

1 Kings Chapter 22 Continued

1 Kings 22:29 "So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead."

Which, according to Bunting, was twenty four miles from Samaria. That Ahab went is no wonder, it was his own idea first, his inclination led to it, his prophets encouraged him, and in bravado to the prophet of the Lord, was determined upon it. But it may seem much stranger that Jehoshaphat should, after such an account as Micaiah had given, and who, doubtless, could observe a great difference between him and the prophets of Ahab. And yet there is much to be said which might incline him to go, as that there were four hundred prophets all agreed, and who made use of the name of the Lord, and pretended to be true prophets. And though he might suspect them, he could not confute them. And Micaiah, he prophesied evil of Ahab only, and therefore Jehoshaphat might think himself safe in going. Besides, he had given his word to Ahab, and he did not choose to go from it; to which may be added, that Ahab's cause was just, to recover a part of his own dominions.

Jehoshaphat would have been willing to listen to Micaiah's advice and call off the battle against Syria. Ahab was determined that Micaiah was a false prophet, so he went ahead with the battle.

1 Kings 22:30 "And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and enter into the battle; but put thou on thy robes. And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle."

Ahab never acted on spiritual advice, but he was taking no chances in the upcoming battle.

“Disguise myself”: Rejecting the prophecy, but fearing it also, Ahab decided not to wear his official robe, but the clothes of an ordinary soldier.

Ahab thought he could outsmart God by disguising himself. But God’s purposes are never thwarted by human schemes (14:1-18; 1 Sam. 28:8).

This is a very evil request in itself. Ahab thought if anyone should be killed, it would be Jehoshaphat. He thought the king of Syria would mistake Jehoshaphat for him. Ahab put on the clothes of the common soldier and went into battle.

1 Kings 22:31 "But the king of Syria commanded his thirty and two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel."

“Save only with the king of Israel”: The very Syrian king, Ben-hadad, whose life Ahab had spared (20:34), ungratefully singled him out for death.

Ben-hadad was still angry with Ahab for the two battles they had fought, when Ben-hadad lost thousands of his men. His anger is vented against Ahab personally. These thirty-two captains are

specifically over the chariots, which are the strongest and best of the army. He is not saying that they should not kill any of the soldiers, if it is necessary. He is saying, concentrate on killing Ahab.

Verses 32-33: Jehoshaphat's "family loyalty" in the face of Micaiah's stern warning nearly cost him his life. For his actions he was severely denounced by God's prophet (2 Chron. 19:1-3).

1 Kings 22:32 "And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it [is] the king of Israel. And they turned aside to fight against him: and Jehoshaphat cried out."

"Jehoshaphat cried out": According to (2 Chron. 18:31), this was a prayer for the Lord's deliverance. Jehoshaphat's cry showed the Syrians that he was not Ahab.

1 Kings 22:33 "And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it [was] not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him."

Against whom only their orders were to fight.

"That they turned back from pursuing him": For upon so great a force coming upon him he could not withstand, so he fled.

Perhaps, the king of Judah cried out and told them he was not Ahab. It was possible that the thirty-two captains knew Ahab's voice and the voice of Jehoshaphat were not recognized as Ahab. He could have actually shouted something about Judah, which would have also caused them to know he was not Ahab. We do not know what showed them he was not Ahab, only that they did realize he was not Ahab. Their recognition of Jehoshaphat is what turned them away.

1 Kings 22:34 "And a [certain] man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded."

"A bow at a venture": The Syrian Bowman shot at an Israelite soldier, not knowing that it was the disguised Ahab. The arrow found a small groove between the breast piece and the flexible scale armor that covered the lower abdomen and thighs. Instantly, Ahab slumped in his chariot, mortally wounded and bleeding to death.

Humanly speaking, the bow strike that killed Ahab was "random," but it illustrates the imperfection of human armor, and human righteousness. Satan will exploit any chink in the believer's spiritual armor in an attempt to take him or her down (Eph. 6:16). This is why it is critical for Christians to live consistently righteous lives.

An unknown archer shot the king of Israel without any knowledge that he was the king. Some would say this was an accidental happening, but I would say this was the will of God. The arrow

shot him in the chest area near the breast bone. He was in the chariot with one of his men, and asked the driver to take him out of the battle zone.

