TRACK TWO

THE DROUGHT · COMPANION GUIDE

Kids Ministry

A complete 45-60 minute lesson for elementary classes (about grades K-5), with notes for preschool and a take-home page for parents.

THE BIG IDEA

God takes care of His people, and He hears us when we pray.

LESSON PLAN

	45 MIN	60 MIN
Welcome and opening game	8	10
Bible story (told or film)	10	12
Object lesson	5	6
Craft	10	15
Small groups	7	10
Memory verse	3	4
Prayer and goodbye	2	3

THE STORY IN PLAIN WORDS

Elijah told King Ahab there would be no rain. God fed Elijah with ravens, then sent him to a widow whose flour and oil did not run out. When her son stopped breathing, Elijah prayed, and God gave him life again.

READ BEFORE CLASS

1 Kings 16:29-17:24 and Luke 4:25-26. If you will show the film, watch it all the way through first. Lesson times include transitions and cleanup.

What Kids May Ask

"Can birds really bring food?" God "commanded the ravens" to feed Elijah (17:4). Say: *God made the ravens, and He can use anything He made.*

"Did the boy die?" The Bible says "there was no breath left in him" (17:17) and that God brought his life back (17:22). Say: *He stopped breathing, and God made him alive again.*

"Was he sick because his mom did something wrong?" She wondered that (17:18), but the Bible doesn't say so, and Jesus taught that sickness isn't always someone's fault (John 9:2-3). Say: *Being sick doesn't mean God is punishing you.*

Telling the Story

YOU'LL NEED two empty containers labeled FLOUR and OIL, a bundle of rolled-up newspaper "sticks," a large paper raven, and a small blanket for the bed. *SAY lines are a dramatized paraphrase for children; READ lines quote the WEB.*

DO Teach the cues. When you hear "rain," wiggle your fingers down like raindrops. When you hear "ravens," flap your arms. When I say "Don't be afraid," everyone says *God takes care of me!*

SAY Long ago, King Ahab of Israel built a temple for a false god named Baal. People thought Baal sent the rain. But God sent His prophet Elijah to the king.

READ 1 Kings 17:1 aloud: "As Yahweh, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word."

SAY The rain stopped. *(Freeze.)* God sent Elijah to hide by a brook, and every morning and evening the ravens brought him bread and meat! *(Hold up the raven.)*

SAY But the brook dried up. God sent Elijah to Zarephath, where a widow was gathering sticks. *(Pick up the sticks.)* She said, *I have only a handful of flour and a little oil. This is our last meal, and then my son and I will die.* Elijah said, *Don't be afraid! (Kids: God takes care of me!) Make me a little cake first. God says your flour and oil will not run out until He sends rain.*

READ 1 Kings 17:16 aloud: "The jar of meal didn't run out and the jar of oil didn't fail, according to Yahweh's word, which he spoke by Elijah."

SAY *(Softer.)* Later, the widow's son got so sick that he stopped breathing. Elijah carried him upstairs to his bed *(lay down the blanket)* and cried out to God. Three times he stretched himself over the child and prayed, *Please let this child live again!*

READ 1 Kings 17:22 aloud: "Yahweh listened to the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived."

SAY The boy was alive! Elijah brought him downstairs and said, *Look, your son lives!* And his mother said, *Now I know you are a man of God, and God's word is true.*

ASK How did God take care of Elijah, the widow, and her son? What can you ask God to help you with this week?

USING THE FILM INSTEAD. The film runs about 10½ minutes. Preview it first and set your stop points before class. The opening has the widow saying she and her son will eat "and die" (17:12), and later the boy lies still after he stops breathing (17:17). Nothing graphic is shown, and he lives again within about a minute. For grades K-2, start at the title card at 0:27 (this skips the cold open, where the widow says "that we may eat it, and die") and **STOP AFTER THE NARRATOR SAYS THE MEAL AND OIL DID NOT RUN OUT "JUST AS GOD HAD PROMISED" AT 4:57,** before the next scene, where the boy falls sick (4:59). Then tell 17:17-24 from the script above. For grades 3-5, show 0:27 to 6:34, through the widow's words "Now I know that you are a man of God..." (17:24). If a child has recently lost a family member, talk with the parent first. Times are from the film's final caption file.

Opening Game: Raven Relay

Make two teams. Each "raven" walks a paper "bread" on a paper plate to a leader, "Elijah," sitting on the floor, then walks back and hands the plate on. Call "Morning!" or "Evening!" to start each round. Dropped bread? Pick it up and keep going. No one is out.

Wrap up: *God sent ravens with food every morning and every evening. Today we'll see how God kept taking care of Elijah, even when things ran out.*

Object Lesson: The Dry Sponge

YOU'LL NEED a dry, stiff kitchen sponge, a bowl, a cup of water, and a towel.

