

LAMPS AND LIGHTING

In ancient times artificial lights came from the fire itself, from blazing torches or from the small clay lamp shown here. Placed in a niche in the wall, a lamp provided a dim light in the house at night. Olive oil or animal fats were used as fuel and wicks were made from coarse fibers of the flax plant. In the Hebrew Bible, a burning lamp is frequently the symbol for a living person: when the flame was snuffed out, the life was also ended (Proverbs 13:9; 20:20).

Place saucer lamp here



The **saucer lamp** developed by the Canaanites as early as 1700 B.C. was used by the Israelites during the period of the Judges and the early kings. The pinched lip held the wick.

RELIGION

Worship of goddesses was common to all areas of the ancient Near East. They were known by many names: Asherah, Astarte, Anat, Queen of Heaven (I Kings 11:33; Jeremiah 7:18 and 44:17-19). The cult practices that grew up around the goddesses and God of ancient Israel were believed to ensure the fertility of the land and its people and were condemned by the Hebrew prophets. Many of these clay **figurines** with exaggerated female features, as in this replica, have been found in the excavation of Iron Age houses.

Place female figurine here