



LESSON 4

GOD PROVIDES FOR ELIJAH

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Can Provide in Unexpected Ways

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 17

GOD'S BIG STORY: When the prophet Elijah is in hiding from King Ahab, God demonstrates that He is the one true God by providing for Elijah's needs in unexpected ways.

WORD OF WONDER: God is able to do far more than we could ever ask for or imagine. He does everything by his power that is working in us. —Ephesians 3:20

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Welcome Question: What is the biggest surprise you've ever experienced?
- Curiosity Questions
- Interactive Game: Who Would've Thought?
- Word of Wonder: Ephesians 3:20
- Word of Wonder Activity
- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Responding in Worship: Popcorn Prayer



[Unexpected Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Can Provide in Unexpected Ways

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 17

WORD OF WONDER: Ephesians 3:20

Take a moment and read 1 Kings 17:7–24. I love to see how God is faithful to provide in unexpected ways. I love that this widow gives out of her own need, and God provides her with more than she can imagine. I love that Elijah experiences grace through the hand of another and that both are blessed as a result.

I have experienced the same miracle but not necessarily in the same way. Rather, my miracle of having my needs met has been much more through the community of faith who add to my jar. A bit of encouragement here. An anonymous financial gift here. A sprinkle of laughter and a smidge of prayer. A dollop of rides for my kids and a generous serving of text messages and calls.

But here's the thing; just like the widow, we have to make our needs known. We must be willing to say, "I only have this much to give right now" or "I am in need of these things." And I believe the same God who provided for the widow will be faithful to make our jars overflow as well.

How has God provided for you in unexpected ways? Take a few moments and thank the Lord today for the miracle of His provision.

—Christina Embree

Nonprofit Ministry Director and Minister of Generational Discipleship

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Elijah was a prophet during the time of King Ahab. God provided for Elijah's needs through ravens and through the unnamed widow of Zarephath. The widow's son was brought back to life through Elijah's prayers.

WHAT?

Israel rebelled against God, and their newest king, Ahab, did more evil things than all the kings before him (1 Kings 16:30). God caused a famine to come to the land as a consequence of these actions and to convince Ahab that the Lord of Israel is God alone.

WHERE?

Kerith Valley, also known as the Jordan Valley, was located just east of the Jordan River. The city of Zarephath was located between Tyre and Sidon and is known today as Sarafand, Lebanon. It is possible Jesus visited there in His journeys (Mark 7:24).

WHEN?

Elijah's experience took place during the reign of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. Ahab was the seventh king of the northern kingdom of Israel and is believed to have reigned between 874–853 BC.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:

Centuries later, Jesus reminded His disciples that God will care for our needs as He does the lilies of the field and the birds of the air. Jesus is our ultimate provision, giving us all we need for eternal life in God by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8).

Small Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Can Provide in Unexpected Ways

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WORD OF WONDER: Ephesians 3:20

Pre-Service (15–20 min)

RESOURCES: [Coloring Page](#)

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have play stations with various board games, activities, or use games from the extra Games & Activities Guide to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them!

Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

Allow quieter kids who don't engage with the board games to color. Involve them in the curiosity questions.

While kids are playing in their opening activity groups..

Pose the following "I'm curious" questions. Say "I'm curious..." before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

- **Who is someone you trust to provide for your needs? Why do you trust this person?**
- **What are different ways God has provided for you?**

Small Group Begins: Welcome Question 2–3 min

SUPPLIES: whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils

As kids arrive, invite them to write/draw the answer to the Welcome Question:

"What is the biggest surprise you've ever experienced?"

Right at your service time, move into Small Group time by sharing your own answers and allowing kids to talk about their answers.

"Just like many of you shared about surprising experiences in your life, sometimes God can surprise us too. Today in God's big story, we're going to hear about a few times when God provided good things in really unexpected ways. But, first, it's time to be curious."

