

LESSON 65

Elisha's Ministry

2 KINGS 4:1-37



BIBLE TRUTH

ELISHA'S LIFE AND MINISTRY POINT TO CHRIST

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. **OPENING REVIEW** **5 MIN**
Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
2. **BIBLE STORY** **10 MIN**
Read 2 Kings 4:1–37 from the Scriptures or read story 65, “Elisha’s Ministry,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
3. **OBJECT LESSON 1** **10 MIN**
Beat That Testimony!
4. **TEACHING/DISCUSSION** **10 MIN**
5. **OBJECT LESSON 2** **20 MIN**
Act It Out
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ various props and simple costume items such as a large stew pot, a jar, a cardboard cutout of an ax head, a few inexpensive fake beards, a couple of old flat sheets, rope for a belt, and a few large branches for staffs
6. **SWORD BIBLE MEMORY** **5 MIN**
7. **ACTIVITY TIME** **15 MIN**
Illustrate a Miracle
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper
8. **CLOSING PRAYER** **5 MIN**
9. **BONUS OBJECT LESSON** **10 MIN**
What Do They Tell Us about God?
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ bottle of salad oil
 - ✓ baby pacifier
 - ✓ stethoscope (borrowed from a medical professional)

TOTAL 90 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Elisha multiplies the oil—As Elisha follows in Elijah’s footsteps as a prophet of Israel, God does powerful miracles through him. We’ve already learned how through Elijah, God fed a widow and her son in the midst of a drought when they had no food to eat. Elisha does something similar for another widow. This widow has debts to pay but no money to pay them with. So Elisha, demonstrating the love and mercy of God, does a miracle and multiplies her oil so that she has oil to sell in order to pay her debts.

Elisha opens the womb of a barren woman—Elisha prophesies that a child will be born to a woman whom no one expects to have a child. Clearly, Elisha wields God’s great power just like Elijah did.

Elisha raises the dead son—When the same woman’s son suddenly becomes sick and dies, she demonstrates great faith in God. Even though her son lies dead, she twice says, “All is well.” Then, rather than hurrying back to her son along with Elisha’s servant, she insists on staying with Elisha. Elisha then raises the boy back to life in the same way Elijah had once done with another child.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Miracles

The word miracle comes from the Latin word “miraculum”—to evoke wonder. A miracle is something that goes beyond the normal course of nature and is so amazing that it evokes wonder in us. Sometimes miracles are called signs or wonders. Miracles are signs of God’s power at work and are wonders because as the word indicates, they are wonderful to behold. These acts are not explainable naturally. Creating something out of nothing, commanding the wind and the waves, and restoring life through resurrection can only be explained if we understand God’s powerful activity behind them. Belief in the miraculous is a key component of Christianity, especially since Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit to a virgin and rose from the dead. To deny the miraculous is to deny Christ.

WHERE IS JESUS?

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read 2 Kings 4:32–37.

God uses Elisha to multiply a widow's oil, to give a wealthy woman a son, and now here in this story, to raise her son after he dies. The miracles that Elisha performs illustrate God's power and point to the day when God would send another prophet even greater than Elisha.

When Jesus comes, he also performs miracles. He turns water into wine and multiplies a few fishes and loaves of bread to feed a crowd of more than five thousand. Jesus heals the sick and even raises the dead. Jesus also dies on the cross for our sins and is raised from the dead so that we can have new life. The new life God gave the young boy through Elisha is a small hint of the new life God gives to all his children.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read 2 Kings 4:1–37 from the Scriptures or read story 65, "Elisha's Ministry," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Beat That Testimony!

Two teachers act out a chance meeting between two friends who have begun to read the Bible. The first began by reading 2 Kings and the stories of Elisha. The other began by reading Luke and the stories of Jesus.

The object is that they trade similar stories and try to outdo one another. In the end, when the one sharing about Jesus talks about Jesus' death and resurrection, the one sharing about Elisha realizes that all the stories about Elisha point to Jesus.

Ask the person talking about Jesus to share the following verses: Luke 24:27; Acts 3:18, 24; and Acts 10:43.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- **Why was it foolish for these two characters to argue?**
(Since all the prophets point to Christ, Elisha's ministry was not intended to compete with Jesus' but to point to Jesus. To pit them against one another is as pointless as teammates fighting.)
- **How does the life of Elisha point to Christ?**
(Elisha demonstrates God's care for his sinful people. It is this love that is ultimately expressed in the life of Christ. Elisha's life foreshadows the compassionate God who comes to serve his people. Jesus demonstrates ultimate love by taking the penalty we deserve on himself on the cross.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION **10 MIN**

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 **20 MIN**

Act It Out

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ various props and simple costume items such as a large stew pot, a jar, a cardboard cutout of an ax head, a few inexpensive fake beards, a couple of old flat sheets, rope for a belt, and a few large branches for staffs

Divide the class into four groups. Each group will act out one of the following incidents from Elisha's life:

- The multiplication of the widow's oil (2 Kings 4:1–7)
- The deadly stew (2 Kings 4:38–44)
- The healing of Naaman (2 Kings 5:1–14)
- The ax head recovered (2 Kings 6:1–7)

Have the groups tell how their stories point to Christ. (Although not exactly similar, the first two point to Jesus' power to multiply the fishes and loaves. The healing of Naaman is

much like Jesus' healing of the lepers. The floating ax head defies natural laws much like Jesus walking on water.)

It is no wonder that some people called Jesus a great prophet (Luke 7:16). Elisha's life and ministry foreshadow that of Jesus.

Ask the class if they can remember how some of the other stories from the Old Testament point to Jesus. (God's salvation of Noah in the ark is like our salvation in Jesus; David was a savior to Israel like Jesus is a Savior for us; Moses was a mediator between God and the people like Jesus mediates between us and God.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY **5 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME **15 MIN**

Illustrate a Miracle

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper

Have the children draw a scene from one of Elisha's miracles.

CLOSING PRAYER **5 MIN**

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON **10 MIN**

What Do They Tell Us about God?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ bottle of salad oil
- ✓ baby pacifier
- ✓ stethoscope (borrowed from a medical professional)

Tell the children that each of today's three incidents from Elisha's life—multiplying the oil, giving a barren woman a child, and raising the dead son—tells us something about God. Hold up one item at a time and have the class tell you which incident it refers to and what important truth the story teaches about God.

1. Bottle of oil—This represents the story of how the widow's oil didn't run out until all the jugs had been filled (2 Kings 4:1–7).

This story tells us that God has the power to create something out of nothing. In this case, God created oil from nothing. This is what God did when he created the earth; he spoke and it was so. God is Lord over creation.

2. Baby pacifier—This points to the barren woman giving birth to a child (2 Kings 4:8–17).

This story tells us that God is the author of life. Not only can he create things like stars and sand, air and water; he can create living things. God is the Lord of life.

3. Stethoscope—This points to the widow's son who was raised back to life. A stethoscope is used to listen for a heartbeat and is often used to determine whether or not a person lives (2 Kings 4:18–37).

This story tells us that God rules over life and death. Death is not more powerful than God. God is the Lord of life and death.