



Appendix 1. Participant Handouts

If you are working with a class or small group, feel free to duplicate the following handouts at no additional charge. If you'd like to print 8-1/2" x 11" or A4 size pages, you can download the free Participant Guide handout sheets at:

www.jesuswalk.com/elijah/elijah-lesson-handouts.pdf

Discussion Questions

You'll typically find 4 questions for each lesson. Each question may include several sub-questions. These are designed to get group members engaged in discussion of the key points of the passage. If you're running short of time, feel free to skip questions or portions of questions.

Suggestions for Classes and Groups

Individuals who are studying online can probably complete one full lesson per week, though they'll need to be diligent to do so. But some of the chapters just have too much material for a one hour class discussion. Feel free to arrange the lessons any way that works best for your group. Because of the length of these handouts – and to keep down the page count so we can keep the book price lower – they are being made available at no cost online and may be duplicated.

www.jesuswalk.com/elijah/elijah-lesson-handouts.pdf

Introduction

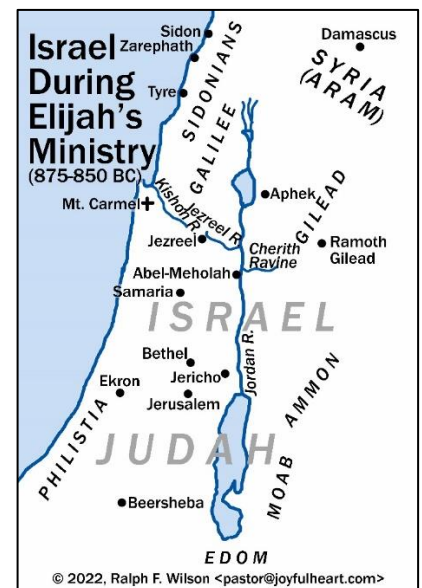
"The Elijah Cycle," as the series of Elijah stories are called, forms a significant portion of the overall Book of Kings. The Book of Kings is part of what the Jews call the "Former Prophets," the historical books that cover the period from David's reign to the Exile (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings).

Initially, the Book of Kings was a single book in the Hebrew Bible, but was divided into First Kings and Second Kings in translations into Greek (the Septuagint) and Latin (the Vulgate) because of the limitations of the effective length of a scroll or book (codex).

The Book of Kings appears to be compiled from official records of the united kingdom under Solomon, and the divided kingdoms of Judah (south) and Israel (north) (970 BC to 587 BC). It is intended to instruct the reader in the importance of faithfulness in serving Yahweh.

Historical Situation

After the United Kingdom under David and Solomon, God's people divide into two kingdoms, Judah with its capital in Jerusalem (the southern kingdom) and Israel with its capital in Samaria (the northern kingdom). The focus of Elijah's ministry is the northern kingdom, which faces a powerful royal-sponsored move away from Yahweh worship in favor of Baal worship. During Elijah's ministry, there are military pressures from the Syrians primarily centered in Damascus, though the Moabites rebel and the Assyrian threat is growing throughout the region.



Israel in the Time of Elijah

1. Elijah Declares a Drought (1 Kings 17)

1.1 Elijah's Proclamation and Escape (1 Kings 17:1-9)

Ahab Becomes King of Israel (1 Kings 16:29-34)

Jeroboam's sin was setting up golden calves in Dan and Bethel to substitute for worship at the temple in Jerusalem. This led to idol worship (1 Kings 12:28-30).

Ahab had a long reign. He married Jezebel from Sidon, who has a strong allegiance to Baal and Asherah.

Baal and Asherah (1 Kings 16:32-33)

Baal (the son of El) was revered as the god with power over rain, wind, clouds, and therefore over fertility. Baal is known as the storm god.

Asherah was a Semite goddess derived from the Babylonian god

Ishtar. As worshipped locally in Canaan, she was the consort of Baal, and supposedly brought fertility to the people who worshipped her.

Elijah Appears (1 Kings 17:1)

Elijah's name means "My God is Yah(weh)."

