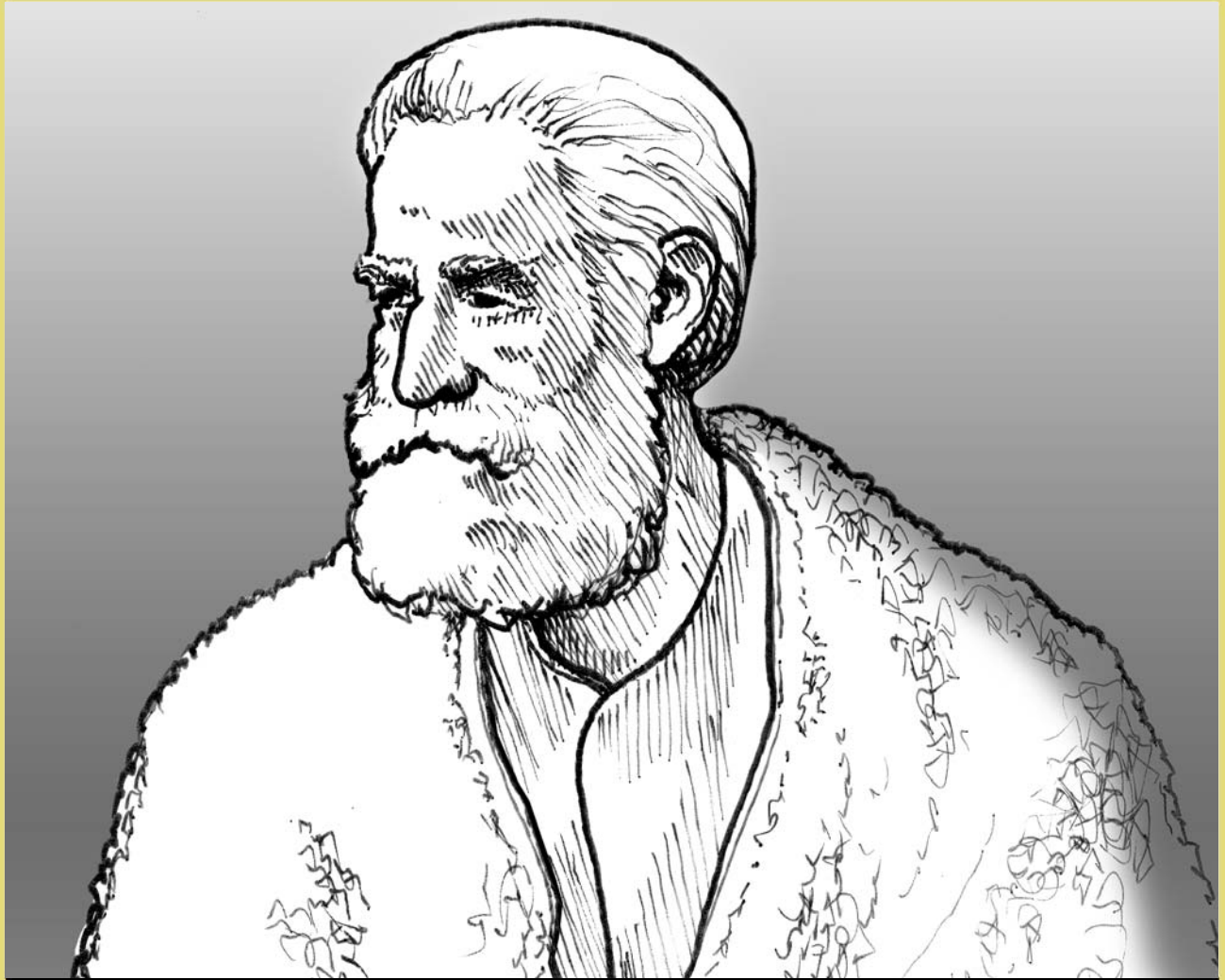
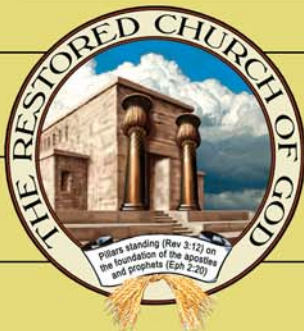


THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD

CHILDREN'S BIBLE LESSONS



Elijah the Prophet

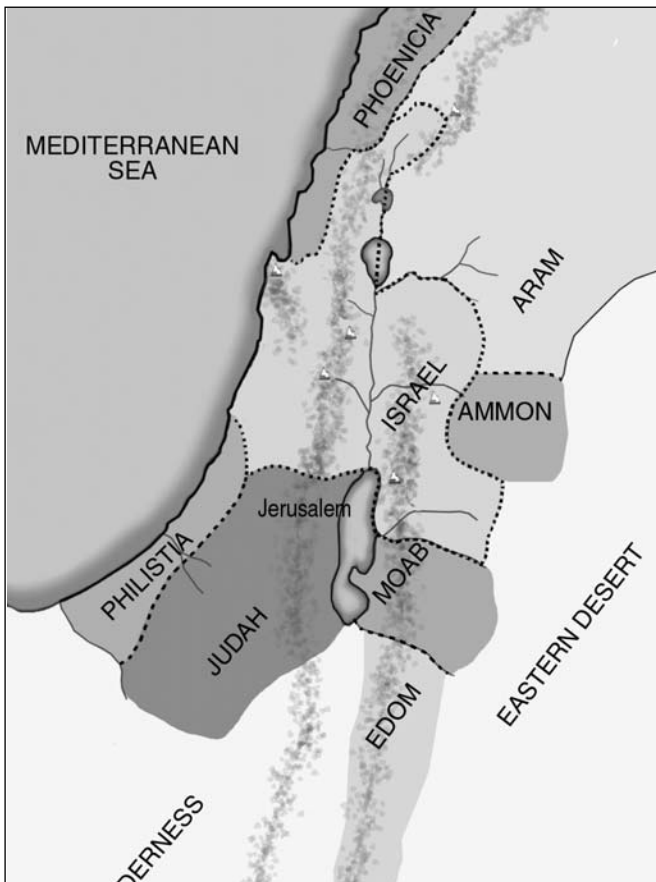


LEVEL 5
LESSON 7

Elijah

the Prophet

In this Lesson, we will learn about the life of the Prophet Elijah, one of the greatest servants of God of all time. His ministry took place during the early- to mid-800s B.C. It was marked by a number of dramatic miracles, as you will see. Elijah was the forerunner, in type, of two other men, whose ministries came shortly before the First and Second Comings of Jesus Christ.



To review, after the Kingdom of Israel was split in two, Jeroboam led the northern tribes, called the house of Israel, in a downhill slide into idolatry. Most of the kings who followed him, such as Baasha, Zimri and Omri, followed his terrible example.

Ahab and Jezebel

After Omri's death, his son Ahab took the throne of Israel. What kind of ruler was he? Write out I Kings 16:33: _____

Ahab proved to be the worst king that Israel ever had. After he became king, he married a Zidonian princess named Jezebel, disobeying God's instructions to marry within the Israelite tribes. The Zidonians worshiped false gods, and Jezebel influenced her husband to lead Israel further into paganism and idolatry. A devoted worshipper of Baal, she fiercely persecuted the servants of the true God, even sending a group



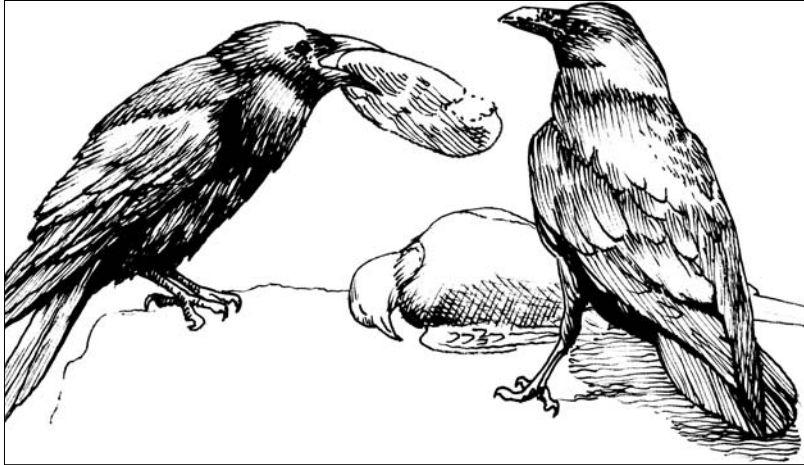
of soldiers to murder God's prophets. Ahab allowed her wicked deeds. Ahab also built a temple and altar to Baal in Samaria, the capital of Israel. This was a terrible offense against God.

Just as Jezebel influenced Ahab, as king and queen, they influenced the whole nation of Israel. Groups of people, whether a team, a business, a family or a nation (a family grown large) reflect the character of

their leaders. This has been proven throughout history.

Elijah Prophesies Drought

The sins that filled the nation, from the leaders to the citizens, had greatly angered God. He decided to punish Israel for its own good. Since God always warns His people before He punishes them, He sent



Elijah to warn King Ahab and the rest of the country.

