#### Lesson 3:

#### Sunday\*: God Takes Elijah to Heaven/Elisha Takes His Place

#### \*This lesson is different, in that Sunday and Wednesday have different lessons. Wednesday teachers should briefly review the Sunday lesson then refer to the Wednesday lesson and activities

#### SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:

 1 Kings 19:16,19-21; 2 Kings 2:1-15

#### MEMORY WORK:

Bible skills 1-6 Psalms 119:105

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

Heaven is a wonderful, special, beautiful place. Some day I want to live there with Jesus!.

 **LESSON STARTS HERE**

INTRODUCTION:

All the people in the Bible died except two men. One was Enoch (in the book of Genesis). He went to heaven to be with God without dying. Today we’re going to learn how the great prophet Elijah went to heaven.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. When Elijah was feeling sorry for himself and seeking refuge in a cave at Mount Horeb (Sinai), God reminded Elijah of His great power (in the storm, the fire, the earthquake, and the still, small voice). Then God told Elijah to get back to work. One of the things God told him to do was to find a man named Elisha to take his place as God’s prophet (1 Kings 19:19-21). Elijah left Mount Horeb and traveled back to find Elisha.
2. Elisha left his father’s farm behind to follow Elijah and learn from him. About 10 years passed. Elijah encouraged Elisha to leave him and go to different towns [Gilgal, Bethel (one of the centers of idol worship in Israel), and Jericho] while the old prophet went on with his work for God. But Elisha stubbornly refused to leave his old friend; he knew that the king of Israel (Ahaziah, son of Ahab) had tried to kill Elijah, and he wanted to stay with him. When they arrived in Bethel, a group of prophets (called “the sons of the prophets”) who were living there asked Elisha if he knew that day would be Elijah’s last. Elisha told them that he knew and asked them not to say anything (“**Keep silent**”—2 Kings 2:3).

**NOTE**: When Elisha told the sons of the prophets to “**keep silent**,” perhaps he did not want them to be upset about Elijah leaving, or he, himself, did not want to be upset about it. He was likely very close to Elijah, having served at his side for ten years. He did now want to leave Elijah’s side (2 Kings 2:4,6), and called him “father” (2 Kings 2:12). He also may simply have not wanted to discuss it at that moment because of the gravity of the moment.

1. Elijah and Elisha traveled on to Jericho that day and more sons of the prophets met Elisha to tell him that his master would be taken away that day. They came to the Jordan River, and Elijah took off his cloak (mantle), rolled it up, and hit the water with it. Immediately the water of the Jordan opened up and the two prophets walked to the other side. Fifty sons of the prophets saw this happen.
2. The sons of the prophets and Elisha weren’t the only ones who knew that it was time for Elijah to go be with the Lord. Elijah knew, too. When they had reached the other side of the Jordan River, Elijah asked his young friend what he could do for him before he was “taken.” Elisha said that all he wanted was a “double portion” of Elijah’s spirit. He wanted to be as strong in his faith and as powerful a prophet as Elijah had been for so many years. This was a “hard thing” that Elisha asked, but Elijah told him his wish would be granted **if** he saw Elijah going up into heaven.
3. They walked on and talked. Suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared in the sky and took Elijah up into **heaven** in a whirlwind.

**NOTE**: The underlying Hebrew word for “**heaven**” in this story is plural—i.e., heavens. There are three heavens described in the Bible (see the article below): the atmosphere (sky—Genesis 1:20; 8:2; etc.), space (Genesis 15:5; 22:17; etc.), and the place where God and other celestial beings abide (Deuteronomy 10:14; 26:15; etc.). In this case, without further clarification as to his destination, it appears that the text is saying that Elijah was carried up into the sky (the “first heaven”), especially in light of John 3:13 (see the article referenced below) and Matthew 17:1-13, where he is depicted as being where Moses is, presumably in Hades.

1. Elisha was so overwhelmed that he tore his clothes—in this case not only a sign of grief, but of absolute wonder/awe of what he had just seen. Elijah’s mantle fell to the ground as he was being taken into heaven, and Elisha picked it up. He walked back to the Jordan River, rolled up the mantle, struck the water, and walked to the other side on dry ground—just as Elijah had done. This was a sign to the 50 **sons of the prophets** who were watching that Elisha was God’s choice (not just Elijah’s) to take Elijah’s place.

