

LESSON 9: *Ahab: The Tragedy of Israel*

(Read: **1 Kgs 16:29-33; 1 Kgs 17-22**)

Key Passage: “Come, strengthen yourself, and consider well what you have to do...” (**1 Kgs 20:22**).

I) **Ahab Background Info**

A) Ahab was the Son of Omri. Ahab Reigned _____ years in Samira. (**1 Kgs 16:29**).
The days of Ahab in Samaria were days of growing wealth and spiritual apostasy.

1) How evil was king Ahab? (**1 Kgs 16:30**).

2) Who did Ahab take as his wife? (**1 Kgs 16:31**). What did the law of Moses say about this? (**Deu 7:1-6**).

3) Since it was a light thing for Ahab to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, how did he take his idolatrous practices to another level?

a) He went and served _____ and worshiped him (**1 Kgs 16:31**).

b) He erected an _____ for Baal in the _____ of Baal, which he built in Samaria. And he made an Asherah (**1 Kgs 16:32-33**).

c) He built an _____ (**1 Kgs 22:39**), the remains of which were discovered in the Harvard excavations at the site. Rooms and furniture were decorated with ivory inlay that in many cases featured Egyptian deities.

d) There was none who _____ himself to do what was evil in the sight of the LORD like Ahab (**1 Kgs 21:25**).

e) How far back did Ahab’s pursuit of idolatry go? (**1 Kgs 21:26; Gen 15:13-16; Deu 12:29-31**).

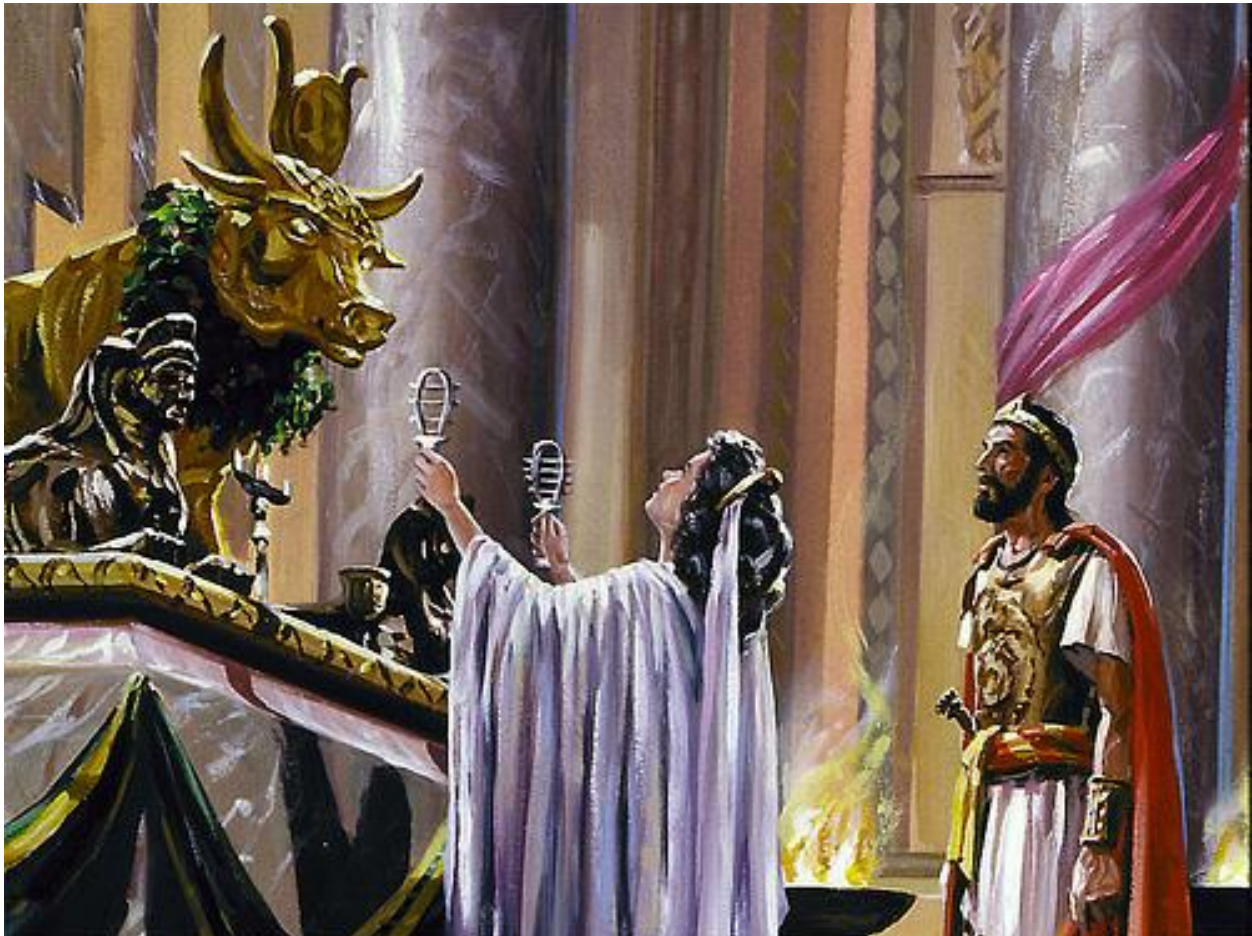
B) How did Jezebel play a role in Ahab's wickedness? (1 Kgs 21:25)