Elijah lived in Gilead, and was one of the few in Israel who remained faithful to the Eternal. God instructed him to go to Ahab to deliver a message from Him. Elijah obeyed, and set out for the capital.

When he arrived at the palace, he boldly approached the king, and stated, “As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word.”

As he turned to leave the palace, God instructed him to flee to the Brook Cherith, a tributary of the Jordan River. There, God would provide for him. Again, Elijah obeyed—trusting God.

As Elijah had prophesied, the drought began. When the normal rainy season was dry, Ahab remembered what Elijah said. His eyes narrowed into angry slits.

God Protects and Provides for Elijah

At the Brook Cherith, God miraculously provided for Elijah, sending ravens to bring him meat and bread each morning and

evening. God provided for him just as He does for His people today. He drank from the brook itself, until the drought caused the flow of water to stop.

Then, God told Elijah to leave for Zarephath, a city in Zidon, which was a hundred miles north of Samaria. God said that He had commanded a widow to provide for him there. When he arrived,

Elijah found a widow gathering sticks near the city gate. He asked her to get him a cup of water, and then for a morsel of bread. She answered, “As the LORD your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I *am* gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.”

Elijah reassured her that, if she fulfilled his request, God would miraculously provide



for her as well: “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the LORD sends rain on the earth.’”

And the result? Turn to I Kings 17:15 and fill in the blanks. “So she _____ and did _____ to the _____ of Elijah; and she and her _____ for _____ days.”

God honored the woman’s willingness to help His servant Elijah. The prophet stayed in an upper room at her house, and both the woman and her son were saved from starvation during this time of drought.

himself over the boy’s body three times. He then called out to the Eternal, “Please let this child’s breath come in to him again” (verse 21). God answered Elijah’s prayer—the widow’s son began to breathe again, his eyes opened, and his limp arms and legs began to move! Elijah brought him down from the upper room to his mother, and said to her, “Look, your son is alive!”

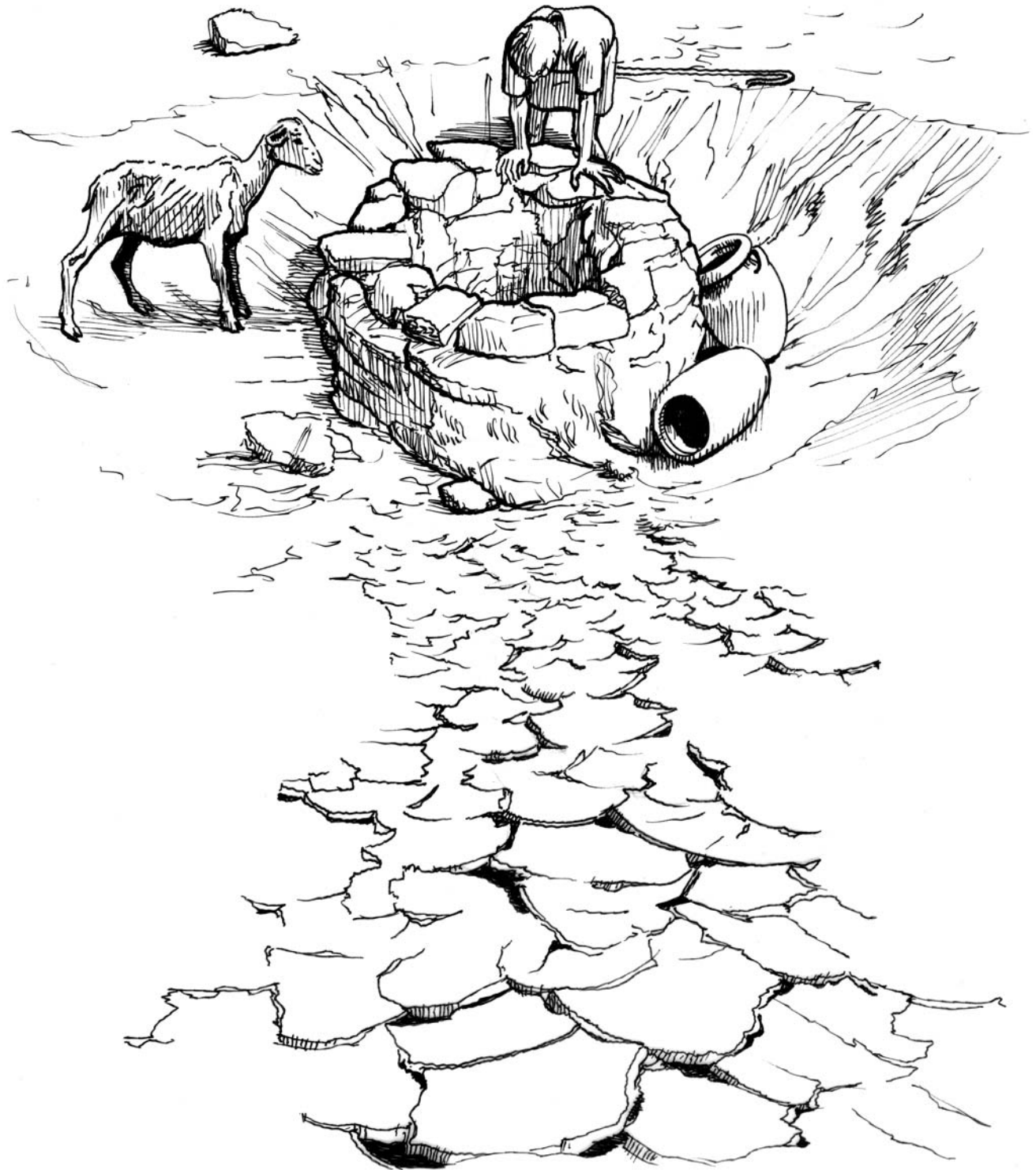
The widow was thrilled to have her son back. She embraced her son, and looked at Elijah with tears of joy in her eyes, saying, “Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is the truth” (verse 24). She learned

