

References

1 Kings 17:7-24;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 129-132



Memory Verse

"The God of all
grace . . . will himself
restore you and make
you strong"
(1 Peter 5:10).

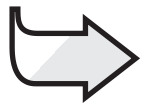


Objectives

The children will:
Know that life is
precious to God.

Feel reassured
that God cares
about what
happens
to them.

Respond by
taking their
problems straight
to God.



The Message

Even though bad
things may happen, I
know God loves me.

Food for One More

Monthly Theme

Grace is the gift of life.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

God tells Elijah to go to Zarephath, where a widow will feed him. Elijah finds the widow gathering firewood. He asks for food and tells her not to worry, there will be flour and oil for her to make a meal too. He promises her that she will not run out of flour and oil until it rains again. And she doesn't. When her son dies, she thinks that God is punishing her for past sins. Elijah demonstrates God's love when he takes the boy and prays for him, and he comes to life.

This is a lesson about grace.

God does not send bad things; they come from the enemy. "An enemy did this." (See Matthew 13:24-30.) God often uses bad situations as an opportunity to show His grace, love, and power. Sometimes we have to wait for things to be resolved, but God will take care of them in His time.

Teacher Enrichment

In Elijah's time Zarephath was in the heart of Phoenicia, the country ruled by kings who worshipped Baal. Ahab would never search for Elijah there. Zarephath is known in the New Testament as Sarepta. Today it's a small village on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea known as Sarafand.

The famine lasted a total of three and a half years. Elijah spent several months beside the Brook Kerith, but even taking that into consideration, the widow's oil and flour probably lasted for at least two and a half years.

Room Decorations

See Lesson 9.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	<i>A. Life Is Precious</i> <i>B. Bread Recipe**</i>	Bible, water, small paper cups Bible, containers of whole-wheat flour and salt, permanent marker, measuring cup, sealable plastic bag for each child
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> jar with "OIL" label "prayer time" notebook used last week, pen/pencil, star stickers (optional)
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes, firewood white/chalkboard, markers/chalk Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>A. Pleasing God</i> <i>B. Bad Versus Good</i>	Bible none
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Grace Coupons</i>	grace coupons (see p. 142), pens or pencils

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

****Be aware of any food allergies, and adjust accordingly.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share an experience from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bible
- small paper cup of water for each child

A. Life Is Precious

Tell the children to hold their breath. Ask: **Who can hold it the longest?** Time them or count slowly. **How long can you live without air?** (three to four minutes) Give each child some water in a paper cup. **How long can you live without water?** (a few days) **How long can you live without food?** (a few weeks)

Life is a free gift from God, and He freely gives us the things we need to stay alive—air, water, the sun, and soil to grow food.

Debriefing

Read aloud 1 Peter 5:10 (the memory verse). Ask: **What does “restore” mean?** (to renew; to bring or put something back into its original state) **How does God restore you and make you strong?** (by healing, by sending you what you need through people, circumstances, etc.) **When you have a problem, what is the first thing you do? Listen to today's important message.**



EVEN THOUGH BAD THINGS MAY HAPPEN, I KNOW GOD LOVES ME.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bible
- container of whole-wheat flour*
- container of salt
- measuring cup
- permanent marker
- sealable plastic bag for each child

B. Bread Recipe

Help the children get started making a simple bread similar to that which the widow probably fed Elijah. On the sealable plastic bag write with the permanent marker: “Add: one teaspoon of water and two teaspoons of oil. Mix well in bag. Roll or pat flat. Fry in oil or bake until brown.” Help each child pour a half cup of flour and a pinch of salt into a bag. The children will take the bag home and finish making the bread there.