Old Testament Prophets

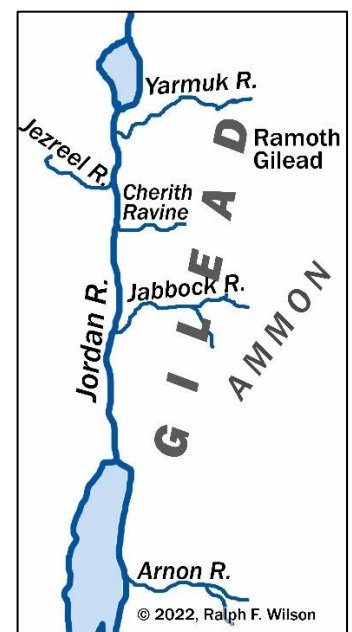
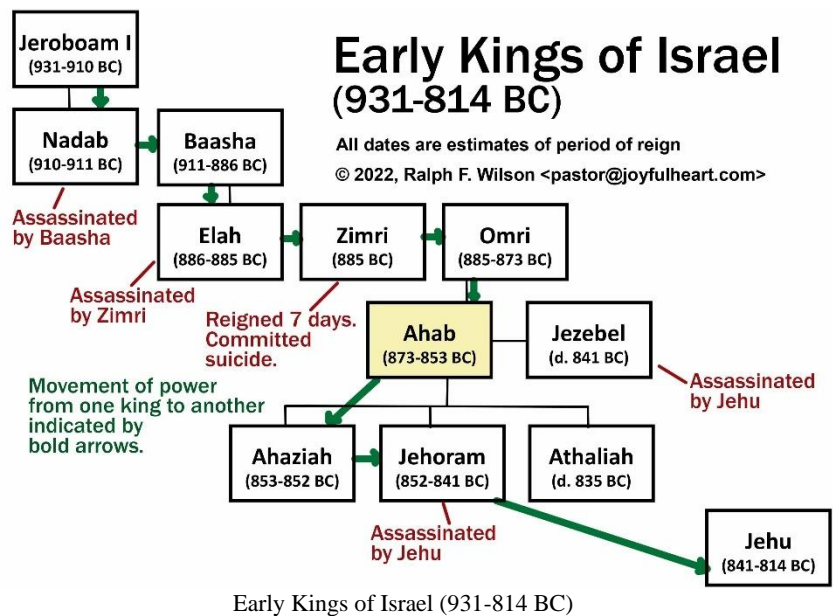
Elijah is a prophet of God, sometimes called, "Man of God." "The word of the Lord came to...." is a phrase often used to describe the way in which God spoke to and through a prophet. Some scholars have emphasized that Old Testaments prophets were "forthtellers," that is, proclaimers of God's message, often a pronouncement of God's judgment on sin, a call for justice and righteousness by those in power, and a concern for the poor. Some prophets were also "foretellers," that is, they brought predictions of the future.

Elijah Declares a Drought to Ahab (1 Kings 17:1)

Elijah from Tishbe in Gilead is roughly dressed, "a garment of hair and ... a leather belt around his waist" (2 Kings 1:8; Zechariah 13:4; Matthew 3:4). He calls for a total drought.

A Challenge to Baal, the God of Rain

This drought is a special challenge to Ahab and Jezebel who worship Baal, the Canaanite storm god, the "god of rain."



Location of Gilead ([larger map](#))

Q1. (1 Kings 17:1) What kind of courage does it take for Elijah to go before King Ahab with a message of drought? What dangers does this bring to Elijah? Why is “speaking truth to power” so difficult when the power structures are corrupt?

Hiding in the Kerith Ravine (1 Kings 17:2-6)

Fed by Ravens (1 Kings 17:6)

Every morning and every evening a huge black raven brings bread and meat. Ravens are scavengers, unclean birds, but Elijah eats anyway (Ac 10:14; 1 Cor 10:27; 1 Tim 4:4-5).

Q2 (1 Kings 17:2-6) What does God feeding Elijah by ravens tell us about God? What does eating food sent by ravens tell us about Elijah? What do we learn about God's provision for us when we obey him?

1.2 The Widow at Zarephath (1 Kings 17:7-16)

Yahweh's Direction (1 Kings 17:9)

Elijah Meets the Desperate Widow (1 Kings 17:10-11)

The Widow's Plight (1 Kings 17:12)

Elijah's Challenge of Faith (1 Kings 17:13-16)

Common Sense vs. Faith

Q3. (Proverbs 1:1-7) What is the appropriate role of common sense in our lives? Does that supplement or contradict faith in God's ability to work miracles outside the natural order?

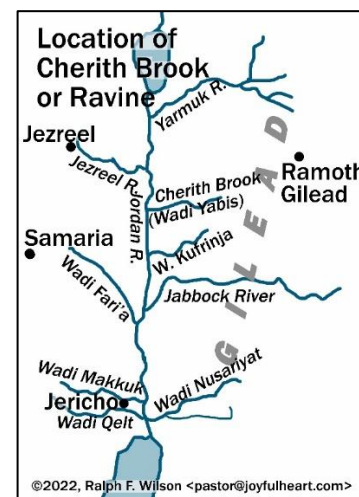
Faith in God's Promise (1 Kings 17:15-16)

Elijah Raises the Widow's Son (1 Kings 17:17-24)

Q4. (1 Kings 17:8-16) Why does God send Elijah to a poor widow rather than a rich man? If God sent someone to you to provide for, how would you respond?

Lessons for Disciples

1. Worshipping false gods is dangerous and displeases God. So is syncretism: mixing worship of the true God with partial allegiance to false gods (1 Kings 16:31-33).
2. True prophets act as God's spokespersons and with his authority — as foretellers or as forthtellers.
3. The lie behind Baal is that he is the god who will bring fertility to the land. The truth is that Yahweh is all-powerful. Inducing us to believe lies about what is best for us is at the root of the Deceiver's power.
4. We are to accept God's provision for us, even though we may find the way it is provided distasteful, such as raven-delivery (1 Kings 17:4-6).
5. God delights in doing the impossible to show that the answer comes from him, not through our own successes. God can place answers to prayer in our path where we least expect them.
6. God can predestine or foreordain events ahead of time by “commanding” them to happen (1 Kings 17:9).
7. Christian maturity requires us to be able to balance a good dose of wisdom or common sense with a strong faith in the God who can do anything (Proverbs 1:1-7).
8. It is common for us to interpret tragedies as God's punishment or God's fault when we aren't aware of all that he is doing (1 Kings 17:18, 20).