Another Dramatic Miracle

After Elijah lived with them for some time, the widow’s son became seriously ill. I Kings 17:17 tells how grave his condition was: “And his _____ was _____ that there was _____ in him.” The widow assumed that her son’s illness and death was a result of her sins, and that somehow Elijah had caused it! It seems that she had forgotten the miraculous blessings that had been given to her. As she held her son in her arms, Elijah said, “Give me your son.”

Elijah was not sure exactly why God allowed the widow’s son to die, but he knew that God had the power to bring him back to physical life, if it was His will. He brought the boy up to the room where he was staying, laid him on his bed, and stretched





valuable lessons from this difficult trial, and at the end came to the right conclusion—that God’s true servants speak and teach the truth!

After sharing lodging and food with the widow for many months, Elijah was told by

God that the drought would be ending soon. We can find the length of the drought in the New Testament: “Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months”

(James 5:17). After this long without rain, the ground was parched and cracked. Rivers and streams had dried up. Crops had failed season after season. Trees were dying and withering; animals were succumbing to dehydration and disease; and the grass and other plants were brittle and brown. People in the land had to conserve water carefully, drinking only enough to survive. At this time, God determined that the punishment was enough.

Elijah Faces Ahab Again

God told Elijah to travel to Samaria once again, to tell Ahab that the drought would be over shortly. While Elijah was making this trip, Ahab and his chief steward Obadiah were traveling through the land in search of pasture where the king's mules and horses could feed. The king and his servant separated into two companies, each leading a group of men who scouted for grass not killed by the drought.

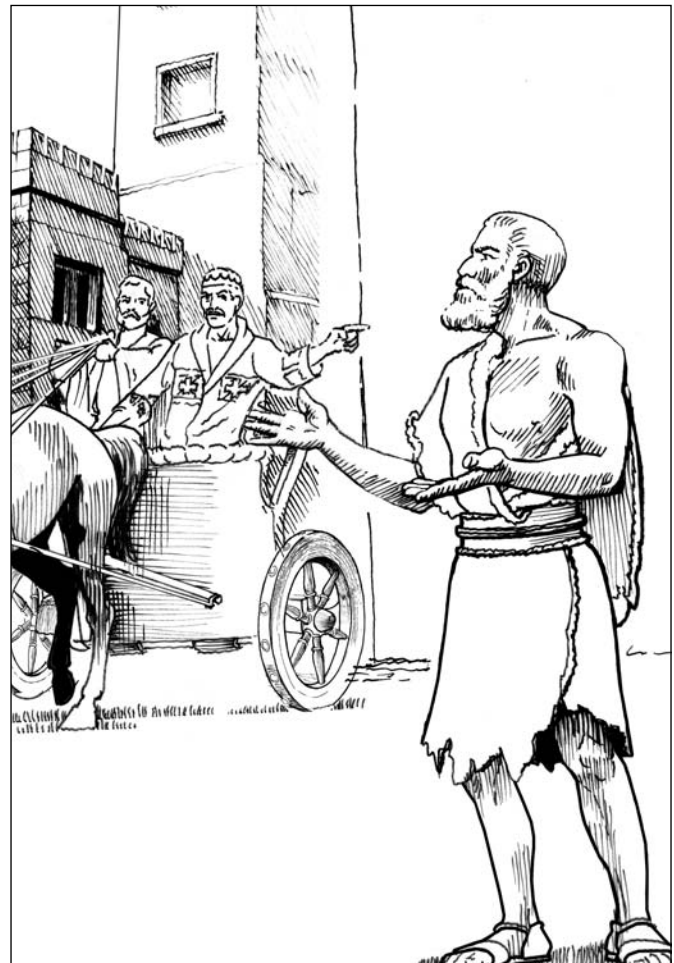
Despite that he served in the palace of a wicked king, Obadiah feared and worshiped the Eternal. He had recently demonstrated his dedication to God by protecting one hundred of His prophets from the murderous Jezebel's plot to kill all His servants. In defiance of the wicked queen—his master's wife—and at the risk of execution, he hid them in a cave and provided food and water for them.

