

Elijah & Elisha

2 Kings 2-5



Elijah was taken bodily into heaven and Elisha served in his place.



The Story

The Lord did many wonderful signs and miracles through Elijah, His prophet. Elijah was getting old. He served the Lord for many years. He was ready to go to heaven. The Lord had chosen a new prophet to take Elijah's place. His name was Elisha. He followed Elijah everywhere.

It was time for Elijah to go to heaven. Elijah knew it was time. Elisha knew that it was time. "I will not leave you," Elisha said to Elijah. They walked until they came to the Jordan River. At the river, Elijah took off his coat and hit the water. The water split apart and Elijah and Elisha walked across on dry ground.

Elijah asked, "Elisha, what may I do for you before I go to heaven?" Elisha said, "I would like a double share of your spirit." This means that Elisha wanted the Lord to be with him just like the Lord was with Elijah. Elisha wanted this done two times.

Elijah knew that only the Lord could give that gift to Elisha. Elijah said, "If you see me go into heaven, then you will get your answer."

They kept talking and walking. All of a sudden, a chariot of fire and horses appeared. It went between Elijah and Elisha. Then Elijah was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha saw it all happen and yelled, "My father, my father." Then he didn't see Elijah anymore.

Elisha remembered that if he saw Elijah go into heaven, he would get a double share of the Lord's Spirit. Elisha didn't feel any different. He wondered if the Lord's Spirit was with him. Elisha picked up Elijah's coat and asked, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" He took the coat, rolled it up, and hit the water just like Elijah had done. The water separated and Elisha knew that the Lord was with him.

Elisha was the new prophet of the Lord. The Lord was with him. He did miracles like Elijah had done. The people of Israel knew that the Lord was with him. The Lord also promises to be with us. The Lord is in our hearts, just like He was in Elisha's heart.

Activity One - Answer these Review Questions together.

1. Who was the old prophet of the Lord?
2. Where was Elijah ready to go to?
3. Who did the Lord pick to take Elijah's place as prophet?
4. Did Elisha think he was ready to take Elijah's place as prophet?
5. What separated Elijah and Elisha just before Elijah was taken to heaven?
6. What took Elijah to heaven?

7. How did Elisha know that the Lord was with him?

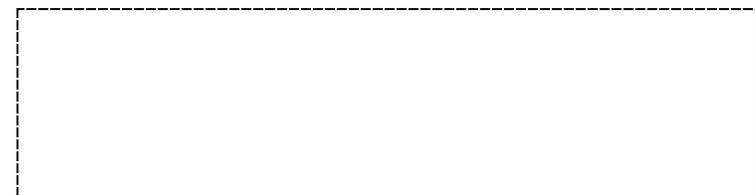
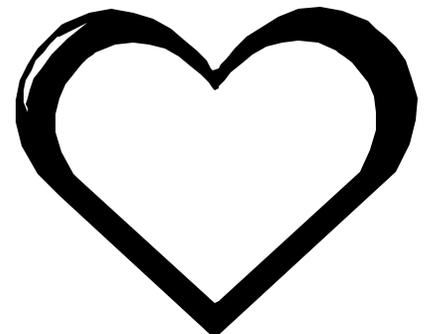
8. Who is the Lord with today just like He was with Elisha?

Activity Two - There are two prophets in our lesson, circle "Elisha and Elijah."

- | | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. I was old and knew I would go to heaven soon. | E <u>l</u> isha | Eli <u>j</u> ah |
| 2. I was Elijah's helper. | E <u>l</u> isha | Eli <u>j</u> ah |
| 3. I was the first person to hit the water. | E <u>l</u> isha | Eli <u>j</u> ah |
| 4. I asked for God's Spirit. | E <u>l</u> isha | Eli <u>j</u> ah |
| 5. I was taken to heaven in a whirlwind. | E <u>l</u> isha | Eli <u>j</u> ah |
| 6. I was the new prophet of the Lord. | E <u>l</u> isha | Eli <u>j</u> ah |

Activity Three - Follow the directions.

1. Color the two rectangles brown and the heart red.
2. Cut all the pieces out.
3. Glue them onto another sheet of paper. The brown pieces form a cross with the red heart in the middle of the cross. You may wish to copy Matthew 28:20 at the bottom of the paper.
4. Alternate activity—Make patterns of the pieces and have children trace them onto the appropriate color of construction paper. Then have them glue the pieces onto another sheet of paper.



The same Lord who worked so powerfully through Elijah and Elisha has also promised to be with us today.

Passages

Hebrews 13:8 - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Matthew 28:20 - Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Hymn - TLH #434 or v. 1, 4

O God of Jacob, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed;
Who thro' this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led.

Oh, spread Thy covering wings around
Till all our wanderings cease
And at our Father's loved abode
Our souls arrive in peace.

Prayer

Dear Jesus,

Please be with me just as You were with Elijah and Elisha. I know that I will change as I grow older, but You will always stay the same. Amen.

Elijah & Elisha

2 Kings 2-5



Elijah was taken bodily into heaven and Elisha served in his place.



The Story

Elijah was getting old. He served the Lord as a prophet for many years. He was ready to go to heaven. The Lord had chosen a replacement for Elijah. His name was Elisha. He followed Elijah everywhere.

