

PPT Title

Elijah Fed by Ravens

Main Point: God provides for those who trust in Him.

Key Verse: *The jar of flour wasn't used up. The jug always had oil in it. That's what the Lord had said would happen. He had spoken that message through Elijah.* - 1 Kings 17:16

Props: 3 identical bottles, each containing about 1/4 cup of oil; Clay jar of flour; bowl; cardboard box with flaps, set on its side to resemble a cabinet. Before class begins, place the jars of oil in the box, turn it so kids cannot see inside when you open the flap.

BACKGROUND/REVIEW

Say: Let's take a minute to review the Kings of Israel. You'll remember that having a human king was not God's best for His people. God warned the Israelites that having an earthly king was a bad idea. God wanted to be their only King, but the people begged and begged to be like other nations who had a king. God gave in to their request and anointed Saul. It did not take long for Saul to forget about God and do many evil things. God replaced Saul with David. He was a man after God's own heart. But he was not perfect either. David passed down his throne to his son Solomon. Solomon started out well, but in time, he began to worship false gods. Sin always spoils things. God promised that the kingdom of Israel would be divided after Solomon died. And that is exactly what happened.



The kingdom was divided into two parts - the southern part was called Judah and the northern part was called Israel. and many bad kings ruled the Israelites in these kingdoms. A man named Ahab began to rule over the northern part, Israel. Listen to what the Bible says about him:

Ahab, the son of Omri, did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. He did more evil things than any of the kings who had ruled before him. - 1 Kings 16:30



Wow. Of all the evil kings that ruled Israel and Judah, Ahab was the worst! He married a woman named Jezebel. She was the daughter of the king of Sidon. In Sidon, the people worshipped a false god named Baal.

This was **VERY** evil in the sight of God. God's first commandment to the Israelites was, "Do not put any other gods in place of Me." (Exodus 20:3) The second commandment was very much like it, "Do not make statues of gods that look like anything in the sky or on the earth or in the waters. Do not bow down to them or worship them. I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God." (Exodus 20:4-5a)



King Ahab began to serve and worship Baal. He built a temple for Baal, and built an altar for Baal in the temple. He also made a pole that was used to worship a goddess named Ashera. Just imagine: The Israelites were the people chosen by God to be set apart, to know Him and worship Him. Yet their King was worshipping false gods! The people followed the King and the land was full of idol worship. Jezebel even began having all the prophets of the one true God killed! (Note: This will be an important

point for future lessons.) God sent a prophet to speak out against Ahab and his worship of false gods, and to turn the hearts of His people back to Him.

WHAT IS A PROPHET? (Deuteronomy 18:14-22)

Prophet:
a person chosen
by God to be
His Messenger

A prophet is a person chosen by God to be His messenger. The prophet's authority, or his power and right to be heard, does not come from his family background, his education, or his own wisdom. His authority comes from God alone.

In the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy, God told Moses that **He** chooses the prophets. God said, "I will give My message to that prophet, who will tell the people exactly what I have said. Since the message comes from Me, anyone who doesn't obey the message will have to answer to Me." (Deuteronomy 18:18b-19 CEV). God also warned against becoming a prophet for a false god. (This will be an important point next week.)

God even said there was a test to know if someone was truly a prophet from God.

If the prophet speaks in the Lord's name but his prediction does not happen or come true, you will know that the Lord did not give that message. That prophet has spoken without My authority and need not be feared. - Deuteronomy 18:22 NLT

God allowed His prophets to know important events that were going to happen, ahead of time. The prophets told people what was going to happen, and then when it did happen, the people knew the messenger was really from God. God used prophecies about events to get the people's attention so they would listen to the prophet's message. Most often, the message was about the hearts of the people toward God.

ELIJAH & THE RAVENS (1 Kings 17:1-6)



Say: God sent a prophet named Elijah (eh-LY-juh), with a strong message for King Ahab. Elijah means, "My God is Jehovah." Jehovah is God's proper name. It means, "the existing One." God IS! He always was, and He always will be. The word LORD is the English word for the Hebrew word, Jehovah. When you use the word LORD, you are declaring that God is, was, and will always be.



Elijah was from Tishbe in the land of Gilead. He said to Ahab, "I serve the Lord. He is the God of Israel. You can be sure that He lives. And you can be just as sure that there won't be any dew or rain on the whole land. There won't be any during the next few years. It won't come until I say so." - 1 Kings 17:1

In order to get King Ahab's attention, Elijah announced that a drought was about to begin, and it would last for years. A drought is when no rain falls at all. **Ask:** What is the problem with a drought? *People have nothing to drink; Plants and animals die; People go hungry.* **Say:** Without water, nothing can survive for very long.

Well, Elijah sort of came out of nowhere, and King Ahab might have thought he was just a crazy man. **Ask:** When do you think Ahab would believe that Elijah was speaking with God's authority? *When the drought came!*

God sent Elijah to hide out while he was waiting for the drought to be noticed by Ahab. God gave very unusual instructions to Elijah. Listen to this!



Then a message from the Lord came to Elijah. It said, "Leave this place. Go east and hide in the Kerith Valley. It is east of the Jordan River. You will drink water from the brook. I have ordered some ravens to feed you there."



So Elijah did what the Lord had told him to do. He went to the Kerith Valley. It was east of the Jordan River. He stayed there. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning. They also brought him bread and meat in the evening. He drank water from the brook. - 1 Kings 17:2-6

It didn't rain that day, or the next day, or the next day. At first, Ahab must have thought that the dry weather was just a coincidence. Then after a week, a month, two months, he must have felt a bit uneasy. The funny thing was that the "god" Ahab worshipped was supposed to be a storm god! Baal was supposed to specialize in weather. Yet, not a drop came out of the sky for Ahab.



