

LESSON 3

GOD ANSWERS ELIJAH'S PRAYER FOR THE WIDOW'S SON

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Death and Sin

When someone unexpectedly dies, people sometimes automatically assume that it is due to that person's sin (e.g., the blind man whom Jesus healed in John 9:1-2).

In the case of the widow's son, she believed that it was her own sin that caused her son's death, since he was still very young. After her son passed away suddenly, she cried out to Elijah, "Did you come to remind me of my sin and kill my son?"

We know that God allows events to occur for special reasons. It may be true that some people die for the sins they commit, but we also know that everyone will eventually die a physical death, and that God has His time for each of us.

However, in this situation, the woman did not commit any great sin that led to the death of her son. Rather, he died so that God's glory could be revealed, just as Jesus had said the blind man was blind from birth so "that the works of God should be revealed in him" (Jn 9:3).

The Bible records many instances in which God's glory is revealed, but none seem to be greater or more dramatic than the raising of the dead. The most significant instance, of course, is the resurrection of Christ.

Like in this scenario, Jesus died not for His sins, but for the sins of all the people of the world. It is through Jesus' death and resurrection that our sins were washed away and through His death that we became a new and holy people. It is also through this wonderful sacrifice that Jesus overcame death and the world for our salvation.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

The woman in this story did not understand why her son was taken away so suddenly. When her son died, she had housed and provided for Elijah throughout the difficult times of drought and famine.

As detailed in the previous lesson (1 Kgs 17:7-16), when Elijah had asked the widow for a morsel of bread, she had been willing to give to him out of her faith in his prophesy of God's word, even though she was on her last bit of oil and flour.

When her son died suddenly, it seemed deeply unjust that a good person should have to suffer such a tragedy. Later on, the widow realized that it was through the resurrection of her son that God's glory was revealed. Fortunately, she had Elijah present to help her through the tough times and in the end, she was able to give praise to God instead of turning away because of her son's death.

Likewise, your students may not always immediately comprehend why unfortunate events happen in their lives or to those around them.

BIBLE TEXT

1 Kings 17:17-24

BIBLE TRUTH

God hears and answers all of our prayers.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To believe in God's power by praying to Him.
2. To trust in God always.
3. To understand that God can use us to do marvelous things for Him.

MEMORY VERSE

"Call to Me, and I will answer you."

(Jeremiah 33:3a)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Lord Jesus, thank You for always being there to listen to our prayers. We know that at all times we can pray to You and ask for Your help. Please guide us so that our faith will grow stronger and we can learn to rely on You more. May all the praise and glory be unto Your name. Hallelujah! Amen.

Of course, what they consider to be catastrophic may not be something as profound as death. Sometimes receiving bad grades or not having any friends may be all it takes.

Whatever the situation may be, it is important that we assure the students that bad things don't just happen to bad people. Just as those who die suddenly do not always die because of sin, tragedies likewise do not occur only to punish the unjust. In this case, the tragedy was a test of the widow's and Elijah's faith, and ultimately this miracle brought glory to God.

Often, the things that we go through are tests from God that will help us to know Him better and improve our faith. As teachers, we are like Elijah in this story. We need to remind our students to rely and trust in God's righteousness and in His promise that "all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28).

We should tell them not to murmur against God or question why things happen the way they do. We need to explain to them that God has His plan for everything, and while it may not be clear to us at that point in time, our reliance on God will help us through difficult times. As teachers, we need to be there to see our students through so they can continue to walk in God's heavenly pathway.

VOCABULARY

resurrect: to raise from the dead

REVIEW

Last week, we learned about how Elijah helped a widow and her son. He had to travel to her house from far away because the brook where he had been hiding had dried up.

How did Elijah know to go and find this woman? (God had instructed him.) When he found this widow, what did he ask of her? (He asked for some water and bread.) While she readily brought the water, she had trouble feeding the prophet. Why? (She only had enough food for one last meal, and she was saving it for her son and herself. But because she trusted in God and followed Elijah's instructions on what to do, she and her son did not have to starve to death.) How did God solve their problem? (God kept the flour and oil from running out until the famine was over.)

