

#28: Elijah and Ahab

Monte F. Shelley, 1 Aug 2010

Quotes

- How long halt ye between two opinions? (1 Kgs 18:21)
- The darkest hour has only 60 minutes!
- Discouragement is like a new baby. If you nurse it, it will grow.

Review

Psalm 24 Read at the dedication of the Kirtland temple by Sidney Rigdon

Sunday (1st day of creation), **Psalm 24**: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. ...³ Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?⁴ He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. ...⁶ [This is the circle of them that inquire of him, that seek the face of the God of Jacob]." (*Gate 126*)

Possible mention of a prayer circle:

This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. (KJV Ps 24:6)

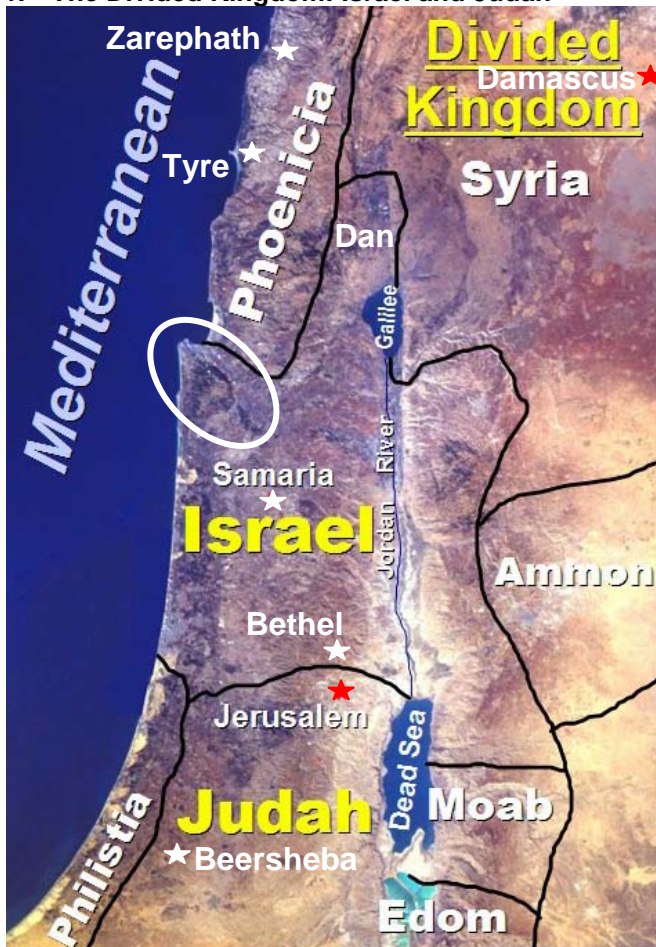
OR "This is the circle of them that inquire of him, that seek the face of the God of Jacob." (Parry)

OR "Such is the circle of those who turn to [God]." (*Gate 126*)

"Such is the circle of those who turn to Him, Jacob, who seek Your presence." (NPS Ps 24:6)

"The basic meaning underlying Heb. *dor* is 'circle.' ... a 'circle of people,' viz. an assembly or generation." (*TDOT 3:169–170*)

1. The Divided Kingdom: Israel and Judah



Judah= **Judah**, (capital) Jerusalem, (king) Rehoboam

Israel= **Ephraim**, (capital) Samaria, (king) Jeroboam (Ephraimite)

Why was the kingdom divided?

Rehoboam increased instead of reducing taxes

Which of the 12 tribes were part of Judah?

Rehoboam ... gathered ... **Judah** and **Benjamin** ... to fight against Israel, that he might bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam.² But the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying,³ Speak unto Rehoboam ... and to ... Judah and Benjamin, saying,⁴ Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not ... fight against your brethren: ... for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the words of the LORD. ...¹⁴ The **Levites** ... came to Judah and Jerusalem: for Jeroboam ... had cast them off from executing the priest's office ...¹⁶ And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the LORD. (2 Chr 11:1–4, 13–16)

"**Benjamin**... is mentioned as part of **Judah** at the time of Rehoboam (see 1 Kgs. 12:20–21, 23; also 2 Chr. 11:3, 23), although a portion of Benjamin was initially retained by Jeroboam. But by the time of Asa, king of Judah (955 B.C.), all the territory of Benjamin had been captured by the kingdom of Judah and Benjamin remained thereafter a land part of Judah only. This is confirmed by the numerous passages listing the two tribes together. (See, for example, 2 Chr. 15:2, 8–9; 25:5; 31:1; 2 Chr. 34:9, 32.)

"The **Levites**, who had no major land inheritance, owed much of their allegiance and service to the temple in Judah's Jerusalem. Jeroboam therefore expelled most of the Levites from his kingdom and appointed non-Levites as priests to serve in his apostate temples. (See 1 Kgs. 12:26–33; 2 Chr. 11:13–16; 13:9–11.) Thus the blood tribe of Levi, having "resorted to him [Rehoboam] out of all their coasts" and having "left their suburbs and their possession and [come] to Judah and Jerusalem" (2 Chr. 11:13–14) also ended up, for the most part, in the land kingdom of Judah.

"In time, however, both the northern and southern kingdoms were to suffer the fate of exile. The kingdom of Israel was taken into captivity by the Assyrians in 722 B.C., while Judah fell to the Assyrians' conquerors, the Babylonians, in 586 B.C. The people of the northern kingdom that were taken away never returned to reclaim their land, and eventually they became the 'lost tribes'—that is, lost to the record-keepers of Judah. The people of land Judah were more fortunate. In 537 B.C., Cyrus II of **Persia**, who had conquered Babylon, issued a decree allowing the people of Judah to return home and rebuild Jerusalem and their temple. (John A. Tvedtnes, "The 'Other Tribes': Which Are They?" *Ensign*, Jan. 1982, 32)

Israel, Kingdom of. The division of the house of Israel into two kingdoms at approximately 925 B.C. had been prophesied by Ahijah (1 Kgs. 11:31–35). The immediate cause was a revolt of the people against the heavy taxes levied by Solomon and his son Rehoboam. Ten tribes formed the northern kingdom, with headquarters at Shechem in Samaria. They were known as Israel, or the northern kingdom, or Ephraim, since Ephraim was the dominant group among them. Their first king was Jeroboam, an Ephraimite; he was followed later by such kings as Omri and Ahab. ... The southern kingdom, consisting of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, was headquartered at Jerusalem. The northern kingdom soon went into apostasy. ... After a history of over 200 years and a series of 19 kings, the [northern] kingdom was captured by the Assyrians and the people carried away captive into Assyria. They have therefore become known as the "lost ten tribes." (BD Israel, Kingdom of)

2. Sin(s) or way of Jeroboam

Golden Calves were set up in Bethel and Dan. “These calves and their shrines are referred to as the ‘sin(s) of Jeroboam’ or ‘the way of Jeroboam.’ ... The calves represented false and illegitimate images connected with Jehovah and his power, and were not originally intended to represent other gods.” (JWOT 248)

Bethel (House of God) Jacob received endowment, Abraham worshiped there, Saul met 3 prophets going up to God to Bethel, Elijah & Elisha.