Small Group Discussion: Younger Kids 5–8 min

Invite kids to grab their Bibles and open to 1 Kings 17. Explain to kids they are going to read an example of God providing. 1 Kings is in the Old Testament and tells the true story of different leaders in Israel's history. Have volunteers help kids find the passage before you begin.

Ahead of time, invite 3 confident readers to read part of today's passage out loud for the group. Provide the readers with their specific verse numbers so they can look over the verses before reading out loud: 1 Kings 17:7–11 17:12–14, 17:15–16. When you're ready to begin, invite the readers to read their assigned verses aloud while the rest of the kids follow along.

- In God's big story today, what is one way God provides for Elijah?
- Why does the widow tell Elijah she can't share any bread with him?
- What miracles does God provide for the widow and her son?
- If you were the widow, would you have trusted Elijah that God would provide more flour and oil? Why or why not?
- Is it hard or easy for you to trust that God will take care of you? Why?
- What is one way you want to trust God this week?

"It's not always easy to trust God, especially when things don't seem to be going our way. However, we saw in Elijah's life that sometimes God provides in unexpected ways. Let's pray to God right now, thanking Him that we can trust Him to provide."

Make It Inclusive!

Kids in your group likely come from varying backgrounds. Some may have never known physical want while others might be familiar with hunger and experience anxiety over where their next meal will come from. Be intentional not to make promises of physical comfort and needs. Instead, remind kids that God is with them always and can provide in ways we would never guess, and to ask for help when they need it!

Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Open your prayer time by thanking God for being a God we can trust to provide for us. Invite kids to share their praises—what are they thankful for—and prayer requests—who or what are they praying for. Then pray for each child by name. Consider asking for volunteers ahead of time to pray for those who shared ways they wanted to trust God this week.

Small Group Discussion: Older Kids 8–12 min

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Invite kids to grab their Bibles and open to 1 Kings 17. Explain to kids they are going to read an example of God providing. 1 Kings is in the Old Testament and tells the true story of different leaders in Israel's history.

Invite 3 volunteers to read 1 Kings 17:7–11; 12–14; and 15–16 aloud.

Turn to Page 3 of this guide and help kids understand the context of this passage.

- In God's big story today, why is Elijah hiding?
- What are the different ways God provides for Elijah during this time?
- What happens to the widow's son? What does Elijah do in response?
- Elijah and the widow had to trust God each day that the flour and oil would not run out. Why can trusting God daily be difficult?
- Is it easy or hard for you to trust God? Why?
- What is something you can do to help you remember that God will take care of you?
- What did you see God do in today's story? What does this action show you about God?
- What is one question you have after hearing this part of God's big story?

"God shows Elijah that He can provide in some really unexpected ways! This part of God's big story can encourage us that when life gets tough, God still cares for us. We just might be surprised by how He does it! Let's take time to pray and thank God for providing for us."

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Prayer Time: Older Kids

Invite kids into a time of prayer. Allow kids to share their requests about how they need God to provide and share praises for those ways God already has provided. Ask volunteers to pray for these requests and to thank God for providing in unexpected ways.

Older Kids – Notes Page

Complete the Notes Page with kids. Helping them to fill out all of the spaces. This is an important way for parents to see what their kids are learning each way and have meaningful conversations at home!

WORD OF WONDER

God is able to do far more than we could ever ask for or imagine. He does everything by his power that is working in us.

—Ephesians 3:20 (NIRV)

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid); **Word of Wonder Poster** (1 per SG, keep for entire series)

"The Word of Wonder for the Unexpected series is Ephesians 3:20. Today we've seen how God provides, sometimes in very unexpected ways. This verse tells us more about how God works in ways we would never imagine. Let's read the Word of Wonder together!"

Have kids open their Bibles to Ephesians 3:20. Read the Word of Wonder several times together. Consider having kids strike powerful poses as they read the verse as a group. They can change poses each time they read.