Location of the Cherith Brook or Ravine



Location of Zarephath

2. Elijah Challenges Baal on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18)

2.1 Elijah, Obadiah, and Ahab (1 Kings 18:1-18)

The Word of the Lord (1 Kings 18:1-2a)

Ahab and Obadiah (1 Kings 18:2b-6)

Obadiah, an official in charge of Ahab's palace, is a devout believer in Yahweh, who hides and feeds 100 prophets.

Elijah Meets Obadiah (1 Kings 18:7-15)

Jezebel Seeks to Kill Yahweh's Prophets (1 Kings 18:13-14)

Obadiah Arranges the Meeting (1 Kings 18:15-16)

Q5. (1 Kings 18:3-16) What do we learn about Obadiah from this passage? What do we know of his faith? Of his courage? Of his fears? If you were in Obadiah's situation, how much courage would *you* have shown?

2.2 Contest on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:17-46)

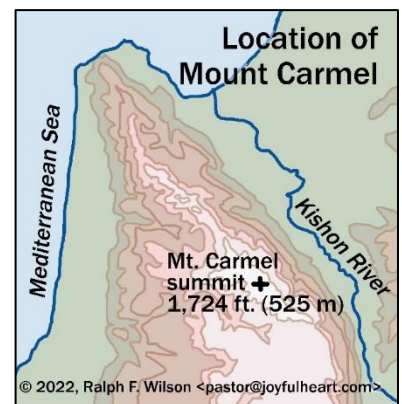
Troubler of Israel (1 Kings 18:17-18)

Ahab and his father Omri before him are guilty of two offenses against the Lord: (1) abandoning Yahweh and (2) following the Baals (Ex 20:3; 20:4-6).

Elijah Challenges Baal on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:19)

Limping between Two Opinions (1 Kings 18:21)

"Waver" (NIV), "go limping" (ESV, NRSV), "halt" (KJV) translate a verb meaning "to be lame, limp." They are like a lame man who can't take firm strides in one direction. This is the problem with syncretism, or combining two or more religions (Joshua 24:15).



Location of Mount Carmel

Q6. (1 Kings 18:21) What is the danger of syncretism? What currently competes with your allegiance to Jesus in terms of time, focus, commitment, etc.? Why is there competition, do you think? How long will *you* go limping between two opinions?

Defining the Rules of the Contest (1 Kings 18:22-24)

The wood is to be laid on the altar under the sacrifice but not lit. The carcass of the young bull is butchered with the major pieces laid on the altar for a burnt sacrifice – that is, a sacrifice designed to be completely burned up.

The Prophets of Baal Attempt to Sacrifice (1 Kings 18:25-29)

Elijah Repairs the Altar of the Lord (1 Kings 18:30-35)

Q7. (1 Kings 18:30-32a) What is the significance of Elijah "rebuilding" the altar of Yahweh? What rebuilding needs to be done in your own worship practices? Your church's? What has caused your "altar" or practice of worshipping and living before the Lord to be broken down? How will you repair it?

The *kad* (water jar) that women drew from the well would hold perhaps 2 or 3 gallons (15 liters) of water.

An Evangelistic Prayer (1 Kings 18:36-37)

Q8. (1 Kings 18:37; Malachi 4:5-6) In what way does Elijah have a ministry of “turning hearts back again,” of calling for true repentance? How was this fulfilled in Elijah’s successor John the Baptist? (Mark 1:4-6). Why is this an important ministry for pastors and evangelists?

Charles G. Finney (1792-1875), Great Awakening (1730-1750), Second and Third Great Awakenings, Welsh Revival (1904-1905), Azusa Street Revival (1906), East Africa Revival (1929-1950), Jesus Movement (1970-1985), and others.

The Fire of Yahweh (1 Kings 18:38-40)

Slaying the Prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:40)

Q9. (1 Kings 18:40) When we repent before the Lord, why is it important to put away the things that facilitate and tempt us back into our old life of sin? Yes, we want to avoid extremism. But what is the value of a clear break with evil? What is the danger of *not* making a clear break with evil?

The Sound of Heavy Rain (1 Kings 18:41-42a)

A Cloud as Small as a Man's Hand (1 Kings 18:42b-44)

Racing in the Rain (1 Kings 18:44b-46)

Lessons for Disciples

1. Devout men and women like Obadiah are willing to do radical and dangerous things to carry out God's will and protect God's people (1 Kings 18:3-15) – a powerful example to us!
2. Elijah takes pride in being the “servant” of the Lord Almighty (1 Kings 18:15). We can take the same sense of self-worth from being trusted by Jesus to be his representatives in our world. Servant is a high office, one we learn from Jesus himself (John 13:2-17; Mark 10:43-45; Colossians 1:23).
3. It is not possible to faithfully serve two gods – whether Yahweh or Baal, Mammon or the Lord Jesus Christ. Syncretism, or mixing two or more religions, is not possible while still remaining a faithful Christian. To follow the Lord, we must actively turn away from, repent of, service to any other. Following the Lord is an exclusive relationship (1 Kings 18:21).
4. Elijah rebuilding the altar of Yahweh on Mount Carmel reminds us of the need to rebuild whatever in our life has broken down and kept us from true and fervent worship of and commitment to the Lord (1 Kings 18:30-32a).
5. Elijah prays that the people will know the true God and turn their hearts back to him (1 Kings 18:37). This is similar to the prayers of all God's prophets and apostles and pastors for their people, “to know the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge” (Ephesians 3:18-19).
6. The killing of the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:40) is symbolic of our need to forsake and die to the false ways that have led us astray.
7. Elijah the prophet hears the sound of heavy rain and prepares for it, even before it is visible (1 Kings 8:41-44). We live a life of faith in following what God leads us in, even if we don't yet see the fulfillment of his promises. “We walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7).
8. Elijah races Ahab's chariot the 17 miles from Mount Carmel to Jezreel. God sometimes empowers his servants to great feats by the Spirit, such as Sampson's great strength. It is wrong to abuse our bodies without a break and we shouldn't presume on the Lord. But, having said this, there may be times when the Spirit clearly empowers us to do what we could not otherwise endure.

