
QT Questions—for 1Kings

(Here's a short introduction to the book of 1Kings from one of my study Bibles.)

- First Kings testifies to Yahweh's presence among Israel, but also shows just how far a nation (people) can fall when Yahweh is ignored. In 1 Kings, priests lead God's people astray when they should have been interceding on their behalf; and kings, who are expected to be godly examples, are selfish and idolatrous.
- First Kings profoundly illustrates just how faith in national identity or leadership can lead to failure. Meanwhile, a faithful relationship with Yahweh is reflected in the life of Elijah, who predicts droughts, resurrects the son of a widow, and calls down fire upon the prophets of the god Baal. Elijah and a few others bravely show strength in the midst of religious persecution. We see that these courageous few have the most powerful ally of all, Yahweh, who provides whatever they need and speaks truth in a still small voice. First Kings leads us to reflect on what kind of people we will turn out to be. We can choose to stand nearly alone like Elijah, proclaiming righteousness in an unjust time, or we can choose to follow after failed leaders, or worse, become like them. The choice to follow Yahweh or not, is ours to make.

1Kgs 1 (4/13/23)

1. In 1:1-27, what was happening to King David; who was Adonijah and what did he do and who were with him and why; who spoke on behalf of Solomon and why; how is this applicable to you?
 2. In 1:28-53, how was Solomon confirmed as king; why were Adonijah and his guests alarmed; what do you learn here?
- In v. 39, we see Solomon is anointed by the priest Zadok, whereas David was anointed by the prophet Samuel. Why the difference of the offices in the anointing of the king? Kings who were successors to their father-king are anointed by priests. However, kings chosen by God, as in Saul or David, whose fathers were not kings, were anointed by the prophets. Our God is a God of order.

1Kgs 2 (4/14/23)

1. In 2:1-12, what was David's charge to Solomon; what did David want his son to know about God; what did David want for the three men mentioned here and why?
 2. In 2:13-46, how is the kingdom established in Solomon's hands here; of the many things here, which ones strikes your heart and why; how is this applicable to you?
- In v. 17, Adonijah requests for Abishag to be his wife. Several thoughts and questions cross my mind. How could he ask for his father's concubine to become his wife? Did he think because they had no sexual relations, she never really belonged to King David? Did he think since she was only a concubine and not a formal wife, that she was available? Does he not remember what it meant for Absalom to sleep with his father's concubines? Did he seriously not know that to ask for his father's concubine, he was once again seeking to claim the throne? Did he not know it would be an open affront to Solomon's power? Did he expect King Solomon to be ok with his requests? Was he in love with her or maybe infatuated with her or lusted after her, and did that

blind him from all these obvious reasons? He lacked discernment; he lacked common sense; he was simply a foolish man.

1Kgs 3 (4/15/23)

1. In 3:1-15, how did the Lord meet Solomon and what did He offer him; what did Solomon want and why; as God offers you “whatever you want,” what would that be for you and why?
 2. In 3:16-28, who came to King Solomon and why; how did Solomon resolved this conflict and how did that demonstrate God’s answer to his prayer; what do we learn about the two mothers; how is this applicable to you?
- Let me offer three quick thoughts. First, the literal translation of the discerning heart is a hearing heart. And of course, the hearing heart is not literal, but a heart that knows how to hear the troubles compassionately and distinguish who’s right and wrong, as in the two mothers. What a wonderful requests for Solomon and for God to answer him so wonderfully. Secondly, I am shocked there were prostitutes during this time. The immorality of the people now and then are no better. Third, what’s more shocking is that these prostitutes were able to enter the King’s presence. We remember, how even the Queen herself, Esther, could not enter the king’s presence without his calling for her first. And here were the least qualified, the lowest of the society, freely and confidently entering and arguing before the King. When God is present in His people, our ways should most certainly be different, holier and more gracious than the world’s.

