



Date: _____
Series: God is Awesome
Summer Year 2, Lesson 9

Elijah is Taken to Heaven in a Fiery Chariot

Bible Event: 2 Kings 2:1-18

Take Home Point: *GOD IS AWESOME!—*God shows me his power.*

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson. The leader will say the first part of the phrase (CAPS). The children respond with the second part of the phrase (*italics*).

Jesus Link: Just as Elijah was taken to heaven, someday Jesus will take me to heaven.

What kids will learn about God in this worship experience:

- Children will learn that God has awesome power. He can accomplish anything! He can transfer his Spirit from one person to another and he can take us up to heaven in a magnificent way. Kids will know that God's awesome power works for them and one day will take them to heaven. Kids will take home the point: ***GOD IS AWESOME!—*God shows me his power.***
- Children will respond to God's love as they pray to him, thanking him for loving them and giving them Jesus. They will offer him their songs of worship, their offerings, and their actions of love as they actively learn God's word.



Welcome Zone: (15-20 minutes)

Purpose: While kids arrive, give them a simple learning readiness activity that requires minimal supervision. This might include a video, games, blocks, or puzzles.

Video Suggestion: Choose a video and list it here.

Activity Suggestion: Blocks, toys, puzzles, paper, and crayons.



Opening Worship: (10-15 minutes)

Children can bring forward the cross, candles, Bible, offering plate, and treasure box. The treasure box contains the props used to tell or dramatize the Bible event. Open with a simple prayer, having the children repeat after you. Collect offering and talk about how God will use it.

Praise Songs:

Choose two or three songs and list them here.

Bible Event: Imagination Theater

Imagination Theater is an audience participation drama, in which the Bible event is told in creative fashion, using children as actors. The Imagination Box contains the Bible and other special props used for the drama. Begin by removing the Bible and explain that this is God's word, which tells us of the wonderful deeds God has done. Then, remove an imaginary hat from the box and place it on your head. This is your Imagination Hat. Invite the children to put on their imagination hats, as well. They will use their imaginations to picture the events the Bible tells us about. Some will even use their imaginations to help act out these events. Distribute props to volunteer actors, as they are called forward at the beginning of the presentation.

Today's imagination theater is about two men who loved God very much. One was named Elijah and the other was named Elisha. (Over-enunciate the 'j' and the 'sh' sound and have the kids practice saying them. Put a head piece on Elisha and a special cloak on Elijah.)

Elijah was very old. He had served God for a long time, and it was his time to go to heaven. Elisha was young, and God had chosen him to take over for Elijah. The young Elisha followed old Elijah everywhere to learn as much as he could. Even when the day came for old Elijah to go to heaven, young Elisha would not leave his side.

Lots of people knew that this was Elijah's special day to go to heaven, so they were following him. They all came to the Jordan River and didn't know how they were going to cross it. Old Elijah

took off his cloak, wrapped it up, and hit the water with it. The water parted! (Have two blue tablecloths lying end to end on the floor. When Elijah hits the tablecloths with his cloak, have two helpers pull on the side of each tablecloth, making them “open” a path on the floor to walk through.) **Only Elisha and Elijah were allowed to cross through the path. The others had to stay behind.**

As the two of them were walking, old Elijah asked young Elisha, “What do you want from me before I am taken away?”

Elisha answered, “Let me have a double portion of your spirit.” Young Elisha knew how much of God’s Holy Spirit was in old Elijah, and he hoped he could be a godly man just like Elijah.

Elijah answered, “If you see me when I am taken away, then you will know that God has given a double portion of my spirit.”

Just then, a chariot and horses of fire came down from the sky to take old Elijah away. (Bring out a wagon, box, or chair with some stick horses to be the fiery chariot. Have them decorated with red, orange, and yellow streamers. Elijah should drop his cloak and ride away.)

Young Elisha cried out when he saw Elijah leave this world. Then he picked up old Elijah’s cloak and started back on his journey. When he came upon the Jordan River again, the people were still waiting on the other side. Elisha wrapped up the cloak and hit the water just like Elijah had.

Do you know what happened? The water split again so Elisha could get through. Then he and the people knew that young Elisha truly had old Elijah’s spirit in him!

All the people wanted to go look for old Elijah, but they never found him. He had ridden the fiery chariot to heaven! Remember: *GOD IS AWESOME! —*God shows me his power.*



Action Zones: (20-30 minutes)

Purpose: Children move at their leisure to the activities according to their interest. Adults are assigned to oversee each of the zones, watching for safety, assisting any activity, and helping the children connect to the lesson of the day. All zones are introduced at the beginning of Zone Time. Some suggested zones are included below. It is usually best to have all children go to the Snack Zone first. Sing a blessing song or say a snack prayer together before dismissing to the zones.

During the Zone Time, children may arrive from mid-service dismissal if this is an option at your church. Be prepared to welcome the children and invite them to choose a zone.

Snack Zone: Have Honey Comb cereal to represent chariot wheels and Red Hot candies (or other cinnamon flavored candy) to represent the fire.

HEALTHY SNACK OPTION: Use four grapes and two pretzel sticks to make a chariot. Poke a grape to each side of two different picks. Then connect them with two additional pretzel sticks making a four- wheeled chariot. This will make a rectangle with grape wheels.

Drama Zone: Have the kids reenact the story with the cloak, the chariot and horses.

