

Lesson 8

God Keeps Me Going

Bible Lesson: I Kings 17:1-16

Memory Verse: Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? *Matthew 6:26*

Enrichment Memory Verse: And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. *Philippians 4:19*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. *What does this mean?* I believe that God has created me and all that exists; that He has given and still preserves to me my body and soul, my eyes and ears, and all my members, my reason and all the powers of my soul together with food and clothing, home and family, and all my property, that He daily provides abundantly for all the needs of my life ...

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

- ✦ That God can be trusted to provide everything that is needed for our physical and spiritual lives
- ✦ The difference between wants and needs
- ✦ That ALL things come from God

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

1. Secret Stash bag with 5 bread loaf pictures and 2 fish pictures. Write the following review questions on the pictures. One question per picture.

What did the boy have that he was willing to give to Jesus? (*five loaves of bread and two fish*)

Where did the boy get his food from? (*from God. If students answer that he got his food from his mother at home, lead them to understand that EVERYTHING we have comes from God.*)

How did the boy wisely use his food to bring honor and glory to God? (*He unselfishly gave it to Jesus for Him to use as He wished.*)

What miracle did Jesus perform? (*He fed a crowd of over 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish.*)

What did Jesus do before He distributed the food? (*He gave thanks to His heavenly Father.*)

To Whom does everything belong? (*God*)

Why did God give us so many good things? (*Because He loves us*)

2. Compile a list of ALL the things you use every day.

Prayer Preparation

1. Thank God for His daily provision of both physical and spiritual needs—especially His grace and forgiveness. Thank Him for His Word, for in it He has given everything you need for salvation and your daily walk.
2. Pray for grace to receive His Word and all that it imparts.
3. Pray that your students will understand that God has provided, and continues to provide, everything they need, both physically and spiritually.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study (This material was gleaned from the current TM. cj)**I Kings 17:1-16**

During the time of Elijah, Israel's king was Ahab. The Bible says that King Ahab did more evil in the sight of God than any of the kings who served before him. He, along with his wicked wife, Jezebel, led the nation of Israel in the worship of idols.

God had warned Israel that if the people worshiped other gods "the Lord's anger will burn against you, and He will shut the heavens so that it will not rain and the ground will yield no produce..." (Deuteronomy 11:16-17). This judgment of God was now being carried out on the nation of Israel.

In order to warn the people of His judgment God did not see fit to raise up a prophet from among the *religious* leaders of Israel. Indeed, the priests of Israel were themselves caught up in the worship of idols and did not consider idol worship a serious evil. So God called Elijah, a man from a small, obscure, distant town, to deliver His message of warning.

Elijah's God

Elijah means, "The Lord is God". While the officials and leaders of Israel worshiped other gods, the gods of the Canaanites, Elijah worshiped Jehovah. He warned Israel of what would happen if the nation continued to reject the true God. The gods they worshiped would not be able to protect them or provide for them. If the people continued to reject the true God, they would experience lack of the basic necessities of life. Elijah's life demonstrated that those who have the Lord as their God need not fear anything, while those who trust other gods will lack basic needs even though they live in the Promised Land. Elijah's God cared for Elijah even though Elijah had to live away from the Promised Land.

Elijah's Provision

When the predicted drought came as a result of Israel's sin, everyone in the area suffered. The rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, masters and servants all felt the effects of God's judgment. But God had a special provision for His servant Elijah. God was not affected by the drought. He instructed Elijah to hide out along the brook named Cherith and God caused ravens to fly in with food for Elijah as he needed it. Elijah was sustained in a very unusual way, a way ordained by God, while those who lived in the cities and town of the Promised Land were going hungry.

Eventually the brook dried up and even the ravens stopped bringing food. But that extremely severe situation did not hinder the Lord's provision for his prophet. Even though ravens scavengers by nature, were no longer bringing food, God directed Elijah to a place where food would continue to be provided.

God instructed Elijah to go to Zarephath, a small town located on the Mediterranean coastline between Tyre and Sidon. In Zarephath Elijah met a widow who was in a desperate situation. She and her son had no one to care for her and she had only enough food for one more meal. Even that meal was only enough for two people. But again God was not hindered by any lack. Through Elijah, God promised the woman that she would have a continuous supply of food in her house until the drought ended.

God was true to His word. Though the woman used the last of her flour and oil to make a breadcake for Elijah, there was more left to make bread for herself and her son. As God had promised, there was enough food every day for these three people until the drought ended.

What God has promised, God will provide. Desperate circumstances should not trouble us, for the fulfillment is dependent upon God's ability and God is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we may ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).

