

THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD

CHILDREN'S BIBLE LESSONS



Elijah Is Taken Away



LEVEL 5
LESSON 8

Elijah Is Taken Away

In the last Lesson, we saw that Elijah was a prophet whom God used to perform a number of amazing miracles. He was God's messenger warning the nation of Israel of His punishment for their rebellion and idolatry. This commission brought him before the evil king Ahab and his equally wicked wife, Jezebel.

He told them that a three-and-a-half year drought would befall Israel—and it happened!

Elijah later confronted 450 prophets of Baal in a public showdown. It gave the Israelites dramatic proof that Elijah served the true God, and that Baal was a false, imaginary god, invented by deceived men. After this event, the false prophets were executed.

Jezebel's Vow

When Ahab told Jezebel that the prophets of her pagan religion had been killed, she was furious. She sent the following message to Elijah: "Within the next day, I am going to make sure that you are dead like those prophets. If I fail, let the gods end my life!"

She then began plotting to turn her words into reality.

When Elijah heard that the Queen of Israel had placed a death sentence on his head, he was stunned—and began to feel overwhelmed. His head was spinning as he thought, "Jezebel is the second-most powerful person in this nation. She has government officials and an army at her beck and call. How will I escape?"

Although he had seen God perform miracles—and many of these miracles were performed through him!—Elijah allowed himself to become discouraged. He let doubts about God's purpose for him creep into his mind. Fill in the blanks in the following verse to find out what he asked God while he was in this state of mind: "He _____ that he might _____, and said, It is enough! Now, LORD, _____; for I am no better than my fathers" (I Kings 19:4).

Elijah was so downcast that he wanted God to end his life! He saw that, despite all his hard work and his warnings, the nation of Israel would not repent of idolatry (worshiping false gods). He also felt terribly

lonely, carrying out his mission on his own with no one to help him. After making this misguided request to God, he lay down under a juniper tree and fell asleep, exhausted.

God knew that Elijah needed extra strength and encouragement. So He sent an angel to help him. The angel touched Elijah, who stirred awake. “Arise and eat!” said the ministering spirit. Elijah saw a freshly baked loaf of bread sitting next to him, along with a container full of fresh, cold water. He ate some of the bread and drank some water, and then fell asleep again. The angel touched him again, and told him to finish the bread, since he would soon set out on a long journey. Elijah ate, and began walking.

Elijah at Mt. Horeb

Miraculously, Elijah was able to travel 40 days and 40 nights straight without eating another meal (I Kings 19:8)! He walked all the way to Mt. Horeb, also called Mt. Sinai. This was the mountain from which, many years before, God had given the Ten Commandments to Israel through Moses. Elijah saw a cave near the foot of the mountain and went inside. God then asked him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

The prophet answered, “I have been very zealous for You: for the children of Israel have broken your covenant, torn down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life” (vs. 10).

God told him to leave the cave and stand on the mountain. A wind began to blow, becoming increasingly stronger. It became

so fierce that it tore huge pieces of rock from the face of the mountain. When the wind stopped, an earthquake shook the ground. Then a roaring fire made its way across the mountain!

After this incredible display, Elijah heard a still small voice, like a whisper. God was showing Elijah that He has infinite power, and has perfect control over events. Again He asked Elijah, “What are you doing here?” Elijah gave the same weary answer as before.

God told him that he had three very important tasks to carry out. Read I Kings 19:15-16 and list these tasks below: _____

Then God gave Elijah wonderful news, “I have reserved 7,000 Israelites, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.” He was not alone after all!

God sometimes allows us to go through difficult times in order to make us stronger. He also wants to know whether we will stand loyally with Him, alone if necessary. However, He will never forsake us as long as we do not turn our backs on Him. Even when we think we are defeated, God can still win our battles for us!

Elijah’s Student

Elijah left Mt. Sinai, his spirits having been lifted, determined to carry out the commission before him. He found Elisha (who would be trained to replace Elijah) plowing a field

with a team of 12 yoke of oxen. Elijah put his mantle (coat) on the younger man's shoulders, a gesture that symbolized Elisha coming under, and sharing, Elijah's authority.

Elisha asked Elijah for permission to say goodbye to his family, which Elijah granted. He then slaughtered a pair of oxen and used the wood in his plow to start a fire. After sharing a farewell meal with his relatives, Elisha joined Elijah.

