

The Book of 1 Kings



Part 10 Last 3 studies in 1 Kings

Study 1 – Being Clear about God’s Justice

1 Kings 21:1-29

(Sermon on 06-Nov – Paul)

Before we begin: Remind yourself what God said, through His prophet, to King Ahab, in 1 Kings 20:41-43.

God told King Ahab he had set free a man [Ben-Hadad] that He had determined should die. Therefore, it would cost Ahab his life and the life of his people.

Read 1 Kings 21:1-7

1. What does Ahab want to buy and why?

Ahab wants to buy the vineyard of Naboth, the Jezreelite, and exchange he will give Naboth a better vineyard, and will pay whatever it’s worth. Ahab wanted Naboth’s vineyard because he wanted to grow veggies and because this vineyard was close to his palace.

Note: tearing up a vineyard for a veggie patch would mean the vineyard would be out of action for some time; and if ever a vineyard was to be reestablished, it would take many years.

2. **Ponder:** does this seem like a fair request from Ahab? (cf. Exodus 20:17)

It seems like a fair request. But remember, Ahab is King, and he has everything he could possibly have. Exodus 20:17 – the 10th commandment says: “you shall not covet your neighbour’s house. You shall not covet your neighbour’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything [vineyard] that belongs to your neighbour”

3. What is Naboth’s reply in verse 3? Does he have a valid reason not to sell? (c.f. Leviticus 25:15, 23-28; Numbers 36:7-9; Ezekiel 46:18)

Naboth’s reply is that he does not want to give away the inheritance of his ancestors. The vineyard has been in his family for generations and the land was originally allotted by God to each tribe and family. Therefore, the land belonged to God and wasn’t really owned by the people but really only leased. The land was not to be sold except under dire circumstances. Leviticus 25:15 says: sales were to happen based on the number of years since a jubilee year.

There’s not mention of that here with Ahab and Naboth

Leviticus 25:23-28 says: The land was not to be sold permanently as it’s God’s land. Even in the case of someone being poor and needing to sell, it was to be redeemed by the nearest relative to keep it in the family. Ahab is not a relative of Naboth; and Naboth is not poor and needing to sell it. Besides, the property has to be returned in the Jubilee year. Again, this is not mentioned in Ahab’s case.

Numbers 36:7-9 says: No inheritance can pass from tribe to tribe. We’re not told which tribe both men are from.

Ezekiel 46:18 says: Princes of Israel must not take the inheritance of the people.

4. How does Ahab react to Naboth’s refusal in verse 4? And remind yourself just how much of the land of Israel Ahab rules over?

*He lay on his bed sulking like a child and refused to eat. Diddums!
Remember Ahab rules 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel.*

5. How does Jezebel react in verses 5 to 7?

She asks Ahab why he is so sullen and not eating. When Ahab tells Jezebel why; she says it's no way for the King of Israel to behave and she promises to get Naboth's vineyard for Ahab.

6. What do Jezebel's comments in verse 7 reveal about who really has authority in the palace?

Clearly Jezebel wears the trousers and is the one with the real authority in the palace. Ahab is like a puppet husband and puppet king! Jezebel is "she who must be obeyed"

Read 1 Kings 21:8-16

7. What despicable plan does Jezebel come up with?

She uses the King's seal to write letters to the elders and nobles of the city that Naboth lives in to proclaim a day of fasting. The idea seems to be that some evil or calamity had come upon Israel, and a scapegoat had to be found for the evil. Jezebel intended that Naboth would be revealed as the scapegoat. So, the elders and nobles had to arrange for two scoundrels to sit opposite Naboth and bring charges that Naboth had cursed both God and the King. Then they were to stone Naboth to death!

8. What is the irony in having two witnesses (scoundrels) in verse 10? (cf. Deuteronomy 17:6-7; 19:15; Numbers 35:30)

The law required the testimony of two witness to convict a person and sentence them to death. The irony is that there were two witnesses but they were lying and the irony is that they followed the letter of the law whilst breaking the 9th commandment regarding giving false testimony against your neighbour!

9. What is the outcome of this despicable plan in verse 14? (cf. Leviticus 24:13-16). Note from 2 Kings 9:26 what happens to Naboth's sons!

Naboth is stoned to death which was the requirement of the law in Leviticus 24:13-16 for anyone who blasphemed. We'd be in trouble today if we implemented this law for blasphemy. Note: From 2 Kings 9:26 – it seems Naboth's sons may well have been killed also! Perhaps so there were no heirs to his vineyard!

10. **Ponder:** How would you assess the characters of a) Ahab; b) Jezebel; and c) the elders, in this incident?

a) Ahab is wicked and weak; b) Jezebel is wicked and strong and c) The elders and nobles are wicked and subservient/compliant! A deadly combination!

11. What false accusations were laid against Naboth in verse 10? Do these accusations sound familiar? (cf. Matthew 26:59-61, 65; John 19:15; 2 Corinthians 1:5)

The accusations are cursing God and the King.

