

**1Kings 22:1** ¶ **And they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel.**

The peace established between Syria and Israel by Kings Benhadad and Ahab respectively lasted for three years.

**1Kings 22:2** **And it came to pass in the third year, that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel.**

**1Kings 22:3** **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?**

**1Kings 22:4** **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.**

**1Kings 22:5** **And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to day.**

In the third year, Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, came to see Ahab. We learn from the Chronicler that the two families had made an alliance by marriage. Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram married Ahab's daughter.

*2 Chronicles 21:5–6 “Jehoram was thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife....”*

During that visit Ahab remarked to his servants that Syria still occupied the city of Ramoth in Gilead that belonged to Israel. In other words, Benhadad had not kept the covenant that he made to return all the cities that his father had captured.

*1 Kings 20:34 “And Benhadad said unto him, The cities, which my father took from thy father, I will restore....”*

Ahab turned to Jehoshaphat and asked if he would go with him to retake possession of the city. Jehoshaphat answered that he would support him personally as well as with troops and horses. Jehoshaphat did tell Ahab that they should seek the LORD's counsel before doing anything.

**1Kings 22:6** **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.**

**1Kings 22:7** **And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him?**

Ahab gathered his prophets together; in all they numbered 400. He asked them if he should go to war to reclaim Ramothgilead or not. As a group, they told him to go because the Lord (their god) would give him the victory.

Jehoshaphat realized that these men were not prophets of the LORD God of Israel. He asked Ahab if there were a prophet of the LORD (the God of Israel) that they could ask.

**1Kings 22:8** 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.*

**1Kings 22:9** Then the king of Israel called an officer, and said, *Hasten hither Micaiah the son of Imlah.*

Ahab answered that there was one man (in Samaria – Elijah and Elisha were somewhere else), Micaiah the son of Imlah, through whom they could seek the LORD's will. He quickly pointed out that he hated Micaiah because he never prophesied good for him. Jehoshaphat admonished the king for his remark. So Ahab called one of his officers and sent him to get the prophet Micaiah.

Some commentators infer from verse 26 that Micaiah was in prison at the time.

*1 Kings 22:26 "And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son...."*

**1Kings 22:10** 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.

**1Kings 22:11** And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron: and he said, *Thus saith the LORD, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them.*

**1Kings 22:12** And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, *Go up to Ramothgilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the king's hand.*

Both Ahab and Jehoshaphat sat on thrones in their royal robes in an open area at the entrance of the gate to Samaria. Guzik notes: "This illustrates the ancient custom of holding court and making decisions at the gates of the city."

Zedekiah, son of Chenaanah, made himself a set of horns out of iron and told Ahab that they testified to the fact that he would gore or wound the Syrians until they were all dead. The rest of the prophets affirmed him and continued to declare that the LORD (this time referencing the God of Israel) would give Ahab the victory.

**1Kings 22:13** 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.*

**1Kings 22:14** And Micaiah said, *As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.*

The soldier sent to fetch Micaiah told him that the rest of the prophets had

assured the king that he would be victorious over the Syrians. He urged Micaiah to join that affirmation. Some commentators conclude that the soldier felt pity for Micaiah and hoped to help him find favor with the king and get released from prison.

Micaiah answered that he would surely speak whatever the LORD (the God of Israel) told him to say.

**1Kings 22:15 ¶** 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.

**1Kings 22:16** 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?

When Micaiah arrived, Ahab asked him if he should go and fight for Ramothgilead. The prophet told him to go because the LORD would give him the victory.

Ahab must have sensed from the prophet's tone that his answer was not sincere. He basically told Micaiah that he only wanted to hear the truth as revealed by the LORD (the God of Israel).

**1Kings 22:17** 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.

**1Kings 22:18** And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?

So Micaiah told Ahab that he saw the troops of Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd. The LORD declared that they were men without a master and should go back home. That they did not have a master indicated that Ahab would die.

Ahab immediately turned to Jehoshaphat and basically said, "I told you so." He complained that Micaiah never prophesied good for him.

