Preschool–Grade 6

Elijah and Elisha

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: Stay faithful to God all the way, even when others tell you to stop. God's work goes on.
Bible passage: 2 Kings 2:1–15. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." *2 Kings 2:11 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board. Draw a line across the bottom of the board with four dots on it, and write the four place names under the dots: Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho, Jordan.

1. Opening game: Keep Going (5–10 minutes)

Choose a leader. The leader does a motion (jumping jacks, arm circles, marching in place) and everyone copies. Every few seconds, you call out a reason to quit: "You can stop now!" "Nobody's watching!" "Everyone else sat down!" Anyone who stops sits down. The last ones still going win. Ask: *What made it hard to keep going? What helped you not quit?* Say: "Elisha was told three times to stay behind. Let's see what he did."

2. Bible story: Elisha Will Not Leave (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to 2 Kings 2. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words. Point to each place on the board as the story gets there.

Elisha follows Elijah. Elijah was God's prophet (1 Kings 18:36). Some time before this story, Elijah had found Elisha plowing and cast his mantle, his cloak, upon him (1 Kings 19:19); Elisha "went after Elijah, and ministered unto him," which means he served him (19:21). Now the LORD was about to take Elijah up into heaven by a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:1).

Three times "Tarry here." Look up 2 Kings 2:2. Tarry means stay. Elisha's answer means, "As sure as God lives, and as sure as you live, I will not leave you." At Bethel the **sons of the prophets** (a group of prophets) asked Elisha, "Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day?" He said, "Yea, I know it; **hold ye your peace**," which means be quiet (2:3). It happened again at Jericho (2:4–5). Elijah said "Tarry" a third time, for Jordan, and Elisha said a third time, "I will not leave thee" (2:6).

Across the Jordan. Fifty men of the sons of the prophets stood far off to watch (2:7). **Look up 2 Kings 2:8.** Elijah **wrapped** his mantle **together** (rolled it up) and **smote** (hit) the waters. They divided **hither and thither**, this way and that way, and the two went over on dry ground.

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Elisha's request. Look up 2 Kings 2:9. A **double portion** is a double share. Elijah answered, "Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so" (2:10).

The whirlwind. Look up 2 Kings 2:11. Behold means look; **asunder** means apart. Elisha saw it and cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." He saw Elijah no more, and he **rent** (tore) his own clothes in two pieces, as people did in great sorrow (2:12).

The mantle. Elisha took up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him and stood by the bank of Jordan (2:13). **Look up 2 Kings 2:14.** The same God who parted the water for Elijah parted it for Elisha. **Look up 2 Kings 2:15.** The sons of the prophets at Jericho saw it. They came to meet him and bowed to the ground before him.

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. Elijah told Elisha to stay behind three times (2:2, 2:4, 2:6). Why do you think Elisha kept going?
2. The sons of the prophets kept reminding Elisha what was going to happen (2:3, 2:5). How do you think that felt? Who helps you keep going when things are hard?
3. Elisha asked for "a double portion" of Elijah's spirit (2:9). He could have asked for anything. What does that show about what mattered to him?
4. Elijah was gone, but Elisha asked, "Where is the LORD God of Elijah?" and the water parted (2:14). What does that teach us about God when people we love are gone or far away?
5. Elijah went to heaven, but God's work went on through Elisha. How can kids help God's work go on today?

Recall questions

1. What four places do Elijah and Elisha go in this story? *(Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho and the Jordan, 2 Kings 2:1–6)*
2. How many sons of the prophets stood far off to watch? *(Fifty, 2:7)*
3. What did the sons of the prophets say about Elisha at the end? *("The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha," 2:15)*

4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old words: **behold** means look, **asunder** means apart, and a **whirlwind** is a strong wind that spins around and around. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Elisha stayed faithful to the end, and God was with him. God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: pick one good thing you have started (praying every day, reading your Bible, helping at home) and don't quit, even when it gets hard.

6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point.

1. 2 Kings 2:1: How was the LORD going to take Elijah up into heaven? *(By a whirlwind)*
2. 2 Kings 2:2: Where did the LORD send Elijah first? *(To Bethel)*
3. 2 Kings 2:4: Where did the LORD send Elijah next? *(To Jericho)*
4. 2 Kings 2:8: What did Elijah do with his mantle? *(He wrapped it together and smote the waters)*
5. 2 Kings 2:10: What did Elisha have to do to get what he asked for? *(See Elijah when he was taken)*
6. 2 Kings 2:12: What did Elisha cry when he saw it? *("My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof")*
7. 2 Kings 2:14: What did Elisha say when he smote the waters? *("Where is the LORD God of Elijah?")*
8. 2 Kings 2:15: What did the sons of the prophets do when they came to meet Elisha? *(They bowed themselves to the ground before him)*

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You were with Elijah and with Elisha. Help us stay faithful to You when others tell us to stop, and help us do Your work too. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks about the chariot of fire or what a double portion means: keep to what the Bible says. A chariot of fire and horses of fire parted them, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:11). Elisha asked for a double share of Elijah's spirit, and the sons of the prophets saw that "the spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha" (2:15).

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