

**RABBINICAL THESIS**

The Elijah/Elisha Cycle

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#### Summary of text immersion

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Number of chapters:	N/A

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The contribution of this text immersion is that it provides a close reading of the Elijah/Elisha cycle identifying and analyzing literary devices used within it.

The goal of this text immersion was to provide a translation of I Kings 16:23-21:29 and II Kings 1:1-3:27, as well as to examine in depth the many rich historical, etiological, theological and sociological teachings in these texts .

This text study is divided into three columns: The column on the right side of the page is the original Hebrew. The middle column is a translation of the Hebrew text. The column on the left hand side of the page is where I have written up my notes and commentary on the verses.

The sources I used were primarily the text itself, as well as translations of I and II Kings, commentaries, lexicons and concordances, Encyclopedias, books and articles on I and II Kings as listed in the bibliography, as well as BibleWorks software. I worked weekly with Dr. David Sperling on these verses, and much of what I have written here is a reflection of these conversations and my research.

Introduction:

In Deuteronomy 18:15-18 we read:

נָבִיא מִקִּרְבְּךָ מֵאַחֲיֶיךָ כָּמוֹנִי יָקִים לְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲדִירוֹ תִשְׁמָעוּן: כָּכָל אֲשֶׁר־שָׁאֵלְתָּ מֵעַם יְהוָה  
אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּתוֹרַת בְּרִינֹם הַקֹּהֵל לֵאמֹר לֹא אֶסֶף לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶת־קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֶת־הָאֵשׁ הַגְּדֹלָה הַנֹּאֶת  
לֹא־אֶרְאֶה עוֹד וְלֹא אֶמּוֹת: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי הִיטִיבוּ אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְוּ: נָבִיא אֲקִים לָהֶם מִקִּרְבָּם  
אֲחֵיהֶם כָּמוֹךָ וְגַמְתִּי דְבָרֶיךָ בְּפִיו וְדִבַּר אֲלֵיהֶם אֶת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶנוּ:

The Eternal your God will raise up for you a prophet from among your own people, like myself; him you shall heed. This is just what you asked of the Eternal your God at Horeb, on the day of the Assembly, saying, "Let me not hear the voice of the Eternal my God any longer or see this wondrous fire any more, lest I die." Whereupon the Eternal said to me, "They have done well in speaking thus. I will raise up a prophet for them from among their own people, like yourself: I will put My words in his mouth and he will speak to them all that I command him. (Translation from JPS, 1985)

The above text provides an etiology of prophecy. We have here a move away from direct communication between the Israelites and YHWH, to that of an intermediary, namely, a prophet who would serve as a representative of YHWH's will on earth. Elijah and Elisha were unique in that they performed wonders more than any of the other great literary prophets. We read in Deuteronomy 13:3 that prophets can perform signs and wonders, but aside from Elijah and Elisha, we see very little works of wonder by prophets. Within the Elijah and Elisha cycle, however, we see astonishing things happen such as people being fed and sustained when little or no food is available, and people being raised from the dead.

When we first meet Elijah we are told very little about him. There is no genealogy given for Elijah. He is simply called *Eliyahu ha tishbi*, "Elijah, the prophet." Our lack of knowledge of Elijah's background only serves to emphasize a sense of mystery around him. Elijah is a figure who seems to appear and disappear at YHWH's will; he seems to be a kind of being imbued with divine power. Even within the biblical narrative, Elijah's mysterious and miraculous abilities are acknowledged.

We are first introduced to Elisha when he becomes Elijah's assistant. By the end of the third chapter of II Kings, it is clear that both YHWH as well as the Israelite people accept him as Elijah's successor. He, too, like Elijah, is a wonder worker imbued with a kind of divine power.

The Elisha and Elijah cycle is rife with historical and sociological material. We learn about the historical and sociological conditions of Elijah's lifetime through a synchronism; An adversary of Elijah's, Ahab (called Ahabu in Akkadian), is mentioned in historical sources. Ahab's father, Omri, is mentioned in the Moabite stone. This stone gives us a 9th century reference to Omri and Ahab in a dateable extra-biblical source. Thus, while the stories in which Elijah is imbued with supernatural powers may seem at times to be too outlandish to be historically accurate, at least we are able to situate some of these stories in a real historical period.

The Elijah and Elisha cycle also gives us insight into the theological beliefs during the biblical period. We see that monotheism was not prevalent among the people through the stories in the cycle. Elijah and Elisha's main purpose as prophets was to help spread the belief in YHWH as the only true God. Looking at the ways in which they worked to spread this message gives us insight into the politics and theology of biblical times. My text immersion is an attempt to share some of the many teachings we find within these stories.

### Index of Cited Sources

Abbreviations for the Primary Sources Used in the Main Text of This Text Immersion:

AB=Anchor Bible

BDB=Brown, Driver, Briggs: A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament

EJ=Encyclopedia Judaica

JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1985 ed)\*

JPS SB=Jewish Publication Society, Study Bible

BW NET=Bibleworks software access to NET (New English Translation) Bible commentary

\*All translations of biblical verses from places in the Tanakh outside of I and II Kings are taken from that of the JPS, 1985 edition.

<p>עמרי Omri</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are told in this verse that Omri ruled for twelve years, however, there is a synchronism in the text and it is unclear if he ruled eight years or twelve years. In 16:15 we are told that war followed his death, but in 16:29 the war is included in Omri's rule.</li> <li>Omri ruled from approximately 882-871 BCE. (AB, p. 416)</li> <li>We are not given a great deal of detail about Omri's accomplishments in this text, however archeological finding from the Iron Age referred to as, The Moabite Stone, gives us extra biblical material that corroborates Omri's reign and lists Omri's military victories and conquest of land among his achievements. "Omri, king of Israel, oppressed Moab many years.... [Omri] has taken possession of all the land of Medeba and dwelt there during his lifetime and half the lifetime of his sons." (AB, II Kings, Appendix I) The inscription also refers to the "house of Omri," confirming that Omri established a dynasty. (EJ, vol 15, p. 422)</li> <li>The author of I Kings would have left out Omri's successes, as they would not have served the author's agenda of showing Omri to be an unfit ruler who worshiped other gods was evil in the eyes of YHWH.</li> </ul> <p>In spite of the relative stability that Omri achieved in internal affairs and his improvement of Israel's political status externally, the biblical historiographer finds fault with Omri (I Kings 16:25–26). This negative assessment stems from the religious and social viewpoint and is in accordance with the Deuteronomic school. Indeed Omri did not abolish the worship of the golden calves which Jeroboam the son of Nebat had introduced." (EJ, Vol 15, pp. 422-23)</p>	<p>In the thirty-first year of Asa, King of Judah, Omri ruled over Israel for twelve years. He ruled in Tirza for six years.</p>	<p>16:23 בשנת שלשים ואחת שנה לאסא מלך יהודה מלך עמרי על- ישראל שתים עשרה שנה בתרצה מלך שש-שנים:</p>
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<p>כֶּכֶר Talent This refers to a round piece of metal, which was used for commercial transactions. A single talent would have been valued as the equivalence with a piece of metal that weighed 75.558 pounds. (JPS SB, p. 2105)</p>	<p>And he purchased the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver and</p>	<p>16:24 וַיִּקְנוּ אֶת־הַהֵר שִׁמְרוֹן מֵאֵת שֹׁמֶר בְּכֶכֶרִים בָּסָף וַיִּבְנוּ אֶת־הַהֵר וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שֵׁם הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה עַל־שֵׁם־שֹׁמֶר אֲדוֹנֵי הַהֵר שִׁמְרוֹן:</p>
<p>שִׁמְרוֹן Samaria (modern Sebaste) –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samaria was likely a major center of for the production of oil and wine before King Omri established it as the capitol of Northern Israel. (see EJ, p. 716)</li> <li>Samaria's location on top of a hill may have been a primary reason why Omri chose it, as well as its location being on top of a hill, which would give its inhabitants the ability to see enemies approaching. This echoes David's choice of Jerusalem.</li> </ul> <p>“Excavations at Samaria/Sebaste have uncovered the architectural remains of the Omri dynasty, whose first kings developed the site.” (AB, p. 416)</p>	<p>built up the hill (made a city) and he named the city that he build Samaria after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill.</p>	
<p>שֹׁמֶר Shemer This verse gives us the etiology for Shomron, however, scholars call the reason for naming the city Samaria into question, doubting that Omri would have taken the name of the previous of the hill's name into account. (AB, pp. 416-7)</p>		
<p>וַיִּבֶן אֶת־הָעִיר He made a city Asa took a territory and built it up so that he will not bound to anyone's rule. At the time he would have been under a monarchic or tribal system, respectively. By building his own city, he avoided being ruled by over these other established systems. The dynastic system in Jerusalem was much more intricate than the one in place in Judah. This was because there had been several dynasties in the Northern Kingdom. Omri, wanted to build up his own base uncontested.</p>		

<p>וַיֵּרַע מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי he was more evil than all who came before him</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the Northern Kingdom is ultimately brought to an end before Judah, the descriptions of the Northern Kings found in this book, carry the biases of the Southerners. For the biblical writers, Jeroboam, was an evil king who broke the kingdom of David apart in tearing away from Judah and settling in the North. In the Bible, Jeroboam is despised for splitting up the kingdom, for setting up an unethical society in which the dishonest and immoral are rewarded, and for encouraging idol worship. In fact, the story of the golden calf in Exodus 32 is a polemic against Jeroboam, as Jeroboam constructed golden calves for the Northerners to worship (I Kings 12:25-43).</li> </ul> <p>“The golden calf which either served as a pedestal on which YHWH stood, or actually represented YHWH [in I Kings 12], was opposed by the writer of Exodus 32. That author composed the story of the golden calf in the wilderness (cf. I Kings 12:28 with Ex. 32:4) as a polemic against Jeroboam’s cultic restoration by claiming that its origins were in ancient rebellion against YHWH” (EJ, Vol 11, pp. 140-141)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When one understands how terribly the biblical authors depict Jeroboam, it is impressive that they say here that Omri was even more evil than Jeroboam.</li> </ul>	<p>But Omri did evil in the eyes of the Eternal he was more evil than all who came before him.</p>	<p>16:25 וַיַּעַשׂה עֲמֹרִי הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּרַע מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי:</p>
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<p>הַבְּלִיָּהִם idols</p> <p>This word is more literally translated as “futilities,” and the JPS uses “futilities” in their translation of this verse. However, it is a euphemism for idols (things that have no power and are of little value, therefore futilities). We see <i>hevel</i> used in this way in many places throughout the Bible; for example, Deut. 32:21 and I-Kings 16:13.</p>	<p>He followed all the ways of Jeroboam, son of Nabat and in the sin of having caused Israel to sin, vexing the Eternal, the God of Israel with their idols.</p>	<p>16:26 וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּכָל־דֶּרֶךְ יִרְבְּעָם בֶּן־נִבָּט וּבְחֻטְאָתָיו [וּבְחֻטְאֵהוּ] אֲשֶׁר הִחֲטִיא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַכְעִיס אֶת־ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּהֲבִלֵיהֶם:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In this verse, the author does not want to emphasize Omri's bravery, but simply directs us elsewhere. The technique of deemphasizing a ruler's successful acts by simply referring the reader to the annals of that ruler is used throughout the I and II Kings, for example, I Kings 14:19, 14:29, 15:23, II Kings 8:23, 10:34, 13:12 and 14:15.</li> <li>We know Omri had done many mighty deeds. The biblical notice is corroborated by the Moabite Stone. (the text of the Moabite Stone can be found in AB, II Kings, Appendix A).</li> </ul>	<p>As for the remainder of Omri's deeds that he did and the bravery that he performed, are they not written in the scroll “The Annals of the kings of Israel?”</p>	<p>16:27 וְלִמְר דְּבָרֵי עֲמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וּגְבוּרָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הֶלֵא־הֶם כְּתוּבִים עַל־ סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַמֶּלֶכִּים לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>
<p>וַיִּשְׁכַּב...עִם אֲבוֹתָיו [Omri] was buried with his ancestors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is an idiom for dying peacefully. As opposed to dying on the battlefield, which in the Semitic world, was understood as a consequence of God's anger with a person for having committed a terrible sin.</li> </ul>	<p>Omri was buried with his ancestors In Samaria, and his son Ahab ruled after him.</p>	<p>16:28 וַיִּשְׁכַּב עֲמֹרִי עִם־אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּקְבֹּר בְּשֻׁמְרוֹן וַיִּמְלֹךְ אַחָאב בְּנוֹ תַחְתָּיו:</p>

<p>אחאב Ahab</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ahab ruled between 873-852 BCE.</li> <li>He was the first Israelite king mentioned in a cuneiform inscription; Ahabu Sirilaya (AB, p. 420)</li> </ul>	<p>Ahab, the son of Omri, came to rule over Israel in the thirty-eighth year of King Asa of Judah. Ahab the son of Omri ruled over Israel in Samaria for twenty-two years.</p>	<p>16:29 וַאֲחָאב בֶּן־ עֲמֹרִי מֶלֶךְ־עַל־ יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּשָּׁנָה שְׁלִישִׁים וּשְׁמֹנֶה שָׁנָה לְאַסָּא מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה וַיִּמְלֹךְ אֲחָאב בֶּן־עֲמֹרִי עַל־ יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּשְּׁמֹנֶה עָשָׂר שָׁנָה:</p>
	<p>Ahab, the son of Omri, did evil in the eyes of the Eternal, more than all who came before him.</p>	<p>16:30 וַיַּעַשׂ אֲחָאב בֶּן־עֲמֹרִי הָרָע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר לִפְנָיו:</p>
<p>זיזבל Jezebel Jezebel's name can be parsed to as זבל – אי meaning, "Zebul exists." Zebul was one of the names used for the god Baal. <i>Zebul</i> itself means "prince" or the like. (AB, p. 420)</p> <p>אתבאל Ethbaal Another name related to the god Baal. Ethbaal's name can be parsed as <i>Eto baal</i>, meaning, "Baal is with him." Ethbaal reigned from approximately 887-856 BCE. Josephus made mention of him in his writings. (AB, p. 420)</p> <p>Baal Names We see with the names of Jezebel and Ethbal that the Sidonians had God bearing names. In this way, they are similar to the Israelites.</p> <p>צידון Sidon/Phoenicia The area of land that is now Lebanon.</p>	<p>The slightest sins he did were following the ways of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, he took as a wife, Jezebel, the daughter of King Ethbaal of the Phoenicians and he went and served Baal and he bowed down to him.</p>	<p>16:31 וַיְהִי כִּנְקֹל לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּחַטָּאוֹת יִרְבֹּעַם בֶּן־נִבְטַן וַיִּלְכֹּחַ אִשָּׁה אֶת־ אֵיזָבֵל בַּת־ אֶתְבַּעַל מֶלֶךְ־ צִידֹנִים וַיִּלְכֶּךָ וַיַּעֲבֹד אֶת־ הַבַּעַל וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לוֹ:</p>

<p>בעל Baal</p> <p>Baal is an epithet of the ancient Canaanite god. Ugaritic texts that give us a lot of information about Baal. For example, Baal was considered the god of fertility and the god of rain and weather. In Ugaritic myths when Baal suffers a temporary death, there is a drought everywhere. We see in verse 32 that the Temple for Baal was royally sponsored.</p>	<p>And he established an altar for Baal in the Temple of Baal that he built in Samaria.</p>	<p>16:32</p> <p>וַיִּקַּם מִזְבֵּחַ לַבַּעַל בֵּית הַבַּעַל אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה בְּשֶׁמֶרֹון:</p>
<p>אשרה Asherah</p> <p>Asherah was the name of a Canaanite goddess. Asherah appears in Ugaritic myths as one of the major gods. (AB, p. 398)</p> <p>אֶהָאֵשֶׁרֶת Ahab made a pole of Asherah</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cogan indicates that Asherah can refer to either the goddess or a pole of Asherah, which was a well-known symbol of Asherah. (AB, p. 421)</li> </ul>	<p>Ahab made a pole of Asherah. Ahab did more deeds to make the Eternal of Israel angry than all of the kings of Israel who had come before him.</p>	<p>16:33</p> <p>וַיַּעַשׂ אֲחָזָב אֶת־הָאֲשֶׁרֶת וַיַּוִּסֶּף אֲחָזָב לַעֲשׂוֹת לְהַקְעִים אֶת־ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ לִפְנָיו:</p>

<p>חִיאל Hiel A God bearing name that can be parsed as <i>Chai-El</i>, meaning, "God lives."</p> <p>כְּדָבַר יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּיַד יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן-נֹון as per the word of God that God spoke through Joshua son of Nun.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The death of Hiel's sons fulfills the curse upon anyone who rebuilt Jericho from Joshua 6:26:</li> </ul> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">And Joshua charged the people with an oath at that time, saying: "Cursed be the man before the Eternal, that rises up and builds this city, even Jericho; with the loss of his first-born shall he lay the foundation thereof, and with the loss of his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it."</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">God handed over Jericho to Israel in Joshua's first great battle. Joshua destroyed Jericho at God's command. Thus, those who rebuilt Jericho were acting against God's will and were cursed.</p>	<p>In his days, Hiel, the Bethelite, built Jericho. <i>At the cost of</i> Abiram, his first born, he founded it. And <i>at the cost of</i> Segub, his youngest, he caused the doors of Jericho to stand, as per the word of God that God spoke through Joshua son of Nun.</p>	<p>16:35 בְּיָמָיו בָּנָה חִיאל בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת- יְרִיחוֹ בְּאַבִּירָם בְּכֹרֹ יִסָּדָהּ וּבְשִׁגְיָב [וּבְשִׁגְיָב] צָעִירוֹ הִצִּיב דְּלָמִיָּה כְּדָבַר יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּיַד יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן- נֹון:</p>
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<p>אליהו Elijah Elijah's name is a God bearing name that can be parsed as <i>Eli-yah</i> "my God is YHWH." Some scholars posit that Elijah's name is a kind of religious alias. (AB, p. 425)</p> <p>התשבי The Tishbite It is unclear whether the moniker "Tishbite" is in reference to Elijah as a resident (Toshav) of Gilead, or being from "Thisbe" in Galilee, although there is no mention of Thisbe in ancient sources, except for in Tob 1:2. (AB, p. 425)</p> <p>עמדתי לפני I serve before Literally: I stand before Similarly, prophets are called the <i>avadim</i> servants of God.</p> <p>אם-יהיה...חיי-יהיה As sure as God lives...if + <i>conditional clause</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This text is a shortened version of an oath.</li> <li>If the oath in this verse was written out in its full form, it would read: <i>As sure as the God of Israel lives, whom I serve, if there is rain or dew in these years except by my word, may I be cursed/damned etc..</i> Because the conditional curse is omitted in this shortened version, we must understand the positive of "if there is rain or dew" as expressing a negative clause, "there will be no rain or dew."</li> <li>The full version of the oath is less common within the bible. It appears in Numbers 5:19-22 in the section about the sotah. Which indicates a conditional curse that would go into effect if the thing vowed against takes place.</li> </ul> <p>טל ומטור כי אם-לפי דברי [there will be no] dew and rain except by my word.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Much of this chapter centers on the display of God's power over Baal in showing that God can bring rain when Baal cannot. Baal was believed by the Sidonians to be the god who was responsible for rain. So when the Baal prophets try to make it rain and cannot, the biblical writers show Baal to be an impotent or false god.</li> </ul>	<p>Elijah the Tishbite, from Gilead, said to Ahab, "As sure as I live, The God of Israel, whom I serve lives, there will be no dew and rain in these years except by my word.</p>	<p>17:1 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיהֶוּ הַתִּשְׁבִּי מִתְּשֻׁבִּי גִלְעָד אֶל- אֲחָאָב חֵי-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר עֲמַדְתִּי לִפְנֵי אֱם-יְהִי הַשָּׁנִים הָאֵלֶּה טַל וּמָטָר כִּי אִם-לִפִּי דְבָרִי:</p>
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<p>This begins Elijah's first of three episodes in which we see him perform miracles. Scholars have noted that these episodes seem to be woven together as if they are separate folk legends edited into the text. (AB, pp. 430-431)</p>	<p>And it was the word of the Eternal came upon him, saying:</p>	<p>17:2 וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר:</p>
<p>נַחַל a wadi an Arabic word which indicates a place where there is a water bed where during certain times of the year it is dry and other times it has water in it. We see נַחַל defined clearly through its usage in Job 6:15:</p> <p>אֲחֵי בְגָדִי כְמו־נַחַל בְּאַפְיָם נַחֲלִים יַעֲבֹרוּ:</p> <p><i>My comrades are fickle, like a wadi, Like a bed on which streams once ran.</i></p> <p>קֶרִית [the wadi] Kerith This is an unidentified wadi. It may be that the name is taken from the root <i>krt</i> means to be "cut off." We can see that this name is also symbolic as Elijah hides and cuts himself off from view in the wadi. (AB, p. 426)</p>	<p>Go from here and turn yourself eastward, and hide yourself in the wadi Kerith which is near the Jordan.</p>	<p>17:3 לֵךְ מִזֶּה וּפְגִיתָ לְךָ גִּדְמָה וְנִסְתַּרְתָּ בְּנַחַל קֶרִית אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּגֵי הַיַּרְדֵּן:</p>
<p>לִכְלָקָה Support you this term indicates that the ravens will supply Elijah with food.</p> <p>הַעֲרָבִים Ravens In the Tenakh and rabbinic literature, ravens are symbolic of undesirable people, or negative human qualities. For example, we read in Leviticus 11:15 that ravens are unclean and that "every raven [is] after its kind" (Lev. 11:15). In rabbinic literature, we read: "Three love one another, proselytes, slaves, and ravens." (Pes. 113b). In I Kings 17:4, the biblical author's usage of the raven as the type of bird that provided sustenance for Elijah heightens the miracle—it is not just any bird that sustains Elijah, but one that is typically dirty and antagonistic. It also eats carrion. The raven, in effect, outsteps the perimeters of its nature in order to take care of Elijah. (EJ, Vol. 17, p. 119)</p>	<p>There you will drink from the wadi as well I have commanded the ravens to support you there.</p>	<p>17:4 וַיְהִי מִהַנַּחַל תִּשְׁתֶּה וְאֶת־הַעֲרָבִים צִוִּיתִי לִכְלָקָה אִשָּׁם:</p>

	<p>And so he went and he did as the Eternal had told him. Thus, he went and settled in the valley Kerith near the Jordan.</p>	<p>17:5 וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיַּעַשׂ כְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּנַחַל כְּרִית אֲשֶׁר עַל-פְּנֵי הַיַּרְדֵּן:</p>
<p>לֶחֶם וּבָשָׂר בַּבֹּקֶר וּלֶחֶם וּבָשָׂר בָּעֶרֶב Bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was not common for one in biblical times to have meat twice a day. This description is here to show that God is providing Elijah over and above what he would have needed. (AB, p. 427)</li> </ul>	<p>And the ravens would bring in for him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening and he drank from the wadi.</p>	<p>17:6 וְהָעֹרְבִים מְבִיאִים לוֹ לֶחֶם וּבָשָׂר בַּבֹּקֶר וּלֶחֶם וּבָשָׂר בָּעֶרֶב וּמִן-הַנָּחַל יִשְׁתָּה:</p>
<p>יָמִים a year We see other examples of יָמִים (literally “days”) as “a year” in Num 9:22, I Sam 27:7, and II Sam 14:26.</p>	<p>And the end of a year the wadi dried up for there was no rain in the land.</p>	<p>17:7 וַיְהִי מֵעַץ יָמִים וַיִּבֶשׂ הַנָּחַל כִּי לֹא-הָיָה גֶשֶׁם בְּאֶרֶץ:</p>
<p>This verse begins Elijah’s second of three episodes in which we see him perform miracles.</p>	<p>and the word of the Eternal came to him, saying:</p>	<p>17:8 וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר:</p>

<p>צָרְפָּתָה אֲשֶׁר לְצִידוֹן Zarephath of Sidon (now Lebanon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The naming of this place is important to the story in indicating that Elijah is leaving the land of Israel and that the woman whom YHWH commands to support him is foreign. Just as the raven (an unfriendly bird) cared for Elijah, now a foreign woman will feed him. That she is a widow makes this occurrence all the more miraculous, as widows were known to have difficulty supporting themselves, let alone another person. (AB, p. 427)</li> <li>From both of these episodes we get the theological message that YHWH can take care of us, even in unlikely places.</li> </ul>	<p>Arise, Go to Zarephath of Sidon and settle there behold I have designated a widow there to support you.</p>	<p>17:9 קוּם לֵךְ צָרְפָּתָה אֲשֶׁר לְצִידוֹן וְיָשְׁבֶתָ אִשָּׁה הִנֵּה צִנִּיתִי אֵשֶׁת אַלְמָנָה לְכַלְכֶּלְךָ:</p>
<p>עֵצִים [pieces of] wood עֵצִים can mean a big standing tree, or little wood pieces.</p> <p>מִקְשָׁשׁ gathering This word only appears in three other places in the bible, namely, I Kings 17:12, Exo 5:12 and Numbers 15:32-33. In all of these examples, מִקְשָׁשׁ is used describe a gathering of small items for burning (straw and twigs).</p>	<p>And he arose and he went to Zarephath and he came to the gate of the city. And behold! there the widow gathering sticks, and she called to him and he said “please take a little water for me in your pitcher, that I will drink”</p>	<p>17:10 וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ צָרְפָּתָה וַיָּבֹא אֶל־פֶּתַח הָעִיר וְהִנֵּה־שָׁם אִשָּׁה אַלְמָנָה מִקְשָׁשׁ עֵצִים וַיִּקְרָא אֵלֶיהָ וַיֹּאמֶר קַח־נָא לִי מֵעֵט־מִים בַּדֵּלִי וְאֶשְׁתֶּה:</p>



<p>פת־לקחם A morsel of bread  פת means a morsel or bit. It is clearly defined through its usage in Proverb 17:1:  “better a dry morsel with peace than a house full of feasting with strife.”</p> <p>בְּיָדְךָ in your hand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This detail may seem superfluous here at first glance, but I believe it is here to emphasize that the widow is getting bread for Elijah herself.</li> </ul>	<p>So she went to take (it) and he called to her and he said please take for me a piece of bread in your hand.</p>	<p>17:11  וַתֵּלֶךְ לִקְחַת וַיִּקְרָא אֵלֶיהָ וַיֹּאמֶר לָקְחִי גֹאֵל לִי פַת־לֶחֶם בְּיָדְךָ:</p>
<p>וְלִבְנִי וְאֶכְלֶנָּהּ וּמָתָנוּ We shall eat it and then we shall die.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sense of this statement is that soon after the widow and her son eat scant bit of remaining oil and flour, they will die of starvation.</li> </ul>	<p>She said, “as sure as the Eternal your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a palm full of flour in a jar and a little oil in the jug. I am just gathering a couple of sticks and will go prepare it for my son, and me and we shall eat it and then we shall die.</p>	<p>17:12  וַתֹּאמֶר חַי־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אִם־יִשְׁלִי מֵעוּג כִּי אִם־מִלֹּא בֹרֶךְ־לָמַח בֶּכֶד וּמַעֲט־אֶשְׁמֹן בַּצִּפְחָת וְהִנֵּנִי מְקַשֶּׁשֶׁת לְעֹנִים עֲצִים וּבָאתִי וְעָשִׂיתִיהָ לִי וְלִבְנִי וְאֶכְלֶנָּהּ וּמָתָנוּ:</p>

