

# Ahab and Jezebel: Abuse of Authority



## Teacher's Guide

### Surveying the Source

1 Kings 16:21–22:40; 2 Chronicles 18.

### Plotting the Course

#### The students will:

► Discuss how people in the Bible and people today can use power to manipulate others, and how the “God factor” makes a difference in good leadership.

► Explore how the story of Ahab and Jezebel demonstrates abuse of authority,

and look at what happens when people in power do not involve God in their decisions.

► Examine different strategies that can be used to make good decisions.

### Preparing to Lead

Ahab had a chance to lead with integrity, to lead with God as his guide. But he chose another route. He chose to marry a wife whose father was devoted to idolatry and who herself worshiped Baal. To please his wife Jezebel, Ahab erected a temple for Baal and hired pagan priests to work in the temple.

For a person who had power, Ahab didn't use his power to make his country a better place for the people living there. He allowed Jezebel to kill some of God's prophets and forcing others of them to hide in the wilderness. By tapping into God's power, Elijah played an important part in saving these prophets.

### Getting Started

**A.** Bring a pop culture magazine such as *People* or *Us* to class. Ask someone to find one or two stories which demonstrate an abuse of power. These stories may be about a personal relationship or a business relationship. Discuss the decisions that the people in the stories may have made to lead up to such an abuse of power. Discuss how God can use that situation to show His power.

**B.** Talk to the class about this scenario: Two students are roommates. One is

popular and one is not. The popular student sees his roommate getting good grades and asks him for help. The smarter roommate begins tutoring him, but only for favors such as an invitation to a party or an introduction to a girl. How is this relationship unhealthy? What can each student do to improve the relationship and change it from a manipulative one to a healthy one which God can be a part of?

### Delving Into the Word

**A.** Briefly describe Ahab and Jezebel's relationship to each other; to the people they ruled over; and to God (read selec-

tions from 1 Kings 16:30–33; 18:7–13; 21:5–14). Discuss how they would have related to others if God has been their

### Materials

pop culture magazine such as *People* or *Us*, paper and pens

guide. Ask several people from the group to describe a healthy relationship between a man and woman, one that is based on a relationship with God.

**B.** Read to the class selections from 1 Kings 18:16–46. Discuss the story of Elijah’s demonstration of God’s power in contrast to Baal’s prophets. Discuss how

Ahab could have seen this miracle and yet still harden his heart to God’s leading. Ask the class to think of other illustrations from world history where such a blatant abuse of power existed (Hitler, Mussolini, etc.). Then contrast these with others who used their leadership for good (Mother Theresa, Gandhi, etc.).

## Discussing the Ideas

1. What does it mean to be unequally yoked? (See 2 Corinthians 6:14.) How were Ahab and Jezebel unequally yoked?

2. Identify two or three good leaders of today and the not-so-distant past. How are they using, or how did they use, their power? Who are/were they trying to help, and why?

3. In any relationship, why is it important not to abuse your power or your place in that relationship? What about in the following relationships: parent/child; friend/friend; student/teacher; worker/worker?

4. What are some of the consequences of trying to manipulate someone else? Is

there ever a situation when manipulating someone is a good thing? Explain your answer.

5. What advice could you give to a friend who is in a relationship where she or he is being taken advantage of and manipulated? What Bible verses or stories could you share with this person to help her or him get out of this relationship or try to improve it?

6. Hand out the reproducible activity (see page 41). Have individual class members read each line of the “poem.” Then discuss how Ahab and Jezebel might have viewed the second half of each phrase.

## Closing the Activity

Have each member of the class list attributes God wants us to have. Ask them to consider silently how these attributes are different from “the world’s” view of

power and success. Close with a prayer that class members will desire to develop godly attributes in order to benefit others rather than hurt them.

**Stephanie Yamniuk, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada**

## ENRICHING THOUGHTS

The highest aim in life – To know God and do His will  
The most enriching good habit – Complimenting others  
The most destructive habit – Worry  
The greatest joy – Giving  
The greatest loss – Loss of self-respect  
The most satisfying work – Helping others  
The most endangered species – Dedicated leaders  
Our greatest natural resource – Our youth  
The ugliest look – A frown  
The greatest “shot in the arm” – Encouragement  
The greatest problem to overcome – Fear  
The most effective sleeping pill – Peace of mind  
The most crippling disease – Excuses  
The surest way to limit God – Unbelief  
The most powerful force in life – Love  
The most dangerous piranha – A gossip  
The Greatest Life-Giver – The Creator  
The world’s most incredible computer – The brain  
The worst thing to be without – Hope  
The deadliest weapon – The tongue  
The two most power-filled words – “I Can”  
The greatest asset – Faith  
The most worthless emotion – Self-pity  
The most beautiful attire – A Smile  
The most prized possession – Self-esteem  
The most powerful form of communication – Prayer  
The most contagious spirit – Enthusiasm  
The most urgent need – Salvation  
The greatest attribute of Jesus – Obedience  
The Greatest of All – God