

Episode: Kings and Prophets Series No. 11

Narrator: King Ahab and Elijah

Primary Scriptures: 1 Kings 15 – 2 Kings 1

Story Summary: The Northern Kingdom and life of Elijah

Location: Northern Kingdom

Time: 910-850 BC

Suggested Memory Scriptures: 1 Kings 15:29-30; 17:1; 18:27; 19:12-13, 19:18; 2 Kings 1:1

King Ahab was the seventh king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. The first six were Jeroboam 1, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri. Ahab was the son of Omri, and the husband of Jezebel.

The first king, Jeroboam 1 led his kingdom deep into idolatry. As prophesied, his entire family was destroyed.

Jeroboam's son, Nadab, was the second king. He ruled only two years, and followed in his father's footsteps by committing the same sins.

Baasha came from a different tribe and family, rebelled against Nadab and killed him. He also destroyed all of the descendants of Jeroboam and Nadab. Baasha reigned for 24 years, and he continued in the same sins of idolatry.

Elah was the son of Baasha, and he reigned for two years. One of his trusted officials, Zimri, got him drunk and assassinated him.

Zimri took over the kingdom. He reigned over the Northern Kingdom for about a week before the commander of the army, Omri, assassinated him.

Omri immediately eliminated his enemies and took firm control over the Northern Kingdom for twelve years. Half of his reign was out of Tirzah, and second in his city of Samaria. Omri was more evil than the kings before him, and continued leading the people of the Northern Kingdom to worship worthless idols.

Ahab, a son of Omri, took the kingship of the Northern Kingdom for twenty-two years. He took evil to a new level. He not only worshiped the idols of the previous kings, but married the foreigner Jezebel, and began worshipping her god, Baal, and set up an Asherah pole. He aroused the anger of God more than the kings before him.¹

The actions of Ahab and Jezebel set up the well-known contest with Elijah the prophet. Elijah is the subject of many of the well-known stories of the Old Testament. Yet, as powerful as Elijah was, his warnings did not deter the kings of the Northern Kingdom from continuing in their idol worship. The demise of the Northern Kingdom was accelerated by the rebellion of the vassal countries that David had conquered.

¹ 1 Kings 16:32

Discussion Questions:

1. The book of 1 Kings includes accounts of the kings of the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah). Do you find it hard to keep track of what is going on with which country? Since the Northern Kingdom will be destroyed and go out of existence, why did the writers include their kings in the narrative?
2. From a spiritual standpoint, did the Northern Kingdom have any good kings? What would be your basis on making that evaluation?
3. According to 1 Kings 17:1, Elijah prophesied to King Ahab that it would not rain for a few years. Do you think he also told him this would happen because of his evil actions? How much courage would have taken for Elijah to tell a king this dire prophecy?
4. 1 Kings 17 describes God intervening in very intimate ways in the lives of people. Do you perceive that God still does this today? If so, do you perceive he does it in your life, or just in lives of others?

2. They were all described as being evil because they led their country in worshiping false gods and idols. Most of their descendants were killed because of their sins.

Application Questions:

1. 1 Kings 15:29-30 says Jeroboam's whole family was destroyed because of the sins Jeroboam committed and according the prophecy given by the Lord through Abijah. Do you often consider the consequences your actions might have on your family? Do you think your actions are known by the Lord ahead of time?
2. 1 Kings 16:34 says that Hiel rebuilt Jericho, and this action cost the lives of his sons according to the prophecy given by Joshua. Have you ever let your earthly ambitions harm your family members? If you are currently doing that, are you willing to stop?
3. 1 Kings 18:13 says that Obadiah saved the lives of 100 prophets of God, at great danger to himself. 1 Kings 19:18 says God reserved 7,000 people to worship him. Do you ever feel sorry for yourself because it seems there are not very many true God-believers left? Do you think you really know how many there are? What are you willing to do to make God-believers and preserve the ones who already exist?

Application Questions for Teens:

1. All of the family members of Jeroboam and Baasha were wiped out because of their sins. How have you seen the behaviors of your parents or the parents of your friends have a good or bad long-term effect on their families?
2. 1 Kings 16:13 says that Baasha and Elah aroused the anger of the Lord because they worshiped worthless idols. Do you have any worthless idols in your life that you are committed to? (note: an idol might be video games, clothes, popularity or anything else that you are devoted to)