

# Elijah Goes to Heaven

(1 Kings 19:19; 2 Kings 2:1-15)

## Pre-Session Warm Up

What kinds of things do you need power and strength for? (Hitting a baseball, opening jar lids.) What makes you strong? (Exercising and eating food that is good for you.) Where do you get Spiritual strength from? (God!)

Today we are going to learn how important it is for us to have the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

## Opening Prayer

Father, we want to be faithful to You. But sometimes it's hard. The things of the world tug and pull at us. We are tempted to do things that we shouldn't. We need the power of the Holy Spirit, so desperately. Your way is so much better than the way of the world. Teach us this morning how to hold on to You no matter what happens to us in life. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you.  
(Acts 1:8)*

## Lesson

### **Reviewing the last few lessons...**

Over the past three weeks, we have been learning about the prophet, Elijah. Because King Ahab and Queen Jezebel were wicked and worshipped idols instead of the only true God, God sent Elijah to bring messages of warning to them.

God Provides for Elijah

First, Elijah told Ahab and Jezebel that because of their wickedness, God was going to bring a drought and a famine to the land. And God

kept His promise and many people died. Jezebel wanted to kill Elijah for bringing God's judgment against them. But God cared for Elijah in a miraculous way. God led him to a hiding place right next to a stream of water and then God sent ravens to carry bread to him morning and evening. So Elijah had plenty to eat and drink while the rest of the world around him was experiencing the drought.

Then, after a couple of years, the stream dried up, but God didn't forget about Elijah. He led Elijah to a widow's house. When he arrived, the widow was just about to make her last bit of flour and oil into a loaf of bread. She expected to die shortly after that. But God miraculously provided flour and oil for over a year. Her jars of oil and flour never emptied!

We learned that God promises to supply all our need!

Elijah and the Contest with Baal

To prove to evil Ahab that only the Lord is God, Elijah challenged the false prophets of Baal to a contest. He told them to set up an altar with a sacrifice on it. And he did the same. Then he told the false prophets to call upon Baal to light the fire. They danced furiously all night long, but Baal never sent down fire. Do you know why? (Because Baal is not God!) Then Elijah called upon God.

1 Kings 18:38-39

*Immediately the fire of the LORD flashed down from heaven and burned up the young bull, the wood, the stones, and the dust. It even licked up all the water in the trench! (39) And when all the people saw it, they fell face down on the ground and cried out, "The LORD—he is God! Yes, the LORD is God!"*

We learned that Lord is God and there is no other.

Elijah and Naboth's Vineyard

Last week we learned that King Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard because it was near the palace. When Naboth would not sell it to him, Queen Jezebel came up with a plan to kill Naboth so they could just take the land.

Ahab thought he could do anything he wanted and no one would know what happened. What began with an attitude of discontentment, led to the cruel murder of an innocent man.

So, God sent Elijah to tell King Ahab that the Lord was going to bring great harm to him.

We learned that God wants us to be content with what we have.

### ***Going on with the story...***

Now it is time for Elijah's life on earth to be over. But before he went up to heaven, God wanted him to pass his job onto another man.

God told Elijah to go find a man named Elisha and choose him to take his place as God's prophet. Elijah found Elisha working in his field because Elisha was a farmer.

1 Kings 19:19

*So Elijah went and found Elisha son of Shaphat plowing a field. There were twelve teams of oxen in the field, and Elisha was plowing with the twelfth team. Elijah went over to him and threw his cloak across his shoulders and then walked away.*

The cloak that Elijah was wearing was a symbol of God's power. Elisha recognized that when Elijah threw his cloak around him, it was an invitation to follow Elijah. So, Elisha left his old life as a farmer and became Elijah's assistant. During the next few years Elijah taught Elisha everything he knew about being a true prophet of God.

Finally, Elisha was ready to take over Elijah's job and it was time for God to take Elijah to heaven.

2 Kings 2:1

*When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were traveling from Gilgal.*

The two men came to the edge of the Jordan River. And, when they got there, an amazing thing happened.

