

Elijah: God's Messenger

Key Verse:
"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and he will make your paths straight."
 Proverbs 3:5-6

Extra: What do you think this study means by saying we've got to 'hide ourselves'?

Level 4 lesson 33

Read 1 Kings 16:29-34; 17:1-6 and James 5:13-20

For our next few studies, we go back several hundred years into Old Testament times. After King Solomon's reign, other kings came to power in Israel; men who did not know and worship God as Solomon and his father David had done. A man named Elijah was also born at this time. He grew up out in the country and became a herdsman. He loved God greatly and was keen to serve Him. It saddened him terribly to see how the nation of Israel had rejected God and to observe so much sin and wickedness everywhere.

A man named Ahab was King at this time, and he was the worst king ever! He was married to a very wicked woman named Jezebel, and together they led the whole country into wickedness and the worship of the idol god, Baal. God was angrier with Ahab than He'd been with any other King! But He still loved His people, and longed for them to love and worship Him again.

One day, He gave Elijah a special message to tell King Ahab: there would be no rain until the people turned back to God and acknowledged Him as their God! Being left without water and having their crops fail would be a reminder that they could not get on without Him. God sometimes has to withhold things from us, too. He does this so that we will turn to Him, and listen to His Word and instruction.

Elijah obeyed God and bravely went to face evil King Ahab with God's message of coming judgement. This could easily have cost Elijah his life, but God gave him courage and protected him. After delivering his message, Elijah hurried from the palace. God told him to "go and hide by the brook Cherith" and Elijah was happy to obey. There were two reasons for this; firstly, for his own safety. God knew that wicked King Ahab would blame Elijah and try to kill him for what was about to happen. The best thing for Elijah to do was to keep out of Ahab's way.

Secondly, God wanted the people to realise that HE had brought about the drought; they should seek Him, not Elijah! We can learn something here. In any work for Jesus, we must remember that we are His servants. It is He who works through us and not we ourselves who do the work. Sometimes we like to 'show off' and try and make people think that we are 'somebody special.' If we truly want to serve God we must be prepared to be humble and 'hide ourselves.' Even in his humble position, God continued to protect and provide for Elijah. He drank water from the brook and God used ravens to bring him food.

Would you like to be one of God's messengers today? God's Word will speak to your heart too, as you do your lessons each month. You probably won't be told to leave home and do what Elijah did, but in many other ways God speaks to our hearts through His Word. He will protect and strengthen you too - if you are willing to follow Elijah's example and be an obedient, humble servant.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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| 1. What kind of man was King Ahab? | |
| 2. Why did God send Elijah to Ahab? | |
| 3. When Elijah had given the message what did God tell him to do? Why? | |
| 4. How is Elijah's life an example of obedience? | |
| 5. How did God provide for Elijah's daily needs? | |

My Name is _____ Age _____

God Provides for Elijah

Key Verse:
“My God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”
 Philippians 4:19

Extra: Can you think of any occasions or situations when God calls you to trust Him?

Level 4 lesson 34

Read 1 Kings 17:7-24 and 2 Corinthians 1:8-11

After a couple of years without rain, the brook Cherith finally dried up, too. What a dilemma for poor Elijah! What should he do, alone in a land of drought and famine? As always, he sought God’s direction. God’s response was; “Go to Zarephath. I have commanded a widow there to look after you.”

In faith, Elijah went, not knowing who the woman was. As he neared the village of Zarephath, he found a woman gathering sticks for a fire. Elijah greeted her politely and asked for a drink and some food. She explained that she only had a handful of flour and a little pot of oil left. She was about to prepare a last meal for her son and herself, and then they would die of starvation.

Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said, but make a little cake and bring it to me FIRST.” Then he promised her, “Your flour and oil will not run out until the rain comes again.” At first you may think it selfish of Elijah, to ask for food before the widow and her son had eaten. However, this was really a test of her faith. Firstly, it was a test of her willingness to put God first and honour Him by providing for His servant. Secondly, it was a test to see if she trusted God and believed His promise. The answer was obvious, as the woman obediently went and did as Elijah asked.

