



1 Kings

Confrontation between Elijah & Ahab

1 Kings 20:1 - 22:53

March 12, 2008

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It is important to remember that 1 & 2 Kings is actually _____. The break most likely had more to do with how the text laid out on scrolls than a strategic break according to the narrative.

Ben-hadad loses in the mountains (20:1-25)

(1-6) This is most likely Ben-hadad II, king of Syria. He is accompanied by rulers of puppet states under his dominion. He demands Ahab's silver, gold, as well as his wives and children. At first Ahab capitulates.

(7-12) After conferring with his leadership, Ahab communicates to Ben-hadad that he is willing to pay tribute, but is unwilling to allow Ben-hadad to take his wives and children, a sign of utter plundering. Ben-hadad was not content with mere tribute, but desired to completely ravish Ahab's palace and kingdom. Ben-hadad threatens to level the hill of Samaria. Ahab confronts Ben-hadad's pride.

From a theological standpoint we have God defending his people from their enemies, even though Israel has committed _____, worshiped _____ openly, and _____ to repent, even seeking the life of God's true prophets. It is here we see the following:

- Although choices ultimately warrant consequences, God is _____, even when his people live in disobedience.
- God's protection of his people is ultimately founded in his _____, not his people's performance. This is the basis of the Davidic and Abrahamic Covenant, thus the basis for premillennialism.
- One aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant was God's promise to curse those who curse Israel. Although God allows and uses nations to chasten Israel, those nations are ultimately _____ for their actions and reap the consequences.

(13-22) God sends a prophet to Ahab promising victory and deliverance. The victory will be a clear sign that there is one true God, Jehovah. Again God seeks to free Israel from idolatry by showing his power. Ahab will lead the army, 232 men of the young rulers of the providences, and an army of 7,000.

The young leaders approach. Ben-hadad sends his men to enquire concerning the intentions of the Israelites. God gives Israel a miraculous victory, proving that he was the reason for the victory.

(23-25) The prophet instructs Ahab to prepare for another battle. Ben-hadad's men attribute Israel's victory to the mountainous terrain. God is intent on showing Ben-hadad that he is God over all the _____, not just the mountains.

Ben-hadad loses in the valley (20:26-30)

(26-30) Ben-hadad returns for another war. Compared to the army of the Aram's, Israel looked like two small divisions. The prophet of God makes it clear that God will give Israel victory because of the words the Arameans. Our words do solicit a response from God.

An Israelite in exile would understand that although God uses other nations to chasten his people (Babylon for instance), God does not leave his people to be destroyed. He still fights on their behalf, because of his promises, which are based on his grace and mercy.

Ahab's disregard for God's justice (20:31-43)

(31-34) After receiving the victory, Ahab allows Ben-hadad to go free. This would have been in direct violation of Deuteronomy 7:2 and 20:16.

(35-43) A prophet of the Lord solicits the help of a man. When the man refuses, he is killed; a reminder of the _____ of the Lord at times.

The prophet tricks Ahab into pronouncing judgment on him. This tactic was used when Nathan confronted David. It is man's hypocrisy that ultimately condemns him. This is the ultimate argument Paul uses to describe the condemnation of the human race. Man will not even keep the religious standard he creates for himself (Romans 1-3).

Ahab's disregard for God's law (21:1-4)

Canaanite culture dictated that land could be _____ indiscriminately. However, Jewish law stated that Israelite families could not surrender ownership of property (Leviticus 25:23-28). It is important to note that Ahab's neighbor, living in Israel, was still keeping the Mosaic Law. What an example to those in exile receiving this book. At the same time, Ahab's involvement with Canaanite idolatry and Baal worship eventually led to his complete disregard for all aspects of God's law. His utter weakness and selfishness is highlighted in his reaction to Naboth's refusal. Unfortunately, pouting is a trait used by many men who lack leadership qualities.

Ahab's passive disobedience (21:5-16)

His willingness to allow Jezebel to deliver the vineyard demonstrates the following:

- He is _____. He allows his evil wife to carry out what he is unwilling to do.
- He is a _____. He does not lead, and is heavily influenced by those around him.
- He is _____. He allows a godly man to die for physical possessions. This should be a reminder of the seriousness of David's sin with Bathsheba.

Jezebel devises the plot to have Naboth killed. She orchestrates the murder of Naboth.

Elijah's pronouncement of judgment (He's back!) (21:17-26)

It is always interesting to note what God _____. Although Ahab is guilty of many sins, this sin causes God to send his choice prophet, Elijah. God holds Ahab accountable personally for the death of Naboth. Leaders are responsible for what they allow in passiveness. Just as David was guilty, Ahab is guilty.

Elijah accuses Ahab of "selling himself" to work evil. He has sold out his position and responsibility for sin. Every leader is faced with this choice. The root of his sin was his wife. Elijah pronounces judgment against both.

God's mercy (21:27-29)

Because of Ahab's repentance, God does not fulfill Elijah's initial prophecy; that the dogs would lick up Ahab's blood in the same place Naboth died. However, he does die, and his blood is licked up at the pool of Samaria.

Israel and Judah become allies against Aram (22:1-12)

(1-7) It has been three years since the wars with Ben-hadad. Jehoshaphat and Ahab form an alliance to take back the city of Ramoth-gilead (Levitical city on the E of the Jordan River). We see a contrast between Jehoshaphat and Ahab in that Jehoshaphat counsels Ahab to seek the counsel of the Lord. Ahab seeks the counsel of his own prophets, Jehoshaphat asks for one prophet of the Lord.

(8-12) Micaiah is summoned.

Micaiah message (22:13-28)

(13-28) Micaiah is pressured to go along with the prophets of Ahab. Instead he states he will speak God's words. This is the distinguishing characteristic of God's prophets in the Old Testament. It is also the distinguishing characteristic of God's preachers and teachers today.

Micaiah begins by telling Ahab what he wants to hear. Even Ahab knows that Micaiah is not being honest. Micaiah then pronounces judgment upon Ahab, comparing him to a negligent shepherd. Ahab has failed as a leader. This is a reoccurring theme in the Bible, God's indictment of his negligent shepherds.

Micaiah then tells an amazing story. God has allowed a deceiving spirit to deceive the prophets of Ahab. Because of the deception Ahab will be judged. Micaiah places his credibility as a prophet of the Lord on the line.

Ahab's death (22:29-40)

Micaiah's prophecy is fulfilled. Ahab is killed in battle. The phrase "according to the word of the Lord" is a reminder of the _____ of God's _____.

Baal worship continues (22:41-53)

Jehoshaphat follows in the steps of Asa. He does right in the sight of the Lord, but like his father, failed to remove the high places.

Ahab is succeeded by his son Ahaziah. Like his father, he continues in Baal worship. The judgment of God has made no difference. Only when the nation would find itself in exile would they truly repent.