



LESSON 4 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Can Speak to Us

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 19

WORD OF WONDER: James 4:8a

Have you ever been in a situation where the odds seemed stacked against you? When you felt like you'd given it all you had, and you wanted to throw in the towel? Despite those feelings, God's plans are greater than our discomforts, worries, disbeliefs, and fears.

I invite you to read 1 Kings 19, and as you read, note the places where you empathize with Elijah.

For me, it was Elijah's feeling of wanting to throw in the towel. We've all felt the weight of the day-to-day grind. How much sweeter, then, are the moments when we hear God say to us like He did to Elijah, "Get up" and "Go out" (1 Kings 19:7, 11)?

God doesn't count us out.

The fact that you're reading this right now shows that no matter what else you're facing in life, God's voice is still guiding you. He gets what you're going through, and He has not abandoned you.

The next time you kneel, sit, or lay down ... imagine the voice of God saying to you, "Get up." He's got you in this moment. And He's got you in the next. So be ready for God to speak in ways you'd never expect.

—**Andrae Jones**

Nextgen Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 4 FOR LEADERS GOD WHISPERS TO ELIJAH

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Elijah was a prophet during the reign of Israel's King Ahab. As a great prophet, Elijah's life was full of dramatic moments—being fed by ravens, multiplying a widow's grain and oil, raising her son from the dead, and calling fire down from heaven.

WHAT?

After significant miracles and revelations from God, Elijah found himself tired and afraid. Fleeing for his life, he asked the God who had sustained him to take his life. In this moment of Elijah's weakness, God promised His presence, which came in an unexpected way.

WHERE?

Elijah mostly prophesied to the northern kingdom of Israel, condemning the idolatry of Baal under wicked King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. In his exhaustion, Elijah ran into the wilderness of the southern kingdom, where God spoke to him on Mount Sinai.

WHEN?

When King Ahab married Jezebel, he worshiped her god, Baal. Elijah prophesied during the reign of King Ahab, eventually defeating the prophets of Baal and proving God is the one true God. Queen Jezebel was so angry she sent word that she planned to kill Elijah.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Even when the northern kingdom of Israel was ruled by ungodly kings and God's people turned away from Him, God showed His love and faithfulness to the Israelites by sending prophets to share His message. After Elijah, God sent Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Micah to call His people back to Him.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Activity: What Sound Does It Make?

In our story today, we're going to hear about different sounds someone heard as he was listening for God to speak to him. We'll learn that God speaks to us too! Do you like to listen? Allow the kids to respond. It's OK if it's hard to listen sometimes. We can listen for different sounds. God speaks, and it's not always the way we'd expect.

Let's play a game to see how you listen and know different sounds!

If you have younger kids, make all of the animal sounds yourself. If you have older kids, call them up one at a time and whisper an animal sound to make. Encourage the other kids to guess the animal that makes that sound. To make it easier, you could call out the animal and encourage all the kids as a group to make each animal sound.

Use the following animals:

Pig	Bumblebee
Chicken	Turkey
Cow	Cat
Horse	Monkey
Dog	Snake
Donkey	Elephant
Owl	Fox
Frog	

Does anyone know what sounds a fox makes? I'm not sure either! Does anyone know what sound God makes or how He talks to us? He speaks in different ways. We'll learn more about it today.

Our Wonder Truth today is GOD CAN SPEAK TO US.

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

GOD—*Point up.*

CAN SPEAK—*Hold your hands to your mouth.*

TO US—*Point to yourself.*



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Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, thank You for all the ways You spoke to Your people long ago. And thank You for speaking to us today! Help us to recognize Your voice when You speak. We love You! In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible

Ask: What is this called? ***The Bible***

Ask: Why is the Bible special? ***Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.***

Tell the Bible Story

The Big Picture Bible, page 98

Elijah Ran from Jezebel

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

Come near to God, and he will come near to you.

- James 4:8a



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LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Activity: Wind, Fire, Earthquake, Whisper

In our story today, Elijah saw and heard big and loud things. What were they? Allow the kids to respond. Elijah saw and heard a loud whooshing wind, a big crackling fire, and shaky, loud earthquake. Was God in any of those things? No! How did God speak to Elijah? Allow the kids to respond. God spoke to Elijah in a gentle, quiet whisper.

God speaks to us too. It might not be how we expect. It might not be a loud booming voice. It might be through a sunset, or through a Bible verse, or story from the Bible. It might be through a parent or leader at church, or through prayer or worship. We can listen to God, and we can talk with God!

Let's do an activity to remember what Elijah saw. When I say "wind," you can blow as much air as you can to sound like wind. Pause to let the kids do it. When I say, "fire," you can wiggle your arms and your whole body like a wiggling, crackling flame of fire. Pause to let the kids do it.

When I say, "earthquake," you can stomp and jump and move your body as much as you can, like a shaky earthquake. Pause to let the kids do it. Then, when I say, "whisper," you can quietly whisper, "God can speak to us." Pause to let the kids do it.

Call out *wind*, *fire*, *earthquake*, and *whisper*, and invite the kids to do the actions with each word.

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish the activity, pray with them and thank God for speaking to us.

God, help us have ears that listen for You and hear Your voice this week. We thank You that You care about us and speak to us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: God never left Elijah, and God will never leave you. May your ears be open for God to speak a special word to your heart in an unexpected way. God loves you!