



LESSON PLAN

Scripture Texts:

1 Kings 17:1-16

Psalms 111:1-6

Session Theme:

Sharing

a. Welcome to Class

Teachers should arrive in the classroom well in advance of class. Welcome students as they enter, and inquire about their week. Pass out name tags and record attendance on a classroom chart.

b. Icebreaker: Care and Share

Bring some small baked goods (bite-size brownies, mini donuts, etc.) and a plastic knife to class. Put one treat on a plate, with the remainder out of sight. When kids arrive, ask how they would suggest dividing this one treat fairly among all of them. Ask, "If cutting this into many pieces would just result in crumbs, would it still be worth sharing? What if this was all the food we had left for the week? How might you feel about sharing it then?" After attempting to divide the treat and discussing the problem, bring out the remainder and give each student one.

In today's story, a man named Elijah meets a very poor woman who has little to eat. Elijah is hungry, too. What do you think he does in this situation? What do you think she does? Will either of them even survive without much food? Let's begin our story and find out more!

c. Opening Prayer

Faithful God, thank you for all the good things you give us. Help us to be generous and to share what we have with those in need. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

d. SEED Video or Song (Optional)

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This time may also include an opening song or two, using a commercial Sunday School music CD.

Song suggestions for this lesson:

- "Blest Be the Tie that Binds" (hymn)
- "Be Present at our Table, Lord" (hymn)

e. Brief Bible Background

Read together the introduction to the lessons for the day, and briefly summarize the context and setting:

- Today's Lesson is from the Old Testament
- Scripture Section: Division

Because of disputes in the royal house, God's people were split into a Northern Kingdom (Israel) and a Southern Kingdom (Judah). It was a bad time, with much false worship and idolatry.

f. Communicate the Bible Story

Always keep in mind that the main purpose of Sunday School is to put people in contact with Bible stories. Use a version that is appropriate to the age level:

Upper Elementary: Read the Bible Story and Rhyme

Youth/Adults: Read the Scripture text from the Bible

For Upper and Lower Elementary, use the Storyteller questions to help the students think about the events of the story.

g. Complete the Worksheet(s)

Continue with the handout sheets appropriate to the age level of the students in class:

Upper Elementary: Worksheet and Drama

Youth: Bible Study (Maps, Timelines, and Questions)

Adults: Bible Study (Large or Small Group Discussion)

h. Craft and Activity Time

If there is time after covering the Bible story, the class may move to craft and activity time, described on the following page. (Do not let the activity time supersede the actual time spent on the Scripture lesson.)

i. Summarize and Review

Before ending class, briefly summarize the day's lesson one last time. Use the Bible Rhyme as a short review, or simply ask questions to help the students recall the events of the story.

Youth/Adult: Discuss "Reflection for the Week Ahead"

j. Closing Prayer

Close the session in prayer before dismissal:

Upper Elementary: Practice a prayer from memory (e.g., the Lord's Prayer, Luther's Morning Prayer, etc.)

Youth/Adult: Use the ADTRC Prayer format



Bible Study Leader's Guide

The following is a discussion and answer guide for the Youth and Adult Bible Study sheets. For all leaders, it can serve to provide some background on the Bible lesson.

Discuss: 1 Kings 17:1-16

1. Why was the prophet Elijah hiding out by the Cherith brook? Who was he afraid of? How did Elijah's faithfulness to God get him in trouble with leaders in his day?

After having spoken against them, Elijah fled from the wicked King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. He told them that because of their sin, God was sending a drought upon the land. Elijah was hiding out near his home town of Tishbe, on the eastern side of the Jordan River.

2. In what ways or by what means did God provide for Elijah's needs in the wilderness? Would you call this a miracle? What eventually caused the brook to dry up?

While he was alone in the wilderness, God sent ravens (black birds) to bring the prophet food. This was indeed a miracle of God's providence — ravens don't normally make grocery deliveries of bread and meat!

The Cherith was a brook that fed into the Jordan River. Eventually, the brook dried up because of the very drought Elijah had predicted.

3. A widow is a woman whose husband has died. Why was the widow in Zarephath collecting sticks? What did Elijah ask of the woman?

This widow and her son were poor because they had no one to take care of them. She was collecting sticks so she could make a fire and cook with the little flour and oil that they had. When Elijah came to town, he asked the woman to share what little she had with him.

4. Under the circumstances, do you think this was a rude request? Why or why not? What did Elijah know that the woman didn't?