Gather kids to talk about these questions:

- **How do you see God's power at work in you?**
- **When have you seen God provide in a way you wouldn't have ever imagined?**

Leader Tip: Be sure to help kids make the connection that the amazing power God used to perform the miracles in Elijah's life is in us through the Holy Spirit!

Word of Wonder Activity

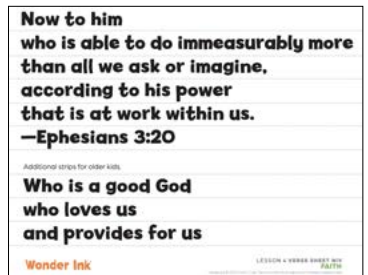
SUPPLIES: scissors (prep only)

RESOURCES: **Verse Sheet NIRV**

Ahead of time, print the Verse Sheet NIRV and cut out the strips of the Word of Wonder. Mix up the strips so the words aren't in order. If older kids are in your group, consider cutting out the additional strips for older kids.

Have kids lay the strips of paper face down in three rows.

"Today, we learned how God can provide in unexpected ways. We are now going to look at the Word of Wonder in a way you might not expect—cut into strips and mixed up! When it's your turn, you'll turn over two strips of paper and read the phrases on them. If you have the first part of the Word of Wonder on either of the two strips of paper, you will set that part of the verse aside for the rest of the group to add to it. If you don't, you'll put the strips of paper back, face down. Once one person finds the first part of the verse, you'll take turns turning over the strips two at a time to find the next part of the verse."



Allow kids to take turns until they have built the Word of Wonder in order. If you have added extra strips for older kids, explain that there will be words left over. When they finish, read the Word of Wonder together.

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. Consider numbering each of the slips of paper in order to help younger kids build the Word of Wonder correctly.

Large Group!

Responding in Worship: Popcorn Prayer

RESOURCES: [Unexpected Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Gather kids together. Help kids form a circle, either as one large group or in groups of 10–12, depending on what works best in your space.

"In God's big story today, we heard about the different and unexpected ways God provided for Elijah. I imagine it could've been a little scary to trust that God would provide food each day through ravens or that the jar of flour and jug of oil wouldn't run out even after the widow used it to make bread. Elijah had to have faith and trust with his heart that God would come through.

Like Elijah, we have examples from our own lives of how God provides in unexpected ways. We're going to take some time to think about some of those ways and praise God for them. When we take time to remember all God has done for us, it becomes easier to have faith that He will continue to provide for us. Take a minute to think, and then we will share our thoughts in a few words, popcorn-style. That means you can share your ideas one after another without going in any set order. As we share the ways God has provided, allow these words to be a form of praise, telling God we adore Him for who He is and for His goodness.

You may want to give kids a few ideas to get them started. For example, they could say "kind teachers" or "a warm home." Consider selecting one volunteer to start the popcorn prayer, and then allow kids to continue until most have contributed. Assure kids it's OK if they share the same words someone else shared. When the prayer has stopped "popping," you may add in your own adoration and then close the prayer.

God has taken care of us in so many different ways! How does it make you feel when you think of these different ways God has provided for you? Let's tell God in a popcorn prayer of thanksgiving. We'll go in no particular order, and when you're ready to share, you can share how you feel after hearing all these different and sometimes unexpected ways God provides. For example, I might say the word "grateful" or "loved." Let's share how blessed we are to have a God who cares for us!

Allow kids to share their prayers of thanksgiving for all the unexpected ways God provides for them. Assure kids it's OK if they share the same word someone else shared. After completing these prayers, sing together one of the songs from the [Unexpected Elementary Spotify playlist](#).

Make It Inclusive!

For those kids who are especially shy or might have difficulty speaking in front of groups, consider pairing them with a trusted friend or providing them another means of expression. For example, they can whisper their prayers to this friend, who can then share with the group, or they can write down their praise for the leader to share.