

LESSON PLAN

ELIJAH'S MINISTRY ENDS

2 Kings 1 – 2

Lesson Memory Verse: 1 Thessalonians 4:17 "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Lesson Aim: Be ready for the Rapture when the Lord comes to take His people to Heaven.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – Be plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): David was going to go sliding with his cousin Jonathan. Jonathan's mother was going to take them in her car to a good sliding hill. It was a perfect day to try out his brand new sled. Jonathan's mother had told David that he would have to be ready to go when they came to his house; otherwise they would leave him at home.

David's mother had told him that he would have to have all of his chores done before he could go sliding—room cleaned up, bed made, and garbage taken out. He thought he would have plenty of time to finish these chores, so he decided to sit down and watch television for a little while. What do you think happened? Before he knew it, the doorbell rang and Jonathan and his mother were there to take him sliding. David still had all of his work to do. He was not ready, so he could not go sliding.

HE (for Authority): Our memory verse for today says that the Lord Jesus Christ will come at the Rapture to take those who are ready to go with Him to Heaven. He may come at any time. Would you be ready to go to Heaven with Jesus Christ if He came today? The way to be ready is to receive Jesus as your Savior. Have you done that? (Have the children say the verse together.) **Words and Phrases to Explain:**

"We which are alive and remain"-- Believers living on the earth when the Rapture occurs

"Shall be caught up" – Believers lifted up from the earth

"Together with them" – Believers who are alive will join believers who have died in the air

"Meet the Lord in the air" – All believers from the church age will meet Jesus in the air

"In the clouds" – in the clouds of the sky

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scriptures for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. Today's Bible story is about a man who was ready for the Lord to come and take him to Heaven. It was not the Rapture, but it reminds us of the Rapture.

I. Elijah Fought for the Lord 2 Kings 1:1-18)

Elijah was a mighty servant and a great prophet of God. He knew that the God he was serving was the true and living God. Yet, many people in Israel served false gods. Even Ahaziah, King of Israel, turned to one of these false gods, named Baal-zebub, and asked for his help when he was sick. God was not pleased with Ahaziah when he did this, so He told Elijah to tell him that he would die because he had trusted in a false god. This command meant that God wanted Elijah to fight for Him. Elijah obeyed God's command even though it was dangerous and he might be killed for telling this message to the king.

WE: Would we obey the Word of God if it meant that we might be killed? That is what made Elijah great.

When the king heard what Elijah had said, he was so angry that he sent a captain and his fifty men to arrest Elijah. But Elijah called fire down from Heaven to kill these wicked men and God sent the fire. Then the king sent another captain and his company of fifty men and Elijah called fire to fall on them, too, and they also were burned up. A third captain and his fifty soldiers was sent by the king to arrest Elijah, but this captain was humble and pleaded for Elijah to spare his life and the lives of his soldiers. The angel of the Lord told Elijah that this man was trustworthy and he could go with him.

WE: When we are attacked for giving God's message to sinners, we expect trouble. Sometimes it is not too bad, but at other times, our very lives could be taken from us. Whenever we are threatened with harm, we should call on God for protection and in most cases He will protect us, unless He has a better plan to bring glory to Himself. Elijah had obeyed God in telling Ahaziah His message, so he was ready to be taken to Heaven to meet God. If we obey God by telling sinners His message of salvation, we have been good soldiers for Him. This is how we can be ready for the Rapture. (2 Tim 4:7; Eph 6:10ff)

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e-mail: rnjp3t3rson@gmail.com

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II. Elijah Followed After the Lord (2 Kings 2:1-8)

Elijah knew that the Lord would take Him to Heaven in a whirlwind that very day.

WE: We do not know when Jesus will come for us in the Rapture, so we must be ready for Him every day.

Elijah knew exactly where the Lord wanted him to go: first from Gilgal to Bethel, then to Jericho, and finally to the Jordan River. He faithfully followed the Lord's directions. However, Elijah did not want Elisha to come with him, unless it was in the Lord's plan. So he told Elisha to stay first at Gilgal, then at Bethel and finally at Jericho, but Elisha said he would not leave him. He even crossed the Jordan River with Elijah when he took his mantle, struck the water and the river parted so they crossed on dry ground. Elisha knew Elijah was following the Lord (2:2, 4, 6), and he wanted to be with Elijah to the very end of his life on earth.

WE: We should follow Jesus just like Elisha followed Elijah. We should follow Jesus by walking in His light. We do that when we stay close to Him by obeying His instructions in the Bible (1 John 1:7; John 14:21). If we follow Jesus, we will be ready for Him when He comes for us in the Rapture.

III. Elijah Flew to the Lord (2 Kings 2:9-15)

Before Elijah was taken to Heaven by the Lord, he asked Elisha what he could do for him. Elisha asked Elijah for a double portion of his spirit to be given to him. That meant that Elisha wanted to take Elijah's place as the prophet of God to the nation of Israel. Elijah said he could not give that promise to him. It was a difficult request. However, if God allowed Elisha to see him go into Heaven, his request would be granted by God; he would receive a double portion of Elijah's spirit. As Elijah and Elisha talked, suddenly there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which came between them and Elijah was taken to Heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha saw Elijah go into Heaven and he took up the mantle that fell from Elijah as he went up in a chariot (2:12-13). Then Elisha took Elijah's mantle, went down to the Jordan River, struck the water and asked if God was with him. The water parted and he crossed over Jordan. God had chosen him to carry on the ministry that Elijah had started; he received the blessing he wanted from the Lord.

WE: We are to look for the Rapture when all believers from the church age will go to Heaven in their new resurrected bodies. Those who die before the Rapture will go to Heaven, but they will not receive their new resurrected bodies until the Rapture. When Jesus returns, those believers who died and went to Heaven will return with Jesus to receive their new resurrected bodies. They will be the first to receive their new bodies. Then those who are alive at the time of the Rapture will have their present bodies changed into new bodies in a twinkling of an eye and all believers from the church age will meet with Jesus in the clouds of the heavens. Then Jesus will take us to Heaven. From that time we will be with the Lord forever. But someone may ask, "Why do we need resurrection bodies?" We will not need them in Heaven, but we will need them when we return to earth with Jesus. He will reign as the King of the whole earth for 1000 years and we will reign with Him in our resurrection bodies (Zech 14:9; Ps 2:8-9; Rev 2:26-27; 3:21; 20:6).

BE (for Action): We know Elijah was ready to go to Heaven when his work on earth was done, but how did he get ready to go to heaven when the Lord came for him? (He faithfully fought the enemies of the Lord; he followed the Lord, going to the places where the Lord directed him.) How can you be ready for the Rapture? (First, trust Jesus and ask Him to be your Savior; second, obey Him as a good soldier would obey his commander; third, follow Jesus wherever He goes and stay away from the places that you know He would not go.) If you do these things, you will be ready to go to Heaven when the Lord comes for us in the Rapture.

If you are not saved, you are not ready for the Rapture. If you want to be ready, I urge you to receive Jesus as your Savior today, so you will be ready for the Rapture. You can do that as soon as we dismiss class. (Tell them to see you after you dismiss the class and you will help them receive Jesus as their Savior.)