

UP IN THE AIR: Preteen

WEEK 1

BIG IDEA

Elijah Taken Up to Heaven: II Kings 2:1-2, 6-14; Psalm 66:1-9

Bible

Elijah Taken Up to Heaven: II Kings 2:1-2, 6-14; Psalm 66:1-9

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT?

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *You can lead kids in worship with any songs you like best, but here are a few songs that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)*
 - "Trust In You" (Lauren Daigle)
 - "Promises" (Maverick City Music)
 - "For All My Days" (Gateway Kids Worship)
 - "All of Me" (Gateway Kids Worship)
 - "We Shine" (Vineyard Kids)

ACTIVITY | Cloud Toss

- Hi kids! Welcome to *Up in the Air*, where we are going to learn about all the big dreams God has given us and helps us achieve!
- Before we begin, do you know what the forecast for today is? Something tells me it's going to be *cloudy!*
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Dump out a bunch of balloons over a line in the middle of the room, and divide the group evenly to stand on either side of the line. When you give the signal, have kids try to kick with only their feet as many balloons out of their side of the line to the other team's side. After one minute, have everyone freeze. The team with the fewest clouds (balloons) on their side wins!*

ACTIVITY | Cloud Dough

- **Have you ever wondered what clouds feel like?** Let's imagine that we grabbed some clouds and turned them into dough!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have a volunteer at each table to lead the kids in making this recipe: 1) Measure 1/2 cup of lotion and pour it into the mixing bowl; 2) Add 1 cup of cornstarch into the mixing bowl; 3) Drop food coloring into it and mix well. Give each kid a little piece of the dough to play with on their own tray or parchment paper.*

QUESTION | What is something that you hope for or dream about?

- When someone has big, seemingly unrealistic dreams, people like to say they have their "head in the clouds." It means that their dreams appear to be so lofty and unreachable that it's as though they're not on the ground.
- When it comes to the things God can do, however, there is no limit! That means God can also help us do things we never thought imaginable, too.
- **What is something that you hope for or dream about?**
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** *Consider adding questions that talk more about daring dreams such as, "Would you rather skydive or hang glide?" or "Would you rather fly a jet or operate a hot air balloon?" Have fun discussing their responses!*

SO WHAT?

BIBLE STORY | Elijah Taken Up to Heaven

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Bookmark II Kings 2:1-2, 6-14 in your Bible and read the passage in small chunks as you tell the Bible story. To tie in to the theme, you can pretend that you are floating in the sky as you tell this story by standing on a ladder (use the rungs for support) and have the kids lie on their backs and look up at you!*
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** *When you tell the story, consider nicknaming Elijah, "JAH," and Elisha, "SHA," and referring to them using these names. It's a silly way to make the teaching more casual and help kids distinguish between the two prophets. You can give the volunteers baseball caps with "JAH" and "SHA" printed on them, too.*
- In today's story, we're going to be talking about someone who walked with — and dreamed with — God, all the way to the end.
- *[Read II Kings 2:1-2, 6.]*
 - God was about to take the prophet Elijah up to heaven. A prophet was kind of like a messenger for God.
 - Elijah was traveling with his friend and fellow prophet, Elisha. Elijah told him to stay behind because God wanted Elijah to travel to different places before it was time for him to go.
 - But Elisha said he would not leave Elijah's side.
 - **Why do you think Elisha wanted to stay close to Elijah?**
- *[Read II Kings 2:7-8.]*
 - Soon Elijah and Elisha came to the Jordan River. Before crossing, Elijah does something

unusual with his cloak – **what was it?**

- **How can we tell from this part of the story that God was with Elijah?**
- [Read II Kings 2:9-10.]
 - When Elijah asked Elisha what he could do for him before he had to go, Elisha asked for a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit.
 - What that meant was that Elisha wanted to continue doing what Elijah did. Now Elijah had done some remarkable things in his lifetime. By asking for a double portion, Elisha was saying he was ready to carry on God's work.
- [Read II Kings 2:11-12.]
 - This was a very big thing for Elisha to ask for. Elijah promised that if Elisha saw Elijah going up into heaven, he would get what he asked for. And that is exactly what happened!
 - **Why do you think Elisha tore his garment in two when he saw Elijah disappear into the clouds?**
- [Read II Kings 2:13-16.]
 - **Based on these verses, did Elisha get what he had asked for? How do we know?**
- It might have seemed like an impossibly big dream for Elisha to think he could do the things Elijah did. But he really wanted to do great things for God and, guess what? God wanted Elisha to do great things, too!

VIDEO | Up in the Air, Episode 1

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](#).

BIBLE | Psalm 66:1-9

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Psalm 66:1-9 or recruit a few readers to help you.
- This psalm shows us that **I can dream big with God** because God can do — and has already done — big things!
- The text says in verses 3 and 5 that God has done "awesome deeds," deeds like turning the sea into dry land.
- **Can you think of some other examples of awesome things God has done?**
- Those are wonderful examples! This psalm also tells us what our response should be to all the awesome things God has done, and that is to shout out our praises to God. This verse mentions
- The awesome-est thing God has ever done for us is sending Jesus! Jesus came to earth not only to save us from the power of sin and being separated from God, he showed us how to live our lives the way God wants us to.
- When we have a relationship with God, it's no surprise that God wants the best things for us and allows us to have big dreams.

NOW WHAT?

RESPONSE | Dream Clouds

- **PRETEEN HACK:** *Have kids check out a list (like [this one](#)) of kid dreamers that became doers. Lead preteens into discussing which of the stories they found most inspiring and how they challenge them to dream big in a specific way.*
- **Write or draw one thing you are dreaming about.**
- God hears you and cares about what you care about. We will put these clouds up in our space so that each time you see it here, you can remember, **I can dream big with God.**

MEMORY VERSE | Cloudy Memories

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Practice memory verse
- **"Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." Colossians 3:2 (NIV)**

PRAYER

- God, you know me and you hear my prayers and my dreams. I'm so glad that the things that are important to me are also important to you. Help me to trust you with my hopes and remind me that I can dream big with you. Thank you for showing us none of our dreams are out of reach when they come from you. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **Before Elijah went to heaven, what did he ask Elisha?**
- **What did Elisha ask for? What might you have asked for if you were Elisha?**
- **How do we know that Elisha's big dream came true?**
- **Read Psalm 66:5-6. How do these verses remind you of today's Bible story?**
- **What is a dream you have that some people might think are too big?**
- **What would it take to make your dream come true?**
- **Why can we trust God with our dreams?**

MEMORY VERSE | Colossians 3:2 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Practice this month's memory verse with the signs (a combination of SEE and

ASL) we've provided in your Programming folder or at growcurriculum.org/Colossians3-2.

- Let's practice this month's memory verse together!
- **"Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things."**