



Bible Point ▶

God is our friend who takes care of us.

Bible Verse

O Lord, you know me (adapted from Psalm 139:1).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- see that God cares for us through other people,
 - hear how God cared for Elijah and the woman at Zarephath,
 - talk about ways God cares for them, and
 - sing a song to thank God for his care.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ God cares for Elijah, the widow, and her son.

**1 Kings
17:10-16**



The widow of Zarephath had plenty of reasons to doubt God's care. Because of the drought, food was becoming scarce. The widow and her son would soon die of starvation. But somehow she trusted Elijah when he promised that God would provide for her needs. When she emptied her jars to make bread for Elijah, God filled them right back up again. All through the drought, God continued to provide for Elijah, the widow, and her son.

The widow's response revealed her true trust in God. Elijah demonstrated his powerful faith, and as a result, the widow believed in God. Yet God's people, the people of Israel, remained unfaithful, worshipping the pagan god Baal.

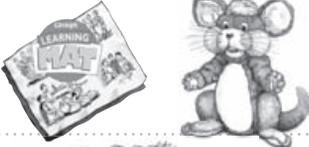
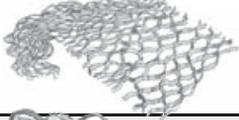
Prayer

- Read Psalm 23.
- How has God cared for you as this passage describes?
- Pray: Dear God, please release my fears so I can trust you in this area of my life...

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God's direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome Time	Welcome! —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	“Praying Hands Name Tags” (p. 23), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape	
Let’s Get Started Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Option 1: Fill It Up —Experiment with filling and emptying containers.	Clean sand, newspapers or an old bedsheet, bowls, funnels, scoops	
	Option 2: Sensible Care —Learn how their senses show God’s care.	Small boxes, scissors, perfume, vanilla extract, mint, banana, cotton balls, sandpaper, leaves, small rocks	
	Option 3: I’ll Care for You —Practice being caregivers.	“Caring Roles” handout (p. 118), scissors, dolls, stuffed animals, dress-up clothing, toy doctor’s kit	
	Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Setting the Stage —See how God takes care of us by giving us just what we need.	Two balloons	
	Bible Song and Prayer Time —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, CD player	
	Hear and Tell the Bible Story —Answer Whiskers’ questions about Elijah and the woman who shared with him.	Bible	
	Do the Bible Story —“Catch” pictures of people and things God uses to care for us.	Old magazines, scissors, tape	
Closing 	My Favorite Baby Sitter —Hear how Whiskers’ baby sitter takes care of him, and talk about how God takes care of us.		
	Watchful Care —Sing a song about God’s care.	CD player	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: “Praying Hands Name Tags” (p. 23), scissors, marker, safety pins or tape

- Bend down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them how they put last week’s lesson into practice. Use questions such as “What did you tell others about the woman who shared with Elijah?” or “Who did you share with this week?”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► God is our friend who takes care of us.**
- Hand out the praying hands name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help children attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopyable name tag patterns.
- Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.



It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point again and again will help children remember it and apply it to their lives.



Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among the children to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversations toward today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “Who takes care of you?” or “How did God take care of Elijah and the woman?”

■ Option 1: Fill It Up

SUPPLIES: clean sand, bowls, funnels, scoops, newspapers or an old bedsheet

Cover a work area with newspapers or an old bedsheet, and set up a “full” station and an “empty” station. Each station should have a bowl with clean sand, an empty bowl, a funnel, and a scoop.

Form pairs, and assign one pair to each station. If you have a large class, encourage children to participate in other activities as they wait for a turn.

Let children in each pair take turns holding the funnel over the empty bowl and slowly scooping sand into it. As children transfer the sand, review the meanings of full and empty. Point out that they’ll empty one bowl and fill up the other. Remind children how God took care of Elijah and the woman in Zarephath by keeping the woman’s jars of oil and flour full. Explain that today they’ll be learning that ► God is our friend who takes care of us.



