



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

Curiosity Activity: Charades

Do you think you can tell what someone is saying even if that person doesn't talk? Allow the kids to respond. **Let's play a game where we try to guess what someone is saying when the person doesn't talk at all. It's called Charades. I'll call someone up front and whisper something to that person to act out (without talking!), and the rest of you will try to guess what that person is acting out.**

Use the following ideas (or customize to fit your group of kids):

- Eating a popsicle
- Riding a horse
- Playing basketball
- Dancing like a ballerina
- Sweeping the floor
- Driving a race car
- Climbing a ladder
- Swimming

Today we're going to explore a part of God's big story where God speaks to someone named Elijah. Kind of like how you paid attention in our game, Elijah had to pay close to attention to understand how God would speak to him. We can pay attention and listen for God too! Sometimes we can figure out what is being said even when we can't hear it out loud. We'll learn today how God speaks. Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD CAN SPEAK TO US.**



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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

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Who was the prophet (or messenger of God) in today's story?** (*Elijah*)
- **What did Elijah see next to him when he woke up after the angel touched him?**
(*freshly baked bread and water*)
- **How did God speak to Elijah?** (*through a still, small whisper in a cave*)
- **How do you think Elijah felt when he saw and heard the strong wind, shaky earthquake, and blazing fire?**
- **How does God speak to us?** (*If kids need help, offer ideas such as: through His Word, the Bible; when we pray; through worship songs; through a pastor, parent, or leader.*)
- **Is it easy for you to be a good listener when people talk to you? What about when God speaks?**

In our story today, we learned about how God spoke to Elijah. God speaks to us too! He may not speak loudly or in a way we're used to hearing. He may show us His love or His story through the Bible or through other people. We can listen with our ears and with our hearts.

WORD OF WONDER

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

—James 4:8a



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Game: Guess the Sound

In today's story, Elijah heard God speak. We can hear from God too. We just need to listen and pay attention. Let's do a game to practice listening.

Have the kids stand on one side of the room in a line choose one kid to stand on the opposite side of the room. He will be the guesser. The guesser will close his eyes or turn around while you choose one kid from the group. Whisper an animal name into the ear of that kid and have her make the sound that animal makes while the guesser is still not looking.

When it's your turn to guess, listen closely to the sound. Then open your eyes, point to the person you think made the sound, and say what animal makes that sound. Let the kids take turns being the guesser and the sound-maker.

Use the following animals:

- Pig
- Chicken
- Cow
- Horse
- Dog
- Donkey
- Owl
- Frog
- Bumble bee
- Turkey
- Cat
- Monkey
- Snake
- Elephant
- Fox

Does anyone know what sound a fox makes? Allow the kids to respond. **I'm not sure either. We may not know exactly how God will speak to us, but we can be ready and listen to hear from Him!**



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Responding in Worship: Look and Listen Prayers

Today in God's big story, God spoke to His prophet, Elijah. God still speaks. He can speak to us! It might not be in a big booming voice. It might be through a sunset, or a worship song, or a parent, or church leader. It might be through a Bible verse or story, or worship, or prayer. We just need to pay attention and we will hear Him. When Elijah first came out to meet with God on the mountain, there was a **great big wind!** But was God in the wind? Allow kids to answer and encourage them to share together: No!

You're right! Let's say a prayer together: (Encourage the kids to repeat your words and mimic the motions.)

God, (Put your hands together in praying hands.)

help us look (Hold your hands like binoculars around your eyes.)

for You in unexpected places. (Move your hands sweeping outward.)

Way up high (Reach your hands up to the sky.)

or way down low, (Reach your hands down and touch your toes.)

speak, Lord! (Hold your hands like megaphone over your mouth.)

We're listening! (Put your hands to your ears.)

We're ready to go! (March in place.)

After the prayer, wait a few moments and allow the kids to listen. Then encourage them to get up and move to another spot in the room for the next prayer.

After the great wind, there was a huge earthquake. But was God in the earthquake?

Allow kids to answer and encourage them to share together: No!

Repeat the same prayer.

Invite the kids to move with you to another spot in the room.

After the huge earthquake, there was a crackling, blazing fire. But was God in the fire?

Allow kids to answer and encourage them to share together: No!

Repeat the same prayer.

Then invite the kids to move to a final spot for the last prayer.

After the fire, there was a soft whisper. Was God in that whisper?

(Allow the kids to answer and encourage them to share together: Yes!)

Repeat the same prayer.

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!