1Kgs 4 (4/17/23)

1. In 4:1-34, in vv. 2-4, why are Zadok and Abiathar designated as priests and yet only Zadok’s son, Azariah, named as the priest (2:27); in vv. 20 & 25, how are God’s people described and why was that; do you think this is what the people were envisioning when they first asked for a king?
 2. In 4, in vv. 26-28, how were the animals cared for and what would that mean; how would God see this caring for the animals (Deut 17:16); what was Solomon wise about; how is this applicable to you?
- This chapter is filled how abundantly well Solomon and the people were provided for. We are told that the people were happy in this present state. Yet, I cannot help but be sad in the midst of their happiness. Actually, I am happy for their happiness. But, what saddens me is that in the midst of what appeared so blissful, there are several things that do not seem right. Let me point out one of them. The many horses and chariots are mentioned in the midst of their peaceful days. By sight, they seem to provide a much needed protection and strength, whenever they should go to war. But, God was clear, they were not to have many of them (Deut 17:16). In other words, sight would welcome such mighty weapons. But faith declared, to not to have them. And we can see, Solomon chose sight over faith in God’s word. Our God delights when His people live by faith and not by sight, because by faith, we will trust and believe in our God to be more precious and trustworthy than any power or strength the world can provide. May we trust more in our God than what we see or what we know.

1Kgs 5 (4/18/23)

1. In 5:1-12, why is Solomon and Hiram in a good relationship and what does that teach us; how were Hiram's men going to supply the needs for Solomon's project and how was Solomon going to repay them; what do you learn here?
2. In 5:13-18, what did Solomon desired to do here; how was he going to accomplish his project; how is this applicable to you?

- Verse 13 is troubling for me. Though Solomon was building God's Temple, to use conscripted laborers from Israel, from God's holy people, seem out of place. In my eyes, he was working for a great end, the building of God's Temple, but using the wrong means. And we know, the means to the end is just as important for our God and therefore, for His people who walk with Him. God had warned Israel what the abuse of the kingship would do, that is, the king will use His people for his use (1Sam 8:11-18). In fact, eventually, the Israelites will become resentful after the death of Solomon and this will play a major reason in the division of the kingdom. God's people must remember, ultimately, we are building His kingdom, which is His people, and not just projects, including the Temple, including the Church, including a ministry. We must build people into His image, and not just erect a beautiful and useful building or ministry.

1Kgs 6 (4/19/23)

1. In 6:1-13, what does Solomon do in his fourth year of his reign and why; what was God's promise; what did God want Solomon to do and why; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 6:14-38, what was the size of the Temple and how was it divided; what was the size of the Most Holy Place and why those measures; what covered the inside of the Temple and why was that; how is this applicable to you?

- As we know, the Temple did not guaranteed God's presence. But His promise was, that He will be present among His people, like the Temple would stand among the community. But, far more important than the beautiful building, God's delight was to build His people beautifully, more than the Temple building, just like His glorious image, that's what the Temple was meant to reflect, God's beautiful presence. That is why, the Temple have to be built beautifully, because it was meant to reflect God's beauty. Likewise, God's people are meant to reflect the beauty of our God, that is why, the way we live and speak and dress and present ourselves before others, should be beautiful, just like the God we are representing. Friends, we must not take ourselves lightly. We are meant to reflect, display and represent the amazing God of beauty and holiness. Of course, all of us will fall short trying to do so perfectly. That is why, we repent whenever we mis-represent Him. And learn and grow more, so that we can better represent Him. Though we know we will never reach perfection this side of heaven, still that becomes our greatest endeavor and delight, because it means, we are reflecting and representing our God a little better today than yesterday. May we drink and behold our beautiful God today more, so that His beauty will overflow in all the ways of our lives. Yes, our beauty was not for others to admire, nor for us to enjoy the compliments. The more beautiful we are, the more beautifully we will reflect and

represent our God who is most beautiful. His beauty is the reason for our beauty.
Have a beautiful day, Beautiful!

1Kgs 7 (4/20/23)

1. In 7:1-12, how long did it take to build Solomon's palace as compared to God's Temple and why do you think we are told this; what did Solomon do for Pharaoh's daughter and why do you think we are told this again; how is this applicable to you?
2. In 7:13-51, what are the names and meanings of the two pillars of the Temple; what are some of the making of the Temple's furnishings that catches your attention and why; what do you learn here?