In Matthew 26:59-61a – the chief priests and Sanhedrin looked for false evidence so they could put Jesus to death. Finally, they found one person who reported that Jesus had said He would destroy God’s temple and rebuild it in three days (v61) and the high priest tore his clothes and said that Jesus had blasphemed (v65).

In John 19:15 – after Pilate had presented Jesus to the people as their King – the people said “we have no king but Caesar”. Their thinking was – if Jesus declared Himself as King – he was going against the King of the Roman Empire – Caesar!

In 2 Corinthians 1:5 – says we may have to share in Christ’s sufferings – as Naboth surely did!

12. How did Jezebel and Ahab react upon hearing the news of Naboth’s death?

She told Ahab to get up and take possession of the vineyard because Naboth is now dead. She didn’t bat an eyelid! And like a good puppet, Ahab did exactly that!

Read 1 Kings 21:17-24

13. Who confronts Ahab in verses 17 to 19; and what does the Lord promise?

Elijah confronts Ahab. God promises that in the place where Naboth was killed, dogs will lick up Ahab’s blood.

14. **Ponder:** why does Elijah say **Ahab** murdered Naboth in verse 19?

God clearly held Ahab responsible for the murder of Naboth as a) the husband of wicked Jezebel who came up with the plan and didn’t stop her [like Adam failed to stop Eve]; b) as King – he should be setting a godly example – and as King, Ahab is more accountable because he is supposed to uphold God’s law on behalf of the people; and c) as beneficiary of the crime.

15. What does verse 20 reveal about Ahab and his thoughts on Elijah?

Ahab saw Elijah as his enemy; when in fact, Elijah was his best friend always pointing him towards God; whereas Jezebel was Ahab’s real enemy.

16. What does the Lord promise will happen to Ahab and his descendants?

Because Ahab has sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord (v20); God will bring disaster on Ahab, God will wipe out every descendant of Ahab and cut off every last male – so that Ahab will not be able to leave a legacy or descendant (v21)

17. Who is Ahab compared to in verse 22? Why?

Ahab is compared to the house of Jeroboam and Baasha.

Because a) Ahab’s dynasty will come to end like Jeroboam’s and Baasha’s; b) because they all caused Israel to sin – and fall into false worship of false gods!

18. **Spoiler alert:** If you want to know if God’s prophecy about Ahab comes true, read 1 Kings 22:29-40; or you can wait until we get there. **Note:** the prophecy was not fulfilled in the

location that Elijah said; the explanation for this may be found in 1 Kings 21:29 and the fact that the prophecy found its final fulfilment in the punishment of Ahab's sons in 2 Kings 9:24-26.

In 1 Kings 22:29-40 – Whilst Ahab (King of Israel) and Jehoshaphat (King of Judah) were in battle with the King of Aram (Ben-Hadad) – Ahab was killed by a random arrow which hit the King between the sections of his armour (v34).

The location of Ahab's death was not as originally prophesied because in 1 Kings 21:29 Ahab humbled himself before God and so God said he would not bring disaster in Ahab's day but in the days of his son. So, we have to wait until 2 Kings 9:24-26 – when Joram, Ahab's son, is killed by Jehu and his body is thrown in the field of Naboth.

19. What does the Lord say will happen to Jezebel in verse 23?

The Lord says that dogs will devour Jezebel by the walls of Jezreel.

20. **Another spoiler alert:** If you want to know if God's prophecy concerning Jezebel comes true, read 2 Kings 9:30-37.

Jezebel was thrown down from her palace in Jezreel and her blood splattered the wall and she was trampled on by horses (v37)

21. What will happen to all who belong to Ahab, in verse 24?

Dogs will eat those who belong to Ahab who die in the city and birds will eat those who die in the country!

Read 1 Kings 21:25-29

22. What is the assessment of Ahab in verses 25 to 26? Why such an assessment?

There was never anyone like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord. Why such assessment? Because he was urged on by his wicked wife, Jezebel [remember how Adam listened to his wife in Genesis 3:15]; and Ahab behaved in the vilest manner by going after idols, like the Amorites (Genesis 15) – whom the Lord drove out of the land before Israel. Just like the Amorites were driven out of the Promised Land before the Israelites occupied it; God is foreshadowing the same thing will happen to the 10 tribes of Israel that Ahab is King over; they too will be driven out of the land – into exile in Assyria – 722BC.

Note: Ahab continues to do evil – despite God sending Elijah to him; despite what happened on Mount Carmel; despite what happened in last week's study, where God allowed Ahab an unlikely and undeserved victory against Ben-Hadad.

23. How does Ahab react in verse 27? Is Ahab sincere? Yes/No/Maybe?

Ahab tore his clothes, donned sackcloth and fasted. Showing sorrow and repentance having heard God's judgment upon him. Is this sincere? I think it's sincere but temporary rather than lasting. For example, he did not relinquish his hold on Naboth's vineyard; and Ahab has the

constant threat and influence of Jezebel. No-one can fool God and it does seem that in v29 that God sees Ahab humbling himself!

24. How does God respond to Ahab humbling himself?

God in His grace and mercy postpones the judgment on Ahab's household, so that it does not happen in Ahab's day, but in his son's day. Judgment is postponed but not cancelled! It seems this postponement is not relayed to Ahab but to Elijah; we're not told if Ahab knows this or is told this; perhaps later?

