



KING AHAB

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The name Ahab in Hebrew means 'father's brother'. Ahab, the son of King Omir, became the seventh king of the separated kingdom of Israel, infamous for being Israel's most wicked king. He would go on to reign for twenty-two years from 874-853 BC. (1 Kings 16:29 to 1 King 22)

During King Ahab's 22-year reign, his much more God-fearing counterpart and contemporary Judean kings in the southern kingdom were King Asa for the first three years, followed by King Jehoshaphat's reign for the remaining nineteen years, with whom he joined forces together to fight against the Syrians. (1 Kings 22:4)

Key Biblical insights into the life and reign of King Ahab:

- King Ahab is clearly stated on two occasions as being the most wicked king to have ever reigned over Israel, worse than any of the previous six wicked kings that had reigned before him. (1 Kings 16:30, 21:25-26)
- He married an evil pagan woman called Jezebel who was more wicked than himself, who subverted his worship and devotion away from the Lord God onto her false gods Baal and Asherah in Israel. (1 Kings 16:31-33)
- Ahab and Jezebel had three children together, two sons and one daughter. Their two sons Ahaziah, (1 Kings 22:51), followed by Jehoram (2 Kings 3:1) would go on to become two future kings of Israel, who would themselves commit evil in the sight of the Lord.
- Their daughter Athaliah (2 Kings 8:26), became the wife of Jehoram/Joram, the King of Judah (2 Kings 8:18) who was the son of king Jehoshaphat. She herself was a wicked queen. (2 Kings 11:1)
- Ahab had more than one wife (1 Kings 20:7), and fathered a staggering seventy additional sons. (2 Kings 10:1)
- The prophet Elijah contested Ahab's evil reign throughout. Through Elijah's work, God repeatedly displayed his power, graciously giving Ahab many opportunities to change his ways. (1 Kings 17:1-1, 18, 21:17-22)
- Ahab's 22-year reign involved three wars with neighbouring Syria. God graciously aided Ahab twice giving him victory. (1 Kings 20:20-21, 20:28-30). King Ahab in the third war, succumbed to a fatal injury from an arrow, whilst in battle.

- King Ahab's accomplishments are mentioned. (1 Kings 22:39)
- The key highlighted narrated events of King Ahab's reign. (1 Kings 16 – 1 Kings 22)
- The contest with Elijah between the Lord and Baal at Mount Carmel. (1 Kings 18)
- Twice defeated the Syrian Army, through God's help. (1 Kings 20:20-21, 20:28-30)
- Formed a disobedient and unholy alliance with the Syrian King Ben Hadad. (1 Kings 20:31-34)
- Ahab's and Jezebel capture Naboth's vineyard, through means of evil treachery. (1 Kings 21)
- Ahab's humbly repents before the Lord. (1 Kings 21:25-29)
- Ahab pursues to take Ramoth Gilead out of the hands of the Syrians. (1 Kings 22)
- Ahab's dies in battle with the Syrians. (1 Kings 22:29-38)

What made King Ahab to become so wicked?

1. He defied and disobeyed the commandments of God:

Examples of where Ahab defied and broke the commandments of God:

He married an evil Sidonian pagan wife called Jezebel: (1 Kings 16:31). The Law of Moses forbid marriages with people of other nations that worshiped false gods. (Deuteronomy 7:3-4)

Who was Queen Jezebel?

Daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, known for her devotion to the worship of Baal and defiance to the Lord and for her despicable evil actions throughout her reign. Jezebel 'stirred up' Ahab (1 Kings 21:25) to make sinful treacherous choices.

Like her husband it would not end well, as they would go on to face a violent death, with their blood being licked up by dogs, as part of incurring the judgement of God.

Jezebel's character and actions are referred to as false prophetess in the church at Thyatira, in the last book of the Bible (Revelation 3:19.23), emphasizing her traits of violence, evil deception, manipulation and immorality.



He broke the second commandment not to worship false Gods. (Exodus 20:3)

Ahab followed suit in the wicked lineage of his father and previous kings in the worship of false Gods. He even took it a step further by building a house for Baal, Canaanite deity God of the storm and fertility, (1 Kings 16:32) which in turn angered God. (1 Kings 16:33).

He ignored the warning of Joshua (Joshua 6:26) as Jericho was rebuilt through Hiel of Bethel, under Ahab's command. (1 Kings 16:34)

After God's victory, Ahab disobeyed the will of the Lord, by forming a covenant with the Syrian king (1 Kings 20:42)

2. He acquired Naboth's vineyard through the sin of covetousness. (1 Kings 21)

What started with covetous proceeded into treachery, deceit, and murder.

3. Ahab abused his reasonability as Israel's king:

Abused his authority by leading and subverting Israel away from the Lord God into idol worship of foreign pagan Gods. (1 Kings 16:32-33)

He did not stop Jezebel killing the prophets (1 Kings 18:13) and trying to kill Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-3) and likewise killing his prophets. (1 Kings 19:1-3)

Behaved in a childish dysfunctional manner by sulking when he did not get what he wanted, which played into the hands of his wife Jezebel. (1 Kings 21:4-6)

Allowed his wife Jezebel to usurp his authority to take Naboth's vineyard. (1 Kings 21:6-8)

Blamed others, when he was his own biggest enemy to himself. (1 Kings 18:17-18, 21:20)

4. Had hardened his heart to the power of God.

Ahab had seen God perform many miracles. God twice granted him victory over the Syrians. He saw at first hand drought through the ministry of the prophet Elijah, the Lord answer by fire to defeat the deity of Baal at Mount Carmel, which went onto end a three and half year drought. Yet despite God's miraculous interventions, Ahab did not fully turn his heart to the Lord God and see life in a new light.

King Ahab persistently refused the counsel of the servants of the Lord (Elijah, Obadiah, Michaiah) and would rather listen to what he wanted to hear from the advice of the ungodly. (1 Kings 22:6)

Well at least King Ahab did eventually humbly repent before the Lord. (1 Kings 21:27-29)

Upon hearing Elijah's rebuke and prophesy (1 Kings 17-24), Ahab in (verse 27) "tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly" (verse 27). In response to Ahab's repentance, in (verse 29) God mercifully postponed the destruction of Ahab's dynasty until after Ahab was dead.

What lessons can we learn from King Ahab negative characteristics?

Ahab shows the outcome of when we do not take God's warnings seriously! (Hebrews 12:25)

The people we closely associate with will greatly influence our lives. (1 Corinthians 15:33)

We can't afford to compromise and make allegiances which are in enmity with God. (James 4:4)

Our godly/ungodly choices today do impact others both present and future. (Galatians 6:7-8)

The riches of God's grace provide the opportunity of repentance, to the vilest offender. (Romans 2:4)

Man's wickedness cannot stop God implementing His sovereign masterplan. (Genesis 50:20)

King Ahab's link to the genealogy to Jesus Christ. After King Joram (Matthew 1:8) The three kings, Ahaziah (Ahab and Jezebel's grandson), Joash and Amaziah should be listed between Joram and Uzziah. Omitted in error or intentionally.