

Up, Up, and Away

2 Kings 2:1-15; Prophets and Kings, pp. 225-228



But I've prayed about it and asked God to give it to me," Burt complained to his older sister. "You know we don't always get what we want. If it's God's will for you to have it, you'll get it," Martha explained.

"How do you know?" asked Burt.

"Let me tell you what I read in the Bible about Elijah and Elisha. Then you will understand too."

God had something wonderful planned for Elijah. God wanted to take him straight to heaven without dying first. This was a special honor that God had given to only one other person—Enoch.

Elisha was Elijah's assistant. Elisha knew that soon the prophet Elijah would end his work and it would be Elisha's time to carry on. Many of the prophets who worked with them also knew that Elijah would soon be leaving them. God's gentle voice had told them so.

One day Elijah took Elisha on a last journey to visit God's schools of the prophets. The prophets in these schools were asking Elisha, "Did you know God is going to take Elijah today?"

"Yes, I know," Elisha said. The thought of losing Elijah the

prophet filled Elisha with sadness. He was probably a little nervous about taking over Elijah's work, too.

Elijah also knew he would soon be leaving Elisha. So he gave his helper a test. At each school they visited, Elijah told Elisha, "Stay here. I need to go on."

But each time Elisha insisted on going too.



The Message

God's grace is the gift of eternal life.

He didn't want to let Elijah out of his sight. He wanted to be with him till the last moment. "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you," Elisha said. So the two of them walked on.

Soon they came to the Jordan River. Elijah took off his coat, rolled it up, and hit the water with it. The water parted, and the two men walked across on dry ground. On the other side it was time to say goodbye. "What can I do for you before I am taken from you?" Elijah asked Elisha.

Elisha could have asked for a lot of things. He could have asked for money. He could have asked to be famous. But instead he asked for a special blessing. "Let me inherit a double portion of your Spirit," he answered. He knew that the only way he could do the work he had been called to do was with extra help from God.

"If you see me when I am taken up from you, it will be yours; otherwise not," Elijah said, and they kept walking.

Then suddenly a chariot and horses of fire appeared and separated the two men. Elijah was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha called after him, "My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!" But Elijah was gone. Elisha tore his clothes to show his sorrow at losing his teacher and friend.

Then Elisha saw Elijah's coat where it had fallen. He picked it up and walked back to the Jordan River. Rolling up the coat, Elisha hit the water with it, just as Elijah had done. Again the waters parted, and Elisha walked across on dry ground. God had indeed given Elisha the gift of His Spirit.

God wants to give us good gifts, too. His very best gift is the gift that He gave Elijah,

Memory Verse

"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"

(Romans 6:23).

the gift of eternal, forever life. And like Elisha, we have to ask for the gift. We have to keep our eyes on Jesus. And we have to believe our prayers have been answered and act in faith. We have to believe just as Elisha did when he hit the water with Elijah's coat.



S A B B A T H

DO If possible, read the Bible lesson story with your family near a river. Try acting it out. Elisha stayed with Elijah everywhere he went. Whom should we follow today?

SING Sing together "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 119). Then ask Jesus to help you follow Him.

READ Read Romans 6:23 together and teach the verse to your family.

M O N D A Y

DO For family worship, wrap a gift box with pretty paper and a bow. Label it "Forever Life." Leave it where you can see it all week. Let it remind you of God's gift of eternal life to all who love and follow Jesus.

READ In your Bible find and read 1 John 5:11. Together, thank God for offering you such a wonderful gift.

DO How many round things can you find in your house? How do they remind you of eternal life?

DO Play "Beanbag Toss."

T U E S D A Y

DO During worship today, read 2 Kings 2:6, last part. How many times did Elisha repeat his promise, "I will not leave you"? (See 2 Kings 2:2, 4, 6.) Say the promise to each member of your family. Put each person's name at the beginning.

SHARE Discuss with your family: What seems longer to you, an hour doing chores or an hour with your friends? How would you like to be with your friends forever? Eternal life will be like that. Tell God that you choose to be with Him forever.

