



#8 – WHAT DO I DO IF THE LIGHTS GO OUT?

*Walk in the light of your fire.
Isaiah 50:11*

- PURPOSE:** What to do in the event of a power failure.
- SONG:** “I Am Glad for Many Things,” CS 151 (verse 1)
- LESSON:** Tell the story “When the Lights Went Out” (from *The Friend*, January 1990).

What did this family do when the lights went out? What would your family do? Show family members where candles, oil lamps, wicks, matches, and emergency flashlights are stored. Are these supplies easy to get to? Should these items be stored together in a certain place?

Pretend your lights have gone out. Have a Family Home Evening like the family in the story. Get out the candles and warm clothing, and prepare dinner without electricity. Have children practice lighting candles, oil lamps, replacing wicks, etc.

**What does your family need to do to be better prepared
in the event of an electrical power failure
that would last for more than a day?**

When the Lights Went Out

By Mary Beth Pruett

“Look,” Jessica said, pointing to the window. “It’s snowing.”

We ran to look outside. The tiny flakes started falling faster and faster. Then the flakes got bigger. They fell in swirls and swoops, and sometimes we could hardly see the barn through the curtain of white. By the time we finished lunch, the snow was three feet deep.

We watched from the window, feeling snug and warm inside the house. The cedar trees bent and swayed under their load, and the mailbox wore a thick white muff. Every now and then we heard a sharp crack as a limb broke under the weight of the snow.

Suddenly the lights blinked—once, twice. We held our breaths. Mom hurried about, setting out candles and filling the oil lamp on the mantel. The lights flickered again, then gave up.

“Listen to the quiet,” said Jessica. There was no television, no radio, no hum from the refrigerator. The only sound we heard was the tick of the grandfather clock by the front door.

David brought an armful of wood from the shed for the fireplace and soon had a blaze crackling and popping. We all gathered around the hearth, bundling into our warmest clothes. Our dog, Duke, crept closer to the fire and curled up for a nap.

The wind howled around the house, and I was glad to be inside. “What about the ponies?” asked Jessica. “Will they get cold?”

“They’re safe inside the barn,” said Dad. “I put extra straw in their stalls.”

For supper we roasted hot dogs in the fireplace and ate off of paper plates. It was just like a picnic. We toasted marshmallows for dessert. I let mine burn on the outside so that they were crisp and almost black. Inside they were gooey and hot.

“Mmmm,” said Jessica, licking her sticky fingers. “I wish the electricity would go off every day.”

“I’ll bet you’d soon get tired of that,” Mom said.

“Well, it’s time for family home evening,” Dad said and brought out his guitar. He played while we sang “I Am a Child of God.” David said an opening prayer. Then, by the light of the oil lamp, Mom read us the story of the brother of Jared. The flickering candles made spooky shadows against the walls. I sat close to Dad, glad to be by the fire.

Afterward, we sang “Over in the Meadow” all the way through, and “Bingo” and “Old MacDonald” and “Frosty the Snowman.”

“We can make a snowman tomorrow,” I said.

David turned Duke out. When he came back inside, he looked like a snow dog. Jessica dried him off with a towel.

We knelt together for family prayer, then went to bed early in our warmest pajamas and with extra blankets piled on our beds. “May we have waffles for breakfast tomorrow?” I asked as Mom tucked me in.

“We’ll have cold cereal if the power is still out,” Mom reminded me.

The moon was bright, and I could see its reflection on the snow from my window. Everything looked strange and different. The house sounded different too.

I woke up in the middle of the night. My nose was cold. Suddenly, I heard a click and a hum. The electricity was back on! I heard the furnace start, and I snuggled deeper into my blankets. The house would be warm again by morning. Maybe there would be waffles for breakfast, after all.