Samaria Under Siege

At this time, the army of Syria, led by King Benhadad, swept into Israel and surrounded Samaria, the capital. The Syrian army completely cut off Israel's supply line, causing their food to become more and more scarce. No one was allowed to leave the city. The future looked bleak for Ahab and the rest of the Israelites.

Benhadad assumed the people of Samaria would soon give up, so he sent men to Ahab to collect tribute of gold and silver. Ahab reluctantly gave in to the Syrian king's terms. But when Benhadad found out Ahab had agreed, he wanted more. "I will send my _____ to you _____ about this time, and they shall search your _____ and the _____ of your servants. And it shall be, that whatever is _____ in your _____, they will put in their _____ and _____ it" (I Kings 20:6). Benhadad wanted everything in the city.

This was too much for Ahab, so he sent a message to Benhadad that Israel would not agree to these new conditions.

This infuriated the king of Syria, and he told his men to get ready to attack. He went

back to his tent in celebration, assuming they would have a quick victory over Israel.

While the Syrian army was preparing to attack, God sent a man to Ahab. "I carry a message from God," the prophet said. "'Have you seen how big Syria's army is? Watch, I will help you defeat them! You will see that I am God!'"

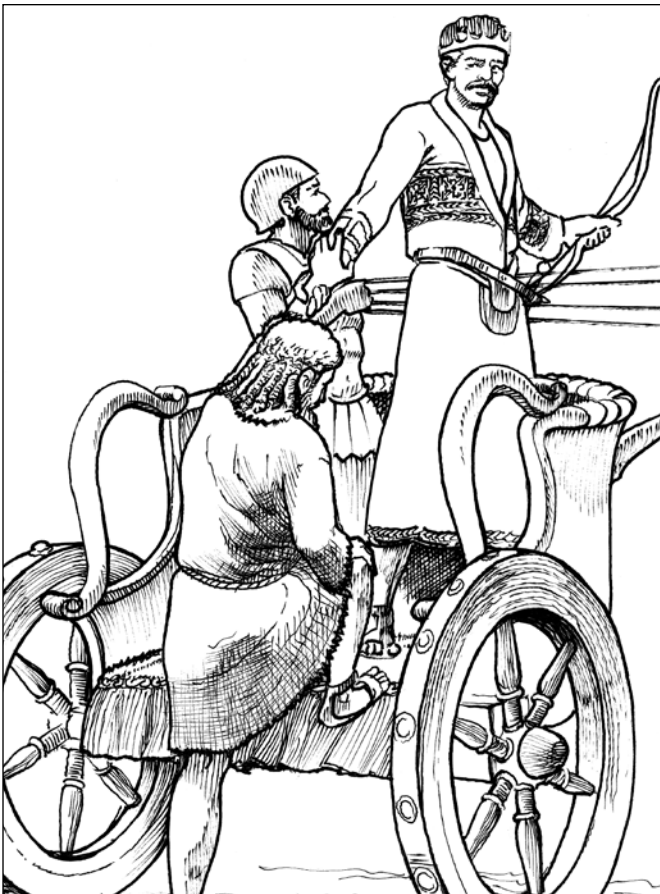
After the prophet left, Ahab gathered a tiny army of 7,000 men and 232 princes. They ran out of the city and attacked the Syrians with all of their strength, knowing that God was with them. That day, the outnumbered Israelites quickly defeated the large army of Syrians, gaining a huge victory with the help of God.

After escaping on horseback, Benhadad was very angry that he had lost. He did not realize that it was God who had helped the Israelites defeat the Syrian army. His servants told him that the reason Israel had won was because their gods were gods of the hills. "They are stronger in the hills," they said to the king. "We must get them to fight in the plain where they are weak." This sounded like a good explanation to Benhadad. He began to prepare his army for another invasion. So once again, the Syrians attacked the land of Israel, and Ahab and his army went out to meet them.

Before this battle, God told Ahab that he would once again overcome the Syrian army. Write out I Kings 20:28. _____

The Israelites were victorious, just as God had promised. But after Ahab captured Benhadad, he made a big mistake. He let Benhadad go free and made a truce with him. God told Ahab that because he had done this, Ahab would eventually lose his life along with the lives of many of his people.

