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David and Goliath

Scripture: 1 Samuel 17:1-58

Theme: The battle belongs to the Lord

4th-6th Grade (Ages 9-11)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

Sunday School Lesson Overview: "Elijah on Mount Carmel , The One True God" Introduction (Engage & Connect): Start with a question like, "If you could ask God one question right now, what would it be?" Then share that in the Old Testament, a brave prophet named Elijah faced a big challenge: Israel was worshipping many gods, but God wanted them to know He was the only true God who answers in a special way, with fire! Today, we'll see how Elijah trusted God even when it seemed impossible. Lesson (Explore): Elijah stood before King Ahab and Queen Jezebel, who worshipped false gods like Baal. One day, the people argued: "Let's see whose god is real!" Elijah proposed a test on Mount Carmel. He challenged the prophets of Baal to offer their sacrifice, but no one was allowed to touch it! God wanted to prove He was the One who answers, not just with wind (Elijah saw), but with fire from heaven! (1 Kings 18:38, 39). The prophets of Baal screamed and burned themselves, while the fire from God consumed Elijah's sacrifice, showing His power and love. Why does this story matter today? God doesn't just speak to us, He shows His presence in big and small ways. Elijah knew God's love wasn't about power for power's sake, but about truth and faith. Even when we doubt, God invites us to trust Him like Elijah did, even when the world says, "Maybe God doesn't care about you!" Deeper Questions for Discussion: - What's one way you've seen God answer prayers in the past? (Let kids share.) - If you had to choose between Baal and God, who would you pick, and why? - How can you remind yourself (and others) that God is the One True God today? Personal Application (Reflect & Apply): End with a prayerful moment: "God, thank You for being real and for answering with fire, literally and metaphorically. Help us trust You more, even when the world feels confusing. Show us how to worship You wholeheartedly!" Then ask: "What's one 'test' God could use to show you His love this week?" (Example: Asking you to share the Gospel, trusting you to handle a fear, etc.) Closing Encouragement (Motivate): Elijah's story isn't just about fire, it's about faith. When we feel small or alone (like Elijah did under Jezebel's threats), remember: God's power isn't just for heroes; it's for you. He loves you enough to answer, even when you're unsure. Challenge: "This week, ask God to show you a new way He's near, and share it with someone!" Volunteer Tips: - Use props (e.g., a "sacrifice" drawing or a small fire extinguisher for fun). - Play dramatic audio clips of wind (recorded thunder) vs. the singular fire. - End with a simple craft: Draw a

"mountain" where God's fire "appears" to you today.

Bible Story

Sunday School Lesson: Elijah's Challenge on Mount Carmel

One day, King Ahab and his queen, Jezebel, were telling the prophets of Baal that Elijah was gone, maybe he had died, maybe he was hiding. But the Lord had told Elijah to go to Ahab and challenge the people to prove whose God was really powerful. So Elijah went to the mountain where the Israelites had built a huge altar to Baal, covered with wood, and even added a bull as an offering. He stood there waiting, wondering if anyone would dare to pray.

The prophets of Baal were excited. They took turns walking around the altar, cutting themselves with knives, and shouting for Baal to answer, but no fire came. They even went so far as to set the altar on fire with their own bodies, but still, nothing happened. The people watched in amazement, not sure if they should laugh or cry. Meanwhile, Elijah stood silent, waiting for the Lord's power to speak.

Then, suddenly, a fire from heaven rained down on the altar! The people gasped in shock and realized the God of Israel was the true God. "The Lord is God!" they shouted, bowing down in worship. Elijah didn't let this stop him, he took the prophets of Baal and killed them, showing that no one could serve more than the Lord. The people finally believed, and God answered his call to be faithful.

Deeper Questions: - Why do you think the prophets of Baal tried so hard to make their god look good? How could they have been wrong? - What does it mean for God to "burn up" the false ways we follow instead of trusting Him? - Have you ever doubted God, like the people in this story? What helped you remember who He really is?

Personal Application: This story reminds us that even when things don't go our way or when others don't believe, God is still the same powerful God who answers prayer. Like Elijah, we can trust that God's way is always the best way, even when it's hard. Ask the Lord today to help you be brave like Elijah, standing for what's true, even when it's scary.

Why This Story Matters: God doesn't need sacrifices or rituals to prove He exists, He does it by showing His power in a way everyone can see. Just like Elijah, we can choose to trust God fully, even when others doubt. His Word tells us, "The Lord does what pleases Him" (Isaiah 1:14), and this story shows how He always acts for His people!