<p>אל־תִּירָאִי do not be afraid Elijah said to the widow, “you should not be afraid” when he asked her to give him her last bit of flour and oil. One might wonder if Elijah asks that she make something for him <i>first</i> as a test of her faith.</p> <p>עוגה The basic sense of עוגה is something cooked that is round. Perhaps an עוגה is something cooked in a clay pot. It is likely akin to a pancake.</p>	<p>Elijah said to her, “don’t be afraid; go and do as you said, only first make for me from these a small cooked thing and bring it to me and then make for yourself and for your son.</p>	<p>17:13 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיָהּ אַל־תִּירָאִי אֶל־ תִּירָאִי בָּאִי עֲשִׂי כַדְבָּר אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי לִי מִשָּׁם עֹגָה קִטְנָה בְּרֹאשָׁנָה וְהוֹצֵאת לִי וְלִבְנִי וְלַעֲמָלִי בְּאַחֲרָנָה:</p>
<p>תכלה run out/be made gone. לכלות From the verb.</p> <p>תת To give/giving This is a version of the infinitive (the <i>Lamed</i> ל we typically see is a prefix).</p>	<p>For thus said the Eternal the God of Israel the jug of flour will not run out and the container of oil will not empty until the day of God’s giving you rain on the face of the earth.</p>	<p>17:14 כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּדֹ הַקֶּמֶחַ לֹא תִכְלֶה וְצִפְתָּח הַשֶּׁמֶן לֹא תִחְסַר עַד יוֹם תִּתֵּן [תֵּת] - יְהוָה גֶּשֶׁם עַל־ פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה:</p>
<p>היא והיא she and he These are old spellings of היא and הוא It is likely that these words were consonantly the same, they were vocalized or pronounced differently.</p> <p>ביתה her household the reference to her having a household implies that she had more than one son, making the miracle all the more impressive as Elijah made enough food to support all of them.</p>	<p>And she went and she did as Elijah said and she and he ate: there was for her household (food) for a year.</p>	<p>17:15 וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתַּעֲשֶׂה כַּדְבָּר אֲשֶׁר וַתֹּאכַל הָיָא [הָיָא] וְהָיָא [וְהָיָא] וּבֵיתָהּ שָׁמָיִם:</p>

	<p>The Jug of oil did not run out and the plate of oil did not empty as was the word of the Eternal that He said through His prophet Elijah.</p>	<p>17:16 כִּד הַקֶּמַח לֹא כָלְתָה וְצִפְחַת הַשָּׁמֶן לֹא חָסַר כִּדְבַר יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּיַד אֱלִיָּהוּ:</p>
<p>עד אשר לא-נותרה-בו נשמה Until there was no breath left in him.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The boy's death is described in a way to draw our attention. We are given a lot of detail. The author could have simply written that the boy got sick and died.</li> <li>The <i>neshama</i> or lifebreath is directly connected to life, as we read in Genesis 2:7: "The Eternal God formed man from the dust of the earth. He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being לנפש חיה."</li> </ul>	<p>And it was sometime later the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, got sick. His illness became very strong until there was no breath left in him.</p>	<p>17:17 וַיְהִי אַחֲרַי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה חָלָה בֶן-הָאִשָּׁה בְּעֶלְתِ הַבַּיִת וַיְהִי חֲלִילָה חֲזָקָה מְאֹד עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא-נִוְתְּרָה-בּוֹ נִשְׁמָה:</p>

<p>מֶה־לִּי וְלָךְ What is it about/between me and you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is an idiom that expresses wonderment at one's life circumstance. In this case, this idiom is used to express that the woman wonders if her son's death was a punishment given by God through Elijah. In biblical thinking, children can die for the sins of their parents. It is possible that the widow thinks that Elijah is God's agent of punishment. JPS translates this as: "what harm have I done you?" (JPS, p. 757)</li> </ul> <p>We see a similar idea expressed in Judges 11:12, 2 Sam 16:10 in which a person utters this idiom as a way of expressing, "what wrong did I do to deserve this fate?"</p> <p>לְהִזְכִּיר אֶת־עֲוֹנַי to recall my sins</p> <p>Rashi commented that Elijah's presence in the widow's home called attention to her so that her misdeeds were brought out before God. (AB, p. 428)</p>	<p>She said to Elijah, "What is it about me and you, man of God, that you have come to me to recall my sins and to bring death to my son?"</p>	<p>17:18 וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־ אֵלֶיהָ מֶה־לִּי וְלָךְ אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים בָּאתָ אֵלַי לְהִזְכִּיר אֶת־עֲוֹנַי וּלְהַמִּית אֶת־ בְּנִי:</p>
<p>הָעֶלְיָה Upper (chamber/room/place)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The specific place is inferred by the context in which this term, עֶלְיָה, is used.</li> <li>II Kings 4:10 הָעֶלְיָה refers to an entire upper story of a house.</li> </ul> <p>מִחִיקָהּ from her bosom/arms</p> <p>חֵיק is a body part. It is used in this verse as a metonym for being on one's mother's lap nestled in her bosom. The boy is dead and laying in the lap of his mother. We see חֵיק used in a similar way in Lam 2:12. (BDB, p. 300)</p>	<p>So he said to her, "give me your son and he took him from her lap and he lifted him to the upper chamber where he was staying and he laid him down on his bed.</p>	<p>17:19 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ הִנֵּנִי לְךָ אֶת־ בְּנִי וַיִּקְחֵהוּ מִחִיקָהּ וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ אֶל־הָעֶלְיָה אֲשֶׁר־הוּא יֹשֵׁב שָׁם וַיִּשְׁכְּבֵהוּ עַל־מִטָּתוֹ:</p>

<p>הגם is an emphatic particle we see הגם used in a similar way in Gen 16:13, I Sam 10:11-12, I Sam 19:24, and Job 2:10. (BDB, p. 169)</p>	<p>And he cried unto the Eternal. He said, “Eternal, my God have you really done this terrible thing to kill the son of the widow whose guest I am, and let her son die?”</p>	<p>17:20 וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־ יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַגִּם עַל־ הָאִלְמָנָה אֲשֶׁר־ אָנִי מְתוֹנֵנָהּ עַמָּה הָרְעוּתָהּ לְהָמִית אֶת־ בְּנָהּ:</p>
<p>קרב Body/midst/middle/inward part We קרב see used to mean “within one’s body” in Gen 25:22, 18:12, I Sam 25:37, Jeremiah 23:9, Job 20:14, and Is 19:1. (BDB, p. 899)</p>	<p>Then he stretched out over the boy three times and called out to the Eternal, saying “O Eternal my God, may the breath of this boy return to his body.</p>	<p>17:21 וַיִּתְמָדָד עַל־ הַיָּלֵד שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי תְּשֻׁב־נָא נְפֹשׁ־הַיָּלֵד הַזֶּה עַל־קִרְבּוֹ:</p>
	<p>The Eternal answered Elijah’s prayer; the boy’s breath returned to him and he lived.</p>	<p>17:22 וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּקוֹל אֱלִיָּהוּ וַתָּשׁוּב נְפֹשׁ־ הַיָּלֵד עַל־קִרְבּוֹ וַיְחִי:</p>

	Elijah took the boy, brought him down from the upper room to the house, and handed him to his mother. Elijah then said, "See, your son is alive!"	17:23 וַיִּקַּח אֵלִיָּהוּ אֶת־הַיֵּלֶד וַיֵּרֵדֵהוּ מִן־ הָעֲלִיָּה הַכִּיָּתוּה וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ לְאִמּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלִיָּהוּ רְאֵי הִנֵּה בְנֶךָ:
	The woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a prophet and that the Eternal and the word of God in your mouth is true.	17:24 וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֶל־אֵלִיָּהוּ עַתָּה יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים אַתָּה וְדָבָר־ יְהוָה בְּפִיךָ אֱמֶת:
the third year the third year of the drought (JPS SB, p. 713)	A long time passed until the word of God was upon Elijah on the third year of the drought, saying, "go, show yourself to Ahab and I send rain upon the earth."	18:1 וַיְהִי יָמִים רַבִּים וְדָבָר־יְהוָה הָיָה אֶל־אֵלִיָּהוּ בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁלִישִׁית לְאֹמֶר לֵךְ הִרְאָה אֶל־ אַחָאָב וְאָמְנָה מָטָר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה:

<p>וְהָרָעַב תָּמָּךְ בְּשָׁמְרוֹן Now there was very severe famine in Samaria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This verse contains two disconnected ideas that need to be separated. In order to do so, I translated the ן of וְהָרָעַב as “now,” and wrote it as a separate sentence.</li> </ul>	<p>So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab. Now there was very severe famine in Samaria.</p>	<p>18:2 וַיֵּלֶךְ אֵלֵיהֶוּ לְהַרְאוֹת אֶל- אֲחָאָב וְהָרָעַב תָּמָּךְ בְּשָׁמְרוֹן:</p>
<p>עֹבַדְיָהוּ Obadiah</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a God-bearing name that can be parsed as עֹבַד <i>servant</i> of יה <i>God</i>.</li> <li>Some believe this was the very same Obadiah who was a prophet.</li> <li>The differences in the rendering of Obadiah’s name here as עֹבַדְיָהוּ and as עֹבַדְיָה within the prophetic writings’ section called Obadiah is a result of the time in which these narratives were written down. In pre-exilic sources, we find the long form of names with the ending “hu.” In post-exilic sources, we find the shorter form.</li> </ul> <p>אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַבַּיִת steward of the palace This is an attested title found in inscriptions from in the biblical period from before exile. For example, Joseph has a steward of his home, also referred to as אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַבַּיִת in Genesis 43:19.</p>	<p>Ahab summoned to Obadiah the “steward of the palace (its the person who runs everything in the house)” and Obadiah was very reverent of the Eternal</p>	<p>18:3 וַיִּקְרָא אֲחָאָב אֶל־עֹבַדְיָהוּ אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַבַּיִת וְעֹבַדְיָהוּ תָנָה יָרָא אֶת־יְהוָה מְאֹד:</p>

<p>מֵאָה נְבִיאִים One hundred prophets This is not necessarily an exact figure, rather an idiom for <i>many</i> men.</p> <p>חֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ בְּמַעְרָה Fifty men per cave The literal translation of this text is “fifty men in the cave.” חֲמִשִּׁים is a haplography. חֲמִשִּׁים should have been written twice to five the sense of having 50 men in each cave. We see that in verse 13 of this chapter, the word is written twice, as it should be.</p> <p>לֶחֶם וּמַיִם bread and water This is a merism, meaning that the prophets were given anything “soup to nuts,” so to speak. Elijah provided them above and beyond the minimal amount they would have needed simply to survive.</p>	<p>And it was when Jezebel destroyed the prophets of the Eternal, that Obadiah took one hundred prophets and hid them; fifty men per cave and supported them with bread and water.</p>	<p>18:4 וַיְהִי בַּהֲכָרִית אֵלְזָבֶל אֶת נְבִיאֵי יְהוָה וַיִּקַּח עֲבָדָיו מֵאָה נְבִיאִים וַיִּחְבֵּאֵם חֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ בְּמַעְרָה וְכָל־קִלְמָם לֶחֶם וּמַיִם:</p>
<p>נִכְרִית destroy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The author used the word נִכְרִית here using the <i>hiphil binyan</i> instead of the <i>nifal (nikaret)</i> as we might have expected as <i>nikaret</i>. This was likely in order to connect with the previous verse by sound, as the biblical audience would have heard this story out loud. In 18:4 Jezebel destroys (slaughters) בַּהֲכָרִית. The repetition of words was a technique used by the biblical authors in that it was useful in appealing to the ear in keeping the audience interested.</li> <li>There are some other places where we also find the <i>hiphil binyan</i> of כָּרַח used to describe the destruction of animals, for example, Lev 26:22, Micah 5:9 and Zech 9:10.</li> </ul> <p>חֲצִיר grass חֲצִיר holds the same meaning as <i>eiseb</i>, <i>deshe</i> and <i>yereq</i>, for example, we see this pairing in Prov 27:25 and Isa 15:6. חֲצִיר is a food for animals in Ps 104:14, 147:8, and Job 40:15.</p>	<p>And Ahab said to Obadiah, “go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the wadis. Perhaps we will find grass and we will be able to keep the horses and mules alive, if only we will not destroy any of the beasts?”</p>	<p>18:5 וַיֹּאמֶר אֶחָזָב אֶל־עֲבָדָיו לֵךְ בְּאֶרֶץ אֶל־כָּל־ מְעֵיֵי הַמַּיִם וְאֶל כָּל־ הַנְּחָלִים אוֹלֵי ! וּנְמָצָא חֲצִיר וַיִּחְיֶה סוֹס וַחֲמֹר וְלֹא נִכְרִית מִהַבְהֵמָה:</p>



<p>בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶחָד In one direction In biblical Hebrew <i>derech</i> can be either masculine or feminine.</p>	<p>They divided the country between them to pass through it, Ahab went alone in one direction alone and Obadiah went alone in another direction.</p>	<p>18:6 וַיִּחְלְקוּ לָהֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ לְעֵבֶר־בָּהָא אֶחָדָב הָלַךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶחָד לְבָדוֹ וְעֹבַדְיָהוּ הָלַךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ־ אֶחָד לְבָדוֹ:</p>
<p>וַיִּפֹּל עַל־פָּנָיו Fell on his face This is a physical action that was used as a marker of respect. We see this in many places in the bible as a way in which people react to coming in contact with the physical presence of God (<i>K'vod Adonai</i>). In II Samuel 9:6 the idiom עַל־פָּנָיו is used in a similar way to that used in 18:7, as demonstrating respect of one person to another.</p>	<p>Obadiah was on the road, and suddenly Elijah approached him. Obadiah recognized him and fell on his face, saying, "Are you really my Eternal Elijah?"</p>	<p>18:7 וַיְהִי עֹבַדְיָהוּ בְּדֶרֶךְ וַהֲגָה אֱלֹהֵהוּ לִקְרָאתוֹ וַיִּפֹּל עַל־פָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הֲאֵתָה זֶה אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹהֵי:</p>
	<p>"Yes, it is I," he answered. "Go tell your Eternal: Elijah is here!"</p>	<p>18:8 וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֲנִי לֹה אָמַר לְאֲדֹנֶיךָ הִנֵּה אֱלֹהֵי:</p>

<p>Obadiah's fear of the king's reaction to hearing about Elijah's appearance is repeated three times; it appears in verses 9, 12, and 14 of this chapter.</p> <p>Obadiah's reaction to Elijah is similar to that of the widow in I Kings 17:18 who questions what wrong she has done in the face of what appears to be dire life circumstances.</p>	<p>He said, "what sin have I committed? For you give me, your servant, into the hand of Ahab to have me killed."</p>	<p>18:9 וַיֹּאמֶר מָה חַטָּאתִי כִּי־אַתָּה נָתַן אֶת־עַבְדְּךָ בְּיַד־אַחָאָב לְהַמִּיתָנִי:</p>
<p>וַהֲשִׁבֵיעַ אֶת־הַמַּמְלָכָה וְאֶת־הַגּוֹי כִּי לֹא יִמָּצָאָהּ and he made the kingdom and nation swear that you could not be found.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We know from this verse that Ahab searched far and wide for Elijah and when he would ask about Elijah, people would claim to not know where Elijah could be found. Ahab would not just take them at their word, but made them take a solemn oath. It is likely that Obadiah had already sworn to Ahab that he did not know Elijah's whereabouts.</li> <li>This story would have been familiar to the biblical audience who would have heard about situations in which a leader would demand the return of people (similar to Elijah) who were considered to be dangerous. That leader would not have wanted them to be protected by any of his allies and would have put tremendous pressure upon them to comply with his demands.</li> </ul>	<p>As the Eternal your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom to which my Eternal has not sent to look for you; and when they said, "Nothing," and he made the kingdom and nation swear that you could not be found.</p>	<p>18:10 חַי וְיֵהוּהָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ אִם־יֵשׁ־ גּוֹי וּמַמְלָכָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שָׁלַח אֶדְגִּי שָׁם לְבַקֵּשׁךָ וְאָמְרוּ אֵין וְהִשְׁבִּיעַ אֶת־ הַמַּמְלָכָה וְאֶת־ הַגּוֹי כִּי לֹא יִמָּצָאָהּ:</p>
	<p>and now you say "go and tell to your Eternal here is Elijah?"</p>	<p>18:11 וַעֲתָה אַתָּה אָמַר לְךָ אָמַר לְאֵדְגִיךָ הִנֵּה אֵלֶיךָ:</p>

<p>רוח יהוה wind of God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God is associated with <i>ruach</i> as both life giving and ending.</li> <li>• When we see something that has an effect, but the cause is not visible, we need to explain how it happens. In this case, the explanation for Elijah's ability to appear and disappear suddenly is attributed to a divine wind.</li> <li>• This idiom is also used as an expression of a person being a kind of vessel for God in specific circumstances, as if God is working through them, for example, in Judges 6:34, we read:</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">The spirit of the Eternal enveloped Gideon; he sounded the horn, and the Abiezrites rallied behind him.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וְרוּחַ יְהוָה לְבָשָׁה אֶת־גִּדְעֹן וַיִּתְקַע בְּשׁוֹפָר וַיִּזְעַק אֲבִיעֶזֶר אַחֲרָיו:</p> <p>In Judges 6:34, <i>ruach Elohim</i> is used as an idiom to describe the evasive nature of Elijah. He comes and goes as if by magic. He is a miracle worker who seems to appear and disappear at God's will.</p> <p>עַבְדְּךָ Your servant Obadiah is addressing Elijah in a humble and polite fashion by calling himself Elijah's servant.</p>	<p>When I will leave from you, and the wind of the Eternal will carry you to a place where I will not know. Then I come to tell Ahab and will not find you, he will kill me. Yet your servant has feared the Eternal from my youth.</p>	<p>18:12 וְהָיָה אֲנִי אֵלֶיךָ מֵאֵתָּה וְרוּחַ יְהוָה יִשְׁאֹף עַל אִשְׁרִי לֹא־אֵדַע וְכִאתִי לְהַגִּיד לְאַחֲזָב וְלֹא יִמָּצְאָה וְהִרְגֵנִי וְעַבְדְּךָ יָרָא אֶת־יְהוָה מִנְעֹרִי:</p>
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<p>קֹלָא Indeed  קֹלָא is most often translated in the negative as “has it not?” or “is it not?” However, scholar Michael A. Brown in his article ““Is It Not?” or “Indeed!”: HL in Northwest Semitic” provides a convincing argument that קֹלָא is more likely a cognate of an Akkadian word <i>allu</i>, which means “indeed.”</p>	<p>Indeed, my Eternal has been told what I did when at the time when Jezebel was killing the prophets of the Eternal and I hid a hundred of the prophets of the Eternal, fifty men to a cave, and provided them with food and drink?</p>	<p>18:13  קֹלָא־הַגִּיד  לְאֹדֹנִי אֵת  אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי  בְּהָרֹג אֵיזֶכֶל  אֶת נְבִיאֵי יְהוָה  וְאֶחָבָא מִנְּבִיאֵי  יְהוָה מֵאָה אִישׁ  חֲמִשִּׁים חֲמִשִּׁים  אִישׁ בְּמַעְרָה  וְאֶכְלָקְלָם לֶחֶם  וְנָמִים:</p>
<p>We see here in I Kings 18:14 a repetition of verse 18:11. The biblical authors repeated texts as technique to help keep the attention of the audience.</p>	<p>and now you say “go and say to your lord, Elijah, and have me killed?”</p>	<p>18:14  וְעַתָּה אַתָּה  אָמַר לְךָ אָמַר  לְאֹדֹנִי הַנֵּה  אֵלַיְהוּ וְהָרַגְנִי:</p>

<p>כִּי for  “ki” introduces a matter that is sworn. (AB, p. 438)</p> <p>יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת Commander of the Divine Army</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a shortened version of יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת. The longer title explains that God is the god of <i>tz'vaot</i> the “heavenly bodies.” This reading highlights God’s roles as Commander of the sun and the moon and the stars.</li> <li>• We see the stars fight on God’s behalf in Judges 5:20:  The stars fought from heaven,  From their courses they fought  against Sisera.</li> <li>• Similarly, in Isaiah 40:26, there is a description of God having command over the heavenly army.    Lift high your eyes and see:  Who created these?  He who sends out their command by  count,  Who calls them each by name:  Because of His great might and vast  power,  Not one fails to appear.</li> </ul>	<p>So Elijah  said, “as sure  as the  Commander  of the Divine  army lives,  whom I serve,  on this day, I  will appear  before him.”</p>	<p>18:15  וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיהֶוּ  חַי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת  אֲשֶׁר עִמָּדָתִי  לִפְנֵי כִי הַיּוֹם  אֶרְאֶה אֵלָיו:</p>
	<p>So Obadiah  went to greet  Ahab, and  informed him;  And Ahab  went to meet  Elijah.</p>	<p>18:16  וַיֵּלֶךְ עֹבַדְיָהוּ  לִקְרֹאת אֶת־אֱחָאָב  וַיִּגְדַּלְהוּ בַּיָּלֶד  אֶת־אֱחָאָב לִקְרֹאת  אֵלֵיהֶוּ:</p>

<p>הֲאֵתָהּ זֶה Is that really you? We find the emphatic use of a pronoun here.</p> <p>עֵבֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל Troubler of Israel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a title reserved in the Bible for those who have tried to undermine God's law or the Israelites.</li> <li>• Some others have been called "troublers of Israel," are King Saul in Sam 14:29, Achan the son of Carmi who stole that which belonged to God in Josh 7:25, and again in I Chron 2:7.</li> </ul>	<p>And it was when Ahab caught sight of Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is that really you, troubler of Israel?"</p>	<p>18:17 וַיְהִי כִּרְאוֹת אֲחָאָב אֶת־ אֱלִיָּהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲחָאָב אֵלָיו הֲאֵתָהּ זֶה עֵבֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>
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<p>הַבְּעָלִים Baalim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The title “Baalim” also appears in Jud. 2:11, 3:7, 8:33, 10:6 and 1 Sam 7:4 12:10. The plural of Baal may reflect the idea that Canaanite god Baal had many manifestations. (AB, p. 438)</li> <li>Baal appears as “Baal hamon,” and “Baal Shamayim” in Phoenician and in Aramaic sources and in Maccabees. Baal was worshipped primarily on the Mediterranean coast, but Baal was also deified in the area that is now Turkey. The various names for Baal could be compared to how different Christian communities refer to the virgin Mary as “our Lady of Ascension, our Lady of Mount Carmel, and Our Lady of Mercy.”</li> <li>One could make an argument that the verse Zech 14:9, was as a response to the practice of having various manifestations of God. The reception history of this verse may have changed the way in which we conventionally understand it, to be a statement about how the entire world will come to see that the true God is the God of the land of Israel.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">And the Eternal shall be king over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Eternal with one name.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וְהָיָה יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ עַל-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהוָה יְהוָה אֶחָד וְשְׁמוֹ אֶחָד:</p> <p>One could argue that at the time this text was written, it was a prophecy about the acceptance of monotheism; that there would come a day when all would come to recognize that the manifestations of YHWH are unified as One.</p> <p>וַתִּלְךְ אַחֲרַי you will serve Literally, “you will follow after.” וַתִּלְךְ אַחֲרַי is an idiom that means “to serve.”</p>	<p>He said to him, “I have not troubled Israel, but rather you and your father’s house, by abandoning the commandments of the Eternal and serving the Baalim</p>	<p>18:18 וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא עָרַתִּי אֶת- יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי אִם- אַתָּה וּבֵית אָבִיךָ בְּעֻזְבְּכֶם אֶת-מִצְוֹת יְהוָה וַתִּלְךְ אַחֲרַי הַבְּעָלִים:</p>
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<p>18:19</p> <p>וְעַתָּה שְׁלַח קִבְצָאֵלַי אֶת-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-הָרֵ הַכַּרְמֶל וְאֶת-נְבִיאֵי הַפֶּעַל מֵאוֹת וְחֻמָּשִׁים וְנְבִיאֵי הָאֲשֵׁרָה אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אֲכָלֵי שֶׁלֶחַן אֵיזֶבֶל:</p> <p>Asherah and Baal prophets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the only section in the Tanakh that acknowledges prophecy through non-Israelite gods, albeit this is allowed only to show that YHWH is the only true God through a test. We see in Deut 13:2-6 prophecy in the name of foreign gods is forbidden. (AB, p. 439) Furthermore, Deut 18:18-20, gives the impression that the <i>navi</i> was unique to Israel.</li> </ul> <p>הַר הַכַּרְמֶל Mount Carmel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This mount is a symbol of majesty in the Tanakh, as we can see in Isa 35:2.</li> </ul> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">It shall blossom abundantly, It shall also exult and shout. It shall receive the glory of Lebanon, The splendor of Carmel and Sharon. They shall behold the glory of the Lord, The splendor of our God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baal is associated with Mount Carmel. Baal was worshipped on Mount Carmel until 3rd century CE as the god of storms. Assyrian annals refer to Mount Carmel as Baale Rasi – which means Rosh Baal – Baal’s head. (AB, pp. 438-439)</li> </ul> <p>אֲכָלֵי שֶׁלֶחַן אֵיזֶבֶל who eat at Jezebel’s table</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This statement is a idiom for those who were supported by Jezebel.</li> </ul>	<p>And now send out to join with me all Israel at Mount Carmel, [together] with the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.”</p>	<p>18:19</p> <p>וְעַתָּה שְׁלַח קִבְצָאֵלַי אֶת-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-הָרֵ הַכַּרְמֶל וְאֶת-נְבִיאֵי הַפֶּעַל מֵאוֹת וְחֻמָּשִׁים וְנְבִיאֵי הָאֲשֵׁרָה אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אֲכָלֵי שֶׁלֶחַן אֵיזֶבֶל:</p>
	<p>Ahab sent for all the Israelites and gathered the prophets at Mount Carmel.</p>	<p>18:20</p> <p>וַיִּשְׁלַח אַחָאב בְּכָל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְבֹּץ אֶת-הַנְּבִיאִים אֶל-יְהוָה הַכַּרְמֶל:</p>



