



**Michigan District, LCMS
All Pastors' Conference 2018**

**Rev. Dr. Walter A. Maier III
The Changeless One Changes Us**

1 Kings 17-19

Elijah was a servant of Yahweh who experienced change. He carried out his ministry during a time of change in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and he went through changes in his understanding of his own ministry and the effects of his ministry.

I. The change in the Northern Kingdom occurred when Ahab became king.

- A. The Northern Kingdom was already weak spiritually because of the corrupt religious innovations of Jeroboam I.
- B. The situation became worse with the reign of Ahab and his queen, Jezebel. They attempted to make Baal worship the dominant religion in the kingdom.
- C. Ahab and Jezebel could tolerate the Yahwism of Jeroboam I, but not true Yahwism.
- D. To deal with this religious crisis, this altered situation, Yahweh provided the prophet Elijah.
 - 1. He launched a direct assault on the religion of Baal.
 - 2. Elijah was Yahweh's spokesman.
 - 3. God presented the truth to Ahab.
- E. After three and a half years of drought the "showdown" on Mount Carmel occurred. What impact did this have on Ahab?

II. Elijah had to undergo changes in his understanding of his ministry and the effects of his ministry.

- A. Elijah thought that Ahab, after what transpired on Mount Carmel, had been converted to true Yahwism.
- B. Elijah ran before Ahab's chariot to Jezreel.
- C. Jezebel announced her intent to kill Elijah, and he became afraid and fled. He needed further refining, and had misunderstandings.
- D. He thought that his entire prophetic ministry had been a complete failure. Despondent, he wanted to die.
- E. Yahweh ministered to his minister.
 - 1. He sent an angel to Elijah.
 - 2. Elijah went to Mount Horeb for a meeting with God.

F. On Mount Horeb Elijah poured out his thoughts and feelings. We see that:

1. Elijah had started to focus too much on himself.
2. He had fallen into feeling sorry for himself, and into inaccurate thinking.

G. Yahweh granted Elijah a theophanic experience.

1. Yahweh was associated with a voice, a low whisper.
2. Elijah learned that Yahweh's usual way of operating was through his external word.
3. God worked a thorough change in Elijah.

Concluding Comments