

LESSON 5: GOD TAKES ELIJAH TO HEAVEN

Leader Guide for Ages 3-6

Classroom: Monkeys

 2 Kings 2:1-18

01/05/2020

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: 2 Kings 2:1-18
- In This Passage: In this mysterious Bible story, God takes Elijah up to heaven in a chariot of fire drawn by horses of fire. The chariot is caught up in a whirlwind, carrying Elijah to heaven. Elisha looks on, upset that Elijah is gone but ready to carry on his legacy. These strange events show that God is mysterious.
- Bible Point: God is mysterious...
- Application: ...so we have faith.
- Summary Verse: "For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it?" (Isaiah 43:19).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *God is mysterious*. Kids love mysteries! But sometimes God's mysterious qualities can be an obstacle to belief. It can be hard for older kids to believe in something they can't see or fully explain. Use this lesson to help kids understand that faith is believing even when we don't understand the mystery of God.
- Think About: What questions do *you* have about God? Ask him to help you have faith even when you don't understand him.

Dig In to Prayer

- Pray that kids will be more in awe of God because he is beyond what our brains can comprehend.

Quick Tip

- As you explore the mysterious nature of God, kids are bound to have questions! Don't feel like you have to have all the answers. It's okay to say "I don't know" or throw questions back out to see what kids think. And in the end, if no one can answer a question...that's all part of the mystery!

This Lesson at a Glance



OPENING

Preschoolers share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible

Easy Prep

- Ask an adult or teen helper ahead of time to ask “wondering” questions to you when you share about yourself.



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Preschoolers act out the Bible story and talk about faith in God.

Supplies

- Bible
- 2 blue bedsheets or large pieces of blue bulletin board paper
- electric fan
- red, yellow, and orange crepe paper
- “Elijah” handout (1 copy) (download [here](#))
- small throw blankets or bath towels (1 for every 10 kids)

Easy Prep

- Arrange with an adult or teen helper ahead of time to discreetly take the “Elijah” handout and then pull the 2 blue bedsheets back together when indicated in the lesson (in the “Spend Time at the Jordan” section).



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Preschoolers wonder about God and pray.

Supplies

- whiteboard or bulletin board paper
- dry-erase or regular markers
- red, orange, and yellow sticky notes

Easy Prep

- Draw a basic carriage shape on the whiteboard or bulletin board paper. (You might even draw just a rectangle with wheels.)



OBJECT LESSON

Preschoolers make colors mysteriously appear on black paper.

Supplies

- bowls of water (1 for every 5 or 6 kids)
- clear nail polish
- black construction paper cut into 2x3-inch rectangles (2 or 3 per child)
- lamp or flashlight

Easy Prep

- Follow the instructions below to make a sample rainbow rectangle.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers run to colors and follow directions.

Supplies

- 4 colors of construction paper (1 piece of paper in each color per child)
- masking tape
- upbeat music
- music player

Easy Prep

- Randomly tape the pieces of construction paper to the floor all around the room.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers guess which friend is making an animal sound.



CRAFT

Preschoolers make Elijah slide up a string.

Supplies

- “Elijah and Chariot of Fire” handout (1 for every 2 children) (download [here](#))
- yarn cut into 6-foot lengths (1 per child)
- pony beads (2 per child)
- crayons
- plastic smoothie straws (1 for every 2 children)
- transparent tape
- painter’s tape

Easy Prep

- Fold each piece of yarn in half and tie a knot at the fold to mark the center. Make the knots large enough that they won’t fit through the straws.
- Cut the straws in half.
- Cut apart the handouts.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.

**Marked supplies are also used in Core Bible Discovery*

Let’s keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



OPENING

Welcome

[5 min]

Supplies

- Bible

Easy Prep

- Ask an adult or teen helper ahead of time to ask “wondering” questions to you when you share about yourself.

Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have preschoolers show their goofiest faces to everyone around them.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having preschoolers give the birthday child a fist bump with fireworks. (Make a fist, and when you bump your fist to another person’s fist, open your hand and wiggle your fingers.)
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we’re learning God is mysterious. That means we can’t understand everything about God because he’s so big and so amazing. God surprises us with how wonderful he is! God’s so mysterious, he makes us wonder. We might wonder why he does something, what he looks like, or what his plans are. Let’s start today by asking some “wondering” questions about one another. I’ll tell something about myself, and you can ask me questions about it.**

