

F7. Elijah is Taken to Heaven

1 Kings 19:19-21, 2 Kings 2:1-11

Learning Objectives

1. The children will explore the story of Elijah and Elisha, and the events surrounding Elijah's ascension to heaven.
2. The children will be able to identify what things they can do each day to draw closer to God.

Memory Verse: *"But anyone who is joined to the Lord becomes one with Him in spirit."
--1 Corinthians 6:17 (NIRV)*

Getting Started

Choose One

All Ages

"Right Environment"

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Object Talks → "Right Environment"

You will need a small potted plant, a few seeds and a small pot filled with dirt for this object talk. This activity teaches the children that it takes the right environment to grow a beautiful flower, and it also takes the right environment for us to grow spiritually. Please see the above website for detailed instructions. As part of your conclusion, the children will need to understand that a "good environment" for us to grow spiritually involves reading our Bibles, praying to God, worshipping God, learning about God (in Sunday school and services), and finding good friends that help us to grow in our faith and grow closer to God. Elisha and Elijah had such a friendship in today's story. (Continue with the lesson.)

Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions:

Message: ***Stay close to Him.***

The Lord Chooses Elisha

Elijah left Mount Horeb. He saw Elisha, the son of Shaphat. Elisha was plowing in a field. He was driving the last of 12 pairs of oxen. Elijah went up to him. He threw his coat around him. Then Elisha left his oxen. He ran after Elijah. "Let me kiss my father and mother good-bye," he said. Then I'll come with you."

"Go back," Elijah replied. "What have I done to you?"

So Elisha left him and went back. He got his two oxen and killed them. He burned the plow to cook the meat. He gave it to the people, and they ate it. Then he started to follow Elijah. He became Elijah's assistant.

2 Kings 2 ~ Elijah Is Taken Up to Heaven

Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. The Lord was going to use a strong wind to take Elijah up to heaven. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here. The Lord has sent me to Bethel."

But Elisha said, "I won't leave you. And that's just as sure as the Lord and you are alive." So they went down to Bethel. There was a company of prophets at Bethel. They came out to where Elisha was. They asked him, "Do you know what the Lord is going to do? He's going to take your master away from you today."

"Yes, I know," Elisha replied. "But don't talk about it." Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, Elisha. The Lord has sent me to Jericho."

Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions - *continued*

Elisha replied, "I won't leave you. And that's just as sure as the Lord and you are alive." So they went to Jericho. There was a company of prophets at Jericho. They went up to where Elisha was. They asked him, "Do you know what the Lord is going to do? He's going to take your master away from you today."

"Yes, I know," Elisha replied. "But don't talk about it." Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here. The Lord has sent me to the Jordan River."

Elisha replied, "I won't leave you. And that's just as sure as the Lord and you are alive." So the two of them walked on. Fifty men from the company of the prophets followed them. The men stopped and stood not far away from them. They faced the place where Elijah and Elisha had stopped at the Jordan River. Elijah rolled his coat up. Then he struck the water with it. The water parted to the right and to the left. The two of them went across the river on dry ground.

After they had gone across, Elijah spoke to Elisha. He said, "Tell me. What can I do for you before I'm taken away from you?"

"Please give me a double share of your spirit," Elisha replied. "You have asked me for something I can't give you," Elijah said. "Only the Lord can give it. But suppose you see me when I'm taken away from you. Then you will receive what you have asked for. If you don't see me, you won't receive it."

They kept walking along and talking together. Suddenly a chariot and horses appeared. Fire was all around them. The chariot and horses came between the two men. Then Elijah went up to heaven in a strong wind.

Discussion Questions:

1. Describe Elisha's relationship with Elijah. *(Discuss. Answers will vary. They appeared to have a very close relationship because Elisha remained with Elijah and wanted very much to learn from Him.)*
2. What miracle did Elijah perform in today's story? *(He struck the waters of the Jordan River with his coat and the water split so that Elijah and Elisha could cross the river.)*
3. What was the one thing that Elisha wanted from Elijah before he was going to be taken to heaven? *(Elisha wanted to have a "double share of Elijah's spirit.")*
4. What did Elisha mean? *(He wanted to inherit a double portion of Elijah's spirit, and become Elijah's successor, a "holy man" just like him.)*
5. How was Elijah taken to heaven? *(A strong wind came and a chariot and horses appeared with fire all around them, and it took Elijah up to heaven.)*
6. What do you think Elisha was feeling or thinking when he saw all of those things take place? *(Discuss. Answers will vary.)*
7. Do you think Elisha wanted to go to heaven too? Why or why not? *(Discuss together.)*
8. Do you want to go to heaven? Would you go right now if God wanted to take you? Why or why not? *(Discuss together.)*

