

Elijah and Elisha

Storyteller (*spreads out the Desert Bag*): This is the Desert Bag. So many wonderful and important things happen in the desert, we need to know what it is like. We can't get the whole desert into our church, so here is just a little piece of the desert.

2 Kings 2:1-12

Not long before the Lord took Elijah up into heaven in a strong wind, Elijah and Elisha were leaving Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "The Lord wants me to go to Bethel, but you must stay here."

Elisha replied, "I swear by the living Lord and by your own life that I will stay with you no matter what!" And he went with Elijah to Bethel.

A group of prophets who lived there asked Elisha, "Do you know that today the Lord is going to take away your master?"

"Yes, I do," Elisha answered. "But don't remind me of it."

Elijah then said, "Elisha, now the Lord wants me to go to Jericho, but you must stay here."

Elisha replied, "I swear by the living Lord and by your own life, that I will stay with you no matter what!" And he went with Elijah to Jericho.

A group of prophets who lived there asked Elisha, "Do you know that today the Lord is going to take away your master?"

"Yes, I do," Elisha answered. "But don't remind me of it."

Elijah then said to Elisha, "Now the Lord wants me to go to the Jordan River, but you must stay here."

Elisha replied, "I swear by the living Lord and by your own life that I will never leave you!" So the two of them walked on together.

Fifty prophets followed Elijah and Elisha from Jericho, then stood at a distance and watched as the two men walked toward the river. When they got there, Elijah took off his coat, then he rolled it up and struck the water with it. At once a path opened up through the

The Storyteller
smooths the sand while s/he talks. The desert is a dangerous place. There is little water, and almost nothing grows there. It is hot in the daytime and cold at night.

If any of the children reach out to touch the

sand, smile at them but say "You may work with the desert bag later in the Story Room. Right now we all need to be ready to listen to the story. This is how you get ready. *Demonstrate folding your hands in your lap. Then smooth the sand in one smooth motion around the edges of the desert bag, reinforcing the limits imposed by the edge of the bag.*

Lay the two pieces of the river Jordan down slightly to the right of middle, dividing the desert bag into two uneven sections. The pieces of felt should overlap slightly so they look like a single long river. The river Jordan divides the Promised Land from the Desert. *Put down some greenery in the smaller section.* In the Promised Land the People of Israel planted farms, and built cities: *Put down one block on the green side of the river -- Gilgal, put down another block – Bethel, put down the third block – Jericho.*

Set the Elijah doll down next to the block that you named for Gilgal. Long ago, when the People of Israel were living in the Promised Land, the prophet Elijah travelled around the land to tell people God's word for them. Other prophets, *put the Elisha figure down next to Elijah*, like the prophet Elisha, travelled with Elijah to learn from him, and Elijah was their leader.

Move Elijah and Elisha a couple of steps away from Gilgal. As

Story Materials

- Elijah figure
- Elisha figure
- Three wooden blocks
- materials from "Joshua 3:7-17 Crossing the Jordan":**
 - blue felt "water" (2 pieces)
 - plants figures

river, and the two of them walked across on dry ground.

After they had reached the other side, Elijah said, “Elisha, the Lord will soon take me away. What can I do for you before that happens?”

Elisha answered, “Please give me twice as much of your power as you give the other prophets, so I can be the one who takes your place as their leader.”

“It won’t be easy,” Elijah answered. “It can happen only if you see me as I am being taken away.”

Elijah and Elisha were walking along and talking, when suddenly there appeared between them a flaming chariot pulled by fiery horses. Right away, a strong wind took Elijah up into heaven. Elisha saw this and shouted, “Israel’s cavalry and chariots have taken my master away!” After Elijah had gone, Elisha tore his clothes in sorrow.

Elijah and Elisha were leaving Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, “The Lord wants me to go to Bethel, but you must stay here.”

Elisha replied, “I swear by the living Lord and by your own life that I will stay with you no matter what!” *Move Elijah and Elisha to the block that you named Bethel.* And he went with Elijah to Bethel.

A group of prophets who lived there asked Elisha, “Do you know that today the Lord is going to take away your master?”

“Yes, I do,” Elisha answered. “But don’t remind me of it.”

Elijah then said, “Elisha, now the Lord wants me to go to Jericho, but you must stay here.”

Elisha replied, “I swear by the living Lord and by your own life, that I will stay with you no matter what!” *Move Elijah and Elisha to the block you named Jericho.* And he went with Elijah to Jericho.

A group of prophets who lived there asked Elisha, “Do you know that today the Lord is going to take away your master?”

“Yes, I do,” Elisha answered. “But don’t remind me of it.”

Elijah then said to Elisha, “Now the Lord wants me to go to the Jordan River, but you must stay here.”

Elisha replied, “I swear by the living Lord and by your own life that I will never leave you!” So the two of them walked on together. *Move Elijah and Elisha to the river where the two pieces of felt overlap.*

Fifty prophets followed Elijah and Elisha from Jericho, then stood at a distance and watched as the two men walked toward the river. When they got there, Elijah took off his coat, then he rolled it up and struck the water with it. *Strike the water with your hand. Roll back the two pieces of felt to create an opening.* At once a path opened up through the river, and the two of them walked across on dry ground.

Walk Elijah and Elisha across into the desert. After they had reached the other side, *close the river back up behind them,* Elijah said, “Elisha, the Lord will soon take me away. What can I do for you before that happens?”

Elisha answered, “Please give me twice as much of your power as you give the other prophets, so I can be the one who takes your place as their leader.”

“It won’t be easy,” Elijah answered. “It can happen only if you see me as I am being taken away.”

Walk Elijah and Elisha a little further out into the desert, letting Elijah get about a hands-width ahead of Elisha. Elijah and Elisha were walking along and talking, when suddenly there appeared between them a flaming chariot pulled by fiery horses. *Bring your hand in from shoulder height, rapidly swooping in between the two prophets, then scooping Elijah into your hand and lifting him up and back.* Right away, a strong wind took Elijah up into heaven. *Turn Elisha to face toward where Elijah has gone.* Elisha saw this and shouted, “Israel’s cavalry and chariots have taken my master away!” After Elijah had gone, Elisha tore his clothes in sorrow.

Walk Elisha back. Elijah's coat had fallen off, so Elisha picked it up and walked back to the Jordan River. He struck the river with Eijah's coat -- *hit the water with your hand* -- and wondered “Will the LORD perform miracles for me as he did for Elijah?” As soon as he did this – *roll the water back to create a gap* – a dry path opened up through the water and he walked across.