Truth, Lies, and Compromise

"Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab."
II Chronicles 18:1

"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."
II Chronicles 19:2

Introduction:

1. We can learn many righteous things from this interesting chapter of I Kings 22. See also II Chron 18.
2. We shall see marital, family, military, and commercial compromise, false prophets, a true prophet, peer pressure, despising of prophesyings, implacability, God's government of the world, God's protection, God's judgment, value of heart religion, another spirit behind false religion, preacher compromise, majority rule, unity vs. purity, positivism vs. truth, cooperation vs. separation, etc.

22:1 THE SETTING

1. Israel means the ten tribes under Ahab, and Syria means a northern enemy nation under Benhadad.
2. The three years were the result of a covenant, for which God would judge Ahab (I Kgs 20:28-43).

22:2-4 THE COMPROMISE

1. Jehoshaphat was the righteous king of Judah (41-43); Ahab worshipped Baal (16:29-33; 21:25-26).
2. Jehoshaphat made affinity with Ahab in spite of great religious differences by marrying his son, Jehoram, to Ahab's daughter, Athaliah (II Chron 18:1; 21:6; II Kings 8:18). **Affinity** = marriage.
3. Here is an alliance started by marriage that will cost Jehoshaphat dearly (I Cor 7:39; 11:11), for it will create great family pressure for compromise and bring evil communications (I Cor 15:33).
4. We are told in the Chronicles that Ahab wined and dined Jehoshaphat and his men (II Chron 18:2).
5. Ahab asks for Jehoshaphat to join him in a battle against Syria, and Jehoshaphat does so sinfully.
6. Jehoshaphat learned to compromise from his father, who hired Syrians against Israel (15:16-34).

22:5-6 THE LORD JEHOVAH OR MERELY A LORD OR GOD

1. Jehoshaphat, with a good heart, asks Ahab to check *that day* with the true God, the LORD.
2. Ahab, true to his religion, calls 400 prophets of Baal, who positively say the "Lord" will bless.
3. Note at this point that the false prophets are only appealing to the "Lord," rather than the "LORD."
4. Even Baal may be called God or Lord, but Baal cannot be called Jehovah, I Am that I Am. Glory!

22:7-12 THE LIE FROM HEAVEN

1. Jehoshaphat perceives the false prophets of Baal and further requests a true prophet of the LORD.
2. Ahab knew his prophets did not know the LORD, so he tells of one prophet of the LORD (26-27).
3. Ahab hated the prophet Micaiah, since he never had good news for him, which was Ahab's fault.
4. Here we have a classic example of a violation of I Thessalonians 5:20, "Despise not prophesyings."
5. Why hate the message or messenger, when you should hate the sin causing an evil word from God?
6. Jehoshaphat shows weakness by his tepid rebuke of Ahab for rejecting Micaiah. Remember Eli.
7. The false prophets of Ahab adjust their message to ape true prophets of God and win Jehoshaphat, but these good words like "LORD" should never move the hearts of the righteous (Rom 16:18).
8. With fervent zeal and perfect unity, they used visual aids and spoke in the name of the LORD.
9. This is a preachers' conference that would be hard to resist, for its sheer size, unity, positive message, exciting presentation, enthusiasm, godly language, confidence, and cooperative spirit.
10. Jehoshaphat should have asked for their heads or waited for Elijah to arrive (I Kings 18:17-40)!
11. When did Zedekiah meet the LORD? Probably when Jehu worshipped Baal (II Kings 10:18-28)!

22:13-23 THE TRUTH FROM HEAVEN

1. The peer pressure is great – 400 to 1; and the stated pressure is for unity and a positive message.
2. A true prophet of God has no regard for unity, the desires of men, or a positive message! They must proclaim the Word of the Lord and that only! And they can swear in their boldness! Amen!
3. Micaiah first gives Ahab what he wants to hear by use of holy irony – words meaning the opposite.
4. Ahab recognizes the irony, and chooses to ridicule this man of God by falsely accusing him of lies.
5. Micaiah tells the plain, cold truth – Ahab would die in battle and Israel would be without a king.
6. Ahab, with implacable folly, reverts to his earlier excuse that Micaiah never gives good news.
7. So Micaiah describes in detail the government of God over the affairs of men and Ahab's death.
8. The LORD our God is king of heaven and earth, and the host of holy and evil angels obey Him.
9. This heavenly counsel is described in terms to show our feeble minds the sovereignty of God.
10. Ahab didn't want the truth, so it is no injustice on God's part to give him a lie (II Thess 2:9-12); which action, so far from debasing truth, actually exalts truth over lies and those who love them.
11. There is another spirit, which brings a gospel of another Jesus (II Cor 11:3-4; I John 4:1-6).

