



LESSON PLAN

Scripture Texts:

2 Kings 2:1-14

John 13:31-35

Session Theme:

Loyalty

a. Welcome to Class

Teachers should arrive in the classroom well in advance of class. Welcome students as they enter, and inquire about their week. Pass out name tags and record attendance on a classroom chart.

b. Icebreaker: Two Wheels to Where?

Before class, print out a picture of a chariot. When kids arrive, draw two wheels on the board. Ask kids to name as many vehicles as possible that have only two wheels (*bicycle, wheelbarrow, scooter, motorcycle, moped, Segway, etc*). If no one mentions chariot on the list, write that word on the board and ask kids to tell you what it is. Hold up the picture and explain that this was an ancient form of transportation, pulled by horses. Even today, chariots are used in some parts of the world in exciting and dangerous races.

Today's story involves two men and their faithful God. What happened when one man got into a chariot and his loyal friend and student was left behind? Let's see!

c. Opening Prayer

Faithful God, thank you for loyal friends like Elisha in today's story. Help us to be a good friend to others and to serve you faithfully all our days. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

d. SEED Video or Song (Optional)

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This time may also include an opening song or two, using a commercial Sunday School music CD.

Song suggestions for this lesson:

- "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" (hymn)
- "Here I Am, Lord" (hymn)

e. Brief Bible Background

Read together the introduction to the lessons for the day, and briefly summarize the context and setting:

- Today's Lesson is from the Old Testament
- Scripture Section: Division

Because of disputes in the royal house, God's people were split into a Northern Kingdom (Israel) and a Southern Kingdom (Judah). It was a bad time, with much false worship and idolatry.

f. Communicate the Bible Story

Always keep in mind that the main purpose of Sunday School is to put people in contact with Bible stories. Use a version that is appropriate to the age level.

Upper Elementary: Read the Bible Story and Rhyme

Youth/Adults: Read the Scripture text from the Bible

For Upper and Lower Elementary, use the Storyteller questions to help the students think about the events of the story.

g. Complete the Worksheet(s)

Continue with the handout sheets appropriate to the age level of the students in class:

Upper Elementary: Worksheet and Drama

Youth: Bible Study (Maps, Timelines, Questions)

Adult: Bible Study Sheet (Introduction and Discussion)

h. Craft and Activity Time

If there is time after covering the Bible story, the class may move to craft and activity time, described on the following page. (Do not let the activity time supersede the actual time spent on the Scripture lesson.)

i. Summarize and Review

Before ending class, briefly summarize the day's lesson one last time. If you have not already done so, introduce the Theme Word for the week, providing the definition, and asking how the lesson connects to that theme.

Youth/Adult: Discuss "Reflection for the Week Ahead"

j. Closing Prayer

Close the session in prayer before dismissal:

Upper Elementary: Practice a prayer from memory (e.g., the Lord's Prayer, Luther's Morning Prayer, etc.)

Youth/Adult: Use the ADTRC Prayer format

Bible Study Leader's Guide

The following is a discussion and answer guide for the Youth and Adult Bible Study sheets. For all leaders, it can serve to provide some background on the Bible lesson.

Discuss: 2 Kings 2:1-14

1. The name Elijah means "God is the Lord." Elisha means "God is salvation." What do these names tell us about these two men? What was their profession? Who was the master, and who the apprentice?

The prefix "El" is the Hebrew word for God. These men clearly recognized and trusted the Lord (Yahweh). Both were prophets and miracle workers. Elijah was the master and Elisha the apprentice. The signs they performed were similar to those of Jesus himself.

2. How did the prophets in Bethel and Jericho know Elijah was going to be taken away? Why do you think Elisha didn't want to talk about it? What emotions do you imagine he was feeling at the time?

Prophets are those who are given a direct messages from God to convey to others. In this case, the group of prophets encountered by Elisha had learned of Elijah's death from God. (Apparently Elisha also knew.) Elisha didn't want his master to leave, because he loved Elijah and was his closest friend.

3. Can you think of other stories where God parted water so his people could cross? (Hint: Exodus 14:26-30 and Joshua 3:14-17.) Why is it important to remember that these are examples of God's power at work, and not the power of human beings?

In Exodus 14, God parted the Red Sea to let his people cross to safety, while at the same time he destroyed the Egyptian army. In Joshua 3, God parted the Jordan River to let his people cross into the Promised Land.

