

The CHRONICLES of the KINGS

Ahab and His No Good, Very Bad, Day

1 Kings 21:25-26

May 02, 2026

Ahab was the last of 8 kings who ruled in Israel during Asa's 41-year rule in Judah.

Today, we will confine ourselves to 1st Kings 18, 20-22 as they are exclusively dedicated to the events of his reign.

We begin with the death of Ahab's father, Omri, "who did more evil than all those before him."

In the 38th year of king Asa of Judah, Ahab became king over Israel – he reigned for 22 years. He followed in his father's footsteps by continuing the traditions of Jeroboam and marrying Jezebel – the daughter of Ethbaal, king of Sidonia.

Additionally, he served and worshipped Baal and built a temple to it in Samaria. A note about Baal – The word simply means "lord" and is a generic term for the gods of Canaan, the main god being Hadad, the god of rain and storms. Hadad and the other "baals" were responsible for abundant crops and herds, so in order to encourage them to be fertile, worshipers practiced fertility rights, which included male and female temple prostitution. **And he made an Asherah pole.**

He did more to provoke the anger of Yahweh than did all the kings of Israel before him.

The Bible records 4 major events that occurred during Ahab's reign:

- The Mount Carmel Experience
- The Ben-hadad Experience
- The Naboth Experience
- The Final Battle and death

Mount Carmel – 1 Kings 18:

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, God instructed him to get out of town..... 3 ½ years later Yahweh told Elijah it was time to confront Ahab.

The lack of rain was felt especially hard in Samaria, so hoping to spare his animals, Ahab instructed Obadiah, his steward, to take a water and grass survey of the land.

Elijah met Obadiah on the road and at first Obadiah was thrilled to see him, but then Elijah asked to see the king.

Obadiah was certain this request would mean death for him because (1) he had been hiding some of the prophets of God and (2) he was sure the Spirit of God would carry Elijah off again leaving him holding the bag.

Elijah promised to stick around, so Obadiah reported to Ahab and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

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

Elijah: It's not me it's you. You and your family are the problem! You are the ones who have abandoned God and followed Baal, so let's settle this once and for all. Summon the people of Israel to the top of Mount Carmel and bring the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah with you.

So, Ahab, Elijah, the people and 850 prophets assembled on Mount Carmel.

This will become one of the greatest Spiritual Showdowns in history and will inform our understanding of the Battle of Armageddon – a Hebrew/Greek mix meaning “Mountain of Megiddo” in Revelation (Revelation 16:12-16).

Elijah stood before the people and asked a question, “How long are you going to be stuck on the fence – wavering between 2 opinions? If Yahweh is God, follow him, but if Baal is god than follow him.”

Elijah got right to the heart of the matter – the peoples half-hearted, double-minded, can’t make up my mind, attitude toward God. They had had 1 foot in and 1 foot out for so long that they couldn’t even respond – they said nothing, so Elijah continued by outlining the rules of the contest, “There is 1 of me and 450 prophets of Baal. We’ll get 2 bulls and Baal’s guys can go first. They can cut up the bull. They can put wood on the altar. They can place the bull on the wood. They can call on the name of their god. The one thing they are not allowed to do is strike a match. I will do the same, only I will call on the name of Yahweh. Whichever God answers with fire from heaven – HE is God!”

Now the people responded with enthusiasm. Baal was the storm god. If any god was going to rain fire from heaven it would be him, so the prophets of Baal got to work.

When everything was ready, they began to dance around the altar calling on Baal - but there was no answer.

At noon, Elijah began to taunt them: “Hey – nothing’s happening! Shout louder! Maybe your god is deep in thought or maybe he is on vacation or maybe he has gone down to the grocery store or maybe he is taking a nap. Whatever he is doing – he is NOT listening to YOU!”

The prophets of Baal went wild. They began to cut themselves until their blood flowed onto the ground – but they got no response – crickets.

Finally, it came time for the evening sacrifice – Elijah rebuilt the altar of God, then he did something strange. He dug a trench 3 feet wide and 3 feet deep all around the altar. He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid them on the wood, then he did another strange thing. He told a couple of guys to pour 4 pitchers of water on the altar. He said, “Great! Do it again!” 3 times they poured water over the altar until the sacrifice was soaked and the wood was soaked and the water filled the trench. Then he knelt and prayed:

“O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.”

Fire fell from heaven and consumed the sacrifice and consumed the wood and consumed the stones of the altar and consumed every drop of water in the trench!

The people were terrified and fell on their faces, “Yahweh – he is God! Yahweh – he is God!”

Elijah ordered all the prophets of Baal be taken to the Kishon Valley and killed, told Ahab to prepare for rain, then climbed back up Mount Carmel and laid on the ground. He told his servant to go look toward the sea, but the servant didn’t see anything. Elijah told him to do this 7 times. When the servant came back the 7th time, he reported, “A cloud as small as a man’s hand is rising from the sea.”

Elijah told his servant that he should tell Ahab to head on home before the rain stopped him.

As the rain fell, Yahweh’s power came upon Elijah. He tucked his cloak into his belt and ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel.

Ahab was having a no good, very bad day, so when he got home, he told Jezebel all about it – she popped a blood vessel, “May my gods deal with me even more severely if by this time tomorrow Elijah isn’t dead, Dead, DEAD!”

Stay tuned for more on that in the Life and Times of Elijah.....

Ben-Hadad, king of Aram – 1 Kings 20:

Ben-Hadad, along with 32 other kings mustered their armies and laid siege to Samaria. He sent word to Ahab demanding all his silver, gold, wives and children.

Ahab responded, "Ok-doky," but then Ben changed his mind and said he was going to take everything of value.

