

# Elisha Makes Water Pure and Helps a Poor Widow

2 KINGS 2:19-22



Old Testament 7  
Part 2: The Divided Kingdom

## SUNDAY MORNING

Old Testament 7 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

2 Kings 2:19-22; 4:1-7; Leviticus 25:39-46; James 1:27

### MEMORY WORK:

“But he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he” (Proverbs 14:21b).

### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- [“From Elijah to Elisha”](#)
- [“Elijah and Elisha”](#)

### LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [The Divided Kingdom 1 Bible fact cards](#) (provided under “O.T. 7 Bible Facts”)
- “Summary of the Bible” from “[Kids Prep](#)” CD by Jeff Miller
- Pictures/drawings from any books listed under 3rd-4th Grader Pre-Class Activities/ Learning Centers
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- [“Map of the Divided Kingdom”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- Elisha A Beka Flash-a-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, not the lesson book)
- Ask a woman from your congregation to dress up as the poor widow and tell the story to the class from her perspective.
- Glass of salt water

### PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I can be kind, generous, helpful, and encouraging to those who do not have what they need.



## LESSON STARTS HERE

### INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

How did Elijah go into the heavens? What was the name of the man who took his place? Elijah helped a lot of people during his lifetime. The man who took his place would help others, too. We can learn a lot from these two great men and what we should do when someone needs our help.

### INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last week's lesson.

Most of us have plenty of food to eat and plenty of clothes to wear. Have you ever known someone who didn't have enough food to eat? What does God want us to do when we know about people who need food or clothing or medicine? Elijah helped a lot of people during his lifetime. The man who took his place, Elisha, helped others, too. Today we're going to talk about one of those instances.

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

NOTE: Teachers of preschoolers should skip the part about the impure water and teach that part of the lesson on Wednesday night.

1. Elisha was chosen by God to be a prophet (a messenger or spokesman for God—1 Kings 19), chosen to take Elijah's place (2 Kings 2:12-15). Elisha was a prophet during the reigns of four kings of Israel (the Northern Kingdom): Jehoram\*, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Joash\* [\*not to be confused with kings of Judah with the same names]. Like Elijah, Elisha was sometimes sent by God to give advice and instruction to these kings and to warn them of dangers at other times.
2. After Elijah went up into the sky in the chariot of fire, Elisha crossed the Jordan River to return to Jericho. The men of the city believed Elisha had the ability to do miracles, as Elijah did, so they asked Elisha for help. Something was wrong with their water, and their crops were not growing. Elisha's simple command was to put some salt in a jar and bring it to him. He poured the salt into the city's water supply, and miraculously the water became pure and healthy—healthy for them to drink and healthy for their crops. [Put some salt into a glass of water and ask some of the children to taste it. How could a simple bowl of salt make water better? Only **God** could do that! Remind them that during the Israelites' wilderness wanderings, a similar thing happened when God told Moses to throw a tree branch into a spring to make the water sweet (Exodus 15:22-26).]
3. Elisha traveled from Jericho to **Bethel** and then to Mount Carmel where Elijah had the great contest with the prophets of Baal. Returning to these places where his mentor Elijah had been probably helped Elisha remember what he should do as a servant of God. Then he returned to the city of Samaria, the capital of Israel (the Northern Kingdom).



**NOTE:** Recall that Bethel was one of the places where Jeroboam had set up golden calves many years prior to Elisha.

4. As happened frequently in Bible times, a widow and her children were in a desperate situation, without hope or help from anyone. The woman’s husband had been one of the “sons of the prophets.” [See note in previous lesson regarding this group.] Since his death, she had no one to support her family, pay bills, or provide basic necessities. The widow’s children were soon to be sold as slaves to pay the family’s debts, as was the custom in Bible times [see **NOTE** below]. The poor woman begged Elisha for help.



**NOTE:** Since the Israelites had abandoned God, they had also abandoned His teachings about caring for the poor. See Leviticus 25:35-41 for one example of God’s directions for the poor, widows and orphans. Without men to provide for them and protect them, women and children were at the mercy of relatives and others. Sadly, those who should have taken care of them often did not.

5. Elisha instructed the widow to gather jars from her neighbors and fill them with the little oil she had left. She did exactly as he told her, filling the jars, putting each one aside, until there were no more jars. God turned the little amount of oil she had into more and more. It was a miracle that showed God’s great love and care for those who believe in Him, while proving that Elisha spoke for Him. With God’s help, the woman had enough money from selling the oil to pay her debts and prevent her sons from being sold into slavery. Elisha would do many more miracles because of his great faith in the all-powerful Jehovah.
6. We are not told the name of the woman in this story, but we do know that she was very important to God. She had to follow Elisha’s instructions to receive the blessing from God. She believed in God, and she believed that Elisha worked for God. Believing in God did not necessarily mean that terrible things would not happen to her. But good things also happened to her and her sons because of her faith and willingness to obey God.
7. For most of the history of the world there have been divisions between people who have a great deal and people who have little to nothing—the “haves” and the “have nots.” God knew that the poor would suffer a great deal, that they would be overlooked and abused by those around them who thought they were “better”/had more power. Today widows and their children aren’t often left to take care of themselves, but there are many people who still need our help. God has always expected us to treat people who are poor and lonely and in need as we would want to be treated if we were in their situation.

**PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):**

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#).

**Ages 2-5:**

- [“Elijah Meets Elisha Coloring Sheet”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- Provide half-sheets of construction paper or colored copy paper, crayons, stickers, etc., so that the children can make “thinking of you” cards for the widows of your congregation. (Or you could help them make hand-print art on the cards.)
- Ask the children to bring canned food for your congregation’s pantry. Spend time talking about how that food helps people in need have something to eat. (Send notes home with the kids to help them and their parents remember.)

- Help each child make a handprint on a piece of card stock or construction paper. On each paper write “\_\_\_\_\_ Has Helping Hands” and/or a verse about helping others.
- [“Oil Pot Activity”](#): Let the children give examples of things they could do for or give to others. Write the examples on cutouts of oil pots (or help them write those examples, if they are able). (provided in activity sheets)
- [“How To Treat Others Activity”](#) (provided in activity sheets)

### 1st-2nd Graders:

- Cut out 8-10 shapes of pitchers or basic oil pots. On each pot write a sentence about the story. Ask the students to put the pots in chronological order. (Can make several sets and let students work in groups/pairs.) ([oil pot cutouts](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Provide half-sheets of construction paper or colored copy paper, crayons, stickers, etc., so that the children can make “thinking of you” cards for the widows of your congregation. (Or you could help them make hand-print art on the cards.)
- Ask the children to bring canned food for your congregation’s pantry or for food baskets that you are making for those in need. Spend time talking about how that food helps others, and how grateful you would be if someone brought you food when you were hungry. (Send notes home with the kids to help them and their parents remember.)
- Ask the children to bring items (e.g., clothes, toiletries, canned food, small toys, etc.) for victims of a natural disaster, or school items for underprivileged children, etc.
- [“Oil Pot Activity”](#): Let the children give examples of things they could do for or give to others. Write the examples on cutouts of oil pots (or help them write those examples, if they are able). (provided in activity sheets)
- Play Hang Man with key words from this and previous lessons. **Or** play Bible Alphabet Soup with key words. Divide the class into pairs or small teams. Give each pair/team a bag of plastic letters (like the magnetic refrigerator letters). Ask a review question and give the students time to spell the correct answer. (Example words: chariot, Gilgal, fire, Bethel, Mt. Horeb, Jericho, Ahaziah, Ahab, Naboth, Jezreel, Jezebel, widow, Elijah, Elisha)
- [“Elijah Meets Elisha Fill in the Blank”](#) and [“Elijah Meets Elisha Word Search”](#) (provided in activity sheets)