Priests: Jeroboam “made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi” (1 Kgs 12:31). Jeroboam cast off the Levite priests “from executing the priest's office unto the LORD: And he ordained him priests for the high places” (2 Chr 11:14–15; 13:19). Jeroboam also acted as a priest (1 Kgs 12:33).

High places: Jeroboam “made an house of high places” (1 Kgs 12:31). “Judah did evil ... they also built them high places, and images, and groves on every high hill.” (1 Kgs 14:22–23)

“A ‘high place’ (Hebrew *bamah*) was a local, often open-air, shrine near a city; it had an altar, priests, and other cultic features, such as standing stones and an *asherah* (a symbol of Asherah). The Israelites worshipped Jehovah at their own high places for much of their history in the land of Israel (e.g., 1 Sam 9:19, 25; 1 Kgs 3:3–5), but king Josiah eventually shut these down for religious and political reasons (2 Kgs 23:5–9) Thus a high place was not inherently ‘bad.’ It depended on how it was used.

Similarly, the Israelites were commanded to destroy Canaanite ‘standing stones’ or ‘pillars’. ... But the Bible reports Israelite ancestors had utilized such stones in worshipping Jehovah (Gen 35:15; Ex 24:4).” (JWOT 167–8)

Holy Day: Jeroboam ordained a feast on the 15th of the 8th month like the feast of tabernacles in Judah on 7/15. (1 K 12:32)

“Jeroboam is remembered as a man who started with good intentions, trying to oppose the excessive power which the House of David had accumulated, but who was himself tempted by power and whose wisdom and judgment were subsequently impaired.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr*) (Rona #27)

Even though he made golden calves, “Jeroboam had in his mind ... the image-worship which Aaron introduced for the people at Sinai. ... ‘Behold, this is thy God, O Israel, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.’ ... What Jeroboam meant to say ... was, ‘this is no new religion, but this was the form of worship which our fathers used in the desert, with Aaron himself leading the way.’ ... Jehovah was worshipped under the image of the calves or young oxen; the choice of the places in which the golden calves were set up also shows that Jeroboam desired to adhere as closely as possible to ancient traditions. He did not select his own place of residence, but Bethel and Dan. *Bethel*, on the southern border of his kingdom, which properly belonged to the tribe of Benjamin [Josh 18:13, 22], the present *Beitin*, had already been consecrated as a divine seat by the vision of Jehovah which the patriarch Jacob received there in a dream [see Gen 28:11, 19], and Jacob gave it the name of *Bethel*, house of God, and afterwards built an altar there to the Lord [see Gen 35:7]. ... *Dan*, in the northern part of the kingdom, ... was also consecrated as a place of worship by the image-worship established there by the Danites, at which even a grandson of Moses had officiated; and regard may also have been had to the convenience of the people, namely, that the tribes living in the north would not have to go a long distance to perform their worship.” (Keil & Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 3:1:198–9)

3. Evaluation of kings

“History is written by the victors.” Winston Churchill

True religion is opposed by governments using false religion or irreligion (humanism). See CCR

Deut –2 Kings abridged by Jewish Deuteronomist(s).

Israel: abandoned temple of the Lord, and house of David (Davidic covenant). Did king destroy the calves at Beth-el and Dan set up by Jeroboam?

Kings of Judah		Kings of Israel	
Rehoboam	930–913 BC	Jeroboam I	930–909 BC
Abijam	913–910 BC		
Asa	910–869 BC	Nadab	909–908 BC
		Baasha	908–886 BC
		Elah	886–885 BC
		Zimri	885 BC
		Tibni	885–880 BC
Jehoshaphat	872–848 BC	Omri	885–874 BC
		Ahab	874–853 BC
		Elijah, Elisha	
		Ahaziah	853–852 BC
		Joram/Jehoram	852–841 BC

Dates are approximate. (Adapted from BD and OT-I.) Righteous kings in bold italics. Only major prophets are listed.

“Asa did *that which* was right in the eyes of the Lord, as *did* David his father. And he ... removed all the idols ... But the high places were not removed.” (1 Kgs 15:11–14)

The first sentence “is generally understood to convey that a particular king was, or was not, like David in remaining completely loyal to Jehovah alone, meaning the king never worshipped any gods in addition to Jehovah.” (JWOT 248)

Asa ... was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding *great*: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians. (2 Chr 16:12)

Jehoshaphat (=Jehovah is judge) “walked in all the ways of Asa his father ... doing *that which* was right in the eyes of the LORD: nevertheless the high places were not taken away; for the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.” (1 Kgs 22:43)

4. Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kgs 16)

²⁵ Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that *were* before him. ²⁶ For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam. ... ³⁰ Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that *were* before him. ... ³¹ He took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. ³² And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. ³³ And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD ... to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him. ... ^{18:3,13} Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD.

Zidon or Sidon is a major port in Phoenicia.

Ethbaal = with Baal.

Jezebel “appointed priests and false prophets to this god.” (Josephus, *Ant.* 8:8.1). She was probably a high priestess.

Clarke: Ahab “took to wife, not only a *heathen*, but one whose hostility to the true religion was well known, and carried to the utmost extent. (1) She was the idolatrous daughter of an idolatrous king; (2) She practiced it openly; (3) She not only countenanced it in others, but protected it, and gave its partisans

honors and rewards; (4) She used every means to persecute the true religion; (5) She was hideously cruel, and put to death the prophets and priests of God; (6) And all this she did with the most zealous perseverance and relentless cruelty.

