



LESSON 4

ELIJAH AND THE PROPHETS OF BAAL

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Is the Only True God

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 18

GOD'S BIG STORY: Elijah challenges the prophets of Baal to a showdown: Whichever god sends fire to burn the bull on the altar is the one true God. Nothing happens when Baal's prophets cry out to their god, but when Elijah prays to God, fire comes down from heaven!

WORD OF WONDER: Be still, and know that I am God. I will be honored among the nations. I will be honored in the earth. The LORD who rules over all is with us. The God of Jacob is like a fort to us. —Psalm 46:10–11

- PRESERVICE
 - OPTION 1 Interactive Game: Who's on Your Side?
 - OPTION 2 Multisensory Activity: The Real Thing?
- Welcome Question: What is the most amazing thing you've ever seen?
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: Closer, Over & Over
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- In Awe of God's Wonder
- Responding in Worship: Holy
- Blessing Your Kids



SCAN FOR THIS
WEEK'S VIDEO!

INVITATION

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Is the Only True God

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 18

WORD OF WONDER: Psalm 46:10–11

Take a moment to read 1 Kings 18:16–39, and as you do, picture what it would have been like to be there as an Israelite watching this showdown take place.

In 2012, I visited Israel and got to spend time on Mount Carmel, the place where Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal. I imagined the reality of this story—Elijah calling hundreds of people to climb this mountain, and him spending all day watching these prophets flail around as they begged Baal to answer. I thought of Elijah’s physical labor as he rebuilt God’s altar, dug a trench, and slaughtered a bull. His passion for people to know the one true God was incredible.

Do you feel passionate about others knowing the truth that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life?

After all Elijah’s hard work, God did not disappoint. He sent fire from heaven, burning up the sacrifice, the altar, and the water. The people fell down in awe. Now they knew—God was the only true God.

As you prepare to teach and lead kids this week, spend a few moments worshipping the Lord. Move toward Him in your heart and let Him know again that you believe and know that He is the only true God. He is the One worthy of all our worship and awe.

—Denise Morris Snyder

Spiritual Formation Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 4 **FOR LEADERS**

ELIJAH AND THE PROPHETS OF BAAL

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Elijah was a prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel, mainly during the reign of evil King Ahab. Elijah served God faithfully, often running for his life. He didn't die a natural death—instead God took him to heaven in a chariot of fire.

WHAT?

King Ahab's wife, Jezebel, worshiped Baal (BAY-ul), a false god of storms and rain. Ahab promoted worship of Baal in Israel, even building Baal a temple. Baal worship in Israel was a persistent problem, as people worshiped him instead of or in addition to the one true God.

WHERE?

Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to a duel of the gods on Mount Carmel in northwest Israel. The events were amazing—Elijah climbed, dug, built, slaughtered, and ran. His passion for God lived on, which is why he is mentioned in the New Testament Gospels.

WHEN?

In 1 Kings 17, Elijah announced a yearslong drought in Israel. Baal, the false storm god, should have been able to bring rain and produce fertile ground for crops. But Yahweh showed His power, and the drought ended right after this confrontation on Mount Carmel.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:

God showed up in power on Mount Carmel—proving His strength over the false god, Baal. Later, through Jesus, Colossians 2:15 tells us He, yet again, defeated the spiritual forces at work against Him, triumphing over them by the cross! Our God is victorious!

LESSON 4 **ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN**

Large Group

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Is the Only True God

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 18

WORD OF WONDER: Psalm 46:10–11

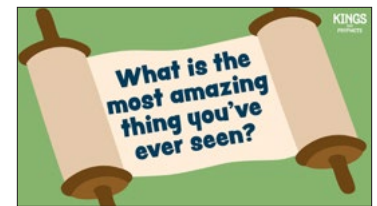
Series Bumper and Countdown Videos

Choose between the [Kings and Prophets Series Bumper Video](#) and [Countdown Videos](#) to introduce the kids to the series.

Welcome Question

SUPPLIES: paper, coloring utensils, whiteboard (optional), dry-erase marker (optional)

Before kids arrive, [display the Elijah Welcome Question](#) Slide or write the following question on a whiteboard: “What is the most amazing thing you’ve ever seen?” Set out paper and coloring utensils.



As kids arrive ...

Warmly welcome kids by name. Show them the Welcome Question. You may want to write your own answer on the whiteboard to help get the kids thinking. Encourage kids to find one other person to share their answer with. If you have younger kids, be sure to read the question for them. Some kids may want to draw their responses as well.

At your start time ...

Invite all the kids to join you and let them know you’re excited to spend time with them today. Call on several kids to share their answers to the Welcome Question: **What is the most amazing thing you’ve ever seen?**

Wow, you’ve seen some awesome things! Today we’re going to learn about a time God did something amazing, and large crowds of people got to see it.

OPTION 1 Interactive Game: Who's on Your Side?

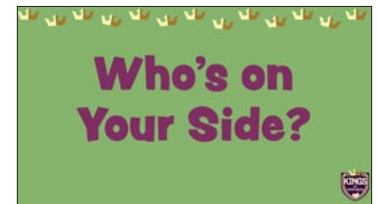
SUPPLIES: buckets (2), masking or painter's tape, large bowls (2), one-pound bags of dried beans (2), stopwatch or timer, broom and dustpan (for clean-up)

Make It Inclusive: Give a heads-up to any kids who are likely to struggle or experience an outburst when the leader “unfairly” pours beans into Team A's bucket. Present it like special, VIP information you're letting them in on! By being prepared for this twist, kids can more easily regulate their emotions.

Ahead of time, set up the game by placing two buckets a few feet apart from one another on one side of the room. Tape a starting line on the opposite side of each bucket, about five feet away. Take one of the bags of beans and pour half of them into a large bowl and half into the other bowl. Reserve the second bag of beans for later in the game. Place the bowls at the taped starting line.

Display the **Who's on Your Side? Slide** and gather the kids. Ask for two people to volunteer to keep score. Have one scorekeeper stand behind one of the buckets and another behind the other bucket. Then ask for one more volunteer, someone who is up for a challenge. Have this volunteer stand behind the taped starting line in front of the first bucket. He is Team A.

Have the rest of the kids stand shoulder to shoulder (as space allows) behind the other taped line in front of the second bucket. They are Team B.



Leader Tip: If you have a large group, you may want to play this game in two separate rounds.

Our game is simple. Each team has a bowl of beans. Whichever team gets the most beans in the bucket before I call time wins!

Team A can only toss one bean at a time, but all the kids on Team B can toss their bean at the same time as their teammates. The scorekeepers should try to keep track of how many beans make it into the buckets. If Team B runs out of beans, the scorekeeper can keep track of how many they got, and then they can empty their bucket into the bowl and continue to play, adding to their previous score.

Near the end of playing time, bring out the second bag of beans and pour them into Team A's bucket. Then call time!

OK, who has the most beans in their bucket? (It will clearly be Team A, since you just added an extra bag of beans to his bucket.)

Help the kids calm down and encourage everyone to sit while you explain the game.

When we started the game, it was unfair—one person against everyone else! But then I helped and changed the whole game. The number of people on the team wasn't important anymore—what mattered was who was helping.

Display the **Elijah Wonder Truth Slide**. Today we're going to learn about a time when one of God's prophets, Elijah, was all alone against the prophets of the false god, Baal (BAY-ul). But then God did something amazing and showed that He is more powerful than Baal or anyone else. He proved today's Wonder Truth that **GOD IS THE ONLY TRUE GOD**.



OPTION 2 Multisensory Activity: The Real

Leader Tip: If you're unable to project slides, print out The Real Thing Slides and hold up each one during this activity.

Display the first of **The Real Thing? Slides**, which shows the activity title. Gather the kids together. **Let's see how good you are at telling the difference between Artificial Intelligence, or AI, and the real thing! In a moment, you'll see two images on the screen. One is a real photograph, and the other is an image generated by AI. You'll go to one side of the room or the other to indicate which one you think is ... The Real Thing!**



Invite kids to gather at the center of the room. Display **The Real Thing? Slide 2**. **If you think the image on the right side of the screen is the real thing, when I say, "Go," you'll move to the right side of the room.** Point to the image on the right and to where kids can gather on the right side of the room. **If you think the image on the left side of the screen is the real thing, when I say, "Go," you'll move to the left side of the room.** Point to the image on the left and to where kids can gather on the left side of the room. **Ready, go!** Give kids time to move. Then display **The Real Thing? Slide 3**, which reveals which image is the real thing. Invite kids back to the center of the room. **Proceed through all of The Real Thing? Slides**, giving kids time to cast their votes by moving to one side of the room or the other after each set of images. There are five sets total.



