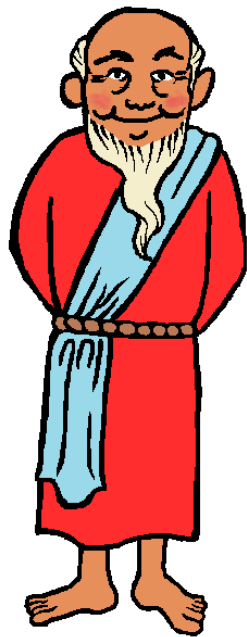


Elijah shows Israel who's the BOSS

GRADE 6, LESSON 5

1 Kings 18:20-39



²⁰ So Ahab sent to all the Israelites, and assembled the prophets at Mount Carmel. ²¹ Elijah then came near to all the people, and said, "How long will you go limping with two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." The people did not answer him a word. ²² Then Elijah said to the people, "I, even I only, am

left a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets number four hundred fifty. ²³ Let two bulls be given to us; let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire to it; I will prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood, but put no fire to it. ²⁴ Then you call on the name of your god and I will call on the name of the Lord; the god who answers by fire is indeed God." All the people answered, "Well spoken!" ²⁵ Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose for yourselves one bull and prepare it first, for you are many; then call on

the name of your god, but put no fire to it." ²⁶ So they took the bull that was given them, prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon, crying, "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no voice, and no answer. They limped about the altar that they had made. ²⁷ At noon Elijah mocked them, saying, "Cry aloud! Surely he is a god; either he is meditating, or he has wandered away, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened." ²⁸ Then they cried aloud and, as was their custom, they cut themselves with swords and lances until the blood gushed out over them. ²⁹ As midday passed, they raved on until the time of the offering of the oblation, but there was no voice, no answer, and no response.

THEME:

Elijah has been running for his life after being the bearer of bad news to the wrong person. God has plans for this Prophet, though, and gives him the opportunity to prove an enemy wrong, challenge fellow false 'prophets', and demonstrate to the nation of Israel that the Lord is the one, true God! But first, Elijah will have to be able to swallow his fear and trust in God completely...

³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come closer to me"; and all the people came closer to him. First he repaired the altar of the Lord that had been thrown down; ³¹ Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord came, saying, "Israel shall be your name"; ³² with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord. Then he made a trench around the altar, large enough to contain two measures of seed. ³³ Next he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood. He said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." ³⁴ Then he said, "Do it a second time"; and they did it a second time. Again he said, "Do it a third time"; and they did it a third time, ³⁵ so that the water ran all around the altar, and filled the trench also with water.

³⁶ At the time of the offering of the oblation, the prophet Elijah came near and said, "O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your bidding. ³⁷ Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so that this people may know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back." ³⁸ Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones, and the dust, and even licked up the water that was in the trench. ³⁹ When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, "The Lord indeed is God; the Lord indeed is God."

MEMORY VERSE:

Proverbs 3:5-6

⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own insight.

⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.

Student Introduction

Omnipotent- do you know what that word means? Here's a hint: it 100% describes God. Elijah was fully aware of the Lord's omnipotence, but how to prove it to the people of Israel was a completely different problem. Especially since the Israelites started worshipping other gods. How could one man remind a nation of their God's omnipotence, and get them to turn their hearts to the Truth?

Discuss: If you were in Elijah's shoes, would you have the courage to speak face-to-face with the man who was trying to hunt you down?

Discuss: How do you think you would have reacted after witnessing such a miracle? What if you were a believer of the wrong gods, what then?

Bible Exploration

Meet Elijah, a prophet of God. He was given a job by God to confront the wicked king of Israel, Ahab. It was Elijah who prophesied to Ahab that, there would be a severe drought for a long time.

Meet Ahab, the evil king of Israel who did not follow the Lord. He married Queen Jezebel, and together they set up altars and temples for Baal and Asherah (false gods) and worshipped them. In fact, Ahab did so much evil that he provoked the Lord's anger more than all the kings of Israel before him! (1 Kings 16:30)

1 Kings 18 sets the stage by explaining that it has been 3 years since the drought started, and a severe famine has hit the land. Ahab is still king, along with his wife Jezebel. Elijah, who has been in hiding for the past 3 years, is called by God to come out into the public and meet King Ahab. Imagine Elijah's fear! After all, he was "Israel's Most Wanted," since he was the initial deliverer of the bad news.

Elijah makes his choice: he decides to trust in God's instructions. Elijah challenges Ahab to bring his 450 prophets of Baal against him; it's time for a showdown!

The rest of the story plays out in 1 Kings 18: Elijah sets up a challenge to de-

termine who’s god is the true God, complete with identical altars and a selected bull to be sacrificed. The only “twist” is that the lighting of the sacrifice is up to the true God. The prophets of Baal have no success in getting some divine fire, despite resorting to cutting themselves up in the hope that their god would notice! And in the end, “there was no voice, no answer, and no response.” (verse 29) Ouch!

Elijah takes the stage. He begins by repairing God’s original altar, and has volunteers dump water all over the area! Scientifically, this altar should be impossible to light on fire, right? (Don’t try this at home.) But...God does the impossible! (Hint: that’s why He is Omnipotent.) After a prayer by Elijah, the soaking altar, surrounded closely by Israelites, ignites and is completely burned up!

To put the icing on the cake, Elijah tells Ahab that rain is on the way. The drought that began three years ago with no foreseeable end has now come to a close with this spectacular (and fiery) finish!

Vocabulary

Drought: A long period with little or no rain.

Famine: An extreme scarcity of food.

Omnipotent: Having unlimited power, and able to do anything.

Baal: A false god, was believed to be the god of thunder.

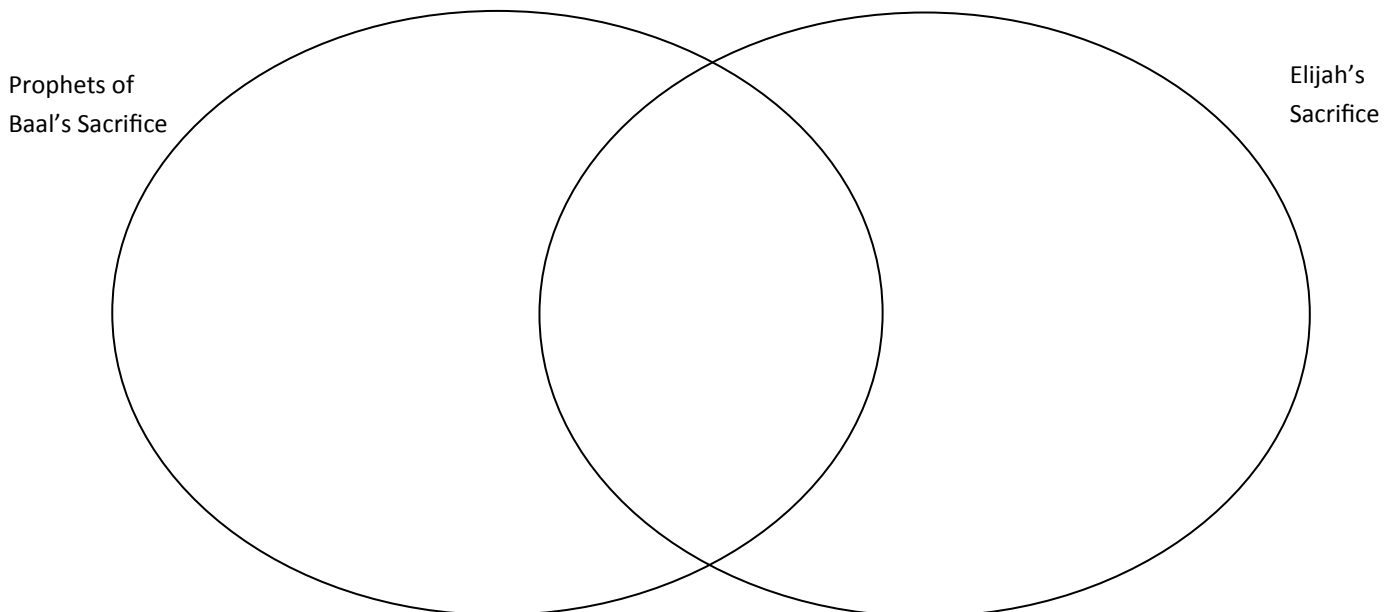
Asherah: A false goddess, was represented by a wooden pole.

Fun Fact: Elijah is one of the only people who did not ‘die’ at the end of his life. (Check out 2 Kings 2:11 to find out more!) As for the other person who left our world in a non-conventional way? Try looking up Genesis 5:21-24.

Activity

Write details that are similar between the sacrifice of the Prophets of Baal and God’s Prophet (Elijah) where the circles overlap.

Write details that demonstrate the differences between these sacrifices in the outer circles.



Values for My Life

We live in a science-driven world. Science is not here, however, to destroy the notion of God. It's there to help us understand and appreciate Him better! This doesn't mean that science can explain everything that happens in the world. Some events just seem to have our Creator's hand on it. Like Elijah's altar, which did not 'spontaneously combust', we as believers and students know that, in this world, sometimes the only logic that makes sense is the fact that we have an Omnipotent and loving Father.

Faith in Action

We may not know all the answers to the impossible questions about God, but we do know that God is able to do the impossible. Let's make a decision to follow God's plan, and to always expect the unexpected!

Let's Review!

Fill Ins

1. After Elijah beckoned the Israelites to step closer, he first _____.
2. The 12 stones on the altar that Elijah rebuilt represented _____.
3. Elijah asked for ____ jars of water to be filled ____ times, and poured over the altar.

Short Answers

1. From today's bible passage, describe how different characters displayed faith in God in difficult situations.
2. An Omnipotent God means that events that are not scientifically possible can be made possible with the help of our Lord. Look through the Bible, and find other instances where God allowed the impossible to happen. How about in your own life?

Closing Prayer:

Lord God, we thank You for the strength and courage you give to us every day. Teach us to trust in Your wisdom and guidance, and to help lead others to you. Amen.

Teacher Guide for Lesson 5

Elijah shows Israel who's the BOSS

Aim: Students will use Elijah's story as a basis to understand that God is omnipotent.

Bible Passage: 1 Kings 18:20-39 (NSRV)

Teacher Preparation: This lesson can branch out in a variety of ways, depending on the dynamic of your class. The students might be skeptical that such a miracle (of a soaking wet sacrifice bursting into flames) is scientifically possible.

They might also express dissatisfaction with Elijah's belittling (and very human) behavior towards the false prophets. Or perhaps, they will be curious as to whom Baal and Asherah is, and why so many Israelites were led astray.

Be prepared to answer these questions, and more. For most answers, you can always discuss God's omnipotence, and what that means in a given situation. It sometimes is the only answer we can give to unanswerable questions.

As an extra activity, (during the lesson), have the students act out the story. Get them to really put effort and a little craziness into it, especially since it's a pretty amusing story!

Extra teacher information:

Most ancient civilizations believed in Polytheism, or multiple gods. (If students question this, refer to the Greek and Roman deities– which they study in school, or the modern Hindu deities.)

Baal was one such ancient god, and among other titles, he was considered the 'Lord of the rain and dew', which were indispensable to nourishing the field. So, when a drought and famine are underway, it may make sense that many people flock to become priests/prophets of Baal– so as to convince this god to send the life-giving rain.

Asherah was a goddess who was often paired with Baal. She was considered a 'mother' figure for the pantheon of gods at that time, and was represented by a wooden pillar.

Main Ideas: See student book

In-Class Activity: "What will you put on your altar?"

Goal: Using the Venn diagram in their book, students will contemplate the differences and similarities between the two attempted sacrifices in 1 Kings 18.

Teacher Preparation: Start the assignment by leading a discussion on what 'went wrong' with the Prophets of Baal. Bridge it over to what 'should've went wrong' with Elijah's, and have the students lead the conversation to the 'Game changer' in the situation- God

Activity:

- a. Decide whether the students work alone or as a group.
- b. Have the students begin filling in the Venn Diagram with specific details directly from the Bible.
 - c. Encourage them to read prior to the assigned Bible portion, (verses 1-19) as well as beyond.
 - d. Have the students come up with 3-5 points per outer circle, and 3-5 points for the inner circle.
- e. Examples for outer circle:
 - i. False Prophets– 450 of them! **VS** Elijah- only 1
 - ii. False Prophets- took all day, never got a response **VS** Elijah- after setting up altar, got immediate response.
 - iii. False Prophets- Had a dry altar (easy to catch fire) **VS** Elijah- had a soaking wet altar, with no chance of it being lit naturally.

Examples for inner circle:

Both had complete faith in their God/gods

Both had the same altar and same animals used for sacrifice

Extension:

Have students analyze the facts they have listed, and discuss how God's omnipotence puts things in Elijah's favor. Have them discuss this with regards to their own lives, and create a second Venn diagram, this time with the two circles labeled as "Omnipotent God" and "little me". The center area should be filled with ideas of what they can achieve with an Omnipotent God helping them out.

Note to 6th Grade Teachers:

As you teach the 5 trial lessons, please be aware that they have been designed with the intention of seeing which curriculum style works best for your Sunday School classroom.

<i>Lesson 1 (Abraham)</i>	<i><u>Teacher Centered</u></i>	<i>The teacher leads, the students follow</i>	<i>Activity is separate from content</i>
<i>Lesson 3 (Micah)</i>	<i><u>Teacher Centered</u></i>	<i>The teacher leads, the students follow</i>	<i>Activity supplements content</i>
<i>Lesson 5 (Elijah)</i>	<i><u>Teacher Centered</u></i>	<i>The teacher leads, the students follow</i>	<i>Activity supplements content</i>
<i>Lesson 6 (Boaz)</i>	<i><u>Teacher and Student Centered</u></i>	<i>The teacher leads, but there are built in elements of student independence</i>	<i>Activity is built into the content</i>
<i>Lesson 7 (Joseph)</i>	<i><u>Student Centered</u></i>	<i>The students lead, the teacher facilitates</i>	<i>Activities are built into the content</i>

At any point during the trial 5 lessons, please e-mail AnissaKurian@gmail.com with your feedback, including:

How is the length of the Bible portion?

How appropriate are the Bible lessons and Memory Verse?

What lessons worked best for your class? What lessons were easiest to teach? (And vice versa)

Based off of question 4- do you prefer a Teacher centered or a Student Centered curriculum?

Do you prefer a paper-based activity, or an 'out of the box' activity (like Lesson 1)?

STUDENT FEEDBACK- what did your students like or dislike about the new lesson format?

Ultimately, it is your talent and your willingness to donate your time, energy, and love that will impact the 6th grade students the most. This curriculum is simply a tool to aid you in your vital ministry. Any and all feedback (good and bad) will help us to make the curriculum as beneficial as possible to our Mar Thoma children.

Thank you, and God Bless!

Anissa Kurian and George P. Babu

6th Grade Curriculum Editors

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