To the Israelites, Ahab seemed like a fearless leader and a great king. He had twice defeated king Benhadad's large armies with much smaller ones. But Ahab knew that God had given him those victories, and there is no evidence that he was thankful or gave God any credit for them.



Even with God's miraculous intervention, Ahab, along with his evil wife, Jezebel, continually rebelled against and disobeyed God. Only once in awhile did Ahab recognize God, and it never lasted long.

Naboth's Vineyard

Now there was a man named Naboth who lived next to Ahab's palace. Naboth had a beautiful vineyard. One day, Ahab noticed it, and thought to himself, "This would be a perfect addition to my garden."

So Ahab offered Naboth a large sum of money for the land, but Naboth rejected it. Ahab persisted, and asked him, "What if I traded an even better part of my garden for your vineyard?" Fill in the blanks with Naboth's answer found in I Kings 21:3. "But Naboth said to Ahab, 'The ____ forbid that I should ____ the ____ of my ____ to you!'" Ahab knew he was not going to succeed in forcing Naboth to sell him the inherited land, so he went home, lay on his bed and fasted in self-pity.

By coveting Naboth's land, Ahab was directly breaking the Tenth Commandment, which says, "You shall not covet" (Exodus 20:17). When Jezebel saw that Ahab was not eating, she asked him what was wrong. Ahab explained the whole situation.

Jezebel told him that she would take care of everything. "You are the king! Get up, eat, and do not worry. You will have Naboth's vineyard soon!" she promised.

So Jezebel sent letters to the officials of Naboth's city, stamped with the king's name, and sealed with his seal. She com-



stoned, so the Israelites took Naboth outside of the city and stoned him to death.

Jezebel was proud of herself when she told Ahab what she had done. “Naboth is taken care of. His vineyard is all yours!” (I Kings 21:15).

Ahab went to see for himself, and sure enough, the vineyard was his for the taking. But God was very upset with Ahab for letting Jezebel cause the death of an innocent man, so He sent Elijah the prophet to confront Ahab.

Elijah carried a special message for Ahab from God. “Look, because of what you have done, in making Israel sin, and angering Me, I will bring evil on you and your family.”

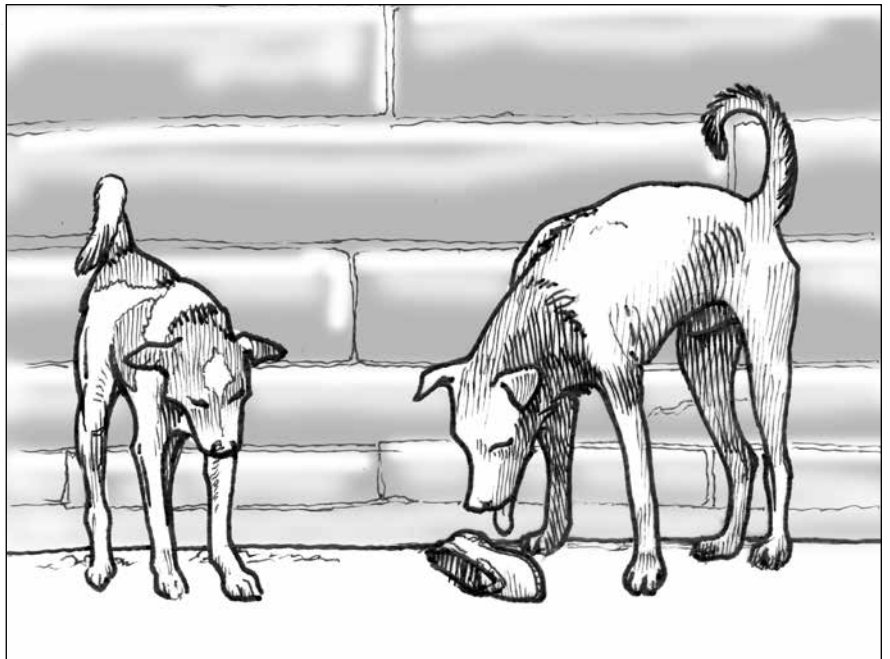
Ahab was also told by Elijah that because of what he had done, after he died, dogs would lick up his blood just like Naboth’s.

Elijah also prophesied about Ahab’s wife Jezebel: “She will also die and be eaten by dogs near the wall of Jezreel.”

