

Introduction

Well, we've seen thus far how that initially Benhadad, king of Syria, had besieged and warred against Samaria and sent messengers to tell King Ahab to send him his gold, his silver, his wives, and his children.

After Ahab agreed to the terms rather quickly, Benhadad amended his terms and said he was going to send his servants in to take whatever they thought was precious from both King Ahab and his servants.

Ahab then obtained counsel from both the elders of Israel and the people. They told him to resist Benhadad's demands. Ahab sent back a message to Benhadad telling him that he would meet his original demands, but this ransacking plan was a no-go!

Well, Benhadad was a prideful, cocky king who felt confident with a crowd of 32 kings supporting his coalition. So he fired back at Ahab saying in so many words, that he was going to annihilate Samaria.

Ahab sent back a sarcastic response. Essentially saying to Benhadad, *"Don't boast before a battle like a soldier who has finished a battle!"*

Well Benhadad was drinking...in fact, he was drunk along with all his associates! Ahab's sarcastic response caused Benhadad to become angry and order his servants to get ready to attack!

An unnamed prophet of the LORD came to King Ahab and said that the LORD was going to deliver the great multitude of the Syrian army into Ahab's hands so that Ahab would know that He is the LORD! And that is where we left off last time!

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Tonight, we pick up where we left off and get into the specifics of this battle.

I. WE SEE THE LORD' PLAN FOR THE BATTLE FOR AHAB! (Vs 13-15)

No doubt the news from this unnamed prophet of the LORD was encouraging to Ahab and Israel.

This great multitude was going to be delivered into Ahab's hands so

that Ahab would know that the LORD was God.

Ahab appears to have been taken aback at first to find out that he was going to be the one ordering the battle. Ahab doesn't strike me as being a man of war! After all, he surrendered immediately to Benhadad's initial demands of him and even kept that in play as he resisted Benhadad's second demands of him!

So, the prophet of the LORD told Ahab that the LORD was going to use the young men of the princes of the provinces to attack and fight the battle. There were only 232 of them and they would be followed by 7000 of the children of Israel. Ahab would be the one to order the battle!

They were outnumbered by Benhadad and obvious underdogs to win except for one thing. They had the LORD on their side! That is all they really had!

II. WE SEE THE LORD USED BENHADAD'S STUPOR!(Vs 16-18)

So, Israel went out at noon to meet Benhadad. But we see that Benhadad was still partying with the other 32 kings. Scripture says he was *"drinking himself drunk"* with them! Not a good thing to do, especially when you're about to go to battle! Benhadad didn't let a silly thing like an impending battle interfere with his partying! *"There'll be time enough for battling, when the drinking is done!"*

Benhadad and his cronies were a drunken mess! The Bible warns about drunkenness over and over again! Drunkenness is not a sickness, it is a sin plain and simple! In my 35 plus years of ministry I've heard most every argument that folks can give to justify their drinking of alcohol, but none of them hold water when examined with the Word of God!

Proverbs 23:29-32--"29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? 30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the

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last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.”
Proverbs 31:4—“It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:”
(Well we see King Benhadad and his princes all drinking together!)

The LORD was working behind the scenes. Benhadad, in his sorry state, gave a command here that gave Israel a great advantage.
“Take them alive,” was the command.

Anybody that knows anything about war knows that is not much of an attitude of war, but rather it was a faulty decision made under the influence of drunkenness. Benhadad was not thinking clearly.

So, Benhadad’s drunkenness worked against him here! And hear me well, intoxicants of any kind will work against those who imbibe!

Benhadad’s root problem was not his drinking, but his not having a fear of the LORD in his life that led to his pride, his arrogance, and his haughty air of invincibility! If he lived in our time, I have no doubt that he would be one that would wear the apparel that we see that has **“NO FEAR”** emblazoned on it! **He didn’t fear anything!**

We have never so much cause to fear as when we fear nothing!

Proverbs 1:7 – “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Proverbs 9:10 – “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.”

Job 28:28 – “And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.”

Psalms 36:1 – “The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.”

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And Benhadad’s drunkenness exacerbated his lack of fear!
Do you know what the #1 problem is for our own dear nation?

It is NOT abortion, as wicked and as heinous as that is!
It is NOT fornication in all of its various forms!
It is NOT a breakdown of the family unit!
It is NOT the rampant alcohol and drug abuse!
No, ALL of those things and MANY other things that we might point to are just symptoms of the real problem!

The root problem in our land is that by and large our nation has lost its fear of the LORD God!

Millions do not fear His Person, His Word, His judgment, or even the natural consequences of their own sin!

We live in a time where the mentality is *“Live and let live!”*
“Don’t judge me Bro!” *“You do your thing and I’ll do mine!”*

We are back to a **Judges 21:25** mentality!
“In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”

Our nation has forgotten that GOD STILL HAS ABSOLUTES!
People have tossed aside the doctrines of **GOD TRUTH and HIS ABSOLUTES**, and have embraced the doctrines of men known as **MORAL RELATIVISM and its sister SITUATION ETHICS!**

WE SEE THE LORD’ PLAN FOR THE BATTLE FOR AHAB!
WE SEE THE LORD USED BENHADAD’S STUPOR!

III. WE SEE THE SLAUGHTER OF THE SYRIANS! (Vs 19-21)

The Scripture shows here that even Ahab is out there fighting with his army (**vs. 21**) The Israelites were more than conquerors on that day!

Think about how they were fighting with **THE PURPOSE OF THE LORD** that he gave them! They were fighting with **THE PLAN OF THE LORD** that he gave them and **THE POWER OF THE LORD!**

THE BATTLE WAS THE LORD'S! THE VICTORY WAS HIS!

In Christ, we Believers are more than conquerors as well!

Romans 8:37—Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

(“In all these things” points back to *tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword.*)

*2 Corinthians 2:14—“Now thanks be unto **God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place.**”*

Ephesians 6:10—“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

Philippians 4:13—“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

But listen, in spite of this great victory, we find no record of Ahab honoring God here! He still does not acknowledge God's blessings! Ahab did not give God the glory due Him for this great victory!

May God help us to give God the Glory that is due Him for our victories!

IV. WE SEE THE WARNING FROM THE PROPHET! (Vs 22)

When achievement, victory, or success comes our way we must be careful. Because if we are not careful, our tendency can be to drop our guard and leave ourselves vulnerable.

That was the message of this prophet of the LORD. He told them to take every precaution and not to think that the danger was past. Because the Syrians would be back in the Spring!

Over and over again God warns us not to underestimate the power of our enemies of the world, the flesh, and the devil!

Ephesians 6:11—“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

Ephesians 6:13—“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

1 Peter 5:8—Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Galatians 5:16—“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”

1 Corinthians 10:12—“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

When we are less dependent upon God, we become careless.

Matthew 26:41—“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

The words “*watch and pray*” indicate continuous action. Keeping up our spiritual guard is not a part-time matter but a full-time one.

Whether we like it or not, we are in a spiritual war until the day we die. When we get self-confident, spiritually comfortable, or independent of the LORD's leadership, we tend to get spiritually drowsy.

Church, prayer time, or Bible reading can seem to not be as important as it use to be. But, we cannot overcome Satan or the desires of the flesh in our own power! Daily we must yield our life to the LORD!

Romans 12:1-2—“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”