

Lesson 8

Elijah's Challenge with Baal

I Kings 18:1-46

Memory Verse

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind
(II Timothy 1:7)

Teacher's Objective

At the end of the session, the students should be able to:

1. Define what it means to worship an idol.
2. Locate Mount Carmel on a map.
3. Describe how the people walked the fence worshipping two gods.
4. Express in their own words how they know God is the one and only true God.

Materials Needed

See Teaching Activities: for specific activities.

Teacher's Bible Study

Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal is an exciting story. As well as being exciting, it is a significant story about the history of Israel. The story of Elijah gives insights to the meaning of prayer. We live much of our life here on earth by faith. Many of the challenges we face in life are completely out of our realm of control. Read Matthew 6. Jesus did teach us how to pray. Just as Elijah had a relationship with God through prayer, we can too.

Elijah was a prophet that lived in Israel during the reign of King Ahab. There are many scriptures in the Bible that refer to Elijah. The prophet Malachi foretold the return of Elijah before the Day of the Lord. Read Malachi 4:5-6. Zechariah was told by an angel that his son, John the Baptist, would go before him [Jesus] in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord (Luke 1:17). At the transfiguration, the disciples saw Moses and Elijah with Jesus. Read Matthew 17:3; Mark 9:4; and Luke 9:28-33.

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. I Kings 17:1 | The rain stops |
| 2. I Kings 17:14 | Widow's food multiplies |
| 3. I Kings 17:21 | Widow's son is restored to life |
| 4. I Kings 18:38 | Fire comes down on Mount Carmel |
| 5. I Kings 18:41 | Rain is restored to the land |
| 6. II Kings 1:12 | Fire comes down on soldiers |

Finally, it is significant that we remember that Elijah was a spokesman for God. There are seven miracles that authenticate this fact. The seven miracles are as follows:

The Old Testament sees King Ahab as an evil king. He married Jezebel, who was the daughter of the king of Sidon. Jezebel worshiped the weather and fertility gods, Baal and Asherah. She was the one who convinced Ahab and his subjects to accept her religion. She set about having the prophets of God executed and replacing them with the prophets of Baal. Ahab did more to anger God than all the kings before him. Read I Kings 16:31-34. He was the seventh king of Israel and he ruled from the capital city of Samaria. King Ahab and Queen Jezebel signed their own death warrant when they killed Naboth for his vineyard. Elijah predicted Jezebel would die a violent death. Read II Kings 9:30-37. King Ahab died while at war with Syria.

Make copies of Activity Page for each age group, enough for all your students. Provide construction paper, copies of the stones, colors, glue and pencils; clay, wood to build on; toothpicks, sponges, water, and clean-up supplies.

Ask your students
some of the
following questions:

Presenting the Bible Story

Have you ever been frightened? Did you ever wake up from a dream and something in your room scared you? Maybe you were home alone watching a movie in the dark and you thought you heard someone in the other room. Did it frighten you? Read what Jesus said in John 14:1: Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

What is idol worship? Do you put your clothes, television sports, and famous people first in your life? Did you know that if you are a selfish person, you make yourself an idol?

God was very angry with King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. God sent his prophet Elijah to warn them that there will be no rain until God permits it, through Elijah. By the Brook of Kerith, Elijah went into hiding. While there, God provided for him. Ravens brought him food to eat. When the brook dried up, God sent Elijah to Zarephath. There Elijah lived with a widow and her household. God provided for them. Their food supply never ran out. When the widow's son died, Elijah prayed and God answered his prayer by bringing the son back to life.

I Kings 18:1 6

After three years (Luke 4:25) Elijah returned to see Ahab as God had commanded him to do. King Ahab blamed Elijah for the drought he and his people were enduring. Obadiah was a man who worked in King Ahab's household. He held great responsibilities in the palace. Obadiah feared and believed in God. He was not the writer of the book Obadiah. Obadiah hid 100 of God's prophets in caves and fed them during a time when Queen Jezebel ordered them to be killed. Since there was an extreme drought and famine in the land, this must have been a very difficult task.

