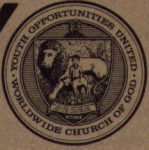


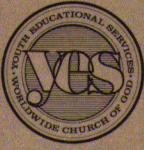
YOUTH



LEVEL 6

BIBLE

LESSONS



LESSON 8



Elijah — A Man of Miracles — Part 2

ELIJAH — A MAN OF MIRACLES — PART 2

We learned in our last lesson of God's great power and of the many miracles He worked through His servant, the prophet Elijah.

As you will recall, Elijah was sent by God to proclaim a drought as punishment upon the nation of Israel, which had forsaken God. King Ahab, his wife Jezebel and the false prophets of Baal were largely responsible for leading the people into sin.

After three and one-half years of severe drought, God finally sent much needed rain to the land of Israel. Also at that time, 450 prophets of Baal were executed for their part in leading the people of Israel into idolatry.

This lesson will continue with the story of Elijah, and introduce a man named Elisha who was to eventually assume Elijah's responsibilities.

ELIJAH FLEES FOR HIS LIFE

Ahab's story of the death of the 450 prophets of Baal enraged Israel's idolatrous queen, Jezebel.

ABOUT OUR COVER . . .

Remains of a gateway in the ancient Israelite capital city of Samaria.

Photo by Keren Hayesod

"If Ahab won't do anything about Elijah," she thought, "I'll do it myself!" Jezebel plotted to kill the prophet and even sent a messenger to tell him of her threat.

Her words conveyed a haughty and determined attitude. "I promise you'll be dead by tomorrow about this time. If not, I hope the gods destroy me!"

What did God's servant do after hearing this threat against his life? (I Kings 19:3-4) _____

_____.

Even though God had just performed great miracles through him, Elijah's faith nevertheless faltered when he learned of Jezebel's intention to kill him.

Elijah was very discouraged. He had put all his effort into the job God had given him to do. He worked fervently and prayed fervently. Yet the Israelites continued in their idolatrous ways.

Elijah must have felt alone and very tired — both physically and mentally. He wanted to give up and quit. As far as he knew, he was the only one who feared and obeyed God.

"It is enough," he prayed, "take my

life now, God!” Elijah then lay down under the juniper tree and fell asleep.

Rather than take his life, God strengthened Elijah for the work yet ahead. While he was sleeping, an angel touched him and said, “Arise and eat!” Elijah awoke and looked around. He smelled a wonderful aroma. Nearby, he saw a loaf of freshly baked bread. Near his head, Elijah found a container of fresh water.

After eating and drinking, Elijah once again lay down under the juniper tree and fell asleep.

While Elijah was sleeping, the angel again touched him and said, “Arise and eat, for you will be going on a long journey.”



Elijah awoke to see a loaf of freshly baked bread and a container of cool water.

After eating the second time, Elijah arose and traveled the next forty days and nights. His destination was Mt. Horeb (also known as Mt. Sinai), where many years earlier God had given the Ten Commandments to the nation of Israel. At Mt. Horeb, Elijah found a cave in which he took refuge (I Kings 19:8-9).

GOD ENCOURAGES ELIJAH

“What are you doing here, Elijah?” God asked the prophet.

“I am alone,” Elijah said. “I have worked very hard, but the people have forsaken you! They have destroyed your altars and killed all your prophets except for me. Now they want to kill me, too!”

God wanted to remind Elijah that he was not alone, that He was still very much with him. So God told him to go out and stand on the mountain. Soon a great wind began to blow. The wind blew so strongly that it dislodged huge boulders, causing them to come crashing down the mountainside.

After the wind stopped blowing, an earthquake shook the mountain with tremendous force. After the earthquake, Elijah saw an awesome display of fire! These dramatic events demonstrated God’s great power to Elijah.

God again spoke to Elijah, this time in a clear, quiet voice.

“What are you doing here, Elijah?” asked God.