<p>הַסְעָפִים הֹפֵתִי עַל־שְׁתֵּי הַסְעָפִים hopping between two opinions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• פסח is the root for a verb that can mean to skip, hop or limp. The verb פסח implies “to limp” when it describes the movement of a physically impaired boy in II Sam 4:4.</li> <li>• סֶעַף refers to the boughs of a fruit tree, as referred to in Isaiah 17:6 and Ezek 31:6-8. It can also mean the “clefts of rocks,” as is found in Isa 2:21; 57:5. (AB, p. 439)</li> <li>• The image is of a group limping between two things, which is a physical metaphor of their placing their belief in two different gods and wavering back and forth as they favor one over the other.</li> </ul>	<p>Elijah approached all the people and said, “until when will you keep hopping between two opinions? If the Eternal is God, Follow Him; and if Baal [is God] follow him.” But the people did not answer him with even a word.</p>	<p>18:21 וַיֵּגֶשׁ אֵלָיו אֶל־כָּל־הָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר עַד־מָתַי אַתֶּם הֹפֵתִים עַל־שְׁתֵּי הַסְעָפִים אִם־ יְהוָה הָאֱלֹהִים לְכוּ אַחֲרָיו וְאִם־הַבַּעַל לְכוּ אַחֲרָיו וְלֹא־עָנוּ הָעָם אֹתוֹ דְּבָר:</p>
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<p>אני נותרתי נביא ליהוה לבדי I remain the only prophet of the Eternal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elijah's statement is pure hyperbole. We have already seen that there are many prophets who he kept in hiding in the caves. Perhaps Elijah meant that he was the only active prophet, or the only prophet who crusaded against Baal worship. (AB, p. 440)</li> </ul> <p>נביאי הבעל The prophets of Baal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the only place in the Tanakh that <i>navi</i> is used for Gentile prophets.</li> <li>We do see that rabbinic writings make mention of the Baal prophets, however, as the rabbis call Bilam a <i>navi</i>. Archeological discoveries have uncovered other sources that use of the word <i>navi</i> for gentile prophets. Many of these sources are texts that were written earlier than the Tanakh that come from the Syria/Palestine area. (Texts from the Mesopotamia area naming gentile prophets have not been found.)</li> <li><i>Side Note:</i> The literal sense of <i>navi</i> is "the one who is called," rather than a prophet. In Hammurabi's Code, Hammurabi refers to himself as a Navi, meaning "the one who is called."</li> </ul>	<p>Then Elijah said to the people, "I remain the only prophet of the Eternal, while the prophets of Baal are four hundred and fifty men.</p>	<p>18:22 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיהֶם אֶל-הָעָם אֲנִי נֹתָרְתִּי נְבִיא לַיהוָה לְבַדִּי וְנְבִיאֵי הַבַּעַל אַרְבַּע-מֵאוֹת וְחָמִשִּׁים אִישׁ:</p>
	<p>Give two bulls to us. Let them choose the one bull, and cut it up, and place it on the wood, but they should not put fire upon it; I will prepare the one bull, and lay it on the wood, and will not put fire upon it.</p>	<p>18:23 וַיִּתְּנוּ-לָנוּ שְׁנַיִם פָּרִים וַיִּבְחָרוּ לָהֶם הַפָּר הָאֶחָד וַיִּנְתְּחוּהוּ וַיְשִׂימוּ עַל-הָעֵצִים וְאֵשׁ לֹא יָשִׂימוּ וְאֲנִי אֶעֱשֶׂה וְאֵת- הַפָּר הָאֶחָד וְנִתְחֵהוּ עַל- הָעֵצִים וְאֵשׁ לֹא אֶשִׂים:</p>

<p>וַיֹּאמְרוּ טוֹב הַדָּבָר and they answered, “very good.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literally: the matter is good.</li> <li>• This is an idiom meaning that they thought it was a good idea. We see this phrase used in a similar way in I Kings 2:38 and 42.</li> </ul>	<p>Then call the name of your god and I will call the name of the Eternal, and it will be the god who answers by fire, that one is God.” And all the people answered, “very good.”</p>	<p>18:24 וַיִּקְרְאוּ אֲלֵהֶם בְּשֵׁם אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְאֲנִי אֶקְרָא בְשֵׁם־ יְהוָה וְהָיָה הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר־ יַעֲבֹד בְּאֵשׁ הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים וַיַּעַן כָּל־הָעָם וַיֹּאמְרוּ טוֹב הַדָּבָר:</p>
<p>וַיִּקְרְאוּ בְשֵׁם אֱלֹהֵיכֶם Call your god by name</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a Polytheistic environment, one would need to clarify which god one is calling.</li> <li>• Even within Jewish monotheism there is a perpetuated idea that there are holy beings that we call upon for various things. For example, the Shabbat Bride, or the angels or ministers that take care of <i>parnasah</i>. Perhaps this stems from the need of many to have a sense of intimacy with God.</li> </ul>	<p>Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one bull and prepare it first, for you are the majority, but place no fire [upon it]; and call your god by name.”</p>	<p>18:25 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיהֶם לְנָבִיאֵי הַבַּעַל בְּחַרְוּ לָכֶם הֶפֶר הָאֵדוּל וַעֲשׂוּ רִאשֹׁנָה כִּי אַתֶּם הָרֵבִיִּים וַיִּקְרְאוּ בְשֵׁם אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְאֵשׁ לֹא תִשְׂמֹד:</p>

<p>וַיִּפְסְחוּ they hopped/limped          Their hopping or limping about the altar implies a ritual dance. (AB 440)</p> <p>וַיִּקְרְאוּ בְּשֵׁם־הַבַּעַל מִבֹּקֶר וְעַד־הָצֹהָרִים And called Baal by name from morning until noon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This statement is meant to be satirical (<i>they are screaming for hours!</i>).</li> </ul> <p>הַבַּעַל O Baal          the letter ה here is a sign of an vocative “O.” This is similar to how we address Adonai at times as HaMelech.</p> <p>וַיִּפְסְחוּ עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה On the altar that had been made</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is clear from this statement that the altar was specially set up for this contest between Elijah and the Baal prophets. It was not an altar that had been there before for usage in ritual ceremonies.</li> </ul>	<p>They took the bull that was given them; they prepared it, and called Baal by name from morning until noon, saying, “O Baal, answer us!” But there was no sound, and no one responded; so they limped about the altar that had been made.</p>	<p>18:26          וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־הַפָּר אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן לָהֶם וַיַּעֲשׂוּ וַיִּקְרְאוּ בְּשֵׁם־הַבַּעַל מִבֹּקֶר וְעַד־הָצֹהָרִים לֵאמֹר הַבַּעַל עֲנֵנוּ וְאִין קוֹל וְאִין עֲנָה וַיִּפְסְחוּ עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה:</p>
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<p>וַיִּהְיֶה כְּהֵם [Elijah] mocked them וַיִּהְיֶה "he mocked, cheated, lied, or deluded."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One could make an argument for using "deluded" in this verse, so it would read, "[Elijah] deluded them." In this reading, Elijah deluded the prophets into thinking that he, too believed in Baal, and was trying to help them get Baal's attention.</li> <li>We see הָתַל used as "deceitful" in Ex 8:25: וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה הִנֵּה אֲנִי יוֹצֵא מֵעַמְּךָ וְהִעַפְתִּי אֶל־יְהוָה וְסָר הָעָרֹב מִפְּרֹעָה מֵעַבְדֶּיךָ וּמֵעַמּוֹ מִזֶּה רַק אֶל־יִסָּף פְּרֹעָה הָתַל לְבָלְתִּי שֶׁלַח אֶת־הָעָם לִזְבֹּחַ לַיהוָה: And Moses said, "When I leave your presence, I will plead with the Eternal that the swarms of insects depart tomorrow from Pharaoh and his courtiers and his people; but let not Pharaoh again act deceitfully, not letting the people go to sacrifice to the Eternal."</li> </ul> <p>אולי יישן הוא ויגאץ perhaps he is asleep and will wake up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elijah heightens the sense of mockery through this statement by making excuses for why Baal does not respond to the Baal prophets' shouting for him.</li> <li>Elijah uses the same language that we find in Psalms for Adonai to mock the Baal prophets. In Psalm 44:24 we read that God is sleeping:</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">Rouse Yourself; why do You sleep, O Eternal? Awaken, do not reject us forever!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">עֲוֶרְהוּ לָמָּה תִישָׁנוּ אֲדֹנָי תִּלְיֹצֶה אֶל־תִּנָּח לְנֶצַח:</p> <p>There is a strong connection in this Psalm between YHWH's sleeping as representing YHWH's abandonment of the people. Elijah is drawing on this language to mock the <i>Baal</i> prophets.</p> <p>וְכִי־יָרֶד לוֹ may be on the way: This could be a reference to an Ugaritic text in which a goddess comes to visit Baal only to find out that he was on his way somewhere else. (AB, p. 441)</p>	<p>When midday came, Elijah mocked them, saying, "Shout louder! For, he is a god. But he may be in conversation, he may be detained, or he may be on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and will wake up."</p>	<p>18:27 וַיְהִי בַּצְהֲרַיִם וַיִּהְיֶה כְּהֵם אֶל־הֵם וַיֹּאמֶר קִרְאוּ בְקוֹל־ גְּדוֹל כִּי־אֱלֹהִים הוּא כִי־שִׁיעַ וְכִי־שָׁיג לוֹ וְכִי־יָרֶד לוֹ אוּלֵי יִישָׁן הוּא וַיִּגָּאץ:</p>
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<p>וַיִּקְרְאוּ בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל so they shouted in loud voices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This would have been comedic to the biblical audience as this story would have been told out loud. One could imagine that the narrator might yell louder to bring out the comedy of the scene.</li> </ul> <p>וְהַרְמְתִּים עַד־שִׁפְךָ־דָם עֲלֵיהֶם until the blood poured over them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Baal prophets were doing this to try to attract divine attention.</li> <li>The shedding of blood is associated in biblical sources with rites of mourning. This is probably an expression of extreme grief, and was outlawed for the Israelites. We can find examples of this in Deut 14:1, Jer 16:6 and 41:5. (AB, p. 441)</li> </ul>	<p>So they shouted out in loud voices, and slashed themselves with knives and spears, according to their practice, until the blood poured over them.</p>	<p>18:28 וַיִּקְרְאוּ בְּקוֹל גָּדוֹל וַיִּתְּגַדְּדוּ כַּמְּשִׁפָּטִים בְּחֶרֶב וּבְרִמְחִים עַד־ שִׁפְךָ־דָם עֲלֵיהֶם:</p>
<p>וַיִּתְּנָבְאוּ they prophesied</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have translated this as “raved,” taken from the JPS translation, in that it gives the idea of the prophets going into an altered state. They worked themselves into a prophetic frenzy, so to speak. We see the same verb used in a similar way in I Sam 10:10, 19:20-24 and Num 11:25-26.</li> <li>Once again, this verse is satirical, making a mockery of the Baal prophets.</li> </ul>	<p>And it was that noon passed, they were raving until the time of the meal offering. but there was no responding voice, and no answer, and no attention was paid to them.</p>	<p>18:29 וַהֲלִי כַעֲבֹר הַצֹּהֲרַיִם וַיִּתְּנָבְאוּ עַד לְעֹלֹת הַמִּנְחָה וְאִין־קוֹל וְאִין־ עֹנֶה וְאִין־קֹשֶׁב:</p>

<p>וַיִּרְפָּא Repaired This is an uncommon usage of the word וַיִּרְפָּא, which typically refers to having healed a person or living thing.</p> <p>וַיִּרְפָּא אֶת־מִזְבֵּחַ He repaired the altar of the Eternal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ostensibly, Jezebel was as much a Baalist as Elijah was a Yahwist. In order to stop people from worshipping we would assume that she would have torn down altars and prayer spaces. However, it is unlikely that Ahab and Jezebel would have wanted to get rid of the Yahweh cult because Yahweh was the national God. It is not credible that they would try to stop Yahweh worship. Jezebel's own son, Yehoram, had a name that bore Yahweh's name. On the other hand, Jezebel tried to get rid of the Yahweh prophets, and tried to raise up the Baal cult.</li> </ul>	<p>Then Elijah said to all the people, "draw near to me"; and all the people drew near to him. He repaired the altar of the Eternal that had been torn down.</p>	<p>18:30 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיהֶם לְכָל־הָעָם גִּשְׁוּ אֵלַי וְיִגְשׁוּ כָל־ הָעָם אֵלָיו וַיִּרְפָּא אֶת־ מִזְבֵּחַ יְהוָה הַהוּא:</p>
<p>שְׁתֵּים עָשָׂר אֲבָנִים twelve stones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The twelve stones that Elijah took represented the twelve tribes of Israel. We see similar usage of שְׁתֵּים עָשָׂר in other places in the Tanakh. In Ex 24:4, Moses sets up twelve pillars in Ex 24:4 and God commands Joshua to tell the take twelve stones across the river Jordan in Josh 4:1-9. (AB, p. 442)</li> </ul> <p>לֵאמֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהִיָּה שְׁמֶךָ saying, "Israel shall be your name"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are two different traditions of how he got the name, as evidenced in Gen 32:28 and Gen 35:10 respectively: Gen 32:28 "No longer will your name be Jacob," the man told him, "but Israel, because you have fought with God and with men and have prevailed."  Gen 35:10 God said to him, "Your name is Jacob, but your name will no longer be called Jacob; Israel will be your name." So God named him Israel.</li> </ul>	<p>Then Elijah took twelve stones, corresponding to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob -- to whom the word of the Eternal had come, saying, "Israel shall be your name."</p>	<p>18:31 וַיִּקַּח אֵלֵיהֶם שְׁתֵּים עָשָׂר אֲבָנִים כְּמִסְפַּר שְׁבָטֵי בְנֵי־ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקַּב אֶשֶׁר־הָיָה דְּבַר־יְהוָה אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהִיָּה שְׁמֶךָ:</p>

<p>סֵאִים Seahs There is some confusion about the measurements of this, as the seah is an inexact measure. However, it was clear that it was sizable. (AB, p. 442)</p> <p>תַּעֲלָה Drain/gutter/channel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is an uncommon word in the Bible, but it seems to be used as a word for a drain or gutter of some kind. For example, in Job 38:25, we read:</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">Who carves out a channel for the heavy rains, and a path for the rumble of thunder,</p>	<p>And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Eternal. He made a drain/gutter that could house two seahs of seed around the altar.</p>	<p>18:32 וַיִּבְנֶה אֶת־ הָאֲבָנִים מִזְבֵּחַ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה וַיַּעַשׂ תַּעֲלָה כְּבִית סֵאִים נָרַע סָבִיב לְמִזְבֵּחַ:</p>
<p>וַיַּעֲרֶךְ he prepared/set up Another example in which this where this verb means “to set up or prepare,” can be found in Prov 9:2. In rabbinic Judaism, Joseph Karo’s Shulchan Aruch also uses the verb להַעֲרִיךְ “to lay out/set.”</p> <p>וַיַּגְמִחַּהּ he cut up גִּמְחָה is used for <i>korbanot</i> in Lev 1:6 and 12.</p>	<p>He prepared the wood, and he cut up the bull and placed it on the wood.</p>	<p>18:33 וַיַּעֲרֶךְ אֶת־ הָעֵצִים וַיַּגְמִיחַ אֶת־הַפָּר וַיִּשֶׂם עַל־הָעֵצִים:</p>
<p>מָלֵאוּ אַרְבַּעָה כְּדִים מַיִם וַיִּצְקוּ עַל־הָעֹלָה וְעַל־הָעֵצִים Fill four jars with water and pour it over the burnt offering and the wood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The RaDaK noted that the soaked the altar “so as to increase the miracle” (AB, p. 443).</li> </ul> <p><i>Side Note:</i> There is a midrash that Ahab’s courtier, Hiel, crawled under the altar that the Baal prophets had set up, and was going to set a fire to show that Baal was the real God. However, his plan was foiled when Adonai sent a snake that bit Hiel.</p>	<p>And he said, “Fill four jars with water and pour it over the burnt offering and the wood.” and he said, “Do it a second time”; and they did it a second time. “Do it a third time,” he said; and they did it a third time.</p>	<p>18:34 וַיֹּאמֶר מָלֵאוּ אַרְבַּעָה כְּדִים מַיִם וַיִּצְקוּ עַל־ הָעֹלָה וְעַל־ הָעֵצִים וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁנִי וַיִּשְׁנֻ וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלִשִׁי וַיִּשְׁלְשׁוּ:</p>



	The water flowed around the altar, and even the trench was filled with water.	18:35 וַיִּלְכּוּ הַמַּיִם סָבִיב לַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְגַם אֶת־הַחֲפָצָה מִלֵּא־מַיִם:
<p>אֱלִיהוּ הַנָּבִיא Elijah the prophet This is the ONLY time Elijah is referred to as <i>hanavi</i> in the Elijah cycle.</p> <p>אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיִשְׂרָאֵל God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Israel is used instead of Jacob when naming the line of patriarchs, although we might expect this here because of the reference to Jacob becoming Israel in 18:31. However, in 18:31, the title Israel was referring to the people, here the title refers to the patriarch.</li> </ul>	<p>When it was time to present the meal offering, the prophet Elijah approached and said, "Eternal, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel! Today, may it be known that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant, and that it was upon your command that have done all these things.</p>	18:36 וַיְהִי בַעֲלֹת הַמִּנְחָה וַיֵּאָשׁ אֱלִיהוּ הַנָּבִיא וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיִשְׂרָאֵל הַיּוֹם יָדַע כִּי־ אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֲנִי עַבְדְּךָ וּבְדַבְּרֶיךָ [וּבְדַרְכְּךָ] עָשִׂיתִי אֵת כָּל־ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה:

<p>עֲנֵנִי יְהוָה עֲנֵנִי וְגִדְעוּ הָעַם הַזֶּה כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה הָאֱלֹהִים Answer me, Eternal, answer me, and this people will know that You, O Eternal, are God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This statement is identical to the words uttered by the Baal prophets in I Kings 18:26.</li> </ul> <p>אַתְּ הָיִיתָ אֶת־לִבָּם אֲחֵרָנִית you have turned their hearts backwards, or you have caused them to be backsliders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elijah is saying here that YHWH is responsible for the sinning of the people. We see a similar theme in Exodus when YHWH is responsible for hardening Pharaoh's heart.</li> </ul>	<p>Answer me, Eternal, answer me, and this people will know that You, O Eternal, are God; for You have caused their hearts to turn backward."</p>	<p>18:37 עֲנֵנִי יְהוָה עֲנֵנִי וְגִדְעוּ הָעַם הַזֶּה כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה הָאֱלֹהִים וְאַתָּה הַסַּכַּת אֶת־לִבָּם אֲחֵרָנִית:</p>
<p>לִחְכָּה Licked up לִחְכָּה can be used in a destructive sense, as we find in Numbers 22:4, where the people are described as licking up everything:</p> <p>And Moab said to the elders of Median, "Now this horde will lick clean all that is about us as an ox licks up the grass of the field." Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time.</p> <p>וַיֹּאמֶר מוֹאָב אֶל־זִקְנֵי מִדְיָן עֲלֵה וְלַחְכוּ הַקֶּהֱלִי אֶת־כָּל־ סְבִיבֹתֵינוּ כִּלְחֹךְ הַשּׂוֹר אֶת יֶרֶק הַשָּׂדֶה וּבָלֵק בְּוַצֵּפוֹר מֶלֶךְ לַמוֹאָב בְּעֵת הַהוּא:</p>	<p>Then fire from the Eternal descended and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones, and the dust; and it licked up the water that was in the trench.</p>	<p>18:38 וַתִּפֹּל אֵשׁ־ יְהוָה וַתֹּאכַל אֶת־הָעֹלֶה וְאֶת־ הָעֵצִים וְאֶת־ הָאֲבָנִים וְאֶת־ הָעֹפֶר וְאֶת־ הַמִּים אֲשֶׁר־ בַּתֶּעֱלָה לַחְכָּה:</p>
<p>יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים The Eternal is God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In I Kings 18:24, we read, "it will be the god that answers by fire, that one is God." The text of I Kings 18:39 provides a nice answer to this, as YHWH answers by fire, proving that YHWH is the true God.</li> <li><i>Side Note:</i> this is where the text הָאֱלֹהִים הוּא יְהוָה is taken from, that has been incorporated into the Yom Kippur liturgy. We traditionally sing this text 7 times at the end of Yom Kippur.</li> </ul>	<p>When they saw this, all the people flung themselves on their faces and cried out: "The Eternal is God, The Eternal is God!"</p>	<p>18:39 וַיֵּרָא כָּל־הָעָם וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל־ פְּנֵיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים:</p>

<p>וַיִּשְׁחָטֵם Slaughtered them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• שחט is a verb normally used for animals.</li> <li>• Jezebel had tried to kill the YHWH prophets, but in the end, it is the Baal prophets who lose their lives.</li> </ul>	<p>Then Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal, let not a single one of them escape." They seized them, and Elijah took them down to the Wadi Kishon and slaughtered them there.</p>	<p>18:40 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיהֶם לָקֹם תִּפְשׁוּ וְ אֶת־נְבִיאֵי הַבַּעַל אִישׁ אֶל־ יָמְלֹט מֵהֶם וְיִתְּפְשׂוּם וַיִּזְרְקֵם אֵלֵיהֶם אֶל־נַחַל קִישׁוֹן וַיִּשְׁחָטֵם שָׁם:</p>
	<p>Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink, for there is the sound of the rumble of rain."</p>	<p>18:41 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיהֶם לָאֵחָאֵב עֲלֶה אֲכַל וּשְׁתֵּה כִּי־ קוֹל הַמָּוֶן הַגָּשָׁם:</p>
<p>וַיִּגָּהֵר אֶרְצָה וַיִּשָּׁם פָּנָיו בֵּין בְּרָכָיו [בְּרַקְיָו] he bent to the ground, and put his face between his knees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elijah enacts a prayerful pose. We see Elijah do a similar pose when bringing the Shunemite woman's dead son back to life in II Ki 4:34-35. Once again, the root גהר is used to describe Elijah bending down low. In II Ki 4:34-35, it is a life saving action, as he stretching himself up on the child twice, and gives him what seems to be mouth- to-mouth resuscitation.</li> </ul>	<p>and Ahab went up to eat and drink. Elijah meanwhile climbed to the top of Mount Carmel, he bent to the ground, and put his face between his knees.</p>	<p>18:42 וַיַּעֲלֶה אַחָאֵב לֶאֱכֹל וּלְשִׁתּוֹת וַאֲלֵיהֶם עֲלֶה אֶל־רֹאשׁ הַכַּרְמֶל וַיִּגָּהֵר אֶרְצָה וַיִּשָּׁם פָּנָיו בֵּין בְּרָכָיו [בְּרַקְיָו]:</p>

<p>שֶׁבַע שִׁבְעִים seven times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number seven appears to hold special significance within the Tanakh. A number of turning points happen after an action is done seven times. For example, Elisha sneezes on the Shunamite woman's deceased son seven times in bringing him back to life in II Kings 4:35.</li> <li>• Elisha heals the king of Aram of leprosy by having him bathe himself in the Jordan seven times. In II Kings 5:10.</li> <li>• Joshua leads a march around Jericho in which the people circle the city seven times and the walls come down in Josh 6:15.</li> </ul>	<p>And he said to his servant, "Go up and look toward the Sea." He went up and looked and reported, "There is nothing." Seven times he said, "Go back,"</p>	<p>18:43 וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־ נָעֳרָיו עֲלֵה־נָא הַבֵּט דְּרֹד־יָם וַיַּעַל וַיִּבֹט וַיֹּאמֶר אֵין מְאֻמָּה וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁב שֶׁבַע פְּעָמִים:</p>
	<p>And it was on the seventh time, that he [the servant] said, "A cloud as small as a man's hand is rising from the sea." So he [Elijah] said, "Go, say to Ahab, 'Hitch up [your chariot] and go down before the rain stops you.'"</p>	<p>18:44 וַיְהִי בִשְׁבָעִית וַיֹּאמֶר הַנֶּה־עָב קָטָנָה כְּכַר־אִישׁ עָלָה מִיָּם וַיֹּאמֶר עָלָה אָמַר אֶל־אַחָאָב אָסֹר וְרֵד וְלֹא יַעֲצֹרְכֶה הַגֶּשֶׁם:</p>

<p>התקדרו became more black          From the root קדר, which is less common than שחור. A pot is sometime called a קדרה because it can turn black after a lot of usage.</p>	<p>So it was that the sky grew black more and more with clouds; there was wind, and a heavy rain fell; Ahab rode his chariot and went to Jezreel.</p>	<p>18:45          ויהי ערבה ועדפה והשמים התקדרו עבים ורוח ויהי גשם גדול וירקב אחאב וגילה יורעאלה:</p>
<p>and the hand of the Eternal was upon Elijah.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ahab travels by chariot, but Elijah arrives faster than he, as Elijah travels by God's hand. Once again, as we saw in I Kings 18:12, we have a reference to how God might whisk Elijah here or there quickly from one place to another.</li> </ul> <p>וַיִּשְׁנֵם מִתְּגָיו He tied up his skirts around his middle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>וַיִּשְׁנֵם is a hapax legomenon, but likely carries the meaning of the more commonly used word, תגור, "to strap or lace." II Ki 4:29 and Jer 1:17 are examples of verses within which the word תגור is used. (AB, p. 445)</li> <li>All of these images for tying up one's skirts are really trying to express that the person was going somewhere quickly (in a hurry). We have artistic representations of this from the Near East. Both men and women wore something that looked like a skirt or a kilt. Sometimes these garments were fairly long and needed to be lifted and tied up in order for the people wearing them to run.</li> <li>שנס is the root of a term for binding around the waist is found in Ugaritic.</li> </ul> <p>יִזְרְעָאֵלָה Jezreel          The royal family had an estate at Jezreel. (AB, p. 445)</p>	<p>and the hand of the Eternal was upon Elijah. He tied up his skirts and ran in front of Ahab all the way to Jezreel</p>	<p>18:46          וַיִּדְיָהוָה הָיָתָה אֶל־אֱלֹהֵי וַיִּשְׁנֵם מִתְּגָיו וַיֵּרֶץ לִפְנֵי אַחָאב עַד־בְּאֶבְרָה יִזְרְעָאֵלָה:</p>

	Ahab told Jezebel all the details of what Elijah had done, and all the details of how he killed all the prophets by sword.	19:1 וַיַּגֵּד אַחָאָב לְאִיזָבֵל אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֱלִיָּהוּ וְאֵת כָּל־ אֲשֶׁר הָרַג אֶת־ כָּל־הַנְּבִיאִים בַּחֶרֶב:
<p>May the gods do to me Jezebel is a heathen, as is clearly described in I Kings 16:31-34. She makes her vows to “the gods” as opposed to YHWH.</p>	Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah saying, “May the gods do thus to me and more if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life as you did to them.	19:2 וַתִּשְׁלַח אִיזָבֵל מַלְאָךְ אֶל־ אֱלִיָּהוּ לֵאמֹר כֹּה־יַעֲשׂוּן אֱלֹהִים וְכֹה יוֹסִפוּן כִּי־בָעִת מָחָר אֲשִׁים אֶת־נַפְשְׁךָ כִּגְפָשׁ אֲחִיד מָדָם:

