



3-4 GRADES

FUN + FRIENDS + FAITH



UNDERSTANDING YOUR LESSON

Ahab was the most evil of all the kings of Israel. He was ready to take the sin of idolatry to the next level. Ahab worshiped Baal and Asherah and welcomed hundreds of false prophets to lead the people away from the one true God as they worshiped the false gods of the surrounding nations.

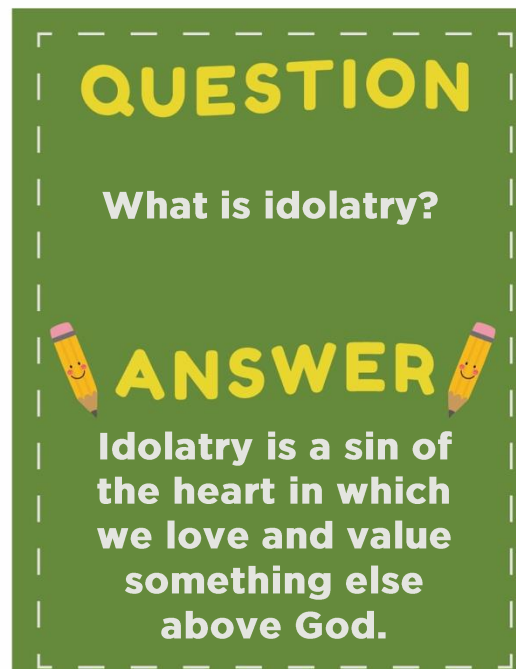
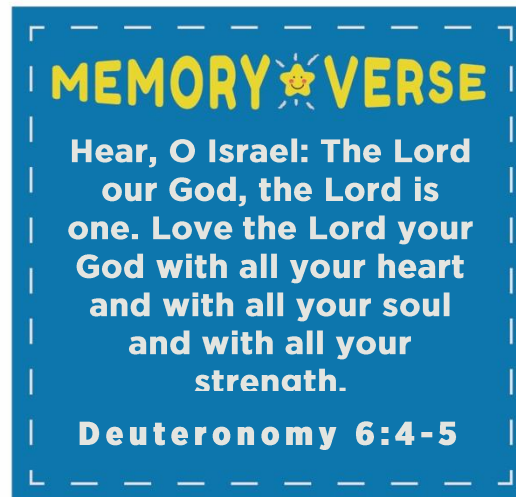
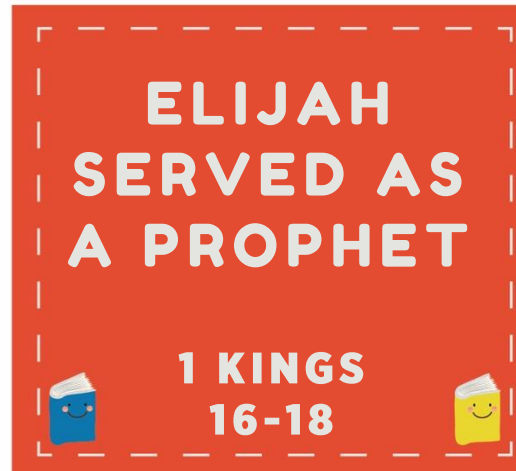
We all worship something, whether we realize it or not. In today's passage we read that Elijah challenged the people to choose whom they would worship: the Lord or the false god, Baal. We cannot be lukewarm in our worship. God calls us to love Him with our whole hearts.

Ahab led the people away from God. He came from a long line of wicked kings who turned their backs on God. Ahab believed his ways were best and surrounded himself with people who never challenged that assumption. Perhaps it was more convenient for Ahab to worship a fake god who didn't demand anything from him.

Elijah led the people toward God. While the kingdom of Israel was led astray by the sinful Ahab, the prophet Elijah stayed the course, trusting God and obeying His commands. His faith in God grew as he continually listened to His voice and walked in obedience.

God's power led the people toward worship. When the Israelites saw God's power on display they immediately fell on their faces and worshiped. For so long their worship had been misplaced through their idolization of Baal. Finally, they were faced with the truth that the Lord is the living God. In this session, help the kids see that we are designed to worship. There is something innate in all of us that tells us there is One greater than us that we are called to give our allegiance to. Our response to God's power and glory should be reverence for Him. False gods and idols will lead us away from the one true God, but when we submit our lives to Him we find true life and flourishing.

PEOPLE TO KNOW Elijah: prophet from the ninth century BC from Tishbe of Gilead in the Northern Kingdom





BUSY HANDS

ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES

When you arrive in the classroom introduce yourself to the children from first service. As children arrive for second service, introduce yourself, welcome them to the class, and invite them to engage with the other children. When most kids have arrived for second service and you are ready to begin the lesson, ask them to find a seat at the tables.

GROUP DEMONSTRATION // Small statue or another object

Choose a volunteer to come to the front of the room. Display the small statue or other small object for the kids to see. Explain that you are going to have the volunteer participate in a series of challenges, competing against the statue. Divide the room in half and explain that one side of the room is going to cheer for the volunteer. The other half will cheer for the statue. Ask the volunteer to complete the following challenges: do 10 jumping jacks, run around the room two times, do two push-ups, and then give everyone on their half of the room a high five.

SAY: Great job! You were able to complete all the challenges! Was the statue able to do any of them? Of course not. Did it matter that the kids were cheering for the statue? Nope. The statue isn't alive so obviously it couldn't even begin to compete with our volunteer.

Today we are going to discuss the difference between idols and our one true living God. God is all-powerful and nothing is impossible for Him. At one time or another we have all worshiped idols. Probably not in the form of a statue, but anytime we love or value something more than God, it becomes an idol. It could be a person, a thing, or even a place. Can you think of anything that you might be tempted to make an idol in your life? Pause for responses. We can keep things from becoming idols by remembering God's power and glory. He calls us to worship Him and show Him reverence and respect.

11:00 – Move to the Large Group 2 space for Kids' Worship.

INTRODUCTION AND BIG PICTURE QUESTION // Big picture question poster

SAY: Hi friends! It's great to be with all of you today. Our God is all-powerful. He created everything in the universe and the Bible tells us that it's Jesus who holds everything together. Isn't that amazing? When we think about all that God has done, we should respond with reverence, or respect, for God. God created us to worship, but sometimes our worship is misplaced, like when we worship idols. Does anyone remember what is idolatry? That's right, idolatry is a sin of the heart in which we love and value something else above God. Do you think God is pleased when we love something more than we love Him? No way! God wants us to love Him with our whole hearts. Note: Use the big picture question poster when needed. Continue



ACTIVE MINDS

FOCUS ON GOD'S WORD

Last week, we learned that the king of Israel, Jeroboam, led the people into sin by worshiping the golden calves. He didn't want the people returning to Jerusalem to worship God in the temple, so he made these idols for them to worship close to home.

The people forgot that God alone deserves our worship. They stopped obeying God and started worshiping these ridiculous statues. Jeroboam lied to the people, telling them that it was these golden calves who led them out of Egypt. That's outrageous! A statue can't save anyone, only the Lord can do that.

Today, we're going to learn about how the prophet Elijah stood up to the evil King Ahab. Elijah challenged the prophets of the false god Baal to send down fire from heaven. Let's get ready to hear more.

ELIJAH SERVED AS A PROPHET // Bible story printed below, Bibles, Bible story picture poster

TELL THE BIBLE STORY Open your Bible to 1 Kings 16-18. Tell the Bible story using the script provided or use the "Kids Sermon Outline" to teach a more in-depth message. You may use the bold text to retell or review the story. Reference the Bible story picture poster.

ELIJAH SERVED AS A PROPHET

When Ahab became the king of Israel, he was the most evil king of all. Ahab led the Israelites away from God. They worshiped Baal (BAY uhl), a false god, instead. King Ahab's evil ways made God angry, so God sent a prophet named Elijah to speak to Ahab.