■ Option 2: Sensible Care

SUPPLIES: small boxes, scissors, perfume, vanilla extract, mint leaves or extract, banana, cotton balls, sandpaper, leaves, small rocks

Before class, prepare several “smell” boxes and a “touch” box. In each smell box, place one of the following items: several crushed mint leaves or a cotton ball dipped in mint extract, several slices of banana, a cotton ball dipped in perfume, and a cotton ball dipped in vanilla extract. Cut a small hole in the lid of each box so children can smell the item inside.

Place several of the following items in the touch box: sandpaper, cotton balls, leaves, small rocks, and any other textured items you think children would enjoy. Cut a hole in the touch-box lid that’s large enough for children’s hands to reach inside.

Set out the touch and smell boxes. Explain that one way God takes care of us is by giving us senses to help us identify and enjoy things like fruit, meat, and bread. Help children name their senses; then invite them to test their senses of touch and smell.

Let children try to identify the items by touching and smelling them. Then let them look inside the boxes. Remind children that ► God is our friend who takes care of us, and God took care of Elijah and the woman by giving them oil and flour to make bread.



■ Option 3: I’ll Care for You

SUPPLIES: “Caring Roles” handout (p. 118), scissors, dolls, stuffed animals, dress-up clothing, toy doctor’s kit

Before class, photocopy the “Caring Roles” handout, and cut out the pictures. If you have a large class, you may want to make several copies. Post the pictures around the room. Near each picture, set out appropriate dress-up clothing or props for children to act out that role. For example, you might put dolls or stuffed-animal “babies” near the picture of the parent and child, a toy doctor’s kit near the picture of the doctor, a chalkboard and chalk near the picture of the teacher, and a firefighter’s hat near the picture of the firefighter.

Form pairs, and let each pair choose a caregiver’s role to act out. Explain that ► God is our friend who takes care of us. One way that God takes care of us is through other people. Encourage children to act out ways each caregiver takes care of them. If your children are particularly shy, have everyone act out the same role as you give verbal instructions. You may want to circulate among children to offer help and ideas as they play.

When everyone has arrived and you’re ready to move on to Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they’re doing and get ready to clean up.

■ Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



Lead children in singing “Come Along With Me” with the CD (track 2) to the tune of “Come and Go With Me.” Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.



SING

**Come along with me and pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things,
Pick up all our things.
Come along with me and pick up all our things
So our room will be clean.**

(Repeat 2x.)

Bible Story Time

■ Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: two balloons

Before class, blow up two balloons. Under-inflate one balloon and inflate one just the right amount. Bring both balloons with you to class.

Tell children that when they hear you clap your hands two times, they’re to stop what they’re doing and clap their hands two times. Practice this signal a few times. Encourage children to respond quickly so you’ll have time for all the fun activities you’ve planned.

Ask: • **What did you make or do when you came to class today?** (Got to dress up as a doctor; tried to guess things by touching and smelling; filled up a bowl with sand.)

Say: **Some of you filled an empty bowl with sand, some of you used your senses to find out what things were, and some of you acted out ways different people take care of us. You were all learning important things about today’s lesson. Today we’re going to learn that ► God is our friend who takes care of us. Sometimes God uses other people to care for us. Who are some people who take care of you?** (Mom; my dad; grandparents; my baby sitter.)

There are lots of people in our lives who take care of us. In our Bible story, we’ve been learning how God used the woman in Zarephath to take care of Elijah. We’ve also been learning how God took care of the woman and gave her just what she needed to feed Elijah and her family.

Hold up the under-inflated balloon.

Ask: • **What’s wrong with this balloon?** (It’s too small; you didn’t blow it up enough; it’s wimpy.)

Say: **This balloon is too small because there’s not enough air in it. The woman in our Bible story was worried because she didn’t have enough flour and oil in her jars to make bread for Elijah.**

Hold up the properly inflated balloon.

⚠ WARNING: CHOKING HAZARD—

Children under 8 yrs. can choke or suffocate on uninflated or broken balloons. Adult supervision required. Keep uninflated balloons from children. Discard broken balloons at once. Balloons may contain latex.



