

Group Bible Study

Nourishing Hope in Times of Scarcity.

1 Kings 17:1-16



untilallarefed.ca



Objective:

To learn about generosity even in times of scarcity

Recommended Time:

20-30 minutes

Structure:

Pray, read, reflect, respond, and rest in God's Word



Opening Prayer

Good and gracious God,
You are gathering this community from across the earth,
asking us to pour out our lives on behalf of those who are hungry.
For hope. For justice. For daily bread.
You are asking us to see the earth as you do,
Trees with fruit, bursting with seed.
Green plants for food, for us, and for every living creature.
Gather us together so that we may remind each other of your intent for this earth.
Gather us so that we may pour out our lives in Christ's name, as Christ does on behalf of those who hunger.
For Hope. For justice. For daily bread.
So that it will be on earth as it is in heaven.
For now, and for always. Amen

Adapted from WFD prayer on presbyterianmission.org

Scripture Reading and Context

Select a volunteer to read 1 Kings 17:1-16 aloud. Following the reading, ask the group to reflect on what they have heard individually in silence for 2 minutes.

1 Kings 17:1-16 (NRSVue):

Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the Lord the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.” ² The word of the Lord came to him, saying, ³ “Go from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. ⁴ You shall drink from the wadi, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.” ⁵ So he went and did according to the word of the Lord; he went and lived by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. ⁶ The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the wadi. ⁷ But after a while the wadi dried up because there was no rain in the land.

The Widow of Zarephath

⁸ Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, ⁹ “Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there, for I have commanded a widow there to feed you.” ¹⁰ So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, “Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink.” ¹¹ As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, “Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.” ¹² But she said, “As the Lord your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die.” ¹³ Elijah said to her, “Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said, but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterward make something for yourself and your son. ¹⁴ For thus says the Lord the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the Lord sends rain on the earth.” ¹⁵ She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord that he spoke by Elijah.

Review of scriptural context: The bible study leader briefly provides the context of the bible passage before moving into a time of group reflection.

Prophet Elijah and the widow: What does God’s Word say? What does God’s Word mean to me and all of us as the body of Christ?

- **The famine:** Elijah, a prophet declared a drought and famine in Israel.
- **God’s instructions:** God instructed Elijah to go to Zerephath, a town in the region of Sidon, and stay with a widow who could provide for him.
- **Limited resources:** When Elijah arrived, he found a widow gathering sticks, and he asked her for water and a piece of bread. The widow told Elijah that she only had a small amount of flour and oil left, enough for one last meal for herself and her son.
- **Elijah’s promise:** Elijah assured her that if she shared her food with him, her flour and oil would not run out, and God would provide for them.
- **The widow’s faith:** The widow, trusting in Elijah’s words, shared her food with him, and miraculously, her flour and oil never diminished, providing enough food for her and her son for many days.



Reflection and Application

The following questions will encourage discussion about faith, obedience, and God's provision:

1. What does the widow's initial reaction to Elijah's request reveal about her?
2. What lessons can we draw from the widow's willingness to share her meagre resources with Elijah?
3. In what ways does the widow's experience resonate with your own experiences of faith?
4. What invitation can we glean from the widow and Elijah in our willingness to share our resources with others in need?
5. How can this story inspire you to be a better witness to God's power and provision?

Closing Prayer

Read the following prayer either individually, aloud by one person, or as a group:

Giver of All Good Gifts

There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.
Acts 4:34-35

Giver of all good gifts –
we take this opportunity to give to you
our profound thanks
for your liberal and consistent generosity.

We give you heartfelt praise
for modeling a way of living that prioritizes giving.
May we, amidst all our myriad blessings,
cultivate the discipline of cheerfully giving.
Of those to whom much is given, much will
be required.

May we not shirk our responsibility and our privilege –
that of feeding the hungry,
clothing the naked,
caring for the sick and the imprisoned –
of redistributing what we've been given
to those less fortunate.

And may we find in our service the joy and the peace
Jesus proclaimed in living for others. Amen.

Written by John Ballenger, in
"The Bread of Deliverance: Variations on a Scene."