It was time for Elijah to go to heaven. Elijah knew it was time. Elisha also knew it was time. Elisha did not want Elijah to leave him. Elijah made stops in two cities. Each time he told Elisha to stay in the city. Elisha said, "I will not leave you."

Elijah and Elisha traveled on. They came to the Jordan River. At the river, Elijah took off his coat, rolled it up, and hit the water with it. The water parted and Elijah and Elisha crossed the river on dry ground.

Elijah asked, "Elisha, what may I do for you before I go to heaven?"

Elisha answered, "I would like a double portion of your spirit." This means that Elisha wanted the Lord to be with him just like the Lord was with Elijah. Elisha asked for it to be done not one time, but two times.

Elijah knew that only the Lord could give that gift to Elisha. Elijah answered, "You will know if your question is answered if you see me go into heaven."

As they were talking, a chariot of fire and horses appeared between Elijah and Elisha. Elijah was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha saw it all happen and yelled, "My father, my father." Then he didn't see Elijah anymore.

Elisha picked up Elijah's coat and asked, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" He took the coat and hit the water like Elijah had done. The water separated and Elisha knew that the Lord's Spirit was with him.

Elisha performed more signs and miracles that showed that the Spirit of the Lord was with him. He made bad water good again. It was always pure and good tasting after that. He also helped a widow make money so that her sons wouldn't have to be slaves to pay her debts.

The Spirit of the Lord was shown through Elisha again when he raised a boy from the dead. Elisha also made a pot of poisonous stew able to be eaten. Another time, the Lord allowed Elisha to feed 100 men with a little sack of food. Through the signs and miracles Elisha performed, the people of Israel knew the Lord was with him.

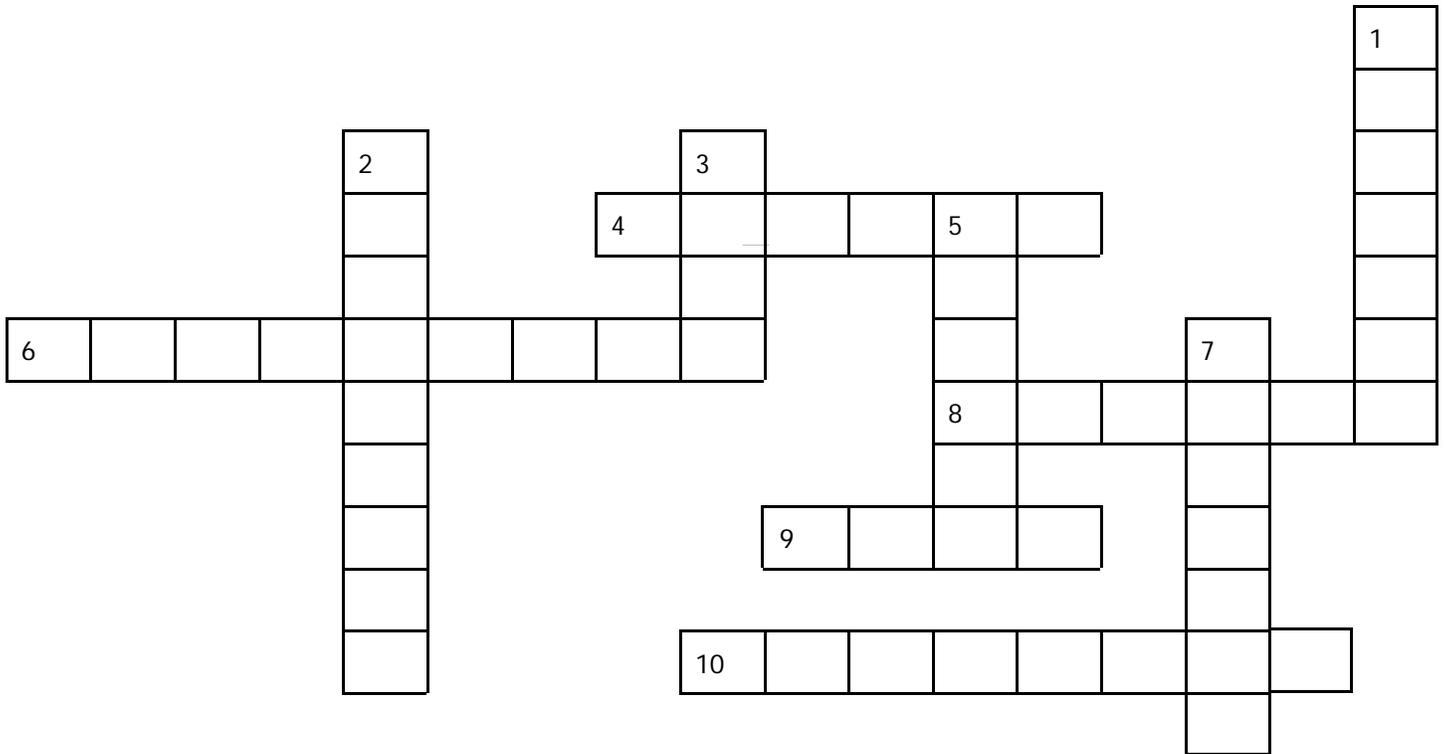
Activity One - Answer these Review Questions together.

