

3

Grace
God helps us understand grace.

POWER TEXT

"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

KEY REFERENCES

- 1 Kings 18:41-46
- *Prophets and Kings,* chap. 12, pp. 155-166
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 5, pp. 35-37
- student story on page 42 of this guide.

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 10, The Experience of Salvation
- No. 18, The Gift of Prophecy
- No. 3, The Father

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that God always fulfills His promises.
- **Feel** assured that they can trust God to do what He says He will do.
- **Respond** by trusting in God's promises.

A Promise Kept



God always keeps His promises.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

After the Mount Carmel experience, Elijah tells Ahab that rain will be coming in abundance. Elijah goes up to Mount Carmel to pray and tells his servant to look toward the sea for any sign of rain approaching. After checking seven times, the servant comes back with news that a small cloud is gathering. Finally rain comes, and Elijah leads Ahab's horses back to Jezreel.

This is a lesson about grace.

Elijah experiences again that God fulfills His promises even when, from a human standpoint, there is delay. God sends the rain because He promised to, not because of the merit or goodness of Elijah or the people.

Teacher Enrichment

"It was not because of any outward evidence that the showers were about to fall, that Elijah could so confidently bid Ahab prepare for rain. The prophet saw no clouds in the heavens; he heard no thunder. He simply spoke the word that the Spirit of the Lord had moved him to speak in response to his own strong faith. Throughout the day he had unflinchingly performed the will of God and had revealed his implicit confidence in the prophecies of God's word; and now, having done all that was in his power to do, he knew that Heaven would freely bestow the blessings foretold. The same God who had sent the drought had promised an abundance of rain as the reward of rightdoing; and now Elijah waited for the promised outpouring" (*Prophets and Kings,* pp. 155, 156).

Do I have the same confidence that Elijah had? If not, what is stopping me from placing my confidence in God? What are some of God's promises that strengthen my faith?

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week. (The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the readiness activity of your choice.

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	*A. A Promising Contract*	Bibles, large-size paper, marker
		B. Scrambled Words	Bibles, sticky labels
* Prayer and Praise	15-20	See page 37. Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, rainbow box, mirrors
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	
		Experiencing the Story	Bibles
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*Scenarios*	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*A Promise Shared*	Bibles, paper, pens
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ large-size paper
- ☐ marker

A Promising Contract

Before class write "Important Contract" across the top of a large sheet of paper. Tape this large size paper to the front of the class and start brainstorming with the students ideas they think would be important to be included in a contract for Sabbath School classes (i.e., respect one another, raise a hand if you have a question or want to give an answer).

Say: **Now let's read the contract as a pledge (i.e., in Sabbath School class I promise to . . .). The contract we have created is an example of how we promise to treat each other and to participate in Sabbath School.**

We've all had people make promises to us. But some people have broken their promises. Some of us have been disappointed and wondered if we can really trust anyone.

Ask: **Whom can we trust?** (Wait for responses.) **Let's find and read together our power text, found in 2 Peter 3:9.** (Allow time for students to find and read the text aloud with you.)

"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Say: **We can be certain that God will always keep His promises. That is one of His gifts of grace.**

God always keeps His promises.

B

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ sticky labels

Scrambled Words

Beforehand, write out all or some of the following words, one word per sticky label (add or duplicate words or phrases to provide a label for each student). God, always, keeps, His, promises, grace, undeserving, free gift. As the students arrive, stick a word on their clothes.

Say: **You are jumbled up as different words having to do with today's theme. Can you unscramble yourselves?**

Debriefing

Ask: **What is the connection between each of these words?** (God's grace is an undeserved free gift given in love. One of God's gifts of grace is that He always keeps His promises.) **What do you think our power point is? Do you always keep your promises to others? Let's look at our power text found in 2 Peter 3:9 and say it together:**

"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Say: **We can be certain that God will always keep His promises. That is one of His gifts of grace.**

God always keeps His promises.

Prayer and Praise

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"In His Time" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 93)
"We Must Wait (on the Lord)" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 129)
"In Moments Like These" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 147)
"All Through the Day" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 77)

Mission

YOU NEED:
- ☐ world map
- ☐ pushpins

Use Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. For the mission story, have a map of the world where the students can identify the location of the mission story and compare it to where they are. You could use pushpins to mark where the mission story takes place.

Offering

YOU NEED:
- ☐ rainbow box
- ☐ *He Is Our Song*

Continue to use the rainbow offering box from two weeks ago. Take a different color and talk about what that color represents. You may want to sing one verse of "The Coloring Song" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 61). Ask: **How does this color reflect God's grace?**

Prayer

YOU NEED:
- ☐ mirrors

Hand out a mirror or a couple mirrors. Say: **Please look in the mirror and share one thing about you that reflects God's grace.** Say a prayer of thanks for the grace God shows through each of you.