Once again Elijah told God how alone he felt and how zealous he was for God’s way. When Elijah finished speaking,

God told him that there was important work to be done.

“You are to leave here and anoint Hazael to be king over Syria, and Jehu to be king over Israel,” God told Elijah. “Also, you are to anoint a man who will later take your place as prophet to Israel. His name is Elisha” (I Kings 19:15-16).

God then gave Elijah some encouraging news: “Yet I have _____ me _____ in _____, all the _____ which have not _____ unto _____, and every _____ which hath not _____ him” (I Kings 19:18).

ELISHA IS CALLED

Elijah quickly set out to fulfill God’s instructions. Days later he found Elisha plowing a field with twelve yoke of oxen. He walked up to Elisha and threw his mantle upon him. The mantle (a type of coat) symbolized the authority and office held by Elijah. Elisha was eager to begin assisting Elijah, but asked if he could first say goodbye to his parents.

“Of course! You shouldn’t leave without seeing them and telling them goodbye,” Elijah said.

Elisha quickly returned home and gave a farewell celebration for his relatives. He killed a yoke of oxen and used the wooden part of his plow for the fire.

After the celebration, Elisha said goodbye to everyone and left to join Elijah.

Do You Remember?

1. _____, Israel’s idolatrous queen, sent a _____ to tell _____ of her threat to kill him.
2. God showed Elijah three dramatic expressions of His power — a great _____, an _____ and then _____.
3. God chose _____ to be the next prophet to the nation of Israel after Elijah.

SYRIANS INVADE ISRAEL

Benhadad, the king of Syria, and his army invaded Israel and surrounded its capital city, Samaria. The army did not allow people or supplies to go in or out of the city. As time went by, the food supplies got lower and lower. The situation looked grim for Ahab and the inhabitants of the city.

Benhadad thought the city would soon surrender. So he sent messengers to Ahab demanding tribute. “Thy _____ and thy _____ is _____; thy _____ also and thy _____, even the _____, are mine” (I Kings 20:3).

Ahab agreed to Benhadad’s demands. However, when the Syrian king heard of Ahab’s compliance, he decided to make further demands. Benhadad now wanted his soldiers to go through the entire city and take everything of value.

Ahab knew he could not allow such pillaging. So he and the city leaders told Benhadad’s messengers that they would not agree to this second demand.



King Ahab is dismayed at the sight of thousands of Syrian soldiers surrounding the city.

Benhadad was furious. “We’ll see about that,” he thought. “Get ready to attack!” he ordered his men. Benhadad returned to his tent and celebrated what he felt would be sure victory.

While the Syrians prepared to attack, God sent a prophet to Ahab. “Here is a message from God,” the prophet said. “‘Have you seen how great Syria’s army is? Behold, today I will give you victory over this great army. You will know that I am God!’ ”

Ahab quickly gathered a small army of 7,000 men and 232 princes. The small Israelite army rushed out of the city and attacked the Syrians. With God’s help, the Israelites won a swift and decisive victory over the great Syrian army that day. Benhadad, however, escaped on horseback.

Benhadad was very upset at the surprising turn of events. His servants, not realizing that it was God who helped the Israelites win the battle, tried to calm him with a superstitious explanation. “The Israelite gods are gods of the

hills,” they told the king. “In the hills they are stronger. We must fight them in the plain where their gods are weak.”

The explanation appealed to Benhadad. He began rebuilding his army and making preparations to attack. Once again the Syrian army invaded the land of Israel. Ahab and his small army went to the northeastern part of the country to meet the Syrians.

Prior to the battle, God sent word to Ahab that Israel would again be victorious. “Because the _____ have said, The _____ is _____ of the _____, but he is not _____ of the _____, therefore will I _____ all this great _____ into thine _____, and ye shall _____ that _____” (I Kings 20:28).

Israel’s army defeated the Syrians as God had said. Benhadad was captured and pleaded for his life. Ahab unwisely set Benhadad free and made an alliance with him.

