

The Death of Ahab

1 Kings 22:29-40

2 Chronicles 18:28 – 19:11

by Don Falkos

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Ahab king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah led their armies against Aram. Before engaging in battle Ahab disguised himself having told Jehoshaphat, "You should wear your royal robes."

The Aramean king ordered his commanders, "Don't bother to attack any of the enemy's men – not his commanders, not his foot soldiers, none of them. Instead, go after the king of Israel himself."

When the Aramean commanders saw Jehoshaphat in all his finery, they thought he was Ahab, so they turned to attack him. But when they discovered he was not the king of Israel, they turned away.

During the battle one soldier shot an arrow at random and hit Ahab between the sections of his armor. The king shouted to his chariot driver, "I'm wounded. Get me out of here."

Ahab was propped up in his chariot all day long watching as the battle raged. He bled all over the floor of his chariot, and that evening he died. As the sun was setting Ahab's army retreated. His body was taken back to Samaria for burial. His chariot was washed out, and dogs licked up Ahab's blood.

Jehoshaphat returned safely to Jerusalem. A prophet went out to meet him saying, "Should you help the wicked? Should you befriend those who hate the Lord? The Lord is angry with you for cooperating with Ahab."

But Jehoshaphat was determined to seek after God. He guided the people of Judah back to the Lord. He appointed judges and instructed them, "Fear the Lord; be careful what you do; you are not dispensing justice by merely human standards but on behalf of the Lord our God."