

# 1 Kings 16 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

1 Kings Commentaries

1 Kings 16:1  
1 Kings 16:2  
1 Kings 16:3  
1 Kings 16:4  
1 Kings 16:5  
1 Kings 16:6  
1 Kings 16:7  
1 Kings 16:8  
1 Kings 16:9  
1 Kings 16:10  
1 Kings 16:11  
1 Kings 16:12  
1 Kings 16:13  
1 Kings 16:14  
1 Kings 16:15  
1 Kings 16:16  
1 Kings 16:17  
1 Kings 16:18  
1 Kings 16:19  
1 Kings 16:20  
1 Kings 16:21  
1 Kings 16:22  
1 Kings 16:23  
1 Kings 16:24  
1 Kings 16:25  
1 Kings 16:26  
1 Kings 16:27  
1 Kings 16:28  
1 Kings 16:29  
1 Kings 16:30  
1 Kings 16:31  
1 Kings 16:32  
1 Kings 16:33  
1 Kings 16:34

---

Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
[1 Kings Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

## THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

[Click to Enlarge](#)

(NOTE: Many consider Amaziah and Hezekiah as "good" kings)  
SEE ALSO:  
[ESV chart - kings of Israel - more information](#)  
[ESV chart - kings of Judah - more information](#)  
[Another Chart with Variable Dates for Reigns of Kings](#)

---

## 1 Kings 16:1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying,

- **Jehu:** 1Ki 16:7 2Ch 19:2 20:34
- **Hanani:** 1Ki 15:33 2Ch 16:7-10
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

1 Kings 15:33+ In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha the son of Ahijah became king over all Israel at Tirzah, and reigned twenty-four years.

2 Chronicles 16:7-10+ At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you have relied on the king of Aram and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Aram has escaped out of your hand. 8 "Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim an immense army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand. 9 "For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars." 10 Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in prison, for he was enraged at him for this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at the same time.

Keep the context in mind, for in 1 Kings 15:25-30 Baasha rose to power in a conspiracy to kill Jeroboam's son Nadab and all Jeroboam's lineage, completely destroying the house of Jeroboam and fulfilling God's prophecy.

**Now the word of the LORD came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying-** Jehu's father had prophesied to King Asa, a good king, but now Jehu is charge to prophesy to a bad king. Note the phrase against Baasha clearly suggesting this is not going to be a message to comfort Baaha, but to disturb his false comfort.

**THOUGHT** - Dear pastor, "prophet" of God, would you describe your message as a word you have received from the LORD (not new revelation of course, but Spirit illuminated insights on the finished revelation of God)? As most of us have heard said, a good, God honoring message should comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. Are your messages saturated with Scripture? If not they need to be, because God does not promise to bless our mental machinations, as clever and humorous as they might be, but He does promise to bless the proclamation of His Word declaring "So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it." (Isaiah 55:11).

**Knapp** points out that "Baasha was of plebian stock, yet his name, *he who lays waste*, tells only too accurately what kind of a ruler he proved himself to be." ([Quoted by Guzik](#))

**C T Lacey** points out that "In these dark days of declension, when God's word was ignored, the voice of the prophet was frequently heard. Ahijah the Shilonite (1Ki 11:29; 14:5) and Shemaiah the man of God (1Ki 12:22) had already appeared on the scene to reveal the mind and will of God in relation to Jeroboam and Rehoboam respectively. It was now the turn of Jehu the son of Hanani to declare the Lord's message to Baasha. ([What the Bible Teaches – 1 and 2 Kings.](#))

---

**Bob Utley** - The long reign of Asa (i.e., 41 years, 1 Kgs. 15:10; NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 412-414) provides a way to document the turmoil in Israel.

1. in the 20th year of Jeroboam, Asa began to reign (1 Kgs. 15:9)
2. in the 2nd year of Asa, Nadab begin to reign in Israel (1 Kgs. 15:25)
3. in the 3rd year of Asa, Baasha began to reign (1 Kgs. 15:33)
4. in the 26th year of Asa, Elah began to reign (1 Kgs. 16:8)
5. in the 27th year of Asa, Zimri began to reign (1 Kgs. 16:15)
6. in the 31st year of Asa, Omri began to reign (1 Kgs. 16:23)
7. in the 38th year of Asa, Ahab began to reign (1 Kgs. 16:29)

## NOTE - DATES ARE APPROXIMATIONS

The **Northern Kingdom of Israel** (also called **Samaria**) had a total of **nine dynasties**—each founded by a new king who seized power, often through violence. Unlike Judah, which remained under David's dynasty, Israel experienced frequent coups and assassinations. The Southern Kingdom of Judah had only one dynasty, the Davidic Dynasty (circa 1010–586 BC) established by King David and continuing until the Babylonian exile of Judah in 586 BC.

---

### 1. The Dynasty of Jeroboam (First Dynasty)

**Reigned: 931–909 BC**

**Members:**

1. **Jeroboam I** (931–910 BC) – First king of Israel after the kingdom split from Judah. Led Israel into idolatry by setting up golden calves in Bethel and Dan (1 Kings 12:25-33).
2. **Nadab** (910–909 BC) – Son of Jeroboam I, assassinated by Baasha.

**Ended when Nadab was assassinated by Baasha** (1 Kings 15:27-28).

---

### 2. The Dynasty of Baasha (Second Dynasty)

**Reigned: 909–885 BC**

**Members:**

1. **Baasha** (909–886 BC) – Killed Nadab and took the throne. Continued idolatry and warred with Asa of Judah.
2. **Elah** (886–885 BC) – Son of Baasha, assassinated while drunk by Zimri, his military commander.

**Ended when Zimri assassinated Elah** (1 Kings 16:9-10).

---

### 3. The Dynasty of Zimri (Third Dynasty, Lasted Only 7 Days)

**Reigned: 885 BC (7 Days)**

- **Zimri** – A military commander who killed Elah, reigned for **only seven days** before Omri overthrew him.
- **He burned himself alive in the palace** when Omri's forces took over (**1 Kings 16:18**).

**Ended when Zimri died** (1 Kings 16:18-19).

---

### 4. The Dynasty of Omri (Fourth Dynasty, Most Powerful)

**Reigned: 885–841 BC**

**Members:**

1. **Omri** (885–874 BC) – Established **Samaria as Israel's capital** and made Israel a regional power. Note that **Tibni** was a rival king of Omri over the Northern Kingdom but was not a fully recognized ruler by all of Israel, never was uncontested and left no ruling descendants. Therefore technically for these reasons **Tibni** is not considered a true **dynasty** like the others who ruled undisputedly for a period.
2. **Ahab** (874–853 BC) – Son of Omri, **one of the most wicked kings**. Married **Jezebel**, led Israel into Baal worship, opposed by Elijah (**1 Kings 16:30-33**).
3. **Ahaziah** (853–852 BC) – Son of Ahab, fell through a window and died without an heir.
4. **Joram (Jehoram) of Israel** (852–841 BC) – Brother of Ahaziah, killed by Jehu.

Ended when Jehu killed Joram (1 Kings 9:24).

---

## 5. The Dynasty of Jehu (Fifth Dynasty)

Reigned: 841–753 BC

Members:

1. **Jehu** (841–814 BC) – Killed Joram, Jezebel, and wiped out Ahab's dynasty. God promised his dynasty would last **four generations** (2 Kings 10:30).
2. **Jehoahaz** (814–798 BC) – Son of Jehu, suffered oppression by Syria.
3. **Joash (Jehoash)** (798–782 BC) – Recovered some land from Syria.
4. **Jeroboam II** (793–753 BC) – Most successful of Jehu's dynasty, restored Israel's borders but continued idol worship.
5. **Zechariah** (753 BC) – Last of Jehu's dynasty, assassinated by Shallum after 6 months.

Ended when Shallum assassinated Zechariah (2 Kings 15:10).

---

## 6. The Dynasty of Shallum (Sixth Dynasty, Lasted Only 1 Month)

Reigned: 753 BC (1 Month)

- **Shallum** – Usurped the throne by **killing Zechariah**, but was assassinated after just **one month** by Menahem.

Ended when Menahem killed Shallum (2 Kings 15:13-14).

---

## 7. The Dynasty of Menahem (Seventh Dynasty)

Reigned: 752–740 BC

Members:

1. **Menahem** (752–742 BC) – Brutally seized power, paid tribute to Assyria to keep his throne.
2. **Pekahiah** (742–740 BC) – Son of Menahem, assassinated by his own captain, Pekah.

Ended when Pekah killed Pekahiah (2 Kings 15:25).

---

## 8. The Dynasty of Pekah (Eighth Dynasty)

Reigned: 740–732 BC

- **Pekah** (740–732 BC) – Killed Pekahiah and ruled during the Syro-Ephraimite War against Judah.
- Assyria invaded and took much of Israel's territory.
- Pekah was assassinated by **Hoshea**, ending his dynasty.

Ended when Hoshea killed Pekah (2 Kings 15:30).

---

## 9. The Dynasty of Hoshea (Ninth and Final Dynasty)

Reigned: 732–722 BC

- **Hoshea** (732–722 BC) – The last king of Israel.

- Rebelled against Assyria by seeking Egyptian help, which led to **the fall of Samaria in 722 BC**.
- **Assyria destroyed Israel and took the people into exile.**

Ended when Assyria conquered Israel (2 Kings 17:6).

**1 Kings 16:2** “Inasmuch as I exalted you from the dust and made you leader over My people Israel, and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam and have made My people Israel sin, provoking Me to anger with their sins,

- **I exalted:** 1Ki 14:7 1Sa 2:8,27,28 15:17-19 2Sa 12:7-11 Ps 113:7,8 Lu 1:52
- **walked:** 1Ki 13:33,34 15:34
- **My people:** 1Ki 14:16 15:26 Ex 32:21 1Sa 2:24 26:19 Mt 5:19
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Kings 14:7+ “Go, say to Jeroboam, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel, “Because I exalted you from among the people and made you leader over My people Israel,

### WALKING IN THE WAY OF JEROBOAM

**Inasmuch as I exalted you from the dust and made you leader over My people Israel** - God gives the reasons for the prophetic judgment. Baasha is reminded he reigns because of God raising him up, not because of his merit or ingenuity. Notice the phrase **My people Israel** -indicating God has not abandoned the 10 tribes, even though they have largely forsaken Him. God is a covenant keeper and will remain true to His covenant with the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, regardless of the manifold backslidings of His Chosen People. Amazing love. Amazing grace indeed.

**C T Lacey** - The phrase “exalted thee out of the dust”, instead of “exalted thee from among the people” (1Ki 14:7), as in Jeroboam’s case, suggests that Baasha had risen to the throne from very humble origins. ([What the Bible Teaches – 1 and 2 Kings](#).)

**and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam** - Next Baasha is reminded that despite the LORD's exalting him, he turned away from Yahweh. **Walked** of course speaks of Baasha's overall conduct, the main direction of his life, which sadly was to imitate the godless walk of his predecessor Jeroboam. **Way of Jeroboam** is repeated in 1Ki 15:34, 1Ki 16:1, 19, 26 and 1Ki 22:52, giving us the pattern of the other godless Northern kings to follow.

**and have made My people Israel sin** ([chata'](#)) - **Made My people** (note again God still claims Israel as His people) indicates Baasha personally caused the people to sin. Thus Baasha is held personally responsible and is bashed by Jehovah for leading Israel away from God and into idolatry.

**Provoking Me to anger** ([kaas](#); Lxx - [parorgizo](#)) **with their sins** (Lxx - [mataios](#) - [see note below](#)) - The result of Israel's **sins** was provocation of the **anger** of Jehovah. Note that provoking God to anger is a key theme in chapter 16 where this verb is used 5 times (1Ki 16:2, 7, 13, 26, 33) Notice also that I say "idolatry" because the Septuagint renders "**sins**" with the Greek word [mataios](#) which means empty, worthless, foolish and in Acts 14:15NLT+ (turn from these **worthless things** to the living God", NJB = "empty idols", GWT = "worthless gods") and 1Ki 16:13 specifically says "their idols."

**David Guzik** quips "The Bible tells us that by nature, God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy (Psalm 103:8). Because He is slow to anger, it took a lot of wickedness on the part of Baasha to succeed in provoking Him to anger."

---

**Sin** ([02398](#))([chata'](#)) means to miss the way, to fail; to err, to swerve from truth, to go wrong. The literal use describes an accurate shot by slingshot Jdg 20:16 - they could "**not miss** (chata')." Pr 19:2 conveys a related meaning of chata' in those versions that translate it as "miss the way." (Pr 19:2NIV) As Vine says "From this basic meaning comes the word's chief usage to indicate moral failure toward both God and men, and certain results of such wrongs." When man sins he has missed the mark, the goal, or the way that God has set as standard. In an ironic use, the intensive (Piel) stem can mean "purified" or "to de-sin" and to cleanse (Ex 29:36, David's request of God to purify him - Ps 51:7, Lxx = [rhantizo](#) = to sprinkle, figuratively = inward cleansing = "hearts sprinkled" - Heb 10:22; cf purify in Nu 8:21; 19:12,13, 20; 31:19, 20, 23).

