

# MOUNTAIN TOP EXPERIENCES

*by Elizabeth Ann Jaeger*



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# Mountaintop Experiences

A Lenten series  
by Elizabeth Ann Jaeger

## PRODUCTION NOTES

Here's a peek at the peaks! *Mountaintop Experiences* is a series of six short dramas for the Lenten season, plus one additional option of a dialogue on Jesus' seven last words from Mount Calvary for Good Friday.

Often when a person has a stirring spiritual event, one might refer to it as a mountaintop experience. Each drama represents a transformational happening from the Bible that took place on a mountain. Sir Everest Hillervalley interacts with various biblical characters for each week of Lent.

1. Mount Ararat — God's new creation began here with Noah and his family after the ark found a safe landing spot.
2. Mount Moriah — God asks Abraham to make the ultimate sacrifice, and that was a mountain of faith hard to climb.
3. Mount Sinai — Moses waited for the Ten Commandments up there.
4. Mount Carmel — A smackdown between the prophet Elijah and foreign prophets resulted in the God of Israel reigning supreme against Baal ... no contest.
5. The Sermon on the Mount — When Jesus preaches to the people, each "blessed are" illustrates God's kingdom based on love.
6. The Mount of Olives — As Jesus prays in the Garden, he accepts his sacrificial death amid denial and desertion.
7. Mount Calvary — A bonus script for Good Friday features the seven last words of Christ on the cross.

Recurring character Sir Everest Hillervalley is the official tour guide who introduces the congregation to the people and places of biblical mountains. He may be dressed as a rugged mountaineer, with a khaki shirt and shorts, khaki hat, hiking boots, and backpack. He can use a walking stick and wear binoculars around his neck. All other characters wear biblical costumes.

The "set" for each week's drama is primarily a projected PowerPoint image of a mountain. You may use the same standard mountain image each week, or you may go a step further and find an image online of each week's specific mountain or even a map of the area. If your congregation does not have a projection system, you could paint a mountain backdrop.

Props are listed for each skit.

Good Friday's script is somewhat of a departure from the previous weeks. Although the setting is a mountain (Mount Calvary), it is a simplified reading for two voices. Sir Everest Hillervalley does not appear. This gives it an appropriately reverent tone.

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## Week 1

## Mount Ararat

(Based on Genesis 6-9)

## Cast

SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY

Renowned explorer and mountaineer, narrator

NOAH

Righteous man and ark builder

EMZARA

Noah's wife

GOD'S VOICE

Off-stage

## Set

In addition to the projected image of a mountain or perhaps even an actual photo of Ararat from the Internet, you will need an image of a rainbow. Various stuffed animals may be strewn about the "ark" area.

## Props

A fake dove and a broom.

## Costumes

NOAH and EMZARA are biblically dressed, and SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY is suited up as a mountaineer.

- 1           *(NOAH and EMZARA freeze with backs to audience until they*  
 2           *speak. SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY strides On-stage and*  
 3           *speaks from his microphone.)*  
 4       **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** *(In best New Zealand accent)*  
 5           **G'day, mates! Welcome to the Lenten edition of**  
 6           ***Mountaintop Tours.*** **I'm your host, Sir Everest**  
 7           **Hillervalley, acclaimed mountaineer and explorer. Not**  
 8           **to toot me own horn, but I'm simply the best. I assure**  
 9           **you that we're gonna have a wicked good time this Lent**  
 10          **as I take you on an adventure to a different biblical**

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1 peak every week. Let's get started tonight with Noah  
 2 and his wife Emzara on the mountains of Ararat in  
 3 Turkey. (*EMZARA and NOAH unfreeze.*)

4 **EMZARA:** (*Nagging wife vibe. Sweeping up with a broom*) When  
 5 do you suppose this blasted rain is gonna end, dear?  
 6 The animal smells are starting to get under my skin.  
 7 Not to complain, mind you, but I'm also getting awfully  
 8 tired of cleaning up after them.

9 **NOAH:** Fairly soon now, dear. I think the Lord told me it was  
 10 gonna last about forty days and forty nights.

11 **EMZARA:** (*Sarcastically*) Is that all?

12 **NOAH:** Patience, my love. The Lord tells me that it takes  
 13 time to blot every smidge of evil from the face of the  
 14 earth.

15 **EMZARA:** I'm sure it does. I'm sure it does. The Lord should  
 16 try blotting up every smidge of this animal ... stuff from  
 17 the floor of this ark. I wonder if he'd be so patient then.

18 **NOAH:** I know it hasn't been easy, dear. When you start to  
 19 think you've got it bad, think of those poor people.  
 20 (*Points down below.*)

21 **EMZARA:** (*Gulps.*) You've got a point.

22 **NOAH:** The Lord assures me that they all had it coming. The  
 23 earth was filled with violence and corruption. The Lord  
 24 saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in all  
 25 the earth and that every inclination of their hearts was  
 26 only evil continually. And the Lord felt sorry that he  
 27 had made humankind on the earth, and it grieved him  
 28 in his heart.

29 **EMZARA:** I know, dear. Everyone except you. Don't get a  
 30 swelled head over it.

31 **NOAH:** You're right, you're right. Too much pride is a sin.  
 32 Say, by the way, (*NOAH holds out palm*) did you notice  
 33 that it stopped raining?

34 **EMZARA:** (*Holds out palm.*) Mercy me! I think you're right!  
 35 (*Peeks over edge of "ark."*) I see land under there!

36 **NOAH:** (*Also peeks over edge of "ark."*) I think we must have  
 37 "landed"!

38 **EMZARA:** (*Drops her broom.*) I'd better go pack my bags! It's

1           time to get off this floating zoo!