1 Kings 22:35 "And the battle increased that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot."

Whatever his faults might have been, Ahab did not die as a coward. He did not allow his mortal "wound" to be a source of discouragement, hence defeat for his troops.

It seemed he remained in his chariot, even though he was wounded and removed from the front lines. He possibly even continued to fight at his retreated position, until he died. There seemed to be a pool of blood in the bottom of the chariot.

1 Kings 22:36 "And there went a proclamation throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country."

Much about the time that Ahab died; and this proclamation by a herald might be made by his order, as he was dying. Or by Jehoshaphat, when he understood he was dead.

"Saying, every man to his city, and every man to his own country": The order was to cease fighting, and make the best of their way as fast as they could to their own homes, since their shepherd and master was dead, which fulfilled the vision of Micaiah (1 Kings 22:17). It seems to have been a drawn battle, at least there is no account of the advantage on either side.

This is just what Micaiah had prophesied. The army was disbanded and everyone went home. Just as the prophet had said, this army was scattered because they had no leader.

Verses 37-38: Various prophecies came to pass at Ahab's dramatic death (20:42; 21:19; 22:17, 20). Ahab's death came about just as prophesied.

1 Kings 22:37 "So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria."

In the chariot he died in.

"And they buried the king in Samaria": Where his father Omri was buried (1 Kings 16:28).

Ahab was buried in his capital city. He was buried in Samaria with his father.

1 Kings 22:38 "And [one] washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armor; according unto the word of the LORD which he spake."

“And they washed his armor”: The Hebrew text may read “where” or “while”. In either case, the point is the same: Ahab, the spiritual harlot (i.e. idolater), was associated with the physical harlots at his death.

“According unto the word of the Lord”: Ahab’s death fulfilled the prophecies spoken by Elijah (21:19), and Micaiah (verse 17).

The following prophecy was fulfilled in the Scripture above.

1 Kings 21:19 "And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine."

1 Kings 22:39 "Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he made, and all the cities that he built, [are] they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?"

“The ivory house”: Ahab’s palace at Samaria had internal walled panels that were made of inlaid ivory, indicative of his kingdom’s economic prosperity.

Confirmation of the fact of Ahab’s “ivory house” comes from the excavations at Samaria. Internally, the furniture was inlaid with ivory panels, the walls, were covered with inlaid ivory, and ivory figures and plaques were found in abundance. Externally, the building was covered with a polished white limestone that in the gleaming sunlight gave the appearance of ivory to those who approached it. The use of ivory in the various palaces of the ancient Near East is widely attested. Amos complained that the indolent rich of the northern kingdom in the eighth century B.C. sprawled themselves out “upon beds of ivory” (Amos 6:4).

“Cities that he built”: Archeological excavations show that Ahab strengthened the fortifications of Samaria, Megiddo, and Hazor.

This record book is mentioned over and over in the book of Kings. His house was not solid ivory, but he had used ivory widely in the inlay work. Ahab was a very evil, self-indulgent king. In the following, we read of a throne made of ivory.

1 Kings 10:18 "Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold."

Amos 3:15 "And I will smite the winter house with the summer house; and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, saith the LORD."

1 Kings 22:40 "So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead."

Of whom more is said in the latter part of this chapter (and in 2 Kings).

Ahaziah had no son to carry on for him. Ahab would not live on through grandsons. Joram would be the last of his line. Ahaziah was evil as his father, Ahab, had been evil. He worshipped Baal. "Ahaziah" means "whom Jehovah upholds". We see that Ahab had great plans for this son. God had helped Ahab against Syria, but Ahab continued to worship false gods, and so God destroyed him.

Verses 41-50: Little is said of "Jehoshaphat" here. For a full account of his life (see 2 Chronicles Chapters 17-20). His later accompanying of Jehoram of Israel on a campaign across the Jordan is recounted (in 2 Kings 3:6-27).

1 Kings 22:41 "And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel."

"Fourth year": A reference to the beginning of Jehoshaphat's reign, after being co-regent with his father Asa, in 870 B.C.

This is a break from the last few verses. This goes back to when Jehoshaphat became king of Judah. We must remember that he is of Judah, and not the ten tribes of Israel. Ahab had been reigning in Israel 4 years when Jehoshaphat became king of Judah.

