



More Than a Storm God

GRACE

God offers Himself for us.

Power Text

"Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again" (1 Kings 18:37, NIV).

Key Text and References

1 Kings 18:16-46; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 143-154; student story on page 40 of this guide.

Objectives

The students will:

Know that because God loves us, He never gives up trying to win our hearts.

Feel that God never gives up on us.

Respond by being grateful that God loves us.

Power Point



God never gives up trying to win our hearts.

Getting Ready to Teach

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Elijah has delivered God's message that it will not rain. It hasn't rained for nearly three years. Then one day Elijah appears again and tells Ahab to summon all the people to Mount Carmel, along with the priests of Baal. He calls them to make a choice between God and Baal. Elijah and the priests agree that only the god who answers by fire is really God. To make sure there is no doubt, Elijah drenches his sacrifice in water. God consumes not only the animal, but also the rock altar

and the water surrounding the altar.

This is a lesson about grace.

God used this experience to turn the hearts of His people back to Himself. God is in our lives today demonstrating in many different ways that He is God. He wants to win our undivided affection. This pursuit of our hearts is a gift of His grace.

Teacher Enrichment

"[Baal] was the storm god. . . . Bringing the winter rains with storms

FOUR

Program Notes			
Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at door Hear pleased/troubled	
1 Readiness	10-15	A. <i>The Power of Grace</i> B. <i>What Attracts You?</i>	Vinegar, water, baking soda, glasses, spoons, aluminum foil, liquid dish detergent, large baking pans, food coloring, measuring spoons Advertisements from magazines and newspapers
* Prayer and Praise*	15-20	See page 37. *Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	Two copies of <i>Net Kids</i> script
		Experiencing the Story	Adult costume, materials for altar
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	<i>Grace Interview</i>	Chalkboard or paper
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	<i>Advertisements</i>	Art/craft supplies, advertisements, paper

and lightnings, he was held responsible for the fertility of the country. . . . His antagonist was Mot, the god of drought and of the scorching heat. . . . Baal's death at the hand of evil Mot at the end of each rainy season was observed by bitter mourning, and his annual resurrection at the end of the long, dry summer months when the rainy season began, bringing new life to fields and vineyards, was celebrated with joyous and licentious feasting" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 8, pp. 104, 105).

"The test that Elijah proposed was entirely fair. The issue at stake was, Who was

God, Jehovah or Baal? If Baal was what the pagan priests claimed him to be, then let him demonstrate that fact by bringing forth fire from heaven. If he has, indeed, the power of the rain and the storm, let him send forth his lightning bolts. Even the priests of Baal could not deny the fairness of the offer made, though they must have feared the results" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 819).

"The great burden on Elijah's heart was the conversion of Israel—that their hearts which had turned to Baal might be turned back to God" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 820).

Teaching the Lesson

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they're pleased/troubled about. Ask if they have a description or reaction to share from their Bible study during the week.

Direct the students immediately to the Readiness Activity you have prepared.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A. The Power of Grace

You Need:

- vinegar
- water
- baking soda
- tall glass
- long-handled spoons
- aluminum foil
- liquid dish detergent
- large baking pans
- food coloring
- measuring spoons

You'll need the following supplies for each group of children: ½ cup vinegar, ¼ cup water, 3 tablespoons baking soda, a tall glass, a long-handled spoon, aluminum foil, 5 drops of liquid dish detergent, a large baking pan, and 3 drops of food coloring.

Form small groups (trios if possible). Have each group create a volcano by following these directions: **Set the glass right side up in the middle of the pan. Mold the foil around the glass to form the cone shape of a volcano. Put baking soda in the glass, then add dish detergent and food coloring.** (If possible, have adult helpers to assist with measuring, etc.) **Gently pour in water, then stir lightly. Slowly pour vinegar into the volcano. Wait and watch what happens.**

Debriefing

Ask: **What happened? What other displays of power can you think of? Let's read Jeremiah 32:17 together.** Wait for students to look up the text and read it as a group.

How powerful is God? Is anything too hard for Him? What would you do with that much power? Allow the students to respond with their dreams. **God is all powerful, and yet He will not make us love Him. He tries to win our hearts. Sometimes He uses His power to impress us or draw us to Himself. Remember,**



God never gives up trying to win our hearts.

(Adapted from *Helping Children Know God* [Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1993], p. 21. Used by permission.)

B. What Attracts You?

Have a variety of advertisements from magazines or newspapers at tables for students to look over in small groups. Give them the following directions: **Look over the advertisements. Choose one that attracts you. Think about whether it is the advertisement or the product that attracts you.**

You Need:

- magazines
- newspapers

Have students share their choices and explain what attracted them.

Debriefing

Ask: **Do you think that God advertises to draw our hearts to Himself? If so, what kind of advertisement would attract you?** (a kind Christian person, beautiful things in nature) **Remember,**



God never gives up trying to win our hearts.