From this story, we learned the importance of having simple faith. When we trust in God, He will always be there to help us, even when we think it is impossible. Remember that everything is possible with God.

BIBLE STORY

A Tragedy in the House

After God helped the widow and her son solve their food problem, they were overjoyed because they had witnessed God's great power and mercy. They knew that God would definitely take care of them during this famine.

To thank Elijah, the widow gave him permission to sleep in an upper room that she had in her house. During Elijah's stay with them, God provided flour and oil to feed all three of them every day. For a while, they had peace and plenty of bread to eat. But one day, something unexpected happened.

One day, the widow's son became violently ill. His sickness was so severe that he died. How do you think his mother felt at this time?

The widow was very sad. She cried and cried. She was also angry. When she saw Elijah, she asked him tearfully, "What did I do wrong? Did you come to remind me of my sin and to kill my son?"

She did not think her son would be taken so abruptly.

When bad things happen, we often try to use our reasoning to understand why they happen.

What could be some of the reasons that bad things happen to us? Here, the widow thought that because her son was so young, he could not have possibly committed a great sin, so she must have been the one that did something wrong and God was angry with her so He took her son away.

Elijah's Prayer

When Elijah saw this, he felt very sad, too.

Elijah said to the widow, "Give me your son."

He picked the boy up and carried him to the room upstairs. Then he laid the boy on the bed. Elijah knew that he alone did not have the power to do anything but he knew that he could pray to God about it.

So Elijah knelt down and prayed to God, saying, "O Lord, my God, let this child live again." As he said this, he stretched himself on top of the boy three times.

God Answers Elijah's Prayer

God heard Elijah's prayer and did something wonderful. God made the boy live again. The widow's son was resurrected! Elijah picked the boy up and carried him downstairs.

Elijah said to the widow, "Look, your son is alive."

When the mother saw this great miracle, she realized God's great power and mercy. In her amazement, she said to Elijah, "You really are a prophet of God. Everything He says through you is the truth!"

The widow learned from this experience that God truly hears and answers the prayers of His people.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Fill In the Blank/True or False

1. The widow's son became so sick that he _____ (died).
2. God has the power to _____ (raise) the dead.
3. Elijah knew he could bring the boy back to life himself. False; he knew only God could.
4. God promised to hear and answer our prayers. True.
5. God sent Jesus, His only Son, to come and die for us so that we could be saved. True.

Questions for Discussion

1. Could the woman have prayed to God herself when her son died? What do you think would have happened?
2. Why do we always say that God is the greatest doctor?
3. When we pray to God and ask Him for something, He may answer us in one of three ways. He might say, "Yes," He might say, "No," or He might say, "Wait." Why do you think that God has different answers for us?
4. Why did Elijah have to pray three times? Could God have healed the widow's son after Elijah's first prayer? Why do you think God waited for him to pray three times?

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"Call to Me, and I will answer you." (Jeremiah 33:3a)

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

1. **Believe in God's power by praying to Him. God is all-powerful.
What seems impossible to man is possible with God.**

[Read the following testimony to or with your students. This is a good time to share testimonies of God's healing in your life or in the lives of those around you. Manna has many such testimonies that you can use if you do not have any personal testimonies. After the testimony, be sure to enforce the teaching that God hears and answers all of our prayers and that He is able to do things that we cannot imagine or do ourselves.]

TESTIMONY

In 1987, my wife and I were overjoyed with the birth of our firstborn. Our joy, however, was short-lived. When the nurse gave him his first feeding, he could not take in the milk. Every mouthful of it was thrown up. Upon thorough examination, the doctor discovered that certain parts of his internal digestive tract were not properly connected and the milk could not reach his stomach. We were told that he had to be operated upon immediately or he would die. He was less than 24 hours old! How could this tiny life survive this cruel ordeal? However, thank God, the Holy Spirit comforted me and gave me strength to entrust this little life into the hands of the Almighty, the Lord and Giver of Life. Medical science may be highly advanced, but a doctor still cannot give life to a dying patient. Only the Lord Jesus can do so. Having been strengthened by the Holy Spirit, my wife and I wholly entrusted the life of our child to the Lord.