I Kings 18:7 12

Elijah was recognized by Obadiah. Out of respect, Obadiah bowed down to Elijah. Remember that Elijah was a wanted man. Obadiah was concerned about reporting to Ahab about Elijah's arrival. What if Elijah disappeared again, after Obadiah reported speaking with him. All knew that the Spirit of Lord protected Elijah. Read II Kings 2:15,16. Ahab would think Obadiah was tricking him and would probably execute him.

I Kings 18:12 15

Obadiah let Elijah know that he had been a servant of the Lord since his youth. Obadiah thought Elijah would have heard about how he hid the 100 prophets in caves and kept them fed. Elijah assures Obadiah that he will present himself to Ahab. Elijah had confidence in God's ability to handle every situation. Read I Kings 17:1 as an example.

I Kings 18:16 18

When Elijah and Ahab met, King Ahab blamed Elijah for the drought. Elijah, however, reminded him that God had sent the drought because Ahab had led the people to serve idols. Israel was in trouble physically and spiritually because they worshiped Baals. The plural, Baals, refers to local idols. Read Judges 8:33.

I Kings 18:19 21

It was decided to have the contest on Mount Carmel. The contest was to be between Elijah and the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah. If you have a map, locate Mount Carmel for your students. Explain that this was not just one mountain, but a range of mountains. The

place was fitting, as it was between Israel and Phoenicia. It was these people, the Phoenicians, whose idol worship was in question. Ahab was probably pleased that this location was chosen.

I Kings 18:22 25 The Phoenicians considered it as the sacred dwelling place of Baal. When the people were gathered, Elijah questioned their double mindedness. He challenged their worshiping two gods. Would it not be better to stop walking the fence and worship the one true God?

I Kings 18:25 29 In these verses, Elijah explains how the contest will be carried out. He makes it clear that it will be all 450 prophets of Baal against the one prophet of God.

I Kings 18:30 35 As you read here in these verses, the false god, Baal, did not answer them. This is because there is only one true God who answers prayer. Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not (Jeremiah 33:3). The one and only true God wants you to call upon Him and receive eternal life. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be save. (Romans 10:13).

I Kings 18:36 39 By this time, it must have been obvious to all that the prophets of Baal had failed. Elijah called the people together. Long ago an altar had been built and was falling apart. Elijah took twelve stones, each representing one of the tribes of Israel, and repaired the altar. A trench was built around the altar. Two measures of seed equalled thirteen quarts of seed. After the wood had been put in order and the bull had been cut in pieces, Elijah gave the directive for it all to be doused with water three times. He even had the trench filled with water. What was the purpose in pouring water over everything? Could this act prove that what was about to happen was not a trick, but truly a miracle?

I Kings 18:40 42 Elijah did not carry on with wild dancing or slashing himself as the prophets of Baal had done. He simply talked to God. Hear me, O LORD hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. No sooner had Elijah finished his prayer, that instantly fire fell from heaven consuming the sacrifice. The crowd did the following, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD He is the God; the LORD He is the God.

I Kings 18:43 46

The prophets of Baal were executed. Elijah declared to King Ahab that the drought was ended.

Art and Activities Elijah prayed earnestly to God for rain. He sent his servant seven times to the top of the mountain and look toward the sea. At last, on the seventh time, a rain cloud the size of a man's hand appeared. Ahab left for Jezreel as the sky became black with clouds and wind. It is approximately twenty-five miles from Mount Carmel to Jezreel. The divine hand of the Lord enabled Elijah to reach Jezreel before Ahab, who had a chariot.

The contest at Mount Carmel had discredited the worshipers of Baal and had humiliated Queen Jezebel.

Teaching Activities

Young Children

Provide construction paper for each student. Make copies of the stones on the Art Activity sheets for each student. Have the students color the stones and then glue them on their plain piece of construction paper. This is to be the altar that Elijah built. Be sure each student only receives twelve stones, as this represents the twelve tribes of Israel.

Match the picture with the word and then color.

Explore with
your students
the following
questions:

Older Children

Provide clay for the students to build an altar. If you have a picture of how altars looked, show this to your students. While your students work, reinforce today's story.

There are two activity pages: An unscramble the word, and a word search.

Always close your
class with prayer

Explore the Subject

1. Have you ever experienced the affects of a drought? What are the consequences?

2. Do you worship your material things, or do you praise and thank God for all that you have?

Respond and Reinforce

1. The contest that took place on Mount Carmel would be considered by some not a fair match. It was Elijah against 450 priests. Would you agree it was an uneven match? Who did Elijah have on his side?

2. Discuss the memory verse.

Activity Page

Elijah's Challenge with Baal

I Kings 18:1-46

When Elijah the prophet prayed to God, God sent fire down onto the altar.

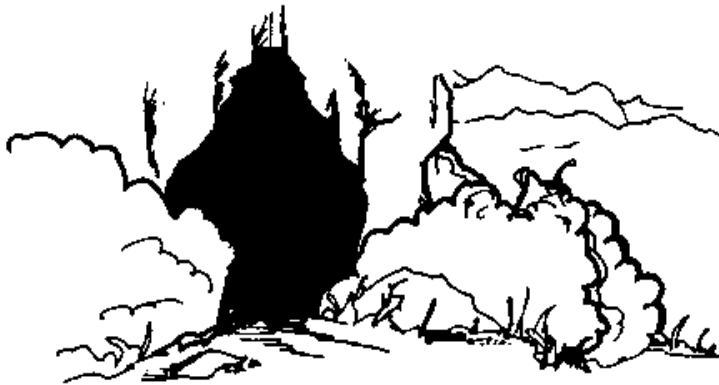
This proved that He, not Baal, is God.

Match the words below with the pictures and then color.



Altar

Cave



Bullock



Fire

Activity Page

Elijah's Challenge With Baal

I Kings 18:1-46

During the days of King Ahab of Israel, Elijah the Prophet warned that there would be no rain until the Lord said. Elijah challenged the priests of Baal to a contest on Mount Carmel to determine whether their god or his God could send fire to an altar.

Unscramble the words below.

1. _____ **TMNUO MCELRA**
2. _____ **KOLLUBC**
3. _____ **LICAESFR**
4. _____ **TAARL**
5. _____ **LEARSI**
6. _____ **SEABTS**
7. _____ **LABA**
8. _____ **EHDI**
9. _____ **TSNEARV**
10. _____ **H AJ I L E**

Activity Page

Elijah's Challenge With Baal

I Kings 18:1-46

Elijah challenged the priests to a contest on Mount Carmel. It was to determine whether their god or his God could send fire on the altar. The priests of Baal cried out and cut themselves, and nothing happened. Elijah prayed to God and He sent fire in a miraculous way.

Find the words below in the puzzle.

R	J	K	Z	J	B	E	Q	B	X	M	T	S	E	C
D	M	E	M	B	L	U	A	J	E	W	D	F	F	B
Z	O	L	Z	C	H	A	L	L	E	N	G	E	E	E
H	U	O	V	E	R	U	H	L	H	F	I	R	E	B
N	N	D	W	M	B	I	V	A	O	F	H	M	K	Z
S	T	I	M	A	X	E	I	A	J	C	P	R	A	Y
B	C	R	H	F	S	D	L	B	N	I	K	K	E	F
X	A	A	L	T	A	R	A	E	F	U	L	E	R	P
W	R	N	O	B	C	C	R	V	A	P	M	E	W	D
O	M	N	O	X	R	T	O	E	W	R	W	N	S	A
R	E	T	A	W	I	O	A	E	D	O	S	B	H	Y
S	L	O	V	E	F	M	J	C	P	P	P	I	T	V
H	W	R	F	B	I	H	Y	M	G	H	D	D	E	Z
I	B	C	M	J	C	R	C	Q	D	E	V	A	U	L
P	E	X	S	S	E	R	V	A	N	T	V	G	P	X