As Obadiah searched for good land, he met Elijah. Obadiah bowed and asked, "Are you my lord Elijah?" Elijah answered, "I am. Go tell your master Ahab that I am here." However, Obadiah was afraid to do

this. He feared that, after he told Ahab that Elijah was there, God would transport Elijah to a distant place to protect him. If this happened, Ahab would assume that Obadiah had lied to him—and would put him to death.

However, Elijah reassured Obadiah that he would show himself to Ahab. So Obadiah told Ahab where Elijah was, and Ahab hurried to meet him.

As Ahab approached Elijah, he said in a cutting, angry tone, "So, is that you, Elijah? The one who troubles Israel?" Elijah answered fearlessly: "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the Eternal and have followed Baal."



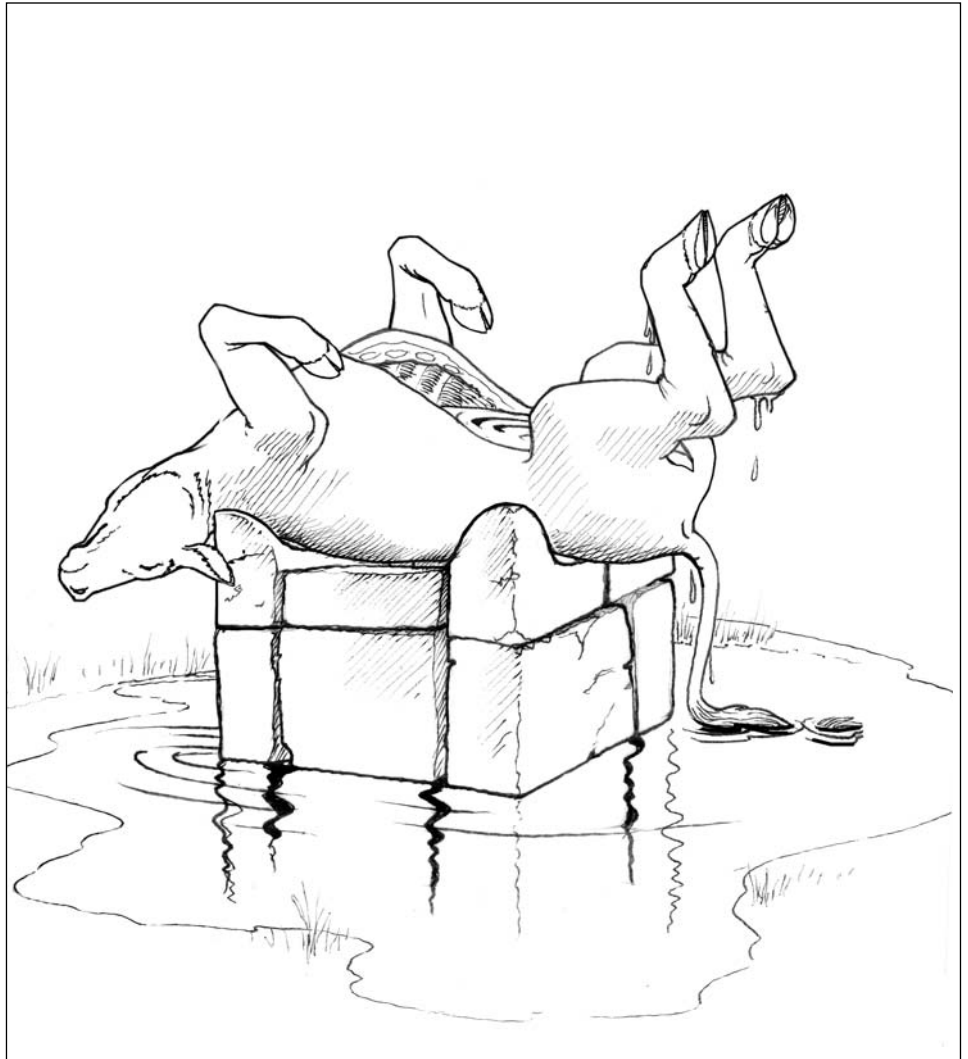
This stinging rebuke infuriated Ahab. The king was not accustomed to opposition from anyone. But he held back, remembering that Elijah prophesied the drought that had crippled Israel for years.

