SAFARI EXPEDITION

Exploring God's Good Gifts

Bible Exploration

Leader Guide

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Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath *1 Kings 17:8–16*	**God Calls Abram** *Genesis 12:1–9*	**Jesus Welcomes the Children** *Mark 10:13–16*	**Jesus Forgives the Thief on the Cross** *Luke 23:32–43*	**An Angel Rescues Peter from Prison** *Acts 12:6–19*
God gives me food and drink.	**God gives me a house and a home.**	**God gives me family and friends.**	**God gives me forgiveness and eternal life.**	**God gives me protection from danger and evil.**
The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due season. *Psalm 145:15*	**For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.** *Hebrews 3:4*	**Let the children come to Me . . . for to such belongs the kingdom of God.** *Mark 10:14*	**For You, O Lord, are good and forgiving.** *Psalm 86:5*	**God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.** *Psalm 46:1*

Bible Exploration Leader Basics

How Does Bible Exploration Work at VBS?

One of the sites kids visit after the Opening is Bible Exploration. Kids move in Teams—groups of five or six kids with one Team Leader. Ask your Director how many Teams will visit your site each rotation and how many rotations you will do each day.

What You Do

Before VBS, do these things to get ready:

- Pray for the kids who will attend VBS. Read the five Bible accounts.
- Read through this *Bible Exploration Leader Guide*.
- Gather science demonstration supplies. Practice each science demonstration.
- Obtain a set of *Bible Story Posters* and review the discussion questions for each Bible lesson.
- Recruit one or two volunteers to help set up and clean up and to assist with the Bible Memory Verse songs and actions.
- Attend training with other volunteers. Learn to lead the call and response of the Take-Home Point.

During VBS, do these things:

- Arrive early and prepare science demonstration supplies. Replenish supplies between rotations.
- Read each day's Leader Devotion (available from your Director).
- Attend the Opening and Closing to connect with kids and families.

During each rotation, do these things:

- Welcome kids; introduce yourself and helpers.
- Give each Team Leader a Bible as Teams arrive.
- Present the Bible Memory Verse and teach the Bible Memory Verse Song.
- Do the science demonstration and share connections to the Bible account and to our lives.
- Use the *Bible Story Posters* and discussion points under "Bible Story Review" to review the lesson. Lead the call and response of the Take-Home Point.

Role of Team Leaders

Team Leaders develop relationships with the children in their groups and work to keep them involved, focused, and connected. At Bible Exploration, they help kids find, say, and sing the Bible Memory Verse for each day, watch the science demonstration with their Team, and assist as needed.

Site Setup and Decorating

- Kids will go wild for these *Safari Expedition* decoration ideas! Start by hanging one or more *Safari Backdrops* on the walls to set the mood. Create rolling grasslands using orange, tan, and green plastic tablecloths or fabric draped over boxes. Cut large pieces of cardboard into grassy points and paint green and brown. Scatter a few craft-paper boulders. Hang silk greenery or premade *Safari Hanging Lanterns*. Fashion a watering hole by covering a small plastic swimming pool with blue gossamer fabric. Populate the watering hole with safari animals cut from the *Decorating Posters* and attached to cardboard or foam core. And don't forget the jumbo photo-op picture in the *Decorating Posters*!
- Set up a table for the science demonstrations. It should be low enough to allow kids to view the demonstrations and easily visible for all.
- Hang the Bible Exploration Site Sign (available on the *Decorating Posters*) near the entrance to the room.

Take-Home Point

Each day has a new Take-Home Point. You will say the Take-Home Point and Teams will respond, **"God gives good gifts!"** using these actions: **God** *(point both index fingers upward)* **gives** *(with palms up, reach forward and out with both hands)* **good** *(left hand stays out; right hand touches chin with fingertips, then extends to meet left hand)* **gifts** *(extend hands to each side)*.

Every-Lesson Supplies

You will need the following supplies for every lesson:

- Bible for each Team per rotation and for yourself
- Bible Memory Verse Song for the lesson, either audio or video
- Digital equipment (to play audio, video, and/or slides)
- Demonstration table
- *Bible Story Poster* for the lesson

We want to know what you think!

Fill out a survey at **cph.org/vbsfeedback**. Thank you!

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Lesson 1

Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath

1 Kings 17:8–16

Take-Home Point: God gives me food and drink.

Bible Memory Verse: The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due season. Psalm 145:15

All We Need and More

Supply List

- 10 plain paper plates and a marker
- Clear glass pint jar or drinking glass
- Pitcher of water and towel
- Box of paper clips
- Every-Lesson Supplies (see page 2 of this guide)

Getting Ready

- On five of the paper plates, use the marker to write a place to get food (e.g., home, school, grocery store, restaurant)
- On the other five plates, write "God."
- Place the glass, paper clips, and pitcher of water on the towel on the demonstration table.
- Practice the demonstration ahead of time.

Learn the Bible Memory Verse

Welcome Teams as they arrive and give each Team Leader a Bible. Show the Leaders where they should sit with their Teams.