2   **NOAH:** *(Continuing to look around)* Not so fast. We're not  
3           exactly on dry ground yet. I do believe this is a  
4           mountaintop. There's still water all around us.

5   **EMZARA:** Drat!

6   **NOAH:** I think it's a good sign, though. You just need to be  
7           pa —

8   **EMZARA:** Be patient, I know! I'd better get back to my  
9           blotting then. *(Walks off.)*

10   **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** Crikey! That was a lot to  
11          expect of that poor woman. Anyway, it took quite a  
12          while for everything to dry up enough for Noah and  
13          company to leave the ark. The Bible says that the flood  
14          continued for forty days and nights, but then after one  
15          hundred fifty days the waters abated, and on the  
16          seventeenth day of the seventh month, the ark rested  
17          on the mountains of Ararat. On the first day of the tenth  
18          month, the other mountaintops appeared. At the end of  
19          yet another forty days, Noah opened the window of the  
20          ark and sent out a raven. It flew around until the land  
21          was dry.

22   **NOAH:** *(Holding a dove)* OK, sweetie, the raven never came  
23          back, so let's see what you do. *(Tosses dove to someone in*  
24          *the sacristy, balcony, or other area.)*

25   **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** The poor dove couldn't find  
26          anywhere to set its feet, so she came back. *(The one who*  
27          *caught the dove throws it back to NOAH.)* Seven days later,  
28          Noah gave it another whirl.

29   **NOAH:** *(Tosses the dove to the person in the sacristy or balcony as*  
30          *before.)* Give it another try, girl!

31   **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** The dove came back that  
32          very evening with a freshly plucked olive leaf in her  
33          beak.

34   **NOAH:** *(Catching dove again)* An olive leaf? Good job, girl!  
35          Things must be drying up. Go on, now, be free! *(Tosses*  
36          *dove out to the congregation.)* Emzara, dearest! I've got  
37          good news!

38   **EMZARA:** What now? Did the monkeys make a mess on the

1 deck again?

2 **GOD'S VOICE:** (*Off-stage*) Go out of the ark, you and your  
3 wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you.  
4 Bring out every living thing that is with you of all flesh  
5 — birds and animals and every creeping thing that  
6 creeps upon the earth — so that they may abound on  
7 earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.

8 **NOAH:** You heard the Lord! It's time to go out and get busy!

9 **EMZARA:** Not you anymore, Noah! You're over six hundred  
10 years old. Leave it to the young folks.

11 **NOAH:** Point taken. Well, the least I can do is build an altar  
12 to praise and thank the Lord for bringing us safely  
13 through this watery journey.

14 **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** Noah made a burnt offering  
15 to the Lord on that mountain. God made a covenant, a  
16 binding promise with Noah. God blessed Noah and his  
17 family and instructed them to repopulate the earth — a  
18 new creation.

19 **GOD'S VOICE:** I am establishing my covenant with you and  
20 your descendants after you, that never again should all  
21 flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again  
22 shall there be a flood to destroy the earth. This is the  
23 sign of the covenant that I make between me and you  
24 and every living creature that is with you for all future  
25 generations. I have set my bow in the clouds, and it  
26 shall be a sign of the covenant between me and all the  
27 earth. (*PowerPoint slide of rainbow is shown.*)

28 **NOAH:** (*Looking up at the rainbow*) Emzara, isn't that just the  
29 most beautiful, awesome thing you've ever seen? God  
30 put that in the sky just for us. He wants to remind us  
31 that he loves us, and from now on, he will protect us and  
32 not destroy us.

33 **EMZARA:** I can't help but wonder, Noah: What will happen if  
34 humankind disappoints the Lord again? We're bound  
35 to, don't you think?

36 **NOAH:** Emzara, do you always have to be such a pessimist?

37 **EMZARA:** I call it practical. Remember, I'm the one who has  
38 been sweeping up all the ... stuff all this time.

1 NOAH: Yes, I know, dear. Someone had to, uh, float the boat.

2 EMZARA: Uh-huh. Say, look at that. What do you call it?

3 NOAH: I'm not sure.

4 GOD'S VOICE: A bow in the clouds.

5 EMZARA: It appeared after all the rain. Let's call it a — a —  
6 rain ... bow. A rainbow! You know. It looks like a bow,  
7 an archer's bow. And if you put an arrow up in there, it  
8 would be pointing up at the sky. Up at God! The Lord  
9 has a bow and arrow aiming up at himself to keep  
10 himself in check.

11 NOAH: It's not just a reminder to us, it's a reminder to God  
12 ... to behave! This promise isn't just binding on us. It's  
13 binding on God!

14 GOD'S VOICE: Indeed! Now, go get those animals and your  
15 sons and their daughters, and get busy filling up this  
16 earth! You hear me?

17 EMZARA: You heard him! Now, get your lazy self going!  
18 *(Sweeps NOAH along with her broom.)*

19 NOAH: Yes, dear. Whatever you say, dear.

20 SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY: So the highest peak of the  
21 mountains of Ararat was where God's new creation  
22 began with Noah and his family. And the Lord gave  
23 humankind the promise of the rainbow, that the earth  
24 would never again be destroyed ... well, by a flood  
25 anyway. Crikey! Maybe that's why we've lasted all this  
26 time! We certainly haven't behaved ourselves like we  
27 should. Well, g'day, mates! See you on next week's  
28 mountaintop tour of Mount Moriah.

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**Week 2****Mount Moriah**

(Based on Genesis 22:1-19)

**Cast****SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY**

Renowned explorer and mountaineer, narrator

**ABRAHAM**

Father of a nation

**SARAH**

Abraham's wife

**ISAAC**

Thirteen-year-old son of Abraham and Sarah

**TWO MEN**

These are nonspeaking roles. They merely accompany Abraham and Isaac on their trek.

