

ENRICHMENT LESSON 10

THE STORY OF THE PROPHET ELIJAH

LESSON NOTES

FOCUS: ELIJAH, A CONFRONTER OF KINGS AND ONE WHO COULD HEAR GOD IN THE STILLNESS (I KINGS 16-19; 2 KINGS 2)

- SACRED STORY
- ENRICHMENT PRESENTATION

THE MATERIAL

- LOCATION: OLD TESTAMENT SACRED STORY SHELVES, MIDDLE SHELF, UNDER "THE ARK AND THE TEMPLE"
- PIECES: CROWN, BLACK RAVEN, GRAIN IN SMALL SACK AND CONTAINER OF OIL, 2 WOODEN ALTARS AND 12 STONES, MOUNTAIN FROM THE TOP SHELF, PAINTING OF ELIJAH GOING UP IN HIS CHARIOT OF FIRE
- CONTROL
- UNDERLAY: DARK BROWN FELT STRIP, 42" X 11"

BACKGROUND

This lesson enriches the core story on the Prophets (*Volume 2*, p. 100). Elijah challenged the kings of Israel for their idolatry and immorality. When he died, a whirlwind carried him up into heaven in a fiery chariot. A whirlwind carried him up into heaven. Elisha picked up Elijah's robe and continued Elijah's work. We have no writings from either of these two prophets, but we have their stories in I and II Kings.

NOTES ON THE MATERIALS

Elijah's story sits on a deep wooden or wicker tray (12" x 8" x 3"). The story icon (5" x 2.5") is an image of Elijah in his chariot. It can be attached to the end or the side of the tray depending on the size of the shelves, the classroom or other considerations. The underlay is a strip of dark brown felt, 42" x 11". Each object in the story is approximately the same size (no more than 4" high and 4" wide) except for the mountain which you take from the top shelf. The story calls for the following objects:

a crown, a black raven, grain in small sack and container of oil, two wooden altars and twelve small stones, the mountain from the top shelf and a painting of Elijah going up in his chariot of fire.

A control for the lesson is folded and placed in the tray for the children to use to check their work. The sequence of the story is important because when you change the sequence, you change the story.

SPECIAL NOTES

The core stories about the People of God are placed on the top of the sacred story shelves. The enrichment stories about the key people in the core stories are placed on the lower shelves of the sacred story section in the room, under the core stories they enrich and extend (see diagram below).

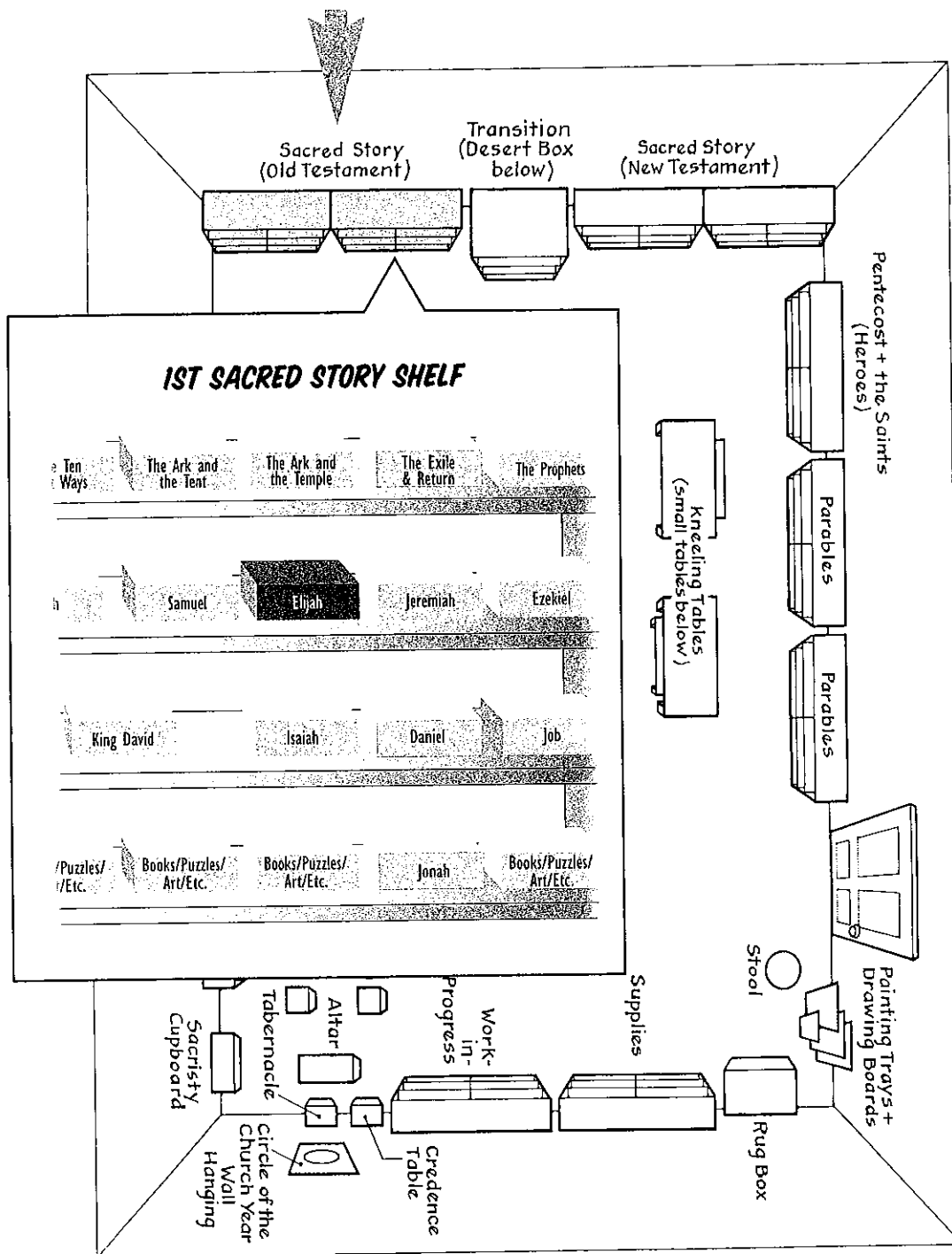
Elijah's story enriches the lesson on the Prophets (*Volume 2*, p. 100). When you introduce the stories in this volume, take care to set them in the larger context of the sacred story of which they are a part. You can accomplish this by:

- presenting the top shelf story the week before and then following up with this,
- presenting the top shelf story briefly on the same day you present this, or
- standing by the shelf and reminding the children of the top shelf story before bringing this one to the circle.

As you tell the story of Elijah place objects on the underlay to remind you of each important event. Unroll the underlay slowly, just enough for each object, as if you are unrolling a life. At the end of the wondering, show the children the control card and then carefully place each object back in the tray saying something about each event like, "Here is one of the ravens that fed Elijah by the river," and so forth. Lastly, model how to roll the underlay back up and place it in the tray.



STORY ICON FOR THE STORY OF THE PROPHET ELIJAH



WHERE TO FIND MATERIALS (TEACHING OBJECTS)

MOVEMENTS

Move with deliberation to the shelf where the material waits.

Pick up the tray containing the material and return to the circle.

Then go and get the mountain from the top shelf as you say...

As you return to the circle you may need to say...

Remove the underlay from the tray and unroll it so that the first object will fit, right to left (the storyteller's perspective).

*Place **Object #1** (crown) on the underlay.*

*Place **Object #2** (black raven) on the underlay.*

*Place **Object #3** (grain in small sack and container of oil) on the underlay. Touch the sack of flour and oil as you mention them.*

WORDS

Watch. Watch where I go.

Oh...we need one more thing.

We need to be ready.

This is the story of Elijah, the prophet. Prophets are people who come so close to God and God comes so close to them that they know what God wants. When the people do not like the message, they often become very angry with the prophet. It's not easy being a prophet.

There was once a king called Ahab who ruled over Israel. He married a woman called Jezebel from a different land. She persuaded Ahab to worship her god, a god called Baal.

Ahab even built a temple and placed a statue of Baal in it. He told the Israelites to bow down and worship Baal. God sent the prophet Elijah to warn the king there would be little rain for the next three years because the people were not following God's laws and were worshipping Baal. This made the king very angry, and Elijah had to go into hiding.

Elijah went to live in the valley of Kerith where there was a running brook. Morning and night, God sent ravens to feed him with bread and meat. And so with both food and water, Elijah was able to stay alive. Still there was no rain in the land, so the brook dried up and Elijah journeyed to a town called Zarephath.

In Zarephath Elijah met a woman gathering sticks for a fire. He asked her for water and bread. The woman told him that all she had was a little flour and oil to make bread, just enough to feed herself and her son. This would be their last meal. Elijah told her to trust in God and if she fed him just a small piece of her bread, the family would never go hungry again. The woman did as Elijah asked, and his promise came true. She was able to feed Elijah and her son for many, many days.

MOVEMENTS

Place **Object #4** (2 altars) on the underlay, leaving room for the 12 stones (Object #5) to surround the second altar. Place them on the underlay when you mention them.

Place **Object #5**: (12 stones) around the second altar.

WORDS

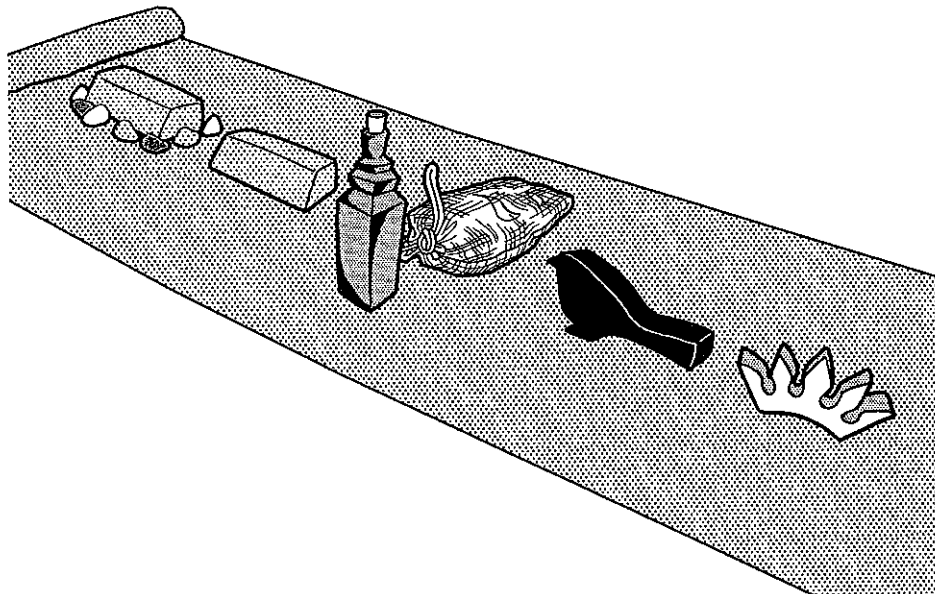
Three years passed. Elijah returned to speak to the king. Ahab was still angry with Elijah, but he listened because there had been no rain.

Elijah told the king to gather all the priests of Baal. There were 450 of them.

The people gathered around them. Elijah said, "You need to choose. Will you worship Baal or the one, true God. Two altars were built. When everything was ready for the sacrifice, Elijah said, "Pray to your god and I will pray to mine, and we will see which one sends down fire to light the offering."

The priests of Baal prayed and prayed all day long for the fire to come. They danced around their altar, but nothing happened. Elijah taunted them: "Shout louder! Maybe your god is thinking. Maybe he's just too busy. Perhaps he's on vacation. I know, maybe he's asleep and you need to wake him up!" The prophets of Baal shouted louder and louder, but still nothing happened.

Finally it was evening, and Elijah called the people to him. He placed twelve stones, one for each of the tribes of Israel, around God's altar. He dug a deep trench around the altar.



TWELVE STONES PLACED AROUND THE SECOND ALTAR (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)

MOVEMENTS

Wave your hand over it all to indicate the water.

*Place **Object #6** (mountain from the top shelf) on the underlay.*

As you mention the wind, earthquake and fire, make gentle movements with your hands over the mountain.

*Place **Object #7** (painting or icon of Elijah and the chariot) on the underlay as you speak of Elijah going into heaven.*

WORDS

He prepared the sacrifice, and when everything was ready, water was poured all over the altar. The trench was filled and overflowing. Then Elijah prayed to God. Fire fell from the heavens and burnt up the offering and dried up all the water. The people fell on their knees saying, "The Lord is God."