When Ahab heard this, he ripped up his clothes and refused to eat. He was sorry for

manded everyone to declare a fast and to bring Naboth before the entire city.

She had them bring out two men, false witnesses, who would lie against Naboth before all the people. They accused him, saying, “This man blasphemed against God and the king!” The law states that blasphemers are to be



what he had done, but this did not cause him to change his behavior permanently. God, in His mercy, did not let his children die until after Ahab had died. This was because Ahab humbled himself before God.

True or False?

Write T on the line if the statement is true, or write an F if the statement is false.

- ___ 1. Ahab was the king of Israel, and Benhadad was the king of Syria.
- ___ 2. God helped the Syrians overcome the Israelites twice in battle.
- ___ 3. Ahab was thankful to God for giving the Israelites the victory over the Syrians.
- ___ 4. Benhadad's wife, Jezebel, had an innocent man killed for his vineyard.
- ___ 5. Because of Ahab's sin, God sent the prophet Elisha to him.

Israel and Judah Ally

During the time that Ahab was ruling over Israel, Jehoshaphat was over Judah. Partly because Jehoshaphat was a good king, who put his faith in God, Judah did not drift from God as far as Israel did.

Ahab asked the king of Judah to come to his palace court for a party. At the party, Ahab talked Jehoshaphat into forming an alliance with him against their enemy Syria. Ahab wanted to capture the Syrian city of Ramoth-Gilead. He knew that, with Judah's help, they could take it.

But before they went out to fight, Ahab asked the false prophets of Jezebel whether they would conquer the Syrians. "You will

certainly defeat them in battle. Do not fear!" they all said in unison.

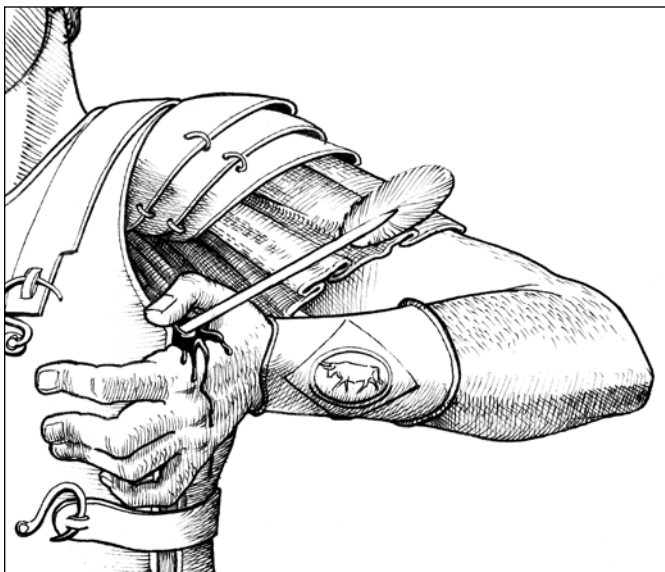
Ahab Is Warned by God

But Jehoshaphat wanted to know for sure, so he sent for a prophet of God. Ahab called Micah, one of the last true prophets alive, and he came before the kings of Israel and Judah. Micah had something different to say about the coming battle. On the lines below, write out Micah's prophecy from I Kings 22:17. _____

Micah also prophesied that Ahab would be slain at the battle of Ramoth-Gilead. Micah's prophecy made Ahab very angry, so he had the prophet thrown in jail and only given bread and water.

Despite God's warning, Ahab went out to fight against the army of Syria. So that the enemy would not recognize him, Ahab dressed up as a regular soldier, and rode his chariot into battle.

Benhadad, the king of Syria, ordered his top men to hunt down and kill Ahab. "Only worry about Ahab, find him and kill him," the king told them. But because Ahab was disguised, Benhadad's men could not find him. Randomly, one of the Syrian archers drew his bow back and shot a single arrow into the air. This same arrow hit between Ahab's armor and wounded him. Later that



day, around sunset, Ahab died from the wound.

Ahab was brought back to Samaria, the capital of Israel, and laid near a pool of water. This water was near the place where Naboth had been stoned. When the dead king's servants cleaned the blood from Ahab's chariot and breastplate, dogs came by and licked up the blood. This was an exact fulfillment of the prophecy that Elijah made, that dogs would some day lick Ahab's blood for his disobedience to God. God keeps His word, even to the exact detail!