1. Whom did the Lord choose to replace Elijah?
2. What did Elisha do to get ready to be a prophet?
3. Do you think Elisha was ready to be the Lord's prophet? Why or why not?
4. What thing did Elisha ask Elijah to give him? Could Elijah give this to him?
5. How did Elijah go up into heaven?
6. Why did a chariot separate Elijah and Elisha?

7. How did the people of Israel know that Elisha was the new prophet?

8. What signs and miracles did Elisha perform?

Activity Two - Find the answers to the clues in the Word Box. Write the answers to the clues in the blanks provided in the CROSSWORD PUZZLE.



Across

- 4. Where Elijah was taken
- 6. What the water did when Elisha hit it
- 8. What Elisha wanted a double portion of
- 9. What Elijah and Elisha hit the water with
- 10. What Elisha did to show the Spirit of the Lord was with him

Down

- 1. What separated Elijah and Elisha
- 2. How Elijah went to heaven
- 3. Elisha raised a boy from this
- 5. The replacement for Elijah
- 7. The job of both Elijah and Elisha

Word Box	
chariot	miracles
coat	prophet
dead	separated
Elisha	spirit
heaven	whirlwind

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Activity Three - Answer the following questions about the passage.

Matthew 28:20 - Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

1. How did the Lord show that He was with Elisha?
2. How does the Lord show that He is with us?
3. Elisha did signs and miracles to show that the Lord was with him. We cannot do miracles like Elisha, but we can show that the Lord is with us. What are some things that we can do to show that the Lord is with us?

Passages

Hebrews 13:8 - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Malachi 3:6 - For I am the LORD, I do not change.

Hymn - TLH #434 v. 1, 4

O God of Jacob, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed;
Who thro' this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led.

Oh, spread Thy covering wings around
Till all our wanderings cease
And at our Father's loved abode
Our souls arrive in peace.

Prayer

Dear Jesus,

Please be with me just like You were with Elisha. Help me to show that You are with me and in my life. I know that You will not change throughout my life. Amen.

Elijah & Elisha

2 Kings 2-5

Some of the best lessons that we learn and cherish are those that we learned from our parents and grandparents. Those who had gone ahead of us have handed down all their adventures and experiences. They shared these items with us sometimes in the form of stories and other times in the form of lessons. As we grow we prepare to share these lessons with the generations that will follow us.

The Lord used this type of passing on information for thousands of years. He also guided younger prophets, pastors, by having them train with older more experienced prophets. Today's story tells us how God passed the leadership of His prophet Elijah on to Elisha.



Prayer

Dear Lord God,

Please be with us and bless us with the same spirit that You gave to Your servants Elijah and Elisha. Fill each of us with love and selfless devotion to You. Guide us as we study and put Your truths into practice. We ask these things in the Name of our Savior Jesus. Amen.

Elijah & His Service to the Lord – Preparing Elisha - 2 Kings 2-5

Elijah had been called by the Lord to minister to the people of Israel. As you have learned in other lessons, the people of Israel were not God-fearing. Their leaders had introduced the worship of false gods including the worship of Baal. The work of the Lord among the people of Israel was thankless. Elijah was consistently dealing with the problems not only of idol worship but famine, the wrath of the king and queen – Ahab and Jezebel, and the constant invasion of foreign armies.

Through it all Elijah kept focused on the Lord and received the blessings of being fed and protected. Though the desire to worship Baal and other man made objects was very strong, Elijah continued to proclaim the true Lord to the people of Israel. He challenged the prophets and followers of Baal at Mount Carmel. The Lord provided not only the fire but

proof that there is but one true God, the God that Elijah was proclaiming. Still shortly after Mount Carmel Elijah had to run for his life from the wicked Queen Jezebel. The Lord then strengthened His prophet, and Elijah returned to Israel and continued preaching the Word of the Lord.

Elijah grows old. His task in Israel had not been an easy one and the time had come to pass his duties on to Elisha. Elisha had been called earlier by the Lord (2 Kings 19:15-21) to serve under Elijah. It was evident to all that with Elijah's growing older there was to be a new prophet of the Lord in Israel. The time was at hand for Elijah to go to heaven.

Elijah informed Elisha that he was going to Bethel to conduct some business. Elisha, strengthened by the Lord, insisted on going along and made a beautiful statement to his teacher "...As the LORD lives, and as your soul



lives, I will not leave you!"

Elijah and Elisha made the trip to Bethel together. Near Bethel some prophets who were in training joined them. The impression is given that these students of the word were aware that Elijah's time here on earth was quickly coming to an end. Again, Elijah offered for Elisha to stay while he would go on to the east of the Jordan River. Elisha refused. The two men are watched from a distance by the prophets in training as this teacher and student traveled east toward the Jordan River.

When the two prophets came to the Jordan River Elijah used his cloak and struck the water. The water divided and the two prophets traveled across the Jordan on dry land. We can see the love these two men had for the Lord by the fact that they understood that it was God alone who parted the waters and provided a way for them to cross the river.