- The making of the Temple's furnishings is remarkable. What strikes me most is the incredible attention to details and the amazing devotion to make each pieces beautiful, extravagant and simply awesomely priceless. God's house is meant to be this beautiful and extravagant, because it is meant to reflect the Owner of the house, our God. And in the NT, we are told, His church is His house, and His house is made up by His people; so, we are His house. No wonder, we should be beautiful, because our lives ought to reflect our beautiful God, our Maker. Of course, the beauty that God delights is not like the beauty of the world, in their outer appearance. God sees the heart, our inner beauty, our characters, our lifestyle, our values, our motivations, intentions, attitudes and purpose for life, which shapes the way we decide, move, act, imagine, think and speak. Our outer ways should be an overflow of our inner person, which is our character, that should delight to grow in the fruit of the Holy Spirit. So, let's pray for our character to grow more and more like our Lord, so that His house, our lives, will be beautiful as He is beautiful. And may what we display outwardly, reflect the inner beauty of our Lord in us and through us.

1Kgs 8 (4/21/23)

1. In 8:6-9, what did the Most Holy Place contained; in Heb 9:4-5, what else would the ark of the covenant have; in 8:10-11, why couldn't the priests perform their service; what do you learn?
2. In 8:29-30, where is God's dwelling place and how is it related with the Temple; how did Daniel live out Solomon's prayer (Dan 6:10); in 8:54, what was Solomon's prayer posture and can you remember some of the other postures of prayers in the Bible; how is it applicable to you?

- In v. 24, Solomon said this about God, "...with Your mouth You have promised and with Your hand You have fulfilled it..." The symphony of the mouth promising and the hand fulfilling is how our faith and deeds must orchestrate, just as how our prayer and deeds must resemble in our lives as well. Our faith is not a mere wishful thinking, where we dream of what we desire, and do not give our whole selves to accomplish them, with all the strength God gives us to live out what we believe. God's mouth and hands worked harmoniously to accomplish His will; therefore, may we also learn to speak and act harmoniously, to bring glory to our God and edify His people more into the likeness of His Son, Christ Jesus.

1Kgs 9 (4/22/23)

1. In 9:1-9, why did the Lord appeared to Solomon; what was the message He wanted Solomon to hear; how is this applicable to you?
 2. In 9:10-28, what did Solomon do for King Hiram and why; in v. 20, who were still living in the land and why; in v. 25, what is Solomon still able to do and why; what do you learn from all these?
- In many instances, God's word will record incidences but not always tell us how God views them. So, unless we remember other parts of God's word where He has already spoken of His heart, it is not always easy to discern how God views them. Let me share briefly on two of them from this chapter. First, why would Solomon give away 20 cities of God's promised land? Later in chapter 21, we will meet Naboth who refused to sell his land to King Ahab because he believed the land is God's inheritance to His people. In other words, lands were not for Solomon to give away, especially to a people that were not God's. But, Solomon does because he feels indebted to Hiram. Then, in v. 20 we are told of the people still living in the Promised Land, whose people were meant for God's people to completely annihilate. Because God's people would not completely obey God's command, now they were living with the remnants of the people, whom God said, will become snares to their holy living. When God's people refuse to live completely in God's way, we will suffer the consequences of our unwillingness to obey. Today is a good day to examine where you are completely obeying or not, God's word in your life. And in our obedience, let's remember and believe, God's command for us to obey is truly what's best for us (Is 48:17-18).

1Kgs 10 (4/24/23)

1. In 10:1-13, why did the queen of Sheba come to Solomon and what was her conclusion; in v. 9, what does Sheba say why Solomon is made king over Israel; how is this applicable to you?
 2. In 10:14-29, in v. 14, how much gold did Solomon receive yearly in today's weight; why would Solomon make shields of gold; who was responsible for Solomon's wisdom and how did Solomon reflect the Giver; how is this applicable to you?
- I appreciate this Gentile woman, Sheba, knowing the reason for the king. She praised the Lord because He has placed Solomon on the throne, because of the Lord's eternal love for His people. In other words, it was not for Solomon's sake, it was not for his happiness and wellbeing, that Solomon became the king. God placed him there, so that he would bless the people to know of God's eternal love for them. May this principle also become our knowledge as well. May we know that we are placed where we are, so that our God can use us to bless His people to taste His eternal love for them. As we can see, our lives are not meant for our happiness. Our happiness is not our goal, but a fruit. We pray that through our lives, the lives of others around us will experience God's eternal love. And seeing others taste God's eternal love for them, may that be our true joy.