God had led him to exactly the right person, proving His faithfulness. God never fails those who trust in Him! The woman and her son also learnt a wonderful lesson; because of her faithful obedience, God miraculously kept supplying her flour and oil every day until the famine was over!

She in turn, provided Elijah with a room in her house and the three of them had enough for their needs every day. Friends, never be afraid to trust God at all times and believe the promises He has given us in His Word. God always honours our faith, however small and weak it may be!

Everything went well in the widow’s home for many months. Then sadly, the widow’s son became very ill and died. Why was this allowed to happen, you may ask? It seems strange that the poor widow who looked after Elijah should see her son die. The simple answer is, we don’t know. We can only surmise, that perhaps God wanted to turn her thoughts to Himself again as she turned to Him in her grief.

We do know, that when all is going smoothly and well, it is easy to take things for granted and forget God. Sometimes there are things in life that puzzle us, but we can be sure that God will always do what is best for us. Sometimes, at times like this, people turn away from God. This widow though, did the right thing. Even in her confusion and grief, she turned to God, and begged His servant Elijah for help.

Elijah took the boy up to his room, placed him on his bed, and prayed that God would raise the boy to life again. God answered Elijah’s prayer and raised the boy back to life. How overjoyed and grateful his mother must have been! How her faith in God must have increased. Now she realised more fully that Elijah really was a prophet of God and that he spoke the truth, the Word of the Lord.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. How did God provide for Elijah when the brook dried up?

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2. What was the woman preparing to do when Elijah met her?

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3. What two things did the woman show by being willing to make a cake for Elijah FIRST?

1. Her _____ to put God first.

2. She trusted God and _____ His promise.

4. How was it that the flour and the oil did not grow any less?

.....

5. Why do you think that the widow’s son was allowed to die?

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Decision Day!

Key Verse:
“How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God follow Him; but if Baal is god, follow him.”
 1 Kings 18:21

Extra: See if you can find some more prayers in the Bible. Try Ephesians for a start.

Level 4 lesson 35

Read 1 Kings 18:12, 17-39 and 2 Timothy 1:7-12

Three years had passed since Elijah first told King Ahab that God was going to hold back the rain. During those years, Ahab had been searching everywhere for Elijah in order to kill him, but God kept Elijah safe. Then one day, God told Elijah, “Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth.”

Here was a test for Elijah. Did he dare face the angry, evil King? He obeyed in faith, trusting God. As Elijah approached him, Ahab called out, “Is that you, you trouble-maker!” Elijah, fearless in the power of the Lord, replied boldly. “I have not made trouble for Israel; YOU are to blame! You have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and have turned to worshipping idols!” Rebuked by the truth of Elijah’s words, King Ahab was shamed into silence.

Elijah then commanded him to gather all Israel together, along with the 450 prophets of Baal, on the summit of Mt. Carmel. Soon a great congregation of people had gathered. Elijah stood alone, but was confident God was with him. He knew that God would prove to all that He was the one TRUE God, and that Baal was a lifeless idol!

This was Elijah’s challenge to the people. “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, then follow Him, but if Baal is God - follow him!” They were speechless. Elijah suggested a contest. They would build two altars and lay sacrifices of bullocks on them. Then the pagan priests of Baal would call on their god, and Elijah would call on his; the god that sent fire to burn up the sacrifice would be the true God. The people agreed to do this.

So the altars were built, the prophets of Baal prepared their sacrifice and began calling out to Baal. All day they cried out but there was no answer. They screamed and danced and even cut themselves to show their sincerity and devotion; but nothing happened!

Then it was Elijah’s turn. He built an altar to the Lord, dug a trench around it, set the wood in order, and laid the bullock sacrifice on it. Then he said to those helping him, “Now pour water over it.” THREE times he commanded this to be done! He didn’t want anyone to be able to say it was simply a trick! Then he humbly prayed. “Oh Lord God, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel, and that I am your servant.”