**GOD'S VOICE**

Off-stage

**Set**

Use PowerPoint to project pictures of mountains perhaps even actual photos of Mount Moriah from the Internet.

**Props**

Firewood, knife, fake torch with a flame, a length of rope, stuffed ram or sheep.

**Costumes**

ABRAHAM, SARAH, and ISAAC are biblically dressed, and SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY is suited up as a mountaineer.

*(The stuffed ram or sheep has been hidden On-stage. ABRAHAM and SARAH freeze with backs to audience until they speak. SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY strides On-stage and speaks from his microphone.)*

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1 SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY: (*In best New Zealand accent*)  
 2 G'day, mates! Welcome to the Lenten edition of  
 3 *Mountaintop Tours*. I'm your host, Sir Everest  
 4 Hillervalley, acclaimed mountaineer and explorer. My  
 5 "cousin," Sir Edmund Hillary, once said, "Every  
 6 mountain is worth climbing." I'd agree with that  
 7 assessment, yet every mountain does not present the  
 8 same set of challenges. Some mountains test one's  
 9 endurance, others test one's courage, and still others,  
 10 strength. Today's trek with Abraham and his son Isaac  
 11 proves to be the ultimate test of faith. The ascent up  
 12 Moriah is difficult in more ways than one, as it leads  
 13 Abraham to the very edge of a cliff from which there is  
 14 no return. (*SARAH and ABRAHAM unfreeze.*)

15 SARAH: Abraham, dinner is almost ready. Don't go  
 16 wandering off too far.

17 ABRAHAM: God is calling me. I might be a little late.

18 SARAH: (*Sarcastically*) Oy vey. "God is calling. I might be a  
 19 little late." Don't complain to me if your food gets burnt,  
 20 Mr. "Father of a Nation."

21 ABRAHAM: You don't keep God waiting.

22 SARAH: Go!

23 GOD'S VOICE: (*Off-stage*) Abraham! Abraham!

24 ABRAHAM: Here I am, Lord! (*Under his breath*) Make it short.  
 25 My wife is a bad enough cook without the food getting  
 26 burnt.

27 SARAH: I heard that! (*ABRAHAM moves farther away so as not to*  
 28 *be overheard.*)

29 ABRAHAM: Here I am, Lord!

30 GOD'S VOICE: Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you  
 31 love, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there  
 32 as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall  
 33 show you.

34 SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY: These were surely the  
 35 worst words any parent ever had to hear. I'm afraid I  
 36 must report that the Bible has nothing to say about  
 37 what Abraham said back to God at this point. He may  
 38 have wanted to say, "What? Are you crazy? No way! Did

1           you forget that Isaac is the kid you promised me in my  
 2           old age so I could have descendants as plentiful as dust  
 3           on the outback?" But as far as we know, Abraham said  
 4           nothing. He was in the presence of almighty God after  
 5           all, and who dares to talk back to God? Mate was likely  
 6           shiverin' in his gumboots, he was. He probably sat down  
 7           with his head in his hands and had a good cry.  
 8           (*ABRAHAM sits with his head in his hands and pantomimes*  
 9           *tears.*) So Abraham rose early the next morning, likely so  
 10          he didn't have to face his wife, saddled his donkey, and  
 11          ... his son, Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt offering,  
 12          and set out to the distant place God had shown him.  
 13          (*ABRAHAM pantomimes the above, fetching TWO MEN,*  
 14          *ISAAC, and some wood from Off-stage.*)

15       **SARAH:** (*Off-stage*) Abraham! What is all that racket you're  
 16          making?

17       **ABRAHAM:** Um, uh, just getting things together for a little  
 18          trip with Isaac and the guys!

19       **SARAH:** Male bonding! Good idea!

20       **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** (*While ABRAHAM pantomimes*  
 21          *action*) On the third day, Abraham said to the young  
 22          men ...

23       **ABRAHAM:** Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go  
 24          over there and worship. Then we ... we will come b-back  
 25          to you. (*ABRAHAM lays the wood on ISAAC's back so he can*  
 26          *carry it. He carries a knife and a fake torch with a flame. They*  
 27          *both walk to Center Stage.*)

28       **ISAAC:** Father!

29       **ABRAHAM:** Here I am, my son.

30       **ISAAC:** The fire and wood are here, but where is the lamb for  
 31          the burnt offering?

32       **ABRAHAM:** (*Very stilted, emotional*) God himself ... will provide  
 33          ... the lamb ... for the burnt offering — my son.  
 34          (*Wordlessly, ABRAHAM lays wood as an altar, binds ISAAC's*  
 35          *wrists with rope, and lays him on top. He then holds the knife*  
 36          *high.*)

37       **GOD'S VOICE:** Abraham! Abraham!

38       **ABRAHAM:** Here ... h-here I am.

1 **GOD'S VOICE:** Don't lay your hand on the boy or do anything  
2 to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you  
3 have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.  
4 *(ABRAHAM runs to get the previously hidden stuffed ram or*  
5 *sheep and places it on the altar as he unbinds ISAAC and*  
6 *embraces him.)*

7 **ABRAHAM:** *(To ISAAC)* This place shall be called "The Lord  
8 provides" because "on the mount of the Lord it shall be  
9 provided."

10 **GOD'S VOICE:** Because you have done this and have not  
11 withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless  
12 you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the  
13 stars of heaven and as the sand on the seashore ... and  
14 by your offspring all the nations of the earth will be  
15 blessed because you have obeyed my voice.

16 **ABRAHAM:** Let's go home, son.

17 **ISAAC:** What happened back there, Dad?

18 **ABRAHAM:** The Lord was testing my faith. He asked me to  
19 sacrifice what I love most.

