

Kids' Chronicle

Elisha repays a family's kindness

BY JOE
SARNICOLA

Elisha worked with other farmers to plow and plant the fields, and his life was simple, but comfortable. But everything changed when God called him to be a prophet. Now every day was filled with wonder at the things God could do. Elisha never regretted leaving his farm to follow God.

While he was in the town of Shumen, a town he visited often, a wealthy woman learned that Elisha did not have a place to sleep for the night.

"I know this man is from God," she said to her husband. "He should not have to worry about having a place to stay or enough food to eat."

"Yes, we will build a room and furnish it," the woman's husband replied. "Then it will be ready for him whenever he needs it."

Elisha was pleased with the room and the people who had built it for him, so he sent Gehazi, his servant, to see if there were some way to repay their kindness.

"She has no children yet, and her husband is getting older," Gehazi said. "She would like to have one son, if it were possible."

"Bring her to me," said Elisha. The

woman came to Elisha's room, wondering what the man of God would want from her. Elisha smiled and looked into the woman's eyes.

"I promise you this. One year from today, you will be holding your own son on your lap," he said.

The woman wiped a tear from her cheek.

"Oh sir, please don't tease me," she said. "All my life I have wanted a child of my own."

"Woman, I would not say it, if it were not so."

Just as he had said, she had a baby boy. But when the boy was old

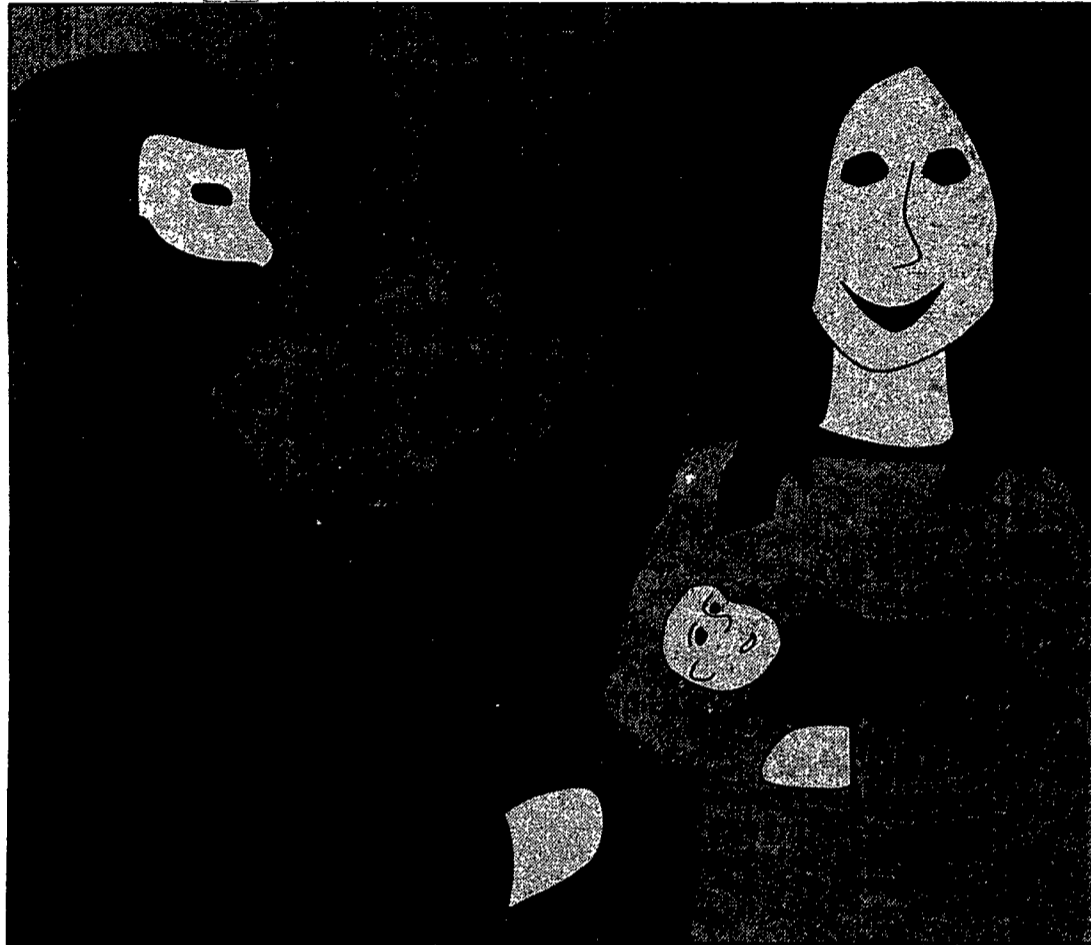
enough to help his father work in the fields, he fell down, held his stomach, and cried out in pain.

The workers carried him back to his mother, where he died in her arms. The heartbroken woman put the boy on the bed in the room saved for Elisha, told the servants to saddle the donkey, and she left to find Elisha. Elisha saw her coming and ran to meet her.

"My son has died," she cried.

Elisha hurried to the boy's bedside and prayed. Then he called for the woman and said, "Here is your son. Alive and healthy."

Illustration by Amy Sundstrom



Bible Accent

The olive tree, its fruit, and its oil are mentioned many times in the Bible.

Olive trees are hardy plants that grow equally well in the coastal plains of Israel and in the dry, rocky soil found further inland. They may require as many as ten years to produce a crop, but olive trees can live for several hundred years.

In Elisha's day, people ate the olives, but the olive oil was even more important for families. It was used for cooking and the same way we use butter. It was also used as fuel for lamps and as a healing salve to be put on cuts and sores.

Elisha performed many miracles. In 2 Kings 4, we hear how he kept a poor woman's jug full of oil even though she kept filling other jugs from it.

St. John Fisher

John Fisher was bishop of Rochester, England. At the turn of the 16th century, he became a religious advisor to Lady Margaret Beaufort, the mother of King Henry VII. He was also named as the chancellor, or head, of Cambridge University.

A man of strong beliefs, St. John Fisher criticized King Henry VIII, who was trying to end his marriage and to take over the church in England. The saint also spoke out against church leaders who were more interested in political power than they were in serving God. This made him very unpopular with the king and some religious leaders.

St. John Fisher was eventually arrested because of his beliefs and was beheaded. We honor him on June 22.

Puzzle

Do the underlined words make the following sentences "True" or "False"? If false, what is the correct answer? *Answers on page 7.*

1. Joshua conquered Jeremiah. (Joshua 6) False: Jericho
2. Solomon was David's son. (2 Chronicles 1) _____
3. Job had ten children. (Job 1) _____
4. David wrote many proverbs. (Proverbs 1) _____
5. Daniel was thrown into a fiery furnace (Daniel 6) _____
6. Jonah was swallowed by a big fish. (Jonah 1) _____
7. Pethuel was Joel's father. (Joel 1) _____
8. Amos saw a basket of fish. (Amos 8) _____

Q&A

READ MORE ABOUT IT:

2 Kings 4

1. What did Elisha do before he was a prophet?
2. What did Elisha do for the dead boy?

Bible Trivia

According to 1 Kings 19, which other prophet gave his cloak to Elisha? Send your answer to: *Catholic Courier Bible Trivia*, P.O. Box 24579, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your name, address and school name.

All entries must be received by July 11, 1996. A winner will be selected at random from all the correct entries submitted.

Last month's winner was Joy Liberi, a student at Greece's Apollo Middle School. She correctly explained that the reason John said he wrote his Gospel was that readers might come to believe Jesus is the Messiah and have life through his name.