

# CONFRONTING AND OVERCOMING THE AHAB SPIRIT



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# OUTLINE

- \* Characteristics of Ahab
  - Ahab was not a man of conviction.
  - Ahab was not a man of action.
  - Ahab blames, and will not take responsibility.
  - Ahab won't restrain Jezebel.
  - Ahab is not a man of strength.
  - Ahab exercises poor judgment.
  - Ahab is moody and childish.
  - Ahab abdicates and refuses to engage.
  - Ahab is not a leader.
- \* How Does a Man Become A Man?
- \* What Causes Manhood Not to be Conferred?
- \* Characteristics of Men
  - Jehu is a leader.
  - Jehu is a man of action.
  - Jehu is a man of strength.
  - Jehu restrains Jezebel.
  - Jehu is a man of conviction.
- \* What Does True Manhood Look Like?
- \* How To Be Successful as a Man
- \* How to Improve the Situation You are In Now
- \* Prayer for Deliverance from an Ahab Spirit

God designed men to be the heads over their families. When this is not happening in the way God intended, it can result in serious consequences for the marriage and children. One reason a man might not take his proper role is when he is being influenced by an "Ahab spirit." Helping men overcome the Ahab spirit helps men become better men, which makes for happier women. It allows men to become better husbands and fathers and to be better leaders.

Ahab embodies a particular type of spirit. King Ahab was a real historical person, but when we talk about "an Ahab Spirit," we are talking about a demonic spirit that acts through people, particularly men, to cause them to act and manifest the same kind of behavior as did King Ahab. Let's consider some of the characteristics of King Ahab, and therefore of an Ahab Spirit. The best way to see how this spirit manifests is to consider some of the characteristics seen in the historic King Ahab. Let's take a look at some of the things that scripture tells us about him.

#### Characteristics of Ahab

##### 1) Ahab was not a man of conviction.

*"In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria over Israel twenty-two years. Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him. He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him. He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. 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. (1 Kings 16:29-33)*

Ahab was not a man of conviction because he took other gods in addition to Jehovah. He acknowledged Jehovah, but he also acknowledged the calf that Jeroboam formed, as well as Baal and Asherah. Just who is God? This is exactly what the Prophet Elijah asks when he confronts the people of Israel at Mount Carmel. He asked, "*How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow*

him.” (1 Kings 18:20) The people's response to the prophet was basically, "We'll wait and see."

I believe that the people of Israel responded to Elijah with no conviction because they were under a leader who had no conviction. Ahab did not lead the nation with the example given by Joshua when he told them, "*Choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*" (Joshua 24:15)

Women need for the men who lead them to know who they are and what they believe. It is difficult to follow a person who has no convictions.

## 2) Ahab was not a man of action.

*“Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbea in Gilead, said to Ahab, ‘As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.’”* (1 Kings 17:1)

*“After many days the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, ‘Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth.’ So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the famine was severe in Samaria. And Ahab called Obadiah, who was over the household. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly, and when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water.) And Ahab said to Obadiah, ‘Go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the valleys. Perhaps we may find grass and save the horses and mules alive, and not lose some of the animals.’”* (1 Kings 18:1-5)

From the time Elijah prophesied the drought, we see nothing about Ahab taking action to seek the Lord to try and prevent it. Jezebel may have been trying to take action when she cut off the Lord's prophets. It may have been that she thought if she could destroy the prophetic voice of God, she could stop the drought. After all, Ahab surely wasn't doing anything about it!

Women want men to take action, to do something. Jezebel has endured three years of famine, and everywhere she looks she sees lack. Whereas she had been looking forward to being the Queen of Israel, married to the most important and powerful man around, instead she is tied to a man who refuses to act and lets his country fall into ruin. His lack of action affects her directly and tempts her to want to do something herself about the problem.

