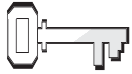


Twice Blessed



References

2 Kings 4:8-37; 8:1-6;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 237-240



Memory Verse

"[He] is able to do
immeasurably more
than all we ask
or imagine"
(Ephesians 3:20).

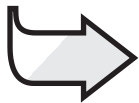


Objectives

The children will:
Know that God
loves to bless us
and give us gifts.

Feel sure that God will take
care of us—more than
we ask or imagine.

Respond by trusting that
God will provide more
than we even think to ask.



The Message

God gives me
blessings, more than I
can ask or imagine.

Monthly Theme

God does for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Whenever Elisha passes through Shunem, a well-to-do woman gives him meals. She and her husband agree to add a room on the roof of their house for Elisha's visits. Elisha is grateful and wishes to do something for them. Because they have no children, Elisha tells the woman that she will have a son next year. And she does. One day this son gets sick and dies. His mother goes to find Elisha and brings him to her home. Her son is restored to life.

This is a lesson about grace.

Although the Shunammite did not ask for anything (2 Kings 4:28), God gave her and her husband a precious gift—twice. God gives us blessings for which we don't even know to ask; they are His gifts of grace to us.

Teacher Enrichment

"This was a miracle, an act that could be performed only by God. As the Lord restored this dead child to life again, even so, at the second advent, will He raise all His faithful children who now sleep in their graves (Isa. 26:19; John 5:28, 29; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16; Rev. 1:18)" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 870).

Room Decorations

Make a border around a bulletin board or on a blank wall. Add the following caption: "God's Grace" (at top) and "to Everyone" (at bottom). Place a gift-wrapped box with a big bow in the middle of the board. Letter the gift box with: "A Gift." Or make different-colored hearts and under the caption write "More Than We Ask or Imagine . . . (Ephesians 3:20)." Attach pictures and/or words as follows: God is able to heal the sick; God is able to raise the dead; God is able to solve our problems; God is able to supply all our needs; God is able to protect us from harm, etc.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	name tag for each child, markers
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	<i>A. Surprise!</i> <i>B. Reach for It</i>	Bibles, stickers or other inexpensive items Bibles, picture hung on the wall
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> wrapped gift box with a slit none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes; baby doll in blanket; bed, table, chair, and lamp; optional: building tools such as hammer, saw, etc. yellow or gold felt for circles, black felt pen, small gift box Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>My Unasked-for Gifts</i>	paper; pencils, markers, or crayons
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Giving Gifts</i>	Bibles, pictures from Applying the Lesson

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

TEACHING THE LESSON

You Need:

- name tag for each child
- markers

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study.

Then give each child a name tag that reads: "I am blessed. (Child's name)." Provide markers so they may write their name. Remind them that they have been blessed by God.

Then have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- stickers or other inexpensive items

A. Surprise!

Say: **(name of teacher) has some surprises for you. You may go and get one from her/him.** Have the teacher make a point of giving two instead of one.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did you feel when you got more than you expected?** (surprised, happy) **God often gives us more than we ask for. Let's find and read our memory verse, Ephesians 3:20.** Find and read it together. **Our Bible story for today is one example of God's gifts to us. Today's message tells us more.**



GOD GIVES ME BLESSINGS, MORE THAN I CAN ASK OR IMAGINE.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bibles
- picture hung on the wall

B. Reach for It

In advance, hang a picture high enough on the wall so that no child can reach it. Ask the children to get the picture and bring it to you. Allow them to try until someone asks for help. Respond: **Sure, I'll be happy to help you.**

Debriefing

Ask: **How did you feel when you couldn't reach the picture?** (frustrated) **Did you ask for help?** (Yes; no, I just kept trying.) **Why or why not?** Accept answers. **I didn't help you until you asked for help, but sometimes God answers you even before you ask. He knows just what you need. Our memory verse today is Ephesians 3:20.** Find and read it together. **That's what today's message is about.**



GOD GIVES ME BLESSINGS, MORE THAN I CAN ASK OR IMAGINE.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Tell each child to turn to the person next to them and say, "May God's grace be upon you." Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13)

"O, How He Loves You and Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 28)

"Wide, Wide as the Ocean" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 32)

"He's Everything to Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 43)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Look for evidences of God's blessings for the people in the story.



Offering

Say: **God gives so many blessings to us. Will you give to bless others?**

You Need:

- wrapped gift box with a slit to deposit money



Prayer

Have a "popcorn prayer." Let the children know that after you start the prayer, you will stop and let them say words to describe the blessings they are thankful for. Each child says only one word at a time, such as: "parents," "pets," "bike," "friends," "food," "Jesus," etc. When the word prayers seem to be finished, close with thanks to God for expected and unexpected blessings.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes
- baby doll in blanket
- bed, table, chair, lamp
- building tools (hammer, saw, etc.) (optional)

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Elisha, Shunammite woman, husband, son

Props: Bible-times costumes for Elisha, Shunammite woman, husband, son; baby doll in blanket; area of classroom fixed to look like the room built for Elisha (see 2 Kings 4:10) with bed, table, chair, and lamp; building tools such as hammer, saw, etc. (optional)

Have the characters do the appropriate actions as you read the story.

Remember the manna that fed the Israelites in the wilderness? God gave that gift almost every day! Remember when God gave Hannah the gift of her son, Samuel? Later, He gave her three more sons and two daughters! God gives and gives and gives—sometimes more than we ask!

A woman from the town of Shunem [*Shunammite woman stands in front of class*] often fed the prophet Elisha when he came to Shunem. She knew that Elisha often passed through town [*Elisha walks in front of class*], so she and her husband decided to add a room to their house where Elisha could stay. [*Shunammite woman and husband pretend to build with the tools.*] Elisha was so thankful that he asked the woman to name anything she wanted. [*Elisha talks with Shunammite woman.*] The woman said she wanted nothing. [*Woman smiles and shakes head.*]

Elisha's servant learned that the woman had no children. When Elisha heard this news, he called for the woman. [*Shunammite woman stands in the doorway of Elisha's "room."*] Elisha goes

to "door." [*One year from now," he said, "God will give you a child to hold in your arms." The woman couldn't believe Elisha. How could this be? [Woman shakes her head in disbelief. Elisha leaves the scene.]*

One year later Elisha returned to the woman's house in Shunem. Smiling at the door, his friends invited him in. He smiled happily. The woman held a baby boy in her arms! [*Shunammite woman, standing next to her husband, holds a baby doll, motions for Elisha to "enter."*]

The baby grew into a big boy. One day the boy was helping his father in the fields. [*Boy and father bend over as if reaping.*] Suddenly the boy's head began to hurt. [*Boy holds head.*] His father called a servant and told him to take the boy home to his mother. His mother held him and tried to help him, but the boy grew sicker. Finally, he died. [*Boy "dies."*]

God's gift to the Shunammite woman—the most wonderful gift she could imagine—had been taken away. She laid him on Elisha's bed in his room on the rooftop. [*Place boy on bed.*] Then the woman got on a donkey and rode as fast as she could to see Elisha. [*Woman stands in front of Elisha with sad expression.*] "I didn't ask you for anything," she said. "But God gave me a son. Now my son is gone!"

The prophet hurried to the Shunammite's house. [*Elisha rushes to his "room."*] After he had prayed, Elisha covered the boy, and the boy's body began to get warm. Elisha covered the boy again, and the boy sneezed. [*Boy sneezes seven times.*] Seven times the boy sneezed, and on the seventh sneeze, he opened his eyes, awake and alive. [*Boy opens eyes and gets up.*]

Elisha called the boy's mother.
[Shunammite woman comes to Elisha's room.] When she saw her son, she immediately thanked God. *[Shunammite woman hugs son and kneels with joyful expression on her face.]* She had been given one of the greatest gifts in life—twice.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you think the Shunammite woman and her husband felt when their child was born?** (thrilled, happy, blessed, etc.) **How do you think she felt when her son died? When he was brought back to life? What did she do when she saw that her son was alive and well?**

When God gives us gifts, He sometimes gives us more than we ask for or expect.