20 **ISAAC:** Did you pass the test?

21 **ABRAHAM:** God gave me what I needed, and I am more  
22 thankful than words can express. I love you, my son.

23 **ISAAC:** I love you too, Dad.

24 **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** It may not be the world's  
25 highest mountain, but Mount Moriah is by far the  
26 hardest one to climb. It is the mountain of faith and  
27 sacrificial love. God no longer requires those who love  
28 and trust him to face that challenge. Instead, he did it  
29 once for all of us. "For God so loved the world that he  
30 gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him  
31 shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16. *(NIV)*  
32 It was for that reason Jesus, the Son of God, climbed a  
33 mountain called Calvary. Thanks for joining us. See you  
34 next week with Moses on Mount Sinai.

35  
36  
37  
38

**Week 3**

**Mount Sinai**

(Based on Exodus 3)

**Cast:**

**SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY**

Narrator and mountain explorer from New Zealand

**YOUNG MOSES**

Teenage shepherd

**GOD'S VOICE**

Off-stage

**AARON**

Moses' older brother

**OLD MOSES**

Deliverer of Israelite slaves from Egypt

**ISRAELITES**

Three or more Israelites, at least one of whom is a pretty girl to distract Aaron from his duties

**Set**

Use PowerPoint to project pictures of mountains or perhaps even actual photos of Mount Sinai from the Internet.

**Props**

Some stuffed sheep and a burning bush — maybe a plant with orange, yellow, and red tissue paper arranged as flames coming out of it — are needed for the set (although the bush could possibly be a projected picture). Dry ice may be used to produce a cloud effect if there is someone with that expertise about. You will also need a basket, a golden calf made of paper mache (or a projected image), and stone tablets, possibly made from Styrofoam.

**Costumes**

YOUNG MOSES, OLD MOSES, and AARON are biblically dressed and carrying walking sticks. Make sure MOSES is wearing sandals. SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY is suited up as a mountaineer.

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## Special/Sound Effects

Smoke, trumpet sounds (optional).

1           *(YOUNG MOSES freezes with back to audience until he*  
 2           *speaks. SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY strides On-stage and*  
 3           *speaks from his microphone.)*

4   **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** *(In best New Zealand accent)*  
 5   **G'day, mates! Welcome to the Lenten edition of**  
 6   ***Mountaintop Tours.*** I'm your host, Sir Everest  
 7   **Hillervalley, acclaimed mountaineer and explorer. The**  
 8   **most awesome mountains are not necessarily the**  
 9   **tallest. The most important sacred mountain in the**  
 10   **Judeo-Christian tradition is neither the highest nor the**  
 11   **most impressive. Mount Sinai, the place where Moses**  
 12   **first met God and was given the Ten Commandments, is**  
 13   **barely more than nine thousand feet. I could shimmy up**  
 14   **that baby in no time flat! However, because of its**  
 15   **history, it towers spiritually over all others as the site**  
 16   **of the most important covenant between God and**  
 17   **Israel. Tonight we begin our tour with young Moses**  
 18   **tending his father-in-law's sheep in the foothills of**  
 19   **Mount Sinai, also known as Mount Horeb. *(YOUNG***  
 20   ***MOSES turns around and unfreezes.)***

21   **YOUNG MOSES:** Hey, sheepies! Look at that bush over there.  
 22           It seems to have been burning for a long time without  
 23           being burned up. What do you say we check it out?  
 24           *(Looks at the sheep. Of course they don't reply.)* No opinion,  
 25           eh? *(Pause)* Whoa! I think I've been shepherding too  
 26           long! *(YOUNG MOSES walks closer.)*

27   **GOD'S VOICE:** *(From Off-stage)* Moses! Moses!

28   **YOUNG MOSES:** Here I am!

29   **GOD'S VOICE:** Come no closer! Remove the sandals from  
 30           your feet, for this place is holy ground! *(YOUNG MOSES*  
 31           *removes sandals.)* I am the God of your father, the God of  
 32           Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.  
 33           *(YOUNG MOSES hides his face, afraid.)* I have seen the  
 34           misery of my people who are slaves in Egypt, and I have  
 35           heard their cries. I have come down to deliver them

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1 from the Egyptians and bring them out of that to a land  
 2 flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the  
 3 Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizites, the  
 4 Hivites, and the Jebusites.

5 **YOUNG MOSES:** No disrespect intended. It's really cool how  
 6 you burn without being burned up and all, but how is a  
 7 tiny little bush gonna do all that?

8 **GOD'S VOICE:** That's where you come in, Moses! I will send  
 9 you to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to bring my people,  
 10 Israel, out of Egypt.

11 **YOUNG MOSES:** Begging your pardon, but who am I to go to  
 12 Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt? (*Aside to*  
 13 *congregation*) Surely I will getteth my butteth kicketh.

14 **GOD'S VOICE:** I will be with you. This will be a sign that I  
 15 have sent you. When you bring my people out of Egypt,  
 16 you shall worship God on this mountain.

17 **YOUNG MOSES:** So, just say I go to the Israelites and tell  
 18 them the God of their ancestors has sent me to you and  
 19 they ask me, "What is his name?" What do I say?

20 **GOD'S VOICE:** (*Booming*) I am who I am! Thus you shall say  
 21 to the Israelites, "I Am has sent me to you. The Lord, the  
 22 God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of  
 23 Isaac, the God of Jacob has sent me to you!

24 **YOUNG MOSES:** I'm not so good at talking. How am I  
 25 supposed to convince them that you will lead them out  
 26 of Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, the H — H —  
 27 all those other "ites"?