Let kids feel the dry sponge. Ask: *Can it make itself wet?* (No.) **Say:** *People said Baal sent the rain. But when God said "no rain," no one could make it rain.* Read Jeremiah 14:22: "Are there any among the vanities of the nations that can cause rain?" Pour water on the sponge in the bowl; let kids feel it go soft. *Only God sends the rain and gives life. He took care of Elijah and the widow, and He takes care of you, even when life is hard.* Wipe up together.

Craft: The Jar That Didn't Run Out

Kids glue a paper jar onto construction paper along the sides and bottom only, making a pocket, and write **God takes care of me.** on it. On large pre-cut cards, they draw or write ways God cares for them (food, helpers, friends, Jesus) and tuck them in. Grades 3-5 can copy the memory verse on the back. Send a few blank cards home to add one a day.

SUPPLIES (PER CHILD)

- Two sheets of construction paper
- A jar shape and 3-4 large cards, pre-cut by leaders
- Crayons or markers
- A glue stick
- No scissors for children; leaders do any cutting before class

Small Groups

GRADES K-2

1. Who brought Elijah food by the brook?
2. What was left in the widow's jars, and what happened to it?
3. What are some ways God takes care of you?

GRADES 3-5

1. The brook dried up (17:7). What did God do next?
2. Why was it hard for the widow to share first?
3. What does Elijah's prayer in 17:20 teach us about talking to God when we are upset?
4. The widow lived outside Israel. What does Jesus say about her (Luke 4:25-26)?

Memory Verse Practice

MEMORY VERSE

"It is because of Yahweh's loving kindnesses that we are not consumed, because his mercies don't fail. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness."

LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23, WEB

Motions: hug yourself on "loving kindnesses," stretch on "new every morning," point up on "faithfulness." K-2: learn "...Great is your faithfulness."

Prayer

Invite kids to name one way God takes care of them, out loud or silently; anyone may pass. Pray: *Dear God, thank You for taking care of us every morning and every evening. Thank You for hearing us when we pray. Thank You for Jesus, who is stronger than death. Amen.*

If a child has lost someone, be gentle: *God doesn't bring everyone back now, but Jesus promises that everyone who trusts Him will live with Him forever* (John 11:25). Don't press for details; tell the parent, or follow the safeguarding steps below if you're worried.

CLASSROOM TIPS

- **Attention signal:** say "Rain!" and kids wiggle their fingers; say "Dry!" and they freeze and go quiet.
- Pair younger kids with an older buddy for the relay.
- Use only large, safe items: no coins, rocks, beads, or small objects. No real flour or oil; check allergies before any snack.
- **Safeguarding.** If a child or teen tells you about abuse, neglect, self-harm, harmful drinking or drug use at home, or anything else that makes you worried for their safety: stay calm, listen, and thank them for telling you. Don't promise to keep it secret, don't question them for details or investigate, and don't confront anyone involved. Write down what they said as soon as you can, and report it the same day to your church's designated safeguarding lead, following your church's safeguarding policy and any mandatory-reporting law that applies to you. If anyone is in immediate danger, stay with them and call emergency services. Telling a church safeguarding lead does not replace any report the law requires you to make directly to child-protection authorities or police.

FOR PRESCHOOL (AGES 3-5)

- Plan 20-25 minutes: story, sponge, pre-cut craft, prayer.
- Tell it as *God sent ravens with food, kept the widow's jars from running out, and made the boy alive again.* Keep the sickness to one sentence.
- Questions: *Who brought Elijah food? Who took care of the widow?*
- Practice "...Great is your faithfulness."

TAKE-HOME PAGE · FOR PARENTS

Today in Kids Ministry

The Drought

1 KINGS 17

WHAT WE LEARNED

God stopped the rain, just as Elijah said, and fed Elijah with ravens by a brook. Then God sent him to a widow whose flour and oil did not run out. When her son stopped breathing, Elijah prayed, and God gave the boy his life back. **Big idea:** *God takes care of His people, and He hears us when we pray, even when His answer isn't what we hoped.*

TALK ON THE WAY HOME

1. What part of Elijah's story do you remember most?
2. What is one way God took care of our family this week, maybe through someone who helped us?
3. What is something we can pray about together?

MEMORY VERSE

"They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness."

LAMENTATIONS 3:23, WEB

TRY THIS AT HOME

Make an "Empty Jar, Full Thanks" jar: each evening, everyone adds a card naming one way God provided that day. At the end of the week, read them together and thank God.

Watch the film together

Scan, or visit phillacolla.com/biblestories. Free, about 10½ minutes, listed there from release day. Parents, preview the film first: the widow's son stops breathing and is brought back to life (17:17-22). Nothing graphic is shown.

GO DEEPER AS A FAMILY

The **Family Study** track of the full companion guide has the story, questions for every age, an activity, and a prayer. Get the full guide free at phillacolla.com/biblestories. Next in the series: *Fire on Carmel* (1 Kings 18).

PRAY TOGETHER

God, thank You for taking care of us every day and for hearing every prayer. Help us trust You when things run low. In Jesus' name, amen.

KIDS: DRAW THE RAVENS BRINGING ELIJAH BREAD

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