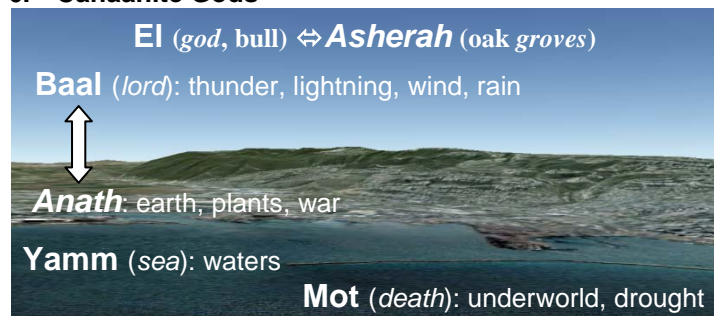
Notwithstanding Ahab had built a temple, and made an altar for Baal, and set up the worship of *Asherah*, the Sidonian *Venus*, ... yet so well known was the hostility of Jezebel to all good, that his marrying her was esteemed the highest pitch of vice, and an act the most provoking to God, and destructive to the prosperity of the kingdom.” (*Commentary*, 2:450–51.) (OT-I)

ESTABLISHED RELIGION IMPOSED WITH FORCE (Blackstone)

5. Canaanite religious practices

“Canaanites prayed to their gods, celebrated holy days, built temples, had priests, offered ... sacrifices ... burned incense, and practiced various forms of divination to determine the will of the gods. ... In Canaan, the productivity of the land depended on rain, not river irrigation. ... The Bible reports a number of droughts. ... This helps explain why Baal, god of storms, was so popular in Canaan. Canaanites worshipped Baal and other deities at ‘high places’ as well as at formal temples. A ‘high place’ ... had an altar, priests, and other cultic features, such as standing stones and an *asherah* (a symbol of Asherah).” (JWOT 167–168)

6. Canaanite Gods



In 1929, at Ras Shamra, Syria (ancient Ugarit), a 14th ... century B.C. library [about 400–500 years before Elijah] was discovered that has shed ... light on the beliefs of the peoples who lived in Syro-Palestine before the Israelites. ... The Canaanite pantheon comprised a large number of nature deities, each one responsible for his or her segment of the universe.

The king of the gods was *El* (meaning “god” or “strong one”), who is depicted ... as a bearded, graying old man, dwelling on an island and noted for his wisdom. His wife was *Asherah*, a fertility goddess whose name means “grove.” The groves (generally of oak or terebinth trees) condemned so frequently in the Bible were dedicated to her worship. ...

Baal is a title meaning “lord,” but also “husband.” He also bore the name Hadad, “thunderer,” for he was the weather god, responsible for lightning, thunder, wind, and rain. [“Baal, often depicted with a lightning bolt in his hand, was the Canaanite storm god. As such, he brought the rains necessary for animal and human life and fertility.” (JWOT 258)]

Anath is sometimes called “the virgin,” but as the “mother of nations” she is often depicted as the wife of her brother Baal. Her name means “surface (of the earth),” and as such she received the rains sent down by Baal to produce vegetation. She is therefore



a fertility goddess, like her mother, Asherah. Considered a very powerful being, Anath was also the goddess of war. ...

Yamm (“sea”) was the god of the waters on and under the earth. Many natural phenomena were interpreted in terms of his struggle with Baal for power. For example, sea storms were thought to occur when Yamm cast his waves up toward Baal. Baal would respond by throwing down winds, rain, and lightning and shouting with his voice of thunder. In the end ... the calm sea [was] the victor. [Yamm cast waters on the earth only to recede leaving the unmoved earth or Anath as victor.]

Mot (“death”) was the god of the underworld, where the spirits of the dead were sent. [“Mot... was the... god of death, infertility, and drought. ... Mot was the Lord of the desert dryness, the underworld, and all that is opposed to life.” (NWE)] He was the antithesis of Baal, the god of life-giving processes, and though brothers, they were enemies.

One of the most important Canaanite myths ... concerns the death of Baal. In the texts, the sky-god sponsored a banquet in his palace atop Mount Zaphon. During the banquet he brought a platter of food and “stood before El.” The idiom meant that he not only served his father, but that he was also the heir apparent of El.

During the course of the banquet, messengers arrived from Yamm, who, being Baal’s sworn enemy, had not been invited. Yamm challenged Baal to a duel to the death. Baal left the banquet to meet the challenge and was slain by Yamm. Anath brought the tragic news to her father, El. The elderly king thereupon left his throne to sit in ashes on the ground, where he began making incisions in his skin with a sharp stone. ...

As time went by, the death of Baal proved to be disastrous, for without rain, the earth languished in drought and famine. Something had happened to Baal, but the earth’s inhabitants, according to the Ugaritic texts, were uncertain as to whether he was asleep, dead, or off hunting with his lightning spears.

While others debated the issue, Anath took action to solve the problem. First, she slew Yamm. Then she descended into the underworld to strike a bargain with Mot. The god of the dead, of course, had something to lose in this matter, too. Once all vegetation disappeared from the earth’s surface, so, too, would animal and human life, and he would receive no more subjects into his dominion. Anath convinced him that it was in the best interests of all to allow Baal to return to the sky. At length, Mot agreed that Baal could remain in the sky for six months out of the year, providing rain to nourish the earth. During the other six, he would have to return to the underworld, while the earth’s surface dried from lack of rain. This story was the Canaanite means of explaining the annual vegetation and rain cycles. (Tv 1990)

In the first part of the myth, there is a battle between Baal and Yamm in which Baal defeats Yamm and controls the unruly waters. In the second part, Baal builds a palace in which there is a window place. When he opens the window, rain is poured out upon the earth. In the last part, Baal and Mott have a contest in which Baal is apparently killed and taken to the underworld. El and Anat mourn Baal’s death through a strange rite consisting of cutting their cheeks, chests, backs, etc., with a knife (cf. with 1 Kings 18:28). El begins to look for another god to take Baal’s place. When one is suggested, he is refused because he is not as fast as Baal was in a race. Another is suggested but likewise refused because he is not as large or tall as Baal. Eventually, Anat, Baal’s consort, forces Mott to release Baal from the underworld and he is resurrected. (Satterfield, 26 Jul 2010, www.ldsmag.com)

7. Israel's Climate

"There are two seasons in Israel: winter—the cold, rainy season from about October to April, and summer—the hot, dry season when rain is virtually non-existent. ... In Jerusalem ... the rainfall is equivalent to London ... although Israel gets their rain all at once! An annual average of [26] inches of rain falls in Israel during the months of December, January and February." (Rona #28) Utah gets about 13 inches per year.

"The former or first rains of the Bible [come] during the latter part of October and the month of November. There is a brief lull during part of December. ... The latter rains [come] mostly during ... January and February and part of March. ... [They] are generally heavier ... and also last a bit longer. Occasionally, the rains will begin as early as September and they sometimes end as late as April. But, generally speaking, rain falls during only six months of the year. Moreover, about 90% of the rainfall comes during the months of November through February. This means that most of the year is dry and, consequently, vegetation is unable to survive the long hot summer and dries up." (Tv 2006)

8. Elijah's Miracles (1 Kgs 17)

As God's spokesman (prophet), Elijah announces famine (3.5 years=Luke 4:25).

