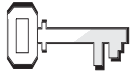


Breakfast With the Birds



References

1 Kings 17:1–6;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 119–128



Memory Verse

“I am your God.
I will strengthen you
and help you”
(Isaiah 41:10, NIV).



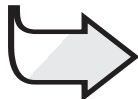
Objectives

The children will:

Know that
God knows and
supplies our needs.

Feel safe in
God’s care.

Respond by trust-
ing God to care for
them even when bad
things happen.



The Message

God knows my
needs; He cares
about me.

Monthly Theme

Grace is the gift of life.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Wicked King Ahab and Queen Jezebel rule the land of Israel. God sends Elijah to the palace in Samaria to bear a message of God’s judgment on Israel for their wickedness. Elijah announces to King Ahab that there will be no dew or rain in the next few years except at his word. Elijah leaves quickly and hides in the Kerith Ravine by a brook. God sends ravens regularly to feed Elijah, and he feels safe in God’s care.

This is a lesson about grace.

Even when bad things are happening all around us because of sin, God is still in charge of the world. He can work through nature, people, and circumstances to care for our needs in spite of terrible situations.

Teacher Enrichment

“Baal was worshiped as the source of life and blessing, as the great storm god, who supplied the earth with moisture, and gave to the land its increase. . . . [Ahab] and [the] people refused to believe that the drought was a judgment from God. They insisted that Baal and Ashtoreth would yet give them the life-giving rain” (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 813).

Ahab was married to the Phoenician princess Jezebel. This marriage was politically arranged because it opened up the Mediterranean seaports for Israel.

Room Decorations

Place some dead and dried-up plants and small trees around the room. In one spot, add a representation of a brook using either blue cloth or aluminum foil to represent the water next to some “ravens” with pieces of bread in their beaks. Perhaps a small pile of sticks, a small container of oil, and a container of flour can be placed somewhere else. If possible, put a likeness of a cave somewhere in the scene.

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. Taste Test</i> <i>B. Traffic Stop Game</i>	plastic bag of lemon wedges, bag of treats, blindfold for each child, Bible double-sided stop sign attached to wooden handle, Bible
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> container or bowl with bird cutouts notebook and writing instrument, Bible
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes, 2 crowns, headbands, long nylon scarves, leather pouch, black cloth, throne Bibles Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Role-Play</i>	lunch bag with nails, bolts, screws; another lunch bag with seeds, dirt, small sealed container of water; another lunch bag with empty food wrappers, Bible
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Food Collage</i>	Bibles, construction paper, old magazines, scissors, glue

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

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Give directions for the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- lemon wedges in clear plastic bag
- tasty treat for each child
- blindfold for each child
- Bible

A. Taste Test

Bring in a small plastic bag of lemon wedges (or other sour food) and a small bag of treats. Show both bags to the children and ask them to trust you to give them a taste of one of them. You get to choose which one they get. Blindfold the children and instruct them to open their mouths for the taste test. Give everyone the treat. (To heighten suspense, squeeze some of the lemon wedges to release the smell.)

Debriefing

Ask: **How hard was it for you to trust me? Were you glad you did? What have you learned about trusting God?** Read aloud Nahum 1:7. **How is this like or unlike the activity we just did?** (God is good. We have to trust God to know what's best for us.) **And here's our message for today:**



GOD KNOWS MY NEEDS; HE CARES ABOUT ME.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- double-sided stop sign attached to a wooden handle (paint stirrer or wooden spoon)
- Bible

B. Traffic Stop Game

Form four lines imitating the traffic pattern at an intersection. One child stands in the middle as the traffic cop. As he or she holds the stop sign one direction, the children in the two lanes facing that direction stop. The children in the other two lanes walk quickly past and loop around at the end to come back the other way. The "traffic police" now faces the other direction, causing the other two lanes of "traffic" to stop. The "traffic police" may swing back and forth at any time. Take turns so several children can be the "traffic police."

Debriefing

Ask: **Did this game work? Why?** (Yes, everyone stopped when they were supposed to. No, some people didn't stop.) **Why don't we have more accidents when we ride in our cars?** (Because most people obey the traffic signs.) **How do you know others will obey traffic laws?** (We don't, but we trust them to.) **Can you always trust other people? Are there some people you can trust more than others? How do you feel about trusting our God?** (Other people will let us down, but God won't.) Read Isaiah 41:10 aloud. Then say, **That reminds me of our message for today:**



GOD KNOWS MY NEEDS; HE CARES ABOUT ME.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study. Give a special warm greeting to visitors and introduce each by name. Acknowledge birthdays or special events.