Once across the river, Elijah encouraged Elisha to request a blessing from him before the Lord would take Elijah away. Elisha the student asked for a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit. Elijah knew that this was a tough item to grant but gave his student a sign. If Elisha saw Elijah go up into heaven Elisha would know that the Lord had granted the request.

The two continued on walking and talking. Suddenly a chariot of fire separated them. Elisha saw Elijah being taken up into heaven on a whirlwind. What a great blessing! Elijah was taken by the Lord into heaven and since Elisha saw it happen it meant the Lord would grant his request for a double portion of Elijah's spirit.

Elijah's cloak was left behind. Elisha picked it up and headed back toward the Jordan River. At the river he used the cloak as Elijah had and the river was divided. The prophets who had been watching from afar understood that the Lord had passed onto Elisha the task of being a prophet to the people of Israel.

As with Elijah, the task of being prophet of the one true God to Israel was not an easy one. Immediately Elisha was tested and strengthened by the Lord. Some disrespectful children from Bethel mocked and made fun of Elisha and the true Lord. Elisha cursed them and two bears came out of the woods and mauled the forty-two children.

The king of Israel was Jehoram, the son of Ahab. Though Jehoram did not promote the worship of Baal he did continue to do evil in the sight of the Lord. At the same time the people of the country of Moab to the south rose up against Judah and Israel. The two countries joined forces against the Moabites. The king of Judah requested that the kings meet with the prophet of the Lord to know the Lord's will. Elisha, with direction from the Lord, helped the kings defeat the Moabites. It was again clear that the Lord had given His people the victory. Still the king of Israel returned to his country and continued in his sinful ways.

Love is the powerful tool of the Lord. This love was demonstrated by Elisha's dealings with the Shunammite woman. Elisha traveled a lot through Israel and Judah. Along the way he came into contact with a man and woman. The woman was moved by her love for the Lord to convince her husband to provide a place for Elisha. When Elisha traveled through their area he would rest at their house. In return for this wonderful offering Elisha requested of the Lord that the couple be blessed with a child. The request was granted. The child was born and the man and woman were very happy.

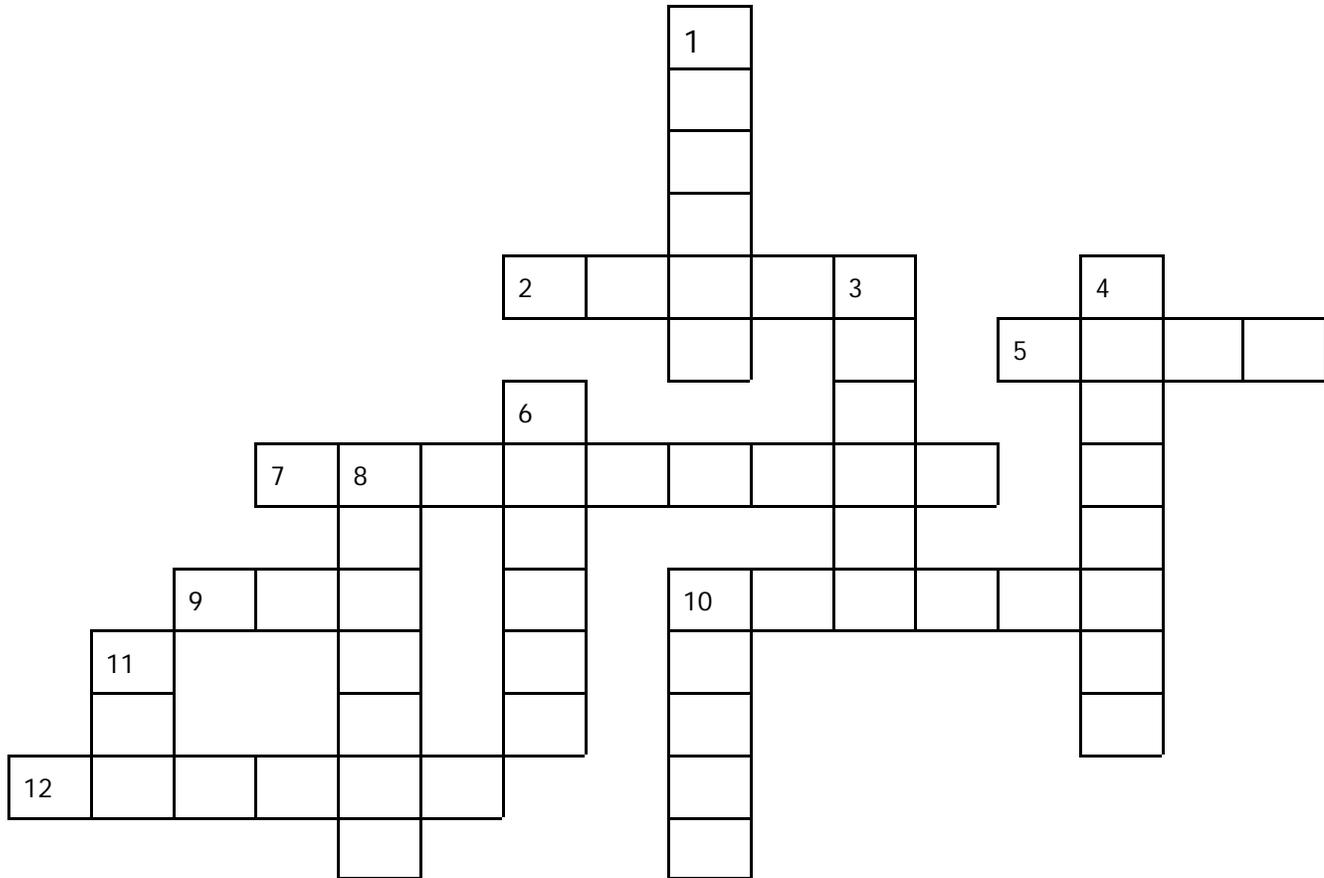
After a period of time the child became sick and died. This was a very sad time in the lives of this family. The Shunammite woman immediately went to Elisha. Elisha returned to the family home and called upon the Lord to bring the child back to the life. The Lord heard the prayer of Elisha and the child was returned to his family.

