



Weaving God's Promises

LESSON 10

Stories of Elijah

This story is quite long and may be divided into several lessons. The story has four parts: Elijah with the widow, the prophets of Baal, the encounter with God and Elijah's ascent to heaven.

Summary of Today's Story

Today's story is a series of stories from the life of Elijah, one of Israel's greatest prophets. He lived during the time that Israel was falling apart and abandoning God.

Four stories are included:

- Elijah performs a miracle for a widow who offers hospitality to him during a drought.
- Elijah and the prophets of Baal have a contest to see which God will answer their request to end the drought.
- Elijah encounters God.
- Elijah is taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot.

Where You'll Find Today's Story

In the Bible

We recommend the *New Revised Standard Version Bible*.

1 Kings 16–19

2 Kings 1–2

In Children's Bibles

If you plan to use a children's Bible for storytelling, write the page numbers of today's story in the space below.

In Our Sunday Lectionary

Today's story is told in church on the following Sundays:

Year B: Last Sunday of Epiphany

Year B: Proper 12 (Sunday closest to July 27)

Year B: Proper 27 (Sunday closest to November 9)

Year C: Proper 5 (Sunday closest to June 8)

Year C: Proper 8 (Sunday closest to June 29)



Weaving Our Story with the Biblical Story

Israel/Judah were surrounded by pagan peoples who worshiped other gods. The Israelites found some of these gods very attractive and also chose to worship them. Some people apparently followed the “mob rule” and just went along with the majority in turning to other gods.

Elijah, a prophet in the northern kingdom of the divided monarchy (in the years 873-843 B.C.) was a very holy man, who was called to bring the faithless people back to God. Sometimes he was all alone in his faithfulness to God, but he never gave up. The many miracles that he accomplished were proof of his goodness and his favor with God.

The Elijah stories record the battle in the northern kingdom for the survival of the rule of God against the many other gods in the region. Elijah was what we call an *ethical prophet*, one of the first in the Hebrew scriptures (Old Testament). Later he will be followed by the famous ethical prophets of the eighth century—Amos, Hosea and Micah. Elijah ushers in of a full and rich era of ethical prophecy in Israel’s history. It is the prophets of this era who help the people stay faithful to God in what will be devastating times in their history.

Elijah’s time is a very sad time in Israel’s history, a time when her people continue, over and over again, to turn away from God. It is hard for us to read about because it reminds us of our own times of faithlessness, when we choose popularity or material things or hatred and resentments instead of following the commandments to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself.” It is so easy to go in the wrong direction—this is our own Fall, continued. As long as we do not obey God it seems hopeless to expect that we can remain God’s chosen people.

Later, though we cannot seem to help ourselves, we will find that God both forgives us for our faithlessness and gives us the way to remain God’s chosen people by sending us God’s only Son to reconcile us with God.

We can see in these stories the theme of this year’s lessons: *God stays with us, no matter what.*



The Episcopal Thread

In the New Testament, Jesus is often compared with—or confused with—Elijah. Apart from Moses, Elijah was considered by the Jews to be the greatest of Israel’s prophets. He did indeed challenge the dominant faithless structure of the society.

As a part of the great line of prophets, then, we in the Episcopal Church also honor Elijah, who called God’s people to be faithful to God.



Weaving God's Beloved Community

Elijah gave to his people an alternate picture of reality than the reality that King Ahab gave to them. He gave them God's picture of how people should live in God's world, and sometimes he was persecuted for being God's agent rather than the king's or the king's idol Baal.

God's Beloved Community is also an alternate reality, a reality that is different from the reality that we see in front of us. God's Community has elements that we lack, such as equitable laws and equitable sharing of resources, and it rejects elements of our worldly reality that we have, such as the social sin of racism and our tendency to misuse our environment.

It can be important for us, in striving to create God's Beloved Community, to look at the world we see around us and be able to identify where and how it differs from God's world.

Topics that can be discussed with children:

What are your favorite flowers, animals, food, things to do and play? Do you have a favorite chore? Favorite subject in school?

What if everybody got to have their favorite things? What would the world look like?



Gathering

As the children enter the classroom, have them participate in a simple activity that relates to today's lesson. You'll find several ideas for entry activities, which can be easily adapted to the lesson, on pages 1-2 in the Appendix, also found on the Website. You'll also find a Gathering Activity handout on page 15 in the activity section at the end of this lesson.

You might offer the older children a brief fellowship time, giving them an opportunity to visit with each other, establish friendships and build community. Relationships are an important dimension of Christian formation, so a few minutes of visiting will enrich their spiritual development.

After all the children have arrived and had a few minutes of activity or fellowship time, gather them together and say a simple opening prayer, such as:

- Dear Lord, we thank you for bringing us together to hear your word and learn about your prophet Elijah. Help us to love you and to listen for you as Elijah did. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord. *Amen.*



Telling the Story

Read aloud today's story from a children's Bible, showing the pictures, tell the story in your own words, or read from the version of the story we provide, found on pages 8-14.

Use gestures and expressive language to make your storytelling more powerful in these already powerful stories. Additional ways to enhance your storytelling can be found on pages 2-3 in the Appendix, also found on the Website.

The section on Elijah in 1 Kings 17-19 is divided into short stories that demonstrate God's control of the earth and God's protection of the prophet Elijah.

Here is the breakdown of the stories:

- **1 Kings 17:1-24:** Elijah announces a drought and is protected by God from its effects. During this drought, a widow provides him with water to drink and, in exchange for her kindness, he miraculously provides food for her and then brings her ill son back to life.
- **1 Kings 18:1-40:** Elijah challenges King Ahab (who encourages the worship of the god Baal and other gods) and his prophets to a contest to see

which deity could end the drought. Elijah sets up an altar for God; the 450 prophets set up another. Notice the imbalance! God sets Elijah's altar on fire, even after Elijah has drenched it with water, to prove that the contest is not fixed. Elijah is quite a character in this story. In 1 Kings 18:27 Elijah makes fun of the prophets, asking whether their god has wandered away, gone to the bathroom or fallen asleep!

- **1 Kings 19:** Elijah is discouraged (1 Kings 18) because people are always trying to kill him. In this condition, Elijah encounters God in the "small still voice," or "the sound of sheer silence" and is commissioned to anoint new kings in Syria and Israel. (The God of Israel has the authority to reject and appoint kings.) God also tells Elijah to find his successor Elisha. It is here that God tells Elijah about Elisha.
- **2 Kings 2:** Elijah is taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire and Elisha takes his place as the prophet of Israel.