**CHATA' IN KINGS AND CHRONICLES** - 1 Ki. 8:31; 1 Ki. 8:33; 1 Ki. 8:35; 1 Ki. 8:46; 1 Ki. 8:47; 1 Ki. 8:50; 1 Ki. 14:16; 1 Ki. 14:22; 1 Ki. 15:26; 1 Ki. 15:30; 1 Ki. 15:34; 1 Ki. 16:2; 1 Ki. 16:13; 1 Ki. 16:19; 1 Ki. 16:26; 1 Ki. 18:9; 1 Ki. 21:22; 1 Ki. 22:52; 2 Ki. 3:3; 2 Ki. 10:29; 2 Ki. 10:31; 2 Ki. 13:2; 2 Ki. 13:6; 2 Ki. 13:11; 2 Ki. 14:24; 2 Ki. 15:9; 2 Ki. 15:18; 2 Ki. 15:24; 2 Ki. 15:28; 2 Ki. 17:7; 2 Ki. 17:21; 2 Ki. 18:14; 2 Ki. 21:11; 2 Ki. 21:16; 2 Ki. 21:17; 2 Ki. 23:15; 1 Chr. 21:8; 1 Chr. 21:17; 2 Chr. 6:22; 2 Chr. 6:24; 2 Chr. 6:26; 2 Chr. 6:36; 2 Chr. 6:37; 2 Chr. 6:39; 2 Chr. 29:24

**Provoking to anger** (03707) **kāas** is a verb meaning to vex, agitate, stir up, provoke the heart to a "heated" condition which results in actions. To be angry, vexed, be incensed, to be in a state of strong displeasure, to provoke to anger. The causative sense of the verb occurs often and frequently signifies idolatry provoking God to anger (cf. 1 Kgs. 14:9; Ps. 106:29; Ezek. 8:17). The result of provocation may be expressed as 'ap, anger (639) (Deut. 9:18; 2 Kgs. 23:26; Jer. 7:20). In a noncausative sense, the verb means to be angry; people were warned not to become angry hastily (Eccl. 7:9); God says that after He punishes, He will not be angry (Ezek. 16:42). Three times it refers to the people's anger directed toward righteousness (2 Chr. 16:10; Neh. 4:1[3:33]; Ps. 112:10).

Deut. 4:25; Deut. 9:18; Deut. 31:29; Deut. 32:16; Deut. 32:21; Jdg. 2:12; 1 Sam. 1:6; 1 Sam. 1:7; 1 Ki. 14:9; 1 Ki. 14:15; 1 Ki. 15:30; 1 Ki. 16:2; 1 Ki. 16:7; 1 Ki. 16:13; 1 Ki. 16:26; 1 Ki. 16:33; 1 Ki. 21:22; 1 Ki. 22:53; 2 Ki. 17:11; 2 Ki. 17:17; 2 Ki. 21:6; 2 Ki. 21:15; 2 Ki. 22:17; 2 Ki. 23:19; 2 Ki. 23:26; 2 Chr. 16:10; 2 Chr. 28:25; 2 Chr. 33:6; 2 Chr. 34:25; Neh. 4:1; Neh. 4:5; Ps. 78:58; Ps. 106:29; Ps. 112:10; Eccl. 5:17; Eccl. 7:9; Isa. 65:3; Jer. 7:18; Jer. 7:19; Jer. 8:19; Jer. 11:17; Jer. 25:6; Jer. 25:7; Jer. 32:29; Jer. 32:30; Jer. 32:32; Jer. 44:3; Jer. 44:8; Ezek. 8:17; Ezek. 16:26; Ezek. 16:42; Ezek. 32:9; Hos. 12:14

**provoking Me to anger"** is used often of covenant violations causing YHWH to judge.

1. Deuteronomy – 4:25; 9:18; 31:29; 32:16; 21 (twice)
2. Judges – 2:12
3. 1 Kings – 14:9,15; 15:30; 16:2,7,13,26,33; 21:22,53
4. 2 Kings – 17:11,17; 21:6,15; 22:17; 23:19,26
5. 2 Chronicles – 28:25; 33:6; 34:25
6. Psalm – 106:29
7. Isaiah – 65:3
8. Jeremiah – 7:18,19; 8:19; 11:17; 25:6,7; 32:29,30,32; 44:3,8
9. Ezekiel – 8:17; 16:26
10. Hosea – 12:15

Israel is evaluated through the obedience to the Mosaic covenant. YHWH's mercy spurned turns to anger. This is the message of Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 27-30; and all the prophets! We must remember the Bible uses human emotions to describe Deity, which is not adequate but it is the only vocabulary we have.

---

## Mataios and Idols in Scripture

The Bible repeatedly describes idols as mataios because they are:

- Powerless – They cannot speak, hear, or act (Jeremiah 10:5).
- Lifeless – They are made of wood, stone, or metal (Psalm 135:15-17).
- Futile – They provide no real help or salvation (Isaiah 44:9-20).
- Deceptive – They mislead people away from the true God (Romans 1:21-23).

- Acts 14:15 – Paul and Barnabas tell the people of Lystra: "Turn from these vain things (mataia) to the living God." Here, mataia describes idols as completely worthless in comparison to the living God.
- Romans 1:21-23 – People exchanged the glory of the true God for "vain" (mataios) images of created things.
- 1 Peter 1:18 – Peter speaks of being redeemed from the "futile (mataia) ways" inherited from ancestors—likely referring to idolatry.

## 2. Why Are Idols Called "Empty" (Mataios)?

1. They cannot create life – Unlike the true God, who made heaven and earth.
2. They cannot answer prayers – They are lifeless objects.
3. They mislead worshippers – Instead of leading to truth, they promote false hope.
4. They are made by human hands – Isaiah mocks idol-makers who carve an idol from the same wood they use for firewood

(Isaiah 44:15-17).

### 3. The Contrast: The Living God vs. Dead Idols

- Idols are mataios (empty, useless), but God is living and powerful.
- Idolatry is futile, but worshiping God brings life, salvation, and truth.
- The true God speaks, hears, acts, and reigns, but idols are mute, deaf, and powerless.

1 Kings 16:3 **behold**, I will consume Baasha and his house, and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

- **will make thy house:** 1Ki 16:11,12 14:10 1Ki 15:29,30 21:21-24 Isa 66:24 Jer 22:19
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Kings 15:29-30+ It came about as soon as he was king, he struck down all the household of Jeroboam. **He did not leave to Jeroboam any persons alive, until he had destroyed them, according to the word of the LORD**, which He spoke by His servant Ahijah the Shilonite, 30 and because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, because of his provocation with which he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.

### BAASHA'S POSTERITY TO BE DESTROYED

**Behold, I will consume** ([ba'ar](#)) **Baasha and his house** - Consume literally meant to burn but figuratively as in this case signifies putting a complete end to Baasha and his offspring.

**And I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat**- Jeroboam's house or offspring (lineage) was completely eradicated, as would be Baasha's lineage. His name would be the sole evidence of his existence. Baasha's son Elah would take the throne briefly but would be assassinated along with all of Baasha's offspring. (1Ki 16:10-12).

**Knapp** points out that "God, who looks upon the heart, sees him but as an assassin for the accomplishment of his ambitious designs, slaying king Nadab and the entire house of Jeroboam." ([Quoted by Guzik](#))

**John MacArthur** - Baasha had angered the Lord by following the sinful paths of Jeroboam. Appropriately, he faced the same humiliating judgment Jeroboam had (14:10, 11). Though he waded through slaughter to his throne, he owed it to the permission of God, by whom all kings reign. His judgment was that no long line of heirs would succeed him; instead, his family would be totally annihilated and their corpses shamefully scavenged by hungry dogs and birds.

---

**Consume** (purge,remove, burn) ([Q1197](#)) [ba'ar](#) is a verb used more often figuratively than literally and is normally translated "to burn," "to be kindled" or "to consume." The burning bush on Mt. Sinai (Exo. 3:2, 3) was an intriguing and holy "burning" from which the voice of Yahweh was heard. At the giving of the Law, Mt. Sinai's burning was frightening and awesome. No one could touch the burning mountain and live (Deut. 4:11; 5:23; 9:15). David called upon Yahweh (Ps. 18:8) "to consume" his enemies (v. 3) with a devouring fire which comes out of the mouth of Yahweh. It is used figuratively of the Lord's anger burning and consuming Jacob and Israel (Isa. 6:13; 30:27; 42:25) and the wicked (Ps. 106:18; Jer. 44:6).

The imagery of Yahweh's burning in the Prophets is against the rebellious people of Yahweh. Isaiah pictures the destructive force of Yahweh's burning as fire destroying sheaves of wheat (the transgressors, sinners and all who forsake Yahweh, Isa. 1:28), and as the vines that bind up the sheaves (the princes and leaders, Isa. 1:23), and no one can quench them (Isa. 1:31). Isaiah 4:4-5 emphasizes the purging and cleansing effect of Yahweh's burning judgment on His people to prepare them for His all-covering, dwelling presence ("a canopy of all glory").

1 Kings 16:4 "Anyone of Baasha who dies in the city the dogs will eat, and anyone of his who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat."

- **dogs eat:** 1Ki 14:11
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Kings 21:23+ “Of Jezebel also has the LORD spoken, saying, ‘The dogs will eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel.’ 24 “The one belonging to Ahab, who dies in the city, the dogs will eat, and the one who dies in the field the birds of heaven will eat.”

## DESECRATION INSTEAD OF PROPER BURIAL PROPHESED

**Anyone of Baasha who dies in the city the dogs will eat, and anyone of his who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat** (eaten by [vultures](#)) - Both of these divine judgments describe dishonorable burials (in effect no burial at all if carnivores devoured the bodies). It was this circumstance which rendered it so horrible to the Oriental mind to be cast out unburied! To remain unburied was declared in the law to be a curse on the disobedient (Deut 28:26). The picture of **dogs** devouring carcasses is especially gruesome for ancient dogs were not like our pet dogs but were vicious scavengers that frequented garbage dumps outside cities. Those who would die in battle, or who were assassinated away from a city, would have their eyes plucked out and their flesh picked from their bones by birds that find rotting flesh delectable.

Imagine the prophet Jehu proclaiming this message to the most powerful man in Israel! Prophets were clearly men of great courage and surely supernaturally enabled by the Spirit of God. It is worth noting that if Baasha had taken Jehu's prophecy to heart, the mercy of God was always available to forgive him. But hardened hearts don't easily repent.

This prophetic end to Baasha's line is virtually identical to the prophecy to Jeroboam “Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city the dogs will eat. And he who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat; for the LORD has spoken it.” (1Ki 14:11+).

**THOUGHT** - Oh beloved, may we never forget that the wages of our sins are very costly to our families!

**Bob Utley** - The imagery of dogs eating (or drinking blood) and birds eating is common in the ANE (cf. Deut. 28:22ff; 1 Kgs. 14:11; 21:19,23,24; 22:38; 2 Kgs. 9:10,30-36; Ps. 79:2; Jer. 7:33; 15:3; 16:4; 19:7; 34:20). Basically this is a curse of not being buried properly.

**1 Kings 16:5 Now the rest of the acts of Baasha and what he did and his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?**

- **the rest:** 1Ki 14:19 15:31 2Ch 16:1-6
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DEEDS OF BAASHA RECORDED IN LOST BOOKS

**Now the rest of the acts of Baasha and what he did and his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel** - This record **Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel** has been lost, much like Baasha's life and legacy! Note that the fulfillment of Jehu's prophecy was not on Baasha himself but on his son Elah and his lineage.

Note the phrase **Book of the Chronicles of the Kings** is found 34 times - 1 Ki. 14:19; 1 Ki. 14:29; 1 Ki. 15:7; 1 Ki. 15:23; 1 Ki. 15:31; 1 Ki. 16:5; 1 Ki. 16:14; 1 Ki. 16:20; 1 Ki. 16:27; 1 Ki. 22:39; 1 Ki. 22:45; 2 Ki. 1:18; 2 Ki. 8:23; 2 Ki. 10:34; 2 Ki. 12:19; 2 Ki. 13:8; 2 Ki. 13:12; 2 Ki. 14:15; 2 Ki. 14:18; 2 Ki. 14:28; 2 Ki. 15:6; 2 Ki. 15:11; 2 Ki. 15:15; 2 Ki. 15:21; 2 Ki. 15:26; 2 Ki. 15:31; 2 Ki. 15:36; 2 Ki. 16:19; 2 Ki. 20:20; 2 Ki. 21:17; 2 Ki. 21:25; 2 Ki. 23:28; 2 Ki. 24:5; Est. 10:2

**1 Kings 16:6 And Baasha slept with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah, and Elah his son became king in his place.**

- **Baasha:** 1Ki 14:20 15:25



- **Tirzah:** 1Ki 14:17 15:21
- **Elah:** 1Ki 16:8,13,14
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**And Baasha slept with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah, and Elah his son became king in his place** - At first some might have been hopeful that Jehu's prophecy was in error in declaring Baasha's line to be exterminated.

**1 Kings 16:7 Moreover, the word of the LORD through the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani also came against Baasha and his household, both because of all the evil which he did in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and because he struck it.**

KJV 1 Kings 16:7 And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and because he killed him.

NET 1 Kings 16:7 The prophet Jehu son of Hanani received from the LORD the message predicting the downfall of Baasha and his family because of all the evil Baasha had done in the sight of the LORD. His actions angered the LORD (including the way he had destroyed Jeroboam's dynasty), so that his family ended up like Jeroboam's.