### 3rd-4th Graders:

- Cut out 8-10 shapes of pitchers or basic oil pots. On each pot write a sentence about the story. Ask the students to put the pots in chronological order. (Can make several sets and let students work in groups/pairs.) ([oil pot cutouts](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Provide half-sheets of construction paper or colored copy paper, crayons, stickers, etc., so that the children can make “thinking of you” cards for the widows of your congregation. (Or you could help them make hand-print art on the cards.)
- Ask the children to bring canned food for your congregation’s pantry or for food baskets that you are making for those in need. Spend time talking about how that food helps others, and how grateful you would be if someone brought you food when you were hungry. (Send notes home with the kids to help them and their parents remember.)
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students time to spell the correct answer. (Example words: chariot, Gilgal, fire, Bethel, Mt. Horeb, Jericho, Ahaziah, Ahab, Naboth, Jezreel, Jezebel, widow, Elijah, Elisha)

- [“Elijah Meets Elisha Fill in the Blank”](#) and [“Elijah Meets Elisha Word Search”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- Have the children read the following:
  - Leviticus 25
  - *Don't Stop...Fill Every Pot!* by Marilyn Lashbrook, Me Too! Books
  - *The Berenstain Bears Think of Those in Need*, by Stan and Jan Berenstain (DISCLAIMER: Skip pp. 16-17, which start with “Now wait a minute...”)
  - *Elijah and the Great Prophets*, by Joy Melissa Jensen, Contemporary Bible Series, Scandinavia Publishing (DISCLAIMERS: p. 20—the text says a “great fish,” not a “whale”; p. 36—skip the phrase “like the one in his dream”; p. 49—skip the last two sentences; p. 61—change the first sentence of the second paragraph to “So a new law was written that protected the Jews.”)

## SONGS:

### “FROM ELIJAH TO ELISHA” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “Are You Sleeping?”)

Bad water, bad water!  
Elisha helped. Elisha helped.  
Put salt in a new bowl, threw it in the spring.  
All fresh now, all fresh now!

Sad young widow, sad young widow,  
No money, had no food,  
With God's help she had more,  
With God's help she had more,  
Paid her debts, paid her debts!

### “ELIJAH AND ELISHA” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Lora Laycook

(Tune: “Onward Christian Soldiers”)

Onward go Elisha! Marching on your way.  
You must follow this man, learn to lead the way;  
For God soon will take him, in a whirlwind, too.  
Come, O come, Elisha, learn God's will to do.

#### CHORUS:

God will take Elijah, up to live above,  
Come, O come Elisha, teach of God's great love.

\*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

\*\*\* IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.





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Old Testament 7  
Part 2: The Divided Kingdom

## WEDNESDAY EVENING

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### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

2 Kings 2:19-22; 4:1-7; Leviticus 25:39-46; James 1:27

### MEMORY WORK:

“But he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he” (Proverbs 14:21b).

### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF SUNDAY'S LESSON FOR WORDS):

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## INTRODUCTION:

Review [O.T. 7 Bible Fact Flash Cards](#) (provided under “O.T. 7 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)

## POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review Sunday’s lesson. (See [O.T. 7 Review Questions](#) for example questions.)

YOUNGER CHILDREN: Discuss story of Elisha purifying the water with salt.

OLDER CHILDREN: Read and discuss the story of the young men who insulted Elisha, its reference to showing respect to men in positions of authority. Read and explain the significance of Deuteronomy 21:18-21 (cf. Exodus 21:15,17).



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the article “[Elisha and the Lads of Bethel](#)” by Wayne Jackson on the Apologetics Press Web site for a response to the charge that Elisha acted inappropriately in unleashing bears on the boys of 2 Kings 2.

## PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- See Sunday morning’s lesson.
- Let children role play these stories.

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