22:24-30 THE REJECTION OF TRUTH

1. How do false prophets deal with truth? Physical opposition and ridicule of the poor minority!
2. Micaiah warned Zedekiah that he would see the truth fulfilled, but he would be hiding himself.
3. Ahab punishes Micaiah for his prophecy; he boasts of his soon success; and Jehoshaphat is silent.
4. Micaiah warns Ahab again that he will not return in peace, and he asks all hearers to remember it.
5. Why did Jehoshaphat seek the LORD and then ignore his counsel? Compromise! Evil company!
6. Ahab takes physical precautions to thwart the Word of the Lord, which is utter vanity and folly!

22:31-36 THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

1. Since Ahab was breaking a covenant, Benhadad directed his 32 captains to fight only with the king.
2. All 32 captains took their divisions directly after Jehoshaphat, due to his royal apparel in the battle.
3. The LORD saved Jehoshaphat and turned the captains away from harming him (II Chr 18:30-32).
4. But a random arrow shot at the army fatally hit Ahab in a joint of his armor. **Harness** = armor.
5. Ahab's blood ran out into the chariot, while he was propped up to continue his hopeless battle.
6. Micaiah's words were fulfilled when news of his death was circulated among the host (36 cp 17).

22:37-40 THE PRECISE JUDGMENT OF GOD

1. Ahab had killed Naboth for his vineyard, so Elijah had prophesied of horrible judgment (21:19).
2. This judgment came to pass exactly, as dogs licked his blood in the chariot and washed his armor.

22:41-49 THE CHARACTER OF JEHOSHAPHAT

1. He was a good king with a good heart, who did much righteousness, as his father before him, Asa.
2. The high places were used to worship the true God, but it was not proper for them to have done so.
3. And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel, in a number of foolish ways to his hurt, for he took Ahab's daughter for his son Jehoram and he joined Ahab in battle against the Syrians.
4. **Read this!** Returning to Jerusalem after Ahab's death, the Lord rebuked him (II Chron 19:1-4), for righteous men do not have any business with wicked men (Ps 101:3-8; 139:21-22; II Cor 6:14-18).
5. He received the rebuke with good zeal to do many things to bring Israel to God (II Chron 19:5-11).
6. Edom was a tributary at this time, but soon revolted under his son Jehoram's rule (II Chron 21:8).
7. But his earlier decision to marry his son to Ahab's daughter brought a naval alliance with Ahaziah to seek gold from Tarshish, but the ships were broken by the word of the Lord (II Chron 20:35-37).
8. In his second effort to build ships, he would not compromise or cooperate with Ahaziah. Amen!

22:50 THE CHARACTER OF HIS SON

1. Jehoram was a wicked king, for he married Ahab's daughter, and lived like Ahab (II Chr 21:1-20).
2. He killed his brothers and many princes, and his son, Ahaziah, was cut off by God (II Chr 22:1-12).
3. Four of Judah's kings are missing in Jesus Christ's genealogy for this profane alliance (Matt 1:8).
4. Let this be a warning to all fathers who will not take strict measures to preserve their children from marriages out of the Lord. It will bring God's judgment and great practical trouble in life.

22:51-53 THE CHARACTER OF AHAB'S SON

1. Ahaziah was a wicked king, for he was Ahab and Jezebel's son, and lived like them.
2. Let this be a warning to all fathers who will not take strict measures to lead and train their children.
3. The expression "like father, like son" is a true law, for only the grace of God can break the cycle.
4. The names become very confusing, as both families name their children after each other. Read it.

Conclusion:

1. Every father has the God-given duty to see that his children marry only in the Lord (I Cor 7:39; 11:11).
2. "In the Lord" does not mean merely a "Christian." It means fervently committed to the true doctrine.
3. Every father has the God-given duty to be an example of faithful righteousness to his children (Eph 6:4).
4. We have no right to choose associations that please us – they must please the Lord (II Cor 6:14-18).
5. The consequences of marriages out of the Lord and other evil associations bring many terrible troubles.
6. While a heart that loves the Lord is very noble, desirable, and necessary; even it cannot save from the judgment for false alliances and compromise.