

## **Auburn Baptist Church**

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# **The House of Ahab**

## **Part 2: The King and the President**

*1 Kings 16:25*

Last week we laid some ground work for a new series of teachings that have great impact on America today. We covered some familiar ground in which we discussed the concept of foreshadowing in the Bible. A foreshadow is a person, event, situation, nation, etc. that existed in the past that serves as a pattern, symbol, or example of a person, event, situation, nation, etc. that exists or will exist at a later time in history.

For example, I mentioned how the life of the ancient Israelite patriarch Joseph, served as a foreshadow of the life of Christ. There were many things that happened to Joseph during his lifetime that were echoed later in the life of Jesus Christ. Joseph was a foreshadow of the Messiah.

I also reminded you of some studies we have done in the past in which we have discovered how the ancient nation of Israel has served as a foreshadow or example of our own modern nation of America. Many of the same events that occurred in ancient Israel have and are occurring in our country today.

More specifically last week we looked at the ancient northern kingdom of our modern counterpart that went by the name of Israel and had the city of Samaria as its capitol. After the reign of King Solomon, the nation of Israel split in two. The northern part of the country consisted of 10 of the tribes of Jacob and took the name Israel. The southern kingdom consisted of two of the tribes of Jacob and took the name Judah with its capitol city of Jerusalem. It is that northern kingdom that we are concerning ourselves with in this study.

The ancient northern kingdom of Israel underwent a metamorphosis over time, especially in its spiritual realm. Of course, this change in the spiritual realm ended up affecting every other part of its national existence, too. We spoke about the fact that they turned their backs on God, adopted the idols and gods of the surrounding nations, and how this in turn lead to them accepting and then establishing and then celebrating and enforcing sin that was once considered taboo and even illegal.

Some of the specific sins we spoke of were the sexual sins that degraded the sacredness of marriage and family, that placed what was once private out into the public domain. The sins that added confusion of gender and redefined what was once holy. This in turn began to degrade and coarsen the society and culture of Israel as a whole. We also mentioned the sin of killing the innocent as sacrifices to the pagan gods. What once was considered vial and evil became endorsed by the government and seen as a right.

And finally, we saw how these practices are being echoed in our own country today as we turn our back on God and accept other gods of self. We have also redefined the once sacred institution of marriage and brought the private side of human sexuality out into the public realm. Homosexuality, pornography, and gender confusion are not just tolerated, but celebrated and enforced as rights. Likewise, we sacrifice our innocent children through abortion on the altar of self-interest. A practice that was once considered vial and evil has become endorsed by our government and celebrated as a right of womanhood.

Today, we are going to see that this foreshadowing of ancient Israel goes much deeper than the overarching national picture that we have already looked at. In fact, we are going to see that the individuals, the leaders of ancient Israel that were involved in the deepening of that nation's apostasy and turning from God also have counterparts that exist in our modern nation of America and our deepening of apostasy.

It's one thing to look at the choice of a culture or society and recognize that we are going in the same direction. It's another thing to be able to look at the ancient leaders of that culture and recognize that not only do we have American leaders who have echoed their choices and championed their exact causes, but that our leaders can also match the exact timetables of those ancient events and decisions.

So, let's see if we can find the pattern in specific leaders of the two nations divided by over 2500 years of history?

## **I. THE KING**

Ancient Israel was ruled and governed by a king. Their reigns were begun and ended by the death of another. A hereditary position, one became king, usually at the death of their father or older sibling, or perhaps at the death or overturning of a different family dynasty as in the event of an overthrow. One's reign also came to an end usually at your death, whether it be by advanced age, illness, battle, or murder.

The apostasy of ancient Israel that we have spoken about occurred over generations and would eventually end in national judgment. But amid this decline there was a specific period of time in which their apostasy was dramatically quickened and deepened. It was under the reign of kings of a certain dynasty in which for the first time the morality of the pagan world would completely supplant the biblical morality on which the nation had been found.

It was during the reign of the House of Ahab. While Ahab and his sons ruled on the throne of Israel spiritual lines would be crossed and moral hedges removed as never before. What was once right became wrong, evil became good, and a new morality supplanted itself in the nation's psyche. Everything was turned upside down.

### **WHAT WAS AHAB LIKE?**

What do we know about King Ahab? What kind of a man and leader was he? If you read the scripture passages in **1 and 2 Kings** that I gave to you last week you probably have a little bit of an idea.

## **A. BACKGROUND**

Ahab was the son of a military commander named Omri. Omri had risen to power in Israel, not through heredity but through force. His father was famous for founding the capitol city of Samaria as the royal seat of the northern kingdom, but according to **1 Kings 16:25**, "**Omri did evil in the eyes of the Lord and sinned more than all those before him.**"

So, Ahab came from a powerful yet ruthless man and was raised in the shadow of this ungodly father, undoubtedly whom made a strong impact on his ways and actions. However, even though he had such ungodly influence, the culture and country in which he was raised did know God. His culture was Hebrew. He named his children, Ahaziah (which means Jehovah seized), Joram (which means Jehovah has exalted) and Athaliah (which means Jehovah has constrained.)

Ahab was a man divided. He lived in the midst of two conflicting worlds each of which had at least a small degree of influence on him.