1Kgs 11 (4/25/23)

1. In 11:1-13, how many wives did Solomon have, and why did he marry so many, and what was the result; how did God feel about Solomon's act and why?
2. In 11:14-43, who were the men God used as Solomon's adversaries; what was God's promise for Jeroboam; how is this applicable to you?

- What a sad chapter this is. Seeing Solomon hold fast to his love for the foreign wives, knowing full well they will eventually mislead him. Actually, it is more accurate to say, not the wives that misled him, but he chose to disobey God. It wasn't the wives that made him sin, it was to gratify his sinful desire that he knowingly chose to marry them and willingly disobeyed God. While Solomon was fully immersed in his sin, where were the prophets like Nathan? Why didn't one of them go to Solomon and rebuked him for his sin, as Nathan did after David sinned with Bathsheba? Sometimes, God rebukes us quickly, but at other times, He doesn't. And why wouldn't God tear the kingdom during Solomon's day, when it was clearly him who sinned so grossly before God? Yet, God didn't. God's way is surely more than I can comprehend. What's also sad in this chapter is, how clearly it is a mirror to me. I am so like Solomon. There are times, I willingly love my sin more than my God. Usually, that's not the case. But at times, I see, I willingly choose sin over God, and that's because I am loving my sin more at the time than God. Sometimes, sin has a firm grip on us. It's not easy to untangle ourselves from it. Oh, Lord, how we need You. Please, please, please, we truly want to love You more than our sins; we truly want to choose You over our sins. May it be so, Lord. Amen, amen, Lord.

1Kgs 12 (4/26/23)

1. In 12:1-24, as Rehoboam takes the throne, whose advice does he accept/reject on Jeroboam's request and why; what was the result and why; why was there no war; what do you learn here?
2. In 12:25-33, in v. 26, what did Jeroboam think to himself and why; what was the advice given to him and what was the result; where was God in Jeroboam's life before and now (11:29-39); how is this applicable to you?

- For both kings, they sought advice before they made their decision. Usually, to seek the advice of others is a good thing, because two are better than one, usually. But, sadly, sometimes the advice is worse. Oh, we need discernment, to know what's right from wrong. And where will we learn what's right before God? It really comes from one place, and that is, in God's word. Let God be true, and every person a liar (whoever should contradict God's word, is a liar, and he, she, even I, should be rejected). Though Rehoboam received good advice from the elders, he rejects them for the advice of fools, who only seem to want to enjoy their new found power. And as for Jeroboam, the only advice received was of those who wanted to align and catered to his own desire. Words to delight their hearts were terrible for their souls. God's word can taste bitter to the mouth, but they are truly a healing balm to our souls. God's people must be a person who learns and loves and trusts in God and His word more than himself/herself. Please, let's not trust ourselves too much. Let's pray that we

would learn to trust in God and His word. Let's study His word, for He alone knows the truth. And let's learn to joyfully and lovingly submit and obey our God (Prov 3:5-7).

1Kgs 13 (4/27/23)

1. In 13:1-10, who came to prophesy against Jeroboam, what was it and why was the prophesy given; how did Jeroboam respond and why; what did God still do for him and why?
 2. In 13:11-34, how did the old prophet convinced the man to come with him and why would he do that; how did God treat both of these men and why; how did the prophesy impact Jeroboam's and the northern tribes lives and why do you think that was; how is this applicable to you?
- There are many miraculous, unusual and sad things are happening in this chapter. Let me pose them with questions for you to ponder. Why would the old prophet lie? Why would God kill the man of God for trusting a lying prophet? Why wasn't the old prophet killed also? Why didn't the lion kill the donkey or eat the man? Why did the old prophet mourn the death that he caused? How could Jeroboam not change his evil way after hearing God's message, even after he experienced what happened to his own hand? With judgment promised against false priests, why would anyone want to be one? Yet, many volunteered and Jeroboam gladly consecrated them for the high places. This is a scary chapter.