Ahab was willing to comply with the 1st demand, but not the 2nd, so Ben said, "Prepare to die!"

Ahab came back with a little trash talk of his own, "You might put your armor on, but you won't be taking it off."

Ahab was actually feeling quite confident, but then Ben ordered his army to prepare to attack, and now Ahab realized he was in for another no good, very bad day. He did not seek God, nevertheless a "certain prophet of God" was sent to him.

He told Ahab that Yahweh was going to deliver the invading army to Ahab, "and you will know that I Am Yahweh."

Ahab was a little unsure, but summoned his 232 young officers as well as Israel's army – 7,000 men total.

While Ben and his commanders got drunk in their tents, Ahab's little army struck down some of Ben's men. The rest of the Arameans fled and Ben escaped on horseback.

The Prophet returned and told Ahab that Ben would return the following year, so he best prepare.

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's army. A no good, very bad, day was sure to follow.

The Prophet came into camp: "Per Yahweh, 'Ben-Hadad thinks that I am only a god of the mountains, but not the valleys, so I am going to give his entire army into your hands and you will know that I AM Yahweh.'"

Ben was defeated, but instead of killing him, Ahab chose to make a treaty with him then sent him home (1 Kings 20:29-34).

The prophet asked a man to beat him up then disguised himself and when Ahab wandered by, he said, "I was in the thick of the battle when someone gave me a captive and told me to guard him. If he went missing, I'd pay with my life or with a talent of silver. The man escaped while I was distracted with other things."

Ahab responded, "well, you should die."

The prophet removed his disguise, "This is what Yahweh says: 'You have set free a man I had determined should die. Therefore, it is your life for his life, your people for his people.'"

Once again, Ahab returned home, having had a no good, very bad day.

Naboth – 1 Kings 21:

Sometime later.... Naboth owned a vineyard not far from Ahab's 2nd palace at Jezreel. Ahab wanted that vineyard bad, so he kept offering to purchase it, but Naboth kept turning him down because of the directive that ownership of land was never to move between tribes. Inheritance was to stay within the clans (Number 36:7). This caused Ahab to have a no good, very bad, day.

Jezebel found him in bed, pouting, "My darling, why are you having such a no good, very bad day?"

Ahab told her his problem and she assured him that she would resolve the situation.

After Naboth had been stoned over some false accusations, Jezebel went Ahab, "Good news! Naboth is dead and his vineyard is yours!"

Ahab, now having a very good day, took possession of the vineyard. But horror!! Yahweh was talking to Elijah! *"Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is currently at Naboth's vineyard. Say to him, 'This is what Yahweh says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property? In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood – yes, yours!'"*

When Elijah showed up at Jezreel, Ahab's heart sank – a no good, very bad, day after all!

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

Elijah: *"Yep, and Yahweh has some things to say. 'Because you sold yourself to do evil in My eyes, I am going to bring disaster on you. Every male from your house – slave or free – will die, just like what happened to Jeroboam and Baasha, because you have provoked me to anger and have caused Israel to sin.' Also, concerning Jezebel: 'Dogs will devour her by the wall of Jezreel. Dogs will eat those belonging to Ahab who die in the city, and the birds of the air will feed on those who die in the country.'"*

When Ahab heard these words, he was devastated and demonstrated humility and repentance. Yahweh told Elijah that full judgment would be delayed until after Ahab had died.

The Final Battle – 1 Kings 22:

For 3 years there was no war between Israel and Aram.

Jehoshaphat and Ahab were in-laws, so when Jehoshaphat went for a visit, Ahab asked him to go to war with him against Aram to reclaim Ramoth-Gilead.

Jehoshaphat seemed cautiously willing, but wanted Yahweh's input first, so Ahab gathered 400 prophets and asked their advice, "Should we go to war?"

Their response was quick and enthusiastic, "Great idea king. You will be victorious."

Jehoshaphat appears to have been uncomfortable with these prophets speaking for Yahweh, so wanted a 2nd opinion from an actual prophet of Yahweh.

Ahab said there was a guy, Micaiah, but that he hated Micaiah because he never told him what he wanted to hear.

Jehoshaphat said, "Humor me," so a messenger went to fetch Micaiah.

Micaiah was encouraged to agree with the other prophets, but he said he would only speak the words Yahweh gave him.

When Micaiah arrived, Ahab asked him, "Should I go to war against Ramoth-Gilead?"

Micaiah responded, "Great idea, king. Attack and be victorious!" but Ahab knew better, so responded, "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: *"I knew it! See, I told you he never has anything good to say concerning me!"*

But Micaiah was not finished. The judgment against Ahab was now a certainty because he preferred lies to the truth. God had allowed one of Satan's minions to put the lie, "you will be victorious," into the mouths of the prophets and that lie would succeed. Ahab would choose war because that's what Ahab wanted to hear. Ahab had crossed the line and God would use Ahab's own desires to execute judgment (see Romans 1:20-32; 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 and James 1:13-15).

The proof? Instead of repenting – as he had done previously, Ahab ordered Micaiah thrown 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 an arrow and it hit Ahab through a space in his armor – another no good, very bad, day! Ahab continued to fight throughout the day until his blood covered the floor of his chariot. That evening Ahab died and his men brought his body to Samaria and he was buried there.

After burying Ahab, they washed his chariot at the pool where the prostitutes bathed and dogs licked up his blood, just as Yahweh had declared.

The other events of Ahab's reign are written in the annals of the kings of Israel.

Ahaziah, Ahab's son, succeeded him as king.

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.

He tried when He declared judgments on Ahab and his family - and for a moment Ahab repented.

Yet, despite every chance given – every mercy extended, Ahab ultimately said, "No!"

Finally, there came a point when Yahweh let Ahab go.

Until Next Time.....