◀ BIBLE POINT


teacher tips

At this stage in their mental development, 3- and 4-year-olds can recall some facts and events and memorize stories, songs, and finger plays. And they ask *lots* of questions!


BIBLE POINT

Ask: • **What do you think about this balloon?** (It looks much better; it's blown up all the way; it's full of air.)

Say: **This balloon is full of air, just like the woman's jars of oil and flour were full when she trusted God to take care of her. ► God is our friend who takes care of us. Let's play a game with this balloon to help us remember that.**

We'll stay sitting down. When I call your name, come up if you want to and bat the balloon into the air. When the balloon goes up into the air, you can say, "God cares." Let's all say that together now: God cares.

Call each child's name and ask him or her to come up and gently bat the balloon into the air. If a child chooses not to come up, bat the balloon for him or her. As the balloon goes into the air each time, lead the child in saying, "God cares." Then place both balloons out of sight. Say: **That was a fun way to remember that ► God is our friend who takes care of us.**

■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



tracks 3 & 4

Say: **Now it's time to choose a Bible person to bring me the Bible marked with today's Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, we'll pass around our special Bible. The person who's holding the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible person today.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" with the CD (track 3) to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.


SING

**I'm so glad for the Bible,
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
I'm so glad for God's book today.
I'm so glad for the Bible,
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—
Keep me learnin' all about his way.**

**Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.
Let me hear 'bout God's love—
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.
Let's shine the light for all to see.**

(Repeat first verse.)

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you. Stamp the child's hand with the *raven stamp*, and thank the child for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. Return the *raven stamp* and *ink pad* to the Learning Lab.

Say: **I'm thankful for [name of child who brought the Bible], and I'm thankful for everyone in our class today. Let's thank God together for all our friends in this class.**


teacher tips

You can also choose children to be the Bible-Replacer (to put the Bible away) and the Cheerleader. Just be sure to keep track of who fills your roles each week, so each child gets a chance to feel special.

Lead children in singing “I’m So Glad We’re Together” with the CD (track 4) to the tune of “Give Me Oil in My Lamp.”



**I’m so glad we’re together.
Keep us prayin’, prayin’, prayin’.
I’m so glad we’re all here today.
I’m so glad we’re together.
Keep us prayin’, prayin’, prayin’—
Prayin’ for each other every day.**

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

**Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.
Thank you for everyone who’s here.
Thank you, Lord, for each one.
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—
Thankful for our friends both far and near.**

After the song, pray: **Dear God, we’re so thankful for your care and for all the people who care for us. Help us remember that you’re our caring friend so we can be caring friends, too. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible



Open the Bible to **1 Kings 17**, and show it to the children. Say: **Our Bible story comes from 1 Kings in the Bible, God’s special book. Our Learning Mat shows us pictures of our Bible story.**

Gather the children around the *Learning Mat*, and then bring out Whiskers. Have Whiskers look at the *Learning Mat*—first from a distance and then up close.

This Bible story is featured in *My First Hands-On Bible™*. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.



Whiskers: What is this thing? What’s going on in these pictures?

Teacher: Oh hello, Whiskers. This is our *Learning Mat*. It shows us pictures of our Bible story. We’ve been learning about a man named Elijah and how God took care of him.

Whiskers: Is he on this mat? Where is he?

Teacher: Children, can you point out Elijah for Whiskers?

(Let children point out Elijah, as Whiskers observes. Let Whiskers pause and “think” for a moment and then continue.)

Whiskers: Hmm. I see four Elijahs on this mat. What’s going on in all these pictures?

Teacher: Children, I think we better tell Whiskers the whole story about Elijah. Maybe if we tell him what’s happening in each picture, he’ll understand.

(Help children tell Whiskers about how God led Elijah to the stream, sent ravens to feed him, and then led him to a woman in Zarephath. Listen as children tell the story, and have Whiskers ask questions to fill in missing details. The following questions will get you started.)

- Whiskers:**
- What did Elijah do while he was living by the stream? Didn't he get lonely?
 - How did Elijah get food when he was living by the stream?
 - Why did Elijah leave the stream?
 - How did Elijah find his way to the woman who could feed him?
 - Did the woman have lots of food to share with Elijah?
 - What was in the woman's jars?
 - What happened when the woman shared her food?

Wow! That's a great story. I'm sure Elijah was glad he met that woman.

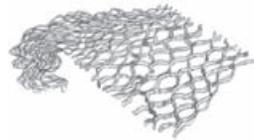
Teacher: God took good care of Elijah, didn't he? God takes care of us, too. God is our friend who is with us when we're alone, who guides us, who helps us share, and who takes care of us. It's great to know we have such a good friend. Our Bible verse is from Psalm 139:1, and it says, ► **O Lord, you know me.** That means that God knows us better than anyone else in the whole world! He's a wonderful friend! Let's say a prayer of thanks to God for doing all that. Dear God, we're so glad to have you for our friend. Thank you for loving us and caring for us. We love you. In Jesus' name, amen.

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■ Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: old magazines, scissors, tape



Before class, cut pictures from magazines of things God provides for our care (such as schools, bandages, homes, and food), people God gives us who take care of us (such as parents, doctors, coaches, and grandparents), and things children can care for (such as animals and people). Spread the pictures on a table where children can sort them. Using tape, hang the *paper fish net* along a wall, like a volleyball net. Be sure it's at a level children can easily reach.

Say: **The Bible lets us know that ► God is our friend who takes care of us. Let's use this fish net to collect pictures showing ways God takes care of us.**

Have children gather around the table. Ask them to look for pictures of things God gives us to make sure we're cared for, such as food or books. Let each child find a picture to show this. As each child finds a picture, let him or her fold or roll the picture and tuck it into one of the openings on the *paper fish net*. Encourage children to say ► God is our friend who takes care of us each time they put a new picture into the net.

Then have children sort through the pictures to find people that care for us, such as parents, doctors, and teachers. Let them add these to the *paper fish net*. Finally, have them find pictures of people or things they can take care of and add these to the *paper fish net*.



BIBLE POINT ►



BIBLE POINT ►



Say: **God also takes care of us by giving us Jesus as our best friend. We don't have a picture of Jesus to add to our net, but the Bible tells us that Jesus loves us. Let's thank God for giving us all the things that we've caught in our net and for giving us Jesus as our best friend.**

Let the children pray aloud if they like. Then pray: **Lord, thank you that you love us enough to care for us and to give us Jesus as a friend. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Closing

■ My Favorite Baby Sitter

SUPPLIES: none

Bring out Whiskers the Mouse, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers away and out of sight.



Whiskers: *(Bouncing up and down as if he's very excited)* Hello, friends!

Teacher: Whiskers, you seem very excited. What's going on?

Whiskers: *(Nods and bounces even more.)* You bet I'm excited. After you helped me learn about Elijah, I went home to have a snack. My mom told me that tonight my favorite baby sitter is coming over to stay with my brother and me!

Teacher: Why don't you tell us about your baby sitter?

Whiskers: Well, my baby sitter's name is Matthew, and he's the most fun baby sitter I've ever had. He plays lots of games with us, and he makes me laugh. Do any of you have a favorite baby sitter?

(Let children tell about their favorite baby sitters, and then continue.)

Teacher: You know, baby sitting is a very important job. The baby sitter is someone who takes care of you and makes sure everything is OK. I'm sure you all like your favorite baby sitters so much because they take such good care of you.

Whiskers: I know Matthew cares about my brother and me. He's our friend.

Teacher: Do you know, Whiskers, that you have another friend who cares for you? *(To children)* Who can tell Whiskers who that friend is?

(Help children explain to Whiskers that ► God is our friend who takes care of us.)

Whiskers: You mean God cares for me as much as Matthew? Does God care for me as much as my parents do?

Teacher: Even more! ► God is our friend who takes care of us. That means God cares lots and lots, and God cares all the time.

Whiskers: Wow! Thanks for teaching me that. I'm going to go tell my brother. We have to clean up our room so we can be ready to play with Matthew when he comes over. I'll see you next week. Goodbye!

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■ Watchful Care

SUPPLIES: CD player



BIBLE POINT ►



Say: ► God is our friend who takes care of us. He'll always watch over us and give us what we need. Let's sing a song to help us remember that.

Lead children in singing "God Is Watching" with the CD (track 14) to the tune of "Frère Jacques." If you have more than eight students in your class, you may want to repeat the song until you've named all the children.



SING

**God is watching.
God is watching
[Name] and [name],
[Name] and [name],
God is watching over us.
God is watching over us.
He never sleeps.
He never sleeps.**

(Repeat.)



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ Lively Learning: Learning Mat Review

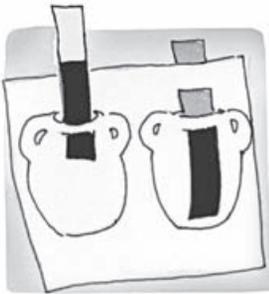


track 13

Set out the *Learning Mat* and have children gather around it. As you play “You Know Everything About Me” (Psalm 139:1-3) from the *CD* (track 13), have children march around the mat. Pause the music several times. Each time you pause the music, ask one of the following questions and have children point to the answer on the *Learning Mat* and tell you more about what was happening.

- Where did Elijah live all alone? Why was he alone there?
- What kind of animal helped take care of Elijah? How did the animal help Elijah?
- Where did Elijah meet someone to give him water? What happened there?
- What was the woman picking up when she met Elijah? Why was she doing this?
- What did the woman use to make bread for Elijah? Why did the woman share with Elijah?

■ Make to Take: Empty to Full



Before class, make photocopies of the “Empty to Full” handout (p. 119). Cut the slits on the handouts as directed. If you have an X-Acto knife, use it to cut the slits. Cut white, yellow, and black construction paper into 1½ x 6-inch strips. You’ll need two black strips, one white strip, and one yellow strip for each child.

Give each child a copy of the “Empty to Full” handout. Remind children how God kept the woman’s jars full. Hold up one strip of each color. Explain that the black strip represents empty and the white and yellow strips represent full. Remind children about the oil and flour you brought in during Lesson 7. Let children choose which color strips they’ll use for flour and oil.

Show children how to use glue sticks. Have them glue black strips to the ends of the white and yellow strips and then slide the glued-together strips through the slits in the handout. Encourage them to move the strips as you review how the woman’s jars were almost empty and then God filled them up again. Remind children that ► God is our friend who takes care of us.

■ Treat to Eat: Bread Shapes

Have children clean their hands with baby wipes or at a nearby sink. Give each child a piece of refrigerator biscuit dough to roll or shape. Collect children’s bread shapes on a lightly greased cookie sheet. Bake the dough according to the package directions, cool, share, and eat! While the bread is baking, review how the woman shared bread with Elijah. Remind children that ► God is our friend who takes care of us.



