

1 Kings 20:1-43 ESV - King Ahab

Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his army together. Thirty-two kings were with him, and horses and chariots. And he went up and closed in on Samaria and fought against it. 2 And he sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel and said to him, "Thus says Ben-hadad: 3 'Your silver and your gold are mine; your best wives and children also are mine.'" 4 And the king of Israel answered, "As you say, my lord, O king, I am yours, and all that I have."

5 The messengers came again and said, "Thus says Ben-hadad: 'I sent to you, saying, "Deliver to me your silver and your gold, your wives and your children." 6 Nevertheless I will send my servants to you tomorrow about this time, and they shall search your house and the houses of your servants and lay hands on whatever pleases you and take it away.'"

7 Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land and said, "Mark, now, and see how this man is seeking trouble, for he sent to me for my wives and my children, and for my silver and my gold, and I did not refuse him." 8 And all the elders and all the people said to him, "Do not listen or consent." 9 So he said to the messengers of Ben-hadad, "Tell my lord the king, 'All that you first demanded of your servant I will do, but this thing I cannot do.'" And the messengers departed and brought him word again.

10 Ben-hadad sent to him and said, "The gods do so to me and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people who follow me." 11 And the king of Israel answered,

"Tell him, *'Let not him who straps on his armor boast himself as he who takes it off.'*"

12 When Ben-hadad heard this message as he was drinking with the kings in the booths, he said to his men, "Take your positions." And they took their positions against the city. 13 And behold, a prophet came near to Ahab king of Israel and said, "Thus says the LORD, Have you seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will give it into your hand this day, and you shall know that I am the LORD."

14 And Ahab said, "By whom?" He said, "Thus says the LORD, By the servants of the governors of the districts." Then he said, "Who shall begin the battle?" He answered, "You." 15 Then he mustered the servants of the governors of the districts, and they were 232. And after them he mustered all the people of Israel, seven thousand. 16 And they went out at noon, while Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the booths, he and the thirty-two kings who helped him.

17 The servants of the governors of the districts went out first. And Ben-hadad sent out scouts, and they reported to him, "Men are coming out from Samaria." 18 He said, "If they have come out for peace, take them alive. Or if they have come out for war, take them alive." 19 So these went out of the city, the servants of the governors of the districts and the army that followed them. 20 And each struck down his man. The Syrians fled, and Israel pursued them, but Ben-hadad king of Syria escaped on a horse with horsemen. 21 And the king of Israel went out and struck the horses and chariots, and struck the Syrians with a great blow.

22 Then the prophet came near to the king of Israel and said to him, "Come, strengthen yourself, and consider well what you have to do, for in the spring the king of Syria will come up against you." 23 And the servants of the king of Syria said to him, "Their gods are gods of the hills, and so they were stronger than we. But let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.

24 And do this: remove the kings, each from his post, and put commanders in their places, 25 and muster an army like the army that you have lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot. Then we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they." And he listened to their voice and did so.

26 In the spring, Ben-hadad mustered the Syrians and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel. 27 And the people of Israel were mustered and were provisioned and went against them. The people of Israel encamped before them like two little flocks of goats, but the Syrians filled the country.

28 And a man of God came near and said to the king of Israel, "Thus says the LORD, 'Because the Syrians have said, "The LORD is a god of the hills but he is not a god of the valleys," therefore I will give all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the LORD.'"

29 And they encamped opposite one another seven days. Then on the seventh day the battle was joined. And the people of Israel struck down of the Syrians 100,000 foot soldiers in one day. 30 And the rest fled into the city of Aphek, and the wall fell upon 27,000 men who were left.

Ben-hadad also fled and entered an inner chamber in the city. 31 And his servants said to him, "Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings. Let us put sackcloth around our waists and ropes on our heads and go out to the king of Israel. Perhaps he will spare your life."

32 So they tied sackcloth around their waists and put ropes on their heads and went to the king of Israel and said, "Your servant Ben-hadad says, 'Please, let me live.'" And he said, "Does he still live? He is my brother." 33 Now the men were watching for a sign, and they quickly took it up from him and said, "Yes, your brother Ben-hadad." Then he said, "Go and bring him." Then Ben-hadad came out to him, and he caused him to come up into the chariot.