Suggested Songs

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

"John 3:16" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 24)

"Lord, We Praise You" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 17)

"I Was Glad" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 144)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Collect the offering with the "bowl" to remind the children that their offerings will be used to supply someone's needs.

You Need:

- container or bowl with cutouts of a black bird attached



Prayer

Make a "Prayer Time" notebook. On one page, write "Blessings From God." On another write "Requests for Prayer." Read aloud Philippians 4:19 and ask the children to tell about times when God showed His care for them. Record their names and experiences on the appropriate page. Then ask for prayer requests and record them. Form a prayer circle and invite children to offer their thanks or requests as they pray. Plan to use this for several weeks.

You Need:

- notebook and writing instrument
- Bible

2

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes
- 2 crowns
- headbands
- long nylon scarves
- leather pouch
- black cloth
- throne

Experiencing the Story

As you tell the story, have the children act it out.

Characters: Elijah, guards, King Ahab, Queen Jezebel, prophets of Baal, ravens.

Props: Bible-times costumes for guards and prophets; crowns for king and queen, headbands for prophets of Baal; long nylon scarves for Jezebel; robe and leather pouch for Elijah; black cloth for ravens (they hold the corners in their hands as they flap their wings); pita bread or other flat bread; throne for Ahab

Setting: At one side of the room place a throne where Ahab sits. His guards stand nearby. On the other side of the room, Queen Jezebel and the prophets of Baal stroll up and down. If possible, have adults play the parts of Jezebel and the prophets. Assign someone to remove the throne when Brook Kerith is mentioned the first time. That place in the room will then become the Kerith Ravine.

Read or tell the story.

Let us go way back to Old Testament times. Pretend with me that we are in Bible times. Wicked King Ahab rules Israel. *[Ahab comes and sits on his throne. Guards stand at his side.]* King Ahab does more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any other king.

Wicked Queen Jezebel is King Ahab's wife. *[Jezebel gives a mean snarl and begins strutting up and down on the other side of the room.]* Ahab and Jezebel worship idols. They lead all Israel into idol worship. They encourage the people to disobey the Lord's commands.

Jezebel appointed prophets of Baal.

[Motion for the prophets of Baal to join Jezebel, strutting back and forth.] They boldly killed the Lord's prophets. *[Jezebel and the prophets snarl at the class.]*

But God has a prophet. *[Elijah enters from back of the room, walks slowly up the center aisle, stops partway down the aisle.]* His name is Elijah, and he is from Tishbe, in the land of Gilead. Elijah devotes himself to serving God. *[Elijah folds his hands and raises his eyes to heaven.]* He teaches others to worship the true God. Notice Elijah's simple clothing and the leather pouch he carries.

Elijah is troubled by the idol worship he sees in the land. He knows it encourages evil in Israel. The sacrifices to heathen gods disgust him.

The priests of Baal tell the people that Baal sends the rain and dew and controls the rivers and streams. *[The priests of Baal nod in agreement and proudly pound their chests.]* This is more than Elijah can bear. *[Elijah shakes his head and raises his hands to heaven again.]* He begs God to teach Israel a lesson. So God asks Elijah to go to Samaria and deliver a message to King Ahab.

Elijah knows that Ahab doesn't want a message from the Lord. Elijah wonders about the palace guards. *[Point to the guards; guards frown.]* Will they arrest him and turn him over to Jezebel and her wicked priests of Baal? *[The priests grin and rub their hands together.]* But in spite of the dangers, Elijah is not afraid. He remembers how God took care of Moses and Aaron. He knows that God cares for His people.

So Elijah goes to the palace in Samaria. *[Beckon for Elijah to come to King Ahab.]* And without stopping for the guards, he marches right up to the king and delivers God's message.

"As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives,

whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word," Elijah proclaims. Ahab's mouth drops open. The guards stare. And before they realize what is going on, Elijah is gone. *[He walks away quickly.]*

"Leave here immediately," God tells Elijah. "Go eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine." *[Elijah circles around to come up front; meanwhile Ahab, the guards, Jezebel, and the priests return to their seats.]* "You will drink from the brook," God continues, "and ravens will feed you."

Elijah finds a safe place beside a stream of water. He drinks at the brook. Then he hears the flapping of wings. *[Enter birds with bread, which they hold for Elijah to take, then fly away.]*

Elijah is excited. He realizes that God knows his need—his hunger. Elijah feels safe in the Lord's care. Every time the ravens bring him food, Elijah is reminded that God's grace gives him the gift of life. Elijah knows that his life is precious to God.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why did God send Elijah to King Ahab?** (He and Jezebel were not obeying God; they taught the people to worship Baal.)

