

Explore It FOR LEADERS



A SPECTACULAR GOD

1 Kings 18:36-46

Elijah wanted people to know that the God of Israel was the true God. This week we explore whether our reasons for wanting to see God do something are always good ones, and consider if we may be trying to show off to others.

Each child will need:

- A sticker with part of a word written on it – see Start It section
- Pens/pencils and paper

You will need:

- 'So That' prayers sheet cut into strips
- A large sheet of paper with 'Thank you, God for, ...' at the top and 'SPECTACULAR' written down the left-hand side – see Pray It section

Start It

Write half of a word on a sticker, one for each child. You may want to add more words or do some repeats. (You may want to use the same colour for each word, if your group needs help with reading.)

Ama- -zing

Breath- -taking

Shock- -ing

Stun- -ning

Aston- -ishing

Remar- -kable

Wonder- -ful

Awe- -some

Eye- -catching

Marvel- -lous

Let the children read their sticker before attaching it to themselves. See how quickly they can find their 'other half'. Each pair reads out the word they've made (or newly created!). Ask if they can spot any common themes with the words. (They describe something really great, something spectacular.)

Ask: What's the most spectacular thing that you've ever seen? It might be something you've seen in real life or on television, but it needs to be something that left you feeling absolutely flabbergasted and amazed!

Ask: What makes something spectacular?


Video

 **Say:** Our God created this world, and it is full of spectacular things.

Seven worlds, one planet: extended trailer by BBC Earth (4 mins 11 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIFRPkT-hVc>

Ask: Out of all the things you saw in the clip, which one was the most spectacular to you? Explain why.

 **Say:** Thank you, God, for the spectacular world you have created. Help us to remember just how amazing you are yesterday, today and forever. Amen.

Sing It

Today's song reminds us of the great God that we serve. He is the one who answers our prayers.

'Great God' by Tasha Cobbs - lyrics video (4 mins 24 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wy074hOgFik>

Tell It

☞ **Say:** In the last session we left Elijah and King Ahab on the top of a mountain. They had each set up an altar and the prophets of Baal were praying to their god to send rain. Elijah found it very amusing that Baal didn't make any response at all.

Watch the clip to find out what happened next in the story.

Video

Elijah and the contest on Mount Carmel by LifeKids (2 mins 41 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amrfPel9aPE>

Ask:

- Did the story turn out how you expected?
- What did Elijah do to show that he worshipped the true, spectacular God?

Read 1 Kings 18:36-37 (ICB)

'It was time for the evening sacrifice. So the prophet Elijah went near the altar. He prayed, "Lord, you are the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel. I ask you now to prove that you are the God of Israel. And prove that I am your servant. Show these people that you commanded me to do all these things. Lord, answer my prayer. Show these people that you, Lord, are God. Then the people will know that you are bringing them back to you."'

☞ **Say:** Elijah prayed that God would show himself to the people. He wanted everyone to know what an amazing God he served.

Ask: If Elijah had wanted to show off and just win the challenge, what do you think his prayer might have sounded like?

☞ **Say:** When we are asking God to answer our prayers, why is it important to ask for the right reasons?

Read 1 Kings 18:38-46 (ICB).

'Then fire from the Lord came down. It burned the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the ground around the altar. It also dried up the water in the ditch. When all the people saw this, they fell down to the ground. They cried, "The Lord is God! The Lord is God!"'

Ask:

- Why do you think Elijah covered his altar with water before asking God to send fire?
- Why did that make what happened even more spectacular?
- How would you have felt if you had seen this spectacular sight?
- Would it have made you believe in God? If so, why?

☞ **Say:** All the people turned to God that day and remembered that he was the true God. But King Ahab and Queen Jezebel and their followers chose to keep serving Baal.

Ask:

- Why would someone turn away from God even when they have seen him do a spectacular thing?
- What amazing prayers has God answered in your life?

Action It

🗨️ **Say:** Here are two examples of prayers for the same thing.

Example one

Dear God,

Please help me to do well in my test tomorrow so that everyone will know how clever I am and think I'm brilliant. Amen.

Example two

Dear God,

Please help me to do well in my test tomorrow so that I can show how much I have learned this term. Amen.

Ask: Which prayer do you think has the right motivation behind it?

🗨️ **Say:** A really good way to check our motivation for the prayers we pray is to add the words 'so that' and think about the reason we are asking God to answer our prayer.

Share out the 'So That' prayers strips among the children and ask them to write two 'so that' prayers: one to show the right motivation for our prayers and one the 'wrong' motivation. The children may be able to think of more scenarios.

Dear God,

- *Please let the teacher notice that I am struggling in maths so that ...*
- *Please let Ayesha play with me at break-time so that ...*
- *Please let me get the lead part in the play so that ...*
- *Please stop Andrew saying unkind things to me so that ...*
- *Please let the teacher forget to give out our homework tomorrow so that ...*

Once the children have made up the different kinds of prayers, ask them to share with the group. Hopefully they will have fun making up the 'wrong' motivations for prayer.

🗨️ **Say:** If we're honest with ourselves, we may sometimes pray for things for the wrong reasons. The 'so that' prayer reminds us to think about why we are praying for the things we are praying for.

🗨️ **Say:** It's OK if you sometimes have the 'wrong' motivation for your prayers. God wants to hear those prayers as well. He loves us no matter what prayers we pray. The 'so that' prayer can sometimes help us to identify how we feel about a situation deep down and bring that to God as well.

Pray It

🗨️ **Say:** We have spent lots of time thinking of our spectacular God today, so let's finish with a spectacular prayer of thanksgiving.

Thank you God activity

Show the large sheet of paper with 'Thank you, God, for ...' at the top and SPECTACULAR written down the left-hand side. Ask the group to come up with one thing they are thankful for, for each letter of the word 'spectacular'.

Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It ideas for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

FOR ME

TOGETHER



Draw

Using nature as your inspiration, draw something spectacular. Stick it up on your wall at home to remind you of the spectacular God that we worship.



Create

In the prayer time for today's session we created a prayer of thanks based on the word 'spectacular'. Find a big piece of paper and write 'Thank you, God, for ...' at the top. Write 'SPECTACULAR' down the left-hand side of the sheet. Stick the poster up somewhere at home where everyone can see it.

Ask your family to add ideas of what they are thankful for next to each letter of the word.



Song for the week

'Great God' by Tasha Cobbs – lyrics video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wy074hOgFik>

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

