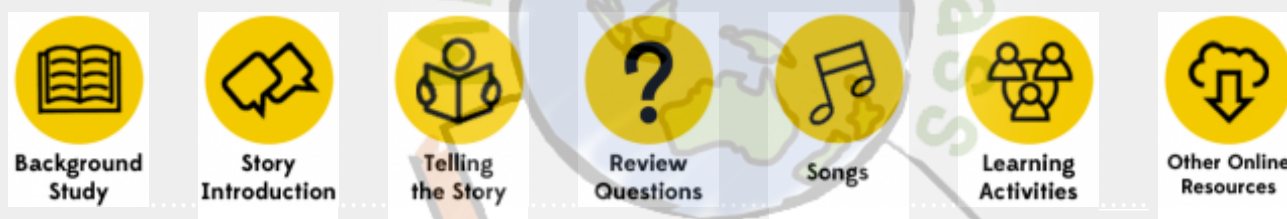


Elisha Raises a Boy from the Dead

Scripture Reference: [2 Kings 4:8-37](#)



Suggested Emphasis: We should help those who preach the word of God.



Story Overview:

A wealthy woman had an extra room built on to her house and furnished it comfortably for Elisha. Elisha and his servant used the room whenever they passed through the area of Shunem. In thanks for the help she gave to the preaching of the word of God, Elisha told the woman that she would give birth to a son even though her husband was very old. She did give birth to a son but after a few years, he died. The woman placed the boy's body in Elisha's special room and then went to find Elisha. Elisha came and raised her son from the dead.

Background Study:

As Elisha, the prophet, travelled from town to town there must have been many times when it was difficult to find lodging. Israelite travellers (especially an Israelite going into a town of Israel) could expect to be invited into someone's home for a meal. If it were evening, the traveller would be asked to spend the night. The Shunammite woman's request that Elisha have a meal and spend the night did not come as a shock to Elisha. After that, whenever he was in Shunem, he visited and stayed with them.

The woman's husband must have been as hospitable as she. When she suggested they build an extra room onto their home for Elisha, her husband agreed. This family was wealthy. Even for a wealthy person, it was no small matter to build an extra room onto a house, plus there was the added expense of furnishing it. They did all this for a man who only visited with them from time to time.

Elisha was impressed and touched by the generosity of these godly people. He wanted to do something for them to show his gratitude. When he asked the woman what she needed, she replied that she had everything she needed. It was Elisha's servant, Gehazi, who realized what the perfect gift would be - a son. Elisha called the woman and prophesied that she would bear a son within the year.

The prophecy came to pass, but some years later the boy suffered from an illness while helping his father in the fields. The boy died a few hours later. The woman immediately asked her husband to let her go to Elisha. He agreed even though he did not understand why she wanted to go.

When the woman saw Elisha, she did not berate him. She stated that she did not ask for a son, but was given one and now he had been taken away from her. She believed that Elisha could do something to help her son and he did.

Elisha instructed his servant to hurry to the child. Gehazi did not even greet anyone, but




lay his staff on the boy's face. The staff did not revive the child.

When Elisha arrived, he went into the room with the dead child, shut the door, prayed, stretched himself on the child to warm him, and prayed. God heard his prayer and restored the life to the child! The woman bowed before Elisha in humble gratitude before she took her cherished son and left the room.

Elisha continued to see this family as the years went by ([2 Kings 8:1-6](#)).

Like Elisha, those that preach the message of God need our support. Preaching the word is often not popular or profitable. Those that are in full time work for the church often spend so much of their time and energy caring for those in and out of the church that they have little time for themselves. Kindness from Christian brothers and sisters towards preachers and teachers of the word is an important way to build up the church.

[Background Information on the Divided Kingdom.](#)

-  [What happened before this story?](#)
-  [What happens after this story?](#)
-  [List of all Bible stories and themes on this website.](#)

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Way to Introduce the Story:

Ask the children what they think that a preacher (or missionary or any church worker) does. Discuss ways that they help the church. (You may want to investigate this yourself before class). You might talk about preaching, teaching, counselling, visiting the sick, evangelising, studying God's word, praying for the church, being hospitable, preaching for funerals and weddings, helping other people learn to study, etc. How could we help preachers? "In today's story, we are going to learn about a woman who helped Elisha when he needed a place to stay."

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The Story:

Elisha and his helper, Gehazi, travelled around Israel. They went from town to town. Elisha preached to people about God. He wanted everyone to learn to love God and to obey him.

It was very tiring to travel around Israel preaching to people. Elisha would always have to find a place to stay when he went to a new town. When he was tired he was always happy to find a comfortable bed to sleep on.

When Elisha came to the town of Shunam he was very hungry. A woman who was very rich asked him to come and eat at her house. The food was delicious. From that day onward, every time that Elisha and Gehazi passed through Shunam they always stopped to eat at the rich woman's house.

After a while the woman had a good idea. She said to her husband, "Elisha is a good man. He always helps people and tries to get them to obey God. He comes to our town often. He is always hungry and needs a place to stay. Why don't we make a small room on the roof for him? We have plenty of room since we don't have any children. We can put a bed and table in the room. We could also add a chair and a lamp. Then he could stay here every time. He could sleep on the bed and study and eat at the table. If we did this for him then he could have more time to teach people about God."