Welcome! I am [your name] and I am excited to be with you for the first day of *Safari Expedition*! Hold up the Bible. **The Bible is God's Word for us! It tells us all about His love and His good gifts for His people. Today's verse is from the book of Psalms.** Show Teams how to look up Psalm 145:15. **Let's learn this promise together.**

Read the verse. Explain that "You" is referring to God, and "due season" means at the right time, according to God's plan. Hold up the five plates with eating places written on them.

These plates show the names of places we go to get our food each day. As you read each, spread the plates out on the floor. **When I say, "Let's eat!" go stand by the plate that names a place where you like to eat.**

Discuss favorite foods from each location. **It is amazing we have so many kinds of food and so many places to get it! God works through others in** (read each plate—homes, grocery stores, etc.) **to feed us, but all the food we have is actually a gift from God to us.** As you say this, walk around and put a "God" plate on top of each of the other plates. **Our eyes look to God for all that we need.**

Repeat after me: "The eyes of all look to You (everyone points to a "God" plate)**, and You give them their food in due season."** Repeat several times.

Early Childhood Option:

If you have a group of children who cannot read, use this option to teach the Bible Memory Verse. Teach the verse in phrases, having the children echo each phrase after you say it.

Our Bible Memory Verse for today is Psalm 145:15: "The eyes of all / look to You, / and You give them their food / in due season."

Show the verse in the Bible. **These words are from God's book, the Bible. They tell us about God's gift of food. Where are some places we can go to get food?** March in place to "travel" to each named location or do the plate activity described above and "travel" to each one. **God uses many ways and people to feed us, but the gift of food always comes from Him. Our food is a wonderful gift from God!**

Lead the children in saying the verse phrase by phrase several more times.

Sing the Bible Memory Verse:

Let's sing about God's gift of food in today's Bible Memory Verse Song.

Play the Bible Memory Verse Song Video for Psalm 145:15, or play the audio of the song and demonstrate the actions. You could also choose to use the Bible Memory Verse Slides. Repeat the song and actions several times.

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Science Demonstration

Direct the students' attention to the demonstration table.

The widow in our Bible lesson today thought that she and her son were going to die from hunger. God sent Elijah to them. Elijah came and spoke God's Word to her. He said that the flour in her jar and the oil in her jug would not run out. God would continue to provide food for them! Can you imagine seeing the flour jar and oil jug always having more and more in them no matter how much is used? What a miracle!

Perform the demonstration:

1. Fill the jar (or glass) to the brim with water. Lead everyone to agree that the glass is indeed full. Then, carefully slide a paper clip into the glass at the edge.
2. Continue adding paper clips, one at a time. (When you practice the demonstration beforehand, note the number of paper clips your container can hold before overflowing.)
3. Stop adding the paper clips at a point that will allow you to add a few more during "Connect with the Bible Story." Marvel at how even when everyone thought the jar was full, it could hold even more!

The science behind the demonstration:

Water molecules love to stick together! This is called *cohesion*. Cohesion is what creates surface tension. The surface tension prevents the water from overflowing.

Connect with the Bible story:

- **The widow of Zarephath was nearly out of food. She was convinced she and her son would soon die of starvation. What two foods/ingredients was she about to use the last of?** (flour and oil)
- **God showed His faithful care to her and her son when He miraculously provided oil and flour until the famine was over. He kept giving her more, and more, and more!**
- **God gives us gifts of food and drink every day. What did you eat for supper last night?** Invite responses.
- **We might think our supper** (name foods the students mentioned, refraining from commenting on food choices) **simply came from the fridge, the restaurant, or the grocery store, but it all came from God! Our eyes look to Him. He gives us our food—day** (add another clip to the jar)**, after day** (add another)**, after day!** (add another!)
- **There are times we doubt God's care for us. There are times we think He is not giving us what we need. That is when we can remember what we learned from our demonstration: God is always blessing us with even more than we can imagine.** (Add a final few clips if you wish!)

Bible Story Review

Point to the *Bible Story Poster* and discuss the following:

- **There was a drought** (no rain, causing a shortage of water) **and a famine** (extreme shortage of food) **in the land. The widow of Zarephath was nearly out of food and thought she and her son would soon starve to death.**
- **Elijah saw the widow gathering sticks and asked her to bring him a little water. How kind of her to do that during a drought! What did he ask her next?** (He asked her to bake him a little cake of flour before making some for herself and her son.) **He told her that God would not let her flour and oil run out. Did she make Elijah a little cake of flour?** (Yes!) **She had faith in the words of the Lord!**
- **God did just what He had promised. He provided flour and oil to the widow until the drought and famine were over.**
- **Sometimes we forget that it is God who gives us our food and drink. Our eyes look at what we have, and we think it is not enough. Our eyes look at what others have, and we wish for different gifts from Him.**
- **But when our eyes look to Him, we remember that He always provides just what we need. When our eyes look to Him, we remember that He is our loving heavenly Father, who has promised to take care of us in due season, in His perfect timing.**

Point to the Bible Memory Verse on the poster and say it together.

Then, say the Take-Home Point with the actions:

SAY: GOD GIVES ME FOOD AND DRINK.

TEAMS: GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS!

Pray Before They Go

Lead the group in this closing prayer: **Dear God, forgive us for wanting more than what You give to us. Forgive us for not looking to You. Thank You for giving us the gifts of food and drink. We trust You to supply all that we need. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

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