**NOTE**: See Joshua 3:1-4:24 for the other instance of the Jordan parting and the Israelites crossing on dry ground.

**HISTORICAL NOTE:** The phrase “**sons of prophets**” (or “schools of the prophets”) may be an indicator of the close relationships/associations these particular men had with Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha. The phrase first appears in Scripture during the time of Samuel. During the reign of King Saul, there was a great need for teachers who could (and would) encourage God’s chosen people to remember who they were and to obey Him. During that time, loosely-organized groups of prophets formed in order to be teachers of God’s Word. Some biblical commentators believe that Samuel started these groups. It is interesting that following his death, these groups are not mentioned again until the time of Elijah and Elisha, and then only in reference to the Northern Kingdom where Elijah and Elisha worked. They are not mentioned again after the death of Elisha.

1. Elijah is mentioned in other biblical passages, including Malachi 4:5-6 and Matthew 11:14 as an example of the prophet who would announce the coming of the Messiah. [John the Baptizer was that “Elijah.”] During the ministry of Jesus, Elijah (and Moses) appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration with Jesus (Matthew 17:3-4), representing the prophets who tried to teach and warn God’s people about the consequences of sin. Elijah was a powerful man of God, but he was not a perfect man. He had his weak moments when he felt fear and uncertainty—like all of us do—but he loved God and served Him every day.
2. It is clear from this story (and by implication in Matthew 17:2-3) that Elijah will be in heaven. We sometimes sing the song “Heaven is a Wonderful Place.” Indeed, heaven **is** a wonderful place—a place where we want to go to be with God, Jesus, and people like Elijah forever and ever. God loved Elijah very much and chose this special way to take him to heaven. [It was a reward for Elijah, to be sure, but it was also a powerful sign to those watching that Elisha was to take his place. If we obey God like Elijah did, we, too, will go to heaven to be with God forever.
3. Heaven is a happy place, a place with absolutely no sadness, no sickness, no war, no hunger, etc. In heaven we will sing and praise God all the time. Heaven is where Jesus went after His resurrection, and He has a special place prepared especially for each one of us. [Go into as much detail about heaven as you think appropriate for your class. As appropriate, talk to the children about Jesus’ Second Coming and the Judgment (meeting Jesus in the clouds, etc.).]

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL VISUALS (**note disclaimers**):

* + - Betty Lukens’ felt pieces
		- ABeka Flash-a-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, not the lesson book)
		- Free Bible Images – Saved on Flash Drive. Script for Images in Lesson File
		- Bible Study Guide for All Ages (BSGFAA) Lesson 181 and 186. These visuals will look like a black and white comic strip on one large piece of cardstock. To use these attach it to the magnetic dry erase board. Use dry erase markers to follow the directions. Let students take turns marking on the page. Both of these go with the Sunday portion of the lesson.

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS :

**“2 Kings 2:11-12”**

Author: Unknown\* (Tune: “Are You Sleeping?”)

In a whirlwind, in a whirlwind,

Chariots of fire, chariots of fire;

Elijah going upward, Elijah going upward, Heaven bound, heaven bound.

Elisha saw him, Elisha saw him, Saw him go, saw him go;

Found Elijah’s mantle, found Elijah’s mantle, Power from God, power from God.

Took the mantle, took the mantle,

Rolled it up, rolled it up;

Elisha struck the water, Elisha struck the water, Jordan was dry, Jordan was dry.

### Prophet SUNDAY

LEARNING CENTERS AND ACTIVITIES:

Activities should focus on the first part of the lesson – Elijah going up in a chariot of fire and Elisha taking his place.

##### Review game: In the lesson file there should be a laminated Elijah and chariot. Draw a sun and clouds high in the right corner of the dry erase board. Place Elijah on the “ground” in the lower left hand corner of the board. Ask the class review questions from lessons 1-3. When a question is answered correctly, move Elijah closer to heaven. When he reaches the top right corner or Heaven the game is over.

