



12

God Calls Elisha

Key Theme

- God uses people to accomplish His perfect plans.

Key Passages

- 2 Kings 2:8, 2:11, 2:13–14, 5:10–11, 5:13–15

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe God's calling of Elisha to be His prophet.
- Explain how Elisha showed he was a prophet of God.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet. Then, they will recite the verse to each other and/or the entire class.



Activity 1: God Calls Elisha Class Notes

Students will fill out the God Calls Elisha Class Notes as you study the lesson. Pass out the assembled booklets before you begin to teach.



Studying God's Word

God took Elijah up to heaven in a fiery chariot and a whirlwind, and Elijah's mantle fell to Elisha. Right away miracles confirmed Elisha's role as a prophet of God, including the healing of Naaman's leprosy which spread the fame of the Lord.



Activity 2: Tic-Tac-Toe Review Game

Students will answer review questions about the lesson to earn an opportunity to play tic-tac-toe.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Print the Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student
- Pencils



GOD CALLS ELISHA CLASS NOTES

- Print, cut, collate, and staple the God Calls Elisha Class Notes Booklet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. There will be six pages total. Keep the answer key for your use.

- God Calls Elisha Class Notes Booklet for each student
- God Calls Elisha Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



TIC-TAC-TOE REVIEW GAME

- Print one Tic-Tac-Toe Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Color 5 white plates red and 5 white plates blue if you are not purchasing colored plates.
- Tape a large tic-tac-toe grid pattern on the floor.

- Tic-Tac-Toe Review Sheet
- 5 red paper plates
- 5 blue paper plates
- Masking tape



Memory Verse

1 Chronicles 29:11 Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all.

➤ **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the lesson key passages along with this background.

Jezebel was seeking to kill Elijah because of God's triumph over the false prophets at Mount Carmel and the subsequent execution of those false prophets (1 Kings 18:36–40). In fear, Elijah ran for his life into the wilderness. In desperation, he prayed that he might die (1 Kings 19:2–4). But in obedience, he ate the food God provided and continued his journey south for 40 days to Horeb, the mountain of God (1 Kings 19:8). In a cave on this mountain, Elijah again encountered God (1 Kings 19:9), learned that God had appointed Elisha to replace him (1 Kings 19:16), and was encouraged to know that God had spared 7,000 in Israel who were faithful to Him (1 Kings 19:18). As Elijah then returned north toward Damascus, he met Elisha plowing with oxen. Before Elisha knew what was happening, he had Elijah's mantle (an outer garment like a cloak or robe) on his own shoulders (1 Kings 19:19). Elisha would have understood that this meant that God had appointed him to be a prophet like Elijah. Elisha followed the great prophet and became his servant (1 Kings 19:21).

The transition of Elisha assuming Elijah's role occurred at the Jordan River about 20 years after Elisha had left his home. Elijah and Elisha stood by the river. Elijah rolled up his mantle, struck the water, and the river divided so they crossed on dry land (2 Kings 2:8). God would bestow to Elisha the blessing he requested through Elijah—a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Elisha witnessed Elijah's unique ascent into heaven as he was taken up in a whirlwind after a chariot of fire with horses of fire appeared (2 Kings 2:9–11). In his distress at this sight, Elisha retrieved the mantle of Elijah that had been left behind and approached the Jordan River. Elisha then struck the water with the mantle as he cried out to the God of Elijah; the river divided again, and he crossed over (2 Kings 2:12–14). The sons of the prophets acknowledged Elisha's status as a prophet of God when they declared, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha" (2 Kings 2:15).

Elisha prophesied during a dark time in Israel's history, and God revealed His power, validated Elisha's position as prophet, and gave him the authority to perform many miracles in His name. The Creator God used His prophet Elisha as a means of accomplishing His perfect plans on earth.

Elisha not only ministered to Israel, but was also called upon to spread God's fame throughout the earth. We see this in the account of Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, a powerful Gentile nation. The Bible tells us that Naaman served as the chief commander to Ben-Hadad and had won many battles by the hand of the Lord. But Naaman was a leper (2 Kings 5:1). If not for his status as commander, his power, and his wealth, this disease would have caused him to be shunned by many.

Upon hearing through an Israelite servant girl about the prophet of God in Samaria, Naaman sought permission from his king to pursue the prophet's healing power (2 Kings 5:4–6). When Naaman approached Elisha's house, the prophet sent a messenger to tell him to wash in the Jordan River seven times to be restored. Naaman became furious at the advice, too proud to oblige these humble, uncomplicated instructions (2 Kings 5:10–12). After some persuasion from his servants to follow the simple command of the prophet, Naaman conceded. He dipped seven times in the Jordan, and his flesh was restored and made clean (2 Kings 5:14). God had healed the leprosy and had changed the heart of this foreigner to acknowledge the true God (2 Kings 5:15).

