2

First Fire, Then Rain

Key References: 1 Kings 18:1-40; *Prophets and Kings,* chap. 11, pp. 143-154*; The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 5, pp. 26-34; Our Beliefs, nos. 3, 17, 18















powertext

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

Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 19.

powerpoint

God uses events in our lives to turn our hearts to Him.

Have you ever had questions about something and then had it proved to you beyond the shadow of a doubt? That's exactly what God did for the people of Israel, to turn their hearts back to worshipping Him.

In the third year of the drought, God spoke to Elijah once again: "Go and present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the land" (1 Kings 18:1).

Again Elijah immediately obeyed God's command. He started the long walk back to Samaria and King Ahab's palace. How different the land looked now after three years of famine. The ground was hard and cracked. Elijah covered his mouth and nose against the swirling, blowing dust. He walked through villages in which fresh mounds of stones covered newly buried bodies. *Surely,* he thought, *surely now the people will be ready to return to God.*

King Ahab was personally searching the countryside for pasture for his royal animals. The famine had even reached the palace.

2

Sunday

READ Read 1 Kings 18:37 and this week's story, "First Fire, Then Rain."

MAKE Create an altar from something around your house and write the power text, 1 Kings 18:37, on it.

LEARN Begin to learn the power text.

PRAY Pray that God will help you to understand His will better.

Monday

READ Read 1 Kings 18:1-15.

THINK What would you do if your life, like Obadiah's, were in danger if you shared some news with someone?

COUNT For how many days was there no rain in Israel?

PRAY Thank God for the blessings of rain.

Tuesday

READ Read 1 Kings 18:16-24.

REFLECT Focus on 1 Kings 18:21.

WRITE Summarize in your Bible study journal the meaning of this verse in your own words.

APPLY How does this text apply to us today? What things distract our attention and cause us to "waver" in our decision to follow God?

PRAY Pray that God will help you to make right choices.

Food and water had been rationed. One of Ahab's servants brought the message, "Elijah is back. He wants you to come and meet him."

As soon as Ahab saw Elijah he said, "Is that you, you troubler of Israel?"

Elijah said, "I have not made trouble for Israel. But you and your father's family have. You have abandoned the Lord's commands and have followed the Baals" (verses 17, 18). Then Elijah told Ahab there would be a contest, God versus Baal. He instructed Ahab to call a meeting of all the people, to bring all the priests of Baal for a showdown on Mount Carmel. Immediately the word went out to the people. When the appointed day came, they met on Mount Carmel.

King Ahab rode up surrounded by his officials and bodyguards. Four hundred fifty prophets of Baal walked boldly up the mountain and surrounded Elijah. They hoped a show of force would scare this prophet of Jehovah God.

Elijah laid down the ground rules. Two separate animals would be prepared as sacrifices on two separate altars. The priests of Baal would ask him to accept their offering by sending fire from heaven to consume it. Elijah would ask Jehovah God to accept his offering by sending fire from heaven to consume it. The god who answered by fire would be declared the true God.

The prophets of Baal prepared their animal sacrifice on the altar of Baal. Then they started calling to him. There was silence. They danced around the altar. There was silence. They screamed. There was silence. They begged Baal to answer with fire. There was silence.

The people watched and listened. After several hours Elijah started taunting



them. “Shout louder!” he said. “Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened” (verse 27). So they yelled louder. The priests of Baal cut themselves with sharp knives until their blood flowed. Silence. Exhausted, the prophets and priests of Baal gave up. It was the time of the evening sacrifice.

Elijah walked to the broken-down altar of Jehovah. He fixed the altar that had been broken

2

Wednesday

READ Read 1 Kings 18:25-40.

THINK What does this story teach about worship?

ASK Ask someone to share their experience about answered prayers.

PRAY Pray for those who are experiencing drought.

Thursday

FIND Discover at what time the evening sacrifice took place (see Exodus 29:39, 41).

REFLECT What made the difference between Elijah's prayers and the prayers of the people?

DISCUSS Ask someone about the prayer life of Elijah. Did he spend time with God rarely or often?

PRAY Pray that God will strengthen you to make time for Him at the start and close of each day.

Friday

READ Read 1 Kings 18:1-40 with your family.

DISCUSS Talk about what is the most amazing and miraculous part of this story to you.

SHARE Share with one another reasons you have to praise God for the evidence of His power in your life.

PRAY Thank God for turning your heart to Him.

down. He took 12 stones, one for each tribe of Israel, and built the altar back. Then he dug a trench around the altar. He arranged the wood. He cut up the animal sacrifice and laid it on the wood. "Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood," he commanded, and strong men brought the jars of water and soaked the sacrifice. Water ran into the trench.

"Do it again," he said. And four more jars of water soaked the sacrifice, the wood, and the stones, and ran off into the trench.

"Do it a third time," Elijah commanded. And this time the water ran down and finished filling the trench.

Every eye watched Elijah as he knelt down beside the altar. Every ear strained to listen as he lifted his voice to God. "Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and





Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel," prayed Elijah. "Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again" (verses 36, 37). There was no crying, nor shouting. Just a short simple prayer.

God's response was immediate. Fire like a giant tongue flashed down from the sky and licked up the wet sacrifice, the wet wood, the wet stones, and even the water in the trench. The people fell on their faces, covered their heads with their arms, and cried, "The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!" (verse 39). They had seen that day the powerful evidence of God, who was determined to win their hearts back to Him.

PUZZLE 2

TURN YOUR HEARTS TO HIM

Instructions: Strike out the letters from this Bible verse in the box below. Unscramble the leftover letters to fill in the blanks (four words).

"The_____ _____ _____ _____ is a fountain of life, turning a person from the snares of death" (Proverbs 14:27, NIV).