In telling these stories, you may either focus on only one or two of the stories or read all of them if you have time. Then move directly to Prayer, which follows. You do not need to discuss the stories at this time. The children should be left with a sense of the power of faith that this incredible prophet has and the close relationship that he has with God. Later, while having snacks, you can bring up the story again and invite the children to talk about it.



Prayer

Set up a small worship center in your classroom.

Materials

- small table with a cloth to cover it
- 2 candles or a single large Christ candle
- matches
- Bible
- cross
- optional:* flowers (real, fake or handmade by the children)

Have the children set up a simple altar with the materials listed above. Invite them to place on the altar any drawings or crafts that they created during Gathering time. Then light the candles.

Read one or two verses from today's scripture to help the children connect the stories that they just heard with the Bible. If working with older children, you might expand the reading to several verses.

Suggestions for the reading:

For younger children: 2 Kings 2:11

For older children: 1 Kings 19:11-16

Help familiarize the children with our liturgy by doing the reading as it is done in church. Read as follows:

Reader: A reading from the book of (2 Kings or 1 Kings): (Read the selected passage.)

Reader: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Invite the children to sit in a circle and join in prayer. Say a brief prayer yourself then invite prayers from each child in the circle:

- Invite prayers of thanks for God's presence in our lives for the past week. Ask children to remember when they have been aware of God's love and blessings, whether in school or at home, with friends or family or strangers.
- Welcome prayers of concern for anyone in any need or trouble. Children may pray for themselves, for friends and family or for people in the wider world. Remembering that some of the Elijah stories take place during famine, you might invite the children to pray for the hungry in your community.
- Ask if anyone has had a birthday or celebrated a special day during the past week and give thanks to God for the opportunity to share the joy of our special times with our church family.
- End the prayer time by praying together the Lord's Prayer.

Carefully extinguish the candles.



Sharing

Pass out snacks and say a simple grace, such as:

- For this food given to us, and for those who prepared it, let us praise the Lord. *Amen.*

Now is a great time, while sharing a snack, to talk about the Elijah stories. Mention especially the miraculous provision of oil and flour for the widow who gave water to Elijah when he was thirsty.

Discuss:

- What was Elijah like? How would you describe him? Courageous and brave? (*Remind the children that Elijah was afraid! His courage came from his relationship with God, who strengthened him and comforted him as well as sent him off to dangerous missions.*)
- If Elijah were living among us, what would he say to us?
- Would he also scold us for being unfaithful to God?
- What are some of the other gods that we pursue in our lives today?
- How can we encounter God like Elijah did?
- Where can we find God? It may be in a "small still voice" or "sound of sheer silence," or it may be in the voices of the church and the community around us, or in our recognizing what we need to do in order to be faithful to God.



Memorization

Continue to encourage children to memorize books of the Bible and the Ten Commandments. Suggestions for ways to help the children with their memorization can be found on page 15 in the Appendix, also found on the Website.



Weaving Our Faith

Before the closing prayer, help the children weave today's lesson together with their life experiences and their own thoughts and ideas by

asking questions such as:

- Who did we learn about today?
- What happened to him?
- What did we learn about God in these stories?
- What else did we learn today?

Encourage the children to remember key words or phrases from today's stories, such as:

- *miracle*
- *faithful*
- *prophet*



Closing Prayer

Before the children leave, say a closing prayer to send them into the church worship service or back to their homes in the knowledge of God's love and protection. The prayer can be very simple and straightforward, such as this one:

- Thank you, God, for sending your prophet Elijah to lead his people to you. Send us now back to our homes, to our families and friends and neighbors, so that we too can spread your love to all around us and lead them to you. This we ask in Jesus' name. *Amen.*

End the class with a dismissal that is used in church, such as:

- Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

The children respond:

- Thanks be to God!



Weaving God's Promises

1 KINGS 16-19, 2 KINGS 1-2

Elijah is one of Israel's greatest prophets. When Elijah shows up in Egypt, Israel has fallen apart. There is no one nation anymore. And the people are worshiping other gods—the gods that the nations all around Israel are worshiping. One of the main gods is named Baal. Baal is the main god of the people called Canaanites, from Canaan. God is very unhappy with his people worshiping not God, but Baal, a fake god. So God sends Elijah to bring the people back to God. Here are some of his stories.

When a bad king sits on the throne

A man named Ahab become king over Israel. He is a bad man and a bad king. He marries a woman named Jezebel. Jezebel worships her country's god named Baal, and to please her, so does Ahab. This makes God very angry. To punish the king, God will send a drought to the land. This means that God will keep the rains from coming.

So God sends Elijah to tell King Ahab about the rain. There will be no rain, Elijah says—not for one month, not for one year, not for three whole years. For three years, the rain will not fall from the sky, and everything will dry up. When it is time for the rains to come, God will send the rain.

Ahab gets angry at Elijah for saying these things, so Elijah goes and hides. He hides in the wilderness. But there is no food there. And because there is a drought, there is no water. But God is with Elijah. When Elijah gets hungry, God sends ravens to feed him. The ravens fly to Elijah with bread and meat in their mouths for Elijah to eat in the morning. In the evening they come again, with more bread and meat. So Elijah does not starve. For water, he drinks from the stream that God lets flow near him. But after a while, there is no rain where Elijah is either, so the stream dries up.

A poor widow helps Elijah, and Elijah helps her

The food and water stop coming to Elijah. He is hungry.

God says to Elijah, “There is a widow, a woman whose husband has died, living in a town called Zarephath. Go to her house. She will feed you.”

So Elijah goes to the town called Zarephath. At the edge of the town, he sees a woman gathering some sticks. He calls out to her, “Please bring me a little water. I am thirsty.”

The woman drops the sticks and goes off to fetch a cup of water. When she comes back with the water, Elijah says, “Please also bring me a little bread. I am very hungry.”

But this time, the woman says to Elijah, “I am sorry! I do not have any bread at all. I do not have anything baked. I only have a little flour in a jar and a little oil in a mug. It is barely enough to make a bit of bread for my son and me. I was just gathering up a couple of sticks to make a fire. Then I was going to make this teeny bit of bread for my son and me. We are going to eat it, and then we will die of hunger.”

Elijah looks at her with love. He knows that God sent him to see this widow and to help her. So he says to her, “Please, do not be afraid. Go ahead and do as you said, baking something to eat. But first, make me a little cake of it and bring it to me. Then make something for you and your son.”

The widow looks at Elijah. The bread that she is going to bake will barely feed her and her son. When that is gone, they will die. Now Elijah is asking her to feed him also! If she does that, she and her son will die even sooner!