It is interesting that you can find book after book on the “Jezebel Spirit,” and yet there is very little written about the Ahab Spirit. I am in no way justifying or making excuses for anyone who allows a Jezebel spirit to operate in their lives; it is a vicious, wicked spirit, and the Lord will destroy Jezebel. All the same, Jezebel does not occur in a vacuum. While the one who moves in this spirit is not without their own evil inclinations, it is still true that a Jezebel spirit can only operate in the context of conditions that Ahab allows to exist. As we look further at scripture, we will see that there is a way to deal with Jezebel, but Ahab does not choose this path and does not "deal with" Jezebel.

### 3) Ahab blames, and will not take responsibility.

*“When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, ‘Is it you, you troubler of Israel?’ And he answered, ‘I have not troubled Israel, but you have, and your father’s house, because you have abandoned the commandments of the LORD and followed the Baals.’” (1 Kings 18:17-18)*

God holds Ahab responsible for the spiritual climate over the nation he leads. Later, when Jezebel has Naboth killed in order to get his vineyards for Ahab, we see that God sends the prophet to Ahab to confront him about it, not to Jezebel. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, God *“called to the man and said to him, ‘Where are you?’”* (Genesis 3:9), not to his wife. This is because Ahab, and Adam, and every husband, father, pastor, or male leader of any capacity, has been given authority, or headship, and with this comes responsibility. Taking responsibility, being willing to step up to the plate and take charge, is the principle mark of a man,

"Men don't have the option of taking charge or not taking charge in the home and in the Church. Responsibility is laid upon them. Responsibility has been the mark of a man

from the moment when God shaped a woman to fit Adam's need and presented her to him... Responsibility is the refusal to drift, or delay, or pass the buck." Elizabeth Elliot, The Mark of a Man.

#### 4) Ahab won't restrain Jezebel.

*"Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, 'So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow.'" (1 Kings 19:1 - 2)*

After Elijah has had the prophets of Baal killed, Jezebel threatens to kill him in revenge. Ahab does nothing to stop her. This is much like when Eli, who was judge of Israel for a time, would not restrain his sons from despising the Lord's offering and taking advantage of the women who came to the temple. In response to Eli's lack of action concerning his sons, the Lord said, *"Why then do you scorn my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded, and honor your sons above me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel?" Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: 'I promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever,' but now the LORD declares: 'Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed."* (1 Samuel 2:29-30 ) In the same way that Eli would not restrain his sons from doing evil and offending the Lord, Ahab would not restrain his wife.

A woman wants a man who is capable of standing up to her! She needs for him to be able to rebuke her or to speak to her about relinquishing something harmful. In other words, *"to speak the truth in love."* (Ephesians 4:15) Elizabeth Elliot goes on to say in The Mark of a Man, "A man at times must be hard as nails, willing to face up to the truth about himself and about the woman he loves, refusing compromise when compromise is wrong. But, he must also be tender; no weapon will breach the armor of a woman's resentment like tenderness."

The first line of defense when a man must restrain his wife is to speak the truth in love. If that does not work, be tender. But, even if that does not work, don't give in, and

don't get mad; just get on your knees and cry out to God. That is your recourse when something has to change in the spirit. It is loving to restrain a woman whose present course will end up hurting her or others. Consider what Jesus says to the Church of Laodicea in the book of Revelation:

*"I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. 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. I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works"* (Revelation 2:19-23)

The Lord makes it clear, "You may tolerate Jezebel, but I won't!" It was Ahab's job to restrain Jezebel, and when he did not do so, the Lord dealt with it. But, great harm came to both Jezebel and Ahab as a consequence of Ahab's refusal to step in and do what he needed to do.

To refuse to take charge and restrain someone over whom you have authority tells them that you don't care. Neglect is every bit as bad as abuse. I knew a couple that had had marital issues for years. When the wife finally filed for divorce, the man called me and said, "I don't understand this, do you?" I told him, "Yes, she does not feel loved. Notice I did not say that you don't love her, but I said she did not feel loved. What she is really saying by filing for divorce is, 'Don't you care? Are you really going to let me do this?'" He told me, "Yes, I am." So, I guess he made a statement. She did not want a divorce; she wanted him to be willing to work out the problems in the marriage, whatever it took, but he wasn't.