Read Luke 18:1-7

25. How does this passage relate to 1 Kings 21:1-29?

In this passage Jesus tells a parable of a widow who keeps coming to a judge of a town asking for justice. The judge is described as neither fearing God or caring what people thought. The woman doesn't care about the reputation of the judge; all she cares about is getting justice against her adversary. Because the widow persists in asking for justice, the judge tired of being harassed by the widow, gives in and sees that the widow gets justice.

Jesus' point of the parable is to say if an ungodly unjust judge grants justice to the persistent widow; how much more will the Lord grant justice to His people who cry out to him, day and night, for justice! Jesus is teaching us to be persistent in prayer – especially when praying for justice!

This parable relates to 1 Kings 21:1-29 in that – even though Naboth was unjustly accused and killed and robbed of his vineyard; and even though Ahab and Jezebel think they have got away with it – they haven't – God will always judge sin/evil and give justice to His people.

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19

26. How does this passage relate to 1 Kings 21:1-29?

Peter tells us that Christians should not be surprised if they face fiery ordeals and suffering. In fact, he says we should rejoice in these sufferings (pretty hard to do I know); because in doing so we are participating in Christ's suffering. Peter says we are blessed by God for enduring suffering for Christ's sake and we should praise God. Peter also says there is a time of judgment coming and it starts with Christians; and if it starts with us who love God, what's it going to be like for those who reject the Gospel of Jesus.

Naboth was a God-fearing man – He refused to sell the land given to him by God – as far as he was concerned it was God's land and not to be sold. Naboth suffered for following God – he was wrongly accused and stoned to death. But he did the right thing. Whereas those who kill him will face terrible judgment.

Read Mark 13:9-13

27. How does this passage relate to 1 Kings 21:1-29?

In this passage from Mark 13:9-13, Jesus warns that His followers will be mistreated (handed over to councils, flogged, stand before governors and kings, arrested and brought to trial) but

the Gospel must be preached and his followers are not to worry about what to say; the Holy Spirit will give the words to say. His followers may even be betrayed by family and people will hate them – but his followers are to stand firm to the end and they will be saved.

Naboth was mistreated by standing up for God and His word.

Ultimately Heaven awaits for all true believers!

Read Matthew 10:28

28. How does this passage relate to 1 Kings 21:1-29?

What we need to be concerned about is fearing the One (God) who controls where our soul ends up – in Heaven or in Hell. Naboth feared the Lord – and so his body may have died but his soul is safe. Whereas Ahab and Jezebel and the elders/nobles may well have their body intact – but where will their soul end up, if they don't repent!

Read 2 Thessalonians 1:1-10

29. How does this passage relate to 1 Kings 21:1-29?

Paul writes to the Thessalonians and commends their perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials they are enduring.

Paul points to the certainty that God's judgment is always right; and that by persevering they will be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God [Heaven] for which they are suffering.

Paul confirms that God is just. He will pay back trouble to those who cause trouble (like the Ahab's, Jezebel's and Putin's of this world). Paul says this will happen when Jesus (the one appointed by God the Father) returns – and He will punish all who do not follow the Gospel of Jesus – they will end up in everlasting destruction – and shut out from the presence of the Lord and the glory that is reserved for His holy people (followers).

Naboth will see that glory – whereas God says Ahab, Jezebel and the elders/nobles won't! God is clear about His justice!

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 1 Kings 21:1-29?

God is clear about His judgement and justice!



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and **Scripture is all about Him** (Luke 24:27), in what ways does this passage point to Jesus, if at all?

- Naboth was a scapegoat and wrongly accused of two charges – cursing God (blasphemy) and the King. This is similar to Jesus – He did no wrong and yet was falsely accused of the same two charges – blasphemy and saying He was/is a King – and there can be no King but Caesar!
- God again shows grace to Ahab – Jesus is our grace
- God judges perfectly in this chapter – Jesus is the perfect Judge
- King Jesus is everything King Ahab isn't

How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- a. God's people can expect to suffer injustice in this world*
- b. We shouldn't expect non-Christians to act like Christians – and that includes non-Christian leaders of countries!*
- c. Even though Jezebel's plan seems to have worked a treat – up pops God's prophet to confront Ahab. God knows everything – we can't hide anything from Him!*
- d. Stand up for God and His Word like Naboth did – and it may cost us!*
- e. God will always implement His justice on all evil and wickedness; nobody gets away with evil and wickedness in the long-run*
- f. The lie and deceit of Jezebel had severe consequences: It forced the elders/nobles to be complicit as they were probably afraid; two scoundrels gave false testimony; an innocent man, Naboth is killed and perhaps his sons too and a family destroyed; Ahab will be punished and his family line terminated; and Jezebel punished; and all 10 tribes will go off to exile to Assyria (72BC). So many consequences with just one lie!*
- g. It's never too late to repent!*

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V17 and V19 and V29

Finish in prayer: Thanking God for His supreme justice in all things.

