

Is God there?

**Bible verses:**

1 Kings 18:22-27

Elijah and the prophets of Baal

**Aim:**

To learn that God always hears our prayers,
even when the answers take time

**Today's fruit:**

Peace



In today's session Elijah challenges the prophets of Baal, who prayed all day but received no answer.

Elijah trusted the one true God, who was listening and would answer at just the right time. Sometimes it can be frustrating when we're praying to God, and it feels like he isn't answering. Today's story helps us to understand that God is always listening and his answers to prayer are always worth the wait.

We can show and feel peace in our lives when we are confident in God's plan and power.

Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils and paper
- *Explore It ideas* handout

You will need:

- News suitable for children, eg *First News* or *CBBC Newsround*
- A flipchart and pens
- Materials for creating a prayer display, leaflet or prayer station (optional)
- Fruit of the Spirit poster: *Peace* - download from **Salvationist**



Start it

Ask:

- What are you like at waiting for things?

- Does your family have any games that you play together when you are waiting in a queue or sat in traffic? Share them with the group.

Option one

Play one of the games suggested by the children.

Option two

Depending on the size of the group, work together or in smaller groups to come up with a game to play while they are waiting for something. Give them five minutes to create the game and then have a go at playing together.

Say:

We now have some games to play while we and our family are waiting for something. As the people in today's Bible story will tell you, waiting can be very frustrating.

**Sing it****Say:**

In the next part of our story, Elijah and the people had been waiting a long time for God to send rain. Many of the people continued to pray to Baal, the god worshipped by King Ahab and Queen Jezebel.

Say:

Elijah, on the other hand, continued to trust in God. Today's song reminds us how important it is to trust in God while we are waiting for him to answer our prayers.

Song

'Waiting here for you' (lyric video) by Kid's Praise Company, video by Marantha! Music (5:45)

If you would like a shorter version of the song, then a natural stopping point is 2:45. 'And it's you we adore, singing alleluia.'

**Share it****Say:**

In the last session we met the prophet Elijah, King Ahab and Queen Jezebel.

Ask:

- Who was the most important god in King Ahab and Queen Jezebel's life?
- Who was the most important God in Elijah's life?

Say:

When the king heard Elijah's message that there would be no rain, he was furious. You made some predictions about what would happen next in the story. Let's find out if you were right.

Video

God's Story: *Elijah* by Crossroads Kids' Club (5:01)

Watch 0:00-2:29 'They both prayed for fire, and then waited to see whose god brought it first.'

Discuss

- What did God tell Elijah to say to King Ahab and Queen Jezebel?
- How do you think the people felt about there being no rain for their crops?
- How did King Ahab and Queen Jezebel react to Elijah's news about the drought?
- How long had the people been waiting for the rain to come?
- What challenge did Elijah set for King Ahab in the third year of the drought?

Say:

The story of the challenge is found in 1 Kings 18:20-25.

Read:

'So Ahab called all the Israelites and those prophets to Mount Carmel. Elijah stood before the people. He said, "How long will you try to serve both Baal and the Lord? If the Lord is the true God, follow him. But if Baal is the true God, follow him!"'

'But the people said nothing.

'Elijah said, "I am the only prophet of the Lord here. But there are 450 prophets of Baal. So bring two bulls. Let the prophets of Baal choose one bull. Let them kill it and cut it into pieces. Then let them put the meat on the wood. But they are not to set fire to it. Then I will do the same with the other bull. And I will put it on the wood. But I will not set fire to it. You prophets of Baal, pray to your god. And I will pray to the Lord. The god who answers the prayer will set fire to his wood. He is the true God."

'All the people agreed that this was a good idea.

'Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "There are many of you. So you go first. Choose a bull and prepare it. Pray to your god, but don't start the fire.

'So they took the bull that was given to them and prepared it. They prayed to Baal from morning until noon. They shouted, "Baal, answer us!" But there was no sound. No one answered. They danced around the altar they had built."

(1 Kings 18:20-25 *ICB*)

Say:

The prophets of Baal kept praying all day for their god to send rain, but nothing happened.

Read:

‘At noon Elijah began to make fun of them. He said, “Pray louder! If Baal really is a god, perhaps he is thinking. Or perhaps he is busy or travelling! Perhaps he is sleeping so you will have to wake him!”’

