

ELIJAH ON MOUNT CARMEL

Memory Verse

“Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.”

Story Characters

Narrator
Voice of God
Elijah
Ahab
Prophets of Baal
The People

Narrator: Because he never stopped loving his people, God sent prophets to the kings of Israel and Judah. These prophets were God’s messengers, pointing out the people’s sin, but also telling them that if they changed their ways, God would forgive them. The prophets gave the people hope when bad things happened, and God used them to continually call His people back to Him. One of these prophets was named Elijah.

During Elijah’s time, the evil King Ahab and Queen Jezebel reigned in Israel. They had led Israel to worship false gods called Ba’al and Asherah. In response to this sin, Elijah the prophet told King Ahab that God would judge him.

Elijah: I’m a servant of the living Lord, the God of Israel. And I swear in his name that it won’t rain until I say so. There won’t even be any dew on the ground.

Narrator: Elijah’s prophecy came true, and for three years no rain fell, and there was almost nothing to eat anywhere. Then The Lord said to Elijah,

Voice of God: Go and meet with King Ahab. I will soon make it rain.

Narrator: So Elijah went to see Ahab. He knew that Ahab wanted to kill him, but he also knew that God would protect him. When Ahab saw Elijah, he blamed the prophet for the drought and famine.

Ahab: There you are, the biggest troublemaker in Israel!

Elijah: You’re the troublemaker—not me! You and your family have disobeyed the Lord’s commands by worshiping Ba’al. Call together everyone from Israel and have them meet me on Mount Carmel. Be sure to bring along the four hundred fifty prophets of Ba’al and the four hundred prophets of Asherah who eat at Jezebel’s table.

Narrator: Ahab got everyone together, then they went to meet Elijah on Mount Carmel.

Elijah: (Proclaiming to the crowd) How much longer will you try to have things both ways? If the Lord is God,

worship him! But if Ba'al is God, worship him!

Narrator: But the people said nothing.

Elijah: I am the Lord's only prophet, but Ba'al has four hundred fifty prophets. Bring us two bulls. Ba'al's prophets can take one of them, kill it, and cut it into pieces. Then they can put the meat on the wood without lighting the fire. I will do the same thing with the other bull, and I won't light a fire under it either. The prophets of Ba'al will pray to their god, and I will pray to the Lord. The one who answers by starting the fire is God.

People: (a crowd murmurs and agrees) That's a good idea. Of course Ba'al will light the fire. I wonder what will happen to Elijah?

Elijah: Prophets of Ba'al, there are more of you, so you go first. Pick out a bull and get it ready, but don't light the fire. Then pray to your god.

Narrator: They chose their bull, then they got it ready and prayed to Ba'al all morning, dancing and shouting, asking him to start the fire.

Prophets of Baal:(shouting, repeating, chanting) Ba'al, answer us!

Narrator: (Baal chants continue through the narration) But there was no answer.

Elijah: (Baal chants continue through the dialogue) Pray louder! Ba'al must be a god. Maybe he's day-dreaming or busy or traveling somewhere. Or maybe he's asleep, and you have to wake him up.

Prophets of Baal: (shouting louder) Ba'al, answer us!

Narrator: (Baal chants continue through the dialogue but progressively weaker and silent at the end) The prophets kept shouting louder and louder, and they cut themselves with swords and knives until they were bleeding. This was the way they worshiped, and they kept it up all afternoon. But there was no answer of any kind.

Finally, Elijah told everyone to gather around him while he repaired the Lord's altar. Then he used twelve stones to build an altar in honor of the Lord. Each stone stood for one of the tribes of Israel, which was the name the Lord had given to their ancestor Jacob. Elijah dug a ditch around the altar, large enough to hold about thirteen quarts. He placed the wood on the altar, then they cut the bull into pieces and laid the meat on the wood.

Elijah: Fill four large jars with water and pour it over the meat and the wood. Do it again. Do it a third time.

Narrator: They did exactly as he said until finally, the water ran down the altar and filled the ditch. Then when it was time for the evening sacrifice, Elijah prayed:

Elijah:(Praying to God) Our Lord, you are the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. Now, prove that you are the God of this nation, and that I, your servant, have done this at your command. Please answer me, so these people will know that you are the Lord God, and that you will turn their hearts back to you.

Narrator: The Lord immediately sent fire, and it burned up the sacrifice, the wood, and the stones. It scorched the ground everywhere around the altar and dried up every drop of water in the ditch.

People: (crying and shouting) The Lord is God! The Lord is God!

Elijah: Grab the prophets of Baal! Don't let any of them get away

Narrator: So the people captured the prophets, and took them away. A short time later, the sky grew black

with clouds, the wind rose, and for the first time in three years, a heavy rain began to fall. God had not only defeated the prophets of Ba'al and proved His power, but He had fulfilled his promise to send rain on the land.

If you would like to read more about Elijah the prophet, check out the Old Testament books of I and II Kings.

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Printed on February 20, 2020