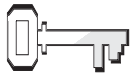


Fire on the Mountain



References

1 Kings 18:1–39;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 137–154



Memory Verse

“The Lord will
hear when I call to
him” (Psalm 4:3, NIV).



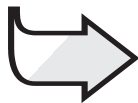
Objectives

The children will:

Know that God is
big, powerful,
and loving.

Feel confident
that He listens to
their prayers.

Respond by pray-
ing to God and
believing that He
will answer.



The Message

God listens
and answers
when I pray.

Monthly Theme

Grace is the gift of life.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

After three and a half years of no rain God tells Elijah that He will send rain. Elijah tells Ahab to summon all the people of Israel, including the prophets of Baal and Asherah, to Mount Carmel. Two altars are built, and wood and sacrifices are laid upon them. One altar is God’s and the other is Baal’s. Elijah says, “The god who answers by fire—he is God.” Baal does not answer. After Elijah prays, God answers by fire. The people cry, “The Lord—He is God!” Shortly after, it rains.

This is a lesson about grace.

Even when we forsake God, He makes the first move to bring us back to Him. We will suffer the consequences of leaving Him, but God always invites us to come back so He can restore us. He hears and answers our prayers.

Teacher Enrichment

Obadiah was a *vizier*—a high executive officer—in Ahab’s court. A vizier literally runs the kingdom on behalf of the king. (See Ralph Gower, *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times* [Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1987], p. 271.)

“Gladly would he [Satan] have sent the lightning to kindle their sacrifice. But Jehovah has set Satan’s bounds, restrained his power, and not all the enemy’s devices can convey one spark to Baal’s altar” (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 150).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 9.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>"I Hear You!"</i> B. <i>Why Aren't You Listening?</i>	two tin cans and a long string or two walkie talkies one toy stuffed animal for each child or one for the whole group
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container Bible, prayer notebook
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes, firewood, toy stuffed animal to represent sacrifice, two "altars," big water jug, bright red light to shine on God's altar, recording of thunder and fire sounds, large stones, kiddie pool Bible Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Prayer—What Is It?</i>	writing instruments, paper, Bibles
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Boppin' Balloons</i>	three inflated balloons, one balloon per child, one marker per child, Bible

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Give directions for the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- two clean, empty tin cans with the top completely removed (no sharp edges)
- long string or
- two walkie talkies

A. “I Hear You!”

Ahead of time, make a tin can “telephone.” Attach one end of the long string to the bottom of one can, the other end to the bottom of the other can. Have two children hold the cans, move as far apart as the string will allow, and pull the string fairly tight. Have one child talk into his/her can while the other listens. Upon hearing the voice through the can, he/she says, “I hear you! How can I help you?” Have the children take turns doing this. This activity can also be done with walkie talkies.

Debriefing

Say: **Why is it important to respond when someone talks to you?** (shows that you care) **How do you feel when someone ignores you when you try to talk to them?** (frustrated, hurt, ignored) **How do you feel when someone hears you and helps you?** (happy, good, relieved) **Our Bible story today is about two gods—a false god who couldn’t help those who were calling on him, and a God who listened and answered His followers. And that brings me to our message for today:**



GOD LISTENS AND ANSWERS WHEN I PRAY.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- toy stuffed animal for each child, or
- one for the whole group

B. Why Aren’t You Listening?

Say: **We are going to talk to our stuffed animal now.** Choose a child to speak first, then ask several others to do the same. Say: **Tell your animal that you are thirsty and ask it to bring you a drink.** Allow time, then say: **Wait for your animal to answer and do as you ask.** Pause, then say: **Did your animal answer and do as you asked?** (No.) **Why?** (It is not alive, can’t hear, think, or do anything.)

Debriefing

Ask: **Was it wise to talk to a stuffed animal and expect it to hear and do something?** (No.) **Why not?** (Because it is not alive, can’t hear, etc.) **How did you feel about asking a stuffed animal to do something?** (foolish, stupid, strange) **When we need help with something, whom should we ask?** (Someone who is alive, friend, family, God.) **What we just did reminds me of today’s message:**



GOD LISTENS AND ANSWERS WHEN I PRAY.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"The Lord Hears Me" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 105)

"Whisper a Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 96)

"A Little Talk With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 98)

"God Is With Us" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 104)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **We serve a God who hears people all over the world (in any language). He cares about everyone. And He wants us to listen and show that we care too. One way to do that is to share our money when we bring an offering to Sabbath School.** Collect the offering.

You Need:

- offering container



Prayer

Read or have a child read Psalm 4:3, last part. Invite the children to tell about times when they have prayed and God heard and answered their prayers. Record new prayer requests in the class prayer notebook, or where all can see. Assign each request to children who are willing to pray out loud. Form a circle, join hands, and have the children pray. To close, sing "Whisper a Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 96).

You Need:

- Bible
- prayer notebook

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes
- firewood
- stones or large rocks
- two “altars” (may be made from boxes, blocks, Styrofoam, etc.)
- child’s swimming pool
- toy stuffed animals (bulls, if possible)
- big water jug filled with water (if feasible)
- bright red or orange light to shine on altar
- recording of thunder, fire crackling

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Obadiah, Elijah, King Ahab, the prophets of Baal, the watching crowd
Props: See box list. If these are not available, encourage children to pantomime the story as it is told.

Setting: Set up the two altars, placing a heap of large “rocks” in the middle of a child’s swimming pool for Elijah’s altar. Build Baal’s altar nearby.

Storyteller: Tell the story in the first person, as if you are seeing it happen.

Read or tell the story.

Obadiah is running down the path. His robe flaps behind him. “Elijah is here!” he gasps. (*Obadiah runs and meets Ahab in the front of the room.*)

King Ahab’s face turns red with anger. Elijah is just the man he is looking for! It hasn’t rained in Israel for three years. There is little food to eat. And the king thinks it is Elijah’s fault. The king hurries to meet Elijah. “There you are—Israel’s troublemaker!” he shouts. (*Ahab and Elijah meet.*)

Elijah stands tall and unafraid. “I have not made trouble for Israel,” he responds. “You are the troublemaker. You and your family. You worship Baal’s idols instead of the Lord.

“Bring all the people of Israel and all the prophets of Baal to Mt. Carmel,” Elijah says. “There we will see which is the true God—Baal or the Lord.” (*Elijah and Ahab part.*)

So King Ahab calls all the people and all the prophets of Baal to Mt. Carmel. (*Everyone assembles at the front of the room around the two altars.*)

Elijah stands before the people. (*Elijah*

steps forward and looks at the crowd, gesturing as you read the story.) “The prophets of Baal will sacrifice a bull,” he says. “They will put it on top of the wood on their altar but not set fire to it. I will sacrifice a bull, too, and put it on top of the wood on my altar. I will not set fire to it either. The prophets of Baal will call on the name of their god. I will call on the name of the Lord. The one who answers by setting the wood on fire is the true god.”

All the people agree that this will be a fair test. (*Crowd nods in approval.*)

Elijah looks at the 450 prophets of Baal. “You may go first,” he says.

Baal’s prophets sacrifice their bull and lay it on their altar. Then they begin to pray. They call and shout to Baal all morning, but there is no answer. (*The “prophets of Baal” put the animal on the altar and call to Baal.*)

The prophets begin to dance wildly. Then they cut themselves with knives and swords to get Baal’s attention. But there is still no answer.

In the evening, Elijah says, “Now it’s my turn.” First he repairs the altar and puts wood on it. Then he digs a ditch around it. He sacrifices his bull and puts it on top of the wood. (*Elijah steps forward, stacks the heap of “stones” in the child’s swimming pool to repair the altar, and makes digging motions around it.*) “Fill four large jars with water and pour them over the offering and the wood,” he says.

The people hurry to do so. (*Some of “the crowd” pour water over the altar. Be sure it falls into the swimming pool.*)

“Do the same thing again,” Elijah says.

They do it again. (*Pour more water over the altar.*)

“Do it a third time!” Elijah orders. (*Pour more water over the altar—as much as is feasible.*)

They do as he says. Water runs all over the altar and overflows the ditch.

Then Elijah bows his head and prays. "Oh, Lord, prove today that You are the God of Israel!" (*Elijah bows his head.*)

Instantly, fire flashes down from heaven. It burns up the bull. It burns up the wood. It even burns up the stones of the altar and the water in the ditch! (*Play recordings of fire and thunder sounds, if available, and shine a bright red light on Elijah's altar.*)

The people of Israel fall down on their faces and cry out, "The Lord is God! The Lord is God!" (*Have the crowd bow low and make excited gestures pointing to heaven.*)

Debriefing

Say: **What does this story tell us about our God?** (He is powerful; He is the greatest; He listens and answers prayer, etc.) **How would you feel if you really had been on Mount Carmel?** (scared, happy, full of love and respect for the God of heaven, etc.) **When you pray, are you just as sure as Elijah that God will answer your prayer?** (Wait for response.) **Let's say our message together:**



GOD LISTENS AND ANSWERS WHEN I PRAY.

Memory Verse

Write today's memory verse where all can see. **"The Lord will hear when I call to him" (Psalm 4:3).** Read it together, doing the body motions as indicated:

You say:
"The Lord will hear when I call to Him."

You and the children do:
Point upward.
Touch your ear.
Point to self.
Cup hand around your mouth.
Point upward.

Repeat until the children know the verse.

Bible Study

Say: **Our Bible has many stories about God answering prayers. Let's read some. We will start with today's Bible story.**

Have adult helpers assist as needed. Have all children find the same verses. (Large Sabbath Schools, form groups of 6-8 children.) Have children take turns reading the verses aloud:

1 Kings 18:36-39

Exodus 3:1-10

Acts 12:5-11

1 Kings 17:17-22

Exodus 14:10-16

You Need:

- Bibles

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **What do all these Bible stories tell us about God?** (He hears and answers prayer.) **Does God always answer right away?** (No. Sometimes we have to wait and sometimes God says no because He knows that what we ask for would not make us happy.) **How do you feel about knowing that God always hears and answers your prayers?** Allow time for discussion. **Let's remember our message:**



GOD LISTENS AND ANSWERS WHEN I PRAY.

Say that with me.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- writing instruments
- paper
- Bibles

Prayer—What Is It?

Form groups of five or six children. Ask each group to list different ways of communicating (such as face to face, telephone, fax, letter, e-mail, handwritten notes, codes, sign language, body language, tone of voice, foreign languages, etc.). Adult helpers assist as needed. Have some groups share their lists.

Ask: **How often do you telephone or write notes to your friends?** (often, not often) **What would your friends think if you never called, wrote, or talked to them?** (You don't want to be their friend; you don't care about them.) **Is Jesus your very best friend?** Ask for a show of hands. **How often do you talk to Him?** Allow response time. **Do you use any of the ways you listed to talk to Jesus?** Let the children think about this.

We have an even better way to reach Jesus. It is called prayer. It is a wireless, machineless, cordless system that reaches all the way to heaven! And it has an automatic translation system from any language to the language of heaven! There is no invention on earth that comes even close! (Adapted from *Come Meet Jesus*, vol. 2, p. 163.)

Debriefing

Say: **What do you think about God's communication system, called prayer?** (It's awesome, wonderful, great, etc.) **Here's one way to talk to God through prayer.** Help the children understand the steps of prayer as follows:

Ask (read aloud Matthew 7:7)

Believe (read aloud Mark 11:24)

Claim the answer by returning thanks that you have already received the answer God promised (read aloud Matthew 21:22).

Note: If we base our prayer on a Bible promise, we can confidently claim an answer to prayer. Jesus claimed an answer to His prayer before it was answered when He was at Lazarus's grave (John 11:41).

(Adapted from Glenn and Ethel Coon. *The Science of Prayer—Its ABC's* [Roan Mountain, Tenn.: 1974].)

Say: **Now let's pray together using the Ask, Believe, and Claim steps. We will pray for one special need that was mentioned during prayer time.**

Have the children open their Bibles to Philippians 4:19 and point to it as they pray. Write a short prayer where all can see, modeled after the following sample prayer. Have the children read and say it with you. (Note: This is an example. Use a real situation known to the class.)

"Dear Jesus, Mr. Smith lost his job. Please supply his need [Ask]. We believe that You will take care of him and his family [Believe]. You say in Philippians 4:19 that you will supply all our needs [point to Philippians 4:19 in Bibles]. We claim this promise for Mr. Smith and his family. Thank You, Jesus for taking care of them [Claim]. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Let's remember our message for today each time we pray:



GOD LISTENS AND ANSWERS WHEN I PRAY.

Say that with me.

Sharing the Lesson

Boppin' Balloons

Inflate three balloons. Have the children stand in a circle. Say: **We're going to toss these balloons around the circle. If a balloon touches the floor, it must stay where it landed, out of the game.** If the activity lasts more than five minutes, call time and have the children hold the remaining balloons.

Debriefing

Ask: **How is keeping balloons in the air like what friends and family do for each other?** (Friends and family work together to support each other.) **How did you feel when a balloon hit the ground?** (sad; I didn't do my part) **How is letting a balloon hit the ground like what sometimes happens between friends or family members?** (Sometimes friends and families let each other down.) **What kinds of things do you do to support your friends and family?** (Help them with their problems; cheer them up; pray for them.) Read aloud James 5:16.

One of the best ways to support others is to pray for them. How do you feel when someone tells you that they are praying for you? (good; like they

care) Distribute balloons and markers. Have the children blow up their balloons, then autograph each other's balloon. Say: **Take your balloon to a neighbor, friend, or family member and tell them that you and your friends who signed the balloon will be praying for them this week. Remember, when you pray, great things happen (James 5:16)! Let's say our message together:**



MY GOD LISTENS AND ANSWERS WHEN I PRAY.

(Adapted from Lisa Flinn and Barbara Younger, *Making Scripture Stick: 52 Unforgettable Bible Verse Adventures for Children* [Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1992], pp. 106, 107.)

Closing

Place the candle on a table and gather the children around it. Light the candle. Say: **It is impossible for us to light the candle without matches, just as it was impossible for the prophets of Baal to light the fire that would burn their sacrifice. But nothing is impossible for God.**

It was God who sent the fire and burned Elijah's sacrifice when Elijah prayed. Let's pray together and praise Him for His power and thank Him for His gifts to us. Offer a short prayer.

You Need:

- 3 inflated balloons
- balloon for each child
- markers
- Bible

You Need:

- candle
- matches

Fire on the Mountain

References

1 Kings 18:1–39;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 137–154

Memory Verse

“The Lord will hear
when I call to him”
(Psalm 4:3, NIV).

The Message

God listens
and answers
when I pray.

Jack and Mary were spending a week at camp. They missed home so much. If only they could speak to Mom and Dad, they were sure they would feel better. They called home from the camp office. When Mom answered the phone, they were very happy.

And that’s how Elijah felt when God heard his prayer.

Obadiah ran down the path. His robe flapped behind him. “Elijah is here!” he shouted to King Ahab.

King Ahab’s face turned red with anger. Elijah was just the man he was looking for! It hadn’t rained in Israel for three years. There was almost no food to eat. And it was Elijah’s fault. The king hurried to meet Elijah. “There you are—Israel’s troublemaker!” he shouted.

Elijah stood tall and unafraid. “I have not made trouble for Israel,” he replied. “You are the troublemaker. You and your family worship Baal’s idols instead of the Lord.

“Bring all the people of Israel and all the prophets of Baal to Mt. Carmel,” Elijah went on.

“There we will see which is the true God—Baal or the Lord.”

So King Ahab called all the people and all the prophets of Baal to Mt. Carmel.

Elijah stood before them. “The prophets of Baal will sacrifice a bull,” he said. “They will put it on top of the wood on their altar but not set fire to it. I will sacrifice a bull, too, and put it on top of the wood on my altar. I will not set fire to it either. Baal’s prophets will call on the name of their god. I will call on the name of the Lord. The one who answers by setting the wood on fire is the true God.”

All the people agreed that this was a fair test.

Elijah looked at the 450 prophets. “You may go first,” he said.

The prophets sacrificed their bull and laid it on their altar. Then they began to pray. They called and shouted to Baal all morning, but there was no answer. They began to dance wildly. They even cut themselves with knives to get Baal’s attention. But still there was no answer.

In the evening, Elijah said, “Now it’s my turn.” First he repaired the altar and dug a ditch around it. Then he sacrificed his bull and laid it on top of the wood. “Fill four large jars with water and pour them over the offering and the wood,” he directed.

People rushed to do as he asked.

“Do the same thing again,” Elijah said.

More water was poured over the altar.

“Do it a third time!” Elijah ordered.

This time water ran all over the altar and overflowed the ditch.

Then Elijah bowed his head and prayed. “Oh, Lord, prove today that You are the God of Israel!”

Instantly, fire flashed down from heaven. It burned up the bull. It burned up the wood. It even burned up the stones of the altar and the water in the ditch!

The people of Israel fell down on their faces and shouted, “The Lord is God! The Lord is God!”



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Go with your family to the top of a hill or mountain and read your Bible lesson. Imagine the scene with the two altars and the crowd. Try to build an altar like Elijah's. (See 1 Kings 18:31.)
- Read Psalm 4:3 together. Teach the verse to your family.

Sunday

- During family worship read 1 Kings 18:1–39. Ask family members to read Elijah's, Ahab's, and the crowd's words. Have someone read the part that tells what's happening.
- If possible, build a bonfire. As you watch the flames, imagine what it was like when God sent fire from heaven.
- Figure out how many months it hadn't rained. How many days.
- Make up a tune and sing your memory verse.

Monday

- During worship today ask your family: How do we usually pray? ("Help me"? "Give me"?) Talk about other parts of prayer:
 1. Praise (saying what God is like—merciful, loving).
 2. Confession (saying that you are sorry for doing wrong).
 3. Thanks (thanking God for something).
 4. Requests (asking God to help with something).
- Make a prayer booklet. Draw a picture or cut out pictures from magazines to illustrate the four parts. Write the words to Jeremiah 33:3 on the cover. Pray a prayer using all four parts. Say your memory verse to God to end your prayer. Thank God for hearing you.

Tuesday

- During family worship, read Elijah's prayer in 1 Kings 18:36, 37. What was Elijah's request? Say or sing your memory verse. Then pray together, praising God, confessing your mistakes, thanking

God, and finally, presenting your requests.

- Write or draw a picture of a prayer request you have. Decorate a "prayer box" and put your requests and your thanks there each day.

Wednesday

- With your family read 1 Kings 18:38. God has three types of answers to our prayers: 1. Yes 2. No 3. Wait. How did God answer Elijah's prayer?
- With your family discuss a time God said "Yes" to a prayer request. When God said "No." When He said "Wait." Ask God to help you understand when He is saying yes, no, or wait.
- Sing "A Little Talk With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 98).

Thursday

- With your family read 1 Thessalonians 5:17. When do you usually pray? When are good times to pray? In what places have you prayed? List three places here: _____

- With a marker, draw a prayer symbol on each other's hands, such as a cross or the face of a clock. Let this symbol help you remember that you can talk to God any time and any place. Sing "Whisper a Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 96).

- Sing or say your memory verse together.

Friday

- Role-play Elijah on Mount Carmel for family worship. God answered Elijah's prayers in two different ways. Read 1 Kings 18:38, 45. First, He sent _____ from heaven, and then He sent _____ from heaven.

- Say your memory verse. Then set an empty chair in your family circle. Pretend that Jesus is there. Open the prayer box that you made on Tuesday. Each family member can take a request and tell it to Jesus. Talk to Him like a friend.

- Close with Jesus' special prayer. Say or read the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9–13).