Elijah said, "God will send a drought. No rain will fall in Israel for three years unless I say so." That is exactly what happened. God caused a drought. No rain fell in the land of Israel. Without rain, the lakes and rivers dried up. People could not grow crops in the fields for food. So in addition to the drought, there was a famine.

After three years, God was ready to send rain. Elijah went back to King Ahab. He told the king, "Meet me at Mount Carmel. Bring the people of Israel and the prophets who worship false gods." King Ahab and the people met Elijah at the mountain. Elijah said, "Make up your minds! If you believe the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him.

Elijah set up a challenge to show who is the one true God. The prophets of the false god Baal set up an altar first and put a bull on it. Elijah said, "Call to Baal and ask him to send fire to your altar. I will call on the LORD. The God who answers by sending fire is the one true God."

Continue



ACTIVE MINDS

FOCUS ON GOD'S WORD

The prophets of Baal worshiped their false God. "Answer us!" they said. But no one answered. The people danced and cried out for hours to show that they loved Baal. "Shout loudly!" Elijah taunted them. "Maybe he is sleeping!" Still, no answer.

Then Elijah set up an altar, dug a trench around it, and put a bull on it. Elijah told the people to pour water on the altar so everything was wet. Then Elijah prayed: "LORD, answer me so that these people will know that You are God."

Suddenly, God sent fire from the sky. It burned up the bull, the wood, the stones, and the dust! It dried up the water in the trench. When the people saw this, they fell facedown and said, "The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!"

KIDS OUTLINE:

Ahab led the people away from God (1 Kings 16:29-34): Ahab encouraged the people to worship Baal.

Elijah led the people toward God (1 Kings 18:15-21): Elijah set up a challenge to show who the one true God is.

God's power led the people toward worship (1 Kings 18:36-39): God set fire to the water-soaked altar and the people realized the Lord is God.

REVIEW AND BIBLE SKILLS // Bibles, Old Testament Kingdoms Map, modern map

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to 1 Kings 18. Explain that Mount Carmel (D4), where today's story took place, is a real mountain in Israel. Consider comparing the Old Testament Kingdoms Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Mount Carmel.)

Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Kings 18:20-21.

SAY: God used Elijah to challenge the people to choose who they would worship: the idol Baal or the true, living God. The people saw that Baal did not respond when they called out to him, but God responded by burning up the wet offering. God displayed His power on Mount Carmel and showed all those who watched that He alone is God. We also must choose who we will worship. God sent His Son, Jesus, to demonstrate His power over sin and death. But we must choose to repent of our sin and follow Jesus. Only Jesus can turn our hearts back to God.



OPEN HEARTS

LIFE APPLICATION & SCRIPTURE MEMORY

GROUP ACTIVITY: ICEBERGS // 4 hula hoops, music on USB

SAY: Who's ready to play a game? When the Israelites chose idolatry, it caused disunity among the people. Let's play a game that helps us find things we have in common.

Lay out several hula hoops throughout the room. Play music while the kids move around the playing space. When the music stops, the teacher will call out a number and the kids must get in groups of that number on the hula hoops. (For example: if the teacher calls out "four," there should be four kids in each hula hoop. If the class is large, the kids must have at least one foot in the hula hoop.)

If there are kids who do not make it into a group, they will sit out the one round and participate when you start again. You may also have more kids meet in the hula hoops. Then challenge the groups to find something that they all have in common. Give each group a chance to share with the class. For example, they all like pizza or soccer or math. Play several rounds, calling out different numbers.

SAY: At the time of King Ahab, the people were divided. Some followed King Ahab in worshiping false Gods, while other were like Elijah, remaining faithful to God. Remember, idolatry is a sin of the heart in which we love and value something else above God. Often the idols we have today are things like video games, toys, or even money. When these things become idols in our hearts, they can also cause division between us and the people we love. Have you ever had a toy that you loved a lot? Was it hard to share it with your brother or sister? Discuss with the kids.