Outer Aim - Elijah was taken bodily into heaven and Elisha served in his place.

What God's Word Tells Us - Discuss the following.

1. God was with Elijah and Elisha. He never left them. He protected them when they were in trouble. Give examples of how God was with Elijah and Elisha.
2. Like Elijah and Elisha, God is with us today. How do you know God is with you everyday? Give examples.
3. Elijah and Elisha were dedicated in their work for the Lord. Many times difficult things happened to Elijah and Elisha, but the Lord helped them triumph. How can you show that you are dedicated to the Lord? How can you show that you are dedicated to the Lord when you grow up? How can you show you are dedicated to the Lord with a job?
4. The Lord blessed the woman who cared for Elisha. Why did the woman help Elisha? Did she expect something from Elisha in return? How do we show our love for the Lord when we help others? Give examples.
5. Some of the best lessons that we can learn in this life have been passed down to us from those who have gone ahead of us. Just as Elijah had strengthened Elisha to be a true prophet of the Lord, so have our parents and grandparents given us important lessons to grow on. The most important of those lessons both to Elisha and to us is to remain faithful to the Lord. If we do, the Lord will bless our families and our work here on earth.
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What the Story Tells Us - Complete the CROSSWORD PUZZLE. The answers can be found in 2 Kings using the chapter and verse given.



Across

- 2. What killed the youth (2:24)
- 5. What Elisha put into the bad water (2:20)
- 7. How Elijah went to heaven (2:11)
- 9. What gift the Lord gave to the woman (4:17)
- 10. What was in the country of Gilgal (4:38)
- 12. What the two boys would become (4:1)

Down

- 1. Which river Elijah and Elisha crossed (2:7)
- 3. Where a woman lived that made Elisha a room (4:8)
- 4. What the youth called Elisha (2:23)
- 6. What Elisha did to ask how to help the boy (4:33)
- 8. How many men ate from the 20 loaves of bread and grain (4:43)
- 10. How many prophets were on the other side of the Jordan River (2:7)
- 11. What the containers were filled with (4:4)

- WORDS**
- baldhead
 - bears
 - famine
 - fifty
 - hundred
 - Jordan
 - oil
 - prayed
 - salt
 - Shunem
 - slaves
 - son
 - whirlwind

Inner Aim - The same Lord who worked so powerfully through Elijah and Elisha has also promised to be with us today.

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 - TLH #434 v. 1-4

O God of Jacob, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed;
Who thro' this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led,

Our vows, our prayers, we now present
Before Thy throne of grace;
God of our fathers, be the God
Of their succeeding race.

Thro' each perplexing path of life
Our wand'ring footsteps guide;
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Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus,

At times I can be frightened about the road that lies ahead. Help me remember that You will be with me wherever I go, just as You were with Elijah and Elisha. I know I will change throughout my life, but I am glad You will remain the same. In Your name I pray. Amen.