<p>וַיֵּרָא he saw It is generally accepted that this is a scribal vocalization error. וַיֵּרָא should be וַיִּירָא <i>he was afraid</i>.</p> <p>וַיֵּרָא וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-נַפְשׁוֹ so he got up and fled for his life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The usage of the word <i>nefesh</i> ties this together with the previous verse in which <i>nefesh</i> is used twice. The technique of repeating words was valued in biblical literature as it was presented orally.</li> </ul> <p>בְּעֶרְוֹ his servant As we see in Esther 2:2, 6:3 and 6:5, a נער is not always a “young man,” rather it could also be an attendant or servant of any age. It can be a high official as in <i>na’ar hammelek</i> found on ancient Hebrew seals. In this second case, the word is a description of the person’s social status rather than his age.</p>	<p>Elijah was afraid, so he got up and fled for his life to Beer Sheba in Judah. He left his servant there.</p>	<p>19:3 וַיֵּרָא וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-נַפְשׁוֹ וַיָּבֹא בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע אֲשֶׁר לַיהוּדָה וַיַּגִּחַ אֶת-בְּעֶרְוֹ שָׁם:</p>
<p>וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת-נַפְשׁוֹ לָמוּת and asked the Eternal to take his life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We see this same statement used in Jonah 4:8. In both Elijah’s and Jonah’s case, it is an expression of utter despair. Elijah would like to die at the hand of YHWH, as opposed to that of Jezebel. (AB p. 450)</li> </ul>	<p>He went a day’s journey into the desert. He came and sat down under a broom tree and asked the Eternal to take his life. He said, “I’ve had enough! Now, O Eternal, take my life. After all, I’m no better than my ancestors.”</p>	<p>19:4 וְהוּא-קִלֵּךְ בַּמִּדְבָּר יָרַד יוֹם וַיָּבֹא וַיֵּשֶׁב תַּחַת רֶמֶם אֶת [אֶתֶד] וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת-נַפְשׁוֹ לָמוּת וַיֹּאמֶר אֲרִב עֲתָה יְהוָה קַח נַפְשִׁי כִּי לֹא- טוֹב אֲנִי מֵאַבְתָּי</p>

<p>מַלְאָךְ Angel/messenger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In a number of places early on in the Pentateuch, the word מַלְאָךְ is used interchangeably with YHWH. For example, in Gen 16:11 and 13 there is a blurring between the labels of “angel of the YHWH” and “YHWH:”</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"> <sup>11</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה הִנֵּה הָרָה וְיִלְדָּתָּ בֵּן  וְקָרָאתָ שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁמָעֵאל כִּי־שָׁמַע יְהוָה אֶל־עֲנִיָּהּ׃  <sup>13</sup> וַתִּקְרָא שְׁם־יְהוָה הַדֹּבֵר אֵלֶיהָ אַתָּה אֵל רֹאֵי כִי  אַמְלִיךָ הַגֵּם הַלֵּם רָאִיתִי אַתְרֵי רֹאִי׃ </p> <p> <sup>11</sup>The angel of the Lord said to her further, “Behold, you are with child And shall bear a son; You shall call him Ishmael, For the Lord has paid heed to your suffering.  <sup>13</sup>And she called the Lord who spoke to her, “You Are El-roi,” by which she meant, “Have I not gone on seeing after He saw me!” </p> <p>In the earlier books מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה seems to be a manifestation of YHWH, but in a slightly different form. מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה does not have a separate personality from YHWH. In the later books in the Tanakh, however, named angels begin to appear. This is because the books were written at a time when monotheism had prevailed. The later biblical authors were likely concerned that the appearance of different manifestations of YHWH could have been perceived as a display of different gods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Side note: mal'ak</i> in Ugaritic means messenger. The verb <i>la'ak</i> in Ugaritic, from which the noun <i>mal'ak</i> is derived means “send.”</li> </ul>	<p>He lay down and fell asleep under a Broom tree, when suddenly an angel touched him and said, “Get up and eat.”</p>	<p>19:5  וַיִּשְׁכַּב וַיִּישָׁן  תַּחַת רִמּוֹם אֶתֶד  וַהֲגִה־זֶה מַלְאָךְ  בִּגְעֵ בֹו וַיֹּאמֶר  לֹו קוּם אֲכֹל׃ </p>
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<p>וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשָּׂא He ate and drank We see in this verse another example of nourishment being provided in a miraculous way, as we have seen throughout the narrative about Elijah.</p>	<p>He looked and right there by his head was a cake baking on hot coals and a jug of water! He ate and drank and then slept.</p>	<p>19:6 וַיֵּט וַהֲגָה מִרְאֲשֵׁתָיו עֲגַת רִצָּפִים וְצִפְחַת מִים וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשָּׂא וַיִּשָּׁב וַיִּשְׁכַּב:</p>
	<p>The angel of the Eternal came back again, touched him, and said, "Get up and eat, or the journey will be too much for you."</p>	<p>19:7 וַיָּשָׁב מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה וַשְּׁנִית וַיִּגַּע-בּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר קוּם אֲכַל כִּי רַב מְמַתְּ הַדֶּרֶךְ:</p>
<p>הָאֲכִילָה The food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• אֲכִילָה is the Aramaic form of the word for food <i>ochel</i>. It uses a <i>qatilah</i> pattern, which becomes much more common in later Hebrew.</li> <li>• In early biblical writings, the word <i>ochel</i> (<i>not achilah</i>) would be used. However, the usage of the word <i>achilah</i> in this verse might not be related to the time in which it was written as much as its geographical location. The Northern Kingdom bordered on Aram (Syria). Therefore, the Aramean language has a fairly strong influence upon Northern Israelite language.</li> </ul>	<p>So he got up and ate and drank. With the strength [he gained] from the meal he travelled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of the Eternal.</p>	<p>19:8 וַיָּקָם וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשְׂתֶּה וַיִּלְךָ בְּכֹחַ הָאֲכִילָה הָיָא אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה עַד הָרִ הָאֵלֹהִים חֹרֵב:</p>

	<p>He went into a cave there and spent the night. All of a sudden the Eternal spoke to him, "What's going on with you here, Elijah?"</p>	<p>19:9 וַיָּבֹא־שָׁם אֶל־ הַמְּעָרָה וַיָּלֵן שָׁם וַתִּהְיֶה דְּבַר־ יְהוָה אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מֶה־ לָּךְ פֹּה אֵלֶיךָ:</p>
<p>קָנָא very zealous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is an infinitive absolute.</li> <li>קָנָא can mean jealous or zealous (these words have the same etymology).</li> <li>We see a similar usage of קָנָא in Num 25:11.</li> </ul> <p>Phinehas, son of Eleazar son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the Israelites by displaying among them his zeal for Me, so that I did not wipe out the Israelite people in My passion.</p> <p>פִּינְחָס בֶּן־עֲלֵעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הֵשִׁיב אֶת־ חַמְתִּי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִנְיָאוֹ אֶת־קִנְאַתִּי בְּתוֹכָם וְלֹא־כִלִּיתִי אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִנְיָאִתִּי:</p> <p>YHWH saved Israel from destruction because of the zealousness that Phinehas displayed towards YHWH.</p> <p>אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת the God of the divine armies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please see commentary for I Kings 18:15.</li> </ul>	<p>He answered, "I am very zealous towards the Eternal, the God of the divine, because the Israelites have abandoned your covenant they have destroyed your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left and now they are seeking my life to take it.</p>	<p>19:10 וַיֹּאמֶר קָנָא קִנְיָאִתִּי לַיהוָה וְ אֵלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת כִּי־עָזְבוּ בְרִיתִךָ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִזְבְּחֶיךָ הָרְסוּ וְאֶת־ בְּנֵי־אֱלֹהֵי הָרָגוּ בְּחֶרֶב וְאֶתְּךָ אֲנִי לְבַדִּי וַיִּבְקְשׂוּ אֶת־ נַפְשִׁי לְקַחְתָּהּ:</p>

<p>In verses 19:11-12 there is a hendiadys describing YHWH as encompassing a roar to a whisper.</p> <p>We see in 19:11 an image of nature itself alarmed and scared. We find similar imagery in Judg 5:4-5, Hab 3:3-6 and Ps 18:8-10, and 68:9. (AB, p. 453)</p>	<p>He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Eternal. Behold, the Eternal passes by. And there was a great and mighty wind--tearing the mountains and splitting the cliffs that are before the Eternal. But the Eternal was not in the wind. After the windstorm, [there was] an earthquake, but the Eternal was not in the earthquake.</p>	<p>19:11 וַיֹּאמֶר צֵא וַעֲמַדְתָּ בְּהָרִי לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וְהִנֵּה יְהוָה עֹבֵר וְרוּחַ גְּדוֹלָה וְחֹזֶק מִפְּרֹק הַרִים וּמִשִּׁבְרֵי סָלְעִים לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לֹא בְרוּחַ יְהוָה וְאַחַר הָרִיחַ רָעַשׁ לֹא בָרַעַשׁ יְהוָה:</p>
<p>דַּמְמָה small voice/whisper In Akaadian we find a similar word, <i>damamu</i>, that means "to whine," or "a light whining sound."</p>	<p>After the earthquake, fire, but the Eternal is not in the fire. After the fire, a still small voice</p>	<p>19:12 וְאַחַר הָרַעַשׁ אֵשׁ לֹא בָאֵשׁ יְהוָה וְאַחַר הָאֵשׁ קוֹל דַּמְמָה דַּקָּה:</p>

<p>וַיִּלְט פָּנָיו he covered his face</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elijah's instinct is to hide his face. We see this also with Gideon (Judges 6:22) and Manoah (13:20-22). (AB, p. 453-454)</li> <li>וַיִּלְט is a rare verb, however, we see forms of it in I Sam 21:10, II Sam 19:5 and Isa 25:7. (AB, p. 454)</li> </ul>	<p>When Elijah heard this he covered his face with his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance to the cave. And behold, a voice asked him, "What's going on with you here, Elijah?"</p>	<p>19:13 וַיְהִי אֲלֵיהֶם וַיִּלְט פָּנָיו בְּאַדְרָתּוֹ וַיֵּצֵא וַיַּעֲמֵד בְּפֶתַח הַמְעָרָה וַהֲגָה אֵלָיו קוֹל וַיֹּאמֶר מַה־לָּךְ כֹּה אֲלֵיהֶם:</p>
	<p>He answered, "I have been very zealous to the Eternal, of Hosts because the Israelites have abandoned the your covenant torn down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left and now they want to take my life."</p>	<p>19:14 וַיֹּאמֶר קָנָא קָנָאתִי לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת כִּי־עָזְבוּ בְרִיתִי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מִזְבְּחֹתַי הָרְסוּ וְאֶת־גְּבִיעֵי הָרָגוּ בַחֶרֶב וְאֶנִּי לְבַדִּי וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ אֶת־נַפְשִׁי לְהַחֲמָה:</p>

<p>וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָיו לֵךְ שׁוּב לְדֶרֶךְךָ The Eternal said to him, "Go back the way you came</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elijah has run away in despair and feels he is no longer useful and says he wishes that Adonai would kill him. The angel comes and feeds him and then he is able to move on. Even though Elijah had lost hope, he is still able to travel forty days and nights to Horeb.</li> <li>This trip is highly symbolic as the Israelites wandered for forty years in the dessert, and received the commandments from God at the foot of Mount Horeb/Sinai. It is on Horeb that Yahweh appears to Elijah and asks him to go back and anoint Hazael.</li> </ul> <p>וַיִּשְׁחָתְךָ אֶת־חֲזַאֵל לְמֶלֶךְ עַל־אַרָם Go and anoint Hazael king over Syria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within the Torah we find that kings, priests and sacred vessels are anointed, however, this is the only case where a prophet is anointed! Furthermore, the king he is anointing is an Aramean! The concept that is derived from this is that the God of Israel controls all of the kingdoms of the earth and can anoint the king of another country.</li> </ul>	<p>The Eternal said to him, "Go back the way you came and then head for the Desert of Damascus. Go and anoint Hazael king over Syria.</p>	<p>19:15 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָיו לֵךְ שׁוּב לְדֶרֶךְךָ מִדְבָּרָה וַיִּשְׁחָתְךָ אֶת־חֲזַאֵל לְמֶלֶךְ עַל־אַרָם:</p>
	<p>You must anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah you shall anoint him as a prophet in your place.</p>	<p>19:16 וְאַחַ יְהוּא בֶן־נִמְשִׁי תִמְשַׁח לְמֶלֶךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאַחַ־אֵלִישָׁע בֶּן־שַׁפְטָן מֵאֵבֶל מֵהוֹלָה תִּמְשָׁח לְנָבִיא תַּחֲמִיד:</p>

<p>וְהַנִּמְלָט the escaped</p> <p>The root <i>malat</i> is the source of the name of the island nation of Malta that had served as a haven for those who had been in a shipwreck. Maltese is a Semitic language. We also see forms of מלט in Isa. 46:2, Jer. 39:18 and Ezek. 33:5.</p>	<p>Jehu will slaughter by sword anyone who escapes Hazael's sword, and Elisha will kill anyone who escapes Jehu's sword.</p>	<p>19:17 וְהָיָה הַנִּמְלָט מִתַּרְבַּח חֶזְקָא יָמִית יְהוָה וְהַנִּמְלָט מִתַּרְבַּח יְהוָה יָמִית אֵלֵיָּשָׁע:</p>
<p>כָּל־הַכֹּרְעִים all who kneel</p> <p>Within biblical times, kneeling was a sign of reverence and/or submission. We see it used also in Isa 46:2, and II Chron 29:29. (AB, p. 454)</p> <p>כָּל־הַכֹּרְעִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־כָרְעוּ לְבַעַל וְכָל־הַפִּה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נָשַׁק לוֹ</p> <p>All the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and all the mouths that have not kissed him</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From this verse, we learn that in Baal worship, one is expected to bow and kiss Baal.</li> </ul>	<p>I still have in Israel seven thousand left, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and all the mouths that have not kissed him.</p>	<p>19:18 וְהִשָּׁאֲרָתִי בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל שִׁבְעַת אֲלָפִים כָּל־הַכֹּרְעִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־כָרְעוּ לְבַעַל וְכָל־הַפִּה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נָשַׁק לוֹ:</p>
	<p>Elijah went from there and found Elisha, son of Shaphat. He was plowing with twelve pairs of oxen; he was near the twelfth pair when Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle over him.</p>	<p>19:19 וַיֵּלֶךְ מִשָּׁם וַיִּמְצָא אֶת־אֵלִישָׁע בֶּן־ שַׁפְטָן וְהוּא חָרֹשׁ שְׁנַיִם־ עֶשְׂרֵי צִמְדִּים לִפְנָיו וְהוּא בְּשֹׁנִים הֶעֱשָׂה וַיַּעֲבֵר אֵלֵיהֶוּ אֵלָיו וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־רִתּוֹ אֵלָיו:</p>

<p>שוב כי מה-עשיתי לך “Go back! For what have I done to you?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It seems to be that Elijah is teasing Elisha here.</li> <li><i>Side note:</i> This kind of teasing banter is picked up in the New Testament, for example, in Matthew 8:21-22.</li> </ul>	<p>He left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said, “Please let me kiss my father and mother goodbye, then I will follow you.” [Elijah] said to him, “Go back! For what have I done to you?”</p>	<p>19:20 וַיַּעֲזֹב אֶת־ הַבָּקָר וַיֵּרֶץ אַחֲרֵי אֱלִיָּהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲשַׁקֶּה־ בָּא לְאָבִי וּלְאִמִּי וְאֶלְכֶּה אַחֲרָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הָךְ שׁוּב כִּי מָה־ עָשִׂיתִי לָךְ:</p>
<p>וַיִּתֵּן לָעָם וַיֹּאכְלוּ he gave food to the people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We see in this verse that Elisha is very generous and kind. He fed the people upon his departure and took the time to kiss his parents goodbye.</li> </ul>	<p>Elisha went back and took his pair of oxen and slaughtered them. He cooked the meat over a fire that he made by burning the harness and yoke. He gave the people meat and they ate. Then [Elisha] got up and followed Elijah, and became his attendant.</p>	<p>19:21 וַיָּשָׁב מֵאַחֲרָיו וַיִּקַּח אֶת־אֶמְדוֹ הַבָּקָר וַיִּזְבְּחֵהוּ וַיַּכֵּל הַבָּקָר בַּשֶּׁלֶם הַבָּשָׂר וַיִּתֵּן לָעָם וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּקֶּם וַיֵּלֶךְ אַחֲרֵי אֱלִיָּהוּ וַיִּשְׁרָתָהוּ:</p>

<p>וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה After these things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rashbam stated that “after these things” is an idiom used in the Tanakh to connect the beginning of a passage with whatever happened before it. If this is the case, then, the story of Naboth would be understood as coming directly after Elisha left his family and home to be Elijah’s assistant.</li> </ul> <p>בְּיֶזְרְעֵאל אֶצֶל הַיָּכָל אֶחָב in Jezreel by the palace of King Ahab</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a problem with the description of the geographical distance between Jezreel and Ahab’s palace, which were not beside each other. Some commentators try to resolve this by suggesting that it was not Ahab’s main palace, but another palace of his that happened to be close the Jezreel valley. (AB, p. 476)</li> </ul> <p>שָׁמָרֹן Samaria Samaria was the capitol of the Northern kingdom.</p> <p>הַיָּכָל palace</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>הַיָּכָל is a Sumerian loan word from <i>egal</i>, which means big house, and from the Akkadian word <i>ekallu</i>, which refers to a Temple. However, in this case, הַיָּכָל refers to a secular palace, as it seems to be in later writings, such as Jonah, Ezekiel, and I and II Chronicles. (AB, p. 476)</li> </ul>	<p>After these things Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard that was in Jezreel by the palace of King Ahab of Samaria.</p>	<p>21:1 וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה כִּרְם הָיָה לְנָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאֵלִי אֲשֶׁר בְּיֶזְרְעֵאל אֶצֶל הַיָּכָל אֶחָב מֶלֶךְ שָׁמָרֹן:</p>
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<p>             תָּנָה-לִּי Sell to me              Although this would most commonly be translated as              “give to me,” we find some examples in the Tanakh when              תָּנָה-לִּי means, “sell to me,” in Gen 23:13, Num 20:19, and              Jonah 1:3. (AB, p. 477)           </p>	<p>             Ahab spoke to              Naboth,              saying, “Sell              me your              vineyard,              and it will be              for me a              garden of              greens, for              it is close              beside to my              palace. And I              will give you              in its place a              vineyard that              is better than              this one; or, if              it is good in              your eyes, I              will pay you              silver for the              price of this.”           </p>	<p>             21:2              וַיִּדְבֹּר אֶחָב              אֶל-נָבוֹת ׀              לֵאמֹר תָּנָה-לִּי              אֶת-כַּרְמִי              וַיְהִי-לִי לְגֹר-              יָרֵק כִּי הוּא              קָרוֹב אֵצֶל              בֵּיתִי וְאֶתְנָה לִּי              תַחְתָּיו כִּדְם              טוֹב מִמֶּנּוּ אִם              טוֹב בְּעֵינַי              אֶתְנָה-לֶךָ כֶּסֶף              מַחֲרִיר זֶה׃           </p>
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<p>חלילה profanation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Naboth understood the proposed sale of his land as a desecration of God's law. In I Sam 24:6-7, an oath is taken to emphasize the seriousness of keeping God's commandments. (AB, p. 478) Breaking one of God's laws would have been understood by the biblical audience to be a great sin. The word חלילה carries the connotation of sinning and rebelling against YHWH (through profaning God's commandments). We can see with in the usage of חלילה in Josh 22:29:</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">Far be it from us to rebel against the Eternal, or to turn away this day from the Eternal and build an altar for burnt offerings, meal offerings, and sacrifices other than the altar of the Eternal our God which stands before His Tabernacle."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">חלילה לנו ממנו למרד ביהוה ולשוב היום מאחרי יהוה לבנות מזבח לעלה למנחה ולזבח מלבד מזבח יהוה אלהינו אשר לפני משכןנו:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have another example of חלילה meaning to rebel or sin against YHWH in I Sam 12:23:</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">As for me, far be it from me to sin against the Eternal and refrain from praying for you; and I will continue to instruct you in the practice of what is good and right.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">גם אנכי חלילה לי מחטא ליהוה מחזל להתפלל בעדכם והוריתי אתכם בגרוד הטובה והישרה:</p> <p>In this example, מחטא ליהוה has a similar semantic range to חלילה לי.</p>	<p>But Naboth replied, "The Eternal forbid that I should give up to you what I have inherited from my fathers!"</p>	<p>21:3 וַיֹּאמֶר נָבוֹת אֶל־אֶחָאֵב חֲלִילָה לִי מִיְהוָה מִתְּתִי אֶת־יְרוּשָׁתִּי אֲבֹתֵי לִדִּי:</p>
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<p>גִּחְלָת Inheritance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In biblical times, land was to be given to a close family member after the death of a landowner. During the Jubilee year, people could sell their property. However, in Lev 25, we read that they would be reluctant to sell it unless forced by economic hardship</li> </ul> <p>Side notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Institution of <i>nahalah</i> is about 1000 years earlier than this story. <i>Nahalu</i> and <i>nihiltu</i> which are not native Akkadian terms, are found in Akkadian texts in Syria written by people ultimately related to the Hebrews.</li> <li>Akkadian, native to Mesopotamia (Iraq), was the lingua franca of parts of Middle East for close to 1000 years. People who were not native speakers of Akkadian, such as the inhabitants of Mari, used it. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century BCE, Western Semites inhabited Mari. While they would write in Akkadian in general, they would also use words that show up later in Aramaic or Hebrew. especially for West Semitic institution for which there was no word in Akkadian</li> </ul>		<p>21:3 (continued)</p>
<p>וְזָעַר וְזָעַר bitter and angry</p> <p>We see this same combination of the words זָעַר וְזָעַר in I Kings 20:43.</p>	<p>So Ahab went home bitter and angry because of the word that Naboth the Jezreelite had spoke to him: who had said "I will not give up to you what I have inherited from my fathers!" He lay down on his bed and turned away his face, and he would not eat.</p>	<p>21:4</p> <p>וַיָּבֹא אֶחָב אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ זָעַר וְזָעַר עַל-הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵלִי וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא-אֶתֶּן לָהּ אֶת-גִּחְלָתִי אֲבוֹתִי וַיִּשָּׁבֵב עַל-מִשְׁתּוֹ וַיִּסָּב אֶת-פָּנָיו וְלֹא- אָכַל לֶחֶם:</p>