Study 2 – Getting Clear about God’s Word

1 Kings 22:1-40

(Sermon on 13-Nov – Paul)

Before we begin: Read 2 Kings 8:16-19 to see what family connection Jehoshaphat King of Judah has with Ahab King of Israel.

Jehoshaphat’s son, Jehoram, married Ahab’s daughter. This intermarriage meant that Jehoram followed Ahab’s ways rather than his father, Jehoshaphat’s ways.

Read 1 Kings 22:1-9

1. How long has there been peace between Israel and Aram?

For three years there was no war between Aram (aka Syria) and Israel.

2. What problem does the King of Israel have? (It seems Ben-Hadad didn’t keep his promise of 1 Kings 20:34)

Back in 1 Kings 20:34 Ben-Hadad, King of Aram, had promised: “I will return the cities my father took from your father,” Ben-Hadad offered. “You may set up your own market areas in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria.”

Ahab, King of Israel, is faced with the problem that the city of Ramoth Gilead belongs to Israel but the King of Aram occupied the city and it has never been returned or retaken.

3. What does the King of Israel ask the King of Judah (Jehoshaphat) to do? Is this reasonable (see map in appendix 1). And how does the latter respond?

See v4 – Ahab asked Jehoshaphat to go with him and fight against Ramoth Gilead.

See red square on map in appendix 1.

It seems a reasonable request as Ramoth Gilead is not far from Jerusalem. About 40 miles (64km).

Jehoshaphat’s reply is sincere “I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses”

Jehoshaphat perhaps realized Israel is God’s nation (whether Ahab and his people actually follow God or not) and Aram has Israel’s land.

Although, we get the feeling, any alliance with Ahab is folly!

4. What **novel** idea does Jehoshaphat come up with in verse 5?

What a great idea Jehoshaphat suggests “first seek the counsel of the Lord”

5. What prophets does Ahab consult in verse 6? What was their advice?

Ahab consults 400 prophets. They are NOT the false Baal prophets from Mount Carmel; they are all dead. These were prophets of the Lord, God, YHWH; they speak in the Lord’s name (v11); claim to have God’s spirit (v22 and 24); promise the Lord’s success (vv6 & 12) and can deliver the Lord’s Word (v5). But they were not faithful to the Lord, but only spoke what the King wanted to hear.

We can surmise that these prophets are connected with the syncretistic Jeroboam cult of bull worship with the Lord God YHWH veneer.

These prophets' advice was unanimously go to war against Ramoth Gilead because the Lord will give it into the King's hand.

6. What does Jehoshaphat's question in verse 7 imply about the prophets that Ahab has just consulted?

Jehoshaphat asks "Is there no longer a prophet of the Lord here whom we can inquire of?" What this implies is that Jehoshaphat smells a rat and is not convinced by Ahab's puppet prophets!

7. What problem does Ahab have with the one prophet he can still inquire of the Lord in verse 8?

Ahab replies that there is ONE prophet through whom we can inquire of the Lord but Ahab hates this prophet because he never prophesies anything good about Ahab, but always bad.

8. What rebuke does Jehoshaphat give at the end of verse 8?

Jehoshaphat tells Ahab that "the king should not say such a thing" about the Lord's prophet. This shows a stark contrast between Jehoshaphat and Ahab's respect and acknowledgement of the Lord's prophet.

9. Who is the prophet in verse 9?

This prophet is Micaiah son of Imlah.

Read 1 Kings 22:10-18

10. Where are the two kings and what idea does Zedekiah come up with?

The two kings dressed in their royal robes are sitting on two thrones at the threshing floor by the entrance of the gate of Samaria, with all the prophets prophesying before them. What a scene!

Zedekiah, son of Kenaanah, had made iron horns and suggested that with these horns they could gore the Arameans until they are destroyed [perhaps a reference to Deut 33:17]. The idea of the two horns was to show two powerful forces (Israel and Judah) defeating the Arameans.

11. What are all Ahab's prophets in agreement about in verse 12?

All of Ahab's prophets were prophesying the same thing as Zedekiah and said the King should attack Ramoth Gilead and they will be victorious because the Lord will give the city into the King's hands.

12. What does the messenger sent to fetch the prophet Micaiah advise him to do in verse 13?

The messenger sent to fetch Micaiah advises Micaiah to agree with the other prophets when he speaks.

13. How does Micaiah respond to the messenger in verse 14? Why?

Micaiah responds by saying he can only speak what the Lord tells him; because he is faithful and accountable to the Lord alone. For Micaiah, the office of prophet, is separate from the stately office of King. The prophet is to stand in front of the King and speak only God's words – not their own words – and not just want is favourable to the King.

Note: Micaiah was fetched from prison to deliver his prophecy – see v27 where he sent back to prison.

14. What does Micaiah initially say and what does he say when pressed to tell the truth?

From his initial reply and Ahab's response, we can deduce that Micaiah was being sarcastic and mocking Ahab when he said "attack and be victorious, for the Lord will give it into the King's hand".

When Ahab says "how many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord"

Then Micaiah gives the true prophecy – Israel will be scattered on hills like sheep without a shepherd.