**1Kings 22:19** 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.

**1Kings 22:20** 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.

**1Kings 22:21** And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him.

**1Kings 22:22** 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.

**1Kings 22:23** 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 declared that the LORD had given him a vision. He had seen the LORD sitting on his throne flanked by the hosts of heaven on his right and left. The LORD said, "Who will go and persuade Ahab to go to Ramothgilead and be killed?" After hearing from some of His servants, one of the spirits (angels in the host) came before the LORD and volunteered. The LORD asked him how he planned to accomplish his mission. He answered that he would put a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets. The LORD told the spirit that he would succeed in his mission and sent him out.

Micaiah concluded by explaining to Ahab that the LORD (through His angel) had put a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets because He has determined to destroy you.

Some commentators insist that the angel that volunteered to put the lying spirit in the mouths of the prophets was a fallen angel. I am not so sure. We know from other scripture that an angel killed 185,000 Assyrians. Is making people lie any worse than killing?

*Isaiah 37:36 "Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses."*

I believe any action taken in accordance with the purposes of God is righteous. When done by evil men in accordance with their own desires, it is evil on their part even though it accomplishes what is righteous in accordance with God's will. When done by a servant of God in accordance with His will/ word, it is righteous. Think of David killing Goliath and Samuel killing the Amalekite king.

*1 Samuel 17:45 & 49 "Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.... And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth."*

*1 Samuel 15:32-33 "Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past. And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal."*

**1Kings 22:24 But Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near, and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?**

Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, stepped forward and slapped Micaiah across the face. Then he said, "How did the Spirit of the LORD go from me to speak to

you?"

**1Kings 22:25** And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself.

Micaiah basically said, "You'll soon find out when you find yourself hiding out" (in fear seems to be implied).

**1Kings 22:26** And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son;

**1Kings 22:27** And say, Thus saith the king, Put this *fellow* in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace.

**1Kings 22:28** And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, the LORD hath not spoken by me. And he said, Harken, O people, every one of you.

Ahab ordered his men to take Micaiah back to Amon, the governor of the city, and Joash, Ahab's son. They were to tell them that Micaiah was to be put in the prison and fed with only bread and water until he returned in peace.

Micaiah boldly spoke up and declared that if Ahab returned, they would know that the LORD had not spoken by him. Then he addressed the others present and told them to take note of what he said. He basically said, "Mark my words." In other words, he was confident that the LORD would prove his message to be genuine and true.

**1Kings 22:29 ¶** So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramothgilead.

So Ahab and Jehoshaphat headed out to war.

This is truly puzzling. Jehoshaphat made a point of wanting to hear from a true prophet of the LORD, yet disregarded his counsel.

**1Kings 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.

**1Kings 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.

**1Kings 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.

**1Kings 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.

Ahab told Jehoshaphat that he was going to disguise himself as they went into battle; however, he wanted Jehoshaphat to wear his royal robes.

It seems that Jehoshaphat is a bit lacking in common sense. Didn't he realize that Ahab was making him a target?

The king of Syria, Benhadad, commanded the 32 captains that manned his chariots not to fight with anyone (except in their own defense I presume) except the king of Israel, Ahab. When the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat in his royal robes, they assumed it was Ahab. When they began to attack him, he cried out and they saw that it was not Ahab; so they quit chasing him.

The Chronicler tells us a bit more.

*2 Chronicles 18:31 "And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him; and God moved them to depart from him."*

The Syrians quit attacking Jehoshaphat because the LORD supernaturally intervened.

**1Kings 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.**

**1Kings 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.**

**1Kings 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.**

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

During the fight, one of the Syrian soldiers hit Ahab with an arrow between the joint that connected his lower armor to his breastplate. He called out for the driver of his chariot to get him off the battlefield because he was wounded.

The battle intensified and continued all that day as the king watched, standing propped up in his chariot. Eventually, it seems he bled to death. The prophet Micaiah was vindicated.

That Ahab tried to remain visible and supportive of his troops actually showed a bit of courage.

Finally, as the sun was setting, the troops of Israel were ordered to return home. I assume this was because of the death of the king.

King Ahab was taken to Samaria and buried.