<p>סָרָה so sad Literally, "your good spirit has turned away."</p>	<p>His wife Jezebel came to him and asked him, "Why do are you so sad spirited that you won't eat any food?"</p>	<p>21:5 וַתָּבֹא אֵלָיו אִיזָבֵל אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתִּדְבֹר אֵלָיו מַה־נָּה רָחוּקָה סָרָה וְאֵינָה אֹכֵל לֶחֶם:</p>
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<p>וַיֹּדֶבֶר אֵלֶיהָ So he said to her</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Ahab's description of events to Jezebel, the order of what he offers to Naboth in exchange for his land is reversed from the initial offer he gives in 21:2.</li> </ul> <p>I Kings 21:2</p> <p>תִּנֶּה-לִּי אֶת-כַּרְמִי.....וְאֶתְנָה לְךָ תַּחֲתָיו כָּרֶם טוֹב מִמֶּנּוּ אִם טוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ אֶתְנָה-לָּךְ כֶּסֶף מַחֲוִיר וְהָ</p> <p>Sell me your vineyard.....And I will give you in its place a vineyard that is better than this one; or, if it is good in your eyes, I will pay you silver for the price of this.</p> <p>I Kings 21:6</p> <p>תִּנֶּה-לִּי אֶת-כַּרְמִי בְכֶסֶף אוֹ אִם-תִּפְּזֵנִי אֲנִי אֶתְנָה-לָּךְ כָּרֶם תַּחֲתָיו</p> <p>sell me your vineyard for silver, or if it pleases you, I'll give you a vineyard instead of it.</p> <p>When Ahab is in conversation with Naboth, he offers to give him another vineyard before offering him money. This is likely because he is aware of the importance of the land to Naboth (as his inheritance) and tries to make a kind of exchange of land for land. On the other hand, when he retells the story to Jezebel, he tells her that he offered Naboth money first. This suggests that he did not take Naboth's claim to the land as an inheritance, or the laws about inheritance of land seriously. Furthermore, as Cogan notes, Ahab substitutes "the land of my fathers' for my vineyard" in his retelling to Jezebel, indicating that he does not take the law of inheritance seriously. (AB, p. 478)</p>	<p>So he said to her, "because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'sell me your vineyard for silver, or if it pleases you, I'll give you a vineyard instead of it'; but he said, 'I will not give my vineyard to you.'"</p>	<p>21:6 וַיֹּדֶבֶר אֵלֶיהָ כִּי-אָדַבֶּר אֵל- נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאלִי וְאָמַר לוֹ תִנֶּה- לִּי אֶת-כַּרְמִי בְכֶסֶף אוֹ אִם- תִּפְּזֵנִי אֲנִי אֶתְנָה-לָּךְ כָּרֶם תַּחֲתָיו וְאָמַר לֹא-אֶתֶּן לָּךְ אֶת-כַּרְמִי:</p>
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<p>וַיֵּטֵב לִבָּךְ so your heart will be well  We also see וַיֵּטֵב לִבָּךְ used as “cheer up” in I Kings 8:66.  (AB, p. 478)</p> <p>אַתָּה עַתָּה תַעֲשֶׂה מְלֹכָה You, now, are exercising kingship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an extra pronoun used here, as the verb expresses the second person. It is there to highlight Jezebel’s speech as emphatic and emotional. She belittles Ahab, saying, <i>You (call yourself a king?)</i>. Through this exchange, Ahab is depicted as a weak king who is overpowered by his wife.</li> </ul>	<p>His wife  Jezebel said  to him, “You,  now, are  exercising  kingship over  Israel?!”  Rise and eat  some food,  so your heart  will be well; I  will get the  vineyard of  Naboth the  Jezreelite for  you.”</p>	<p>21:7  וְתֹאמַר אֵלָיו  אִיזְבֵּל אִשְׁתּוֹ  אַתָּה עַתָּה  תַעֲשֶׂה מְלֹכָה  עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל  קוּם אֲכַל־לֶחֶם  וַיֵּטֵב לִבָּךְ אָנֹכִי  אֲתֵנוּ לֶךְ אֶת־  כֶּרֶם נָבוֹת  הַיִּזְרְעֵלִית לְךָ:</p>
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<p>ספרים letters This is an early Hebrew term for letters.</p> <p>וּתְּכַתֵּב סִפְרִים she wrote letters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We know from this verse that Jezebel is literate.</li> <li>• There are two women who write in the bible. Esther and Jezebel (Miriam and Deborah composed).</li> <li>• For anyone to learn to write during that time, she would have needed leisure time and money for a tutor and writing materials. As Jezebel was the daughter of one king and married to another, she had these resources.</li> <li>• <i>Side note:</i> The first named author in history is the woman Enhe Duanna.</li> </ul> <p>חֲרִים nobles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The usage of the word חֲרִים as meaning “nobles,” rather than “free people,” (as in the end of the song <i>abadim hayinu</i>) is unusual in early texts, and texts from the Northern Kingdom. Typically, חֲרִים meaning “nobles” is found in texts that developed in Judah, and/or late texts. (AB, p. 478)</li> <li>• We find this word חֲרִים paired with סִגְנִים in Nehemiah a number of times, for example in Neh 4:8, 13, 5:7, and 7:5. סִגְנִי is an Akkadian word for “governor.” This connection helps to emphasize the connotation that the word חֲרִים has at times of being a part of the upper echelon or ruling class of society.</li> </ul>	<p>So she wrote letters in Ahab’s name and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who lived in the same town with Naboth.</p>	<p>21:8 וּתְּכַתֵּב סִפְרִים בְּשֵׁם אֲחָאָב וּתְּחַתֶּמּוּ בְּחַתְמֹהּ וּתְּשַׁלַּח הַסִּפְרִים [סִפְרִים] אֶל־ הַזְקֵנִים וְאֶל־ הַחֲרִים אֲשֶׁר בְּעִירוֹ הַיֹּשְׁבִים אֶת־נָבוֹת:</p>
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<p>קרא-צום Proclaim a fast day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By proclaiming a fast day, Jezebel indicates that the community was in a state of mourning or repentance.</li> <li>We see the act of fasting as an expression of mourning in a number of places in the Tanakh, for example, when King David prays for forgiveness and for the life of his child to be spared:</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">David entreated God for the boy; David fasted, and he went in and spent the night lying on the ground.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וּבְקִשׁ דָּוִד אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים בְּעַד הַנָּעַר וַיֵּצֵא דָוִד צוֹם וַיָּבֹא וְלָו וּשְׁכַב אַרְצָה:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Similarly, when warned by Jonah that their city would be destroyed if they did not repent and turn back to God, the people of Nineveh fasted and enacted rituals of mourning in Jonah 3:5:</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">The people of Nineveh believed God. They proclaimed a fast, and great and small alike put on sackcloth.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וַיֵּאֱמִינוּ אֲנָשֵׁי נִינְוָה בָּאֱלֹהִים וַיִּקְרְאוּ צוֹם וַיִּלְבְּשׁוּ שָׂקִים מִגְדוֹלָם וְעַד־קִטְנֵם:</p> <p>Seat Naboth at the front of the people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Giving Naboth a place at the front of the group would have been understood as a marker of respect for a landowner, as we see in Job 29:7 and 25. (AB, p. 479) Jezebel commanded that Naboth sit at the front, as if he were being shown respect. This would give the appearance of her showing respect for the societal order of the community, and wielding her rule fairly within this construct. Jezebel's mock ritual of justice in which the people find Naboth guilty perverted the justice system. She behaved as if she were upholding the law, and yet, she manipulated and falsified the facts in order to "prove" an innocent man is guilty.</li> </ul>	<p>In the letters she wrote saying: "Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth at the front of the people.</p>	<p>21:9 וּתְקַתֵּב בְּסִפְרֵיהֶם לֵאמֹר קְרְאוּ צוֹם וְהִשִּׁיבוּ אֶת־ נָבוֹת בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם:</p>
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<p>שְׁנַיִם אֲנָשִׁים Two witnesses Two witnesses were needed within the ancient biblical legal system to confirm the guilt of another person. We see examples of this in Deut 17:6, 19:15 and Num 35:30. (AB, p. 479)</p> <p>בְּנֵי-בְלִיעַל scoundrels/men without worth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a term used for people who break God's law. This is clearly defined in I Sam 2:12:</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">Now Eli's sons were scoundrels; they paid no heed to the LORD.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וּבְנֵי עֲלִי בְנֵי בְלִיעַל לֹא נָדְעוּ אֶת־יְהוָה:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cogan claims that the term בְּנֵי-בְלִיעַל must have been an addition by the narrator as opposed to a statement from Jezebel herself. He also cites another example of a similar interpolation by a narrator in II Kings 16:8. (AB, p. 479)</li> </ul> <p>בִּרְכָּתָּךְ you have cursed This usage of the בִּרְכָּךְ <i>blessing</i> is a euphemism for a קלל <i>curse</i>. We see other examples of this in Job 1:11, 2:5, and 2:9, as well as in Psalms 10:3. (AB, p. 479)</p>	<p>And seat two complete scoundrels opposite to him, and let them testify saying: 'You have cursed God and king!' Then take him out and stone him so that he die."</p>	<p>21:10 וְהוֹשִׁיבוּ שְׁנַיִם אֲנָשִׁים בְּנֵי-בְלִיעַל נִגְדּוּ וַיַּעֲדוּהוּ לְאֹמֶר בִּרְכָּתָּךְ אֱלֹהִים וּמֶלֶךְ וְהוֹצִיאָהוּ וְסָקְלָהוּ וַיָּמָת:</p>
<p>בְּאֶשֶׁר כָּתוּב בְּסִפְרֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר שָׁלְחָה אֵלֵיהֶם as it was written in the letters she had sent to them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a repetition by the narrator of the information that the command came from Jezebel (as already mentioned in the previous two verses). This repetition is meant to emphasize Jezebel's responsibility for the injustice and evil that takes place when Naboth is proclaimed guilty and killed. (AB, p. 480)</li> </ul>	<p>The men of his city -- the elders and nobles who lived in his town -- did as Jezebel had sent for them to do, as it was written in the letters she had sent them.</p>	<p>21:11 וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֲנָשֵׁי עִירוֹ הַזֵּקֵנִים וְהַחֲרוּסִים אֲשֶׁר הָיִשְׁבִּים בְּעִירוֹ בְּאֶשֶׁר שָׁלְחָה אֵלֵיהֶם אִיזָבֵל בְּאֶשֶׁר כָּתוּב בְּסִפְרֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר שָׁלְחָה אֵלֵיהֶם:</p>

	They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the front of the assembly.	21:12 קראו צום והשיבו את- נבֹת בראש העם:
We see in verses 21:12-13 that the people of the town collaborated with Jezebel by following her scheme to indict Naboth of being guilty.	Then the two scoundrels came and sat down opposite him. And the scoundrels testified against Naboth publicly as follows: "Naboth has cursed God and king." Then they took him outside the city and stoned him to death.	21:13 ויבאו שני האנשים בגי- בליעל וישבו נגדו ויעדהו אנשי הבליעל את נבֹת נגד העם לאמר ברך נבֹת אלהים ומלך ויצאנו מחוץ לעיר ויסקלוהו באבנים וימת:

<p>We see parallels to Jezebel/Naboth story in II Sam 11: 14-21, in which King David sent a letter to Joab ordering that Uriah be put at the front of the line of soldiers in war in order to ensure his death.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In II Sam 11:14-21, David arranges for Uriah's death in order to take Uriah's wife, Bathsheba, from him. A messenger is sent to David to relay the news of Uriah's death.</li> <li>• In I Kings 21 Jezebel arranges for Naboth's death so that she and Ahab can take his land. A messenger is also sent to her in order to relay the news of Naboth's death (as we see here in verse 14).</li> </ul>	<p>then they sent to Jezebel: "Naboth has been stoned to death."</p>	<p>21:14 וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶל- אִיזָבֶל לֵאמֹר סָקַל נָבוֹת וַיָּמָת:</p>
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<p>וְיִשָּׁא אֶת־הַכֶּרֶם take possession of the vineyard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God told the Israelites that there would be terrible consequences for the people, should they insist on having a king to rule over them. We read about this in detail in I Samuel 8:11-18. In I Sam 8:14a, God warns the people about what such a king would do with their land: He will seize your choice fields, vineyards, and olive groves...</li> </ul> <p>In I Kings 21:15, we see God's warning from I Sam 14 come to fruition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The legal method by which he could do that is unclear. As modern readers of the Bible, we have no well-defined example of how during biblical times one would have possessed land that was not his inheritance, and was not purchased. For the purpose of the story, we must assume that a king could take over the land of an executed criminal, and that the biblical audience knew this.</li> <li><i>Side note:</i> There are Akkadian documents from Ugarit from the 13th century BCE which describe kings taking people's vineyards and land.</li> <li><i>Side note:</i> Later in the Talmud, the rabbis question whether it could be possible for a king to take over someone's land after the landowner's death.</li> <li>The killing of Naboth is also referred to in II Kings 9:26. However, there is a discrepancy between the descriptions of Naboth's death in I Kings 21:15 and II Kings 9:26. In that in the latter, we are told that Naboth had sons who were also killed by Ahab. If, in fact, Naboth had had sons who had not been killed, it would have complicated Ahab's claim to the land.</li> </ul>	<p>When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Go and take possession of the vineyard which Naboth the Jezreelite refused to sell you for silver; for Naboth is no longer alive, he is dead."</p>	<p>21:15 וַיְהִי כִשְׁמֹעַ אֵיזֶבֶל בְּיַסְקַל נָבוֹת וַיָּמָת וַתֹּאמֶר אֵיזֶבֶל אֶל־אָחָאב קוּם רִאשׁ אֶת־הַכֶּרֶם נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאלִי אֲשֶׁר מָאֵל לְתַת־לֶךָ בְּכֶסֶף כִּי אֵין נָבוֹת חַי כִּי־מָת:</p>
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<p>וַיָּקָם he got up וַיֵּלֶךְ is used as an auxiliary verb intended for emphasis of Ahab's going down to the vineyard.</p> <p>וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶחָב לָרֶדֶת אֶל-כֶּרֶם נָבוֹת Ahab set out to go down to the vineyard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The action that Ahab takes by going down through the land is comparable to that of Abraham, who walked through the land in Gen 13:17:</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">Up, walk about the land, through its length and its breadth, for I give it to you."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">קוֹם הִתְהַלֵּךְ בָּאָרֶץ לְאָרְכָּהּ וּלְרֵחְבָּהּ כִּי לָךְ אֶתְנֶנָּה:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">In both cases, walking over the newly acquired land is symbolic of taking ownership thereof. (AB, p. 481)</p>	<p>When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab set out to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite to take possession of it.</p>	<p>21:16 וַיְהִי כַשְׁמֵעַ אֶחָב כִּי מֵת נָבוֹת וַיָּקָם אֶחָב לָרֶדֶת אֶל-כֶּרֶם נָבוֹת הַיִּזְרְעֵאלִי לְרִשְׁתּוֹ:</p>
	<p>Then the word of the Eternal came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying:</p>	<p>21:17 וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֶל-אֱלִיָּהוּ הַתִּשְׁבִּי לֵאמֹר:</p>
<p>וַיִּקְרָא to confront Examples of וַיִּקְרָא used to mean "confront," (as opposed to its more common meaning "to greet,") are found in Num 21:23, Josh 8:14, and Jud 20:31.</p>	<p>"Go down and confront Ahab, King of Israel who lives in Samaria. He is at the vineyard of Naboth; he has gone down there to take possession of it.</p>	<p>21:18 קוֹם יֵד לִקְרַאת אֶחָב מֶלֶךְ-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר בְּשֶׁמֶרֶן הֵנָּה בְּכֶרֶם נָבוֹת אֲשֶׁר-יֵרֵד שָׁם לְרִשְׁתּוֹ:</p>

<p>הַרְצַחְתָּ וְגַם-יִרְשָׁתָּ Have you murdered and would now take possession?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The word יִרְשָׁתָּ has a specific sense of taking possession of an inheritance.</li> <li>Elijah's question to Ahab is sarcastic: <i>"you have made yourself the heir through murder?"</i></li> <li>The words הַרְצַחְתָּ וְגַם-יִרְשָׁתָּ would have been pleasing for the biblical audience to hear because they rhyme and are a succinct denigration of Ahab.</li> </ul> <p>הַכְּלָבִים יֹאכְלוּ אֶת-דָּמְךָ גַּם-אַתָּה the dogs will lick your blood, O yes - also yours!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We see a similar curse in I Sam 17:46, in which David predicts Goliath's dishonorable death:</li> </ul> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">This very day the Lord will deliver you into my hands. I will kill you and cut off your head; and I will give the carcasses of the Philistine camp to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth. All the earth shall know that there is a God in Israel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the Semitic areas, it is a serious indignity to not be properly buried. This is clearly described by Isaiah in Isaiah 14:18-20:</li> </ul> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><sup>18</sup>All the kings of nations were laid, every one in honor, each in his tomb;  <sup>19</sup>While you were left lying unburied, like loathsome carrion, like a trampled corpse [In] the clothing of slain gashed by the sword, who sink to the very stones of the Pit. <sup>20</sup>You shall not have a burial like them; because you destroyed your country, murdered your people. Let the breed of evildoers nevermore be named!</p> <p>As indicated in all of these examples, for the biblical audience, it was very important that one had an honorable burial with funeral rites and it was also important to be remembered after one's death.</p>	<p>Say to him,          'Thus said the Eternal:          Have you murdered and would now take possession?          Also speak to him saying:          Thus said the Eternal: In the place where the dogs licked up Naboth's blood, the dogs will lick your blood, O yes - also yours! [they will lick up]"</p>	<p>21:19          וְדַבַּרְתָּ אֵלָיו          לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר          יְהוָה הַרְצַחְתָּ          וְגַם-יִרְשָׁתָּ          וְדַבַּרְתָּ אֵלָיו          לֵאמֹר כֹּה אָמַר          יְהוָה בְּמָקוֹם          אֲשֶׁר לָקְחוּ          הַכְּלָבִים אֶת-          דָּם נָבוֹת יֹאכְלוּ          הַכְּלָבִים אֶת-          דָּמְךָ גַּם-אַתָּה:</p>
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<p>וַיִּמְצְאֵנִי you have found me?  This might be translated instead as “have you found me out?” This alternative translation would indicate that Ahab was asking Elijah if Elijah knew of all of the terrible things that Ahab had been doing.</p>	<p>So Ahab said to Elijah, “So you have found me, my enemy?” He [Elijah] said, “I have found you, because you have committed yourself to doing what is evil in the eyes of the Eternal.</p>	<p>21:20  וַיֹּאמֶר אֶחָאָב  אֶל-אֵלִיהוּ  הִמְצָאתָנִי אֵיבִי  וַיֹּאמֶר מֵצָאתִי  רָעוֹ הַתְּמַכְרֹךְ  לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרָע  בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה:</p>
<p>וַיִּכְרַעַתִּי אַחֲרָיִךְ I will make a clean sweep of you</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some translate this as “I will burn after you.” We see this verb used also in II Sam 4:11, 1Ki 14:10 and 1Ki 16:3.</li> </ul> <p>וַיַּעְצֹר וַיַּעֲזֹב exercising power or rule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>most translate this as “bond and free,” using this phrase as a merism to speak of all people who are connected to Ahab. However, the idiom וַיַּעְצֹר וַיַּעֲזֹב is way of referring to those who are in the position to rule or govern over others. The sense is that by making a clean sweep of both Ahab as well as those with power under Ahab, Ahab’s dynasty will come to an end.</li> </ul>	<p>I will bring disaster upon you. I will make a clean sweep of you, I will cut off from Israel every male exercising power or rule belonging to Ahab.</p>	<p>21:21  הִנְנִי מָבִי  [מָבִיא] אֵלֶיךָ  רָעָה וּבְעָרַתִּי  אַחֲרֶיךָ וְהִכְרַעְתִּי  לְאֶחָאָב מִשְׁתָּיו  בְּלִיר וַיַּעְצֹר  וַיַּעֲזֹב  בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>

	<p>And I will make your house like the House of Jeroboam son of Nebat and like the House of Baasha son of Ahijah, because of the provocation you angered me with by have leading Israel to sin.</p>	<p>21:22 וְנִתְּתִי אֶת־ בֵּיתְךָ כְּבֵית יֵרֹבֹאם בֶּן־נִבְטַן וּכְבֵּית בַּעֲשָׂא בֶּן־אֲחִיהָ אֶל־ הַפֶּעַל אֲשֶׁר הִכְלַסְתָּ וְהִתְחַטַּא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>
<p>חֵל wall/rampart the word for Field is חֵל. It is a metathesis of חֶלֶק “a part, or portion.” There is some discussion as to whether חֵל in 21:23 should be translated as “field,” in which case there would have been a scribal error shortening חֶלֶק to חֵל, or whether it is, in fact, חֵל “rampart/outer wall.” (AB, p. 482)</p>	<p>And the Eternal also spoke about Jezebel, saying: ‘The dogs shall devour Jezebel in the field of Jezreel.</p>	<p>21:23 וְגַם־לְאִיזָבֶל דִּבֶּר יְהוָה לֵאמֹר הַכְּלָבִים יֹאכְלוּ אֶת־ אִיזָבֶל בְּחֵל יִזְרְעֵאל:</p>
<p>יֹאכְלוּ הַכְּלָבִים eaten by dogs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In this verse, there is a curse upon all those from Ahab’s line, stating that they will die and be eaten by dogs. We see similar curses in other places in the book of Kings, for example, I Kings 14:11 and 16:4.</li> <li>Dogs were not domesticated in biblical times. They roamed the streets and were known to eat corpses.</li> </ul>	<p>All of Ahab’s line who die in the town shall be eaten by dogs, and all who die in the open country shall be devoured by the birds of the sky.”</p>	<p>21:24 הַמָּת לְאֲחָאָב בְּעִיר יֹאכְלוּ הַכְּלָבִים וְהַמָּת בַּשָּׂדֶה יֹאכְלוּ עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם:</p>



<p>רַק לֹא־הָיָה כְּאַחָאָב there never was anyone like Ahab</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In II Kings 21:3 Manasseh, who was considered to be the worst of Judah's kings is described as behaved like Ahab. (AB, p. 482)</li> </ul> <p>הַסְתָּמָה the instigation/the incitement הַסְתָּמָה is also used to mean "incitement" in Deut 13:7</p> <p>If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son, or your daughter, or the wife of your bosom, or your closest friend entices you in secret, saying, "Come let us worship other gods" -- whom neither you nor your fathers have experienced --</p> <p>כִּי וְסִיתָהּ אֶחָיד בְּנֵי־אִמִּי אוֹ־בְנוֹתֵי אוֹתִי אִשָּׁת חֵיקָהּ אוֹ רֵעֶה אֲשֶׁר כְּנֻפֶשֶׁךָ בְּסֵתֶר לֹא־אָמַר גִּלְכָּה וְנִעְבְּדָהּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדַעְתָּ אֹתָהּ וְאַבְתִּיד:</p>	<p>Only, there never was anyone like Ahab, who committed himself to doing what was displeasing to the Eternal, at the instigation of his wife Jezebel.</p>	<p>21:25 רַק לֹא־הָיָה כְּאַחָאָב אֲשֶׁר הִתְמַלֵּךְ לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־הִסְתָּמָה אִתּוֹ אִיזָבֵל אִשְׁתּוֹ:</p>
<p>וַיִּתְעַב He behaved abhorrently This verb appears here as well as in Ezek 16:52 and in Ps 14:1. In Deut 27:15 and Ezek 16:36 it is connected to the transgression of idolatry. (AB, p. 483)</p>	<p>He behaved abhorrently, following after the idols just like the Amorites, whom the Eternal had expelled before the Israelites</p>	<p>21:26 וַיִּתְעַב מְאֹד לִלְכֹּת אַחֲרֵי הַגִּלְלִים כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר הוֹדִישׁ יְהוָה מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>

<p>וַיִּהְלֶךְ אָט and walked around subdued  This is an idiom which is used at times to express withdrawal from daily affairs, for example, in Gen 33:14, and II Sam 18:5. It is a sign of mourning. Ahab went through a process of mourning to convince YHWH that he was sincere in his return to YHWH. (AB, p. 483)</p>	<p>When Ahab heard these words, he rent his clothes and put sackcloth on his body. He fasted and lay in sackcloth and walked around subdued.</p>	<p>21:27  וַיִּהְיֶה כְּשָׁמַע אַחָזָב אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיִּקְרַע בְּגָדָיו וַיַּשֶּׁם־שָׂק עָלֵי־בָשָׂרוֹ וַיֵּצֹם וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּשָּׂק וַיִּהְלֶךְ אָט:</p>
	<p>And it was that the word of the Eternal came upon Elijah the Tishbite, saying:</p>	<p>21:28  וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־אֱלִיָּהוּ הַתִּשְׁבִּי לֵאמֹר:</p>

<p>בְּיָמֵי בְנוֹ אֶבְיָא הָרָעָה in the days of his son I will bring the disaster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The delay in punishment is put into the story in order to make sense of why Ahab's son, Joram, goes on to continue Ahab's dynasty after Ahab. The dynasty ends with the assassination of Joram in II Kings 9. (AB, p. 483)</li> </ul>	<p>Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the disaster in his lifetime; I will not bring the disaster during his days, [but] in the days of his son I will bring the disaster on his house</p>	<p>21:29 הָרָאִיתָ כִּי־ נִכְנַע אֶחָאָב מִלִּפְנֵי יְעֹנָכִי־ נִכְנַע מִפְּנֵי לֹא־ אֲבִי [אֶבְיָא] הָרָעָה בְּיָמָיו בְּיָמֵי בְנוֹ אֶבְיָא הָרָעָה עַל־ בֵּיתוֹ:</p>
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<p>וַיִּפְשַׁע rebelled</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This word is mostly found in liturgy.</li> <li>It is in the category of sins, along with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>עוֹן - to sin by being crooked or perverse (this comes from the root עוה which means “to be perverse/turn aside”</li> <li>חֲטָא - to sin by missing/omitting</li> <li>פֶּשַׁע – to sin by rebelling against God. פֶּשַׁע is the worst kind of sin. פֶּשַׁע is a word that originally had a military sense.</li> </ul> </li> <li>There is a similar word in Ugaritic that means arrogance. The way that this word relates to פֶּשַׁע is through the idea that rebellion would be encouraged by arrogance. This word has the same semantic range. The way they are used is affective.</li> </ul>	<p>After Ahab died, Moab rebelled against Israel</p>	<p>II Kings  1:1 וַיִּפְשַׁע מוֹאָב בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אֶחָרִי מֵלֹת אֶחָאָב:</p>
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<p>ויפֿשע מואב בִּישָׂרָאֵל Moab rebelled against Israel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This verse gives us information that is not picked up on until II Kings 3. It is anticipatory information. This is a biblical narrative technique used to add suspense and keep the audience interested in the story. Our sages noted this biblical narrative method; for example, Rashbam pointed out that Gen 1:1 starts a story but then moves on to a different story line and returns to it later.</li> <li>• The Moabite version of the story of Ahab's rebellion is inscribed on the Moabite Stone. (AB, II Kings, Appendix 1)</li> </ul> <p>אַחַר־י מוֹת אַחָאב After Ahab died</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once again we see the strategy in place by the biblical authors to not speak about the successes of a bad king. Instead, we are only told of his failings and of his death. Similarly, earlier in I Kings 22:39, we are simply told that we can find more stories about Ahab in the Annals of the Kings of Israel.</li> <li>• <i>Side note:</i> The historicity of annals such as the one recording the deeds of Ahab seem to be true. We know about annals from as early the 12<sup>th</sup> century BCE.</li> <li>• <i>Side note:</i> We find a similar rhetorical technique of referring the audience to the annals of a king is taken up in Greek writing except in the latter, the audience is told to that the original can be found in the ocean.</li> </ul>		
<p>הַשֶּׁבֶכָה Lattice/Netting/Webbing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From the context, we understand that Ahaziah falls through a window on the upper level of the building that had been covered with a lattice, netting, or webbing of some kind.</li> <li>• הַשֶּׁבֶכָה is used to describe a netlike design on the two bronze pillars adorning the entrance of Solomon's Temple in I Kings 7:17:</li> </ul> <p>Also nets of meshwork with festoons of chain work for the capitals that were on the top of the columns,</p>	<p>Ahaziah fell through a lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria and was severely injured. And he sent messengers and said to them "go and</p>	<p>1:2 וַיִּפֹּל אַחֲזִיָּה בְּעֵד הַשֶּׁבֶכָה בַּעֲלִיתוֹ אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְרוֹן וַיַּחַל וַיִּשְׁלַח מִלְאָכִים וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם לְכוּ דַרְשׁוּ בְּבַעַל זְבוּב אֱלֹהֵי עֲקָרוֹן אִם־אֲחֻזָּה מִחֲלֵי זֶה:</p>