Showdown With False Prophets

Elijah then continued, issuing a bold challenge: “Now therefore, send and gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah [a Canaanite goddess whose name is related to the word *Easter*], who eat at Jezebel’s table” (I Kings 18:19).

Ahab laughed, and agreed to send them. He thought, “Elijah is hopelessly outnumbered. The priests of Asherah will call on their goddess and overpower him.” Ahab not only sent for the 400 prophets, but also called for all of the people of Israel to witness the event.

When the prophets and the crowd arrived at Mount Carmel, Elijah called out a challenge to the Israelites as well. Write out the challenge, found in I Kings 18:21:



Elijah then laid down a final challenge for the false prophets: “All of you prophets, prepare a sacrifice to your god. I will prepare a sacrifice for the Eternal. Do not light a fire under the sacrifice. Rather, call out to your god to accept your sacrifice, I will call out to God. Whoever answers is the true God!” The crowd of Israelites answered, “It is well spoken” (verse 24).

Elijah smiled at the prophets of Asherah and said, “You can go first.” They prepared their sacrifice, slaughtering a bull. Then they began to dance wildly around the altar, singing and chanting, even leaping onto the altar, crying, “O Baal, hear us!”

There was no response from their god.

Elijah sat nearby, occasionally shaking his head. When noon arrived, and the prophets had been making this commotion for hours on end, he began to mock them: “_____ aloud: for he is a _____; either he is _____, or he is _____, or he is on

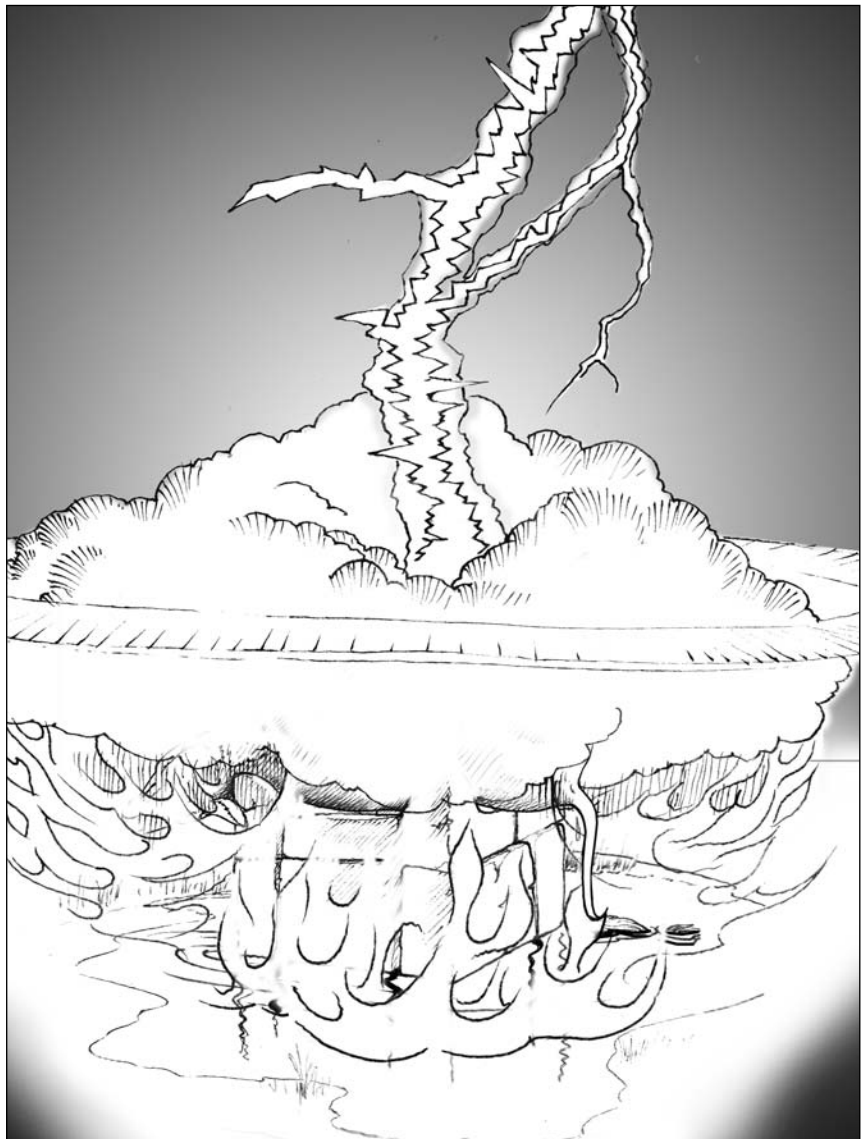
a _____, or _____ he _____, and must be awaked” (I Kings 18:27). This made the false prophets even more desperate. They even began to cut themselves, perhaps thinking that the sight of their blood would get Baal’s attention. But it was to no avail.