3. Elijah and the Still Small Voice (1 Kings 19)

Jezebel's Anger (1 Kings 19:1-2)

Elijah under the White Broom Tree (1 Kings 19:3-5a)

"White Broom" (*Retuma raetam*), a large, beautiful, white-flowered desert shrub in Palestine, Sinai, Egypt, as high as 12 feet (3.5 m.), but sparse leaves.

Q10. (1 Kings 19:3-5) How might Elijah be "at fault" for being depressed? Is "fault" the right question? Does God chide him for "lack of faith"? How does God minister to him? How do you minister to a friend who has isolated himself or herself in deep depression?

Fed by an Angel (1 Kings 19:5a-9)

The Lord Speaks to Elijah (1 King 19:9a-14)

Q11. (1 Kings 19:14) In what ways does self-pity prevent us from discerning the Lord's voice? What is the relationship of self-pity to pride? To entitlement? How does a sense of entitlement stand in the way of true discipleship?

Examining God's Appearance to Elijah (1 Kings 19:11-13)

Elijah (1 King 19:9-13)

"The cave." (vs. 9)

"Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD...." (vs. 11a)

"The LORD is about to pass by...." (vs. 11b)

"[Elijah] pulled his cloak over his face" (vs. 13a)

Moses (Exodus 33:18-23)

"A cleft in the rock." (vs. 22)

"There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock." (vs. 21)

"When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock" (vs. 22)

"My face must not be seen." (vs. 23b)

Yahweh Patiently Restores Elijah

God certainly shows love to Elijah, even though Elijah's confidence has faltered. God restores him gently.

1. Listens patiently to Elijah's self-pity without rebuke.
2. Yahweh reveals himself in his gentle voice.
3. Yahweh gently tells Elijah, "go back the way you came...."
4. Yahweh gives Elijah new directions and assignments
5. Only after all this does Yahweh speak a gentle rebuke:

See Jesus restore Peter (John 21:15-19; cf. Galatians 6:1-2)

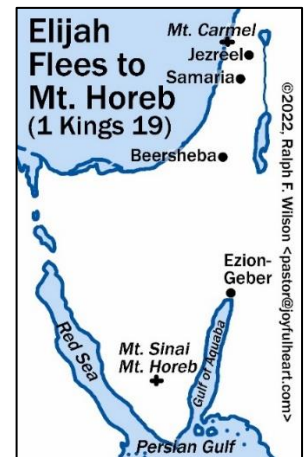
The Still, Small Voice (1 Kings 19:12b)

The phrase is variously translated: "A gentle whisper." (NIV), "The sound of a low whisper (ESV), "A still small voice" (KJV), "A light murmuring sound" (NJB), "A sound of gentle blowing" (NASB), "A sound of sheer silence" (NRSV). "Gentle whisper" (NIV), "sound of a gentle whisper" (ESV), or "still small voice" (KJV) are most likely.

Learning from Elijah's Still Small Voice

Elijah's still small voice is not *normative* but *common* among Christians. See Ralph F. Wilson, *Listening for God's Voice* (JesusWalk Publications, 2017), www.jesuswalk.com/voice/

(1) God's voice is often quiet. (2) God's voice can guide us in what to do. (3) God's voice can provide comfort when we are anxious. (4) God's voice can sometimes bring a rebuke.



Elijah flees to Mount Horeb.

Q12. (1 Kings 19:17-19) Why do you think the author contrasts the “still small voice” to the wind, earthquake, and fire? How does God’s voice comfort and renew Elijah? Why is it easy to miss God when his voice is gentle and quiet?

Yahweh’s Loving Rebuke (1 Kings 19:18). Also Proverbs 3:11-12; quoted in Hebrews 12:5-6.

Q13. (1 Kings 19:18) Why is a parent’s rebuke difficult for a child to listen to? Why is God’s rebuke difficult for us to listen to? How does a loving but sharp rebuke help our children? How does God’s rebuke help us? What would it take for you to embrace God’s rebuke like Solomon’s “wise man” (Proverbs 9:8).

Elijah’s New Assignments (1 Kings 19:15-18)

1. Anoint Hazael King over Syria (1 Kings 19:15)
2. Anoint Jehu King over Israel (1 Kings 19:16a)
3. Anoint Elisha as Successor (1 Kings 19:16b)

The Call of Elisha (1 Kings 19:19-21)

Mantle (2 Kings 1:8; also Genesis 25:25; Zechariah 13:4).