“Being Close to God”

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade school → Activities → “Being Close to God”

For this activity you will need popcorn. Have enough to enjoy as a snack when you are finished with the activity. You may also need to recruit some additional participants for this activity. The children will each need a partner and they will be tossing popcorn pieces back and forth, starting about 10 feet apart and then moving closer to each other. Please see the above website for detailed instructions.

Once you finish the activity, you will compare it to our relationship with God. The farther the children are away from each other, the harder it is to catch the popcorn. Likewise, the farther we are from God the harder it is to have a relationship with Him. We can become closer to God by reading the Bible, praying to Him, and finding time to worship Him each day. No matter what, we want to stay close to Him. (Remind the children of the message and memory verse.)

Memory Work Fun

1. Recite the memory verse.
2. Practice finding the memory verse and/or Bible text in their Bible!
3. Where is the book of James located? In the Old or New Testament? Practice finding it together.
4. Is “thankfulness” a fruit of the spirit?
5. Lead the class in a short prayer and thank God for protecting us and loving us each day. Praise Him for His amazing goodness.

Activity Ideas*Choose One****All Ages*****Craft: Fiery Chariot Picture**

Before Class: Gather the materials (Chariot template, Paint (blue, red, yellow, and orange), Water, Paintbrushes (several for each color), Newspaper, Old t-shirts, Bowls, White paper, Scissors, Markers or colored pencils). Place some blue paint in a bowl. Slowly add water until the consistency of the paint is very watery. Test the mixture on a piece of scrap paper to make sure the color appears. If not, add a little more paint. Repeat these steps with each of the other colors. Cover the area where the children will work with the newspaper. Print one chariot template for each child. Make a sample craft.

Divide the children into two groups. One group will paint while the other group draws, colors and cuts out Elijah with the chariot.

Paint group – Give each child a piece of white paper. Have them paint the edges of the paper and approximately a third of the paper using the blue paint. Use the red, orange and yellow paint to create an explosion looking shape in the center of the paper that overlaps the blue paint.

Drawing group – Give each child a chariot template. Have them to draw Elijah on the chariot. They should use red-, orange- and yellow-colored pencils to color around the outside of the chariot. Then cut out the image. The children do not need to cut out the image on the lines.

When a child has completed the task in one group they can switch to the other station. When the children have completed both tasks, they are to glue the chariot in the center of the sky scene so that it is pointing upwards.

Game: The Voice

Before Class: Print one maze template for each child. (See page at the end of the lesson.) Print one maze answer template for each team. Designate two areas, one for each team to work in.

Divide the children into two teams. Within each team, choose one person to be The Voice. Ask teams to get behind the rope in a single line. The person who is The Voice should be at a table across the room. Give the person at the front of the line the blindfold to put on. After you say the teams can begin, the child who is blindfolded walks to the person who is designated as The Voice. When they reach the table, they sit down and the person who is The Voice gives them the marker and helps them find the starting point of the maze. The Voice then tells them how to safely get through the maze. When they reach the end of the maze, they take their blindfold off, run to the next person and help them put it on. The process begins all over again until all the children have an opportunity to complete the maze.

After the game is complete, discuss with the children how it felt to be blindfolded. For example, ask them if it was difficult to follow the instructions of the person who was The Voice. Explain to the children that sometimes it can be difficult to follow God's instructions. Even though we go through challenging experiences, it is always important to put our trust in God that He will guide us through it.

"Stay Connected" Game

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Games → "Stay Connected"

You will need a stopwatch and at least 5 players for this game (recruit extra volunteers as needed). This is a cooperation game that will demonstrate to the children about the concept of "staying connected". You will use this demonstration to help the children understand why "staying connected" (or staying close) to God is important in our lives. You will also discuss things in our lives that pull us away and do not allow us to stay connected to God. Please see the above website for detailed instructions.

Craft: Can you Hear?

Before class: Cut one piece of string approximately 2m long for each child. With the scissors, poke a small hole in the bottom of the cups. Thread the end of the string through the hole in one cup, tie a large knot so that it does not fall through the cup and tape the knot in the string to the inside of the cup. Repeat the steps with the other end of the string and the second cup. Make one for each child.