Gather all the kids back together. Pause after each question for kids to answer freely:

- Did you find it easy or hard to tell which images were the real thing and which were fake?
- Which AI image was the easiest to spot? Which was the hardest? Why do you think that was?

Artificial Intelligence can generate some pretty amazing images, but they still don't compare to the real thing! Display the Elijah Wonder Truth Slide. Today we're going to learn about a time when a lot of people in Israel were worshiping a false god called Baal, but they discovered in a very dramatic way that no one compares to the one true God! Today's Wonder Truth is **GOD IS THE ONLY TRUE GOD**.



Make It Inclusive: Print copies of the slides to give to any kids in your group with limited eyesight.

Small Group

Introduce small group time. While kids are in small group, consider sitting in the groups for a few minutes each. Engage and interact as is appropriate.

Countdown

After about 15 minutes of small group, give a 5 minute warning and begin the countdown.

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN

"Hey everyone! Welcome to our Large Group Worship time! My name is _____ and I'm excited to take this time to worship God, review what we just read, and talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning about God! We are going to pray as we prepare our hearts to worship God!"

Declaring God's Wonder

Display the Elijah Declaration Slide. Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.

Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

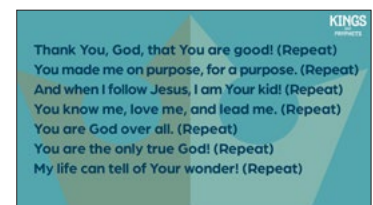
And when I follow Jesus, I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

You are God over all. (Kids repeat.)

You are the only true God! (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)



Prayer of Invitation

Lead kids in a prayer of invitation before entering into worship and God's big story: **God, we thank You that You are the only true God. As we explore Your truth today, help us listen well and learn what You have for us. We pray that Your Holy Spirit will make us more like You. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Worship

God is the only true God! Let's worship Him now through music.

Play songs [Closer](#), [Over & Over](#) and encourage the kids to sing and dance as they praise God.

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

[Display the Elijah Title Slide.](#)

Remind them that this book is in the Old Testament in a section about all the different kings who ruled in Israel and Judah, the land where God's people lived.

Let's start by watching part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, experience more of the story!

[Watch the God's Big Story Video](#)



Leader Tip: For Preteens. In this passage are several instances of "the LORD," a common phrase in most Bibles. This is how English translations handle the Hebrew name of God: Yahweh (sometimes vocalized "Jehovah"). When reading, encourage kids to replace "the LORD" with "Yahweh" to get a better feel for the contest between Yahweh and Baal.

LESSON 4 ELIJAH AND THE PROPHETS OF BAAL EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: paper lunch bags or grocery bags (18); old newspapers, magazines, paper, or clothes; masking tape; red, orange, or yellow streamers; bucket; stuffed animal cow or small toy cow; scissors (prep only, optional); adhesive name tags (optional); fine-tipped permanent marker (prep only, optional)

Ahead of time, stuff the 18 paper bags with filling (old newspapers, magazines, paper, or clothes) and then tape them shut. These will be the stones that the kids will use to build altars. Cut or tear strips of streamers about two feet long. Set out the bucket and the toy cow. Also, consider preparing adhesive name tags to help kids identify who is playing which part in the story by writing each of these names/ labels on a name tag: Elijah, King Ahab, Prophets of Baal (make 3–4 of these), Israelites (make one per remaining kid).

Today I'm going to need your help to act out this part of God's big story as we see how God showed that He is the only true God!

Invite volunteers to help act out the story. One volunteer can be Elijah, one can be King Ahab, three or four can be the prophets of Baal, and the rest of the kids can be the watching Israelites. If you prepared adhesive name tags, give them to the kids to wear. Encourage the kids to use exaggerated actions as they help tell the story visually.

Leader Tip: For Preteens. Invite the oldest kids in your ministry to help lead by playing parts on stage!

Many years after King David's son, Solomon, ruled Israel, a man named Ahab became king of Israel. Invite Ahab to wave royally to the crowd.

Ahab didn't serve the Lord. In fact, he was worse than every king who came before him. Have Ahab shake his fist menacingly.