15. How does the King of Israel respond to Micaiah's prophecy in verse 18?

Ahab says to Jehoshaphat – "didn't I tell you that he [Micaiah] never prophesies anything good about me, but only bad"

Read 1 Kings 22:19-28

16. What does Micaiah reveal about the inspiration behind the 400 prophets of the King of Israel?

*Micaiah reveals a vision in saw from God. **Standing in the council of the Lord as Micaiah seems to distinguish a true prophet – see Jeremiah 23:17-18.***

The Lord was on his throne in Heaven with all the multitude of Heaven standing around him. God asked "who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?" And after some suggestions – finally a spirit came forward, stood before the Lord, and said "I will entice him"

The spirit said he would go out and put a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all his prophets. Micaiah says so that's what's happening now, Ahab, the Lord has put a deceiving spirit in mouths of all the prophets of yours and the Lord has decreed disaster upon you.

Note: we shouldn't have a problem with this. Ahab wanted to be deceived, he wanted his prophets to agree with him anyway. So, he paid lip service by asking them, and they all knew what he wanted to hear. We have an explanation of why they didn't speak the truth, because

God had allowed a deceiving [Hebrew can mean: false, deceitful, lying] spirit to enable them all to speak falsely and deceive Ahab.

Even though Ahab knew Micaiah would speak the truth and demanded he speak the truth – he still ignored it anyway!

17. How is Zedekiah's reaction in verse 24 typical of someone defeated with the truth? Does this sound familiar (cf. John 18:19-24)

Zedekiah slapped Micaiah in the face. When people can handle the truth and have no real comeback, they often resort to violence.

Similarly, when Jesus was questioned by the High Priest about his disciples and teaching, Jesus replied that he had always spoken openly – in the temple and synagogue – so anyone could tell the High Priest – what Jesus had said. He was slapped in the face by one of the officials.

18. How does Micaiah respond to Zedekiah in verse 25? What does he mean?

Micaiah responds to Zedekiah "you will find out on the day you go to hide in an inner room". MSG puts it this way, which is spot on: "You'll know soon enough; you'll know it when you're frantically and futilely looking for a place to hide."

19. How is Ahab's reaction in verses 26 to 27 typical of tyrants when they are confronted with the truth?

Tyrants want rid of ANYONE who stands against their regime and their plans. Ahab puts Micaiah back in prison on bread and water. Out of sight, out of mind!

20. What does Micaiah say about his prophecy in verse 28?

When Ahab says that Micaiah will stay in prison, until he [Ahab] returns safely; Micaiah says "if you ever return safely, the Lord has not spoken through me"

Read 1 Kings 22:29-40

21. Compare how the two kings enter in to the battle. Why do you think Ahab disguises himself?

Ahab went into battle – because he didn't want to believe that Micaiah's prophecy was true and wanted to "courageously" or "foolishly" oppose the prophecy.

Jehoshaphat going into battle is a bit strange – surely, he should have believed Micaiah's prophecy, since he knew Micaiah was the genuine prophet of the Lord.

Is it that Jehoshaphat wanted to please Ahab more than God?

Is that Jehoshaphat took a fatalistic attitude – figuring if it's God's will for Ahab to die – then there was nothing he or anyone else could do about it?

Ahab disguises himself so that he is not a special target. He thought it would help him against Micaiah's prophecy.

22. What does the King of Aram vow in verse 31?

The King of Aram ordered his 32 chariot commanders "Do not fight with anyone, small or great, except the King of Israel"

23. **Read 1 Kings 20:32-34.** How could Ahab have avoided what is now occurring here in v31 of 1 Kings 22?

Back in 1 Kings 20:32-34 – Ahab had the opportunity to do away with the King of Aram [Ben-Hadad] but instead he fell for the sackcloth and sorrow routine and spared him and even made a treaty, which Ben-Hadad didn't keep.

24. How does Jehoshaphat almost get killed in verse 32 & 33? Read 2 Chronicles 18:31 to see how he avoids being killed.

*Jehoshaphat didn't have a disguise like Ahab. So, the chariot commanders thought he was King Ahab. When Jehoshaphat cried out and they saw he wasn't Ahab, they stopped pursuing him. According to 2 Chronicles 18:31: When the chariot commanders saw Jehoshaphat, they thought, "This is the king of Israel." So, they turned to attack him, **but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him. God drew them away from him,***

25. Meanwhile what happens to Ahab? Why?

See v34 – despite his disguise, Ahab was hit by a random arrow from a bow, which went between the sections of his armour.

Why? Because that's what God said would happen in His prophecy from Micaiah and from previous prophecies from God – see next question.

26. What prophecies are fulfilled in verses 37 and 38? See 1 Kings 20:42; 1 Kings 21:19; 1 Kings 22:17, 23.

*1 Kings 20:42 – He said to the king, "This is what the LORD says: 'You have set free a man I had determined should die. **Therefore, it is your life for his life, your people for his people.**'"*

*1 Kings 21:19 – Say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?' Then say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: **In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!**'"*

*1 Kings 22:17 – Then Micaiah answered, "I saw all Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd, and the LORD said, **These people have no master. Let each one go home in peace.**'"*

*1 Kings 22:23 – "So now the LORD has put a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. **The LORD has decreed disaster for you.**"*

27. **Ponder:** Why doesn't the writer of 1 Kings include all Ahab did and instead leaves them to be written elsewhere?