##### 5) Ahab is not a man of strength.

*"Now Ben-Hadad king of Aram mustered his entire army. Accompanied by thirty-two kings with their horses and chariots, he went up and besieged Samaria and attacked it.*

*He sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel, saying, 'This is what Ben-Hadad says: Your silver and gold are mine, and the best of your wives and children are mine.' The king of Israel answered, 'Just as you say, my lord the king. I and all I have are yours.'*" (1 Kings 20:1-4)

What if I went up to one of the men in my congregation and said, "I notice a new restaurant is opening up a few blocks down the road, and I was thinking about coming by and picking up your wife so that we could go and try that new restaurant out. Maybe you could find something else to do tonight. By the way, why don't you just hand over your billfold too? Oh, and your car keys as well." Most men would not just say "No", but be willing to use physical force to make sure that I did nothing of the sort. But not Ahab! When someone came to him and said, "Give me your things," he said, "Okay."

This is because Ahab is not a man of strength. Consider this proverb: "*A gracious woman retains honor: and strong men retain riches.*" (Proverbs 11:16) The word translated "strong" here means "powerful enough to put others in dread," or, in other words, to create a healthy respect. Ahab is not like this; he is weak. This proverb ties graciousness in women to strength in men. As graciousness is to women, so is strength to men. God gives a woman graciousness to be able to put up a boundary if a man is getting too close and to repel unwanted advances, thus retaining her honor. To men, he gives strength to do the same thing.

I know a man who is the head of a Bible Camp that has services at different times throughout the year. Someone who he did not know came to the camp one time during a meeting and began to prophesy that the Lord was going to destroy the camp. They tried to throw him out, but were unable to do so. In a little while, everyone inside the meeting house heard a loud diesel motor running just outside. When they went out to see what the noise was, they saw the head of the camp motoring toward this man's car in his bulldozer. That did it! The man jumped in the car, left, and did not return.

The head of the camp took action, and in doing so demonstrated strength. A woman is attracted to a strong man because he can protect her. What this also means is that a man can abuse his strength and hurt a woman if he does not exercise self-control. When a

woman has been abused by a man who did not exercise self-control, then many times the woman will respond by running to a man who she recognizes will not abuse her. However, sometimes in her zeal to find a man who will not misuse his strength, she chooses a man who is not strong at all. She may not be abused and hurt then, but she may not be able to respect this new man, and so is not happy in this situation either. This is where the temptation comes for her to act as Jezebel and to take matters into her own hands because she sees that the man won't take action. A weak man leaves a woman vulnerable, which in turn tempts her to move in control.

What she really wants is for the strong man to exercise self-control and to use his strength for the right reasons. Or, for the gentle man to take charge more and to show some strength.

#### 6) Ahab exercises poor judgment.

*“His officials said to him, 'Look, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful. Let us go to the king of Israel with sackcloth around our waists and ropes around our heads. Perhaps he will spare your life.' Wearing sackcloth around their waists and ropes around their heads, they went to the king of Israel and said, 'Your servant Ben-Hadad says: Please let me live.' The king answered, 'Is he still alive? He is my brother.' The men took this as a good sign and were quick to pick up his word. 'Yes, your brother Ben-Hadad!' they said. 'Go and get him,' the king said. When Ben-Hadad came out, Ahab had him come up into his chariot.” (1 Kings 20:31-33)*

The Syrians came out to battle against Israel, and against all odds Israel had soundly defeated them and captured the Syrian king Ben-Hadad. Ben-Hadad's officials step in to offer him a strategy on how to survive, which is to appeal to the King of Israel's mercy. Because Ahab is impulsive and self-reliant, he exercises poor judgment and lets a man go who had been delivered into his hands by the Lord. Ben-Hadad was a wicked man who was responsible for the deaths of many people in Israel, but notice that you do not see anything here about Ahab seeking the Lord before making his decision about what to do with this captured enemy. Ahab's impulsiveness and self-reliance cause him to disobey God's will for him to kill King Ben-Hadad.

