SAFARI EXPEDITION

Exploring God's Good Gifts

Elementary Storytelling Leader Guide

For Children Grades K–5

1	2	3	4	5
				
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*

Elementary Storytelling Leader Basics

How Does Elementary Storytelling Work at VBS?

One of the sites kids visit after the Opening is Elementary Storytelling. 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

- Share God's Word with the children, helping them discover how the Bible account applies to their everyday lives. Though the site is called Storytelling, these are not made-up stories—they are the true Word of God! Every day, children will hear about the Father's love for them in Jesus Christ. Storytelling is engaging, memorable, active, and fun!
- Decorate this site, asking others to help.
- Share the Take-Home Point with actions.
- Direct and lead Storytelling activities.
- Supervise Teams as they review the Bible story and do activities in the *Elementary Leaflets*.

Prepare

Read the accounts from the Bible, the five lessons in this guide, and the Leader Devotions so you can accurately and engagingly share the Word of God. Ask your Director for access to these and other materials from the *Director Guide*, the Director USB, or the online digital content center.

Pray

Ask God to bless your work and to prepare the hearts of the children and the families you will reach. Pray that the Holy Spirit would work through His Word to create and sustain faith.

Look the Part

Each day, a prop or costume may be suggested to help capture kids' interest. You can add your own ideas as well. Be creative!

Recruit Help

Having helpers to handle props and assist Team Leaders makes for a smoother presentation. Practice beforehand so each person knows his or her part. Middle or high schoolers make great Site Helpers!

Show Enthusiasm

Be an active, involved, enthusiastic storyteller! Use lots of voice inflection and dramatic gestures in your presentations. As you tell these exciting Bible accounts, keep kids interested by using props and moving around the area. Help kids hear, see, touch, smell, move, think, and feel. Children learn and remember best by using all these God-given senses for learning.

Role of Team Leaders

Team Leaders develop relationships with the children in their groups and work to keep them involved, focused, and connected. At Storytelling, they lead their Teams as you request. They also use the "Elementary Leaflet Guide" found at the end of each lesson (also on the Director USB and in the digital content center) to direct children through the *Elementary Leaflets*, if you choose to use them at this site.

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*!
- Hang the Elementary Storytelling 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)*.

We want to know what you think!

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

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SAFARI EXPEDITION
Exploring God's Good Gifts

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

Preparing for the Lesson

Bible Points to Emphasize

Bible Background: Each of the exciting Bible narratives you will share with the kids at VBS shows how God is the giver of all good gifts.

Elijah was a prophet who lived at the time when wicked King Ahab ruled over Israel. King Ahab did many evil things and led God's people into idolatry. God wanted His people to repent and turn back to Him. He wanted them to know that He was the one who sent the rain, made crops grow, and gave them all good things. So God withheld rain from the land, causing a drought so that food became scarce in the land.

Elijah looked to God, and God provided food for Elijah by sending him to a widow in the town of Zarephath. Though the widow had only enough flour and oil for one last meal, God miraculously replenished the flour and oil each day so that Elijah, the woman, and her household ate for many days. We may also experience times of need. God invites us to look to Him for all good things. He cares, and He provides, often working through others to give us what we need in His time and in His way.

Law: We want more than what we have, even though God promises to give us enough.

Gospel: Our heavenly Father richly and daily provides all that we need to support this body and life.

Safari Connection: *Wildebeest migration.* Wildebeests make a yearly six-hundred-mile migration to find food and water. God provides food and water for all His creatures, including us!

God gives good gifts! God provided food for Elijah and the believing widow, even in a time of drought. We also look to God for the food and drink we need. God is the giver of all good gifts!

Supply List

Materials for Storytelling

- Bible for yourself and each Team Leader
- Bag containing at least 20 items, including a small container of flour, a mostly empty bottle of oil, bread, a bundle of sticks, a water bottle, and a jug. Include nonperishable food items and some random items: small toys, office supplies, clothes, and so forth.
- Small prizes, such as stickers, for the closest guessers (for opening)
- Small container of colored pencils for each group (if using *Elementary Leaflets*)

Costumes

- Child-size robes for Elijah and the widow

Getting Ready

- Read 1 Kings 17:8–16, "Bible Points to Emphasize," and the Lesson 1 Leader Devotion (ask your Director for a copy of the Leader Devotions).
- Review the lesson and practice.
- Place the bag of items and the robes in the Storytelling area, out of sight of children.
- If you are using the *Elementary Leaflets* at this site, photocopy the "Elementary Leaflet Guide" (found at the end of this lesson) or print it out from the digital content center, and give copies to Team Leaders.

