

# Elíjah Chooses Elísha

1 Kings 19:19-21

## **MEMORY VERSE**

1 KINGS 19:19

“So he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him.”

## **WHAT YOU WILL NEED:**

A piece of cloth for each pair of children, approximately 2 feet long.

One white handkerchief for each child, one permanent marker and several multi-colored markers.

## **ATTENTION GRABBER!**

### **Let's Follow the Lord Together**

Today we will be learning about Elijah and Elisha. They followed the Lord together. In this activity let's see how we can follow the Lord with our friends. This activity will be a variation of a three-legged race. You will need a piece of cloth for each pair of children.

Have the children form partners, then using the piece of cloth, gently tie each child's leg to his or her partner's leg as in a three-legged race. This will be like a three-legged race, except it will be a relay race. Divide the pairs of children into two equal groups (if the number of groups is an odd number then choose one pair to go twice). Have a starting line and have the children race across the room and return. They will then tag the next pair and they will do the same. Tell the children that they and their partner need to work together to follow your instructions. Encourage the partners to help each other to finish the race.

Allow the children to complete their race, and then have them sit in a circle and ask the following questions. What was it like racing with a partner? Was it harder or easier? Did it become easier as time went on? How did you help your partner? Explain that Elijah and Elisha both followed the Lord. They were friends and helped each other. We can help our friends to serve the Lord by encouraging them to do what is right. Can you think of some ways that you can encourage your friends to do what is right (read Bible, pray, go to church, etc.)?

## LESSON TIME!

In this section of scripture we see Elisha being called to take Elijah's place in ministry. We will learn in our lesson today that God calls people to do His will. We will also learn that when God calls someone to do something for Him, He will always prepare them for what He calls them to accomplish for the kingdom.

Have you ever wondered what God would have you to do in your life? Sometimes we might think that great Bible characters like Elijah and Elisha are super-human or able to do so much more for the Lord than we could ever do. The truth is that they were people just like us. They were once children who loved to play and be silly sometimes. But God used them for great things because they were willing to be used. God can use our lives for great things when we are willing to be used. **God has wonderful plans for our lives.**

Let's look at how God called Elisha to replace Elijah and learn about how the Lord may want to use us.

### 1 KINGS 19:19

So he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he was with the twelfth. Then Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle on him.

Elijah departed from Horeb and found Elisha, (meaning God is Savior) the son of Shaphat at Abel-Meholah, in the Jordan Valley. We see here that Elisha was busy working when God called him to the ministry. He was a hard worker when God took the initiative of calling him. He was not just sitting around waiting for God to use him, but was diligent with what was at hand for him to do.

The work of God requires constant self-sacrifice and tireless devotion to our duties. Those who are most dedicated in their daily work will be dedicated to the work of God. Elisha's father may have been wealthy, having twelve yoke of oxen, yet Elisha is out working in the field. The call of God on his life would definitely change his life forever.

When Elijah cast his mantle, the insignia of his office, upon Elisha it was truly the call to the office of prophet. A mantle was a piece of clothing that went over Elijah's shoulders. But it had a meaning that Elijah had the call of a prophet on his life. By casting his mantle onto Elisha it would be very clear that the call of God to be a prophet would be passing on to Elisha.

For Elisha this call would mean a drastic lifestyle change. He would leave the farm and become engaged in another work. 2 Timothy 2:4 tells us that the servant of Jesus Christ must not "entangle himself with the affairs of this life." What are we willing to give up to follow God's call upon our lives?

When we are children there are a lot of things that we can be doing to learn how to serve and obey the Lord. We can obey our parents, be careful to do all of our chores around the home as unto the Lord, do our best in school and serve others and tell them about Jesus. As we learn to be faithful in all of these things, the Lord will continue to bless us and use us for even greater things.

We have to be careful though not to think that if we just sit around and do nothing, waiting for God to use us that He ever will use us. Throughout the Bible we see God using those servants who are busy doing today what they are supposed to. Even if that is just being faithful with a small task, it is faithfulness that God is looking for. **God has wonderful plans for our lives.**

### 1 KINGS 19:20

And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?"

Now Elisha, understanding what was meant when Elijah gave him his mantle, left the oxen standing, ran after Elijah and said to him, "let me kiss my father and my mother, then I will follow you". What he was saying was, let me tell my parents good-bye before I take off and join you in your ministry. It's been said that as he plowed his earthly field with his 12 pair of oxen, he was now to plow the spiritual field of the 12 tribes of Israel.

He had taken a place of humility by asking permission of his mentor. He was not delaying his obedience to the call; he was a loving son. It was proof of his obedience to his call by showing a readiness to break the ties that might hold him back. Elijah's response was for him to be sure that he had counted the cost of the call upon his life.

When the Lord calls us to service we should be ready to go. We can be praying now that the Lord will show us His plans for our life and that we would be prepared to "go for it" when He says it is time. **God has wonderful plans for our lives.**

## Who Will You Follow?

Before you begin this activity, set up an obstacle course, using books, tables, chairs, wastebaskets, etc. Have the children get back into the same pairs from the previous activity. Have one child be the leader and the other child the follower. The follower will have the cloth gently tied over their eyes as a blindfold so that they can't see. The job of the leader will be to guide their partner through the obstacle course successfully.

Allow all of the children to have a turn going through the course. Take turns as to who can be the leader. After everyone has had a turn have the children gather together. Ask the children to share their experiences. As the follower, was it easy to get from one place to another? As the leader, was it easy to give directions? Is it easy for us to follow the Lord when we don't always understand or see what is ahead? Do you think it was easy or hard for Elisha to leave everything and follow Elijah? What if Jesus asks us to forsake all and follow Him? We will have to rely on Him like our blindfolded person had to rely on their leader to get them through the path.

### 1 KINGS 19:21

So Elisha turned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them and boiled their flesh, using the oxen's equipment, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant.

Here we see Elisha rejoicing in God by offering up a sacrifice to Him. It also gave a closure to his previous profession. When we are called, we must renounce every other interest or distraction from our lives. Then Elisha begins to follow Elijah. God's call made his heart respond. We see that he became a servant, ministering to Elijah.

Elisha would be greatly used by God, but now he was to be a servant. The greatest of men must first become the greatest of servants. How do we view God's calling upon our lives? Do we desire to be out in front, or are we willing to be the servant of all? God's preparation often puts us in the background for a while to learn about God and His ways.

Elisha's response to God's call is a wonderful lesson for all of us to learn. He was hard at work when he was called, and gave it all up for the highest call. Are we faithful in the things that God has us doing now? Are we looking forward to doing His will and plan for our lives? Are we willing to be a servant and lay down our lives for others?

**God has wonderful plans for our lives.** We only need more faith in Him and obedience to Him. Our life can be every bit as exciting as Elijah's or Elisha's when we are allowing Him to have first place in our heart.

## **Mini Mantles**

For this craft/activity you will need one white handkerchief for each child, one permanent marker and several multi-colored markers. Using the permanent marker before class write out Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." Give one to each child (just for fun you could go by each child and cast the "mini-mantle" onto each child). Next give the children markers and allow them to draw a picture of what they think God will use them to do. It could be a future career, a special ministry, or just serving in some special way. Make sure they write their names somewhere. Encourage the children to display the cloth somewhere so they can remember that God has a plan for their life.

## PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to seek the Lord's will for their lives and then to be faithful to obey His plans. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.