

Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Last Sunday after the Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Older Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: 2 Kings 2:1-12

Background

The Sundays after Epiphany contain stories that show forth the divinity of Jesus and the great power of God. We hear miracles, teachings, and events that make manifest God's saving action in the world. We begin at the beginning: Genesis and the creation of the world. Then we hear stories of the prophets God called to tell the world of God's goodness and mercy and often of the people's need for repentance. We hear stories of healing, of promise, and of hope. We come to know that we are part of a long history of God's love and redemption. We consider how we might share this good news with others.

A Notation for This Week

This is a story of the passing of leadership - from the great prophet Elijah to his disciple, Elisha. It has all the drama a prophet of God story needs, plus a heart-warming friendship. These men of God have become friends as well as teacher and disciple. Elijah is to be carried up to God and Elisha is to continue the work. Elisha asks for a double portion of the Spirit - something felt he needed to continue the ministry. The story, both the fiery drama of a chosen one, and the tender friendship of two faithful servants of God, can inspire our own relationships and ministry.

Theme: Elijah and Elisha

Before Class: Find or make a map that marks the indicated cities of Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho, and the River Jordan. Gather paper dolls or clothespins or other items that can represent Elijah and Elisha (and maybe also the company of prophets). Choose and learn or locate the music you will use.

Music: Sing or play "Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit" from LEVAS II

Opening Prayer: Lord, you call forth people to share your word with others. We thank you for the prophets Elijah and Elisha, and for their friendship. May we be good friends and teachers to others also. Amen.

The Story: 2 Kings 2:1-12

This story has a lot of repetition. Consider moving some figures around a map or large space on the floor to represent the prophets' travels. You could also use the script found below and have different readers for parts of the story.

Reflection Questions:

- What do you think Elijah was thinking during this time? How about Elisha?
- I wonder what it would have been like to be one of those company of prophets in one of the towns.
- I wonder what you thought as you listened to the story?

- I wonder if you have a friend that you would follow anywhere?
- I wonder what Elisha did next?

Activities:

Elijah Entering Heaven: The scene where Elijah is taken up into heaven lends itself to illustration. Provide markers or paints and encourage the children to draw the whirlwind or the chariot and horses of fire.

Mapping the Journey: Provide copies of a map with the cities listed. Invite students to trace the journey that Elijah and Elisha took. Encourage them to illustrate the map with people and symbols from the story (the company of prophets at each location, the sea parting, the whirlwind and chariot of fire).

Drama: Use the room, with locations marked, to act out the story. New children can play the roles at each city.

Notes to Mentors: Invite class members to write notes to a teacher or mentor in their life. Encourage them to describe a quality of their mentor that they would like to have also.

Getting Closure: Gather everyone together. Allow them to share their artwork if they choose. Sing “Spirit of the Living God” or “Sweet Chariot” from LEVAS II.

Closing Prayer: Lord, we thank you for the friends that we would follow anywhere. We thank you for teachers who guide us. We thank you for your Holy Spirit that helps us to follow you. Amen.

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2 Kings 2:1-12

Narrator: Now when the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha,

Elijah: “Stay here; for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel.”

Elisha: “As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.”

Narrator: So they went down to Bethel. The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him,

Prophet1: “Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?”

Elisha: “Yes, I know; keep silent.”

Elijah: “Elisha, stay here; for the Lord has sent me to Jericho.”

Elisha: “As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.”

Narrator: So they came to Jericho. The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him,

Prophet 2: “Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?”

Elisha: “Yes, I know; be silent.”

Elijah: “Stay here; for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan.”

Elisha: “As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.”

Narrator: So the two of them went on. Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha,

Elijah: “Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you.”

Elisha: “Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit.”

Elijah: “You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not.”

Narrator: As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. ¹²Elisha kept watching and crying out, “Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.