



Use Week of:

Unit 13 • Session 4

Elisha and the Army

BIBLE PASSAGE:

2 Kings 6

STORY POINT:

God protected His people.

KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 42:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How many gods are there? There is one true God.

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EXPERIENCE THE STORY
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LEADER Bible Study

After Elijah was taken to heaven in a whirlwind, his successor Elisha continued Elijah's work as a prophet to Israel. God used him, like Elijah, to perform miracles—multiplying the oil of a poor widow, raising a Shunammite woman's son from the dead, purifying a poisoned pot of stew, and more.

At this time, Israel was ruled by King Joram. The land of Aram to the northeast (located in present-day Syria) was ruled by King Ben-hadad. In 2 Kings 5, Naaman—the commander of the army for the king of Aram—sought out Elisha for healing of a skin disease. Naaman recognized the one true God (2 Kings 5:15), but Aram was an enemy of Israel and waged war against the people.

Each time the king of Aram made plans to attack Israel, God revealed the plans to Elisha and he alerted Israel's king so Israel could thwart their enemy's plans. When Aram's king discovered Elisha was to blame, he was determined to kill God's prophet and sent an army to surround the place where Elisha was hiding. Elisha's servant saw the enemy army and was afraid, but Elisha could see something the servant couldn't see: an army of the Lord outnumbering the Arameans covered the mountain, ready to protect Elisha.

God blinded the enemy army, and Elisha led them to Samaria where the king of Israel could have killed them. Instead, Elisha told the king to feed the men and send them home. Those raiders did not come into Israel's land again.

This story in 2 Kings 6 reveals that the world is not limited to what is seen. As you teach preschoolers, emphasize that God is always with us, even though we can't see Him. Jesus came to earth so people could see God. (See Col. 1:15.) God protects us from sin and death when we trust in Jesus.

The BIBLE Story

Elisha and the Army

2 Kings 6

The king of Aram wanted to fight against the kingdom of Israel. He planned to move his army to a certain place. **But Elisha the prophet sent messages to Israel's king and told him where the Aramean (ar uh MEE uhn) army would be.**

The king of Aram was mad when he found out Israel's king knew his plans. Who had told him? Had one of his own soldiers told Israel's king? But **the soldiers said**, "We did not tell! **It was Elisha.** He is a prophet in Israel. **He knows what you say even though he is not with you."**

The king of Aram found out where Elisha was staying. That night, the king sent horses, chariots, and a large army to surround the city.

The next morning, Elisha's servant got up and saw the army. "What are we going to do?" he asked Elisha.

Elisha said, "Do not be afraid. **Our army is bigger than their army."**

The servant did not understand. He only saw the enemy army. Then Elisha prayed, "LORD, let my servant see Your army."

So God let the servant see the mountain covered with horses and chariots of fire—the army of the LORD!

Then Elisha prayed for God to not let the Aramean army see where



they were. Elisha told the army, “You’re in the wrong city!” He led them away to the king of Israel. Then Elisha prayed for God to let them see, and God did. Elisha told **the king of Israel** to give the army food and water. Then he **sent them home**. That army did not come into Israel again.

Christ Connection: Elisha’s servant could not see God’s protection, so God let him see. God is always with us. Jesus came to earth so people could see God. God protects us from sin and death when we trust in Jesus.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Show the emotions:** Lead preschoolers to show the emotions of the people in the story on their faces. Show the anger of the king of Aram, the worry of Elisha’s servant, and his surprise when Elisha’s servant sees God’s army.
- **Reveal the army:** Hide small people figures under a sheet where preschoolers cannot see them. When God’s army is revealed to Elisha’s servant, remove the sheet so the people figures can be seen.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Elisha and the Army

BIBLE PASSAGE: 2 Kings 6

STORY POINT: God protected His people.

KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 42:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How many gods are there? There is one true God.

Welcome time

- "God Is in Control" song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play a theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- "Which One Has More?" activity page, 1 per child
- crayons or markers

Invite preschoolers to look at each pair and circle the one that has more.

SAY • Was it hard to figure out which one had more? In today's Bible story, Elisha told his servant that God's army had more warriors than their enemy's army. At first, Elisha's servant did not think so. Pay attention to the Bible story to hear how Elisha's servant discovered that Elisha was right.