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Bible Story Experience

Welcome the children. If children are in Teams, show Leaders where their Team should sit.

Hello, everyone! I'm [your name]. I'm so glad to see you all. Welcome to Bible Storytelling, where we'll learn that God gives good gifts to provide all that we need. What are some of the gifts God gives to us? Listen to responses. **Those are great gifts, aren't they? We'll hear about many more good gifts this week!**

Take-Home Point

At Vacation Bible School, we have a special way to remind one another that God gives good gifts. I'll say our Take-Home Point for the day, then we will all say, "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)***.**

Today we're learning that GOD GIVES ME FOOD AND DRINK.

TEAMS: GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS!

Lead into the Bible Story

I brought my mystery bag with me today. Would you like to see what's in it? Okay, but first, I want you all to guess how many items are in it. Go ahead and say your guess out loud. Hold up the bag and listen. **I didn't get all of those, so let's have the Team Leaders quickly write down your guesses for our competition.** Have Team Leaders record the guesses of the kids in their Team.

Now, let's see what's in the bag. Have a kid help you pull out seven or eight items, one at a time, mentioning what each is and counting aloud as a group. When you pull out the container of flour, bottle of oil, bread, bundle of sticks, water bottle, and jug, set those aside next to you. **Do you think there's more?** Keep pulling out items, still counting. **Is that it?** Have a kid check. **How many was that?** Congratulate the closest guesser(s) and give the small prize.

Some of these items seem pretty random. Lift a couple of the random items. **What about these?** Lift a couple nonperishable food items. **They're food, the type we sometimes collect for a food drive for people who need help. We want to provide for people who are in need.** Hold up the special items you set aside. **What are these?** Listen to responses, then tell them these are things they will hear about in today's Bible lesson.

Tell the Bible Story

There were so many things in my bag, it seemed like they would never run out! If you had a bottomless bag of only one kind of food, what would it be? Listen to responses, affirming them. **Can you get too much of something?** Discuss how you can. **Having a bottomless bag of food would be a miracle! In our Bible account, God provides for some very hungry people with a miracle a lot like that.**

I'm going to need two helpers: one to be a prophet and one to be a widow. Choose two volunteers. Put robes on them and instruct them to act out and repeat what you tell them to say. Have the WIDOW stand to the side and give her the sticks to put on the ground. Have ELIJAH stand up front. Have set-aside props from the opening activity to hand to them.

This is Elijah, God's mighty prophet through whom God did some amazing miracles. God spoke to His people through prophets like Elijah. Evil King Ahab didn't want to listen to Elijah, but Elijah bravely told the evil king that there would be no rain for a long time. Then Elijah went to a hidden place where God gave him food and drink. But now, it's time for him to move on.

God spoke to Elijah. Elijah, are you listening? Make sure ELIJAH responds. **God told Elijah to go to the city of Zarephath. God said that a widow there, a woman whose husband had died, would feed Elijah so he wouldn't starve. Ready to go, Elijah?** After he answers, have ELIJAH walk around and stop where the WIDOW is standing. Direct the widow to pick up sticks. **Elijah saw the widow gathering sticks and asked her, "Bring me a little water."** Each time there's dialogue, have actors repeat it. **As she was going to get the water, he called out, "Bring a bit of bread too!"** ELIJAH repeats.