1Kgs 14 (4/28/23)

1. In 14:1-20, why did Jeroboam sent his wife to the prophet and what did he say; in vv. 14-16, how does God describe will happen in Israel and does any of God's description frighten-startle you, why; why would Jeroboam's wife ever return to her house after hearing the prophet's words; what do you learn about God here?
 2. In 14:21-31, how old was Rehoboam when he rejected the elder's counsel for his friends (12:6-8) and what does this say about his maturity; in what ways did Rehoboam sinned against God and why; what did God allow for His people because they kept sinning; how is this applicable to you?
- Here's a short explanation from my study Bible. What were high places and sacred stones? The top of a rise, hill or mountain gave ancient worshipers a sense of distance from the mundane things of life. It also moved them closer to the sky, where they believed the gods resided. This led to the custom of placing religious objects, such as stone pillars (sacred stones), on hills to appease the gods. But this pagan practice was forbidden to the Israelites (Ex 23:24; Lev 26:1; Deut 16:21-22).

1Kgs 15 (4/29/23)

1. In 15:1-24, in v. 3, whose heart did King Abijah followed and why; whose heart did God want the kings to follow, how and why; how did King Asa do right and wrong; what do you learn?
2. In 15:25-34, what's the connection between King Nadab and Baasha; in v. 30, what impact did Jeroboam's sin have; what were Jeroboam's sin (12:28-33); how is this applicable to you?

- In v. 29, we are told that Baasha completely destroyed all of Jeroboam's family according to the word of the Lord. We assume he understood and agreed that Jeroboam's way was terrible, as God used him as the executioner. He not only saw God's hand work, but he was God's hand. So, we can safely assume that this is one sin that Baasha would never get near it again, ever in his life. He experienced it powerfully, up close. Yet, in v. 34, we are told that Baasha "did evil in the eyes of the Lord, following the ways of Jeroboam and committing the same sin Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit." This is such a frightening, frightening verse. How could he possibly repeat those sins that God had him execute? He experienced it more intimately than anyone can possibly do. It is terrifying to see that we can repeat the very sins we were used to judge against. It is horrifying to see, what we hate today, can truly become our lives in the future. To experience powerfully is not enough in our walk of sanctification. We truly need God's grace daily, even over the sins we have overcome well yesterday. Yesterday's victory does not guarantee tomorrow's success. Day by day, let us humbly go to our Lord and drink from His fountain of truth and grace, so that His ways will carry us through our daily walk. Our God knows what we need daily, that's why, He invites us daily to enter into His presence in His word and prayer, so He can feed us, nourish us, and build us up more into His image.

1Kgs 16 (5/1/23)

1. In 16:1-33, who are the 5 Kings of Israel and how does God see each of them; how is God's anger aroused; would you also humbly examine yourself and see if there are any worthless idols you are keeping and make some time to repent?
2. In 16:34, what did Joshua speak about Jericho (Josh 6:26) and what did Hiel of Bethel do and what was the result; why would Hiel do such a thing when these words were spoken against it; what kind of God do you meet here?

- It is sad and frightening to see that each of the kings of Israel commit the same sin, the sin of their first king, Jeroboam. None of them have the wisdom, that is, none of them have God's grace to stay away from the same sin that kept tripping them. They kept repeating, and kept receiving the same result, God's anger and judgment. How could they not see the sin that ruined each of their predecessor? And sadder still, how could none of them have the fear of the Lord to stay from such sin? Unless for God's grace for us, did you know, none of us would see the sinfulness of sin, nor stay from such sin? In fact, left to ourselves, each one of us would fall and repeat our sins over and over, as these kings have done. They are a mirror to us. Oh Lord, we need Your grace to stay away from sin, and we need Your grace again to fall in love with You more, so that Your love will keep us closer to You and further from the sin that entices us. Thank You, Lord, for seeing our foolishness and paying for the price of all of our sins, even those sins we keep repeating now and in the future as well. Thank You!