CSB 1 Kings 16:7 Through the prophet Jehu son of Hanani the word of the LORD also came against Baasha and against his house because of all the evil he had done in the LORD's sight, provoking Him with the work of his hands and being like the house of Jeroboam, and because Baasha had struck down the house of Jeroboam.

ESV 1 Kings 16:7 Moreover, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha and his house, both because of all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and also because he destroyed it.

NIV 1 Kings 16:7 Moreover, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Jehu son of Hanani to Baasha and his house, because of all the evil he had done in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger by the things he did, and becoming like the house of Jeroboam--and also because he destroyed it.

NLT 1 Kings 16:7 The message from the LORD against Baasha and his family came through the prophet Jehu son of Hanani. It was delivered because Baasha had done what was evil in the LORD's sight (just as the family of Jeroboam had done), and also because Baasha had destroyed the family of Jeroboam. The LORD's anger was provoked by Baasha's sins.

NRS 1 Kings 16:7 Moreover the word of the LORD came by the prophet Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha and his house, both because of all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and also because he destroyed it.

NJB 1 Kings 16:7 Furthermore, the word of Yahweh was delivered through the prophet Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha and his House, first because of the many ways in which he had displeased Yahweh, provoking him to anger by his actions and becoming like the House of Jeroboam; secondly because he had destroyed that House.

NAB 1 Kings 16:7 (Through the prophet Jehu, son of Hanani, the LORD had threatened Baasha and his house, because of all the evil Baasha did in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger by his evil deeds, so that he became like the house of Jeroboam; and because he killed Nadab.)

YLT 1 Kings 16:7 And also by the hand of Jehu son of Hanani the prophet a word of Jehovah hath been concerning Baasha, and concerning his house, and concerning all the evil that he did in the eyes of Jehovah to provoke Him to anger with the work of his hands, to be like the house of Jeroboam, and concerning that for which he smote him.

- **through** (by the hand\_: 1Ki 16:1,2
- **and against his house:** Ex 20:5
- **in provoking:** 1Ki 16:13
- **with the work:** Ps 115:4 Isa 2:8 44:9-20

- **because he killed him:** 1Ki 14:14 1Ki 15:27-29 2Ki 10:30,31 Isa 10:6,7 Ho 1:4 Ac 2:23 4:27,28
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passage:

1 Kings 14:14+ (YAHWEH RAISED UP BAASHA TO CUT OFF JEROBOAM'S LINE) "Moreover, the LORD will raise up for Himself a king over Israel (BAASHA) who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this day and from now on.

1 Kings 15:27-29+ Then Baasha the son of Ahijah of the house of Issachar conspired against him (JEROBOAM'S SON HADAB), and Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, while Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon. 28 So Baasha killed him in the third year of Asa king of Judah and reigned in his (NADAB'S) place. 29 **It came about as soon as he was king, he struck down all the household of Jeroboam.** He did not leave to Jeroboam any persons alive, until he had destroyed them, **according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Ahijah the Shilonite,**

2 Chronicles 19:2+ (JEHU APPEARS AGAIN ABOUT 50 YEARS LATER) Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD and so bring wrath on yourself from the LORD?"

## JEHU'S PROPHECY BEGINS TO UNFOLD

**Moreover, the word of the LORD through** (literally by the hand of) **the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani also came against Baasha and his household, both because of all the evil which he did in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of his hands** (idiom for idols - Dt. 4:25; 9:18; 32:16; 1Ki 16:7; 2Ki 17:7; 21:6; Jer. 25:6,7; 32:30; 44:8), **in being like the house of Jeroboam, and because he struck it** (referring to the house of Jeroboam) - Like Jeroboam, Baasha manufactured idols (**work of his hands**) which was especially provoking to Yahweh. This shows just how foolish and deceitful idolatry can be -- that one would stoop to worship something he has made as if it were something divine! God was also angry with Baasha because of his destruction of Jeroboam's household. Yes, God had raised up Baasha who would cut off Jeroboam and his line, but Baasha was still held responsible for his actions.

*Yahweh brings judgment on the instruments  
that carry out His judgment;*

**David Guzik** - Jehu the Prophet also wrote specific books of history regarding kings of Israel (2 Chronicles 20:34). His father Hanani is also mentioned in 2 Chronicles 16:7-10, where it describes how he suffered imprisonment because he was a faithful prophet in speaking to King Asa...God used Baasha to bring judgment upon the house of Jeroboam; yet God did not *cause* Baasha to do this, so He rightly judged Baasha, even though God used the wickedness of Baasha in bringing judgment upon Jeroboam. i. God did not need to coerce a reluctant Baasha to conspire against and assassinate Nadab the son of Jeroboam. That wicked desire was already in the heart of Baasha. In using Baasha to bring judgment on the house of Jeroboam, God only needed to let Baasha do *what he wanted to do*. Therefore, it was proper of God to judge Baasha for something that ultimately furthered God's eternal plan. "God is ever represented in Scripture as *doing* those things which, in the course of his providence, he *permits* to be done." (Clarke)

**C T Lacey** addresses the somewhat confusing question of why Baasha was held responsible for seemingly fulfilling Yahweh's prophecy - The Lord had prophesied through the mouth of Ahijah the prophet that this would happen (1Ki 14:14); therefore, if he had simply done what the Lord predicted he would do, it would appear unjust to hold him responsible. **Firstly**, in seeking to address this dilemma, it must be acknowledged that although God might predict the evil a man will do, it does not make Him culpable for that man's actions. Baasha was responsible for his own deeds and therefore had to face the consequences. Indeed, even though God knew what he would do, he put himself forward for the task. (I.E. IN OTHER WORDS BAASHA WAS NOT A PUPPET AND WAS NOT FORCED TO CARRY OUT HIS DESTRUCTION OF JEROBOAM'S LINE.) **Secondly**, the fact that Baasha immediately embraced the idolatry of the man whose household he had destroyed demonstrates that his motives were not pure. He did not destroy Jeroboam's household out of a zeal for the word of the Lord, but because he coveted position and power. The words of Davis are helpful: "*Yahweh brings judgment on the instruments that carry out His judgment; He will judge nations or individuals for the unjust manner in which they carry out His just judgment. You may inflict God's judgment and in so doing incur God's judgment. There is no automatic exemption.*" ([What the Bible Teaches – 1 and 2 Kings](#).)

**August Konkell** adds that "The prophets never find it contradictory to hold wicked individuals responsible for their actions, even when God accomplishes his purposes through them. Peter in addressing the men of Israel on the day of Pentecost speaks in

exactly the same terms as the condemnation of Baasha in Kings. The leaders in Jerusalem through their own wicked deeds have carried out the purpose of God in killing Jesus of Nazareth, a man they knew to be of God through the great deeds he did in their midst (Acts 2:22–23+). For this act they are guilty, even though through it God overcomes the power of death and fulfills the promise he made to David (Acts 2:24–31+). Human deeds are never regarded as a divine coercion. Humans act freely of their own volition for good or ill. In the prophetic viewpoint, all are responsible for the choices they make. At the same time, God never fails to accomplish his purpose, whatever may have been the human volition and intent. (See [1 and 2 Kings - Page 278](#))

**1 Kings 16:8 In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel at Tirzah, and reigned two years.**

- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **BAASHA SLEEPS ELAH SUCCEEDS**

**In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel at Tirzah, and reigned two years.**

**TSK** - Baasha began to reign in the third year of Asa, and reigned 24 years; yet he died and was succeeded by Elah in the 26th year of Asa; and, in like manner, Elah, who began to reign in the 26th year of Asa, and was killed in the 27th, is said to have reigned two years. Thus it is evident that a part of a year is calculated as a whole year. In the Chinese annals, the whole year in which a king dies is ascribed to his reign, the years of the succeeding king being reckoned only from the beginning of the following year.

**1 Kings 16:9 His servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, conspired against him. Now he was at Tirzah drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was over the household at Tirzah.**

- **his servant:** 2Ki 9:31
- **conspired:** 1Ki 15:27 2Ki 9:14 12:20 15:10,25,30
- **drinking:** 1Ki 20:16 1Sa 25:36-38 2Sa 13:28,29 Pr 23:29-35 Jer 51:57 Da 5:1-4,30 Na 1:10 Hab 2:15,16 Mt 24:49-51 Lu 21:34
- **was over,** Ge 15:2 24:2,10 39:4,9
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **ZIMRI CONSPIRES AGAINST ELAH**

**His (Elah's) servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, conspired against him** - There is a bit of what goes around comes around, as Elah's father Baasha had conspired against Jeroboam's son Nadab (1Ki 15:27).

**Now he was at Tirzah drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was over the household at Tirzah**- Drunks often lose consciousness, but this drunk would lose his life in his self-indulgent condition making Zimri's conspiracy much easier to carry out. It is worth noting that Elah and [Belshazzar](#) were both slain while drinking themselves drunk! It is quite possible (even likely) that **Arza** who was over the kings palace, even arranged for the drinking bout as Zimri's co-conspirator.

**Warren Wiersbe:** Elah appears to be a dissolute man who would rather get drunk with his friends than serve the Lord and the people. Arza was probably the prime minister. Both men forgot the words of Solomon, who knew a thing or two about kingship: "Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child, and your princes feast in the morning! Blessed are you, O land, when your king is the son of nobles, and your princes feast at the proper time – for strength and not for drunkenness." (Ecc. 10:16-17) ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**1 Kings 16:10 Then Zimri went in and struck him and put him to death in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and became king in his place.**

- **Zimri:** 2Ki 9:31
- **reigned:** 1Ki 16:15
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ZIMRI STRIKES ELAH DEAD

**Then** - Time phrase. What was the "time" in context? Time for God's judgment on the house of Baasha! And specifically it was when Elah was at Tirzah "drinking himself drunk."

**Zimri went in and struck him and put him to death in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and became king in his place** - Zimri, an officer in the army of Israel assassinated Elah. In Elah's drunken state he probably did not even realize what had hit him!

**Bob Utley** - This act of assassination became a proverb for treason (cf. 2 Kgs. 9:31).

**Warren Wiersbe** reiterates the point about personal culpability even when fulfilling a prophecy - Baasha had fulfilled the prophecy of Abijah and Zimri fulfilled the prophecy of Jehu. But it must be pointed out that a person who fulfills divine prophecy is not innocent of sin. Both Baasha and Zimri were murderers and guilty of regicide, and the Lord held them responsible and accountable. The dynasty of Jeroboam was no more and the dynasty of Baasha was no more. In Judah, the dynasty of David continued. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**1 Kings 16:11 It came about when he became king, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he killed all the household of Baasha; he did not leave a single male, neither of his relatives nor of his friends.**

- **he:** 1Ki 15:29 Jdg 1:7
- **he left him:** 1Ki 14:10 1Sa 25:22,34
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

1 Kings 15:29+ (COMMON PRACTICE TO KILL ALL KING'S RELATIVES) It came about as soon as he was king, he struck down all the household of Jeroboam. He did not leave to Jeroboam any persons alive, until he had destroyed them, according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Ahijah the Shilonite,

## ZIMRI OBLITERATES BAASHA'S LINE

**It came about when he became king, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he killed all the household of Baasha; he did not leave a single male, neither of his relatives nor of his friends** - This fulfills God's word through Jehu (1Ki 16:2-4). Zimri brought death, not only to kin, but to all acquaintances! This was ultimately to protect his reign from anyone in the previous king's family. Thus ends the dynasty of Jeroboam, while the dynasty of David continued in Judah. As we saw with Baasha's destruction of Jeroboam's line in fulfillment of prophecy, Zimri also brings about fulfillment of prophecy, but he would still be held responsible for in 1Ki 16:20 his act was called conspiracy (KJV calls it "treason").

**Male** (shathan = to urinate) is literally, "he who urinates against the wall" (cf. 1 Sa 25:22,34; 1Ki 14:10; 16:11; 21:21; 2 Kgs. 9:8).

**1 Kings 16:12 Thus Zimri destroyed all the household of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke against Baasha through Jehu the prophet,**

- **according:** 1Ki 16:1-4
- **by Jehu the prophet:** Heb. by the hand of Jehu the prophet, 1Ki 16:1,7 14:18 2Ki 14:25 2Ch 10:15 Pr 26:6
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ZIMRI FULFILLS

## JEHU'S PROPHECY

**Thus Zimri destroyed all the household of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke against Baasha through Jehu the prophet** This refers to 1 Kgs. 16:1-7. Note that Zimri moved fast, accomplishing his evil task in 7 days!

**Knapp** notes that "In less than fifty years the first two dynasties of Israel's kings had come to an end and every member of their families been exterminated. God meant to make their doom an example to those who should thereafter live ungodly."

**1 Kings 16:13 for all the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son, which they sinned and which they made Israel sin, provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their idols.**

- **provoking:** 1Ki 15:30
- **idols:** De 32:21 1Sa 12:21 2Ki 17:15 Isa 41:29 Jer 10:3-5,8,15 Jon 2:8 Ro 1:21-23 1Co 8:4 10:19,20
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 32:21+ They have made Me jealous with what is not God; They have provoked Me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation,

## EXPLANATION FOR GOD'S JUDGMENT ON BAASHA'S LINE

**For** - Term of explanation. What is the writer explaining? I realize it is an easy question, but just pausing to answer helps develop the habit of interrogating the text.