The doctors operated on him the next day. When he was brought out from the operating theater, he was hardly the figure we knew. His little head was bandaged and numerous tubes of various sizes were protruding from his body—he was buried in a mass of entangled tubes. He looked more like an alien from outer space! It was a heart-wrenching sight and my heart bled with compassion for him. He was in the intensive care unit for a few days. He was fed through two tubes; one fixed to his neck and another to his abdomen—a pitiful sight to all who saw him.

Our neighbors advised us not to believe in Jesus any longer and to turn to idols instead for help—or he would surely die. However, we held fast to our trust in the Lord by praying to Him day and night. We did not waver in our faith by fully trusting in Him.

Praise the Lord for His mercy and bounteous grace that, through the prayers of our brothers and sisters in Christ, our baby gradually recovered after 28 days in the hospital. Now he is an active, adorable, and healthy eight-year-old boy. Praise and glory to the Almighty God!

From this testimony, we see that God is all-powerful. He is able to do something man is unable to do. What is it? [Let students answer.] To save a life! Nowadays, our doctors are very knowledgeable, and we have all kinds of medicine. However, none of them can guarantee that they can save a life. Who, then, is God to have the power and authority to make a person live? We learned from this testimony already—He's the Giver of Life; He's our Creator! His hands made us, and therefore He's able to control our lives. Many people around the mother in this testimony told her to be prepared for the worst to happen to her child. But God wanted this baby to live and it is His almighty words that counted. What happened next? The baby lived. We need to always remember that there is an ultimate and most promising answer from God. If we are willing to turn to Him for that answer in our times of need, God promises never to let us down!

Just like the woman in today's testimony, when the widow saw this great miracle, she realized God's great power and mercy. The widow learned from this experience that God truly hears and answers the prayers of His people.

2. Trust in God

Now, do you trust God? [Let students answer.] If you do, you're ready for a challenge. The Bible says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding" (Prov 3:5). This Bible verse tells us that "trusting in God" has a deeper meaning—it means to trust Him more than we trust ourselves! "Trusting in God" means to trust Him, even when things seem impossible. "Trusting in God" means to trust Him, even when you think there's an easier or better way than God's way. Elijah knew that bringing a dead person to life is impossible, but he did not give up on trusting in God because of this reason. Instead, he placed his complete trust in God's power to bring the widow's son back to life. Students, God can work miracles in our lives only if we trust that He has almighty power. Many things seem impossible to us, but with God, everything is possible. Let me ask you again. Do you truly trust God? [Let students answer.]

Let's hear a testimony that demonstrates the true meaning of "trusting in God."

TESTIMONY

I was riding my bike one day last summer, and I got into an accident. I lost balance going downhill, and I fell from the bike while it was moving at full speed. My forearm got a very deep cut. My parents took me to the hospital afterwards, and I had to get several stitches for the cut. I was very upset because the doctor told me that there'd be a big scar. All my friends at school saw the stitches on my arm and commented on how bad the cut was. Some of my friends who had had stitches before told me that they still have a big scar from their wounds. Everything led me to believe that my wound would eventually leave a very bad-looking scar on my forearm. However, I didn't cease praying to God. I remembered that we need to trust in God completely, despite what others might say or think. I prayed that God would heal my forearm, as well as help me trust Him. A few weeks later, my wound was completely healed. I could still see a light scar, but it wasn't bad at all. I had seen my friends' scars, and they looked a lot worse than mine. I know that God helped me and didn't allow a deep, big scar to be left on my forearm. My prayers worked! Every time when I see my scar now, it reminds me to place my complete trust in God.

Activity: Trust Walk

Lead the students on a walk around the classroom or somewhere outdoors. Along the way, ask the students to do various things, such as sit on chairs, lean against the wall, or stand in the grass. When they are doing the action, ask them questions: "Do you trust the chair to hold you up?" or "Do you trust the wall to hold you up?" or "Do you trust the ground not to open beneath you?" Many different simple actions are possible, such as standing on one foot, or looking at the sky and asking them if they trust the colors they see—use your imagination. When the walk is finished, talk about how we can trust God in our lives every day. Start by asking them what things He does for us that we can trust Him with. They will probably talk about the air we breathe or the shining sun.