LOW PREP

Find the army

Hide three to four people figures together somewhere in the room. Invite preschoolers to search for the "army." Give hints when a preschooler is close to help them find the army quickly. Then invite preschoolers to take turns hiding the people figures for the rest of the group to find. Occasionally offer hints. Play as time allows.

SAY • Good job finding the army! Was it easier to find the army when I gave you hints? In today's Bible story, God's prophet Elisha gave hints to the king of Israel. He told the king where the army of his enemy would be. We will hear more about it in our Bible story.

Experiment with vision tools

Set out as a variety of vision tools, such as telescopes, binoculars, microscopes, magnifying glasses, pairs of glasses, and so forth. Tools may be real or toys. Invite preschoolers to explore various items such as small toys, stickers, beads, fingers, leaves, tree bark, textures on a wall, and so forth.

• vision tools
• items to view

SAY • All of these items help us see things we can't see very well with our eyes, but they cannot help us see everything. In our Bible story, there was an army that people could not see with their eyes or any kind of special tool. Only God could show this special army to people. We will hear all about this army in today's Bible story.

Transition to teach the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, flip off the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Guide preschoolers to march like soldiers to the Bible study area. You may choose to line up children in an army formation to add to the feel of an army march.

• countdown video
(optional)

TEACH the Story



SESSION TITLE: Elisha and the Army

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KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 42:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How many gods are there? There is one true God.

Introduce the Bible story

- Bible
- bookmark
- Giant Timeline

Place a bookmark at 2 Kings 6 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • Today's Bible story is from the Book of 2 Kings, which is one of the history books. They tell the story of God's people before Jesus was born. Like all the stories in Bible, today's story really happened!

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Story Point Poster
- "Elijah and the Army" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

SAY • Would you be scared like Elisha's servant if a whole army was coming for you? I would! But Elisha wasn't scared because he could see God's army protecting them. **God protected His people.** God still protects His people today. Our greatest enemy is sin and death. God protected us from those enemies by sending Jesus. If we trust that Jesus died for our sin and rose again, then we are saved from sin and death!

Practice the key passage

Place the key passage marker at Isaiah 42:8. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Invite preschoolers to try to say the key passage from memory. Provide assistance when needed. Applaud children's efforts.

- Bible
- Key Passage Marker
- Key Passage Poster
- "Isaiah 42:8" song
- "God Is in Control" song

SAY • God doesn't share His glory, because it only belongs to Him. There is no one greater than God. Israel and Aram both saw God's glory when **God protected His people.**

Sing the key passage song, "Isaiah 42:8," and the theme song, "God Is in Control."

Learn the big picture question

SAY • There were many people in the king of Aram's army. There were even more in God's army. But ***How many gods are there? There is one true God.*** Our one true God is more powerful than any army!

- Big Picture Question Poster



Missions moment

Invite preschoolers to stand and act out giving (reach out your hand), praying (fold hands and bow head), and going (walk in place).

SAY • Churches like ours work together to make sure missionaries have what they need. They give money, they pray, and they even go to places like Africa so that people can hear about Jesus. Let's find out more about how churches work together to help missionaries in this video.

Show the "Power in Partnership" missions video.

- "Power in Partnership" missions video

Pray and transition to experience the story

EXPERIENCE the Story



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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How many gods are there? There is one true God.

LOW PREP

Sing “God has a Greater Army!”

Sing the following lyrics to the tune of “I’m in the Lord’s Army” with the suggested motions. If you are unfamiliar with the tune, look it up online before the session.

“Human soldiers march in the infantry, [*March in place.*]

Ride in the calvary, [*Pretend to shake horse’s reins.*]

Shoot the artillery. [*Point out and hold up thumb.*]

Human soldiers fly o’er the enemy, [*Extend arms.*]

But God has a greater army! [*Point up.*]

Yes, sir! [*Bring hand to forehead.*]

God has a greater army! [*Point up.*]

Yes, sir! [*Bring hand to forehead.*]

Repeat as time allows.

SAY • The king of Aram thought he would capture Elisha for sure, but the army of the Lord was with Elisha and his servant. Elisha’s servant could not see God’s protection, so God let him see. **God protected His people.** God is always with us. Jesus came to earth so people could see God. God protects us from sin and death when we trust in Jesus.