### 7) Ahab is moody and childish.

*“He said to the king, ‘This is what the LORD says: ‘You have set free a man I had determined should die. Therefore it is your life for his life, your people for his people.’ Sullen and angry, the king of Israel went to his palace in Samaria.”*

(1 Kings 20:42)

God sent a prophet to Ahab to pronounce God’s judgment against Ahab’s choice to allow Ben-Hadad to go free. What is revealing about the character of the "Ahab Spirit" is Ahab’s response. Scripture says that, *“Sullen and angry, the king of Israel went to his palace in Samaria”* (1 Kings 20:43). This is not the only time we see this childish reaction from Ahab.

Some time after these events, Ahab decided that he liked the vineyard of his neighbor, Naboth the Jezreelite, and he offered to buy it. When Naboth refused to sell it, Ahab’s response was to go home, *“sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, ‘I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.’ He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat.”* (1 Kings 21:4) Do you see again how childish Ahab is acting? He has a little pity party simply because he does not get his way.

Ahab is not a man of dignity, reputation, and self-control that his wife Jezebel can be proud of and respect. She takes it upon herself to have Naboth killed in order to get the vineyard for Ahab, but before she does, she turns to Ahab and says, *“Do you now govern Israel? (1 Kings 21:7)”* No woman wants a man lying in bed, sucking his thumb, and whining. Ahab is so full of self-pity about not getting his way that he won’t even come to the table for dinner! Jezebel is saying, "Either do something about it, or get over it!"

### 8) Ahab abdicates and refuses to engage.

*“As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, ‘Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money, for Naboth is not alive, but dead.’ And as soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.”* (1 Kings 21:15-16)

I don't believe that Ahab knew that Jezebel was having this man killed. But, don't you think he would at least ask her, "What do you mean he's dead? I just talked to him! How did he die?" But, Ahab abdicates and disengages from the situation. It may be that Jezebel gave him the vineyard in order to restore his cheerfulness, or to restore his honor. She got him respect. Now everybody knows that when the King of Israel wants your vineyard, you sell it to him and give him a good price!

9) Ahab is willing to deceive himself, hide, be passive, and pretend that bad things aren't happening.

*"I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no master; let each return to his home in peace.' And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, 'Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?'"* (1 Kings 22:17-18)

Ahab King of Israel has asked Jehoshaphat King of Judah to go to war with him against the Syrians. But first Jehoshaphat, a godly man, wants confirmation that this is in accordance with the will of the Lord. Ahab calls in all the prophets, who with one voice confirm that, yes, it is indeed the will of Jehovah for the two kings to go to battle. But, for some reason, Jehoshaphat is not convinced. He asks if there might not be another prophet they could inquire of, and Ahab produces Micaiah, who goes on to give a blistering prophecy against Ahab and this endeavor. The prophet finishes by saying, *"I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no master; let each return to his home in peace.' And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, 'Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?'"* (1 Kings 22:17-18)

Ahab was given a clear word here, "You are going to die in battle," but he does absolutely nothing about it. He does not repent or change his course of action one iota. The only thing he does is to whine about the prophet. Ahab did not want to hear the Word of the Lord because it made him feel rejected. The truth is that he was rejected by God, but he did not have to be. What God wanted was for Ahab to humble himself, repent, and change the godless course he was on. After all, Ahab had done so in the past and had received mercy from God (see 1 Kings 21:27-29).