Share

- Share something about *yourself*. It could be a quality, a like or dislike, or something about your family. Ultimately, it doesn’t matter what you share about, as long as it’s something others can ask you wondering questions about. For example, you might share that you’re an artist, or you might share that you like pizza. You might also share that you have five family members. After you share, an adult or teen helper will ask wondering questions to you, such as “Why do you like pizza?” “What kind of pizza don’t you like?” “When do you eat pizza?” or “When have you had pizza with a friend?” Helpers can encourage children to ask wondering questions to you, too.
- In leader-led small groups, have preschoolers share something about *themselves*. If needed, direct them to topics, such as likes or dislikes. Encourage helpers and preschoolers to ask wondering questions after each child shares.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **We wondered a lot about the things our friends shared, and wondering can be good. When it comes to God, we probably wonder a lot of things about him because God is mysterious. God is so amazing and wonderful that we can’t understand or know *everything* about him. But we *can* know for sure that God is good and he loves each of you very much. Even though God is mysterious, we can be friends with him and trust he’ll always be with us!**

Pray, thanking God that we can have faith in him even though he’s mysterious.

**God Takes Elijah to Heaven (2 Kings 2:1-18)**

Supplies

- Bible
- 2 blue bedsheets or large pieces of blue bulletin board paper
- electric fan
- red, yellow, and orange crepe paper
- “Elijah” handout (1 copy) (download [here](#))
- small throw blankets or bath towels (1 for every 10 kids)

Easy Prep

- Arrange with an adult or teen helper ahead of time to discreetly take the “Elijah” handout and then pull the 2 blue bedsheets back together when indicated in the lesson (in the “Spend Time at the Jordan” section).

Travel From Town to Town

Say: **Today we'll find out God is mysterious. That means we can't understand everything about God. He's so big and so incredibly powerful that it's hard for us to understand everything about God—and that's okay! God is always good to us, so we can trust him even when we don't understand what he's doing.**

Show a Bible. Say: **Let's read about something mysterious God did. This Bible story is about a man named Elijah. Show the “Elijah” handout whenever you mention Elijah. Elijah was one of God's close friends, and God had said it was time for Elijah to go live with him in heaven. At the time Elijah was traveling with another man named Elisha. Their names sound a lot alike—Eli-JAH and Eli-SHA. The two of them were traveling to Gilgal. Lead the children on a journey around your room.**

Stop and say: **Elijah was Elisha's teacher. Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here. God told me to go to Bethel.” But the Bible says Elisha loved Elijah and didn't want to leave him. Read 2 Kings 2:2b. Elisha wouldn't leave his teacher and good friend! Lead the children on a journey around your room, explaining you're now going to Bethel. Make the traveling fun by having kids do various things. For example, you can have them skip or pretend to climb over big hills.**

Tell kids when you've “arrived,” and have them sit. Say: **There were some prophets in Bethel. A prophet is a teacher who shares important messages from God. Read 2 Kings 2:3. Elisha and the prophets knew God was going to take Elijah to heaven to live with God. But Elisha asked them not to tell anyone about it quite yet.**

Next God told Elijah to go to a town called Jericho. Elijah again told Elisha to stay while he traveled, but Elisha wouldn't leave Elijah. Read 2 Kings 2:4b. Lead the children on a journey around your room, explaining you're now going to Jericho. Make the traveling fun by having kids do various things such as pretending to step over big rocks or tiptoe around prickly bushes.

Tell kids when you've “arrived,” and have them sit. Say: **Some prophets lived in Jericho, too, and do you know what they said to Elisha? Let's read the Bible to find out. Read 2 Kings 5.**

Say: **Elisha knew God was going to take Elijah to heaven, but he still asked the prophets not to tell anyone about it. Then God told Elijah to go to yet *another* place—the Jordan River. They sure did travel a lot! God is so mysterious—I wonder why he kept having Elijah travel from place to place.**

Ask: • **What's something you wonder about God?** Invite kids to share what they wonder about. Maybe they wonder what God looks like, where he lives, how he knew how to make the world, or something else. Share some preschool-friendly things you wonder about to get them started.

Say: **We don't always understand everything God tells us to do, and that's okay because God loves us! He only asks us to do things that are good for us. Elijah and Elisha knew that, so they trusted God and traveled as God asked them to. Let's see what happened when God told Elijah to go to the Jordan River. Read 2 Kings 2:6b. Lead the children on a journey around your room, explaining you're now going to the Jordan River. Make the traveling fun by having kids do various things like pretending to climb through extra-tall grass or crawling under low branches.**

Spend Time at the Jordan

Tell kids when you've "arrived," and have them sit. Place the two blue bedsheets side by side on the floor in front of your group of kids. Say: **Now 50 prophets watched as Elijah and Elisha stopped beside the Jordan River. Elijah folded his coat and struck it on the water.** Fold a throw blanket and strike the "river" with it. Allow about half of the kids to strike the river with blankets, too.

