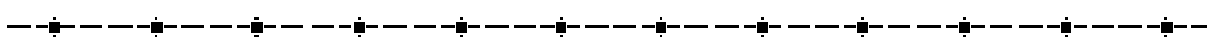


# GOD'S BIG PLAN

## Showdown at Mount Carmel 1 Kings 16-18

**Supporting Scriptures:** Exodus 20:1-6; 1 Kings 12-15



**Lesson Goals:**  
To see that there is no other god but God.  
To see that God alone is worthy of worship.  
To see that God answers prayer.

**Scripture Memory** Call out to me. I will answer you. Jeremiah 33:3a (NIRV)

**NOTE:** Familiarize yourself with this story. Tell it as a STORY, not as “He said. . . She said” or read. To reinforce that these ideas are not your own, hold your Bible as you tell the story.

**The Lesson:** Let’s review what we have learned so far about God’s Big Plan. (Review the previous stories, encouraging more and more students to share.)

Who was Israel’s first king? (Saul) Was God happy about giving the people a king? (No.) Why not? (It meant that they were rejecting Him.) Did King Saul obey God? (No.) What did God do about King Saul’s disobedience? (God began looking for his replacement while Saul was still king.) Who was King Saul’s replacement? (David.) Did David please God? (Yes.) Why? (Because he obeyed God.) And who was king after David? (Solomon, King David’s son.) Did Solomon obey God? (He started out obeying God, but ended in disobedience.) What had God promised King David about the kings who would come after him? (That obedience would guarantee a descendant of King David on the throne, but disobedience would end it all.)

Just as God had promised, God would not continue to place a descendant of King David on the throne because of Solomon’s disobedience. God had also promised King Solomon something else because of his disobedience. King’s Solomon’s kingdom, the nation of Israel, would be divided. King Solomon’s son became king after him. While he was king, though, God made two nations out of the nation of Israel. King Solomon’s son ruled two of the twelve tribes, called Judah, after one of those tribes. Another king ruled the other ten tribes that continued to be called Israel. Both tribes had many kings. Some of the kings were good and followed the example of King David by obeying and trusting God, but most of the kings were bad. God sent special men, prophets, to tell the people God’s message. One of those men was Elijah and he had a message for one of those bad kings, Ahab. Ahab was the king of Israel.

**READ: Exodus 20:1-5a (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)**

When the children of Israel left Egypt, and their slavery, God gave them something very special in the desert. He gave them His word. Part of God’s word, part of His plan, was that only He would be worshipped. That sounds a little prideful, but you have to remember that it was God who has always been and He is the one who created angels. He created the earth and everything in it, including man and woman. And He is the one who keeps this world going. He is the only one worthy of worship; no one else deserves our worship.

The problem is, that bad King Ahab had married a very bad woman and they worshipped other gods. Many of the people of Israel had followed the king and queen in their disobedience. Elijah challenged the

prophet's of their gods to a showdown. The place: Mount Carmel. The rules: pick a bull to sacrifice, place it and wood on the altar, but no fire! The plan: Ask your god to send fire from heaven to burn up the sacrifice. Well, all morning King Ahab's prophets danced around and prayed and cried, but no fire came. "Maybe your god is asleep. Or he could be away on a trip. Shout a little louder," taunted Elijah. So, they shouted until the evening, but no fire came.

Then Elijah repaired the altar of God. He put wood on the altar and then the bull. Then Elijah asked for something strange. "Bring four large jars of water and pour them over the altar," said Elijah. Again and again he asked for the water until twelve large jars of water had been poured over the altar, the bull, and the wood and was running off onto the ground and into a ditch that was around the altar! Now, everything that Elijah was going to ask God to burn up by fire was all wet. But Elijah stopped, and prayed to the God who is creator of all, the God who made and kept promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Elijah prayed, "Today let everyone know that you are God in Israel. . . . Lord, answer me. Then these people will know that you are the one and only God. They'll know that you are turning their hearts back to you again."

And then, God answered Elijah's prayer. God heard Elijah and sent fire from heaven. The fire burned up the wet bull. It burned up the wet wood. The fire licked up the water in the ditch around the altar and even burned the stones and dirt! The people were amazed. They fell down flat with their faces toward the ground saying, "The Lord is the one and only God! The Lord is the one and only God!"

**Review:**

Let's review what you have learned. Who would like to retell the story? (Ask your group if anything was left out or told inaccurately.) Would anyone else like to retell the story?

What were King Ahab and his wife doing that were like King Solomon at the end of his life? (They were worshipping other gods.) What does God say about that? (He says not to put other gods in place of Him.) Why should we obey Him? (Because He created us and everything we see. He deserves our worship and obedience.) What does God do when we disobey? The punishment is different for everyone, but God cannot and will not reward disobedience.

What shows God that we believe Him and trust Him? Our obedience. And God rewards obedience. What can we learn from Elijah's obedience? That God listens to His people and God answers. The Bible tells us, though, that if we enjoy having sin in our heart, God will not listen to us (Ps 66:18 NIV). The first prayer, that God will hear us when we ask Him to take that sin away. How can we do that? By believing that God sent His One and Only Son to pay the price for our sin. Are you tired of enjoying the sin that is so bad for you? Are you ready to accept God's gift of His Son?

**Planning for Next Week  
Lesson 22 • The Promise  
Isaiah 9:1-7**

# PRESCHOOL LESSON

**SING:** "He's Got The Whole World in His Hands"

**SHARE:** Some of the kings that followed King Solomon were good and followed the example of his father, King David, by obeying and trusting God. But most of the kings were bad. God sent special men, prophets, to tell the people God's message. One of those men was Elijah and he had a message for one of those bad kings, Ahab. Ahab was the king of Israel.

The problem is, that bad King Ahab had married a very bad woman and they worshipped other gods. Many of the people of Israel had followed the king and queen in their disobedience even though God said to worship only Him. Elijah challenged the prophet's of their gods to a showdown. The place: Mount Carmel. The rules: pick a bull to sacrifice, place the bull and wood on the altar, but no fire! The plan: Ask your god to send fire from heaven to burn up the sacrifice. Well, all morning King Ahab's prophets danced around and prayed and cried, but no fire came. "Maybe your god is asleep. Or he could be away on a trip. Shout a little louder," taunted Elijah. So, they shouted until the evening, but no fire came.

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**PRAY:** Thank you, God, for being you. Thank you for hearing and answering our prayers.

# LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- **Memory Verse Activity** - Divide your students into two groups. Practice the verse like a cheer with one group cheering, "Call out to me." The other group will respond by cheering, "I will answer you." And everyone will cheer in unison, "Jeremiah 33:3."
- **Play "Books of the Bible Bingo."** Simply call out books of the Bible if your students are beginners, otherwise give clues like, "The book before Exodus."
- **Play a drawing game.** Using main events from the current and previous lessons, draw a picture on a chalkboard or whiteboard that illustrates that main event. Give your students the opportunity to guess what story you have drawn. (If appropriate, give a prize or extra snack to the one who guesses correctly.)
- **Act out the story.** Assign each student a part - altar, wood, water, bull, Elijah, prophets of Baal, etc. All extras can be the people at the end who praise God. As you tell the story, each person will play their part by doing what the scripture says. For example: As you read about the altar being prepared, the person playing the altar will kneel on the floor with their back straight. "The wood" will lay across the altar and "the bull" on top of that, and so on.
- **For adults or older students:** Read James 5:16 and talk about prayer. What could Elijah do because he believed in God's greatness?