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"It's About Grace" (See page 139.)

"Open Our Eyes" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 149)

"He Knows My Name" (*Praise Time*, No. 85)

Any theme song already mentioned this month.

Mission

Use *Teen Mission* or other mission report available to you.

Offering

Reinforce the concept that we do not give our offerings in order for God to love us—but in response for what He has done to show His love to us.

Prayer

Stand in a circle. Hold hands if appropriate. Ask volunteers to pray a short sentence prayer praising God for something He has done to win their hearts.

*Prayer and Praise may be used any time during the program.

2

Bible Lesson

Introducing the Bible Story
The Net Kids

You Need:

- two scripts

(Refer to Lesson 1 for background and setup information.)
Make the appropriate number of copies of the *Net Kids* script found at the back of this guide. Distribute to the students you have selected as early as possible. Allow practice time before using this activity.
Present the skit.

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you ever try to avoid someone because you had done something wrong? What were you afraid of? Did what you were afraid of come true? In what way? How was the way Ulla's father responded to her like or unlike the way God treats us?** (Wait for students to respond.) **Does God's power and forgiveness attract you to Him? Why or why not?**

Experiencing the Story

You Need:

- adult male dressed as Elijah
- altar of rocks, grocery sacks, etc.

Have an adult male dress as Elijah and come in and either act out the story, or tell the students the story as if it happened in the recent past. Have him emphasize the fact that God used His awesome power to demonstrate to the people that He was greater than the storm and rain god Baal. God was willing to stage this demonstration just to draw the people's hearts back to Himself.

Make the story as realistic as possible. You could have an altar built of rocks, grocery sacks, or whatever your creativity can produce.

Refer the students to 1 Kings 18:37, 38. Remind them that this week's power point is



God never gives up trying to win our hearts.

Exploring the Bible

You Need:

- Bibles

Say: **Let's look in the Bible for some other instances when God offered Himself in a unique way in order**

to draw people to Himself. Have students look up and read the following texts aloud. Ask the other students to summarize what they hear read.

- Acts 7:30-35 (Moses)
- Judges 6:11, 17-21 (Gideon)
- Acts 9:3-6 (Saul/Paul)
- 2 Timothy 1:9 (us)

Debriefing

Ask: **What is similar about God's call to the Israelites in our story today and the way He called to Moses, Gideon, and Saul? Who is being drawn or called in 2 Timothy 1:9? (We all are.) Has God ever drawn you to Himself? Tell us about it.** Try to have an experience of your own to share.

3

Applying the Lesson

Grace Interview

You Need:

- chalkboard or paper

Ask the students to go in pairs out into the hall or foyer of the church where there are adults who are not in Sabbath School. Ask each team to ask several adults how they have experienced God's grace. Give them a time limit (five minutes). Or divide students into small groups and invite one adult in to be interviewed by each group.

Ask for volunteers to share what they learned. Write on the board or large paper the essence of the responses.

Debriefing

Ask: **What have you learned about God and His work to turn our hearts to Himself?** (Wait for responses.) **Remember:**



God never gives up trying to win our hearts.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Advertisements

You Need:

- advertisements
- art/craft supplies
- paper

If you used the readiness activity which called for analyzing advertisements, this exercise can flow from that experience. If not, show the students a few attractive advertisements and ask them the same questions as used in the readiness activity.

Divide them into small groups, give them art/craft supplies (be as creative as your situation allows), and ask them to create an advertisement intended to attract or draw people to God, or to Sabbath School next week. Hang the advertisements outside the door of your Sabbath School room.

Alternative

Divide the class into groups of four or five and give each student red construction paper, a pen, and a safety pin. Ask them to cut out a small heart shape and then write on it: Ask me about "turning hearts." Once the hearts are completed, attach to a lapel or shoulder of clothing. Give the students five minutes to brainstorm answers to the questions they may receive once they leave Sabbath School, in response to their "heart." Responses might include: God never gives up trying to win our hearts; God is always busy trying to turn our hearts back to him; We are praying that everyone's heart will be turned back to God, etc.

Close with a prayer that asks for God's strength and courage to be able to speak up when others ask us about our faith.

You Need:

- red construction paper
- pens
- safety pins

Closing

Pray for the class that they will be aware of the many times God tries to get their attention this week, and will respond with thankfulness and joy to His call.

STUDENT LESSON

More Than a Storm God

Key Text

1 Kings 18:16-46

Power Text

"Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again" (1 Kings 18:37, NIV).

Power Point

God never gives up trying to win our hearts.

Have you ever wanted something so badly that you just wouldn't give up trying to get it? Perhaps you were having to save for it. Perhaps you were just begging your parents. Anyway, it just seemed as if you would never get it, but neither would you give up trying. Did you ever think that God sometimes feels the same way? Imagine this scene.

