

Lesson B2.3 - Our God is Greater



Teacher's Pages with Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

For Lower Elementary Students and Classes

Recommended for students in Preschool, Kindergarten, and Grades 1-2.

Quick Facts for the Teacher

Lesson Summary: 1 Kings 18:17-40

► Bible Characters: Elijah, Baal's prophets, God

The prophet Elijah was upset when he saw his people turning to the false god Baal for help and guidance. Elijah told them that they could not worship both God and Baal, but must choose one. In today's story, Elijah challenges the prophets of Baal to a fire-making contest. Who will win this competition — God or Baal? You guessed it: God!

Brief Bible Background

► Today's Lesson is from the Old Testament

► Scripture Section: Division

Because of disputes in the royal house, God's people were split into a Northern Kingdom (Israel) and a Southern Kingdom (Judah). It was a bad time, with much false worship and idolatry.

For More Information

The primary role of a Sunday School teacher for Preschool, Kindergarten (pre-readers), and Early Elementary (new readers) is to simply tell children the stories of Scripture and introduce them to the major characters of the Bible.

Teachers who want to know more about the lessons for their own familiarity with the story are encouraged to read the information in the SEED Upper Elementary and Youth Teacher's Pages.

a. Classroom Greeting

Teachers should arrive 10 to 15 minutes before class and greet students and parents by name. Write the day's Bible Message on the white board or poster board for all the kids to see. Have kids gather on a rug or in a dedicated meeting space. Encourage the children to learn each other's names.

b. Opening Prayer Song

This same opening song should be sung every week with young kids — remember, repetition is good. The words to this song are sung to the tune "A Sailor Went to Sea, Sea, Sea." Feel free to clap along!

**God welcomes you today, day, day
to listen, learn and play, play, play.**

**So hear me when I say, say, say
it's time to start! Let's pray, pray, pray:**

All lift hands and say: **Please bless us, Lord. Amen!**

c. Introduction to Today's Message

*Teacher's Script (student responses are in **bold**).*

Have you ever felt envious when someone else had something you didn't have? But what if that thing looked great only on the *outside*? In today's story, that's just what happened. People thought a false god looked shiny and fancy, but it had no real power. It was empty. They had to learn that **Our God is greater** than any false one! Say that with me: **Our God is greater!**

Tell about a time when you realized what you already had was actually all you needed. *[Choose volunteers.]*

The prophet Elijah got upset with his people. They were praying to a false god named Baal because he seemed new and exciting. Elijah showed the people that Baal had no power. They learned that "**Our God is greater!**"

d. SEED Bible Story Video

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This may be displayed simply on a laptop computer or tablet. If the classroom is equipped with a computer video monitor or video projector, the video can be displayed in a larger size.

e. Read the Story with Poster Pictures

The Bible Story has been divided into four parts, each with an accompanying Poster Picture. The teacher should hold up or point to the relevant Poster Picture while reading the individual part of the story, asking questions while reading. Posters may be printed on letter-sized paper, or enlarged and printed on ledger-sized paper if a bigger printer is available. Poster pictures may also be opened as a PDF on a computer screen, scrolling through each of the four pages.



Picture 1

Tell the children: A prophet is someone who shares God's messages. Elijah was a prophet, just as Samuel had been one before him. But as Elijah looked around at the Israelites, he felt unhappy. God's own people had forgotten him.

Read the caption: Elijah saw that the people of God were doing a bad thing. They were praying to a false god. This god's name was Baal.

- *Point out Baal in this picture. [He's the orange-colored statue with horns.]*
- *What are Baal's prophets holding? [A bowl with some sort of offering to Baal. They are trying to get Baal to answer them and do what they want.]*



Picture 2

Tell the children: So Elijah decided to do something about this. He stood in front of the people and the 450 prophets of Baal. And he challenged them all.

Read the caption: "Either Baal is God, or the Lord is God," Elijah said. "You can't have both. Baal is just a statue. He can't do anything!"

- *Look at the picture. What is Elijah feeling and doing? [He's frustrated and is trying to explain things and convince the people to stop worshiping Baal.]*
- *Have you ever tried to convince a group to do something? When? [Choose volunteers to answer.]*



Picture 3

Tell the children: Elijah had an idea. He and the prophets of Baal would each make an altar large enough for a giant fire. Then, they would call on their gods to do make a fire. Whichever one succeeded would prove to be the one, true God.

Read the caption: Baal's prophets piled wood on their altar. They prayed to Baal. Louder and louder they yelled for fire. But nothing happened.

- *What is piled up in front of Baal? [Wood, covered with kindling sticks and straw.]*
- *Look at Elijah. What might he be thinking? [He knows Baal can't start a fire and is curious to see what the priests of Baal will do.]*



Picture 4

Tell the children: Now it was Elijah's turn. He built an altar with twelve stones. Around that, he dug a trench. He put the wood on top. What was he going to do?

Read the caption: Elijah had people pour water on his altar! When he prayed to the Lord, a big fire lit up! Now, the people saw who the true God was.

- *Point out the water in this picture. [It's in a trench around the stones. Water had been poured everywhere and soaked the wood and ground.]*
- *What is Elijah doing? [Praying to God and asking for him to make a fire.]*
- *What do you imagine the people are thinking? [They are probably amazed and realize who is the real God. Maybe they feel upset that they worshiped Baal.]*

Remember today's message: **Our God is greater!**

f. Bible Story Rhyme (optional)

The Bible Story Rhyme below is the same one found on the Upper Elementary Student sheet. The teacher can read the beginning of the line and see if the children can finish the last rhyming word of the phrase.

*Elijah challenged Baal's priests
knowing God could not be beat.
"I will show you who's the liar.
The real God will send down fire!"*

*So then the priests of Baal cried out,
and around their altar limped about.
Not a sound from Baal was heard.
Then it was Elijah's turn.*

*With water he wet down the altar,
then he prayed and did not falter.
God's fire burned both wood and stone,
proving he's the Lord alone!*

g. Young Children's Activity (optional)

Simple in-class crafts or activities may be completed by the children if there is time left at the end of class. (Note: For the youngest children, simply providing crayons and letting them complete the Coloring Page may serve as the "craft" for the day.)

Craft: Shiny Objects**Materials:**

- Aluminum foil

Instructions:

Give each person one or two long pieces of aluminum foil. Challenge them to create the best shiny object they can make out of the foil. Share ideas for things they could try to create: A fancy ring, a crown, a little idol of some sort, a necklace, etc.

When everyone has made something, go around the room and invite them to tell what they were trying to make, and why they think it's the "best" one in the class. After everyone has had a chance to make a pitch, ask:

- "Do any of these objects, shiny and fascinating as they may be, have the power to make it rain outside?" [No]
- "Do any of them have the power to answer our prayers?" [No]
- "Who does?" [God] "So ... which is greater, our God or this thing you made?" [God] "That's right! Remember that with other things too. Our God is greater!"

**h. Song (optional)**

You can listen to the tune of this children's Bible song online on YouTube, Vimeo, or other sites.

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms

For this song, kids can stand in a circle or a line with arms over each other's shoulders. Sway back and forth in rhythm to the song.

**What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
leaning on the everlasting arms;
what a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
leaning on the everlasting arms.**

Refrain:

**Leaning, leaning,
safe and secure from all alarms;
leaning, leaning,
leaning on the everlasting arms.**

i. Story Review: Then What Happened?

Then What Happened is a learning game that helps kids retell the story and remember the flow of events. The teacher reads the starting sentence and then chooses a student to continue the story. There are two rules: each student may only add one sentence or say one new thing, and events in the story need to be in the right order.

- **Start: Elisha saw that his people were praying to Baal, rather than to the one, true God. Then what happened?**

If the younger kids have trouble, cut a Take-Home Page into four pieces (with no words) and let the kids put the illustrations in order while they tell the story.

j. Closing Prayer

Send the children home with the Take-Home Page, and tell them to ask their parents to read the story to them again (or, perhaps, they can read it to their parents).

End class with this closing prayer, repeated each week for memorization.

*Dear God, we thank you for this day,
And as we go along our way,
We ask your blessing, and your care,
On friends and family everywhere.
Please bless our church, and teachers too,
And help us always follow you. Amen.*