Freeing Benhadad was a big mistake. God informed Ahab that this act would someday cost him his life and the lives of many Israelites.

To the people of Israel, Ahab may have appeared to be a great king and military leader. Twice he led the small Israelite army against massive armies and twice won the battles.

Although Ahab knew that God had granted him the victories, there is no indication that he gave God glory and thanks for them.

In spite of God's help and mercy, Ahab continued to live a wicked life. His idolatrous, strong-willed wife Jezebel continually stirred him up to do evil and disobey God. Occasionally, though, Ahab did acknowledge God, but these times were few and lasted only for a short time.

AHAB COVETS NABOTH'S VINEYARD

One day Ahab decided he wanted an herb garden near his palace. A man named Naboth owned a vineyard next to Ahab's palace. Ahab thought it would be the perfect place for his garden.

The king offered Naboth a generous amount of money for the land, but Naboth refused the offer. Ahab continued to bargain. "Would you consider a trade? I can give you an even better area for your vineyard."

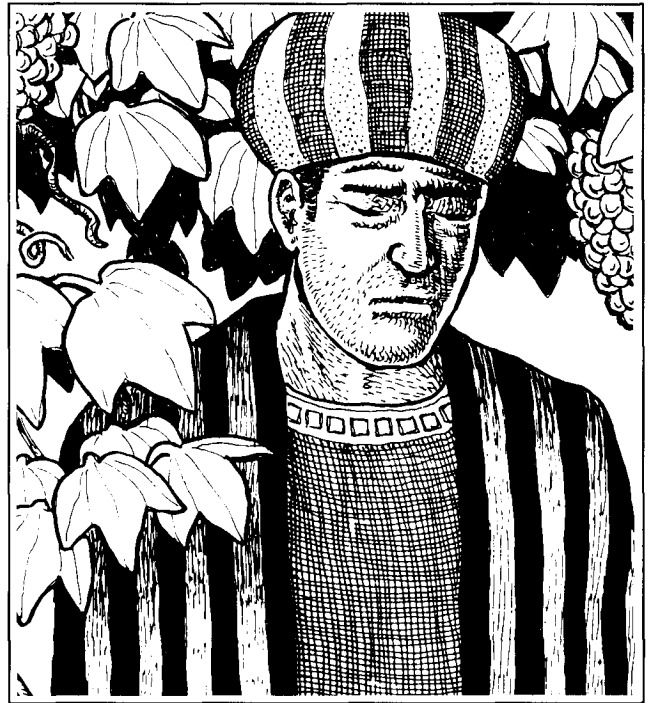
Naboth refused both offers. He told Ahab, "God forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers" (I Kings 21:2-3).

Ahab knew exactly what he meant. A person could not be compelled, or forced, to sell land that he had received as an inheritance.

Ahab returned home, laid down on his bed and refused to eat. He was coveting Naboth's land — a direct violation of the Tenth Commandment which says, "Thou shalt not covet..." (Exodus 20:17).

When Jezebel saw how sad Ahab was, she asked him what was wrong. Ahab told her the story.

"What!" she exclaimed. "You are the king! Get up, eat, and be happy. You



Naboth was unjustly accused of blasphemy against God and the king.

shall soon have Naboth's vineyard!"

Jezebel wrote letters to the leaders of the city where Naboth lived, using Ahab's name and royal seal. She ordered them to proclaim a fast and bring Naboth before the people of the city.

Jezebel directed the city officials to find two witnesses of low moral character who would lie against Naboth. The witnesses accused Naboth in front of all the people. They said Naboth had blasphemed God and the king.

According to the law, blasphemers were to be stoned to death. The Israelites, having heard the testimony against Naboth, took him out of the city and stoned him to death (I Kings 21:13).

Jezebel showed no sorrow as she announced her victory to Ahab. "Na-

both is dead. Go take his vineyard!"

