

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Proper 8
Lesson Plans for Younger Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: 2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14

Background

As we continue to walk through “Ordinary Time” it is hard to imagine the lessons from our Old Testament scriptures as “ordinary” days. We hear fantastical accounts of kings, prophets, and courts and they sound so far away. But we are called to remember these stories of times past and to consider how ordinary days of ancestors relate to the ordinary days we face here and now.

A Notation for This Week’s Scripture

This week we skip further ahead to the end of Elijah’s ministry. Elisha is a disciple of Elijah who has been following and learning from the prophet. In today’s passage we follow Elisha and Elijah as Elijah reluctantly passes the torch to Elisha and goes to Heaven in a whirlwind. Why Elijah is reluctant, we do not know. Is it too great a burden to pass? Does Elijah feel he still has more work to do? The text doesn’t say. However, like Ruth following her mother Naomi, Elisha refuses to leave Elijah’s side. When asked what Elisha would like to inherit (like a son) Elisha asks only for a “double share” of Elijah’s “spirit.” This seems to be what calms Elijah before he is carried away with chariots, fire, and a whirlwind.

Theme: Elijah Goes Up in a Whirlwind

Before Class:

You will need:

- Copy of today’s story
- Individual, clear water bottles with caps (one for each child)
- Food coloring
- Funnel (for glitter)
- Glitter
- Water
- Electrical Tape

Fill each water bottle $\frac{3}{4}$ full before class and remove any labels.

Beginning: When the children have arrived and settled in, ask them about a time when they needed to say a difficult goodbye. Perhaps a friend was moving away or leaving a special teacher at the end of the year? How did they say goodbye? How did they feel? Today’s story is about an exciting goodbye between two very good friends.

Opening Prayer: Dear God of Stillness and of Sound, thank you for coming into our world and showing us your presence. Amen.

The Story: 2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14

There were two friends named Elijah and Elisha. Elijah was a man of God who went all over the place teaching others about God. Elisha was one of Elijah's students – he was very smart and he also tried to follow God as much as he could. When Elijah was getting very old he knew it was almost time for him to go to Heaven. Elijah and Elisha were out traveling around the country when Elijah told Elisha to go home and Elijah who continue traveling alone. But Elisha said, “No, I do not want to leave you. I will keep walking with you.” They kept traveling together and again Elijah said, “Elisha, you should go home. I will keep walking alone.” But Elisha again said, “No, friend, I would rather stay with you.”

When Elijah knew it was his time to go to Heaven he asked Elisha if Elisha wanted anything from him. Elisha said, “I don't any of your things. But I would love to have your special connection with God given to me.” Elijah promised to do his best to give that to Elisha.

When the time came, a huge whirlwind – like a tornado of water – came and whisked Elijah up to heaven in a chariot of horses. And Elisha was given Elijah's special connection with God, just like Elijah promised.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder why wouldn't Elisha leave Elijah.
- I wonder why Elijah wanted Elisha to leave.
- I wonder what it was like to watch Elijah go up to heaven.
- I wonder what it sounded like when the chariots and horses arrived.
- I wonder why Elisha wanted Elijah's special connection with God.
- I wonder how Elisha felt at the end of the story.

Activity: Today we will do a science experiment to make **Elijah's Whirlwind**.

Ask the children what they know about tornados. Explain that the “whirlwind” which carried Elijah to heaven was like a tornado that stretches all the way from earth to heaven.

1. Give each child a water bottle filled $\frac{3}{4}$ with water.
2. Let each child choose a food coloring color and assist them with putting a few drops of color in (you don't want the water to get too dark).
3. Allow each child to add a small spoonful of glitter to his/her bottle.
4. Screw the caps on the bottles and tape them shut.
5. Now, turn the bottles upside down.
6. Holding the bottle by the neck show the children how to move their bottles in a circular motion to make a “whirlwind” in the center of the bottle.

Talk to the children about the “special way” Elijah went to Heaven was because of the special person he was for God. God spoke to him in a special way and God promised to talk to Elisha in that way now that Elijah was gone.

Getting Closure: Ask the children what they are happy about this week. As a means of “sending their gratitude to God” invite them to make their whirlwind once again and to thank God for their happy thought as they do.

Closing Prayer: God of Wonders, thank you for your servants Elijah and Elisha. Help me to follow your path as they did. Amen.

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