2 Kings 2:8

*Then Elijah folded his cloak together and struck the water with it. The river divided, and the two of them went across on dry ground!*

Miraculously, the Jordan divided and the riverbed dried up so they could walk across. When had God performed a miracle like that before? (The Red Sea and the Jordan River.) Do you wonder what went through Elisha's mind when that happened? He had to be thinking that the God he was serving was the same God who delivered Israel into the Promised Land. God does not change; He is all powerful and rules over all creation!

Before God took Elijah up to heaven, he asked Elisha, "What do you want me to do for you before I'm taken away?" So, Elisha had one last request.

If you had a very special person in your life and he told you this would be his last day on earth, and you could ask him for anything, what would you ask for? [Teacher, let the children respond.]

2 Kings 2:9

*When they came to the other side, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I can do for you before I am taken away." And Elisha replied, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit and become your successor."*

Elisha didn't ask for popularity or for riches. He asked for a double portion of God's power. He wanted to carry on the work that Elijah had taught him to do for God. He didn't ask for material possessions, he simply wanted to be used by God for His kingdom. He knew he would need God's power to continue Elijah's work.

2 Kings 2:10

*"You have asked a difficult thing," Elijah replied. "If you see me when I am taken from you, then you will get your request. But if not, then you won't."*

This was a big request. But Elijah tells Elisha, "If you see me when I'm taken from you, you will get your request."

## 2 Kings 2:11

*As they were walking along and talking, suddenly a chariot of fire appeared, drawn by horses of fire. It drove between the two men, separating them, and Elijah was carried by a whirlwind into heaven.*

God came for Elijah suddenly and carried him up to heaven in a tornado. It was not something Elijah did in his own strength; God did it!

Do you think that Elisha kept his eyes wide opened to watch what was happening, or not?

## 2 Kings 2:12

*Elisha saw it and cried out, "My father! My father! I see the chariots and charioteers of Israel!" And as they disappeared from sight, Elisha tore his clothes in distress.*

Do you think that Elisha got that double portion of power he asked for? How would Elisha know if God granted his request?

## 2 Kings 2:13-14

*Elisha picked up Elijah's cloak, which had fallen when he was taken up. Then Elisha returned to the bank of the Jordan River. (14) He struck the water with Elijah's cloak and cried out, "Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?" Then the river divided, and Elisha went across.*

So it was proven! Elisha *did* have the power!

God was faithful! God had given Elisha power just as He had asked for. Elisha started his work as God's prophet with great joy and confidence. He had seen for himself that God is powerful.

God is faithful to us and wants to give us the same power that He gave Elisha.

Who else was taken up to heaven in a miraculous way? (Jesus!)

Before Jesus went up to heaven in the clouds, he promised to send us the Holy Spirit. He knew that we would need the power of the Holy

Spirit to live a life that is pleasing to God, just like Elisha needed the power of God to carry on the work of Elijah, the prophet.

God has important work for you to do for Him, but you must do it by the power of the Holy Spirit. What do you think we need God's power for? [Teacher, let the children respond.] (The Spirit gives us comfort, guides us into all truth, reminds us of God's word, gives us the right words to say to others, and fills us with the power to say, "No!" to sin. The power from the Holy Spirit also gives us the courage, boldness, confidence, insight, ability, and authority that we need to be powerful witnesses for God.) [Teacher, review Memory Verse.]

Who else will be taken up to heaven in a miraculous way? (All true believers who are alive at the end of time!)

## 1 Corinthians 15:51-52

*But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! (52) It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed.*

What this is talking about is at the end of time, all the true believers in Jesus who are still alive, will be taken up into heaven suddenly, just like Elijah and just like Jesus.

If you are not a true believer in Jesus at the end of time, you will be left behind. Are you a true believer in Jesus? Do you really believe that when Jesus was crucified that He took the punishment that you deserve for your sins? Do you trust in what He did for you on the cross? Jesus could come back for us at any time. It says He will come "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." Every day we should get up asking "Lord Jesus, will I see you today?"

## 1 Thessalonians 4:17

*Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever.*

Are you ready? He could come at any time!