1Kgs 17 (5/2/23)

1. In 17:1-6, why does God's prophet appear before King Ahab and why would God do that to His people; how was Elijah provided as in contrast with God's people; what do you learn about God?

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2. In 17:7-24, where and how did God send His prophet to provide for him and why was that important; what happened to the son and what would God do and why; what does Jesus say about this (Lk 4:24-26); what do you learn here?
- In vv. 13-15, Elijah's request to this widow can sound so absolutely selfish and disgusting. She just told him that she had barely enough for her last final meal with her son, and not having any more, they would starve to death. In her desperate situation, when she heard, "But first make a small loaf of bread for me", would that make sense to her? If we were in her shoes, how do you think you will feel? The first sentence of v. 15 is absolutely amazing. When you know you have that little, when you know, there's nothing for you to share, in fact, if you shared what little you have, you would have nothing for yourself, how do you give away when it surely means for you to have nothing and possibly die, not just you but also your son? Why would she trust a man who came from an enemy country? Why would she trust in the God of her enemy? How could she place his words above the obvious present situation, the famine they all were painfully experiencing? By sight, by logic, by reason, by common sense, by feeling, by just about every standard in the world, what Elijah requested and what the woman did made no sense. The only way this makes sense is if she believed what the prophet said was true about his God. When the world and our lives do not make sense, there's really only one place to place our faith, and that is not on a wishful thinking that everything will turn out ok, but only in the object of our faith, and that is, our God, Maker of Heaven and Earth, Savior of our souls, while we were still His enemies. He alone is trustworthy. To Him alone we place our faith. He is the reason and confidence in our faith.

1Kgs 18 (5/3/23)

1. In 18:1-15, what did God command Elijah to do and why; who was Obadiah and why did he do what he did; what did Ahab do in his search for Elijah and why; what do you learn about God here?
 2. In 18:16-46, in vv. 17-18, how do both Ahab and Elijah call each other and why; in v. 21, what did Elijah do before the people and how did they respond and why; why did Elijah pour so much water on his offering and what happened; how did God reveal Himself and what would God desire from you?
- In this chapter, we are told of two groups of people who were fed. First, Obadiah fed 100 of God's prophets, hidden in two caves. We can only imagine, their ration could not have been too great. Meanwhile, at Jezebel's table, 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah feasted daily, despite the famine that threatened to ruin the country. They were not hiding, but in plain sight, they enjoyed, while God's servants probably barely survived. Surely, if the prophets lives were evaluated from this reality, the prophets of Baal were in much better place than God's servants. That is how it is at times in our world, the servants of the world surely look like they are in a better place than God's people. Only when the end is in view, only when we know that this world is not our home, only when we know today is not what tomorrow will be like, will we understand and believe what Paul said to Timothy. "That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is

no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day” (2Tim 1:12).

1Kgs 19 (5/4/23)

1. In 19:1-9, in light of what happened in ch. #18, what is Jezebel vowing to do, and why is Elijah’s response unusual; why did Elijah run to Beersheba and Horeb and how far were they; how did God minister to His servant as he was running away; what do you learn about God?
 2. In 19:10-21, why would God ask what Elijah was doing here; what were the many ways God could have appeared and how did He and why in such a way; of the many ways God ministered to Elijah, which ministers to you and why?
- The 7,000 here is interesting to me. First of all, praise the Lord, not all God’s people surrendered themselves to Ahab and Jezebel’s leading. Elijah was not alone. God had set apart more of His people, even in the midst of great idolatry. Secondly, where were they when Elijah had asked the people to choose between Baal and God in Mount Carmel (18:21)? Though our faith is private, there’s a time when we need to be public, and speak up. I believe Elijah would have been more encouraged if he knew there were more of God’s people who stood with him. But, to feel alone, to feel there’s no one else to stand with, is difficult, even for a prophet, even for a leader, a pastor, for any Christian. That’s why, God’s word says, “Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up... A cord of three stands is not quickly broken.” (Eccl 4:9-12). Our faith is private, but we must learn to live out with our community, within God’s church. Whenever we feel alone, let’s remember we are not alone, there’s 7,000 more. Let’s also remember to live our faith to lift and bless each other, so that our strands will not be quickly broken.

