

### LESSON 4

## GOD WHISPERS TO ELIJAH

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** God Can Speak to Us

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Kings 19

**GOD'S BIG STORY:** Afraid for his life, Elijah runs into the wilderness where God cares for his needs. Then God tells Elijah to stand on the mountain, where He comes in the most unexpected way—a gentle whisper.

**WORD OF WONDER:** Come near to God, and he will come near to you. —James 4:8a

### CURIOSITY

### BELIEF

### FAITH

- Curiosity Activity: Charades
- Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: God's Got It, God's Way
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Prayer and Blessing



God Speaks Preschool Spotify playlist



## LESSON 4 FOR LEADERS

### INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** God Can Speak to Us

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Kings 19

**WORD OF WONDER:** James 4:8a

Have you ever been in a situation where the odds seemed stacked against you? When you felt like you'd given it all you had, and you wanted to throw in the towel? Despite those feelings, God's plans are greater than our discomforts, worries, disbeliefs, and fears.

I invite you to read 1 Kings 19, and as you read, note the places where you empathize with Elijah.

For me, it was Elijah's feeling of wanting to throw in the towel. We've all felt the weight of the day-to-day grind. How much sweeter, then, are the moments when we hear God say to us like He did to Elijah, "Get up" and "Go out" (1 Kings 19:7, 11)?

God doesn't count us out.

The fact that you're reading this right now shows that no matter what else you're facing in life, God's voice is still guiding you. He gets what you're going through, and He has not abandoned you.

The next time you kneel, sit, or lay down ... imagine the voice of God saying to you, "Get up." He's got you in this moment. And He's got you in the next. So be ready for God to speak in ways you'd never expect.

—**Andrae Jones**

Nextgen Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS**

**WHO?**

Elijah was a prophet during the reign of Israel's King Ahab. As a great prophet, Elijah's life was full of dramatic moments—being fed by ravens, multiplying a widow's grain and oil, raising her son from the dead, and calling fire down from heaven.

**WHAT?**

After significant miracles and revelations from God, Elijah found himself tired and afraid. Fleeing for his life, he asked the God who had sustained him to take his life. In this moment of Elijah's weakness, God promised His presence, which came in an unexpected way.

**WHERE?**

Elijah mostly prophesied to the northern kingdom of Israel, condemning the idolatry of Baal under wicked King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. In his exhaustion, Elijah ran into the wilderness of the southern kingdom, where God spoke to him on Mount Sinai.

**WHEN?**

When King Ahab married Jezebel, he worshiped her god, Baal. Elijah prophesied during the reign of King Ahab, eventually defeating the prophets of Baal and proving God is the one true God. Queen Jezebel was so angry she sent word that she planned to kill Elijah.

**CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY**

Even when the northern kingdom of Israel was ruled by ungodly kings and God's people turned away from Him, God showed His love and faithfulness to the Israelites by sending prophets to share His message. After Elijah, God sent Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Micah to call His people back to Him.

## LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** God Can Speak to Us

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## Welcome

### Slide: Series Welcome Loop

#### As kids arrive...

Walk around the room and welcome as many kids as possible by showing excitement that they have joined you. Give high-fives, fist bumps, encourage them to sit on the floor in their spots, and ask questions about their week.

#### Video: Countdown

Welcome kids to worship time. Introduce yourself by name.

## Curiosity Activity: Charades

**Do you think you can tell what someone is saying even if that person doesn't talk?** Allow the kids to respond. **Let's play a game where we try to guess what someone is saying when the person doesn't talk at all. It's called Charades. I'll call someone up front and whisper something to that person to act out (without talking!), and the rest of you will try to guess what that person is acting out.**

Use the following ideas (or customize to fit your group of kids):

- Eating a popsicle
- Riding a horse
- Playing basketball
- Dancing like a ballerina
- Sweeping the floor
- Driving a race car
- Climbing a ladder
- Swimming

**Make It Inclusive:** If any kids in your church are hearing impaired or know sign language, invite them to teach some signs to the group. Include them in the game by giving them pictures of things to act out.

Today we're going to explore a part of God's big story where God speaks to someone named Elijah. Kind of like how you paid attention in our game, Elijah had to pay close to attention to understand how God would speak to him. We can pay attention and listen for God too! Sometimes we can figure out what is being said even when we can't hear it out loud. We'll learn today how God speaks.

### SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD CAN SPEAK TO US.**

## Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions

**RESOURCES:** Tac the Cat puppet

**Leader:** Let's say hello to our friend, Tac. He's always curious about something.

**Tac the Cat:** Hi, kids! Tac here! I'm curious this morning ... have you ever been so focused on something that nothing could distract you from it? *(Allow kids to respond.)*

**Tac the Cat:** Well, that happened to me just yesterday. There's one thing I love to eat so much ... I love cheese! It's just so tasty and creamy and delicious. There's cheddar, and gouda, and Swiss, and mozzarella ... and they're all different but just so tasty.

**Leader:** Sounds like you really know about cheese!

**Tac the Cat:** I do! So I was strolling down the sidewalk the other day with my cat friend, and you really wouldn't believe it. I saw a couple of friends, just like you, sitting outside having a picnic. And right in the middle of my friend's story ... bam!

**Leader:** Oh no! What happened?

**Tac the Cat:** Just a big cheesy problem! One friend dropped the cheese that went with his crackers right there on the grass! Have any of the kids here ever dropped cheese like that? *(Allow the kids to respond.)*

**Tac the Cat:** So I had to run right over! I chowed down that cheese before the pesky ants could get to it, and then I realized I hadn't heard my friend's story at all! I felt bad. I said I was sorry and listened again to the story.

**Leader:** So do you think it's important to pay attention to be able to hear someone when they're talking to you?

**Tac the Cat:** Definitely!

**Leader:** That reminds me of someone from the Bible who had to pay attention and listen when God was talking to him. It's our story for today.

**Tac the Cat:** Who was it?

**Leader:** His name was Elijah! He was so ready to hear what God said, but it didn't come the way he expected. God doesn't always speak to us the way we think or expect. We'll learn more about that story today!

**Tac the Cat:** It sounds like a great story! I hope everyone pays close attention and listens well. Now I'm going to go get more cheese! Bye!

**Has it ever been difficult for you to listen? What makes it hard for you to listen?** Allow kids to respond. **Do you think God still speaks to people?** Allow the kids to respond. **How do you think God speaks to us?** Allow the kids to respond. **There are lots of different ways God can speak to us. One of the ways is through His Word, the Bible. We're going to hear a story from the Bible today, so let's all listen closely.**

Today's Wonder Truth is **GOD CAN SPEAK TO US**. Today we'll discover how God speaks!

## Declaring God's Wonder

### SLIDE: DECLARATION

**Thank You, God, that You made me!** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Make prayer hands, then point up and then to yourself.

**And I am Your kid!** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands on your hips.

**Jesus loves me so much;** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

**His love for me is big.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

**The Holy Spirit leads me,** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Bring your arms down from above, making a path in front of you.

**And I can follow You.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

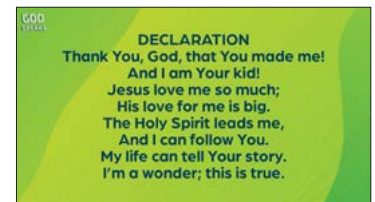
March in place like you're following the leader.

**My life can tell Your story.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

**I'm a wonder; this is true.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands up, shake your fingers, and celebrate ("praise hands").



## Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use your own words. Here is an example: **God, thank You for all the ways You spoke to Your people long ago. And thank You for speaking to us today! Help us to recognize Your voice when You speak. We love You! In Jesus' name, Amen.**

## Worship

Today we'll learn that God speaks to us. God cares about us! We can praise God and thank Him.

**WORSHIP VIDEOS: God's Got It, God's Way**

## God's Big Story

**SUPPLIES:** Bible; Bible Story Picture (1/SG)

### Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

**I open my Bible, and what do I see?** (*Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.*)

**God's big story, waiting for me!** (*Point to yourself.*)

**Let's start by watching part of God's big story from the book of 1 Kings 19 in the Bible. That's in the Old Testament, which is toward the beginning of the Bible, and includes the time before Jesus came to earth.**

**VIDEO: GODS BIG STORY**

## GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

**SUPPLIES:** scrap paper (at least 4 sheets), bowls (several), wooden spoons (several), box or container with a lid, small items that fit inside the box/container, crackers (optional), water bottle or cup of water (optional)

Ahead of time, set out the sound effect supplies at the front of the room. At least two sheets of paper can be rolled up so kids can blow through them to make “wind” sounds. A few sheets of paper can be crinkled to sound like a crackling fire. Kids can bang on upside down bowls with wooden spoons and shake boxes or containers filled with small items to sound like an earthquake. If using crackers, be aware of food allergies.