1 Kings 22:42 "Jehoshaphat [was] thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name [was] Azubah the daughter of Shilhi."

"Twenty and five years": 873-848 B.C. So that he must be sixty years of age when he died.

"And his mother's name was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi": But of what family they were is not said.

He reigned until he was 60 years old. Jehoshaphat tried to keep the people of Judah faithful to the LORD. He even sent those who taught the law, to the people the third year of his reign. He was faithful to the commandments of the LORD. His headquarters was in Jerusalem. He was a good king to the people.

1 Kings 22:43 "And he walked in all the ways of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing [that which was] right in the eyes of the LORD: nevertheless the high places were not taken away; [for] the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places."

"Doing that which was right": Jehoshaphat faithfully followed in his father Asa's footsteps, doing what pleased the Lord. His only major fault, like that of his father, was his failure to close down the high places.

For all of his struggles trying to teach them the law of God, the people still worshipped in high places. They claimed to be worshipping the LORD there, but the worship should have taken place in the temple.

1 Kings 22:44 "And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel."

“Made peace” (In 2 Chron. 19:2), Jehu the prophet rebuked Jehoshaphat for this alliance.

In the verses preceding, we learned of his peace with Ahab of Israel until the death of Ahab.

1 Kings 22:45 "Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he showed, and how he warred, [are] they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?"

“He warred” (see 2 Kings 3:7-27; 2 Chron. 17:11; 20:1-30).

Chronicles in the Bible have quite a bit more to say about Jehoshaphat, but this is speaking of another book which is not in the Bible.

1 Kings 22:46 "And the remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land."

His father Asa removed many of these filthy creatures, but not all. As many, no doubt, as came within his knowledge. But some remained, whom this his son removed, being of the same disposition with his father (see 1 Kings 15:12).

We have discussed in previous lessons, those who practiced sodomy. It is interesting to note, again this king who did right in the sight of the LORD, drove out the "sodomites". These were religious prostitutes in false religions, doing the same thing homosexuals and lesbians do today.

“Verses 47-49: Jehoshaphat controlled Edom, which gave him access to Ezion-geber. He sought to emulate Solomon’s fleet and wealth (9:26-28), but was unsuccessful. According to (2 Chron. 20:36-37), the Lord destroyed his fleet because of Jehoshaphat’s alliance to build it with Ahaziah, the king of Israel. (1 Kings 22:49), apparently refers to a subsequent attempt by Ahaziah to continue the joint venture after the disaster.

1 Kings 22:47 "[There was] then no king in Edom: a deputy [was] king."

Which had been the case from the times of David, who subdued Edom, and placed garrisons in it, and governors over it (2 Sam. 8:14). And continued through the reign of Jehoshaphat, unto the times of his son, under whom the Edomites revolted, and set up a king of their own (2 Kings 8:20). With a view to which is observed, as to account for how Jehoshaphat could build ships in Ezion-geber, which was in the land of Edom, of which in the next verse, because the whole country was governed by a viceroy, or deputy under him.

Edom must have been under the control of Judah at this time. Perhaps, Jehoshaphat appointed a deputy to lead Edom.

Verses 48-49: Jehoshaphat's projected commercial venture with "Ahaziah" was denounced by God's prophet Eliezer (2 Chron. 20:36-37). Moreover, the "ships" were destroyed while they were still in port at "Ezion-geber. Jehoshaphat" wisely refused a second business proposal by Ahaziah. For Ezion-geber and the merchant "ships of Tharshish" (see the notes on 9:26 and 10:22). For "Ophir" (see the note on 9:28).

1 Kings 22:48 "Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber."

Ships to go to sea, particularly the Indian sea (1 Kings 10:22). Tarshish is used for the sea in general (Psalm 48:7). In the Cetib, or text, it is "ten". In the Keri, or margin, it is "made", which we follow, and may be put together, as in the Tigurine version, and read, "he made ten ships to go by sea".

"Even to go to Ophir for gold": As Solomon did; of which place (see 1 Kings 9:28).

"But they went not, for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber": The port where they were built: as soon as they were launched, or sailed, they were broken to pieces against the rocks near the harbor, which stood up like a man's backbone. That's where the port had its name (see 1 Kings 9:26). And if this was Calzem, as there observed, near to it was a dangerous place for ships, and where many were lost, and is supposed to be the place where Pharaoh and his host were drowned. The reason of this shipwreck was, because Jehoshaphat joined himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, for which he was reprov'd by the prophet Eliezer, and this was his punishment (2 Chron. 20:35).

