

ELIJAH CHALLENGES THE BAAL PROPHETS

1 Kings 18

Lesson Memory Verse: Romans 8:31 "What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Lesson Aim: Discover and use the almighty power of God to fight against Satan and defeat him.

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

KEY (for Attention): Billy was the big bully in the neighborhood. Whenever he could start a fight with a younger boy, he would, and it always seemed that he was fighting with Timmy. He would push Timmy and tease him until he got so angry that he would fight back and then Billy would beat him up. Poor Timmy was always running home with a bloody nose or a black eye or a torn shirt. It just was not fair. Everyone felt sorry for Timmy, but no one dared to help him. Everyone was afraid of Billy.

Then one day a new boy moved into town. He was bigger than Billy and looked a lot stronger. He turned out to be a good Christian boy, who did not fight, but everyone was sure he could do it if he wanted to. His name was Dan. Dan and Timmy became good friends. Dan and Timmy were almost always seen together and for this reason Billy stopped teasing and fighting with Timmy. However, one day Timmy was alone on his way home with a few groceries his mother had asked him to get at the store. Just then Billy spied him and ran across the street with a funny kind of smile on his face. Timmy was worried.

"Hi, Timmy," he called. "What do you have in your bag?"

"Just a few groceries," Timmy said nervously.

"Got some candy?" Billy asked.

"No, just some groceries for my mother," Timmy fearfully answered.

"Bet you do have some candy!" And with that, Billy took the bag away from Timmy and began looking through the bag, throwing the groceries on the ground.

Timmy was now half afraid and half angry. With that kind of feeling he said, "Billy, give me my groceries back, right now!"

Billy was quick to reply, "What are you going to do about it?"

Just then, Dan came around the corner and saw Timmy near tears, ready to fight for his groceries.

"Hey, what's going on here?" he said.

Timmy quickly told him what Billy had done and Billy looked a little afraid. Billy said that he had not done anything wrong and that Timmy was just trying to pick a fight with him. Dan knew better and he told Billy that if he ever heard of him fighting or even bothering Timmy again, he would find him and teach him a lesson that he would not forget. Then he helped Timmy pick up his groceries, put them back in the bag and left Billy standing there. After that day Timmy was never bothered by Billy again. Timmy was very happy that Dan had moved into his neighborhood, and he was happy that he was his friend. Today we are going to hear a story about a Friend that was better than Dan and more powerful than 450 men.

HE (for Authority): Before we hear the story, let's find out about this Friend in Romans 8:31. Who is this Friend? (God) If God is for us (He is our Friend), who can be against us and win? (No one) If we love Jesus and have asked Him to be our Savior, God will be with us as our Friend. Do you love Jesus? Have you asked Jesus to be your Savior? If you love Jesus and He is your Savior, God is with you and will protect you. I hope you thank Him for being with you at all times.

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 story today Elijah was brave because he knew God was with him. He did not worry about all the people that were against him. He knew he was safe when God was for him. (Visual aid idea: draw a picture with stick figures for each major part of this story.)

I. Elijah's Message from God (18:1-2)

God told Elijah to tell Ahab the good news that He would send rain again. Elijah obeyed and went to tell Ahab that God would let it rain again. Remember, it had not rained for 3½ years, so this was very good news.

WE: We also have been given good news from God that He wants us to tell to all people in the world. This is the good news of salvation from all our sins. When a person believes Jesus paid the penalty for his or her sins by His death on the cross and that person receives Him as his or her Savior, that person becomes a friend of God. If you are that person, will you obey God like Elijah did and tell the world about this good news?

II. Elijah's Meeting with Ahab (18:3-24)

Elijah told Ahab that he wanted to have a meeting with the 450 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. After Ahab got the prophets together, Elijah told the people to choose whether they would follow the Lord or Baal. The people refused to say what they would do. So Elijah told them that both he and the Baal prophets should prepare a sacrifice, but neither he nor the prophets were to put any fire under their sacrifices. Then the God that would send fire from heaven to burn up the sacrifice would be the true God. The people agreed to Elijah's challenge.

WE: We must learn to be bold like Elijah when we meet people, because God is with us. We must not be afraid. Remember Proverbs 28:1; 29:25. We must be bold as a lion, because we will be safe when we put our trust in the Lord.

III. Elijah's Mockery of Baal's Prophets (18:26-29)

The Baal prophets did their best to get their god to send fire from heaven. They cried to their god and cut themselves to show how serious they were, but nothing happened. Then Elijah mocked them and told them to cry louder, but they still could not get their god to answer!

WE: We know why Baal did not send fire from heaven, don't we? Who will tell me? (Baal was only an idol; he was not alive.) There are many false gods in the world that have no life, so they cannot give life. They are just idols made of gold, silver, wood or stone; they have no power (Isaiah 44:8-20).

IV. Elijah's Might from God (18:30-40)

Elijah prepared the Lord's altar, then he poured twelve barrels of water over the sacrifice, and finally he prayed to the Lord. Notice: he said he did all these things at God's word (v. 36). God had given him the command to have this contest with the Baal prophets. And now that he had obeyed God, Elijah asked Him to do the rest. Immediately God sent fire. It burned up everything: the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the water. God showed his awesome power to the 450 prophets of Baal and to the people.

WE: We must **obey** what God tells us to do before we **pray** for Him to show His awesome power. We cannot expect His power to come when we pray, if we do not obey. Will you obey His command to tell your friends about Jesus? Then pray and God will use His mighty power to save them at the right time.

Elijah's Ministry by Faith (18:41-46)

When the false prophets that worshipped Baal were destroyed, Elijah by faith in God's promise told Ahab that an abundance of rain was coming (v. 41). But Elijah's job was not finished. Then he went to the top of Mount Carmel and waited for God to send the rain. He fell on the ground and put his face between his knees. We do not know if he prayed or meditated on God's promise, but we know that he sent his servant to look toward the Mediterranean Sea for a cloud. His servant returned and said that he did not see a cloud. This happened six times before he saw a little cloud, the size of a man's hand on the seventh time. This was enough proof for Elijah to know that God was sending the rain He has promised. Elijah believed in God and he received from God.

WE: We need to **believe** Jesus' promise to make us fishers of men when we follow Him. Then at the right time we will **receive** the blessing of that promise when our friends come to Jesus for salvation.

BE (for Action): Why was there no rain in Israel for 3½ years? (They had worshipped Baal, a false god.) How did the Lord show that He was stronger than Baal? (Contest by fire) When Elijah obeyed God, he prayed to God and He sent fire to burn up his sacrifice, which the Baal prophets could not do. You must learn to obey before you pray, then God will answer your prayers with power. When Elijah believed God's promise to send rain, he had to wait before he received God's promise of rain. If you believe Jesus' promise to make you a fisher of men, you must wait until you receive the blessing of His promise. Will you obey before you pray? Will you believe until you receive? This is how to defeat Satan in your life.