

Elijah in the Cave

Level D | Lesson 5 | Teacher Overview

Key Message: The Lord speaks to us in His Word.

Text: 1 Kings 19:1-18

Activity Options (choose 2 or 3)

1. Talk About It
2. Look Closer: Elijah's Three Sources of Food
3. Take Action: Find the Still Small Voice of Conscience
4. Meditate and Activate



1 Kings 19:9

He went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and He said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

Talk About It

I Kings 18:1-2,18-46: Fire from Heaven

1. Today's story describes Elijah going alone into the wilderness. What is the wilderness like? (desolate, barren, lonely) Places mentioned in the Word picture states of mind. Describe a mental wilderness. (It is when the Lord's love and truth feel far away or absent.)
2. Elijah went away by himself where he would be alone because he was discouraged—he went to hide. Can people hide from the Lord? (The Lord never leaves us—but we can distance ourselves from Him or even reject Him.)
3. Who came to Elijah while he slept? (an angel) What did the angel give him? (The angel gave him a cake to eat and a jar of water to drink two times.)
4. Elijah went on a mountainous journey for 40 days and nights after being strengthened by the angel. "40" in the Word means a time of temptation. Temptations occur when we experience conflict between the forces of good and evil in our minds. How might you experience this?
5. Where did Elijah go from there? (He went into a cave on Mount Horeb, where he slept for the night.)
6. What time of day did the Lord come to Elijah? (in the morning) Times of day in the Word also picture states of mind. What might different times of day picture? (The Lord came when Elijah was ready for a new day—for a new mental outlook.)
7. What did the Lord tell Elijah to do? (He told him to go out on the mountain before Him.) What did he see? (a big wind, an earthquake and a fire) Imagine hearing the wind, seeing massive trees bending, watch rocks fall, and feeling the heat of the fire! Was the Lord in these things? (No—they are forces in our minds that distract us from seeing Him clearly.)
8. Where was the Lord? (in a still small voice)
9. How does the Lord speak to us now? (In the Word, through people like our parents, teachers or ministers who teach what the Word says, and through our conscience.)

Look Closer: Elijah's Three Sources of Food

I Kings 18:1-2,18-46: Fire from Heaven

This activity examines three times when Elijah received food from a miraculous source.

Supplies Needed for Each Student

- copy of the blank chart (see attached sheet; there is also an answer page for the teacher)
- pens or pencils
- copy of the Word or Bible

Optional

Bring food samples to show and share with the students, e.g. a small piece of uncooked meat and torn bread representing what the ravens brought to Elijah, dry crackers representing the widow's food, a sweet roll representing the cake the angel brought. Bring enough crackers, rolls, and water to share.



Activity

1. Remind students that most of the story of Elijah takes place during a famine—a shortage of food and water due to a drought. These are like times when we are in negative states, when we don't seem to have what we need spiritually. Let's look at the three times we are told about Elijah being fed and see what meaning these might have in our lives.
2. Working alone or in pairs, have students fill out the chart at the top of their pages, using the Biblical references as needed. Give the students 10-15 minutes to work on this. Those who finish early can start thinking about the questions at the bottom of the page for discussion later.
3. Bring the class back together for a discussion. Begin by asking for volunteers to read the columns in the chart so you can make sure you are all on the "same page".
4. What was miraculous about each of these feedings? (The source the food came from : ravens wouldn't normally feed someone; the oil and the flour did not run out as they normally would have; an angel brought physical food.)

