

21.01a Elijah's Translation (2 Kings 2:1–18)

✓ “*Check*” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows.

[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Beka Flash-a-Cards for the story of Elijah and/or pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Robe or coat (mantle)
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *double*: twice as much
- *whirlwind*: a mini-tornado

Scripture: (ESV)

2 Kings 2:1 Now when the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. 2 And Elijah said to Elisha, “Please stay here, for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel. 3 And the sons of the prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that today the Lord will take away your master from over you?” And he said, “Yes, I know it; keep quiet.”

4 Elijah said to him, “Elisha, please stay here, for the Lord has sent me to Jericho.” But he said, “As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they came to Jericho. 5 The sons of the prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that today the Lord will take away your master from over you?” And he answered, “Yes, I know it; keep quiet.”

6 Then Elijah said to him, “Please stay here, for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan.” But he said, “As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So the two of them went on. 7 Fifty men of the sons of the prophets also went and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. 8 Then Elijah took his cloak and rolled it up and struck the water, and the water was parted to the one side and to the other, till the two of them could go over on dry ground.

9 When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you.” And Elisha said, “Please let there be a double portion of your spirit on me.” 10 And he said, “You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it shall be so for you, but if you do not see me, it shall not be so.” 11 And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. 12 And Elisha saw it and he cried, “My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” And he saw him no more.

Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces. 13 And he took up the cloak of Elijah that had fallen from him and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. 14 Then he took the cloak of Elijah that had fallen from him and struck the water, saying, “Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?” And when he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went over.

15 Now when the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho saw him opposite them, they said, “The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.” And they came to meet him and bowed to the ground before him. 16 And they said to him, “Behold now, there are with your servants fifty strong men. Please let them go and seek your master. It may be that the Spirit of the Lord has caught him up and cast him upon some mountain or into some valley.” And he said, “You shall not send.” 17 But when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, “Send.” They sent therefore fifty men. And for three days they sought him but did not find him. 18 And they came back to him while he was staying at Jericho, and he said to them, “Did I not say to you, ‘Do not go?’”

Introduction/Review:

Jehoshaphat, the good king of Judah [locate], had himself gone throughout the land, teaching the people the ways of the Lord. You need to know that these people did not have their own copies of God's Word; they depended on the priests and Levites or, in this case, the king, to teach them. What was to happen to those who were not taught God's ways? What happened if their king did not follow God but idols? Sad to say, in that case, the people often followed their kings' practices and worshiped idols.

What kind of kings did Israel [locate] have? [All wicked.] Ahab, for example, and his son Ahaziah worshiped Baal. Yet, God sent prophets—Micaiah, Hanani, Jehu, and especially Elijah—in order to correct the king, to teach the people, and to bring them back to God. We, too, tend to leave God's ways, and we need parents, Sunday School teachers, and pastors to teach us God's ways even though we all have Bibles of our own.

Elijah, like Samuel, taught some men, called "sons of the prophets," in special schools. Did you know Pastor [name your pastor and adapt the following to his formal education] went to college four years [show four fingers] and then went another three years [show three fingers on other hand] to a school called *seminary* in order to learn God's Word and how to preach it? Well, Elijah's schools for the sons of the prophets were like Pastor's seminary, only the sons of the prophets might have gone to school longer than three years. Elijah had at least two locations for these schools—Bethel and Jericho [locate].

✓Ten years had passed since Elijah had thrown his mantle/coat on Elisha, showing that Elisha would be a prophet after him. During those ten years, Elisha had been a very close student of Elijah, for he was also Elijah's personal servant, living with him, taking care of him.

Who was the man in the book of Genesis who went to heaven without dying? It was Enoch (Genesis 5:21–24). Why would I ask you this question? It's because today's story is a bit similar to Enoch's story. See if you can tell me how it is similar when we are done.

Story:

Something was different about the day when today's story begins. Elisha just knew it. Today was going to be Elijah's last day on earth, and ✓Elisha thought he needed to be an especially good servant for this godly prophet of God.