### Review Questions

1. What man did God tell Elijah to find to take his place when he died?
	1. Elisha
2. What did Elisha leave behind to follow Elijah?
	1. His father’s farm
3. What did Elijah encourage Elisha to do?
	1. Leave him and go to a different town
4. Did Elisha do as Elijah asked and go to a different town?
	1. No, he stayed with Elijah
5. What did the sons of the prophets ask Elisha?
	1. If he knew that this day would be Elisha’s last
6. What did Elijah do when he came to the Jordon River?
	1. He took off his cloak, rolled it up, and hit the water with it
7. What immediately happened to the water?
	1. It parted and Elijah and Elisha walked across.
8. How many sons of the prophets saw this happen?
	1. 50
9. What did Elisha say when Elijah asked him what he could do for him before he was taken?
	1. He asked for a double portion of Elijah’s spirit.
10. As they walked and talked, what appeared?
	1. A chariot and horses of fire, which separated Elijah from Elisha
11. What happened to Elijah after they were separated?
	1. A whirlwind took Elijah to Heaven
12. What did Elisha do after he witnessed Elijah’s going up?
	1. He was overwhelmed and tore his clothes.
13. What fell to the ground as Elijah was being taken up?
	1. Elijah’s cloak
14. What did Elijah do with the cloak?
	1. He picked it up, walked back to the Jordan River, rolled it up, and struck the water with it. The waters parted and he crossed the river again.
15. How was Elisha’s parting of the Jordan River a sign to the 50 sons of the prophets?
	1. It told them Elisha was God’s choice to take Elijah’s place.

#### Lesson 3:

#### Wednesday\*: Shunammite Woman Helps Elisha; Elisha Raises Her Son from the Dead

#### \*This lesson is different, in that Sunday and Wednesday have different lessons. Wednesday teachers should briefly review the Sunday lesson then refer to the Wednesday lesson and activities

#### SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:

2 Kings 4:8-37

#### MEMORY WORK:

Bible skills 1-6 Psalms 119:105

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I will be unselfish, kind, and thoughtful of others.

 **LESSON STARTS HERE**

INTRODUCTION:

Earlier, we learned about a man named Elijah and how he helped a widow. Do you remember what a “widow” is? Can anyone tell me what Elijah did to help the widow? Today, we are going to talk about a lady who was kind to Elisha, and he showed kindness back to her, too. God is always happy when we choose to be kind to others.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Elisha, known to be a “holy man of God,” frequently passed through Shunem (2 Kings 4:9). One day a wealthy woman offered food to the weary prophet. After that day, she made sure that everytime he came that way, she provided him with a meal. She even persuaded her husband to build a small room on top of their house for Elisha, complete with a table, chair, and lamp stand so that the prophet could stay there as often as he needed to.
2. Elisha was so very grateful for this woman’s kindness and generosity that he offered to do something great for her in return. His servant, Gehazi, told him that the woman had long wanted children, but had none. So Elisha promised the woman that the following year, at that same time, she would have a baby boy. At first she did not believe that could be possible (because her husband was old, and they had been childless so long). But just as Elisha promised, the next year she did have a baby boy!

**NOTE**: **Shunem** was originally part of the land given to the tribe of Issachar (Joshua 19:18). It was about seven miles from Mount Carmel. Like so many women in the Bible, we do not know this woman’s name, but she has for centuries just been called “the Shunammite woman,” i.e., the woman from Shunem.

1. The boy grew, and the woman and her husband were so happy. One day, when he was old enough to go to the fields with his father and the farm workers, the boy complained of a terrible pain in his head. He was sent back to the house, and later that day, the boy died—in his mother’s lap. Distraught and grief-stricken, the Shunammite woman went to find the man of God. At first, Elisha offered only to send Gehazi, telling Gehazi to place Elisha’s staff across the boy’s body. But the woman refused to return home without Elisha. So Elisha went with her to her house and asked God to bring the boy back to life. [Give as much detail here as you think appropriate about how Elisha got on the bed with the boy and laid on top of the boy’s body, mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, hands to hands, until the boy’s body grew warm.] Elisha got very close to the boy on the bed, and he prayed. He then turned away and walked back and forth in the room and then got on the bed again. Suddenly, the boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes!
2. Elisha’s prayers were answered, and the woman was called into the room to find her precious son alive again. She was so grateful that she bowed down at Elisha’s feet in awe and gratitude.
3. Because of her unselfishness and her kindness, the Shunammite woman was blessed with two miracles: the birth of her son and the raising from the dead of her son. She had much for which to be grateful. Elisha was also unselfish and kind. He was willing to use the abilities that God had given him to help this woman of faith.
4. Like Elisha and the Shunammite woman, we all have many reasons to be thankful to God and many opportunities to be unselfish and kind to others.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL VISUALS (**note disclaimer**):

##### Betty Lukens’ felt pieces

* Elisha ABeka Flash-a-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, not the lesson book;)
* Free Bible Images – Saved on flash drive. Can be presented on classroom tv. Script included in lesson file.
* Bible Study Guide for All Ages (BSGFAA) Lesson 385 and 387. These visuals will look like a black and white comic strip on one large piece of cardstock. To use these attach it to the magnetic dry erase board. Use dry erase markers to follow the directions. Let students take turns marking on the page. Lesson 385 is a review of Bible history from the kings – Elijah. Lesson 387 tells various accounts of Elisha. For our purposes start with picture #4. Cover pictures 1-3 with a strip of construction paper and a magnet or cover it with black dry erase marker.

