

LESSON 5: GOD TAKES ELIJAH TO HEAVEN

Leader Guide for Grades 1 & 2

Classroom: Greenhouse Kids

 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

Kids 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

Kids see something disappear, cross a river, and make chariots.

Supplies

- Bible
- glass jar or drinking glass
- disposable plate
- pitcher of water
- coin
- blue, red, yellow, and orange crepe-paper streamers
- appliance boxes, laundry baskets, or storage bins large enough for a child to fit in (1 for every 5 kids)
- tape
- markers (optional)



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids guess which friend is making an animal sound.



CRAFT

Kids 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.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids 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.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids wonder about God and pray.

Supplies

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

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

Kids 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.

**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 kids show their goofiest faces to everyone around them.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having kids say “snappy mirthgray” (which rhymes with happy birthday).
- 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 small groups, have kids share something about *themselves*. If needed, direct them to topics, such as likes or dislikes. Encourage helpers and kids 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.



Supplies

- Bible
- glass jar or drinking glass
- disposable plate
- pitcher of water
- coin
- blue, red, yellow, and orange crepe-paper streamers
- appliance boxes, laundry baskets, or storage bins large enough for a child to fit in (1 for every 5 kids)
- tape
- markers (optional)

See Something Disappear

Say: Today we're going to learn that God is mysterious. That means there are some things about God we can't fully understand.

Before we get into the Bible story, let's see something else that's mysterious.

Put the coin on a table, and set the jar or glass right side up on top of the coin. Gather kids around so they can see the coin under the glass by looking through the side.

Say: I can make this coin disappear! Pour water from the pitcher into the glass, and then place the plate on top of the glass. When viewed through the side, the coin will seem to disappear.

Ask: • How do you think I did that?

Say: Well, I can solve this mystery for you. Lift the glass and reveal that the coin is still there.

Say: Although it *looked* like the coin disappeared, it never moved. The water changed the direction of the light, and that made the coin invisible to you. Mystery solved!

But in our Bible story, someone *actually* disappeared...and it was no trick! God is mysterious, so this story might be a little hard to understand. But when it's hard to understand God, that's an opportunity to have faith, or believe what you can't see. Let's look at the story to find out more.

Cross a River

Say: This story is about two guys with similar names: Elijah and Elisha. Elijah was the older one. Elisha was the younger one who went everywhere with Elijah and learned how to be God's prophet from watching Elijah. A prophet is someone who shares God's messages with other people.

In the story, Elijah and Elisha were traveling around to several towns. And at every town, people warned Elisha that God was going to take Elijah away soon. Elisha knew that, but he didn't want to talk about it. He just kept traveling with Elijah.

Listen to what happened when a river got in their way.

Read 2 Kings 2:7-8.

Ask: • How do you think Elijah split the river with just his coat?

Say: God is mysterious, and we can't explain everything he does. We don't know how God gave Elijah the power to split the river. But let's see if we can split rivers in an easier way.

Have kids form trios. Give each trio three pieces of blue crepe paper, each several feet in length.

Have trio members take turns breaking the "river" of crepe paper. Two members of each trio will hold a piece of crepe paper. The third person will karate-chop the crepe paper with his or her hand and then walk between the other two kids. Have kids trade roles so everyone can "split the river."

Make Chariots

Say: As they kept walking, something even more mysterious happened.

Read 2 Kings 2:11-12.

Say: Elijah disappeared, just like our coin! But unlike our coin, Elijah was really gone—he wasn't hiding and it wasn't a trick. It's not even something we can explain or figure out logically. God is

mysterious, and we don't know how or why he sent chariots of fire to take Elijah to heaven. Elijah is one of two people in the Bible who went to heaven without dying first. That's a mystery!

To give our brains a break from all these brain-bending mysteries, let's make our own chariots of fire.

Have kids form groups of five. Have each group work together to decorate a box, laundry basket, or storage bin to look like a chariot of fire. Kids can use tape and red, yellow, and orange streamers to add flames. If you're using boxes, kids can also use markers to decorate the boxes.

When kids have their chariots ready, have chariot races. The smallest child in each group will be Elijah and will get in the chariot. Two other kids will push or pull the chariot. The remaining two kids will swirl streamers around the chariots to represent the whirlwind.

After kids have gone across the room and back, have them sit with their groups of five. Set the chariots and streamers aside.

Ask: • What questions would you want to ask if you saw Elijah's chariot of fire?

• Why do you think God took Elijah to heaven without Elijah dying first?

Say: After Elijah went to heaven, Elisha got Elijah's coat and crossed the river the same way they had before. When other people saw that Elijah was missing, they went out to look for him. But unlike the way we found the coin in our trick, they couldn't find Elijah. He'd disappeared from earth and gone to heaven!

Ask: • A lot of strange stuff happened in this story. What do you think is the most mysterious part?

Say: The Bible doesn't tell us why this happened. But that's okay. God is mysterious, so we have faith. **Faith** means believing even when we can't see or fully understand something.

Ask: • What's something about God you don't fully understand? Share your own example first.

Say: Thanks for sharing. It might seem weird for your Sunday school teacher to tell you that you can't understand God. But think of it this way: If you could fully understand every single thing about God, wouldn't that make him smaller than your own brain? He wouldn't be much of a God, would he? We can't understand God fully because God is mysterious. He's so much bigger than we are! But the more we spend time getting to know him and reading his Word, the more he grows our faith so that we believe in him...even the parts we can't understand.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Sort Out the Sound

[10 min]

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

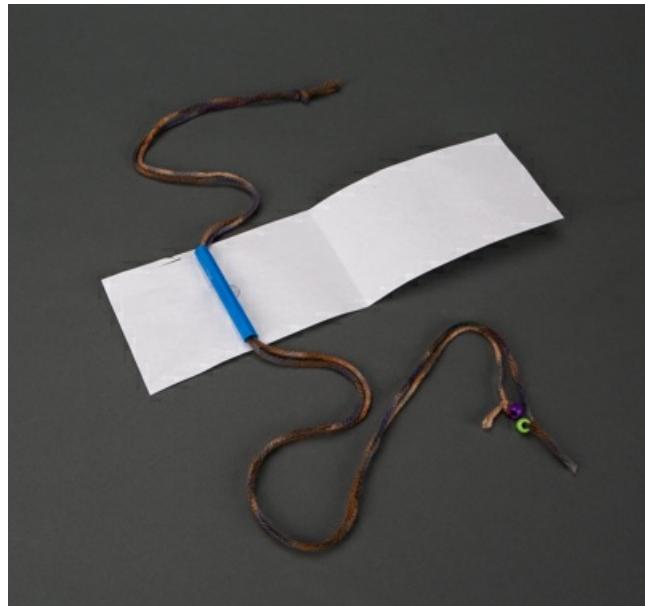
- Fold each piece of yarn in half and tie a knot at the fold to mark the center. Make the knots large enough that they won’t fit through the straws.
- Cut the straws in half.
- Cut apart the handouts.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Make the Craft

Say: **God is mysterious. He sent a chariot 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 kids the sample craft and how it works.

- Give each child half of an “Elijah and Chariot of Fire” handout to color.
- Have kids fold their handouts in half so the two mirrored pictures are folded to the outside.
- Give each child a straw and a piece of yarn.
- Show kids how to thread each of the two loose ends of yarn through the straw.
- Help kids 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 kids 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 kids tape the knotted end of their crafts to the wall or the edge of a table with painter's tape.

Teach kids the following song to the tune of "Pop Goes the Weasel." Have kids 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!**

After kids learn the song, invite them to change the second line of the verse to tell other good things they believe about God.

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.**



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?** Kids 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!



Supplies

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

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 chariot. Point to the chariot 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: Question marks remind us there's a question or that someone is wondering about something.

Share something you wonder about God. 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 chariot.

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

Ask: • Let's try to fill this chariot with questions. What are some other things you wonder about God? As each child shares, have him or her write a question mark on a sticky note and then place it on the chariot. Vary the colors used so the chariot ends up being a combination of red, orange, and yellow.

Encourage children to continue wondering until they've covered the chariot. 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 kids 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!

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