Elijah and Elisha were going through the city of Gilgal [locate; probably north of Jericho, close to the Jordan River]. "Please stay here," Elijah said to Elisha, "for the Lord is sending me to Bethel" [locate inland, due west from Gilgal].

But Elisha answered, "As surely as God and you are living," or in other words, "I swear to God, I will not leave you."

So they went on to Bethel. Bethel had an interesting history. It means "house of God." Jacob had named it when he had had his dream there of angels on a heavenly ladder. But Jeroboam, the first wicked king of the north—of Israel—had built a golden calf and altar there for the people to worship instead of God.

Elijah, bold prophet of God, in the middle of all the false worship in Bethel, had established a school for the sons of the prophets. These several prophets now gathered around Elisha, for they knew what he knew. "Do you know the Lord will take your master away from you today?" they asked Elisha.

"Yes, I know it, but don't talk to me about it," replied Elisha. ✓I think Elisha was sad at the thought of losing Elijah, and that's why he didn't want to talk about it.

There at Bethel, Elijah said again, "Stay here, Elisha. The Lord has sent me to Jericho."

Again Elisha replied, [wait for the students to say—] "As surely as the Lord lives and you live, (or "I swear to God"), I will not leave you."

So they went on to Jericho [locate just northwest of the Dead Sea]. Again, at Jericho several prophets came

up to Elisha and asked, “Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master from you today?”

“Yes, I know,” answered Elisha, “but don’t talk about it.”

Elijah again said to Elisha, [wait for the students to say—] “Stay here, Elisha, for the Lord has sent me to—the Jordan River.”

Elisha replied, [wait for the students to say—] “As surely as the Lord lives and you live (or “I swear to God”), I will not leave you.”

As they walked on, fifty prophets followed for a while and then stopped and watched from a distance as Elijah and Elisha approached the Jordan River. ✓They were probably amazed as they watched Elijah take off his mantle/coat, roll it up, and “swoosh” it [storyteller Ethel Barrett’s term] down to the water, hitting the water. Immediately, the water parted, just as it had for Joshua and the children of Israel when they had come into Canaan. This time the water heaped to the right and to the left, and Elijah and Elisha walked over on dry ground. Then the river flowed again.

They walked along, and Elijah asked Elisha, “Tell me. What can I do for you before I am taken from you?”

✓Elisha perhaps had thought about this question before because he promptly answered, “Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit.”

What does this mean? Did he want twice as much power as Elijah? Maybe. ✓In fact, some Bible teachers say that Elisha ended up doing twice (double) the miracles of Elijah. Personally, I have at least twice as many stories about Elisha than I have about Elijah. ✓But perhaps Elisha was not so bold as to want double the great Elijah’s power. Rather, ✓he might have meant double what other prophets had.

At any rate, Elijah answered, “You have asked a difficult thing.” (Only God could give Elisha’s request.) “However,” Elijah continued, “if you see me when I am taken from you, you will have your request. If you don’t see me, you won’t have your request.”

The two continued walking and talking together when, suddenly, a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them. Then a whirlwind, like a little tornado, took Elijah up to heaven. What a sight! What an experience! Can you imagine it? [Teacher, drop on the floor the mantle/coat you have brought.]

Elisha saw it all and called out, “My father, my father! The chariots and the horsemen of Israel!” Then he took hold of his clothes and ripped them. Why? ✓In order to express his sorrow at losing Elijah.

But what was this? [Teacher, look on the floor at the mantle/coat.] Elijah’s mantle/coat had fallen from Elijah. Elisha picked it up [Teacher, do so] and walked back to the Jordan River. Those fifty prophets were still standing a way off and saw an amazing thing once again. Elisha struck the water with the mantle and asked, “Where is now the Lord, the God of Elijah?”

What happened to the river? Yes, God divided it again to the left and right, and Elijah crossed over on dry ground.

Those prophets rushed to Elisha saying, “The spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha!” They even bowed down to Elisha ✓in respect. But they wanted to find Elijah, not having seen him go into heaven. “Look,” they said, “we have fifty strong men here. Let us go look for Elijah. Maybe the Spirit of the Lord picked him up and set him on a mountain or in some valley.”