1Kgs 20 (5/5/23)

1. In 20:1-30, how big of an army did Ben-Hadad mustered and what were his demands; what was the prophet’s message and why would God do that; why would Ben-Hadad attack again when he was already soundly defeated the first time?
 2. In 20:31-43, why would Ahab not kill Ben-Hadad; what was God’s message for Ahab; how did Ahab respond to God’s message; what kind of God do you meet here and what should be your respond to God’s revelation?
- I am stunned at God’s action in this chapter. Ahab’s behavior, before, after, and even in this chapter, is horribly ungodly. He has no desire for God’s glory. Yet, despite a life of only sinfulness, God still sent His prophet to deliver him and Israel. Despite the miraculous deliverances, the final verse of this chapter reads, “Sullen and angry, the king of Israel went to his palace in Samaria.” Selfish, immature, pouting, is who he is. But, God still delivered him. Wow, our God is truly patient and gentle and loves when His people do not absolutely deserve any of it, none. God truly loves sinners. He truly can declare that He came to save sinners. No sinner can earn our salvation. He is simply gracious and loving beyond anything I know, beyond anything I deserve.

1Kgs 21 (5/6/23)

1. In 21:1-16, why did Ahab want Naboth's vineyard and how did Naboth respond; what is a day of fasting and why did Jezebel want to proclaim it; what happened to Naboth and why did he suffer such fate; how is this applicable to you?
 2. In 21:17-29, what was God's word for Ahab; in vv. 25-26, how does God describe Ahab; why did God relent of the disaster He just announced; what do you learn?
- I am shocked twice in this chapter. I am shocked that the elders caved in so easily to the evil demand of Jezebel. Of course, I know they understood that unless they do, they would have received her wrath. So, I get it that they knew it was either Naboth's life or theirs. Simply then, it was kill or get killed. I pray that God's people, myself included, would rather choose to be killed than to kill. I pray that we would rather die doing right than kill to do evil. The greater shock for me is God's response to Ahab's response. In vv. 25-26, God knows that there was never anyone like Ahab in doing evil. Yet, at the slightest sign of his repentance, God relents. To me, v. 29 is one of the most shocking verse there is. God knows Ahab did evil and will continue to do so even after this, and yet, God still relents. How tender-hearted is God? How quick is He to withdraw His anger? How He truly delights in our repentance. He delights sinners to repent. He delights His people to genuinely repent. He loves our repentance. It is as if He is waiting for us to give Him the slightest sign of our repentance, then instantly, He pours His gentle grace, and not what we deserve, His wrath.

1Kgs 22 (5/8/23)

1. In 22:1-28, why would Ahab asked the 400 prophets of the Lord what he should do, when he doesn't care about the Lord; why did the prophets answered the way they did; why ask Micaiah, when the kings have no interest in following the Lord; how is this applicable to you?
 2. In 22:29-53, how did Ahab enter the battle and why, yet what happened to him; after being wounded, what did Ahab ordered and yet what happened; how does God's word summarize Jehoshaphat's life; what do you learn about God?
- Many people, including many Christians, including these two kings, love to have the appearance of godliness, but lack her substance. These two kings asked Micaiah for God's will, but they had no interest in following God. In fact, when God's word did not suit them, they threw the messenger into prison, punishing him for giving an unwanted message, though it was what they asked for in the first place. What evil hypocrites. God needed to follow their will, not them follow "Your will be done." No wonder the 400 prophets prophesied the way they did, scratching the king's ear. And the hard question here is, if our message does not suit our hearers and they should have the power to punish us, do we scratch their ears also, or do we speak up like Micaiah, and choose harm over peace (though this peace is not true peace; it's simply an escape for now). Our choice, our decision hinges on who is first in our lives. If we are first, then to keep our wellbeing, we will choose the less harmful way. But, if our God's glory is first, then we will choose what brings Him the glory, which may also bring a difficulty for now. Only when we choose to live for Him to increase, and for me to decrease will this become possible (Jn 3:30). May He alone always increase in our lives.