

Celine Grothe

Prof. Emanuel

Old Testament

March 3rd, 2023

Written Assignment 4

Is someone good or bad or even in between? How do we determine if someone is good or bad? In this week's assignment, we are reading through 1 King 22:1-40. After a summary of the content, I will talk about how I determine if the people in those Bible verses are good or bad or even in between. I will also talk about what I can personally learn from this scripture section and what part of the story might even apply to my Christian life.

In 1 King 22:1-40, the King of Israel King Ahab wants to get Ramoth Gilead back. For that, he is asking the King of Judah Jehoshaphat. They both agree on going to war and getting the land back. But King Jehoshaphat wants to ask for God's counsel first. For that King Ahab brings together 400 prophets and asks them if they should go to war. All of them said that they should go against Ramoth Gilead and that God will help them to win. But Jehoshaphat wasn't happy with them all saying the same and asks if there is not one prophet to whom God is actually speaking too. King Ahab brings the prophet Micaiah even though he doesn't like him because he always brings him bad news. Micaiah tells him that God wants Ahab to go to war so he dies. God sent a deceiving spirit over all the 400 prophets so that they would all lie to King Ahab. Even though King Ahab receives this prophecy they still go to war. But King Ahab dressed as a normal soldier so nobody knew he was the King. The King of Aram ordered that nobody should care about the soldiers or the commanders they should just kill the King. During the war, the chariot commanders noticed pretty fast that King Jeshophat was the

wrong one and they left him. But then someone drew his bow randomly and hit King Ahab. He died that night on the field and all the soldiers went home.

After reading this scripture passage for the first time I thought that King Ahab was a bad person. He was ignoring what God was telling him through the Prophet Micaiah and when I was looking at the chapters before he was continuously sinning. For example, he was praising idols and didn't care about God at all anymore. But after reading this passage over and over again I started thinking about it. Who am I that I can decide who is a good, bad, or descend person? The thing with God is that every sin is valued the same. I'm as bad as anybody else and I believe in front of God we are all just completely imperfect human beings. I'm not in a position where I can judge anybody because I'm not even a little bit better than anybody else.

Jehoshaphat is a really interesting character to me. Again I won't judge if he is a good or bad person but how he behaves in that story is interesting. He wants to go to war and agrees on supporting King Ahab but first, he wants to ask the prophets what God says about going to war. When all 400 prophets say the same Jehoshaphat notices that something is off and asks for a real prophet to whom God is actually talking. But after Micaiah's prophecy, Jehoshaphat and Ahab are still going to war even though they knew God didn't want them to. So on one hand Jehoshaphat wants God's counsel but on the other hand, he just ignores what God is telling him through the prophet Micaiah.

When I analyze Micaiah's character I'm impressed by him. He knew that especially King Ahab would hate to hear his bad news. Micaiah also knew that Ahab hates him in general and he could have easily gotten him killed. Regardless of all the good reasons not to tell Ahab and Jehoshaphat he stays loyal to God and he tells them the truth.

I notice that in my life I often don't understand what God is doing. Often I just can't see the bigger picture and I just focus on a small detail in a picture and don't understand why God is not doing what I want him to do. Especially in this story, you can see that God will act at the

right time. King Ahab was King for not just a couple of years he was King for over 20 years. During his reign time, he often disobeyed God limitlessly. But God didn't forget about Ahab's disobedience and after a long time of seeing that King Ahab wouldn't come back to God, he had to pay with his life. Especially as a prophet, it must have been hard to see how King Ahab leads Israel into sin but God's timing is perfect and Ahab got his punishment at the right time.

As I mentioned it's really interesting to see that God's timing is perfect and this is something I want to remind myself over and over again. I don't want to freak out anymore because I think I run out of time. I want to trust God that he sees me and that he knows it best. If nothing happened yet, then it's not the right time. But I also want to learn to accept God's "NO". King Ahab and Jehoshaphat wanted to have God's counsel but completely ignored it when God didn't say what they wanted to hear. I know how often I do this too. I want God's opinion on something but I actually just want God's approval for what I want. Right now I'm actively trying to accept God's "NO" but I'm also learning to ask God for his plan for me. Because being on a path that is not his, will be horrible for me because he won't be there to protect me if I just do whatever I want.

In conclusion, I would say reading and analyzing scripture passages more intensively helps me to reflect on myself and also helps me to understand God more and more. Through bible study, I reflect on myself and then try to live in God's will.