

1 KINGS 16-21

WEEK IN REVIEW + FAMILY GUIDE

WEEK IN REVIEW

As we continue through the book of 1 Kings, we see a divided kingdom as a result of the sin of the people. It was split between the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The Northern Kingdom had nineteen kings total, and none of them were **righteous**. This means that they were not in right standing with God. There was a need for God to send **prophets** to the people to warn them of their wrongdoings. Prophets were messengers of God. The purpose of prophecy was to proclaim God's Word for both the present and the future. One of the most well-known prophets is named Elijah, who we see in these chapters. We are introduced to the prophet Elijah in 1 Kings 17 during the reign of King Ahab, who is known as the most wicked king in Israel. Elijah's name means "My God is Yahweh". He comes into the picture announcing a drought and a famine. It had not rained in three years and there is no food.

The most famous story from Elijah takes place in 1 Kings 18. King Ahab and Queen Jezebel had led the nation of Israel into worship of false gods (also called Baal worship). The people of Israel went back and forth between their worship of the One True God and the worship of false gods. The Lord told Elijah to confront King Ahab directly about this. Elijah obeyed and gathered all of the Israelites and the 450 prophets of Baal together at a place called Mount Carmel. Elijah was incredibly outnumbered. He challenged them to a showdown between the God of Israel and the prophets of Baal. Two teams, two religions, all on one mountain. Each prepared a sacrifice, but they were not allowed to light it themselves. Elijah challenged the people to make a choice and says, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him."

The prophets of Baal did all kinds of things to get their "gods" to listen to them, but nothing happened. Elijah rebuilt an altar for the Lord with twelve stones representing the twelve tribes of Israel. He also covered it in water three times. Right after that, fire fell down from Heaven, and everyone saw who the One True God really was. Just like the people of Israel, we have a choice. We can choose to follow the "gods" or things of this world that have no meaning, or we can choose to follow the One True God, who is the only God who is alive, active, and in control of all things. God is the only one who is worthy of our worship, and the only one worthy to follow.

FAMILY GUIDE

BIG IDEA:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our God is alive, real, and the only one worthy to follow!
KEY STORIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Elijah predicts a drought ● Elijah and the prophets of Baal ● Elijah's encounter with the Lord
KEY VERSES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 Kings 16:30 – “Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him.” ● 1 Kings 18:21 – “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.” ● 1 Kings 21:29 – “Have you not murdered a man and seized his property? ... Because you have done this, the Lord declares: ‘I am going to bring disaster on you.’”
WORDS TO KNOW:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Righteous <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To be in right standing with God ● Prophets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Messengers of God ● Prophecy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To proclaim God's Word for both the present and the future

Reflection Questions

1.	How many kings were righteous in the Northern Kingdom? Who was known as the most wicked of these kings?
2.	Who did God send to be messengers of God to the people?
3.	What was happening in Israel during the time of Elijah?
4.	What does the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel teach us about the character of God?