



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

- Welcome Question: What is the most amazing thing you've ever seen?
- Curiosity Questions
- Word of Wonder Activity
- God's Big Story
- Discussion Questions for Elementary Kids and Preteens
- Small Group Prayer Time
- LARGE GROUP
- Elementary Responding in Worship: One True God
- Preteen Responding in Worship: God Alone



SCAN FOR THIS
WEEK'S VIDEO!

INVITATION

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

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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 or Small 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

Pre-Service Connection (15–20 min)

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

Games & Activities Guide

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have activities ready to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them! Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

As kids arrive ...

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

Use the Welcome Question and the following "I'm Curious" questions to engage kids. Say "**I'm curious..**" before each question and give kids an chance to think before answering each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

Consider having a whiteboard or poster for kids to write or draw answers to any of the questions:

- **What do you wish you could see God do?**
- **What do you think is the most wonderful thing about God?**

Small Group Begins

After the Opening Activity or game, Large Group Leader will begin small group time by reading the Welcome Question aloud and inviting everyone to open their Bibles and begin.

Word of Wonder Activity

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 (NirV)

SUPPLIES: Bible, balls (1 per small group)

Ahead of time, cue upbeat praise music for this activity. Consider playing songs from the [Kings and Prophets Elementary Spotify playlist](#).

Our Word of Wonder for the Kings and Prophets series reminds us that God is the only God and ruler of everything. One day, everyone will recognize that He is the only true God! Let's say the verse together. Open your Bible to Psalm 46:10–11. Read Psalm 46:10–11 several times together.

Invite the kids to sit in a circle. When you start the music, they should start to pass the ball around the circle. When the music stops, encourage everyone to say the Word of Wonder together. Play this way for a few rounds.

Then let the kids know that this time, when the music stops, the person holding the ball and the two kids on either side of him will say the verse together. Play this way for a few rounds.

For the last few rounds, when the music stops, whoever is holding the ball will say the Word of Wonder on her own. If she struggles to remember it, she can toss the ball to someone else in the circle to say the verses first before he passes it back to her to say the verses on her own or with a friend of her choosing.

Leader Tip: For Preteens. Skip straight to having the kid holding the ball recite the Word of Wonder with the two kids on either side of him, rather than saying the verses as a whole group.

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Invite the kids to open their Bibles to 1 Kings 18. 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 reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, experience more of the story!

Invite three or four volunteers to take turns reading 1 Kings 18:16–39 aloud to the group while the other kids follow along in their Bibles. Then do one or both of the following:

Elementary Questions

- **Elijah told King Ahab there was going to be a contest between the false god, Baal, and the only true God. What kind of contest was it going to be?** (Whichever god sends fire to burn the bull on the altar is the one true God.)
- **What did the prophets of Baal do to try to get Baal to send down fire on their altar?** (They danced and prayed to Baal.)
- **What did God do?** (He responded to Elijah's prayer by sending fire from heaven to burn up the bull, altar, dirt, and water!)
- **What do we learn about God from this part of His big story?** (Possible answers: He is the only true God; He answers prayer; He turns people's hearts back to Him.)
- **How did knowing that God is the only true God change the Israelites?** (Possible answer: They worshipped Him instead of a false god.)
- **How can you remind yourself every day, especially on hard days, that God is the only true God?**

Sometimes, just like the Israelites, we need to be reminded that God is the only true God. He loves us and cares for us, and He is the only One worthy of our worship. Let's take some time to pray and thank God that He is powerful and amazing!

Preteen Questions

- **Who did King Ahab and his wife, Jezebel, worship?** (The false god, Baal.)
- **Elijah told Ahab there was going to be a contest between the false god, Baal, and the only true God. What did Elijah and the prophets of Baal need to set up, and how would they know who was the only true God?** (An altar with a sacrificed bull on it. Whichever god sent fire to burn up the bull would prove to be the only true God.)
- **What did Baal do when his prophets asked him to send down fire on their altar? What did God do when Elijah prayed to Him?** (Baal did nothing. God sent fire from heaven that burned up the bull, altar, dirt, and water!)
- **What do we learn about God from this passage?** (Possible answers: He is the only true God; He answers prayer; He turns people's hearts back to Him.)
- **Because God is the only true God, what else can we know to be true about Him? How can knowing these other things about God change our lives?**
- **We don't need God to send fire from heaven to prove He is God. He proved He is the only true God once and for all when Jesus died on the cross and rose again. How does knowing Jesus is the only true God help you each day?**

Leader Tip: Help kids think about what they know to be true about God from the Bible. He is faithful, loving, and trustworthy. He disciplines us but always forgives. Invite kids to share truths about God that can help us each day.

Sometimes when problems come up, we forget that God is the only true God. We try to get help from other places, like our friends, money, or even our own skills. Those things are not bad, but they're not God. The problem comes when we trust those things more than we trust God, when those things become the objects of our worship. Only God is God! Let's take some time to pray and ask God to remind us of His power in our lives.