Elijah ... said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

The LORD ... before whom I stand: Baal "stood before El" means he served his father and was his heir apparent. (Tv 90).

according to my word: "the sealing power by which Elijah was able to close the heavens." (Joseph Fielding Smith, *DOS*, 2:102)

WHEN would be good time for the drought to start?

"Together, Ahab and Jezebel worshipped the various Canaanite deities, including the god Ba'al and his consort Asherah. As the storm god, Ba'al was believed to control the weather and send the needed rain. Asherah was the cult's fertility goddess. She was believed to make the earth fruitful and the harvest abundant when her followers performed erotic rituals that mocked everything that was sacred to Jehovah... Centuries before, the Lord had warned the Israelites that an abundant harvest depended on their love and service to Him and that He would stop the rain if they worshipped other gods (Deut 11:13-17). According to one Jewish Midrash, Jezebel and Ahab considered the drought as evidence that Elijah's God was powerless to demand his people's devotion. Elijah's first illustration was therefore a perfect one to show that Ba'alim possessed no influence over the rainfall and harvest. Jehovah stopped the rainfall, which prevented a harvest and resulted in the widespread famine. Prayers to the storm god and rituals to the fertility goddess did not bring the needed water or abate the serious famine. Through a three-and-one-half-year drought, God showed that Baal does not control the weather or supply a bounteous harvest (Luke 4:25-26; James 5:17-18)." (Camille Fronk Olson, *Women of the Old Testament*, 222-225)

Elijah, was given power like Nephi in the book of Helaman. The Lord said to Nephi: "Blessed art thou, Nephi, for those things which thou hast done; for I have beheld how thou hast with unweariness declared the word, which I have given unto thee, unto this people. And thou hast not feared them, and hast not sought thine own life, but hast sought my will, and to keep my commandments. And now, because thou hast done this with such unweariness, behold, I will bless thee forever; and

I will make thee mighty in word and in deed, in faith and in works; yea, even that all things shall be done unto thee according to thy word, for thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will. ... I give unto you power, that whatsoever ye shall seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; and thus shall ye have power among this people." (Hel10:4-5, 7)

Famine started in the 73rd year and ended in the 76th year → 3+ year famine.

How did Elijah survive during first part of the drought?

He drank from brook and ravens brought him bread and flesh.

² And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, ³ Get thee hence, ... and hide ... by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.

⁴ And ... thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. ⁵ So **he went and did** according unto the word of the LORD. ... ⁶ And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and ... in the evening; and he drank of the brook. ⁷... After a while ... the brook dried up.

Gordon B. Hinckley: "There was no arguing. There was no excusing. There was no equivocating. Elijah 'went and did according unto the word of the Lord.' And he was saved from the terrible calamities that befell those who scoffed and argued and questioned." (*Ensign*, Dec. 1971, pp123-124)

Jeffrey R. Holland: Ravens did bring Elijah bread and meat to eat, but unless ravens carry more than I think they do, this was not a gourmet meal. (*Ensign*, May 1996, 29)

How did Elijah survive when the brook dried up?

He was sent to a gentile woman and multiplied her food supply

⁸ And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, ⁹ Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which *belongeth* to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

Zarephath was on the coast of the Mediterranean between Tyre and Sidon, in what is now Lebanon and was then Phoenicia, outside the boundaries of Israel. (OT-I)

"The widow of Zarephath represents all of us who are poor in the eyes of the world. She was remembered by the Lord, however, as she was rich in spirit and in faith. Near death because of lack of food during a drought, she and her son lacked family support or other resources. Coupled with her profound poverty, she was a Phoenician, living in a community that belonged to the kingdom of Sidon, among a people who worshipped idols and rejected the God of Israel... Jesus Christ reminded the Jews in Nazareth of the remarkable faith of this Gentile woman in Zarephath (*Sarepta* in the New Testament Greek) who put love of God before all others, including her son. There were many widows who lived in Israel and who were suffering from the drought, Jesus told them, but God sent Elijah (*Elias* in the New Testament Greek) to a Gentile widow. (Luke 4:25-28) The people of Nazareth had just heard Jesus give a powerful spiritual witness of His divinity, but they were searching for reasons to discount and deny it. The Savior indicated to the Jews of His hometown that Gentiles recognized and responded to the witness of the Spirit more readily than they did." (Camille Fronk Olson, *Women of the Old Testament*, 219)

"It is related that, during this [1856] famine, a brother, sorely in need of bread, came to President Kimball for counsel how to procure it. 'Go and marry a wife,' was Heber's terse reply, after relieving the immediate wants of the applicant. Thunderstruck at receiving such an answer at such a time, when he could hardly provide food for himself, the man went his way, dazed

and bewildered, thinking that President Kimball must be out of his mind. But the more he thought of the prophetic character and calling of the one who had given him this strange advice, the less he felt like ignoring it. Finally he resolved to obey counsel, let the consequences be what they might. But where was the woman who would marry him, was the next problem. Beshinking himself of a widow with several children, who he thought might be induced to share her lot with him, he mustered up courage, proposed and was accepted. In that widow's house was laid up a six months' store of provisions! Meeting President Kimball shortly afterwards, the now prosperous man of family exclaimed: 'Well, Brother Heber, I followed your advice—' 'Yes, said the man of God, 'and you found bread.'" (*Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 403-404)

¹⁰ **So he arose and went** to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city... the widow woman *was* there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. ¹¹ And as she was going to fetch *it*, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. ¹² And she said, *As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.*

"The woman whom God called to assist Elijah represented every category of defenseless ones: she had lost her husband, her son was fatherless, and she was a Gentile, a stranger to the Israelites. The widows, the fatherless, and strangers were the vulnerable and unprotected in society. They were the ones without family connection, without anyone to champion their cause or care for their needs... Yet, the Lord sent the greatest to depend on the least. What a magnificent lesson in humility and added faith in the One who is 'least in the kingdom of God' and yet 'greater' than all others (Luke 7:28). As in all of God's challenging circumstances, this lesson was not just to prepare and fortify Elijah. The Lord had something to teach the widow as well. Her encounters with the Israelite prophet would be changing, faith building, and empowering." (Camille Fronk Olson, *Women of the Old Testament*, 226-227)

The poor widow had only a little flour with which to make a patty to fry. Her barrel would have been an earthen jar and her cruse a clay bottle. Wooden barrels are not suitable for storing flour in the Middle East because they do not protect the flour from insects. (OT-I)

¹³ And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go *and* do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring *it* unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. ¹⁴ For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day *that* the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth. ¹⁵ And **she went and did** according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat *many* days. ¹⁶ *And* the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah.