But Elijah goes on to say, “God wants you to know this: The jar of flour and the jug of oil will not go empty until the day that God send rain on this earth. The jar of flour will stay full of flour, and the jug of oil will stay full of oil. This will happen because you fed me. Because you feed me, you also will be fed by God.”

So the widow makes a little cake for Elijah and brings it to him, and he eats and is not hungry any longer. Then she makes a little bread for herself and her son and they eat. Then she looks in her jar and her jug. They are full. They stay full of flour and oil for many, many days, just as God has promised.

A contest between God and Baal

Baal is not really a god like God is. Baal is a made-up being that people worship. Baal has statues, priest and prophets, but Baal has no life. Baal is a made-up god. He is worshiped by the people in the lands all around Israel.

Sometimes the Israelites are tempted to worship Baal, too. It's easy because there are statues of Baal all over the place, but there are no statues of God. God would not allow his people to make statues for God. It's also easy because Israel's king, King Ahab, married Jezebel who worships Baal. Because of her, King Ahab also worships Baal, and now, so do many Israelites.

God is angry. There are many people who have turned away from God and are worshipping Baal, pretending that Baal is the god who made them, and brings the sun and the rain, and makes the crops grow. That is why God sent the drought, the years of no rain to the land.

One day, Elijah goes to King Ahab. God wants a showdown between Baal and God, says Elijah. Who is the real God and who is fake? There will be a contest.

Elijah says to Ahab, "Have all the people of Israel come to Mount Carmel and meet me there. Also, bring the 450 prophets of Baal to Mount Carmel. We will see who is the real God, Baal or the God of Israel."

The people of Israel are excited. There will be a contest between Baal and God, and all the people are invited! Thousands of people trudge up the mountain to the meeting place. Elijah meets them there.

Elijah wants the people to decide. Who will they worship, Baal or God? He says, "How long will you go limping along, following one god and then another? Make up your mind! If the Lord is God, then follow God. If Baal is your god, then follow *him*."

The people are quiet. They do not want to make up their minds.

Elijah says, “I am the only, the *only* prophet of God left in this land. Baal has 450 prophets. There are 450 Baal prophets, and only me on God’s side. Now we are going to see who is on the right side.”

Then Elijah sets the scene. He tells the priests of Baal to make an altar out of wood. So they put big pieces of wood on the ground. Then Elijah finds two big bulls. To the priests of Baal, he says, “Take your choice! Choose your favorite bull! Then take it and cut it into pieces and lay it on the wood. But don’t set it on fire! Do not put any fire on the wood. “

The priests do what Elijah tells them. They pick the bull they want. Then they kill it and cut it into pieces and put the pieces on top of the wood. Then they say, “Now what?”

Elijah says, “I will do the same with this other bull. I will kill it and cut it into pieces, and put it on top of the altar that I will make. Then we each will have a bull for our god. When we are both ready, you call your god and I will call my God. The god who answers by fire is the real God.”

The people hear Elijah and shout, “Well spoken!”

So priests—or prophets—of Baal start to cry for Baal. From morning until noontime, they cry, “O Baal, answer us! Baal! Baal, where are you?” But here is no voice from Baal, and no answer from anywhere.

The priests limp around the altar crying and shouting. At noontime, Elijah teases them. “Cry louder! Maybe he doesn’t hear you! Surely Baal is a god, so maybe he is thinking. Maybe he is traveling somewhere. Maybe he’s in the restroom? Maybe he is asleep and you need to wake him up! What’s happened to your Baal?” They cry louder and louder, but there is still no voice from the sky. And more important, there is no fire on the altar to prove that Baal is the real God.

Then Elijah says, “Now it’s *my* turn.” He turns away from the crying prophets and goes to the altar of God, which was in ruins. First he fixes it by putting some

stones around it. Then he makes a trench around the altar, a trench that can hold water. Next he puts some wood on the altar. He takes his bull, kills it and cuts it into pieces, and puts the pieces on the wood.

Then Elijah says, “Now, fill four jars with water and pour it on the meat and on the wood.”

The people say, “What? Water? But we thought you are trying for fire!”

Elijah says, “Yes, water. And now pour four more jars of water on the meat and the wood. And a third time, more water.” Soon, water is running all around the altar. The trench is filled with water, like a little river.

The Elijah goes up to the altar. He prays to God, saying, “O Lord, God of Abraham, let the people know that you are God, and that I am your servant. Answer me, Lord, so these people will know you again.”

And then suddenly, a great flame of fire comes down from the sky and hits right on top of Elijah’s offering. The fire eats up the bull, the wood, the stones and the dust. It even licks up all that water.

When the people see the fire from God, they fall on their faces. They know that God is there. And they now know who is the real God and who is the fake God. They shout, “Yes! The Lord is God!” Then the people take the prophets of Baal and kill them for being prophets of a fake god and for leading them away from the real God.

Elijah thinks he is all alone

King Ahab hears how Elijah has the prophets of Baal killed, and he is very angry. He sends a message to Elijah: “You killed my prophets. I will kill you.” Elijah is afraid, and he runs away into the wilderness to hide from the king. When he gets deep into the wilderness, he finds a cave and spends the night there. He feels all alone. No one is with him, and the king wants to kill him.

While he is sitting in the cave feeling alone, he hears God’s voice. “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

Elijah says, “I seem to be the only one who is working for you, God. The Israelites have left you. They killed all the other prophets except me. And now, they are looking for me so they can kill me, too.”

God says, “You think you are alone. But go outside this cave and stand on the mountain. I, your God, am about to come see you.”

Elijah goes outside. A strong wind passes by him. It is so strong that it breaks the rocks into pieces. But God is not in the wind. It is just wind.

After the wind, an earthquake shakes the ground under Elijah. But God is not in the earthquake. It is just an earthquake.

Then Elijah sees fire on the mountain. But God is not in the fire. It is just fire. The wind, the earthquake and the fire are powerful, scary things, but God does not come to Elijah in these powerful, scary things.

Then, Elijah hears—a sound of silence. Some have called this sound “a small, still voice.” It is quiet—quieter than not-noise, quieter than just not hearing anything. When Elijah hears this silence, he wraps his face in his cape. Then he stands just outside the cave.

A voice speaks. “Elijah, what are you doing here?”

Elijah says again, “I seem to be the only one who is working for you, God. The Israelites have left you. They killed all the other prophets except me. And now, they are looking for me so they can kill me, too.”

But God says, “I want you to go back. You will not die. You will anoint someone else as king—a man named Hazael. Then you will anoint someone named Elisha to be your helper. And then, you will find 7,000 good people in Israel who know and love me. You didn’t know there are still good people in Israel who have not bowed down to Baal, but you will meet them. They will be with you. And I will stay with you.”