(1 Kings 18:27 *ICB*)

Say:

The prophets must have felt so frustrated as Elijah made fun of them.

Ask:

We won’t find out the next part of the story until next week, but what do you think happened next?

Action it

Share the memory verse together.

Memory verse

‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.’

(Deuteronomy 6:5 *NIV*)

Say:

Elijah trusted God completely, even when it felt like nothing was happening. We can trust him too. He loves and hears our prayers, even when answers take time. That’s what it means to love God with all our heart, soul and strength: we bring him everything we care about.

Say:

Our activity today focuses on bringing our worries and concerns about the world to God in prayer.

Share some child-friendly news, eg

- Watch the latest episode of **Newsround**
- Explore the **Newsround website**
- Read a children’s newspaper together (like *First News*).

Ask the children to look for situations or people that need our prayers.

Discuss the situations that have been going on for a while and jot down some of them on a flipchart.



Say:

Thousands of Christians around the world have prayed for these situations repeatedly, and yet we are still waiting for our prayers to be answered.

Ask:

- What prayers are still waiting for answers?
- Why do you think God hasn't answered these prayers yet?
- What does it feel like to wait for God to answer prayer?

Say:

It can be hard when we feel like God isn't answering our prayers, especially when people are facing such horrible circumstances. We can be reassured that God always listens to our prayers, but what we ask for won't always happen in the way we ask. God understands everything far better than we can, so sometimes things will happen that we can't understand. We can still trust that God is good and keep praying to him.

Ask:

As you look at all the situations we have seen in the news, which ones still need prayer?

Choose one of the ideas below, or create your own, to give the children the opportunity to share with the rest of the church the world issues they are praying for. This will help remind our whole church family to keep praying as well.

- Plan and set up a prayer station in the church with prompts for people to pray for specific topics.
- Help the children plan a prayer time that they can lead for the whole church.
- Create a prayer leaflet for the rest of the church.

Say:

One thing that we learn from Elijah is how important it is to keep praying. Just like Elijah, we don't know what happens next in the story.



Pray it

Say:

In today's story the prophets of Baal shouted and danced all day, but their god never answered. Elijah prayed to the one true God, and even though he had to wait, he knew God was listening.

Display the *Peace* sign.

Say:

Sometimes it feels like God is silent or slow to answer our prayers; but unlike Baal, our God is

alive. He loves us and hears every word we pray. We can show and feel peace in our lives when we are confident in God's plan and power. He may sometimes keep us waiting, but his answers are always worth the wait.

Give the children the opportunity to pray for one of the situations they have explored. Give each child some quiet time to choose one of the situations that needs prayer today. Ask them to write a one-sentence prayer for that topic. While they do this, you may want to play the song from today's 'Sing It' section.

Afterwards gather together and invite the children to read their prayers. After everyone has finished, close the time in prayer.

Key dates (optional)

8 November: Remembrance Sunday

This Sunday we take time to honour those who have served and sacrificed in conflicts and reflect on the importance of peace and compassion. Explore It resources are available on [Salvationist.org.uk/resources/discipleship/explore-it](https://salvationist.org.uk/resources/discipleship/explore-it).

Explore it

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



Is God there?

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



Bible verses:
1 Kings 18:22-27



Aim:
To learn that God always hears our prayers, even when the answers take time



Today's fruit:
Peace



Create

In today's session you thought of different ways to share your prayer requests with the rest of the church. Are there any of these ideas that you could adapt to remind you to pray regularly at home?

Create your own way of remembering to pray for the situations that are on your heart.

You could:

- set up a prayer space in your room.
- create a prayer journal with different topics to explore and pray for.
- set up a prayer noticeboard and put newspaper clippings and prayer ideas on it.



Pray

In today's story the people were in the third year of a very long drought. There was no water for crops and no grass for their animals. They were getting desperate and didn't know what to do.

There are still lots of people across the world struggling without clean water to drink. Watch the clip with someone at home and spend time praying for the young people who have to miss school to collect water for their families to drink.

The girls who turned to water by WaterAid
Is there anything else you could do to help as a family?



Song for the week

'Waiting here for you' (lyric video) by Kid's Praise Company, video by Marantha! Music



Memory verse

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.'

(Deuteronomy 6:5 NIV)