

International Christian Community

LESSON 2 – ABC SENIOR

**STANDING OUT AND STANDING
FIRM**

ELIJAH ON MOUNT CARMEL

Elijah Challenged the people of Israel on Mount Carmel. He asked them to choose sides, whether they would follow Baal or God, but the people did not answer. He then said to them that he is the only prophet of the Lord God but there are many more prophets of Baal.

Elijah then gave the prophets of Baal a chance to prove that Baal is God. Elijah called for 2 bulls one for him to lay on an alter and one for the prophets of Baal to lay in the same way on their alter, both with no fire under it.

Elijah then said to the many prophets of Baal to call on their god to burn up the offering and he would call on the Lord God. The prophets of Baal called on their god to no avail then began to leap and cry louder and still heard nothing.

Elijah then mocked them saying their god must be busy or sleeping and they began to cut their wrists as in their customs. There was still no answer at the time of evening sacrifice. Then Elijah called the people and repaired the alter according to specific Godly protocol. He then called for the offering to be saturated with water three times.

Elijah called upon the Lord God of Israel to show himself as God by consuming the offering, so the people may turn their hearts back to him. The Lord responded by consuming the wet offering and the people began to declare that the Lord is God. The prophets of Baal were then seized.

BIBLE READING: 1 KINGS 18: 20-40

¹⁸“I have not made trouble for Israel,” Elijah replied. “But you and your father’s family have. You have abandoned the LORD’s commands and have followed the Baals. ¹⁹Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table. ²⁰So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. ²¹Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.” But the people said nothing.

²²then Elijah said to them, “I am the only one of the LORD’s prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. ²³Get two bulls for us. Let Baal’s prophets choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. ²⁴Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The god who answers by fire—he is god.” Then all the people said, “What you say is good.”

²⁵Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire.” ²⁶So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. “Baal, answer us!” they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made. ²⁷At noon Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder!” he said. “Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or travelling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.” ²⁸So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. ²⁹Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.

³⁰Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come he to me.” They come to him, and he repaired the altar of the LORD, which had been torn down. ³¹Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, “your name shall be Israel.” ³²With the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD, and he dug a trench around it large enough the hold two seahs[a] of seed. ³³He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, “fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood. ³⁴“Do it again,” he said, and they did it again. “Do it a third time,” he ordered, and they did it the third time. ³⁵The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench. ³⁶At time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: “LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. ³⁷Answer me, LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, LORD, are God, and that you are turning their heats back again.” ³⁸Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. ³⁹when all the people saw this fell prostrate and cried, “The LORD—he is God! The LORD—he is God!”

⁴⁰Then Elijah commanded them, “Seize the prophets of Baal. Don’t let anyone get away!” They seized them, and Elijah had them brought down to the kishon Valley and slaughtered there.

1. Knowing where you stand.

Elijah challenged the people to choose sides. Teenage years are identity building years when we find out where we stand on certain issues and teens are often placed in situations where to choose sides like the people on Mount Carmel. These are critical times in a life of a believer when we can manifest Gods opinion and make it relevant to the issues people your age face.

- As a mentor choose 5 age appropriate topics and ask your children to write down a response to the issues. Then find out together what the god has to say on the issues through the scripture. This is a good way to assess what your children have on their minds and whether it aligns with the word of God and teach them to adopt a Godly perspective in dealing with life’s issues.

1Kings 18:21b’ But the people answered him not a word’. In life it is much easier to be quiet and not choose sides. However, God is very clear about sitting on the fence; Revelations 3:16 ‘So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, will I spew thee out of my mouth’. It is a difficult to speak out but it is required of God.

- Can you think of other incidences in the Bible where people spoke out in the name of the Lord?

(Daniel, David, Jeremiah etc)

2. Standing out the crowd for God

Children are being constantly bombarded by the media to be popular, to fit in and conform. However, children of God we are called not conform to this world but be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Roman 12:2).

1Kings 22 ‘then said Elijah unto the people, I, [even] I only, remains a prophet of the LORD; but Baal’s prophets [are] four hundred and fifty men’. Being in the will of God often means standing alone and being out-numbered by the prophets of Baal.

The prophets of Baal were consumed by group hysteria and began to dance, cry out louder and slit their wrist. As a child of God you should be able to stand against what you do not believe in. By doing this you are able to have clarity of mind.

“Destroy the myth of ‘popularity is bliss’, what are the pros of standing out from the crowd?

3. Confidence in God ensures success.

1Kings: 27 ‘and it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, cry aloud: for he [is] a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, [or] peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked’. Trusting in faltering systems like the crowd is following, like the prophets of Baal dis is risky. However, believing in the living God who is constant and our firm foundation is insurance when standing out against the crowd. We serve a God who neither sleeps nor slumbers.

- Consider times in the Bible where God backed up those who obeyed him. (Noah, David, Joseph)

Standing out in a circular environment is a difficult task; however there are two things that enable a child of God to do this;

- The Fear of God that compels obedience (Exodus 20:30, Deuteronomy 5:7, 1 Samuel 26:19, 1 Kings 9:6)
- Faith insures you are backing the winning team (Number 12:7, Deuteronomy 7:9)

WHERE DOES OUR CONFIDENCE IN GOD COME FROM?

In 1 Kings 18 from verse 31 to 35, Elijah followed very particular steps in preparing the sacrifice for God to consume. This is symbolic of knowing Gods ways which come from saturating ourselves with the word of God.

In 1King 18:33-35; there is reference to water and the pouring of the water 3 times over the sacrifice. However, we now know the God does not require bulls as offerings but that we are living sacrifices to God and the water in a picture of the word of God. So confidence in God comes from knowing Gods ways which come from saturating ourselves with the word of God.

1 Kings 37: 'Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou [art] the LORD God, and [that] thou hast turned their heart back again'. In this verse Elijah vocalised our function as children of God; that is not to conform to the systems of the world. In verse 40 the people turned their hearts to the living God, this was Elijah success.

QUESTION

1. What did Elijah the people to make a choice about?
2. How do we know that the people chose not to be on the Lords side?
3. What were the disadvantages Elijah faced?
4. What was the procedure Elijah followed to prepare the sacrifice? What did the 12 stones and the water represent?
5. What is the purpose of us standing out of the crowd?

PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION OF LESSON

Elijah was able to drown out the hysteria of the crowd and follow his calling to lead the people back to God.

As a child of God in this modern and noisy word with so many opinions it's imperative we learn to drown it all out, to hear for the voice of God. This is an exercise that cultivates affective listening, as well as the benefits of being able to isolate yourself from the crowd;

1. According to the number of children in you class, think of the appropriate number of animals with a definitive sound
2. Now write down the name and sound of the animal on small pieces of paper, you should have two of each animal
3. Through a lottery system allow each person to choose an animal.

4. They must then make the corresponding sound as well as seeking for their corresponding partner in the sea of noises everyone else will be making.

Give them a hint; standing out of the crowd will enable you to heed to the call!

