

Setting

Locate the following places on the Bible map:

- Samaria • Damascus
- Aphek

Key Terms and People

Ben-Hadad: King of Syria. His name honors the Syrian Baal, "Hadad."

Syria: In Hebrew (and in some English translations), this nation is called "Aram." Syrians = Arameans.

Ahab: Seventh king of Israel.

Sons of the prophets: A group of students or disciples who followed a prophet of the LORD.

Story Moments

Ahab and Ben-Hadad's Exchange

20:1–3. What message does Ben-Hadad send to Ahab? _____

20:4–6. How does Ahab respond to this demand? _____

In your own words, describe the relationship between Ben-Hadad and Ahab at this point (hint: what does Ahab call Ben-Hadad in 20:4):

20:7–12. What advice do the elders give Ahab about answering this more imposing request? _

The two kings negotiate through messengers. Summarize their exchange:

- Ahab (9): _____
- Ben-Hadad (10): _____
- Ahab (11): _____
- Ben-Hadad (12): _____



War Between Israel and Syria, Part 1

20:13. What reason does the prophet give Ahab that the LORD would deliver Syria into the hands of Israel? "And you shall _____ that I am the _____."

20:14–15. According to the prophet, what group should Ahab choose to lead Israel into battle? _

How does Ahab respond to the word of the LORD from the prophet? _____

20:16–18. What is Ben-Hadad doing with his allies before the young men come out for war?

What does Ben-Hadad order his patrol to do with the young men? _____

20:19–22. Describe the outcome of the battle.

War Between Israel and Syria, Part 2

20:23–25. The Syrians think they lost to Israel because of what factor? _____

What plan do they make as a result? _____

20:26–27. Where does the Syrian army go in the spring to meet Israel for battle? _____

To what does the author compare the people of Israel as they come to war against the Syrians? _____

20:28. What prophecy does the man of God give Ahab? _____

What would God prove to the Syrians by giving the victory to Israel in this manner? _____

20:29–30. What is the result of this second battle between Syria and Israel? _____

20:31–33. How do the Syrians try to receive favorable treatment from Ahab after their loss? _____

20:34. What promise does Ben-Hadad give Ahab? _____

How would you contrast Ahab and Ben-Hadad's relationship at the start of this story (see 20:1–5) with the end of the story? _____

Ahab's Judgment

20:35–38. What does the prophet do to disguise himself? _____

Cross References

Psalm 20:7

Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

Psalm 139:7–10

⁷ Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?

⁸ If I ascend into heaven, You *are* there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You *are there*.

⁹ If I take the wings of the morning, *And* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

¹⁰ Even there Your hand shall lead me, *And* Your right hand shall hold me.

What is the man's consequence for disobeying the voice of the LORD? _____

20:39–40. What story does the prophet tell Ahab? _____

How does Ahab respond to the story of the lost prisoner of war? _____

20:41–43. What does the prophet announce to Ahab? How had Ahab disobeyed the LORD? _____

What are the consequences for Ahab's disobedience? _____

How does Ahab respond to the prophet's message? _____

Ask Yourself

Ben-Hadad is an example of human arrogance. How does his fall remind us of the danger of over-confidence in human strength? (Psalm 20:7)

The Syrians blamed their military loss on the mistaken idea that Israel's God exercised control over a specific geographic location (the hills) and that by moving the battle to the fields (where their god would supposedly have the upper hand), they could defeat the LORD. Do I sometimes think that God has more power in one location (like church) than another (like work or home)? How will it change my attitude when I truly believe that God's authority and power has no limits? (See Psalm 139:7–10)

What can I learn from this chapter about the importance of following God's instructions carefully?