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5. What do you think the food the ravens brought would have been like? *Hint:* Where might it have come from? (raw meat from carrion; stolen pieces of bread) If you brought meat and bread, show them to the students. Point out that these would keep you alive if necessary, but wouldn't be pleasant to eat.
6. What would the cake the widow baked have been like? (made with oil and flour, very plain) If you brought dry crackers and water, distribute to the students. This food would have been clean and wholesome.
7. What do you think the food from the angel would have been like? (warm from coals? a little sweet? very nourishing, and delicious) *Optional:* Share rolls. The food that the Lord miraculously provided for Elijah got better and better over time, as it came from better and better sources.
8. What are the common elements in the food? (some kind of bread; water) We all know that water is essential to life. For centuries, bread was the main staple of most people's diet. For that reason, it was sometimes called the Staff of Life. But the food was of different kinds.
9. The New Church teaches that all the stories in the Word have an inner, hidden meaning for our lives. The key to understanding that inner meaning is something called correspondences. Something natural corresponds to something spiritual. For example, we are told that water corresponds to truth. Both are essential to our lives—one to our physical life and the other to our spiritual life.
10. By knowing what the different sources of Elijah's food represent we can see some of the story's meaning in our lives. Bread represents or corresponds to good. The increasingly good sources of the food represents increasing good and truth in our lives. As we seek to follow the Lord the good and truth we receive becomes increasingly better. This is because we grow in our capacity to receive higher truths.

Elijah's Three Sources of Food in Times of Famine

	WHO fed Elijah?	WHAT was he fed?	WHEN was he fed?
I Kings 17:3-7 At the Brook Cherith			
I Kings 17:8-16 In the town of Zarephath			
I Kings 19:3-8 Wilderness near Beersheba			

Discussion Questions

1. What was miraculous about each of these situations?

2. What do you think each kind of food might have been like?

3. What two kinds of food were consistent in each situation?

4. What do these two elements mean in our lives?

Elijah's Three Sources of Food in Times of Famine

	WHO fed Elijah?	WHAT was he fed?	WHEN was he fed?
I Kings 17:3-7 At the Brook Cherith	Ravens	Bread and Meat	Morning and Evening
I Kings 17:8-16 In the town of Zarephath	A Widow	Small cake made of oil and flour	Everyday for many days
I Kings 19:3-8 Wilderness near Beersheba	An Angel	A cake baked on coals	Twice a day for 40 days and 40 nights

Discussion Questions

1. What was miraculous about each of these situations?
The source of the food in each case. Ravens wouldn't normally bring food to people. The widow's oil and flour would have run out under normal circumstances. An angel appearing and giving someone physical food is a miracle.
2. What do you think each kind of food might have been like?
Ravens: raw meat from carrion, perhaps, bread stolen from people, just enough to live on
Widow: cake made from just oil and flour, clean and nourishing
Angel: delicious, very nourishing—enough to journey on
3. What two kinds of food were consistent in each situation?
In each case there was water to drink and some kind of bread to eat.
4. What do these two elements mean in our lives?
Water corresponds to truth. Bread corresponds to good. These are the two essentials in our spiritual lives. As we work on following the Lord, we prepare ourselves to receive higher truth and good from Him into our lives.

Take Action: Find the Still Small Voice of Conscience

I Kings 19:1-18: Out of the Cave

Read the story of I Kings 19:1-18, and then act out the story using creative movement to suggest the forces of nature. A blindfolded student will play the part of Elijah and search for the “still small voice” above the noise. Follow the enactment with a discussion about the mental forces that are being described in this vivid story and the part they play in our daily lives.



Props suggested for this activity

- **Wind**—lightweight scarves, or a length of hollow tubing to swing around and make swishing sounds
- **Earthquake**—smooth stones to crack together, musical shakers, sticks or tambourines to create the sounds of rocks crashing
- **Fire**—crinkling paper, cans or plastic bags to create crackling sounds
- **Voices**—students may use their voices to make these sounds also

Activity

1. Read the story of Elijah from I Kings 19: 1-18 aloud with the students.
2. Talk about the four things that Elijah saw and heard on Mount Horeb; the wind, earthquake, fire and the still small voice.
3. Brainstorm ways in which you might act out these mighty forces of nature. Include each of the senses: sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste.
4. Choose one student to be Elijah, and one student to be the still small voice.
5. For a large group, divide students into groups. One group will act out the wind, one the earthquake, and one the fire. For a small group, have all of the students act the story together; first the wind, then the earthquake, and then the fire.
6. Blindfold “Elijah” and turn him or her around so that the person loses his or her orientation in the room. The student who plays the still small voice will move in the room so that their location is unknown.
7. The students will now act out the forces of nature. Students may also use the sounds of their own voices to create noise.