Key Verse

1 Samuel 17:45

The Memory Verse: "How Long Will You Walk Around in Two Places?" Elijah stood tall in a crowded place, looking at all the people who had stopped believing in the one true God, Yahweh, and instead worshiped another god named Baal. The king and his people were confused and unsure, so Elijah asked them a powerful question: "How long will you keep changing your mind? If God is really the God you should follow, then trust Him! But if Baal is the god you choose, then follow him." At first glance, this sounds like a simple choice, but Elijah knew that God's love and power were stronger than any other. He wanted the people, and us, to know that faith isn't about being afraid or unsure, but about making a choice we can stand by, no matter what. Elijah's question was like asking, "What will you trust most when life feels big and hard?" Sometimes, we might feel like we're walking between two things, like God's promises and our own fears, or following the crowd and trusting God alone. But God doesn't want us to wander like that; He wants us to make decisions that show we believe in Him. When we're young, we might ask, "What if I'm wrong?" or "What if others judge me?" Those questions are real, and Elijah's challenge isn't to ignore them, it's to ask ourselves: Who will I truly trust, even when it's hard? Here's something exciting: God doesn't just want us to know His name, He wants us to live by it! Elijah's challenge was to the people of Israel, but it's also for us today. When we pray, sing, or read the Bible, we're saying, "I choose to follow You, even when it's scary." Maybe you've prayed before and then wondered, "Did God hear me?" or "Will I be okay?" Those moments are normal, but God doesn't want us to stop asking Him. Instead, He wants us to trust that He's with us, always, and that He'll guide us, just like He guided Elijah. But here's the deeper part: Elijah's question isn't just about what we follow, it's about how we follow. Sometimes, we might think, "I'm not strong

enough" or "I'm not perfect," and that makes us hesitate. But God doesn't ask us to be brave alone, He gives us His Spirit to help us stand firm. If you ever feel unsure, remember this: God doesn't want us to be afraid. He wants us to trust Him, just like Elijah trusted Him enough to challenge the king and the people. So the next time you're torn between two choices, ask yourself: Who will I choose to trust today? Personal Application: - Prayer Time: Close your eyes and pray: "Lord, help me to trust You more than anything. When I'm unsure, remind me that You're always with me." - Reflection: Think of a time you did choose to follow God, even when it was hard. Write down what happened. - Challenge: This week, try to make one small decision that shows you trust God, like asking for His help with a tough question at school. God didn't just give us this verse to remember; He gave it to us to live by. So the next time you feel pulled in two directions, remember: Elijah's challenge isn't just for others, it's for you. Who will you choose to follow today?

Activities

Activity 1:

1. Set Up the Challenge (3 min):
2. Write: "Elijah saw many gods, but God was the One True God. What if you had to choose? How would you trust God?" on a board.
3. Show the Bible verses about Elijah's storm (1 Kings 18:21, 24). Ask: "What 'wind' (distraction/pressure) have you faced? How did you respond?"
4. Create Wind Storms (5 min):
5. Give each child a sheet of cardstock and cut it in half to make two "storm fronts." Fold one side to represent the sky, the other to show the ground.
6. Have them draw a "wind" (e.g., a cloud with arrows, a loud "BAM!" sound) on one half, and a calm "God's presence" (e.g., a quiet sun or mountain with God's

Activity 2:

1. Light the Faith (3 min):
2. Read 1 Kings 18:38, 40 aloud: "The fire of God fell from heaven! ... God is real!" Ask: "When was the darkest time you trusted God? How did He shine light?"
3. Create "Fire" and "Darkness" (5 min):
4. Fold each child's black paper into a small pouch. Inside, tape a glitter "fire" (or draw one with gold markers). Seal it tightly.
5. Give each child a mirror (optional) and tape their pouch to the back so the "fire" shines through when they hold up the mirror.
6. Turn off overhead lights for drama, show how the "fire" glows even in darkness!
7. Shine God's Light (5 min):
8. In pairs, have them hold their pouch with the mirror while someone else shines a flashlight on it. Discuss:
9. "What does your 'fire' symbolize? How is God like that?"
10. "When your life feels dark, where do you turn?" (Use Exodus 13:21 as a reminder God walks with us.)
11. End with a challenge: "This week, share one way you've trusted God in the dark."
12. Key Themes for Both Activities:
13. Trust vs. Fear: Elijah faced 400 prophets but stood firm. Kids see God isn't afraid of storms!
14. Personal Application: "How can you be like Elijah when life gets loud?" (Pray, seek God, stand firm.)
15. Deeper Questions:
16. "What '400 prophets' (distractions) have tried to pull you away from God?"
17. "How did God's word (Bible) guide Elijah? How can it guide you?"