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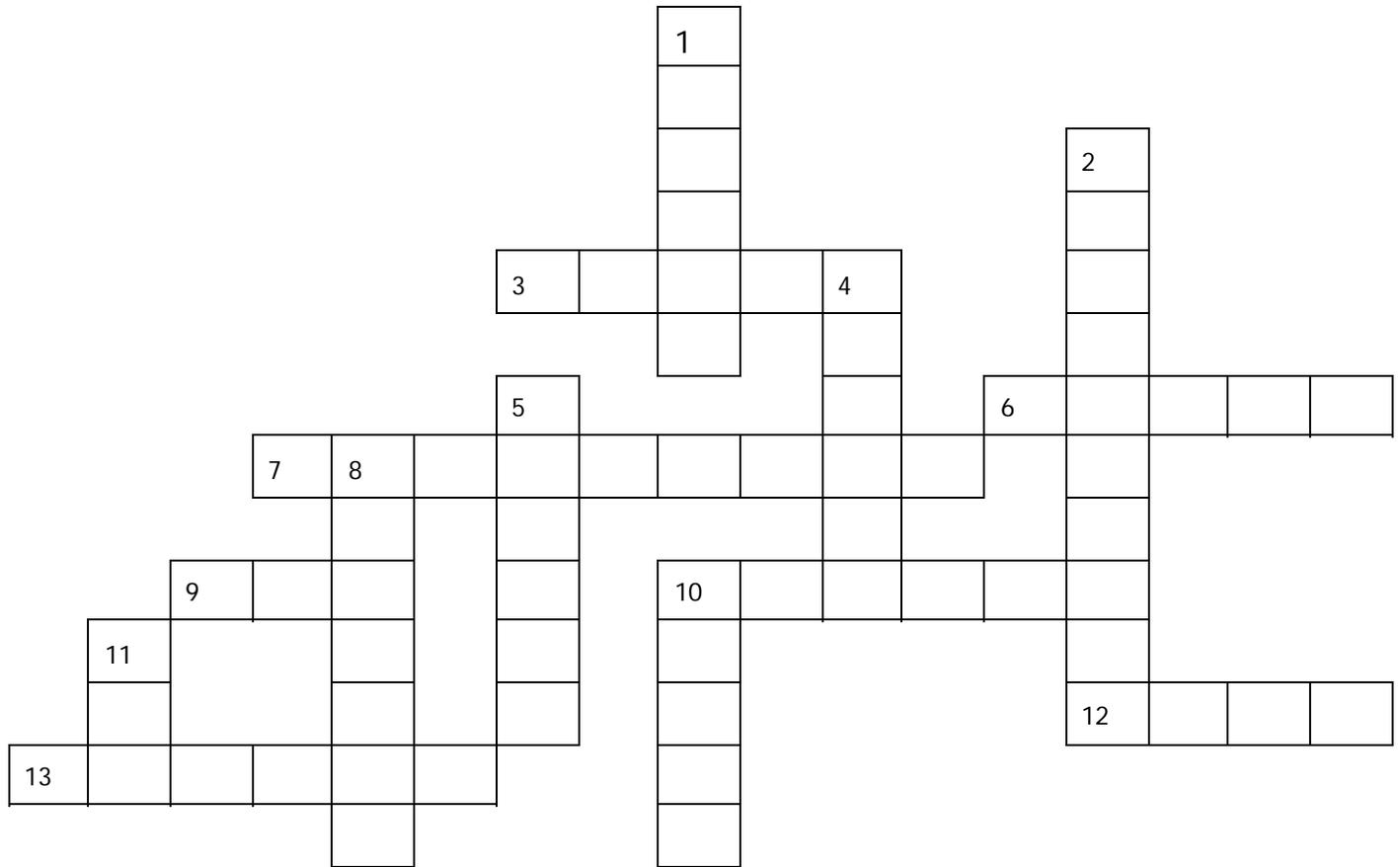
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Outer Aim - Elijah was taken bodily into heaven and Elisha served in his place.

What God's Word Tells Us - Discuss the following .

1. The Lord did many powerful things through Elijah and Elisha. List some of them. Does the Lord work those powerful miracles today? Why or why not?
2. How do you know that the Lord is with you? Give examples.
3. The young people in today's story were rebelling against God. They were making fun of God's servant. How did God react to this rebellion? Imagine that you are walking by as these young people are making fun of Elisha. What would you say to them? What do you say to people who make fun of you for going to church or a religious school?
4. Elijah and Elisha were dedicated to the Lord. It was evident through their work for the Lord. How do you show that you are dedicated to the Lord? How could you show your dedication to the Lord as an adult?
5. Elisha's needs were taken care of by a woman in the story. Did the woman expect something in return for her services? How did the Lord bless the woman? What lesson can we learn from the woman?
6. Some of the best lessons that we can learn in this life have been passed down to us from those who have gone ahead of us. Just as Elijah had strengthened Elisha to be a true prophet of the Lord, so our parents and grandparents have given to us important lessons on which to grow. The most important of those lessons, both to Elisha and to us, is to remain faithful to the Lord. If we do, the Lord will bless our families and our work here on earth.
7. Each of us has the power of God's Word. We study it as families and students in school. Learning to appreciate, believe, and trust in this word of God is the strongest and most important lesson that we can live by and pass on to those who look to us for guidance and direction in the future. We continue to study the Bible and marvel at the wonderful work that the Lord has done and is doing for each of us. Pass it on!

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Joshua 1:9 - The LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Malachi 3:6 - For I am the LORD, I do not change.

Romans 8:31- What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Revelation 1:8 - "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Hymn - TLH #434 v. 1-4

O God of Jacob, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed;
Who thro' this weary pilgrimage
Hast all our fathers led.

Our vows, our prayers, we now present
Before Thy throne of grace;
God of our fathers, be the God
Of their succeeding race.

Thro' each perplexing path of life
Our wand'ring footsteps guide;
Give us each day our daily bread
And raiment fit provide.

Oh, spread Thy covering wings around
Till all our wanderings cease
And at our Father's loved abode
Our souls arrive in peace.

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus,

At times I can be frightened about the road that lies ahead. Help me remember that You will be with me wherever I go, just as You were with Elijah and Elisha. I know I will change throughout my life, but I am glad You will remain the same. In Your name I pray. Amen.



STORY

Elijah and Elisha - 2 Kings 2-4

TEACHER PRAYER

Lord Jesus, please be with me and bless me with the same spirit that You gave to Your servants Elijah and Elisha. Fill me with love and selfless devotion so that I might dedicate myself to you and to your service. Guide me now as I bring the truths of your Word to Your little lambs. Open their hearts to not only hear and learn, but to put into practice the truths they here come to know. I ask these things in the Name of my Savior Jesus. Amen.

VOCABULARY

Gilgal - A city located near the place where Israel first crossed the Jordan to enter the Promised Land. Here the monument of 12 stones (taken from the middle of the Jordan) was erected (Joshua 4:20). The name means "rolling," perhaps a reference to the rolling green hills in which it is located.

Bethel - A city about 12 miles north of Jerusalem and west of Jericho. The name means "house of God," and was so named because it is located at or near where Jacob had his vision when fleeing Esau. Abraham stopped here when the city was known as Luz. Excavations show that the city was burned both in the 14th century BC (around the time of the conquest under Joshua), and the 13th century (the conquest by the house of Joseph in Judges 1:22). Though Bethel had been a city of the tribe of Benjamin, it later became part of the ten northern tribes of Israel.

Mantle - A cloak or outer covering. Elijah and Elisha used this garment cloak much like Moses used his staff.

Mount Carmel - Headlands averaging 1,500 feet in altitude where the Lord through Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal. Elisha also spent time in this area.

Baal - The chief male god of the Phoenicians, adopted by many tribes in Palestine. The Canaanites regarded Baal as the god of storms.

Moab - The country to the east of the Dead Sea founded by and named for Moab, the son of Lot's oldest daughter. The Moabites, along with the Edomites, refused to allow Israel to pass through on the way to the Promised Land. It was the Moabites who hired Balaam to curse Israel. The most famous Moabitess was Ruth.

Indignation - anger aroused by something unjust.

Shunem - A city three miles north of Jezreel and seven miles south and east of what later became Nazareth. The city of Nain (where Jesus raised the widow's son) was later built near the location of Shunem. The maiden Abishag, who cared for David in his old age, came from Shunem.

Baal Shalisha - A little known city of Ephraim slightly west of Gilgal and just south of Jericho.

OUTER AIM

Elijah is taken bodily into heaven and Elisha serves in his place.

INNER AIM

The same Lord who worked so powerfully through Elijah and Elisha has also promised to be with each one of us today.

BACKGROUND (*Rupprecht Volume 1, pages 361-366*)

Elijah's time of service comes to an end

Elijah has served his Lord long and well, and now his time of earthly service is over. By God's hand he had survived famine, the priests of Baal, the wrath of Ahab and Jezebel, foreign armies, and much more. This lesson begins as God prepares Elijah to be taken to heaven.

Chapter 2

Apparently God had last-minute business for Elijah to attend to in Bethel and Jericho before his time of service on earth was completed. We are not told what that service might have been, although in each place it seemed to involve "the sons of the prophets." These were apparently future prophets in training. It had apparently been revealed to all of them that Elijah was to be taken to heaven on that day.

Though Elijah used his cloak in much the same way Moses used his staff, neither item possessed power in itself. All power and ability rests with God alone.

When Elisha asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit, he was not asking for a ministry twice as great as Elijah's. In keeping with Israel's inheritance laws he was asking for the rights of a firstborn son (Deuteronomy 21:17) - in effect asking to be named Elijah's successor. This request was God's, not Elijah's to give, so he left the answer to God himself.

It is a misconception that Elijah was taken to heaven in a chariot of fire. The chariot served to separate Elisha from Elijah, who was then carried to heaven in a whirlwind.

When Elisha referred to Elijah as "the chariot of Israel and its horsemen" he was acknowledging the fact that God had worked through Elijah (not through the armies of Israel) to preserve the nation. The same would later be said about Elisha (2 Kings 13:14). As far as we know, only Enoch (see Genesis 5:22-24) and Elijah were taken bodily into heaven without first having to pass through death.

The signs that Elisha was able to perform after Elijah was taken gave evidence that he was the rightful successor to Elijah's ministry. The "youths" who mocked Elisha were not innocent children but disrespectful rogues. Their taunt to "Go up!" could have been a ridicule in reference to Elijah's assumption into heaven - thus a mocking of a sacred act of God.

Chapter 3

Though Jehoram, the new King of Israel, no longer tolerated the public worship of Baal, as had his father Ahab, he still tolerated the "sins of Jeroboam." To keep the nation of Israel divided from Judah, Jeroboam had built two golden calves and set them up as alternate gods for Israel to worship (in Bethel and Dan rather than in Jerusalem). He also ordained priests outside of the tribe of Levi and enacted his own religious festivals to rival those in Judah prescribed by God. (See 1 Kings 12:25-33)

The people of Moab paid tribute to Israel only as long as they feared Israel. They failed to acknowledge that Israel was God's chosen people.

The armies of Israel and Judah probably took the arid southern route into Moab (around the south end of the Dead Sea) more to avoid the fortified cities located in the north than in an attempt to surprise.