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8. While the forces of nature are making noise and moving around, the student playing the still small voice will quietly whisper, “Why are you here Elijah?” Elijah will try to find the still small voice over the sounds in the room.
9. Repeat activity if the students want to do it again.

Discussion

Elijah was walking on Mount Horeb, the Mountain of the Lord. The forces that Elijah saw and heard are things that we experience in our lives. Let’s look at what they are.

- **Wind**—the way we reason things out, justifying our actions.
 - **Earthquake**—earthquakes dramatically change the shape of the earth. Earthquakes in our own lives are times of great change, e.g. we start going to a new school, or completely change our perspective on something or somebody.
 - **Fire**—our passions, or the things that delight us.
 - **Still small voice**—the Lord speaks to us through our conscience, i.e. what is from the Word in our minds.
1. How do our thoughts, times of change or passions block our way to finding the Lord in our life?
 2. What did the Lord tell Elijah to do? (Read I Kings 19:15-18) The list is a series of tasks that were part of his job.
 3. What does the Lord ask us to do when we hear His voice?

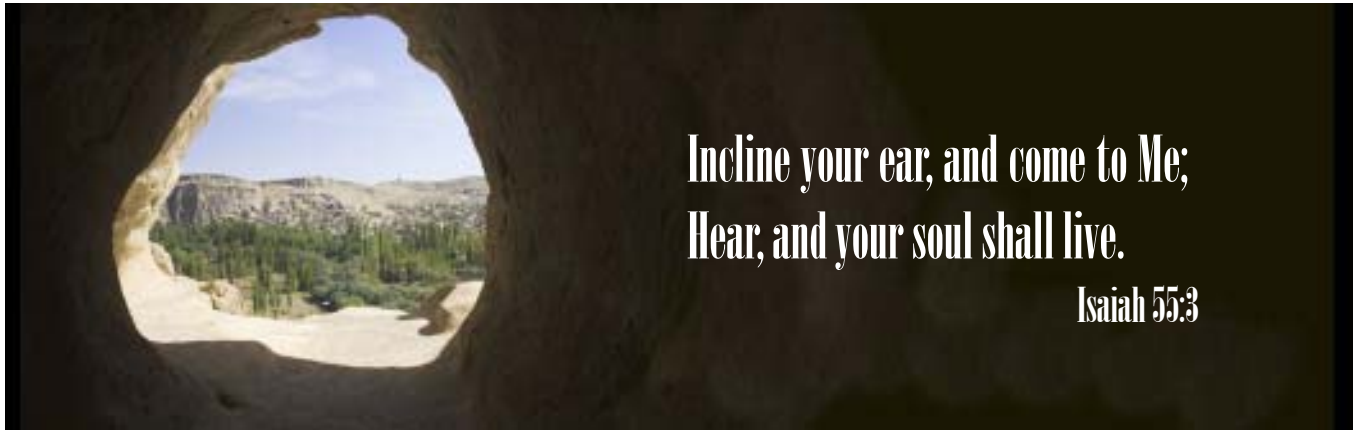


Meditate & Activate

Thinking or meditating about a passage from God's Word and finding opportunities to put it into action can be a powerful experience. Keep this card intact or cut out the illustrated quotation to use as a bookmark or put up somewhere in your home.

Meditate: Are you a good listener? Do you lean in (incline) toward someone who is speaking to you? Do you even mirror back what another person has said to show you have truly heard him or her?

Activate: Actively listen for the Lord's voice today. Try reading the Word, praying for guidance, or taking a walk to enjoy the beauty of the Lord's creation. Look for a message of love or a sense of direction from the Lord.



To make a stronger bookmark, print this page on heavy paper or cardstock, cut in half and give half to each student.

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