What did you learn about God from this story? (That God loves me and gives more than I ask or imagine.) **Let's say today's message together:**



**GOD GIVES ME BLESSINGS,
MORE THAN I CAN ASK OR
IMAGINE.**

Memory Verse

Ahead of time, cut felt or paper into 14 circles, varying in size from two to four inches (five to 10 cm) in diameter. Write one word of the memory verse (Ephesians 3:20) on each "coin." (Don't forget the reference.) Number the coins on the reverse side in the correct order. Place the coins in a small gift box.

Let a child open the box and distribute the "treasure" to the class. Read the memory verse aloud. Then have the children

You Need:

- yellow or gold felt or paper circles
- black felt pen
- small gift box

put the coins in the correct order.

If the children are beginner readers, let them place the coins in numerical order, and then turn over the coins to discover the memory verse. Have everyone read it together.

Put one coin at a time back in the gift box. Have the children say the word each time a circle is put in the box. Repeat until all know the verse.

Bible Study

Say: **The Bible has other examples of God giving unexpected gifts. Let's look at a few.** Help children find and read the following:

Job 42:12 (Job received back all that he had lost and more.)

Genesis 2:22 (Adam received a wife.)

Acts 3:6 (Beggar received healing instead of money.)

Luke 1:30, 31 (Mary received the announcement that she would have Baby Jesus.)

You Need:

- Bibles

Debriefing

Say: **None of these presents are things that we can wrap, but they were still very special, unexpected gifts from God.**

Why do you think God likes to give surprise gifts? (He loves to make His children happy; He wants us to trust Him to supply what we need, etc.)

Which do you like best—surprise gifts or expected gifts? (doesn't matter; surprise gifts, etc.) **When you feel discouraged and don't have what you need, what will you remember? Let's answer with our message:**



**GOD GIVES ME BLESSINGS,
MORE THAN I CAN ASK OR
IMAGINE.**

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- paper
- pencils, markers, crayons

My Unasked-for Gifts

Give each child a piece of paper. Have the children draw some gifts that God has given them that they haven't asked for (parents, house, friends, ability to walk, talk, etc.).

Allow time, then ask the children to show their pictures (one at a time) and tell about the gift it illustrates. Have the children keep these drawings for the next activity.

Debriefing

Say: **Sometimes we take for granted some very important gifts that God has given us. Have you done that with the gifts that you drew?** (yes, no, sometimes)

When you think about these gifts, how do you feel? (Thankful to God.)
What can you do to help you remember how special these gifts really are? (Ask Him to help me to be grateful.)
What is today's message?



**GOD GIVES ME BLESSINGS,
 MORE THAN I CAN ASK OR
 IMAGINE.**

Sharing the Lesson

Giving Gifts

Review briefly the gifts the children named and illustrated during Applying the Lesson. Then encourage the children to think of ways they can share those gifts and/or blessings with someone else. Ask them to think of a person with whom they might share a special gift or blessing God has given them and then plan how they might do so.

Debriefing

Say: **God has blessed all of us in many ways. Now you have the opportunity to share one of those blessings with someone else. Tell us what you want to share and with whom you will share it this week.** Encourage the children to be specific as they tell the class.

Ask: **How do you feel about sharing with someone a gift that you have received from God?** (I'm glad to share, OK, not sure about it, etc.) **How do you think the person you will share with will feel?** (glad, happy, OK, surprised, blessed, etc.) **Let's read the last part of Matthew 10:8.** Have a child read the verse aloud. **Why do I share my blessings with others? Because . . .**



**GOD GIVES ME BLESSINGS,
MORE THAN I CAN ASK OR
IMAGINE.**

Closing

Sing together a favorite song about God's grace. Pray, thanking God for His grace and asking for more appreciation of God and His gifts.

You Need:

- Bibles
- pictures from Applying the Lesson

Twice Blessed

References

2 Kings 4:8-37; 8:1-6;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 237-240

Memory Verse

"[He] is able to
do immeasurably
more than all
we ask or imagine"
(Ephesians 3:20).

The Message

God gives me
blessings, more
than I can ask
or imagine.

