

# Underdogs

## “Elijah and the Widow”

1 Kings 17

### Small Group Plan

What an unusual cast of characters. Ahab the king, who “did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him” (1 Kings 16:30), Elijah, the prophet, who trusted God with an unknown future, and the widow at Zarephath, who expected to die, but received life.

#### OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- Have you ever run out of food or gone without food longer than expected?
- What was it like?

#### LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

### FED BY THE RAVENS

1 Kings 17:1-6

<sup>1</sup> Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word.” <sup>2</sup> Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah: <sup>3</sup> “Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. <sup>4</sup> You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there.” <sup>5</sup> So he did what the Lord had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. <sup>6</sup> The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.

- What impresses you the most about Ahab:  
**His courage** (v. 1) “Elijah ... said to Ahab” ? or  
**His obedience** (v. 5) “he did what the Lord had told him.” ?  
Explain your answer.
- Why was it courageous to give Ahab this message of the coming drought?

## FED BY THE WIDOW

### 1 Kings 17:7-16

<sup>7</sup> Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. <sup>8</sup> Then the word of the Lord came to him: <sup>9</sup> “Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food.” <sup>10</sup> So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, “Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?” <sup>11</sup> As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me, please, a piece of bread.” <sup>12</sup> “As surely as the Lord your God lives,” she 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.” <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> 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.’” <sup>15</sup> She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. <sup>16</sup> For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

- Why did God send Elijah out of Israel (v. 9)?
- Why did God tell Elijah to seek the help of a gentile woman?
- Put yourself in the widow’s place.  
How might she have felt about Elijah’s request for food and drink?
- What does Elijah mean when he tells the widow, “Don’t be afraid” (v. 13)?

## FED BY GOD

### 1 Kings 17:17-24

<sup>17</sup> Some time later the son of the woman who owned the house became ill. He grew worse and worse, and finally stopped breathing. <sup>18</sup> She said to Elijah, “What do you have against me, man of God? Did you come to remind me of my sin and kill my son?” <sup>19</sup> “Give me your son,” Elijah replied. He took him from her arms, carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his bed. <sup>20</sup> Then he cried out to the Lord, “Lord my God, have you brought tragedy even on this widow I am staying with, by causing her son to die?” <sup>21</sup> Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried out to the Lord, “Lord my God, let this boy’s life return to him!” <sup>22</sup> The Lord heard Elijah’s cry, and the boy’s life returned to him, and he lived. <sup>23</sup> Elijah picked up the child and carried him down from the room into the house. He gave him to his mother and said, “Look, your son is alive!” <sup>24</sup> Then the woman said to Elijah, “Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the Lord from your mouth is the truth.”

- After all that God had done for the widow through Elijah, why does she turn on him when her son dies?
- What does she assume when her son dies? Explain.
- How would you describe the impact of the son's recovery on the widow?
- Will this help her through the next crisis? Explain.

### **USE IT / APPLY IT ...**

- Is it easy or difficult for you to move ahead, trusting God, even when you don't see how the future will unfold? Explain
- Do you have any life situations that need God's message "*Don't be afraid*" ? Share them with the group.
- The widow and her son were down to their last meal when God sent Elijah. When was a time when you felt that you were at the end of your rope? How did God intervene?
- Ask the group members to share their physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Take them to God in prayer.