**1Kings 22:38 And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armour; according unto the word of**

**the LORD which he spake.**

As they cleaned Ahab's chariot and his armor in the pool of Samaria, the dogs licked up the blood that dropped to the ground in fulfillment of the word of the LORD declared by Elijah.

**1Kings 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?**

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

The writer closes the account of the life of Ahab, noting that more was written about him in the chronicles of the kings of Israel (not scripture). Those records included how he had built a house of ivory and told of the cities he had built.

After Ahab's death, Ahaziah his son succeeded him to the throne.

So what happened to Jehoshaphat after the battle? The Chronicler tells us a bit more.

*2 Chronicles 19:1–4 “And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem. 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. 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. And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and he went out again through the people from Beersheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers.”*

Jehoshaphat returned home to Jerusalem. Jehu, son of Hanani the seer, went out to meet him. He rebuked him for helping the ungodly (Ahab) and loving them that hate the LORD (again referencing Ahab). He told the king that his actions had made the LORD angry. He went on to say that, in spite of what he had done, good had been found in him because he had removed all of the groves (where idols were worshipped) and prepared his heart to worship God (the God of Israel).

What does it mean to prepare one's heart? According to the Hebrew, it's a deliberate choice to stand faithful and firm in that choice.

After that, Jehoshaphat went throughout his kingdom leading the people to turn back in worship of the LORD God of their fathers.

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

**1Kings 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.**

**1Kings 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.***

The writer decides to go back and tell us a bit more about Jehoshaphat, the son of Asa, the king of Judah. He began his reign when he was 35 years old during the fourth year of Ahab's reign. His mother's name was Azubah, daughter of Shilhi.

Jehoshaphat followed the example of his father Asa and determined to do what was right in the eyes of the LORD. Still, he did not remove the high places because the people still used them to burn incense before the LORD. (This was not in accordance with the LORD's command.)

**1Kings 22:44 And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel. 1Kings 22:45 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he shewed, and how he warred, *are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?***

It is noted that Jehoshaphat made peace with Ahab, the king of Israel.

That sounds like a good thing, except that it almost led to his death as noted in the preceding narrative. I don't know how to justify his determination to follow the LORD with his choice to join Ahab in a war that a true prophet of the LORD did not support. I'm sure it was at least in part due to their family connection by the marriage of their children. It was certainly a very bad choice on the part of Judah's king.

The writer closes his summary of the life of Jehoshaphat noting that more was included in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah (scripture).

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

One further footnote on Jehoshaphat; he got rid of the remnant of sodomites (male prostitutes that served in the worship of false gods) that remained in the land during the reign of his father Asa.

**1Kings 22:47 *There was then no king in Edom: a deputy was king.***

This verse seems to be stating a tidbit of information with no surrounding context. At this time, there was no king in Edom. It seems that a military officer served in his place at that time.

Clarke adds this explanation: "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."

**1Kings 22:48 Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but**

**they went not; for the ships were broken at Eziongeber.**

**1Kings 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.**

The Chronicler words it a bit differently.

*2 Chronicles 20:35–37 “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 Eziongeber. Then Eliezer the son of Dodavaiah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.”*

Looking at both accounts, it seems that Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah joined together to make some ships at Eziongeber to go to Tarshish and then to Ophir for gold. Their venture was thwarted when the ships were broken. The prophet Eliezer told Jehoshaphat that the LORD had supernaturally intervened to break the ships because he did not approve of the joint venture with Ahaziah. Maybe these verses in Kings represent Ahaziah's attempt to get Jehoshaphat to fix the ships and go as planned.

**1Kings 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.**

The writer closes his record of the life of Jehoshaphat noting that he was buried in the city of David with his fathers. His son Jehoram succeeded him to the throne.

**1Kings 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.**

**1Kings 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:**

**1Kings 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.**

Ahaziah, son of Ahab, began to reign in Israel in Samaria during the 17<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoshaphat's reign as king of Judah. He reigned for two years. He followed the example of his parents and of Jeroboam before them and did evil in the sight of the LORD. He continued to lead Israel in the sin of idolatry and the worship of Baal. He roused the anger of the LORD God of Israel.