Say: **The river divided so the two friends could walk across on dry ground!** Pull apart the two bedsheets to create a path that the children can walk through.

Say: **Then Elijah asked if Elisha needed anything before he left with God. Remember, Elijah was Elisha's teacher. Elisha asked to become the new teacher in place of Elijah.**

As they were walking and talking, suddenly a big fire appeared. The fire was in the shape of a carriage and horses. Give kids each a piece of crepe paper, and encourage them to wave the pieces in the air to pretend there's a fire. Discreetly hand off the "Elijah" handout to an adult or teen helper as kids enjoy waving their crepe paper streamers. Have the helper place the "Elijah" handout somewhere it can't be found by kids and then move the two bedsheets back together.

Turn on the fan, facing it toward kids. Say: **This fiery carriage drove between Elijah and Elisha, and a big wind took Elijah to heaven to be with God. Wow!** Walk through the group of kids, and have them part into two groups.

Say: **Elisha saw what happened and cried out. Elisha tore his clothes. Back then, when people were very sad, they tore their clothes to show people how sad they were.**

When God took Elijah to heaven, Elijah left his coat, so Elisha picked it up and went back to the bank of the Jordan River. He did as Elijah had done; he struck the water. Let the other half of the kids strike the river with the blankets.

Say: **The water parted and Elisha walked across.** Move apart the bedsheets, and invite the children to walk through the parted water again.

Look for Elijah

Say: **The prophets saw everything that happened. They said Elisha must be the new prophet to take Elijah's place. They asked Elisha if he wanted them to get someone to search for Elijah, but Elisha said no. Elisha knew that Elijah had gone to be with God in heaven. But the prophets kept asking Elisha, so finally he said they could send some people to look for Elijah.**

My drawing of Elijah is gone. Will you look for it like the people in the Bible looked for Elijah? Allow a few minutes for kids to look around the room for the "Elijah" handout. Then gather the children and have them sit. Say: **You didn't find the drawing of Elijah. In the Bible, 50 men looked for Elijah for three days, but they never found him. Elisha knew they wouldn't because God took Elijah to heaven.**

Talk About It

Say: **God is mysterious! He took Elijah to heaven in a fiery wind. God does a lot of amazing things that we can't understand. That's because God is awesome and powerful!**

Share a few awesome things God can do. You might say God made the world and can make anything he wants to, or God can bring people back to life the way he brought Jesus back to life.

Ask: • **What are some awesome things you think God can do?** Kids might say God can make them feel better when they're sick, and he can make an animal talk.

Say: **God can do *anything* he wants to do. Sometimes what God does seems impossible, but God is mysterious. It's okay when God does things that we can't explain. God is so good, and he'll only do things that are good for us. We can have faith in God even when we don't understand everything God does. That means we can trust God to take care of us no matter what.**



Supplies

- whiteboard or bulletin board paper
- dry-erase or regular markers
- red, orange, and yellow sticky notes

Easy Prep

- Draw a basic carriage shape on the whiteboard or bulletin board paper. (You might even draw just a rectangle with wheels.)

Ask Wondering Questions

Say: **Today we found out God is mysterious. We heard how God took Elijah up to heaven in a fiery wind that looked like a carriage.** Point to the carriage you drew ahead of time and explain what it is. **It was surprising that God took Elijah to heaven in that way! But there are lots of surprising and incredible things about God. I bet you have questions about God, too.**

Write a question mark on a sticky note, and show it to kids. Say: **A question mark means there's a question or that someone is wondering about something.**

Share something *you* wonder about God that you didn't share in the Core Bible Discovery. As you do, hold up the sticky note with the question mark. Then say: **I'll put my "wondering" up here on the mysterious fiery carriage.**

Share one more question you have about God, and repeat the process of writing a question mark and placing it on the carriage.

Ask: • **Let's try to fill this carriage with questions. You already shared something you wonder about God, but what are some other things you wonder about him?** As each child shares, write a question mark on a sticky note and then let the child place it on the carriage. Vary the colors you use so the carriage ends up being a combination of red, orange, and yellow. Allow older preschoolers to write their own question marks.

Encourage children to continue wondering until they've covered the carriage. You can help them by adding more of your own ideas. Children might ask all kinds of questions about God, like "How big is God?" "Where does God live?" or "What is God's favorite color?" Don't answer kids' questions; simply encourage them to share their wonderings freely.