Debriefing

Ask: **Have you ever been hungry, I mean REALLY hungry?** Allow time. **How long can you live without breathing?** (three or four minutes) **How long can you live without food?** (a few weeks) **How long can you live without water?** (a few days) **Our story today is about someone who had just enough food for one more meal. Sometimes bad things happen to us; we may be hungry, or get hurt, but God still loves us, just as He loved the people in today's story.** Read aloud Psalm 37:25. Then say: **Our message tells us that**



EVEN THOUGH BAD THINGS MAY HAPPEN, I KNOW GOD LOVES ME.

Say that with me.

*Be aware of any food allergies and adjust accordingly.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"O, How I Love Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 114)

"He's Able" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 40)

"God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13)

"Trust and Obey" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 113)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Collect the offering with the "OIL" jar. Explain that God provides money for us to buy the food we need to live, just as He provided oil to help a poor widow in today's Bible story. We share what He gives to us to help others. They need to know about God's love and grace too.

You Need:

- empty jar labeled "OIL"



Prayer

Ask the children if they have "bad things" to pray about as a group. Then ask about answered prayers during the week, or other things for which to praise God. Write responses on the appropriate pages in the prayer notebook started last week. Put a star by prayer requests that were answered. Form a prayer circle and praise God for His love and help in good and bad times.

You Need:

- "prayer time" notebook
- pen/pencil
- star stickers (optional)

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes
- firewood

Experiencing the Story

Characters: The widow, Elijah, the widow's son

Props: Bible-times costumes (oversized T-shirts and bathrobes, etc.), firewood

Setting: Elijah is hiding in the Kerith Ravine, to one side in front of the room. On the other side, the widow and her son are picking up firewood.

Instruct the children:

When you say:	They:
Elijah	Put thumbs up.
Water/rain/drink	Clap softly like rain.
Bread	Rub tummy.

Read or tell the story.

Elijah (*put thumbs up*) is still hiding in Kerith Ravine from wicked King Ahab. And just as **Elijah** (*put thumbs up*) predicted, **rain** (*clap softly like rain*) has not fallen for months. The **water** (*clap softly like rain*) in Brook Kerith has dried up. But God is still caring for **Elijah** (*put thumbs up*).

"Go to Zarephath," God says. "I have commanded a widow there to take care of you." So **Elijah** (*put thumbs up*) begins a 100-mile journey north into the country of Sidon. There, at the gate to Zarephath, he finds a widow gathering sticks.

"Would you please bring me a little **water** (*clap softly like rain*) so I may have a **drink?**" (*clap softly like rain*) **Elijah** (*put thumbs up*) asks her. As she goes to bring **water** (*clap softly like rain*), **Elijah** (*put thumbs up*) calls after her: "And would you please bring me a piece of **bread** (*rub tummy*) too?"

The woman stops. "I don't have any **bread** (*rub tummy*)," she says. "All I have are a handful of flour and a little oil. I

was just gathering some firewood so I could mix up one last batch of **bread** (*rub tummy*) for my son and me. And after we eat that, we will die."

"Don't be afraid," **Elijah** (*put thumbs up*) tells her. "Go home and make me a small piece of **bread** (*rub tummy*), and then make something for yourself and your son. For God says the oil and the flour will not be used up until the day the Lord sends **rain** (*clap softly like rain*) on the land." (See 1 Kings 17:14.)

Although this woman is not an Israelite, she believes in God and places her faith in Him. She takes **Elijah** (*put thumbs up*) home and bakes **bread** (*rub tummy*) for the three of them. After that day, whenever she needs to bake **bread** (*rub tummy*), there is just enough flour and oil. They never run out. God sent **Elijah** (*put thumbs up*) to this woman to protect his life. And God's grace working to save **Elijah** (*put thumbs up*) also kept the woman and her son alive.

Some time later the widow's son becomes sick and dies. Her first thought is that God must be punishing her. "What do You have against me?" she cries out in her sorrow. "Did You come to remind me of my sin and kill my son?"

Of course, God has not caused the boy to die. Life is precious to God. God's grace has kept all three of them from starvation. So **Elijah** (*put thumbs up*) takes the boy upstairs to the room where he stays and cries to God. "O Lord, my God, let this boy's life return to him!" God answers **Elijah's** (*put thumbs up*) prayer, and the boy comes back to life.