Elisha answered, “No, don’t go looking for him.”

✓“But we want to.”

“No.”

“Oh, come on! Please let us look for him!”

“No.”

Finally, they pestered Elisha so much that they made him feel ashamed. He finally said, “Go ahead if you must.”

They sent fifty men to search for Elijah while Elisha went back to Jericho. For three days they searched and searched but could not find him. Elisha reminded them when they returned, “Didn’t I tell you not to go?”

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:
Elijah is compared to John the Baptist in the Bible. They looked alike and preached to kings. John prepared the way for Jesus. We should be witnesses for Jesus.
One day those believers in Jesus who are alive when Jesus comes again will not die but go directly to be with Jesus, just like Enoch and Elijah.
- As Elisha and the fifty prophets respected Elijah, respect those whom God calls to minister—preachers and teachers of God’s Word. They “watch for your souls.”

Activities:

- Play dough: mantle/coat; chariot; horses; fire; men
- Snack: A “double” food like Cheez-It® Snap’d, Cheesy Baked Snacks, Double Cheese or Oreo® Double-Stuf chocolate cookies.
- Ask students how today’s story is similar to Enoch’s. The answer is both Enoch and Elijah went to heaven without dying. Also, both men pleased God, walking with Him and obeying Him.
- Sing “Let Thy Mantle Fall on Me”; words are found below, and song may be heard at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xu17ZGxyzf8>.
- Sing “Elijah Song” found at this site: [Song of Elijah \(gardenofpraise.com\)](http://www.gardenofpraise.com).
- Do “double” exercises: Put out a number of objects and ask students to double them by adding the same number of objects.
- Review Questions: (Game: Lay a 12” x 36” or longer strip of blue fabric or paper on the floor. A student who answers a question correctly may hit the blue strip with a mantle/coat. The fact that the strip does not divide illustrates the fact that only God could do the miracle of parting the water.)
 1. What did Elisha and the prophets know God was going to do to Elijah? [Take Elijah from them that day.]
 2. What did Elisha say when Elijah told him to stay at Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho? [“I swear that I will not leave you.”]
 3. How did Elijah and Elisha cross the Jordan River? [Elijah hit the water with his mantle, and the water parted.]
 4. When Elijah asked Elisha what he wanted, what did Elisha ask for? [A double portion of Elijah’s spirit.]
 5. What did Elisha see as Elijah was taken from him? [Chariots of fire and horses of fire and Elijah going up to heaven in a whirlwind.]
 6. What did Elisha ask as he came back to the Jordan River? [“Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?”]
 7. How did God show He was with Elisha? [He parted the Jordan River.]
 8. What did the prophets at Jericho insist be done? [That they go look for Elijah.]
 9. What was the result of their search? [They didn’t find him.]

Memory Verse[s]:

Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, 3 though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.

4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. 5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. 6 The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. 7 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

