

God Cares for Elijah

Key Verse:

“As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him.”

Psalm 103:13

Extra: What evidence can you find of God's love to you?

Level 4 lesson 37

Read 1 Kings 19 and James 5:13-20

After praying to God for rain, Elijah ran down from the top of Mt Carmel to the city of Jezreel. Rain was soon falling fast and he was wet through, but he probably didn't mind. It was so refreshing, after having no rain for three years! However, Jezebel (King Ahab's wicked wife) was waiting in Jezreel for news of the mountain-top contest.

Ahab soon arrived home and told her all that had happened on Mt Carmel: how the idol god Baal had proved to be false and how Elijah had ordered the false prophets of Baal to be executed. Jezebel was absolutely furious! She sent a messenger to tell Elijah that she would have him killed within 24 hours!

Poor Elijah! What was he to do? He knew the Queen's command would be obeyed and his life was in real danger! Suddenly, he felt very weary and tired. Was he the only one still standing true for God? What would it take to change the people's wicked hearts? He was so discouraged he even wished he could die. "What's the use of going on?" he thought. "What good am I on my own?"

Under cover of darkness, Elijah made a run for it. When he thought he was safe, he lay down and fell asleep, tired and worn out. Did God forsake Elijah because he failed to trust Him and ran away from danger? Oh, no! God still loved him and was watching over His tired servant. After Elijah had slept for a while, an angel of the Lord came and woke him up. He gave him some food and water, saying, "Get up and eat."

After Elijah had eaten, he lay down and went to sleep again. After a while, the angel again woke him, saying, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." How kind and loving God is! He patiently nursed Elijah until he was stronger. Then Elijah went on to Mt Horeb, where he found a cave to live in and recover his full strength. After a while, God again spoke to him, and asked, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Elijah answered, "I am the only one in Israel who is faithful to You Lord, and the Queen is even trying to kill me!"

God replied (v18) that in fact, 7000 people had been true to Him all the time and had not bowed down to worship Baal! God intended Elijah to stay in Jezreel and be a help and strength to the many Israelites who had decided to follow God. But Elijah had failed and run away. The sad part was, they had all been secret followers of God and had been no help to Elijah when he tried to bring the nation back to God.

The Lord decided to remind Elijah of His power. Suddenly a great wind arose and swept down the mountain-side, tearing up trees and smashing great rocks to pieces! Next, He caused an earthquake that made the whole mountain tremble. It was followed in turn, by a great fire. When all these had passed, there was a great calm and again Elijah heard God's voice asking, "What are you doing here Elijah?"

Elijah probably felt ashamed that he'd run away. God's mighty power was there all the time to protect him. Elijah answered as before, but this time God gave Elijah fresh instructions (v15-16). He was to anoint the young man Elisha, to carry on serving God as Elijah had done so faithfully. Never doubt God's power to help you too, friends. He is always near. When in danger or difficulty, or any time you need His help, lift your heart to Him in prayer, trust in Him and He will give you strength, courage, and help.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. Why did Elijah flee from Jezreel?

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2. Why was he so downhearted?

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3. How did God show His love and care for the weary and worn-out prophet?

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4. Why did God send the wind, earthquake, and fire? Complete this: The Lord decided.....

5. What should we do when in difficulty or needing help?

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My Name is _____ Age _____

Elijah Taken Up to Heaven

Key Verse:
“...I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me...”

John 14:2-3

Extra: What would cause anyone to think it will be a wonderful day when Jesus comes again?

Level 4 lesson 38

Read 2 Kings 2:1-14 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Elijah knew that his work for God here on earth was finished. So in obedience to God, he found Elisha and told him he was now to be God’s prophet. What a great honour and privilege for Elisha!

Together the two men began walking towards the distant Jordan River. What a thrill that last journey must have been, with both men perhaps sensing that something special was about to happen. Finally, they reached the Jordan River and halted at the water’s edge. Elijah took off his cloak and struck the water with it.

Immediately, it divided and the two men of God crossed through on dry ground to the other side! What a wonderful miracle! However, something even more amazing was about to happen...

As they walked on together, a flaming chariot of fire suddenly appeared and separated them. Then right before Elisha’s startled eyes, Elijah was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind! In the Bible we read of two men who did not die, but went straight to heaven: Enoch and Elijah. Now, Elisha called out after Elijah, but quickly the mighty old man of God and the Heavenly chariot had disappeared from view! Elisha was alone.

Looking around him in amazement, Elisha saw Elijah’s old cloak which had fallen to the road. Picking it up, he made his way thoughtfully back to the river. No doubt his mind was full of thoughts: how could he, a young man, carry on the work of such a great man as Elijah? He didn’t really feel up to the task. Would God be with him as He had been with Elijah?

Nearing the river, Elisha had opportunity to test the reality of his calling to be God’s servant and spokesman. Striking the water with the cloak, it parted once more, and Elisha crossed through on dry ground! Now Elisha knew God WAS with him and he could do whatever God asked him to.

This story of Elijah being taken to heaven reminds us of a similar event that will take place one day. The Bible says that Jesus Christ is coming back again (see Key Verse) to take all those who have trusted Him as Saviour to Heaven to be with Him forever. And we read in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17:

“For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a loud command... and the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are still alive and are left will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will be with the Lord forever.”

All those who have loved the Saviour, but died before He comes again, will be raised first from the dead at His coming. All those who trust in Him and love Him and are still alive when He comes, will not die at all, instead they will be caught up to be with Him just as Elijah was (but without the whirlwind). What a wonderful day for those who have trusted in the Lord as their Saviour and who have asked Him to cleanse them from sin!

The Lord Jesus IS coming very soon and maybe even today! Are **you** ready to meet Him? None of us should ignore this question. We need to be ready when the Lord Jesus comes, because after He has come it will be too late to think about it. Your chance will be gone! Trust Jesus today; believe His word when He says, “Whoever comes to me, I will never drive away.”

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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| 1. Who was to take Elijah’s place as the prophet of God? | Clue: B = A, C = B, D = C, etc F M J T I B Answer: |
| 2. What happened when Elijah and Elisha came to the river Jordan? | |
| 3. What happened to Elijah after crossing the Jordan? | |
| 4. What will happen when the Lord Jesus comes back again? | |
| 5. What must we do to be ready before Jesus returns? | |

Naaman: The Proud Leper

Key Verse:
“The blood of Jesus, God’s Son, purifies us from every sin.”

1 John 1:7b

Extra: What things can you learn from this little girl’s life and behaviour?

Level 4 lesson 39

Read 2 Kings 5:1-12, and Luke 4:24-27

Naaman was a great man, highly respected in his homeland of Syria. As Captain of the Syrian Army, he had led them to great victories in battle and was famous throughout the land. One day, the Syrians defeated the Israelites in battle and took away many prisoners. Among them was a young girl who was brought as a slave to Naaman’s own home, to work for his wife.

The Bible doesn’t tell us what this young girl thought as she was separated from her home and family and taken to a foreign land as a slave. We can imagine though, that she had felt afraid, miserable, and very worried. This young girl loved God and knew He loved her and would care for her, even while she was a slave.

One day, she learned that her master, Naaman, had caught leprosy. She knew what that meant - this terrible disease would completely ruin her master’s life. He would have to leave his home, family, and career for the rest of his life, which would be extra hard for such a great man. We are fortunate not to have leprosy here in New Zealand, but I have seen it in other countries and it is horrible! There was no cure for leprosy in those days, except by a miracle of God.

The little slave girl could have thought to herself, “Ha, ha! That will teach him a lesson for taking me prisoner; now he can see how it feels to lose everything like I did!” But she didn’t! Instead, she felt sorry for her master and told Naaman’s wife, “I wish my master was in Samaria where Elisha the prophet is, for he would heal him!” What a lovely example of God’s love, in the heart of that little slave girl!

This message finally reached the King. He sent Naaman with several servants and many presents of silver and gold to the King of Israel. However, the King of Israel was puzzled; he certainly couldn’t heal Naaman and thought the King of Syria was just trying to cause more trouble between them!

Eventually, Elisha heard that Naaman had come, and sent for him. Soon Naaman arrived with his horses and chariot outside Elisha’s humble home. He expected him to come out with a big show of ceremony and welcome. Instead, Elisha simply sent his servant out with a message, “Go and wash in the river Jordan seven times and you will be made clean.”

Naaman, the Bible tells us, was NOT impressed! He muttered indignantly to himself, “I thought he would come out and call on the name of his God and wave his hand over the leprosy and heal me. Why should I have to wash in the muddy Jordan? I have more beautiful rivers in my own country!” Annoyed, Naaman turned around and began riding back home. He was not going to be insulted like that! Didn’t that ignorant Israelite know who he was? Now, of course, this is where he made a big mistake - he had his own ideas of how he was going to be cleansed of his leprosy.

Friends, there are many people today too, who have their own ideas as to how they will be cleansed from sin and made fit to live in Heaven. They think that doing good deeds, going to church, giving to the poor and perhaps saying prayers will be enough. All those things are good, but they can never cleanse our hearts from sin. Only God’s way will do that! We must be ‘washed’ in the blood of Jesus, which He shed for us on the cross of Calvary. We must simply believe the message of God’s Word and obey it.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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| 1. What kind of man was Naaman, and what was wrong with him? | |
| 2. How did the little girl come to be a servant in Naaman’s house? | |
| 3. What did she say when she heard of Naaman’s illness? | |
| 4. What did Elisha tell Naaman to do? | |
| 5. What did you learn from this lesson about trust in God? | |

Naaman: Humbled & Healed

Key Verse:
“He (Jesus)
became the
source of eternal
salvation for all
who obey Him.”

Hebrews 5:9

Extra: Why do you think Naaman’s servant was wiser than he was?

Level 4 lesson 40

Read 2 Kings 5:13-19 and Exodus 19:3-6

Well now, what would Naaman do? As he drove angrily away, one of his servants showed great wisdom and humility, and began to reason with him. He pointed out that if Elisha had told him to do something great and difficult, he would have done it for sure! So why not do this simple thing, which was to dip in the Jordan seven times?

Finally, Naaman saw his servant was right. It was only his pride that had been hurt. He turned the chariot round and drove down to the muddy Jordan River. Naaman’s servants remained on the bank while he went down into the water. He dipped himself once. Nothing happened! Five more times he went under the water. Still he looked the same! The leprosy had not changed. Had that man Elisha just made a fool of him after all? Would the prophet’s word come true?

Elisha had said, “Seven times,” so once more Naaman immersed himself in the muddy Jordan. Rising out of the water, the miracle was obvious to everyone. He was completely healed! The leprosy had disappeared and his skin was once more like that of a young child. He could hardly believe his eyes! What a great wave of excitement must have swept over that little group. What joy must have filled Naaman’s heart - he was clean!

Thankfully, he made his way back to Elisha’s home. This time, Elisha came out to meet him. The great Captain Naaman was now a very humble man. He said, “Now I know that there is no God in all the earth like the God of Israel!”

He wanted to give Elisha a present, which was kind, but Elisha did not want his gifts. He didn’t want to be rewarded by Naaman. He was the servant of Almighty God, who would honour him for his service. So with a very thankful heart and a healthy body, free of leprosy, Naaman went home.

All through the Old Testament, leprosy is a type (or picture) of sin. This terrible spiritual disease of sin infects us all from birth, and just as it was for Naaman, there is only one cure. Just as there was only one place (the Jordan) and only one way (obedience to the Word of the Lord through Elisha) for him to be cured, so it is with us.

The cross of Calvary is the PLACE where Jesus died, taking the punishment for our sin. Obeying God’s Word to repent and believe in Jesus Christ, as our Saviour and Lord, is THE ONLY WAY to be forgiven and have our sinful hearts cleansed. Would you like to do this? Then repent, believe, and ask God for forgiveness. We’d be glad to answer your questions too!

For those of you who have believed, there is a great example to follow in Elisha. How faithful, true, and devoted to the Lord he was, and always doing something to help others. Everywhere Elisha went he was a blessing. God used him to help and cheer many people. Would you like to be like that? Sure, we can’t do all the great and miraculous things that Elisha did, but there are many things that we can do. Ask the Lord to make you a blessing to others and then be willing to do all you can!

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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| 1. What did Naaman’s servant say to him? | <div></div> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. What happened to Naaman when he went under the water the seventh time ? | <table><tr><td></td><td>E</td><td></td><td></td><td>S</td><td></td><td></td><td>M</td><td></td><td></td><td>T</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>A</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td colspan="8"></td></tr></table> | | E | | | S | | | M | | | T | | | | | | | A | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 3. Why do you think Elisha refused Naaman’s gifts? | <div></div> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. How can we be forgiven and have our hearts cleansed of sin? | <div></div> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. In what ways is Elisha an example for us? | <div></div> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |