



Date: _____
Series: Discovery Digs
Summer Year 4, Lesson 5

Elijah Under the Juniper Tree

Take Home Point: *Stop feeling sorry for yourself—
let God help you.

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: 1 Kings 19:1-18

Key Verse: Psalms 42:5, "Why are you discouraged, my soul? Why are you so restless? Put your hope in God, because I will still praise him. He is my Savior and my God."

We will help kids know:

- The Bible event of Elijah feeling sorry for himself and depressed. God ministered to him and revealed himself in a still small voice.
- God comes and meets us in our sad and lonely moments. We can trust him.
- When we are having a "poor me" party, we think of what is wrong. Instead of believing the lies of the enemy, we need to hear God's truths.




We will help kids feel:

- How easy it is to think only of the bad.
- Confident that they can trust God's truths.

We will help kids do:

- Play a "poor me" game making a "poor me" hat.
- Turn a "poor me" hat into a "God can do it" party hat.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Small Group Warm-Up 	3	Kids make a "poor me" party hat and play a "poor me" party game.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tape ½ sheet of black construction paper (one per student)
Large Group 	4 9 10 10 12	<p>Overview</p> <p>Puppet Presentation: "Jerry Gets Bummed Out" –Jerry Dude is bummed after playing the "poor me" game. He believes lies just as Elijah did.</p> <p>Option 1: Watch the Bible event from 1 Kings 19:1-18 shown in the video, <i>The Bible in Animation: Elijah</i>.</p> <p>Option 2: Story Tell: Tell the Bible event pulling objects out of the sand that represent certain ideas of the story.</p> <p>Puppet Presentation Conclusion: Through Elijah's example, Jerry learns to stop feeling sorry for himself and let God help him. Jerry realizes that life is not a bummer and God is always there for us.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tub of sand "God can do it" party hat (see lesson) key with discovery point <p>Option 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Bible in Animation: Elijah</i> video (order from http://www.christiancinema.com) <p>Option 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sandal branch tortilla rock butane lighter hand fan (can be a folded paper fan) "God can do it" party hat
Small Group Application 	5	Kids make their "poor me" hats into a brightly colored "God can do it" party hats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> black hat from small group warm-up bright colored construction paper ribbon stickers glue scissors

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

Supplies: tape, one half sheet of black construction paper (one per student)

Say:

Today we will have a “poor me” party. Have you ever had one before? Maybe you had one and you didn’t realize it. This is how a “poor me” party works. We tend to sometimes dwell on the bad things that happen and tell each other there is nothing we can do about it.

Disclaimer: Some kids truly may be victims of tragic circumstances, abuse or neglect. Their feelings should be validated and not discounted in a lesson intending to help kids not feel sorry for themselves.

For every party there needs to be party hats. So, today we will make our own “poor me” party hats.

Give each child a half sheet of black construction paper. (Don’t forget to make one for yourself.)

To make a cone shape, pull the two top corners of the paper together, making the tip at the center of the edge. Tape the overlapped sections to create a hat that will sit on kid’s head.



Have all the kids put on their hats. Then say:

Here is how to play the “poor me” game. Think of something bad that has happened or could happen to you. When it is your turn, you will tell us what it is. We will repeat it and then say, “There is nothing we can do about it.”

For example, I say, “Nobody likes me.” Everyone else says, “Nobody likes me.” But remember you need to use your “poor me” voice which sounds like this.

Whine as you say, “Nobody likes me.”

Let’s try it again, “Nobody likes me.” Good! Now we have to end with all of us saying, “There is nothing I can do about it.”

Have kids repeat this in their whining voices.

Who else can think of a bad thing? It does not have to be true, but we do need to hear you whine about it.

Play the game having the kids take turns sharing. Afterwards continue the discussion.

How do you feel after playing this game?

Does it make you feel a little sad? Have you ever had thoughts like these before?

Most people occasionally think these thoughts. Are these thoughts true? No, they are not true. I may say that nobody likes me, but that's not true.

Is there really nothing we can do about our situations? Of course there are things we can do about them.

God wants us to learn today that we can stop having our “poor me” parties. God wants us to stop feeling sorry for ourselves. He wants to help us. This is what he did with Elijah who was having a “poor me” party.

We want to remember today to **stop feeling sorry for yourself, let God help you.*

Large Group Overview: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Puppet Presentation: “Jerry Gets Bummed Out” –Jerry Dude is bummed after playing the “poor me” game. He believes lies just as Elijah did.

Option 1: Watch the Bible event from 1 Kings 19:1-18 shown in the video, *The Bible in Animation: Elijah*.

Option 2: Story Tell: Tell the Bible event pulling objects out of the sand that represent certain ideas of the story.

Puppet Presentation Conclusion: Through Elijah's example, Jerry learns to stop feeling sorry for himself and let God help him. Jerry realizes that life is not a bummer and God is always there for us.

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened?

Have kids refer to 1 Kings 19:1-18 in their Bibles.

Why was Elijah so discouraged he wanted to die? (1 Kings 19:1-4. *Queen Jezebel was so angry that God had destroyed her prophets of Baal that she wanted to kill Elijah. He fled into the wilderness all alone.*)

How did God provide for Elijah when he was discouraged and sleeping under the broom plant? (1 Kings 19:5-7. *God sent an angel to minister to Elijah. The angel provided food and water and watched over him while he slept.*)

Where did Elijah go to meet with God after he had been strengthened? (1 Kings 19:8-9. *He went into a cave on Mt. Horeb.*)

What did God ask Elijah? (1 Kings 19:9. *What are you doing here?*)

How did Elijah answer? How was he having a “poor me party?” (1 Kings 19:10. *He told God that the Israelites had abandoned God's promises, torn down God's altars and killed God's prophets. Elijah was the only one left and they were trying to kill him.*)

What were the three things God sent to Elijah but he was not in? (1 Kings 19:11-12. *God was not in the fierce wind, or the earthquake or the fire.*)

What was God in that Elijah heard? (1 Kings 19:12-13. *A quiet whispering voice.*)

Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

Can you blame Elijah for feeling tired and discouraged and feeling all alone? How would you have felt in his situation?

What lies did Elijah believe? (That he was the only one left who loved God and that God was not with him)

Why do you think God showed Elijah the fierce wind, the earthquake and the fire, but spoke to Elijah in a quiet whisper? *(To show Elijah that God was powerful but he also comes to us in a quiet way.)*

How did God give Elijah encouragement? *(1 Kings 19:15-18. He told Elijah to anoint Elisha as a prophet to help him and told him there were 7,000 people in Israel who still obeyed God.)*

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

Just like Elijah believed lies, we sometimes believe that we are alone and forget that God promises to always be with us.

The key verse for today is a prayer from God's word that we can pray when we are feeling alone. Psalms 42:5 says, *"Why are you discouraged, my soul? Why are you so restless? Put your hope in God, because I will still praise him. He is my Savior and my God."*

Have kids imagine going through a bad time. While picturing themselves in that situation, have them repeat the scripture verse a phrase at a time. Then ask:

How do you think this verse can help you when you feel discouraged?

Application Activity:

Supplies: different colors of bright construction paper, ribbon and/or stickers, scissors, glue

Set out the supplies and let kids decorate their hats from small group Warm Up.

We will now turn our "poor me" hats into "God can do it" hats. Add bright colors to your hat and cheer it up. This will remind us that God can help us and there is no reason to have a "poor me" party.

When you are home, look at this hat when you feel like having a "poor me" party. Ask yourself if this is true or a lie from the devil. Remember that many times it is not the truth, and all the time God can help you if you will trust him.

Just like God sent an angel to minister to Elijah and spoke to him in a quiet voice, God will come to us when we turn to him. He will reveal his truth to us when we seek him.

Today we learned to **stop feeling sorry for ourselves and let God help us.*

Closing Prayer:

Thank God that he brings us encouragement in his word. Pray for the Holy Spirit to help each child know the truth and not believe the lies the devil may tell him/her.

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Large Group Presentation

Elijah Under the Juniper Tree

Discovery Digs-Dramatic Characterization

The theme for this series is "Discovery Digs." Two presenters play the role of explorers searching through the sands of time for lessons from God's story in the Bible. The characters' or story tellers' are Dr. C. M. Goofagain and Dr. Turner Round (Dr. G and Dr. T, for short). We suggest that both characters develop their own personality, accent and costume. Both are archeologists and historians. Both know the Bible events enough to tell them well. Since they are presenting to kids, it's helpful to note that "overacting" works well with kids! Exaggerate expressions of surprise, exhortation or puzzlement.

Dr. C. M. Goofagain and Dr. Turner Round search through the "Sands of Time" and through the pages of the Bible for a special discovery each week. These are Bible truths that students not only discover, but truths that they put into practice. The Bible events are not told as exact readings of the Bible but are paraphrased. Still, it is a good idea to have a Bible in hand so that students can see the source. They might use a clipboard to hold their script, though it looks like archeologist's notes.

Each week a student is brought forward to pull a special key out of the "Sands of Time"—a key that has a clue to the discovery of the day. It is helpful for the characters to use a dry paint brush to brush off the sand from objects pulled from the sand. There is special humor as the archeologists first put their hands in the sand to pull out a rather surprising or intimidating object. This creates just a bit more suspense for the student who then goes searching for the key. Then the characters tell their story in creative fashion using the student volunteer or perhaps the entire audience.

The puppet for this series is Gordy's cousin, Jerry, the surfer dude. He speaks in surfer dude language. He came in to town for summer vacation and likes to come to Kingdom Quest, especially since they play in the sand a bit. He serves as the one to start and close the large group presentation. He interacts with Dr. Goofagain and Dr. Turner, whom he calls Dr. G and Dr. T. The presenter's lines are labeled: Dr._____. (Both characters can be used in all presentations, but in the case of unavailable volunteers or a smaller congregation, one individual would be sufficient, as well. Fill in with whichever character is available this week.)

Supplies:

- *a tub of sand at least six inches deep labeled "Sands of Time"*
- *"poor me" hat from Warm-Up*
- *"God can do it" party hat (a "poor me" party hat decorated with bright colors and printed with, "God can do it" on it)*
- *key with discovery point: "Stop feeling sorry for yourself, let God help you."*

Jerry Dude Gets Bummed Out

Puppet Presentation

Jerry: *(Jerry is wearing a “poor me” hat from Warm-Up and sounds dejected.)* Hi, dudes and dudettes. I’m just bummed out today! I’m feelin’ like you all probably don’t want to be here ‘cause you don’t like me. That’s okay. I don’t like me, either. Where are Dr. T. and Dr. G.? Are they around? They probably don’t like me either. It’s all a major BUMMER dude!

Dr.____: **Hi, Jerry Dude. Wow, what is wrong with you today?**

Jerry: Why would you care? Like, no one else cares.

Dr.____: **But, Jerry, we do care.**

Jerry: No, it doesn’t matter. Life’s bogus!

Dr.____: **I don’t think life’s bogus. But, I can tell you are REALLY bummed. What happened?**

Jerry: Well, like we were in this group and we were like having a “poor me” party. I think it’s the only game I’ve ever won.

Dr.____: **You mean you are better at getting bummed out than anyone else?**

Jerry: Man, at least there is one thing I can do right...I get everything else wrong. For example, no one likes me. I am not good at anything and God doesn’t care about my life. There is nothing I can do to fix it.

Dr.____: **Jerry, it sounds to me like you are not only bummed out, but you also believe that there is nothing you can do to change it.**

Jerry: It would be gnarly if I could. But I am way too bummed out!

Dr.____: **I think I can help you, Jerry. We are going to learn a very important lesson from Elijah today. He was really bummed out and believed a lot of things that were not true.**

Jerry: Like what, dude?

Dr.____: **Well, that he was alone and God did not really care. He was feeling tired and worn out. He had a “poor me” party.**

Jerry: Did he wear one of these hats, man? It really helps me remember all the things I’ve got to be bummed out about.

Dr.____: No, he didn't have a hat, but God gave him a juniper tree to find some rest and shade, then something really incredible happened. God sent some special angels that... Wait a minute. Let me share this Bible event with you right now.

Bible Event

Option 1: Show video *The Bible in Animation: Elijah*, Diamond Entertainment 1998.

Option 2: Story Tell. In advance, place the following objects in the sand to help tell the story. They will need to be positioned so they can be found easily and brought up in order.

- *Sandal—represents Elijah running away*
- *Small branch from a tree—represents the Juniper tree*
- *Tortilla wrapped in plastic—for the food God provided*
- *Rock—represents the earthquake*
- *Butane lighter—for the fire*
- *Hand fan (can be folded paper)—for the wind*
- *Another decorated “poor me” party hat which has become a “God can do it” party hat*

Story Tell of 1 Kings 19: 1-18:

This Bible event will be told in paraphrase with objects from the sand.

Dr.____: Remember last week how Elijah had a show down with the prophets of Baal? It ended up with the Baal prophets—zero and Elijah—500. In other words, the Baal prophets were all wiped out.

It was God who won that battle. Even though that was a great victory, soon Elijah sank into a big sadness. The evil queen Jezebel heard that her priests were dead and she flew into an angry rage. She sent a messenger to Elijah that said this, “Tomorrow at this time, if you are not as dead as the priests, may the gods kill me, too.”

Elijah was afraid, even after he had seen what God could do.

Pull out sandal from the sand.

He ran with his servant into the dark stormy night. They escaped the queen.

Elijah did not call on God as he had before. Instead he thought of himself as being alone. He was disappointed that Jezebel would not leave him alone.

Into the night Elijah and his servant ran. His servant gave up and left him. Still Elijah fled.

Pull out the tree branch.

Elijah came to a great wilderness and stopped to rest under a juniper tree.

He threw himself on the ground and prayed to die. He prayed, "I am ready to die. I am all alone. No one is following you, God, and I am a complete failure."

Pull out wrapped tortilla.

While Elijah slept, an angel of the Lord came to him and said, "Here is some food. Get up and eat." There were cakes cooking on a fire and water in a pitcher. Elijah did eat, but soon went back to sleep.

A second time the angel woke him up. This time the angel said, "Get up and eat. You have a long way to go." Elijah ate and was filled with strength. Now he was ready to go for 40 days to the top of a mountain.

This is the same mountain that God spoke to Moses from the burning bush. Elijah found a cave to hide in. He was still discouraged and afraid.

God asked Elijah, "What are you doing here?" Elijah complained, "Everyone has forsaken your law. They have thrown down your altars. They have killed your prophets. I am the only one left and now they want to kill me."

Take out the paper fan.

God said, "Come out of the cave and stand on the mountain and I will show you what you can believe in." Just then there was a strong wind that blew across the mountain. The rocks crumbled. But, Elijah knew that God was not in the wind.

Take out the rock.

Then there was a great earthquake. The ground trembled beneath his feet. But again, Elijah knew God was not in the earthquake.

Take out the lighter and flick it on.

A huge fire broke out in the mountain. The fire leaped around him and burned many trees. Elijah again knew that God was also not in the fire.

Everything was quiet. All of a sudden Elijah heard it. It was a small still voice. This is what Elijah had waited for. This was the voice of God.

He wrapped his coat around his face and stood in front of the cave. He listened closely as God whispered to him. God asked, "What are you doing here? You are wrong. There are many people in Israel who never worshipped Baal. You are not alone. There are 7,000 others who love me, too. Now go back to Israel and anoint a new prophet to take your place when your mission is over. Appoint new kings. I will make sure that they will have victory over all the evil things the queen has planned."

Take out the decorated "poor me" hat that is now a "God can do it" hat.

Elijah started his journey back, knowing the truth. He was not alone. God was with him. He stopped feeling sorry for himself and let God help him.

Jerry Dude Gets Bummed Out

Puppet Conclusion

Invite a child to come forward.

Dr.____: I would like you to do an archeological dig in our sand and see if you can find a very special object.

The volunteer should pull out a "God can do it" hat buried in the sand.

Jerry, can you tell some of the things you were thinking about when you were playing the "poor me" party game? Our friend is going to put on this "God can do it hat" and maybe help you understand that some of the things you thought "poor me" about, God can change.

Jerry: Yeah. Well, like I kinda felt like nobody liked me.

Dr.____: Well, friend, (talk to the helper), **do you think that is true?** (Accept a "no, it's not true" answer from the helper.) **Right, it's not true and I think we all like you.**

Jerry: Okay. You are right about that. But, I am still not good at anything. I struck out in my baseball game. I really stink, dude. I am not good at anything!

Dr.____: **What do you think?** (Ask the helper.) **Is Jerry right about that? Is that true?** (Let helper respond with a “no.”) **That’s right. It is not true. I hear you are a very good surfer and that you are a great cousin.**

Jerry: Did I ever tell you about the surfing competition I was in? It was so cool, dude. I even placed in that one. You know, man, I am good at some things. But God really doesn’t care about my life.

Dr.____: **Let me ask our helper. Do you believe God cares about Jerry just like he cared about Elijah?** (Allow helper to respond “yes” to Jerry.) **God loves you and cares about you even if you are having a “poor me” party. I think you believed the lies that the devil put in your head just like Elijah did.**

What was the biggest thing God did to show how much he really loves us? God sent his Son Jesus to die on the cross. This is the proof of how much he really cares and loves each one of us—including you, Jerry.

Jerry: How gnarly, man! You know, Dr.____, I think I am doing a little better here. That “poor me” party really bummed me out, dude. But, now you know, I really do think that God can do it.

Dr.____: **Fantastic, Jerry. Why don’t we pray about it and trust him to help you out. Do you feel up to praying?**

Jerry: Yeah, sure dude, like I think I can.

Dear God, I got so bummed out when I was playing the “poor me” party game it was all I could think about. I believed a lot of stuff that isn’t true. Thank you for showing me the truth that you are here and that you really do answer my prayers and help me. I want to thank you for Jesus who is the biggest proof that you do care about me and my life. Thank you that Jesus gave his life for me so that we can be friends forever. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Dr.____: **I think there might be one more thing waiting to be discovered in our sands of time.**

Ask the volunteer to help one more time.

Would you continue digging to see if you can find it?

The helper pulls out the key.

Jerry Dude, can you read the key for us?

Jerry: Sure, man. It says, **Stop feeling sorry for yourself—let God help you.* Wow, man, like what a great reminder. I will let God help me the next time I want to have a “poor me” party. Life is no longer a bummer, dude.