

“Come Out From Among Them”
1 Kings 22:40-53
(Preached at Trinity, October 31, 2021)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Since **Chapter 16** we've been following the reign of king Ahab. After succeeding his father, Omri, the author summarizes his life and reign:
1 Kings 16:29-30 NAU - "Now Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. ³⁰ Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD more than all who were before him."
 - A. What else can be said? He was an evil king. In fact, we are told he was more evil than all who reigned before him.
 - B. Ahab married the princess daughter of the king of Tyre, Jezebel who epitomizes evil. Her influence over king Ahab cannot be underestimated. Submitting to the desires of his wife, Baal was made the god of Israel. God's prophets were executed and Israel fell into the darkness of idolatry.
2. It was in this context that God sent His prophet, Elijah. Elijah delivered God's message of judgment upon Ahab. But it was also a token of God's mercy. If Ahab had received God's message and turned from his wicked ways, perhaps God would have granted him repentance and restored the land.
2 Chronicles 7:13-14 KJV - "If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; ¹⁴ If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."
Of course, we saw no such repentance from Ahab.
3. The final three chapters of **1 Kings** the focus has been upon Ahab's consistent resistance towards God's Word.
 - A. In **Chapter 20** we were witness to Ahab's failure to take God at His Word and defeat his enemies.
1 Kings 20:13 NAU - "I will deliver them into your hand today, and you shall know that I am the LORD."
 1. God promised to deliver His enemies into the hand of Ahab. Ahab on the other hand let the enemy live.
1 Kings 20:42-43 NAU - "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 go for his life, and your people for his people.'" ⁴³ So the king of Israel went to his house sullen and vexed, and came to Samaria."
 2. The word for "sullen" means resentful. Ahab was continually resentful of God's Word and continually resisted it.

- B. In **Chapter 21** we again find Ahab's resentment towards God's Word. Naboth was a peasant who had a vineyard located near the summer palace of Ahab. Ahab decided the plot would be a great location for a vegetable garden and asked Naboth to sell it to him.
1. Naboth refused on the grounds that it violated God's Word.
1 Kings 21:3 NAU - "The LORD forbid me that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers."
 2. The property belonged to his family. It was their inheritance and Naboth saw it as being entrusted to his care. Naboth knew God's Word obeyed it. Ahab despised God's Word and dismissed it. God's Word did not fit his plans. So, he responded in his usual way. He was resentful.
1 Kings 21:4 NAU - "So Ahab came into his house sullen and vexed because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him"
- C. In this final chapter we again, see Ahab resentful of God's Word.
1. Ahab sought an alliance with Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, to go with him against the Arameans. Jehoshaphat agreed with one provision, "We must first inquire of God's Word."
 2. What follows is the procession of 400 of Ahab's top prophets—but they were false prophets. They were Ahab's yes men, although they claimed to speak for God.
Jehoshaphat knew right away that these men were charlatans masquerading as God's prophets.
1 Kings 22:7 NAU - "But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not yet a prophet of the LORD here that we may inquire of him?"
 3. The prophet Micaiah came forth and delivered the word from God,
Verse 22 - "the LORD has proclaimed disaster against you."
4. Ahab and Jehoshaphat went to war against the Arameans. Ahab made every effort to thwart the Word of God, but God's Word will never fail. It is the absolute, infallible, Word from the mouth of God—"Thus Saith the LORD."
Ahab tried to disguise himself, but the unseen hand of God moved irresistibly against him. A randomly fired arrow found its target and Ahab was killed.
5. One of the sad testimonies of this story is Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah. This historical account of 1 Kings is not always delivered in chronological order. Jehoshaphat was the son of king Asa. We were briefly introduced to him **Chapter 15**.
1 Kings 15:24 NAU - "And Asa slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father; and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place."
After introducing Jehoshaphat, the author quickly returns to the history of the kings of Israel. But now, in **Chapter 22** the reign of Jehoshaphat is briefly set before us.
6. The first half of the chapter records his alliance with Ahab but beginning with **Verse 41** we are introduced to his reign.
1 Kings 22:41-43 NAU - "Now Jehoshaphat the son of Asa became king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. ⁴² Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. And 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 right in the sight of the LORD. However, the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense on the high places."

7. In contrast to the kings of Israel, Jehoshaphat, like his father Asa, was a good king. His reign is summarized in **Verse 43** – “He walked in all the way of Asa his father; he did not turn aside from it, doing right in the sight of the LORD.”
8. We also find some flaws in his life. This is true of all men. It’s been said, “The best of men are men at best.” In other words, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” This is our great grief. “Oh God, how often have I failed You!”
One of Jehoshaphat’s failures is declared plainly:
1 Kings 22:43 NAU - "However, the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense on the high places."
- A. The high places had been set up by Jeroboam after the division of the kingdom. He reasoned if the people went to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices they would see the Temple and remember David and Solomon and turn to the king of Judah. He couldn’t allow this to happen.
- B. He established various high places, substitute places of worship.
1 Kings 12:28-31 NAU - "So the king consulted, and made two golden calves, and he said to them, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt." ²⁹ He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. ³⁰ Now this thing became a sin, for the people went *to worship* before the one as far as Dan. ³¹ And he made houses on high places, and made priests from among all the people who were not of the sons of Levi."
- C. These high places continued to persist, even during the reigns of righteous kings. They were finally removed under the reign of Hezekiah.
2 Kings 18:3-5 NAU - "He did right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done. ⁴ He removed the high places and broke down the *sacred* pillars and cut down the Asherah. He also broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the sons of Israel burned incense to it; and it was called Nehushtan. ⁵ He trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel; so that after him there was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *among those who were before him.*"
9. The other fault of Jehoshaphat may go overlooked.
1 Kings 22:44 NAU - "Jehoshaphat also made peace with the king of Israel."
- A. Kings often made alliances with other kings and kingdoms by joining their children in marriage. This is how Ahab and Jezebel were married. It forged an alliance between Israel and Tyre. It was a terrible compromise. Tyre was a pagan nation that practiced gross idolatry. Baal was their God.
Deuteronomy 7:1-6 NAU - "When the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you, ² and when the LORD your God delivers them before you and you defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them. ³ "Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. ⁴ "For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you. ⁵ "But thus you shall do to them: you shall tear down their altars, and smash their *sacred* pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire. ⁶ "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."