Meanwhile, Elijah was out in the wilderness, but God did not forget about him! Elijah had fresh water to drink from the brook, and ravens brought food to him! Ravens are large black birds. They are one of the smartest species of birds. They are about 2 feet long, and they eat plants *and* animals. What an amazing way for God to provide for His faithful prophet. Every morning and every evening, the ravens brought a variety of food to Elijah. God's people weren't obeying Him, but the birds were!

ELIJAH & THE WIDOW (1 Kings 17:7-16)



Things were drying up in Israel. The ground was cracked and the plants were withered. The storehouses of grain were becoming empty and there was no new grain to eat. We wonder how many times Ahab thought back to the words of Elijah.

As the drought continued, Elijah's brook dried up. This was no surprise to God! It was all part of His plan, and God told Elijah the next step to take.

A message came to Elijah from the Lord. He said, "Go right away to Zarephath in the territory of Sidon. Stay there. I have commanded a widow in that place to supply you with food."



So Elijah went to Zarephath. He came to the town gate. A widow was there gathering sticks. He called out to her. He asked, "Would you bring me a little water in a jar? I need a drink."

She went to get the water. Then he called out to her, "Please bring me a piece of bread too."

"I don't have any bread," she replied. "And that's just as sure as the Lord your God is alive. All I have is a small amount of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I'm gathering a few sticks to take home. I'll make one last meal for myself and my son. We'll eat it. After that, we'll die."

Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home. Do what you have said. But first make a little bread for me. Make it out of what you have. Bring it to me. Then make some for yourself and your son."

"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 17:8b-14

The town that God sent Elijah to was right in the middle of Jezebel's hometown, Sidon. Most of the people there worshipped Baal. How would the prophet of the one true God ever be welcomed or taken care of there? God had made the way for Elijah. God had hand picked a woman to help him. This woman, whose husband had died, was also suffering because of the drought. She lived with only her son, and they were out of food. Elijah promised her that if she would do what he said, God would provide the flour and oil she needed until He ended the drought and food was plentiful again. Elijah was asking her to trust the Lord of Israel. Let's see what happened.



She went away and did what Elijah had told her to do. So Elijah had food every day. There was also food for the woman and her family. The jar of flour wasn't used up. The jug always had oil in it. That's what the Lord had said would happen. He had spoken that message through Elijah. - 1 Kings 17:15-16



Ask: Did the Lord keep His promise? **Yes!** **Say:** God promised to provide for Elijah, the widow, and her son. God ALWAYS keeps His promises! Each day, the woman would go to her cupboard, get her bottle of oil and make bread. **Teacher:** Show your jar of flour. Pour some flour into the bowl. Take out one bottle of oil. Pour out ALL the oil into the bowl. Place the bottle back into the box. **Say:** No matter how many times the widow went to get oil and flour, it NEVER ran out. Reach back into the box, get another bottle (the students should think it is the same bottle), and pour the contents into the bowl. Then place it back in the box. The next day, guess what? It was full of oil again! Take the third bottle out & pour the oil into the bowl. As often as she needed oil, it just kept pouring! She could never use up what God provided. One of God's names in the Bible is "The Lord Will Provide." (Genesis 22:14) He provides all of our needs to overflowing! We can never use up what He provides.



GOD HEALS THE WIDOW'S SON (1 Kings 17:17-24)

Some time later, the woman's son got very, very sick. Finally, he stopped breathing. The woman called out to Elijah. She thought her son was dying as a punishment for her sin (1 Kings 17:18). But God had a different reason for this trial.

Elijah took the boy up to his room. He cried out to God on the woman's behalf. He stretched out over the boy.

He said, "Lord my God, give this boy's life back to him!"



The Lord answered Elijah's prayer. He gave the boy's life back to him. So the boy lived. Elijah picked up the boy. He carried him down from the upstairs room into the house. He gave him to his mother. He said, "Look! Your son is alive!"

Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God. I know that the message you have brought from the Lord is true." - 1 Kings 17:21b-24

What a relief it was to this mother for her son to be healed! Her tears of sadness turned to tears of joy. He was all she had left, and he was returned to her alive. **Ask:** Who can tell me what God's purpose was in allowing this boy to die and be brought back? **Listen for answers.** **Say:** Let's look again at what the boy's mother said when she saw her son alive and well.

Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God. I know that the message you have brought from the Lord is true." - 1 Kings 17:24

Say: God allowed this trial so that she could see the power of the one true God. She had to understand that Elijah was God's prophet so she would believe his message that only God is worthy of worship.

This story is far from over! Come back next week to see what happens with Elijah, King Ahab, and 850 false prophets!

Application: Elijah abided with God and obeyed Him every step of the way. It would have been scary for Elijah to go to King Ahab to announce the drought was coming when Jezebel was killing off God's prophets. But Elijah went boldly. It must have sounded very strange when God promised Elijah that wild birds would bring him food, but Elijah did not doubt God. Also, Elijah did not hesitate to go to Sidon, even though it was full of his enemies. And, also, the widow trusted God enough to give her last bit of bread to Elijah, when God promised to provide.

God did not disappoint! God ALWAYS keeps His promises! God took care of Elijah's needs. He fed the widow and her son, and even brought the boy back to life! Boys and girls, there is NO safer place to be than wherever God wants you to be. Abide in Him, remain with Him, hear His voice, and obey His instructions. God will never send you into a place where He doesn't go with you, and He will provide all that you need - in abundance!

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