

## LESSON 4

### GOD WHISPERS TO ELIJAH

#### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** God Can Speak to Us

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Kings 19

**GOD'S BIG STORY:** Afraid for his life, Elijah runs into the wilderness where God cares for his needs. Then God tells Elijah to stand on the mountain, where He comes in the most unexpected way—a gentle whisper.

**WORD OF WONDER:** Come near to God, and he will come near to you. —James 4:8a

#### 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.

## Play Stations

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 the folders or handheld fans 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 folders or fans.

### Play Station: Fire and Earthquake Sensory Bin

**Set up:** Set out a bin filled with items that represent or go with a campfire fire, such as red, orange, and yellow streamers, wooden sticks, toy fire trucks, pretend water hoses, etc. You can also set out a pair of tongs.

**Play:** Let the kids explore the sensory bin. If using tongs, tell them they must try to grab the objects in the bin with a set of tongs because it's so hot! Then tell them to shake the bin and make a pretend "earthquake" in the bin.

**Leader Tip:** Be sensitive to kids who have experienced fires, earthquakes, or storms and may have experienced trauma. Listen to them and encourage them as you remind them that God is always with us.

### 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.

## Craft: Listening for God Instruments

**Allergy Caution:** This activity includes possible food allergens!

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.

Make one (or both!) of the musical instrument options below with the kids and allow them to take their instruments home.

### Paper Plate Tambourine

To make the paper plate tambourine, give each kid two paper plates and uncooked beans. Help the kids fill one plate with the beans and staple the outside of the other plate to it to make a tambourine. Let the kids decorate the outside of the plates with coloring utensils.



### Rice Egg Shaker

To make the rice egg shaker, give each kid a plastic Easter egg and encourage them to fill it with uncooked rice. Then help them tape the spoons around the egg to make a maraca. Use decorative tape to make the shakers pretty!

After the kids make their instruments, encourage them to play them and make joyful noise to praise God.



## 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!**

# Identity

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## 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!