<p>seven for each of the two capitals.</p> <p>שְׂבָכִים מַעֲשֵׂה שְׂבָכָה גְדִלִים מַעֲשֵׂה שְׂרָשְׁרוֹת לְכַתְּרֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשׁ הָעֲמֻדִים שְׂבָעָה לְכַתְּרֹת הָאֵלֶּת וְשְׂבָעָה לְכַתְּרֹת הַשָּׁנִית:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Gen 22:13 we are told about a Ram that is caught in a סִבְכָּה, most often translated as a “thicket.” This also has the implication of something netted together, in this example, it was branches and leaves.</li> <li>• We can see that סִבְכָּה and שְׂבָכָה are related; there was sometimes transference of ס and ש going back and forth in one dialect in Hebrew or another.</li> </ul> <p>דָּרַשׁ to consult, inquire, seek out In early biblical literature, the verb לִשְׁאוֹל is used to inquire of Adonai, as found in Gen 25:22, Judg 1:1, 20:18 and I Sam 14:37, 23:2,4. לִשְׁאוֹל is also used in early biblical literature to inquire of a deity, ghost or spirit, for example, Num 27:21, I Sam 28:6 and Deut 18:11. לִדְרוֹשׁ is also biblical verb that means “to inquire” (of an oracle). (AB, p. 24) In late Biblical Hebrew it is applied to Torah (See Ezra 7:10).</p> <p>בַּעַל זְבוּב Baal Zebub Literally “Baal of the flies.” However, “Zebub” is most likely either a scribal error for <i>zebul</i> or a deliberate corruption of Baal Zevul “Baal the prince.” Another less likely possibility is that the title Zebub is related to an Ugaritic God named <i>Devuv</i>. In any case, Baal Zebub appears in the New Testament as Satan’s associate is known as Beelzebub, the prince of devils/demons in Matt 10:25, 12:24, Mark 3:22, and Luke 11:15. (AB, 25)</p> <p>חִוְלָה Injury In biblical Hebrew, חִוְלָה refers to an injury (not an illness). In this case, it is used to give us the sense that Ahaziah had such a severe injury that he fell ill.</p>	<p>inquire of Baal Zebub the God of Ekron, whether I recover from this.”</p>	
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<p>הַמִּבְלִי אֵין Is it because there is no?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a rhetorical question that takes on a sarcastic tone.</li> <li>We see a similar usage of this idiom in Ex 14:11:</li> </ul> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">And they said to Moses, “Was it for want of graves in Egypt that you brought us to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, taking us out of Egypt?”</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה הַמִּבְלִי אֵין־קְבָרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם לְקַחְתָּנוּ לָמוֹת בְּמִדְבָּר מִה־זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ לָנוּ לְהוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם:</p> <p>הַמִּבְלִי אֵין־אֱלֹהִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אַתֶּם הַלְכִים לְדָרֶשׁ בְּבַעַל זְבוּב Is it because there no God in Israel that you go to Baal-Zebub?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The question asked in this part of the verse is one that brings up an important issue within the development of Judaism, namely, who do we look to for information about the future? In this verse, we can see clearly that the people turn to prophets for guidance, rather than to asking YHWH directly, as we see in Genesis, or looking to the Torah for guidance, as we see much later in the Tanakh. From earliest times people most commonly turned to priests or prophets when trying to ascertain YHWH’s will, or when presenting offerings to YHWH. During the time of Ezra, the people are told to go to Book when inquiring of YHWH. The message form this is clear: <i>God has given you the Torah and you don’t go to prophets anymore.</i> It is in Ezra that we first find the word לְדָרֶשׁ used to express “inquiring about YHWH’s will.”</li> <li>We see a final stage of this development in the Talmudic story of the Oven of Akhnai in which Rabbi Yehoshua stresses that the laws are to be ruled upon by human beings, as opposed to YHWH, using the proof text from Deut 30:12 <i>Lo bashamayim hi</i> “it is not in heaven.”</li> </ul>	<p>But an angel of the Eternal said to Elijah the Tishbite, “Go and confront the messengers of the king of Samaria and say to them, “Is it because there is no God in Israel that you go to Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?”</p>	<p>1:3 וּמַלְאָךְ יְהוָה דִּבֶּר אֶל־אֵלִיָּה הַתִּשְׁבִּי קוּם עֲלֵה לְקִרְאָת מַלְאָכֵי מֶלֶךְ־ שָׁמְרוֹן וְדַבֵּר אֲלֵהֶם הַמִּבְלִי אֵין־אֱלֹהִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אַתֶּם הַלְכִים לְדָרֶשׁ בְּבַעַל זְבוּב אֱלֹהֵי עֶקְרוֹן:</p>
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<p>עֶקְרוֹן Ekron</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ekron was a major city in which the Philistines lived.</li> <li>• Towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a major excavation of Ekron began. Through this excavation, it was discovered that there had been a great wine industry in Ekron.</li> <li>• The Philistines who lived in Ekron were from Indo-European stock. By the eighth century they spoke in a dialect that would have been similar to a mix of Hebrew and Phoenician; a Semitic language that was quite close to Hebrew.</li> </ul>		
	<p>Therefore this is what the Eternal says, “You will not leave the bed you lie on, for you will certainly die!”<sup>1</sup> So Elijah went.</p>	<p>1:4 וְלָכֵן כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה הַמֶּשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר־עָלִיתָ שָׁם לֹא־תֵרֹד מִמֶּנָּה כִּי מוֹת תָּמוּת וְיָלֶךְ אֵלֶיָּה:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The narrative is elliptical in this verse; the account of Elijah encountering the messengers and delivering YHWH’s message is omitted.</li> <li>• This is a narrative technique used by the biblical authors to pique the interest of the audience, as Cogan and Tadmor remark, “this is a case of deferring a key scene to a later sequence in order to heighten the dramatic effect.” (AB, p. 27)</li> </ul>	<p>When the messengers returned to him, he asked them, “Why have you returned?”</p>	<p>1:5 וַיָּשׁוּבוּ הַמַּלְאָכִים אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם מַה־נָּה שָׁבְתֶם:</p>

<p>המבלי אין אין־אלהים בישראל אתה שלח לדרש בבצל זבוב Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a repetition of the same rhetorical question that was in II Kings 1:3. In each case, this question is sarcastic in tone.</li> <li>• In II Kings 1:3 in the phrase אַתֶּם הַלְכִים לְדָרֵשׁ, the second person plural pronoun is used, but here the second person singular is used: אַתָּה שַׁלַּח לְדָרֵשׁ. This directs the question to the king alone, and in doing so, Elijah places blame for turning to a false god upon the king.</li> </ul>	<p>They answered him, "A man confronted us and said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him: Thus said the Eternal: Is it because there no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore, you shall not rise from the bed you are lying on, but will certainly die.'</p>	<p>1:6 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו אִישׁ עָלָה לִקְרָאתָנוּ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵינוּ לֵכוּ שׁוּבוּ אֶל־ הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר־ שָׁלַח אֲתֶכֶם וְדַבַּרְתֶּם אֵלָיו כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה הַמִּבְלִי אֵין־ אֱלֹהִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אַתָּה שַׁלַּח לְדָרֵשׁ בְּבַעַל זְבֻב אֱלֹהֵי עֶקְרוֹן לֵכֵן הַמָּטָה אֲשֶׁר־עָלִיתָ שָׁם לֹא־תָרִיד מִמָּוֶה כִּי־מוֹת תָּמוּת:</p>
<p>מה מִשְׁפָּט הָאִישׁ What sort of man was it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The word, מִשְׁפָּט is typically used in in the context of laws and judgment. However, it can be used to express a person's characteristics or behavior as we see here in II Kings 1:7.</li> <li>• In this verse, Ahaziah asks about the man's attire. We can therefore presume that Elijah's attire was recognizable.</li> </ul>	<p>"What sort of man was it," he asked them, "who came toward you and said these things to you?"</p>	<p>1:7 וַיְדַבֵּר אֲלֵהֶם מָה מִשְׁפָּט הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר עָלָה לִקְרָאתְכֶם וַיְדַבֵּר אֲלֵיכֶם אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה:</p>



<p>בַּעַל שֵׁעַר a hairy man</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literally: an owner of hair</li> <li>בַּעַל “x” is an idiomatic expression that places someone in a category or class. In this case, Elijah would be understood as being placed in a category of hairy men. In a similar way, a Baal Isha is someone in the class of being married.</li> </ul> <p>אָזוּר girdled</p> <p>Through parallelism in Isaiah 11:5, we can see that this a kind of girdling or belting action:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וְהָיָה צֶדֶק אָזוּר מִתְּנִיּוֹ וְהֶאֱמִינָה אָזוּר חֲלָצִיו: Justice shall be the girdle of his loins, And faithfulness the girdle of his waist.</p> <p>אֵלִיָּה Elijah</p> <p>In II Kings, the prophets’ names are most commonly found in the shorter form, as we see here with the usage of אֵלִיָּה. However, we cannot use this as a way of dating the material as names get shortened and/or lengthened throughout.</p>	<p>“A hairy man,” they replied, “with a leather sash girdled around his loins.” And he said, “That’s Elijah the Tishbite!”</p>	<p>1:8</p> <p>וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו אִישׁ בַּעַל שֵׁעַר וְאָזוּר עוֹר אָזוּר בְּמִתְנִיּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלִיָּה הַתִּשְׁבִּי הוּא:</p>
<p>שָׂר־חֲמִשִּׁים וְחֲמִשִּׁין a captain of fifty with his fifty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A military unit consisted of fifty men. We see this in I Sam 8:12, 2 Kings 15:25 and Isa 3:3. (AB 26) In Exo 18:21 there is a reference of leaders being placed over “thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.” We can assume that these numbers represent ranks of leaders of military units.</li> </ul> <p>שָׂר captain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The root of שָׂר is שָׂרָר, which means “to govern.” The term שָׂר can be used for different figures of authority. In the book of Daniel, שָׂר is used for a kind of holy figure. For example, in Daniel 8:11, we read:</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">It vaunted itself against the very chief of the host; on its account the regular offering was suspended, and His holy place was abandoned.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וַעַד שָׂר־הַצִּבְעָה הַגְּדִיל וּמִקְלוֹ (הָרִים)</p>	<p>Then he sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty (men) He climbed up to him, and found him sitting at the top of a hill. “Man of God,” he said to him, “the king commands you to come down!”</p>	<p>1:9</p> <p>וַיִּשְׁלַח אֵלָיו שָׂר־חֲמִשִּׁים וְחֲמִשִּׁין וַיַּעַל אֵלָיו וְהָיָה יֹשֵׁב עַל־רֹאשׁ הַהָר וַיִּדְבֹּר אֵלָיו אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים הַמִּלֵּךְ דָּבָר רָדָה:</p>

<p>[הנרם] התמיד והשלה מקוון מקדשו:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The chief of the host referred to as שר־הצבָּא, could be a title for YHWH or an Angel.</li> <li><i>Side note:</i> In Talmudic Hebrew a related word <i>s'rarah</i>, means “authority, and a <i>sar</i> was a sort of “guardian angel.” Some of the rabbis understood that every nation had its own guardian angel, a concept already present in Dan 10:13, 20-21.</li> </ul> <p>איש האלהים Man of God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The title איש האלהים is used for prophets on many occasions in Kings. Elijah, alone, is referred to as איש האלהים a number of times including; I Kings 17:18, 24, and II Kings 1:9. However, in the Pentateuch, this label is only used to refer to Moses.</li> <li>Some understand איש האלהים to mean “a divine man,” or, a man who belonged to a special category of godliness. There was a belief that there were individuals who were semi-divine. For example, in II Kings 2:23-4 and following, we see Elisha behave in a way that is godlike, in that he is able to magically make bears appear and eat a group that was jeering him.</li> </ul>		
	<p>Elijah replied to the captain of the fifty, “If I am indeed a man of God, let fire come down down from heaven and consume you with your fifty men!” So fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men.</p>	<p>1:10 וַיַּעֲנֵה אֵלִיהוּ וַיֹּדֶבֶר אֶל־שָׂר הַחֲמִשִּׁים וְאָמַר אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי תֵרַד אִשׁ מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתֹאכַל אֹתְךָ וְאֶת־חֲמִשִּׁיךָ וְתֵרַד אִשׁ מִן־ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתֹאכַל אֹתוֹ וְאֶת־חֲמִשִּׁיוֹ:</p>

<p>וַיַּעַן he answered וַיַּעַן is likely a corruption of וַיַּעַל “he went up” for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>וַיַּעַל is used in the first attempt of a captain to coerce Elijah to come down from the mountain in II Ki 1:9. II Kings 1:11 is a part of a tri-part sequence in which Elijah is asked to come down from the mountain. It is logical that the same word, וַיַּעַל would be used.</li> <li>וַיַּעַן וַיְדַבֵּר would be a very unusual address, as opposed to the common וַיֹּאמֶר וַיְדַבֵּר.</li> </ul> <p>מָהֲרָה רָדָה come down with haste.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The captain is more emphatic than his predecessor in this second iteration of the three-part sequence. He adds the word מָהֲרָה “with haste” to his command to Elijah to descend the mountain.</li> </ul>	<p>He returned and sent to him a different captain with his fifty men; and he answered so he went up and he said to him “Man of God, thus commanded the king, come down with haste.”</p>	<p>1:11 וַיָּשָׁב וַיִּשְׁלַח אֵלָיו שָׂרֵ- חֲמִשִּׁים אֲחֵר וְחֲמִשִּׁי וַיַּעַן וַיְדַבֵּר אֵלָיו אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים כֹּה-אָמַר הַמֶּלֶךְ מָהֲרָה רָדָה:</p>
<p>אֵשׁ-אֱלֹהִים fire from the Eternal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>אֵשׁ-אֱלֹהִים-x is an idiom which adds incredible intensity to an event. In this case, אֵשׁ-אֱלֹהִים is used to describe a powerful fire.</li> <li>The description of the fire as אֵשׁ-אֱלֹהִים adds intensity to this second iteration in the tri-part sequence of events. It is a more severe fire than the fire that consumed the first captain and his fifty men.</li> <li>We see a similar usage of the divine name included for intensification of an event in Gen 1:2 with the sense of a great wind travelling over the earth:</li> </ul> <p>And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness over the surface of the deep and a wind from God sweeping over the water</p> <p>וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תֹהוֹ וָבֹהוּ וְחָשֹׁךְ עַל-פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וַיֹּרֶחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֵף עַל-פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם:</p>	<p>But Elijah answered and said to them, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you with your fifty men!” And fire from the Eternal came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men.</p>	<p>1:12 וַיַּעַן אֵלֵיהֶם וַיְדַבֵּר אֵלֵיהֶם אִם-אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אֲנִי תֵרַד אֵשׁ מִן- הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתֹאכַל אֹתָךְ וְאֶת-חֲמִשִּׁיךְ וְתֵרַד אִשׁ- אֱלֹהִים מִן- הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתֹאכַל אוֹתְךָ וְאֶת-חֲמִשִּׁיךָ:</p>

<p>וַיִּתְחַנֵּן He begged/implored</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• חָנַן to plead for grace, or to engage in a plea for grace.</li> <li>• When we compare חָנַן “to plead” with פָּלַל “to pray,” we find that each one has specific connotations that inform the way in which it is used. פָּלַל (from where the word תְּפִלָּה is derived) <i>hitpallel</i> is <i>binyan hitpa’el</i> so it means giving a reckoning or recounting on one’s deeds to God in hopes that God bestow rewards upon one for such deeds. However, חָנַן (from the word חֵן, which means, “grace”) has the sense of one asking for favor without merit. In this verse, the usage of the word וַיִּתְחַנֵּן implies that the captain asked for Elijah to give him grace. In doing so, the captain humbled himself before Elijah.</li> </ul> <p>תִּיקַר נַפְשִׁי בְּעֵינֶיךָ please have regard for my life Literally: Let my life be precious in your eyes.</p>	<p>Then he sent a third captain of fifty with his fifty men. The third captain of fifty climbed to the top, knelt on his knees opposite Elijah, and begged him, saying, “Oh, man of the Eternal, please have regard for my life and the lives of these fifty servants of yours!</p>	<p>1:13 וַיֵּשֶׁב וַיִּשְׁלַח שְׁרֵי־חֲמִשִּׁים שָׁלֹשִׁים וַחֲמִשִּׁיו וַיַּעַל וַיָּבֹא שָׂר־ הַחֲמִשִּׁים הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וַיִּכְרַע עָלֵי- בִרְכָּיו לִפְנֵי אֵלֶיהֶו וַיִּתְחַנֵּן אֵלָיו וַיִּדְבֹּר אֵלָיו אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים תִּיקַר־נָפֶא נַפְשִׁי וְנַפְשׁ עַבְדֶּיךָ אֵלֶה חֲמִשִּׁים בְּעֵינֶיךָ:</p>
	<p>Look here- Already fire has come from heaven and consumed the first two captains of fifty and their men; I beg you, have regard for my life!”</p>	<p>1:14 הִנֵּה יָרְדָה אֵשׁ מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וַתֹּאכַל אֶת־ שְׁנֵי שָׂרֵי הַחֲמִשִּׁים הָרִאשֹׁנִים וְאֶת־חֲמִשֵּׁיהֶם וְעַתָּה תִיקַר נַפְשִׁי בְּעֵינֶיךָ:</p>

<p>אִתּוֹ with him</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We would have expected אִתּוֹ instead of אִתּוֹ here. אִתּוֹ is likely used because it was a part of a Northern dialect.</li> <li>• There are two versions of אִתּ in Hebrew etymologically: אִית and אִת.</li> </ul>	<p>Then the angel of the Eternal said to Elijah, "Go down with him, do not be afraid of him." So he rose and went down with him to the king.</p>	<p>1:15 וַיֵּצֵא מֵאֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה אֶל־ אֵלֶיךָ רִד אוֹתוֹ אֶל־ תִּירָא מִפְּנֵי וַיִּקָּם וַיֵּרֵד אוֹתוֹ אֶל־ הַמֶּלֶךְ:</p>
<p>יַעַן אֲשֶׁר־שָׁלַחְתָּ מַלְאָכִים לְדַרֵּשׁ בְּבַעַל זְבוּב אֱלֹהֵי עֶקְרוֹן Because you sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ahaziah's transgression of turning to the false god, Baal-Zebub, instead of turning to YHWH appears once again as a sarcastic and rhetorical question as we saw in II Kings 1:3 and 6 in this final part of the sequence. It is an emphasis of the importance of turning only to the true God, YHWH.</li> </ul>	<p>He said to him, "Thus said the Eternal: Because you sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron - - as if there were no God in Israel whose word you could seek? -- therefore, you shall not rise from the bed which you are lying on; but you shall surely die.</p>	<p>1:16 וַיֵּצֵא אֵלָיו כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה יַעַן אֲשֶׁר־ שָׁלַחְתָּ מַלְאָכִים לְדַרֵּשׁ בְּבַעַל זְבוּב אֱלֹהֵי עֶקְרוֹן הַמִּבְּלִי אֵין־ אֱלֹהִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל לְדַרֵּשׁ בְּדַבְּרוֹ לִכְן הַמָּטָה אֲשֶׁר־עָלִיתָ שָׁם לֹא־תִרָד מִמֶּנָּה כִּי־מוֹת תָּמוּת:</p>

<p>The description of Jehoram's reign in this verse is at odds with that in II Kings 3:1, in which we read:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Jehoram son of Ahab ruled over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah; and he reigned twelve years.</p> <p>In the Septuagint this chapter has four more verses.</p>	<p>And he [Ahaziah] died, according to the word of the Eternal, as Elijah had spoken. Jehoram ruled after him, in the second year of Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, because he had no son.</p>	<p>1:17  וַיָּמָת כְּדָבָר  יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר-  דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו  וַיָּמָלֶךְ יְהוֹרָם  מִתְחַתָּיו בְּשָׁנַת  שְׁתַּיִם לַיהוֹרָם  בֶּן-יְהוֹשָׁפָט  מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה כִּי  לֹא-הָיָה לוֹ בֶּן:</p>
	<p>As for the rest of Ahaziah's acts, which he did, are they not recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel?</p>	<p>1:18  וַיִּתֵּר דְּבָרֵי  אֲחַזְיָהוּ אֲשֶׁר  עָשָׂה הִלּוּא-  הֵמָּה כְּתוּבִים  עַל-סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי  הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי  יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>

<p>וַיְהִי בַּהֲעֲלֹת יְהוָה אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי בְּסַעֲרָה הַשָּׁמַיִם And it was during the bringing up of Elijah by the Eternal in a storm of Heaven</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From this statement, it would seem that the audience knows that Elijah went up in a storm and that here they are going to hear the story in detail.</li> </ul> <p>בְּסַעֲרָה הַשָּׁמַיִם in a storm of Heaven The usage of בְּסַעֲרָה הַשָּׁמַיִם is similar here to that of אֵשׁ־אֱלֹהִים in I Kings I:12, which was an idiom that depicted an intense fire. בְּסַעֲרָה הַשָּׁמַיִם is a severe storm.</p> <p>גִּלְגָּל Gilgal Gilgal was a topographical area that had round formations. According to the Encyclopedia Judaica, Gilgal was “an ancient sacred site on which a circle of large stones was erected.” (EJ, p. 601)</p>	<p>And it was during the bringing up of Elijah by the Eternal in a storm of Heaven. Elijah and Elisha were going out from Gilgal.</p>	<p>2:1 וַיְהִי בַּהֲעֲלֹת יְהוָה אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי בְּסַעֲרָה הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיַּלֶּךְ אֵלֵיהֶם וְאֵלִישָׁע מִן־הַגִּלְגָּל:</p>
<p>בֵּית־אֵל Bethel Bethel was a very famous northern site. It was the place where Jacob had his famous dream of angels climbing up and down on a ladder. Jacob called it the “gate of heaven” in Gen 28:17.</p> <p>חַי־יְהוָה וְחַי־נַפְשְׁךָ As sure as God lives and by your life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Here we see the distinction between swearing upon the divine and the life of a human. One would swear upon one’s own life, however, one would not swear by the life of YHWH. Doing so would imply that YHWH would perish. Instead, one would swear “as YHWH lives.”</li> </ul>	<p>Elijah said to Elisha Stay here, please, for the Eternal has sent me to Bethel. But Elisha said, “As sure as God lives and as sure as you have a life. I will not abandon you.” And they went down to Bethel.</p>	<p>2:2 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיהֶם אֶל־אֵלִישָׁע שֹׁב־נָא פֹה בִּי יְהוָה שְׁלַחְנִי עַד־בֵּית־אֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלִישָׁע חַי־יְהוָה וְחַי־נַפְשְׁךָ אֲנִי בְּנֵי וַיֵּרְדּוּ בֵּית־אֵל:</p>

<p>בְּנֵי־הַנְּבִיאִים Disciples of the prophets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The בְּנֵי־הַנְּבִיאִים are a class of people who are attached to the prophets, but are not prophets themselves. They are clearly subservient to the prophets. In Amos 7:14-15 we read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><sup>14</sup>Amos answered Amaziah: "I am not a prophet, and I am not a prophet's disciple. I am a cattle breeder and a tender of sycamore figs. <sup>15</sup>But the Lord took me away from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.'</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>From this, we see that the prophet's disciple is in a category set apart from a full prophet, but also set apart from a regular person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>בְּנֵי־הַנְּבִיאִים may be akin to apprentices. They are dependent on the prophets for sustenance as we see later that the prophets take care of them and feed them in II Kings 4:38.</li> <li>The term בְּנֵי־הַנְּבִיאִים seems to be found only in Northern sources. We do not know a lot about this group of people. However, they may be related to a group called a "band of prophets," who are referred to in I Samuel 19:20-24. It may be that the behaviors of the band of prophets, and disciples of prophets were similar. In I Samuel 19:20-24, the "band of prophets" are described as speaking in ecstasy and lying around naked.</li> </ul> <p>מֵעַל רֹאשְׁךָ from your head</p> <p>The idiom מֵעַל רֹאשְׁךָ is two-fold in meaning.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elijah will be physically removed from the presence of Elisha. He will be, in essence, whisked away into the sky above Elisha's head.</li> <li>Elijah was Elisha's superior. He was "above" Elisha in rank, and will be removed from that position when he is taken by YHWH.</li> </ol> <p>The expression מֵעַל רֹאשְׁךָ also occurs in II Kings 2:5.</p>	<p>Disciples of the prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that the Eternal will take your master away from you today?"</p> <p>He replied, "I also know it, be silent."</p>	<p>2:3 וַיָּצְאוּ בְנֵי־ הַנְּבִיאִים אֲשֶׁר־ בֵּית־אֵל אֵל־ אֵלִישָׁע וַיֵּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו הֲיָדָעָתָּ כִּי הַיּוֹם יִהְיֶה לְקַחַת אֶת־אֲדֹנֶיךָ מֵעַל רֹאשְׁךָ וַיֹּאמֶר גַּם־אֲנִי יָדָעְתִּי הַחֲשׂוֹן:</p>
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<p>וַיָּבֹאוּ יֵרִיחוֹ And they went to Jericho</p> <p>The assertion that they went to Jericho is an indication to the audience that the story, is miraculous and they should expect strange things to occur. It would have been impossible for them to make the trip in a short amount of time from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho.</p>	<p>Then Elijah said to him, “Elisha, stay here, for the Eternal has sent me to Jericho.” and he said, “As sure as the Eternal lives and as sure as you live, worse be done to me if I leave you.” And so they went to Jericho.</p>	<p>2:4 וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֱלֹהֵי אֱלִישָׁע   שְׁבִינָא כִּי יִהְיֶה שְׁלַחְנִי יֵרִיחוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר חֵי-יְהוָה וְחֵי-נַפְשִׁי אֲמֵן אֲעֻבֵּב וַיָּבֹאוּ יֵרִיחוֹ:</p>
<p>בְּנֵי-הַנְּבִיאִים   אֲשֶׁר בְּיֵרִיחוֹ The disciples of the prophets who were in Jericho</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We learn from this statement that there are different groups of disciples of the prophets. Earlier, we were told about the group of prophets from Bethel.</li> </ul> <p>בְּיֵרִיחוֹ in Jericho</p> <p>There is a prepositional bet in front of the word Jericho בְּיֵרִיחוֹ. The sense is that the disciples of the prophets were in Jericho. However in II Kings 2:3, the prepositional bet was dropped, and it reads, אֲשֶׁר-בֵּית-אֵל. This was likely a scribal error.</p>	<p>The disciples of the prophets who were in Jericho approached Elisha and they said to him, “Do you know that the Eternal will take your master away from you today?” He replied, “I know it, also; be silent.”</p>	<p>2:5 וַיֵּגְשׁוּ בְנֵי- הַנְּבִיאִים   אֲשֶׁר בְּיֵרִיחוֹ אֶל- אֱלִישָׁע וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו הִנֵּדְעָתָּ כִּי הַיּוֹם יִהְיֶה לְקַח אֶת-אֲדֹנֶיךָ מֵעַל רֹאשֶׁךָ וַיֹּאמֶר גַּם-אֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי הַחֲשׂוֹן:</p>

	<p>Elijah said to him,  “Stay here,  for the Eternal  has sent me  on to the  Jordan.” “As  the Eternal  lives and as  you live, I  will not leave  you,” he said,  and the two of  them went on.</p>	<p>2:6  וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֱלִיָּהוּ  שִׁבְתָּא פֹה כִּי  יְהוָה שְׁלַחְנִי  הַנְּרִדָּה וַיֹּאמֶר  חַי־יְהוָה וְחַי־  נַפְשְׁךָ אִם־  אֶעֱזֹבֶךָ וַיֵּלְכוּ  שְׁנֵיהֶם:</p>
<p>וַחֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ Fifty men  This is a large number of people to be following  Elisha and Elijah.  <i>Side note:</i> this is an inspiration for the crowds that  follow <i>Jesus</i> in the New Testament.</p> <p>מִבְּנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים of the disciples of prophets  These are the same people from Jericho who follow Elijah  and Elisha.</p>	<p>Fifty men of  the disciples  of prophets  followed and  stood  opposite to  them from a  distance as  the two of  them stopped  at the Jordan.</p>	<p>2:7  וַחֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ  מִבְּנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים  הָלְכוּ וַיַּעֲמֻדוּ  מִנְּגִד מִרְחֹק  וּשְׁנֵיהֶם עָמְדוּ  עַל־הַיַּרְדֵּן:</p>
<p>וַיִּגְלֵם he wore  The word גָּלַם only appears only here and in Ezek 27:24.  (AB, p. 32)  גָּלַם is often translated this word as “rolled up.” However,  in Aramaic, the word <i>glimah</i> means “a cloak.”  Using this meaning, the sense would be that Elijah  took off the mantle he was wearing, instead of  rolling his mantle up.</p>	<p>And Elijah  took his  mantle and,  which he  wore and he  struck the  water; it  divided here  and there, so  that the two  of them  crossed over  on dry land.</p>	<p>2:8  וַיִּקַּח אֱלִיָּהוּ אֶת־  אֲדָרְתּוֹ וַיִּגְלֵם  וַיַּךְ אֶת־הַמַּיִם  וַיִּחַצּוּ הַמָּיִם וַהֲגָה  וַיַּעֲבְרוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם  בְּחֶרֶבָה:</p>