Elijah didn't realize how much he was asking of her. Give the WIDOW the water bottle to give to ELIJAH. **The widow gave him the water. The widow said, "I have no bread, only a handful of flour and a little oil in a jug."** Have WIDOW repeat as she picks up the containers of flour and oil to show ELIJAH. **"I'm about to bake bread for one last meal for me and my son."** WIDOW repeats. **"Then we'll probably die."** WIDOW repeats. **The widow and her son had no other food left, and she thought they would soon starve to death. But God had a plan.**

Elijah said, "Don't be afraid." ELIJAH repeats. **"Bake the bread, and give me some first."** ELIJAH repeats. **"God has a promise for you."** ELIJAH repeats. **"The flour and oil will not run out."** ELIJAH repeats. **"They**

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will last until God sends rain again." ELIJAH repeats. **Do you think the woman believed him?** Listen to responses. **Whether she believed him or not, she did what Elijah said. She mixed her flour and oil together, baked it, and fed Elijah, herself, and her son.** Give ELIJAH and the WIDOW some bread. **The flour and oil should have been all used up that first day, but it wasn't! God did a miracle. Day after day after day, the widow went to her flour jar and her jug of oil.** Have the WIDOW hold items. **She made bread each day, and the oil and flour never ran out until God sent rain. God provided for Elijah, and He also saved the lives of the widow and her son by giving them food when they would have starved.**

In this Bible account, God provided food and drink for Elijah and the widow and her son. He provides for you too! He gives us food and drink and everything else we need. Is it good to ask God to give us these gifts? Lead them to answer yes. **God loves hearing us pray to Him for the very things He wants to give us. It makes Him happy that we trust Him to provide for us.**

God gives us what we need when we need it most. Best of all, He gives us His love and His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. And we'll hear a lot more about that this week!

Say the Take-Home Point with the actions:

SAY: GOD GIVES ME FOOD AND DRINK.

TEAMS: GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS!

Note: If you are using the *Elementary Leaflets* during this site, skip the "Discussion" section and move right to the "Elementary Leaflets" section.

Discussion

Ask the following questions and have Team Leaders discuss them with their Teams. After a few minutes, ask a couple of volunteers to share their answers.

- **Where did God send Elijah to get food?** (See 1 Kings 17:8–9.)
  God sent Elijah to the town of Zarephath, to a widow who was living there.
- **What did the widow say when Elijah asked her to bring him some bread?** (See 1 Kings 17:12.)
  She had no bread, but she was preparing to make a last meal for herself and her son.
- **What promise of God did Elijah give to the widow?** (See 1 Kings 17:14.)
  The flour and oil would not run out until God sent rain.
- **How did God provide food for Elijah, the widow, and her family?** (See 1 Kings 17:16.)
  God provided enough flour and oil each day so that Elijah, the widow, and her family had food for many days.
- **Who do we look to for food and drink?** (See Psalm 145:15.)
  We look to God, who gives us the food that we need.

Elementary Leaflets

If you are using the *Elementary Leaflets*, give them to the Team Leaders. Team Leaders will lead their Teams in discussion and leaflet activities. Instructions for using the leaflets are in the "Elementary Leaflet Guide" found on the next page. Give a copy to each Team Leader.

Pray Before They Go

Lead the group in this closing prayer: **Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us food and drink every day! Help us always look to You for all that we need. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

Notes:

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Elementary Leaflet Guide

Team Leaders: Use this sheet to guide your group through the *Elementary Leaflet*.

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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

Talk It Over

Give an *Elementary Leaflet* to each child. Make sure each child's name is on his or her leaflet.

Direct children to open their leaflets and look at the questions on the left-hand side of the page. Open your Bible to 1 Kings 17:8–16. Bookmark Psalm 145:15. Read the questions with your Team. Look up and read the Bible verses under each question. Answers are provided here for you. Then read the sidebar section and discuss.

- **Where did God send Elijah to get food?** (See 1 Kings 17:8–9.)
  God sent Elijah to the town of Zarephath, to a widow who was living there.
- **What did the widow say when Elijah asked her to bring him some bread?** (See 1 Kings 17:12.)
  She had no bread, but she was preparing to make a last meal for herself and her son.
- **What promise of God did Elijah give to the widow?** (See 1 Kings 17:14.)
  The flour and oil would not run out until God sent rain.
- **How did God provide food for Elijah, the widow, and her family?** (See 1 Kings 17:16.)
  God provided enough flour and oil each day so that Elijah, the widow, and her family had food for many days.
- **Who do we look to for food and drink?** (See Psalm 145:15.)
  We look to God, who gives us the food that we need.

Put It on Paper

Direct kids to the right-hand side of the page and lead them in completing the activity. Review the Bible Memory Verse at the top of the page. Pray the prayer together.

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