All these stories of "crossing" symbolize the movement into a new life and situation. They also show that as we enter into each new phase of life, we trust in God's power and not our own.

4. Elisha followed Elijah wherever he went. When we, as Christians, call ourselves "followers" of Jesus, how do we live that out? What does it mean that we are Jesus' students and apprentices in the world?

To "follow" a leader is more than just walking in the same direction; it is looking to our master for guidance, direction, and purpose. It is a willingness to go not where we choose, but where he chooses.

The word disciple means "one who learns." As followers of Christ, we grow in knowledge like students and are shaped in our behavior like apprentices. We trust and obey our master, Jesus, and live in the way he has shown us.

5. According to verse 9, what was Elisha's final request of Elijah? What do you think that means? How do verses 13-14 show that Elisha received what he requested? In a similar manner, how do we share in the Spirit of our master, Jesus?

Elisha asked for a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit, meaning that he wanted to be like Elijah in attitude, faith, and the power of God. In the end, as he returns after Elijah was taken up, we see that God parted the river for Elisha just as he had for his master.

As for the "double portion" of power — Elisha went on to perform miracles even greater than his master. Compare this to what Jesus said to his disciples in John 14:12: "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father."

6. The expression "to take on the mantle of _____" comes from this story. What does that expression mean? What does it say about the power and authority we exercise as believers?

A mantle is symbolic of authority and power, and of serving in a public office. This is why people such as judges, pastors, and academics wear robes of office, even to this day.

To be "vested" with power means a person is granted the authority to carry out a public function on behalf of a greater authority ("by the power vested in me by the state of ..."). In our case, as disciples who represent Christ, the Holy Spirit gives us faith and empowers our service in the world.

7. Read John 13:31-35. These are some of Jesus' final words to his disciples. What did he ask of them? How is this a continuation of his own ministry?

Jesus said, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." We know that "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son..." (John 3:16). We continue the work of Jesus in the world by showing the same sacrificial love that Jesus showed. We have been made the Body of Christ in the world, serving as his hands and feet and mouth to serve others.

Classroom Craft and Activity Page

Listed below are in-class activities and craft projects related to the theme for the day. Choose one of the following based on the age and capabilities of the students. (Never let the activity or craft time take precedence over the biblical story.)

Activity 1: Elijah's Cloak Craft

Materials Needed:

- White or light colored bandannas (one per person)
- Fabric markers
- Newspaper

Instructions:

Spread newspaper on tables or other work space. Give each student a white or light colored bandanna and access to several fabric markers.

Remind kids of today's Bible story and how Elisha picked up Elijah's cloak after Elijah had been taken into heaven. (*When Elisha struck the water with the cloak, the water parted and Elisha was able to walk across it.*)

Invite kids to imagine what Elijah's cloak might have looked like. What color do they picture it being? What patterns might have been woven into it?

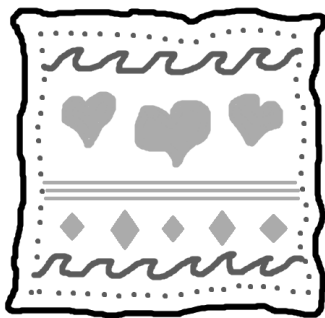
Next, ask kids to use the fabric markers to draw patterns on the bandanna and make a small cloak of their own.

If they want, they might use symbols that remind them of today's story, like flames, horses, chariots, waves, etc. Alternately, they might choose to simply draw geometric shapes, dots, lines, etc. It's really up to them!

Read the directions on your box of fabric markers and tell kids how to launder the bandannas at home so the colors don't run.

Have you ever had a memento or keepsake from a favorite person or place — maybe a shell from the beach or a little gift from a loved one?

For Elisha, having Elijah's cloak was something like that. It reminded him of his teacher. But more importantly, it reminded him of his faith in God!



