

49. Elijah and the Priests of Baal

The Word of the Lord: The Old Testament for Young Children

Notes for Parents & Teachers

49. Elijah and the Priests of Baal

- a. An amazing change of tone from the last story. This is about the Lord's power being shown to thousands of people whereas the last one was to just two people.
- b. Ahab had been searching for Elijah for three and a half years, and suddenly Elijah came to him. Note that Ahab said Elijah had caused the drought, but Elijah said it was Ahab's fault for forsaking the Lord. When Elijah told him to gather all the people Ahab had to obey him.
- c. The mountain Carmel overlooks the ocean. That probably explains how they could put water on the altar.
- d. The people were confused. They had been taught to worship the Lord, but their king and queen were telling them that Baal was the real god. So Elijah told them they should decide, and they didn't know what to say.
- e. Get the children to have a picture of how these hundreds of prophets of Baal tried to get their supposed god to answer them. But there was nothing. No voice answered. Note how they even cut themselves with their own swords, and jumped up and down on the altar.
- f. Compare their jumping about with Elijah's just saying to the people to come near to him. He prepared the altar of the Lord which had broken down.

- g. Ask the children how they thought you could get a fire made when there were buckets and buckets of water poured all over the altar and the wood.
- h. Make it dramatic! The fire from the Lord came down out of the sky. Tell them how hot it was. It burned up the bull and the wood, and also the twelve stones and the water! What must the people have felt as they saw the fire coming down out of the sky that had no clouds in it.
- i. Ask them to picture how the people fell down and shouted: "The Lord, He is God." You might add that after that the rains came.

Text simplified by Carol Bongers Buss
Pictures by Dianna Echols Synnestvedt
Notes by the Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss, Sr.

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The Lord Proves That He Is the Lord God

In the third year of the famine, the Lord spoke to Elijah saying, “Go to Ahab.” When King Ahab saw Elijah he said, “Is it you who has brought this trouble on Israel?” And Elijah said, “It is not I who has troubled Israel, but you and your people for not following the Lord’s commandments and instead following Baal. Now send out and gather together all the children of Israel, and bring also the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal.”

So Ahab sent word to all the children of Israel and gathered them and the prophets together at Mount Carmel. Then Elijah came before all the people and said, “How long will you take to decide in whom you believe? The Lord, or Baal?” But the people said nothing.

Then Elijah told the prophets of Baal to build an altar to Baal and put a bull on the top with sticks underneath. And he told them to call on Baal to send fire down on the altar to light the fire and sacrifice the bull. So the four hundred and fifty prophets called to Baal and said, “O Baal, answer us!” But there was nothing, no voice answered to send down fire on the altar. And they called all day from morning to night. Nothing happened.

Then Elijah built an altar of twelve big stones, one for each of the sons of Jacob, and he laid a bull on top of it with sticks underneath it. And he built a trench around the altar. Then he told Ahab’s men to pour water all over the bull and the stones and the sticks, so much water that the water ran down into the trench. Then Elijah called to the Lord and said, “Let these people know that You are the Lord God.”

And the fire of the Lord fell down out of the sky and it burnt up the bull and the wood and the stones, and the flames licked up the water that was in the trenches. And all the people saw it. Then they fell on their faces and they said, “The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God!”

1 Kings 18