28 **GOD'S VOICE:** Who is the one who gives you the power to  
 29 speak anyway? I Am! I'll be with you. And your brother,  
 30 Aaron — he talks a good game. He'll help you out too.  
 31 And your staff, it'll help you perform a few signs and  
 32 wonders. Now, go! Am-scray!

33 **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** Now Moses (*OLD MOSES*  
 34 *takes place of YOUNG MOSES here.*) eventually stopped  
 35 being such a piker and did what God had called him to  
 36 do that day on Mount Sinai. After ten plagues' worth of  
 37 convincing, Pharaoh set the Israelites free from slavery  
 38 and they crossed over the Red Sea only to wander in the

1 wilderness for forty years in search of the Promised  
 2 Land. Was this because they set out on an excursion  
 3 seeking grand adventure wherever they went? Not  
 4 exactly. I'm afraid that they complained about the food  
 5 and disobeyed God all along the way. Even Moses got  
 6 scolded a bit when he put on too much of a show and  
 7 took too much credit for bringing water out of a rock.  
 8 God told him he would see the Promised Land, but not  
 9 get to go there. Crikey!

10 Now, mates, we get to take a bit of a time machine  
 11 ride fast forward to when Moses arrived back at Mount  
 12 Sinai with the people of Israel in tow. Israel camped  
 13 there at the foot of the mountain while Moses went and  
 14 had himself a chat with God. The people were not  
 15 permitted to come up the mountain. When Moses went  
 16 up Mount Sinai to meet God, the mountain was  
 17 wrapped in smoke and fire because the Lord had  
 18 descended upon it. The whole mountain shook and the  
 19 people heard a sound like trumpet blasts when Moses  
 20 would speak and God would answer with thunder. (*If*  
 21 *possible, the effects of smoke and the sounds of trumpet blasts*  
 22 *and thunder may be used.)*

23 **GOD'S VOICE:** Moses, come up to me on the mountain and I  
 24 will give you the tablets of stone with the law and the  
 25 commandments which I have written to instruct my  
 26 people.

27 **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** Moses was on the mountain  
 28 with God for forty days and forty nights. The people of  
 29 Israel got a bit antsy as they waited for him to return,  
 30 so they went to Moses' brother Aaron.

31 **ISRAELITE 1:** Come on, Aaron, be a lamb and make gods for  
 32 us to worship.

33 **ISRAELITE 2:** We don't know what has become of your  
 34 brother, Moses!

35 **AARON:** Er, um, well ...

36 **PRETTY GIRL ISRAELITE:** Please?

37 **AARON:** (*Grabs a basket.*) Now, here's what we're gonna do.  
 38 Everybody take off your gold earrings and toss 'em in

1           here. I'll melt them down and put them in this calf mold  
 2           I just happen to have handy ... and voila! This is your  
 3           god, O, Israel who brought you out of Egypt!  
 4           *(ISRAELITES pantomime tossing in their gold and a golden*  
 5           *calf is brought out, possibly on projector. ISRAELITES bow*  
 6           *before it.)*

7   **ISRAELITES:** *(Together)* Praise to god who delivered us from  
 8           hard bondage!

9   **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** God got wind of what the  
 10           Israelites were doing while the cat was away, and it  
 11           drove him 'round the bend.

12   **GOD'S VOICE:** I have seen this people, how stubborn and  
 13           disobedient they are. Now let me alone, that my wrath  
 14           may burn hot upon them, and of you I will make a great  
 15           nation!

16   **OLD MOSES:** O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against  
 17           your people whom you delivered from the Egyptians?  
 18           Why should you give the Egyptians a reason to say it  
 19           was with evil intent that you brought your people out to  
 20           kill them in the mountains? Turn from your wrath,  
 21           change your mind, and don't destroy your people.  
 22           Remember the promise you made to Abraham and his  
 23           descendants forever.

24   **GOD'S VOICE:** Moses, for your sake, not for theirs, I change  
 25           my mind. Go down and bring them my law. *(MOSES*  
 26           *carries two "stone" tablets to where the ISRAELITES are*  
 27           *partying down in front of the calf, dancing and singing a wild*  
 28           *party song.)*

29   **OLD MOSES:** Silence! What are you doing, worshiping this —  
 30           this golden thing? You don't deserve these laws from  
 31           God! *(OLD MOSES throws the tablets on the ground.)* I shall  
 32           melt down this calf and mix it with water, and you shall  
 33           drink it!

34   **ISRAELITES:** *(Together)* Yuk!

35   **OLD MOSES:** And you, Aaron, my brother, what has this  
 36           people done to you that you have brought so great a sin  
 37           upon them?

38   **AARON:** Don't be angry. You know these people are bent on

1 evil. They said to me, “Make us gods, since we don’t  
2 know what became of Moses.” So I asked them for their  
3 gold, they threw it in the fire, and out came this calf.

4 OLD MOSES: You really expect me to believe that, bro?

5 SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY: Believe it or not, Moses’  
6 anger cooled, and so did the Lord’s. Moses returned to  
7 the top of Mt. Sinai, and God did a do-over of the Ten  
8 Commandments and all the other laws of Israel. God  
9 renewed his covenant with Moses and all the people.  
10 This time, when Moses came back down the mountain,  
11 his face glowed because he had been in God’s holy  
12 presence. The people got kind of freaked out, so Moses  
13 had to wear a veil whenever he talked to them.

14 The Israelites went on to claim the land that God had  
15 promised to Abraham and his descendants. God went  
16 with them everywhere they traveled. To this day, the  
17 actual location of Mount Sinai is unknown. In a sense,  
18 that’s a good thing because the people were never  
19 tempted to make the mountain itself an idol the way  
20 they did the golden calf. After all, God wasn’t the  
21 mountain or even on the mountain. God is with his  
22 people.

