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# David and Goliath

*Scripture: 1 Samuel 17:1-58*

**Theme: The battle belongs to the Lord**

*1st-3rd Grade (Ages 6-8)*

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Free curriculum for small and rural churches

## Lesson Overview

Lesson Overview: "Elijah's Brave Challenge , God Answers with Fire!" (1 Kings 18:16-40 , Early Elementary, Ages 6-8) Opening Connection (Engage & Relate): Start by asking kids, "Who knows a God who always answers prayers?" Let them share what they think God might do, maybe a miracle, a helper, or something big! Then say, "Today, we'll meet Elijah, a brave prophet who trusted God so much that he asked Him to prove Who He really is!" Use a simple act (like holding up two cups of water, one for God, one for Baal, kids can giggle at the silly idea!) to introduce the challenge. The Story: God's Power Overcomes (Show & Tell): Explain that Elijah faced a king and prophets who worshipped false gods (like Baal, the "god of rain"). One day, Elijah said, "Let's see whose God is real!" He set up two altars, one for the king's gods (no fire), one for God (fire rained down!). Kids can pretend to be the wind, sun, and rain (with props like a fan, a light, or even a spray bottle for "rain") to show how God's power always wins. End with: "Elijah didn't guess, he trusted God to show Who He was!" Key Lesson: Trust & Fire (Apply & Reflect): Ask: "What do you think Elijah did when God didn't answer right away?" (He waited!) Then share: "God doesn't always answer right away, sometimes He waits, sometimes He surprises, but He always answers in the best way!" Use a fire-safe candle or a picture of fire to tie to the theme. Challenge them: "How can you trust God when things feel quiet or slow?" (Pray! Wait! Believe He's there!) Closing Encouragement (Empower & End): End with a prayer: "Dear God, help us trust You like Elijah did, even when the world doesn't understand. Thank You for always being there!" Leave them with a simple task: "Draw a fire that shows God's love!" (Let them color or trace their hand with chalk for a fun takeaway.) Remind them God answers with fire, love, power, and joy, just not always in the way they expect! Teaching Tips for Volunteers: - Use themes (wind, sun, rain) to act out the story dramatically. - Keep transitions short (e.g., "Let's sing a song about God's fire!"). - For shy kids, let them shout "Fire!" with excitement during the altar scene. - End with a "Fire Talk" (ask one kid to share what they learned in a sentence).

## Bible Story

## Elijah and the Fire from Heaven

One day, King Ahab asked his wife, Queen Jezebel, to give up her favorite gods, Baal and Asherah. But Elijah knew the true God was alive and powerful, God who had brought Israel out of slavery in Egypt! Though the king and his people doubted, Elijah challenged them to prove who was really the one true God. He said, "Let them pick a mountain to worship their gods, one at a time. If God answers by sending fire from heaven to burn the offering, then they must know the Lord is real!"

The people cheered, and Elijah set up two large piles of wood for the prophets of Baal. On one pile, they placed a sheep as an offering, and on the other, Elijah placed his. The priests of Baal spent all day dancing, cutting themselves with knives, and crying out, "O Lord, let your name be praised!" But nothing happened, their gods didn't answer. Then it was Elijah's turn. He prayed simply, "Lord, hear me! You are the God who answers by fire from heaven. Let your fire come down and burn this offering." Suddenly, a great fire flashed down from the sky, burning up the whole sacrifice, and not even a single tree was left standing!

The people gasped! They realized the Lord was real, and they bowed down in worship. Elijah took a bold step: "Come, let's all worship the true God together!" He led them to a cave on Mount Horeb to pray. This story teaches us that God is the only One who truly answers prayers with power, no matter how big or small our doubts. When we trust Him, like Elijah did, we see His love and strength in action!

Why This Story Matters: This isn't just about a contest, it's about learning that God always answers when we turn to Him with faith. Just like Elijah, we can pray boldly for things we don't see yet, trusting God to work in ways we can't imagine. Will you trust Him today?

## Key Verse

### 1 Samuel 17:45

God's word says: "What are you waiting for? Pick one God to follow!" (1 Kings 18:21) When we have two choices and aren't sure, God wants us to make a decision. Think of it like picking a favorite toy, you can't like both equally! If God is our true God, we must choose to trust Him first. If we're still unsure, ask God to help you know which path is right. In the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal, the people were torn between two sides. God wanted them to choose Him, the one who is always good, kind, and true. Baal was just a name they made up, but God is real and never changes. Here's how we can follow God today: When we're unsure about something, like picking friends, doing homework, or even what to eat for dinner, we can pray, "Lord, help me choose You!" Then, we ask God for help and listen for His guidance. God wants us to be brave and clear in our choices. Just like Elijah stood up for God, we can too! When we pick God, we're making a happy choice, because He loves us best.

## Activities

### Activity 1:

1. Read & Act It Out (5 min):
2. Read the Bible story aloud, pausing to ask, "How could Elijah prove God was real?" Let kids shout, "Fire!" when you get to the fire call. Have 3, 4 volunteers pretend to be prophets of Baal, then Elijah.
3. Build a Mountain Model (7 min):
4. Cut a large brown paper circle for the mountain. Glue popsicle sticks around the top as "clouds" and sticks on the sides as "mountain peaks."
5. Add a "sea" (blue paper) and "dry ground" (sand in bowls). Label the "God's mountain" and "Baal's mountain" with stickers or writing.
6. Dramatic Fire Experiment (3 min):
7. On Elijah's mountain, place the sticks under the "sea" (bowl of water) and light them. Say, "Just like Elijah, we see God's power when we trust Him!" For Baal's mountain, just show the dry sand, no fire. Discuss: "Which

mountain was real?"

8. Draw a Response (5 min):

9. Each child draws their favorite part of the story, then color it. Ask: "What's one thing you learned God is stronger than other things?"

## Activity 2:

1. Prep the Hunt (2 min):

2. Hide 3 items or write 3 simple clues on cards (e.g., "Find something smooth" for the feather). Hide them around the room.

3. Review the Bible Story (3 min):

4. Show pictures of Elijah's journey (dressing in rags, calling for rain, riding a donkey). Say, "Elijah listened to God and did what He said!"

5. Scavenger Hunt (7 min):

6. Give each pair a card with the first clue (e.g., "Look for something that moves on water" for the donkey). After finding the item, they shout, "Like Elijah, I obeyed!" Move to the next clue.

7. Optional: For actions, have kids act out the command (e.g., stomping like thunder). After each, ask, "Did God give us clear directions?"

8. End with Prayer (3 min):

9. Gather kids. Read: "The Lord never leaves us alone." Ask: "How can we trust God like Elijah?" Have them pray: "Lord, help us listen and obey!"

10. Application Tip for Both Activities:

11. End with a reflection: "Elijah didn't have to see fire, he just trusted God's word. What's one thing you can trust God to do today?" Use their drawings or hunt answers to write down their responses on a class chart!

## Discussion Questions

- Here are four open-ended discussion questions for early elementary children (ages 6, 8) about Elijah on Mount Carmel, designed to help them reflect on the story and its lessons:
- 1. Why do you think Elijah wanted to prove that God was really the one true God?
- (Encourages thinking about God's promises and challenges.)
- Imagine you had a big test where everyone else was guessing, you knew the right answer, but they didn't. Elijah felt the same way! He knew God was real, but the people around him (like King Ahab and Queen Jezebel) didn't trust Him as much. Why do you think God asked Elijah to take this challenge? What does it show us about trusting God when things seem unclear?
- (Application: How can we trust God when we don't always understand why He lets things happen? Do you ever feel like God's answer isn't what you expected?)
- 2. What do you think made Elijah so brave on Mount Carmel?
- (Builds confidence in standing up for what we believe.)
- Elijah faced a huge crowd, a fire from heaven, and even the king and queen threatening him. He didn't run away, he stood strong because he knew God was real. Do you think Elijah was just brave because he was strong, or was there something else? What does this story teach us about how to be brave when we believe in God?
- (Application: Have you ever stood up for something you believed in, even if it was hard? How did it feel?)
- 3. The birds and ravens brought Elijah food. What does that tell us about God's care for us?
- (Teaches trust in God's provision.)

- God didn't just leave Elijah to starve, He sent animals to bring him bread and water! That shows us that even when things look hard, God is always there to take care of us. Have you ever had something tricky happen, like missing lunch or not knowing what to do? How can we trust God to help us, just like He helped Elijah?
- (Application: When is it easy for you to trust God's care? When is it hard? Why?)
- 4. After Elijah won, why did King Ahab still not believe? What does this teach us about changing hearts?
- (Encourages reflection on perseverance and God's work in people's lives.)
- Even after God proved His power, King Ahab still wanted to worship other gods. This shows that while God can change circumstances, sometimes people need time to change their hearts. Elijah later went into hiding because he was afraid. Do you think King Ahab's heart changed forever, or did he just get confused? What does this teach us about how faith grows and how we can help others trust God?
- (Application: Have you ever seen someone change after believing in God? What happened?)
- These questions help kids explore the story's big ideas while connecting them to their own lives. Would you like any adjusted for more/less detail?

## Prayer Focus

*Here's a simple and heartfelt prayer for young children to help them understand and connect with the story of Elijah on Mount Carmel: "Dear God, Today we're going to remember Elijah, who asked, 'Is the Lord really here?' Like Elijah, we want to trust in You above all things. Help us to ask big questions, like 'Does God truly love me?', and to believe in Him with all our hearts, just like Elijah did. When we feel confused or scared, remind us that You are the One True God, stronger than any storm or doubt. Help us to stand up for what we believe and trust You, just like Elijah did when he stood tall and spoke boldly to King Ahab and the prophets who didn't trust You. Teach us to be brave, like Elijah, and to always look to You for strength. Amen." This prayer includes key elements from the story, Elijah's boldness, his trust in God, and the dramatic moment on Mount Carmel. It's easy to follow, encourages simple application, and helps children feel connected to the lesson while keeping it age-appropriate!*

### >> Missions Spotlight

In Haiti, where Vodou practices are widespread, the question of 'which god is real?' is not abstract, it's daily life. Missionaries share Elijah's story to show that the God of the Bible is the one true God who answers with power.

### -> To the Cross

God answered Elijah with fire from heaven to prove He is the one true God. At the cross, God answered with the ultimate demonstration of His power, raising Jesus from the dead. Every false god fails. The God of the Bible alone saves.