It began to rain.

The king Ahab and his wife Jezebel were now even angrier with Elijah, so he had to run for his life and hide on the holy mountain of God. There he found a cave and went inside to sleep.

In the night he thought he heard God calling to him. "What are you doing Elijah?" Elijah answered, "I have done everything you asked of me, but the people do not accept that you are the one, true God and they have killed your prophets. I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me too." God said, "Go out and stand on the mountain. I will come to you."

A powerful wind blew around the mountain, so strong that it smashed the rocks as it passed, but God was not in the wind. An earthquake shook the ground, shattering it. But God was not in the earthquake. A raging fire came and burned everything in its path. But God was not in the fire. Then there was sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his cape around him and stood at the mouth of the cave. He heard a still small voice and knew it was God. God told him to go back to the people, so he did. Ahab and Jezebel died, but he was a prophet in the land of Israel for the rest of his days.

When Elijah was about to die, he was with his friend Elisha. Elisha wanted to inherit a double share of the spirit of God that rested on Elijah. Elijah said, "If you see me as I am taken from you by God, then your request will be granted."

MOVEMENTS

Sit for a moment and look at the lesson from beginning to end to let the story rest. Then begin the wondering.

WORDS

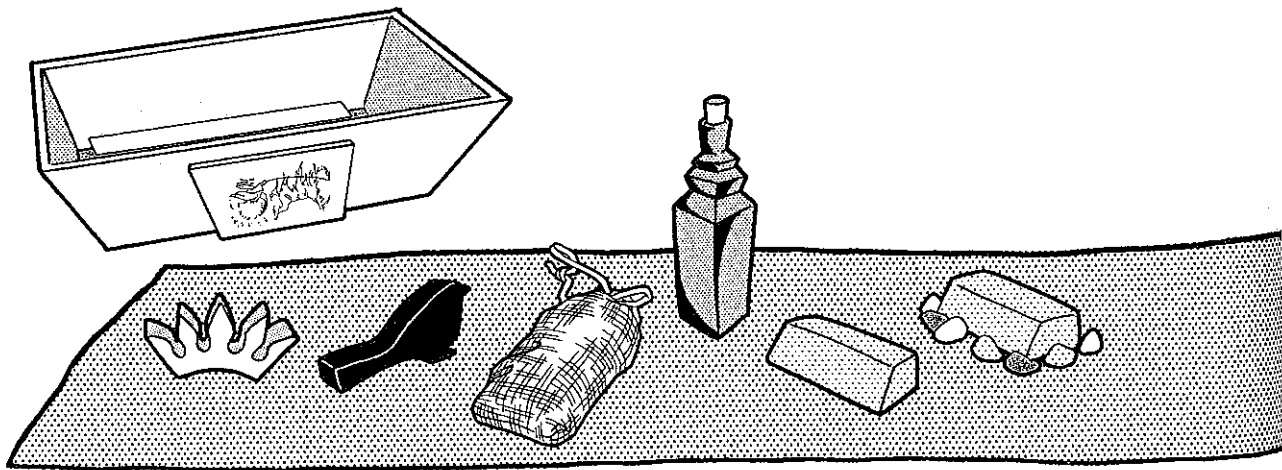
As they were speaking, it was as if a chariot of fire appeared, with horses made of fire, and the two men were separated. Elisha watched as Elijah was taken up into heaven in a whirlwind, and he knew God's spirit was with him and the people knew too. Elisha became a great prophet.

I wonder what part of this story you liked the best?

I wonder what part was the most important?

I wonder what part was about you, or what part you were in?

I wonder if we could leave any of the story out and still have all the story that we need?



FINAL LAYOUT OF THE STORY OF THE PROPHET ELIJAH (CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVE)

MOVEMENTS

After the wondering is over, show the children the control card for them to use to check their own telling of the story. Then put the story away carefully. Pick up each object in reverse order and remind the children what the object is, saying for example, "Here is one of the ravens that fed Elijah by the river..." After all of the objects are back in the tray, carefully model how to roll the underlay back up and place it in the tray as well. Return the lesson to its place on the shelf. Then return to your spot in the circle and dismiss the children one by one to their work.

WORDS

