

It has been said, and even preached in church, that Ahab started out as a good king because of the names he gave his two sons, and later turned bad. Ahaziah means “Yahweh grasps [his hand]” (1 Kings 22:51), and Joram (Jehoram) means “Yahweh is exalted” (2 Kings 1:17; 3:1-3).



On the surface, it may appear that Ahab must have been good when his sons were born, because he gave them names that exalt and praise the true God Yahweh. However, many others in the Bible who were not good people also named their children names exalting and praising Yahweh. Simply giving a child a good name does not mean the parent[s] is/are good.

Did Ahab begin as a good king, and turn bad, or was he always a bad king??

We can see this especially to be true in Ahab’s case.

“Ahab son of Omri become 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 arouse the anger of the LORD, the God of Israel, than did all the kings of Israel before him”—1 Kings 16:29-33 NIV

Ahab directly and flagrantly violated God’s explicit command that:

“You shall have no other gods before me”—Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 5:7

Yahweh tolerates no mixture of religions, or the worship of any other gods. Ahab was a bad king from start to finish during his time as king.

As we can see from the scriptures, Ahab started out as an apostate calf worshipping king, and after marrying Jezebel, he also became a Baal worshipper. Naming his sons names that included Yahweh gives us a good indication that he practiced syncretism, which is a mixture of religions, such as calf worship, Yahweh worship, and Baal worship, but it does not indicate that he was ever a good king.

The scriptures clearly show that Jezebel was the mother of Ahaziah and Joram (Jehoram), which means that Ahab was both a calf worshipper and Baal worshipper when they were born.

“Ahaziah, son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria . . . and he reigned over Israel two years. He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, because he followed of his father and mother and of Jeroboam”—1 Kings 22:51,52 NIV

“Joram son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria . . . and he reigned twelve years. He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, but not as his Father and mother had done”—2 Kings 3:1,2 NIV

At the time his sons were born, Ahab was clearly an apostate, and evil person in the eyes of Yahweh, even though he gave them good names.

One lesson we can learn from this is that we need to carefully consider all that the Bible says about something, or someone, so that we see things from God’s perspective, and not our own, based on partial information (**2 Timothy 3:16,17; 1 Corinthians 10:11; Philippians 1:9,10**).