1) What did Ahab allow Jezebel to do? (1 Kgs 18:3-4; 13)

2) "Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman without _____." (Pro 11:22).

3) "An _____ wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like _____ in his bones." (Pro 12:4).

4) "The wisest of women builds her house, but _____ with her own hands _____." (Pro 14:1).



II) A Weak Leader With Sparks of Promise (1 Kgs 20:1-43).

A) Ahab's Wars

1) Who came to make war against Israel? What did he come for? (1 Kgs 20:1-3).

2) How did the King of Israel respond to this? (1 Kgs 20:4).

a) Should leaders give up so quickly?

b) As a leader facing troubles, can you think of some reasons why Ahab's response was unwise?

3) Only when he felt that his enemies went too far, did Ahab show some courage (1 Kgs 20:5-12).

a) How does this show weak leadership on his part?

b) It takes courage to be a leader of others. Every leader needs a solid source of courage. The leaders of God's people were supposed to look to Him as their main source of strength and courage. This wasn't just a covenantal responsibility, it was also a covenantal blessing. But if they forsook God, they would have no genuine reason for hope. (consider **Deu 7:24; Jgs 10:10-15**).

4) Interestingly, God provided help to King Ahab. According to the Lord Himself, why did He do this? (**1 Kgs 20:13**).

a) Why do you think it was important for Ahab to know this (consider **Isa 46:9**)

b) Why is it important for every leader/ person of authority to know this? (consider the following passages below).

Rom 13:1-5 _____

1 Cor 11:3 _____

Col 4:1 _____

1 Pet 5:1-5 _____

c) Which great leader learned this the hard way (**Dan 6:28-33**)? What did he conclude about Yahweh? (**Dan 6:37**).

5) After the defeat of Ben-Hadad, the prophet of God warned Ahab that Ben-hadad would return in the spring. What did God's prophet tell Ahab to do about this? (**1 Kgs 20:22**).

a) The position of leadership isn't without temptations. Leaders must always stand ready and prepared to face them. Even our Lord Jesus was confronted with temptations. While at His lowest point physically, He had prepared Himself spiritually (**Lk 4:1-12**). When the devil realized Jesus was too strong for his temptations, he decided to depart, until when? (**Lk 4:13**).

6) As the Syrians gathered for battle in the plains of Aphek with a massive army (**1 Kgs 20:26-27**), they believed the God of Israel to only be powerful in the hills. The prophet of God returned and informed Ahab that God would again give Israel a victory and after the battle Ahab would know what? (**1 Kgs 20:28-29**).

7) Despite everything God had done for Ahab, what foolish decision did Ahab make? (**1 Kgs 20:30-43**).

8) Another of Ahab's battles took place at Qarqar in the summer of 853 BC. A record of the event was preserved in an Assyrian stela, but not in the biblical narratives. This battle took place near the Orontes River in northern Syria, and was between the armies of Assyria, led by Shalmaneser III, and a coalition of armies led by Hadad-ezer (Ben-Hadad) of Damascus. As part of the coalition, Ahab led 2,000 chariots and 10,000 troops from Israel. The coalition brought upwards of 50–60,000 troops, 3,000 cavalry, and 4,000 chariots. The outcome of the battle was not very favorable for Shalmaneser; in his own account he claims only many enemy losses, not a decisive victory. Assyrian aggression was halted, at least temporarily. This perhaps emboldened Ahab.