Pray

Say: **Look at all the questions we have! There are lots of things we wonder about God. We can find some of the answers in the Bible, and other things we have to wait to find out because God is mysterious. Sometimes there are things that happen that we don't understand, like how God took Elijah up to heaven in a fiery wind. But it's okay to wonder about God. It's wonderful to have an amazing God who can do more than we can even imagine! It's also okay to ask God our questions. Let's talk to God about our questions now.**

Pray: **God, we have a lot of questions about you. We'd like to understand you more, so please help us answer some of these questions. But we know we'll have to wait to understand *everything* about you. We trust you, God, even when we don't understand everything about you. And we want to know you more because you're our friend! In Jesus' name, amen.**

Thank preschoolers for coming to your class today, and ask them to come back next week so you can all get to know God even better.



OBJECT LESSON

Mystery Colors

[10 min]

Supplies

- bowls of water (1 for every 5 or 6 kids)
- clear nail polish
- black construction paper cut into 2x3-inch rectangles (2 or 3 per child)
- lamp or flashlight

Easy Prep

- Follow the instructions below to make a sample rainbow rectangle.



Dip Paper Into Water

Form groups of five or six kids, and assign an adult or teen helper to each group. Show kids a black paper rectangle and the rainbow rectangle you made. Shine a light on the papers to illuminate the colors. Encourage kids to notice the difference between the plain black rectangle and the rainbow rectangle.

Point at the rainbow rectangle, and say: **Look at these beautiful colors! They mysteriously showed up on black paper. I wonder how that happened! Let's make some more mysterious colors together.**

- Give each group a bowl of water and a stack of black rectangles.
- Choose a child from each group to go first. Give them each a paper rectangle.
- Have adult or teen helpers add one drop of nail polish to the bowls of water.
- Right after the drops hit the water, have kids dip their papers into the water and then pull them back out and lay them on the table. Encourage kids to work quickly before a film develops on the top of the water. If it does, have the adult or teen helpers simply scoop the film out of the bowl and try again.
- Repeat, giving kids each several turns to dip their paper rectangles.

Shine Light on Papers

Say: **I see a little color on our papers. Let's shine light on the papers so we can see the colors more brightly.** Have kids take turns shining light onto the papers while their friends notice the pretty colors.

Ask: **• What colors do you see on the black paper now?** Invite kids to call out the different colors that have appeared.

Talk About It

Say: **We started with regular pieces of black paper, but then something mysterious happened—colors appeared! I wonder why? It's good to wonder about things we don't understand. And most of**

the time we can find out why something happens by learning more about it. God's like that, too. He's mysterious, and there are so many incredible things about God that we don't yet understand. But we can learn new things about God each day when we're friends with him. We might not understand *everything* we see God do, but there's one thing we can be sure about—he loves us and we can trust him!



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Colorful Shuffle

[10 min]

Supplies

- 4 colors of construction paper (1 piece of paper in each color per child)
- masking tape
- upbeat music
- music player

Easy Prep

- Randomly tape the pieces of construction paper to the floor all around the room.

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

Run to Colors and Follow the Directions

Say: **We heard about some awesome things God did for Elijah in our Bible story today! The Bible helps us know about God, but there's still a lot we don't know—and that's okay. God is mysterious—he's a fun and exciting mystery. We don't have to understand everything about God to know that he's good. Let's play a game where you don't have to understand everything to have fun!**

- Have kids spread out in the room.
- When you start the music and while the music plays, everyone will dance, skip, hop, or run around the room.
- When you pause the music, you'll call out a color and everyone must find that color of paper and stand on it.
- Then you'll call out a motion for everyone to do for that color (simply assign one of your colors to each of the motions below):
 - do six jumping jacks
 - sit down and stand up again three times
 - hop side to side over the paper six times
 - touch head, shoulders, knees and toes three times fast
- Play as many rounds as time allows, varying the intervals of music and randomly choosing and calling out the colors.

Talk About It

Say: **There are a lot of mysteries in our lives—things we can't figure out. Maybe you have to brush your teeth or clean up your toys, and you don't know why.**

Share something *you* wonder about. You might share that you don't know how gas makes your car run or how babies learn to talk.

Ask: • **What's something *you* wonder about?** Preschoolers are always wondering about things, but they might need some help getting started since this is a pretty wide topic. Ask them if they wonder anything about the sky, bugs, or how something works.

