

21

5-minute Children's Messages for Sunday Morning!

TOILET: Elijah

PROPS

A toilet

KEY SCRIPTURE

1 Kings 18

Did you know that there is potty humor in the Bible? Your Sunday school teachers probably forgot to tell you that. Or maybe they didn't know. But there's a really great potty joke in the Bible, and most people never, ever notice it.

It happened during a confrontation between the prophet Elijah and the prophets of Baal. Baal was the popular god in Israel during the reign of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. God had had enough of people worshipping Baal, so he sent Elijah to challenge Baal and his followers.

The challenge was simple: Each side would build an altar and make a sacrifice. They would then call on their god to send fire from heaven to burn up the sacrifice. Elijah was nice enough to let the prophets of Baal go first. They started early in the morning, worshipping and crying out to Baal for fire. For hours and hours, they danced and called on their god. But Baal never answered.

Elijah sat back and watched as the prophets danced and called on their god. Then Elijah did something you might expect to see at a sporting event today: He started to trash talk the prophets of Baal! "Shout louder!" he said. "Maybe Baal is asleep and he can't hear you!"

Then Elijah said something else. The literal translation of Elijah's words is "Maybe he has gone aside." Most Bible translations change these words to "Maybe Baal has gone on a trip." But in the original language, "gone aside" is a slang phrase, and it does not mean "gone on a trip."

Elijah was saying, "Maybe Baal is on the toilet!"

Now those are fighting words, right?

Of course Baal wasn't on the toilet, and he wasn't asleep. He wasn't there at all—exactly the point Elijah was trying to make. When Elijah's turn came, he built his altar, made a sacrifice, and had buckets and buckets of water poured over both. He said one prayer, and *foom!* Fire fell from the sky and devoured the sacrifice.

It's a great reminder that our God is a real God. He listens, and he answers our prayers. And God will not take a backseat to false gods that we make up on our own. So next time you take a seat on your "throne," take a moment to thank God for the reminder that he is still on his throne. (No, I don't mean the toilet!)