God used many people to influence Naaman and bring him to a realization of the true God who had the power to heal through such an apparently silly, simple act. God still uses imperfect people to accomplish His perfect plans. The New Testament confirms this as we read of Elijah in the book of James: "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit" (James 5:17–18).

You can trust that in your obedience the sovereign and omnipotent one is using you (despite your failings) in the lives of people around you to proclaim His glory and to further the gospel of Jesus Christ.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

The miracles of Elisha are often cited by skeptics to discredit the Bible as a source of authority. They question why God would send bears to kill a bunch of boys mocking a prophet (2 Kings 2:23–24). They don't believe that throwing a stick in the water would make an axe head float (2 Kings 6:1–7), or that a poisonous

pot of stew could be purified with a bit of flour (2 Kings 4:38–41), much less that a dead child could be raised to life by lying on top of him (2 Kings 4:8–37). But these doubters don't know and fear the Creator and Sustainer of all things—the one true God. God used His prophets and their miracles to accomplish His purposes and to glorify His name among His people.

As we look at the laws delivered to Israel by Moses, various forms of skin disease were referred to as leprosy, not just the disease we call leprosy today (Leviticus 13–14). Consequently, we don't know exactly what afflicted Naaman. We know it was clearly a skin disease classified broadly as leprosy. Naaman's leprosy appears to have been localized (2 Kings 5:11), and he had surely sought many cures in Syria. Upon his healing, Naaman knew that he had experienced a miracle at the hand of God. He was now clean.

If we are honest and look closely, we can easily connect Naaman's leprosy to the leprosy that fills the heart of every human—sin. This disease has separated us from God. We are unclean and can't stand in His presence . . . unless He washes us. Those who receive Jesus Christ, believing in the cleansing and forgiveness offered to sinners through the death of Jesus, can rejoice at the freedom Christ offers. Like Naaman,

those forgiven through Christ no longer have to worry about the disease that has tainted them since birth—but can stand before God, knowing they are clean from sin in Christ for all eternity.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Heavenly Father, you can use me to accomplish your plans, even though I am imperfect. Do that, Lord. Use me to affect the lives of others around me, those you have put in my sphere of influence. Help me proclaim your glory to the students in my class, to my neighbors, my family, and friends, and anyone you call me to minister to. I want you to find me faithful. Provide me with more opportunities to further the gospel of Jesus Christ. Keep me grounded in you. And prepare the hearts and minds of my students, so they are ready to receive the truth you have prepared for them this week.

► Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we encourage you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet.
- They will recite the memory verse to another student or the teacher.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



God Calls Elisha Class Notes

MATERIALS

- God Calls Elisha Class Notes Booklet for each student
- God Calls Elisha Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Print, cut, collate, and staple the six pages of the God Calls Elisha Class Notes for each student. Students will complete the sentences on the sheets as you teach the lesson and take the pages home to color and share with family. The words needed to complete the booklet are listed on the cover. This will help early readers/writers with spelling.

Our class notes are a little different today. We have six pages. You will fill in the blanks, and then take the pages home to color and share with your family.

After filling in each point on the class notes, have the students re-read the statement together or call on individual students to read it.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we study today and complete our class notes, we will learn that God called Elisha to be His prophet after Elijah. And we'll hear about some of Elisha's many miracles.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

After God showed His amazing power over the prophets of Baal, King Ahab became very angry at Elijah. King Ahab came after Elijah. Elijah was on the run, hiding out in caves, afraid he was going to be killed. He was afraid and discouraged—not sure what was next for him. But God wasn't

► Use the History of Israel Poster included with your teacher kit to show your class where the biblical accounts you study chronologically fit into this timeline.

finished with him yet. God still had a plan for Elijah. God sent Elijah on one last journey—to find his friend Elisha, who would one day soon take his place as God’s prophet.

We are going to read how God ended Elijah’s job as prophet and how Elisha became another powerful prophet of God. When Elijah met up with Elisha, God led them to the Jordan River. They had to cross the river and God helped them do just that in a spectacular way.

I am going to read from the book of Second Kings, chapter 2. Before I begin, I want to tell you that the Bible mentions Elijah’s mantle. Mantle is just another name for the robe that Elijah wore. It is like a cloak or a cape.

Listen carefully as I read 2 Kings 2:8. *Read 2 Kings 2:8. Encourage the students with Bibles to open to 2 Kings 2.*

2 Kings 2:8

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

► Re-read the verses if necessary so students can answer from the text.