Elijah's request for the widow to prepare his food was not a selfish request but rather a test of her faith. Because she passed the test, Elijah's promise that her barrel of flour and cruse of oil would not fail for the duration of the famine was fulfilled. This widow not only provided for her own needs in a time of great distress but provided for others an example of great faith. In an attempt to open the eyes of his prejudiced countrymen, Jesus spoke of this Sidonian woman who obeyed God's command

and physically sustained His prophet. "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Serepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow" (Luke 4:25-26). (OT-I)

What happened to the widow's son?

He died and Elijah raised him from the dead.

¹⁷ And it came to pass ... *that* the son of the woman ... fell sick; and ... [died]. ¹⁸ And she said unto Elijah, **What have I to do with thee. O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?** ¹⁹ ... He took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft ... and laid him upon his own bed. ²⁰ And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? ²¹ And he stretched himself upon the child three times, ... and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. ²² And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. ²³ And Elijah took the child ... and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. ²⁴ And the woman said to Elijah, **Now by this I know that thou art a man of God,** *and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth.*

"As though the widow's faith had not been tried sufficiently, the Lord had yet another test that would stretch and fortify her faith beyond what she had thus far experienced. **After receiving daily replenishing of her jar of flour and cruse of oil for three years, the widow saw her son become ill and die... Her faith cracked. She accused Elijah and the Lord of abandoning her.**

"We can become complacent with God's daily miracles. During times of peace and prosperity, we may gradually lose the awe we initially experienced when His grace dramatically sustained us beyond our natural abilities. Because of His constant gifts, we may begin to expect God's enabling power as something we deserve or have even earned. In the case of the widow of Zarephath, she may have felt forsaken by the Lord when He took her son's life away, perhaps because she had begun to pride herself on the daily service she rendered to Elijah by cooking his meals and providing him shelter. Had she therefore falsely assumed that God would shield her from future trials as His gratitude for her service?

"Amid the cacophony of emotions and attempts to understand, the widow cried out to Elijah, 'What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God?' (1 Kings 17:18). Here was the greater test of her faith in the Lord. Was her love and trust in God dependent on the absence of pain, difficulties, and loss, or was she loyal to Him without condition? Could she be stretched to wholeheartedly accept and understand that everything God does for His children is for their benefit—even painful situations?

"...Reverence for God is important during peaceful and prosperous times, but how do we respond when a crisis erupts? Where do we turn when everyone around seems to abandon us? Do our hearts become hardened and bitter or soft and pliable by turning unflinchingly to God for the solace that only He can give? A Book of Mormon king wisely taught that turning to the Lord in times of loss was not enough. We must also continue to trust Him when no solution seems possible and actively serve Him even when we don't know how He will rescue us (Mosiah 7:33)." (Camille Fronk Olson, *Women of the Old Testament*, 230-231)

9. Elijah and prophets of Baal and Asherah (1 Kgs 18)

¹ After many days ... the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. ...

Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; (Luke 4:25)

¹⁷ When Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? ¹⁸ And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou ... ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim. ¹⁹ ... Gather ... all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the [450] prophets of Baal ... and the [400] prophets of the groves [HEB Asherah] ... which eat at Jezebel's table. ...

→ Jezebel supported them.

NIV Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

The contest was designed by Elijah to "stack the cards" in Baal's favor ... to make a greater impression on the people. Elijah designated the summit of Mount Carmel as the site for the encounter. The name Carmel comes from Hebrew or Canaanite *karm-El*, meaning "vineyard of El," and was probably considered by the Canaanites to be sacred to the old Canaanite God, as well as to Baal and to the ... two chief goddesses. Atop the mount there still exists today one of the largest forests of oak trees in Israel, these being the symbol of Asherah. As the most prominent piece of land in the area, it was considered part of the body of Anath, the earth goddess. ... Because it is the highest mountain in the region, during thunderstorms it receives more lightning strikes than other points; probably this was thought to indicate Baal's presence. The mountain also receives more rainfall than any other spot in Israel, making it an even more suitable representation of Anath, on whom Baal sends his rain. (Tv 1990)

²¹ Elijah [HEB my God is Jehovah] came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal [HEB master], then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. ²² Then said Elijah ... I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are [450] men.

Who is your master? Elijah literally means "my God is Yah (Jehovah)," an appropriate name at a time when a proliferation of gods was popular in the land. Ba'al in Hebrew means 'master' and the Ba'al religion named gods (masters) of such things as rain, earth, wind and fire. (Rona #28)

What was the contest?

Elijah and Baal's prophets were each to kill a bull [El], put it on an altar over oak wood [Asherah], and call on their god. "The God that answereth by fire [Baal], let him be God." The people agreed.

While sheep or goats were most often sacrificed in Israel, the bullock was the symbol of El, whose full title in the Ugaritic literature is "Father Bull El." Again, everything seemed to favor the prophets of Baal. (Tv 1990)

Priests of Baal called on ... Baal from morning ... until noon, saying, O Baal, [NIV answer] us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made.

HEB *qol* sound, voice, thunder

The expected "voice" of Baal would be thunder, an indication that he was still in control of his domain. (The Hebrew or

Canaanite word *qol* means both "voice" and "thunder.") (Tv 1990)

²⁷ At noon Elijah began to taunt them. "Shout louder!" he said. "Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened." ²⁸ So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. ²⁹ ... They continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention. (NIV)

These possibilities were also considered four centuries earlier by priests of Ugarit during a drought. Just as those earlier priests had done, the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel apparently concluded that their god must have died. Following the traditional Canaanite mourning practice, they "cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them." (Tv 1990) Mourning preceded the resurrection in their myth.

Elijah: ³⁰ All the people came near. ... [Elijah] repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down. He used 12 stones representing the 12 tribes of Israel to build the altar. He put a trench around the altar. He put the pieces of a bull over (probably oak) wood on the altar and then poured 12 barrels of water over the bull and the wood until the trench was filled.

Josephus: Elijah had the people observe "lest he should ... hide fire among the pieces of wood." (Ant. 8:8.5)

Priests of Baal ... rigged their altars with fires beneath them to make the sacrifices appear to ignite spontaneously. (OT-I)

³⁶ At the time ... of the evening sacrifice ... Elijah the prophet ... said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant. ...