Give each child two plastic cups that are attached by a piece of string. Allow the children to decorate their cups with markers and stickers. After all the children have finished decorating their cups, divide the children into groups of two. Tell each child within the groups to hold a cup. The string between the two cups should be pulled tight, but not too tight. Have one child speak into a cup while the other child places the cup to their ear. The children should be able to hear the talking because of the vibration of the sound waves over the string.

Briefly explain to them that it is important for us to listen to the Lord's voice. Emphasize that we can sometimes hear God directing our lives through the people around us. Other times we may be so distracted by all the noise around us that we find it difficult to hear what He would like us to do.

Grades K-2**“Follow in my Footsteps”**

You will need white construction paper (one for each child) and markers for this activity. Before class begins, you will need to trace your foot onto each sheet of paper. Then the children put their foot into your (hopefully) larger footprint and trace their own foot (help as needed). Talk with the children, asking them whose footprint is larger or smaller. Then have the children write on their papers: “Stay close to Him.” Let them color the footprints if time allows. Remind the children that Elisha followed Elijah’s (who was God’s prophet) footsteps and he wanted to stay close to Him. He wanted to learn everything he could from Elijah, and by doing so he was able to not only stay close to Elijah, but he stayed close to God. God wants us to be “connected” and close to Him. Many things try to pull us away, including the friends we choose to surround ourselves with.

Grades 3-5**Role Play: I Will Not Leave You**

Before Class: Gather the props for the play (cloak for Elijah). Print the fire image. Print a copy of the play for each character. Please see the pages following this lesson.

“Perfect Mix” Object Talk

See www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Object Talks → “Perfect Mix”

You will need four packages of unsweetened Kool-Aid (same flavor), four pitchers, cups or glasses, sugar, salt and a bucket for this object talk. Please see the above website for detailed instructions.

You will make four different mixtures using the ingredients, and then compare them to four classifications of Christians: “pretenders”, “putter-offers”, “pleasure seekers” and “pure Christians”. The children will consider what kind of a person they are in their faith life and in their relationship with God, as well as what kinds of friends they have in their lives.

Encourage the children to strive to be like the “pure Christians” as they are described in this exercise, full of faith, love, concern and kindness, reaching out to others and maintaining a close and developing relationship with God. This is how we want to be, and these are the people we need in our lives to help us to stay close to God.

Journal*Optional***Grades K-2**

Who is your favorite person to talk to about God or Bible stories? Draw a picture of that person. Why are they your favorite? Write about it.

Grades 3-5

Do you have a mentor, or someone who is older than you who can help you grow closer to God? What makes him/her so special? How has that person helped you to grow? Write about it.

What do you think all the qualities of a good friend are? Make a list. Write about it.

Homework Ideas

- Read at home with a grownup the story about the **Elisha and the Miracles** (2 Kings 4:1-36).
- Learn the memory verse: *"You will experience all these blessings if you obey the Lord your God."* --Deuteronomy 28:2 (NLT)
- Work on memorizing commandment #_____.
- Color the **Elisha and the Miracles** coloring sheet as your parents read you the Sunday School Lesson. Return your coloring page for a sticker.
- Look up the word "blessing" in the dictionary. Write down the definition and bring it to class to share.

