

## 1 Kings 22

Good evening and thank you for joining us. Would you please turn in your bibles to 1 Kings 22? Tonight we finish 1 Kings and then next week on Wed we'll move back to the NT and study the book of Galatians.

Remember, Ahab is still on the throne in Israel, and he was a wicked king. Last week we saw Ahab's foolishness as he made a treaty with Ben Hadad king of Syria, and tonight, he'll pay for that. The title of tonight's message is The end of Ahab  
Let's pray

1 Now three years passed without war between Syria and Israel.

2 Then it came to pass, in the third year, that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went down to visit the king of Israel. It's been several chapters since there was any mention of the king of Judah, the southern kingdom. Jehoshaphat was not a perfect king, but he was a godly king. Now it says down-Israel is north-remember Jerusalem is high up, so you would go 'down' even when going up north

3 And the king of Israel said to his servants, "Do you know that Ramoth in Gilead is ours, but we hesitate to take it out of the hand of the king of Syria?" Last week in chapter 20 we saw how the King of Syria, Ben Hadad, promised to return certain cities to Israel in exchange for leniency after defeat in battle. Apparently, this was a city that was never returned to Israel.

4 So he said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to fight at Ramoth Gilead?"

Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses."

5 Also Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Please inquire for the word of the LORD today." Jehoshaphat wants to mend fences between Judah and Israel. Jehoshaphat's first inclination is to fight this battle with Ahab, but before he gets any deeper he wants to check it out with God. This was a very smart move.

6 Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said to them, "Shall I go against Ramoth Gilead to fight, or shall I refrain?"

So they said, "Go up, for the Lord will deliver it into the hand of the king."

7 And Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not still a prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of Him?"<sup>[fn]</sup> Jehoshaphat is no dummy. He quickly recognizes that the 400 prophets Ahab gathered together were 'yes' men who would simply tell him what Ahab wanted to hear. But Jehoshaphat doesn't want yes men, he wants the real deal, so he asks is there no true prophet of the Lord?

8 So the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is still one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD; but I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil."

And Jehoshaphat said, "Let not the king say such things!" Ahab hated him because he always spoke truth.

9 Then the king of Israel called an officer and said, "Bring Micaiah the son of Imlah quickly!"

10 The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, having put on their robes, sat each on his throne, at a threshing floor at

the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. These are the false prophets.

11 Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made horns of iron for himself; and he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'With these you shall gore the Syrians until they are destroyed.' " 12 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, "Go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper, for the LORD will deliver it into the king's hand." It was common for Old Testament prophets to use props or visual aids in their prophecies. Jeremiah and Ezekiel were both known for these living parables. But obviously even false prophets employed these tactics.

Zedekiah comes into the palace prancing in with iron horns, telling the king to gore the Syrians. The other prophets chime in with the same message. Just because a speaker is entertaining and declares 'thus says the Lord' doesn't really mean that's from the Lord.

13 Then the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, "Now listen, the words of the prophets with one accord encourage the king. Please, let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak encouragement." The king's messenger tries to prep Micaiah - for once don't be controversial. Blend in with the other voices. Go along with the majority. We need a unanimous verdict...

This scene is about to drip with drama. Now later in verse 26 it indicates that Micaiah was brought out from prison. So this is a prophet who's in rags and chains standing before two kings, ready to speak on behalf of the LORD.

But listen to the prophet's reply to this 'coaching'.

14 And Micaiah said, "As the LORD lives, whatever the LORD says to me, that I will speak." There are a lot of pastors and churches today that'll tell you what you want to hear. But a true man of God will speak only what the Lord speaks.

15 Then he came to the king; and the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall we refrain?" And he answered him, "Go and prosper, for the LORD will deliver it into the hand of the king!" To Ahab's shock, Micaiah agrees with the false prophets. And this raises some suspicion in his mind. It's quite likely that Micaiah said this in a sarcastic way because look at Ahab's response...

16 So the king said to him, "How many times shall I make you swear that you tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?" King Ahab demanded that Micaiah tell nothing but the truth — which Ahab believed and hoped was the message of the 400 other prophets.

17 Then he said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no master. Let each return to his house in peace.'" The vision implies that King Ahab will die in battle

18 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?" Ahab says, "There he goes again!"

Verses 19-23 give us a very startling and shocking scene...

19 Then Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left. 20 And the LORD

said, 'Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?' So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. 21 Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, 'I will persuade him.' 22 The LORD said to him, 'In what way?' So he said, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And the LORD said, 'You shall persuade him, and also prevail. Go out and do so.' 23 Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you." Since the right hand was the place of favor, this may indicate that God spoke to both faithful and fallen angels.

I've heard it said, and I'm sure you have too, how Christians will say that God can't allow evil in His presence. That sounds nice, but it's not biblically accurate

Some people forget that Satan and his fellow fallen angels have access to heaven **Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.**

and

**Revelation 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.**

These passages show that God can allow evil in His presence, but of course God has no fellowship with evil and one day all evil

will be removed from His presence **Revelation 20:14-15** 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.[fn] 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

So here in these verses God wanted to bring judgment against Ahab, so the Lord asked this group of the host of heaven for a volunteer to lead Ahab into battle.

Apparently, one of the fallen angels volunteered for this task. Since Ahab wanted to be deceived, God would give him what He wanted, using a willing fallen angel who worked through willing unfaithful prophets.

