

Two Ways in Israel: Ahab and Elijah

Transition in Israel—Baasha, Zimri, and the House of Omri; Ahab, Jezebel, and the worship of Ba'al; Elijah and the drought; Elijah's triumph over the priests of Baal; his flight to Horeb (Sinai); Jehoshaphat and the alliance between Israel and Judah; Micaiah and the end of Ahab.

1 Kings 15:25–22:53.

Transition in Israel—Baasha, Zimri, and the House of Omri

- Reign of Nadab over Israel (15:25–31; c. 901–900 B.C.)
 - Conspiracy of Baasha of Issachar (15:26–30)
- Reign of **Baasha** over in Tirzah Israel (15:32–16:7; c. 900–877 B.C.)
 - Prophecy of **Jehu** against the House of Baasha (16:1–4)
- Reign of Elah in Israel (16:8–14; c. 877–876 B.C.)
- Reign of Zimri in Israel (16:15–20; c. 876 B.C., 7 days!)
- Reign of **Omri** in Israel (16:21–28; c. 876–869 B.C.)
 - **Samaria** the new capital (16:24–28)

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Reign of Ahab over Israel (16:29–22:40; c. 869–850 B.C)

- Beginning of Ahab's reign (16:29–30)
- **Ahab marries Jezebel and worships Baal** (16:31–34)
- **Elijah's prediction of drought** (17:1)
- God's provision for Elijah (17:2–16)
- **Elijah Revives the widow's son** (17:17–24)
- **Elijah's Challenge to the priests of Baal** (18:1–19)
- **Elijah's triumph over the priests of Baal** (18:20–46)
- **Elijah flees from Jezebel** (19:1–10)
- **Elijah meets God at Horeb** (19:11–18)
- Elijah's appointment of Elisha (19:19–21)
- Ahab's Syrian victories (20:1–43)
- Ahab's desire to have Naboth's vineyard (21:1–16)
- **Elijah pronounces God's sentence** (21:17–29)
- **Joint campaign with Judah against Aram** (22:1–12)
- **Micaiah predicts failure** (22:13–28)
- **Defeat and death of Ahab** (22:29–40)

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Ahab, Jezebel, and the Worship of Ba'al

- Beginning of Ahab's reign (16:29–30)
- **Ahab marries Jezebel and worships Baal** (16:31–34)
 - "And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in **the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat**, that he **took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians**, and went and **served Baal, and worshipped him**. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And **Ahab made a grove**; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him." (16:31–33)
 - **the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat** = worshipping YHWH the wrong way
 - **took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians** = from a people forbidden by the law
 - **served Baal, and worshipped him, Ahab made a grove** [Asherah, female deity] = worshipping false gods

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Elijah and the Drought

- Elijah's prediction of drought (17:1)
 - "... 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.**"
 - Baal was supposedly the god of the storm and rain → YHWH had power over his supposed rival's domain!
- **God's provision for Elijah** (17:2–16)
 - by the brook Cherith (17:2–7)
 - in the house of the widow of Zarephath (17:8–16)
 - *God's ability to provide for his servants resonates with the Savior's feeding multitudes in the NT gospels; also his symbolic and spiritual role as the Bread of Life, Fountain of Living Waters, etc.*
 - *Cf. also Jesus' time in Phoenecia, where he healed the daughter of the Syro-Phoenecian woman*
- **Elijah Revives the widow's son** (17:17–24)
 - Power over death, to be sure
 - *Jesus' raising of the son of the widow of Nain, daughter of Jairus*
 - Also, since Zarephath was in Phoenecia, YHWH had power in rival's territory!

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Elijah's Triumph over the Priests of Baal

- **Elijah's Challenge to the priests of Baal** (18:1–19)
- **Elijah's triumph over the priests of Baal** (18:20–40)
 - "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, **How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him:** but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." (18:21)
 - *How much do we vacillate between God and the idolatry of wordliness?*
 - **The challenge of the sacrifice**
 - On 18:25, Baal was thought to be in the underworld during the dry season, he was revived or brought back from the dead to bring rain
 - **Rebuilding the altar of the Lord** . . . (18:30–32) — technically a high place!
 - "Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. **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.**" (18:38–39)
 - Elijah = "YHWH is god!"
- **The Lord sends rain** (18:41–46)

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The Still Small Voice

- **Elijah flees from Jezebel (19:1–10)**
 - Motif of the mourning, almost depressed, prophet: “But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.” (19:4; cf. 2 Nephi 4)
- **Elijah meets God at Horeb (19:11–18)**
 - And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; **but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.**” (19:11–12)
- **Elijah’s appointment of Elisha (19:19–21)**
 - Anoints new kings of Syria (Hazael) and Israel (Jehu), showing that YHWH has power over the nations
 - Places his mantle upon Elisha, his prophetic successor

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Ahab’s Syrian victories (20:1–43)

- Ahab’s war with the Arameans (20:1–12)
- Prophetic Support (!) to Ahab (20:13–22)
- Arameans are defeated (20:23–34)
- A prophet condemns Ahab for sparing and making a treaty with the Syrian enemy (20:35–43)



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The End of Ahab

- Ahab's desire to have **Naboth's vineyard** (21:1–16)
 - **Jezebel conspires to have Naboth killed so that Ahab can have the property—an example of murder to get gain!**
- Elijah pronounces God's sentence (21:17–29)
- Joint campaign with Judah against Aram (22:1–12)
 - Good king **Jehoshaphat** of Judah, Ahab's vassal, is forced to participate
- **Micaiah** predicts failure (22:13–28)
- Defeat and death of Ahab (22:29–40)

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Final Events in 2 Kings

- Reign of **Jehoshaphat** in Judah (22:41–50)
 - A **good** king in **2 Chronicles 17:1–20:37** —he removes the high places and the “groves,” has priests teach the law throughout Judah
 - **The Lord delivers Judah from Edom (Mt. Seir), Moab, and Ammon after Jehoshaphat prays**
- Reign of **Ahazariah** in Israel 22:51–53
 - **Typical bad northern king—sin of Jeroboam and Baal**

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