**All the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son, which they sinned and which they made Israel sin, provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their idols** (KJV - vanities) - Notice that Elah demonstrating "like father, like son," and thus was personally responsible for his own sin. Idols is the Hebrew word [hebel](#) which is translated in the Septuagint with the Greek word [mataios](#) which means empty, worthless, foolish and in Acts 14:15NLT+ (turn from these *worthless things* to the living God", NJB = "empty idols", GWT = "worthless gods"). This picture ([hebel](#)) of idols makes me think of the phrase grasping after the wind when we try to lay hold of idols! They amount to absolutely nothing of eternal value!

**Bob Utley** on **idols** - This is the NOUN (BDB 210 I; NIDOTTE, vol. 1, pp. 1005-1006) which means "vapor" or "breath." It denotes the non-existence of idols (cf. 1 Kgs. 16:13,26; Ps. 31:6; Jer. 8:19; 10:8; 14:22; Jonah 2:8). This is a clear manifestation of the superstition of fallen humanity that makes its own gods!

---

**Idols** (futility, vanities, breath, delusion, worthless, emptiness)([01892](#)) [hebel](#) means to vanity, emptiness, meaninglessness; idols. The first OT use refers to idols (Dt 32:21, cf 1 Ki 16:13, 26, Jer 8:19; Jeremiah 10:8, 15; Jer 14:22 Jer 51:18; Jonah 2:9; Ps 31:6), a fitting word picture for the worthlessness of idols! In Jer 2:5 Judah "walked after emptiness (hebel) and became empty" refers to Judah's pursuit of idols (cf similar use Jer 10:15, 2 Ki 17:15 "the followed vanity [hebel] and became vain [worthless])

**Hebel** refers to breath because of its transitory fleeting character, as in Job's figurative use "my days are but a breath." (Job 7:16, cf similar idea Ps 39:5, 6, 11; Ps 62:9; Ps 78:33 where hebel parallels behâlâ from root bāhal "to hasten": Ps 94:11; Ps144:4) **Hebel** "generally appears in contexts where it is used as a simile emphasizing the transitory state of an object, never as descriptive of the biological function. A prime example would be "Humanity is like a breath (Ps. 144:4). Not only is breath ethereal and of short duration, but all things which breathe will die." (Gilbrant)

**Vine's** summary of **hebel** - **First**, the word represents human "breath" as a transitory thing: "I loathe it; I would not live always: let me alone; for my days are vanity [literally, but a breath] (Job 7:16). **Second**, hebel means something meaningless and purposeless: "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity" (Eccl. 1:2). **Third**, this word signifies an "idol," which is unsubstantial, worthless, and vain: "They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities ..." (Dt. 32:21, the first occurrence).

Other words for **idols** are:

**[gillul/gillulim](#)** means logs, blocks, shapeless things. This word describes "an object (not necessarily three dimensional) which has been formed to resemble a person, god, animal."

**selem** "image," which emphasizes its representational character (used seven times);

**semel** of uncertain etymology (5x);

**terapim**, apparently meaning a "thing of shame" used for Laban's household gods stolen by Rachel;

**mippeleset** "thing of horror";

'**elil** "empty or meaningless thing";

'**awen** "sinful thing" BDB (KB suggests, a "thing of mystery" from a possible etymology, but BDB is better on the basis of the usage of 'awen).

**ashera**, which are cult objects, perhaps sacred poles, but are more symbols of the goddess 'ashera rather than idols in the normal sense.

### 1 Kings 16:14 Now the rest of the acts of Elah and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

- **written:** 1Ki 16:5
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ELAH'S STORY A KING CUT SHORT

**Now the rest of the acts of Elah and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel** - Elah reigned for only 2 years (1Ki 16:8). And Elah's legacy in the Book of the Chronicles has been lost. Note **Chronicles** is not a reference to First/Second Chronicles.

### 1 Kings 16:15 In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri reigned seven days at Tirzah. Now the people were camped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines.

- **seven:** 1Ki 16:8 2Ki 9:31 Job 20:5 Ps 37:35
- **people were camped:** 1Ki 15:27 Jos 19:44 21:23
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Kings 15:27 Then Baasha the son of Ahijah of the house of Issachar conspired against him, and Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, while Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon.

## ZIMRI'S SHORT REIGN

**In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah**- The length of Asa's reign is testimony to the fact that the Southern Kingdom was relatively calm compared to the turbulence and political upheavals in the Northern Kingdom. Is there not a hint here of what a life lived honoring God (south) brings versus what a life lived for self (north) brings?

**Zimri reigned seven days at Tirzah** - Zimri's reign was the shortest of any of the kings, north or south. Zimri was chronologically the fifth of 20 kings in the Northern Kingdom and all 20 were evil!

**Now the people were camped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines**- Zimri had miscalculated that assassinating King Elah would automatically guarantee he would receive the throne of Israel. It is also notable that Zimri as commander of half of Elah's chariots was not at Gibberoth with the rest of the army. Of course, given that he had orchestrated a conspiracy, that might explain why he stayed back to carry out his plan.

---

## QUESTION - [Who was King Zimri in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**ANSWER** - Two people named Zimri are mentioned in the Bible. Numbers 25:14 mentions Zimri, son of Salu, a Simeonite prince. Nothing more is revealed of this Zimri. The second Zimri, of whom we know more, became the fifth king in the northern kingdom of Israel, ruling while Asa was king over Judah. 1 Kings 16 details the treasonous way Zimri became king, his brief reign of seven days, and his suicide before he could be assassinated by the next king.

First, some background to Zimri's history. While King Baasha reigned in Israel, a prophet delivered a message from the Lord. The Lord was angry with Baasha for the way he had led Israel into sin. God told him, "So now I will destroy you and your family, just as I destroyed the descendants of Jeroboam son of Nebat. The members of Baasha's family who die in the city will be eaten by dogs, and those who die in the field will be eaten by [vultures](#)" (1 Kings 16:3-4).

When Baasha died, his son [Elah](#) became king and continued the evil of his father. He reigned for two years until one of his own military officials, Zimri, decided to assassinate him. While Elah was drinking with his palace administrator, Azra, Zimri crashed the party and murdered the drunken Elah (1 Kings 16:9). He immediately sought out and murdered every member of Elah's family to protect his claim to the throne. Without realizing it, Zimri was the fulfillment of God's judgment on Elah's father, Baasha (verse 11). With all of Baasha's family dead, Zimri took the throne of Israel, believing himself invincible. That fantasy lasted seven days.

While Zimri gloated over his coup, ruling from a city called Tisrah, members of Israel's army learned what he had done. Infuriated, they chose a new commander, Omri, and marched against Zimri. Receiving word that the army was coming against him, Zimri locked himself inside the citadel of his palace and burned it down around him. His treason thus led to his early death.

Later, [Queen Jezebel](#) used Zimri's name as a taunt against [Jehu](#) when she learned that he had been anointed the next king over Israel in place of her husband, Ahab (2 Kings 9:31). She falsely compared Jehu's rightful claim to the throne to treasonous Zimri's seizure of it. However, God was not deterred by her protestations and brought her to an unsavory demise. Jehu ordered her servants to throw her out of a window, and they did. She died in the fall, and the dogs ate her body (verses 32-37).

King Zimri had the reputation in Israel of being a traitor, much in the same way that Americans think of Benedict Arnold. Even though Baasha and his son Elah were wicked kings and led Israel into sin, Zimri was equally wicked and took matters into his own hands rather than waiting on God. Daniel 2:21 says that God removes kings and sets up kings. God Himself chose the first king of Israel, Saul (1 Samuel 10:1). And it was God who chose his successors (1 Samuel 16:1; 1 Kings 11:29-31).

We learn from King Zimri that God will not honor our attempts to promote our own greatness. He will not bless selfish plans. In contrast to Zimri's demand for the throne was [David's](#) patient waiting on the Lord. David had been anointed as Israel's next king but refused to lift his hand against the reigning King Saul (1 Samuel 26:9). David righteously refused to harm "the Lord's anointed" (verse 11), but Zimri had no such scruples. David refused to take the throne until God handed it to him; Zimri usurped the throne in a mad grab for power. When we, like David, determine to wait on the Lord, He will exalt us in His time (Psalm 37:34; Isaiah 40:31).

**1 Kings 16:16 The people who were camped heard it said, "Zimri has conspired and has also struck down the king." Therefore all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the camp.**

- **Omri:** 1Ki 16:30 2Ki 8:26 2Ch 22:2 Mic 6:16
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE ARMY GETS WIND OF ZIMRI'S TREACHERY

**The people who were camped heard it said, "Zimri has conspired and has also struck down the king."** - **The people who were camped** refers to men in the army. It is surprising that there was still somewhat of a moral compass in the Israelites in the north. Clearly they interpreted Zimri's act as evil.

**Therefore all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the camp-** Omri was in the right place (commander) at the right time (Zimri's conspiracy and treachery) and thus was crowned king of Israel.

**Bob Utley** - Omri is the most famous king of Israel in non-biblical literature (i.e., Moabite stone and Assyrian documents); as a matter of fact, Israel was known as "the house of Omri." This powerful image of him is not reflected in the Bible. For a good brief account of his reign see R. K Harrison, BORROW [Old Testament Times," pp. 213-216, PAGE 214](#); NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 1026-1027.

**1 Kings 16:17 Then Omri and all Israel with him went up from Gibbethon and besieged Tirzah.**

- **besieged Tirzah:** Jdg 9:45,50,56,57 2Ki 6:24,25 18:9-12 25:1-4 Lu 19:43,44
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **OMRI LAYS SIEGE TO TIRZAH & ZIMRI**

**Then Omri and all Israel with him went up from Gibbethon and besieged Tirzah** - From one siege (Gibbethon) to another (Tirzah).

**1 Kings 16:18 When Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the citadel of the king's house and burned the king's house over him with fire, and died,**

- **burned the king's house:** Jdg 9:54 1Sa 31:4,5 2Sa 17:23 Job 2:9,10 Mt 27:5
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **TIRZAH & ZIMRI THE KING BOTH FALL**

**When Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the citadel of the king's house and burned the king's house over him with fire, and died** - Zimri destroyed as much of the royal residence as he could when he took his life. [TOPIC: SUICIDE](#)

**David Guzik** - Zimri is one of the few suicides in the Bible, along with Samson (Judges 9:54), Saul (1 Samuel 31:4) and Ahithophel (2 Samuel 17:23). The Bible never approves of suicide. It is sin; the sin of self-murder. Yet we are wrong if we regard it as the unforgivable sin, and anyone who does commit suicide has given in to the lies and deceptions of Satan, whose purpose is to kill and destroy (John 10:10).

**G Campbell Morgan:** Suicide is always the ultimate action of cowardice. In the case of Saul, and in many similar cases, it is perfectly natural; but let it never be glorified as heroic. It is the last resort of the man who dare not stand up to life.

**1 Kings 16:19 because of his sins which he sinned, doing evil in the sight of the LORD, walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, making Israel sin.**

- **doing:** 1Ki 16:7,13 15:30 Ps 9:16 58:9-11
- **in his sin:** 1Ki 12:28 14:16 15:26,34
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **SEVEN DAYS OF ZIMRI'S SIN**

**because** - Term of explanation. This explains why Zimri died, in a word, SIN!

**Of his sins which he sinned, doing evil in the sight of the LORD, walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, making Israel sin** - Notice the key word describing Zimri is sin! He apparently was a rank sinner long before his 7 day reign **walking in the way of Jeroboam** before he was king. What a depressing legacy he left.

**1 Kings 16:20 Now the rest of the acts of Zimri and his conspiracy which he carried out, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?**



- **the rest of the acts:** 1Ki 16:5,14,27 14:19 15:31 22:39
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## REST OF THE ACTS OF ZIMRI LOST

**Now the rest of the acts of Zimri and his conspiracy** (KJV - treason - literally, "His conspiracy which he conspired") **which he carried out, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel** - The acts of Zimri and his conspiracy were written in books that were lost. This seems appropriate for such a sinful short reign!

**Bob Utley** - "**conspiracy**" This is literally, "His conspiracy which he conspired." The VERB (BDB 905, KB 1153, *Qal* PERFECT) is combined with the NOUN (BDB 905). This COGNATE ACCUSATIVE occurs six times (cf. 1 Kgs. 16:20; 2 Kgs. 12:20; 14:19; 15:15,30; 2 Chr. 25:27).

**1 Kings 16:21 Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; the other half followed Omri.**

NET 1 Kings 16:21 At that time the people of Israel were divided in their loyalties. Half the people supported Tibni son of Ginath and wanted to make him king; the other half supported Omri.

CSB 1 Kings 16:21 At that time the people of Israel were divided: half the people followed Tibni son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri.

ESV 1 Kings 16:21 Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts. Half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri.

NIV 1 Kings 16:21 Then the people of Israel were split into two factions; half supported Tibni son of Ginath for king, and the other half supported Omri.

NLT 1 Kings 16:21 But now the people of Israel were split into two factions. Half the people tried to make Tibni son of Ginath their king, while the other half supported Omri.