Lessons for Disciples

1. We humans sometimes experience great battles and depression. Rather than criticize Elijah’s lapse of faith, we ought to try to learn from it. God certainly doesn’t reject Elijah for his weakness (1 Kings 19).
2. Even servants of God can sometimes be motivated by fear rather than faith. It leads us to bad decisions. It is wise to discern our motives in order to get back on track as God enables us (1 Kings 19:3).
3. God tenderly feeds Elijah and restores him during this long sojourn in the wilderness (1 Kings 19:5-9). We are to restore our wounded brothers and sisters with this same gentleness (Galatians 6:1-2).
4. Elijah’s self-pitying response to God’s question, “What are you doing here,” is so obviously pathetic to us. However, we, too, can get caught up in self-pity. No one appreciates me! God is calling us to grow up, and, using the modern expression, “Suck it up!” (1 Kings 19:10, 14).
5. God’s quiet voice doesn’t have to be spectacular to be real. God’s voice, his personal communication, reveals his love for us.
6. God restores Elijah by showing confidence in him, by giving him a new purpose for his life (1 Kings 19:15-17)
7. We learn that God’s voice (a) is often quiet, (b) can guide us in what to do, (c) can provide comfort when we are anxious, and (d) can bring a rebuke (1 Kings 19:11-13).
8. Some of God’s assignments for us aren’t completed in our own lifetimes, but by our successors, such as Elisha completed Elijah’s mission (1 Kings 19:15-17).
9. Loving rebuke is an important tool God has to shape us as disciples. We should welcome it (1 Kings 19:18).
10. We should celebrate God’s call to ministry like Elisha did, though it will bring many difficulties. Ministry is a great privilege! (1 Kings 19:21)



Elisha’s hometown, Abel Meholah.

4. Ahab's Syrian Wars (1 Kings 20)

4.1 The Syrian Siege of Samaria (1 Kings 20:1-22)

Ben-Hadad, King of Aram (Syria)

These are the kings of Aram (Syria) during our period:

- Ben-Hadad I (about 900-860, 1 Kings 15:1, 20)
- Ben Hadad II (about 860-841, 1 Kings 20)
- Hazael (about 841-806, 2 Kings 8:15)

Ahab also seems to be a sometime vassal of Ben-Hadad II. A few years later Ahab fought as a vassal of Ben-Hadad against the Assyrians in the Battle of Qarqar in northern Syria in 853 BC.)

The Syrian Attack on Samaria (1 Kings 20:1-12)

A Prophet Declares Victory (1 Kings 20:13-21)

Ahab's Response to the Prophet (1 Kings 20:14-15)

A Prophetic Warning (1 Kings 20:22)



Q14. (1 Kings 20:13-14) Why would God send his prophet to instruct a corrupt king and an apostate people so they might win a battle against the Syrians? What purpose is stated in verse 13? What is Ahab's reaction? What does that tell you about his religious piety or faith?

4.2 The Syrians Attack Aphek (1 Kings 20:23-43)

Q15. (1 Kings 20:23-30) Why do you think God seems to enjoy helping the Israelites in impossible situations? Why do you think God whittled Gideon's army down to 300 men? (Judges 7:1-8). What impossible situations are you facing in your life that need God's intervention?

Ahab Spares Ben-Hadad's Life (1 Kings 20:30b-34)

Ben-Hadad promises to (1) return of the Israelite cities that the Syrians had taken from Ahab's father Omri, and (2) special access to the rich markets of Damascus, fattening Ahab's own bank account with his cut of the profits.

The Prophet Rebukes Ahab (1 Kings 20:35-43)

Devoted for Destruction (1 Kings 20:42)

Joshua 6:17; chapter 7; 1 Samuel 15; Acts 5:1-11; Hebrews 10:31.

Lessons for Disciples

1. God will sometimes assist even corrupt rulers to aid his people and his purposes (1 Kings 20:13-21). Sometimes he assists corrupt rulers to punish others (1 Kings 20:28). We shouldn't mistake God's help as his endorsement of our lifestyle.
2. Ahab obeys a prophet's instructions to relieve the siege of Samaria (1 Kings 20:14-15) and win the Battle of Aphek (1 Kings 20:23-29), but disobeys the prophet's command to execute Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 20:30-34). He is a sometime-believer in Yahweh, but not a devoted disciple. When his perceived self-interest conflicts with Yahweh's command, he disobeys.
3. God seems to enjoy helping Israel in impossible situations to show that the battle belongs to the Lord and not to man (1 Kings 20:23-30).
4. Ahab's failure to execute Ben-Hadad as a man devoted to destruction (1 Kings 20:42) reminds us that God is jealous of what is holy to him. We should not mess with what belongs to God.

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5. Naboth's Vineyard: Judgment and Grace (1 Kings 21)

Q16. (1 Kings 21:1-3) Why does Ahab want Naboth's vineyard? Is there anything wrong with his proposal to Naboth? Why does Naboth refuse his offer?

Ahab's Depression, Jezebel's Presumption (1 Kings 21:4-16)

Several words describe Ahab: (1) "Sullen and angry, resentment, a sense of entitlement; (2) "Sulking" (NIV) in verse 4 is literally, "turned away his face" (ESV, NRSV, KJV); (3) Not eating (verse 5); (4) "Depressed".