The woman's husband agreed and began preparing the room. The next time that Elisha came to Shunam, the woman invited him to stay in the new room.

Elisha was very happy. He was glad that the woman and her husband wanted to do something for him. Now he wanted to do something good for her. What could he do? When he asked her she said that she did not need anything. She had everything she

needed.

Elisha's servant, Gehazi, had an idea: "The woman's husband is very old and they have no children. Why don't you ask God to give them a son?"

Elisha thought this was a great idea! He told the woman that she would have a baby before a year passed. The woman was very happy. Things happened just as Elisha said and she had a baby before the year passed.

Then a terrible thing happened! One day the little boy got a terrible headache. He ran out to the field where his father was working. "My head, my head," he screamed as he held his head. His father did not know what was wrong so he told a servant to take the boy back to the house to his mother. The mother took care of the little boy but he died.

The parents were very sad. Then the boy's mother had an idea. She said to her husband, "Let me go to Elisha. He can help us." Then she rode a donkey all the way to the town where Elisha and Gehazi were staying.

When she asked Elisha for help he told Gehazi to run ahead and try to help the boy. Gehazi left but the woman waited. She wanted Elisha to be the one to help her son.

Gehazi tried to help the boy but he could not. When Elisha arrived he went to the boy's bedroom. He prayed to God and he tried to make the boy warm.

Then Elisha heard something. What was it? No one was in the room with him except the dead boy. Then he heard it again. It was the sound of sneezing. The boy was coming alive! He sneezed again. In fact, he sneezed seven times and then opened his eyes!

Elisha was so happy! He quickly called the boy's mother into the room. She was very happy to see her little boy alive again. The woman was very happy that Elisha was a man of God. She was happy that she had been kind to Elisha, too.

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Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Click here to download these illustrations and slideshow.](#) Be selective. Each teacher is unique so only use the illustrations that best relate to the way YOU are telling the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Review Questions:

1. What did the rich woman and her husband do for Elisha? Built an extra room so he could stay there whenever he wanted
2. What did Elisha tell the woman would happen to her? She would have a son even though her husband was old
3. What did the little boy say when he ran out to the field where his father was? My head, my head!
4. What did the boy's mother do when he died? She went and got Elisha for help
5. What was the first thing the boy did when Elisha brought him back to life? He sneezed seven times

Song Suggestions:

- [I've Got Peace Like a River Song](#)
- [My God is So Big Song](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

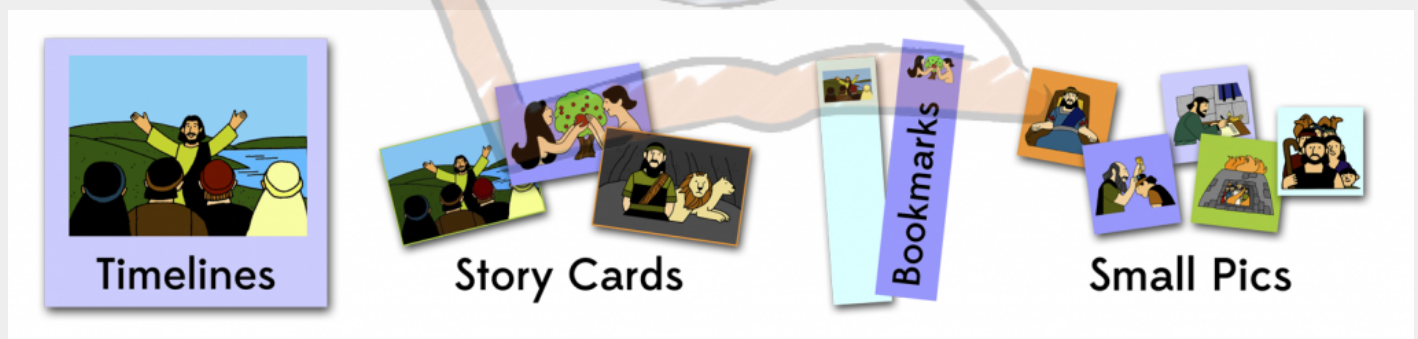
Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

Activities:

- Look up the word “miracle” in a bible dictionary and discuss its meaning.
- Write notes of encouragement to those who preach the gospel (preachers, teachers, missionaries, etc.)
- Plan and host an appreciation supper for preachers and/or teachers.
- Invite the preacher to class to discuss his work and how people have helped him.
- Use a bible encyclopaedia to learn about houses in Elisha’s time.
- Find Shunem on a map or Bible Atlas
- Younger children can practice making a bed for Elisha and then act out showing him the bed and inviting him to have a rest. You can also use the same bed to act out the woman’s son coming back to life.

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for “Elisha Raises a Boy” printables to print on A4 size paper](#)

[Click here for “Elisha Raises a Boy” printables \(Letter size-USA\)](#)

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Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Craft: Instructions and printable pattern to make a bible times house at <http://www.mssscrafts.com/crafts/bibletimeshouse/index.htm>](#)
- [Craft: Printable collage patterns \(be sure and print pages one AND two\) at <http://www.mssscrafts.com/crafts/collages/elisha.htm>](#)
- [Various Elijah and Elisha worksheets. Available at <http://www.squidoo.com/bible-worksheets-OT>. When you arrive at the page scroll down to “Samuel / Kings / Chronicles Sunday School Worksheets”.](#)

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