#### 10) Ahab is not a leader.

*“So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, ‘I will disguise myself and go into battle, but you wear your robes.’ And the king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle.” (1 Kings 22:29)*

Can you think of an act that could be any more symbolic of Ahab abdicating his responsibility than that of him taking off his kingly robes? He was the King and possessed authority, but how could he command his armies when he had taken off his royal attire and hidden who he really was? Those under him needed him to lead! How can Jezebel respect this man? The problem, in this case at least, is not the Jezebel spirit, it's the Ahab spirit. The Jezebel spirit perceives the weakness of the Ahab spirit and moves in to tempt the woman to move in control in an effort to "protect" herself from the sense of vulnerability which is making her feel threatened.

#### How Does a Man Become A Man?

We have established that Ahab was a weak man without conviction or the forcefulness to act. Why was Ahab this way? I believe it was because his father, Omri, failed to help him make the transition from boyhood into mature manhood. Manhood is always conferred on a man by another man, usually his father. The father does this by doing things with his son that are unique to manhood, and then by affirming manly behavior or achievements that the young man does all by himself. This can happen at a particular time, or it might happen over a series of events.

The point is that a man must, at some point, leave childhood and become able to take on the role of manhood. To do this, he needs to confirm his ability to endure and overcome, to take responsibility and to risk something. In some cultures, a man cannot get married until he has killed a lion. I shared this story at a conference recently, and a man said, “Yes, they do that in Africa!” I said, “Yes, where the lions are.” In our culture, I guess our young men would have to sneak down to the zoo! Of course, we don't kill lions here in the States, but if you think about it, what would it do to a man's sense of

confidence and strength? Think of how a young man would respond to someone seeking to intimidate him? He'd think, "Hey, I killed a lion. Who are you to threaten me or mine?"

We don't have that type of clear cultural initiation into manhood here, so it is left to Dad, and Dad often does the job either poorly or not at all. Every adolescent boy wants to know, "Do I have what it takes? Am I a man?" And, everything for the rest of his life hinges on the answer that comes back from Dad. The answer may come back "yes," or "no," or, "I don't know, find out for yourself, I'm out of here. I can't tell you because I don't even know if I have it myself."

What a blessing when the answer comes back, "Yes." I know a man who followed his father into the Ministry. I noticed from the way that he handled himself that his father had been able to effectively confer upon him his own mantle of anointing. When I mentioned this to him, he said, "Absolutely! He would prepare me beforehand and stand with me and coach and guide me. Then, he would let me do it on my own and would affirm me." As a result, this man can minister with confidence, presence, and selflessness.

Remember what David said to Solomon? He said, "*Be strong, and show yourself a man*" (1 Kings 2:2). He did not say, "Solomon you weakling, why can't you act like a man?" He believed in Solomon. He was telling him, "I know you can do it, son!" As men, we want to hear from a man we respect that he is proud of us and thinks we have what it takes.

Jesus got this from his Father. When he went to the Jordan and was baptized, what did he hear when he came up out of the water? He heard his Father say, "*This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased*" (Matthew 3:16)." Then, he was able to go into the wilderness and defeat the devil. It may be that he needed his Father's affirmation to stand that test. When he did pass his test, the bible says, "*Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit*" (Luke 4:14).

Jesus went on to minister in power for three years, then a time came when he was on Mount Tabor and again heard his Father's voice speak and say, "*This is my beloved Son,*

*with whom I am well pleased; listen to him” (Matthew 17:5).* What was Jesus on his way to do when he heard his Father speak? He was on his way to the cross. Jesus may have needed his Father’s affirmation to give him the courage to be able to complete this horrible task.

### What Causes Manhood Not to be Conferred?

The conferring of manhood cannot come from a woman; it has to come from a man. Flowers affirm flowers, buffalos affirm buffalos. This is one reason why divorce is so devastating to children. For many young boys, divorce means that there is not a man there for large parts of their lives. But, there are other reasons the man may not be there the way a son needs him to be. A man can be taken out of the picture by death, or he may just be emotionally absent. Some men can be so violent that the children don’t want to be near him. The child could come from an out-of-wedlock marriage so that there was never a man around in the first place. The good news is that his conferring of manhood does not have to come from his father. If, for some reason, the father is not able to do this for his son, it can come from someone else: a grandfather, an uncle, a coach or teacher or next door neighbor.

