

## Session 2: Pray It Through

*“As surely as the LORD your God lives,” [the widow] replied, “I don’t have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die.” Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the LORD sends rain on the land.’”*

1 KINGS 17:12-14



### CONNECT

If you had to eat the same meal again and again for a week, what particular meal would you choose? Why?

How do you typically feel when you prepare to approach God in prayer?

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### WATCH

Watch the video for this session, Below is an outline of the key points covered during the teaching. Record any key concepts that stand out to you.

### OUTLINE

#### I. Elijah had gone from the throne room of Ahab to the wilderness at Kerith.

- A. We can imagine it was fairly easy for Elijah to remain dependent on God when the brook was flowing and the ravens were bringing him food.
- B. However, depending on God became more difficult when the brook dried up during the drought.
- C. We tend to feel the same—it’s easy to trust God when provision is already there.

#### II. Eventually, God sent Elijah to Zarephath, where a widow would provide for him.

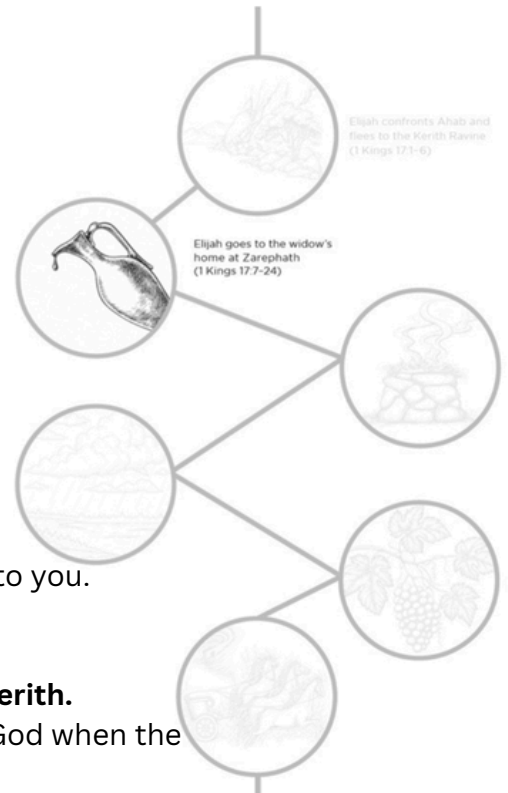
- A. This would not have instilled confidence in Elijah that he would soon be out of his situation.
- B. The hundred-mile-long hike through the drylands would have posed a challenge.
- C. Zarephath was governed by Baal worshipers—and Elijah was a wanted man.
- D. To his credit, Elijah obeyed the will of the Lord and set out on the journey.

#### III. The widow in Zarephath was one drop away from emptying herself.

- A. The widow’s resources consisted of a handful of flour and a tiny jug of olive oil.
- B. Elijah could have given up, but he remembered how God had kept his promises.
- C. Elijah was courageous and had faith that the Lord would provide for him, the widow, and her son.
- D. The widow did as Elijah asked, and she received the blessing God had promised.

#### IV. Prayer was Elijah’s strategy when the widow’s child died sometime later.

- A. The widow had witnessed God’s provision, but when her son died, it seemed it had all been for nothing.
- B. Like Moses before him, Elijah responded by wrestling with God in prayer.
- C. Fervent prayer changes the one who prays—it’s how Elijah became Elijah.
- D. The power of “praying it through” was demonstrated when the son of the widow returned to life.





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### Discuss

Discuss what you just watched by answering the following questions.

1. At the Kerith Ravine, Elijah enjoyed a season of provision and then watched as the waters ran dry. Why do you think God allowed Elijah to feel the effects of the drought? What further training was God giving to Elijah in learning how to trust in him?

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2. Ask someone to read 1 Kings 17:7–9. Zarephath was a center of Baal worship and—for good measure—the hometown of Jezebel. It seemed like a terrible place for a wanted man like Elijah to hide. What does it say about Elijah that he obeyed God anyway? When has God asked you to do something like this that at first did not make sense?

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3. Elijah told the widow, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the LORD sends rain on the land’ ” (1 Kings 17:14). What part do you think Elijah’s remembrance of how God had just provided for his needs played in his making this pronouncement to the widow?

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4. Ask someone to read Luke 11:9–10. The Greek verbs used in this passage imply continuous and repeated action: “keep asking,” “keep seeking,” “keep knocking.” How did Elijah demonstrate persistence (and passion) in his prayers for the widow’s son? What does his example say about the importance of fervent and faithful prayers?

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5. Elijah wasn’t the offspring of angels or embedded with spiritual superpowers at birth. He became great in God’s kingdom because of his fervent prayers and courageous obedience. How does that truth inspire you today? If you were to pray an Elijah-level prayer today over a situation that you want to be resolved . . . what would you say?

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## Session 2: Pray It Through

### Respond

One of the reasons prayer can seem difficult is because we imagine needing to catch God’s attention or attract his notice. We think of him as up in heaven managing the cosmos, which makes it intimidating to initiate contact—as if we’re pestering or bothering him.

Sometimes we might be tempted to try to “earn” the access we need by using impressive words, passionate emotions, and even lots of volume. But here’s the reality: God is more interested in us just speaking with him than he is in the way we choose to do it. Jesus made this clear when he gave this instruction in the Sermon on the Mount:

5 “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. 7 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” MATTHEW 6:5–8

What type of attitude is Jesus addressing in this passage when it comes to prayer? What kind of heart does God want you to have when you approach him?

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What does Jesus say about your ability to “catch” God’s attention? When you think of God as a loving heavenly Father, how should that affect the way you pray?

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### Pray

**When the time comes to close this session, talk with God about the many ways he has prepared and equipped you to be servants in his kingdom—including seasons of solitude. Express gratitude for those seasons and for the ways God has preserved you and provided for you in the midst of them. Commit to actively making time for God to fill you each day so you have something to give at home, at work, and beyond. Use the space below to write down any requests so you and your group members can pray about them in the week ahead.**