³⁸ Then the fire of the LORD fell [Baal], and consumed the burnt sacrifice [El], and the wood [Asherah], and the stones, and the dust [Anath], and licked up the water [Yam] that was in the trench. ³⁹ And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

Jehovah had shown that it was he, and not Baal, who was able to cast down lightning from heaven (in this case, out of a clear blue sky) and that it was he and not the fictitious Baal who had brought three years of famine into the land. ... It destroyed the bullock, symbol of El, as well as the wood, symbol of El's wife Asherah, thus making Jehovah more powerful than any of the Canaanite deities. The fire also destroyed the water, symbol of Yamm, who, as the destroyer of Baal, was more powerful than Baal. More powerful even than Yamm, however, was Anath, the goddess of war, who had slain Yamm. Jehovah's lightning bolt consumed not only the stones of the altar, but also the dust—both elements sacred to this earth goddess. There could be no doubt in the minds of those who observed this great miracle: Jehovah was the God! (Tv 1990)

⁴⁰ And Elijah said ... Take the prophets of Baal; ... and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

After destroying the Canaanite gods, their priests were killed.

The rains, which would soon come, would wash the earth of the blood of the slain prophets. This was no doubt another jab at the Canaanite religion. In the Ugaritic texts, we read that Anath, the earth, washes in the rains sent by Baal after a bloody battle, casting her filth into the sea, just as the Kishon river would have brought the bodies of the false prophets into the Mediterranean a dozen miles distant. (Tv 1990)

⁴¹ Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for *there is* a sound of abundance of rain. ⁴²... Elijah went up to the top of Carmel ... and put his face between his knees, ⁴³ And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. ... ⁴⁴ The seventh time, ... [the servant] said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And [Elijah] said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare *thy chariot*, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.

People mourn and fast when friends die, but eat and drink to celebrate victory over enemies.

Mot (god of drought): "It remained to show that the Lord was more powerful than Mot, the Canaanite god of death [and drought], who was able to hold Baal captive for half of each year." (Tv 1990) or longer during droughts.

Josephus: During time of Deborah the prophetess, "a great storm ... or rain and hail" stopped the chariots and army of Sisera in the same area. (*Ant.* 5:5.4)

Neal A. Maxwell: There will be... times when we simply have to trust the prophet, for he will see things we do not see. Just as Elijah knew torrential rains were coming when there was not a cloud in the sky: (quotes 1 Kgs. 18:41–45.) Prophets can see major implications in developments when these are no bigger than a man's hand! (*Ensign*, Apr. 1981, 59)

⁴⁵ ... The heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. ⁴⁶ And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

NIV The power of the Lord came upon Elijah and, tucking his cloak into his belt, he ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel.

While Ahab rode in his chariot, Elijah, girding up his loins, ran to the city—a distance of about [13 miles OR] eleven miles as the crow flies—and arrived there before the king. It is likely that Ahab's chariot ... had become bogged down in the mud newly formed in the valley by the rainfall.

In the ancient Near East, it was traditional to test the powers of the king—the chief warrior of his people—by having him run a footrace and throw a javelin. This was an important test of divinity for the Canaanites. The Ugaritic texts, for example, note an attempt to replace the dead Baal with another of Asherah's sons. El objects that the newcomer could neither run across the clouds nor throw the lightning spear with accuracy and was hence unsuited to become the sky god.

The Lord ... had already demonstrated his ability to throw the lightning spear to earth with great accuracy when he burned up Elijah's sacrifice. Now his personal representative, Elijah, the prophet who "stood before the Lord," had won a footrace against Ahab, Baal's Israelite representative. Jehovah's right to reign over Israel was firmly established. (Tv 1990)

10. Elijah at Horeb (1 Kgs 19)

² Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. ³ And when he saw *that*, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba ... and left his servant there. ⁴ But he ... went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested ... that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. ⁵ And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel ... said unto him, Arise *and eat*. ⁶ And he looked, and ... *there was* a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water. ... ⁷ And the angel of the LORD came again ... said, Arise *and eat*; because the

journey is too great for thee. ⁸ And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

Elijah fasted for forty days and forty nights while communing with the Lord on the mount Horeb. Moses, probably on the same mountain, "was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water" (Ex 34:28). Jesus, before beginning his mortal ministry, was "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be with God" having "fasted forty days and forty nights" (JST Matt 4:1-2).

⁹ He came ...unto a cave, and ...the LORD ... said ... What doest thou here, Elijah? ¹⁰ And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God ... for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and ... I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. ¹¹ And he said, ...stand upon the mount before the LORD. ... The LORD passed by, and a ... strong wind [Baal]... and brake in pieces the rocks ...; *but* the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake [Anath]; *but* the LORD was not in the earthquake: ¹² And after the earthquake a fire; *but* the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

Though Jehovah controlled the wind, the earthquake, and the fire, he was none of those phenomena of nature. He was not the wind, as some depicted Baal. Nor was he the earth, whose quaking was considered by others to be the movement of Anath. He was not the fire or any other of the elements. Rather, it was the Lord who controlled them all, and he manifested himself ... in the "still small voice" of his Spirit. (Tv 1990)

Boyd K. Packer: The Spirit does not get our attention by shouting or shaking us with a heavy hand. Rather it whispers. It caresses so gently that if we are preoccupied we may not feel it at all. ("The Candle of the Lord," *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 53)

When does God speak with earthquakes and thunder?

⁸⁸ After your testimony cometh wrath and indignation upon the people. ⁸⁹ For after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes. ... ⁹⁰ And ... the voice of thunderings, ... lightnings, ... tempests, and ... the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds. (D&C 88:88–90)

11. Elijah to anoint Elisha (God will save) (1 Kgs 19)

¹⁵ And the LORD said unto him, Go, return ... [to] Damascus: and ... anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: ¹⁶ And Jehu ... anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha... anoint to be prophet in thy room.

Hazael would fight against Israel;
Jehu destroyed Ahab, Jezebel, and house of Ahab;
Elijah only anointed Elisha who anointed others.

¹⁸ Yet I have ... [7,000] in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal. ... ¹⁹ So he departed thence, and found Elisha ... who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen ... and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him. ²⁰ And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah.

12. Ahab desires vineyard of Naboth (1 Kgs 21)

Ahab spake unto Naboth, ... Give me thy vineyard ... and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; *or* ... I will give thee the worth of it in money. ³ And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.

