

# Bible Stories

## AHAB

1<sup>st</sup> Kings 16:29-33

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**Ahab:** Reigned for 22 years in Israel (874-853) = EVIL.

The events of his 22-year reign are broken down as follows:

- Ahab and Elijah – including the Mt. Carmel Showdown – we will cover Elijah in a separate sermon.
- Ahab and Ben-hadad
- Ahab and Naboth
- Ahab's Final Battle

### Ahab and Elijah

- **1 Kings 17:1** - Elijah the Tishbite said to Ahab, "As Yahweh lives, the God of Israel before whom I stand, there shall surely not be dew nor rain these years except by my command."

After Elijah delivered his message to Ahab, God instructed him to get out of town.....

3 ½ years later ..... Yahweh instructed Elijah to go back to Ahab.

**Ahab:** *Are you the one who has created all this trouble for Israel?*

**Elijah:** *It's not me, it's you, man. You and your family have ruined everything, so here's what we are going to do. We're going to go to the top of Mount Carmel. You are going to bring the people and all the prophets of Baal and Asherah with you and we're are going to end this debate.*

Yahweh = 1

Prophets of Baal and Asherah = 0

### Ahab and Ben-hadad

Ben-hadad, the king of Aram, laid siege to Samaria. He sent word to Ahab:

**Ben:** *I'm going to take all your gold and silver, wives and children.*

**Ahab:** *Oki-Doky.....*

**Ben:** *I've changed my mind. Not only am I going to take all your stuff but all your people's stuff too.*

**Ahab:** *You can have all my stuff, but I can't allow you to take my people's stuff.*

**Ben:** *Prepare to die!*

Things are not looking good for Ahab, but suddenly, in walks a "**certain prophet of God.**"

**Prophet:** *Per Yahweh – I'm going to deliver that huge army outside into your hand, and you will know that I Am the Lord.*

**Ahab:** *How exactly is that going to work?*

**Prophet:** *Here's what's going to happen: you're going to take your 7232 men and you are going to go out and attack Ben-hadad.*

Meanwhile, Ben-hadad was sitting in his tent getting good and drunk. Ahab's men went out to the camp of the Arameans and killed as many as they could while the rest fled – including Ben-hadad – "**Israel defeated Aram with a great blow.**"

**Prophet:** *Go think about what you need to do because next year Ben-hadad is coming back.*

When the next year rolled around, Israel found itself encamped against Aram. Ahab's army looked like a little flock of goats compared with Ben-hadad's army, which filled the land.

**Prophet:** *Per Yahweh, "Because Ben-hadad says that I am only a god of the mountains, but not a god of the valleys, I am going to give ALL this great multitude into your hands and you will know that I AM the Lord."*

And that's what happened. However, Ahab chose to spare Ben-hadad's life.

**Prophet:** *Because you have not done what I asked you to do – your life will be for his life and your people for his people. (Ahab went home angry and in a very bad mood).*

## **Ahab and Naboth**

Sometime later.... There was a man named Naboth. He owned the vineyard next to Ahab's palace. Ahab kept offering to purchase the vineyard, but Naboth kept turning him down. This caused Ahab to be angry and in a very bad mood. One day Jezebel found him in bed, pouting:

**Jezebel:** *My darling, why are you in such a very bad mood?*

**Ahab:** *That horrible man, Naboth! I want his vineyard and he won't give it to me!*

**Jezebel:** *Aren't you the king? Get up now - eat and be happy. I will give you Naboth's vineyard.*

Jezebel sent a letter to the elders of the town instructing them to find 2 useless men to testify against Naboth and then take him out and stone him to death. After the deed was done, Jezebel went Ahab:

**Jezebel:** *Good news! Naboth is dead ----- his vineyard is yours!*

Ahab, no longer angry or in a very bad mood, took possession of the vineyard. But horror!! Elijah was back in town!

**Ahab:** *My old enemy, you have found me!*

**Elijah:** *I have found you because you have sold yourself and done evil in the eyes of Yahweh. So, here's what Yahweh says, "I am going to bring disaster upon you and your descendants – not one will survive. Your house will be like that of Jeroboam and Baasha, because you have provoked me to anger and have caused Israel to sin. Jezebel, too, will die by the wall of Jezreel and the dogs will devour her."*

When Ahab heard these words, he tore his robe, put ashes on his head and fasted (signs of humility). So, Yahweh told Elijah that since Ahab had humbled himself the disaster would happen to his family after he had died.

## **Ahab's Final Battle**

Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, went to visit Ahab {they were in-laws}. Ahab asked Jehoshaphat to go to war with him against Ramoth-gilead.

**Jehoshaphat:** *Hey, we're family, you can count on me. Do one thing first, seek Yahweh's guidance.*

Ahab gathered 400 prophets. **"Should we go against Ramoth-gilead or stay home?"** he asked.

**The prophets:** *Go. You will be victorious.*

**Jehoshaphat:** *Isn't there a prophet of Yahweh available to ask?*

**Ahab:** *There is a guy, Micaiah, but I hate him. He never tells me what I want to hear.*

**Jehoshaphat:** *Humor me.*

A messenger went to Micaiah's house, **"Listen the king wants to see you. All the prophets are UNIFORMLY in favor of war with Ramoth-gilead. No pressure, but make sure you agree with them."**

**Micaiah:** *I will only speak the words Yahweh gives me.*

**Ahab:** *Micaiah, should I go to war against Ramoth-Gilead?*

**Micaiah:** *Attack and be victorious!*

**Ahab:** *How many times do I have to remind you to only tell me the truth!*

**Micaiah:** *Okay.... I saw all Israel scattered like sheep without a shepherd.*

**Ahab:** *See, I told you he never prophesies good concerning me! Take this guy away and put him in prison. Give him nothing but bread and water until I return safely from the battle.*

**Micaiah:** *If you return safely, Yahweh has not spoken through me.*

Ahab and Jehoshaphat went to war against Ramoth-gilead.

Hoping to avoid getting killed, Ahab disguised himself but told Jehoshaphat to wear his kingly robes.... NICE!

During the battle, an enemy soldier shot a random arrow and it hit Ahab through a space in his armor.... Jehoshaphat cried to Yahweh and the battle shifted away from him – Jehoshaphat will return safely to Judah. Meanwhile.....

- **1 Kings 22:35-36** - All day long the battle raged, and Ahab was propped up in his chariot facing the Arameans. The blood from his wound ran onto the floor of the chariot, and that evening he died. As the sun was setting, a cry spread through the army: "Every man to his town; everyone to his land!" So, the king died and was brought to Samaria, and they buried him there.

### **What do we do with these stories?**

Ahab was one of the worst Kings of Israel **EVER** and yet, Yahweh still tried to get his heart and turn him around before it was too late.

He tried when He declared that Israel would have no rain.

He tried on Mount Carmel.

He tried when Ban-hadad surrounded Samaria – even though Ahab did not request this intervention.

Yahweh revealed himself to be a powerful and faithful God, yet despite all that Yahweh did, Ahab wanted nothing to do with Him.

In the end – Ahab chose to walk off the cliff Yahweh had so desperately tried to keep him away from.