23 Ta-ta for now, mates! See you next week when we’ll  
24 be touring Mount Carmel.

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**Week 4**

**Mount Carmel**

(Based on 1 Kings 18:16-40)

**Cast**

**SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY**

Narrator. Mountaineer and explorer from New Zealand

**ELIJAH**

Prophet of Israel

**KING AHAB**

King of Israel who marries a foreign wife  
and turns to other gods, including Baal

**QUEEN JEZEBEL**

Ahab's foreign wife

**STAGEHAND**

Nonspeaking role

**GOD'S VOICE**

Off-stage

**BAAL'S PROPHETS**

Israelite prophets who have turned away from God  
to serve Baal. No specified number, but enough to suggest  
that Elijah is outnumbered

**Set**

Use PowerPoint to project images of mountains on a screen up front. You may even use actual photos of Mount Carmel from the Internet. You will also need an altar, which could be a low table (such as a coffee table) covered with a brown cloth. Hide some type of container on it to catch the water when it is poured on top.

**Props:**

Knives (one for each of the PROPHETS OF BAAL), jar for water, large water pitcher, and two bulls (could be stuffed animals). ELIJAH needs twelve stones representing the twelve tribes of Israel.

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## Costumes

The STAGEHAND is dressed all in red. ELIJAH, AHAB, JEZEBEL, and BAAL'S PROPHETS are biblically dressed, and SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY is suited up as a mountaineer.

1           (*ELIJAH, KING AHAB, and QUEEN JEZEBEL are Upstage,*  
2           *frozen with backs to audience until it is their time to speak. SIR*  
3           *EVEREST HILLERVALLEY strides On-stage and speaks from*  
4           *his microphone.*)

5   **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** (*In best New Zealand accent*)  
6   **G'day, mates! Welcome to the Lenten edition of**  
7   ***Mountaintop Tours.*** I'm your host, Sir Everest  
8   **Hillervalley, acclaimed mountaineer and explorer.**  
9   **Today we'll be hosting the Marvelous Mountaintop**  
10   **Smackdown between the prophets of Baal and the**  
11   **prophets of God. It doesn't seem like much of a**  
12   **competition, since Baal's prophets number about four**  
13   **hundred fifty, not to mention the four hundred**  
14   **prophets of Baal's female counterpart, Asherah. God's**  
15   **prophets number just about ... one. That's right. Elijah**  
16   **is the only loyal one left.**

17           To give you mates just a smidge of background,  
18   **Elijah was prophet during the reign of King Ahab from**  
19   **about 873-852 BC. King Ahab did evil in God's sight**  
20   **more than *any* of Israel's kings before him. He married**  
21   **a Phoenician princess named Jezebel. (*JEZEBEL, AHAB,***  
22   ***and ELIJAH unfreeze.*)**

23   **JEZEBEL:** Ahab, darling, it would make me very happy if  
24           you would erect an altar to my god, Baal, so that you  
25           and your people can worship him with me.

26   **AHAB:** Of course, my sweet. Whatever makes you happy.

27   **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** God was *not* happy. Ahab's  
28           behavior had driven God 'round the bend. So God sent  
29           Elijah the prophet to pass on a message.

30   **ELIJAH:** Because of your sins, there will be a severe drought  
31           in the land. As the Lord of Israel lives, there shall be  
32           neither dew nor rain unless I say so.

33   **AHAB:** That's not what the other prophets are saying.

- 1 **JEZEBEL:** Well, I never! Come on, poopsie. Let's go find a  
 2 prophet who will tell us some good news! (*AHAB and*  
 3 *JEZEBEL storm off.*)
- 4 **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** Three years went by, and  
 5 God said to Elijah ...
- 6 **GOD'S VOICE:** (*Off-stage*) Go to Ahab. I will send rain upon  
 7 the earth.
- 8 **ELIJAH:** Oh, goody! I'm so excited! (*AHAB and JEZEBEL come*  
 9 *back out.*)
- 10 **AHAB:** Is it you, you troubler of Israel?
- 11 **ELIJAH:** I haven't troubled Israel, Ahab, you have. You have  
 12 forsaken the commandments of the Lord and followed  
 13 Baal. Now all the people of Israel have come to Mount  
 14 Carmel with the four hundred fifty prophets of Baal  
 15 and the four hundred prophets of Asherah.
- 16 **AHAB:** All Israel and all the prophets of Baal and Asherath,  
 17 I issue a royal decree that you must all assemble at  
 18 Mount Carmel, by the word of King Ahab! (*Several*  
 19 *PROPHETS OF BAAL gather with knives in hand.*)
- 20 **ELIJAH:** (*To congregation*) How long will you go limping with  
 21 two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him;  
 22 but if Baal is god, follow him! I, even I only, am left a  
 23 prophet of the Lord: but Baal's prophets number four  
 24 hundred fifty. Let two bulls be given, one to them and  
 25 one to me. We will each lay the bull upon the wood of  
 26 our altars, but put no fire to it. Then the prophets of  
 27 Baal will call upon their god and I will call upon the  
 28 Lord. The god who answers by fire is indeed God.
- 29 **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** All the people answered  
 30 "Well spoken!" That's you, by the way.
- 31 **CONGREGATION:** Well spoken! (*The PROPHETS OF BAAL set*  
 32 *about placing the bull on their altar.*)
- 33 **BAAL PROPHETS:** (*Repeat over and over walking around their*  
 34 *altar*) O Baal, answer us! (*Time passes.*)
- 35 **ELIJAH:** (*Very sarcastically*) Surely Baal is a god. Maybe he is  
 36 busy meditating, or perhaps he has wandered away on  
 37 a journey. Or maybe he has fallen asleep and needs to  
 38 be awakened. (*BAAL PROPHETS pantomime cutting*

1           *themselves with their knives and cry out.)*

2   **BAAL PROPHETS:** We willingly offer you our blood, O Baal,  
3           as a sacrifice! O, hear us!

