



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 hiding from King Ahab, God demonstrates that He is the one true God by providing for Elijah's needs through unexpected ways.

**WORD OF WONDER:** God can do more than we could ever imagine. —from Ephesians 3:20

**CURIOSITY**

**BELIEF**

**FAITH**

- Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: Mighty God, You Are With Me
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Prayer and Blessing





**INVITATION**

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

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**WONDER TRUTH:** God Can Provide in Unexpected Ways

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Kings 17

**WORD OF WONDER:** From 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

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**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).

LESSON 4 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

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

**LESSON AT A GLANCE**

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**Welcome****Slide: Series Welcome Loop****As kids arrive...**

Walk around the room and welcome as many kids as possible by showing excitement that they have joined you. Give high-fives, fist bumps, encourage them to sit on the floor in their spots, and ask questions about their week.

**Video: Countdown**

Welcome kids to worship time. Introduce yourself by name.

**Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions**

**SUPPLIES:** fake red rose or picture of a red rose

Introduce the kids to Tac, the curious cat. Start by having him behind your back with the rose.

**Leader:** Can you help me call for our friend Tac? Ready? Tac? Tac? Where are you?

*(Pull Tac and the red rose out from behind your back.)*

**Tac the Cat:** Oh! Hello, friends!

**Leader:** Hi, Tac! We're so happy to see you! What do you have with you?

**Tac the Cat:** I have a rose! You will never believe where I found this rose!

*(If you have a red rose, you can have Tac hold it up here.)*

**Leader:** That sounds like a story we want to hear. Where did you find it?

**Tac the Cat:** I was flying a kite in a field when I saw an old bush. It didn't seem to have anything growing on it, but when I looked closer, it had a small, red rose. It was so unexpected. Red roses are my mom's favorite, so I picked it for her!

**Leader:** Wow! That was so unexpected!

**Tac the Cat:** Yes! I know God provided this for me to give to my mom! God can provide in the most unexpected ways.

**Leader:** Yes, He can! This reminds me of a story in the Bible. We will learn more about how God can provide in unexpected ways in God's big story today.

**Tac the Cat:** Wow! God is amazing. Well, I am off to give my mom the red rose!

**Leader:** Have fun, Tac! Bye!

**"Have you ever been curious about something? Let's take a moment and think: Who provides food for you? Allow the kids to respond. Has anything unexpected ever happened to you? Allow the kids to respond. We all see and hear things that make us curious. Did you ever stop to think about how God provides for us in unexpected ways?"**

### **SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH**

Today's Wonder Truth is **GOD CAN PROVIDE IN UNEXPECTED WAYS**. Today, we'll discover how God takes care of us in ways we don't expect!"

## **Declaring God's Wonder**

### **SLIDE: DECLARATION**

Encourage the kids to say the statements and do the motions with you.

**"Let's say these words together."**

**Thank You, God, that You made me!** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Make prayer hands, then point up to God and to yourself.

**And I am Your kid!** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands on your hips.

**Jesus loves me so much;** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

**His love for me is big.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

**The Holy Spirit leads me,** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Bring your arms down from the sky, making a path in front of you.

**And I can follow You.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

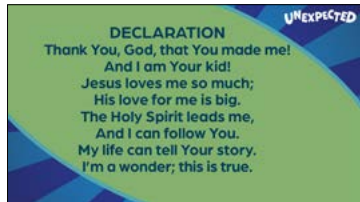
March like you're following the leader.

**My life can tell Your story.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

**I'm a wonder; this is true.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands up, shaking your fingers, celebrating ("praise hands").



## Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use your own words. Here is an example: **Dear God, we praise You for the ways You provide for us. Help us see You in unexpected ways in God's big story today. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

## Worship

"Today, we'll learn about how God can provide in unexpected ways. Let's sing together about how God provides!"

**WORSHIP VIDEOS: Mighty God, You Are With Me**

## God's Big Story

**SUPPLIES:** Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them today's story comes from the book of 1 Kings in the Bible. Open a Bible and show them where the story is found.

### Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

**I open my Bible and what do I see?** ((Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.)

**God's big story, waiting for me!** (Point to yourself.)

**Let's hear part of God's big story, which comes from the book of 1 Kings in the Bible.**

**VIDEO: GOD'S BIG STORY**

## GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, crown, crackers, jar, cotton balls (several handfuls), bag, bread (toy or real), cooking oil (optional), flour (optional)

**Allergy Caution:** Be aware of any food allergies or sensitivities among your kids and volunteers before doing this activity!

