

Week 25: *June 23 (June 16–June 22)*

- One king after another, each doing “evil in the eyes of the Lord”,
- Ahab, along with his wife Jezebel, “did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him.”
- First reference to Elijah, the prophet, from “Tishbe in Gilead”
- The story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath and her son
- Jezebel had begun killing “the Lord’s prophets”
- Elijah demands a confrontation between him and the “four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah who eat at Jezebel’s table”.
- They meet at Mt. Carmel, where Elijah demands, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.”
- The famous scene of Elijah and the prophets of Baal: “Shout louder! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy or traveling...or asleep!”
- Elijah then slaughters all the prophets of Baal - why?
- Jezebel furious, promises to kill Elijah, who flees; travels 40 days and nights to the cave in Horeb, where he hears the “gentle whisper/still small voice” of God
- Elijah then finds Elisha, anoints him as his successor
- Ahab wants Naboth’s vineyard; Naboth won’t sell, Ahab sulks. Jezebel then plots to kill Naboth so Ahab can take the land
- As soon as Ahab takes the land, Elijah confronts Ahab with the word of the Lord: Ahab will die, as will Jezebel. But then Ahab seems to repent
- Micaiah, the true prophet, says that God has put a deceiving spirit into the mouths of the other prophets
- Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, is different: “he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord”
- Elijah described in familiar words: “He had a garment of hair and a leather belt around his waist”. Compare John the Baptizer
- Elijah comes to the end of his journey: “the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind.” Then “a chariot of fire and horses of fire” appeared and carried Elijah away, leaving Elisha to carry on
- Elisha taunted by boys for being a “baldy”; he sets bears to maul them
- Elisha and the Shunammite woman
- Peter travels to Caesarea, meets with Cornelius, says, “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.”

- The Holy Spirit is poured out on those Peter was speaking to: Gentiles, expanding beyond the Jewish community.
- “The apostles and believers through Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.”
- Peter: “If God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God’s way?”
- Barnabas brings Saul to Antioch, where followers of the Way are first called “Christians”
- James, the brother of John, put to death by Herod; Peter arrested
- Peter mentions another “James” - one of Jesus’ brothers
- Barnabas and Saul/Paul travel to spread the gospel; tell Jewish leaders, “Since you reject the Word of God, and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles”; quotes Isaiah 49:6 to support their words (Sept. 26/p. 902)
- “The disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit”
- The people of Lystra think of Barnabas and Paul as Greek gods; they then turn on them, stone them, leaving Paul for dead: “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God”
- Elders are appointed as the new churches spring up - the beginning of structure and organization
- Psalm 137: the very moving lament of the children of Israel in exile in Babylon: “By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept...”
- Psalm 139: “You discern my going out and my coming in; ...lead me in the way everlasting”
- Psalm 140:12 - “I know the Lord secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause of the needy”
- Proverbs 17:9 - “Whoever would foster love covers over an offense...”
- Proverbs 17:14 - “Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.”
- Proverbs 17:19 - “Whoever loves a quarrel loves sin; whoever builds a high gate invites destruction”