

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

2 Kings 5:1-19 The Little Servant Girl

Please see the Introduction document and the COGS programme for leader's notes and further information/ideas.

Each child will need:

- Pens and paper
- Some small sticky dots/paper or face paint

Leader's note: You could come to the session with spots painted on your face with make-up or face paints!

Start It

Play the game Elisha Says Seven Times. This game is a twist on the classic 'Simon Says'.

You say an action – for example, 'Elisha says clap.' If you say 'Elisha says...', the children must do that action seven times (so clap seven times, then stop). If you don't say, 'Elisha says' but just give an instruction, they should ignore the instruction and not do the action.

Use seven 'Elisha says...' instructions, interspersed with a few where you don't say it. Finally say 'Elisha says, stick seven spots on your face!' (At this point ask the children to put the sticky circles/dots on their face or draw them on with their face paint. Ask all group leaders to stick spots on their face too!)

Say: Our story today is about a little girl, a poorly man called Naaman who was covered in spots, and a prophet called Elisha. The little girl was a servant of Naaman, and because she had faith in God she knew that the prophet Elisha could heal Naaman. When we read the story, at first you might think the servant girl didn't do much, but by playing her part an amazing thing happened. She had the courage to speak up about her faith and her knowledge of Elisha's power to heal, and by doing so she helped Naaman know where to go for healing. What we will learn through the story of this little servant girl is that we too can help others and make a difference, no matter how big or how small we are.

Sing It

While you sing this song you could ask the children to write their own speech bubbles of what 'I say...' to wave as banners during your worship.

'Shout Your Fame'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQR8qEjaN0w>

Tell It

Have one glass bottle or jug of very dirty water to show the children. If possible, make the water dirty with something that you wouldn't mind washing over your face!

Ask: Would you like to have a bath in water that looked all dirty like this?

Tell the story. You can either use the script below or read from the Bible or a Children's Bible story book. If you would prefer there is a slideshow of the story with pictures here:

<https://www.biblewise.com/kids/read/young/naaman.php>

Many years ago in the country of Aram there lived a man named Naaman. Naaman was a great soldier and was in charge of the army. Everything was going well for Naaman - except that he had leprosy. Leprosy was a skin disease that left spots on your skin. (Point out the spots on all of your faces.)

Naaman's wife had a servant girl who was from Israel. This little servant girl knew God and had heard of a prophet named Elisha who could heal Naaman. Since she was just a servant girl she could have been scared to speak up, but she wasn't. She told Naaman's wife about Elisha and Naaman's wife told Naaman.

Naaman was super excited that he might be healed. He quickly got permission from his boss to go to Israel. His boss wrote a letter to the King of Israel asking for Naaman to be healed. But we have to remember that Israel and Aram were two very different countries and they sometimes fought. So when the King of Israel read the letter he was afraid. He thought that Naaman's country wanted to fight with his country.

Then Elisha heard about what was going on and he stepped in. He sent a message to Naaman saying that if he wanted to be healed then he would have to go to the River Jordan and wash himself in the water seven times. After he washed himself seven times he would be healed.

Now, when Naaman heard this he got mad! Can you believe that? He didn't want to get into the yucky Jordan River - it was dirty and smelly. (Show the children the dirty water again.) There were rivers in Aram near where he lived; why couldn't he wash in one of those rivers instead of going all the way to Israel, he wondered.

As an aside you could ask: how would the Queen feel if she travelled to your house for help but you just sent a message to her to go and wash in the river?

But finally Naaman decided to follow Elisha's instructions and went and washed himself seven times in the Jordan River.

Wash your face (just pretend if necessary!) with the dirty water to remove your spots.

When Naaman washed, he was healed.

Ask the children to remove their spots and throw them away.

Naaman thanked Elisha and said that now he knew that God was real. Naaman promised that he would not worship any other gods - only the one true God who had healed him. When he got back home, his life was changed in more way than one. He no longer had leprosy, and he and his household worshipped the true God.

What an amazing story!

Share a picture of Naaman in the river (there is an example below, or choose your own via an internet image search) and leave the picture visible as you ask the following 'I wonder' questions:

- I wonder which part of the story you liked best.
- I wonder why the servant girl wanted to speak up.
- I wonder why Naaman decided to listen to the girl.
- I wonder why God healed Naaman.
- I wonder what good qualities the servant girl showed.
- I wonder if you have ever spoken up about something or for someone.
- I wonder if you have ever spoken up about your friend Jesus.

Action It

🗨️ **Say:** In our Bible story today, the young girl may not have seemed old enough to make a difference, but because of what she said Naaman was healed. God can use anybody to do his work. He can use a little servant girl and he can use you too!

Use the following activity to demonstrate to the children the difference they can make. (You can either pre-prepare this activity, do it 'live', or ask the children to join in with their own paperchain at the same time.)

Cut out a people paper chain. On the first person shape in the chain write the servant girl – perhaps your group could decide on a name for her.

🗨️ **Say:** The servant girl told Naaman's wife about Elisha.

(Write 'Naaman's wife' on the next person shape in the paper chain.)

Naaman's wife told Naaman.

(Write 'Naaman' on the next person shape on the paper chain.)

Naaman told the King of Aram.

(Write 'King of Aram' on the next person shape on the paper chain.)

After he was healed, all of Naaman's household knew about the one true God and worshipped him.

(Write 'Naaman's household' on the next person shape, or the next few, on the paper chain.)

Show the children the whole paper chain of people.

🗨️ **Say:** All of this happened, all of these people heard about God, because a little servant girl was brave enough and willing to speak up and help someone out. If she had said nothing, would any of the people have got to know about Elisha and God's help? By speaking up, you can make a big difference.

🗨️ **Say:** There are lots of ways we can make a difference today. We can tell people about Jesus, and we can also use our voices to speak up about situations in which others are treated unfairly. Sometimes we use a big word - 'injustice' - to describe this.

Have a discussion with the children about injustices (unfair things) that exist in the world, in their neighbourhood or school, then show pictures that represent injustice. For example: people who have been trafficked, disease, poverty, famine, lack of clean water to drink, homelessness, bullying, abuse, climate change, child labour, deforestation, pollution, plastic in oceans, war, crime, animal cruelty.

(Be very sensitive as to which pictures and subjects you choose based on the children you are working with.)

Ask the group some questions, such as:

- ➔ What is the injustice you see in the picture?
- ➔ What bad or unfair thing is happening here?
- ➔ Who needs help?
- ➔ What needs to change to make things right again?

Discuss what they, as children, could do to help stop injustice happening – for example, telling a parent or teacher; standing up for someone; writing a letter or email to an MP or the Prime Minister; writing to a newspaper to raise awareness; starting a petition. Something we can all do is pray about it.

Pray It

There are ways to pray with children that teach how their minds and bodies communicate with God. Take the children through the actions and then invite each child to find their own comfortable space. Read out the following while doing the actions.

1. (Take three deep breaths.)
2. God, you are above (reach toward the sky), below (touch your toes), inside (hands to heart) and all around (big arm circles).
3. I worship you (reach toward the sky), and give my life to you (touch your toes).
4. And I love you (hands to heart) with all that I am (big arm circles).
5. (Take three deep breaths.)

Explore It

Remember to share the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.