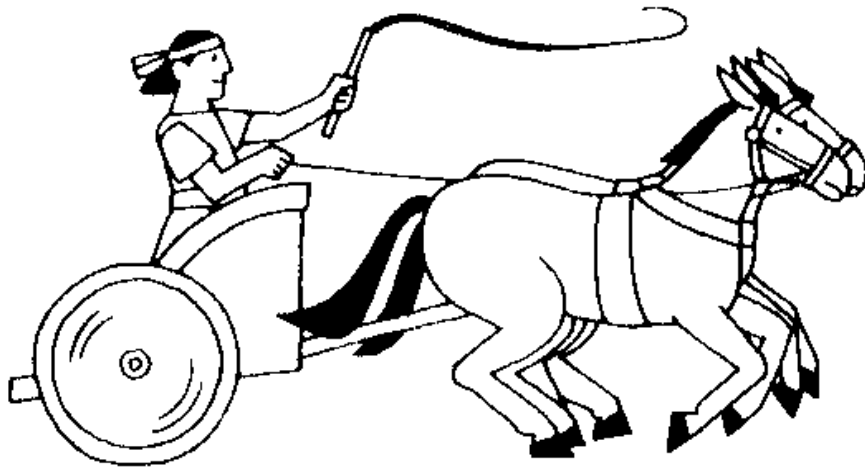
## Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for being a faithful and loving God. We do love You and want our lives to please You in every way. We ask that You give us the power of the Holy Spirit so that we might be able to say, "No!" to sin and "Yes!" to whatever You call us to do. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Craft Corner

Enlarge and copy the follow graphic onto yellow construction paper. Have the children cut "flames" out of red and orange construction paper to glue on to their chariots and horses.



### Game Center

#### *Bible Story Review Activity*

Have a volunteer stand with his/her back to the other students. Volunteer tosses a bean bag or nerf ball over his shoulder. Student

who catches it must answer one of the review questions, then becomes "It."

Or, use the following questions in another game of your choice:

1. What was the name of the evil King and Queen that Elijah had to bring God's word to? (Ahab and Jezebel)
2. Why did Jezebel want to kill Elijah? (Because she thought he brought the drought upon the country and also because he killed all the prophets of Baal.)
3. How did God take care of Elijah during the drought? (He led him to a hiding place right next to a stream of water and sent ravens to carry bread to him morning and evening.)
4. Tell about the contest Elijah challenged Ahab to.
5. Why didn't Baal send fire down on their altar? (He's not a real god!)
6. Who did Elijah find to take his place as the prophet of God? (Elisha)
7. What was Elisha doing when Elijah found him? (He was plowing a field; he was a farmer.)
8. How did Elijah "invite" Elisha to come follow him and become his assistant? (Elijah threw his cloak on him.)
9. Before Elijah went up to heaven what amazing thing happened at the Jordan River? (Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up, and struck the water with it. The waters divided and the river bed dried up.)
10. What was Elisha's last request of Elijah? (A double portion of power.)
11. Why did Elisha need God's power? (To continue the work Elijah had trained him to do for God.)
12. Tell how Elijah went up to heaven. (A chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire and then Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.)

13. How did Elisha know if God had given him the power he asked for? (He also took up the cloak of Elijah and struck the water with it. And the water divided and Elisha was able to cross over on dry land.)
14. Who else was taken up into heaven in a miraculous way? (Jesus!)
15. What did Jesus promise to send to us once he returned to the Father? (The Holy Spirit)
16. What do we need God's power for? (The Spirit gives us comfort, guides us into all truth, reminds us of God's word, gives us the right words to say to others, and fills us with the power to say, "No!" to sin. The power from the Holy Spirit also gives us the courage, boldness, confidence, insight, ability, and authority that we need to be powerful witnesses for God.)
17. Who else besides Elijah and Jesus will be taken up into heaven in a miraculous way? (Those of us who are alive at the end of time.)
18. How do you know if you'll be taken up into heaven when the rapture happens? (If you are a true believer in what Jesus did on the cross.)