- ? What did Elijah do with his rolled up mantle (or robe)? *2 Kings 2:8. He struck the water with it and it parted.*
- ? Yes, he put his robe in the river and then what happened to the water? *2 Kings 2:8. It was divided and they crossed on dry ground.*
- ? Look at page 2 of your booklet. See the picture? Elijah struck the river with his mantle and it was divided. Which word will complete that sentence? The words you will be using are listed on the cover of the booklet. *River.*

And so Elijah and Elisha crossed over the Jordan River on dry land!

Now Elijah knew he was going to leave soon and he also knew that Elisha was God’s pick to take his place. Elijah asked Elisha if there was anything he could do for him before he left. Elisha asked Elijah for a special blessing. Elisha wanted to have the mighty power that Elijah had so he could continue Elijah’s work to the glory of God! Elijah said that Elisha would get the blessing he asked for. And THEN . . . something incredible happened.

Listen as I read 2 Kings 2:11. *Read 2 Kings 2:11 enthusiastically!*

- ? Did you hear that? Look at page 3 of your booklet. What was it that suddenly appeared? *A chariot of fire with horses of fire!*
- ? Incredible! Then what happened? *The chariot separated the two of them and Elijah went up to heaven.*
- ? Look at page 3 of your booklet. How will you complete the statement? *Heaven.*

Wow! What a way to end one ministry and start another. Can you imagine! God is omnipotent—He is all-powerful! He can do amazing

2 Kings 2:11

things like take someone up to heaven in a chariot of fire! Look at the Attributes of God Poster. Who can tell me what omnipotent means? *All powerful to do whatever He wants.*

Well Elisha definitely saw the chariot take Elijah up to heaven. The Bible says he was upset. His friend was gone. Elijah had been like a father to Elisha. And now Elisha was alone. But God didn't leave Elisha alone really. In fact, Elijah left something for Elisha. Something dropped from the chariot as it was whisked to heaven in the whirlwind. Elisha went to pick it up.

Listen carefully and tell me what it was that Elijah left for Elisha and what Elisha did with it. This is 2 Kings 2:13–14.. *Read 2 Kings 2:13–14 emphasizing the answers to the questions below.*

2 Kings 2:13–14

- ? What fell to the ground as Elijah was being taken to heaven? *Elijah's mantle.*
- ? Yes, Elisha found Elijah's robe or his mantle. And what did Elisha do with Elijah's robe? *2 Kings 2:14. He struck the water of the Jordan River and the water divided and Elisha crossed over.*
- ? Now look at page 4 in your booklet. How will you complete that sentence? *Robe.*

Discover the Truth

God came and took Elijah in an amazing way, with a chariot and horses of fire! Now Elisha had Elijah's robe—which showed he was now God's prophet. Elisha knew he had become God's prophet when he came back to the Jordan River and the water divided again for him. Elisha crossed the river on dry land and returned as God's prophet.



READ THE WORD

God would go on to perform great miracles through Elisha. These miracles would show the power of the true God. Remember, performing miracles in God's name is one of the roles the prophet had. *Refer to the Roles of the Prophets Poster.*

One of the miracles that God performed through Elisha had to do with a powerful man from another country. He was a commander in the army and had a serious disease called leprosy.

- ? Do any of you know what that is? *Allow for answers.*

Leprosy was a disease on the skin. The skin would break out with sores that wouldn't ever heal. It was very bad and there was no way to get rid of the disease. This powerful commander had heard about Elisha, and knew God had given him special power to perform miracles. So he traveled a long way, hoping the prophet could cure his leprosy. The commander's name was Naaman.

We are going to pick up the account where Naaman came to see Elisha. He asked for Elisha's help. This is what Elisha told Naaman to do. Listen carefully. *Read 2 Kings 5:10–11.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? Wow! Elisha sent his messenger to talk to Naaman. Naaman wasn't too happy with what he heard. What did the messenger tell Naaman to do? *2 Kings 5:10. Go and wash in the Jordan seven times.*
- ? Take a look at page 5 of your booklet. How will finish that sentence? *Seven.*
- ? What did Elisha say would happen if he did that? *2 Kings 5:10. His flesh would be restored. His leprosy would be gone.*
- ? Naaman didn't like it! What did he do when he heard these instructions? *2 Kings 5:11. He was furious and walked away.*
- ? Naaman wanted Elisha to come out himself. And who did Naaman want Elisha to call on? *2 Kings 5:11. Come out and call on the Lord.*

Naaman wanted Elisha to do things his way. And he got angry because Elisha did not heal him in the way he expected. The commander did not want to be seen going to the Jordan River and washing seven times. He thought he was too good for that. He was an important man, after all! But someone came and convinced him that he should obey Elisha and do what he told him.

