



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

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: variety of lightweight objects such as cotton balls, pom-poms, tissues; cardstock sheets, coloring utensils

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: God Whispers to Elijah Coloring Sheet (1 per kid)

Greet the kids warmly and briefly explain the play stations to them. Invite them to play at any of the stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help you get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas about what we'll be learning today?

Play Station: Wind Races

Set up: Set out a variety of lightweight objects such as cotton balls, scarves, pom-poms, tissues, etc. on a low table or on the floor in a line. Set out file folders or handheld fans.

Play: Let the kids take turns using cardstock sheets like a fan to blow the lightweight objects from one side to the other. The kids can have a race moving their objects across the surface by making "wind" with the paper.

Play Station: God Whispers to Elijah Coloring Sheet

Set up: Print one copy per kid of the coloring sheet and set out the coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw something in nature that they like.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

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



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Craft: Listening for God Instruments

SUPPLIES: paper plate tambourines (1 per kid), coloring utensils, stickers, hole punch, bells, pipe cleaner pieces

In our story today, Elijah experienced big and loud things before he heard from God. What were the big and loud things? Allow the kids to respond. He experienced an earthquake, a big fire, and a big wind. Was God in the big things? No! God came quietly. How did God speak to Elijah? In a still, small voice? Yes!

God speaks to us too. He may not speak through fire, wind, or earthquakes. He may not speak in a loud voice or in a whisper. But He can tell us about His love through the Bible or about His creativity and power through nature and creation. He can lead us and guide us through the Holy Spirit. He can offer comfort through a friend. We can listen for God, and we can talk with Him and praise Him. We can praise Him by being loud and by being quiet. We can make noise with instruments to help us remember to listen for God in a lot of ways. Let's all make a lot of noise right now ... Ready, set, go! Encourage the kids to make noise and shout.

Now let's take a moment to be quiet and still before God. Encourage the kids to stand still and quiet.

We're going to make musical instruments that can make loud noises or quiet noises to help us remember we can listen for God and talk with Him.

Give each kid a tambourine and let them decorate it with crayons or markers. Then help them use the pipe cleaner pieces to attach a couple of bells.





Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Game: Loud and Still

We're going to play a game to help us remember God can speak to us! God can do anything. He could have talked to Elijah in a big earthquake. He can speak in loud and big ways or small and still ways. I'm going to turn my back to you so I can't see. You can talk, shout, dance, wiggle, move, skip, or jump all around the room while my back is turned. But when I turn back to face you, freeze and be completely still and quiet. I'll stay facing you for a few seconds. Try not to let me see anyone move or hear anyone when I'm turned around.

Continue several rounds of the game. You can give the kids specific things to do while your back is turned, such as dancing, skipping, singing, jumping, or crawling. For older kids, when you turn to face the kids, if you see or hear anyone, they can sit down and be "out" for the next round. You can let someone else take a turn as the one who turns around and faces the kids.

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!