- **divided:** 1Ki 16:8,29 15:25,28 Pr 28:2 Isa 9:18-21 19:2 Mt 12:25 1Co 1:12,13 Eph 4:3-5
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A DIVISION IN THE NORTHERN DIVISION

**Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; the other half followed Omri** - These two verses (v21-22) are the only mention of **Tibni**, so that we know nothing else about him. Records show that he did rule **in** opposition to Omri for about 4-5 years (Compare "**27th** year of Asa" in 1Ki 16:15 and "**31st** year of Asa" in 1Ki 16:23). Josephus says it lasted four years. During this time the Northern Kingdom was divided into the section ruled by King Tibni and the section ruled by King Omri. This was a time of civil war, brother against brother in Israel, another of the wages of forsaking God's ways and worshipping empty idols!

**1 Kings 16:22 But the people who followed Omri prevailed over the people who followed Tibni the son of Ginath. And Tibni died and Omri became king.**

NET 1 Kings 16:22 Omri's supporters were stronger than those who supported Tibni son of Ginath. Tibni died; Omri became king.

CSB 1 Kings 16:22 However, the people who followed Omri proved stronger than those who followed Tibni son of Ginath. So Tibni died and Omri became king.

ESV 1 Kings 16:22 But the people who followed Omri overcame the people who followed Tibni the son of Ginath. So Tibni died, and Omri became king.

NIV 1 Kings 16:22 But Omri's followers proved stronger than those of Tibni son of Ginath. So Tibni died and

Omri became king.

NLT 1 Kings 16:22 But Omri's supporters defeated the supporters of Tibni. So Tibni was killed, and Omri became the next king.

- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## OMNI DEFEATS TIBNI TIBNI O BECOME KING

**But the people who followed Omri prevailed over the people who followed Tibni the son of Ginath.**

**And Tibni died and Omri became king** - We do not know how Tibni died (slain or natural causes).

**1 Kings 16:23 In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king over Israel and reigned twelve years; he reigned six years at Tirzah.**

- **the thirty:** 2Ch 22:2
- **twelve years:** 1Ki 16:8,29
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## OMRI KING OF ISRAEL FOR 12 YEARS

**In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king over Israel and reigned twelve years; he reigned six years at Tirzah.** - So clearly once Omri prevailed over Zimri, he remained in [Tirzah](#) as his capital city.

---

**QUESTION - [Who was King Omri in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)**

**ANSWER** - King Omri was the sixth king of the northern kingdom of Israel. Despite his precarious ascension to the throne, Omri ruled for twelve years (885–874 BC) before his son, [King Ahab](#), succeeded him. As the others before him, Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord, but Omri is noted in the Bible for being the worst of the kings to that point (1 Kings 16:25).

Omri's reign began amidst turmoil. [King Elah](#) had reigned for two years before he was assassinated by one of his officials, [Zimri](#) (1 Kings 16:8–14). Zimri reigned for only seven days (1 Kings 16:15–20). The Israelites heard of Zimri's plot against Elah and "proclaimed Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that very day there in the camp" (1 Kings 16:16). Omri and his men laid siege to the capital city of [Tirzah](#). Upon seeing this, Zimri went into the royal palace and set it on fire, killing himself. Not everyone was sure they wanted Omri to be their king; the people of Israel were split over whom to support. Half of them rallied to Omri, but the other half preferred Tibni for king (1 Kings 16:21). "But Omri's followers proved stronger than those of Tibni son of Ginath. So Tibni died and Omri became king" (1 Kings 16:22).

Omri took undisputed control of Israel during the thirty-first year of [King Asa's](#) reign in the southern kingdom of Judah (1 Kings 16:23). Omri died in the thirty-eighth year of Asa's reign, which accounts for only eight years of the twelve that Omri ruled. This means that Omri must have first risen to power in the twenty-seventh year of Asa and then spent four years in conflict with Tibni. Omri ruled for six years in Tirzah, and during his reign he purchased a hill called Samaria, an easily defended natural stronghold (1 Kings 16:23–24). Samaria remained the capital of Israel for as long as the northern kingdom lasted. The city of Samaria and its surrounding area would later become the home of the despised [Samaritans](#) during Jesus' time.

As did the kings of the ten northern tribes of Israel before him, Omri committed the same sins as Jeroboam, and increasingly so. 1 Kings 16:25–26 says, "Omri did evil in the eyes of the Lord and sinned more than all those before him. He followed completely the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat, committing the same sin Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit, so that they aroused the anger of the Lord, the God of Israel, by their worthless idols." Ahab, Omri's infamous son, went on to do even more evil in God's eyes (1 Kings 16:30–33). The dynasty begun by Omri lasted four generations before God judged their wickedness and brought an end to Omri's line.

---

**QUESTION - [Who/what was Tirzah in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)**

**ANSWER** - Tirzah in the Bible is 1) the name of a city that Joshua conquered (Joshua 12:24), and 2) the name of a woman from

the [tribe of Manasseh](#) who was instrumental in clarifying a law governing family inheritances (Numbers 26:33; Joshua 17:3).

In Joshua chapter 12, we learn of the city of Tirzah, an ancient Canaanite city west of the Jordan River, allotted to the half-tribe of Manasseh. Tirzah was conquered by Joshua (Joshua 12:24). Tirzah became the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel from the time of Jeroboam I until the reign of Omri. It was Omri who moved the capital to Samaria (1 Kings 16:23).

There aren't many references to the city of Tirzah in the Bible, but we do know a few things about it. Tirzah was where Jeroboam's son died. Also Baasha, Elah, and Zimri ruled Israel from Tirzah (1 Kings 14:17; 15:33; 16:6, 15). The city is compared to a beautiful young woman in Song of Solomon 6:4, "You are as beautiful as Tirzah, my darling, as lovely as Jerusalem, as majestic as troops with banners."

The other Tirzah, a [daughter of Zelophehad](#), joined her four sisters and came to Moses with a concern over how the Promised Land was to be divided to their family. In Numbers 26:52–56, Moses was given instructions from the Lord on how to divide up the land for inheritance, but these sisters had a unique situation in that they had no male relatives to maintain the inheritance for them (verse 33). With no father and no brothers to inherit a portion of the land, the daughters of Zelophehad would be left destitute. In Numbers 27:1–4 Tirzah and her sisters proposed to Moses that they be allowed to inherit their father's portion of the land. God ruled in favor of the daughters. They could inherit their father's portion of the land as a way to provide for themselves and preserve the memory of their father (verses 5–11). Later, in Numbers 36, we once again hear about the daughters of Zelophehad. This time it is in relation to whom they could marry. A potential problem loomed: if Tirzah and her sisters, who were now landowners, married men outside their tribe, they would join their husbands' tribes and take their father's property with them. As the sisters married men from other tribes, the property allotted to Manasseh, the tribe of Zelophehad, would be diminished (Numbers 36:1–3). God instructed that the daughters of Zelophehad could marry anyone they wanted *within* their father's tribal clan. The land promised to Zelophehad could not be parceled out to other tribes.

The name *Tirzah* means "she is my delight." Throughout the Bible, God shows special concern for the widow and the orphan. This was certainly the case with Tirzah and the other daughters of Zelophehad.

**1 Kings 16:24 He bought the hill Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; and he built on the hill, and named the city which he built Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill.**

- **the name of the city:** 1Ki 13:32 18:2 20:1 22:37 2Ki 17:1,6,24 Joh 4:4,5 Ac 8:5-8
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## OMRI BUYS AND BUILDS SAMARIA

**He bought the hill Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; and he built on the hill, and named the city which he built Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill** - This hill was about 300 feet high and about 7 miles northwest of Shechem.

[Bob Utley](#) - "**He bought the hill Samaria from Shemer**" Samaria (see NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 1163-1165) was a very fortified, geographical location with a 400 foot drop on three sides, which meant only one side had to be fortified. The hill contained its own spring inside the walls of the city. This city was such a major fortification that it took Tiglath-Pileser three years to finally capture it in 722 b.c. "**Shemer**" The name Shemer (BDB 1037 I) is a play on the Hebrew word "watchtower." The name Samaria retains this play on the word.

**John MacArthur** writes on Samaria "Though ringed by other mountains, it stood by itself so that attackers had to charge uphill from every side. This new capital amounted to the northern equivalent of Jerusalem. Its central location gave Israelites easy access to it." (See [The MacArthur Bible Commentary- Page 418](#))

**August Konkell:** Though the establishment of the capital of Israel at Samaria is never declared to be the divine will and is not accomplished by a king subservient to the covenant, Samaria becomes an icon of political success. With the strategic location of the capital and the alliances with neighboring countries, Israel became a nation of considerable political force. The splendor of Samaria can still be seen in the ruins uncovered by archaeologists. (See [1 and 2 Kings - Page 279](#))

**1 Kings 16:25 Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, and acted more wickedly than all who were before him.**

- **did evil in the sight of the LORD**, 1Ki 16:30,31,33 14:9 Mic 6:16
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## OMRI'S REIGN OF UNMATCHED EVIL

**Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, and acted more wickedly than all who were before him**- We can only imagine the depth of depravity in Omri's reign for him to be said to surpass Jeroboam's evil! But as they say "you ain't seen nothing yet," for his son Ahab learned his father's evil and took it to new heights of wickedness!

**Constable:** Assyrian records refer to Israel as "the land of Omri." His influence extended far. He defeated the Moabites, the record of which constitutes one of the inscriptions on the famous Moabite Stone. He also made a treaty with Ethbaal, king of Tyre and Sidon (887-856 B.C.), that involved the marriage of his son, Ahab, and Ethbaal's daughter, Jezebel. A granddaughter of Ethbaal, Dido, founded Carthage. Still the writer of Kings did not mention these strengths, only the fact that he was the worst king Israel had had spiritually (v. 25). He was very bad because he personally followed Jeroboam's cult and caused the people to sin by allowing it to flourish in Israel

**R. D. Patterson:** Despite Omri's forward-looking vision for restoring Israel's strength and his many accomplishments, spiritually he was more destitute than all his predecessors (vv. 25-26). Not only did he perpetuate the spiritual sins of Jeroboam, but his ties with Phoenicia were to unleash on Israel the common pagan social and religious practices known to the ancient world. Therefore the scriptural record concerning Omri is both brief and condemnatory. (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Page 50](#))

**1 Kings 16:26 For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat and in his sins which he made Israel sin, provoking the LORD God of Israel with their idols.**

- **he walked:** 1Ki 16:2,7,19 12:26-33 13:33,34
- **their idols:** 1Ki 16:13 Ps 31:6 Jer 8:19 10:3,8 14:22 16:19 18:15 Ac 14:15 Ro 1:21-23
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## OMRI WALKED LIKE JEROBOAM

**For** - Term of explanation. What is the writer explaining? He is explaining why Omri wins the title of "MOST EVIL KING TO DATE!"

**He walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat and in his sins which he made Israel sin, provoking the LORD God of Israel with their idols**

**Knapp** says that Omri "seems to have formulated laws [see Micah 6:16], making Jeroboam's calf-worship, or other forms of idolatry, obligatory throughout his realm, which remained in force till the end of the kingdom, more than two hundred years later."

**1 Kings 16:27 Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did and his might which he showed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?**

- **the rest:** 1Ki 16:5,14,20 15:31
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did and his might which he showed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel**

**Knapp** - **Omri's** name "means *heaping*; by his iniquity he helped to heap up wrath against his dynasty. God executed His indignation thirty-six years later on his great-grandson Joram, to the total extinction of the guilty house." (Knapp)

**1 Kings 16:28 So Omri slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria; and Ahab his son became king in his place.**

- **So Omri slept:** 1Ki 16:6
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## AHAB SUCCEEDS HIS FATHER OMRI

**So Omri slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria; and Ahab his son became king in his place-** Ahab's name means "father's brother," "brother of the father" or "resembling the father," which is certainly apropos because Ahab's wickedness would resemble and even surpass the depth of depravity of his father Omri!

I like [David Guzik's](#) comments - "It can be said of some sons, "He has his father's eyes." It could be said of Ahab, "He has his father's lies." Jeroboam intended to serve the LORD through idolatrous images (such as the golden calf) and in disobedient ways (altars and high places other than Jerusalem). Ahab introduced the worship of completely new, pagan gods. In his disobedience Jeroboam said, "I will worship the LORD, but do it my way." Ahab said, "I want to forget about the LORD completely and worship Baal." iii. In his later years, Solomon tragically worshipped pagan gods. Yet Omri and Ahab were far worse in that they *commanded* the worship of idols.

**Dilday** - [Omri's](#) fame as a monarch, while downplayed by the author of Kings, was widely recognized in other places. The Moabite stone, discovered in 1868, refers to him as the conqueror of Moab. Assyrian inscriptions make mention of him as a great warrior. For years the Assyrians referred to Israel as "the house of Omri" (See [The Preacher's Commentary - Vol. 09: 1 and 2 Kings - Page 25](#))

### QUESTION - [Who was King Ahab in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**ANSWER** - Ahab was one in a line of increasingly evil kings in Israel's history, starting with the reign of Jeroboam. King Ahab "did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him" (1 Kings 16:30). Among the events chronicled in Ahab's life that led to his downfall was his marriage to an evil woman named [Jezebel](#) who had a particular hatred for God's people (1 Kings 18:4). Because of his marriage to a pagan woman, Ahab devoted himself to the worship of the false gods [Baal](#) and [Asherah](#) in Israel (1 Kings 16:31–33).

