



Uh Oh Topher

God Sends Elijah Food

BIG IDEA: God takes care of me.

BIBLE BASIS: 1 Kings 17:1-16

KEY VERSE: "God's way is perfect. The LORD's word doesn't have any flaws." Psalm 18:30 (NirV)

SCHEDULE

2S & 3S CLASSES

ARRIVAL & PLAYTIME

10:30-10:55

2S & 3S LARGE GROUP

10:55-11:10

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

11:10-12:00

PRE-K & K CLASSES

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

10:30-11:15

PRE-K & KINDER LARGE GROUP

11:15-11:40

REVIEW ACTIVITIES

11:40-12:00



LEADER DEVOTIONAL

A few years ago, life had taken a sudden turn. Overnight, what felt like a secure future became a cloud of uncertainty. I remember standing in my kitchen, staring into my coffee mug like it had answers, saying, “*God, what now?*” Bills were coming. Our kids were young. And that familiar voice of fear kept ringing louder than my faith.

It is in those moments we need to remember the story of Elijah, a widow, and God’s surprising provision. First, God sent Elijah to a stream during a drought and fed him with bread and meat carried by ravens. Then, when the stream dried up, God sent him to a widow who, by all earthly measures, had *nothing* left — just a handful of flour and a little oil. But she obeyed God’s word and gave what she had. And somehow, miraculously, that tiny jar of flour and oil never ran out.

The same God who took care of Elijah — through birds and a widow in crisis — is the God who takes care of us. He may not always show up the way we expect, but He always shows up. He is never late, and He is never limited by what we see.

In seasons of lack, in moments of anxiety, we have a choice: fix our eyes on the empty jar or trust the One who fills it. As 1 Peter 5:7 reminds us, “Turn all your worries over to him. He cares about you.” Not some worries. Not just the “spiritual” ones. *All* of them.

So what feels empty in your life today? What area feels like it’s running out?

Bring it to Him. Every fear. Every need. Every burden. He cares for you. And He will provide — sometimes through unexpected means, but always with unwavering love.

Mindy Rausch
GO! Contributor



SMALL GROUP SKILL BUILDING

Keeping Kids Engaged During Small Group

Eyes can tell you a lot about the engagement level of a kid. Is the kid staring off into the distance? Is the kid looking at the ceiling? Are the kid's eyes closed? Is the kid snoring, and does he have a bit of drool seeping from the corner of his mouth? If so, there's a decent chance you may have lost his attention! No worries, though — this can be fixed! One of your goals as a small group leader is to capture (rather than demand) the attention of your group so that life-changing conversation can happen. Here are a few suggestions to help you achieve that:

Be prepared: Your eyes are a tell-all. Are they buried in your small group lesson during group time? It probably means you didn't read the lesson carefully enough ahead of time. Read the lesson and be familiar with its activities before arriving to church. It's okay to reference the lesson during group time, but if you're reading the lesson and trying to make sense of it for the first time, it's easy to lose your group's attention.

Facilitate! Don't dominate: Learn how to facilitate conversation as opposed to dominating it. When kids don't feel like they get to talk or participate enough, they eventually begin to lose interest.

Seat the kids in a circle: When kids are seated in a clump, the kids in the back often lose interest because they feel like they are on the outside of the group (which they are, quite literally). However, when kids are seated in a circle, everyone has equal access to the conversation and activities.

Keep it moving: As a wise man once said, "You've got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em." If it appears your group is totally into the conversation or activity, keep it going. If, on the other hand, they're becoming restless or bored, move on. Even the best small group lessons can be driven into the ground.

4.1 Small Group Lesson | 2s & 3s



☆ PLAY TIME ACTIVITY

Along with your other play time activities, present the following activity to children as they first arrive in the preschool room. Choose a leader to facilitate the activity. The activity is designed to introduce kids to the Bible story and Big Idea for the day.

