

## ELIJAH AND THE PROPHETS OF BAAL

*Our God is above all gods.*



THE STORY: 1 KINGS 18:1-19

MONDAY

## The word of the Lord directed Elijah's steps

The word of the Lord directed Elijah's steps – The word of the Lord came to Elijah. God told him to go to Ahab, and Elijah obeyed. God revealed to Elijah all that would take place - from the end of the drought to the confrontation on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:36). Elijah was not trying to make himself look good with a dramatic demonstration of power on Mount Carmel. He was following the word of the Lord. God was planning to show the people of Israel the true God and judge the prophets of Baal.

### TALK ABOUT IT:

How bad was the drought when God called Elijah to go back to Ahab? *(The drought was very severe. It was difficult to even find grass for the animals to eat.)*

Why did God continue to rescue Israel even though they were sinning? *(He did this because of His grace toward sinful people. All of us were saved when we were sinners (see Romans 5:8). Without God's grace, none of us would turn to the Lord and be saved.)*

### PRAY:

Thank God for taking the initiative to save us in the midst of our sin.





## The prophets of Baal failed

The prophets of Baal failed – Elijah established the contest according to the instructions for a sin offering given by Aaron in Leviticus 9. Elijah instructed the prophets of Baal to see if their god would consume the offering. For hours they cried out to their god with no answer. It seemed that their god of fertility and storms could not light the offering. After Elijah mocked their attempts and their god, the prophets of Baal were stirred into frenzy. If they failed, they would have had to face Jezebel, who had killed the prophets of the Lord. She would have been furious if her own prophets failed. A full-blown effort would at least lend them some credibility. They thought no fire would come from Elijah's efforts either.

Four jars of water were poured on Elijah's offering three times. Twelve stones marked the boundaries of the offering, symbolizing the twelve tribes of Israel. The tribes were divided into two separate kingdoms due to Solomon's sin. Elijah offered a humble prayer and declared himself a servant of God. His prayer also gives us a clue as to God's ability to capture the hearts and affections of His people. Elijah disclosed God's purpose of turning the hearts of the people back to Himself. (1 Kings 18:37). Without a pause, the fire of the Lord consumed the offering, the stones, the wood, the dust, and even the water in the trench! The people fell down and worshipped the Lord. Upon Elijah's command, the people killed the prophets of Baal, allowing none to escape.

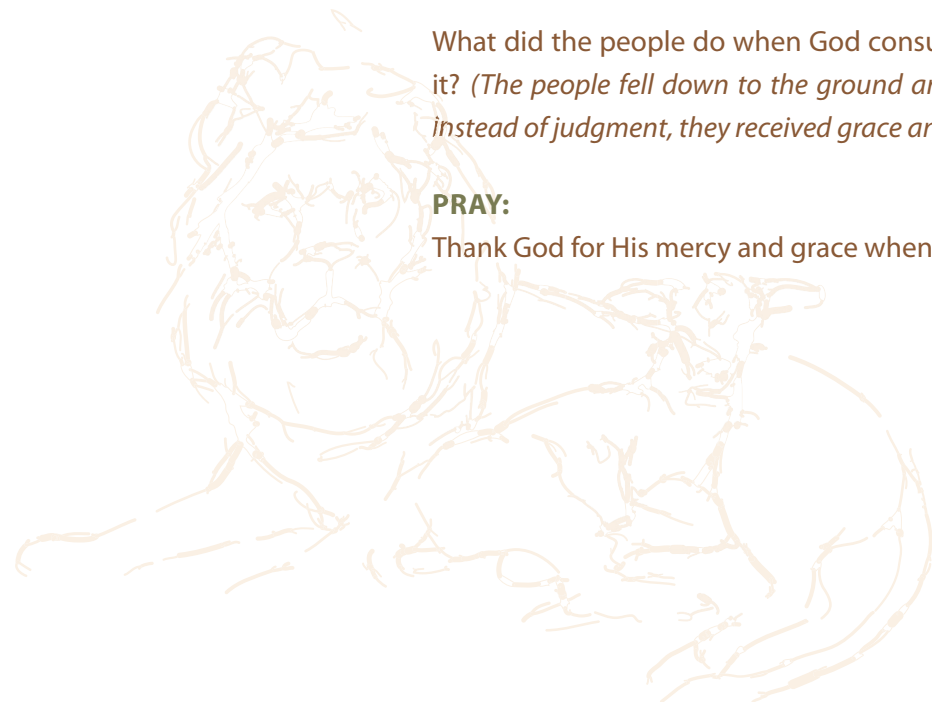
### TALK ABOUT IT:

Why did Elijah pour water on the sacrifice? *(Elijah wanted to be sure that everyone knew the Lord was the one who started the fire. By pouring water upon the offering, it would be impossible to quickly start a fire.)*

What did the people do when God consumed the offering and everything around it? *(The people fell down to the ground and believed that the Lord was God. Like us, instead of judgment, they received grace and mercy.)*

### PRAY:

Thank God for His mercy and grace when we deserve judgment.





## Where is Jesus?

On Mount Carmel God revealed Himself by consuming the sacrifice offered to Him by Elijah. This was an expression of His grace. Even though the people of Israel rejected Him, He showed Himself to them by accepting Elijah's sacrifice. The sacrifice of the bull was another reminder before God that one day a sacrifice would be made to atone for all the sins of His people. Knowing Jesus' sacrifice would come, God poured out mercy and accepted Elijah's sacrifice that day.

When Jesus hung on the cross the people mocked Him saying, "Let's see if Elijah comes to save him" (Matthew 27:49). They did not know that all of Elijah's wonders were meant to point to Jesus.

### TALK ABOUT IT:

Did Elijah have any power to make the fire come down from heaven? (*Elijah had no power himself. What Elijah did have was a relationship with the God of power! The gods of the prophets of Baal were powerless and could do nothing.*)

How can reading the stories of the Old Testament build our faith? (*God doesn't change (Malachi 3:6). The same God who answered Elijah's prayers hears our prayers. It was Jesus who said that if we have faith as small as a mustard seed we could move a mountain (Matthew 17:20).*)

### PRAY:

Thank God that He never changes and that He is a God who hears our prayers. Then present your requests to God in faith.





## God destroyed the prophets of Baal and brought rain to His people

God destroyed the prophets of Baal and brought rain to His people – After the Lord consumed the offering, Elijah called the people to seize the prophets of Baal. Elijah killed them. With the pagan prophets destroyed, God brought rain to Israel in keeping with His word.

### TALK ABOUT IT:

See 1 Kings 18:1. Did God do what He said? *(Yes. God brought the blessing of rain upon Israel.)*

Do we have false gods today? *(Yes. In some countries they still worship wood and stone idols. In our part of the world people tend to worship possessions and power. An idol can be understood biblically as anything people love more than God. So an idol can be something you have or something you want that you do not have.)*

What are the idols that lead you astray? *(Remember that our idolatrous desires can be non-tangible “wants” like a craving for control, peace, or ease. If we love and seek these things more than God, we are just as idolatrous as if we were seeking a stone idol for rain.)*

Pray:

Ask God to help you love Him more than anything on this earth.





## On the road to Emmaus.

Jesus is the one who will come and judge the earth in righteousness. In 2 Timothy the Apostle Paul tells us that Jesus will one day judge the living and the dead when He appears again. On that day all believers will receive a crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:1-8).

### TALK ABOUT IT:

Why does the Psalmist say we should rejoice and praise God? *(We should rejoice because God will one day come to judge the earth in righteousness. All wickedness will then be destroyed.)*

Should we be afraid of God's judgment? *(Because Jesus has already taken the penalty for our sin, all those who have placed their trust in Jesus will be spared the fires of judgment.)*

### PRAY:

Thank God for His mercy available through Jesus. Pray that each member of your family would believe in Him and place their trust in Jesus.