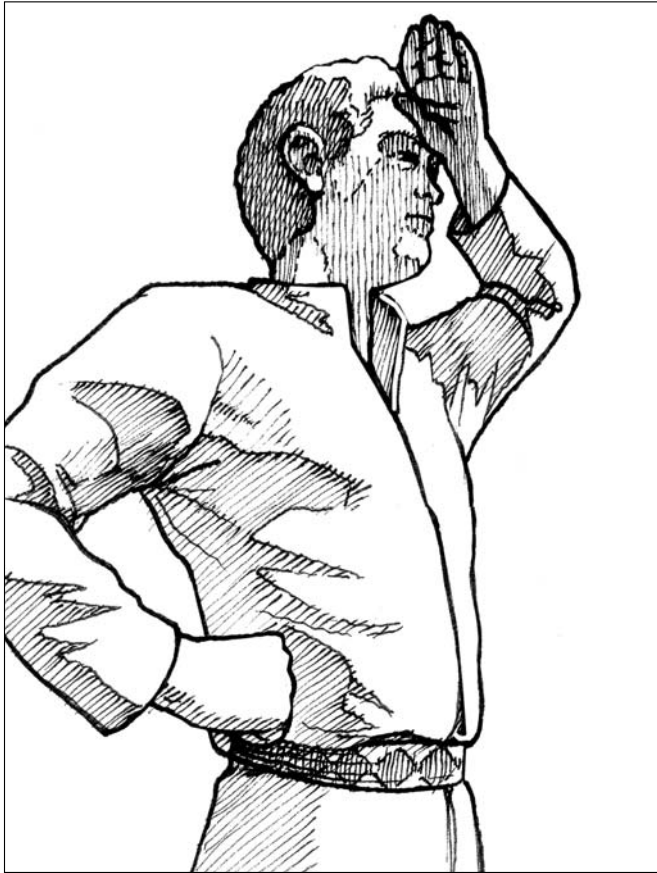
God Settles the Matter

Then Elijah turned away from the bloody spectacle and called the people to come near to him. He began to repair the Eternal’s old altar. He took 12 stones, each one representing a tribe of Israel, and used them to solidify the altar. He slaughtered a bull and placed it on the altar. Then he dug a trench around it. He instructed onlookers to fill four buckets with water and drench both the sacrifice and the wood, making it much harder

to light a fire under it. The people looked on, puzzled by Elijah’s actions. Then he had them empty another four buckets on the altar—and then a third time!

Elijah then bowed his head and gave a brief prayer. He did not shout, dance, or hurt himself. His prayer is found in I Kings 18:36-37: “LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD





God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.”

Write out verse 38 to find out what happened next: _____

Notice that even the stones were burnt up—this was no ordinary fire! The people responded with awe, saying, “The Eternal, He is God! The Eternal, He is God!” Elijah said, “Seize the false prophets! Don’t let any of them escape!” Elijah then executed them at the Brook Kishon, according to God’s instructions in Deuteronomy 13:5.

God, through Elijah, had offered dramatic proof that the Eternal is the only real God, and that the gods of the false prophets did not exist. God was also showing the Israelites that only leaders who served Him should be followed.

The Drought Ends

Elijah looked over at Ahab, and said, “Eat and drink; there will soon be an abundance of rain.” Ahab, who now took Elijah’s words more seriously, followed his instructions.

While Ahab ate, Elijah went to the top of Mount Carmel and kneeled on the ground, his face between his knees, and began to pray for rain. He sent a servant to look to the sea for any sign of a rain cloud. He returned, saying, “There is nothing.” The sky remained clear and blue.



However, this did not cause Elijah to doubt. He prayed again, and once again sent his servant to watch the skies. The servant reported, “The sky is still clear!” Seven times Elijah prayed and then waited for the servant’s observation. Finally, after the seventh prayer, the servant said, “Now there is a small cloud over the sea, and it is shaped like a man’s hand” (I Kings 18:44).