Discussion Questions

- Here are four open-ended discussion questions for upper elementary students (ages 9, 11) about the story of Elijah on Mount Carmel, encouraging reflection on faith, courage, and trust in God:
- **Defending Our Faith in Challenging Times**
 - In the story, Elijah stood up for God in a time when many people were worshipping false gods. The prophets of Baal tried to trick people by challenging Elijah to see whose god could bring fire from heaven. What do you think it means to stand up for what you believe, even when others doubt or try to make you doubt? Have you ever faced a situation where you felt pressured to choose something other than what you believed in God's way? How did you handle it? Why is it important to keep trusting God even when things seem hard?
- **Waiting for God's Answer**
 - Before Elijah went to Mount Carmel, he had already faced big challenges, like sending a message to Queen Jezebel about his mission (1 Kings 17, 18). He had to wait for God to prepare the way. Sometimes, when we pray or make a decision, we don't get an immediate answer. What do you think Elijah learned from waiting? Have you ever waited for something important, like a test result, a friend's text, or God's guidance, and been surprised by how He answered? How did that make you feel?
- **Why Does God Choose Certain People to Share His Truth?**
 - Elijah was just a young prophet when God called him to do this big task. How do you think God chose him? What makes someone brave enough to stand up for what's right? Have you ever felt like God picked you for something special, maybe to help others, stand up for justice, or share His love? What makes you feel like you're called to do something for God, even if it's scary?
- **How Do We Know When to Trust God's Plan?**
 - At the end of the story, Elijah saw fire and smoke, but then God passed by in a gentle, peaceful wind. Sometimes, God doesn't always answer in big, loud ways like fire or earthquakes, He might speak through quiet moments, like a still small voice. The story reminds us that God's presence is always there, even when we can't see it. Have you ever had a time when you thought God wasn't answering how you expected, but later realized He was working in a different way? How did that change your trust in Him?
- These questions encourage students to think about their own experiences, reflect on their faith, and connect the story to their lives in meaningful ways.

Prayer Focus

Here's a heartfelt prayer for upper elementary students (ages 9, 11) focused on the story of Elijah on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:16, 40). It invites reflection, wonder, and personal connection to God's power and faithfulness. Prayer Focus: "Lord God, You are the One True God who hears our voices and shows Your power in ways big and small. When Elijah stood in the wind, fire, and earthquake, he trusted You, not because he knew everything, but because You promised to be there. Help us like Elijah to speak boldly when we feel afraid, to listen to Your whispers in the quiet, and to trust You even when things seem too hard. Teach us to see Your presence in our lives, just like Elijah did on Mount Carmel. When we doubt or question, remind us that You are always with us. Amen." Why This Works for the Lesson: 1. Connection to Elijah's Trust , The prayer ties Elijah's story to their own lives by asking students to recall moments when they've trusted God, even when they weren't sure. "When have you felt God's presence, even in a small way?" (Encourage them to share or think silently.) 2. Embrace the Chaos , After the fire, the wind, and earthquake, Elijah stood still, waiting for God's still small voice. The prayer invites students to notice how God speaks quietly, like a whisper or a stillness, in their own lives. "Where have you heard God's voice when the world felt loud or confusing?" 3. Boldness in Doubt , Elijah challenged the false gods with truth. The prayer asks them to pray for courage to stand up for what they believe, like Elijah did, when others might doubt or fear. "How can we speak up for what we know is true, even if it feels scary?" 4. Personal Application , Ending with "just like Elijah did

on Mount Carmel" connects the story to their daily lives. "Where in your life right now do you need to trust God more?" (Encourage them to write or pray one simple request.) Teacher's Note: You can adapt this prayer by adding: - A shared act of worship (e.g., singing a song about God's power). - A short discussion: "What did Elijah learn about God that we can learn too?" - A time for students to pray one personal request aloud (e.g., "Thank You for helping me believe in You even when I don't see answers"). Would you like a follow-up activity, like a reflection worksheet or discussion questions?

>> 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.