The writer of 1 Kings doesn't include all that Ahab did because the writer's focus is on Ahab's spiritual walk. The writer is not interested in the details of Ahab's palace adorned with ivory;

the writer is interested in Ahab's heart. What the writer wants to emphasize is 'how did Ahab stack up when it comes to God's Word and God's commandments'. Ahab is in the Bible, so that following generations [including us] can hopefully learn from his mistake.

Read Matthew 7:24-29

28. How does this passage relate to 1 Kings 22:1-40?

What did Ahab build his life on? The rock-solid foundation of God and His Word?

No – Ahab built his life on SAND – the sand of false worship; the sand of a Baal worshipping wife, Jezebel, who manipulated and controlled him; the sand of false prophets discredited at Mount Carmel; the sand of ignoring Elijah and Micaiah, God's prophets; the sand of foolishly making treaties with the King of Aram; and the sand of going his own way, not God's way! Ahab is like the foolish man in Matthew 7:26, who heard the word, but didn't put it into practice.

Read Isaiah 55:10-11

29. How does this passage relate to 1 Kings 22:1-40?

God promises in Isaiah 55:10-11 that nothing can stop His word from going out and achieving what He means it to achieve – His Word is never wasted and never comes back to Him empty. God told Ahab repeatedly what would happen – time and time again God showed Ahab – who He is – the one true God. God sent true prophets to Ahab to warn him – and told him what would happen to him – and that's exactly what happened. We can trust God's Word!

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 1 Kings 22:1-40?

God's Word is paramount

Or

The Certainty of God's Word

Or

The Word of God destroys the person who defies it



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and **Scripture is all about Him** (Luke 24:27), in what ways does this passage point to Jesus, if at all?

- a. Micaiah's prophecy was that Israel were like sheep without a shepherd – which should remind us of what Jesus says about the Israel of His day – see Matthew 9:36.*
- b. Micaiah was struck for standing up for God's truth – just like Jesus was!*
- c. King Ahab is everything that King Jesus is not*
- d. God's Word goes out and achieves God's purposes in this chapter – Jesus as God's word is sent by God to achieve His purposes of salvation.*

How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- a. *When we speak God's word it is to please God – not please people. We don't tell people what they want to hear (to make their itchy ears feel good); we tell them what God's word says.*
- b. *We must be bold like Micaiah and not be afraid to speak the truth of God's Word – even if it seems many are not in agreement with it.*
- c. *We may be persecuted (slapped in the face) for speaking the truth about Jesus and speaking God's Word.*
- d. *Being a disciple of Jesus and standing for the truth – can be lonely – ask Micaiah?*
- e. *What God's word says will happen – will happen (Isaiah 55:11). Ahab can put on whatever disguise he likes and imprison God's prophet – but God still punishes evil!*
- f. *Characters in the bible – like Ahab, Jehoshaphat and Micaiah are in the Bible so that we learn from them.*
- g. *We can trust God's Word all the time!*
- h. *Ahab and his prophets thought they controlled God's Word – but God's word controls us not the other way around!*
- i. *Ignore God's Word at your peril. How do we know what God's Word is – if we don't read it and remember it and apply it!*
- j. *Beware of false prophets! The proof of any prophecy is in the fulfilment of it – Micaiah's prophecy is fulfilled – the prophecy of the other 400 prophets is not (see Deut 18:21-22). This can only be done in retrospect. However, Deut 13:1-3 places the emphasis on whether the prophet leads people towards or away from serving the true God.*

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

1 Kings 22:5 - But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, "First seek the counsel of the Lord."

1 Kings 22:28 - Micaiah declared, "If you ever return safely, the LORD has not spoken through me." Then he added, "Mark my words, all you people!"

Isaiah 55:11 ...my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Matthew 7:24 - "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

Finish in prayer: Thanking God for His Word which He promises will not return to Him empty but will accomplish His purposes.