How do you think Elijah felt when God told him to go to talk to the king? (afraid, uneasy, nervous, etc.)

What gave Elijah the courage to go to the king? (He knew God would be with him; he knew he could trust God to care for him.)

How did God take care of Elijah? (He sent ravens to feed him; God sent him to a place where there would be water.)

Does God know about your needs? Does He care about you? Allow response time. **Our message tells us . . .**



GOD KNOWS MY NEEDS; HE CARES ABOUT ME.

Say that with me.

Memory Verse

Help children find and read the memory verse aloud ("**I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you**" **Isaiah 41:10, NIV**). Briefly discuss ways God strengthens and helps us. Form three groups and assign a phrase to each group as follows:

Group 1 "I am your God."

Group 2 "I will strengthen you"

Group 3 "and help you."

Have groups call out their phrases in order. Repeat. Then rotate phrase assignments and call out new phrases twice. Repeat until all know the verse.

Bible Study

Say: **God sent ravens to feed Elijah every day. He had water to drink from the brook. Let's look at some other promises that Jesus makes about taking care of our needs.** Help the children find and read the following verses:

Matthew 10:29, 30

Matthew 6:25-34

Debriefing

Ask: **What is more splendid than Solomon?** (flowers) **Who makes the flowers grow? What does Jesus say about clothes?** (Do not worry. If He can clothe the field, He can give you clothes.) **Why should we not worry about food?** (If Jesus can feed the birds, He can also feed us.) **Does anyone know how many hairs they have on their head?** (We can guess, but we don't know.) **If God knows so much about us, He must love and care about us. Let's say our message together:**



GOD KNOWS MY NEEDS; HE CARES ABOUT ME.

You Need:

- Bibles

You Need:

- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- lunch bag with nails, bolts screws, etc.
- lunch bag with seeds, dirt, small sealed container of water
- lunch bag with empty food wrappers
- Bible

Role-Play

In advance, make up the following lunch bags, one for each child if your group is small. Large class, one bag for each group of five or six children.

1. Bag with nails, screws, bolts, etc.
 2. Bag with seeds, dirt, small sealed container of water
 3. Bag with empty food wrappers
- Distribute the lunch sacks and ask the children to share them with each other.

Debriefing

Ask? **What is wrong with your lunch sacks?** (We can't eat screws or dirt and seeds. Maybe we could grow something, but that would take a long time. We want to eat now. We need food, not just wrappers, etc.) **How would you feel if your parents gave you a lunch like these?** (wouldn't like it, unhappy, mistreated, etc.)

Are parents supposed to provide for their children? (Yes.) **Can parents provide everything you need?** (No.) **Who can?** (God) **Let's read 1 Timothy 6:17 to understand what God has provided out of love.** (everything for our enjoyment, including our parents)

Read aloud Psalm 111:5, first part. Say: **What does God provide that helps our food to grow?** (water, air, sunshine) **Water, food, air, and sunshine are proof of God's love for us.**

Do you remember to thank Jesus often for taking such good care of you? When do you do this? (at mealtime, in family worship, in church, other times during the day, etc.) **Let's stop right now and thank God for caring for us.** After a brief prayer, have the children say the message with you:



GOD KNOWS MY NEEDS; HE CARES ABOUT ME.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Food Collage

Ask: **How did God strengthen and help Elijah?** (He sent birds to feed him.)

Ask: **How does God strengthen and help us today?** Allow response time, then form groups of five or six, each with an adult helper. Provide old magazines, scissors, and construction paper for each child. Have children cut and paste food pictures to form a collage. Write the memory verse on the collage.

Debriefing

Say: **Hold up your collage so we can see it.** Affirm their work. **Who would like**

to tell why they chose some of their pictures? Allow time.

Think of someone you can share your collage with while you tell them about Elijah and the ravens. Be sure each child has thought of someone. **You can tell them about today's message too. Let's say it together.**



GOD KNOWS MY NEEDS; HE CARES ABOUT ME.

CLOSING

Gather the children in a circle and ask each to name one thing God gives them (air, food, sunshine, water, family, etc.). Close with prayer, thanking God for supplying all these needs.

You Need:

- Bibles
- old magazines
- scissors
- glue/paste
- construction paper

Breakfast With the Birds

References

1 Kings 17:1–6;
Prophets and Kings,
 pp. 119–128

Memory Verse

“I am your God.
 I will strengthen you
 and help you”
 (Isaiah 41:10, NIV).

