Preschool–Grade 6

Elijah and Elisha

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: Stay faithful to God to the end, and trust that His work goes on through the people who follow Him.
Bible passage: 2 Kings 2:1–15. Students read it out loud themselves. Background: 1 Kings 19:19–21.
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)* and "And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Beth-el. And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Beth-el." *2 Kings 2:2 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read 1 Kings 19:19–21 and 2 Kings 2:1–15. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

1. Opening game: Stay or Quit? (5–10 minutes)

Name one side of the room "stay" and the other side "quit." Read each situation. Students walk to the side they think most people their age would choose, then say what the faithful choice would be. 1) Your friends stop coming to church, and they want you to stop too. 2) You promised to help your grandma every Saturday, and your friends have better plans. 3) You started reading your Bible every day, and it's been a boring week. 4) Someone tells you, "Everybody knows that won't last," about something you are doing for God. Ask: *What makes people quit? What makes someone stay?* Say: "Elisha was told three times to stay behind."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Background (tell it): God told Elijah to anoint Elisha "to be prophet in thy room," which means in his place (1 Kings 19:16). Elijah found Elisha plowing and "cast his mantle upon him" (1 Kings 19:19), and Elisha "went after Elijah, and ministered unto him" (19:21). **Ministered** means served.
Read out loud: 2 Kings 2:1–15. Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **tarry** (2:2): stay; **As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth** (2:2): as sure as God lives and you live, a very strong promise
- **sons of the prophets** (2:3): a group of prophets; **take away thy master from thy head** (2:3): take your master from over you
- **hold ye your peace** (2:3): be quiet
- **wrapped it together** (2:8): rolled it up; **smote** (2:8): hit; **hither and thither** (2:8): this way and that way
- **double portion** (2:9): a double share
- **asunder** (2:11): apart; **rent** (2:12): tore

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3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. Elijah told Elisha "Tarry here" three times (2:2, 2:4, 2:6). Why do you think he kept saying it? Why do you think Elisha kept refusing?
2. The sons of the prophets told Elisha twice what was about to happen, and he said, "hold ye your peace" (2:3, 2:5). Have people ever talked you out of something you knew God wanted? How do you answer them?
3. Elijah said, "Ask what I shall do for thee" (2:9). If someone who loved God asked you that, what would you ask for? What does Elisha's answer show about what he wanted most?
4. Elijah said it would happen only "if thou see me when I am taken from thee" (2:10). Elisha had to stay close to the very end. Why does staying close matter?
5. After Elijah was gone, Elisha asked, "Where is the LORD God of Elijah?" and the water parted (2:14). What does that tell you about where faith is anchored: in a person, or in God?
6. The same mantle Elijah once cast on Elisha (1 Kings 19:19) was now in his hands (2 Kings 2:13). What has God put in your hands to carry on?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words in 2 Kings 2:11 and 2:2: **behold** means look; **asunder** means apart; **tarry** means stay; **As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth** means "as sure as God lives and you live," a very strong promise. Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say 2 Kings 2:11 this week; keep working on 2 Kings 2:2 next week too.

5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "Elisha stayed to the end, and when he called on the LORD God of Elijah, God answered. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: '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) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-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 utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, 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.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. Where am I being tempted to "tarry here," to stop following God as closely as I did?
2. Who in my life has shown me what it looks like to follow God? What have I learned from them that I want to carry on?
3. Write a short prayer asking God to help you stay faithful to the end.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: thank someone who has helped you follow God, and tell them one thing you learned from them.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You are the same God who was with Elijah and with Elisha. Help us stay faithful to You to the end, and let Your work go on through us. Thank You for loving us and making a way to save us through Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks what the double portion means or why there was a chariot of fire: stay with what the passage says. Elisha asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit (2 Kings 2:9), Elijah said he would have it if he saw him taken (2:10), Elisha saw it (2:12), and the sons of the prophets said, "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha" (2:15). The Bible says the chariot and horses were of fire and parted them (2:11), and it doesn't say more.

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