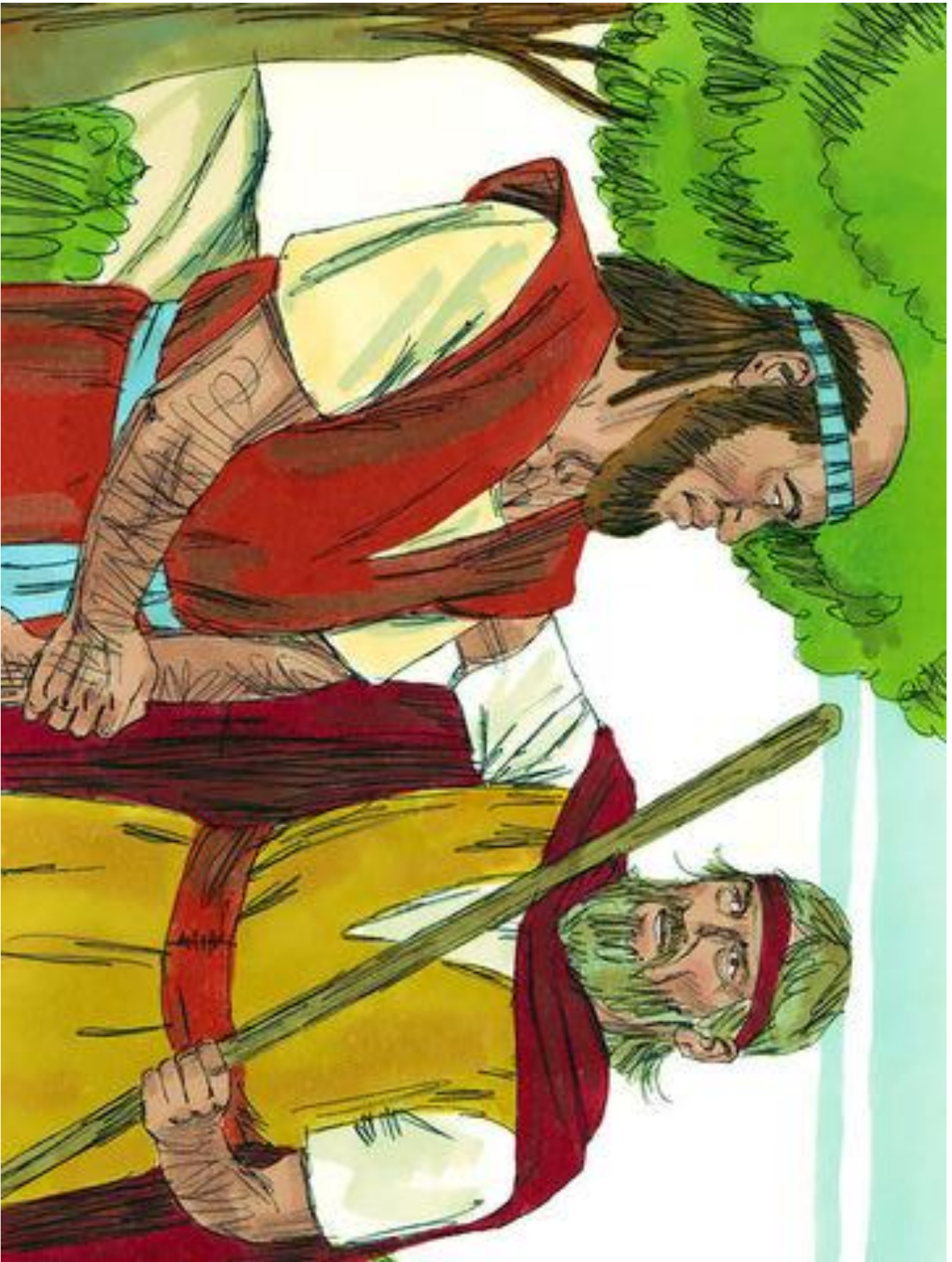
8 Come, behold the works of the Lord, how he has brought desolations on the earth. 9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire. 10 “Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” 11 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Handwork:

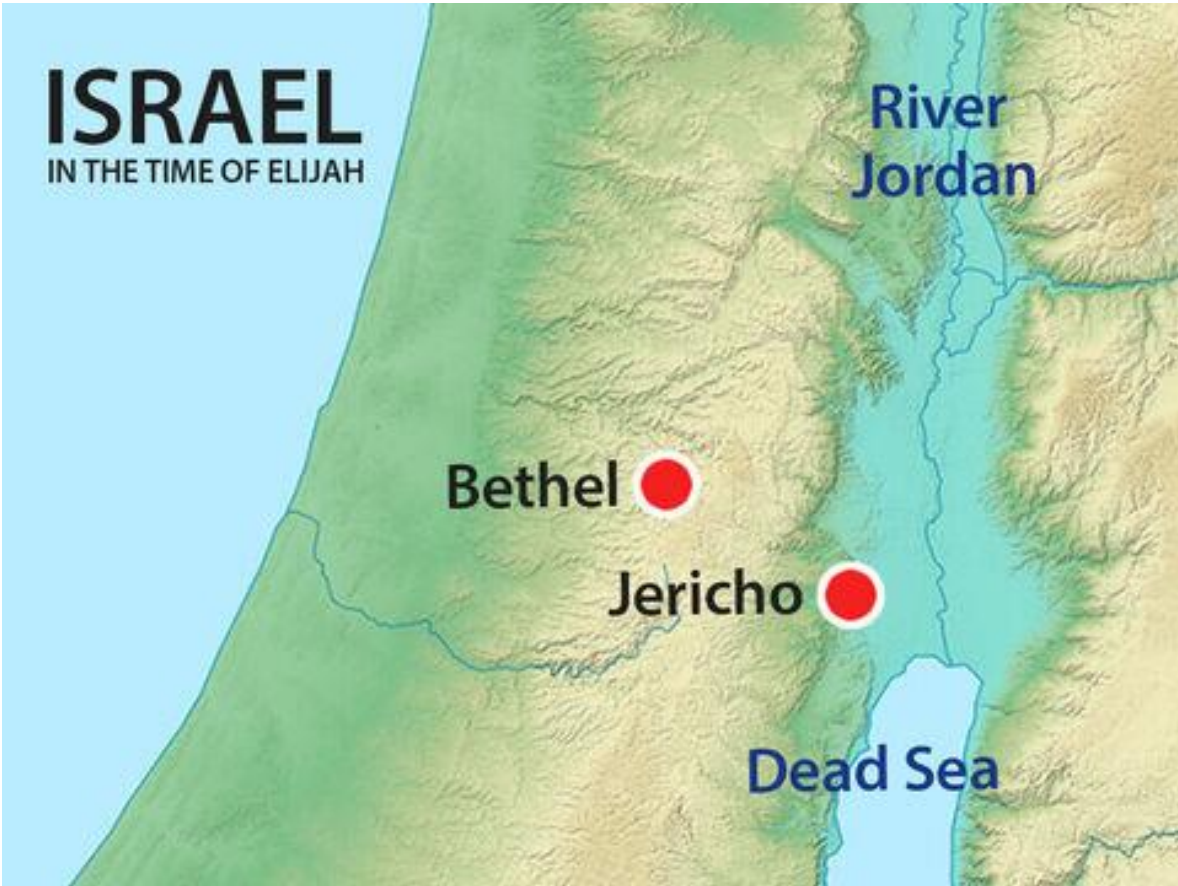
- Print and color a double-sided picture of Elijah’s fiery chariot. Clip art is found at [Elijah taken to heaven in fiery chariot – Sabbath School Crafts](#). Three photos rotate on this site. Right click on the line drawing and select “Copy” or “Save picture as” to acquire this picture.