Study 3 – Folly upon Folly

1 Kings 22:41-53
(Sermon on 20-Nov – Paul)

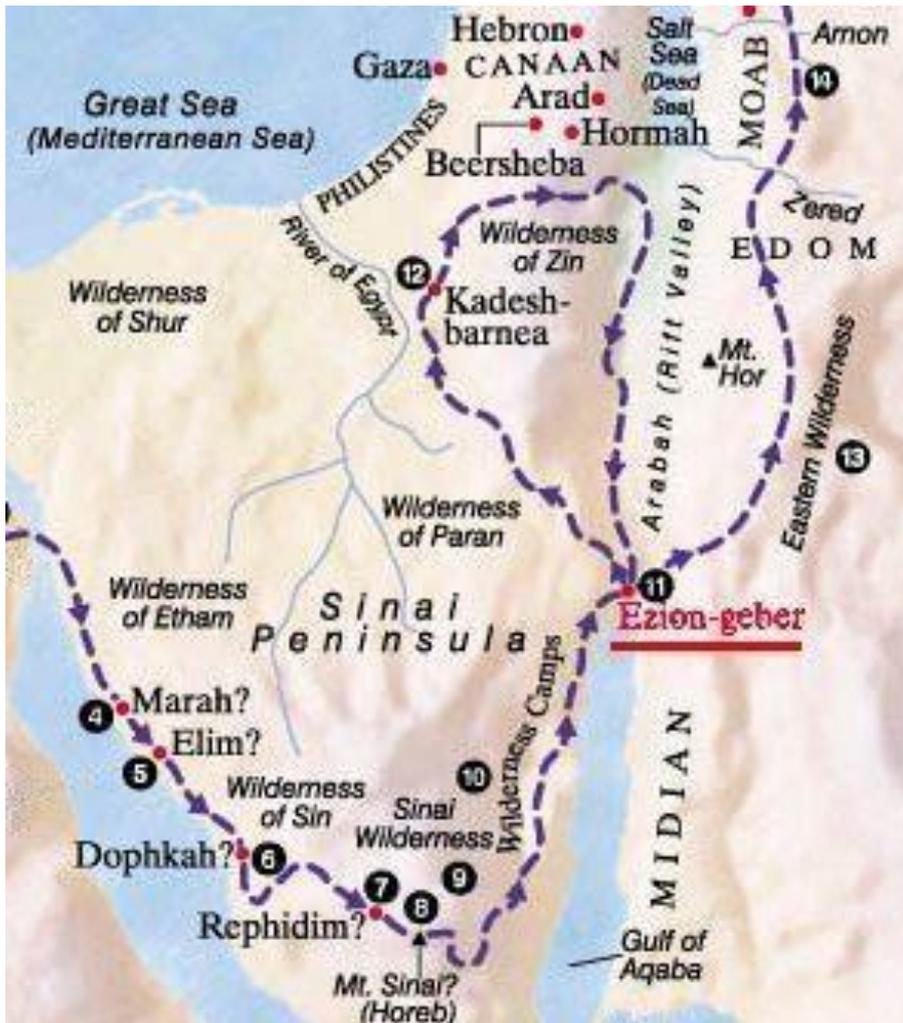
Read 1 Kings 22:41-50

1. Here we deal with Jehoshaphat son of Asa; when was the last time we heard about Asa?
We last dealt with Asa back in 1 Kings 15 where we were told that “Asa did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as his father David had done. He expelled the male shrine prostitutes from the land and got rid of all the idols his ancestors had made...” (1 Kings 15:11-12ff)

2. What positives are we given about Jehoshaphat in verses 42 to 46?
V43 – In everything he followed the way of his father Asa and did not stray from them, he did was right in the eyes of the Lord.
V44 – Jehoshaphat was also at peace with the King of Israel (may sound like a positive but maybe not – see question 6 and following below)
V46 – He rid the land of the rest of the male shrine prostitutes who remained there even after the reign of his father Asa.

3. What negatives are we given about Jehoshaphat in verses 42 to 46?
V43b – the high places however, were not removed, and the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there.
In 2 Chronicles 17:6, it is expressly said, that he did take way the high places. Allowing that the text is right in 2 Chronicles – one explanation is that: there were two kinds of high places in the land: 1. Those used for idolatrous purposes. 2. Those that were consecrated to God, and were used before the temple was built. The former he did take away, the latter he did not.” (Clarke)
But we’re still left with a problem; because by this stage the temple has been built.

4. Why is verse 47 important?
This note is introduced by the writer to account for Jehoshaphat’s building ships at Ezion-geber, which was in the territory of the Edomites, and which showed them to be at that time under the Jewish yoke.” (Clarke)



5. What was Jehoshaphat planning to do in verse 48? Why? (cf. 1 Kings 9:26-28)
Jehoshaphat built a fleet of trading ships to go to Ophir for gold, but they never set sail—they were wrecked at Ezion Geber. This is something Solomon successfully did in his day. Perhaps Jehoshaphat was trying to rekindle the glory days of Solomon.



6. What happened to the shipping venture? Would verse 49 have anything to do with the shipwrecks? See parallel story in 2 Chronicles 20:35-37.

Jehoshaphat's shipping venture failed from the offset.

Verse 49 tells us that Ahaziah son of Ahab offered to have his men sail with Jehoshaphat's men; but the latter refused.

The parallel story from 2 Chronicles 20:35-37 tells us:

*³⁵ Later, Jehoshaphat king of Judah made an **alliance** with Ahaziah king of Israel, whose ways were wicked. ³⁶ He agreed with him to construct a fleet of trading ships. After these were built at Ezion Geber, ³⁷ Eliezer son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, "Because you have made an alliance with Ahaziah, the LORD will destroy what you have made." The ships were wrecked and were not able to set sail to trade.*

From this parallel story, we see Jehoshaphat's alliance with the Ahaziah (son of Ahab) the King of Israel is not deemed a wise one by the Lord God; and so, the Lord destroyed Jehoshaphat's fleet of trading ships!