Asking someone to give you something when they have very little would not normally be a nice thing to do. But in this case, Elijah knew something this woman did not. God had specifically promised to provide for them all — Elijah, the widow, and her son.

5. The town of Zarephath was outside the boundaries of Israel, far from Tishbe. Compare what Jesus said in Luke 4:25-26. What point did Jesus use the story of Elijah to illustrate? What might this story say about God's care for all people?

Jesus used the story to show that, like Jesus himself, the prophet Elijah was rejected by his own people. On the other hand, this foreign woman received Elijah in faith. Jesus said,

"Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow" (Luke 4:25-26).

Jesus didn't want the Jews to presume they were better than others in God's eyes. No one is outside of God's love and care.

6. In verse 14, what did Elijah tell the woman that God had promised? Do you think that the woman believed God's promise? Or do you think she doubted and just went along with it anyway?

God promised that the flour and oil would not run out for the entire time that rain was held back from the land. While we can't know this woman's heart, we know she did share what she had with the prophet. Through Jesus' commentary (answer 5, above), we get the impression that he was using the woman as a surprising example of faith.

7. What does this story show us about God's faithfulness to his Word? How do you know that you can trust the promises God has made to you?

Even when all the evidence appears to the contrary, God is faithful to his promise. We may not know how God will provide for us, but we trust that he is with us in good times and bad. Proverbs 3:5-6 says:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

8. Read Psalm 111:1-6. What attitude does the writer of the psalm have? What reasons does he give for his confidence and faith?

The writer of this psalm expresses his faith that God can be trusted in all things. In the past, God has proved his power and faithfulness to people of old. That is how we know that we can trust him to care for us as well.

The story of Elijah and the widow shows us that God is faithful to his word. In the same way, we can trust that God "provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever" (v. 5-6). That includes us!

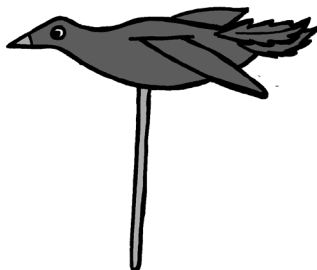
Classroom Craft and Activity Page

Listed below are in-class activities and craft projects related to the theme for the day. Choose one of the following based on the age and capabilities of the students. (Never let the activity or craft time take precedence over the biblical story.)

Activity 1: Flying Raven Craft

Materials Needed:

- Black card stock (two pieces per person)
- Orange construction paper
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Long, thin wooden dowels
- Googly eyes
- Glue; clear tape
- Black feathers (optional)



Instructions:

Give supplies from the list to each student. Invite kids to set one sheet of black card stock aside. Fold the other sheet of black card stock in half. Open it up and cut along the fold, making two smaller pieces of card stock.

In pencil, draw the outline of a bird body silhouette (*see illustration to left*) on one of these smaller pieces of card stock. Cut this out. Trace around the bird shape on the second smaller card stock piece and cut this out as well. Glue these two shapes together, leaving space unglued at the bottom to insert the dowel.



On the larger, uncut sheet of black card stock, draw a wide V shape (*see illustration to right*) as wings. Cut this out and set it aside.



Draw a horizontal line in pencil on the bird's body where the wings will go. Using scissors, cut along that line. (Kids may need help with this step.) Slide the long wing shape through this slit so half of it is visible on each side, making a 3-D bird with wings.

Glue a googly eye on each side of the bird's face. Cut a beak shape out of the orange paper and glue this over the black card stock (on both sides) where the beak should go. Insert the dowel through the opening in the bottom of the bird. Add extra glue or clear tape and close the opening to secure the dowel. You now have a flying raven like the birds in today's story!

Activity 2: Make Me a Cake Game

Materials Needed:

- None

Instructions:

To play this game, kids will try to remember ingredients in a certain order to add them into a cake.

Invite the class to sit in a circle. You (the Leader) can get the game started by saying, "I'm going to mix up a cake. First, I'll add flour."



The person to your right will go next. He or she will repeat what you said, but will also add one ingredient to your list. So, that person would say, "I'm going to mix up a cake. First I'll add flour, then I'll add (blank)."

The next kid in line will repeat what was said, and then add another ingredient. For example, "I'm going to mix up a cake. First I'll add flour, then I'll add (blank), then I'll add (blank)." (The ingredients can be as crazy as desired!)