Imagine the most wonderful gift that could ever be given to you. Imagine the excitement of opening a present and finding the one thing you have wanted your whole life!

God often gives us more than we ask or imagine. Let's read about a woman who would agree.

A woman from the town of Shunem knew that Elisha often passed through town. She often fed the prophet when he visited there. One day she and her husband talked about the prophet's visits. "I think we should have a place for Elisha to stay," she said. "What do you think?" So they decided to add a room to their house. This room was a place on the rooftop with a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp. Elisha was so thankful to have a place to rest that he wanted to do something for the family. So he asked the woman to name anything she wanted, but the woman said she wanted nothing.

Elisha's servant remembered that the woman had no children. When Elisha heard this, he knew just what to do. He knew that God loves to give gifts. So he called for the woman. "One year from now," he said, "God will give you a child to hold in your arms."

One year later Elisha returned to the woman's house in Shunem. Smiling at the door were his friends, and, in the woman's arms, a baby boy!

The baby grew into a fine boy. One day he was helping his father in the fields. Suddenly the boy's head began to hurt, so his father called for a servant to carry him home. His mother did everything she

could, but the boy grew sicker. Finally, he stopped breathing; he had died.

God's gift to the Shunammite woman—the most wonderful gift she could imagine—had been taken away. The woman got on her donkey and rode as fast as she could to find Elisha. "I didn't ask for anything," she cried as she shared her grief and told the prophet about her son's death.

The prophet hurried to the Shunammite's house. He went into the room where the boy was lying and prayed to the Lord. Elisha covered the boy, and the boy's body began to get warm. Elisha covered the boy again, and the boy sneezed seven times. On the seventh sneeze, he opened his eyes, awake and alive!

Elisha called the boy's mother. When she saw her son, she immediately thanked God. She had been given one of the greatest gifts in life—twice. There was no doubt that God loved her. God is so good! He gave her more than she asked or imagined. And God will give you great blessings too—more than you can imagine.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Read your Bible lesson with your family. Read Ephesians 3:20 together. Remember that God is able to take care of you and bless you more than you can ask or imagine. Thank Him for His gifts to your family.
- Tonight, go outside and look at the sky. Do you really know what is up there? More than you can imagine. Look up at the stars and try to count them. Or look at a book about the universe. What does the universe tell us about God?

Sunday

- For worship, read about Elisha's new room in 2 Kings 4:8-10.
- Take a small box and make a model of Elisha's room on the rooftop. What four things were in the room? (See 2 Kings 4:10.) Write them here.
_____, _____, _____,
_____. Make cutouts of these four things and put them in the "room" that you made. Thank God for *your* home.
- Review your memory verse; then say it in your own words.

Monday

- Does your family have a baby? Or do you know a family with a baby? What is the baby's name? Write it here. _____ What was the Shunammite's son's name? What name would you give him, if he was born in your family? Ask God to bless a baby you know.
- Sing "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13).
- Say your memory verse.

Tuesday

- If you have a garden, be like the Shunammite's

son and help do some garden work. Don't forget to wear a hat and drink enough water if the weather is warm. Thank God for things that grow.

- Make up a tune for your memory verse.

Wednesday

- Talk about a time you had a big problem and "ran" to God for help. Draw a picture about it. Draw a face on the other side of the paper to tell how you felt after giving your problem to God. Thank God for hearing your prayers.
- Say your memory verse together.

Thursday

- After the boy was restored to life, how did his mother thank God? Ask two people to tell about an unexpected gift they received from God.
- God gives us many gifts. Can you unscramble two of them?
1. meoh _____ 2. odof _____
- Say your memory verse. Then thank God for three gifts He has given you today.

Friday

- For worship, tell your Bible lesson story as a family. Have someone begin by telling the first part, someone else the next part, and so on until the story is finished.
- Ask each family member to name a gift from God that they have received recently. Which were more than asked for or imagined? Write them in a "Blessing Book." Add to this book as time passes.
- Sing "Praise God, From Whom All Blessings" (*The SDA Hymnal*, no. 694) before prayer. Thank God for all His gifts. Then say your memory verse together.