

# SABBATH SCHOOL

## Preteen Sabbath Instruction Program — Teacher's Outline

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Level 4 • Unit 2 • Week 2

### GOD LISTENS TO US AND ANSWERS OUR PRAYERS

**OBJECTIVE:**

To show through the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal that God listens to us and answers our prayers according to His will when we try to obey Him.

**ATTENTION GETTER:**

Do: Show an instruction manual for an appliance or piece of equipment. Explain what an instruction manual is for.

The Bible is God's instruction manual. Bible study is how we learn about God, what He is like and what He wants us to do. When we read the Bible, God is talking to us, telling us how to make our lives work well. We become close to God by our prayer and by our Bible study.

Our prayers are how we talk to God. Do you have a best friend with whom you feel you can share anything? God can be an even better friend than our best human friend. Do you remember that last time we discussed how Abraham was God's friend? God also wants us to be His best friends. We can share anything with God.

God listens to us and answers our prayers. God has answered my prayers. [Relate a personal experience of answered prayer. Then allow the children to relate their experiences.]

God has answered prayers throughout time for His servants, His people.

**BIBLE LESSON:**

The example we are going to read from the Bible today is a story about a prophet of God named Elijah. The story is in 1 Kings 18-20-40. [Tell this story rather than read it. Put a lot of expression into how the people cried to their false god with no response. You might have some older students put on a short skit. They could wail, get down on the floor and roll around. In contrast, show how Elijah "made fun" of their god not responding. Then he talked to God in a calm, soft tone—first acknowledging that

God is God, that He has all power; then explain how God answered Elijah's prayer.]

Ask: Why did God not hear the prayers of the prophets of Baal?

Say: When we are doing wrong or when we are serving the wrong god, God doesn't hear our prayers.

1 John 5:3—First we must show God we love Him by keeping His commandments.

1 John 5:14—Then we can know if we ask anything according to His will, He will hear us.

Ask: Was Elijah a righteous man?

Say: God tells us the story of Elijah raising a young man from the dead. The young man's mother affirmed that Elijah was a prophet of truth.

1 Kings 17:24—Elijah was a man of God, and he was truthful.

Say: God heard Elijah because he obeyed God, worshiped the right God and prayed according to God's will.

Ask: When we pray today, in whose name do we always pray?

Say: We always pray in Jesus' name. When we pray with the right attitude—we obey God and pray according to His will—Christ allows us to be in God's throne room and talk to Him in prayer. Ephesians 2:18—Through Christ we have access to the Father.

### Music:

Have the students sing the following lyrics to the tune of "For Even From My Youth, O God," (page 16 in the United Church of God hymnal).

The people had their own god. Baal was his name.  
The people built him temples, to advertise his name.  
They shouted and they hollered, gave sacrifices too.  
So Baal would not be displeased. They did this all on cue.

Elijah knew that they were wrong. He taunted and he teased.  
Then he asked God to hear his prayer. He knew God would be pleased.  
God heard the prayer of Elijah. The sacrifice He burned.  
Elijah showed them the true God. And the people, they returned.  
(words by Karen Allwine)

Ask: Do you know of other incidents in the Bible where God answered the prayers of His people? [Let students respond. Be ready with incidents yourself in case the children need some ideas. One example, Elijah asked for rain after three years of drought (1 Kings 18:41-45).]

Ask: What are the kinds of things we should pray for? Thank God for what we have too! [Stress *thanking God* for our food before meals and for all the other things we need.]

Say: God takes care of all our needs (food, shelter, clothing, family and friends, healing, protection). And He also gives us a lot of our wants—if they are good for us. It is all right to pray for what we want; but we should understand the difference between wants and needs. Sometimes God has to say no. This is another important aspect to consider. God isn't going to give any of us everything we ask for because some of it may not be good for us.

Say: God wants you to be His friend, just as Abraham and Elijah were God's friends. Just as we make friends by listening and talking to them, we make friends with God the same way—by listening to God talking in the Bible and talking to God in prayer.

### **LESSON APPLICATION:**

Choose one of the following possibilities for an activity:

1. Have the children make a collage or drawing to show how we can be a friend to others and a friend to God. Have them show that we become His friend, in part, if we are friends to others—doing good for them and serving them.
2. Have them show (in either a drawing or a collage) ways that God does hear our prayers.

### **MEMORY VERSE:**

1 John 5:14 "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."

# *family activity*

## **THE POINT:**

To show through the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal that God listens to us and answers our prayers according to His will when we try to obey Him.

## **ASK ME...**

Why did God not hear the prayers of the prophets of Baal?

What was the name of the righteous prophet of God whose prayers God answered?

Why do we pray to God in Jesus' name?

## **FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:**

Discuss the requests your family members should be making to God.

If you are not doing so already, pray as a family on Friday night before going to bed. Ask the children to pray first unless they need to hear your example of the type of prayer which should be prayed. Parents should pray only as long as the children would normally pray.

## **MEMORY VERSE:**

1 John 5:14 "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."