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

Notes

2

BIBLE LESSON

Introducing the Bible Story

Ask: **Have your parents ever promised you something special, but did not tell you when you would get it? When you are waiting for something how quickly does time pass? Did you begin to doubt that their promise would be kept? Today we'll find out that after Elijah won the battle with the prophets of Baal it did not rain immediately, but Elijah was still confident that the rain would come. He knew that**

God always keeps His promises.

YOU NEED:

- ☐ Bibles

Experiencing the Story

Read 1 Kings 18:41-46 with the narration in unison and one person taking Elijah's voice and another taking the part of his servant. Ask: **What is the most striking thing about Elijah at this time? Why is Elijah taking the posture he is? Why doesn't he look for the rain himself? What do you think Elijah is feeling as he waits for the rain? What do you think you would be feeling? Would you have any doubts about God's promise because it didn't start to rain right away?**

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ white/chalkboard
- ☐ markers/chalk

Exploring the Bible

Beforehand, write the following questions and texts on the board/on separate handouts for students to use in small groups. Divide the students into groups of three or four and have each group find and write down the answer to each question. Say: **Elijah had supreme confidence in the promises of God. We can have the same confidence today. Let's look at some promises that we can claim today:**

1. What does God promise when we ask for things in prayer? Matthew 7:7-11.
2. What does God promise when we feel afraid? Joshua 1:9.
3. What does Jesus promise if we are faithful to Him? Revelation 3:21.
4. What does God promise those who are faithful and return their tithe? Malachi 3:8-12.
5. What does God promise to provide for us? Matthew 6:25-34.
6. What does Jesus promise if we ask Him to come into our lives? Revelation 3:20.
7. What does God promise those who ask for wisdom? Proverbs 3:5, 6.

Ask: **What did you discover?** (Ask for volunteers to come and write answers beside each of the questions and references as you discuss each one.) **How many of these promises have you seen God fulfill in your life?** (Encourage responses.) **We can be assured that**

God always keeps His promises.

Accommodations for students with special needs:

Students with impaired vision or with learning disabilities will benefit from having the list of questions and texts in front of them. Allow these students to sit near the board or prepare for them in advance handouts with the above list of questions and texts.

Scenarios

Discuss what promises you could use to encourage someone in the following situations:

1. Your friend's grandma or grandpa has died. They are very sad, because they feel they will never see them again or be able to talk to them. Their grandparents were Christians. What promises did Jesus give that would encourage your friend? (See Ps. 49:15; 2 Cor. 4:14; John 14:1-3.)

2. Your family looks at all the bills they have to pay and how much income your family has. If you do not return tithe, you might be able to pay for everything. What should you suggest to your family and what promise can you claim? (See Mal. 3:8, 9.)

3. You are babysitting your little brother or sister. There is a thunderstorm outside, and they are scared. What promise can you give them to help them not to be afraid? (See Ps. 91:9-12.)

Debriefing

Say: **It doesn't matter what situation we are in; God promises to be with us, and**

God always keeps His promises.

4

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pens

A Promise Shared

Say: **This morning we are going to share a promise with the rest of the church. Choose your favorite promise and write it out ___ times.** (You will need to count the ratio of children to church members. If it is a large ratio of members to students, they could type the promises into a computer and print out enough copies. Alternately you may want to photocopy some ahead of time and let students choose the one they want to give out.) **After the church service, people coming out of church can get a promise for their week.** Decide who is going to go onto the platform inviting the congregation to claim a promise on the way out of church. Be sure to arrange this ahead of time with the pastor.

If time allows, divide into small groups and share a time you claimed a specific one of God's promises.

Closing

Prayer and closing scomments:

Thank God for all the promises He has fulfilled in the past. Ask Him to show each student this week what He wants to do for them. Pray that they will each come to trust God more completely than ever before.

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www .juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **Elijah runs! Even when we are discouraged, God is with us.**

Notes

Student lesson

A Promise Kept

Have you ever prayed for something and not gotten an answer right away? That happened to Elijah right after he had experienced an instant answer to prayer—when fire came down from heaven on Mount Carmel. This time, however, he prayed seven times before he got an answer.

After God answered Elijah's prayer on Mount Carmel by sending fire from heaven, the people realized that Baal was a false god. The prophets of Baal, however, refused to accept Jehovah as the true God. Even with the evidence of the burned-up altar, they would not recognize the power of God. Because of this, Elijah commanded that they be killed. Not one prophet of Baal escaped.

Then Elijah told the king to go and eat, because he knew a great rain was coming. But Elijah didn't stop to eat and rest; he went to the top of Mount Carmel and looked at the sky over the Mediterranean Sea. It was blue. There were no clouds. Elijah heard no thunder. Swirls of dust rose from the barren sides of the mountain ridge. Withered plants bent in the wind. But Elijah believed that God would send rain to the land as He had promised. Without any evidence of rain, Elijah believed rain would come, and had told the king to prepare.