Ahab's offer to buy Naboth's vineyard may seem fair at first glance, but Naboth could not sell. His land had been inherited from his forefathers, and the law of Moses did not permit the

sale of one's inheritance, except in cases of extreme destitution, and then it could be sold or mortgaged only until the time of jubilee, when it would be reclaimed. Ahab wished to acquire the land permanently. Hence Naboth's reply: "The Lord forbid it me" (v. 3). Ahab's tantrum over being refused (see v. 4) gives an insight into the character of Ahab. The king owned tenths of the land of Israel already, but he was miserable because he could not get everything he wanted. These verses also show how Ahab's wife, Jezebel, arranged her husband's affairs without hindrance of any sort (see v. 16). The phrase "sons of Belial," was a catch-all term that applied to almost any evil persons—liars, thieves, murderers. Notice how the punishment pronounced on Ahab and Jezebel matched their character (see vv. 19, 23). (OT-I)

"Ahab did not have absolute power to seize Naboth's property. The kings were viewed as under the law of God and the divinely based law of the land, like other Israelites. Israel also believed that all land ultimately belonged to Jehovah, who had divided it according to his will under Joshua's direction, and that land played an important part in family identity. Naboth wanted to keep his property in his family. Jezebel, however, arranged for Naboth to be falsely accused of blasphemy and then stoned to death. Thus Ahab and Jezebel broke three of the Ten Commandments: coveting, bearing false witness, and killing." (JWOT 260)

⁴ And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased. ... And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. ⁵ But Jezebel his wife ... said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad ...? ⁶ And he said unto her, Because ... Naboth ... answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. ⁷ And Jezebel ... [said] ... I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth.

When did Ahab's desire become coveting?

How did Jezebel give Ahab the vineyard?

Covet, False Witness, "LEGAL" Murder, Steal

⁸ So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders ... dwelling with Naboth. ⁹ ... saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people: ¹⁰ And set two men, sons of Belial [NIV scoundrels], before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And ... stone him, that he may die. ... ¹⁵ When Jezebel heard that Naboth ... was dead, ... Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth ... for Naboth is ... dead. ¹⁶ ... Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth ... to take possession of it.

¹⁷ The word of the LORD came to Elijah ... saying, ¹⁸ Arise, go down to meet Ahab ... in the vineyard of Naboth. ... ¹⁹ [and say:] Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? ... In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood. ... ²⁰ Elijah, ... [said to Ahab] because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD. ²¹ Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity. ... ²² And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam ... and like the house of Baasha ... for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin. ²³ And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. ²⁴ Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.

"Dogs in ancient Israel often roamed as scavengers, and their willingness to eat human flesh meant they were often invoked in curses and condemnations. Thus to call someone a dog was an insult." (JWOT 261)

13. King Ahaziah, son of Ahab (2 Kgs 1)

² Ahaziah ... was sick: and he sent messengers, and said ... Go, enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease. ... ¹⁶ [Elijah] said unto [Ahaziah], Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, is it not because there is no God in Israel to enquire of his word? therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

His son Jehoram was later killed by Jehu (2 Kgs 9:24). Jehu and his descendants reign for 90 years

14. Why is Elijah important to the Jews and to us?

"A special chair is set aside for Elijah at circumcisions, as he is called the protector of children, and the upholder of the covenant between God and Israel, and Elijah is supposed to visit every Jewish home on Passover, so a special cup of wine is set aside for him. And ... when the time is right, it will be Elijah who will herald the coming of the Messiah." (EJ Jr.) (Rona #28)

When Israel separated from Judah and began worshiping other gods, Israel was cut off from (a) God, (b) His Temple, (c) the other tribes, and (d) the "promises made to their fathers" (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob). Elijah came to restore the sealing power needed seal and reunite the seed of Abraham by planting in their hearts "the promises made to their fathers." (Hidden 181-187)

What would you think about a man who had the power to raise the dead, call down fire from heaven, cause the heavens to withhold rain, and render a barrel of flour inexhaustible? Elijah was such a man, a man of power, a man of miracles, a prophet so worthy that he was translated and taken from the earth in a chariot of fire. Small wonder that Elijah became one of the great heroes in Israel's history. Small wonder, too, that in Jewish households a place is set for him at every Passover feast in anticipation of his return as predicted by the prophet Malachi (see Malachi 4:5-6). (OT-I)

Joseph: Elijah was the last Prophet that held the keys of the Priesthood, and who will, before the last dispensation, restore the authority and deliver the keys of the Priesthood, in order that all the ordinances may be attended to in righteousness... The spirit, power, and calling of Elijah is, that ye have power to hold the key of the revelations, ordinances, oracles, powers and endowments of the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of the kingdom of God on the earth; and to receive, obtain, and perform all the ordinances belonging to the kingdom of God, even unto the turning of the hearts of the fathers unto the children, and the hearts of the children unto the fathers, even those who are in heaven. (TPJS 172)

15. Elijah was a type of Christ

- The elements obeyed his word (1 Kgs 17:1)
- He multiplied a little food to feed faithful (1 Kgs 17:9-16)
- Raised a child from the dead (1 Kgs 17:17-24)
- Fasted 40 days and nights (1 Kgs 19:8)
- Passed his authority to one who followed him (1 Kgs 19:19+)
- Ascended to heaven, in sight of followers (2 Kgs 2:11)
- His return was promised (Mal 4:5-6) (Hidden 254-255)
Moses is mentioned in preceding verse (Mal 4:3).

16. Moses and Elijah Similarities

Moses	Elijah
Announced the plagues of Egypt (Ex 7-11)	Announced a drought in land (1 Kgs 17:1)
Called down fire from heaven (Ex 9:23-24)	Called down fire from heaven (1 Kgs 18:38; 2 Kgs 1:10-14)
Caused the Red Sea to part (Ex 14:21)	Caused Jordan River to part (2 Kgs 2:8)
After passing through the Red Sea, he saw Pharaoh's chariots trapped by the waters (Ex 14:23-31)	After crossing the Jordan River, he was taken to heaven by horses and a chariot of fire (2 Kgs 2:11-12)
Fasted 40 days and 40 nights atop mount Horeb, conversing with the Lord amid earthquake, fire, and smoke (Ex 19:16-20; 24:12; 34:28; Dt 9:9, 18, 25; 10:10)	Fasted 40 days and 40 nights atop mount Horeb, conversing with the Lord amid wind, earthquake, and fire (1 Kgs 19:8-18)
Taken to heaven without tasting death (Alma 45:18-19; Josephus, <i>Ant.</i> 4.8.48; early Jewish, Samaritan, Christian texts), at mount Nebo on east side of Jordan River near Jericho (Deut 34:1)	Taken to heaven without tasting death (2 Kgs 2:11) on the east side of the Jordan River, near Jericho (2 Kgs 2:4-5, 8)
Appeared to Christ and his leading apostles on the mount of transfiguration (Matt 17:3-4; Mark 9:4; Luke 9:30-33) and "gave the keys to Peter, James, and John" (HC 3:387)	
Appeared to Joseph and Oliver in the Kirtland Temple to restore keys on 3 April 1836, (D&C 110:11) Passover Sunday that year.	