The evil of King Ahab was countered by the [prophet Elijah](#) who warned Ahab of coming judgment if he did not obey the Lord. Ahab blamed Elijah for bringing trouble on Israel (1 Kings 18:17), but it was Ahab's promotion of idolatry that was the true cause of the three-and-a-half-year famine (verse 18). In a dramatic [confrontation](#) between Elijah and Ahab's false prophets, God proved to Israel that He, not Baal, was the true God (1 Kings 18:16–39). All of Ahab's men of Baal were killed that day (verse 40).

King Ahab also disobeyed the Lord's direct command to destroy [Ben-Hadad](#), the king of Aram. God set it up so that Ahab would lead Israel to victory, but Ahab made a treaty with the king he was supposed to kill (1 Kings 20). "Therefore," God told Ahab through an unnamed prophet, "it is your life for his life, your people for his people" (verse 42).

The event that sealed Ahab's doom was his murder of an innocent man ([1 Kings 21](#)). Ahab coveted a vineyard belonging to a man named [Naboth](#). The king offered to buy the vineyard, but Naboth refused, because the Law forbade him to sell it (1 Kings 21:2–3; cf. Leviticus 25:23). While Ahab sulked about it in his palace, his wife arranged Naboth's murder. Once the vineyard's owner was out of the way, King Ahab took the vineyard for himself. Elijah came to Ahab and told him the Lord would deal with him by cutting off all his descendants. Also, Ahab himself would suffer an ignoble fate: "In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!" (1 Kings 21:19). Upon hearing this, Ahab "tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly" (verse 27). In response to Ahab's repentance, God mercifully postponed the destruction of Ahab's dynasty until after Ahab was dead (verse 29).

The prophesied judgment against Ahab came true exactly as Elijah predicted. God used Ahab's own false prophets to entice him into going to the battle at Ramoth-Gilead, where he was hit by a "random" arrow and slowly bled to death in his chariot. Later, "they washed the chariot at a pool in Samaria (where the prostitutes bathed), and the dogs licked up his blood, as the word of the Lord had declared" (1 Kings 22:38). After Ahab's death, [Jehu](#) killed Jezebel (2 Kings 9) and all of Ahab's descendants (2 Kings 10).

King Ahab was justly judged by God because he disobeyed the Lord's direct commands, he abused his responsibility as Israel's king, and he led God's people right into idolatry. In the end, "there was never anyone like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, urged on by Jezebel his wife. He behaved in the vilest manner by going after idols" (1 Kings 21:25–26).

### QUESTION - [What is the story of Ahab and Jezebel? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**ANSWER** - King Ahab and Queen Jezebel served as leaders of the northern kingdom of Israel during a time of much evil in the land. [King Ahab](#) was an Israelite king who married a Sidonian woman named Jezebel and became involved in worshipping [Baal](#), the

god of her people. Ahab built a house to Baal in the capital city of Samaria and made an [Asherah pole](#) as a tool of pagan worship. We are told, “Ahab did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him” (1 Kings 16:33).

Jezebel was likewise known for her evil actions. She was the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians. After her marriage to Ahab, her first recorded action was cutting off the prophets of the Lord (1 Kings 18:4). Obadiah, a God-fearing officer in Ahab’s court, noted that Jezebel killed many prophets, despite Obadiah’s efforts to save them: “Has it not been told my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, how I hid a hundred men of the LORD’s prophets by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water?” (1 Kings 18:13–14).

It was during the time of Ahab and Jezebel that [Elijah](#) was the prophet in Israel. Satan had his couple on the throne, but God had His man in the field, performing miracles and leading a revival against Baal-worship. The three-and-a-half-year drought that Elijah prayed for was part of God’s judgment on the wickedness of the nation and its leaders.

When Elijah confronted Ahab near the end of the drought, the king said to him, “Is that you, you troubler of Israel?” (1 Kings 18:17). But Ahab had it wrong. Elijah was not the one bringing trouble on the land. The prophet corrected the king: “I have not made trouble for Israel . . . but you and your father’s family have. You have abandoned the Lord’s commands and have followed the Baals” (verse 18).

After Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal and had them killed at Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18), Jezebel issued a death threat against him (1 Kings 19:2). The queen went on to plot against [Naboth](#), the innocent owner of a vineyard that Ahab coveted. Jezebel had Naboth killed so the king could confiscate his land (1 Kings 21), and she prodded her husband into many other wicked acts besides: “There was none who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the LORD like Ahab, whom Jezebel his wife incited” (1 Kings 21:25).

Ahab’s death was predicted by the prophets Elijah and [Micaiah](#) (1 Kings 21:19; 22:28). Jezebel’s gruesome death was also predicted by Elijah (1 Kings 21:23). True to the prophecy, Ahab was killed in a battle with Syria. Later, Jezebel was thrown from a tower, “and some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses, and they trampled on her” (2 Kings 9:33). Then, “when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands” (2 Kings 9:35). Just as Elijah had said, the dogs ate Jezebel.

In Revelation 2:20 Jezebel’s reputation lives on as Jesus speaks against the [church at Thyatira](#): “But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols.” The woman’s name in Thyatira was probably not literally “Jezebel,” but her immorality and idolatry in preying upon God’s people was very Jezebel-like.

Both Ahab and Jezebel were leaders of God’s people who forsook the Lord and served other gods. The royal couple earned a reputation for sin and violence, and they both suffered violent deaths as part of God’s judgment on their actions.

**1 Kings 16:29 Now Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years.**

- **Samaria:** 1Ki 16:24
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **AHAB REIGNS ISRAEL FOR 22 YEARS**

**Now Ahab the son of [Omri](#) became king over Israel in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years** - Asa reigned for 41 years in total (1 Kings 15:10) while there were 8 kings in the Northern Kingdom. One reason for this difference is of course the godlessness and idolatry of the northern kings and the general godliness of Asa who made no idols. The other reason of course is that God was preserving the line of David as part of His promise to keep the [Davidic Covenant](#).

**Kings of Israel Whose Reign  
Overlapped with King Asa's 41 Years**

1. **Jeroboam I (931–910 BC)**  
- 1 year overlap with Asa (911–910 BC)
2. **Nadab (910–909 BC) – Son of Jeroboam I** (1 Kings 15:25-28) - "  
- 2 year overlap with Asa (911–909 BC)
3. **Baasha (909–886 BC) – Usurper, 3rd King of Israel** (1 Kings 15:27-34; 1 Kings 16:1-6) -  
- 23 year overlap with Asa (909–886 BC)
4. **Elah (886–885 BC) – Son of Baasha** (1 Kings 16:8-10)  
- 1 year overlap with Asa (885 BC)
5. **Zimri (885 BC) – 7-Day King** (1 Kings 16:9-20)  
- 7 days overlap with Asa (885 BC)
6. **Tibni (885–880 BC, Rival to Omri)** (1 Kings 16:21-22)  
- 4 to 5 year overlap with Asa (885–880 BC)
7. **Omri (885–874 BC, Sole Ruler from 880 BC Onward)** (1 Kings 16:23-28)  
- 6 year overlap with Asa (880–874 BC)
8. **Ahab (874-853 BC)** (1 Kings 16:29-34; 1 Kings 17-22)  
- 4 year overlap with Asa (874–870 BC)

### The Dynasty of Omri (Fourth Dynasty, Most Powerful)

**Reigned: 885–841 BC**

#### Members:

1. **Omri** (885–874 BC) – Established **Samaria as Israel's capital** and made Israel a regional power. Note that **Tibni** was a rival king of Omri over the Northern Kingdom but was not a fully recognized ruler by all of Israel, never was uncontested and left no ruling descendants. Therefore technically for these reasons **Tibni** is not considered a true **dynasty** like the others who ruled undisputedly for a period.
2. **Ahab** (874–853 BC) – Son of Omri, **one of the most wicked kings**. Married **Jezebel**, led Israel into Baal worship, opposed by Elijah (**1 Kings 16:30-33**).
3. **Ahaziah** (853–852 BC) – Son of Ahab, fell through a window and died without an heir.
4. **Joram (Jehoram) of Israel** (852–841 BC) – Brother of Ahaziah, killed by Jehu.

**Ended when Jehu killed Joram** (1 Kings 9:24).

**1 Kings 16:30 Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD more than all who were before him.**

- above: 1Ki 16:25,31,33 14:9 21:25 2Ki 3:2
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### GOING FROM BAD TO WORSE!

**Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD more than all who were before him** - Omri was more evil than all before him and now his son Ahab even surpasses the evil of Omri!

**1 Kings 16:31 It came about, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he married Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went to serve Baal and worshiped him.**

- as if it had been a light thing: Heb. was it a light thing, Ge 30:15 Nu 16:9 Isa 7:13 Eze 8:17 16:20,47 34:18
- took to wife: Ge 6:2 De 7:3,4 Jos 23:12,13 Ne 13:23-29
- Jezebel: 1Ki 18:4,19 19:1,2 21:5-14,25 2Ki 9:30-37 Rev 2:20
- the Sidonians: 1Ki 11:1 Jdg 10:12 18:7

- and went: 1Ki 11:4-8
- served Baal: 1Ki 21:25,26 Jdg 2:11 3:7 10:6 2Ki 10:18 17:16
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Exodus 34:16+ and you might take some of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters might play the harlot with their gods and **cause your sons also to play the harlot with their gods.**

Deuteronomy 7:3-4+ "Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. 4 **"For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods;** then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you.

1 Kings 11:1-3+ Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian (LIKE AHAB'S WIFE JEZEBEL), and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel, "You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, for **they will surely turn your heart away after their gods.**" Solomon held fast to these in love. 3 He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away.

## AHAB BECOMES UNEQUALLY YOKED TO BAAL WORSHIPPING JEZEBEL

**It came about, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he married Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went to serve ([abad](#); Lxx - [douleuo](#) = enslaved to) [Baal](#) and worshiped ([shachah](#); Lxx - [proskuneo](#)) him** - Ahab clearly disobeys God's warning in Ex 34:16+ and Dt 7:3-4+ by marrying a Sidonian woman. As a result Ahab became a Baal worshiper because his wife Jezebel a devout Baal worshiper. She was obviously influenced by her father [Ethbaal](#) (see below). Recall that Solomon also married a Sidonian woman (1Ki 11:1) and look what happened to his heart. Notice that Ahab goes "all in" for Baal, not just worshiping this false god but also becoming a servant of this non-entity! His heart was completely deceived and enraptured by this pagan so-called deity!

It is interesting to note that Baal means something like "master," "owner," or "husband." That is fitting for in Ahab's case, Baal became his master and he **served and worshiped him!**

**THOUGHT** - Watch out for idols! They are not neutral playthings, but they will steal your heart from your first love of Jesus (Rev 2:4-5) and you will end up in bondage to them. And remember idols come in many shapes, sizes and forms. I recently realized watching youtube videos (all the amazing, even shocking political hoopla occurring in Jan-March, 2025) and I began to find myself waking early in the morning (I mean sometimes at 3AM) to grab my Ipad and check the latest youtube news while my Bible sadly lay at my side unopened. I cannot explain how I came to my senses (I didn't, God did). I firmly believe the Spirit of God mercifully convicted me that morning showing me that I was serving and worshiping the news videos on youtube! For almost 2 months I had bowed down to that idol! You may think I am exaggerating but I can attest that over the first few days of youtube fasting I had to fight the temptation to take just a quick peek at the latest news (I call that bondage). On the other hand, I can also affirm that the morning I said it is time to repent and jettison youtube news videos, God's Spirit spoke to me, in of all places, in the book of Leviticus, chapter 1, showing me some beautiful truths I had never seen before! I was ecstatically grateful to Him. All this to say I am beginning to understand the apostle John's last command in First John "Little children, **guard** ([phulasso](#) in the [present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves from idols." (1Jn 5:21+)

**Gotquestions** - The king of Israel at the time was [Ahab](#), a weak, self-pitying man who abdicated his authority to his bride, the princess Jezebel. In spite of God's laws forbidding idolatry and the worship of any god but the Lord, Ahab married this princess who brought to Israel with her hundreds of priests of lewd Baal worship, a cult that tended to destroy manhood and drag womanhood into shame. Jezebel was such a domineering person that she soon became master over her weak husband. One of her first acts was to order the extermination of the prophets of the Lord (1 Kings 18:4, 13) and set up altars to Baal. So pervasive was her idolatrous influence in Israel that Jesus later used her name to refer to a woman who led the church at Thyatira into immorality and the worship of false gods (Revelation 2:20).

**THOUGHT** - Single men out there, be very, very careful about who you choose as a life-partner in the solemn covenant of marriage! (Read 2Co 6:14-18+)



**Ethbaal** means "with Baal" or "Baal is with him." He apparently was both a king and a priest of Baal, reinforcing Baal worship as the state religion in Phoenicia. Josephus (quoting Menander of Ephesus) states that Ethbaal usurped the throne of Tyre around 887 BC by murdering King Pheles. He ruled for about 32 years and expanded Phoenician influence through political alliances, including his daughter's marriage to Ahab.