Ahaziah's Short Reign

After Ahab's death, his son Ahaziah ruled over Israel for two years. Although only king for a short time, Ahaziah followed his father's evil ways and angered God by worshipping Baal.

One day, while walking in his upper chamber, he fell down to the lower level and was injured. Ahaziah was not sure if he would recover from this serious wound, so

he sent men to ask his pagan idol, Baalzebub, if he would get better.

Elijah went out to meet the messengers because God had informed him what Ahaziah had done. Elijah said, "Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to ask of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron?" Elijah had a message from God for Ahaziah, and told Ahaziah's men to tell the king that he would die because he did not trust in God.

The men told the king everything that Elijah had said to them. After they were finished, Ahaziah asked them, "What did he look like?"

They answered and said, "He was an extremely hairy man. He wore a robe tied at the waist by a leather belt." Ahaziah immediately realized that this man was none other than Elijah the prophet.

"Go, and bring this man to me," he commanded. After searching for Elijah, the leader of a 50-man group of soldiers found him on a large hill and ordered him to go with them.

God wanted to prove to them that Elijah was His servant. So He sent fire down from heaven and quickly killed all 51 of the king's men! After hearing about this, Ahaziah sent another band of 51 men to retrieve Elijah. Fill in the blanks from II Kings 1:12 with what happened after Ahaziah sent the next group of men. "So Elijah answered and said to them, 'If I am a _____ of _____, let _____ come down from _____ and _____ you and your _____ men.' And the _____ of _____ came down from heaven and _____ him and his _____."

The king was very stubborn so he sent a third group of men to Elijah. This time, an angel of God appeared to Elijah and told him to go back with them to see Ahaziah. Once Elijah came before the king, he told him that he would die from his wounds. Ahaziah never left his bed.

God Takes Elijah Away

One day, Elijah and Elisha were traveling from Jericho to the Jordan River. When they arrived at the banks of the river, Elijah took off his coat and hit the water with it. Immediately, the waters parted, and they walked across the river to the other shore.

Elisha knew that he would soon take over Elijah's job, and that God had other plans for Elijah.

In the following lines, write down Elisha's last request to Elijah from II Kings 2:9. _____

Elijah answered him by saying, "If you see me, as I am being taken away, what you





asked for will be given to you. If you do not see me, it will not be granted to you.”

Elijah and Elisha continued on their way when, suddenly, a chariot of fire pulled by horses of fire came before them. They headed straight toward Elijah, separating him from Elisha. In a split-second, the chariot and horses took Elijah with them, and he ascended into the sky in a whirlwind.

When this incredible display was over, Elisha picked up Elijah’s coat from the ground. This special coat was a symbol of Elijah’s authority as a prophet of God. Now that Elijah was gone, Elisha would hold this office, to represent God to Israel.

Elisha went back to the bank of the Jordan River and struck it with Elijah’s

coat. As it hit, the waters parted so he was able to cross the dry riverbed.

Some of the young men saw the miracle and quickly realized that God was now using Elisha to do His Work. These young men were being taught God’s way of life by His true servants, the prophets. They asked Elisha what had happened to Elijah, and he answered, saying, “God took Elijah to a different area in a chariot of fire; in a great whirlwind.” They asked Elisha if they should look for Elijah, to make sure he was okay. Elisha wisely answered them that it would be pointless. Elisha had faith that God was with Elijah. But this answer did not please the young men, so he let them search.

After searching three whole days, the youth were not able to find Elijah, so they returned to Jericho.

The “Elijah” to Come

Elijah was specially chosen by God, as a prophet to Israel, to be His tool in witnessing to a nation that had turned their backs on God to serve idols.

Hundreds of years later, recorded in the New Testament, we see another prophet whom God used, named John the Baptist. He came in the *spirit and power* of Elijah to make way for Jesus Christ’s first coming. On the following lines, write out Luke 1:17.

After preparing the way for Christ, John was put in jail by the time Christ's ministry had begun. Fill in the blanks from Matthew 17:10-11 about Christ's prophecy of yet another "Elijah" who was to come. "And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Why then do the _____ say that _____ must _____ first?'" Jesus

answered and said to them, 'Indeed, _____ is coming _____ and will _____ all _____.'"