When **Elijah** (*put thumbs up*) gives the boy back to his mother, she knows for sure that her life is precious to God. Because of God's grace, your life is precious to God too.

Debriefing

Ask: **Who is this story really about? Who is the most important person?** (Hint: You don't even see Him.) (God) **Why is God important to the story?** (Accept all responses.) **What does this story tell us about our God?** (He knows our needs; our lives are precious to Him; He can do miracles to take care of us, etc.) **How do you feel about God? Do you always take your problems straight to Him? Remember our message for today:**



EVEN THOUGH BAD THINGS MAY HAPPEN, I KNOW GOD LOVES ME.

Memory Verse

Write the memory verse in large letters where all can see. Call out categories listed below and have children who fit them say or read the memory verse. Ask children to stand as they do so.

You Need:

- white/chalk-board
- markers/chalk

- had doughnuts for breakfast
- have lace-up shoes
- are wearing green
- take music lessons
- have a white Bible
- love Jesus

Repeat until the children know the verse.

Bible Study

Say: **Open your Bibles to 1 Kings 17. I will give you some questions and tell you what verse to look at. Whoever finds the verse first, stand up and read the answer from your Bible.** Adults assist as needed. Ask:

You Need:

- Bibles

1. Why did Elijah leave the Kerith Brook? Look in verse 7. (The brook dried up.)

2. Where did God tell Elijah to go to eat? Look in verse 9. (to Zarephath)

3. Elijah asked the widow to get him a drink. What else did he ask for? Look in verse 11. (bread)

4. The widow said that she had no bread, and was about to prepare her last meal. What did Elijah tell her to do first? Look in verse 13. ("Do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me.")

5. Elijah promised the widow that her oil and flour would not run out until it rained again. What does the Bible say happened? Look in verses 15 and 16. (There was always enough flour and oil to make bread.)

6. When the widow's son got sick and died, what did Elijah do about it? See verses 19-21. (Elijah carried the boy upstairs and cried out to God to let this boy's life return to him.)

7. How did God respond to Elijah's request? Look in verse 22. (The boy's life returned.)

8. What did the boy's mother say after her son came to life? Look in verse 24. (She told Elijah that she knows now that he is a man of God and that the word of the Lord from his mouth is the truth.)

Debriefing

Ask: **How many bad things happened?** (The brook dried up, the widow's food was almost gone, the widow's son died.) **How did God show that He cared?** (He sent Elijah to the widow. The flour and oil didn't run out. He brought the widow's son back to life.) **When bad things happen, let's remember,**



EVEN THOUGH BAD THINGS MAY HAPPEN, I KNOW GOD LOVES ME.

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- Bible

A. Pleasing God

Share the following information with the children:

People pay special tribute to other gods in different ways around the world. People in other parts of the world pray, give offerings, light incense or candles and pray or wish for eternal life, a happy family, good fortune, good health, and other desirable things.

In Thailand, people buy a piece of gold paper to put on their idol, covering the entire idol with gold. They believe this pleases the gods.

In India, people throw coins to the idol by the highway so their journey will be safe.

In many countries, people worship their dead ancestors. On a certain day each year, they bring that person's favorite food to the cemetery and burn a paper model of a house, believing this pleases the dead. Vietnamese families, for instance, create shrines in their homes in honor of deceased loved ones, offering food and flowers each year at that time.

Japanese Buddhists clean their homes and prepare special foods. Cemeteries and streets are ablaze with the light from lanterns and bonfires, which are meant to show the spirits the way.

In Mexico the dead are honored with a festive holiday. Families take picnics to the cemeteries where their relatives are buried.

Funerals in Ghana are also happy occasions. It is believed that the dead look after the living, which is cause for rejoicing.