Did God hear? Did He respond? He sure did! Fire from heaven came and burnt up the sacrifice, and also the altar, the wood, and the water! The Children of Israel fell on their faces and cried, “The Lord, He is God!” What they had seen convinced them of their sin and that the God of heaven still lived. He would still help them if they would trust Him.

Elijah was a faithful messenger of the Lord. He was unafraid to stand against those who’d turned their backs on God. It’s never easy to stand alone against a crowd. However, Elijah’s trust was in God, who stood with him. Remember, when you are called to take a stand for Christ and do what you know to be right, trust in the Lord and pray to Him for help. He will make you strong and courageous!

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. What did Elijah tell Ahab was the cause of all the trouble and famine in Israel?

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2. What was the challenge that Elijah gave the people?

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3. What simple, humble prayer did Elijah pray?

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4. What did the people say when God sent the fire to show He was the true God? (Find the vowels).

T h _ _ L _ _ r d H _ _ _ s G _ _ d.

5. What is a good thing for us to do when we have to stand up for that which is true and right?

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God Answers Prayer

Read 1 Kings 18:40-46 and Matthew 6:5-15

Key Verse:

“Pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18

Extra: How can we keep ourselves living a life that pleases God?

Level 4 lesson 36

What a great victory and day of triumph it had been for Elijah, the servant of the One True, Living God! Baal had been shown to be the worthless statue that he was; and the people of Israel confessed their sin and turned to serve and worship the Living God again. The wicked prophets of Baal were summarily executed, in punishment for their evil practices. Now God could end His judgement and send the rain.

Elijah told Ahab to go home because it was going to rain! Ahab went, apparently unmoved by the amazing demonstration of God’s reality and power he had just witnessed! How sin blinds us to God! What a warning, to those who keep living in sin and disobedience to God. Don’t play with sin, thinking you can turn to God later. You may end up like Ahab, blinded and unwilling to respond to God.

Elijah meanwhile, was keen to fulfil God’s purpose in His life. He went to the top of Mt Carmel and knelt to pray for the promised rain. After some time, he asked his servant to look for any sign of clouds. There were none. Again he prayed, but still no clouds appeared. Elijah was sure God would keep His promise, so he kept praying. On the seventh time a small cloud could be seen. Soon the whole sky was black with clouds and rain began falling!

When we think how God instantly answered Elijah’s prayer for the fire, it may seem strange that Elijah had to ask seven times before the rain came.

We know the Israelites had strayed far from God, and perhaps it was for THEIR sake that God sent the fire immediately. He wanted Israel to know He was the True God. Elijah, although a mighty prophet of God, was still just a man, so perhaps God wanted to keep him from becoming proud and doing things in his own strength. Whatever the reason, we can be sure God’s ways and purposes are always for our ultimate good! What a great relief for the people, to feel the refreshing rain after three years of drought and famine. No doubt they praised God for His wonderful provision!

Do you ever stop to think how much you owe to God? The rain, sunshine, and air all come from Him. How true it is, that often we do not miss things until they are taken away from us. Let’s remember God’s goodness to us each day and thank Him for all the good things He gives to us!

There is another important lesson here. God does not always answer our prayers instantly. “God’s ways are not our ways.” Sometimes we must wait for His direction. In this way, we learn to depend more on Him. Don’t be discouraged if your prayers are not answered straight away; keep praying, trusting God and looking to Him. He may have a big lesson for you to learn while you keep praying day by day.

Remember, our Key Verse says, “Pray continually.” That means, pray at all times, anywhere. We don’t have to kneel beside our beds to pray. We can speak to God anytime, wherever we are, and whatever we are doing!

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. Baal was shown to be what?

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2. What did the people of Israel do?

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3. How many times did Elijah pray before the rain came? (Circle the correct number)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. What should we do if God does not answer our prayers straight away?

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5. What have you learnt from this lesson about prayer?

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PSSM, 1-2A (G2) 93 Dominion Rd, Mt Eden, Auckland 1024 or scan & email to info@biblediscovery.org.nz