III) Ahab's Further Decline & Humility (1 Kgs 21:1-29)

A) King Ahab & Naboth, the Jezreelite. The city of Jezreel dwelt in a fertile valley with the same name; it was about 25 miles north of Samaria, Israel's capital. Starting with Ahab, Jezreel was the location of the Israelite king's winter residence.

1) Why was Ahab's request for Naboth's vineyard unwise? (1 Kgs 21:1-3). (consider Lev 25:23-28; Num 36:7).

2) Hardly the behavior of a leader, let alone an adult—to what would you liken the response of Ahab (1 Kgs 21:4).

a) "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up _____ (1 Cor 13:11).

b) "Brothers, do not be _____ in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be _____." (1 Cor 14:20).

3) What was Jezebel's response to Ahab's behavior? (1 Kgs 21:5-7).

a) "Do you not _____ all Israel?"

b) *"This is not so much a question as an exclamation—a sarcastic taunt; 'A pretty king thou art! Canst thou not use thy power and take what thy heart is set upon?'" -Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible (Vol. 1, p. 228).*

4) Jezebel wrongly assumes that a king should use government power for personal gain. What was she willing to do? (1 Kgs 21:8-14).

a) “There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him: _____, a _____, and _____, a heart that _____, feet that make haste to run to _____, a _____ who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.” (Pro 6:16–19).

b) Being a Queen, what was Jezebels concept of the power of leadership?

c) According to Jezebel, what is the value of human life when compared to the personal ambition of a leader?

5) Upon hearing the news of Naboth’s demise, what did Ahab do? (1 Kgs 21:15-16).

a) What did this say about His conscience? (consider Eph 4:17-19).

b) Even though Ahab did not initiate the events that caused Naboth’s murder, can you list some reasons why he deserves to be considered guilty?



6) Ironically, how does Ahab respond when seeing Elijah, God's prophet? (**1 Kgs 21:20a**)

7) Why had Elijah "found" Ahab? (**1 Kgs 21:20b**)

8) What was God's judgment upon Ahab?

a) Ahab, himself (**1 Kgs 21:19**) _____

b) His house/ Family & Dynasty (**1Kgs 21:21-22, 24**) _____

(consider **2 Kgs 9:14-26; 10:1-17**).

c) His wife, Queen Jezebel (**1 Kgs 21:23**) _____

(consider **2 Kgs 9:30-37**)

9) Upon hearing God's condemnation and judgment, how did Ahab respond? (1 Kgs 21:27)

10) How do we know his humility was genuine? (1 Kgs 21:28-29)



IV) The Fall of Ahab (1 Kgs 22:1-40)

A) The peace that followed the battle of Aphek (1 Kgs 20:26–34) lasted three years. Even after such a crushing defeat, the king of Syria was able to hold on to the strategically important city of Ramoth-gilead in Transjordan, which was situated on a major trade route running from the Red Sea to Damascus.

1) Determined to retake possession of Ramoth-gilead, king Ahab secured the support of Judah's king, Jehoshaphat (1Kgs 22:1-4). When Jehoshaphat said that they should first inquire of Yahweh (1 Kgs 22:5), through whom did Ahab seek to inquire of God? (1 Kgs 22:6-7).

a) What did the false prophets tell Ahab? (1 Kgs 22:6, 10-12).

b) According to Ahab, why did he not seek the counsel of a true prophet of Yahweh? (1 Kgs 21:7-8).

c) After summoning God's prophet Micaiah, what was commanded of him? (1 Kgs 22:9, 13). What was Micaiah's response to this command? (1 Kgs 22:14)

d) Ironically, what did Micaiah tell Ahab to do? (1 Kgs 22:15)

2) Ahab was defiant to the end. Upon hearing of God's plan to destroy Ahab by going into battle, what did Ahab decide? (1 Kgs 22:16-29)

a) To attempt to avoid the Lord's judgment, what did Ahab do in the battle? (1 Kgs 22:30-33). Did it work?

b) Who did God use to bring judgment upon king Ahab? (1 Kgs 22:34-37).

3) Ahab was a weak and wicked king who lived in disgrace. How was his death a disgrace? (1 Kgs 22:38).