On the one hand, he would fight those who stood for God, even the prophets of the Lord. On the other hand, he would consult prophets who would counsel him in the name of the Lord. He would commit great evil against God's ways. Yet he would then publicly express sorrow and repentance over his sins and seek the Lord's mercy.<sup>i</sup>

Ahab could be tactical and strategic in his leading making him adept as a commander of men. Yet he was also a man with weak morals and will. He could begin the construction of a city and yet act like a child. He was self-contradictory, display great bravery at times yet was a ready compromiser when it came to matters of personal luxury and self-interest.

King Ahab epitomized the fall of the nation he led. He was compromised and divided and so too was the nation of Israel. "He was the catalyst to accelerate and deepen [Israel's] progression"<sup>iii</sup> into apostasy. "He led a spiritual, cultural, and political war against the nation's biblical faith and traditional values."<sup>iii</sup> He built a temple to the pagan god, Baal in the capitol city and apostasy would become state-sponsored and immorality the law of the land under his term.

## **B. HIS MARRIAGE**

Perhaps the most critical event of King Ahab's life was his marriage to the princess of Phoenicia. A woman of foreign decent who had been raised in a pagan culture, she was hostile toward the God of Israel. Her father, the king, was a priest to the pagan god of Phoenicia and she a priestess.

"When she came to Israel and then to its throne, she was determined to resist the faith of her new homeland. More than that she would wage war against and attempt to wipe it out of existence. Ahab would take his wife's rage and fury into the political, cultural, and spiritual war against God."<sup>iv</sup>

## **II. THE PRESIDENT**

Modern America does not have kings. We are governed and lead by Presidents. Their length of time in that leadership role is predetermined by term limits, and political elections. The means in

which they come to power and leave power is different from what occurred in Israel, but the ends remain the same.

Can you think of a recent American presidential dynasty under which our American society and culture underwent the same decline, under whose leadership spiritual lines would be crossed and moral hedges removed in America like never before? It is much more recent than you may think. We have been on a national decline of turning from God for several generations now, but under the reign of this presidential dynasty we have fallen like never before. Who is the Ahab of our times?

If I told you that our period of accelerated apostasy begins in the early 1990's where the culture war appeared on the national stage, would that help you pinpoint whom Ahab served as a foreshadow of? There is only one candidate that fits the paradigm: Bill Clinton. It was not just the timing of his presidency that fulfills the prophetic foreshadow, it's the nature of his presidency, and the nature and character of the man that fulfilled it as well.

#### **A. BACKGROUND**

Bill Clinton was raised as a Southern Baptist regularly attending church and Sunday School in his early years.<sup>v</sup> Like Ahab he was raised within a culture that was based on biblical morality. He knew of the one true God. But he was also a man who was more concerned with his own personal luxuries and agenda than he was with the will of God. He would at times seek godly counsel just like Ahab, but if someone opposed his agenda on biblical grounds he would quickly lash out at them.

Clinton was and is a man divided and full of contradictions. "He was, on one hand, a talented politician, a tactical, strategic, and calculated leader. On the other hand, he was a man of moral weakness, and weakness of will."<sup>vi</sup>

Clinton, like Ahab, would epitomize America's apostasy. He embodied our national spiritually divided and morally compromised condition. It would be under his presidential terms that America would redefine morality and truth and the very meaning of the words. American culture would grow more profane and debased and vulgar in the 90's. Clinton would become the first president in American history to be exposed while in office, for committing adultery in the White House. His presidency had a corrosive effect on culture by legitimizing sexual sin and placing it on the most public platform of display.

It would also be under Clinton's terms as president that the killing of unborn children become legitimized and championed to an unprecedented level and where the restraints against child killings were swept away. The same as Ahab's reign when the worship of Baal became sanctioned by the government including the right to sacrifice your child to the god.

In the very first days of his presidency, in a celebratory ceremony in the Oval Office, Clinton signed a series of executive orders wiping away the protections that had been put into place by former leaders in an attempt to protect the unborn. Clinton's first executive orders as president empowered the practice of abortion in America and around the world.<sup>vii</sup>

He would be the first to use American tax dollars to pressure other nations to engage in the practice [of abortion] and the first to open up America to drugs that would by chemical means kill the unborn child.<sup>viii</sup>

## **B. MARRIAGE**

And just like his ancient counterpart, it would be his marriage that would mark perhaps the most critical turning point in Clinton's character. Clinton too, would have a bride with an agenda who refused to adapt to the culture of the conservative climate of the area she found herself in.

She was hostile to the morally conservativeness of her adopted region. His wife would constantly come into conflict with the religious values held there, and actively work against them to promote and different and new morality. And just like Ahab, Clinton would adopt his wife's rage and fury taking it boldly into the political, cultural, and spiritual war against God that was presently taking place in nation.

## **CONCLUSION**

We will stop right there with our comparison for this morning. However, as we continue with this study, I will provide you with more specific examples of each man's behaviors, characters, and actions, as well as those of their wives and those who continued their legacies. It goes much farther than you might think.

For now, I want you to begin to see the connection between these two men and the places they held of leadership and influence in their respective nations. This is important to note, because if all these things happened once, even though it was in ancient times, and we see them happening again on American soil, it is probably safe to assume that what ultimately occurred to that ancient nation of Israel will likewise be our own fate should we continue along the same path.

## **Sermon Sources:**

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<sup>i</sup> Jonathan Cahn, *The Paradigm* (Lake Mary: FrontLine, 2017). 23.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>iii</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>iv</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>v</sup> Bill Clinton, *My Life: The Early Years* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005). 29, 28.

<sup>vi</sup> Cahn, 2

<sup>vii</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>viii</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.