**Dilday** - "Jezebel's name may come from a cultic cry used in the worship of Baal meaning 'Where is Baal?' Translated into Hebrew the name was also a verbal pun that the Israelites must have relished. *Zebe* in Hebrew means dung!....Had a secular historian been recording these events, the marriage of Ahab and Jezebel would likely have been applauded as a prudent political move. Both Phoenicia and Israel were being threatened by Syria, and the marriage gave Ahab a powerful military ally at a crucial time ([The Preacher's Commentary - Vol. 09: 1 and 2 Kings - Page 14](#))

David Guzik - It seemed like the marriage partnership between Tyre and Israel was ideal for Israel. Tyre was at the height of its glory. "Her colonies dotted the shores of the Mediterranean as far as Spain; her ships whitened every sea with their sails, and ventured to the coasts of our own Cornwall for tin; her daughter, Carthage, nursed the lion-cup Hannibal, and was strong enough to make Rome tremble" (Meyer).

---

**Worshipped** (bowed down, prostrate himself) ([07812](#)) **shachah** means to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to crouch, to fall down, to humbly beseech, to do reverence, to worship. The idea is to assume a prostrate position as would in paying homage to royalty (Ge 43:28) or to God (Ge 24:26, Ps 95:6). In the first use in Genesis (which has most of the uses - 21v), when Abraham saw "three men (one of Whom was most likely the pre-incarnate Christ)... standing opposite him... he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed (shachah) himself to the earth (Ge 18:2, cp Lot bowing to the two angels - Ge 19:1) It is used to describe Joseph's brother's sheaves which "bowed down to my sheaf." (Ge 37:7) When God told Abraham to sacrifice his son, he told his men to remain for they would go to "worship and return to you." (Ge 22:5) Joshua bowed down to the "Captain of the host of the LORD," (Joshua 5:14) almost assuredly a preincarnate appearance of Messiah. In Josh 23:7, 16 Joshua warned Israel NOT to bow down to the idols of the land, but in Jdg 2:12, 17, 19 that is exactly what they did!

The English word **prostrate** is defined as being stretched out with one's face on the ground in adoration or submission. It is not just that the person has fallen down but pictures them lying at length or with their body extended on the ground and so lying in a posture which is reflective of genuine humility and/or adoration.

**SHACHAH IN KINGS AND CHRONICLES** - 1 Ki. 1:16; 1 Ki. 1:23; 1 Ki. 1:31; 1 Ki. 1:47; 1 Ki. 1:53; 1 Ki. 2:19; 1 Ki. 9:6; 1 Ki. 9:9; 1 Ki. 11:33; 1 Ki. 16:31; 1 Ki. 22:53; 2 Ki. 2:15; 2 Ki. 4:37; 2 Ki. 5:18; 2 Ki. 17:16; 2 Ki. 17:35; 2 Ki. 17:36; 2 Ki. 18:22; 2 Ki. 19:37; 2 Ki. 21:3; 2 Ki. 21:21; 1 Chr. 16:29; 1 Chr. 21:21; 1 Chr. 29:20; 2 Chr. 7:3; 2 Chr. 7:19; 2 Chr. 7:22; 2 Chr. 20:18; 2 Chr. 24:17; 2 Chr. 25:14; 2 Chr. 29:28; 2 Chr. 29:29; 2 Chr. 29:30; 2 Chr. 32:12; 2 Chr. 33:3

**Baal** (proper noun)([01168](#)) **ba'al** refers to the pagan god who was called by the name "Baal". Elijah contended with and exterminated the prophets of Baal (1 Ki 18:18, 19, 21, 22, 25, 26, 40). One of the more incredible mentions of Baal is Jehu's eradication of them from the northern kingdom (see 2 Ki 10:18-28). Before God would use Gideon to deliver His people from the Moabites, He first had him tear down his father's backyard altar to Baal (Jdg 6:25, 28, 30-31-note). As a result Gideon was named Jerrubball ("Let Baal contend against him" - Jdg 6:32-note). Under Gideon Israel was set free from Moabite oppression, but apparently they people were not set free from the "seed" of Baal worship in their hearts for "Then it came about, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the sons of Israel again played the harlot (SPIRITUAL ADULTERY!) with the Baals, and made Baal-berith their god" (Jdg 8:33-note)! Wow! Our hearts are more deceitful than all else and are desperately sick (Jer 17:9)! In 1 Sa 7:4 we see that "Israel removed the Baals and the Ashtaroth and served the LORD alone" but they must have backslide because we see their cry in 1 Sam 12:10! Beware of idols.

Used with the definite article, it means the god Baal served by the Canaanites and Philistines, but Israel was caught up in worshiping this pagan god, too (Judg. 2:11, 13; 6:25; 28, 30; 1 Kgs. 18:18, 19, 21; 19:18; 2 Kgs. 3:2; 10:18-23; Hos. 2:8[10]). The word occurs in the plural, indicating the many manifestations of pagan polytheism (Judg. 2:11; 1 Sam. 7:4; 12:10; 1 Kgs. 18:18; Jer. 2:23; Hos. 11:2). It is used without the definite article as a name indicating, e.g., high places of Baal (Num. 22:41; NIV renders as Bamoth Baal).

**BAAL - 66V** - Baal(58), Baal's(1), Baals(18), Bamoth-baal\*(1). Num. 22:41; Jos. 13:17; Jdg. 2:11; Jdg. 2:13; Jdg. 3:7; Jdg. 6:25; Jdg. 6:28; Jdg. 6:30; Jdg. 6:31; Jdg. 6:32; Jdg. 8:33; Jdg. 10:6; Jdg. 10:10; 1 Sam. 7:4; 1 Sam. 12:10; 1 Ki. 16:31; 1 Ki. 16:32; 1 Ki. 18:18; 1 Ki. 18:19; 1 Ki. 18:21; 1 Ki. 18:22; 1 Ki. 18:25; 1 Ki. 18:26; 1 Ki. 18:40; 1 Ki. 19:18; 1 Ki. 22:53; 2 Ki. 3:2; 2 Ki. 10:18; 2 Ki. 10:19; 2 Ki. 10:20; 2 Ki. 10:21; 2 Ki. 10:22; 2 Ki. 10:23; 2 Ki. 10:25; 2 Ki. 10:26; 2 Ki. 10:27; 2 Ki. 10:28; 2 Ki. 11:18; 2 Ki. 17:16; 2 Ki. 21:3; 2 Ki. 23:4; 2 Ki. 23:5; 2 Chr. 17:3; 2 Chr. 23:17; 2 Chr. 24:7; 2 Chr. 28:2; 2 Chr. 33:3; 2 Chr. 34:4; Jer. 2:8; Jer. 2:23; Jer. 7:9;

Jer. 9:14; Jer. 11:13; Jer. 11:17; Jer. 12:16; Jer. 19:5; Jer. 23:13; Jer. 23:27; Jer. 32:29; Jer. 32:35; Hos. 2:8; Hos. 2:13; Hos. 2:17; Hos. 11:2; Hos. 13:1; Zeph. 1:4

**Bob Utley** - We learn of the worship of this Canaanite deity from the Ugaritic tablets. Originally he was a weather god who defeated *Yamm* the god of the waters. Later he developed into the fertility god in his relationship to *Mot*, the god of death and the underworld. *Mot* killed *Ba'al*, but *Ba'al's* sister, *Anath*, attacked *Mot* and destroyed him. Out of this mythological struggle the annual spring fertility was attributed to *Ba'al* coming back from the underworld. In the Bible, *Ba'al* is associated with *Asherah*, his female consort.

- [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org) - [Who is Baal?](http://GotQuestions.org)

---

## Wicked Ruler - John Butler

"It came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshiped him." (1 Kings 16:31)

AHAB was a very wicked king. In fact, Scripture says he was more wicked than any of his predecessors (1 Kings 16:30, 33). His wickedness was a great curse to his kingdom. Our verse today gives a brief but instructive snapshot of Ahab which shows the evil in his walk, his wife, and his worship. The news media of Ahab's day would not describe Ahab this way. They would, like our news media, describe the wicked ruler in glowing terms. But Scripture speaks the truth unlike much of the news media.

**His walk.** "As if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam." Ahab was wicked like Jeroboam, the first king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. And this evil was so accepted that it was considered a "light thing" to do. How often evil becomes so common that it is not considered serious. Today in our land abortion, gambling, homosexuality and other evil acts of conduct are all treated lightly as though they were not serious failures of conduct. But God does not treat sin lightly! He will judge sin properly.

**His wife.** "He took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians." Jezebel was a very wicked woman. In fact, she was more wicked than Ahab. Her father was not only a king but was also a priest of Baal which explains why Jezebel was so wicked. Later Scripture says Jezebel "stirred up" (1 Kings 21:25) Ahab to work evil. Marry the ungodly and you will be ungodly. Associate with the ungodly and you will act ungodly.

**His worship.** "Went and served Baal, and worshiped him." The influence of Jezebel encouraged Ahab to reject Jehovah and worship Baal instead. Baal worship was a vile religion that involved gross immoralities and engaged in bloody persecution of Jehovah worshipers. Creed determines conduct, and Ahab's wicked worship encouraged his wicked lifestyle. If we do not worship well, we will not behave well.

---

## QUESTION - [Who was Jezebel in the Bible?](http://GotQuestions.org) | [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

**ANSWER** - "Jezebel" is a name synonymous with evil; she is the epitome of the wicked woman. So infamous is her name that, to this day, no one names their baby daughter "Jezebel." To call a woman a "Jezebel" is the greatest insult imaginable. Jezebel was the daughter of Ethbaal, a priest of the cruel, sensuous, false god Baal. Ethbaal, the priest-king of Tyre who murdered his own brother to take over the throne, was hardly a good father figure. But Jezebel followed in her father's footsteps and was herself a power-hungry murderess who stopped at nothing to get what she wanted.

The king of Israel at the time was [Ahab](#), a weak, self-pitying man who abdicated his authority to his bride, the princess Jezebel. In spite of God's laws forbidding idolatry and the worship of any god but the Lord, Ahab married this princess who brought to Israel with her hundreds of priests of lewd Baal worship, a cult that tended to destroy manhood and drag womanhood into shame. Jezebel was such a domineering person that she soon became master over her weak husband. One of her first acts was to order the extermination of the prophets of the Lord ([1 Kings 18:4, 13](#)) and set up altars to Baal. So pervasive was her idolatrous influence in Israel that Jesus later used her name to refer to a woman who led the church at Thyatira into immorality and the worship of false gods ([Revelation 2:20](#)).

Jezebel's strongest enemy was the great prophet Elijah, who defied her and opposed her evil rule. First, he pronounced the punishment of God upon Israel in the form of a drought which lasted three years ([James 5:17](#)). This culminated in a contest on [Mount Carmel](#) between the powers of Israel's true God and the Baals. After the 450 priests of Baal and 400 priests of Asherah spent the day beseeching their gods with wailing and self-mutilation to end the drought, all to no avail, Elijah prayed to his omnipotent God who responded by accepting the sacrifice, having the false prophets slaughtered, and providing an abundance of rain ([1 Kings 18:16-46](#)). Instead of acknowledging the awesome power of the one true God, Jezebel was enraged and vowed to kill Elijah ([1 Kings 19:1-2](#)). Elijah fled from her wrath to the wilderness ([1 Kings 19:3-8](#)).

In the meantime, Jezebel was proving herself to be the greedy, murderous, evil woman she truly was. A righteous man named [Naboth](#) owned a vineyard next to Ahab's palace. Ahab offered to buy the vineyard, but Naboth, honoring God's command to keep inheritances within the family, rightly refused to sell. Ahab became "sullen and angry" and went home to sulk on his bed. Jezebel ridiculed him for his weakness and told him to cheer up for she would get the vineyard for him. She plotted with two lying scoundrels to have Naboth falsely accused and denounced, then put to death. Then she calmly declared to Ahab that the vineyard was his ([1 Kings 21:1-16](#)). Here we see the formula for a disastrous marriage: a weak, childish man who allows his evil, domineering wife to rule the home. This is the exact opposite of God's plan for marriage: a loving husband who leads his family, and whose care for his wife mirrors that of Christ and His church ([Ephesians 5:25-26, 28-29](#)), and a godly woman who submits to her husband "as to the Lord" ([Ephesians 5:22](#)), each submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ ([Ephesians 5:21](#); [Colossians 3:18-19](#); [1 Peter 3:7](#)).

As with all who defy the Lord, Jezebel's end was not a pretty one, although it was more gruesome than most, perhaps as an object lesson to all who set themselves up against the one true God. Her doom was sure, having been prophesied by Elijah in [1 Kings 21:23](#). Even as she saw her death approaching, she remained defiant to the end, painting her face and adorning herself in queenly garments. She looked out the window and shouted her defiance to Jehu, the next king of Israel who came to take his throne ([2 Kings 9:30-37](#)). Jehu commanded her to be thrown out the window to her death, where she was trampled by the horses' hooves and almost entirely consumed by dogs. Her thirty years of tyranny over Israel had ended. The terror visited upon Jezebel was a testimony to the Israelites, and to us, that God's power is supreme and those who defy Him will meet a terrible end.