Debriefing

Ask: **How is our God different from these gods?** (We don't have to perform rituals or give Him something to make Him like or love us. We don't worry that bad things are caused by angry gods.) **Do we have to earn the favor of our God?** (No. The things God gives us are His free gifts to us.) **Christianity is the only religion in the world that doesn't require people to earn their salvation or to earn favor with the gods.** Read aloud 1 Peter 1:8, 9. **Remember our message for today:**



**EVEN THOUGH BAD THINGS
MAY HAPPEN, I KNOW GOD
LOVES ME.**

B. Bad Versus Good

Form two groups. Have one group call out bad things that may happen, such as: "I fell down and cut my leg." The other group calls out something positive, such as: "Someone cleaned the cut and took care of it." Change groups every fourth thing so that each group calls out both bad and good things that happen to children.

Debriefing

Ask: **Does God want bad things to happen to us?** (No.) **Remember last week's lesson? God said that no rain would fall. Why did the rain stop?** (Because the king and the people were worshipping idols.) **Bad things happen because sin is in the world. God doesn't want anything bad to happen, but even when it does, He still loves and cares for us. Let's say our message together:**



**EVEN THOUGH BAD THINGS
MAY HAPPEN, I KNOW GOD
LOVES ME.**

Sharing the Lesson

Grace Coupons

Duplicate and give the children one or more “grace coupons” (see page 142) that they can give out during the week. The children will offer a personal service to the person who may be having a bad day or having a personal problem. Explain that sometimes God shows His love for others through us. Ask them to say, “This service and God’s grace are free.”

Debriefing

Ask: **What are some ideas for personal services that you could do for others?** Allow response time. List their

ideas where all may see. Say: **Now take a moment and think of someone to whom you will give a grace coupon.** Ask children to raise their hands when done. **Let’s pray that God will help you this week to show someone that God loves them, because:**



**EVEN THOUGH BAD THINGS
MAY HAPPEN, I KNOW GOD
LOVES ME**

Closing

Ask the children to stand and hold up their coupons. In a closing prayer, ask God to help each child become a messenger of His grace to someone in need this week.

You Need:

- personal service coupons—one or two per child (see p. 142)
- pens or pencils

Food for One More

References

1 Kings 17:7-24;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 129-132

Memory Verse

"The God of all
grace . . . will himself
restore you and
make you strong"
(1 Peter 5:10).

The Message

Even though bad
things may happen,
I know God
loves me.

Kerah was hungry. His family was hungry too. They had not had any food for three days. Their father had gone to try to find something. But he came back with nothing. "I'm sorry," he said. "There is no rice left in our village. It has not rained for many months. Without rain, things will not grow. We may not have any food for a long, long time."

Just when they thought they would die, God sent help. A truck with a sign that said ADRA came to their village. "Rice, rice!" the driver called. "Each family may have one bag of rice!"

Soon each family in the village had enough rice to last for several days. More trucks came during the long months until rain came again.

A long time ago God took care of Elijah in a special way too.

It hadn't rained in Israel in months. The fields were brown and dead. Bare trees stood like skeletons against the hot sky. The rivers and streams had dried up. And finally, even the Brook Kerith, where Elijah had been hiding from King Ahab, ran dry. But God was still caring for Elijah.

"Go to Zarephath," God said. "I have told a widow there to take care of you." So Elijah left Israel and traveled more than 100 miles away, to another country.

There, at the gate to Zarephath, a widow was gathering sticks.

"Would you please bring me a little water in a jar?" Elijah asked her. "And would you please bring me some bread too?"

The woman

had turned to go get the water. But she stopped when Elijah asked for bread. "I don't have any bread," she said. "All I have are a handful of flour and a little oil. I'm gathering firewood so I can bake some bread for my son and me. And after we eat that, we will die."

"Don't be afraid," said Elijah. "Go home and make me a small piece of bread. Then make something for yourself and your son. For God says the oil and the flour will not be used up until He sends rain on the land." (See 1 Kings 17:14.)