The Message

God knows my
 needs; He cares
 about me.

Have you ever watched birds eating? What do they eat? If God told you that birds would bring your food, what would you expect? Bird seed? Worms? Some fruit? A long time ago, God sent birds to feed a man. Elijah’s bird story is not what you might expect.

Long ago wicked King Ahab ruled the land of Israel. Ahab did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any other king (1 Kings 16:30). King Ahab and his queen, Jezebel, worshiped idols. They led all of Israel to worship idols too. They encouraged the people to disobey the Lord’s commands. Jezebel and the prophets of Baal boldly killed the Lord’s prophets.

God had a prophet whose name was Elijah. He was from Tishbe, in the land of Gilead, on the other side of the Jordan River. Elijah served God and

taught others to worship Him. He was troubled by the idol worship he saw in the land. He knew it encouraged wickedness in Israel. The sacrifices to heathen gods disgusted him.

The priests of Baal taught the people that Baal sent the rain and dew. They believed Baal also controlled the rivers and streams. Elijah knew better, and it was more than he could bear. He begged God to teach Israel a lesson. So God asked Elijah to deliver a message to King Ahab.

Elijah knew that Ahab didn’t want a message from the Lord. He knew, too, that the palace guards would recognize him as a prophet of God. They might try to arrest him. They might even turn Elijah over to Jezebel and her wicked priests of Baal. But in spite of the dangers, Elijah didn’t hesitate. He went to Samaria and, without stopping for the guards, marched right into the palace. He walked right up to the king and delivered God’s message.

“As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word,” Elijah proclaimed. And then he quickly turned and left.

Elijah was not alone when he marched in to see Ahab. Without God’s protection he surely would have been stopped by the guards and put to death. But God was with him when he went in. And God was with him as he left.

“Leave here, at once,” God told Elijah. “Go eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine. You will find water in the brook there. And I have ordered the ravens to feed you.”

And that’s exactly what happened. Elijah found a safe, quiet place on a hillside above the brook. Every morning and evening the birds brought food to Elijah. And for many months, Elijah drank water from the brook. As long as the brook flowed, he had water to drink.

Elijah felt safe in God’s care. Every time the ravens swooped down, bringing food, Elijah knew that God was giving him the gift of life. And Elijah knew that his life was precious to God.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go to a quiet stream with your family and read the Bible lesson together. Ask: What do ravens look like? Take some food for the birds with you. Thank God for birds.
- Read the memory verse in Isaiah 41:10, NIV.
- Sing together "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 13).

Sunday

- Together with your family, read 1 Kings 17:1–6. Talk about a bad time in your family, and how God cared for all of you.
- Read your memory verse together. What two things does your memory verse say that God has done or will do for you? Write them here:

1. _____

2. _____

Monday

- During family worship, discuss: What kind of person was King Ahab? Read 1 Kings 16:33. Why do you think Elijah needed to hide after giving the king God's message?
- Play hide-and-seek with your family. Pretend that the person who is "it" is King Ahab or Queen Jezebel. Describe how Elijah hid from the real Ahab and Jezebel. Why couldn't they find him?
- Cut memory verse words from a magazine or newspaper. Glue them in the right order to a piece of paper. Read the verse aloud.

Tuesday

- During worship ask your family: Have you ever been in a dangerous situation? How did you feel? How do you think Elijah felt? Read Jeremiah 1:19 together.

- Write the name of someone you know about who is in danger: _____.
With your family, pray for that person. Say or read the memory verse to your family.

- Sing "You Are My Hiding Place" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 96). Then thank God for protecting your family.

Wednesday

- During family worship, look at a Bible map that shows Samaria and Kerith Ravine (Cherith Brook). How far might Elijah have traveled before reaching Kerith Ravine? How do you think he felt by this time? Make a picture to show Kerith Ravine and Elijah.
- If possible, sit with your family near a brook. Read 1 Kings 17:6. Imagine Elijah drinking from the brook and getting food from the ravens. Talk about the ways God takes care of your family.
- Say your memory verse together.

Thursday

- For family worship, sit in a circle. Tell your family to take off their shoes without bending their elbows. Give them a minute to try. Then choose partners to help each other remove their shoes. What was different this time? Why do we need God's help? Read Psalm 46:1 together. Plan to do something to help someone else today.
- Say the memory verse out loud, taking one step for each word. How far did you go?

Friday

- Ask a family member to read Elijah's story (1 Kings 17:1–6) while you act it out.
- Say the memory verse with your family.
- Sing a song about God's love for you.
- Ask each family member to tell how God took care of them this week. Then thank God for His care.