So Elijah leaves his cave and goes out of the wilderness. He finds Hazael and makes him king, and finds Elisha and makes him his helper, and finds all of the people who are still with God.

Elijah rides up to heaven

It is now time for Elijah to meet God. He has Elisha with him. Elisha will take Elijah's place as God's prophet. Now Elijah can leave this earth.

Elijah and Elisha are walking. Elijah knows that God will take him away. Every once in a while, he says to Elisha, "You stay here. God is sending me away." But each time, Elisha says, "No! I will not leave you!"

Finally, Elijah and Elisha reach the Jordan River. Elijah takes off his cloak (called a mantle) and hits the water with it. The water rolls to one side and to the other and leaves the middle dry. Elijah and Elisha cross the river on the dry land.

Elijah and Elisha are walking and talking. Suddenly a chariot and horses of fire come flying down from the heavens. The fiery chariot goes between Elijah and Elisha. Then the chariot plunges under Elijah and takes him into the chariot. A whirlwind swoops down and carries the chariot and horses, with Elijah on the chariot, way, way up into heaven.

Elisha's eyes get wide. He watches Elijah sitting on the chariot of fire and watches the horses carry Elijah up into heaven. He shouts, maybe just to himself, "Father! Father! The chariots of Israel and their horsemen!"

Then Elijah in the chariot disappears. The prophet of God is now not Elijah anymore, but Elisha. He slowly goes back to the Jordan River and across to the other side. He has work to do.



Weaving God's Promises

GATHERING ACTIVITY FOLLOW ELIJAH'S PATH

Follow Elijah through his adventures. Help him find his way to the cave in the mountainside where he can talk to God. You need to stop at each place, in order.





Weaving God's Promises

MINIATURE ALTARS for Primary, Elementary, Intermediate

Children build individual altars from sticks and rocks and other natural objects.

Materials:

- small sticks, rocks, and other natural objects gathered by the children or provided (**Note:** You will need 12 small rocks per child.)
- cardboard
- seeds
- cellophane paper in red, orange and yellow
- scissors

Preparation:

Cut cardboard into 6-8" pieces, one for each child.

Directions:

Give each of the children a piece of cardboard, 12 small rocks and a few sticks—or have the class gather these objects outside—and invite each child to build an altar. Give the children these directions:

1. Build an altar with the rocks.
2. Glue seeds around the altar.
3. Place small sticks on top of the stones.
4. Cut cellophane in long irregular shapes like flames and glue onto the sticks.



Weaving God's Promises

FLAMING CHARIOTS for Intermediate

Children make chariots, resembling the chariot that took Elijah up to heaven.

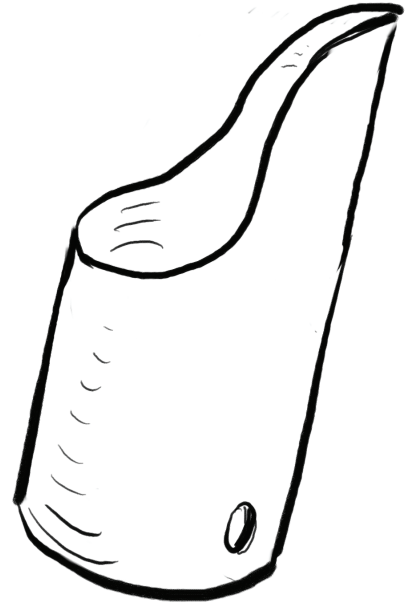
Materials:

toilet paper tubes
masking tape
paper fasteners
poster board
cellophane paper or tissue paper in red, orange and yellow
nails
scissors

Directions:

Invite each of the children to make a “flaming” chariot. Give children these directions:

1. Cut the top of a toilet paper tube down the sides and across the front to make a chariot shape.
2. Place the uncut end of the tube on a piece of poster board and draw a circle around the end. Cut out the circle and tape it to the bottom of the tube. This is the floor of the chariot.
3. Cut two 3" circles from poster board for the wheels. With a nail, punch a small hole in the center of the circles.
4. Punch a small hole on each side of the tube, near the bottom. This is where the wheels attach.
5. Fasten the circles to the tube with paper fasteners to make the wheels.
6. Cover the chariot with strips of red, orange and yellow tissue or cellophane paper to make flames.





Weaving God's Promises

ELIJAH'S BIRD FRIENDS for Preschool, Primary, Elementary

Children make ravens, a reminder of how God cared for Elijah by having ravens feed him while he was hiding by the brook.

Materials:

Raven Body and Wings patterns (p. 19)
black construction paper
yellow construction paper
googly eyes or small circle stickers (yellow)
scissors
paper clips
glue
tape
small pieces of wrapped candy
light colored pencils

Preparation:

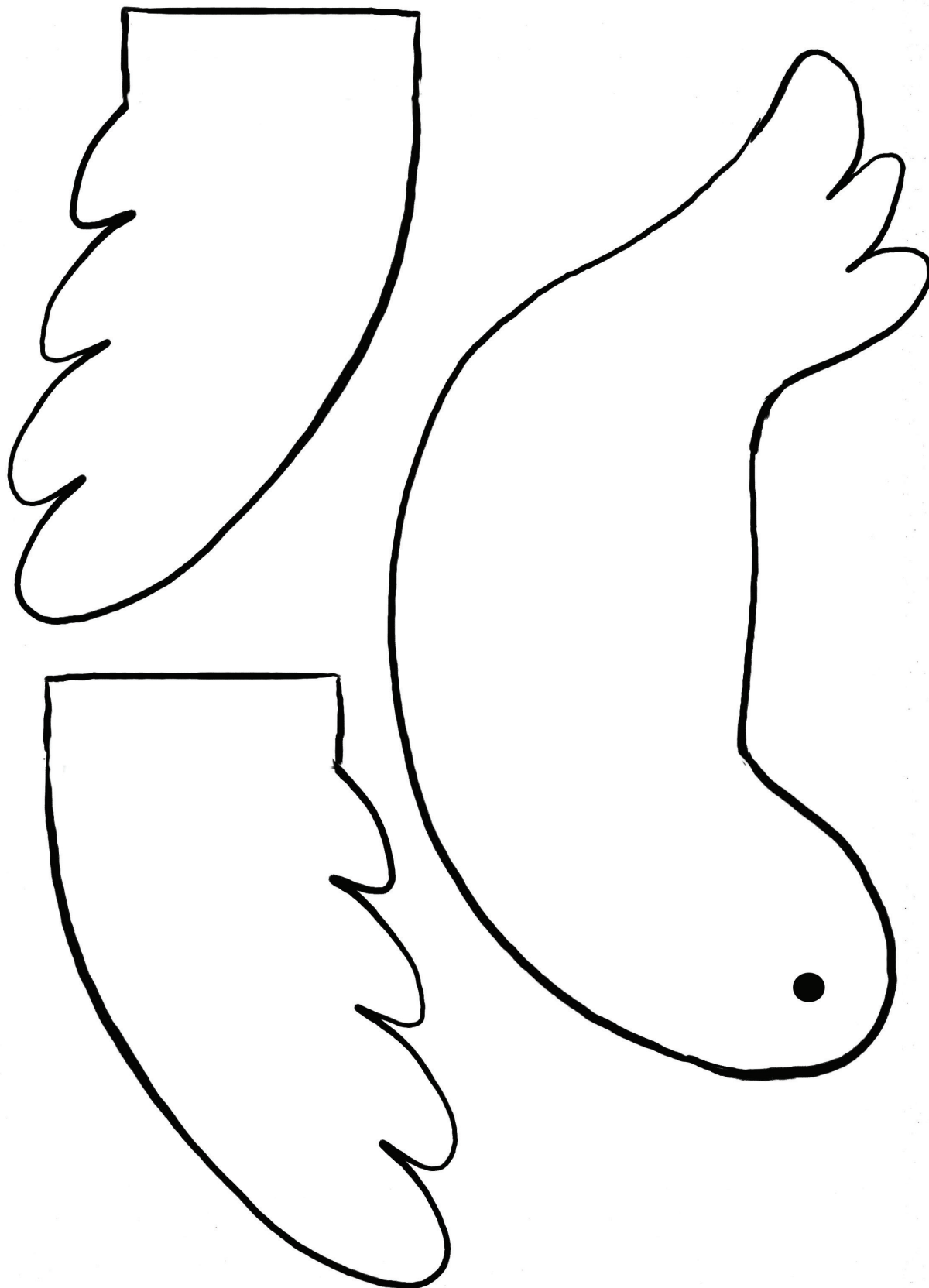
Make copies of the *Raven Body and Wings* patterns on heavy paper, one set for each child. Cut 1" x 1" squares from yellow paper, one for each child.

Directions:

Pass out the patterns and yellow squares and invite each child to make a raven. Help younger children as needed. Give the children these directions:

1. Cut out the raven patterns. With a light colored pencil, trace around the raven body and wings patterns onto black paper and cut them out.
2. Glue the wings of the raven onto the sides of the body, then glue on eyes.
3. Fold the yellow square in half diagonally and glue it onto the bird's head to make the beak. Tape a paper clip to the side of the beak.
4. Carefully slip a corner of the candy wrapping under the paper clip.

RAVEN BODY AND WINGS





Weaving God's Promises

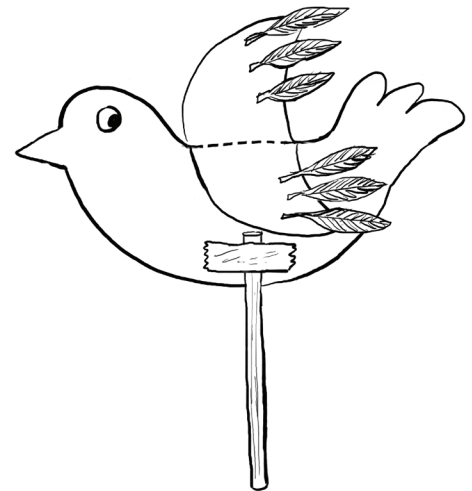
RAVEN STICK PUPPETS for Primary, Elementary

Children make ravens that “fly.”

Materials:

Raven Pattern (p. 21)
small pieces of bread
drinking straws
light colored pencils
transparent tape

feathers, preferably black
black construction paper
googly eyes
glue
scissors



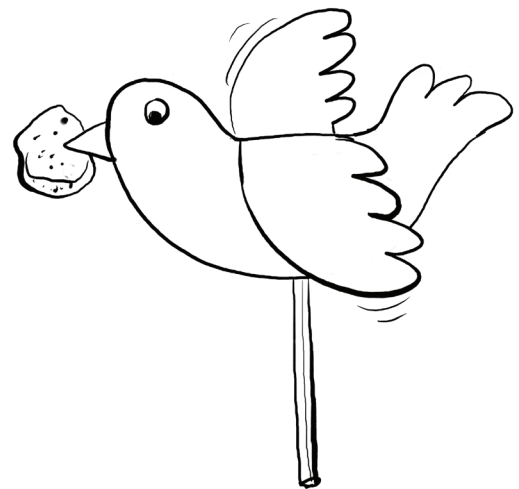
Preparation:

Make copies of the *Raven Pattern* on heavy paper, one per child.