Q17. (1 Kings 21:4-16) Do you think Ahab is actually depressed? How does Jezebel fix his depression? Why does she do so? Is Ahab responsible for Jezebel's corrupt actions to obtain Naboth's vineyard? Are the elders responsible for suborning perjury?

Elijah Meets Ahab at Naboth's Vineyard (1 Kings 21:17-22)

Ahab's Sins (1 Kings 21:20-22)

(1) "You have **sold yourself to do evil** in the eyes of the LORD." (verse 20b); (2) "Because you ... have **caused Israel to sin**." (verse 22b); (3) You have "behaved in the vilest manner by **going after idols**." (verse 26a). "Sold yourself" means to completely give oneself over to something (Ephesians 4:19)

Q18. (1 Kings 21:20) What is the danger of giving ourselves over to sin? How does that make us a slave to sin? What kind of opening does that give the devil?

Q19. (1 Kings 21:22) How responsible are kings, politicians, leaders, and parents for leading those under them into sin? Can you think of any examples? How serious is this? Is it appropriate for leaders to be held to a higher moral standard than others?

Q20. (1 Kings 21:26; Colossians 3:5; Ephesians 5:5) What is the modern-day equivalent of idolatry? In what ways is greed similar to worshipping a false god? How does greed keep us from being true disciples of Jesus?

Ahab's Doom (1 Kings 21:19-25)

(1) A violent death; (2. no continuing descendants, (3) Jezebel will die in violence and shame.

Ahab's Epitaph (1 Kings 21:25-26)

Ahab's Repentance (1 Kings 21:27-29)

Tearing one's clothes in Hebrew culture was "an act of heartfelt and grievous affliction," involving "tearing one's upper and under garment in front of the breast baring the sorrow of the heart." Sackcloth is a thick coarse cloth, usually dark in color and made mostly from goat's hair, worn as a garment by mourners to show contrition. See Ezekiel 18:27-28; Acts 2:38-39.

Q21. (1 Kings 21:27-29) How does Ahab's humbling himself affect God's response? Do you think Ahab truly repented? How does God relenting in his judgment trouble some people's view of predestination?

Lessons for Disciples

1. Amoral and immoral leaders, such as Ahab and Jezebel, can destroy the guard-rails of the laws designed to maintain justice in a nation. We must seek leaders of character (1 Kings 21:1-3).
2. We are fully responsible for the actions of those who work on our behalf, if we have any knowledge of what they are doing. We are also responsible for breaking the law, even if someone in authority commands us to do so. Ahab can't blame his sins on Jezebel, nor can the elders of Jezreel (1 Kings 21:6-16).

3. "Selling ourselves to do evil," giving ourselves over to sin, is a terrible betrayal of God and his law. Sin enslaves us. So can Satan (1 Kings 21:20; Ephesians 4:19; John 8:34).
4. When we as kings, presidents, leaders, and parents cause those under us to sin, or lead them into sin, we bear heavy punishment from God (1 Kings 21:22; Matthew 18:6).
5. Serving money (or anything else) as if it were a god is similar to idolatry and a dangerous sin (1 Kings 21:26; Colossians 3:5; Ephesians 5:5).
6. Repentance and humbling ourselves before God can cause God to delay or even remit the punishment we deserve (1 Kings 21:27-29).
7. Our doctrine of predestination must be big enough to allow God to respond to repentance as well as prayers.

6. Ahab and Micaiah the Prophet (1 Kings 22, 2 Kings 1, 2 Chronicles 21:12-15)

6.1 Micaiah Declares Ahab's Death

Ahab Enlists the King of Judah in His War (1 Kings 22:2-4)

Seeking Counsel from Yahweh (1 Kings 22:5-9)

Q22. (1 Kings 22:2-9) Why does Jehoshaphat want to consult an actual prophet of Yahweh before going into battle? What does this tell us about his discernment of Ahab's prophets? Of his desire to be obedient to God?

False Prophet with the Iron Horns (1 Kings 22:10-12)

Summoning Micaiah the Prophet (1 Kings 22:13-16)

Micaiah; s name means "Who is Like Yah[weh]."

The Vision of the Scattered Sheep (1 Kings 22:17-18)

The Vision of the Deceitful Spirit (1 Kings 22:19-22)

Predestination and the Problem of Evil

Reactions to the True Word of God (1 Kings 22:23-28)

Q23. (1 Kings 22:10-28) What kinds of pressures is Micaiah experiencing as he prophesies before Kings Ahab and Jehoshaphat? What is his danger from men? What is his danger from Yahweh? Why are the true prophets of the Old Testament so honored by Jesus? (Matthew 5:12; 23:31-32, 37; Luke 11:50-51; 13:34).

The Battle of Ramoth Gilead (1 Kings 22:29-36)

Dogs Licking Ahab's Blood (1 Kings 22:37-38)

Summary of Ahab's Reign and Succession (1 Kings 22:39-40)

Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah (1 Kings 22:41-53)

Q24. (1 Kings 22:29; 2 Chronicles 19:2) Why do you think Jehoshaphat goes into battle alongside Ahab, even after he hears Micaiah's prophecy? What kind of weaknesses in Jehoshaphat's character does this decision suggest?

Reflection on Court Prophets

Mistaken Prophecy

Q25. What is the danger of Christian leaders identifying themselves too closely with political leaders? What do the Christian leaders hope to gain from the association? What do the political leaders hope to gain? What is the effect on the church and Christ's work if these political leaders are ungodly men? How can Christians work for good through politics without being corrupted by a quest for power?

6.2 Elijah Confronts King Ahaziah (1 Kings 22:53-2 Kings 1)

Ahaziah's two primary sins: (1) golden calves and (2) Baal worship.

Moab Rebels against Israel (2 Kings 1:1)

Ahaziah's Fall (2 Kings 1:2)

Consulting Baal-Zebub (2 Kings 1:2b)

Elijah Intercepts Ahab's Messengers (2 Kings 1:3-8)



A Hair Mantle and a Leather Belt (2 Kings 1:7-8)

Ahab Sends Armed Men to Take Elijah (2 Kings 1:9-12)

Q26. (2 Kings 1) Why is Yahweh offended by Ahaziah's consulting Baal rather than Israel's own God? What are modern-day applications of this sin? Have you ever made important decisions without seeking God's wisdom? Why?

Ahaziah Succeeded by Joram (2 Kings 1:17b-18)

6.3 Elijah's Letter to Jehoram, King of Judah (2 Chronicles 21:12-15)

Lessons for Disciples

1. Inquiring of the Lord before undertaking any major action is wise. Sometimes God will speak to us directly. More commonly, we can discern his will by sensing his nudges or restraints. The key is to wait on him rather than just forging ahead heedlessly (1 Kings 22:7)
2. The authenticity of a man or woman of God lies not in the show they can put on, but in their allegiance to Jesus. Jesus said, by their fruits you shall know them (1 Kings 20:10-11; Matthew 7:15-20)
3. It is dangerous for leaders to gather around them only people who agree with them. They tell the leader what he or she wants to hear. Diversity in counselors provides safety and avoids "group-think" (1 Kings 20:6-8; Proverbs 11:14).
4. Yahweh seems to be soliciting an evil spirit to deceive Ahab, which is difficult for us to understand (1 Kings 22:19-22) Perhaps this is what Paul describes when people persist in suppressing the truth and they are "given over" to their lies (Romans 1:18-25).
5. We may have great pressures when we are called upon to "speak truth to power," as Micaiah was, but we must do what God is urging us to do! (1 Kings 22:10-28)
6. We must not be disobedient like Jehoshaphat was when God shows him not to do something. Associating ourselves with evil and evil men displeases God unless we act under his direction (1 Kings 22:29; 2 Chronicles 19:2).
7. There is a danger of prophets and Christians associating themselves too closely with political parties and government leaders. While we might gain some power, we may very well lose the clear testimony of the gospel as our image is conflated with political forces.
8. Unlike Ahaziah, we must consult with God about our actions before doing anything. To consult with false gods, mediums, etc. or ungodly people, rather than God, will lead us astray (2 Kings 1)



Location of Samaria, Ekron and Moab

7. Elijah and the Whirlwind (2 Kings 2:1-18)

7.1 Elijah's Entrance into Heaven (2 Kings 2:1-18)

Elijah's and Elisha's Journey (2 Kings 2:1)

Stay Here! (2 Kings 2:2-6)

"As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you." (2 Kings 2:2b, 4b, 6b; see Ruth 1:16-17)

Q27. (2 Kings 2:2-6) Why do you think Elijah discourages Elisha from following him at the end? What is Elisha's response? What kinds of discouragements have you faced that made you wonder if you should keep on following the Lord?

The Prophets at Bethel (2 Kings 2:2-3)

The Prophets at Jericho (2 Kings 2:4-5)

Elijah Parts the Jordan River (2 Kings 2:7-8)

A Double Portion of Elijah's Spirit (2 Kings 2:9-11)

Elisha is asking for the portion that the first-born son was entitled to under the Jewish laws of inheritance – twice whatever the other sons received.

Q28. (2 Kings 2:9-11) Why does Elisha ask for a double portion (or full first-born's inheritance) of Elijah's spirit? Is he greedy for power? Is it right to long for a greater presence and power of the Holy Spirit? How should we seek this?

The Whirlwind, Chariots, and Horsemen (2 Kings 2:11-12)

Chariot of Fire (Psalm 68:17; 2 Kings 6:16-17; Revelation 19:11, 14)

Elijah's Mantle (2 Kings 2:13-15)

7.2 Fulfilling Elijah's Instructions and Prophecies

Anointing Hazael King over Syria (2 Kings 8:7-15)

Anointing Jehu King over Israel

Elisha Directs that Jehu Be Anointed King over Israel (2 Kings 9:1-10)

Jehu Kills Jehoram (2 Kings 9:14-29)

Jezebel Dies in Fulfillment of Prophecy (2 Kings 9:30-37)

Jehu Wipes Out Ahab's Descendants (2 Kings 10:17)

Jehu Ends Baal Worship in Israel (2 Kings 10:18-29)