Ahab went to Naboth's vineyard to take possession of the property. But God was very angry at him for allowing his wife to plan the death of an innocent man. God sent the prophet Elijah to meet Ahab in the vineyard.

Elijah had a message from God for Ahab. "Behold, I will bring evil upon you, and will take away your posterity, because you have provoked me to anger and made Israel to sin."

Elijah also told Ahab that because of his wickedness, when he died the dogs would lap up his blood just as they had Naboth's.

"Your wife, Jezebel, shall die also, and dogs shall eat her by the wall of Jezreel," Elijah continued.

Upon hearing Elijah's frightening words, Ahab tore his clothes and fasted. He regretted the terrible things he had done, but not enough to really change his ways. Because Ahab humbled himself, God did not allow the death of his children until after he had died.

True or False?

Write the letter T on the line to the left if the statement is true, or an F if the statement is false.

- ____ 1. Benhadad was the king of Israel, and Ahab was the king of Syria.
- ____ 2. God helped the Israelites to twice defeat Benhadad and the Syrian army.
- ____ 3. Ahab was very grateful to God for helping the Israelites win the battles against the Syrians.

- ____ 4. Benhadad was married to a strong-willed, idolatrous woman named Jezebel.
- ____ 5. Jezebel caused Naboth, an innocent man, to be stoned to death because Ahab coveted his vineyard.

ISRAEL AND JUDAH BECOME ALLIES

While Ahab ruled in Israel, King Jehoshaphat was ruling in Judah. The nation of Judah had not drifted as far from God as had the nation of Israel. This was largely because Jehoshaphat was a righteous man who trusted and obeyed God.

Ahab invited Jehoshaphat to visit his court, where he was royally entertained. Ahab convinced Jehoshaphat that it would be advantageous for both Israel and Judah to form an alliance against the nation of Syria, their common enemy.

Ahab wanted to take the city of Ramoth-gilead from the Syrians. With the help of Jehoshaphat's forces, Ahab felt he could succeed.

Before going out to battle, Ahab inquired of Jezebel's prophets to learn if this military action would be successful. The false prophets unanimously told Ahab that he would certainly win the battle.

GOD WARNS AHAB OF DEFEAT

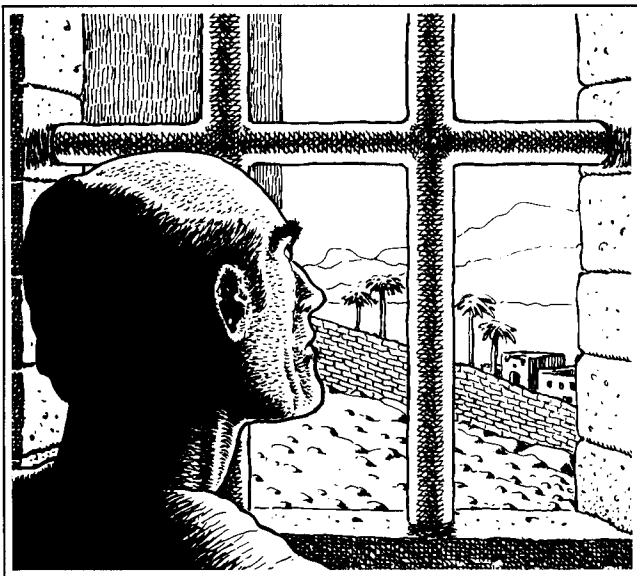
Jehoshaphat wanted to hear the truth. So he asked Ahab to send for a prophet of God. Ahab reluctantly sent for Micaiah, one of the few prophets of God that were still alive. Micaiah was soon

brought before the kings. He prophesied that Ahab would die in the upcoming battle.

Ahab was angered by these words and had the true prophet thrown into prison and fed a sparse ration of bread and water (I Kings 22:26-28).

Ahab decided to battle the Syrians despite the warning from the prophet of God. He disguised himself as a common soldier, hoping the enemy would not recognize him. Ahab then drove his chariot into battle.