4   **ELIJAH:** Enough! It's my turn! (*ELIJAH lays out stones to fix the*  
5           *altar.*) I am using twelve stones to rebuild this altar to  
6           represent the twelve tribes of Israel. (*ELIJAH lays the*  
7           *bull upon the altar.*) Fill jars with water and pour it on the  
8           burnt offering. (*Someone pours out a jar of water.*) Do it a  
9           second time. (*Someone pours more water.*) Do it a third  
10          time. (*Someone pours again.*) O Lord, God of Abraham,  
11          Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are  
12          God in Israel, that I am your servant, and that I have  
13          done all these things at your bidding. Answer me, O  
14          Lord, that this people may know that you alone are  
15          God. Turn their hearts back.

16   **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** Then the fire of the Lord  
17          fell and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the  
18          stones, the dust, and even licked up all the water that  
19          had been poured out. (*STAGEHAND dressed in red runs*  
20          *through and takes ELIJAH's altar and the offering away by*  
21          *gathering it all up in the tablecloth and using it like a bag.*)  
22          Sorry, mates. We don't have much for a special effects  
23          budget. I'm afraid I didn't have time to ring up my good  
24          friend Peter Jackson back home in New Zealand.  
25          Maybe next time, eh? When all the people saw it, they  
26          said — repeat after me — “The Lord indeed is God.”

27   **CONGREGATION:** (*Responding together*) The Lord indeed is  
28          God.

29   **ELIJAH:** Seize the prophets of Baal. Don't let even one of  
30          them escape!

31   **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** Elijah laid the smackdown  
32          on all four hundred fifty of the prophets of Baal. The  
33          rain came and the drought was ended as God had  
34          promised. The Lord was with Elijah and proved that the  
35          God of Israel is the one true God. Other false idols may  
36          tempt you, but only God promises to be faithful to all  
37          who follow him.

38                 After this challenge of the prophets, Jezebel got

1           angry and Elijah fled in fear and became depressed and  
2           discouraged, but God was with Elijah to the very end of  
3           his life, when he passed on his mantle to another  
4           generation of prophets.

5           Next week, the next stop on our mountain tours is the  
6           site of the greatest sermon ever preached. G'day.

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**Week 5**

**The Sermon on the Mount**

(Based on Matthew 5:1-46)

**Cast**

**SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY**

Narrator and mountain climber from New Zealand

**JESUS**

**SIMON**

Disciple

**JAMES**

Disciple

**ANDREW**

Disciple

**JOHN**

Disciple

**MARY MAGDALENE**

Disciple

**Set**

Use PowerPoint to project pictures of mountains in Israel.

**Costumes**

JESUS, MARY MAGDALENE, and the DISCIPLES are biblically dressed. We used a purchased Jesus wig and beard from Amazon.com. SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY is suited up as a mountaineer.

- 1 *(JESUS freezes with back to audience until he speaks. He is*
- 2 *standing. The DISCIPLES and MARY MAGDALENE sit in a*
- 3 *semicircle around him, and they also freeze. SIR EVEREST*
- 4 *HILLERVALLEY strides On-stage and speaks from his*
- 5 *microphone.)*

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1 SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY: *(In best New Zealand accent)*  
 2 G'day, mates! Welcome to the Lenten edition of  
 3 *Mountaintop Tours*. I'm your host, Sir Everest  
 4 Hillervalley, acclaimed mountaineer and explorer.  
 5 Being the Son of God and all, I'll bet Jesus was an  
 6 impressive preacher. Crikey! Imagine what it must  
 7 have been like to hear one of his sermons in person.  
 8 Pretty sweet, eh? I'll bet there wasn't any snoozing in  
 9 that audience.

10 Today we're taking a trip to the mountain where  
 11 Jesus gave one of his most famous sermons. I'll bet you  
 12 can't guess what it was called, mates. *(Give congregation a*  
 13 *chance to shout it out.)* That's right, the Sermon on the  
 14 Mount. Let's listen in, shall we? *(ALL unfreeze.)*

15 JESUS: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the  
 16 kingdom of heaven.

17 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be  
 18 comforted.

19 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

20 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for  
 21 righteousness, for they will be filled.

22 Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

23 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

24 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called  
 25 children of God.

26 Blessed are those who are persecuted for  
 27 righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of  
 28 heaven.

29 Blessed are you when people revile you and  
 30 persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you  
 31 falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your  
 32 reward is great in heaven ... *(JESUS continues to mouth*  
 33 *words as disciples SIMON, ANDREW, JAMES, and JOHN*  
 34 *talk among themselves, turning around to do so.)*

35 SIMON: Guys, I don't get this stuff. Do you?

36 JAMES: Hey, what do you guys know? You're just a couple of  
 37 dumb fishermen.

38 ANDREW: So are you guys.

1 JAMES: Oh yeah, right.

2 JOHN: I don't know if I understand it, but I like it. This Jesus  
3 guy is a great speaker.

4 SIMON: He's turning everything upside down. How can the  
5 poor and those who mourn, the meek and those who  
6 hunger and thirst, be blessed?

7 ANDREW: More importantly, what does he mean when he  
8 says we'll be blessed when people are mean to us? That  
9 doesn't sound very fun.