**24 Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near and struck Micaiah on the cheek, and said, "Which way did the spirit from the LORD go from me to speak to you?"** in a dramatic moment, this false prophet Zedekiah smacks Micaiah and says hey-which way did the spirit go now?

**25 And Micaiah said, "Indeed, you shall see on that day when you go into an inner chamber to hide!"** Again speaking of the defeat in battle.

**26 So the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son; 27 and say, 'Thus says the king: "Put this fellow in prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction, until I come in peace."'** ' This is what has many scholars to believe that Micaiah was already a prisoner.

But notice, how is Micaiah's faithfulness to God rewarded? Sent or returned to prison, given very meager rations.

28 But Micaiah said, "If you ever return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "Take heed, all you people!"

Micaiah makes one final and ultimate appeal. He was willing to be judged by whether his prophecy came to pass or not. Talk about faith!!!

29 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth Gilead. Why Jehoshaphat goes with Ahab we don't know. He should've turned back. He knows he's going out to fight a battle, knowing he's on the losing side. But it gets worse!

30 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into battle; but you put on your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle. Ahab decides to wear the infantryman's fatigues so he won't be an easy target. But he tells Jehoshaphat to dress up in his royal robes. And Jehosophat does!

31 Now the king of Syria had commanded the thirty-two captains of his chariots, saying, "Fight with no one small or great, but only with the king of Israel." 32 So it was, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, "Surely it is the king of Israel!" Therefore they turned aside to fight against him, and Jehoshaphat cried out. 33 And it happened, when the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him. As the only identifiable king in the battle, Jehoshaphat found himself quickly in danger. He cried out unto

the LORD and was rescued when they turned back from pursuing him. We get more details...

2 Chronicles 18:31 So it was, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, "It is the king of Israel!" Therefore they surrounded him to attack; but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him, and God diverted them from him. Even in our foolishness we can still cry out to the Lord!!!

34 Now a certain man drew a bow at random, and struck the king of Israel between the joints of his armor. So he said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around and take me out of the battle, for I am wounded." God took control of that random arrow and He supernaturally guided it through a hole between Ahab's armor.

35 The battle increased that day; and the king was propped up in his chariot, facing the Syrians, and died at evening. The blood ran out from the wound onto the floor of the chariot. Ahab, mortally wounded by this arrow, is propped up in his chariot, motivating the troops. But as the minutes turned to hours, Ahab dies.

36 Then, as the sun was going down, a shout went throughout the army, saying, "Every man to his city, and every man to his own country!" When Israel got word of Ahab's death, they fled. In other words, the shepherd died and the sheep scattered, just as Micaiah had prophesied back in verse 17.

37 So the king died, and was brought to Samaria. And they buried the king in Samaria. 38 Then someone washed the chariot at a pool in Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood while the

harlots bathed,[fn] according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken. While Ahab's chariot got detailed - God fulfilled the details of the prophecy uttered in 1 Kings 21:19. You shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "Have you murdered and also taken possession?"' And you shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours." ' "

There was another prophecy fulfilled in the death of Ahab. It was the word from the anonymous prophet of chapter 20 that Ahab spared Ben-Hadad's life at the expense of his own.

39 Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, the ivory house which he built and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?40 So Ahab rested with his fathers. Then Ahaziah his son reigned in his place. By the worlds standards, the reign of Ahab was a success. He was militarily successful and enjoyed a generally prosperous economy. Yet spiritually his reign was a disaster, one of the worst ever for Israel.

The scene shifts to the southern kingdom of Judah and gives an overview of Jehoshaphat's reign. We'll study more about it when we get to 2 Chronicles.

41-48

41 Jehoshaphat the son of Asa had become king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. 42 Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah the daughter

of Shilhi. 43 And he walked in all the ways of his father Asa. He did not turn aside from them, doing what was right in the eyes of the LORD. Nevertheless the high places were not taken away, for the people offered sacrifices and burned incense on the high places. 44 Also Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel. 45 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, the might that he showed, and how he made war, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

46 And the rest of the perverted persons,[fn] who remained in the days of his father Asa, he banished from the land. 47 There was then no king in Edom, only a deputy of the king.

48 Jehoshaphat made merchant ships[fn] to go to Ophir for gold; but they never sailed, for the ships were wrecked at Ezion Geber.

49 Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, “Let my servants go with your servants in the ships.” But Jehoshaphat would not. 2 Chronicles 20 tells us why the ships were wrecked. The same reason Jehoshaphat almost lost his life in battle with Ahab... The king listened to Ahab and dressed in kingly clothes – and almost became victim of a double-cross. This too, was a joint-venture with a wicked man - Ahaziah, Ahab’s son.

We see time and again if you ally yourself with corrupt people you’re inviting disastrous results. When we are unequally yoked with unbelievers—be it in marriage, business, or any other venture—we’re headed for problems.

50-53

50 And Jehoshaphat rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David his father. Then Jehoram his son reigned in his place.

51 Ahaziah the son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel. 52 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin; 53 for he served Baal and worshiped him, and provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger, according to all that his father had done. The book that began with a man after God's own heart sitting on the throne of a united Israel ends with two godless kings on the thrones of a divided nation.

1 Samuel 8:4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, 5 and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."

Psalm 106:15 And He gave them their request,  
But sent leanness into their soul.