Sometimes a father, maybe without even knowing it, can curse his son so that doubts are created in the young man about his manhood. A father does this when he calls his son a loser, or idiot, or something negative, and puts wounds deep into the heart of the young man. So, instead of receiving the blessing he needed in order to grow into manhood, a boy receives a chain that causes him to become stunted in his perception of his own manhood and in the way he lives out his life and his various roles as a man.

Another way manhood can become stunted is for something to happen outside of the father-son relationship that the father is not aware of, something that causes a young man to have doubts about his manhood. He could be sexually molested, or bullied, or shamed somehow at school. These types of events can cause a drifting away from the model of manhood that God intended.

Another scenario which can cause these kinds of problems to arise in a young man occurs when the father puts his son in a situation that he is not ready for. The Bible tells us of one such situation when Gideon defeated the Midianites and captured their two kings, Zeba and Zalmunna. When these two captives were brought to Gideon for judgment, he happened to be standing there with his oldest son, Jether. The Bible tells us that Gideon turned to Jether and said, *“Rise and kill them!” But the young man did not draw his sword, for he was afraid, because he was still a young man. Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, ‘Rise yourself and fall upon us, for as the man is, so is his strength.’ And Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna”* (Judges 8:21). These two captives cursed this boy by implying that he was a weakling. Later in his life, Jether, along with all his brothers, was killed by the illegitimate son of Gideon. Maybe his slaughter at the hands of his half-brother would not have happened if this boy had not been marked as "weak" by this incident. These kinds of failures early in life set up a man to "play it safe," and then later failures in life can further reinforce that insecurity.

Here is the reason why I think that Ahab’s problems with being passive and weak as a man were because his father never conferred manhood on him while he was growing up. Ahab’s father Omri was the commander of the entire army of Israel. When Israel's preceding King was killed in a coup by Zimri, it was Omri who came in, defeated Zimri, and eventually took the throne for himself (See 1 Kings 16). These are not the actions of a weak man! Omri’s actions were strong and violent. This is not a man who would have given up his gold, wives, and children at the demand of the King of Syria! However, it is abundantly clear that, for whatever reason, Omri did not pass this forcefulness down to Ahab.

### Characteristics of Men

Men were called to rule, to subdue, to be fruitful and multiply. They are naturally attracted to sports, sales, and the challenge to achieve, explore, build, and conquer. It is unnatural for a man not to be this way. If he is not, it is because something happened, or failed to happen to him as a boy or young man, something that resulted in him never becoming established and secure in his masculinity.

*"Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out"* Proverbs 20:5. Discouragement, self-pity, bondage, fear, or insecurity in a man lead to passivity. You have to discover the fundamental issue that causes the problem. Somewhere in that man is a wound, or disconnect, or lack that is the real problem. Whatever the issue is can be solved in Christ if you can discover its root. Is the area of insecurity in his own manliness caused by a curse from the father or by the withholding of approval? Was the father absent or aloof? Wherever the area of insecurity lies, that is the place where truth needs to come in and for deliverance to take place.

I would like to say to the wives that it is better for you not to try and find out what your husband's issue is. Instead, encourage him to go to a man that he can trust. This can be a pastor, or mentor, or simply a brother in the Lord. Remember, you can't confer manhood on him, so there is no real reason for you, wives, to know what the real issue is. You aren't the problem, and you aren't the solution. It can even be unhealthy for him to tell you because he may look to you as an answer for his lack, and you can't really be that for him.

### What Does True Manhood Look Like?

Just as we looked at a scriptural example to show us what a spirit that robs a man of his masculinity looks like, we can also find an example in the scripture of what true manhood looks like. To do this, we will look at the man that God raised up to judge Ahab's house, Jehu.