Benhadad commanded thirty-two of his chief chariot officers to find and kill Ahab. "Look only for Ahab, and get him at all costs," ordered the king. The Syrians, however, failed to locate Ahab. A Syrian soldier drew back his bow and randomly sent an arrow flying into the air. The arrow struck between the armor joints of Ahab's breastplate, causing a deep wound in his chest. Ahab died from the wound at sunset that day.



God's prophet Micaiah was imprisoned for prophesying that Ahab would die in battle.

The Israelite army took Ahab and his chariot back to Samaria. Beside a pool of water, near the place where Naboth was stoned, servants washed the blood from Ahab's chariot and armor. Dogs came around and licked up the blood, thus fulfilling the prophecy made by Elijah that dogs would one day lap Ahab's blood because of his disobedience to God. God fulfilled His word, even down to the smallest detail!

AHAZIAH'S BRIEF REIGN

After the death of Ahab, his son Ahaziah ruled on the throne of Israel. He reigned for only two years. Ahaziah followed in the wicked ways of his father and mother, serving Baal and angering the Eternal.

While walking in his upstairs bedroom, Ahaziah accidentally fell to the floor below. He was seriously injured and wondered if he would recover. So he decided to ask a prophet for the answer. Instead of sending for a prophet of God, Ahaziah sent messengers to inquire of Baalzebub, his pagan god, to see if he would get well.

God told Elijah what Ahaziah had done. Elijah went to meet the messengers. Notice Elijah's words in II Kings 1:3: "Is it not because there is not a _____ in _____, that ye go to inquire of _____ the god of Ekron?" Elijah then told the messengers to return and tell the king he would die.

The king's messengers returned quickly with God's message. "A man told us you would die," they said to the king.

Ahaziah inquired about the man. "What did this man look like?" he asked.

The messengers described a hairy man whose robe was held at the waist by a broad leather belt. After hearing his description, Ahaziah realized the message had come from Elijah the prophet.

"Go get Elijah and bring him to the palace," the king ordered. A little while later, a band of fifty soldiers and their captain found Elijah. The captain ordered Elijah to come with them.

At this point, God dramatically emphasized that Elijah was His servant. Fire from heaven instantly killed the fifty-one soldiers! The next day, Ahaziah sent another band of fifty-one to bring Elijah to him. They also were killed by fire from God (II Kings 1:9-12).

When a third band of men came for Elijah, an angel of God told him to go with them back to the palace. Elijah then told Ahaziah that he would die from his injuries. Ahaziah never again rose from his bed.

Matching

Match the names on the left with their descriptions on the right by placing the correct letter in each of the numbered blanks.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| — 1. Jehoshaphat | A. The prophet who was to replace Elijah. |
| — 2. Elijah | B. The king of Israel whose blood was lapped up by |

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| — 3. Naboth | C. The prophet who was imprisoned by Ahab for telling the truth. |
| — 4. Ahaziah | D. The innocent man who was stoned to death for not selling his vineyard to Ahab. |
| — 5. Micaiah | E. The idolatrous queen of Israel and wife of King Ahab. |
| — 6. Elisha | F. A son of Ahab who died from a wound caused by a fall. |
| — 7. Jezebel | G. A king of Judah who formed an alliance with Ahab. |
| — 8. Ahab | H. The king of Syria who invaded the land of Israel. |
| — 9. Benhadad | I. God's powerful prophet and witness to the nation of Israel. |

A CHARIOT OF FIRE

One day Elijah and Elisha were walking from the city of Jericho toward the Jordan River. As they stood by the river, Elijah took the mantle from his shoulders and struck the waters. Suddenly the waters separated, allowing the two men to walk across

the riverbed to the other side.

Elisha knew that Elijah would soon be taken by God to another place on earth. When that occurred, he would assume the responsibilities that had been Elijah's.

While the two men continued walking, Elisha requested that a double portion of God's Spirit be given to him.