<p> מה אעשה-לך "Ask, what can I do?"  By asking Elisha what he can do for him, Elijah is creating something akin to what we would call in modern times a "living will."   אֶלְקָח מֵעִמָּךְ I am taken from you  With this statement we see that Elijah is speaking to Elisha as if he is speaking to his own son. Similarly, in II Kings 2:12, Elisha calls to Elijah אָבִי אָבִי "my father, my father."   פִּי-שְׁנַיִם a double portion  While on first reading, Elisha's request for a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit might seem crass, it is perfectly appropriate, given the pseudo father/son relationship between Elisha and Elijah. The term פִּי-שְׁנַיִם refers to a legal inheritance procedure in which the eldest son inherits two-thirds of his father's land, as described in Deut 21:17:   <p style="text-align: center;"> Instead, he must accept the first-born, the son of the unloved one, and allot to him a double portion of all he possesses; since he is the first fruit of his vigor, the birthright is his due.   כִּי אֶת-הַבְּכֹר בְּנֵי-הַשְּׁנוּאָה יָפִיר לָתֶת לוֹ פִּי שְׁנַיִם בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר-יִמְצָא לוֹ בִּיהוּא דְאִשִּׁית אִמּוֹ לוֹ מִשְׁפָּט הַבְּכֹרָה: </p> </p>	<p> And it was as they were crossing, Elijah said to Elisha,  "Ask, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?"  Elisha answered,  "Please, Let a double portion of your spirit be passed onto me." </p>	<p> 2:9  וַיְהִי כְעָבְרָם וְאֵלֵיהֶוּ אָמַר אֶל-אֵלִישָׁע שְׂאֵל מֶה אֲעָשֶׂה-לָּךְ בְּטָרָם אֶלְקָח מֵעִמָּךְ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלִישָׁע וַיִּהְיֶה-גַּם פִּי-שְׁנַיִם בְּרוּחִי אֵלַי: </p>
<p> In II Kings 2:9, by asking for a double portion of Elijah's spirit, Elisha is asking to be treated as if he is Elijah's eldest son and rightful heir.  Side note: In Akkadian, the word <i>shinipu</i> (which one can see as a kind of Metathesis of פִּי-שְׁנַיִם) is found in ancient contracts and has a similar meaning to פִּי-שְׁנַיִם. (AB, p. 32)   אֵלַי בְּרוּחִי your spirit be passed onto me.  Prophecy is compared to wind in this case, because like a wind, prophecy is something that cannot be seen. Like a wind, only the effects of prophecy are visible. Prophecy, like wind, blows over the prophet. רוח is a physical metaphor for an invisible process. </p>		

<p>לשאול אם-תראה אתי לקח מאתך If you see me being taken from you</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elijah sets a condition for Elisha here. It is unclear to us as modern readers of the Bible, but we have to assume that the audience could understand the significance of Elijah's condition.</li> <li>Perhaps this is an implication of a kind of ritual that would need to take place in which one needs to be present and conscious of events as they take place in the moment of change.</li> </ul>	<p>And he said: "You have made your request difficult. If you see me being taken from you, it will be for you thus, if not, it will not."</p>	<p>2:10 וַיֹּאמֶר הַקָּשִׁיף לְשֹׂאֵל אִם- תֵּרְאֶה אֹתִי לִקְחָה מֵאַתְּךָ יְהִי-לְךָ כֹּן וְאִם-אֵין לֹא יִהְיֶה:</p>
<p>וַיֵּלֶךְ הַלֵּכִים הַלֹּךְ וְדֹבֵר walking along and talking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This phrase is a description of a normal everyday activity (walking and talking) which provides a foil for the miraculous event of the appearance of the fiery chariot.</li> <li><i>Side note:</i> The least believable events to us as modern readers were likely the ones that impressed the biblical audience. The more unnatural the event, the more wondrous it was, the more the audience at the time might have believed that it happened.</li> </ul> <p>וַיֵּרָא אֵשׁ וְסוּסֵי אֵשׁ וַיִּפְרְדּוּ a fiery chariot with fiery horses appeared</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>אֵשׁ is commonly associated with a divine presence in most of the Tenakh, with the exception of Genesis. For example, in Ex 3:2, YHWH appears to Moses in a burning bush. In Ex 13:21, YHWH appears to the Israelites as a pillar of fire at night. We see other examples in Ex 19:18, Deut 4:12 and 24, 5:19 and I Kings 18:24. (AB, p. 32)</li> <li>In Rudolph Otto's book, <u>The Idea Of The Holy</u>, Otto stressed God as a numinous power. One of the ways of describing God is through images that can be both harmful as well as good. Fire is a prime example of this as people cannot live without it, and yet it can kill.</li> </ul>	<p>As they kept on walking and talking, and behold! a fiery chariot with fiery horses appeared between them; and Elijah went up to heaven in the storm.</p>	<p>2:11 וַיְהִי הֵמָּה הַלֵּכִים הַלֹּךְ וְדֹבֵר וְהִנֵּה רֶכֶב-אֵשׁ וְסוּסֵי אֵשׁ וַיִּפְרְדּוּ בֵּין שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיַּעֲלֵה אֱלֹהֵי בְּסַעְרָה הַשָּׁמַיִם:</p>

<p>אָבִי אָבִי my father, my father          There is a question as to whether Elisha is calling out to Elijah or to YHWH when he yells, אָבִי אָבִי.          Most commentators believe that he is calling to Elijah. I agree with this reading, as Elijah treats Elisha as a son in the previous verses by asking what he can give to him as he leaves him.</p> <p>פָּרָשִׁי her horsemen or her rider          פָּרֶשׁ can mean “horse” or “rider.”          Using either of these translations of פָּרֶשׁ in this verse presents different understandings of what happened:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If we translate פָּרֶשׁ as “horse,” then the chariot is driven miraculously by horses without a driver.</li> <li>2. If we translate פָּרֶשׁ as “rider,” then it is like manifestation of YHWH coming to get Elijah. If we translate it in this way, then we would understand Elisha’s screaming of <i>avi</i>, <i>avi</i> as his response to seeing YHWH at the reins.  <i>Side note:</i> If YHWH is at the reins, it is a play on the idiom רָכַב אֱלֹהִים, which we find in the Tanakh, for example, in Psalms 68:18.</li> </ol> <p>וַיִּחַזֶּק and he held faster and faster          The verb וַיִּחַזֶּק is in <i>binyan piel</i>. In biblical Hebrew, the <i>binyanim piel</i> and <i>pual</i> do not imply an intensification of action, as they do in modern Hebrew, rather, they imply a repetition of an action.          We also see this in the story of the Exodus when God hardens pharaoh’s heart. For example, in Ex 10:1 we read:</p> <p>Then the Eternal said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh. For I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his courtiers, in order that I may display these My signs among them,</p> <p>וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בֹּא אֶל־פַּרְעֹה כִּי־אֲנִי הִכְבַּדְתִּי          אֶת־לִבּוֹ וְאֶת־לֵב עֲבָדָיו לְמַעַן שִׁתִּי אֶתְנִי אֵלָה בְּקִרְבּוֹ:</p>	<p>And Elisha saw it and he kept on screaming out “my father, my father! The chariot of Israel and its horsemen!” and then he could no longer see him,. He held faster and faster to his garments and tore them in two pieces.</p>	<p>2:12          וְאֵלִישָׁע רָאָה          וְהוּא מִצְעֵק          אָבִי אָבִי רָכַב          יִשְׂרָאֵל וּפָרָשָׁיו          וְלֹא רָאָהוּ עוֹד          וַיִּחַזֶּק בְּבִגְדָיו          וַיִּקְרַעֵם לִשְׁנַיִם          קְרָעִים:</p>
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<p>אֶדְרֶת mantle A mantle becomes a sign of the prophet. (AB, p. 26) For example, in Zech 13:4, Zechariah says,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">In that day, every “prophet” will be ashamed of the “visions” [he had] when he “prophesied.” In order to deceive, he will not wear a hairy mantle</p>	<p>He lifted up Elijah’s mantle, which had fallen from him; and he returned and stood on the bank of the Jordan.</p>	<p>2:13 וַיִּרֶם אֶת־אֶדְרֶת אֱלִיהוּ אֲשֶׁר נָפְלָה מֵעָלָיו וַיָּשֶׁב וַיַּעֲמֵד עַל־ שְׂפַת הַיַּרְדֵּן:</p>
<p>וַיִּכָּה אֶת־הַמַּיִם בַּיָּמִין וּבַשְּׂמֹאל וַיִּפָּרֵד כֵּן וְכֵן He too, struck the water, it parted this way and that.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We see in this verse God’s acceptance of Elisha as succeeding Elijah.</li> </ul>	<p>And he took Elijah’s mantle which had dropped from him, and he struck the water and said, “Where is the Eternal, the God of Elijah?” He too, struck the water, it parted this way and that, and Elisha crossed over.</p>	<p>2:14 וַיִּקַּח אֶת־אֶדְרֶת אֱלִיהוּ אֲשֶׁר־ נָפְלָה מֵעָלָיו וַיִּכָּה אֶת־הַמַּיִם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֱלִיהוּ אֶת־ הָאֵל וַיִּכָּה אֶת־ הַמַּיִם וַיִּפָּרֵצוּ הַנָּהָר וַיַּעֲבֹר וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶל־יָשָׁע:</p>

<p>וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ לוֹ אַרְצָה bowed low before him to the ground</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bowing down is a gesture of respect. For example, Jacob bows to Esau in Gen 33:7 as a gesture of respect in trying to make amends for his past transgressions. Joseph's brothers bow to Joseph in Gen 42:6 when they meet him when he has become a vizier in Egypt.</li> </ul> <p>וַיֹּאמְרוּ גִּתָּה רוּחַ אֱלֹהֵי עֲלִישָׁע they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha!"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We see with this text that the disciples of the prophets are able to discern a difference in Elisha. There is a detectable marker of his having being given a portion of Elijah's spirit.</li> </ul>	<p>When the disciples of the prophets who were in Jericho saw him from a distance, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha!" And they went to meet him and bowed low before him to the ground.</p>	<p>2:15 וַיִּרְאוּהוּ בְנֵי-הַנְּבִיאִים אֲשֶׁר-בִּירְיָחוֹ מִן־הַנָּגִד וַיֹּאמְרוּ גִּתָּה רוּחַ אֱלֹהֵי עֲלִישָׁע וַיִּבְאוּ לִקְרֹאָתוֹ וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ לוֹ אַרְצָה:</p>
<p>חֵיל capable The basic meaning of חֵיל is strength, power or wealth. However it has a large semantic range, and in II Kings 2:16, it means capable. We see חֵיל used as "capable" also in Ex 18:21:</p> <p>You shall also seek out from among all the people capable men who fear God, trustworthy men who spurn ill-gotten gain. Set these over them as chiefs of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, and</p> <p>וְאַתָּה תִּתְּנָה מִכָּל־הָעָם אֲנָשֵׁי־חֵיל יִרְאַי אֱלֹהִים אֲנָשֵׁי אֱמֶת שְׂנֵאִי בָצַע וְשָׁמַת עֲלֵהֶם שָׂרֵי אֲלָפִים שָׂרֵי מֵאוֹת שָׂרֵי חֲמִשִּׁים וְשָׂרֵי עֶשְׂרִית:</p>	<p>They said to him, "Here, please, your servants have fifty capable men. Please let them go and look for your Lord; Lest a wind of the Eternal has sent him off and thrown him upon some mountain or into some valley." but he said. "Do not send them."</p>	<p>2:16 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו הִנֵּה־נָּא יֵשְׁעָתָּ עִבְדֶּיךָ חֲמִשִּׁים אֲנָשִׁים בְּנֵי־חֵיל יֵלְכוּ נָא וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ אֶת־אֲדֹנֶיךָ כֹּה־נִשְׂאוּ רוּחַ יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁלְכֵהוּ בְּאֶתֶד הַהִירִים אוֹ בְּאֶתֶת הַגִּיאֹת [הַגִּיאֹת] וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא תִשְׁלְחוּ:</p>

<p>ויפצרו they pressed him</p> <p>The root פצר can be used in words that describe the physical act of pressing another, or coercing another through words. For example, in Gen 19:9, we read an example of פצר being used to describe a physical act;</p> <p>But they said, “Stand back! The fellow,” they said, “came here as an alien, and already he acts the ruler! Now we will deal worse with you than with them.” And they pressed hard against the person of Lot, and moved forward to break the door.</p> <p>ויאמרו וישקלצוהו ויאמרו האתד בא לגור וישפט שפוט עתה נרע לך מהם ויפצרו באיש בלוט מאד ויגשו לשבר הדלת:</p> <p>עד-בש for a long time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sense of עד-בש is “for a long time.” A particularly colorful example in which we see עד-בש used to describe something that was taking a long time can be found in Judges 3:25. In this example, King Ehud’s servants were waiting for him while he was in the biblical equivalent to a bathroom for such a long time that they went in to check on him and found that he had been killed!</li> <li>Another example of the idiom עד-בש can be found in II Kings 8:11: <p>The man of God kept his face expressionless for a long time; and then he wept.</p> <p>ויעמד את-פניו וישם עד-בש ויבך איש האלהים:</p> </li> </ul> <p>שלושה-ימים three days</p> <p>In the Tanakh, three days represents a turning point. A particularly well-known usage of שלושה-ימים can be found in Jonah 2:1 when Jonah is stuck in the stomach of a giant fish for three days.</p>	<p>But they pressed him for a long time, and said, “Send them.”</p> <p>So they sent out fifty men, who searched for three days but did not find him.</p>	<p>2:17</p> <p>ויפצרו-כו עד-בש ויאמר שלחו איש ויבקשו שלושה-ימים ולא מצאוהו:</p>
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	<p>They came back to him while he stayed in Jericho; and he said to them, "had I not told you not to go?"</p>	<p>2:18 וַיָּשׁוּבוּ אֵלָיו וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב בִּירִיחוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם הֲלוֹא־ אָמַרְתִּי אֲלֵיכֶם אֶל־תֵּלְכוּ:</p>
<p>There is an abrupt segue into a new story in this verse.</p> <p>מִשְׁכָּלַת causes bereavement/causes miscarriage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Another example of this can be found in I Samuel 15:33, Samuel threatens King Agag's life by telling him that he will make Agag's mother bereaved.</li> </ul> <p>Samuel said: "As your sword has bereaved women, So shall your mother be bereaved among women." And Samuel cut Agag down before the Eternal at Gilgal.</p> <p>וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל בְּאִשֶּׁר שְׁכָלָה נָשִׁים תִּרְכָּדָה כֹּן־ תִּשְׁכַּל מִנָּשִׁים אִמָּה וַיִּשְׁפֹּךְ שְׁמוּאֵל אֶת־אֲגָג לִפְנֵי יְהוָה בְּגִלְגָל:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This term can also be used for animals, for example a דב שכול is a mother bear who lost her cubs.</li> <li>There is a parallel to the word שכול in Ugaritic. In an Ugaritic poem, there is a god of death <i>mot</i> who carries two staffs, one of which is called <i>shicul</i> and the other <i>alman</i> (like the Hebrew <i>almana</i>- "barren woman").</li> </ul>	<p>The men of the town said to Elisha, "Behold, please, Look, the location of this city is a good one, as my Eternal can see; but the water is bad and so the land causes bereavement."</p>	<p>2:19 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אַנְשֵׁי הָעִיר אֶל־אֵלִישָׁע הִנֵּה־נָא מוֹשָׁב הָעִיר טוֹב בְּאֵינֶר אֲדֹנָי רָאָה וְהַמַּיִם רָעִים וְהָאָרֶץ מִשְׁכָּלַת:</p>
<p>צִלְחִית jar/flask A צִלְחִית is distinct from a צִלְחַת "dish" for eating. (AB, p. 36)</p>	<p>So he said, "Bring me a new dish and put salt in it." They brought it to him.</p>	<p>2:20 וַיֹּאמֶר קְחוּ־לִי צִלְחִית חֲדָשָׁה וַעֲשִׂמוּ שָׁם מֶלַח וַיִּקְחוּ אֵלָיו:</p>

<p>מים water Just as we saw with wind and fire, water is an element that is featured in this story for its powerful ability as both life giving and yet can also be responsible for death.</p>	<p>He went to the source of the water and threw salt into it. And he said, "Thus said the Eternal: I heal this water; no longer shall death and bereavement come from it!"</p>	<p>2:21 וַיֵּצֵא אֶל- מוֹצָא הַמַּיִם וַיִּשְׁלֹךְ-שָׁם מֶלַח וַיֹּאמֶר כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה רְפָאתֵי לַמַּיִם הָאֵלֶּה לְאֶ- יְהוָה מַשֵּׁם עוֹד מִוֹת וּמִשִּׁבְלֹת:</p>
<p>וְעַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה up to this day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This statement shows that the narrator is at a distance from the event.</li> <li>• It is also a testament to Elisha's great power. What he did many years ago still continues today.</li> <li>• This story works to give the Divine credit for solving what was likely a historically genuine problem regarding the waters of Jericho; there was likely a time when the waters of Jericho were unfit for consumption but are now still potable because of the prophet.</li> </ul>	<p>The water remains restored up to this day, as the word spoken by Elisha.</p>	<p>2:22 וַיֵּרָפוּ הַמַּיִם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כְּדִבְרֵי אֱלִישָׁע אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר:</p>
<p>וַיִּתְקַלְסוּ-בּוֹ and they ridiculed him, In Biblical Hebrew קלס means to be mocking. The Mishnaic Hebrew homonym has an entirely different meaning: "to praise" that is borrowed from the Greek <i>Kalos</i>, "good" and is used as an expression of praise.</p>	<p>He went up from there to Bethel. As he was going up the road, some little boys came out of the town and ridiculed him, saying, "Go away, baldhead! Go away, Bald-head!"</p>	<p>2:23 וַיַּעַל מַשֵּׁם בֵּית- אֵל וְהוּא   עֵלָה בְּדֶרֶךְ וַיְנַעֲרִים קְטָנִים יְצֵאוּ מִן- הָעִיר וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ עֲלֵה קֶרֶחַ עֲלֵה קֶרֶחַ:</p>

<p>Two she-bears came out of the woods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The point of the miraculous appearance of the bears in this story is to convey that Elisha was very powerful and could make impossible things happen.</li> </ul>	<p>He turned around and looked at them and cursed them in the name of the Eternal. Two she-bears came out of the woods and cut to pieces forty-two of the children.</p>	<p>2:24 וַיִּפֹּן אֶת־רִירוֹ וַיִּרְאֵם וַיִּזְלֹלֵם בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה וַתֵּצֵאנָה שְׁתֵּי דְבִים מִן־הַיַּעַר וַתִּבְקַעְנָה מֵהֶם אַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁנַיִ יְלָדִים:</p>
<p>We see in II Kings 2:19-25 that Elisha is a wonderworker and prophet who has been endowed with the spirit of Elijah. With the examples of the waters of Jericho and the jeerers being eaten by bears we see that those who respect and revere Elisha as a representative of YHWH are rewarded, and those who disrespect him are punished. (BW NET)</p>	<p>He went on from there to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.</p>	<p>2:25 וַיֵּלֶךְ מֵשָׁם אֶל־ הַר הַכַּרְמֶל וּמֵשָׁם שָׁב שָׁמְרוֹן:</p>

	<p>Jehoram, son of Ahab, ruled over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. And he reigned for twelve years.</p>	<p>3:1 וַיְהִי כִּן־ אֶחָאָב מֶלֶךְ עַל־ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשָׁמְרוֹן בְּשִׁנַּת שְׁמֹנֶה עֶשְׂרִי לַיהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וַיִּמְלֹךְ שְׁתַּיִם־ עֶשְׂרִי שָׁנָה:</p>
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<p>וַיַּעַשׂ הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה He did the things that were evil in the eyes of the Eternal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The things that his father and mother had done that were evil in the eyes of YHWH are listed in I Kings 16:31-33.</li> </ul> <p>כְּאָבִיו וְכַאֲמוֹ as his father and mother By including his mother, the biblical writer wants the audience to connect worship of Baal to Jezebel.</p>	<p>He did the things that were evil in the eyes of the Eternal, only not like his father and mother, for he removed the pillars of Baal that his father had made.</p>	<p>3:2 וַיַּעַשׂ הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה לֹא כְּאָבִיו וְכַאֲמוֹ וַיִּסֹּר אֶת־מִצְבֹּת הַפֶּעַל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אָבִיו:</p>
<p>מִמֶּנֶּה from [it] מִמֶּנֶּה is conjugated as the singular, "it." It should read, מִמֶּנּוּ in order to match up with the antecedent "sins."</p> <p><i>Side note:</i> From the time that the Solomonic Temple was built, it was felt that any sacrifice was not valid anywhere else. By definition, none of the Northern kings could have offered acceptable sacrifices because they worshipped and sacrificed in their own temples.</p>	<p>Yet, [he persisted] in the sins which Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to commit; he clung [to them] and did not turn away from them.</p>	<p>3:3 לֹא־סָר מִמֶּנֶּה: וְרַבְעָם בֶּן־נִבַּט אֲשֶׁר־הִקְטִיף אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל דָּבַק לֹא־סָר מִמֶּנֶּה:</p>

<p>מֶשָׁה מֶלֶךְ-מוֹאָב Mesha, king of Moab.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mesha is named in the Moabite Stone. In fact, Mesha himself was responsible for the erection of the Moabite Stone (AB, p. 43) The Moabite Stone was a major archeological find in the 19th century. An Alsatian Protestant missionary by the name of Frederick Augustus Klein bought the Moabite stone from the Bedouin. The Mesha Stone was likely a building inscription. It has on it the first mention of YHWH in a datable non-Hebrew source.</li> <li>Though the synchronism, we can date the time of the story that appears in Kings to the version of it that was written from the Moabites' point of view in approximately 840 BCE. We can see from this that at least part of the story is actual history.</li> </ul> <p>נֶקֶד a sheep breeder;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A נֶקֶד was typically a title used broadly for a "herdsman." Here, it is used specifically for a "sheep breeder." We see a similar usage of נֶקֶד as "sheep breeder" in Amos 1:1: (AB, p. 43)</li> </ul> <p>The words of Amos, a sheep breeder from Tekoa, who prophesied concerning Israel in the reigns of Kings Uzziah of Judah and Jeroboam son of Joash of Israel, two years before the earthquake.</p> <p>דְּבַרֵי עָמוֹס אֲשֶׁר-הָיָה בְּנֶקֶדִים מִתְּקוֹעַ אֲשֶׁר חָזָה עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּימֵיו עֲזִיָּה מֶלֶךְ-יְהוּדָה וּבִיָּמֵי יִרְבָּעָם בְּנִי-יוֹאָשׁ מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁנָתַיִם לִפְנֵי הָרָעָשׁ:</p> <p>וְהָשִׁיב לְמֶלֶךְ pay as tribute to the king</p> <p>It was fairly common for a king of one country to pay tribute to another to receive protection. For example, we see this situation described in Ps 72:10: "Let kings of Tarshish and the islands pay tribute, kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts."</p> <p>We learn from II Kings 3:4 that Mesha, the king of Moab was a vassal. However, the numbers in the tribute in II Kings 3:4 are very high. According to Cogan and Tadmor, the total submission is not an accurate account. (AB, p. 43)</p>	<p>Now King Mesha of Moab was a sheep breeder; and he used to pay as tribute to the king of Israel [with] a hundred thousand lambs and the wool of a hundred thousand rams.</p>	<p>3:4 וּמִיָּשָׁע מֶלֶךְ- מוֹאָב הָיָה נֶקֶד וְהָשִׁיב לְמֶלֶךְ- יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶה- אַלְפֵי כְרִים וּמֵאֶה אַלְפֵי אֵילִים צֹמֶר:</p>
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<p>Verse II Kings 3:5 is a repetition of II Kings 1:1 in which we read: “After Ahab died, Moab rebelled against Israel.” The repetition here is a literary technique used to hold the audience’s attention, in which a story is referred to briefly, and then dropped and then is picked up again at a later point.</p> <p>וַיִּפְשַׁע rebelled The king of Moab rebelled by stopping to pay tributes. As described in the commentary to II Kings 1:1, פֶּשַׁע is the worst kind of sin in a category of sins that are referred to in the Tenakh. It is attested more in the bible in the theological sense, but the origin פֶּשַׁע is in the military sense. We can see here that indicates a deliberate throwing off of the over lordship.</p> <p>Differences in the accounts: According to the Moabite stone, the rebellion against the king of Israel was after the death of Omri, and in the biblical tale it is after the death of Ahab. Here are some possible explanations for the discrepancy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is possible that King Mesha reported the story with this mistake; it may have been written late in his reign. The king himself was likely illiterate and would have called upon a scribe to write the story over many years. The scribe would have likely needed to reconstruct events while setting down a permanent account. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Side Note:</i> King Ashurbanipal in 628 boasted he could read anything. This tells us that being able to write was unusual for a king. A scribe of the royal court would be called upon to do it.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. It is also possible that the Hebrew writer made the mistake. Scribes could have had different versions. The story would have been put together originally on parchment or papyrus and then transferred to other media. There was a lot of room for scribal errors and a recasting of things.</li> <li>3. It is also possible that either account could have incorporated lies and embellishments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Side Note:</i> Scholar Hayim Tadmor studied Assyrian Annals intensively and found that in general, versions will disagree, even when produced in the lifetime of the ruler.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>But when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.</p>	<p>3:5 וַיָּהִי כִּמְזֻז אַחֲזָב וַיִּפְשַׁע מֶלֶךְ-מוֹאָב בְּמֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>
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<p>וַיִּפְקֹד mustered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is from the root פקד which means, to take note of, to take a count of, and to take account of. In Gen 25:60, YHWH took account of Sarah's barrenness and promised a child to her. The sense is that once people are taken account of, one can muster them. In ancient warfare the number of people you could muster determined the success of the king. We see other examples of וַיִּפְקֹד meaning to summon or muster the people in Joshua 8:10 and I kings 20:15.</li> <li>Sometime פקד means "to appoint," as we see in Gen 41:34:</li> </ul> <p>And let Pharaoh take steps to appoint overseers over the land, and organize the land of Egypt in the seven years of plenty.</p> <p>נַעֲשֶׂה פַרְעֹה וַיִּפְקֹד פְּקָדִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַחֲמִשָּׁה אֶת־אָרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּשִׁבְעַת שָׁנֵי הַשָּׁבַע:</p>	<p>So King Jehoram left from Samaria that day and mustered all Israel.</p>	<p>3:6 וַיֵּצֵא הַמֶּלֶךְ יְהוֹרָם בָּיִת הַיְּהוָה מִשְׁמֶרֶת וַיִּפְקֹד אֶת־כָּל־ יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>
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<p>כְּמֹנִי כְמוֹדָה כְּעַמִּי כְּעַמֶּיךָ כְּסוּסֵי כְּסוּסֶיךָ  how I am is like you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a commitment of one leader to another. Jehoshaphat is tying up his fate with that of the King of Israel.</li> <li>• We see an identical construction as in I kings 22:4.</li> </ul> <p>my troops shall be your troops, my horses shall be your horses.</p> <p>Such statements are political and reflect a treaty between two groups. (AB, p. 43)</p>	<p>Then he went and sent <i>word</i> to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, “The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to make war against Moab?” And he said, “I will go up; how I am is like you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.”</p>	<p>3:7  וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶל־יְהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה לֵאמֹר מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב פָּשַׁע בִּי הִתְלַח אֹתִי אֶל־מוֹאָב לְמִלְחָמָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶעֱלֶה כְּמוֹנִי כְּעַמִּי כְּעַמֶּיךָ כְּסוּסֵי כְּסוּסֶיךָ:</p>
	<p>And he asked, “Where is the road should we will go up? and he [Jehoram] replied, “The road through the wilderness of Edom.”</p>	<p>3:8  וַיֹּאמֶר אֵיזָנָה הַדֶּרֶךְ גִּשְׁלָה וַיֹּאמֶר דָּרָךְ מִדְּבַר אֲדוֹם:</p>