- “Army Upset Game” printable, 1 for every 12 children
- chairs

Play “Aramean Army Upset”

Print one copy of the “Army Upset Game” printable for every 12 preschoolers. Cut out the images. Form a circle of

chairs with one less than the number of preschoolers in your group. Lead children to sit in the chairs and the remaining child to stand in the center. Give each preschooler one of the images. Lead the child in the middle to say, “horse,” “chariot,” or “army.” Every child with that image stands up and finds another place to sit along with the child in the middle. The child without a chair goes to the middle and leads the group in saying the story point.

SAY • The king of Aram sent an army to surround the city where Elisha was. Elisha prayed for God to not let the Aramean army see where they were, and God answered! **God protected His people** from their enemies. God protects us from our enemies of sin and death when we trust in Jesus.

Paint with invisible ink

Post an allergy alert. Mix equal parts baking soda and water in foam bowls. Give each preschooler a sheet of copy paper and a cotton swab. Invite children to dip their cotton swab in the solution and draw on their paper. When preschoolers finish, set aside the invisible ink pictures to dry.

As the artwork dries, mix one package of powdered flavored drink mix with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water in a foam bowl. Mix additional packages based on the number of children in your group. Put on smocks and roll up sleeves. Invite a preschooler to dip a paintbrush in the drink mixture and paint over their invisible ink to reveal their painting.

SAY • You could not see your picture until you painted over it with the solution, but you knew it was there because you drew it with the cotton swab. We cannot always see what God is doing, but we can know that God is always with us because He tells us so in the

- Allergy Alert
- baking soda
- water
- foam bowls
- cotton swabs, 1 per child
- copy paper
- powdered flavored drink mix
- smocks
- paintbrushes

Bible. *How many gods are there? There is one true God.* God protects us from sin and death when we trust in Jesus.

Count which is bigger

- hula hoops, 2
- objects in the room

Lay two hula hoops on the floor. Invite preschoolers to place various objects from the room inside the two hula hoops. Stop preschoolers then count the objects out loud to determine which group is bigger.

SAY • Good job counting the things you put in the hula hoops! Elisha's servant was afraid because the Aramean army was so big, but God let him see that the army of the Lord was bigger! **God protected His people** from their enemies. Today, God protects us from sin and death when we trust in Jesus.



Carry a baby on your back

- baby dolls
- blankets or large pieces of fabric

Invite a child to bend over at the waist. Lay a baby doll on the child's back. Then lay a piece of fabric over the doll. Invite the preschooler to wrap the top of the cloth across his chest and tuck it under his arms. Then help him gather the excess fabric at the bottom and tie it in front of him to hold the baby doll in place. Invite the child to squat down, bend over, and sit with the baby still on his back. Allow preschoolers to take turns tying babies on their backs.

SAY • This is the way the many people in Africa carry their babies. When their babies get sick, they put them on their backs and walk to the hospital. Churches helped build a hospital in Africa, where people can bring their babies and also hear about the one true God. *How many gods are there? There is one true God.*

Snack and review

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Wash hands and gather preschoolers for snack time. Pray, thanking God for the snack.

Before preschoolers arrive in the snack area, place the snack on plates and cover them with a napkin. Allow children to guess what the snack is. Then let them remove the napkins to see if they were correct. Remind preschoolers that God let Elisha's servant see the mountain covered with horses and chariots of fire—the army of the LORD.

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

1. What prophet told the king of Israel where the Aramean army would be? (*Elisha*)
2. What did the king of Aram send to surround the city where Elisha was? (*an army*)
3. Why did Elisha tell his servant not to be afraid of the Aramean army? (*God's army was bigger.*)
4. What happened to Elisha's servant after he prayed that God would let him see the army? (*Elisha's servant saw God's army.*)
5. ***How many gods are there? There is one true God.***

Transition

When preschoolers finish their snack, they may color the Bible story coloring page, play a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question, or sing along to the key passage or theme song.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert
- paper cups and napkins
- snack food
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster

- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Key Passage Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- "Isaiah 42:8" song
- "God Is in Control" song
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers