

Grandma's favorite read aloud Bible stories ©: ELIJAH
2 Kings 2: 1- 18

Once there was a man named Elijah...

Elijah was hairy man! He wore a big leather belt around his waist and a mantle around his shoulders. (A mantle was a cape that kept him warm.) Now, Elijah was a prophet (a man who God talked to and who's job it was to tell people whatever God said to him.)

God also gave Elijah many amazing things that he could do but that required God's power to do them. Once, he brought fire down from the sky. And another time, he prayed and prayed and stopped it from raining for 3 years! ----AND he even raised a boy from the dead!!! But....God had him do all this because God wanted His people, the Israelites, to stop worshipping Baal! They were doing many bad things trying to impress Baal (who was really not even a god but a chunk of wood that couldn't hear or speak!) God wanted them to worship Him—the only TRUE God! For Elijah, this was really hard work, and sometimes it got very scary, but Elijah was faithful to do all that God wanted him to do.

Now, one day, Elijah went walking with his student Elisha. As they were walking, Elijah suddenly turned to Elisha and said, "Stay here, please! For the Lord is sending me now to another city called Bethel". But Elisha shook his head and said, "Oh! As the Lord lives ---and as long as YOU live – I will NOT leave you!" So, they walked down to Bethel together.

When they got to Bethel, 50 men came running out and ran over to Elisha saying quietly, "DON'T YOU KNOW? THE Lord is going to take away your master and teacher from you today!!!" Elisha brushed them away saying, "Yes! I know! Now be quiet!! Don't talk about it!!" Elijah and Elisha walked on together toward the river. The 50 men stood and watched them walk away until the two prophets were far from them at the bank of the Jordan River.

At the river's bank, Elijah reached around and took off his mantle, rolled it up and stuck the water with a smack!! Instantly the river divided into two parts, leaving a pathway of dry ground! The men proceeded to walk across! When they reached the other side, Elijah turned and said to Elisha, "ASK! Ask whatever you want me to do for you before I am taken away." Elisha didn't even have to stop and think, he quickly answered, "Please, give me double of what God gave to you!"

Elijah stood silently looking at him and then replied, "You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, here's the deal... IF you see me when I am taken away from you, then you shall have it. BUT, if you don't ---- you will not."

The two men kept walking and talking when, ALL OF A SUDDEN, before Elisha could blink—something very bright came rushing in between them and separated them. A chariot of fire! A chariot with horses of fire!

It swept in with the wind whirling around them snatching Elijah off the ground and racing over the mountains and away into heaven!! He was gone! Elijah was gone!

Elisha was stunned and as he stared at where he disappeared, he cried out, "My father, my father! The chariot of Israel. The horsemen!" He wasn't hardly making sense, but, there was no answer. There was no trace of Elijah. Elisha was so sad. He was so sad that he grabbed his clothes and tore them into two pieces! He stood looking around and he spotted Elijah's mantle on the ground. (It had fallen off as he flew away.) Elisha slowly picked it up and then he began to walk back --- alone.

When Elisha got to the river, he just stared at the water for a moment. He looked down at the mantle he was holding and thought about Elijah. He was so upset, that he swung that mantle over his head and struck the water and said "Where is the Lord God of Elijah!?" Now....when the mantle of Elijah hit the water --- the water divided just like before! Did he now have Elijah's power from God? The 50 men saw it! They saw it all! So, when Elisha crossed the river and approached them, they all bowed down to the ground and said, "The Spirit of Elijah IS in Elisha!" Then, they begged Elisha saying, "PLEASE, please, please...let us go and search for Elijah, your teacher. Maybe the Spirit of the Lord dropped him on some mountain or in one of the valleys!" Elisha said, "no, don't!", but they kept on begging and they begged until Elisha felt bad. So, Elisha finally said okay.

Those 50 men went and searched and searched for Elijah's body – for 3 days - but found nothing. No one EVER saw Elijah again.....well..... at least not for four hundred more years!!