**In today’s story, we’re going to hear about a time when God spoke to someone. We’re going to have to be good listeners and pay close attention, and you can help tell the story by using items to make sound effects during the story.**

**Before we start the sound effects, we need to know the background of the story. When Israel was split into two kingdoms, a lot of God’s people worshiped fake gods called idols. But God did not forget His people. God sent messengers called prophets.**

**Elijah was a prophet. He saw God work in amazing ways. Elijah listened to God. And God spoke to him. God did really amazing things through Elijah!**

**But even a man like Elijah can feel afraid. A woman named Jezebel got angry about what God did through Elijah. Jezebel scared him! Elijah was so afraid that he ran away into the wilderness. Before he went to sleep, Elijah cried out to God, “LORD, I can’t do this anymore. Take me away because I’m no better than my ancestors who disobeyed you!” But God wanted to care for Elijah. Elijah went to sleep. Can you make sound effects like you’re all asleep?** Encourage the kids to pretend to sleep for a few seconds, then sit up and continue listening.

**An angel of God touched Elijah. The angel woke him up and told him to eat. Elijah saw some freshly baked bread and water right next to him. He ate and drank and fell back asleep.** If you have crackers and water, you can eat a cracker and drink some water to make eating and drinking sound effects. **Later, the angel of God came back again. “Get up and eat,” the angel told Elijah. “Your journey will be long and hard” (1 Kings 19:7). Elijah ate and drank again. He traveled for 40 days to reach Horeb, the mountain of God. Can you step your feet up and down on the food to make a walking sound effect?** Pause to allow the kids to make the walking sound effect.

**When Elijah got to the mountain, he slept in a cave. Can you make a sleeping sound effect again?** Pause to allow the kids to make the sleeping sound effect. **God called out to Elijah, “Elijah, what are you doing here?” (1 Kings 19:9).**

**Elijah replied, “LORD, I trust you. But everyone else turned away from You. Now I’m all alone. They are coming after me!”**

**Then God said, “Go out. Stand on the mountain in front of me. I am going to come.” Wow! God was coming to where Elijah was! What would it be like? When God got close, there was a lot of noise. First, a strong wind blew through the mountains.** Encourage a couple of kids to take rolled up sheets of paper and blow through them to make a “wind” sound effect. **Do you hear that wind sound?**



**Elijah heard a sound like that ... but God was not in the wind. Then there was a shaky earthquake.** Invite a few kids to come up and bang on bowls with wooden spoons and shake the box or container filled with small things, to sound like a shaky, rumbling earthquake. **Do you hear that loud rumbling? Elijah heard a rumbling earthquake ... but God was not in the earthquake. Then, a blazing fire came.** Invite a few kids to come up and crinkle the scrap paper like a “crackling fire” sound effect. **Elijah heard a crackling fire like that ... but God was not in the fire.**

Say the next part in a quiet voice. **Then there was a soft, quiet whisper. Can you all say “whisper” very quietly?** Pause and allow the kids to say the word “whisper.” **Elijah knew that God was there. So he got up and went to meet with God.**

**Then God told Elijah to go back home. God told him that a lot of people were there to help him. Elijah was not alone.**

**Elijah saw God work in mighty ways before. But this time, God did something surprising. God talked to Elijah in a soft whisper. God sometimes shows up in big ways. But He also speaks quietly and works in ways that surprise us. God can speak to us.**

## Connecting the Wonder Truth

### SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Ask the following question to help kids connect the Wonder Truth to God’s big story:

**Our Wonder Truth today is GOD CAN SPEAK TO US. Where did you see our Wonder Truth happen in the story?** Allow kids to answer freely.

**Even when Israel was ruled by kings who didn’t follow God and God’s people turned away from Him, God showed His love and faithfulness to the Israelites by sending prophets to share His message. After Elijah, God sent a lot more prophets. The prophets told messages about Jesus coming. God speaks to us through many ways—the Bible is His story and His message for us!**

## Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish the activity, pray with them and thank God for speaking to us.

**God, help us have ears that listen for You and hear Your voice this week. We thank You that You care about us and speak to us. In Jesus’ name, Amen.**

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

**Blessing:** God never left Elijah, and God will never leave you. May your ears be open for God to speak a special word to your heart in an unexpected way. God loves you!