

I Am: The Greatest Battle

Unit I: Into the Cave

Lesson 2: Hiding in a Cave – Introduction of Elijah

The Cave Of Wisdom

Cave Opening: The Burning Bush

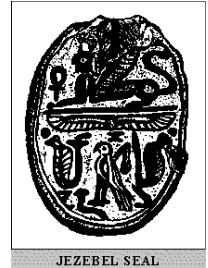
Spirit Woman (Leader): “In the darkness of a cave, we first encounter “Fear”, the most debilitating force the dark side possesses to destroy our search for the “I am” intended for our lives. It is first because of its power to defeat us. The dark side does not want you to succeed in your quest, so it doesn’t hesitate to use its most powerful weapon quickly. Elijah, one of the greatest prophets of Israel, encountered the dark weapon. In our scripture, Elijah angers Jezebel, the wicked queen of Ahab. She swears to kill Elijah. In fear, Elijah flees to the desert of Judah to hide. The Cave is our symbol of the forces in the world that try to prevent us from becoming what God has dreamed for us long before we were born. In this dark place, God found Elijah and led him to achieve his tasks. He will share his story with you now.”

The Circle of Fire: Elijah’s Story – A Queen to Fear

Scripture reference: 1 Kings 18: 19-40, 19: 1-13

Biblical Character: Elijah – The Prophet of Fire

Elijah: "Israel had a very wicked king and queen while I was a prophet. Their names were Ahab and Jezebel. Perhaps you are familiar with Jezebel more than Ahab. Few people in history have so demonstrated wicked living as to have their very name associated with evil as has Jezebel. She came from Tyre, a city on the Mediterranean Sea north of Israel. There they worshipped Baal, not the one true God. Jezebel was very beautiful. Her father, the king of Tyre, arranged the marriage with Ahab to secure Israel as a trading partner.



It was easy for Ahab to agree to marry the beautiful woman. For Jezebel it was easy to sway Ahab to do whatever she desired, including building temples for the people to worship the gods of Baal and align them with Tyre. If all went well, Jezebel would move the capital of Israel to Tyre, but initially she settled for Ahab to construct a palace at Samaria, close to the Sea.

Ahab reigned over Israel for 22 years. During that time, Jezebel killed as many of the prophets of God as she could find. I was one of the few left when God called me to face Ahab. I told him to bring the people of Israel and all of the prophets of Baal to Mount Carmel to meet me. There were 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah who served Jezebel. The odds against me were pretty bad, but God had given me these instructions. Ahab was confident that he had me in a position to serve up my head to the people and didn't hesitate to agree to the meeting.

The meeting on Mount Carmel was miraculous. Ahab, the prophets and the people came to the mountain. A final solution to the selection of the god over Israel was needed. They couldn't continue to worship both Baal and Yahweh. Each of us would sacrifice a bull on an altar and call upon our god to consume it. Since there were so many of them, I offered to allow them to go first and use all day to call upon Baal to light the fire under the altar in answer. What a sight that was: over 850 people dancing, yelling, screaming, pleading, beating their bodies until bloody around the altar for Baal. They continued until all collapsed from exhaustion with no answer from their god.

It was evening and time to call upon the one true God. I built an altar using twelve stones, one for each of the tribes of Jacob. Next I dug a deep trench around the stones and filled the area with sticks. This had to be convincing, so I had large jars of water poured over the altar and sacrifice until the trench was full. Then I prayed. No matches, torches, or tricks, just prayer. 'Blessed are those whose strength is in You', said King David (Psalm 84:5). Without a doubt, my strength was in Yahweh, for I had little power of my own and was greatly outnumbered.

My prayer was simple: let it be known that you are God. The answer was both amazing and frightening. Fire rained down from heaven onto the altar and consumed the sacrificed bull, the wood, the stones, the ground under them, and all the water in the trench. All the people yelled, 'The Lord, he is God!'.

I then commanded the people to seize the prophets of Baal and Asherah and slaughter them. It was a great victory for God. I thought the war was over and Israel would be allowed to worship God freely. But I had forgotten about Jezebel. She sent a messenger to me with word that she would kill me by the next day. I was so afraid that I ran for my life to this cave.”

Show the video: “Elijah the Prophet – Part 2”

See Appendix 2 for online link to Youtube video.

Spirit Woman (Leader): “The mighty prophet who had just called down fire from heaven and destroyed the priests of Baal was now trembling from the wrath of a woman. So afraid was Elijah, he didn’t even ask God for guidance. Have you ever ‘jumped before you thought’? It’s best to seek God’s guidance before we act. Elijah moved from the power and light of God’s victory to the fear and darkness of a cave. But God will not abandon us to the darkness. Elijah may have felt alone, frightened and defeated, but God still knew him and where to find him.”

Modern Character: Martin Luther – A Nail on the Door

Spirit Woman (Leader): “The Protestant Revolution was begun by one man claiming God’s Dream for his life: to stand on the Word of scripture. He would have to face the political powers of the time much as Elijah had to do and risk his life. Martin Luther’s cave was a trial room where fear could easily have destroyed his dream. Our “cave” can

come in many forms and at times unexpected, even when we believe we are doing the right thing.”

Show the Youtube video of Martin Luther’s stand for God. See Appendix 2 for online link.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Fear is a powerful dark side weapon. Overcome it using Psalm 23: “Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.” God will protect you from the evil of the dark side.

Key Learning for the Tribe: God will provide and care for you. The courage you need to overcome fear will be from the Power of God. It will be all that you need.

Craft: Provide permanent markers of various colors and have the students write their name on their T-Shirt under the “I AM” logo. Explain the symbolism is that God knows each little “I am” He created. It will be each person’s job during the course to discover the “I am” God planned for them.

Recreation Activity: “Famous People: Name the Character”
– Put the name of different famous people on each member’s back (both good and bad). Each person must identify the name on their back by asking questions of the others. After all have been identified, ask how it felt to be that famous person. Remind them that every day they are creating a perception of their character in the eyes of

someone else. Is it the perception that reveals God's Dream for them? See Appendix 6 Recreation, Fun Games, "Famous People" for printable cards. Explain that these famous people could have allowed fear to stop their quest for their dream, but they overcame it. At the point, they do not know God's Dream for them, but they too can overcome fear and perhaps be famous one day.