34 And Ben-hadad said to him, "The cities that my father took from your father I will restore, and you may establish bazaars for yourself in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria." And Ahab said, "I will let you go on these terms." So he made a covenant with him and let him go.

35 And a certain man of the sons of the prophets said to his fellow at the command of the LORD, "Strike me, please." But the man refused to strike him. 36 Then he said to him, "Because you have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, behold, as soon as you have gone from me, a lion shall strike you down." And as soon as he had departed from him, a lion met him and struck him down.

37 Then he found another man and said, "Strike me, please." And the man struck him--struck him and wounded him. 38 So the prophet departed and waited for the king by the way, disguising himself with a bandage over his eyes.

39 And as the king passed, he cried to the king and said, "Your servant went out into the midst of the battle, and behold, a soldier turned and brought a man to me and said, 'Guard this man; if by any means he is missing, your life shall be for his life, or else you shall pay a talent of silver.' 40 And as your servant was busy here and there, he was gone."

The king of Israel said to him, "So shall your judgment be; you yourself have decided it."

41 Then he hurried to take the bandage away from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized him as one of the prophets. 42 And he said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Because you have let go out of your hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction, therefore your life shall be for his life, and your people for his people.'"

43 And the king of Israel went to his house vexed and sullen and came to Samaria.

1 Kings 21:1-29 ESV

Now Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. 2 And after this Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house, and I will give

you a better vineyard for it; or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money."

3 But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers."

4 And Ahab went into his house vexed and sullen because of what Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him, for he had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and would eat no food.

5 But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, "Why is your spirit so vexed that you eat no food?" 6 And he said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money, or else, if it please you, I will give you another vineyard for it.' And he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'"

7 And Jezebel his wife said to him, "Do you now govern Israel? Arise and eat bread and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite." 8 So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and she sent the letters to the elders and the leaders who lived with Naboth in his city.

9 And she wrote in the letters, "Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth at the head of the people. 10 And set two worthless men opposite him, and let them bring a charge against him, saying, 'You have cursed God and the king.' Then take him out and stone him to death."

11 And the men of his city, the elders and the leaders who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them. As it was written in the letters that she had sent to them, 12 they proclaimed a fast and set Naboth at the head of the people. 13 And the two worthless men came in and sat opposite him. And the worthless men brought a charge against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death with stones.

14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned; he is dead." 15 As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money, for Naboth is not alive, but dead."

16 And as soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

17 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 18 "Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria; behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone to take possession. 19 And you shall say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, "Have you killed and also taken possession?"' And you shall say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: "In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick your own blood.'"

20 Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?"

Elijah answered, "I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight of the LORD. 21 Behold, I will bring disaster upon you. I will utterly burn you up, and will cut off from Ahab every male, bond or free, in Israel. 22 And I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the anger to which you have provoked me, and because you have made Israel to sin.

23 And of Jezebel the LORD also said, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel within the walls of Jezreel.' 24 Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city the dogs shall eat, and anyone of his who dies in the open country the birds of the heavens shall eat."

25 (There was none who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the LORD like Ahab, whom Jezebel his wife incited. 26 He acted very abominably in going after idols, as the Amorites had done, whom the LORD cast out before the people of Israel.)

27 And when Ahab heard those words, he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his flesh and fasted and lay in sackcloth and went about dejectedly. 28 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 29 "Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the disaster in his days; but in his son's days I will bring the disaster upon his house."

1 Kings 22:1-53 ESV

For three years Syria and Israel continued without war. 2 But in the third year Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel. 3 And Ahab, the king of Israel said to his servants, "Do you know that Ramoth-gilead belongs to us, and we keep quiet and do not take it out of the hand of the king of Syria?"

4 And he said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to battle at Ramoth-gilead?" And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses."

5 And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Inquire first for the word of the LORD." 6 Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said to them, "Shall I go to battle against Ramoth-gilead, or shall I refrain?" And they said, "Go up, for the Lord will give it into the hand of the king."