Together with his wife, Jezebel, King Ahab led the Israelites to worship and serve the false god named Baal (BAY-ul). Ahab turned away from the one true God and even built a temple and set up an idol to show how much he wanted to please Baal. Encourage Ahab to bow.

So God raised up a prophet named Elijah. Invite Elijah to wave to the crowd.

Like most of God's messengers, Elijah had a very hard job. He had to bring God's truth to people who didn't want to listen. Have the kids who are Israelites cover their ears and shake their heads.

Elijah told Ahab to gather all the people of Israel and all the prophets of Baal to meet him on Mount Carmel. Encourage Ahab to motion everyone to come to him.

Elijah said to them, "How long will it take you to make up your minds? If the LORD is the one and only God, worship him. But if Baal is the one and only God, worship him" (1 Kings 18:21).

Then he told the prophets to pray to Baal and ask him to send down fire on the altar to burn up the bull. Elijah would pray to God. Whichever god answered was the one real and true God. The prophets agreed to the contest. Have the prophets stack the paper bag stones on top of one another like they're building an altar.

The prophets of Baal got their bull ready and then prayed to Baal, but nothing happened. The prophets of Baal should place the toy cow on the altar and then pretend to pray.

After a while, Elijah began to laugh and to tease them. He said, "Perhaps ... he's away on a trip. Maybe he's sleeping" (1 Kings 18:27). Elijah can point and pretend to laugh.

The prophets danced and prayed, trying to get Baal's attention. They did this until evening, but no one paid any attention. Have the prophets of Baal dance around and pretend to pray until they get tired. The Israelites should look around at each other like they're confused.

Then Elijah rebuilt the altar to the Lord that had been torn down. Give Elijah 12 of the paper bag stones and encourage him to stack them up.

He dug a large trench around it. He cut up the bull and put it on the altar with wood. Elijah can pretend to dig and then place the toy cow on top of his altar.

Then he told the people to fill big jugs with water and pour them all over the bull and the altar until there was water covering everything and flowing out of the trench. Invite one of the Israelites to use the bucket to pretend to pour water on the altar.

Then Elijah prayed: “LORD, you are the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel. Today let everyone know that you are God in Israel. Let them know I’m your servant. Let them know I’ve done all these things because you commanded me to. Answer me. Lord, answer me. Then these people will know that you are the one and only God. They’ll know that you are turning their hearts back to you again” (1 Kings 18:36–37). Elijah can pretend to pray.

And then, guess what happened! God didn’t send a tiny spark or a small flame. He sent fire from heaven that burned up the bull, the wood, the altar, the dirt, and all of the water in the trench! Invite a few of the Israelite watchers to throw the streamers onto the altar.

When all the people saw fire fall from heaven, they fell down and cried out, “The LORD is the one and only God! The LORD is the one and only God!” (1 Kings 18:39). Encourage everyone to look amazed and fall down.

We may not be tempted to worship false gods like Baal, but we may be tempted to put some things and people in our lives ahead of God. We also need to remember that God alone is most worthy of our time, love, and attention. God showed Elijah and all the people His great power that God is the only true God!

Connecting the Wonder Truth

Display the Elijah Wonder Truth Slide.

Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD IS THE ONLY TRUE GOD**. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

God is the only true God. God showed up in power on Mount Carmel—proving His strength over the false god, Baal. And later, God yet again

defeated evil that was at work against Him. Through Jesus and His life, death, and resurrection, evil was defeated once and for all. Our God is victorious!



In Awe of God’s Wonder

Spend a few moments allowing kids to think about the wonder of God’s story.

Imagine you were there that day, watching this showdown between Elijah and the prophets of Baal. At what point would you have thought, “Wow!”? Invite kids to answer freely.

At the end of the day, what word would you have used to describe God? Invite kids to answer freely.

Responding in Worship

SLIDE: RESPONDING IN WORSHIP

Talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning with next steps such as tithing, prayer, asking questions, and worship. Encourage kids to ask their SG leaders any questions they were wondering during the lesson.

***Introduce this next song and invite kids to respond and participate in worship. See the "Worship Posture Tutorial" on the RBKids Resource Page.

WORSHIP VIDEO: Holy



Blessing Your Kids

Speak this blessing over your kids, as a group or as individuals. If you bless kids individually, insert each name into the blessing.

Blessing: As you go this week, may God remind you that He is the only true God. He loves you, cares for you, and helps you. He alone is powerful and good. Our God is worthy of worship!