Remind the students that God loves all of us, so He provides all these things for us even when we don't ask for them. Guide the discussion and remind the students that we can trust that God will: listen to our prayers and answer them in His time; help us get through difficult times in our lives; look out for us in our lives; and make a plan for our lives that is better than anything we can imagine. Just as Elijah trusted in God to bring the widow's son back to life, we too can trust in Him to do great miracles if it is according to His will and if we ask Him earnestly through prayers.

3. God can use us to do marvelous things for Him.

One thing that we can learn from this story is that God uses ordinary people like you and me to make marvelous things happen. Elijah was a great man of God, but he didn't have any power on his own. He trusted in God and prayed in faith. God used Him, and specifically his prayer, to bring the widow's son back to life and show the widow what God can do. If you are willing to trust God, God will use you to do marvelous things too!

God can use you to do many things for Him and for the church. For example, God can use you to tell others about Him, to invite others to church, or to help a friend who is discouraged or sick to feel better. When you are older, God can use you as missionaries, as pastors, or as whatever God needs you to be.

Have the class work together to decorate a poster board titled, "I can be used by God to do marvelous things for Him!" On the poster board, ask them to write or draw the things that God can do through them. When they are finished, hang the poster board in your classroom so that it will remind them of what God can do through ordinary people. Challenge the students to pray for God to use them every day.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

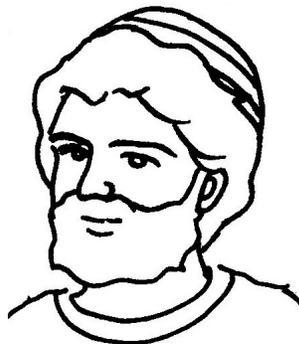
1. flour, oil
2. very sick
3. the upstairs room
4. True
5. False; Elijah had to pray three times.
6. Bad things don't always happen to people because they have done something wrong. God often uses trials to test us and help us build our faith in Him.
7. To trust in God means to believe that He will listen to our prayers when we earnestly ask of Him and that He will get us through difficult times in our lives, just as long as we have faith.
8. Answers may vary.
9. Answers may vary.

ACTIVITIES

1

God Answers Prayers**Objective:** To help students recall how God answered Elijah's prayer for the widow.**Instructions:** Read each sentence and identify the person who said it. Write their names next to each sentence.

1. My son and I do not have anything to eat. _____
2. I let the prophet sleep in a room upstairs. _____
3. I was carried to the room upstairs by the prophet. _____
4. My mother was glad I came back to life! _____
5. King Ahab and Queen Jezebel were looking for me. _____
6. God provided enough flour and oil for me to make bread for my family. _____
7. I was led by God to a safe place to hide. _____
8. Thank God, I came back to life! _____
9. God sent me to a widow's house far away. _____
10. I prayed to God to let the boy live again. _____
11. God sent a prophet to help me. _____
12. I did not have the power but I had prayers, and God heard my prayers and brought the boy back to life. _____

**The Widow's Son****Elijah****The Widow**

E1 Year 2 Book 2 Lesson 3—God Answers Elijah's Prayer for the Widow's Son

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: God hears and answers all of our prayers.

Lesson Objective: To follow God's way by praying to Him with faith.

Bible Reading: Please put a check mark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a check mark in the space provided on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Jeremiah 33:3a)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

Fill In the Blank

1. When Elijah stayed with the widow, God provided them _____ and _____.
2. One day, the widow's son became _____.
3. Elijah picked up the boy and carried him to _____.

True or False

4. The widow thought that she must have did something wrong to cause her son to die. _____
5. Elijah only prayed once and then God raised the widow's son from the dead. _____

Short Answer

6. Why does God allow bad things to happen to people?

7. What does it mean to trust in God?

8. What is the most difficult thing that you or your family has gone through? It doesn't have to be something that you remember yourself. You can ask your parents for help. What did you or your family learn from that experience? Why do you think God let that happen to you or your family?

9. Share a time when you prayed to God and He answered your prayers in a way that you knew was the best solution.