#### 1) Jehu is a leader.

*"Then Jehu mounted his chariot and went to Jezreel, for Joram lay there. And Ahaziah king of Judah had come down to visit Joram. Now the watchman was standing on the tower in Jezreel, and he saw the company of Jehu as he came and said, 'I see a company.' And Joram said, 'Take a horseman and send to meet them, and let him say, is it peace?' So a man on horseback went to meet him and said, 'Thus says the king, is it peace?' And Jehu said, 'What do you have to do with peace? Turn around and ride behind me.' And the watchman reported, saying, 'The messenger reached them, but he is not coming back.' Then he sent out a second horseman, who came to them and said,*

*“Thus the king has said, is it peace?’ And Jehu answered, ‘What do you have to do with peace? Turn around and ride behind me.’” (2 Kings 9:16-19)*

Notice how Jehu caused men to follow him as he went out to battle? Jehu did not allow others to make his decisions for him. He made up his own mind for himself and influenced others to follow.

## 2) Jehu is a man of action.

*“Again the watchman reported, ‘He reached them, but he is not coming back. And the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he drives furiously.’” (2 Kings 9:20)*

Notice that Jehu mounts his horse and rides "furiously" to do the will of the Lord. Jeremiah 48:10 says, “Cursed is he who does the work of the LORD with slackness, and cursed is he who keeps back his sword from bloodshed.” When Ahab had King Ben-Hadad in his power and then let him go, he did the work of the Lord "negligently," but Jehu did what was assigned to him "furiously," with passion, zeal, and resolute determination.

## 3) Jehu is a man of strength.

*"And when Joram saw Jehu, he said, ‘Is it peace, Jehu?’ He answered, ‘What peace can there be, so long as the whorings and the sorceries of your mother Jezebel are so many?’ Then Joram reined about and fled, saying to Ahaziah, ‘Treachery, O Ahaziah!’ And Jehu drew his bow with his full strength, and shot Joram between the shoulders, so that the arrow pierced his heart, and he sank in his chariot." (1 Kings 9:22-24)*

## 4) Jehu restrains Jezebel.

*"When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it. And she painted her eyes and adorned her head and looked out of the window. And as Jehu entered the gate, she said, ‘Is it peace, you Zimri, murderer of your master?’ And he lifted up his face to the window and said, ‘Who is on my side? Who?’ Two or three eunuchs looked out at him. He said, ‘Throw her down.’ So they threw her down. And some of her blood splattered on the wall and on the horses, and they trampled on her." (1 Kings 9:30-33)*

I feel sure that Jezebel's remarks to Jehu were made with all the "witchcraft" she could muster, with all the spiteful, manipulative, controlling, scorn that she possessed. Jehu must have felt the guilt, the shame, the questioning of his own motives that such witchcraft seeks to cause. He might even have been tempted to withdraw, but, even if he was so tempted, he pushed through and silenced her and her witchcraft forever.

#### 5) Jehu is a man of conviction.

*"Then Jehu assembled all the people and said to them, 'Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu will serve him much. Now therefore call to me all the prophets of Baal, all his worshipers and all his priests. Let none be missing, for I have a great sacrifice to offer to Baal. Whoever is missing shall not live.' But Jehu did it with cunning in order to destroy the worshipers of Baal... So when they put them to the sword, the guard and the officers cast them out and went into the inner room of the house of Baal, and they brought out the pillar that was in the house of Baal and burned it. And they demolished the pillar of Baal, and demolished the house of Baal, and made it a latrine to this day." (1 Kings 10:24-27)*

Jehu wiped out hundreds, maybe thousands of Baal worshippers in one single day. Do you see that his actions were in a sense, violent? A man must be able to be so at times in order to protect and defend that which is his and that for which he has responsibility. Women love to bring home the sick puppies to care for and to heal. But, if they can't be nursed back to health, it is Dad who has to take them in the backyard and put them out of their misery. Men aren't to be cruel or mean, but they are called to be responsible by executing necessary duties with strength, character, and conviction to cover those under them who are weaker.