Elijah responded by saying, "Thou hast asked a _____: nevertheless, if thou _____ when I am _____ from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so" (II Kings 2:10).

Elijah and Elisha continued walking together. Suddenly, a chariot of fire drawn by horses of fire appeared before them. The chariot and horses drove straight toward them, separating Elijah and Elisha. In an instant the fiery chariot and horses took Elijah up in a whirlwind (II Kings 2:11-12).

When the dust settled, Elisha picked up the mantle which had fallen from Elijah's shoulders. The mantle had symbolized Elijah's office and authority. Now, Elisha would occupy that office and represent God to the nation of Israel.

Elisha returned to the east bank of the Jordan River. He struck the water with Elijah's mantle. As it hit the river, the waters parted. Elisha then walked back across the riverbed (verse 14).

Some of the sons of the prophets (young men who were being taught God's way of life) who were from Jericho had seen the miracle that God performed through His servant Elisha.

They realized that Elisha was now the prophet God would use to head His work. Summarize II Kings 2:15 on the lines below. _____

"Where is Elijah?" they inquired. Elisha explained the marvelous way God had transported Elijah from the area.

"Maybe we should go search for him," one of the men suggested. "He may be alone and hurt on some



Elijah is taken up in a whirlwind by a fiery chariot and horses.

mountain top or in some valley — or even dead!”

Elisha told the young men that looking for Elijah would be useless. He knew that God was taking care of Elijah. But they were anxious and insisted. So Elisha allowed them to go.

After three days of searching, the men were unable to find Elijah. So they returned to Jericho.

To learn more about where God took Elijah, be sure to read the booklet, *Where are Enoch and Elijah?*, published by the Worldwide Church of God.

THE PROPHESED “ELIJAH” TO COME

Elijah was a servant and prophet of God with a special work to do in Israel.

God used him as a powerful witness to Israel — a nation that had forsaken God and turned to idolatry.

In the New Testament, we learn that hundreds of years later another prophet of God named John the Baptist came in the *spirit and power* of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ’s first coming (Luke 1:17).

After John was put in prison and Christ had begun His ministry, Jesus prophesied that *another* “Elijah” was yet to come (Matthew 17:10-11). Let’s notice the prophecy in Malachi 4:5, which tells us when this “Elijah” was to come.

“Behold, I will send you _____ the prophet _____ the _____ of the great and dreadful _____.”

John was a *type* of the future “Elijah” — one who would also be sent by God to the world in the spirit and power of Elijah the prophet, this time just *before* Christ’s Second Coming to rule the earth.

As John prepared the way for Christ’s first coming, so the prophesied Elijah to come would prepare the way for Christ’s Second Coming to earth. Jesus said that this man would “restore all things,” referring to God’s Government in His Church and Christ’s Gospel of the Kingdom of God. This has been done today by God’s end-time apostle, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong. The work of proclaiming the Gospel message Jesus Christ brought is today being done by Mr. Armstrong with the active support of the membership of the Worldwide Church of God.

Using the latest technology, Mr. Armstrong announces the *good news* of the coming Kingdom of God to world leaders in private visits, and to the rest of the world through the mass media of television, radio and the printed word.

As part of this end-time Work of God, supportive literature such as The PLAIN TRUTH, GOOD NEWS and YOUTH magazines, THE AMBASSADOR COLLEGE BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE, dozens of booklets, as well as these YOUTH BIBLE LESSONS, are being published. These publications are an important part in preaching Christ’s Gospel to the world. They teach both young and old about God’s way of life and the soon-coming Kingdom of God!

EDITOR IN CHIEF: **Herbert W. Armstrong**

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BIBLE MEMORY

Malachi 4:5

Matthew 17:11-12

CODE BOOK LESSONS

Unscramble the groups of letters in the code book below to form words. Then arrange these words to form sentences that give specific principles you learned from this lesson. As a review, write a few paragraphs about how these principles were brought out in this lesson.