10 JAMES: Well, maybe you guys should just go back to your  
11 nets then, if you don't like it.

12 ANDREW: I didn't —

13 MARY MAGDALENE: *(Over her shoulder)* Shhhh. Guys, some of  
14 us came here to listen. *(Faces JESUS again.)*

15 SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY: In a sense, the beginning of  
16 the Sermon on the Mount, called the Beatitudes *(Or*  
17  *blessings)* did turn the world upside down. Jesus is  
18 ushering in the kingdom of God. Jesus is giving hope to  
19 those who would follow him. Those who oppress and  
20 hurt God's people may be fortunate for a while, but  
21 those who trust in God will be fortunate forever. This  
22 blessing comes not from what is seen, but the presence  
23 of God in his comfort and mercy.

24 JESUS: Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or  
25 the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.  
26 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away,  
27 not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from  
28 the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever  
29 breaks one of the least of these commandments, and  
30 teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the  
31 kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches  
32 them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.  
33 *(Begins mouthing words, as if continuing his message.)*

34 SIMON: Hey, I think I get this part. He wants us to follow all  
35 of the commandments. I can do that!

36 ANDREW: Yeah, right, bro. You break about one  
37 commandment an hour!

38 MARY MAGDALENE: *(Over shoulder again)* Please, be quiet.

1           *(Faces front again.)*

2   **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** Little do the disciples  
3           know, but by preaching on the mountainside, Jesus is  
4           taking on the role of a new Moses. Just as Moses gave  
5           the law from Mount Sinai, Jesus is redefining the law  
6           for those who would follow him. A new life in Christ will  
7           mean more than just going through the motions, but  
8           going deeper to include not just what we do, but what  
9           we think and feel.

10   **JESUS:** You have heard that it was said to those of ancient  
11           times, “You shall not murder.” But I say to you that if  
12           you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable  
13           to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you  
14           will be liable to the council; and if you say, “You fool,”  
15           you will be liable to the hell of fire ... *(Continues mouthing*  
16           *words.)*

17   **JAMES:** That can’t be right! He’s making it even harder!  
18           Especially with *my* brother! No offense, John.

19   **JOHN:** None taken. Half the time we’re fighting with each  
20           other. It’s how we express our love.

21   **SIMON:** Shut up. I’m trying to listen, you fools! I mean, you  
22           guys ...

23   **JAMES:** See? It’s tough.

24   **JESUS:** You have heard that it was said, “You shall not  
25           commit adultery.” But I say to you that everyone who  
26           looks at a woman with lust has already committed  
27           adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes  
28           you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for  
29           you to lose one of your members than for your whole  
30           body to be thrown into hell ... *(Continues mouthing.)*

31   **ANDREW:** For crying out loud! That’s crazy!

32   **MARY MAGDALENE:** *(Over her shoulder)* You back there. Stop  
33           looking at me right now. *(Turns back around.)*

34   **SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY:** Jesus does indeed interpret  
35           the law in a much more radical way than those before  
36           him, making it much more difficult for anyone to keep.  
37           We have an advantage that the disciples who were  
38           hearing these words for the first time did not. We know

1           that Jesus didn't come to fulfill the law simply by  
2           keeping it perfectly by not sinning (although he did do  
3           that), but by giving his life on another mountain, Mount  
4           Calvary. He calls his followers to an ethic of radical  
5           love, but he also carries that love to the very extreme by  
6           suffering and dying so that all might be forgiven.  
7           Amazing, that.

8   **JESUS:** You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye  
9           and a tooth for a tooth." But I say to you, do not resist  
10          an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right  
11          cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to take  
12          your coat, give your cloak as well, and if anyone forces  
13          you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give to  
14          everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone  
15          who wants to borrow from you.

16   **JAMES:** Whoa. That's impossible! No one could ever do that.  
17          Why should someone who's wronged me get away with  
18          it? Or why should I give what I have earned to someone  
19          too lazy to work for themselves?

20   **JOHN:** Yes, but how do you know how that person got in that  
21          situation? There are times when we don't catch enough  
22          fish, and we could use some help.

23   **SIMON:** I think Jesus has got something here. I want to keep  
24          listening. If we keep following him, maybe he will show  
25          us the way.

26   **MARY MAGDALENE:** *(Over her shoulder)* You think? Here's  
27          the first lesson in listening. Close. Your. Mouth. *(Turns*  
28          *back around.)*

29   **JESUS:** You have heard it was said, "You shall love your  
30          neighbor and hate your enemy." But I say to you, love  
31          your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so  
32          that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for  
33          he makes his sun rise on the evil and the good and  
34          sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if  
35          you love those who love you, what reward will you  
36          have?

37   **ANDREW:** Love our enemies? Who can do that?

38   **SIMON:** Maybe we can, if we keep following and keep

1 listening.

2 JOHN: Overcoming evil with good. That's a revolutionary  
3 idea. I want to be a part of this kingdom Jesus is talking  
4 about.

5 MARY MAGDALENE: *(Over her shoulder)* A kingdom of love. I  
6 need that in my life.

7 JAMES: Please be quiet, miss. We're trying to listen to the  
8 sermon. *(MARY MAGDALENE turns back around.)*

9 SIR EVEREST HILLERVALLEY: Love. That's what God's  
10 kingdom is based on. Jesus' idea of perfection is loving  
11 others and praying for them in spite of their actions.  
12 Jesus was able to do that. He challenges those who  
13 follow him to do it too with a large dose of forgiveness  
14 and grace. That's all the time we have, mates. That's  
15 only halfway through the sermon, though, so go home  
16 and crack open your Bible to Matthew, chapters 5-7. We  
17 can all be a part of that kingdom of love.

18 Next week is Holy Week, mates. We'll meet Jesus  
19 again on two different mountains: the Mount of Olives,  
20 where he prayed alone while his disciples slept, and  
21 Mount Calvary, where he made the ultimate sacrifice  
22 for the love of all of us. Hope to see you there.

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