■ Story Picture: God Fills the Woman’s Jars

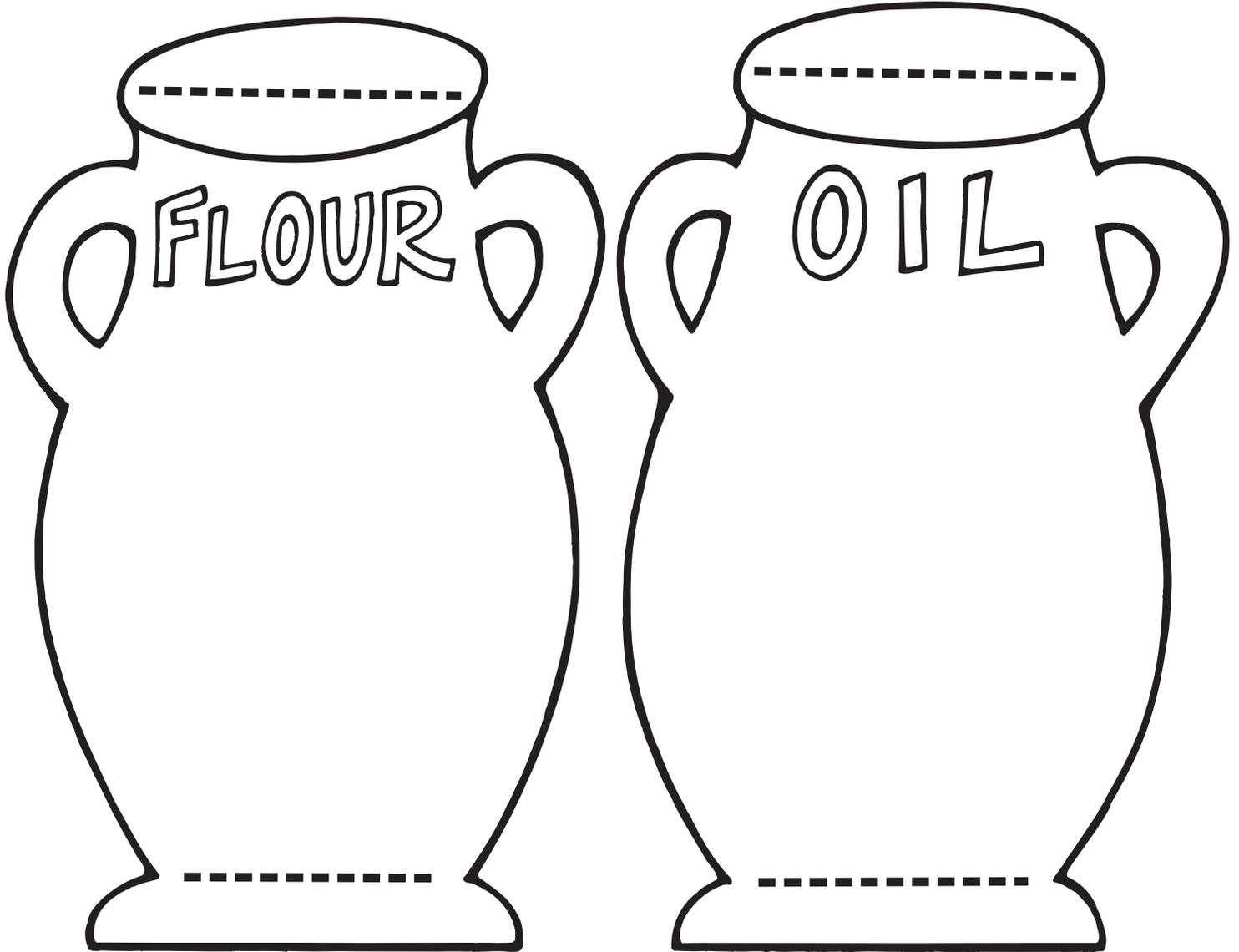
Give each child a copy of the “Today I Learned...” handout. Set out crayons, and have children color their handouts. Let children tear small pieces of white and yellow tissue paper and use glue sticks to glue the paper bits to the jars in the picture to “fill them up with oil and flour.” As they work, review how God filled the woman’s jars.

Caring Roles



Empty to Full

Photocopy this handout, and cut along the dashed lines.



Today i learned... @

@ God is our friend who takes care of us.

Lesson 8

Today your child learned that

GOD IS OUR FRIEND

WHO TAKES CARE OF US.

Children heard how God cared for a woman by filling her jars of oil and flour. They thanked God for people who care for them.

Help me learn this:

O Lord, you know me (adapted from Psalm 139:1).

Ask me:

- How did the woman care for Elijah?
- Who takes care of you?
- How can our family care for each other this week?

Family Fun

- Have your child help you prepare a meal. Talk about the sources of the food, noting the incredible care that God put into his plan for the world! Point out that cows give us milk and cheese, chickens give us eggs, and seeds grow into vegetables and fruit we can eat.



**God Provides
Flour and Oil**

(1 Kings 17:10-16)