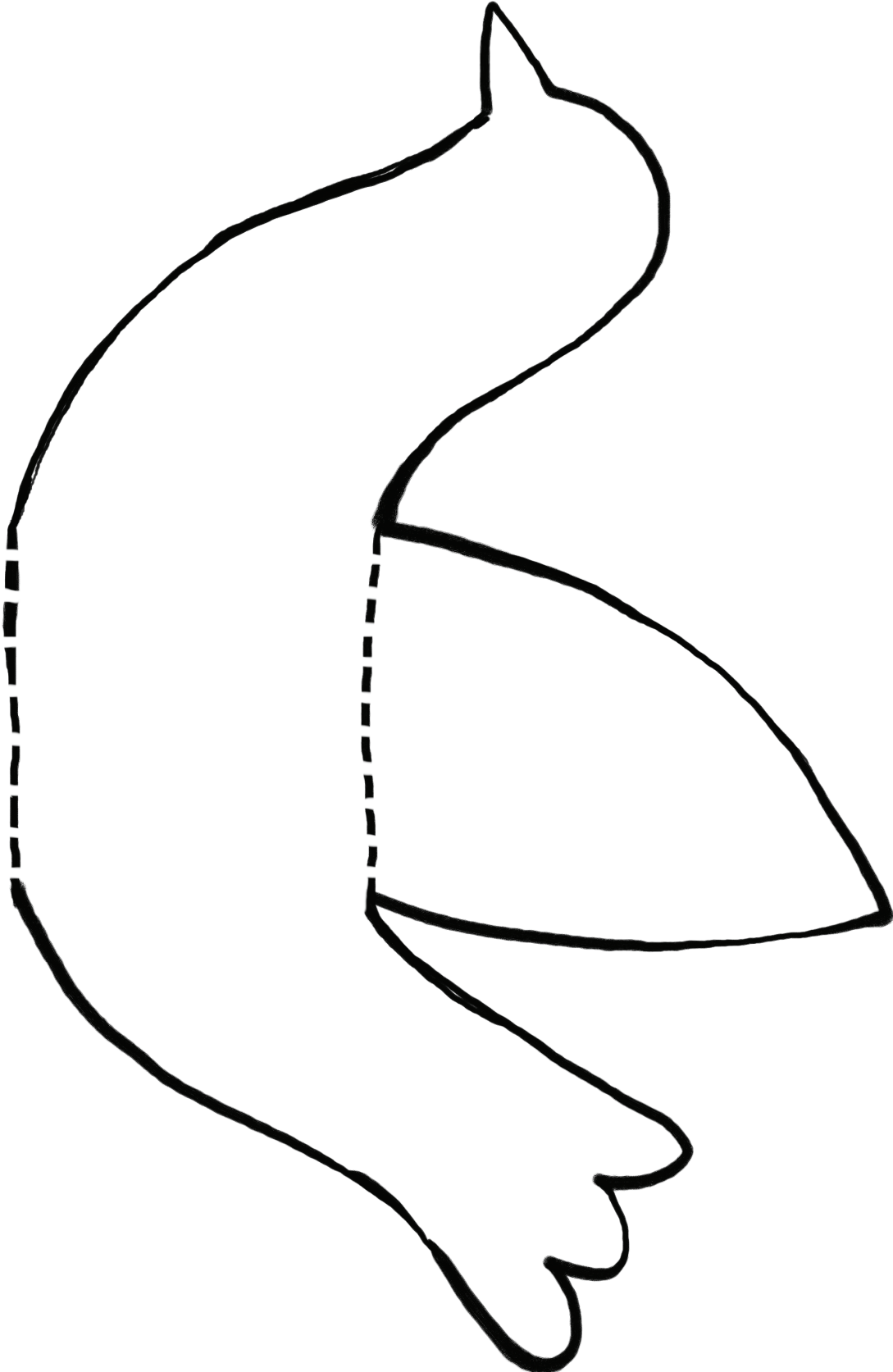
Directions:

Distribute the patterns and invite each child to make a raven stick puppet.
Give children the following directions:

1. Cut out the *Raven Pattern*.
2. Fold a piece of black construction paper in half and place the bottom of the pattern on the fold. With a light colored pencil, trace around the pattern and cut out the raven shape. Do not cut the fold.
3. Fold down the wings so they stick out.
4. Glue the bird's body together. Do not glue the wings.
5. Tape a straw to the middle of the body, under the wings.
6. Glue feathers to the top of the wings.
7. Glue a googly eye to each side of the head.
8. Glue a small piece of bread to the beak.
9. Hold the straw and move the bird up and down to make it “fly.”



RAVEN PATTERN





Weaving God's Promises

BIBLICAL BARLEY STEW

for Preschool, Primary, Elementary, Intermediate

During a time of plenty, Elijah and his friends might have eaten this kind of stew. For a participatory activity, invite each child to add ingredients.

Ingredients:

½ cup barley	⅓ cup chopped onion
½ cup chopped celery	½ cup chopped carrots
½ pound spinach	5 tablespoons butter or margarine
6 cups water or beef stock	dash rosemary
3-4 tablespoons salt	

In addition to the ingredients, you will also need:

soup pot	stirring spoon
measuring cups and spoons	cutting board
knife	bowls
spoons	napkins

Preparation:

Chop all vegetables ahead of time and put in jars. Precook the barley.

Directions:

1. Saute the onion, celery and carrots in the butter.
2. Add stock, barley, and spices. Bring to a boil, turn down the heat, and simmer until vegetables are tender.
3. During the last 15 minutes, add the spinach.
4. Serve in bowls and enjoy during Sharing time.



Weaving God's Promises

SNAKE WATCH for Elementary, Intermediate

In the wilderness, Elijah needs to avoid all sorts of dangers, including snakes. But God is always with him and keeps him safe.

Children play this game as a reminder of Elijah's wilderness adventures.

Materials:

- tube sock
- stuffing (cloth, rags or pillow stuffing)
- yarn or string
- rope or heavy cord
- scissors
- masking tape or rope

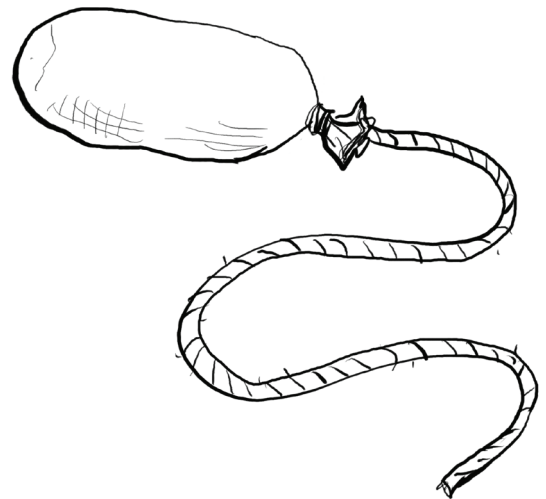
Preparation:

Make a snake by filling a sock with stuffing. Tie a piece of string around the sock to keep the stuffing inside. Then tie the end of a 5' length of cord or rope around the sock.

Directions:

Invite the children to play the Snake Watch game:

1. Make a large circle about 10' in diameter, using a rope or tape.
2. Choose one child to be *It*. Ask *It* to hold the end of the rope with the snake attached.
3. Other children stand in a circle with *It* in the center. Holding the end of the rope, *It* slowly swings the snake around the circle near the ground. Children try to jump over the snake without getting hit. If hit, the child leaves the circle.
4. If *It* hits someone above the knees, *It* is out of the game and the child hit becomes the new *It*.
5. Play until only one child is left. That child becomes the new *It*.





Weaving God's Promises

BANDANA TAG for Elementary, Intermediate

Robbers in the wilderness took Elijah's head covering! Children help find it.

Materials:

bandana

Directions:

Invite the children to play Bandana Tag:

1. Choose one person to be *Elijah*. Everybody else stands in a circle holding hands.
2. Put the bandana in the pocket of one of the children.
3. *Elijah* runs outside the circle trying to grab the bandana. Still holding hands, the children move in a circle, trying to keep *Elijah* from getting his head covering back.
4. When *Elijah* gets his head covering, he or she joins the circle. Pick a new *Elijah* to play again.



Weaving God's Promises

RAVENS TO ELIJAH for Preschool, Primary

Children take turns playing *Elijah*, who tries to guess who the raven is that fed him!