Small Group Prayer Time

Invite kids to share their prayer requests with the group. Then invite volunteers to pray, asking God to help us each day to trust that He is the only true God and that He is powerful to help us when we need Him.

LARGE GROUP

refer to large group leader guide

Elementary Responding in Worship: One True God

SUPPLIES: air-dry clay (1 lump per kid, paper plates (1 per kid, markers

Give each kid a lump of air-dry clay and a paper plate. Ask them to set their clay on their plates and place it in front of them and wait until prompted to touch the clay.

God's people, the Israelites, often struggled with worshiping false gods. They had trouble honoring God and worshiping Him alone. In today's story, King Ahab made statues and built a temple for the false god, Baal. We probably aren't tempted to worship idols or statues of gods, but there are some things that can get in the way of worshiping God alone. What are some of those things? Invite kids to answer. If they aren't sure, offer some ideas—maybe things like favorite toys, video games, TV shows, videos on the Internet, wanting others to like you, wanting to win, etc.

Think now of one thing that gets in your way of putting God first and worshiping Him alone, and then make it out of clay. Give kids time to create quietly. Play “Great Are You, Lord” from the [Kings and Prophets Elementary Spotify playlist](#) quietly as you continue. (Put it on repeat so it plays throughout the rest of this activity. If kids finish quickly, encourage them to mold their clay into another thing that can keep them from putting God first.

Each of us has things in our lives that sometimes keep us from putting God first. These things aren't necessarily bad things by themselves, but when we put them before spending time with God and worshiping Him, they become idols, or false gods. But God is the only true God, and we worship Him alone!

I invite you to take whatever you made out of clay and squash it as a symbol that God alone is the only true God! Pause for kids to squash their clay creations. **Now I invite you to turn your clay into a symbol or object that reminds you of the only true God!** Give kids time to create symbol or object out of clay, such as a cross, a heart, or some other symbol that reminds them of God.

When kids finish, have them place their creations on their paper plates and write their names on their plates with markers. Invite kids to take their creations home and to set them somewhere they'll see often as a reminder that God is the only true God. Let them know it'll take about three days for their clay to dry completely. Once it does, they're welcome to color their creations at home with markers!

Make It Inclusive: Have paper and coloring utensils available for kids who aren't comfortable touching air-dry clay due to texture sensitivities. They can crumple their paper (rather than squash their clay) and draw a symbol of God on a fresh sheet.

Preteen Responding in Worship: God Alone

SUPPLIES: coloring utensils, writing utensils, bucket

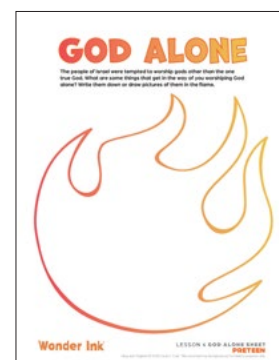
Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [God Alone Sheet \(1 per kid\)](#), “Great Are You, Lord” on the [Kings and Prophets Elementary Spotify playlist](#) (optional)

Ahead of time, print a copy of the God Alone Sheet for each kid. Set out the bucket.

Set out coloring and writing utensils and place the bucket at the front of the room. **God’s people, the Israelites, often struggled with worshiping false gods. They had trouble honoring God and worshiping Him alone. We probably aren’t tempted to worship other gods, but there are some things that can get in the way of worshiping God alone. What are some of those things?** Invite kids to answer and then offer some ideas—maybe things like money, comfort, friends, phones, wanting to be popular, etc.

Give a God Alone Sheet to each kid and read the instructions at the top of the page out loud. Invite kids to take some personal time to write down or draw things that sometimes get in the way of them worshiping God. While the kids respond quietly, consider playing “Great Are You, Lord” from the [Kings and Prophets Elementary Spotify playlist](#).

After a few minutes, call everyone back together. **What are some of the things in our lives that get in the way of worshiping God alone?** Invite kids to share their answers from their God Alone Sheets, if they want.



Leader Tip: Some kids may have really personal answers to this question. Allow kids to choose whether to share or not. If you notice anything in the kids’ responses that may need to be addressed individually, be sure to follow up with them at the end of the lesson, inviting another adult leader to join you.

In God’s big story today, we saw that God sent fire from heaven and burned up Elijah’s offering. When we give our struggles to God, He helps us work through them through the Holy Spirit working in our lives. Let’s give to God anything that keeps us from knowing that He is the only God.

Invite the kids to crumple up their flames and throw them into the bucket to symbolize God’s amazing work in their lives.

Ask someone to pray, thanking God that He is the only true God and that He’s always willing to help us.

Make It Inclusive: Provide a variety of writing and drawing utensils to support different motor skill levels. For example, markers are often easier for kids to use than crayons or colored pencils because they require less hand pressure.