7. What other compromise did Jehoshaphat make? (cf. 1 Kings 22:1-40; 2 Chronicles 18:28-19:3)

We learnt last week that Jehoshaphat agreed to go to fight at Ramoth Gilead with King Ahab, even though there were 400 false prophets involved in a false prophecy of victory and even though the one true prophet Micaiah had said that Ahab would lose the battle and be killed. Jehoshaphat perhaps pleased Ahab more than God. At best, it was a foolish alliance from the offset!

According to 2 Chronicles 19:1-3 - When Jehoshaphat king of Judah returned safely to his palace in Jerusalem, ² Jehu the seer, the son of Hanani, went out to meet him and said to the king, "Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD? Because of this, the wrath of the LORD is on you." ³ There is, however, some good in you, for you have rid the land of the Asherah poles and have set your heart on seeking God."

8. **Read 1 Kings 22:44** again and then discover what problem results in 2 Kings 8:16-19; 25-27 and subsequently in 2 Kings 11 because the daughter of Ahab remained very much alive and almost wiped out the whole divinely chosen line of Davidic kings!

V44 tells us that Jehoshaphat was at peace with Ahaziah (son of Ahab).

In 2 Kings 8:16-19 – We read that Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram was married to Ahab's daughter; which meant Jehoram did not walk in the ways of his father Jehoshaphat but in the ways of his father-in-law, Ahab. V19 – says the Lord did not destroy Judah – only because of His promise to King David – and to preserve the remnant of His people!

Then 2 Kings 8:26-27 – we read that Ahaziah son of Jehoram also walked in the way of the house of Ahab and did evil in the sight of the Lord.

This alliance between the house of Jehoshaphat and the house of Ahab – proved to be a very bad one – with intermarriage – and the subsequent following of evil.

In 2 Kings 11:1-2 – we read that the daughter of Ahab, Athaliah planned to destroy the whole royal family of Judah. This would have wrecked God's plan of redemption through the

promised line of Judah. However, Jehosheba, daughter of King Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash, the son of Ahaziah and stole him away...

Thus, the line was preserved!

Read 1 Kings 22:51-53

9. What negatives are we told about Ahaziah?

V52 – Ahaziah did evil in the eyes of the Lord because he followed the ways of his father and mother and of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin.

An unholy trinity!

V53 – He served and worshipped Baal and aroused the anger of the Lord, the God of Israel, just as his father had done.

Like father, like son.

10. What positives are we told about Ahaziah?

None!

Read Matthew 6:24 and Galatians 1:10

11. How do these verses relate to 1 Kings 22:41-53?

Matthew 6:24 says: "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Jehoshaphat tried to serve the Holy God and make an unholy alliance with a Baal worshipping regime!

Galatians 1:10 says: Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ. Jehoshaphat was trying to gain approval from Ahab and his son Ahaziah, and please them, rather than pleasing God. We saw how pleased God was with that!

Read Hebrews 10:26-31

12. How does this passage relate to 1 Kings 22:41-53

Ahaziah (like his father Ahab):

V26 – kept on deliberately sinning – despite the truth given to them by the true prophets of God like Elijah and Micaiah.

V27 – They will face judgment and raging fire that consumes all enemies of God

V28-29 – People who rejected the Law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses; how much more severely will Ahaziah be treated for trampling on God's word!

V30 – Ahaziah and the house of Ahab can be sure that it is up to God to avenge – and He will repay them for their evil wicked ways.

V31 – Yes – it's a dreadful thing for ANYONE to fall into the hands of the living God.

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 1 Kings 22:41-53?

The folly of not following the Lord's ways completely!



If the Old Testament points to Jesus and **Scripture is all about Him** (Luke 24:27), in what ways does this passage point to Jesus, if at all?

- a. *The fact that despite Jehoshaphat's unwise alliance, God still preserved a remnant in the family line of Judah that leads to our Lord Jesus.*
- b. *Unlike Jehoshaphat and unlike Ahaziah, Jesus always does the will of the Father and always serves His Master!*
- c. *As we look at the character of the Kings; even when they are godly like Jehoshaphat, they still make bad choices and just show their and our need for someone who is able to keep all of God's laws perfectly – and that is our Lord Jesus.*

How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- a. *Take our decisions to the Lord and seek His wisdom.*
- b. *Don't make compromises which go against God's will.*
- c. *We cannot serve two masters.*
- d. *We must please God before people.*
- e. *Continue to bring our sins to the Lord and confess (1 John 1:9) – and seek His kingdom first (Matt 6:33).*
- f. *We must repent before it's too late.*
- g. *God's judgment is certain – and it's a dreadful thing for someone unrepentant to fall into the hands of the Lord.*

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

Hebrews 10:31 - it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Finish in prayer: Asking God to help us understand just how holy He is and just how much we need Jesus because we cannot stop sinning!

Appendix 1 – Map



**Studies prepared by Paul O'Rourke
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Resources:

The MacArthur Study Bible

New Bible Commentary (Carson, France, Moyter & Wenham)

1 and 2 Kings (Donald J. Wiseman – Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries)

1 Kings – The Wisdom and the Folly (Dale Ralph Davis)

Halley's Bible Handbook – New Revised Edition (Henry H. Halley)

Notes/Prayer Points