Solomon had a great fleet of ships which traded with the known world when he was in power. It appears, Jehoshaphat tried to build a fleet and send them out on similar missions. We see from this that they were destroyed in rough seas.

1 Kings 22:49 "Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships. But Jehoshaphat would not."

Who very probably had built some more ships on his own, having broken off his partnership with Ahaziah.

"Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships": Since he was refused a part in the ships themselves, he desires leave to send men aboard them to traffic for him abroad.

"But Jehoshaphat would not": Having been reprov'd by a prophet of the Lord, and had suffered the loss of his ships by joining with him already.

It appears that Ahaziah and Jehoshaphat had worked together on the building of the ships.

2 Chronicles 20:35-36 "And after this did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who did very wickedly:" "And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Ezion-geber." It appears that God sunk these ships, because of this evil alliance with Ahaziah.

1 Kings 22:50 "And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead."

In the city of Sion, where David, Rehoboam, Abijam, and Asa, were buried.

"And Jehoram his son reigned in his stead": Who was now thirty two years of age, and he reigned ten years.

Jehoram married the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel and he became an evil king, unlike his father. Jehoshaphat was buried with honor in the city of David.

Verses 51-52: Fathers or mothers can influence their children to evil. After Ahab was killed in battle, Jezebel continued to live on, poisoning the kingdom with her Baal worship and provoking the Lord's "anger." And "Ahaziah," Ahab's son, was so captivated by it all that he did not learn from the mistakes of history.

22:51 – 2 Kings 1:18: "Ahaziah ... two years" 853-852 B.C.

1 Kings 22:51 "Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel."

It is observed, that Jehoshaphat began to reign in the fourth year of Ahab, and Ahab reigned twenty two years (see 1 Kings 22:41). Therefore, Ahab's son must begin to reign in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat. But perhaps he was made king in his father's lifetime, before he went on his expedition to Ramoth-gilead, or Ahab's reign was not twenty two years completely.

"And reigned two years over Israel": Not complete (as appears from 2 Kings 3:1).

This goes back a step to pick up the very short reign of Ahaziah, the evil king of Israel.

1 Kings 22:52 "And 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 made Israel to sin:"

His father Ahab, who worshipped Baal.

"And in the way of his mother": His mother Jezebel, who was still living, and served Baal and Astarte, the deities of her country.

"And in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat": Who set up and worshipped the golden calves.

"Who made Israel to sin": By the worship of the same, into which he drew them by his example and authority.

1 Kings 22:53 "For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done."

"He served Baal": Ahaziah continued the official promotion of Baal worship (compare 6:31-32).

(1 Kings ends at this point), in the middle of Ahaziah's reign which is picked up in 2 Kings 1:1-18).

You can easily see why the LORD would not have been pleased with Jehoshaphat making an alliance with this very evil king of Israel.

1 Kings Chapter 22 Continued Questions

1. Why did Ahab go to war, after the warning from the prophet Micaiah?
2. What did Ahab do, so no one would suspect he was at the sight of the battle?
3. What did he tell Jehoshaphat to do?
4. What did the king of Syria tell his 32 captains to do?
5. How did Jehoshaphat stop them from killing him?
6. Who shot Ahab?
7. What part of his body was hit?
8. Where was Ahab, when this happened?
9. What did Ahab do the rest of the day?
10. What proclamation was given at the end of the day?
11. Where was Ahab carried to be buried?
12. What happened to his blood?
13. What kind of house had Ahab made in his lifetime?

14. Who reigned in Ahab's stead?
15. Who was the last of Ahab's lineage?
16. What does "Ahaziah" mean?
17. When did Jehoshaphat begin to reign in Judah?
18. How old was he when he began?
19. What kind of king was he?
20. What was he never able to break the people from doing?
21. Who were the "sodomites"?
22. What did Jehoshaphat do to them?
23. Who ruled in Edom?
24. What happened to the ships Jehoshaphat built?
25. Where was Jehoshaphat buried?
26. How long did Ahaziah reign in Israel?
27. What kind of a king was Ahaziah?