### How To Be Successful as a Man

Some of the attributes of manhood are: Self-control, humility, fear of the Lord, passion, zeal, and leadership. What is not true manhood is being macho, aggressive, ruthless, or cruel. Manhood is leadership, and leadership is always for the sake of others. To be successful as a man, absolutely the most important thing that you can do is to be single-minded in your devotion to and service for Christ.

If these attributes are not qualities you picked up as you were growing up, then one thing that will help is to hang around men who do have these qualities. Proverbs 13:20 says, "*Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise.*" I think that this applies to any godly attribute we wish to acquire. Find a mentor who can help teach you in this area. When Gideon told his son to kill Zeba and Zalmunna, and his son did not do it, Gideon should have said, "Let's do this together," and walked through it with him. This is how he could have helped his son make that transition into manhood. For all of us who did not have this type of help and input, it's not too late! No matter what age, you should always be learning from others.

Another way to learn to be a good leader is to discipline yourself to joyfully embrace the cross, or the suffering, that is put before you. What this means for us today is for us to rise to the challenge of the rigors of our job, the repair of our car, the incessant responsibility of yard work, the woman that can be so hard to understand, the demanding needs of children, the subtle pressures to increase church obligations, and all of the other demands that life makes on you. You will grow when you meet these things head-on and do not hide from them, blame others, or complain about the difficulty.

### How to Improve the Situation You are In Now

What happens if your home is in trouble and your relationships with your wife and/or children are difficult? You have the ability to change the situation. If you want the wife and family that you have now to be different, then:

- 1) You need to take the lead by first and foremost taking responsibility for your walk with the Lord.

- 2) Secondly, you need to make your wife glad that she is a woman. This means to notice her and compliment her. Women want to be chosen and pursued. You need to always be courteous and a gentleman.

3) Understand that leadership is for her help and redemption, so you need to be willing to take charge and not make excuses. You are called to be the spiritual head of your household. Being a husband is not a talent or a gift, it is a role.

4) Love her with the love described in 1 Corinthians 13.

5) Remember that you are an heir together with her of the grace of life, so respect her like a princess or a daughter of God. Forgive her quickly, and ask for her forgiveness quickly.

If you are married, remember that you chose her. You created your life; you can, with God's help, fix or change it if it is not what you want. Right now you are living with the consequences of your choices. If you are not happy, don't sit under condemnation, just take action. It is important to realize that when you marry a woman, you marry what has happened in her relationships with her Dad, brothers, and others. I understand that these are things you have to deal with that make it harder, but how long do the problems go on without you doing something about them? Eventually, the problems in the marriage come down to you. You might not like this, but you should, because it means that you can do something about it. You have the ability to change it.

Deliverance from an Ahab Spirit begins with taking absolute, total responsibility for where you and your family are right now. You cannot make any excuses. This goes for your marriage situation, but also for your financial, health, and ministry situations as well. Wherever you are now, it is not someone else's fault. Life may sometimes play difficult cards for you to handle, but if it does, it is your chance to be a man and to play the hand to win.

#### Prayer for Deliverance from an Ahab Spirit

Jesus,

I accept responsibility for where I am right now spiritually, financially, in my marriage and relationships, as a parent, in ministry, and with my health. I cry out to you to show me how I can move forward from here. I make a commitment right now to take the lead

in my life and in my family. I make a commitment to take responsibility for my spiritual life. I make a commitment to make my wife glad that she is a woman and that she is my wife. I make a commitment to make my children glad that I am their father and to make them proud of me. I make a commitment to lead my wife and family even if they don't want to be led and even if they make it hard for me to move in my authority and headship. I make a commitment to love my wife and children with the love described in 1 Corinthians 13. I make a commitment to remember that she and I are heirs together with Christ, to forgive her for anything, at any time, under any circumstances, and to ask for her forgiveness as well.

In Jesus Name,  
Amen

*Grateful acknowledgement is given to John Eldredge for his book, "Wild at Heart,"  
From which many concepts in this booklet were taken.*

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