

GLENVIEW NEW CHURCH SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAM
Primary Lessons: Phase 3 – Lesson 29
Elijah and the Prophets of Baal (I Kings 18:20– 40)

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. The Lord is always trying to reach us, no matter how bad we become.
- B. The Lord can be with us and help us only when we obey Him.
- C. When we care more for self and the world than for the Lord's Word, it is as though our souls shrivel and dry up, as plants do when deprived of water.
- D. We may work very hard, even injure our health, in the pursuit of worldly possessions and power, but it doesn't bring us happiness. This is like the prophets of Baal who worked hard all day and even cut themselves, but still no fire from heaven descended upon their altar.
- E. Basic correspondences:
 - Elijah = the prophetic Word
 - Baal = self as a god

II. Story Circle

- A. Introduce the Story
 - 1. Last time we learned that king Ahab was the worst king Israel had ever had. He led the people into idolatry. They were worshiping a god named Baal instead of the Lord. And you know that this is against the First Commandment!
 - 2. So the Lord sent the prophet, Elijah, to warn Ahab that there would be a drought (a time of no rain) until Ahab was willing to listen to the Lord. The drought lasted for 3 1/2 years! It was a very hard time for the people of Israel because when there is no water, food can't grow, so there was a famine also.
 - 3. Finally Ahab was willing to hear what the Lord wanted him to know. Elijah delivered this message: "Now therefore, send and gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. . . ." (I Kings 18:19)
 - 4. Let's read today's story from the Word and find out what happened on Mount Cannel that convinced the people of Israel to stop worshiping the idol, Baal, and to worship the Lord again Instead.
- B. Tell/Read the Story: Read aloud I Kings 18:20– 40.

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C. Ideas to Discuss

1. Literal Sense

- a. When wicked king Ahab was finally ready to listen to the Lord, what did the prophet, Elijah, tell him to do? (Gather the 450 prophets of Baal and all the people of Israel on Mount Carmel)
- b. What was the test that Elijah suggested to see which god was really God? (He and the prophets of Baal would lay a bull on a stack of wood but would not start a fire. The prophets of Baal would call on the name of Baal, and Elijah would call on the name of the Lord, and they would see which God answered by sending fire to burn up the sacrifice.)
- c. How did the prophets of Baal try to get their god to hear them? (They called all day, leapt about the altar, and cut themselves with knives and lances.)
- d. Did Baal answer them? (No)
- e. How did Elijah build his altar? (He built it of 12 stones, according to the 12 tribes of the Sons of Jacob, put wood and a bull on top, and 3 times he ordered water poured on top of all of it to soak it.)
- f. How did the Lord show which was the true God? (He sent fire that burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and all the water.)
- g. What did all the people say when the fire fell? (“The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!”)
- h. What did Elijah tell the people to do? (Seize [catch] all the prophets of Baal)
- i. What did Elijah do to them? (executed [killed] them)

2. Further Ideas

Elijah wanted water poured all over his altar and sacrifice for the Lord. How well does wet wood burn? (Not well; sometimes not at all!)

Why do you suppose Elijah did this? (Listen to children’s ideas, and make sure they hit on the correct ideas) He wanted to prove to the people of Israel that nothing they did could keep the real God, the Lord, from answering Elijah with fire that would burn up everything— even wet wood. The Lord is all-powerful; Baal had no power at all. (In fact, Baal did not exist; he was imaginary!)

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. “I pray Thee, Lord, to guide my ways,” HYMNAL #169.
2. “May we learn, O Lord of life,” HYMNAL #219.
3. “All that the Lord has spoken,” HYMNAL #245.
4. “Kol asher dibber Y’HOWAH,” HYMNAL #246. (Hebrew version of #245)

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B. Activities

C. Project: THE LORD SENDS FIRE DOWN ON ELIJAH'S SACRIFICE (collage)

1. Materials Needed

- a. scissors
- b. glue
- c. white, light yellow, or light blue construction paper for background
- d. preferably orange, red, and yellow tissue paper (fire from Lord) (or orange, red, and yellow oil pastels, crayons, or felt markers)
- e. gray construction paper (stones of altar)
- f. brown construction paper— – cut into strips for wood for altar
- g. white or black paper, about 3" x 5" (sacrificial bull)

2. Method

- a. Draw (or trace) a bull onto the white or black paper and cut it out.
- b. Tear (or cut) gray construction paper into 12 stones. Glue at bottom of page to build Elijah's altar.
- c. Glue brown paper strips on top of stones for wood.
- d. Glue bull on top of wood.
- e. Glue orange, red, and yellow tissue paper pieces coming down from top of page to show fire coming down from Lord in heaven.
- f. Optional: Draw Elijah (and perhaps a crowd of people— – all Israel and 450 prophets of Baal!) to the side(s) of the altar.

IV. Teaching Aids

Illustrations of:

- A. Elijah's sacrifice being consumed by fire from the Lord.
- B. The prophets of Baal trying to get Baal's attention.

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

Dole's BIBLE STUDY NOTES, Volume 3, "Elijah and Ahab" (I Kings 17;18), pp. 231-251.