B. Creed Study

(This Bible/CREED Background is an unedited version and is to be replaced at a later date with the edited version.)

The Lord has promised never to leave us or forsake us. God has not provided for us once and then abandoned us. The Scriptures make clear the continuous activity and intervention of God in this world. The climax of this is the Incarnation in which God took on flesh and became man.

In I Kings 17 God tells the prophet Elijah to go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon. This town is of note in at least one way; Sidon was the area from which Jezebel came (1 Kings 16:31-33). So God sends His prophet into the home area of this wicked woman. We are reminded through this that God can provide "our daily bread"

even in situations which seem impossible. The world may be against us but God will not abandon us. He can keep us going when everything points to our failure or destruction.

When we look at the story in I Kings we might ask the question, “How is that abundantly?” The abundance doesn’t mean that we have all the niceties that the world has to offer. In fact, as Christians we should be prepared and not surprised when the world tries to take away those comforts that others enjoy so regularly. We remember that Jesus Himself said, “The foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head” (Matthew 8:20).

The reality is that our greatest needs are spiritual and God has promised to provide everything in that area. However, we confess in the Creed that we believe our physical needs are not forgotten either. Elijah was provided for miraculously; we are provided for, most often, through the people around us using their gifts and abilities to help us receive these things.

In the enrichment memory verse for this lesson, Philippians 4:19, we are told, “And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” Paul shares these words after he has made clear to the Philippian believers that he has learned how to view the various situations that life brought him. He said, “I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:12-13).

We live in a society that places so much value on performance. We are often told that you will only be cared for, loved, or considered to be of any value if you are able to perform certain things for others or for society as a whole. What happens when we don’t perform? Society casts us aside. But God has declared that we are precious to Him not because of what we do but because of what Jesus Christ, His One and Only Son, came and did for us. He redeemed us with His precious blood. If He has provided for us so abundantly in this way, He will certainly care for us in all things.

BEGINNING OUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

As students enter the classroom, **ASK** them some very obvious questions like:

1. Did you use water today?
2. Did you breathe air today?
3. Did you eat food today?
4. Did you use your hands today?
5. Did you turn on a light today?
6. Etc.

ASK one final question: Where do all these things come from?

These questions will help the students understand that the everyday things we have, those things we usually take for granted, are graciously given to us by God. These questions will also prepare the students for this lesson and its focus on the truth “that He (God) daily provides abundantly for all the needs of my life.”

Open with Prayer

1. Ask students to pray short prayers of thanks to God for His care and for all the things He has given them.
2. End with a prayer asking God to prepare the heart of each student so he or she can understand the truths being taught in today’s lesson.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

From the Bible: James 1:17

And

From the Catechism: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean? I believe that God has created me and all that exists; that He has given and still preserves to me my body and soul, my eyes and ears, and all my members, my reason and all the powers of my soul together with food and clothing, home and family, and all my property...

Review

DIRECT the students’ attention to your “Surprise Sack”.

(See #1 under Prepare Materials for pictures and suggested review questions to include in your “Surprise Sack”.)

Have students pull a picture from the “Surprise Sack”. Then have the student read and answer the questions. If the student is unable to answer the question, let him or her ask someone else for help.

Introduce Wall Words

Catechism-- is a book of questions and answers which explain Christian teachings. (cj added this word)

Prophet— A prophet is someone who received a message from God and proclaims that message to the people.

Ravens—A raven is a large, black, scavenger bird that will eat fresh or decaying meat, insects, or vegetation.

Reap—To reap is to gather in a crops when it ripe. Reaping means to bring in the harvest.

Shelter—A shelter is a place that protects you. The house you live in is a shelter because it protects you.

Sow—To sow is to scatter or plant seeds.

Widow—A widow is a woman whose husband has died.

Introduce the Lesson

SAY Before you went home last week, I asked you to make a list of ALL the things you need in one day. (See Assignment from Lesson 7.) Please take out that list and hold it up.

(If no students brought a list, take 2 to 3 minutes for the class to compile a list.)

CALL ON individual students and ask them to share three things on their list.

Teach the Lesson

INSTRUCT students to turn to page 31 in their book. **SAY** Let's read about a boy who thought he was going to run out of something very important.

READ paragraphs 1 through 4. Then have the students **RESPOND** to the question: Do you think the boy needed to do that [hold his breath]? (Remind the students that God has created many parts of our bodies to continue working without us even thinking about it.)