Similarities between Moses and his successor Joshua and Elijah and his successor Elisha.

Moses/Joshua	Elijah/Elisha
Moses chose his successor, Joshua ("Jehovah saves") (Num 27:18-20; Deut 34:9)	Elijah chose his successor, Elisha ("God saves") (1 Kgs 19:16-20)
Moses placed some of his own "honour" on Joshua (Num 27:20)	Elisha took up Elijah's mantle (1 Kgs 19:20; 2 Kgs 2:13)
"Joshua . . . was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him" (Deut 34:9)	Elisha asked to have "a double portion" of Elijah's spirit (2 Kgs 2:9) and others recognized that he had "the spirit of Elijah" (2:15)
The Jordan River stopped flowing so Joshua could bring the people across westward near Gilgal and Jericho (Josh 3:15-17; 4:19)	The Jordan River stopped flowing so Elisha could cross westward near Gilgal and Jericho (2 Kgs 2:1, 4-5, 14-15)
Moses cast wood into bitter water to make it sweet (Ex 15:23)	Elisha cast salt into water to "heal" it (2 Kgs 2:19-22)
Joshua built an altar atop Mount Ebal (Josh 8:30)	Elijah rebuilt an altar atop Mount Carmel (1 Kgs 18:31-32)
Joshua used twelve stones to build a monument at Gilgal (Josh 4:19-22)	Elijah used twelve stones for the altar he rebuilt (1 Kgs 18:31-32)
	Elijah multiplied oil and meal for a widow (1 Kgs 17:14-16), while Elisha multiplied oil for a widow (2 Kgs 4:1-7)

Elijah brought a child back to life (1 Kgs 17:17-23), as did Elisha (2 Kgs 4:32-37)

<http://www.meridianmagazine.com/ancients/050509moses.html>

Conclusion

READ Maxwell #1 and Benson #1 and Maxwell #2

Quotes

Neal A. Maxwell: The stirring words of various prophets ... urge us to choose, to decide, and not to halt. ... Elijah's message has tremendous relevancy today, for all must finally choose between the gods of this world and the God of eternity" (*That My Family Should Partake* [1974], 22).

Ezra Taft Benson: When we put God first, all other things fall into their proper place or drop out of our lives. Our love of the Lord will govern the claims for our affection, the demands on our time, the interests we pursue, and the order of our priorities. ... May God bless us to put [him] first and, as a result, reap peace in this life and eternal life with a fulness of joy in the life to come. (*Ensign*, May 1988, 4, 6)

Neal A. Maxwell: There will be... times when we simply have to trust the prophet, for he will see things we do not see. Just as Elijah knew torrential rains were coming when there was not a cloud in the sky: (quotes 1 Kgs. 18:41-45.) Prophets can see major implications in developments when these are no bigger than a man's hand! (*Ensign*, Apr. 1981, 59)

Gordon B. Hinckley: When a news reporter asked him how he communicates with God, the prophet responded, "I think the best way I could describe the process is to liken it to the experience of Elijah as set forth in the book of First Kings. Elijah spoke to the Lord, and there was a wind, a great wind, and the Lord was not in the wind. And there was an earthquake, and the Lord was not in the earthquake. And there was a fire, and the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire a still, small voice, which I describe as the whisperings of the Spirit" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 51).

Ezra Taft Benson: Do you take time to listen to the promptings of the Spirit? Answers to prayer come most often by a still voice and are discerned by our deepest, innermost *feelings*. I tell you that you can know the will of God concerning yourselves if you will take the time to pray and to listen. (*Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 32)

Boyd K. Packer: The Spirit does not get our attention by shouting or shaking us with a heavy hand. Rather it whispers. It caresses so gently that if we are preoccupied we may not feel it at all. ("The Candle of the Lord," *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 53)

Joseph: Elijah was the last Prophet that held the keys of the Priesthood, and who will, before the last dispensation, restore the authority and deliver the keys of the Priesthood ... to receive, obtain, and perform all the ordinances belonging to the kingdom of God, even unto the turning of ...the hearts of the children unto the fathers, even those who are in heaven. (*TPJS* 172)

Canaanites believed that their gods would save them from enemies, droughts, famines, and plagues. They spent their time and money and trusted false priests to appease their gods and to know their will. In our time, people trust in the arm of flesh (scientists, doctors, politicians) to save them with medicine, technology, weapons, and government. If Elijah came today to have a contest with the modern false priests, what type of contest would convince people that Jehovah is God?

Spencer W. Kimball: “Modern idols or false gods can take such forms as clothes, homes, businesses, machines, automobiles, pleasure boats, and numerous other material deflectors from the path of godhood. Intangible things make just as ready gods. Degrees and letters and titles can become idols. Many people build and furnish a home and buy the automobile first—then they find they ‘cannot afford’ to pay tithing. Whom do they worship? Young married couples who postpone parenthood until their degrees are attained might be shocked if their expressed preference were labeled idolatry. Many worship the hunt, the fishing trip, the vacation, the weekend picnics and outings. Still another image men worship is that of power and prestige. Many will trample underfoot the spiritual and often the ethical values in their climb to success. These gods of power, wealth, and influence are most demanding and are quite as real as the golden calves of the children of Israel in the wilderness” (*Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p. 244).

Spencer W. Kimball: In spite of our delight in defining ourselves as modern, and our tendency to think we possess a sophistication that no people in the past ever had—in spite of these things, we are, on the whole, an idolatrous people—a condition most repugnant to the Lord. We are a warlike people, easily distracted from our assignment of preparing for the coming of the Lord. When enemies rise up, we commit vast resources to the fabrication of gods of stone and steel—ships, planes, missiles, fortifications—and depend on them for protection and deliverance. When threatened, we become antienemy instead of pro-kingdom of God; we train a man in the art of war and call him a patriot, thus, in the manner of Satan’s counterfeit of true patriotism, perverting the Savior’s teaching: (“The False Gods We Worship,” *Ensign*, Jun 1976, 3)

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- NIV = New International Version of the Bible
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