Preschool–Grade 6

Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: God's word is true. God takes care of us, and God gives life.
Bible passage: 1 Kings 17:8–24. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth." *1 Kings 17:24 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, a small empty box or bowl, a cup, 6 paper strips, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 6 paper strips (see part 4). Put a bookmark in your Bible at 1 Kings 17:16.

1. Opening game: True or Not True? (5 minutes)

Say a sentence. If it is true, kids stand up tall. If it is not true, they sit down. "Fish can swim." "Dogs can fly." "The sky is green." "We are at church." "God loves you." Ask: *How do you know when something is true?* Say: "Today we will hear a true story about a woman who found out that every word God says is true."

2. Bible story: The Barrel and the Cruse (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to 1 Kings 17, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

Elijah was a prophet, a man who spoke God's words. There was no rain in the land (1 Kings 17:1, 17:7). God told Elijah, "Arise, get thee to **Zarephath**." A **widow** lived there, a woman whose husband had died. God said she would feed Elijah (17:9).

At the gate of the city, Elijah saw the widow gathering sticks. He asked her for a little water and a piece of bread (17:10–11). She said she had no bread baked. She had only "an handful of **meal** in a barrel, and a little **oil** in a **cruse**" (17:12). Hold up the empty box. Say: "**Meal** is flour. A **cruse** is a small jar. That was all the food she and her son had left!"

Elijah said, "**Fear not**." He said, "make me thereof a little cake first" (17:13). Then he told her what God said: the barrel of meal would not run out, and the cruse of oil would not run dry, until God sent rain (17:14). The widow did what Elijah said (17:15). And it happened, just as God said! **Read 1 Kings 17:16 from your Bible:** "And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah." Say: "**Wasted not** means it did not run out. **Fail** means run dry. They had enough to eat for many days (17:15)!"

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The story continues: Later, the widow's son got very sick. He was so sick that "there was no breath left in him" (17:17). He died. His mother spoke to Elijah (17:18).

Elijah said, "Give me thy son." He carried the child up to a **loft**, a room upstairs, and laid him on his own bed (17:19). Elijah cried out to the LORD. He stretched himself over the child three times, and he prayed, "O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again" (17:20–21).

The LORD heard Elijah! The child came back to life (17:22). Say: "The Bible says **he revived**. That means he was alive again!" Elijah carried the child downstairs to his mother and said, "**See, thy son liveth**" (17:23). Say: "**Liveth** means he is alive!" The widow said, "the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth" (17:24).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. What town did God send Elijah to? *(Zarephath, 1 Kings 17:9)*
2. What did the widow have left? *(A handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse, 17:12)*
3. What did Elijah ask her to make first? *(A little cake, 17:13)*
4. Did the meal and oil run out? *(No. The barrel of meal wasted not, and the cruse of oil did not fail, 17:16)*
5. What did Elijah say when he brought the child down? *("See, thy son liveth," 17:23)*

4. Memory verse: Six Strips game (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 strips up in order: *And the woman said to Elijah, / Now by this I know / that thou art a man of God, / and that the word of the LORD / in thy mouth / is truth. 1 Kings 17:24.* Explain the old words: **thou art** means you are; **a man of God** means a man who serves God and speaks for Him; **in thy mouth** means the words you speak; **is truth** means is true. Read the verse together. Then take down one strip and read it again. Keep taking down one strip each time until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "God kept His word to the widow, and God gave her son life again. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: when you eat, thank God for your food. Remember that everything God says is true.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Elijah and the widow word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/elijah-and-the-widow-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the craft (vbshq.com/crafts/elijah-and-the-widow-craft), or **God Keeps His Word:** sit in a circle with the cup. Each child who holds the cup names one thing God gives us (food, family, a home, rain) and says, "Thank You, God!" Then pass the cup on. Say: "God takes care of us every day, like the barrel and the cruse."

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that Your word is always true. Thank You for taking care of the widow and her son, and for taking care of us. Thank You that You give life. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child is sad about someone who died: some children in your class may have lost someone they love. Let them talk, and tell them it is all right to be sad. God cares. Keep it simple, don't guess about any person, and let the child's parents know so they can talk about it at home.

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