



Lesson 12

# God Gives Ahab Victory Over Syria



Ben-Hadad was the king of Syria. He had gathered a large army accompanied by 32 kings with their horses and chariots ready to attack the city of Samaria in Israel. Having surrounded the city he wrote a letter to King Ahab who ruled the northern Kingdom of Israel.



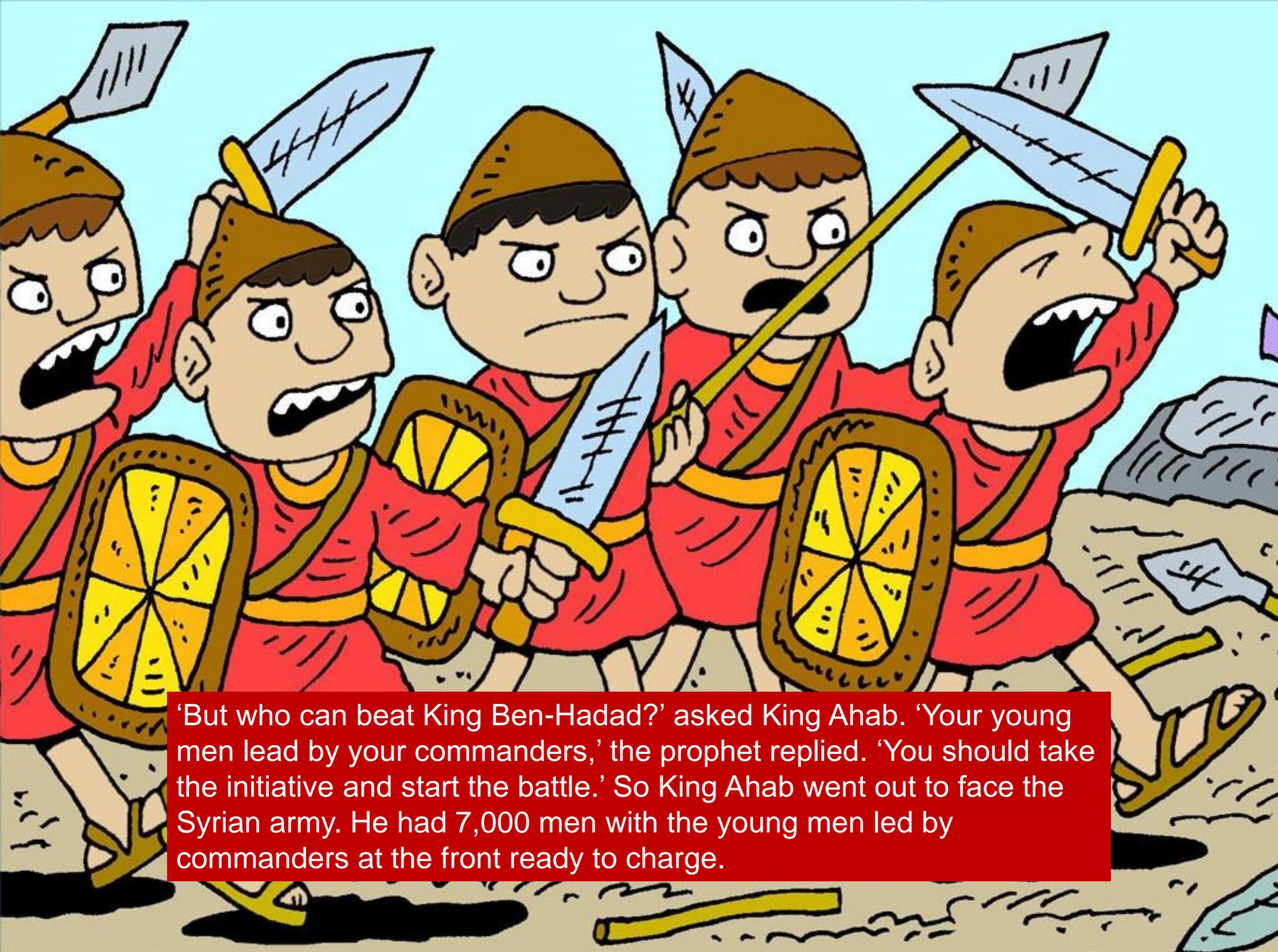
In the letter he boasted to King Ahab that soon everything he owned would become his property. King Ahab was scared but the elders and people of Samaria said, 'Don't listen to Ben-Hadad or agree to his demands.'



Ben-Hadad sent another message to Ahab: 'May the gods deal with me severely, if enough dust remains in Samaria to give each of my men a handful. King Ahab of Israel was furious. 'Tell Ben-Hadad he had better not talk like he had beaten me until he has fought me.'



Soon after that God sent a prophet to King Ahab. 'This is what the Lord says: "Do you see this vast army? I will give it into your hand today, and then you will know that I am the Lord."'



‘But who can beat King Ben-Hadad?’ asked King Ahab. ‘Your young men lead by your commanders,’ the prophet replied. ‘You should take the initiative and start the battle.’ So King Ahab went out to face the Syrian army. He had 7,000 men with the young men led by commanders at the front ready to charge.



They set out at noon while Ben-Hadad and the 32 kings allied with him were in their tents getting drunk. 'Men are advancing from Samaria,' a scout reported. Ben-Hadad replied, 'If they have come out for peace, capture them. If they have come out for war, capture them.'



But King Ahab's tiny army, led by the young fighting men, fought hard and each beat his own opponent. The Syrians fled, with the Israelites in pursuit. Ben-Hadad managed to escape on horseback.



Afterwards, the prophet of the Lord told the king, 'Strengthen your position and see what must be done, because next spring King BenHadad will attack you again.'



And sure enough, the following spring, Ben-Hadad had gathered another army and was marching to fight King Ahab. The King of Syria had new battle tactics. He knew the Israelites were good at fighting in the hills so he wanted to battle with them on the plains.



The prophet of the Lord told Ahab, 'The Lord says "As the Syrians think the Lord can fight in the hills but not in the valleys, I will deliver this vast army into your hands, and you will know that I am the Lord."' For seven days the two armies camped opposite each other, and on the seventh day the battle began.



King Ahab's army of Israelites inflicted 100,000 casualties on the Syrian foot soldiers in one day. The rest of Ben-Hadad's army escaped to the city of Aphek, where the wall collapsed on 27,000 of them.



Ben-Hadad hid in an inner room in the city. God gave VICTORY to king Abah this day.