

King David and King Ahab

Commentary for June 1, 2017 — **Contrasts of Two Kings**

A review of the reigns and lives of King David and King Ahab make an interesting contrast of opposites. King David ruled a united Kingdom of all 12 tribes of Israel. After the reign of David's son Solomon, that kingdom broke in two. One hundred fifty years later, King Ahab reigned over 10 of those tribes in the north. In the south all the kings of Judah were descended from David, while no king of Israel was descended from David.

This month's article, "Israel and Judah: 24. Jehoshaphat and Ahab's Death" tells of complex events and plots leading to Ahab's death, plots involving supernatural intrigue by YHWH as well as human political intrigue. Read the introduction in the "[June 2017 Newsletter](#)."¹

There were no truly "good" kings in northern Israel. The first ruler, Jeroboam, was given his kingdom from God, yet he did great evil:

"Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon [Syria], and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father."

• **1 Kings 11:33**

All other kings of Israel followed his example, and most did worse. They corrupted the Israelite people, and eventually the kings and people south in Judah were likewise seduced.

Now for a short comparison of David and Ahab, two kings who were very different.

| David | Ahab |
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| <p>See "Israel and Judah, 7. Conspiracy and War"</p> <p>David was king of all 12 tribes of Israel. His kingdom was united, although there were civil wars, foreign wars, and threats to the kingdom. David prevailed in every war.</p> <p>David founded a dynasty that received God's blessings in spite of his sins. As ruler, David felt guilt that the people suffered for his sins against God and His laws.</p> <p>David faced a coalition of kings and armies <u>led by Assyria</u> who desired to destroy the</p> | <p>"Israel and Judah: 24. Jehoshaphat & Ahab's Death"</p> <p>Ahab was ruler of the Kingdom of Israel. He warred with Judah, with Syria, and with Assyria. God punished Ahab, but also gave him many victories.</p> <p>Ahab's accumulated evil actions against God led to the end of the dynasty founded by his father Omri. He cared little that the people suffered for his sins against God and His laws.</p> <p>Ahab fought <u>with</u> a coalition of kings against Assyria. The coalition was led by kings in</p> |

¹ Jehoshaphat was a direct descendant of David and ruled Judah. Ahab, Jehoshaphat's contemporary, was the son of Omri who usurped the throne and founded the third dynasty of Israel.

united Kingdom of Israel (Psalm 83:4).² The coalition included kings of Syria ("Ammon" in Psalm 83) was defeated and many of the kings of Syria submitted to David. Assyria was diminished for long decades.

David sinned against God greatly and repented several times.

David's communications with God were direct as well as through prophets. He experienced great forgiveness, mercy, and blessing. He listened and understood his sins. God showed His love for His people through David.

David honored and loved YHWH. He was a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22).

David honored and heeded God's prophets. He acknowledged that God spoke through His prophets. As far as we read, false prophets were not a problem at this time.

David established worship of YHWH, brought the ark to Jerusalem, organized the priesthood, and sought to build YHWH's Temple. David's son built the Temple (1 Kings 8:20).

David's successors were appalled by human sacrifice, as the Canaanites practiced when Israel entered Palestine (Psalm 106:34-40).

David provoked God to anger by his murder of one man, Uriah the Hittite (1 Kings 15:5).

David died peacefully in his bed. His tomb still contains his body.³

Syrian territory, especially the king of Damascus. The battle, mentioned only in history, temporarily limited Assyrian expansion. That empire soon expanded in power and influence to be a superpower in coming decades.

Ahab was given several chances to repent, but never did so, nor did he seem to care.

God communicated through prophets but Ahab ignored their messages. He was punished, yet repeatedly received undeserved blessings from God, even military victories. God showed love to His people in spite of Ahab.

Ahab dishonored and hated YHWH (2 Chronicles 19:2). He did everything he could to lead people away from YHWH.

Ahab hated and killed many of God's prophets. They told the truth about the Canaanite calf and Baal worship. Yet God proved His faithfulness to His people Israel many times.

Ahab fostered worship of false gods, organized priesthoods of both the golden calf cult and Baal. He built or upgraded several temples where evil rites with lying spirits took place.

Human sacrifice was practiced before the Canaanites were killed or driven out by Israel (2 Kings 16:3; Psalm 106:38).

Ahab provoked God to anger by his murder of many people (1 Kings 20:42).

Ahab died bravely in battle. He is buried in the capital city of Samaria (1 Kings 22:34-40).

Enjoy this month's article. A great deal of interesting material and human interaction takes place, as well as a glimpse to the heavenly throne of God, a sight we will view with our own enhanced eyes after our resurrection. Think on that a while.

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² "[Israel and Judah, 7. Conspiracy and War](#)" tells the story of David's great victory over this coalition which sought to **"suppress them as a nation, That the name of Israel not be remembered any more."**

³ See "[The Location and Future Discovery of King David's Tomb.](#)"