Materials:

- bowl
- fish-shaped snack crackers or other small crackers
- napkins

Directions:

Invite children to play the Ravens to Elijah game:

1. Put a chair in the center of the room with an empty bowl under it.
2. Pick one child to be *Elijah*. *Elijah* sits on the chair. The other children are *ravens*. They sit in a circle around the chair.
3. Give all the children except *Elijah* a cracker on a napkin (for sanitary reasons).
4. Ask *Elijah* to close his or her eyes. While *Elijah* is sleeping, tap one of *ravens* on the head. The *raven* flies like a bird to *Elijah* and puts a cracker into the bowl for *Elijah* to eat, then flies back and sits down.
5. Everyone says, "Elijah, Elijah, open your eyes! You will find a big surprise!"
6. *Elijah* tries to guess which of the *ravens* brought the food. Let *Elijah* guess three times, then he or she eats the cracker.
7. The raven that fed *Elijah* then becomes the new *Elijah*. Play until all children have been *Elijah* and the *raven* that feeds *Elijah*.



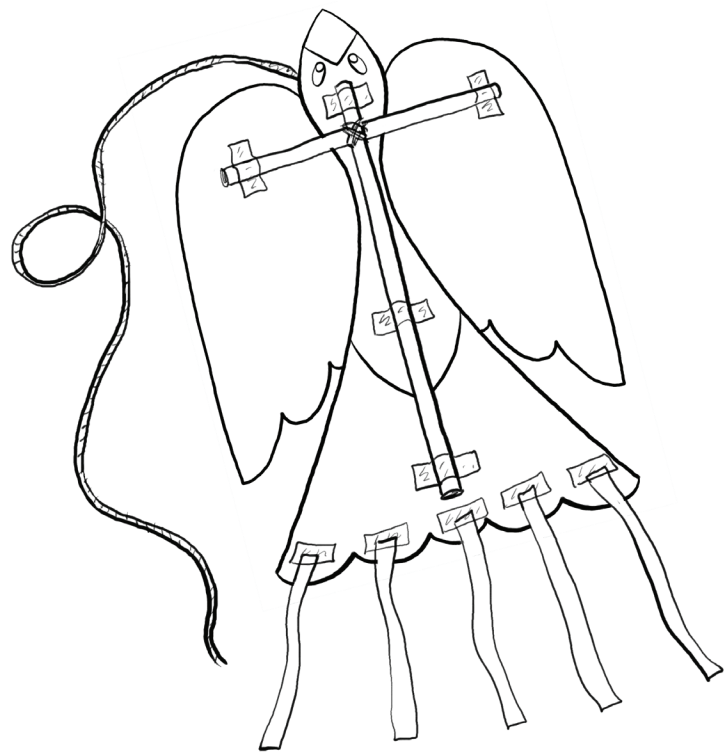
Weaving God's Promises

RAVEN KITES for Intermediate

Children make kites in the shape of a raven, the bird God sent to bring food to Elijah while he was hiding by the brook.

Materials:

black poster board
tape
kite string
shishkabob sticks or drinking straws
hole punch
light colored pencils or markers
scissors
black ½" wide ribbon
Raven Kite Pattern (p. 27)



Preparation:

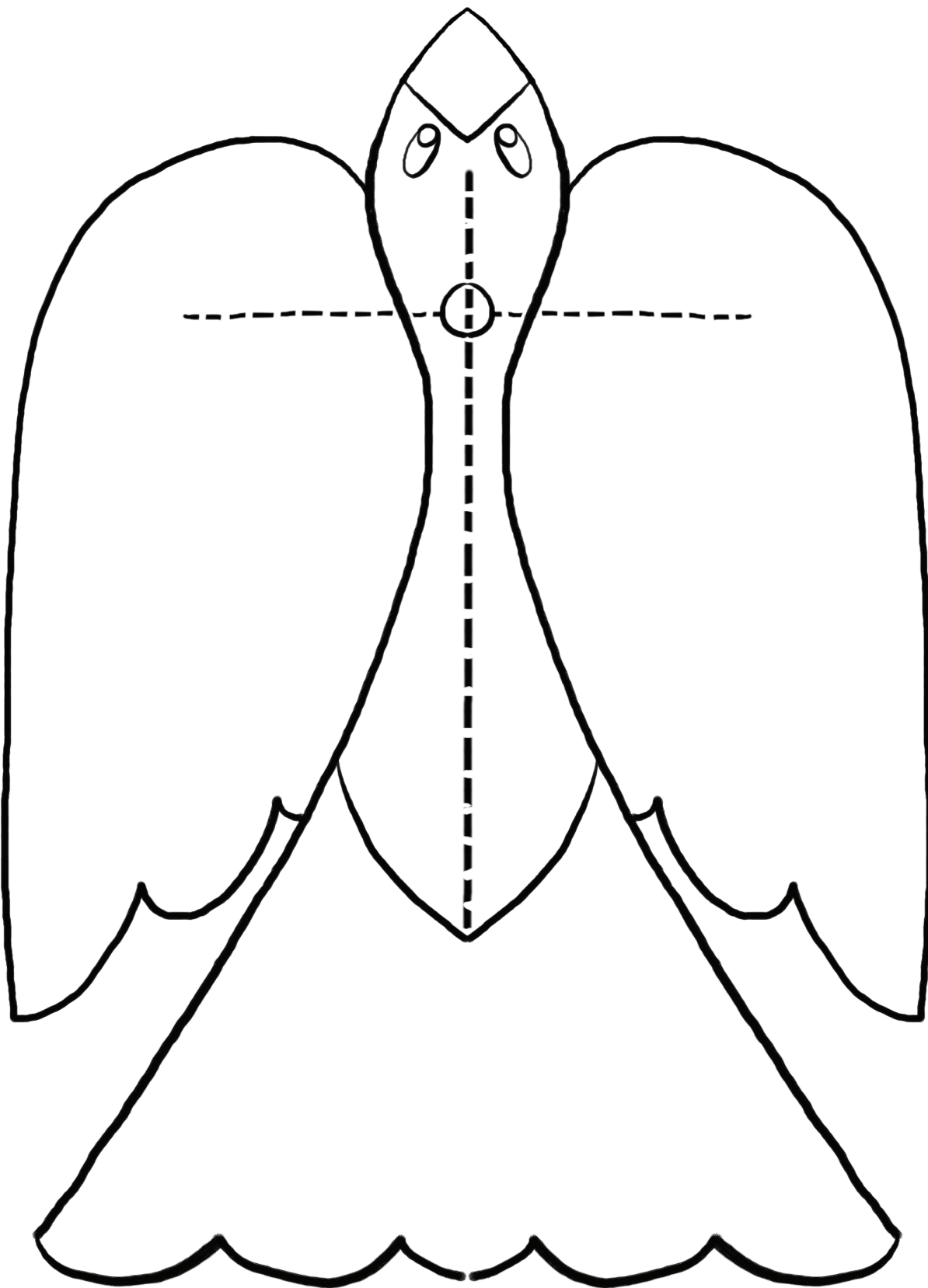
Make copies of the *Raven Kite Pattern* on heavy paper, one for each child.