Activity 2: Loyal Friends Game

Materials Needed:

- Large area to play a tag-style game

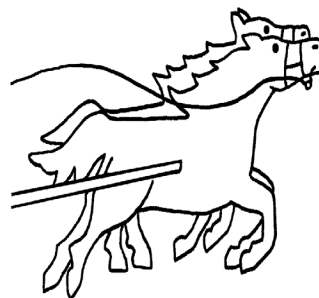
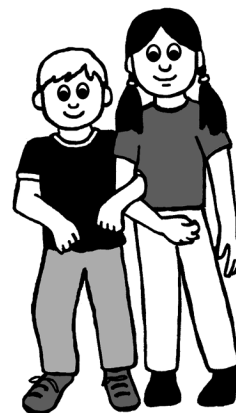
Instructions:

Choose one student to be "Elijah" and one to be "Elisha." All of the other students will be "horses."

To play this game, invite kids to follow these directions:

- Elisha links arms (or holds hands) with Elijah. The two of them will stay together, since Elisha does not want to leave Elijah!
- When you say "start," all of the other students ("horses") will begin to run.
- Elijah will try to tag the horses so they can join his chariot. Elisha's job is simply to keep holding on to Elijah without letting go!
- If Elijah succeeds in tagging a "horse," that person must link arms with Elisha and join them in their running. That "horse" will now help Elijah tag other horses.
- Each time a running horse gets tagged, it joins Elijah's chariot by linking arms with the last horse on the chain.
- Only Elijah and the newest horse on the end of the chain do the tagging.

Play until either all horses have been tagged and have joined the chariot, or until kids tire of it.



In today's story, loyal Elisha didn't want to leave his mentor, Elijah. But it was time for Elijah to go. So Elisha trusted God, and released his friend into God's care.

Imagine how amazing it must have been to see the fiery horses and chariot that carried Elijah into heaven!

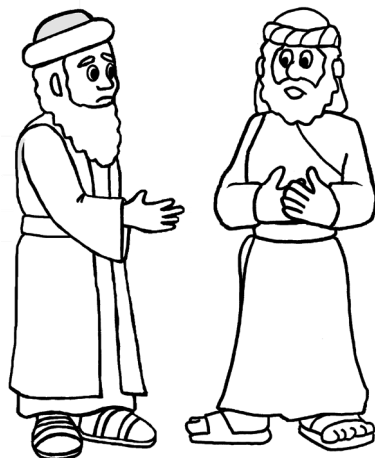
Worksheet Answer Key

Shown below are the answers and solution to the children's worksheet for this week's lesson:

Coded Message:

*Decode the message below
to see what Elijah said:*

ELISHA, THE
LORD WILL
SOON TAKE
ME AWAY.
WHAT CAN I
DO FOR YOU
BEFORE THAT
HAPPENS?



2 Kings 2:9

(Contemporary English Version)

Elisha's Request: (2 Kings 2:9)

"Please let there be a double portion of your spirit on me." (ESV)

In other words:

"Please give me twice as much of your power as you give the other prophets, so I can be the one who takes your place as their leader." (CEV)

From Martin Luther's Small Catechism

In the Lord's Prayer we pray: "Deliver us from evil."

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition, as in a summary, that our heavenly Father would deliver us from every type of evil — whether it affects our bodies or souls, property or reputation — and at last, when our hour of death comes, would grant us a blessed end to our earthly lives and graciously take us from this world of sorrow to himself in heaven.

Vocabulary Word for the Week:

Teachers may want to introduce the theme word for the week to help expand students' biblical vocabulary:

Loyalty

to stick with someone
and not give up on a friend

*When we are loyal to others,
they can trust that we will stand up for them
and not abandon them.*

Reflection for the Week Ahead

Elisha was an apprentice to Elijah who was teaching him the ways of the Lord so he could take over when Elijah was gone. In the work world, when we train a person who will be taking over our job, that person is called our "successor." That person will replace us when we move on to another company or retire.

The word for the person who teaches us the job is "mentor." Mentors advise us and guide us as we learn. Elijah was a good mentor for Elisha, especially when Elisha was nervous about him leaving.

- Why is it important to have a successor to take over a job? Ask your parent or another adult if they have ever had to train a successor and what that was like.
- What sort of qualities do you think it would take to replace the prophet Elijah? Did Elisha have those qualities?
- Why do you think Elisha was nervous about Elijah leaving him and going up into heaven? Would you be nervous if you were given the job of your mentor?

The Practice of Prayer

On the lines below, write a prayer giving thanks for the gift of wise mentors in your life. Ask God to bless them and encourage them as they teach others. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you courage and confidence when you take on a new role or job.

Practice using the ADTRC Prayer Form: Address, Description, Thanks, Request, Conclusion.