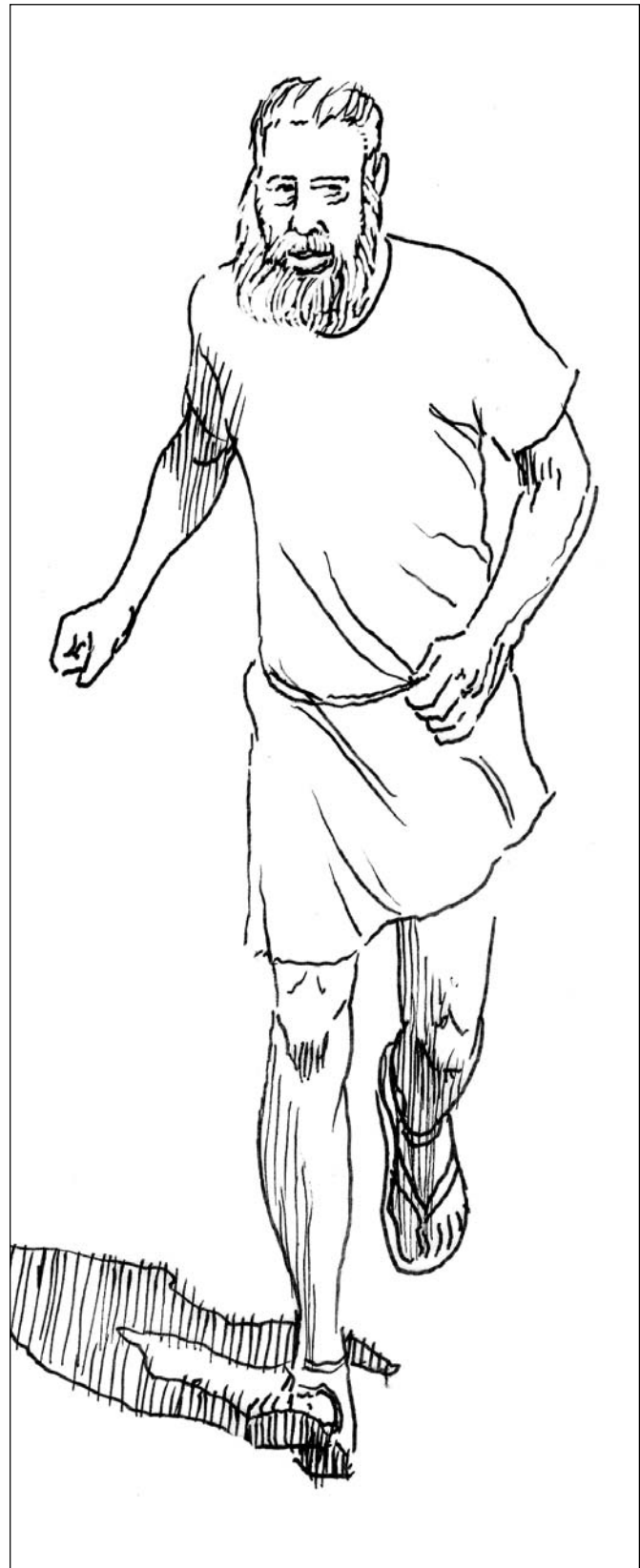
Though this tiny cloud did not look like it could produce any rain, Elijah knew that God had answered his prayer. He sent a message along to Ahab: “Get in your chariot and ride, before you get caught in the storm!” The little cloud was quickly expanding into large, dark thunderclouds. Finally, after a full 42 months, the drought was over. A heavy, soaking rain was on its way.

Ahab hurried to his chariot and set out toward Jezreel, roughly 20 miles from Mount Carmel. Elijah also left for Jezreel, but on foot. Through another miracle from God, Elijah actually outran the horse-drawn chariot, and arrived at Jezreel before Ahab!

As the many miracles that God performed during his life demonstrate, Elijah was a great and unusual servant of the Eternal. He trusted in God for protection and guidance, and was willing to stand nearly alone in doing what is right.

Would the nation of Israel remember Elijah’s message, and learn lessons from his example?

In the next Lesson, we will learn more about Elijah, his successor and the remaining years in the reign of Ahab and Jezebel.



BIBLE MEMORY: I Kings 17:24

TIMELINE ACTIVITY

Place the miracles in the correct time sequence.



A - Widow's son brought back to life

B - Elijah outruns Ahab's chariot

C - God uses ravens to feed Elijah

D - Elijah's prayer for rain answered

E - Fire from heaven consumes Elijah's sacrifice

F - The widow's oil and flour last three-and-a-half years