7.3 Elijah's Legacy in the Old and New Testaments

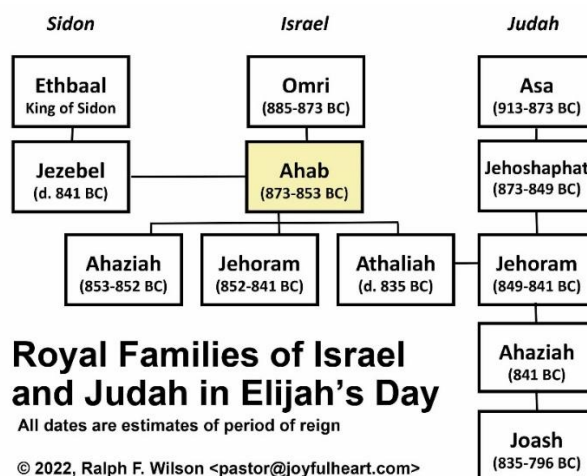
Elijah Will Turn the Hearts (Malachi 4:5-6; Luke 1:17)



The Last Days of Elijah



Jehu goes from Ramoth Gilead to Jezreel to slay Jehoram, king of Israel



Royal Families of Israel and Judah in Elijah's Day

- Fathers = pious patriarchs and ancestors who followed Yahweh,
- Children = descendants of Israel who have fallen away from Yahweh,
- Turning the hearts = restoring the fathers' hearts in their descendants.

Elijah Held in Highest Esteem in the New Testament (Matthew 17:2b; 7:12; 22:40; Luke 9:31)

Elijah as the Precursor to John the Baptist (Malachi 4:5-6;

1. **The Christ (Messiah)** — that is, the anointed descendant of David who would deliver Israel from her enemies (2 Samuel 7:11-16). There was a high fervor of messianic expectation during this era.
2. **The Prophet** — that is, the prophet that Moses said would come after him (Deuteronomy 18:15-18).
3. **Elijah**, whose coming in the end times as prophesied by Malachi at the end of the Old Testament (Malachi 4:5-6).

John the Baptist's understanding: Isaiah 40:3-4.

- **Straight road**, not twisting to accommodate obstacles.
- **Level road**, where mountains were carved down to fill up valleys, so the resulting roadway would be level, easy to travel, worthy of the king.
- **Smooth road**, where rough and rugged ground would be flat, level, and even. Any rocks in the roadbed would be shoved aside or ground to dust.

Luke 1:16-17, ESV: (1) **"Make ready"** — "to cause to be ready, put/keep in readiness, prepare." (2) **"Prepared"** — "to make ready for some purpose, make ready, prepare."

Was John the Baptist Elijah?

1. **Clothing.** (2 Kings 1:8a; Matthew 3:4)
2. **Boldness.** (Luke 3:7-14; Mark 6:18).
3. **Repentance.** (Luke 1:17a)

John isn't Elijah, but he comes with Elijah's mission and boldness, using "spirit" in the sense of "spiritual state" (Matthew 11:14)

Q29. (Malachi 4:5-6; Luke 1:17) In what ways did Elijah's ministry and calling have similarities with John the Baptist's ministry and calling? Was John the Baptist actually Elijah reincarnated?

Elijah, a Man Just Like Us (James 5:16-18)

Q30. (James 5:16-18) Elijah is James' example of an ordinary man who did extraordinary things through believing prayer. Do you believe God can use you in extraordinary ways? Why? or Why not? What keeps us from being used effectively?

7.4 Assessing Elijah's Life and Ministry

His legacy, his heart, is to rebuild the altar of Yahweh, to cause God's people to know him once again and worship him as God.

Did Elijah Succeed? (2 Kings 10:28; Acts 13:36; 1 Corinthians 4:3b, 5a)

Q31. What was Elijah's primary mission? How successful was he at this mission? How can we measure success in ministry? What are the dangers of self-assessment? When can an accurate assessment be made?

Lessons for Disciples

1. Like Elijah's confusing words to Elisha, we'll experience many temptations to stop following our Lord and Master, but we must firmly resist them as Elisha did: "I will not leave you" (2 Kings 2:2-6). We are called to faithfulness.
2. We may know secret things from God (like the prophets knew the Lord was going to take Elijah that day), but some of what the Lord shows us is for us only, not to be shared (2 Kings 2:3-5; Matthew 17:9).
3. In parting the Jordan with his mantle, Elijah is to be seen as a successor to Moses, who parted the Dead Sea by God's power (2 Kings 2:7-8).
4. Elisha asks for a double portion (or a full first-born's inheritance) of Elijah's spirit. Such a longing for a greater power and presence of the Holy Spirit should be in us constantly! (2 Kings 2:9-11).
5. God honors Elijah with the rare gift of taking him directly to heaven without first seeing death (2 Kings 2:11-12). If we're alive at the coming of Christ, we'll experience that too! (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) .
6. The prophecies Elijah speaks against Ahab and Jezebel and Ahab's descendants come to pass just as Elijah said — with terrible precision. True prophecy comes to pass!
7. Malachi prophesies that Elijah will return before the final judgment to turn his people back to the faith of their fathers the patriarchs. This is fulfilled in the ministry of John the Baptist, especially in his boldness and ministry of calling for repentance (Malachi 4:5-6; Luke 1:17).
8. Elijah is used as an example of an ordinary man who seeks to live a righteous life before God and sees great things happen through prayer (James 5:16-18). God can use ordinary people like us in powerful ways if we will just pray believing!
9. It is impossible to determine the true success of Elijah's ministry — or our own ministries — prior to Christ's Second Coming (1 Corinthians 4:3-5). We, like Elijah, are called to obedience and faithfulness to be instruments in God's hands that he can use to work out his will for our generation.