

WEEK 3

LESSON GUIDE

ANIMATED

BIG IDEA

God gives me comfort
when I feel sad.

BIBLE

Elijah Flees to Horeb:
1 Kings 19:1-13; Jeremiah 8:18-9:1

LARGE GROUP TIME

Welcome to another week of our series, *Animated!* So far, we've talked about how God makes us feel secure and how God takes away our feelings of shame. Today, we'll talk about a feeling all of us have sometimes – sadness – and how God can help us when we're sad.

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can lead kids in worship with any songs of your choice, but here are some suggestions that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)
 - "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" (Lifetree Kids)
 - "Falling Into You" (Hillsong Young & Free)
 - "Trading My Sorrows" (Capitol Kids!)
 - "Anchored to You" (Elevation Youth)

ACTIVITY | Sad-Venger Hunt

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ahead of time, print the printables double-sided so there's a picture on one side and a corresponding statement on the other. Print and cut as many copies as you need based on the size of your group. Hide the printables throughout the room. Invite the kids to look for them. The first four kids to find four different cards (no duplicates) win! Have the winning kids come to the stage. Have each of them act out one of the emotions they found.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Instead of using the pre-printed pictures, select preteens to draw emojis to represent the emotions.
- Sometimes, identifying how we feel can be hard, and today, our emotions are hidden all over the room. Let's look around the room to find four cards with four different emotions on them. When we're done, you'll have a chance to act out the statement on the back.

ACTIVITY | Voice-Over Training Day

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this](#) video (or just a part of it) of behind-the-scenes voice acting. Then invite the kids to try out their own voice acting skills in response to animated GIFs you'll put on the screen by going to giphy.com and typing in the name of the animated movie you want to use. (We recommend downloading these GIFs in advance to avoid kids seeing any unwanted images or ads on the site.) Make sure the final GIF is one where the animation is crying – this will help you transition into the Bible story and Big Idea for the day. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have preteens find and select a one-minute clip from an animated movie of their choice. Play the clip on mute and have them dub the scene by replicating the lines in their own voice or making up their own words.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Make this a partner activity and use the GIFs as inspiration. Instead of dubbing over GIFs, have one partner do some motions and the other can provide the voice-over. You can even edit it digitally on a platform like TikTok.
- These actors are doing the voices for a bunch of different animated movies! Do you see how they have to capture the feelings of the characters? Today, we're going to train to be voice-over actors for animations.
- I'm going to show you all animated GIFs, and it's your job to express the sounds and feelings of the characters in the animation.

POLL | Animated Reactions

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Invite kids to respond to the following statements by acting out the gestures attached to each answer.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** You may have friends who are unable to participate in all of the gestures being prompted. Consider pairing response options with other universal gestures, like a thumbs up, head nod, etc.
- **What do you like to do when you're sad?** I'm going to call out some common things people do and if it's something you do, show me by doing the action I say. You can pick as many as you like!
 - If you like to be alone, hug yourself.
 - If you like to be with others, jump up and down.
 - If you like to eat food or ice cream, rub your tummy.
 - If you like to cry it out, cover your face with your hands.
 - If you like to distract yourself with a good movie or book when you're sad, curl up into a little ball.
 - If you like to play with your pet, act like your pet!
 - If it depends on the day, stand with your hands on your hips.
- Everyone feels sad sometimes, but how we respond to that sadness is different for each person. But there is something – or rather, someone – everyone can turn to when they're sad. Let's talk more about that now!

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | 1 Kings 19:1–13 (Elijah Flees to Horeb)

- **Who can tell me the last animated movie or cartoon you saw?** Well, let's watch a clip right now from an amazing animated movie that I really like!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before telling today's Bible story, show [this](#) clip from "Inside Out," stopping the video at 2:02. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
- In this clip, we saw some of the characters had really, really big and animated emotions! All of these characters live inside Riley's mind, and Bing Bong, Riley's old imaginary friend, was feeling sad because it seemed like she had forgotten all about him.