double

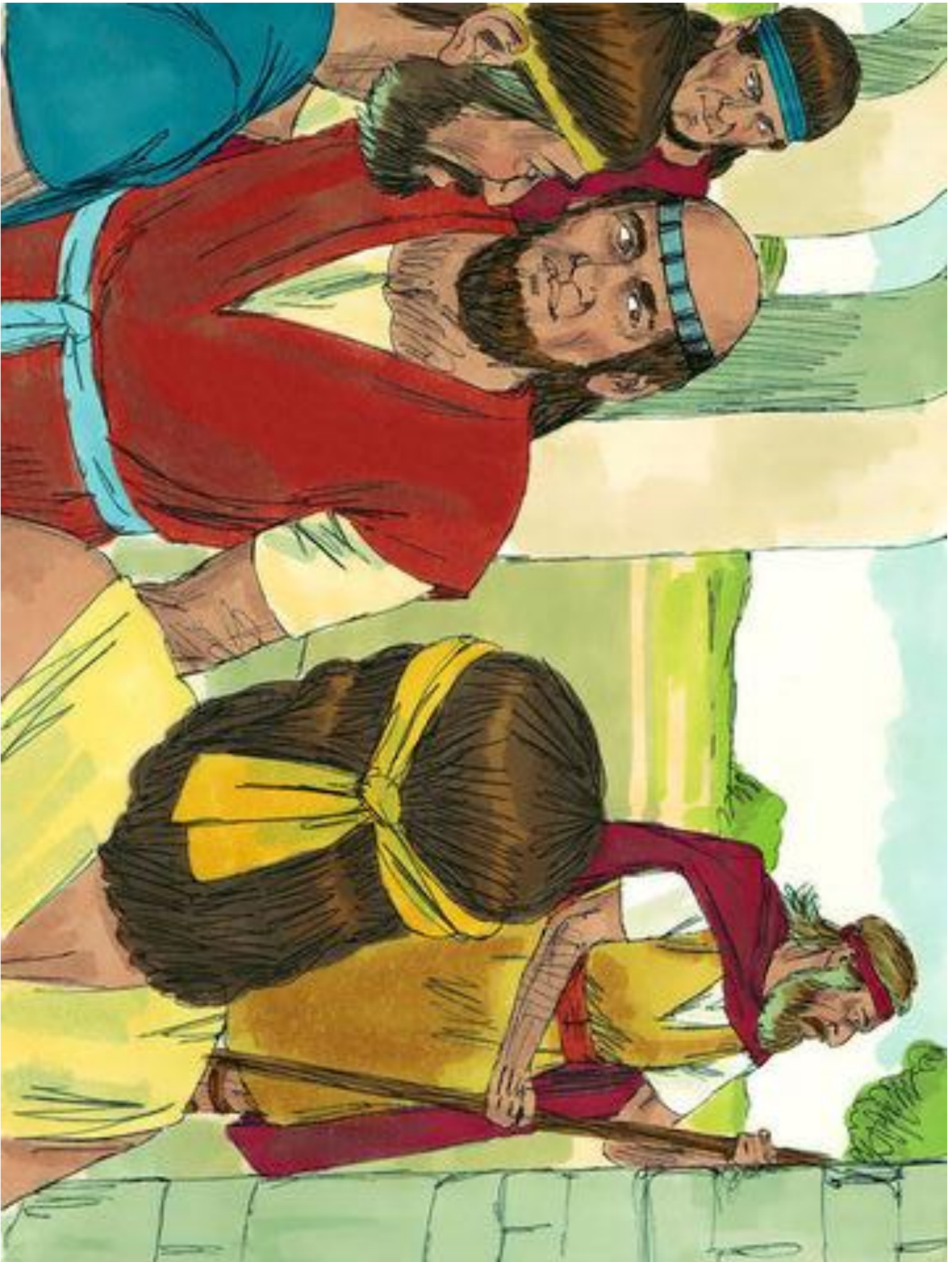
whirlwind



[FreeBibleimages :: Elijah and the chariot of fire :: Elijah is taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot and his mantle falls to Elisha \(2 Kings 2:1-17\)](#)



[FreeBibleimages](#) :: Elijah and the chariot of fire :: Elijah is taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot and his mantle falls to Elisha (2 Kings 2:1-17)



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LET THY MANTLE FALL ON ME

1) Elijah was God's prophet;
Elisha stood close by,
And ere the prophet left him,
He heard his servant cry:

REFRAIN:

"Let thy mantle fall on me!
"Let thy mantle fall on me! (on me!)
"A double portion of Thy spirit,
"Lord, Let thy mantle fall on me!"

2) Then Elijah made the promise
That, if faithful he would be,
His petition would be granted,
And God's glory he would see

3) As Elijah rose to heaven
In a chariot of fire,
He did not forget his servant,
Who expressed one strong desire.

4) In the Upper Room they waited—
'Twas the faithful Christian band—
And their pray'r was heard and answered
Over in the gloryland.

SECOND REFRAIN:

"Let Thy Spirit fall on me!
"Let Thy Spirit fall on me!
"The promised blessing, may it be outpoured.
"Let Thy Spirit fall on me!"

5) That pray'r of early Christians
Long ago and far away
Is the cry of all God's children;
And He's just the same today.

You may hear the melody to this song in a choir arrangement at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xu17ZGxyzf8>