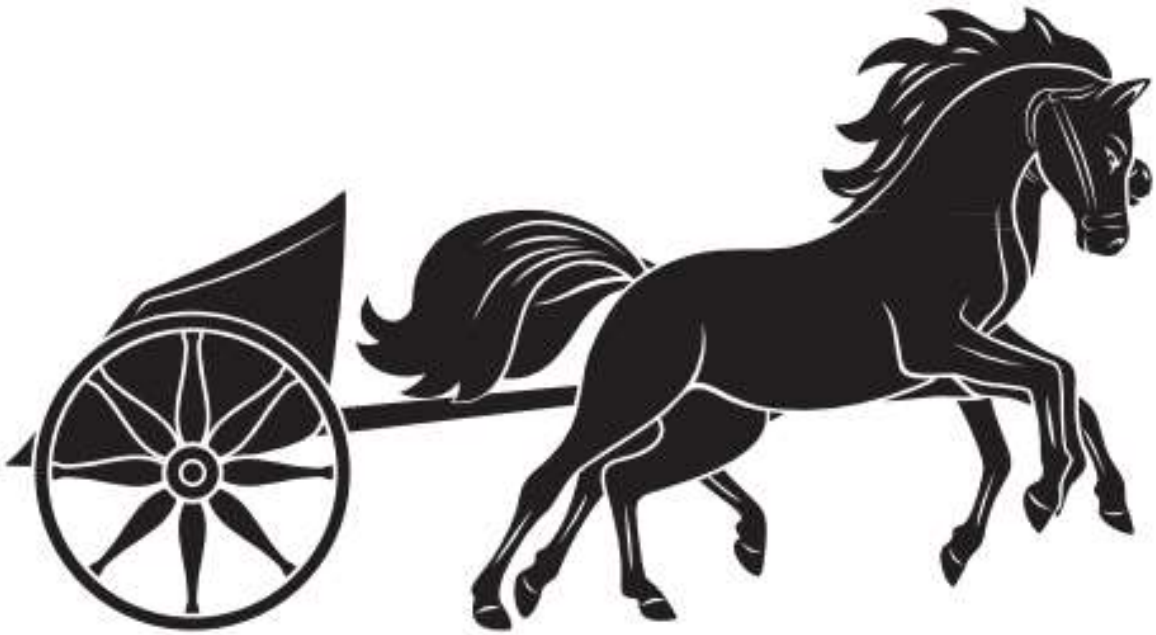
Other Resources

www.daniellesplace.com → Resource Room → Search "Elijah – God Gives Us Teachers"

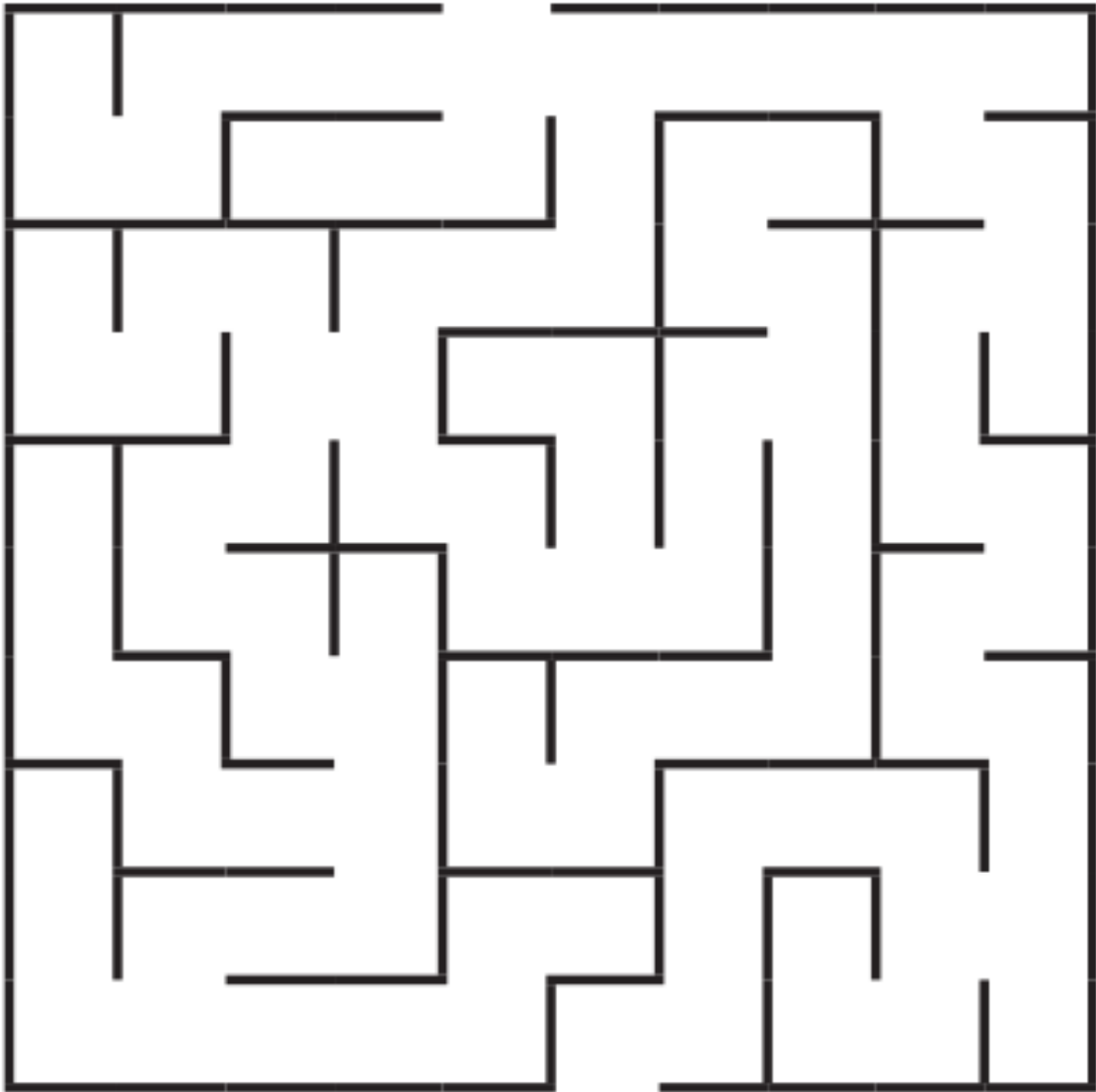
<http://children.ccm.com/curriculum/> → OT Support Curriculum → Page 11 → "Elijah is Taken to Heaven"



 **Craft: Fiery Chariot Picture**



 **Game: The Voice**





Role Play: I Will Not Leave You

Elijah: Elisha, I want you to stay here. The Lord wants me to go to Bethel.

Elisha: I swear by my faithfulness to the living Lord and to you, I will not leave you.

Elijah: Elisha, stay here. The Lord wants me to go to Jericho.

Elisha: I swear by my loyalty to the living Lord and to you that I will not leave you.
(Elijah and Elisha pretend to walk to Jericho.)

Prophets: *(Second group of prophets walk up to Elisha.)* Elisha, did you know the Lord is going to take Elijah away from you today?

Elisha: Yes, I know. Please do not talk about it to me.

Elijah: Stay here Elisha. The Lord wants me to go to Jordan.

Elisha: I swear by my faithfulness to the living Lord and to you that I will not leave you. *(Both pretend to walk to the Jordan.)*

Narrator: When they arrived, fifty of Elijah's prophets were watching them on the river bank. Elijah took off his cloak, rolled it up and struck the water. The waters divided and they were able to cross on dry land. *(While the narrator talks, Elijah strikes the water with his cloak. Put the cloak on the edge of the stage. The two pretend to walk to the other side of the river.)*

Elijah: Ask what I should do for you before I am taken away.

Elisha: Please give me a double portion of your spirit.

Elijah: You have asked for something difficult. If you can see me as I am taken away, then your request will be fulfilled.

Narrator: Then a flaming chariot with fiery horses appeared and a whirlwind took Elijah up to heaven. Elisha took his cloak off and ripped it in two pieces. Then he picked up Elijah's cloak and struck the water as Elijah had done.

Role Play: I Will Not Leave You

Elisha: Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?

Narrator: Then the water divided and Elisha walked back to the other side.

Prophets: Elijah's spirit is now with Elisha.

Narrator: The people knew Elisha was the new prophet. For three days, fifty men searched for Elijah but they could not find him.



Name: _____

Elisha and the Miracles



"You will experience all these blessings if you obey the Lord your God."
--Deuteronomy 28:2 (NLT)



Take Home Page: F7. Elijah is Taken to Heaven

Today I learned...

Today your child learned that God's wants us to **stay close to Him!** The children reviewed the story of Elijah and Elisha, and what happened when Elijah ascended to heaven. They also talked about things they can do each day to draw closer to God.

Help me learn my memory verse...

"But anyone who is joined to the Lord becomes one with Him in spirit."

--1 Corinthians 6:17 (NIRV)

Ask me...

1. What kind of relationship did Elijah and Elisha have?
2. What happened to Elijah?
3. Do you want to go to heaven too some day? Why or why not?

Live Your Faith...

Make a simple treat with your child, but the first time you attempt making it, make it incorrectly. (i.e., use salt instead of sugar.) Let your child taste the result and see what reaction you get. Then try to make the treat again, this time following a written down "recipe". As you work, talk about how important it is to follow the recipe as much as possible so that the end result is what it should be. God also wants us to be obedient to Him and His commandments, but He also wants us to stay close to Him. Talk about specific ways you can do that each day.