- B. Normally, marriages within the house of Israel were blessed of God. In fact, God commanded these were the only marriages that were allowed. But these were not normal times. Israel was divided, separate kingdoms with separate kings. They often did not share in the same covenant faithfulness to God.
1. Generally, Israel forsook the covenant promises. In the end they were judged by God and destroyed. They were overrun by the Assyrians and scattered.
2 Kings 18:11-12 NAU - "Then the king of Assyria carried Israel away into exile to Assyria, and put them in Halah and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, ¹² because they did not obey the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed His covenant, *even* all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded; they would neither listen nor do *it*."
 2. We can easily see the problem with **Verse 44**
1 Kings 22:44 NAU - "Jehoshaphat also made peace with the king of Israel."
 Jehoshaphat's son, Jehoram was married to Ahab's daughter, Athaliah. It was a most unholy alliance. Ahab and his wife were wicked and it should be supposed that his daughter was also wicked. Indeed, she was, and the author implies she had a hand in the downfall of Jehoram.
2 Kings 8:18 NAU - "He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab became his wife; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD."
10. One might say, what in the world was Jehoshaphat thinking? This chapter opens with Jehoshaphat making the trip for a friendly visit with his son's father-in-law. Ahab saw it as an opportunity to gain Jehoshaphat's help in going to war with the Arameans. Jehoshaphat did what all righteous men do. He sought a word from God.
1 Kings 22:5 NAU - "Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Please inquire first for the word of the LORD."
- A. He rejected the message from the 400 false prophets and sought the counsel of a true prophet of God. Micaiah arrives and declares that the war would not go favorably, and it did not. It almost cost him his life. When you make your bed with the wicked you will often be led down the path of unrighteousness.
 - B. When he returned he was rebuked by the prophet Jehu.
2 Chronicles 19:1-2 NAU - "Then Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned in safety to his house in Jerusalem. ² Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD and so *bring* wrath on yourself from the LORD?"
Psalms 1:1-4 NAU - "How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! ² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. ³ He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers. ⁴ The wicked are not so, But they are like chaff which the wind drives away."

11. Jehoshaphat barely escapes with his life. But did he learn anything from it? Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. The Apostle Paul would write 900 years later:
2 Corinthians 6:14-18 NAU - "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? ¹⁵ Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ¹⁷ "Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord. "And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you. ¹⁸ "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty."
12. So now Ahab is dead and his son, Ahaziah, is sitting on the throne. He makes an offer of an alliance with Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat has gone into the shipping business. Ahaziah is offering to provide labor for the enterprise. This seems like an excellent idea. It would be a good opportunity to continue to forge unity between the Northern and Southern kingdoms. "Let's work together. Let's keep our relationship strong."
- A. The author tells us that Jehoshaphat wanted nothing to do with an alliance with Ahab's son.
1 Kings 22:49 NAU - "But Jehoshaphat was not willing."
- B. He might not have been willing initially, but he was eventually enticed and once again he entered into an unholy alliance.
2 Chronicles 20:35-37 NAU - "After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah king of Israel. He acted wickedly in so doing. ³⁶ So he allied himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish, and they made the ships in Ezion-geber. ³⁷ Then Eliezer the son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat saying, "Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD has destroyed your works." So the ships were broken and could not go to Tarshish."

Conclusion:

1. We need to hear this loudly. How do you view this world? Who do you forge bonds with? Who are your friends?
2. The Bible teaches that we must live in this pagan world, but we must stand apart from it. While we should interact with unbelievers so that we might bring them the Gospel, we must not be united to them in close relationships.
 They shouldn't be our bosom friends.
 We must not enter into close covenant relationships – marriage, business partnerships, etc.
3. Spurgeon – "(The godly man) avoids the very persons of sinners except so far as he has to deal with them in civil matters and the common courtesies and duties of life. They are, not his bosom-friends, he would never dream of being unequally yoked with them in marriage: he shuns their company all he can, for his congenial associates are elsewhere. Their ways, example, words, he avoids. As he would keep from plague-infected places and people, so he strives to keep aloof from men who blaspheme, lest their profanity should taint and defile him."¹

¹ C. H. Spurgeon, "The Truly Blessed Man" – Spurgeon's Sermons, vol. 57, No. 3270. CCEL: <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/spurgeon/sermons57.xl.html> .