Listen as I read this. It is 2 Kings 5:13–15. Tell me what happened. *Read 2 Kings 5:13–15 emphasizing the answers to the questions below.*

- ? Who convinced Naaman to listen to Elijah? Did you hear that part? *2 Kings 5:13. His servants.*
- ? What did Naaman finally do? *2 Kings 5:14. He went to the Jordan River and dipped seven times.*
- ? And what happened to him? *2 Kings 5:14. His flesh was healed. It was like a little child. He was clean.*
- ? What did Naaman think of God now? *2 Kings 5:15. He knew that there was no other God but the God of Israel.*
- ? What is the answer for page 6 of your booklet? What did Naaman know? *There was only one true God. Fill in the blank on page 6.*

Discover the Truth

Because Naaman was prideful, he didn't want to go to the river and do a simple thing like wash himself. He thought he was too good to do that. He was an important commander! He wanted the prophet Elisha to come to him, to wave his hand and make his leprosy disappear. But that is not what God's plan was. Instead, Naaman had to obey Elisha. He did

obey; he went to the Jordan River, dipped in the water seven times, and then he was healed. And through his healing, the name of the Lord God was glorified in Israel and to the entire commander's army. More and more people were hearing about the one true God—the God who could perform miracles—the powerful, Creator God!



Tic-Tac-Toe Review Game

MATERIALS

- Masking tape
- 5 blue paper plates
- 5 red paper plates
- Tic-Tac-Toe Review Sheet and Answer Key

INSTRUCTIONS

Using masking tape, put a tic-tac-toe grid pattern on the floor large enough for a paper plate to fit inside each square. Divide the class into two teams. Each team will take turns answering questions. If a question is answered correctly, that team can put a plate down on the tic-tac-toe grid. If the answer is wrong, the next team can answer. If no one gets it, give the answer and ask the question again later.

Divide the class into two teams. Today we'll be playing a tic-tac-toe game with red and blue paper plates instead of x's and o's. I hope you were paying attention during today's

lesson so you'll know all of the answers! Each team will take turns answering questions. If you get it right, you can put a plate down on the tic-tac-toe grid. If you get it wrong the next team can answer. If no one gets it, I'll tell you the answer and I'll ask it again later! Everyone ready? Let's play! *Play the game.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Elijah and Elisha crossed the Jordan River on dry land and Elisha asked Elijah for a special blessing. Elisha would become God's next prophet after Elijah was taken away. Elisha went on to perform many miracles in God's name including the healing of Naaman's leprosy which spread the fame of the Lord to other countries.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

It was hard for Elisha to watch his friend disappear to heaven in a whirlwind with horses and a chariot of fire. He didn't want Elijah to leave him. But God's timing is always perfect, and God knew that it was time for Elisha to take Elijah's robe and become the next prophet of God.

God showed Elisha he was now the prophet when Elisha used Elijah's mantle to divide and cross the Jordan River. God also used Elisha to

heal the army commander, Naaman. Naaman came to Elisha because he wanted to be healed of his leprosy. He was healed from his disease and his skin was cleared up when he listened to Elisha and washed in the Jordan River seven times. It wasn't how Naaman expected to be healed, but when he was healed, he glorified God and spread the news about God's wonderful name to other countries. God used His prophet Elisha to confirm that He is the one true God.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

God cured Naaman's leprosy and Naaman knew it was a miracle. He was now clean, cured, made pure.

The sin in our hearts is a lot like Naaman's leprosy. It looks nasty, and only God can heal it. Sin fills every human heart and has separated us from God. We are unclean. Our hearts are sick because of sin. But God sent a cure for the disease of sin. God has made a way to clean our hearts and heal us of our sin—like He did for Naaman's leprosy. We might think we can heal it ourselves, but we need to follow God's plan, just like Naaman had to follow Elisha's instructions. God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the Cross. And all people who accept Jesus's message of salvation and believe in the forgiveness He offers through His death, can rejoice that they will one day be with Him in heaven forever. They are no longer separated from God, but are made one of God's children.

Those who believe in Jesus and receive Him as their Savior won't need to worry about the disease of sin. They can stand before God, knowing that through Christ they are clean from sin for all eternity.



➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

1 Chronicles 29:11 Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God because He speaks to us through His Word.
- Thank God for using ordinary people to give Him glory and accomplish His plans.
- Ask God to use us to spread His fame to someone new this week.