7 But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here another prophet of the LORD of whom we may inquire?" 8 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD, Micaiah the son of Imlah, but I hate him, for he never prophesies good concerning me, but evil." And Jehoshaphat said, "Let not the king say so."

9 Then the king of Israel summoned an officer and said, "Bring quickly Micaiah the son of Imlah."

10 Now the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah were sitting on their thrones, arrayed in their robes, at the

threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying before them.

11 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made for himself horns of iron and said, "Thus says the LORD, 'With these you shall push the Syrians until they are destroyed.'" 12 And all the prophets prophesied so and said, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and triumph; the LORD will give it into the hand of the king."

13 And the messenger who went to summon Micaiah said to him, "Behold, the words of the prophets with one accord are favorable to the king. Let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favorably." 14 But Micaiah said, "As the LORD lives, what the LORD says to me, that I will speak."

15 And when he had come to the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we refrain?" And he answered him, "Go up and triumph; the LORD will give it into the hand of the king."

16 But the king said to him, "How many times shall I make you swear that you speak to me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?"

17 And he said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no master; let each return to his home in peace.'"

18 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?"

19 And Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing beside Him on His right hand and on His left; 20 and the LORD said, 'Who will entice Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' And one said one thing, and another said another.

21 Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, 'I will entice him.' 22 And the LORD said to him, 'By what means?' And he said, 'I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And he said, 'You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do so.'

23 Now therefore behold, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; the LORD has declared disaster for you."

24 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near and struck Micaiah on the cheek and said, "How did the Spirit of the LORD go from me to speak to you?" 25 And Micaiah said, "Behold, you shall see on that day when you go into an inner chamber to hide yourself."

26 And Ahab, the king of Israel, said, "Seize Micaiah, and take him back to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son, 27 and say, 'Thus says the king, "Put this fellow in prison and feed him meager rations of bread and water, until I come in peace.'"" 28 And Micaiah said, "If you return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "Hear, all you peoples!"

29 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. 30 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into battle, but you wear your robes." And the king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle. 31 Now the king of Syria had commanded the thirty-two captains of his chariots, "Fight with neither small nor great, but only with the king of Israel."

32 And when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, "It is surely the king of Israel." So they turned to fight against him. And Jehoshaphat cried out. 33 And when the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.

34 But a certain man drew his bow at random and struck the king of Israel between the scale armor and the breastplate. Therefore he said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around and carry me out of the battle, for I am wounded." 35 And the battle continued that day, and the king was propped up in his chariot facing the Syrians, until at evening he died. And the blood of the wound flowed into the bottom of the chariot.

36 And about sunset a cry went through the army, "Every man to his city, and every man to his country!" 37 So the king died, and was brought to Samaria. And they buried the king in Samaria. 38 And they washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood, and the prostitutes washed themselves in it, according to the word of the LORD that he had spoken. 39 Now the rest of the acts of Ahab and all that he did, and the ivory house that he built and all the cities

that he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

40 So Ahab slept with his fathers, and Ahaziah his son reigned in his place. 41 Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. 42 Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

43 He walked in all the way of Asa his father. He did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the sight of the LORD. Yet the high places were not taken away, and the people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places. 44 Jehoshaphat also made peace with the king of Israel. 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? 46 And from the land he exterminated the remnant of the male cult prostitutes who remained in the days of his father Asa. 47 There was no king in Edom; a deputy was king. 48 Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but they did not go, for the ships were wrecked at Ezion-geber. 49 Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships," but Jehoshaphat was not willing.

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 place. 51 Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel. 52 He did

what was 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. 53 He served Baal and worshiped him and provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger in every way that his father had done.

Psalms 34:11-22 ESV

Come, O children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD. 12 What man is there who desires life and loves many days, that he may see good? 13 Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit. 14 Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

15 The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous and His ears toward their cry. 16 The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.

17 When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears and delivers them out of all their troubles. 18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all. 20 He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken. 21 Affliction will slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

22 The LORD redeems the life of His servants; none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned.