

LESSON PLAN

ELIJAH BECAME FEARFUL

1 Kings 18 – 19

Lesson Memory Verse: Proverbs 29:25 “The fear of men brings a snare, but whoever puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe.”

Lesson Aim: The fear of man will trap us, but trust in the Lord will keep us safe.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Have you ever been chased by a mean person? Maybe you know a bully who is always pushing other kids around and being mean to them. Has that ever happened to you? Do you remember how you felt? In our lesson today, Elijah felt the same way when a wicked queen tried to kill him. Elijah became afraid. I’m sure you would be afraid, too, if someone tried to kill you. But our memory verse tells us that it is dangerous to be afraid of a bad person. Let’s find out what it says.

HE (for Authority): Our memory verse is found in Proverbs 29:25. There are two important things that the Lord teaches us in this verse. First: if we fear people, we will be trapped. Explain that a “snare” is a trap to catch animals. Second: if we trust Him, we will be kept safe. Can you trust the Lord to take care of you when someone wants to make you afraid hope so. Let’s find out what happened to Elijah.

The meaning of words and phrases in this verse:

“**Fear of man**” – being afraid of a person

“**Snare**” – a trap to catch animals

“**Trust**” – confidence or faith

SEE (for Apperception and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. In our lesson today we will see how Elijah was almost trapped by his fear of a woman, but was saved by his trust in the Lord.

I. Elijah Fought Baal (1 Kings 18)

You will remember that last week we saw that Elijah was not afraid of King Ahab tried to capture him, but trusted in God to protect him. Ahab was a bad king that let his wicked wife, Jezebel, teach the people of Israel to worship Baal instead of the true God. Then remember how Elijah boldly challenged the 450 prophets of Baal to call fire down from heaven to burn up their sacrifice and they could not do it, but Elijah prayed to the true God and He did it before the eyes of Ahab and all his people. Was Elijah afraid of the wicked king? No! Was he afraid of Baal? No! Elijah wasn’t afraid because he was trusting in the Lord. He knew that God would keep him safe as long as he trusted Him, just like our memory verse says.

WE: We should be bold and stand up for God like Elijah did. If we do, God will keep us safe.

II. Elijah Feared Jezebel (1 Kings 19:1-8).

Something strange happened to Elijah. Suddenly he became afraid of Queen Jezebel. He no longer trusted the Lord. What made Elijah afraid?

Jezebel was very religious in her worship of Baal, the false god that made her rebel against the true God of Israel. She was religious, but dangerous to anyone that opposed her. When Jezebel heard what Elijah had done on the mountain, and how he had killed 450 prophets of Baal, she was very, very angry. She was so angry that she sent a messenger to Elijah saying that she was going to kill him. This is what made Elijah afraid. He suddenly forgot about the great show of God’s power when He sent fire from heaven to burn up his sacrifice. All he could think about was Jezebel’s threat to kill him.

WE: We must not forget that we serve almighty God, who is stronger than any god or any person. We must trust God and He will keep us safe. Do not be like Elijah when he was afraid. Be like Elijah when he was bold.

God had protected Elijah from Ahab, and He was able to protect him from Jezebel. But Elijah became afraid of Jezebel and failed to trust the Lord. As a result, he ran from her and failed to put an end to Baal worship in Israel. God had to use other men to do it.

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WE: If we forget to trust God and become afraid of someone, we will fail to finish the work that He wanted us to do. Be strong in the Lord so you will not be afraid what someone can do to you.

Notice, however, that God still loved Elijah even though he did not trust Him, as he should have, and ran far away from Jezebel. God showed His love to him when he was running away from Jezebel. He sent an angel to feed him two times with food that gave him enough strength to travel for forty days until he reached Mount Horeb, a journey of 200 miles from Beersheba. This was the same mountain where God met Moses and gave him the Ten Commandments.

WE: We should remember that God loves us, too, even if we fail to finish the work that He wants us to do. That is no excuse for not finishing His work, but it is comforting to know that He will always care for those who have received Jesus as their Savior.

III. Elijah Faced the Lord (1 Kings 19:9-18)

Elijah came to **the** cave on Mount Horeb. (The article with “cave” in the original Hebrew may indicate it was the very cave that Moses had used when he met with the Lord hundreds of years earlier.) Here the Lord spoke with Elijah and asked him what he was doing at Horeb. He was supposed to be in Israel fighting for Him against Baal. After Elijah told the Lord that his enemies were trying to kill him, God told him to stand outside of the cave and watch for Him.

Elijah obeyed the Lord. First, he saw a great and strong wind which tore up the mountains and broke up the rocks, but the Lord was not in the wind. Then God sent an earthquake, but He was not in that either. Then a fire came, but He was not in the fire. Elijah was puzzled. He thought surely the Lord would have been in at least one of these powerful acts of nature. While he was thinking, he heard a still small voice (a voice of gentle stillness – LXX). Immediately he knew it was the Lord. The Lord wanted Elijah to know that His Word is more powerful and more important than tornadoes, earthquakes or even fire from heaven. When He has spoken a word against His enemies, they will be defeated, and when He has spoken a word to His servants, they should obey. Then He told Elijah to get back to work for Him. It was too bad that Elijah had become afraid of Jezebel. As a result, he did not completely destroy Baal worship. Now the Lord gave him a new plan. He was to anoint three men who would destroy the worship of Baal in Israel and in Judah, a work that he had failed to do.

WE: We need to believe God’s Word is more powerful than a tornado or an earthquake or even fire from heaven. We need to believe God’s Word and obey it. When we do, we will have the power of God to destroy the work of His enemies.

IV. Elijah Followed the Lord (1 Kings 19:19-21)

Elijah immediately left Horeb to obey the Lord. When he arrived in Horeb, he thought he was the only prophet of God that was left, but God told him that there were 7,000 who had not bowed to Baal and one of them was to take his place in the fight against Baal. That man was Elisha. Elijah found him and cast his mantle on him. This showed Elisha that he was called to be the prophet to take Elijah’s place. It must have been hard for Elijah to choose someone else to take his place when he had failed, but he obeyed the Lord and found the man that the Lord had chosen.

WE: We must obey the Lord even though He may tell us to do something that we do not want to do. It is important that we obey everything that He tells us to do.

BE (for Action): What happened when Elijah trusted the Lord and obeyed His word (18:36)? (The Lord sent fire down from heaven and gave him a great victory over Baal.) What happened when Elijah became afraid of Jezebel? (He ran away from her and did not destroy the worship of Baal in Israel and in Judah. Instead, he tried to protect his life.) What did the Lord teach Elijah on Mount Horeb? (God’s Word is more powerful and more important to obey than anything else in the world.) Who did the Lord choose to help destroy Baal worship when Elijah failed? (Elisha) If you want to work for God and not be afraid of people, raise your hand. If you are not afraid, I want you to tell that to the Lord when we bow our heads for prayer. (Give them an opportunity to pray in class.)