Illustrations created with Grok (AI) and reviewed by our team

Elijah on Mount Carmel

1 Kings 18:20–39 · Sprout · Ages 5–8

Long ago, Israel had a king named Ahab and a queen named Jezebel. They turned away from God and led the people to worship Baal, a false god. For three years no rain fell, and the whole land was dry and dusty.

God's prophet Elijah gathered all the people on Mount Carmel, together with four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. Elijah told the crowd they could not keep switching back and forth between the Lord and Baal. They had to make up their minds. The people said nothing.

So Elijah suggested a test. Each side would put an offering on a pile of wood, but nobody would light it. Baal's prophets would pray to Baal, and Elijah would pray to the Lord. If fire came down on one of the offerings, everyone would know which God was real. The people agreed that this was a fair test.

Baal's prophets went first. From morning until noon they called out to Baal and danced around their altar. Nothing happened. Elijah began poking fun at their silent god. They shouted even louder, all afternoon long. Still nothing. Not one spark.

Then it was Elijah's turn. He called the people close. He rebuilt the Lord's old altar, which lay in ruins, using twelve stones, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. He

dug a ditch around it and laid the wood and the offering on top. Then he had the people pour big jars of water over everything, three times, until the wood was soaked and the ditch was full.

Elijah prayed, not loudly and not for long. He asked God to make himself known, so that the people would come home to him.

Suddenly fire fell from heaven! It blazed so hot that nothing was left on the altar, and every drop of water in the ditch was gone.

The people bowed down to the ground. With one voice they shouted that the Lord, and no one else, was their God.

God is real, and he listens when we pray.

Talk about it

1. What test did Elijah suggest to show who the true God was?
2. What happened when Baal's prophets prayed? What happened when Elijah prayed?
3. What does this story teach us about praying to God?

Key verse: 1 Kgs 18:39. Look it up in your Bible.