This woman was not an Israelite. But she believed in God and placed her faith in Him. She decided to trust God to take care of her needs.

It happened just as Elijah said it would. He went home with her, and she made some bread for him. After that day, whenever she went to bake bread, there was just enough flour and oil. The flour and oil never ran out. The miracle God worked to save Elijah also saved the lives of this woman and her son.

Some time later this woman's son became sick and died. Her first thought was that God was punishing her. "What do You have against me?" she cried out in her sorrow. "Did You come to remind me of my sin and kill my son?"

Of course God had not caused the boy to die. God's grace brings the gift of life. God's grace had kept all three of them from dying during the famine.

Elijah had been staying in an upstairs room at the widow's house. He took the boy to that room and cried to God, "O Lord, my God, let this boy's life return to him!" God answered Elijah's prayer. At once the boy came back to life.

God cares about the problems in your life too. Even though bad things sometimes happen, God still loves you. He wants you to trust Him. He will take care of your needs, just as He cared for Elijah and for the widow of Zarephath.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Put some flour in a jar and some cooking oil in another jar. Put these on your dinner table. Set the table with a plate and cup for each person. Put bread on each plate and water in each cup. As you read your Bible lesson together, imagine that you are visiting the widow—eating her bread, drinking water, looking at her miracle oil and flour.
- Read 1 Peter 5:10 together.
- Sing “God Is So Good” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13), then thank God for your food.

Sunday

- During family worship, read 1 Kings 17:7-16. Then make the bread you started in Sabbath School. (In a sealable plastic bag mix together a half cup of flour, a pinch of salt, one teaspoon of water, and two teaspoons of oil. Roll or pat flat. Fry in oil or bake until brown.)
- Make and decorate a cutout of a big oil jug like the one in your story. Write your memory verse on it. Put it where you will see it every day.
- Thank God for good bread.

Monday

- In worship today, read 1 Kings 17:17-24 together.
- Draw a face to show how the widow felt when her son died. Draw another face to show how she felt when he lived again.
- Imagine that you have only one slice of bread left. You won’t get more for three days. If someone asks you to share, what will you say?
- Say your memory verse in your own words. What does the word *grace* mean? Ask God to help you show His grace to others.

Tuesday

- During worship, read 1 Kings 17:15. What good thing happened because the widow was willing to share her food? Think of a time you shared with someone and received a blessing yourself. Tell your family about it.

- Teach these motions to your family as you say the memory verse. For God—point up; grace—point to your heart; restore—wave your hands from the top of your head down your body; strong—flex muscles.
- Thank God for your health and strength.
- Find someone with whom to share your grace coupon that you were given in Sabbath School or write on a piece of paper, “Ask me to do something for you,” then sign your name to it.

Wednesday

- Tell your family the part of your Bible story about the widow’s sick son (1 Kings 17:17-24). Discuss together: Where do bad things such as sickness and death come from? (One of Jesus’ stories in Matthew 13 helps to answer this question. See verses 24, 25, 38, and 39.) Ask your family to explain these verses.
- Read the memory verse (1 Peter 5:10), but say your name in place of “you.”
- Pray for someone you know who is sick.

Thursday

- During worship today, read 1 Kings 17:22, 23. Imagine that you are the boy who came back to life. What is the first thing you would say to God? What might you say to your mother?
- Thank God for giving you grace and life.
- Say your memory verse out loud, clapping your hands on each word.
- Sing a “Thank-You” song before prayer.

Friday

- During worship today, ask your family: In what ways does God’s grace make each of us strong? Then read together 2 Corinthians 9:8.
- At the top of a piece of paper, write: “I know God loves me.” Under that write: “God’s grace provides . . .” Then ask each person to list or draw a picture of something God’s grace gives you. Across the bottom of the paper, write: “God cares for you and me.”
- Thank God for His many blessings to your family.