

1 Kings Chapter 22 Verses 01-23 Bible Study

1Ki 22:1 ¶ "And they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel. 2 And it came to pass in the third year, that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to; the king of Israel. 3 And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know ye that Ramoth in Gilead is ours, and we be still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria? 4 And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramothgilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses."

There were three years of peace between Ahab and Benhadad, because of their covenant seen in **1Ki 20:34** "**And Benhadad said unto him, The cities, which my father took from thy father, I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria. Then said Ahab, I will send thee away with this covenant. So he made a covenant with him, and sent him away.**" Why? The Syrian army was greatly depleted in the former battle, and he did not have the strength to make war with Israel. However, Ahab is telling Jehoshaphat, king of Judah: Benhadad has not fulfilled his oath to restore all the cities taken by Benhadad's father, namely the city of Ramothgilead. Wherefore, Ahab seeks to go and take the city from him by force. Ahab forgets that Benhadad has had three years to reestablish and strengthen his army.

We must read to the verse 20 to find out that the king of Israel is Ahab. So, we see that Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, comes down to Samaria to Ahab. We know not the reason, except that the providence of God is at work to bring about Ahab's death. What business could a good king have with a very bad king? We are told in **2Ch 18:1 ¶** "**Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab.**" We believe that this visit was the result of a marriage contract between Ahab and Jehoshaphat, for Ahab's daughter to be married to Jehoshaphat's son, seen in **2Ki 8:16-19; 16 ¶** "**And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign. 17 Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. 18 And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab: for the daughter of Ahab was his wife: and he did evil in the sight of the LORD. 19 Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him alway a light, and to his children.**"

This resulted in a stern rebuke from God by Jehu to Jehoram in **2Ch 19:1-3; 1 ¶** "**And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem. 2 And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD. 3 Nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God.**"

There is a warning here for us, seen in **Nu 32:23** "**But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.**" As demonstrated in the texts above, Jehoshaphat sins will find him out. God's people should not have anything to do with those who are sowing seeds of evil, as seen in **Jas 1:19 ¶** "**Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: 20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.**" I think we can safely say that Jehoshaphat is quick to speak and agree with one who is his adversary. Remember, Jehoshaphat is a good king, and Ahab is a bad king.

5 "And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD today. **6** Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramothgilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king."

Jehoshaphat has enough sense to inquire of the Lord if this is the right thing to do. Ahab assembles his false prophets, and they all tell him to go and prosper, for the Lord shall deliver for the king.

7 "And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him? **8** And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so. **9** Then the king of Israel called an officer, and said, Haste hither Micaiah the son of Imlah. **10** And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah sat each on his throne, having put on their robes, in a void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets

prophesied before them. 11 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaah made him horns of iron: and he said, Thus saith the LORD, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them. 12 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramothgilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the king's hand. 13 And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good. 14 And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak. 15 ¶ So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramothgilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king. 16 And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the LORD?"

Zedekiah makes horns of iron and prophesies: with these shall the king push the Syrians until they are devoured.

Jehoshaphat has sense enough to realize that these are not prophets of God, and asks Ahab: is there not a prophet of God of whom we may inquire? Ahab acknowledges that there is one, but Ahab hates him for telling him the truth and always prophesying against Ahab.

They send for Micaiah, the prophet of the Lord. The one who goes to get him tells him what is going on and tells him to prophesy the same as the false prophets. Micaiah replies that he can only tell what the word of the Lord saith to him.

When Micaiah comes before the kings he prophesies exactly as the false prophets, but he does it with such sarcasm that both kings know that he is not telling them the truth. King Ahab scolds him to tell him the truth.

17 "And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace. 18 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?"

Micaiah now tells these kings: "*I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master:*" which would be a prophecy of Ahab's death. He also tells them to all go to their homes and not pursue this war against Syria.

Here we have a picture of those who hear the truth and receive it not, for their eyes are blinded, and they have ears that hear not, for their hearts are hardened against the word of God's truth, as we see in *Joh 12:38-43; 38 "That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? 39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, 40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. 41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him. 42 ¶ Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: 43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."*

At this point Jehoshaphat should have withdrawn from this covenant with Ahab and went home. However, God is still providentially using Jehoshaphat to get Ahab in the right place to bring about his death.

19 "And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. 20 And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. 21 And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him. 22 And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. 23 Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee."

Micaiah continues and tells of the vision in which God revealed this unto him. Micaiah tells that the host of heaven were gathered to God on his right and left hands, and God asks who will go and persuade Ahab to go to Ramothgilead so he will be killed? Several spoke of what they could do but their ideas were not received. Then a spirit came before God, and tells God he will put a lying spirit in the mouths of the false prophets, and God tells

him to go and do so. God also tells the spirit that it will be successful. Micaiah tells the kings: God hath put the lying spirit, in the mouths of these false prophets, and that God has spoken evil concerning king Ahab, as I told you to start with.

At this point, having heard what God has said through the prophet Micaiah, and that it was God's purpose to slay Ahab: Jehoshaphat should have told Ahab: you are on your own. Why? Because God has said for everyone to go home and not go to war.