

Elijah Is Taken To Heaven

2 Kings 2:1-11

MEMORY VERSE

2 KINGS 2:11

“...Suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Two small beanbags and two small foam balls.

A sheet of white construction paper for each child and markers.

The visor template, scissors, a hole punch, crayons or markers, string or yarn, and clear contact paper.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Crazy Relay

You will need two small beanbags and two small foam balls. Divide your class into two equal groups. Have them each line up next to each other in two lines. Give the person at the front of each line a small beanbag. Give the person at the end of the line the small foam ball.

Explain to the children that the beanbag will be passed through their legs to the person behind them, while the small foam balls will be passed over their heads to the person in front of them. We'll see which group can pass both the bean bag and the ball at the same time and get to the other ends of the line without getting mixed up.

When you say, “go!” have the first player in each line pass the beanbag through their legs to the next player in line. Have the last player in line pass the ball overhead to the player in front of them. Have the children continue passing the beanbags and balls until they reach their designated positions. This game is a fun icebreaker.

LESSON TIME!

The prophet Elijah saw the demonstration of God’s power throughout his life. The ravens brought him sustaining food in the wilderness. The widow’s oil jar did not run dry and the bin of flour was not used up. Remember when Elijah challenged the 450 prophets of Baal to a contest on Mount Carmel? Elijah represented the true and living God, and there is nothing too hard for Him!

God guided Elijah through times of victory and difficulty and even defeat. Remember how God encouraged the frightened prophet who had run from the threats of Jezebel? There, from a cave, in the southernmost part of Judah, Elijah again witnessed the power of God and heard His still small voice. As our journey with Elijah comes to an end, we will see yet one more demonstration of God’s power. **The God of Elijah was powerful yesterday and is powerful today.**

2 KINGS 2:1-5

And it came to pass, when the LORD was about to take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.

Then Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they went down to Bethel.

Now the sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent!"

Then Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Jericho." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So they came to Jericho.

Now the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?" So he answered, "Yes, I know; keep silent!"

It seems that Elijah knew something unusual was going to happen to him that day. He had seen God work in so many ways throughout his life. Now, as his ministry on earth ends, God would again demonstrate His power.

Elisha, did not want to leave Elijah's side. Perhaps, he was sensing that his best friend and mentor was ready to depart to be with the Lord; he may have been wondering about God's plan for his own life now; perhaps, he was recalling the miracles of the past and was wondering what was going to happen next. Perhaps, he had a feeling of anticipation when he said, "I will not leave you."

So they traveled from Gilgal to Bethel together. They met up with some other prophets while there. Perhaps, Elijah wanted to say a few last words to them to strengthen their faith. The Spirit of the Lord had told the prophets in Bethel that Elijah would be taken from Elisha that day. Elisha said he knew.

Then the Lord called Elijah to Jericho--about 15 miles back in the direction they had come from that morning! God had a reason for Elijah to go there, but it is not recorded in the Scripture. Again, Elisha insisted on accompanying Elijah. Elisha was *not* going to be left behind. He wanted to see the power of God at work in Elijah's life.

Follow in my Footsteps

For this activity you will need a sheet of white construction paper and markers for each child. Before class trace the outline of one of your feet on each sheet of paper. During class, hand out one of these sheets to each of the children. Have the children set their same foot into the footprint and trace their foot. Ask the children if their footprint is larger or smaller? Next, have the children write to the side "Follow in the footsteps of Jesus." Then, they can color the picture.

Remind the children that Elisha followed Elijah everywhere he went. Even if it seemed kind of strange, like turning around and going back to a place they had already been. This is a good example of how we need to follow Jesus. Every step that Jesus makes we need to follow close behind. Let's make sure that we are following our master and teacher, Jesus.

2 KINGS 2:6-11

Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!" So the two of them went on.

And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood facing them at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan.

Now Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up, and struck the water; and it was divided this way and that, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground.

And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?" Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me."

So he said, "You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so."

Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

The Lord called Elijah to the Jordan River, a short walk from Jericho. Again, Elisha, filled with faith and expectation, says, "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you." The fifty men of the company of prophets from Jericho who followed Elijah and Elisha stood facing them at a distance. There, at the Jordan, Elijah struck the water with his mantle; the water divided; and they walked to the other side on dry ground. Again, as in the past, God demonstrated His mighty power.

On the other side of the Jordan, Elijah, knowing the end was near, asked Elisha what he wanted before Elijah was taken. Elisha answered, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me." Elisha was ready for the power of God to be at work in his life! During the few years that he had served Elijah, Elisha had seen

Elijah's faith and relationship with God. He had seen Elijah rely on God to do mighty works so that the people of Israel might know how great their God was. Elisha wanted even more than Elijah had!

Elijah responded, "...if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so." Perhaps, he was simply saying, "If you just wait a little longer (don't go anywhere), God will grant your request."

How excited Elisha must have been when he saw a chariot of fire and horses of fire! Elisha and Elijah were separated, perhaps, by the brightness of the fire. Elijah went up into heaven and Elisha saw him no more. Elisha tore apart his robes, a Jewish custom to show mourning over the loss of a loved one. What an awesome demonstration of God's power once more in the life of Elijah. **The God of Elijah was powerful yesterday and is powerful today.**

Did you notice that we did not read that Elijah died? There is one other person we read about in the Bible who did not die; his name was Enoch (see Genesis 5:24).