Continue with the lesson. **READ** paragraph 5. Students may need to be reminded that a catechism is a book of questions and answers which explain Christian teachings. Be prepared to show them an example of a catechism. **EMPHASIZE** the statement: "All these things come from God."

SAY Now let's read about a time when God used birds to bring a man his food. **TELL** the students that this true story can be found in the Bible in I Kings 17.

SAY Find I Kings 17: 1-6 in your Bible.

READ I Kings 17:1-6 to the class while they follow along.

ASK Who is the story about? (*the prophet Elijah*)

EXPLAIN that a prophet was someone who

received a message from God and proclaims that message to the people.

ASK How did God provide for Elijah's needs? (*God sent Elijah to hide by the brook Cherith. Then God chose ravens to bring Elijah food twice a day. What a miracle since ravens are scavengers by nature and would normally eat the meat and bread themselves. Another interesting fact about ravens is that they will eat fresh or decaying flesh. They are not fussy about the quality of the meat. But our Almighty God had the power to over-rule the ravens' natural instincts as He directed them to consistently provide only fresh meat and bread for Elijah.*)

SAY Elijah lived by the brook Cherith for a while, but while he was there something terrible happened. Let's **READ** I Kings 17:7 to find out what terrible thing happened. (*the brook, Elijah's only source of water, dried up*)

SAY God had a new plan for Elijah's life. Let's read about that plan from our books.

READ paragraphs 8 through 12.

ASK How did God provide for Elijah's needs this time? (*God miraculously provided for Elijah, the widow, and her son, by daily supplying enough flour and oil for them to survive on, but only enough for each day. God did not give enough for them to save it up, but every day God provided exactly the amount that was needed.*)

READ OUT LOUD TOGETHER the last paragraph.

ASK How often does God provide for our needs? (*God faithfully provides for us every day. Just like Elijah trusted God to provide for his needs, we too can trust Him to take care of us. Explain to the students the difference between wants and needs.*)

Turn back to page 31 and have the class **READ** together the words from Philippians 4:19 found in the illustration underneath the rainbow.

ASK a student to explain what that verse is saying. **DIRECT** the students to circle the word "all".

CLOSE the lesson by re-asking the class the same questions you asked them when they came into the classroom:

1. Did you use water today?
2. Did you breathe air today?
3. Did you eat food today?
4. Did you use your hands today?
5. Did you turn on a light today?
6. Where do all these things come from? (*God provides them all.*)

REMINd them that God not only provides for our physical needs in this life, He also has provided for

our eternity by sending His Son to pay the price for our sin. Eternal life in heaven belongs to those who

trust in Jesus.

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE—Matthew 6:26

Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?"

CATECHISM—Have each student add the next segment of the Meaning to the First Article of The Apostles' Creed:

Add: that He daily provides abundantly for all the needs of my life,

Then the student may draw whatever kind of line he wishes to make an edge for the first puzzle piece. Then cut it off along that line.

Allow students time to place all their puzzle pieces together.

At this point, the students should have pieces for the following portions of the Apostles' Creed and its Meaning:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean? I believe that God has created me and all that exists;

that He has given and still preserves to me my body and soul, my eyes and ears, and all my members, my reason and all the powers of my soul, together with food and clothing, home and family, and all my property; that He daily provides abundantly for all the needs of my life,

Have each student place the puzzle pieces in the envelope.

Encourage students to memorize the First Article of the Apostles' Creed and its Meaning by putting the puzzle together at home. One method that may help the students memorize is to challenge them to remove pieces of the puzzle and recite the missing portion from memory. The ultimate goal is to recite the entire First Article and its meaning without the help of the puzzle pieces.

See sample puzzle at the front of this Teacher Manual.

Activity Pages

Activity 1—Round and Round

ANSWERS

1. life
2. Elijah
3. heavenly
4. years
5. sin
6. need
7. dried
8. die
9. every

Insert Answer Wheel here

Activity 2—Do You Remember?

ANSWERS

1. a
2. b
3. a
4. b
5. b
6. b
7. a
8. a
9. b

CLOSING THE LESSON

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You because You provide everything we need. Help us to trust You every day to give us what we need. Help us to be thankful and satisfied with what You give us. Forgive us for taking so many things for granted. In Your Name we pray. Amen

Assignment

1. Encourage students to take their Activity pages home and use them to tell someone what they

learned today in class. If there wasn't sufficient time to complete the Activity pages, students should finish the at home and bring them back to class next week.

2. Remind students to memorize Matthew 6:26.
3. Challenge the advanced students to also memorize Philippians 4:19.
4. Students should also continue memorizing The First Article of the Apostles' Creed and its meaning.