John was a *type* of the coming "Elijah." This man would be sent by God in the spirit and power of Elijah to bring a message just *before* Christ's Second Coming to reign on Earth. Read about this

man in Malachi 4:5-6 and just how important his coming would be. God said that if He did not send this man, He would destroy the entire earth!

This prophesied Elijah to come would pave the way for Christ's Second Coming, just as John the Baptist prepared the way for His first coming. This second fulfillment of the Elijah was prophesied to

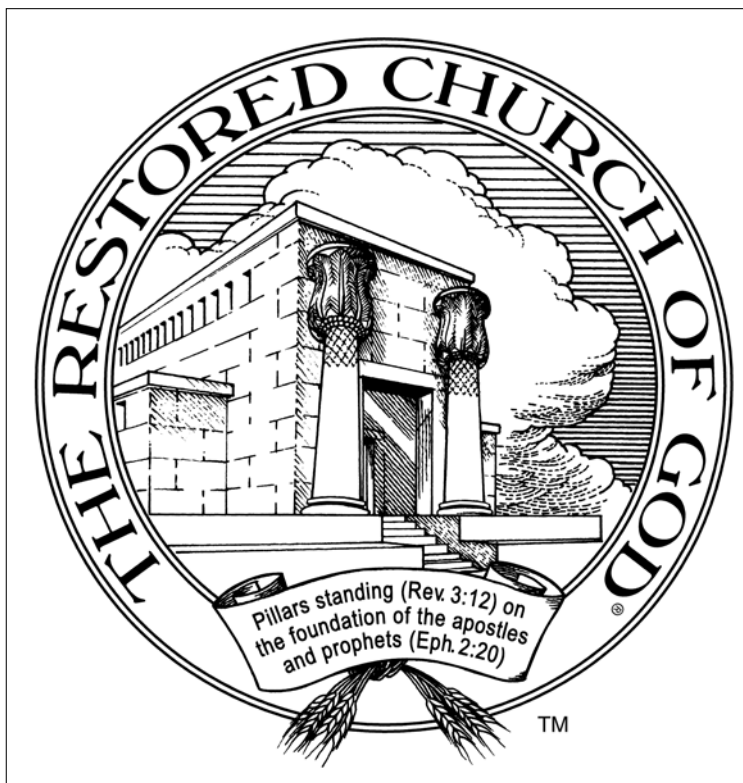
"restore all things," referring to the restoration of God's government in the Church, Christ's true gospel, and many teachings of the Bible that had been lost over centuries.

This role would be fulfilled by the final leader of God's Church, Mr. David Pack. During his over 45-year ministry, which began in 1970, he received unique training for this task. Using the latest technology, he is bringing Christ's gospel message

of the kingdom of God to the world with the membership of The Restored Church of God faithfully supporting him.

God's Church continues the pattern established through Herbert W. Armstrong in carrying out the Work of God through many books and booklets, *The Bible Introduction Course*, *The Real*

Truth[™], *The Pillar*[™], *Ambassador Youth* magazines, *The World to Come*[™] program, and many other tools. Hundreds of items are all available on the Internet, and are a crucial part in preaching the gospel to the nations. They help to teach and train both young and old in preparation for the soon-coming kingdom of God!



BIBLE MEMORY: Matthew 17:11-12; Malachi 4:5-6

MATCHING

Match the names on the left with their descriptions on the right by placing the correct letter in the numbered blanks.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ___ 1. Ahab | A. The Syrian King who invaded Israel |
| ___ 2. John the Baptist | B. The man chosen by God to prepare the way for Christ's first coming |
| ___ 3. Elijah | C. Elijah's successor |
| ___ 4. Jehoshaphat | D. The king of Israel who was married to Jezebel |
| ___ 5. Elisha | E. The man who was killed for not selling his vineyard |
| ___ 6. Jezebel | F. The prophet who was put in prison by Ahab for giving truthful prophecies |
| ___ 7. Ahaziah | G. The evil queen of Israel, married to King Ahab |
| ___ 8. Naboth | H. Ahab's son who died from wounds caused by a fall |
| ___ 9. Benhadad | I. A powerful prophet of God to ancient Israel |
| ___ 10. Micah | J. A king of Judah who allied with Ahab |