Say: **There are so many things we wonder about—they feel like mysteries to us. And there was a little mystery in our game, too. You didn't know what color I would call or why I called each color. You also didn't know what motion I'd have you do for each color. It was a fun mystery! God is mysterious in a fun way, too. He does amazing things, and we can trust him to always take care of us. It's always exciting to see what God's going to do next!**



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Sort Out the Sound

Guess Who Makes an Animal Sound

Say: **Today's Bible story was full of amazing things God did with Elijah. God is so big and so powerful, it makes us wonder why and how God does the amazing things he does! God's so mysterious. Let's play a silly game full of things that will make us wonder, too.**

- Have everyone sit in a group, all facing the same direction.
- Then invite a willing child to be the first Guesser. Have the Guesser sit in front of everyone else with his or her back turned to the group.
- Quietly choose a child in the group to make an animal sound a few times. If the child needs some help, whisper the name of an animal (for example, a duck) in his or her ear.
- After the sound, the Guesser turns around and gets three guesses at who made the sound.
- If the Guesser chooses the correct person, then that person is the new Guesser.
- If the Guesser can't solve the mystery, have everyone cheer, "Great guesses!" and then point to the person who made the animal sound. The person who made the sound is the new Guesser.
- For each new round, have kids mix up where they're sitting in the group.
- Play the game until everyone has had a chance to be the Guesser.

Talk About It

Ask: • **Tell what it was like to figure out who made the sound.**

Say: **In our game, we practiced solving mysteries. There are a lot of mysteries in our world—and we wonder and ask questions about them all the time. God is one of those things we wonder about because God is so mysterious. Even though we won't be able to figure out why God does everything he does, God is always good! We can trust God and have faith in him.**



CRAFT

Up Went Elijah

[20 min]

Supplies

- “Elijah and Chariot of Fire” handout (1 for every 2 children) (download [here](#))
- yarn cut into 6-foot lengths (1 per child)
- pony beads (2 per child)
- crayons
- plastic smoothie straws (1 for every 2 children)
- transparent tape
- painter’s tape

Easy Prep

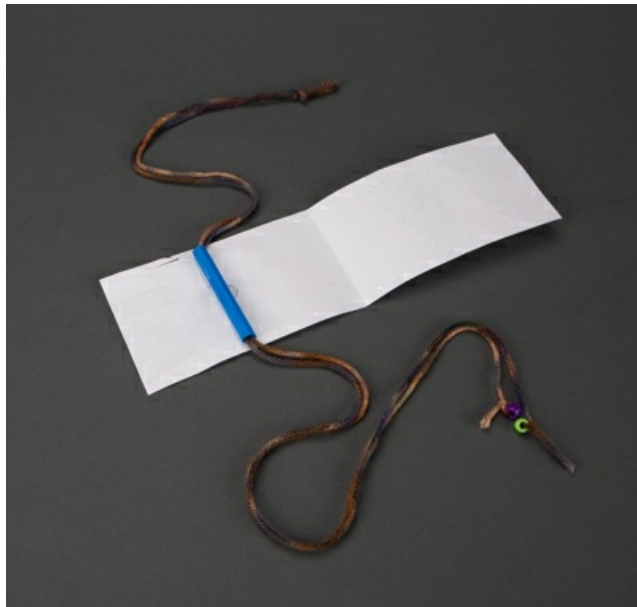
- Fold each piece of yarn in half and tie a knot at the fold to mark the center. Make the knots large enough that they won’t fit through the straws.
- Cut the straws in half.
- Cut apart the handouts.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Make the Craft

Say: **God is mysterious. He sent a carriage and horses of fire that carried Elijah up to heaven in a big wind. That’s so amazing! Let’s make a craft that will remind us of our Bible story.** Show preschoolers the sample craft and how it works.

- Give each preschooler half of an “Elijah and Chariot of Fire” handout to color.
- Have preschoolers fold their handouts in half so the two mirrored pictures are folded to the outside.
- Give each preschooler a straw and a piece of yarn.
- Show preschoolers how to thread each of the two loose ends of yarn through the straw.
- Help preschoolers thread pony beads onto the loose ends of the yarn (one pony bead per end) and tie the bottom of each end to secure the beads.
- Help preschoolers tape the straws inside their handouts (to the back of one of the pictures) and then tape the two sides of the handout shut.



Play With the Craft

Help preschoolers tape the knotted end of their crafts to the wall or the edge of a table with painter's tape.

Teach preschoolers the following song to the tune of "Pop Goes the Weasel." Have preschoolers hold the beads together on their crafts. When they reach the last line of the song, have kids pull the beads apart so the straws and the pictures of Elijah slide up the yarn, like Elijah being carried up to heaven.

**Our God is so mysterious,
Powerful and amazing.
A big wind of fire came down,
Up went Elijah!**

Repeat a few times.

Say: **God took Elijah up to heaven in an amazing way that's hard to understand. God is so big and so amazing, we'll never understand everything about God. God is mysterious. But we can have faith in God and trust him because we know for sure that God loves us and wants good things for us.**