SONGS:

**“A Room for Elisha”**

Author: Unknown\* (Tune: “London Bridge”)

(Can divide the class into three groups for this song)

Shunammite Woman speaks:

Oh, Elisha’s come to town, come to town, come to town, Oh, Elisha’s come to town; he’s a prophet!

Let us build a room for him, room for him, room for him. Let us build a room for him; he’s a prophet.

Elisha speaks:

Let us thank the Shunammite, Shunammite, Shunammite,

Let us thank the Shunammite; she’s unselfish.

Servant speaks:

Ask the Lord to give her a son, give her a son, give her a son. Ask the Lord to give her a son. That would please her!

So Elisha prayed for her, prayed for her, prayed for her, So Elisha prayed for her, and she had one.

**“Elisha Raises the** **Shunammite’s Son”**

Author: Unknown\* (Tune: “Are You Sleeping?”)

He was working, he was working,

In the field, in the field,

When he said, “My head hurts,” When he said, “My head hurts”

He was sick! He was sick!

Home to mother, home to mother,

They took him, they took him.

Then about the noon-time, then about the noon-time,

He was dead! He was dead!

Mother laid him, mother laid him,

On his bed, on his bed.

Went to tell Elisha, went to tell Elisha,

“Come and help!” “Come and help!”

He came quickly, he came quickly,

To the child, to the child.

From the dead he raised him, from the dead he raised him,

Back to life! Back to life!

### Wednesday

LEARNING CENTERS AND ACTIVITIES:

##### “[Elisha Raises a Boy Coloring Sheet](http://www.apcurriculum.com/dcirfol/4-24-33-173Coloring%20Sheet%20%28Elisha%20Raises%20a%20Boy%29.pdf)” (provided in activity sheets)

##### Build Room. Using large mega blocks or duplo blocks build a basic cube house. Then add on a room for Elisha. If available include doll furniture – a bed, table, chair, and lamp.

##### The Sharing Game: Cut out circles from colored construction paper or posterboard, two per child. On one half of the circles, draw a “happy face.” On the other half, draw a “sad face.” Put a happy face and a sad face back-to-back and glue them together, along with a craftstick handle. Write the following statements (or make up your own) about sharing/ not sharing on slips of paper (example [statement cutouts](http://www.apcurriculum.com/dcirfol/4-24-33-173The%20Sharing%20Game.pdf) provided in activity sheets). Fold the slips of paper, and put them in a basket or small container. As you take out each slip of paper and read each statement, ask the children to use their happy/sad faces to show if each situation describes sharing (happy face) or not sharing (sad face). Examples:

Would you like a cookie? That’s mine!

Go home! Come to Bible class with me.

Do you want to play with me? I’ll go first.

I want that! Why don’t you sit by me?

* Ask the children to sit in a circle. Roll a ball to a child or throw a beanbag, and ask him/her to tell one kind thing he can do for someone else. He then rolls the ball back to you, and you roll it to someone else. Do this until everyone has had a turn.

### Review Questions

1. Who offered Elisha food and a place to stay when he passed through Shunem?
	1. A wealthy woman
2. What did the Shunamite woman have built for Elisha?
	1. A room to stay in for when he was in town
3. What was in the room?
	1. A table, chair, and lamp
4. What had the woman wanted for a long time?
	1. A child
5. Who told Elisha what the Shunemite woman wanted?
	1. His servant, Gehazi
6. What did Elisha promise the woman?
	1. The next year she would have a baby boy
7. Why didn’t she believe him?
	1. Her husband was old and they had been childless for many years.
8. Years later, what happened to the boy?
	1. He was working in the fields and went home because he wasn’t feeling well. He died at home in his mother’s arms.
9. What did the woman do after her son died?
	1. She found Elisha and begged him to help her.
10. What did Elisha do to the boy?
	1. He got very close to the boy on the bed and prayed. He then turned away and walked back and forth in the room. He then got back on the bed with the boy.
11. What happened after Elisha got on the bed the second time?
	1. The boy sneezed seven times and then opened his eyes.
12. What did the woman do when she saw that her son was alive?
	1. She bowed down at Elisha’s feet thanking him.

Additional Notes / Activities Performed & Curriculum Feed Back

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