Elijah bowed down with his face to the ground and prayed for God's people. A great miracle had occurred that day on Mount Carmel. God had demonstrated to His people once and for all that He was the God who had blessed them. The people had humbled themselves before Him. They had confessed their sins. The way was prepared for a great change to take place in Israel. Now Elijah wanted the people to receive the rain that would convince them of God's love and care.

Elijah told his servant to go to a high point that overlooked the sea. "Tell me what you see," he said.

The servant looked out over the vast Mediterranean. As far as his eye could see there were no clouds in the sky. He came back to Elijah. "There is nothing there," he said.

God had answered Elijah's prayer for fire from heaven immediately. However, God did not answer Elijah's prayer for rain immediately. Elijah continued to pray. He did not become impatient. He did not become discouraged. He did not lose his faith in God. Elijah knew that God would keep His word. Six times Elijah sent his servant to look out over the sea for a sign of rain. Six times Elijah got the message "There is nothing there." Then Elijah prayed again, the seventh time. He knew that God would send rain, just as He had promised.

Then Elijah sent his servant the seventh time. "Go. Look for a sign of rain." This time the servant returned with the exciting news: "A cloud as small as a man's hand is rising from the sea." (1 Kings 18:44). It was enough. Elijah rose. He did not wait for the sky to fill with dark clouds. He did not wait for a sprinkle of rain to begin. He recognized this cloud as God's sign that rain was coming.

Elijah immediately sent his servant to King Ahab with the message: "Prepare your chariot and start down the mountain now, before the rain comes to stop you." But before Ahab could do as Elijah had commanded, the sky grew thick with gray clouds, the wind rose, the rain began. The king started his trip to the city of Jezreel, about 28 miles (45 kilometers) away. Meanwhile Elijah tucked his tunic into his belt, and with the power of God he ran in front of the royal chariot until they reached the safety of the city.

Elijah was a mighty prophet, and humble too. But it was not Elijah's might that had caused the heavens not to give rain for more than three years. It was not Elijah's goodness that had brought fire from heaven. Nor were his seven prayers capable of opening the heavens to rain.

The rain had come because God had promised it. God keeps His promises. Elijah knew that. He believed in God and trusted His promises. As a result, Elijah witnessed God's most miraculous answers to his prayers.

KEY REFERENCES

- 1 Kings 18:41-46
- *Prophets and Kings*, chap. 12, pp. 155-166
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 5, pp. 35-37
- Our Beliefs, nos. 10, 18, 3

POWER TEXT

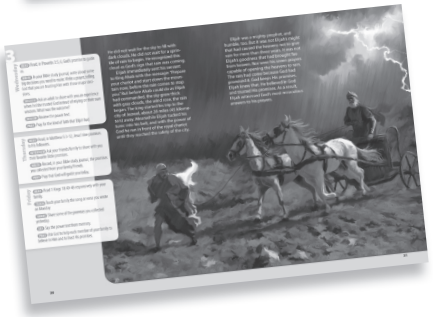
"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

POWER POINT

God always keeps His promises.







Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 32.

Sunday

READ Read 2 Peter 3:9 and this week's story, "A Promise Kept."

MAKE Make a rain cloud and write on it the power text, 2 Peter 3:9. Begin to learn it.

THINK Why does God delay His answer to your prayers? Why is it important for you to be persistent in prayer?

PRAY Thank God for His many promises.

Monday

READ Read 1 Kings 18:40–46.

WRITE Write a song or verse about Elijah's experience.

REFLECT Imagine you could interview Elijah. What questions would you like to ask him?

PRAY Thank God for His continued grace today.

Tuesday

READ Read in Isaiah 41:10 God's promise for strength.

FIND See if you can find a Bible map that shows Mount Carmel and Jezreel.

MEASURE If you found a map, measure the distance between Mount Carmel and Jezreel. Measure the same distance on a local map to get an idea of how far Elijah ran.

RUN Run for a few minutes and think about Elijah running a long distance.

PRAY Pray for strength to do what God wants you to do.

Wednesday

READ Read in Proverbs 3:5, 6, God's promise to guide us.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write about some big decisions you need to make. Write a prayer, telling God that you are trusting Him with those major decisions.

DISCUSS Ask an adult to share with you an experience when he/she trusted God instead of relying on their own wisdom. What was the outcome?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for the kind of faith Elijah had.

Thursday

READ Read in Matthew 5:3–12, Jesus' nine promises to His followers.

INTERVIEW Ask your friends/family to share with you their favorite Bible promises.

WRITE Record, in your Bible study journal, the promises you collected from your family/friends.

PRAY Pray that God will guide you today.

Friday

READ Read 1 Kings 18:40–46 responsively with your family.

TEACH Teach your family the song or verse you wrote on Monday.

SHARE Share some of the promises you collected yesterday.

SAY Say the power text from memory.

PRAY Ask God to help each member of your family to believe in Him and to trust His promises.