Ahab

Obadiah

Fear

Idol

Trench

Altar

Challenge

Prophet

Israel

Twelve Stones

Mount Carmel

Elijah

Fire

Servant

Water

Baal

Power

Hide

Jezebel

Wood

Bullock

Famine

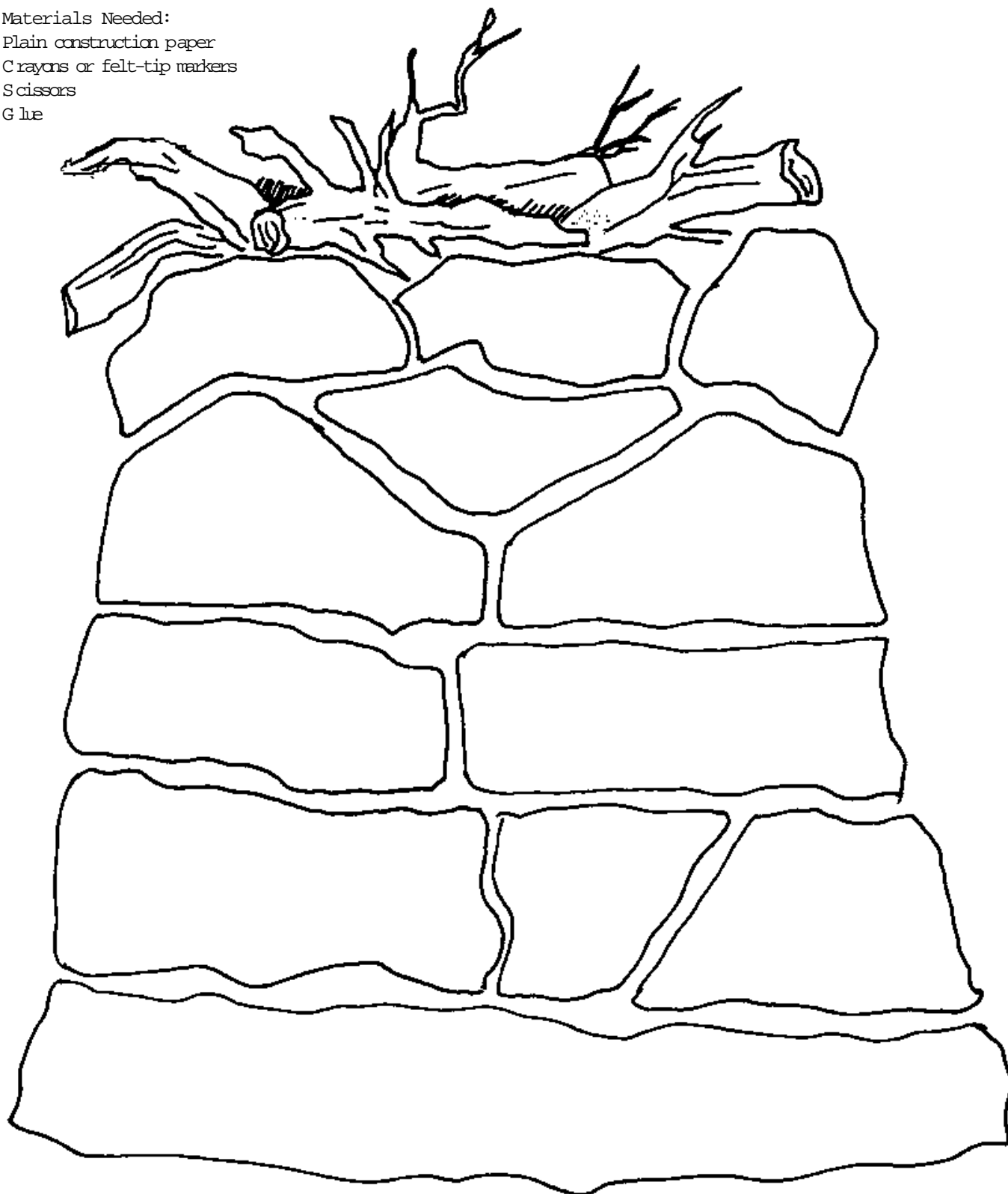
Sacrifice

Love

Worship

Art Activity

Materials Needed:
Plain construction paper
Crayons or felt-tip markers
Scissors
Glue



Art Activity

Door Plaque

Materials

Scissors

Colored paper

Glue

Crayons or colored pens

