Preschool–Grade 6

Elijah and Elisha

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Stay faithful to God, like Elisha. 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, 4 sheets of paper, 6 paper strips, a marker, tape, a towel or jacket, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the four town names on the 4 sheets: GILGAL, BETHEL, JERICHO, JORDAN. Tape them on four walls of the room. Write the memory verse on the 6 paper strips (see part 4). Put bookmarks in your Bible at 2 Kings 2:2 and 2 Kings 2:11.

1. Opening game: I Will Not Leave You (5 minutes)

Line the kids up behind you at the GILGAL sign. Walk to the next sign and they follow. At each sign, turn around and say, "Stay here!" The kids answer together, "I will not leave you!" and keep following you to the next sign: Bethel, Jericho, then Jordan. Then ask: *Was it easy to keep following, even when I said "Stay here"?* Say: "Today we will meet a man who would not leave his teacher, no matter what."

2. Bible story: Elisha Will Not Leave (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to 2 Kings 2, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

Elijah was a prophet, a man who spoke God's words (1 Kings 18:36). **Elisha** had followed Elijah and served him (1 Kings 19:21). One day the LORD was going to take Elijah up into heaven by a **whirlwind** (2 Kings 2:1). Say: "A whirlwind is a strong wind that spins around and around."

Elijah and Elisha went from a town called Gilgal (2:1). Elijah said, "**Tarry** here," which means stay here, "for the LORD hath sent me to Beth-el." But Elisha said, "As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee" (2:2). Say: "That means, 'As sure as God lives, and as sure as you live, I will not leave you!'" So they went to Bethel together.

At Bethel, a group of prophets called the **sons of the prophets** came to Elisha. They asked Elisha if he knew that the LORD would take away his master that day. Elisha said, "Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace" (2:3). That means, "Yes, I know. Be quiet."

Elijah said, "Tarry here," again, because the LORD was sending him to Jericho. And Elisha said again, "I will not leave thee" (2:4). At Jericho the sons of the prophets said the same thing, and Elisha gave the same answer (2:5). Then Elijah said, "Tarry here," a third time, because the LORD was sending him to the river Jordan. And a third time Elisha said, "I will not leave thee" (2:6). So the two of them went on.

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The story continues: Fifty of the sons of the prophets stood far away to watch (2:7). Elijah and Elisha stood by the river Jordan. Elijah took his **mantle**, his big coat, rolled it up, and **smote** (hit) the water. The water divided this way and that way, and the two of them walked over on dry ground (2:8)!

Then Elijah said, "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee." Elisha said, "Let a **double portion** of thy spirit be upon me" (2:9). Say: "A double portion is a double share." Elijah said, "Thou hast asked a hard thing." But if Elisha saw Elijah when he was taken, he would have it (2:10).

They kept walking and talking. **Read 2 Kings 2:11 from your Bible:** "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." Say: "A **chariot** is a cart with wheels that horses pull. **Asunder** means apart. Elijah went up to heaven!"

Elisha saw it, and he cried, "My father, my father" (2:12). Then he could not see Elijah anymore. Elisha was so sad that he tore his own clothes in two pieces (2:12). That is what people did then when they were very sad.

Elijah's mantle had fallen down. Elisha picked it up and went back to the river Jordan (2:13). He hit the water with the mantle and said, "Where is the LORD God of Elijah?" And the water parted this way and that way, and Elisha walked over (2:14)! God was with Elisha too. The sons of the prophets saw it and said, "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha." They came to meet him and bowed down to the ground (2:15).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. What did Elisha say each time Elijah said, "Tarry here"? *("I will not leave thee," 2 Kings 2:2, 2:4, 2:6)*
2. What did Elijah hit the water with? *(His mantle, his coat, 2:8)*
3. What did Elisha ask for? *(A double portion, a double share, of Elijah's spirit, 2:9)*
4. How did Elijah go up into heaven? *(By a whirlwind, after a chariot of fire and horses of fire parted them, 2:11)*
5. What happened when Elisha hit the water with the mantle? *(The water parted, and Elisha went over, 2:14)*

4. Memory verse: Whirlwind Verse (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 strips up in order: *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.* Explain the old words: **behold** means look, **asunder** means apart, and a **whirlwind** is a wind that spins around and around. Read the verse together. Then take one strip away and read it again. Keep taking strips away, one each time, until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves. Each time you say "whirlwind," everyone twirls a finger in the air.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Elisha stayed faithful all the way. He did not quit, and God was with him. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: '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 we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
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: keep doing what is right, even when it is hard and you want to quit. Say to yourself, "I will stay faithful to God!"

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Elijah and Elisha word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/elijah-and-elisha-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the craft (vbshq.com/crafts/elijah-and-elisha-craft), or **Pass the Mantle:** the kids sit in a circle and pass the towel or jacket (the "mantle") around while everyone says, "I will not leave thee, I will not leave thee." When you say "Jordan!" the child holding the mantle answers a question from part 3, or tells one thing that happened in the story. Then keep passing.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for being with Elijah and Elisha. Help us stay faithful to You and not give up, even when it's hard. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks where Elijah went: answer just as the Bible says. Elijah "went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (2 Kings 2:11). God took him up to heaven. If they ask about the chariot and horses of fire, say the Bible tells us they were fire, and it doesn't tell us more.

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