**Leader Tip:** Instead of toy food or other props needed to tell the story, you can print pictures of them instead, so the kids still have a visual while acting out the story.

Ahead of time, set out a crown, a few crackers, a jar (which you can fill with cooking oil, or simply leave empty and pretend), a bag containing several handfuls of cotton balls (which you can pretend is flour, or you can use real flour), and either toy bread or a piece of real bread. You can use these props as you tell the story.

**"We're going to hear an interesting part of God's big story from the Bible about a time when God provided for people in unexpected ways! Pay attention and see if you can discover the ways God provided.**

**God's people—the Israelites—were living in the Promised Land, and God gave them prophets, or messengers, to share His message with His people. Elijah was a prophet during the rule of King Ahab, a terrible king who didn't love God and worshiped idols—pretend gods. Can you pretend to be a king?** Hold up the crown and let a child put it on his head and pretend to be a king.

**God was upset with King Ahab. God told Elijah to inform King Ahab that there would be no rain for several years to prove that God is alive and powerful. No rain meant there wouldn't be food for people to eat. That would be very sad. Can you show a sad face?** Encourage the kids to make sad faces.

**This made King Ahab angry. So Elijah hid from King Ahab in the Kerith Valley. God told Elijah He would provide for him. God stopped the rain, but He also led Elijah to a little stream of water that had enough water for him to drink. Without rain, food can't grow, but God provided another way for Elijah to eat. God sent birds called ravens to carry food to Elijah every day. Hold up the crackers. I did not expect God to provide through ravens!**

**Can you be a raven and drop off these crackers to me?** Allow a few kids to act like ravens and drop off crackers to you.

**When the little stream dried up, it was time for Elijah to leave. God told Elijah to go to a town called Zarephath where a widow (someone whose husband had died) would take care of him and give him food. Elijah traveled to Zarephath, where he met the widow and her son. Elijah asked her, "Would you bring me a little water in a jar? I need a drink" (1 Kings 17:10). The widow was sad. She said, "I don't have any bread. ... All I have is a small amount of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. ... I'll make one last meal for myself and my son" (1 Kings 17:12). She knew that would be the last thing she and her son would eat before they ran out of food.**

Hold up the jar (of oil) and bag of cotton balls (or flour).

Elijah told her, “The LORD is the God of Israel. He says, ‘The jar of flour will not be used up. The jug will always have oil in it. You will have flour and oil until the day the LORD sends rain on the land’” (1 Kings 17:14). The widow believed God’s words. She went home and made Elijah some bread with the last of the flour and oil. When she looked in the jar after feeding Elijah, there was still more flour and more oil. In fact, “the jar of flour wasn’t used up [and] the jug always had oil in it” (1 Kings 17:16). **God kept His promise! Let’s pretend to make bread.** Pretend to pour the ingredients and knead the bread. Then hold up the toy bread (or real bread) to show the kids.

But a little while later, something very sad happened. The widow’s son got very sick and even stopped breathing! The widow was heartbroken. She questioned Elijah and all that had happened. Elijah took the boy to the upstairs room and cried out to the Lord. “LORD my God, I’m staying with this widow. Have you brought pain and sorrow even to her? Have you caused her son to die? ... LORD my God, give this boy’s life back to him!” (1 Kings 17: 20–21).

God heard Elijah’s prayer. Suddenly, the boy took a deep breath. He was alive. Elijah took the boy to his mother and declared, “Look! Your son is alive!” (1 Kings 17:23). Can you act surprised? Encourage the kids to look surprised. The woman was overjoyed and realized all that Elijah had done and said was from God. God took care of Elijah, and He takes care of us. God can provide in unexpected ways!”

## Connecting the Wonder Truth

Ask the following question to kids to help them connect the Wonder Truth to God’s big story:

### SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

"Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD CAN PROVIDE IN UNEXPECTED WAYS**. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

In the story, God provided for Elijah using birds. Many years later, Jesus reminded His disciples that God would care for their needs as He does the lilies of the field and the birds of the air. The greatest way God provides for us is through Jesus, who saves us from our sins!"

## Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for providing for us. Use your own words. Here is an example:

**Dear God, thank You for all we have and all the ways You have provided for us in the past. Help us continue to thank You for the unexpected ways You will provide for us in the future. In Jesus’ name, Amen.**

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them. Use your own words. Here is an example:

**Blessing:** May God provide for all your needs and surprise you in unexpected ways this week.