SAY: Something is an idol if we love it more than God. If there is something you love more than God, it's likely that you love that thing more than your siblings or friends, too. The sin of idolatry separates you from God, and it also hurts your relationships with others.

While sin causes brokenness in our relationships, it is also true that when we trust in Jesus, He brings us back to God and gives us peace with one another. Jesus died on the cross so our sins could be forgiven. When we confess our sin and repent, or turn back to God, He is faithful to forgive us. Jesus restores the brokenness between us and God. This is called "reconciliation." Jesus reconciles us with God so we can be close to Him again. Jesus also gives us peace with one another. He helps us love God more than anything else. And when we keep God at the center of our lives and follow Him, He helps us love the people around us too.



OPEN HEARTS

LIFE APPLICATION & SCRIPTURE MEMORY

KEY PASSAGE AND PRAYER // Bibles, key passage poster, key passage song: "The Lord Our God" on the USB

SAY: Do you remember in which book of the Bible our key passage is found? Pause. That's right, Deuteronomy. In this book, God's people were preparing to enter the promised land and God wanted to show them how life works best. He wanted them to trust Him and love Him more than anything else. God wants what is best for us and He knows that loving Him is the best thing we can do! When we trust and follow Him, He will bless us and lead us into abundant life.

Read Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and encourage the kids to read along. Display the key passage poster for kids to read. You may also sing the key passage song, "The Lord Our God (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)."

PRAY: God, thank You for speaking to us through Your Word. You are powerful and glorious, and we want to show You reverence and worship for all that You have done. Thank You for loving us so much that You would send Your only Son, Jesus, to die for our sins and be raised to life so that we can live forever with You. Please forgive us for the idols we have made in our lives and help us to love You more than anything else. Amen.

IDOLS CHARADES // Whiteboard, dry-erase marker, eraser, half sheet of paper per child, pencils

SAY: Elijah prayed, asking God to hear him and answer his prayer "so these people will know that you, LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again" (1 Kings 18:37). When Elijah prayed, God answered, and the people bowed down and worshiped Him. They realized that He is the one true God, and Baal, whom they had been worshiping, was a worthless idol. God is merciful and forgives us when we come to Him and confess our sin. He wants to restore us, to bring us back to Himself and bless us. We don't have to fear God's judgment against sin when we give our lives to God and honor Him.

Hand out the paper and pencils then say: We know that we have things in our life that can become idols if we are not careful. Things that can become more important than God. I want you to write down several items on your paper that could become idols for you if you do not stay focused on God.

After a few minutes, ask one child at a time to use the whiteboard for charades. Each child should choose one of the potential idols on their list and have the kids guess the word. Continue as you have time, or the children are interested.



EXTRA IDEAS

CHRIST CONNECTION AND REFLECTION // Paper, pencils

SAY: The prophets of Baal cried out for hours, pleading with him to send fire to their sacrifice. But no one answered, because Baal was a false god, he was not real. The one true God is not like the false gods. God answered Elijah's prayer immediately, sending fire from heaven, proving that He is the one true God. The prophets of Baal danced and cried and even hurt themselves trying to get Baal's attention. We do not have to work hard to show God we love Him. Instead, He showed His love for us by sending His Son, Jesus. Jesus died to rescue us from sin, and He hears us when we cry out to Him. God loves us so much and He wants us to have abundant life. We cannot have that kind of life apart from God. Jesus tells us that to find life, we must lose it. That means we must obey God's commands and let go of the idols that we love more than God. When we trust and obey God, we will be blessed! That doesn't mean life will always be easy, but when we follow God we know that we will have eternal life with Him.

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each child. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests and pray for the children and their requests.

REMINDERS: The VIP meeting will be 10:20 – 10:30 in the Puddle Room. Attend for: Vision/Information/Prayer. Pick up your supply bin before going to class.

REVIEW the items in your bin. Be ready to greet the parents and children at the door and dismiss first service children. When you leave the classroom, stack the chairs in the designated area and return the bin to the Puddle Room.

FOLLOW protocol for sanitizing hands and cleaning large surfaces.