

Leader Notes- Ahab and Jehoash

Day 1

Ahab provoked the Lord to anger because he worshipped false gods. He erected a house to Baal in Samaria, and he built at least one Asherah pole and constructed foundations for more. Asherah poles were places where immense sexual immorality took place. Today, the same kind of practices take place. The problem of false god worship is still relevant today- we just don't recognize it for what it is.

God sent a drought in response to Ahab's disloyal behavior and his negative influence on the Northern Kingdom. I think Lysa makes a good point at the top of page 97. The drought may have been an act of God's mercy to Ahab and the Northern kingdom, in an effort to cause them to turn back to Him.

Are there examples in your life when God has disciplined you- and it caused you to turn back to Him?

I thought it was interesting to learn that in the Old Testament, rain/water was the sign of covenant faithfulness and drought was a sign of covenant unfaithfulness. I never knew this before!

Day 2

I like the exercise in comparing the actions of David and Ahab on page 99 in response to the droughts they faced. David sought the Lord, and once he found answers he sought to make things right. Ahab did not seek the Lord, he was prideful and stiff necked, and did not see that it was his sin that was causing the drought to occur. Neither king was perfect, however David was faithful, Ahab was not.

Elijah's standoff with the prophets of Baal was epic. God was the one that orchestrated everything, and displayed his power. Elijah only needed to obey what God called him to do. Elijah challenged the people in 1 Kings 18:21, "how long are you going to go limping between two different opinions?" Does this challenge speak to anyone in your group?

It might be worthwhile to read the account of Elijah and the prophets of Baal as a group, especially in light of that fact that rain/water is a symbol of covenant faithfulness, and drought is a symbol of covenant unfaithfulness. It can be found in 1 Kings 18:20-40.

Day 3

Can you identify patterns in your life? Are they patterns of obedience to God that produce positive outcomes? Or are they patterns of disobedience to God that produce negative outcomes?

Ahab was influenced by Jezebel. It may have started as a passive influence, but it turned into an active influence. In what ways are you influenced by others? In what way do you influence others?

By looking at the life and decisions of Ahab, does it make sense why God set up parameters for life for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden? Where does humanity's behavior lead when we are left to determine right and wrong separate from the counsel of God? Does God give us parameters to steal our joy, or does He give them to us because He is familiar with our tendencies and ultimately loves us?

Day 4

Now we transition to Jehoash, a 7 year old king in the southern kingdom. He began the repair of the temple. The physical deterioration of the temple in Israel can be a good analogy picture for us. Israel was using its resources to build altars and false places of worship to idols. Meanwhile the temple of Yahweh was neglected. How about your own life? Where do you put your resources? Into your spiritual growth as a disciple of Christ? Or does that pursuit take a back seat to looking a certain way, earning a certain amount, having the right type of friends or the right kind of influence?

Where Ahab listened to Jezebel, David listened to the prophet Nathan, and Jehoash listened to the prophet Jehoiada. What were the results? Do you listen to godly wisdom? Do you speak godly wisdom?

Jehoash's aunt played an important role in the spiritual trajectory of the southern kingdom of Israel, and yet we don't know much about her. God knew of her courage and integrity. Her role was part of a bigger plan. Remind yourself of this when you feel like your efforts are having a minimal impact on the world at large. Just be faithful in what God has called you to do. He sees your service to His kingdom, even if no one else does. What has God called you to do?

Psalms 78 is a review of what God had done in the lives of the Israelites. Have you ever written a list of what God has done in your entire life?

Day 5

In this day, we consider how the temple was neglected. In 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, we are told that our bodies are the temple of God, because as Christians, the Holy Spirit dwells within us. This is why God gives us instructions about how to live. Do we honor our bodies as the temple of God?

Jehoash was a good leader at first, but he became very evil and corrupt. He stoned the son of the prophet Jehoiada, who had served him. It is hard to believe that someone could change that much- but I think it is a testament to how false idol worship can affect us- so much more than we realize.