**1 Kings 16:32 So he erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal which he built in Samaria.**

- **the house of Baal:** 2Ki 10:21,26,27
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **AHAB'S BLATANT APOSTASY! BUILDING A TEMPLE FOR BAAL**

**So** - Term of conclusion. Why is this a conclusion? What has the writer just clearly stated about Ahab?

**He erected an altar for [Baal](#) in the house of [Baal](#) which he built in Samaria** - While Jehovah had His house in Jerusalem, Ahab built a house for his false god in Samaria, which in effect made Baalism the official pagan religion of the Northern Kingdom. Recall that Jeroboam I had installed syncretistic worship (Yahweh and idols), but Ahab is fully into Baal worship.

**[Bob Utley](#)** - "**Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians**" The name (BDB 33) may mean "Zebul exists," thereby "*Ba'al* exists." Her father's name contains "Baal." Jezebel was the means by which wholesale Phoenician Baalism entered into the daily life of the people of Israel. [FERTILITY WORSHIP OF THE ANE](#)

**Cogan** draws an interesting analogy pointing out that "Ahab's introduction of the cult of Baal in Samaria is hardly different from Solomon's installation of various high places in Jerusalem (cf. 1 Kings 11:7); both monarchs honored their wives by supporting the worship of their native gods." (Borrow [1 Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary Page 420](#))

**F B Meyer** on the bad reign of Ahab: "This came to pass, not so much because his character was more depraved: but because he was a weak man, the tool of a crafty, unscrupulous, and cruel woman: and some of the worst crimes that have ever been committed have been wrought by weak men, at the instigation of worse – but stronger – spirits than themselves."

**1 Kings 16:33 Ahab also made the Asherah. Thus Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who were before him.**

KJV 1 Kings 16:33 And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

BGT 1 Kings 16:33 κα πο ησεν Αχααβ λοςος κα προσθηκεν Αχααβ το ποισαι παροργσματα το παροργσαι τ ν ψυχ ν α το το ξολεθρευθειν κακοπο ησεν π ρ π τας το ς βασιλε ς Ισραηλ το ς γενομ νους

μπροσθεν α το

LXE 1 Kings 16:33 And Achaab made a grove; and Achaab did yet more abominably, to provoke the Lord God of Israel, and to sin against his own life so that he should be destroyed: he did evil above all the kings of Israel that were before him.

NET 1 Kings 16:33 Ahab also made an Asherah pole; he did more to anger the LORD God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

CSB 1 Kings 16:33 Ahab also made an Asherah pole. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

ESV 1 Kings 16:33 And Ahab made an Asherah. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

NIV 1 Kings 16:33 Ahab also made an Asherah pole and did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than did all the kings of Israel before him.

NLT 1 Kings 16:33 Then he set up an Asherah pole. He did more to provoke the anger of the LORD, the God of Israel, than any of the other kings of Israel before him.

- **made the Asherah:** Ex 34:13 2Ki 13:6 17:16 21:3 Jer 17:1,2
- **did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel:** 1Ki 16:30 21:19,25 22:6,8
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **AHAB'S SURPASSES THE SINS OF PREDECESSORS**

**Ahab also made the Asherah** ([Asherah](#)) - Ahab is directly promoting pagan worship to worship of Yahweh.

**William Barnes** - This particular Asherah symbol will apparently survive until after the reign of the reformer king, Jehu (cf. 2 Kgs 13:6). (See 1-2 Kings - Page 146)

**Thus** - This is almost like a conclusion, based on Ahab's becoming unequally yoked and going full in for worship of Baal and Asherah.

**Ahab did more to provoke** ([kaas](#); Lxx - [parorgizo](#)) **the LORD God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who were before him** - Don't miss who Ahab provokes - the **LORD God** Who was still the **God of Israel!** The king of Israel might have denied Him, but He was still the true God of Israel and Israel's Husband (Je 31:31, 32+, Isa 54:5). As such He had a right to be jealous of His people playing the harlot with other "lovers!" Ahab's actions were a direct assault to the truth that Yahweh was Israel's "Husband" and was deserving of full devotion. It is ironic that the word for "**husband**" in Jer 32:32 is [baal](#) (master, owner - see [baal](#), [ba'al](#), [ba'al](#)) is the same word used for Israel's "lover" (idols) with whom she had an adulterous affair, for these idols were often named "**Baal!**" (cf Jdg 2:11-13+) In the **OT**, under the Old Covenant, Israel formally became Jehovah's "Wife" in the "ceremony" at the foot of Mt. Sinai (Ex 19:1,2+) when God gave Moses the Law and Israel said "**Yes**" (cf marriage ceremony where bride says "I do" - Israel the "bride" of Yahweh said "We will do!" - Ex 24:3,7+) to the vows. Note that the solemn, binding nature of their entrance into this covenant was ratified by the blood of the covenant (Ex 24:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8+, cf Dt 29:25+ and Heb 9:18-21+). Israel was (repeatedly) an unfaithful, adulterous wife and eventually was thus disowned by Jehovah (e.g., see Dt 29:25-28+), but she will one day in the future repent (cf Zech 12:10-14+) and be restored (Isa 62:4, 5 - where the verb "**married**" = [baal!](#)), a prophecy which will be fulfilled in the Messianic Age. (See complete discussion on this topic [Israel The Wife of Jehovah](#)).

**More.... than all the kings of Israel who were before him** - This is quite a statement given the evil perpetrated by Ahab's predecessors. To be sure Jeroboam had sinned greatly by introducing idolatry into Israel, but Ahab took it one evil step further by choosing to introduce full blown pagan worship to God's chosen people! God is a jealous God and the first commandment was to have no other gods before Him (Ex 20:3+). Ahab set up many gods in place of Him, thus provoking God's anger.

---

**Asherim** ([0842](#)) [Asherah](#) refers to "poles" representing and/or associated with the goddess Asherah - these poles could be cut down and burned (Jdg. 6:25-26). They were made (1Ki 14:15) and set up (1Ki 14:23) after being carved (2Ki 21:7). In many cases, Asherah clearly refers to the deity and not to an image or symbol (Judg. 3:7, 1 Ki. 18:19 and 2 Ki. 23:4).

**NIDOTTE** - (a) wooden cult-object; pole (Asherah pole); (b) goddess (direct reference not accepted by NIV). Derivation unknown. **Ancient Near Eastern** - Asherah (Aṯratu/Ašratu/Ašertu) in the second millennium was worshiped from Asia Minor to Mesopotamia. In Ugar. myths she (ʾtṛt) was wife of El and "mother of the gods."

She was the goddess (Elat) of Tyre and Sidon. She is 'tirat ym: Asherah of the sea. Cf. Akk. ašratum, consort of Amurru (see Lipiński). In the first millennium references to her are found only on the fringes of the culture area, especially in Arabia. It is generally held that the Kuntilet 'Ajrud and Khirbet el-Qôm inscriptions refer to some cultic object associated with Yahweh, and not exclusively—as some still maintain—his consort. Outside of the possible references in the Bible, she is not well attested in the Syria/Palestine region. **OT** Most scholars accept that the word is used as the name of the goddess in 1 Kgs 15:13 (= 2 Chron 15:16); 1 Kgs 18:19; 2 Kgs 21:7; 23:4 (perhaps 7); and the textually doubtful Judg 3:7 (possibly Astarte). All references in the OT, whether to goddess or to the cult object, are uniformly antagonistic. The אֲשֵׁרָה (pole, Asherah) is also said to be used within the worship of Yahweh, but is never approved. The אֲשֵׁרָה was also at times described as being in the temple, either as a symbol in the worship or as the image of a "guest goddess" (2 Kgs 21:7; 23:6). If an image, she could only be the consort of Yahweh, even if Baal was also a "guest god" there. There is apparently no part of the Bible that accepts the poles (אֲשֵׁרָה) as legitimate cult objects, even though the pillars, מַצֵּבָה, are sometimes accepted (Gen 28:18; perhaps Hos 3:4). LXX translates this word as λοςος, sacred grove, which is also the meaning as understood in Jewish literature (cf. Abodah Zarah). This association was unchallenged (cf. AV) until the Babylonian evidence was studied (cf. RV, BDB).

**Bob Utley** - There is some ambiguity in the OT as to exactly the symbol of this fertility goddess. In some texts it seems to imply a live tree planted by the altar of *Ba'al* (cf. Deut. 16:21; Jdgs. 3:7; 6:25). However, in other passages it seems to imply a carved, wooden stake (cf. 1 Kgs. 14:15,23; 2 Kgs. 17:16). The reason *Asherah* is symbolized by a tree or a carved stake is that to ancient people, trees were sacred, basically because they showed the presence of underground water; others believed that the *Asherah* was a symbol of "the Tree of Life" from the Garden of Eden. *Ba'al* and *Asherah* are connected with the worship of the Babylonian star deities known as the "hosts of heaven" (cf. 2 Kgs. 17:16; 21:3; 23:4; 2 Chr. 3:3). This female fertility goddess is first mentioned in the Bible in Exod. 34:13; Deut. 7:5; 12:3. *Ba'al* and *Asherah* became major problems in the northern kingdom during the reign of Ahab because of Jezebel's influence.

**1 Kings 16:34 In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho; he laid its foundations with the loss of Abiram his firstborn, and set up its gates with the loss of his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke by Joshua the son of Nun.**

- Jos 6:26 23:14,15 Zec 1:5 Mt 24:35
- 1 Kings 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Joshua 6:26+ Then Joshua made them take an oath at that time, saying, "Cursed before the LORD is the man who rises up and builds this city Jericho; with **the loss of his firstborn** he shall lay its foundation, and with **the loss of his youngest son** he shall set up its gates."

### FULFILLMENT OF THE JERICHO CURSE- A WARNING TO AHAB?

**In his days** - This "time phrase" is important for interpretation of this passage which almost seems out of place. The question of course is "whose days?" From the preceding context, this has to be a reference to King Ahab.

**Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho** - Bethel was a center of idolatry (worship of golden calves set up by Jeroboam I, 1Ki 12:28-33), so Hiel likely did not fear God or His warnings. Given the fact that God had been largely forsaken in the Northern Kingdom (of which Jericho was a possession), Hiel may not have even known about Joshua's curse (Joshua 6:26+) which had been given over 350 years earlier. Some commentators believe that Hiel carried out this rebuilding project because of the fact that the King had fostered a spirit of total disobedience to God's Word.

**He laid its foundations with the loss of Abiram his firstborn, and set up its gates with the loss of his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke by Joshua the son of Nun** - Hiel's building in Jericho resulted in perfect fulfillment of the curse in Joshua 6:26+. Note the clear statement **according to the word of the LORD** which links Hiel's son's deaths with God's Word given by Joshua centuries earlier. God's Word stands forever and His prophecies will all be perfectly fulfilled. Psalm 119:89 says "*Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.*" While the text does not give us details, it is likely the tragic news got back to King Ahab regarding the death of Hiel's two sons. This should have been a warning to Ahab, but it is

possible he may not have known about the curse in Joshua 6:26+.

**Guzik** may be correct in his assessment of this somewhat enigmatic verse writing that Hiel's loss of his sons "This was a merciful warning to Ahab that he ignored. God told him, "You cannot go against my word without paying the price. Hiel of Bethel, the man you directed to rebuild Jericho, has found this to be true. Take this warning seriously." Yet Ahab did not take this warning seriously.

*The text is telling you that open defiance  
of Yahweh's word typified Ahab's regime*

**Dale Ralph Davis:** This is not a piece of unrelated trivia about construction work. The writer includes it as what was characteristic of Ahab's reign. The opening phrase, 'in his [Ahab's] days,' implies that Hiel did not undertake this project on his private initiative but under Ahab's direction. To 'build' (bānāh) here means to 'rebuild' or 'fortify' as in 1Ki 15:17. After the destruction of Jericho Joshua had pronounced a curse upon anyone who would rebuild Jericho (Josh. 6:26), the curse to which our writer refers in the last half of this verse. **The curse did not prohibit folks from living on the site, for there seem to have been post-conquest settlements there** (cf. Josh. 18:21; Jdg. 3:13; 2 Sam. 10:5). The curse was on anyone who dared to rebuild Jericho as a fortress. . The text is telling you that open defiance of Yahweh's word typified Ahab's regime. Our writer makes this clear in that he does not merely say Hiel's sons died in accord with Joshua's curse; rather, he explicitly says it was 'in line with the word of Yahweh which he spoke by the hand of Joshua.' Was Jericho fortified? Oh yes—a monument to Ahab's defense strategy. But there were other monuments. Walk outside Bethel to Hiel's family burial plot and see the graves of Abiram and Segub, monuments to Yahweh's certain judgment. But that was the reign of Ahab—folks thought nothing of flying in the teeth of Yahweh's word. ([1 Kings: The Wisdom And the Folly](#)) (Bolding added)

**William Barnes:** the unfortunate actions of Hiel are probably meant to reflect negatively on the reign of Hiel's king, Ahab. While any king can repent and thus bring blessing to himself, his land, and perhaps to his future dynasty, no king can undo a truly prophetic word from God, whether it be from an unnamed "man of God" (cf. ch 13), or from the renowned leader Joshua. Perhaps the continuing conundrum of free will versus predestination has never been illustrated so clearly as in these parallel passages: God literally has the last word in history, but authentic repentance can remarkably change the future, at least to some extent (yet not rendering void any clear long-term prophecies from God). What a divine mystery this is! What a hope and what a warning to believers in any age! (See [1-2 Kings - Page 147](#))