

It's a fools strategy. When we think God might be speaking it is truth that matters, not whether or not we like what is being said. Liking it is beside the point. Jehoshaphat rebukes him for this. So, Ahab calls Micaiah. Micaiah then speaks in v14 and says what Ahab wants to hear – 'go'. But, he is charged to tell the truth. And then comes words that he does not want to hear:

V16, Micaiah sees Israel as a people scattered. They are sheep without a shepherd. That's Bible-language for saying that they are people without a King. Jesus uses the same language in Matthew 9 to speak of God's people as lacking a ruler, as does Ezekiel. Except of course, they do have a king. Ahab. This king however is not worthy to be so called. We're then told that the call to war was about deceiving Ahab – a way of bringing death and judgement upon him (18).

Micaiah observes, v27, that if Ahab survives then he is a false-prophet. But if Ahab dies in war they'll know that Micaiah spoke the truth. Ahab goes to war, disguised (28) and is hit (33) at random and so dies.

All the time, Jehoshaphat plays along with this. When he returns home (19v1-3) he is sharply rebuked. The prophet Jehu son of Hanani confronts him. Jehoshaphat has sinned by loving those who hate the LORD. That is to say he allied with a King who hated what God had to say.

We might struggle to see the crime. This is because we divide God from his word. God cannot be separated from his word. If someone hates what God says then they hate God. Thus, Ahab hated God. Jehoshaphat was weak. He should not have sought the alliance with Ahab. And consequently he incurs God's wrath against him. He survives however since he is part-good – he removed idols and sought God. Nonetheless this was a tragic error by this promising king.

God's true King will be one who loves the words of God. He will indeed be called the Word of God incarnate. Everything Jesus does will be by God's word, with no exceptions. No alliances with those who hate God. The tragic story of Jehoshaphat is a warning to us to take God's word seriously. We cannot ally ourselves with those who hate God's word. How do people hate it? By accepting only what they want God to say – bending and twisting God's word, often subtly like Ahab. We can do it ourselves – we read selectively and focus on favourite passages whilst never reading uncomfortable parts. e.g. We over look wrath but focus on love. God's word must be central to all we do – driving our message, our methods, our meetings, our partnerships. Those who do not love God's word, do not love God.



Cell Notes >2/5. Jehoshaphat – love God's word

Welcome (10)

Your cell is a **mission team** based in your hall.
And now with new **word** and **witness** leaders!

Share together...

WHAT IS GOD DOING IN YOUR LIFE?
What's good? What's a struggle?

Explain that you'll study God's word together, pray and seek to encourage and equip one another to live and speak for Jesus. **This term we're studying the magnificent letter 2 Chronicles in cell from week 2-6, and then Esther in weeks 7-9. In 2 Chronicles we're called by God to a life of humble orthodoxy, in Esther to prize God's promises whatever our circumstances.**

Word (40)

2 Chronicles
17v1-10, 18v1-19v3
Theme – **Jehoshaphat – love
God's word**
Transformational-Faith-Aim:
**My attitude to God's word is
my attitude to God..**



17v1-10 When God's word rules

What did Jehoshaphat do? (positively/negatively) What was the state of his heart? (v3,4,6)

What was the surprising effect of teaching God's word? (v10) Why would the word have this effect on the nations? (*also Joshua 2v9*) How might God's word have change the way God's people lived?

What might it look like in course, corridor and clubs if we were entirely shaped by God's word – and what effect might that have upon those around us?

[NB: THERE IS **NO** MENTION OF EVANGELISM HERE]

Living for Jesus Speaking for Jesus

18v1-19v3 When God's word is despised

1-12 – Going to war

What did Jehoshaphat do with Israel? (v1-3) What is his priority? (v4)

What do the prophets say? (v5) What is Jehoshaphat's objection to this? (v6) (6v34-35) Why does Ahab have a problem with this (v7) How might this attitude show in our lives?

13-27 – hearing from God

What does Micaiah say? What is his verdict on the people? (16) What does that say about their king? Why is this his message? How will his words be tested?

28-3 – the aftermath

What happens to Ahab? What is the connection between God and his word? (also 7v19) What was Jehoshaphat's error? Why is he spared?

What will a true King need to look like?

How does this incident shape our approach to God's word?

Next Week

Uzziah – God seeks humble worshippers

2 Chronicles 26

TIP: With a long narrative like this – look for the changes in scenes and read it in those sections – maybe read the passage as you go along rather than unveiling the end before you've studied it.

Worship (10)

Thank God for his word and for our King 'The Word' Jesus.

Witness (30)

Christian Union is a Mission Team – you're part of that.

Share stories of attempting to witness to friends.

Where do you need help? Who can you pray for?

**** How is our love of God's word impacting those around us?**

Word Notes

Post-Solomon the nation has split into two. Things are not good. But here is a king who seeks God and has God's word taught to the people. Jehoshaphat is a Davidic King not just genetically but in his character. Under his rule the nation reforms back to God's standards rather than following their previous sin. Idolatrous 'high places' are removed. To further strengthen God's people he sends out men to teach God's law to the nation. Here is a king who wants his people to love the word of God. We're not told of the immediate effect on God's people but we see the effect on the surrounding nations. They fear the LORD! They dare not make war against Israel. So transformed and strengthened must God's people be that they truly represent the LORD.

We find ourselves asking – is this the King we've been waiting for... Fast-forward to chapter 18! Jehoshaphat has become a great king and now make an alliance with Ahab king of Israel. On paper this is a good idea – reuniting the divided people. They celebrate and Jehoshaphat says great covenant words 'I am as you are, my people are your people'. Ahab then says he wants to go to war. His prophets say 'go'. Jehoshaphat wants a prophet of the LORD (6). Ahab knows of one man who speaks for the LORD (though he instead listens to his 400 yes-men). In tragic and revealing words, v7, Ahab says that he hates the prophet of the LORD, Micaiah. Why? Because Micaiah never says good things about Ahab, only bad things. On this basis Ahab rejects him.

Where we stand with God's word is where we stand with God. His Kings and his people must take his word seriously. The word brings fear on the nations as they hear of his fame, and it should have the same effect on his people! ...The true king is the Word incarnate!