Video Zone: *Animated Stories from the Bible: Elijah* (Animated Bible Stories II, 1993) or *Animated Stories from the Bible: Elisha* (Nest Masters, 1994).

Messy Zone: Provide play dough for children to mold horses and a chariot of fire.

Puppet Zone: Have one puppet tell the other about God's power.

Felt Zone: Use felt board materials to show the story of Elijah from today's Bible event. (For example, use Lesson #77, "Elijah Goes To Heaven," from *Betty Lukens Through the Bible in Felt*.)

Craft Zone: On blank paper, have the children draw and color old Elijah, young Elisha, and a fiery chariot with horses. Cut each character out and attach them to craft sticks to create puppets so they can act out the story later. Or use the templates of Elisha, Elijah, and the chariot for the children to color and cut for puppets.

Play Zone: Play a parachute game. Tape red and orange streamers to balls. Throw the balls onto the parachute and have the kids wave the parachute to send the balls to heaven.

Quiet Reading Zone: *The Beginner's Bible* and a basket of books

Music Zone: Your choice of music. *Options:* “Thank You, Lord, for Making Me” by Vince Barlow from the CD titled *Dance, Shout, Sing*.

Coloring Zone: “Elijah, Taken to Heaven in a Fiery Chariot” coloring page.

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Closing Worship: (20 minutes)

Purpose: As you empty the zones and clean up, begin the music so the children can start wandering over.

Worship Songs:

Choose one or two songs and list them here.

Bible Application with Puppet Presentation:

Purpose: The puppet demonstrates the need that will be met in today's lesson. The scripts are not written verbatim, but give a story line in which the group leader can interact with the puppet.

Bubba comes on stage dressed as a superhero, with a handkerchief cape and a mask. He wants to be a superhero like Spiderman or the X-men. He wants to fly into outer space, just like today's Bible event where the hero flew into space in a fiery chariot.

The large group presenter looks at Bubba and then asks the kids:

Is that what really happened in today's event? Bubba thinks Elijah was a superhero. (The kids explain that he was a prophet of God.) Elijah wasn't going to space. He was going to heaven. And it wasn't a rocket; it was a fiery chariot from God.

Bubba asks if that's how we all get to heaven. The large group presenter explains:

We won't go to heaven in a fiery chariot, but it will still be awesome. Will it be a rocket ship? (No.) Will it be a chariot? (No.) Will we fly like a superhero? (No.)

The large group presenter shows a cross. He explains:

We will go to heaven because of Jesus. Because Jesus died on the cross, you and I get the power to go to heaven. When we die, our body stays here. But the real us inside goes to heaven. We get a new body and get to see God and be with him. It will be awesome! God is more powerful than any rocket ship or superhero. He sent Jesus so that we could get to heaven. Remember, *GOD IS AWESOME! —God shows me his power.

Prayer Time:

Purpose: Allow children to contribute their own prayers. This will teach them to turn to God in both good times and in times of trouble. End with the Lord's Prayer.

"Children Pray" Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Train Option:** Children line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone and speak their brief prayers of thanksgiving.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Children stand in a circle around one child sitting on a chair in the middle. All children in the circle will lay a hand on the child sitting in the chair as they say a prayer together.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and taps children on the head to stand and speak their prayer.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

Blessing:

May God, who is all around you,
pour his love upon you.

(Beginning at the bottom of the circle, slowly make a large circle with your hands. Finish by bringing your hands down and wiggling your fingers to resemble rain.)

And Jesus, his life a sacrifice,
walk right there beside you.

(Slowly make a large sign of the cross. Then move your hands out to the sides.)

And may God's Holy Spirit,
the one who lives inside you,

(Cross hands over your heart)

keep you strong,
comfort, lead, and guide you!

(Move to a "strong man" position. Then cross your arms with your hands on corresponding upper arms to communicate comfort. Bring one hand forward with "lead" and the other with "guide" to complete the blessing.)

Song of Sending:

Choose one song and list it here.



Closing Zones:

Purpose: Children go to an activity zone, such as the coloring zone, quiet reading zone, and children's Christian music video zone, as they wait for their parents.

Supplies:

Welcome Zone:

- blocks, toys, puzzles, paper, and crayons

Opening Worship:

- Bible
- head piece and cloak
- two blue tablecloths or towels
- wagon, box or chair
- stick horses
- red, orange and yellow streamers
- tape

Action Zones:

Snack:

- Honey Comb cereal
- Red Hots or cinnamon candy

Drama:

- head piece and cloak
- blue tablecloths or towels
- wagon, box or chair
- stick horses

Messy:

- Play Doh
- newspaper

Video:

- *Animated Stories from the Bible: Elijah*, *Animated Bible Stories II*, 1993, or *Animated Stories from the Bible: Elisha*, Nest Masters, 1994.—order from http://www.nestfamily.com/store/product_detail.asp?productID=EJD

Craft:

- blank paper or templates
- markers or crayons
- scissors
- craft sticks
- glue or tape

Play:

- parachute
- small balls
- red and orange streamers

Quiet Reading:

- *Beginner's Bible*

Music:

- song, "Thank You, Lord, for Making Me," by Vince Barlow, from CD "Dance, Shout, Sing"

Puppet:

- assorted puppets

Felt:

- felt board materials to show the story of Elijah from today's Bible event.

Coloring:

- coloring page
- crayons and markers

Closing Worship:

- Bubba, the puppet
- handkerchief
- mask

Closing Zones:

- colored pencils
- paper
- basket of books



Elijah



Elisha

