



# The Ministry of Elijah

## Lesson 1: The Times of the Prophet

Intro: God's Kind of Man for His Kind of Time

### The World of Elijah (Background)

#### A. The Time Frame: Time of the Divided Kingdom

1. United Kingdom: Saul, David, Solomon
2. Civil War and Division - c. 930 B.C.
3. Ahab, King of Israel - 874-853 B.C.

#### B. Geographical Background

1. Countries: Israel and Judah
2. Capitals: Samaria and Jerusalem

#### C. The Moral Climate

1. The Sin of Jeroboam - 1 Kings 12:25-33
2. Syncretism (e.g. Exodus 32)

#### D. Ahab, the Worst King Ever (1 Kings 16:29-33)

1. From the powerful house of Omri
2. Marriage to Jezebel of Phoenicia
  - a. Daughter of Ethbaal, the King-Priest of Tyre
  - b. Cousin of Queen Dido of Carthage
3. The Nature of Baal Worship

#### Digging Deeper 1:

*With what sins is America pushing the patience of God? How may he punish us in a way that will really "hurt", as he did in Israel?*

#### Digging Deeper 2:

*How is syncretism alive and well in our day? Examples from the world around us?*

- a. Baal - God of rain and crops
- b. Asherah - Baal's consort; goddess of passion
- c. Sexual excesses (Asherah poles, worship)
- d. Lust and murder glamorized in Canaanite mythology

4. As the leader, so the people - I Kings 16:29-34

- a. cf. Joshua 6:26
- b. What attitude does this reflect?

**E. Breaks in the Storm Clouds**

1. The name "the LORD" (YHWH)

- a. Ex. 33:1 – 34:10 (*read*)
- b. Emphasis is on *faithfulness*

2. Signs of spiritual life in Israel

- a. Prophecy
- b. Schools of the Prophets
- c. Age of Miracles

Concluding Remarks

**Digging Deeper 3:**

*Although our society doesn't use names of various gods, what similarities to Canaanite religion in attitudes/ beliefs show themselves in our culture?*

**Digging Deeper 4:**

*The Canaanite religious pantheon was, in essence, a system of trying to explain the world and to find a sense of order.*

*What do modern Americans mean by the phrase, "personal belief system", and how does it basically function the same way?*

**Digging Deeper 5:**

*In a rapidly paganizing world, what are some signs of God's grace in which we can take comfort?*

*Consider: Mt. 24:14; Mt. 26:13; Acts 13:48-49; others?*