It hadn't rained for three years in Israel. Everybody knew that it had to do with a prophet named Elijah. He was the one who had told King Ahab that it wouldn't rain until God said it would. Ahab had been looking everywhere for this prophet. He had even sent his agents to other countries to try to find him.

But now everyone in Israel was headed for Mount Carmel. They had heard that Elijah had returned and had told Ahab to bring all the priests of Baal and meet him there. Elijah said that God was going to show Himself to them.

"I'm surprised Elijah is brave enough to come out in public," someone may have commented as they climbed the rocky path. "Ahab blames Elijah for all the drought and famine."

"Look, Elijah's getting ready to talk," exclaimed someone else in the crowd.

"Today you will have to make a choice. Each of you is going to have to decide who is God once and for all. Will it be Baal or the Lord God? Make up your minds. You can't have both," said Elijah.

"Bring me two young bulls," Elijah told a group of men nearby. "I am the only prophet of the Lord left. But Baal has 450 prophets. We'll call upon our gods and see whose will answer."

As the men left to find the bulls, Elijah turned to the prophets. "You need to build an altar. I'm going to repair the Lord's altar. You'd better get started so you're ready when the bulls arrive."

Men came and went carrying and piling up the stones.

"Here come the bulls," went up the

shout as the animals were herded through the mass of people.

"Choose a bull and kill it," Elijah instructed the priests of Baal. "Lay it on the altar but don't light a fire. I'll do the same thing."

When Baal's prophets were finished, Elijah turned to the crowd of onlookers. "Let's test our gods now. We'll pray to them and ask them to send fire for the sacrifice. I believe the one who lights the fire on the altar will be the true God. We should follow Him. Let the priests of Baal begin," Elijah proclaimed.

The priests began to shout at Baal. Hours passed and nothing happened.

Elijah teased, "Maybe Baal is sleeping. Or maybe he's gone on a trip."

Growing more frenzied, the screaming priests slashed their bodies trying to get Baal's attention. Finally in late afternoon the priests gave up and fell down exhausted. Baal had not lit the fire.

Now came Elijah's turn. Again he spoke to the onlookers. "Come closer. Don't be afraid."

Elijah began to dig a trench around the newly repaired altar.

When the trench was dug, Elijah killed the bull and placed it on the altar.

"I need four barrels of water." He assigned several people to go and fill the barrels.

When they returned from their errand, Elijah commanded them, "Pour it on the sacrifice. Then go and fill them up again."

Men poured the water over the sacrifice again, and Elijah demanded four more barrels.

“Elijah must be crazy from the heat,” someone shouted. “The sacrifice will never burn after it’s been drenched with all that water.”

Elijah took his place at the altar. He lifted his hands and began to pray. “God, these people need to know that You are the true God. I did what You told me to do and built the altar. Answer my prayer, God, and turn these people back to You. Show them that You are calling them to follow only You.”

WHOMP! WHOMP! People in front of the crowd fell backward. Fire flared down from the sky. The bull burned up. The wood burned up. Even the stones burned up! The fire scorched the ground and licked up every drop of water.

“The priests lied to us!” someone shouted. “The Lord is the living God—not Baal!”

“The Lord is God! The Lord is God!” rose the chant as the people fell to their knees.

Today He had shown Himself as a God of fire. But He wanted to be so much more to these wandering people.

Sabbath

Do this week’s activity on page 25.

Sunday

- Read “More Than a Storm God.”
- Draw a three-part picture illustrating the events in this story. Write the power text across the top or bottom.
- Start learning the power text.

Monday

- Read 1 Kings 18:1-15.
- In your Bible study journal describe the conditions in the land at that time after three years of no rain. Describe what the home and food situation was probably like (see 1 Kings 17:7-24 for more information). How would your family survive if there were no rain for three years?
- Thank God for the ways He provides for your daily needs.

Tuesday

- Read 1 Kings 18:16-24. The people at this time had forgotten God. They had chosen to follow the prophets of Baal.
- Read and underline the question in verse 21. Are there any things in your life you are trying to make a decision about?

- Thank God for trying to win you, and for being patient while you decide.

Wednesday

- Read 1 Kings 18:25-29.
- Do you think these priests of Baal were sincere in their beliefs?
- What can you find out about the idol worship of Bible times? Ask an adult to suggest places you can look for information.
- Ask God to help you listen to His voice, hear what He is telling you, understand what He has done for you.

Thursday

- Read 1 Kings 18:30-35.
- Rewrite these verses in your Bible study journal as if you were Elijah. Talk about how you would feel about what you had to do. Explain why you used the water.
- Pray for courage to say yes to God’s call to you today.

Friday

- Read 1 Kings 18:36-39.
- Write a prayer or a song of your own to God expressing to Him what you think and feel about the lessons this month—about His offering Himself for us. Be honest.
- Read the prayer or song out loud to God.