

Will the Real Ahab Please Stand Up?

We talk a lot about **Jezebel**, but this wicked principality relies on Ahabs to maximize its authority and propagate its immorality and idolatry.

King **Ahab** isn't who many spiritual warriors have made him out to be. There's no lack of checklists online that offer the characteristics of Ahab. But many of them base their revelation off experience rather than Scripture. Practical experience is helpful, but we should base our understanding of how spirits named for biblical personalities flow primarily based on Scripture. Everything else is anecdotal and while it can sometimes be helpful it's not always accurate.

Let's set the stage: King Ahab seemed hell-bent on provoking God from the moment he took the throne. His first recorded move was to marry Sidonian King Ethbaal's daughter **Jezebel** and serve her gods (1 Kings 16:31). Ahab did more to provoke God to anger than any other king before him (1 Kings 16:33). He not only broke the second commandment by worshipping Baal, he also broke the third commandment by building wooden images, a temple and an altar for Baal in Samaria (1 Kings 16:32)—all to please Jezebel.

Like the puppeteer she was, **Jezebel** manipulated Ahab through his lusts and emotions. Ahab wore the king's signet ring and sat on the throne, but **Jezebel** was pulling his strings. So how do you recognize an Ahab spirit—and steer clear of false accusations that damage relationships? Know this enemy from Scripture. Here's what we know:

1. Ahab Empowers Jezebel

Ahab stood by and watched while **Jezebel** massacred the **prophets** of the Lord (1 Kings 18:4). It wasn't as if Ahab was an Old

Testament New Ager who worshipped this, that and the other god. Ahab made his choice of gods clear when he did nothing to protect Jehovah's true prophets, or come against **Jezebel** for massacring them. Jezebel was a persecutor of God's followers. She wasn't content with Jehovah as a god among many gods. She wanted to murder anyone who pledged allegiance to God and God alone. And she used her position in Ahab's kingdom to execute her will as he worshipped her gods. She manipulated his authority to carry out her agenda. Ahab empowers Jezebel by giving her the authority to flow freely.

2. Ahab Financially Supports Jezebel

Ahab was sold out to Jezebel and her will. He seemed loyal to Jezebel and Jezebel alone. When Elijah defeated the 850 false prophets at the Mount Carmel showdown, Ahab ran back and told Jezebel. He also footed the bill to keep Jezebel's prophets living in luxury. Jezebel's prophets were on the state payroll and lived the high life—all in exchange for telling Jezebel what she wanted to hear. **Jezebel** employed 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah, according to *The Dakes*. Even if feeding them only cost \$15 a day, which is a low estimate, keeping these false prophets on the payroll would cost the Kingdom of Israel \$12,750 a day. That's \$89,250 a week, \$357,000 a month, and nearly \$4.3 million a year. Ahab financially supports Jezebel's murderous agenda.

3. Ahab Uses Jezebel to Do His Dirty Work

Of course, Ahab realized certain benefits by allowing **Jezebel** to usurp his kingship. Indeed, Jezebel gave him what he wanted to placate his lusts, including setting up innocent Naboth and having him murdered so a depressed Ahab could stake claim to his vineyard (1 Kings 21). Ultimately, serving Jezebel and her gods instead of the God of Israel cost Ahab his life and the lives of his sons. Ahab uses Jezebel to do his dirty work.

4. Ahab Is Not a Lover of the Truth

Ahab was a lover of Jezebel, a lover of himself, a lover of power—he did not receive the love of the truth (2 Thess.

2:10). Not only is Ahab not a lover of the truth, he makes an enemy out of anyone who tells him the truth or who stands for God. After God sent a famine to the land of Samaria, Ahab called Elijah a “troubler of Israel” (1 Kings 18:7). Elijah set the record straight, telling **Ahab** he was the one who was troubling Israel “in that you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and followed the Baals” (1 Kings 18:18). After Ahab stole Naboth’s vineyard, the Lord sent Elijah to deliver a message to him. “So Ahab said to Elijah, ‘Have you found me, O my enemy?’” (1 Kings 21:20). And let’s not forget Micaiah. He wouldn’t prophesy what Ahab wanted to hear and it landed him in prison (1 Kings 22).

5. Ahab is Covetous, Idolatrous and Rebellious

Earlier, we discussed how Ahab broke the second and third commandments. But he also broke the tenth commandment. He coveted what belonged to his neighbor—he coveted Naboth’s vineyard and used **Jezebel** to get it for him. We know that Ahab was rebellious against the Word of God because he consistently broke the law. And, of course, idolatry was the sin that opened the door.

6. Ahab Is Emotionally Unstable

Ahab was an emotional mess. When he didn’t get his way, he wore his emotions on his sleeve. Ahab was sullen and angry, for example, when Naboth wouldn’t sell him his vineyard (1 Kings 21:14). He manifested with insecurity, which is why he kept the “yes-men” **prophets** around him (1 Kings 22) and why he allowed the strong-willed **Jezebel** to usurp his authority. Ultimately, Ahab catered to his emotions rather than to his spirit. He was led by the lusts of the flesh rather than the Spirit of God.

7. Ahab’s Repentance Is False

False humility is one thing. False repentance is another. When the Lord sent **Elijah** with a word of condemnation to **Ahab**, he appeared to repent but it was false. Elijah prophetically spoke these words, “Behold, I will bring calamity on you. I

will take away your posterity, and will cut off from Ahab every male in Israel, both bond and free. I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked Me to anger, and made Israel sin.' And concerning Jezebel the Lord also spoke, saying, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.' The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field" (1 Kings 21:21-24). How did Ahab respond? "He humbled tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his bod, and fasted and lay in sackcloth, and went about mourning" (2 Kings 21:27).

Although the repentance put off God's judgment, Ahab's heart really didn't change. It's like the kid who says he's sorry because he got caught but goes out and does the same thing again. **Ahab** rent his garments but not his heart. We know this because Ahab did not forsake his idols, he did not return Naboth's vineyard to its rightful heirs, and he did not bring Jezebel in order. He went on in the next chapter to put Micaiah in prison because he wouldn't prophesy according to the party line. Ultimately, actions speak louder than words. Ahab remained Jezebel's puppet until the day he died.

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