This account of Elijah's experience and the experience of Enoch in Genesis may be an Old Testament picture of an event yet to occur—the "Rapture" of the church of Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us in 1 Thessalonians 4 that one day Jesus will come to take His church—the believers remaining on the earth—to live forever with Him in heaven. They will not die, but be "caught up" (the Rapture) to meet the Lord in the air. What an awesome display of God's power is yet to come, and it could be in our lifetime! **The God of Elijah was powerful yesterday and is powerful today.**

Do you know God has special plans for your life too? Maybe you will not see a chariot of fire like Elisha did, but God's power is at work in your heart and life just like it was in the days of Elijah.

God wants us to live every day as Elijah did--talking to Him, following His directions, praying and anticipating that God will show His power in our lives and in the lives of our families. God wants to show the people of this nation His greatness. He is able to work through us powerfully to touch those around us if we are willing to be His instruments.

Super Sun Visor

This craft you can do just for fun. You will need the visor template included with the curriculum, copied onto cardstock paper, scissors, a hole punch, crayons or markers, string or yarn, and clear contact paper.

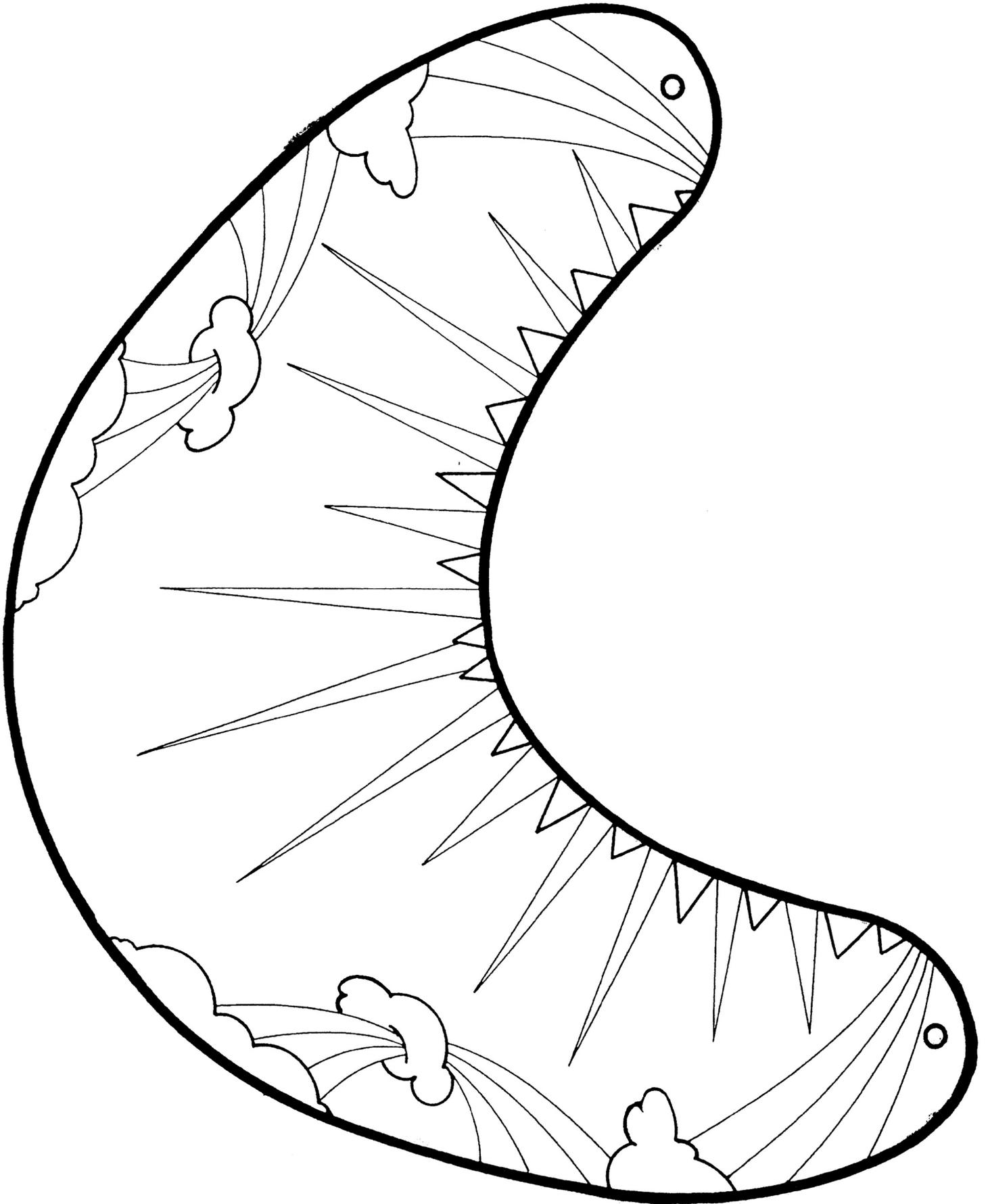
Copy a visor template onto cardstock for each child in your class. Allow the children to color the visor using crayons or markers. Cut out the visor. Cover with clear contact paper. Use hole punch to put holes in the areas indicated. Precut two pieces of yarn or string approximately 12 inches long. Place into the holes and tie in a knot.

Have the children put the visor on and tie both strings together in the back. Next, stay cool in the sun.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for His awesomeness and power. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.

Template - Super Sun Visor



Helpful Hints:

You may wish to cover visor with clear adhesive plastic to protect it and make it sturdier.