<p>וַיֵּלֶךְ<sup>א</sup> went  The verb הלך should be conjugated into the plural וילכו to match with the subject “they” (the kings of Israel, Judah and Edom). It is likely in the singular to emphasize that the king of Israel was the instigator of the treaty and journey. We see a similar occurrence in Num 12:1, in which Miriam and Aaron complain to Moses about his wife.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">When they were in Hazeroth, Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman he had married: "He married a Cushite woman!"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וַתְּדַבֵּר מִרְיָם וְאַהֲרֹן בְּמִשְׁחָה עַל־אִשְׁתּוֹ הַכּוּשִׁית  אֲשֶׁר לָקַח כִּי־אִשְׁתּוֹ כּוּשִׁית לָקַח:</p> <p>The biblical writers conjugate the verb דבר “to speak” into the feminine singular, even though both Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses’s wife. This is to emphasize that Miriam instigated this complaint. The grammar here helps to make sense of the reason why God punishes her alone.</p> <p>בָּרָגְלֵיהֶם walked with them  The literal meaning of this is “[the animals] who were at their feet.” The sense of this is that the animals followed them closely. We see other examples of בָּרָגְלֵיהֶם used in this way in Deut 11:6 and I Kings 20:10, Judg 4:10, I Sam 25:27, II Sam 15:16 and 17. (AB, p. 45)</p> <p>וַיֵּסְבוּ הָרֶדֶד שִׁבְעַת יָמִים they circled for seven days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The kings take a circuitous route. This is likely so that they could stay hidden in caves along the way.</li> </ul>	<p>So the king of Israel and the king of Judah and the king of Edom went and they circled for seven days; and there was no water left for the army or for the animals that walked with them.</p>	<p>3:9  וַיֵּלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה וּמֶלֶךְ־אֱדוֹם וַיֵּסְבוּ הָרֶדֶד שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וְלֹא־הָיָה מַיִם לַמַּחֲנֶה וּלְבִהֶמָּה אֲשֶׁר בָּרָגְלֵיהֶם:</p>
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	<p>The king of Israel said, "Alas, for the Eternal has called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab."</p>	<p>3:10 וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵלֶּה כִּי־ קָרָא יְהוָה לְשָׁלֹשׁ הַמְּלָכִים הָאֵלֶּה לְתֵת אוֹתָם בְּיַד־ מוֹאָב:</p>
<p>וַיַּעַן to speak up In biblical Hebrew, the word וַיַּעַן has the sense of speaking up. In modern Hebrew it means, "to answer."</p> <p>וַיַּעַן אֶת־יְהוָה מֵאוֹתוֹ a prophet of the Eternal, from whom we may inquire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is in direct opposition to three-fold sequence in II Kings 1 in which Ahab looks to consult prophets of Baal-Zebub, for which he provokes YHWH's wrath.</li> <li>• It was commonplace to try to consult the divine to gain knowledge of the future regarding the outcome of a war before entering into the war. There were three basic methods of divining: dreams, prophecy and urim and tumim. We see all three of these named in I Sam 28:6 when Saul tried to inquire of the divine:</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">And Saul inquired of the LORD, but the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by prophets.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וַיִּשְׁאָל שְׂאוּל בִּיהוָה וְלֹא עָנָהוּ יְהוָה גַּם בְּחִלְמוֹת גַּם בְּאוּרִים גַּם בְּנְבִיאִים:</p> <p>אֲשֶׁר־יִצַק מַיִם Who poured water We see from this comment that pouring water on the hands of a superior was a typical activity for an attendant or apprentice. (AB, p. 45)</p>	<p>But Jehoshaphat said, "Isn't there here a prophet of the Eternal from whom we may inquire of the Eternal?"</p> <p>One of the servants of the king of Israel spoke up, "Elisha is here, son of Shaphat, who poured water on the hands of Elijah."</p>	<p>3:11 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשָׁפָט הֲאִין פֹּה נְבִיא לַיהוָה וְנִדְרָשָׁה אֶת־יְהוָה מֵאוֹתוֹ וַיַּעַן אֶחָד מֵעַבְדֵי מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר פֹּה אֵלִישָׁע בֶּן־שָׁפָט אֲשֶׁר־יִצַק מַיִם עַל־יְדֵי אֱלִיָּהוּ:</p>

<p>וְאִתּוֹ with him we would have expected אִתּוֹ here. אִתּוֹ may be a part of a Northern dialect. There are two versions of אִת in Hebrew etymologically: אִית and אִת.</p>	<p>Jehoshaphat said, "The word of the Eternal is with him." So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.</p>	<p>3:12 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשָׁפָט יֵשׁ אִתּוֹ דְּבַר־ יְהוָה וַיֵּרְדּוּ אֵלָיו מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיהוֹשָׁפָט וּמֶלֶךְ עֲדוֹם:</p>
<p>מִה־לִּי What have you to do with me? Elisha asks this question to ascertain what it is that binds him to the king of Israel. Elisha is questioning why he has any responsibility to help the king of Israel. We see a similar usage of מִה־לִּי as being used to question a relationship between people in I Kings 17:18 and II Sam 16:10 and 19:23.</p> <p>לֹא מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵל But the king of Israel said, "don't!"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The subtext of the king's statement is likely something similar to: <i>Do not go on this way – you're bothering me about my late parents!</i></li> </ul>	<p>Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What have you to do with me? Go to your father's prophets or your mother's prophets." But the king of Israel said, "don't! For the Eternal has called these three kings together only to deliver them into the hand of Moab."</p>	<p>3:13 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלִישָׁע אֶל־מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִה־לִּי וְלֹדֶךָ אֶל־גִּבִּי'אֵי אֲבִיךָ וְאֶל־גִּבִּי'אֵי אִמֶּךָ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵל כִּי־ קָרָא יְהוָה לְשְׁלִישָׁת הַמְּלָכִים הָאֵלֶּה לְתֵת אוֹתָם בְּיַד־ מוֹאָב:</p>

<p>פְּנֵי יְהוֹשָׁפָט In the presence of Jehoshaphat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The word פְּנֵי is used as a marker of respect in the idiom is נָסָא פְּנֵי. Within the Tenakh, body idioms are used to describe emotions. The sense of פְּנֵי is that one lifts his/her eyes to another, or places a hand under the chin to look at the face of another whom he/she respects.</li> <li>• Part of the reason one would lift another's face and look at them would be in order to be close enough to observe the other's facial expression. In Daniel 7:10, a servant has to be close enough to observe the facial expressions of the master.</li> <li>• In Isaiah 3:3 the term is used to refer to someone respected.</li> </ul> <p>Captain of fifty, Magnate and counselor, Skilled artisan and expert enchanter;</p> <p>שְׂרָמְמָשִׁים וְנִשְׂוֵא פָנִים וְיוֹעֵץ וְחָכֵם תְּרָשִׁים וְנִבְוֹן לְחֵשׁ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Gen 32: 21, the word <i>p'nai</i> is used to describe a manner or way of behaving. Laban.</li> </ul> <p>And you shall add, 'And your servant Jacob himself is right behind us.'" For he reasoned, "If I propitiate him with presents in advance, and then face him, perhaps he will show me favor."</p> <p>וְאָמַרְתָּם גַּם הִנֵּה עֹבְדֶךָ יַעֲקֹב אַחֲרָיו כִּי־אָמַר אֲכַפְּרָה פָנָיו בַּמִּנְחָה הַלֵּכֶת לִפְנֵי וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן אֲרָאָה פָנָיו אוּלַי יֵשֵׂא פָנָי:</p>	<p>So Elisha said, "As the Eternal of the heavenly army lives, whom I serve, were it not that I respect Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, I wouldn't look at you or see you.</p>	<p>3:14 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלִישָׁע חַי־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֲשֶׁר עִמָּדָי לִפְנָיו כִּי לֹלֵךְ פָּנָי יְהוֹשָׁפָט מִלִּד־יְהוּדָה אֲנִי נִשְׂא אִם־אֶבִּיט אֵלָיָה וְאִם־ אֲרָאָה:</p>
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<p>מַנְגֵּן a musician</p> <p>The term מַנְגֵּן is used for a musician who plays a stringed instrument such as a harp.</p> <p>וְהַמַּנְגֵּן וַתְּהִי עָלָיו יְדִי־יְהוָה As the musician played, the hand of YHWH came upon him</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 1 Samuel 16:16 we read:</li> </ul> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Let our Eternal give the order <i>and</i> the courtiers in attendance on you will look for someone who is skilled at playing the lyre; whenever the evil spirit of God comes over you, he will play it and you will feel better.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">יֹאמְרֵה־נָא אֲדֹנָינוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ לִפְנֶיךָ יִבְקֹשׁוּ אִישׁ יָדָע מַנְגֵּן בַּכִּנּוֹר וְהָיָה בְּהִלּוֹת עָלֶיךָ רוּחַ־אֱלֹהִים רָעָה וְנִגַּן בְּיָדוֹ וְטוֹב לָךְ:</p> <p>We have similar usages of מַנְגֵּן in I Sam 18:10 and 19:9. Music was considered to be able to bring down a spirit of the divine at times within the Tanakh. It had the ability to change one's mood.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music making is also an activity done by prophets while prophesying as described in 1 Samuel 10:5:</li> </ul> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Afterward you will come to the hill of God where the Philistine garrison is; and it shall be as soon as you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with harp, tambourine, flute, and a lyre before them, and they will be prophesying.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sense we get in II Kings 3:15 is that YHWH is involved in music. Elisha needs some kind of stimulation, to be put in the mood, so to speak.</li> <li><i>Side Note:</i> In Ugaritic, we read that the God Baal had an attendant with a <i>tov kol</i> "a good voice."</li> </ul>	<p>Now then, get me a musician." As the musician played, the hand of the Eternal came upon him.</p>	<p>3:15 וְעַתָּה קְחוּרִלִי מַנְגֵּן וְהָיָה כִּנְנוֹ וְהַמַּנְגֵּן וַתְּהִי עָלָיו יְדִי־יְהוָה:</p>
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<p>וַיִּבְרָא גִבִּימִים pools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The word גב has the meaning of a place within where water gathers. It is an area with depressions.</li> <li>This word is repeated twice for emphasis of the miracle that is promised here: in the desert, YHWH will provide pools of water.</li> </ul>	<p>And he said, “Thus said the Eternal: This wadi shall be full of pools.”</p>	<p>3:16 וַיֹּאמֶר כֵּן אָמַר יְהוָה עֲשֵׂה הַנַּחֲלִ הַזֶּה גִבִּימִים וַיִּבְרָא:</p>
<p>וּמִקְנֵיכֶם from קנה “something one owns.”</p>	<p>For thus said the Eternal: You shall see no wind, you shall see no rain, and yet this wadi shall be filled with water; and you and your livestock and your cattle shall drink.</p>	<p>3:17 כִּי־כֵן אָמַר יְהוָה לֹא־תֵרָאֹ רוּחַ וְלֹא־תֵרָאֹ לְשֶׁם וְהַנַּחֲלִ הַזֶּהוּא יִמְלֵא מַיִם וּשְׁתִּיתֶם אֹתָם וּמִקְנֵיכֶם וּבְהֶמְתֶּכֶם:</p>
<p>וְנִקְל but this is a trifle. This word is related to the root קלל, “to slight” which is a euphemism for “curse.” (AB, p. 45)</p>	<p>And this is but a slight thing in the eyes of the Eternal, for He will give Moab into your hands.</p>	<p>3:18 וְנִקְל זֹאת בְּעֵינַי יְהוָה וְנָתַן אֶת־ מוֹאָב בְּיָדְכֶם:</p>

<p>every fortified city and every desirable city</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The repetition of כָּל־עִיר is likely a scribal error. (AB, p. 45) This dittography has lead to some confusion over what מְבֻחָר means. It is clearly not, “choice” city, but is likely a desirable city. A similar phrase is used in II kings 19:23:</li> </ul> <p>בִּגְד מְלֹאכִידֹתֶיךָ תִּרְפָּתוּ אֶדְנִי וְתֹאמַר (בְּרֹכָב) [בְּרֹכָב]  רִכְבִּי אֲנִי עָלִיתִי מְרוֹם הָרִים יִרְכָּתִי לְבָגְדוֹן וְאֶקְרָאת  קוֹמַת אֶרְצוֹ מְבֻחָר בְּרָשָׁיו וְאֶבְלֹאֶל מִלּוֹן קִצֵּה יַעַר  בְּרִמְלֹו:</p> <p>Through your envoys you have blasphemed my Lord. Because you thought, ‘Thanks to my vast chariotry, It is I who have climbed the highest mountains, to the remotest parts of the Lebanon, And have cut down its loftiest cedars, its choicest cypresses, And have reached its remotest lodge, Its densest forest.</p> <p>you shall fell every good tree  II Kings 3:19 presents a variance of the rules of warfare found in Deut 20:19-20:</p> <p><sup>19</sup>When in your war against a city you have to besiege it a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding the ax against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are trees of the field human to withdraw before you into the besieged city? <sup>20</sup>Only trees that you know do not yield food may be destroyed; you may cut them down for constructing siege works against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been reduced.</p> <p>When compared with Deut 20:19-20, the instructions in II Kings 3:19 seem particularly brutal, as the land itself is to be made inhabitable through stopping up wells and chopping down all trees.</p> <p>you shall ruin (literally: you shall inflict pain).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The root כאב usually refers to bodily pain. (AB, p. 46)</li> </ul>	<p>You shall strike every fortified city and every desirable city; you shall fell every good tree and stop up all wells of water; and every portion (of land) you shall ruin with stones.”</p>	<p>3:19  וְהִכִּיתֶם כָּל־עִיר  מְבֻצָּר וְכָל־עִיר  מְבֻחָר וְכָל־עֵץ  טוֹב תִּפְּלוּ וְכָל־  מַעְיֵי־מַיִם  תִּסְתָּמוּ וְכָל־  הַחֲלָקָה הַטּוֹבָה  תִּכָּאֲבוּ בָאֲבָנִים:</p>
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	<p>And in the morning, at the offering of the meal offering, behold! Water came from the path of Edom and the land was filled with water.</p>	<p>3:20 וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר בַּעֲלוֹת הַמִּנְחָה וְהַנֶּהֱמִים בָּאִים מִדֶּרֶךְ אֱדוֹם וַתִּמְלֵא הָאָרֶץ אֶת־הַמַּיִם:</p>
<p>וַיִּגְרְ תַּגְרָה warriors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literally: girders who girded.</li> <li>• The sense of this idiom is that these were the men who were quick to gather their skirts so that they could move quickly to war.</li> <li>• We see a similar usage of the root תגר used as shorthand for “going to war” in I Sam 17:39 in which David readies himself for a fight against Goliath by girding his garment.</li> <li>• In I Kings 20:11, the root is used once again as a metaphor for readying oneself for war.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">The king of Israel replied, “Tell him: Let not him who girds on his sword boast like him who ungirds it!”</p> <p>In this example, the metaphor of not ungirding one’s sword is similar to the modern saying “don’t count your chickens before they hatch.” In other words, one should not ungird his sword and assume that he will be victorious.</p>	<p>And all the Moabites had heard that the kings had come up to wage war on them; and they mustered the warriors from the youngest up, and they stood on the border.</p>	<p>3:21 וְכָל־מוֹאָב שָׁמְעוּ כִּי־עָלוּ הַמְּלָכִים לְהִלָּחֶם בָּם וַיֵּצְעֲקוּ מִכָּל תַּגְרַת תַּגְרָה וַיַּעֲמְדוּ עַל־הַגְּבוּל:</p>



<p>There is an ellipsis here in which we do not hear about the people sleeping or what happened at night.</p> <p>וַהֲשֵׁמֶשׁ וָרָחָה עַל־הַמַּיִם the sun was shining over the water  We could also read this as the sun “broke” [the darkness]:  The word וָרָחָה can mean “broke,” for example in II Chronicles 26:19:</p> <p>Uzziah, holding the censer and ready to burn incense, got angry; but as he got angry with the priests, leprosy broke out on his forehead in front of the priests in the House of the ETERNAL beside the incense altar.</p> <p>וַיִּזְעַף עֲזַרְיָהוּ וַיִּבְדֹּל מִקִּטְרֵת לְהַקְטִיר וַיִּבּוֹעַפּוּ עִם־הַכֹּהֲנִים  וַהֲצִרְעַת וָרָחָה בְּמַצְחוֹ לִפְנֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּבֵית יְהוָה מֵעַל  לְמִזְבֵּחַ הַקִּטְרֹת:</p> <p>וְהַמַּיִם אֶת־הַמַּיִם אֶת־הַמַּיִם כְּדָם the water red as blood  Commentators have reflected upon the reasons why the water may have looked red. It may have been on account of the sun’s reflection upon the water, or perhaps there was red sandstone under the water. (AB 46)</p> <p>מִמָּוֶה from a distance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Moabites misinterpreted what they saw because it was at a distance. We see similar occurrences in Judges 20:34, when Israelite warriors do not realize that danger is upon them because they saw the battle from a distance at first:</li> </ul> <p>Thus 10000 picked men of all Israel came to a point south of Gibeah, and the battle was furious. Before they realized that disaster was approaching,</p> <p>וַיָּבֹאוּ מִמָּוֶה לְגִבְעָה עֲשָׂרֹת אֲלָפִים אִישׁ כְּחֹר  מִכָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהַמִּלְחָמָה כְּבֹדָה וְהֵם לֹא יָדְעוּ כִּי־  בֹאֲתָה עֲלֵיהֶם הָרָעָה:</p>	<p>When they rose early in the morning, the sun was shining over the water, and the Moabites saw from a distance the water red as blood.</p>	<p>3:22  וַיִּשְׁכְּמוּ בִבְקָר  וַהֲשֵׁמֶשׁ וָרָחָה  עַל־הַמַּיִם וַיֵּרְאוּ  מִמָּוֶה אֶת־  הַמַּיִם אֶת־  כְּדָם:</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Genesis 21:16, a mother expresses wanting to be at a distance מִנְּגִיד intentionally in order to not be able to see the death of her child.</li> </ul> <p>וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתֵּשֶׁב לָהּ מִנְּגִיד הַרְחֵק כַּמֵּטָחוּי גִּשְׁת כִּי אָמְרָה אֶל-אֶרְצָא בְּמֹות הַיָּלִד וַתֵּשֶׁב מִנְּגִיד וַתֵּשֶׂא אֶת-קִלְהָ וַתִּבְדֶּה:</p> <p>and went and sat down at a distance, a bowshot away; for she thought, “Let me not look on as the child dies.” And sitting thus afar, she burst into tears.</p>		<p>3:22 continued</p>
<p>וַיִּכְרוּ surely they have annihilated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We would have expected the usage of the hofal binyan here instead of the <i>nifal</i> וַיִּכְרוּ.</li> <li>the root חרב typically appears as noun חֶרֶב paired with the verb לאכל to convey the sense of being “killed by the sword”. The usage of the root חרב in verb form, as we see in this verse, is unusual.</li> </ul> <p>וַיִּכְרוּ killed while the root <i>nh</i> often means “stricken” in the <i>hiphil</i> it means “struck” and often, “killed.”</p>	<p>They said. “This is blood. Surely they have annihilated themselves, so that each man and killed one another. So now, to the booty, Moab!”</p>	<p>3:23 וַיֹּאמְרוּ הֵם זֶה הַחֶרֶב וַיִּכְרוּ הַמְּלָכִים וַיָּכּוּ אִישׁ אֶת-רֵעֵהוּ וַעֲתָה לְשָׁלַל מוֹאָב:</p>

<p>וַיָּבֹאוּ They advanced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If we were to read the Ketiv וַיָּבֹאוּ in the context of this verse, it would say: “and they advanced... striking down.” However, we could also read the K’ri וַיִּכּוּ as constructing an infinitive absolute here, in which case, the verse would read: “they struck down, striking down.” (AB, p. 46)</li> <li>The aleph of the root בוא is missing from וַיָּבֹאוּ. we see this in other places, for example, I Sam 25:8:  <p>שאל את-נעריך ונגידו לך ומצאו הנערים חן בעיניך כיעל-נים טוב בנו תנה-נא את אשר תמצא ידך לעבדך ולבנה לדוד</p></li> </ul>	<p>They entered the Israelite camp, and the Israelites arose and struck down the Moabites, so they fled before them. They advanced in [the land], striking the Moabites.</p>	<p>3:24 וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל-מִתְנֶה יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְמוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּכּוּ אֶת-מוֹאָב וַיִּנָּסוּ מִפְּנֵיהֶם (וַיִּכּוּ- [וַיִּכּוּ] כָּה וַהֲבוּ אֶת- מוֹאָב:</p>
<p>The verbs in this verse and in the last verse are all in the imperfect tense to convey a graphic picture of the progress of the battle. (AB, p. 46)</p> <p>קיר חרשֶׁת Kir Hareshet Kir Hareshet and Kir-Moab usually taken to be the same place. It was a major city in southern Moab. There were steep approaches to Kir Hareshet. It is referred to in many places throughout the Tanakh, for example, Isa 15:1, 16:7, Jer 48:31, and 36. (AB, 46)</p> <p>הקלעים the slingers The root קלע can mean “to sling,” but also can mean “to carve.” We see examples of קלע used as “to sling,” in Judges 20:16 and Job 41:28. Zechariah in Zech 9:15 refers to “stone slingers,” which was a name he gave to evildoers who he understood to be unworthy of YHWH’s love.</p>	<p>And they destroyed the towns. and [upon] every good portion of land each person threw his stone until they filled it. And they stopped up every spring and felled every good tree. Only the walls of Kir-hareseth were left, and then the slingers surrounded it and attacked it.</p>	<p>3:25 וַהֲעִירֻם יְהוָה וְכָל-חֲלָקָה טוֹבָה יִשְׁלִיכוּ אִישׁ- אֲבָנוֹ וּמִלְאוּהָ וְכָל-מַעְיָן-מַיִם יִסְתַּמּוּ וְכָל-עֵץ- טוֹב יִפִּילוּ עַד-הַשָּׁאִיר אֲבָנֶיהָ בְּקִיר חֲרֻשֹׁת וַיִּסְבּוּ הַקְּלָעִים וַיַּכּוּהָ:</p>

<p>וַיִּבְקֶעַ to break away The root בקע only appears in the <i>binyan hifil</i> in one other place in the Tanakh, namely, Isa 7:6. However, in Isa 7:6, it takes on a different meaning. It has the sense of one creating an advantage for oneself. (AB, p. 46)</p> <p>וַיֵּרָא מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב the king of Moab Cogan and Tadmor note that it is remarkable that this verse is told from a Moabite point of view. (AB, p. 47) I believe this is to heighten the sense of victory for the biblical readers, as they hear about the King of Moab's his last attempt at breaking free and are privy to his sense of defeat.</p> <p>וַיִּבְקֶעַ אֶל-מֶלֶךְ עֲדוֹם break away through to the king of Edom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Edomite line was considered to be the weakest part of the the forces that protected the city. (AB, p. 47)</li> </ul>	<p>The king of Moab saw that the battle was fiercely against him so he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break away through to the king of Edom; but they could not.</p>	<p>3:26 וַיֵּרָא מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב כִּי-תִתֶּקֶן מִמֶּנִּי הַמִּלְחָמָה וַיִּקַּח אִתּוֹ שִׁבְעֵ- מֵאוֹת אִישׁ שִׁלְחָה לְקָרֵב לְהִבְקֶעַ אֶל-מֶלֶךְ עֲדוֹם וְלֹא יָקְלוּ:</p>
<p>וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ עֲלֶיהָ and offered him as a burnt offering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In ancient times, in many cultures when a king suffered a great defeat of men and property, it was understood to mean that his god was angry. In II Kings 3:27, we see this belief enacted. The king of Moab tried to appease his god, Chemosh, by sacrificing his son. (AB, p. 47)</li> </ul> <p>וַיָּהִי קֶצֶף-גָּדוֹל עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל A great wrath came upon Israel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This statement leaves us with a number of questions – who is angry with Israel? What had Israel done to bring on this wrath? It is likely that this verse is intentionally unclear in an attempt to not make mention of the Moabite god, Chamosh, who is likely the source of anger. (AB), 47-48, 51–52.</li> <li>We read about Chemosh in Judges 11:24.</li> <li>If it is, in fact, Chemosh who is angry with the Israelites, then the King of Moab's sacrifice of his son was effective. His sacrifice provoked Chemosh's anger upon the Israelites and caused them to retreat.</li> </ul>	<p>So he took his first-born son, who was to succeed him as king, and offered him up on the wall as a whole burnt offering. A great wrath came upon Israel, so they pulled up [away] from him and went back to the [their own] land.</p>	<p>3:27 וַיִּקַּח אֶת-בְּנוֹ הַבְּכוֹר אֲשֶׁר- יָמְלֹךְ תַּחְתָּיו וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ עֲלֶיהָ עַל- הַחֹמָה וַיָּהִי קֶצֶף-גָּדוֹל עַל- יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּסְעוּ מִעָלָיו וַיָּשׁוּבוּ לְאֶרֶץ:</p>

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