- **How does Joy try to cheer up Bing Bong?**
- **Why do you think it didn't work?**
- **How does Sadness comfort Bing Bong?**
- Today, we're hearing all about the prophet, Elijah, who also had very animated feelings. Elijah was such a strong and confident believer in God, he called out all the prophets of Baal — which was a fake god — and challenged them to a contest.
- Of course, it was no contest. The real God made the fake god and all its prophets look silly. But let's find out what happens next.
- *[Read 1 Kings 19:1–5a.]*
 - An evil queen named Jezebel, who worshiped this fake god, got really mad and became determined to find and kill Elijah. Elijah was scared, so he did what he had to do: He ran for his life.
 - He ran and ran until he fainted. He was so tired and so depressed, he wanted to die, but an angel came and gave him food and drink.
- *[Read 1 Kings 19:5b–9.]*
 - When Elijah heard this, he poured out his feelings to God. His frustration, sure, but mostly his sadness. Elijah was sad God had come through in such an amazing way to defeat the prophets of Baal, but now seemed far away.
- He said: *[Read 1 Kings 19:10–13.]*
 - God told Elijah to go out and stand on the mountain because he was going to show up.
 - A mighty wind came, but God wasn't there.
 - An earthquake shook, but God wasn't there.
 - A fire burned, but God wasn't there.
- And then, in the midst of Elijah's sadness, came a gentle whisper. It was God speaking directly to Elijah, letting him know God was still there and Elijah could feel comforted.
- No matter how confident or sure of yourself you are, sometimes, you'll find yourself in a situation where you feel sad feelings, too. But no matter what, God comforts us when we feel sad.

BIG IDEA | God gives me comfort when I feel sad.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Go to app.animaker.com and create another short and easy animation to reveal this week's Big Idea. Alternatively, you can create two speech balloons with poster boards and write "God gives me comfort" on one and "when I feel sad" on the other. Invite two volunteers to hold up each speech balloon and freeze in a funny, cartoon pose. Have the volunteers unfreeze and say what's in their respective balloons when the kids yell, "Animate!"
- Let's all say the Big Idea together: **God gives me comfort when I feel sad.**

VIDEO | Animated, Episode 3

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](http://Grow.TV).

ACTIVITY | Whisper Challenge

- We might not think that a whisper is as powerful or convincing as fire or wind, but God knew the gentleness of a whisper was what Elijah needed. Sometimes, a whisper is enough, as we are about to see with this game!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have four or five kids come up front and stand in a line. Give them something to block their hearing like noise-canceling headphones, disposable earplugs, or headphones playing music. Say or write a quote from an animated movie and only let the first kid know what it is. The first kid will whisper their movie quote to the next kid in line, who will then turn and whisper it to the kid behind them.

Continue to play until the final kid in line removes whatever is covering their ears and says what they think the phrase was. Depending on the size of your group, you could have teams compete – award one point for every correct word guessed. You can also just have one or two volunteers at the front wearing noise-canceling headphones and have the whole group whisper the quote to them. Here are some ideas:

- “The cold never bothered me anyway.” (Frozen)
- “Yabba Dabba Do!” (The Flintstones)
- “To infinity and beyond.” (Toy Story)
- “Silenzio, Bruno!” (Luca)
- “Be our guest, be our guest.” (Beauty and the Beast)
- “Where is my super-suit?” (The Incredibles)
- “Crabby cakes.” (SpongeBob SquarePants)
- “Tadashi is here.” (Big Hero 6)
- “We don’t talk about Bruno.” (Encanto)
- “Mother knows best.” (Tangled)
- “It’s so fluffy!” (Despicable Me)

✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Play a game of [Telestrations](#) instead which is a combination of telephone and charades. You can purchase the game or make your own version using sketchpads and index cards filled out with different animated characters.

ACTIVITY | Act and React Relay

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide your group into even teams for this relay race. Line up teams at a start line on one side of the room. Each person will touch the opposite wall (or finish line) and come back. The first team all the way through wins. Here’s the catch: A successful back-and-forth run will be determined not only by speed, but acting ability. You will be calling out “bees,” “avalanche,” or “fog.” When you call those out, the kids whose turn it is will have to act like they’re in the middle of the called out thing.
- In today’s Bible story, Elijah encountered some crazy natural occurrences like wind, earthquake, and fire. In this game, we’ll act how we’d respond if met with some less-likely phenomena.

SCRIPTURE | Jeremiah 8:18–9:1

- Do you remember when we talked about Jeremiah? Jeremiah had the nickname, “the weeping prophet.” Jeremiah was sad very often because he cared so much about God’s people. Let’s read together some of the words Jeremiah said when his heartfelt sorrow.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Jeremiah 8:18–9:1 together.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Provide each preteen with a small tissue package and a name tag for the tissues. Encourage preteens to give it to a friend who might need comforting.
- Do you see? Jeremiah didn’t hold back when it came to his thoughts and feelings. But even then, Jeremiah knew God was with him and he could say all those things because he knew God was listening.
- **Did you know even Jesus got sad sometimes?**
 - While on Earth, Jesus felt and experienced human emotions, including sadness.
 - The Bible tells us about a specific time when Jesus was with friends and wept. One of Jesus’ friends died after being sick, and Jesus cried after seeing how sad his friend’s family and friends were.
- Sadness doesn’t last forever. And having someone with us who understands our sadness – like Jesus was with friends – actually helps because then we aren’t alone in our sadness. When you’re sad, remember God is with you in your sadness, so you can say with confidence, **God gives me comfort when I feel sad.**

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

REFLECTION | Whispered Words

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Start talking to your kids in a whisper. They will most likely have to lean in to hear you. When they start to lean in, ask them why they did that.*
- When we're sad, it's easy for us to believe God is far away. But today's Bible story and memory verse tell us to believe something different — that God is just as close to us in our sadness as ever.
- In fact, it's in our sadness that God longs for us to lean in closely so we can hear — even if God speaks in a whisper.
- **When you feel sad, what kind of things do you think God wants to say to you?** *[Invite kids who feel comfortable to share their thoughts.]*
- I don't know about you, but knowing **God gives me comfort when I feel sad** helps me feel better. Some of the most comforting words of my life haven't come in a shout, they've come in a soft and quiet voice. Isn't it cool that our God speaks to us like that in our sadness?

ACTIVITY | Doughy Teardrops

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Guide kids in making their own version of Play-Doh using [this](#) tutorial. Then, instruct them to mold the dough into a teardrop shape. If possible, make a few different colors of the dough. After each kid molds their dough into the shape of a teardrop, have them bring the tears together to make something to remind them they're not alone when they're sad. For larger groups, divide the kids into groups of four or five.*
 - ✳ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *For those who may be resistant to making the dough and interacting with sensory items, this can be turned into a coloring and art activity. The teardrops can be constructed using construction paper and other art materials as an alternative.*
- **Have you ever felt alone when you were sad?** Maybe you were upset at school and found yourself playing in the corner of the playground. Or maybe you were in your house but felt like nobody would listen.
- Let's each create our own teardrop out of dough. *[Guide the kids in creating the dough and shaping it into teardrops.]*
- Today's Big Idea tells us that **God gives me comfort when I feel sad**. One of the ways God does that is by giving us other people. Let's join our teardrops together to create something that reminds us we're never alone in our sadness.

MEMORY VERSE | Romans 15:13a (NIV)

- **"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him."**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Ask kids for the names of some of their favorite animated villains. Show Romans 15:13a on a screen or print it on paper for them to see. Then, invite the kids to recite the memory verse like they're giving a famous villain monologue. Only a few kids might actually volunteer to do it, but it will be a hilarious way to help everyone remember the verse. (Don't forget to also check out the memory verse signs — a combination of SEE and ASL — available in your Programming folder or at growcurriculum.org/Romans15-13a.)*

PRAYER

- God, thank you for your comfort. Thank you for being there both on the best days and the worst days. In my deepest valleys, I will trust in you. Quiet my heart when it aches so I can hear your comforting voice. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- Why was Elijah running for his life?
- Why was Elijah so sad?
- How did God appear to Elijah on the mountain?
- Read Jeremiah 8:18–9:1. What made Jeremiah so sad?
- What will you do the next time you feel sad?
- How does it make you feel to have a God who comforts you?
- How can you imitate God when someone you know is sad?

ACTIVITY | Stop Motion Series

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ahead of time, download the app, [Stop Motion Studio](#). Divide kids into groups of four or five and provide letter cutouts (or have kids make their own). Encourage the groups to work together to make a creative display of the Big Idea. Check out a video like [this](#) for inspiration. Alternatively, divide the kids into groups and have them create their own actions to the Big Idea. Remind them to make the motions big and fast. You can film them in slow-mo with your phone and show it back to them.
- I hope this will help you remember the Big Idea, especially when you're feeling down: **God gives me comfort when I feel sad.**