Directions:

Hand out the *Raven Kite Patterns* and invite each child to make a raven kite. Give children the following directions:

1. Cut out your raven and, with a light colored pencil, trace around it onto the poster board, then cut out the raven shape.
2. Punch a hole through the kite where marked.
3. Tape one stick from head to tail. Tape the other stick from wing to wing. The sticks should cross right at the hole.
4. Tie the kite string in the center, where the sticks cross. Pull the string through the hole.
5. Cut several lengths of ribbon and tape to the tail of the raven for tail feathers.

RAVEN KITE PATTERN



LESSON 10: STORIES OF ELIJAH



We Believe . . .

In the New Testament, Jesus is often compared with—or confused with—Elijah. Apart from Moses, Elijah was considered by the Jews to be the greatest of Israel's prophets. He did indeed challenge the dominant faithless structure of the society.

As a part of the great line of prophets, then, we in the Episcopal Church also honor Elijah, who called God's people to be faithful to God.



Words of Faith

Miracle—something God does that is amazing, unexpected and seemingly impossible

Faithful—to remain true to something or someone; keeping your word and promise

Prophet—a leader; one who brings God's word to others; one who speaks for God

We clearly see in these stories the theme of this year's lessons: God stays with us, no matter what.

Today's Story:

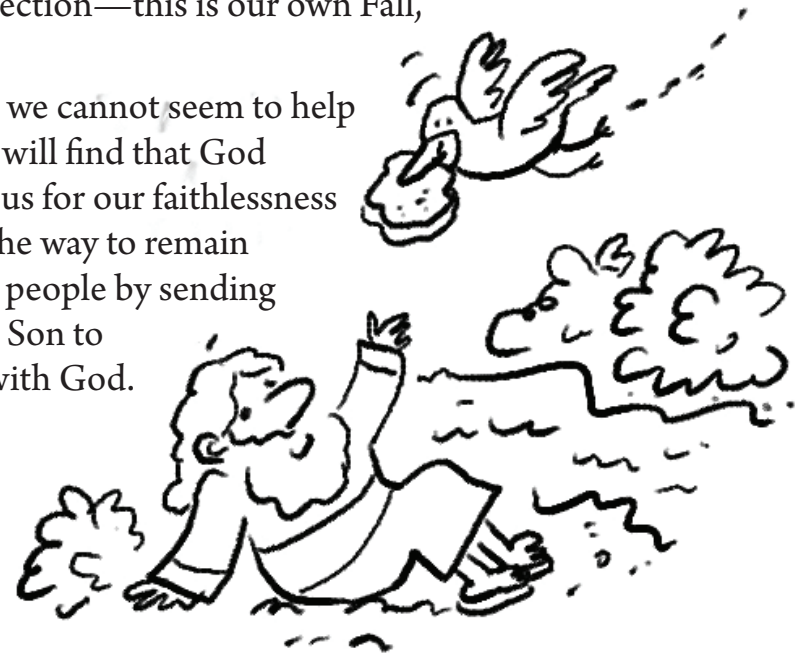


1 Kings 16-19; 2 Kings 1-2

The Elijah stories record the battle in the northern kingdom for the survival of the rule of God against the many other gods in the region. Elijah was what we call an *ethical prophet*, and he ushers in of a full and rich era of ethical prophecy in Israel's history. It is the prophets of this era who help the people stay faithful to God in what will be devastating times in their history.

Elijah's time is a very sad time in Israel's history, a time when her people continue, over and over again, to turn away from God. It reminds us of our own times of faithlessness, when we choose popularity or material things or hatred and resentments instead of following the commandments to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself." It is so easy to go in the wrong direction—this is our own Fall, continued.

Later, though we cannot seem to help ourselves, we will find that God both forgives us for our faithlessness and gives us the way to remain God's chosen people by sending us God's only Son to reconcile us with God.





Sharing

Today's story

is a series of stories from the life of Elijah, one of Israel's greatest prophets. He lived during the time that Israel was falling apart and abandoning God:

- Elijah performs a miracle for a widow who offers hospitality to him during a drought.
- Elijah and the prophets of Baal have a contest to see which God will answer their request to end the drought.
- Elijah encounters God.
- Elijah is taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot.

Read or tell one or more of these stories from a children's Bible or your family Bible. Use gestures and expressive language to make your storytelling more powerful in these already powerful stories.



Weaving God's Promises

This Week at Home



- **Celebrate and share the knowledge that God never leaves us alone.** When do we think we're alone? When have we felt abandoned? In these situations, how can we remind ourselves that we never are alone, that God is always with us? How can we remind others? Is there someone, right now, that we know could use this reminder? Why not visit that person? call them? send them a text, an e-mail or a card?
- **Follow Elijah's example and practice solitude.** First read together the story of Elijah's experience of solitude and his encounter with God in 1 Kings 19. Ask each household member to go somewhere in or near your home to "be alone" for 5-10 minutes, in complete silence. Ask everyone to do two things, first, just listen. Second, listen for God. Set a timer. When it goes off, regather and ask everyone to explain what happened to them. What did they hear? Did they hear the voice of God?
- **Roleplay the story of Elijah and the widow as found in 1 Kings 17:8-24.** Afterwards, talk about trusting God. How does God meet our needs? How does God meet other peoples' needs *through us*? How can we be more intentional about allowing God to meet other people's needs *through us*? Consider committing—as a household—to a specific action to help others the way Elijah and God helped the widow.
- **Pantomime the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal.** First, read aloud the story from 1 Kings 18:20-40. Then invite household members to pantomime the story as one person rereads it. This is a great story, filled with irony, sarcasm and humor. "Maybe Baal is sleeping and need to be waked up!" Afterwards, talk about how God comes through in a powerful, dramatic way at the end of the story. When does God do the same for us?
- **Illustrate Elijah's exit in the fiery chariot.** Reread the story of Elijah and the chariot in 2 Kings 2. Using whatever art supplies you have at home—crayons, markers, paints, clay, play dough—together create your vision of this scene.



Household Prayer

Lord, sometimes you call people like your prophet Elijah, who show us how to be good and faithful and brave, and who show us how to be workers for you. Help us also to be good and faithful and brave workers for you, just like Elijah; in Jesus' name. *Amen.*