Continue like this and see if kids can remember the exact order of things. It's okay if they don't know what actually goes into a cake, and if they suggest odd ingredients.

If playing this non competitively: The main purpose will be to see how long of a list kids can remember as a group.

If playing competitively: If someone has a turn and forgets something on the list, that person is out and will slide out of the circle. By the end, only one person will remain.

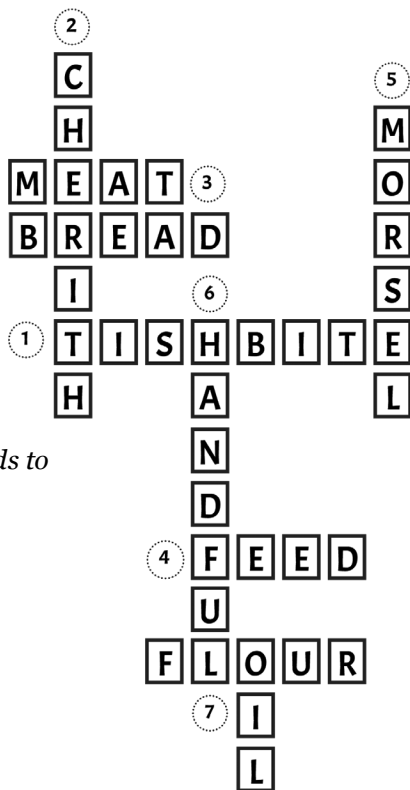
The "cake" we planned to make in our game had a lot of ingredients. But in today's story, when Elijah asked the widow to make him a cake, all she had was oil and a handful of flour. That would have been a very tough and small and plain cake, indeed. Yet despite having so little herself, the woman was still willing to share what she had with Elijah. And God blessed her for it.

Sharing what we have can make a real difference!

Worksheet Answer Key

Shown below are the answers and solution to the children's worksheet for this week's lesson:

Crossword:



These are the words to fill in the blanks:

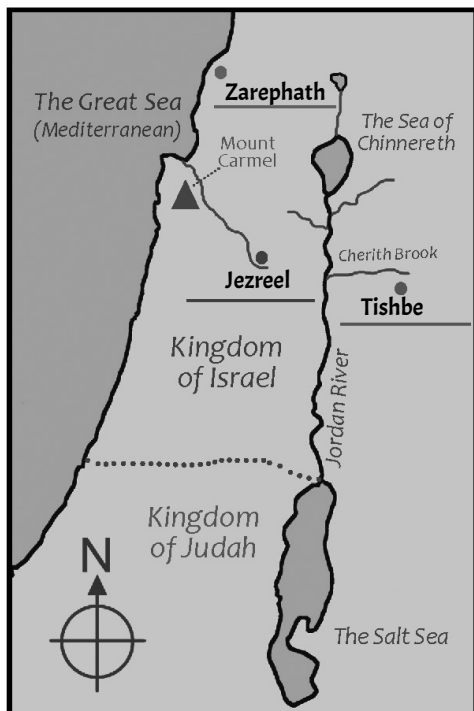
1. Tishbite
2. Cherith
3. Meat, Bread
4. Feed
5. Morsel
6. Baked
7. Flour, Oil

The Apostle Paul wrote the quote from 1 Corinthians

Map Key:

Question b)

Elijah served his prophetic ministry in the northern kingdom of Israel.



Vocabulary Word for the Week

Teachers may want to introduce the theme word for the week to help expand students' biblical vocabulary.

Sharing

letting others use what is yours

After sharing her last bit of food with Elijah, the widow received a blessing in return.

Reflection for the Week Ahead

We all know that it is good to share. If I have a big cake, it is not difficult to give someone else a piece of it. But what about when sharing is hard? What about when I am asked to share the very little that I have?

That's what happened in today's Bible story. A starving widow and her son shared their last bit of food with the prophet Elijah. And God blessed them for it. In fact, we even remember their generosity to this day, thousands of years later.



Discuss the following together:

Tell about a time when you were asked to share something that you really did not want to give. What did you do?

What are some things that we could share with others right now? These don't have to be material goods, but could include our time, our talents, our friendship, and other things of that nature.

What do you think Jesus meant when he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35)?

The Practice of Prayer

Write a prayer giving thanks to God for all that he provides you in daily life. Ask him to help you always count your blessings and that he would give you the generosity to share what you have with others.

Practice using the ADTRC Prayer Form: Address, Description, Thanks, Request, Conclusion.