DRAW Draw a circle. How does a circle remind you of "forever" and "eternal life"? Write the memory verse inside your circle.

S U N D A Y

READ During family worship, read the lesson story in the Bible (2 Kings 2:1-15).

DO Divide a large piece of cardboard into the number of squares equal to the number of words in the memory verse. Have a family member help you print one word of the verse in each square. Print the reference in a square of its own. Now you can play "Beanbag Toss." Toss a beanbag onto the squares in the correct order of the memory verse. Let your family members have a turn. Play this game all week.

When Elisha asked for a double part of Elijah's spirit, he was asking for the power he needed to be God's prophet.



W E D N E S D A Y

DO During family worship, take turns telling about a time when someone gave you a wonderful gift. Discuss: Why did they give it to you? What kind of a gift does God offer us? Read 1 John 5:11 together. What does this tell you about God? Read 1 John 4:9.

DO Play "Beanbag Toss" to review your memory verse.

SING Sing "John 3:16" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 24).

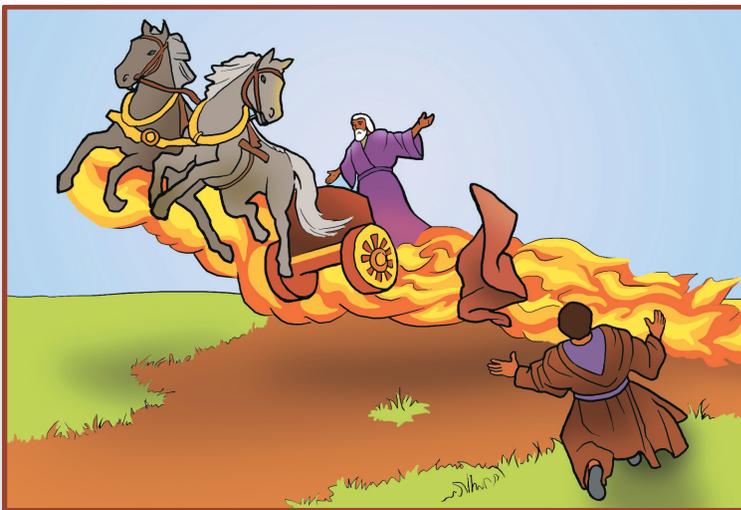
THURSDAY

READ Use today's family worship time to celebrate the reason that we have the gift of eternal life. Read John 3:16 and Philippians 2:8-11. What did you learn about God's greatest gift to us? Sing "O, How He Loves You and Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 28).

DO To review the memory verse, snap your fingers or clap your hands in rhythm with the words.

PUZZLE

Directions: Find the five things that are different in the second picture.



FRIDAY

DO For Friday evening worship, give each other a special love gift. Stand in a circle and rub each other's backs. Then turn inward and hug each other. While still in this position, say the memory verse.

DO Read 2 Kings 2:11 together. Imagine what Elijah did when he first arrived in heaven. Pass the "gift" you made on Monday to a family member. Ask that person to tell what he/she wants to do when first arriving in heaven. That person passes the "gift" to the next person, who does the same thing.

PRAY Thank Jesus for His forever gift of forever life.

SING Sing "For God So Loved the World" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 26).

EGYPT

MILES

50

6

Red Sea



EGYPT

Mediterranean Sea

In Elijah's Footsteps

As a prophet of God, Elijah traveled throughout Israel and Judah. He urged people to turn from pagan gods. Elijah's experience teaches us that grace is the gift of life.

Directions: Find seven places that Elijah visited.

Read the Bible texts listed below and match them with numbers on the map. Write the names of the places beside the number on the map.

1. 1 Kings 17:1
2. 1 Kings 16:29
3. 1 Kings 17:2-4
4. 1 Kings 17:7-9
5. 1 Kings 18:19
6. 1 Kings 19:8
7. 2 Kings 2:11-15

4

5

2

3

1

7

ISRAEL

Dead sea