PLAY DOUGH DINNER PARTY

Supplies: Play dough, plastic spoons (4–5)

Directions: Invite some children to have a play dough dinner party. Tell the children to create their favorite food using play dough. When finished, place the food on plates and have a pretend dinner party. Encourage the children to break or cut off pieces to share with their friends. While the children are playing, ask them the following questions:

Question: What's your favorite food?

Question: Where do you think your food comes from? How do you get it?

Say: In today's true Bible story, there's a man named Elijah that gets his food in a *really* strange way. We'll find out what it is in just a little bit. We'll also learn that **God takes care of us.**

2s & 3s – Large Group at 10:55
Pre-K & K – Large Group at 11:15



★ SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

After the Large Group story time is over, help the children transition into the small group activity time. There are multiple activity options designed to help kids remember the Bible story and Big Idea, discover personal application, and respond to God through art, prayer, and Bible reading. Offer as many activities as your time and space allows.

RING AROUND THE BOTTLE (Application Activity)

Supplies: Paper plate (1 per group), water bottle (1 per group)

Preparation: Cut the center of the paper plate out so that it forms a ring.

Say: This plate reminds us of food (hold up plate). This water bottle reminds us of water (hold up water bottle). Food and water — those are the two things God gave Elijah in our true Bible story today. We're going to play a game with this plate and bottle that helps us think of other ways God takes care of us.

Directions: Set the water bottle on the floor. Have the children stand about 4 feet from the bottle. Tell the children they get three tries to toss the plate ring around the bottle. Before they can toss the ring, though, they must answer the question below. If the child struggles to toss the ring around the bottle on the first two tries, you can move them closer for their last try. When a child makes the ring around the bottle, have all of the children shout, **"God takes care of me!"**

Question: What's one way that God takes care of you or something He gives you?

SAY IT LIKE (Bible Memorization Activity)

Supplies: Picture Dice (1 per group)

Today's Bible verse:

*"God's way (walk in place)
is perfect (two thumbs up).
The LORD'S word (cup hands around mouth like you're calling out)
doesn't have any flaws (brush hands off).
Psalm 18:30 (extend hands like you're holding a book)."*

Directions: Practice the Bible verse together until the children can remember it. When ready, choose a child to roll the picture dice, then have all of the children say the Bible verse like they are the picture that is face-up on the dice. If the dice lands on Topher the Gopher, have all of the children say the verse with buck teeth like a gopher. Continue playing until all of the children have had a turn rolling the dice.

4.1 Small Group Lesson | 2s & 3s



UH OH TOPHER! (Bible Story Review Activity)

Supplies: “Uh Oh Topher” story review page (1 per group), Topher the Gopher character cards (1 per child)

Say: I’m going to read you today’s Bible story again, but there’s a little problem. Topher the Gopher got into the story and chewed up some of the words, then he replaced them with the wrong words. Listen carefully to see if you can hear the wrong words. If you hear something that is wrong, hold up your “Topher the Gopher” card, then say, “Uh Oh, Topher. That’s not right!” Then you can tell me what really happened in the story.

Directions: Use the “Uh Oh Topher” story review page to read today’s story to the children. The page will indicate in bold which words are wrong, followed by the right words. If necessary, help the children remember what really happened in the story.

THANKS FOR MY FOOD (Response to God Activity)

Supplies: GO! Home Guide (printed on back of coloring sheet, 1 per child), crayons.

Directions: Give each child a GO! Home Guide and some crayons or markers. The sheet will have a space for children to draw. Tell the children to draw a picture of their favorite food. When finished, have the children show their picture and tell about it.

Say: In today’s true Bible story, we learned that **God takes care of us**. One of the ways He does that is by giving us food. Let’s say a prayer and thank God for taking care of us and giving us our favorite foods.

Prayer: Begin by asking if any of the children would like to pray. Allow any children who want to pray the opportunity to do so. When they’re finished, thank God for taking care of the kids and for giving them the foods they drew in their pictures.

Question: What did this story teach you about God? How does it make you feel about God?

Question: God cares for us by giving us food. What are some other ways God cares for us?