Edom at this time was a vassal state of Israel. The "King of Edom" mentioned here was appointed by the King of Judah. Edom did not have its own king until after its revolt against Jehoram, Jehoshaphat's son. (See 2 Kings 8:16 and 20)

When Elisha told Jehoram, "Go to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother," he was referring to Ahab and Jezebel, and to the fact that they had accepted both the prophets of Baal and non-Levites as their own. (1 Kings 22:6ff.)

God provided water for the armies of Israel, Judah, and Edom; but note that obedience on their part was required if they were to benefit. The water probably came in the form of flash floods coming down from the mountains in Edom. This water would have simply seeped back down into the earth had not the ditches and trenches been dug by the combined armies.

When Mesha, the King of Moab, saw the destruction of his land, he tried to make a desperate effort to form an alliance with Edom. That effort failed. Mesha then offered his own son as a burnt offering to the idol Chemosh. The result was "great indignation against Israel." While the exact meaning of this phrase is not known, the result was that Moab was spared from complete destruction, and Moabite raiders continued to plague Israel and Judah in the years to come.

Chapter 4

As swift and sure as was Elisha's wrath against the rebellious and disrespectful youths, so he here demonstrated a love and compassion for those who suffered, especially for those who were among the faithful in Israel.

Elisha spent a good deal of time travelling from Judah, through Samaria, and into Galilee. Shunem lay in his path of travel where a hospitable family provided room and board for him. (See application below.)

As did Elijah before him, Elisha spent a good deal of his time and effort prophesying against (and ministering to) the apostate northern tribes of Israel. Note the many parallels between Elisha's ministry and the events of Jesus' day: the cursing of the rebellious youth - the cursing of the fig tree; the jars filled with oil - the changing of water to wine; the birth of a son in old age - the birth of John the Baptist to Elizabeth and Zacharias; the raising of the woman's son - the raising of the Widow of Nain (Nain, ironically, was the city built on or near the ruins of the city of Shunem, where Elisha raised this child from the dead); and finally the feeding of the 100 - the feeding of the 5,000.

The mother of the dead child seemed to display a rare faith here, determining not to abandon hope and mourn for her son until she had spoken to Elisha. She seems to demonstrate a confidence in the God of Elisha.

Though Elisha acted only according to the command and by the power of the Lord, note the relative difficulty he had in raising this child compared to the simple words of the Lord Jesus.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus, at times I can be frightened about the road that lies ahead. Help me to remember that You will be with me wherever I go, just as You were with Elijah, Elisha and the other prophets and apostles. I know that I will change throughout my life, but I am glad that You will remain the same. In Your name I pray. Amen.

PRESENTATION

The Bible account presented today is too long to read in class. It is also too complex to attempt to present all parts in a single Sunday School lesson, especially for the younger students. Assign the reading of this entire lesson to the students the week before it is presented, and then choose from among its many parts what you will emphasize in your presentation. In doing this, remember the Inner Aim..

APPLICATION

- . Emphasize to the children (in keeping with the inner aim) that the same Lord who worked so powerfully through Elijah and Elisha has also promised to be with each one of us today. He is just as powerful today as He was then, and cares just as much for each of His children today as He did then.
- . Bring the attention of the students to the dedication which Elijah and Elisha show for the work of the Lord. Such dedication is still required today. Encourage the boys to consider serving as pastors or teachers, and the girls to consider the teaching ministry, emphasizing that there is great honor and blessing in the public ministry. Elisha knew the hardships that Elijah had faced, yet he desired to continue in that work. We may not witness miracles today as seen in the days of Elijah and Elisha, but we might be privileged enough to play a part in calling a sinner from death to Life.
- . Though society today cares less and less, God does not look kindly upon any rebellion against any authority He has ordained. All are to show honor and respect to all those in authority over us. The incident with the bears and the insolent youths can be used to emphasize just how serious rebellion and lack of respect is in God's sight.
- . Jehoram followed in many of the evil ways of his father Ahab. Each generation must be taught to reexamine and relearn the truths of God's Word for themselves. Only then can we avoid perpetuating any sins into which our fathers might have fallen.
- . As God required the army of Israel to carry out a simple command in order for His blessing to be enjoyed, so He often today calls for obedience on our part so that we might enjoy the blessings He wants to give us. (Church attendance yields strengthening, prayer yields answers to prayer, a medical checkup yields an early diagnosis, honoring parents and superiors leads to a rich and peaceful life, etc.)
- . The King of Israel had turned away from the Lord to idols and yet he expected the Lord to answer him at his beck and call. We cannot cast the Lord away from our lives and expect Him to watch over us as His children.
- . The woman who cared for Elisha's needs was blessed in that service. The same promise holds true for laymen and laywomen today. (Matthew 10:41 NKJV) "He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward."

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

Malachi 3:6 - For I am the LORD: I do not change.

Matthew 28:20 - Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Hebrews 13:8 - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Middle

Matthew 18:20 - For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.

Romans 8:31 - What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Upper

Joshua 1:9 - Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Lamentations 3:22-23 - Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

Revelation 1:8 - "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

HYMN CHOICES

O God of Jacob, by Whose Hand - TLH #434

Abide with Me! Fast Falls the Eventide - TLH #552:1-4

We Praise Thee, O God, Our Redeemer, Creator - TLH #568