

JUNE 20

1 Kings 22

Vs. 1-40 We meet Jehoshaphat in this story, but the object is really the death of Ahab.

Vs. 1-4 Notice that there was no need for this war. You really have to wonder what Jehoshaphat was doing there. Jehoshaphat was a godly king in Judah, and I think he was trying to unify both kingdoms by making peace, a marriage covenant and doing some "bonding" stuff with Ahab. Great idea. Maybe he did this because his father, Asa, was at war with the northern kingdom and it kind of ate his lunch and his faith. I think this peace also had a godly "spin" to it in trying to bring unity to Israel, but it is always better to check stuff out with God. Not every human effort toward peace is God's will. What we are seeing here is actually the tragic flaw of Jehoshaphat that will rain horrible cultural ungodliness down on Judah. If we were going to make a policy from his life, it would be to ask God first, and then make sure that the peace we make with others is totally on God's terms. Political unity with ungodliness doesn't work. We'll see in Chronicles that what Jehoshaphat did might have looked spiritual on the surface, but there was a lot of human and fleshly motive mixed in.

Vs. 5-12 Jehoshaphat would never have tolerated prophets of Baal, but these false prophets didn't impress him either. I really think Jehoshaphat was trying to be a good influence on Ahab by suggesting they consult a "real" prophet of the Lord. You realize that since Jehoshaphat had come to Ahab and had already agreed to help him, Jehoshaphat had already made his decision. This was just for show. The time to have consulted the Lord was in Jerusalem, consulting the high priest in the temple. This will turn out ugly.

V. 8 We should like Micaiah immediately because Ahab didn't like him.

Vs. 11-12 Apparently this guy was very convincing and even Jehoshaphat was under his spell. The horns, as we'll see in Daniel, symbolized kings.

Vs. 13-23 This portion of Scripture is very important. Joined together with other teaching in the entire Bible, it gives you a unique look into how God still uses rebellious angels to accomplish His will. We've already seen this with King Saul, and even the apostle Paul will get a thorn in the flesh delivered from a messenger of Satan.

V. 15 My take on this is that Micaiah answered with some sort of parroting of the other prophets, making it apparent he was ridiculing the entire circus atmosphere. Imagine what this looked like with 400 prophets.

V. 16 What Ahab says here is so ironic that it is funny. I'm sure he never ever said this to Micaiah before.

Vs. 17-23 Now, we are looking into God's court where the fallen angels still enter and where God uses them to chasten and judge men. We'll get another look at this in Job. All the angels God made, including Lucifer (Satan), still report to God. When God calls for judgment on Ahab, it is clearly a fallen angel that comes forward. What is interesting is that God Himself grants the mission and its success.

Unfortunately for Jehoshaphat and Ahab, they had already decided to do what they were going to do regardless of what those prophets or God said. Their hearts were already set and hardened, so God gave them what they wanted as judgment against them. He allowed a demon to supernaturally empower the speech and persuasion of the lying prophets. That means that these prophets were really good and inspiring. Sometimes it isn't good when God gives you what you want if you really don't want what He wants.

Vs. 24-28 Micaiah was completely humiliated. Jehoshaphat should have seen this, but he had already given his word, or as Proverbs below will say, made a pledge for his neighbor. In this, Jehoshaphat was a complete fool.

Vs. 29-40 Ahab was really setting up Jehoshaphat to be killed, but God made sure the arrow went into the air and came down in the right place. Apparently, the well is where those who killed Naboth and his family washed themselves. It is an interesting and ironic note that the prostitutes washed themselves in the blood-tainted water, as if they were baptized unto Ahab. More than any king before him, Ahab led Israel into spiritual “whoredom” and away from Yahweh.

Vs. 41-50 Jehoshaphat was a godly king and did a lot of great stuff, but his human attempt (without seeking God's will) to unite the kingdoms will completely destroy everything that he built. That ought to be a word to the wise. Even though he was rebuked by the Lord for his association with Ahab (in Chronicles), Jehoshaphat persisted in trying to be friends with the evil rulers north of him. Verse 49 is one of the few times Jehoshaphat said no.

Today too, you see a lot of Christian leaders trying to make public relational bridges to very ungodly groups and very ungodly concepts. They do it because of the “love of God” or “tolerance” or whatever, but the result looks utterly foolish and they harm the people of God and the mission of Christ. Jesus preached repentance and sent the Twelve out preaching repentance. We don't have to be condemning, but we do have to preach the Word of God and leave it to Him, not to our savvy. Repentance is between the lost and God, but there must be a recognition of sin and the need to turn to Him (repentance). We are just the messengers, not the architects, of reconciliation. We don't need to schmooze God's Word to make it acceptable to sinners either by our teaching or by our tolerance of them. Jesus said, *No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.* We speak His Word in love and God draws them, if they are “drawable.”

Vs. 51-53 Ahaziah was like his father; and Jezebel, his mother, was still running things. The judgment on Ahab's house would soon follow.

Acts 13:16-41

We are fully into Paul's 1st missionary journey. What is interesting as you read this, note how much Paul knows about John and Jesus and what they said. This sermon is being given in a synagogue. Note also how often Paul mentions names, like David. Also, notice how often he mentions the resurrection. This, too, is a very Jewish audience.

Vs. 16-25 This seems to be how Paul showed that Jesus was the fulfillment of God's plan of redemption and God's purpose for Israel.

Vs. 26-31 This is the recounting of Jesus' condemnation, death and resurrection.

Vs. 32-39 This is where Paul explains that Jesus not only fulfilled the plan of God, but that it is Jesus who brings forgiveness and frees men from the curse of the law/judgment.

Vs. 35-37 Here, Paul sounds a lot like Peter in Acts 2:27-30. I wonder if Paul was there.

Vs. 40-41 Not many of us would do this, but it is only fair to warn people that they shouldn't ignore God's offer.

I'm impressed over and over that the giving of the gospel was very simple, especially as Jesus taught his men. I think that in the harvest, simple is better. The Father is the one who draws men to the Savior. We are just the messengers who then become makers of disciples, who make disciples.

Psalm 138

In reading this psalm, note that David is praising God for delivering him from everything that was thrown at him during those ten years of running from Saul and those seven years of civil war. So then, he is giving testimony to all those forces, human and spiritual, of God's greatness and power and love.

Vs. 1-3 The word *gods* could mean mighty ones, either being human or spiritual. Notice in v. 4, David refers to *the kings of the earth*, and in v. 7 he talks about *enemies*.

David was strengthened by the faithfulness of God having given him a promise and then delivering him over and over again. All of the stress over all of those years made him know of the *steadfast love* of the Lord.

Vs. 4-6 Apparently David did give testimony to kings and ambassadors of other nations. This is also mentioned in Isaiah 55.

Vs. 7-8 This is a very perceptive summary that David gave to his life. Notice that David perceived that God had a *purpose* for him and that God would *fulfill* it. Now, look back at the previous page in Acts 13:36. Kind of cool, huh?

Proverbs 17:17-18

These seem like contradictory verses. One says that a friend or a brother is always there for you. The other says you're a fool if you make yourself the guarantor for your neighbor.

V. 18 seems to say that there is a line you don't have to cross, and shouldn't cross for a friend or a brother. Loyalty and love are enough. Jesus presents the option of just providing for your neighbor's need without having to receive in return. In the case of Jesus, He didn't make a pledge on our honor; He just paid it all.