

# CONFIDENCE

WEEK 4

LIVING LIKE YOU BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAYS IS TRUE

## Elijah and the Prophets of Baal

1 Kings 18

MEMORY VERSE | Psalm 27:13

**M**any kings ruled over Israel. Some were good. Some were not so good. Not one of them, though, was as terrible as King Ahab.

“Hey, that Baal looks like a pretty great god,” Ahab decided. “Let’s worship him!”

Ahab didn’t just ignore the One True God. He led all of Israel to worship the false god Baal. And he looked the other way when his wife, Jezebel, had prophets of the true God killed. Ahab was such a horrible king that God sent the prophet Elijah to warn him.

“Are you here to deliver my new 650z model chariot with the racing stripes?” asked Ahab.

“No. I’m here to deliver a word from the Lord,” announced Elijah.

“Well, that’s a buzzkill,” Ahab grumbled.

“As the Lord God of Israel lives, there won’t be any rain until I say,” Elijah told the king.

“You can’t do that!” protested Ahab, but Elijah left quickly to go into hiding.

Just as Elijah had promised, there was no rain in the land of Israel for nearly three years. As crops failed, Ahab sent messengers everywhere to find and capture Elijah. But God kept Elijah safe and provided him with food and water.

In the third year, God spoke to Elijah. *“Go. Speak to Ahab. Then I will send rain on the land.”*

Elijah traveled to find the king, and met him on the road.

“Is it you, you troubler of Israel?!” growled Ahab.

“Don’t put this on me!” warned Elijah. “You’re the one who’s troubled Israel, because you’ve forgotten the One True God and followed false gods.”

“We need rain!” ordered Ahab.

“Gather all the Israelites at Mount Carmel,” Elijah instructed him. “And all the prophets of Baal, too.”

Ahab narrowed his eyes. “This better be good,” he threatened.

***“The god who  
answers with fire is  
the One True God.”***

The whole nation gathered on the rugged slopes of Mount Carmel. Four hundred and fifty prophets of the fake god Baal buzzed around like angry wasps as they faced off against one prophet of God: Elijah.

He called out to the Israelites. *“How long will it take you to make up your minds? If the Lord is the one and only God, worship him. If Baal is the one and only god, worship him. Let’s settle this now. There’s one of me and 450 prophets of Baal. I’ll put an offering on an altar to God and they can put an offering on an altar to Baal. The god who answers with fire is the One True God.”*

The Israelites applauded. “Well said!” they cried out, glad not to have to decide for themselves.

The prophets of Baal prepared an offering and laid it on their altar. All morning, they danced wildly and cried out. *"Baal! Answer us! Baal! Send fire!"* they shouted.

Nothing happened.

"Maybe Baal is on a trip," Elijah taunted them. "Or taking a nap. You should probably shout a little louder."

The prophets of Baal tried once again, shrieking at the top of their lungs: *"BAAAAAAAAL! HEEEEEEEEEEEEEAR UUUUUS!"*

But still, nothing happened. By the end of the afternoon, the prophets of Baal were limping and hoarse.

Shaking his head, Elijah called out to the Israelites again. "Come closer," he said. "Watch this."

Elijah used large stones to repair an altar to God that had been destroyed. Then he placed wood on the stones, and the offering, a bull, on top of the wood. Everything seemed to be ready.

"Let's go!" cried one of the Israelites.

"Not yet," said Elijah. "First, fill four jars with water and pour the water over the offering."

"Make it wet?" exclaimed the Israelite. "But wet stuff doesn't burn!"

"Just give it a go," said Elijah.

The Israelites poured four jars of water over the offering on the altar. Then Elijah told them to do it a second time. And then again a third time!

Water soaked the offering and the wood. It ran down the altar, filling a trench at the base.

At last, Elijah cried out. "O Lord, let it be known this day that You are the One True God. Answer me so that these people may know you are God, and that You have turned their hearts back."

Instantly, fire fell from heaven.

It consumed the offering and ate up the wood. It even licked up the water in the trench!

The Israelites fell down, faces to the ground. "*The Lord is the one and only God!*" they called out.

King Ahab couldn't deny what his own eyes had just seen. But still, he complained, "What about the rain?"

"Go eat a meal," Elijah told him. "I hear the sound of rushing rain."

"Yeah, well, there's not a single cloud in the sky," Ahab pointed out.

Elijah climbed to the very top of the mountain. He bowed down and called on God. Then he turned to a servant.

***The servant quickly returned. "There is nothing. Not a cloud."***

"Go and look toward the sea," he said.

The servant hurried off for the best view of the horizon, but quickly returned, shaking his head. "There is nothing. Not a cloud."

"Go again." Elijah ordered.

The servant went back to check the sky again. And again. And again. Finally, on the seventh time . . .

“Hey! There’s a tiny little cloud the size of someone’s hand,” the servant told Elijah.

“Quick!” said Elijah, leaping up. “Go tell Ahab to harness his chariot and leave before the rain stops him.”

In minutes, the wind whipped up.  
Clouds grew and raced across the sky.  
Rain began to fall for the first time in three years.

God’s power was strong with Elijah. Gathering the folds of his robe, he ran through the storm so quickly that he beat Ahab’s chariot . . . all the way back to the city.



Let's  
Talk!

*Is there something in your life that seems impossible right now?*

**Maybe it’s trying to learn a math skill, or get along with your sister, or deal with a medical condition. Take a minute and share with each other. Facing something big like that can make you feel helpless and insecure. But here’s the awesome thing to remember: God can do anything! He can do something as impossible as making rain stop and start or sending down fire from Heaven. He did the impossible of keeping Elijah safe for three whole years while the king was trying to find him. Whatever you’re facing, God is bigger. You can live with confidence knowing that God can take away that obstacle in front of you . . . or maybe carry you right through it. Pray for each other, that God will help you see how big He is so that you can live with confidence in Him.**