

Wednesday, August 17, 2022 • Read 1Kings 22:1–40

Questions from the Scripture text: How long did the truce last (v1)? What happened in the third year (v2)? To whom does Ahab say what, in Jehoshaphat's hearing, in v3? Then what does he propose in v4? How does Jehoshaphat respond? But what does he want (v5)? How many of whom does Ahab gather to ask in v6? What do they say? But what does Jehoshaphat recognize that none of them truly are (v7), despite the name that they use in v11–12? Whom does Ahab know is the only true prophet (v8)? What does he say about him? How does Jehoshaphat respond? Whom does Ahab call in v9? What is the setting in v10? What are all the prophets doing? Whose prophesy does v11 specifically record? What does he say? Who else is saying this (v12)? What does the messenger tell Micaiah to do with their words (v13)? What does he tell Micaiah to let his own word be? But how does Micaiah answer him (v14)? So who told Micaiah to answer the king the way that he does in v15? Who, in v16, recognized the sarcastic aping with which Micaiah had mocked the other prophets? What does he tell Micaiah to do instead? Now what does Yahweh tell Micaiah to say (v17)? How does Ahab respond (v18)? And how does Yahweh explain what is going on with the other prophets (v19–23)? What is this meant to accomplish (v20, 23)? What sort of spirit is under the sovereignty of God (v21–22, cf. Gen 50:20)? Who claims to speak by the same spirit as Micaiah (v24)? What will happen to him (v25)? What does Ahab command to be done with Micaiah (v26–27)? Until when? What does Micaiah say about this (v28)? Whom does he urge to take heed of this? Who go where in v29? How does Ahab trick Jehoshaphat into thinking that he is honoring him as the lead king (v30)? What had the king of Syria commanded (v31)? Whom do they think they have found in v32? But what did he do that revealed their mistake? How do they respond in v33? Who shoots the arrow in v34? At what does he aim? Whom does it strike? Where? Whom does Ahab tell to do what? Now what happened during the day (v35)? And what happened in the evening? What did the blood fill? What shout went out in v36, revealing what circumstance? To where was the dead king brought (v37)? What did they do with him there? But what happened to his blood, and how (v38)? According to what word? Who had spoken it (v38, but also cf. 21:17–19)? With whom did Ahab lie down in v40? Why is this particular instance not a good thing? Who reigned in his place?

How far does the sovereignty of God extend? 1Kings 22:1–40 looks forward to the first serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these forty verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the sovereignty of God extends to determining the future, doing good through those who intend and do evil, the suffering of His servants, and the slightest little "coincidences."**

God's sovereignty extends to determining the future. Ahab is trying to determine the future in v3. He mentions the situation with Ramoth Gilead offhand to his servants, so Jehoshaphat can overhear. Then he offers Jehoshaphat the "opportunity" to come to the rescue in v4.

But Jehoshaphat is accustomed to doing things according to the Word of Yahweh (we'll learn more about this in the next passage). He asks for the Word in v5, but as someone who still has true prophets at his disposal in the South, he immediately recognizes that every one of the four hundred in v6 is a false preacher. Elijah is not the sort of prophet that one can summon, but Ahab has one left. But since he preaches convicting sermons that encourage repentance (v8) rather than those that encourage the king to do what he wants (v13), Ahab hates him.

How great is our sinfulness? We will willingly choose four hundred prophets that make us feel good over one who says what is right! But that's the point in v29, isn't it? Yahweh's Word determines the future, and Yahweh's Word tells us what to do. "Take heed, all you people!"

Indeed, the entire episode fulfills the word which Yahweh had spoken (v38) through the lips of Elijah in 21:17–19. God's sovereignty extends to determining the future.

God's sovereignty extends to doing good, even through those who intend and do evil. The most impactful instance of this is the cross. Never has the good God done more good through evil men and evil devils who were doing evil. Another particularly memorable example of this is summarized in the words of Joseph to his brothers in Genesis 50:20. They intended evil and did evil because they are evil, but the good God had intended the good that He would do even through those events.

It is good, righteous, that Ahab would fall disastrously (v20, 23). God is the Author of this good—even as it comes by way of an evil spirit that is too happy and willing to be a lying spirit in the prophets' mouths. That demon is the author of its own evil.

Do we live in a day where false, "encouraging" preachers outnumber faithful ones 400:1? This is under the sovereignty of God, Who righteously brings such calamities upon people who use His Name on worship that mixes in their own ideas. There is a special justness in their being given over to their own false preaching as a judgment for their own false worship. But God is true, even if every man is a liar.

God's sovereignty extends to the suffering of his servants. It bears pointing out that Micaiah's immediate reward for faithfulness is to be cast into prison, with special instructions that every bite of his bread be miserable and every sip of his water be miserable.

When the servants of Christ, the Suffering Servant, suffer, let them not be surprised. And let them remember that God is both sovereign and good in the midst of it. We may learn much from the prophet who, rather than defending or protesting in his own behalf, responds with one more plea to all of the people to heed his faithful word (v28).

God's sovereignty extends to the slightest little "coincidences." We put the quotes on the word because how it is commonly used. But the passage gives us stark evidence to remind us that it is the sovereign God Who makes all things to coincide.

Jehoshaphat has gullibly dressed as the only king that day, perhaps even thinking that Ahab is trying to honor him by making him the leader of the joint army. We know from other history that most of the northern army was actually off fighting the Assyrians, so perhaps the king of Judah thought that this was his time to shine. Whatever the case, when he yelps that he's the king of Judah (v32), the well-instructed captains (v31) call of the chase (v33) and return to the rest of the battle.

So which of these diligent, well-trained captains gets Ahab? Probably none of them. It's just "a man" in v34. And he's not even aiming—he just draws his bow at random. And this "randomly" shot arrow just happens to penetrate in between a joint of the royal armor. And where it hits, it just "happened" to get a blood vessel so that the wound is mortal, and the chariot fills with blood. And it needed to be enough blood so that the blood-licking prophecy of 21:19 could be fulfilled. God's sovereignty extends to the slightest little "coincidences"!

Why must you yield to the reality of God's sovereign rule over everything that happens? Over what evils have you had difficulty reconciling God's sovereignty? How does this passage (and the cross!) help? What are some "coincidences" in which God's sovereignty has been particularly noteworthy to you?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You and praise You for Your sovereign rule in all things. Even when evil spirits and evil men are doing evil, You are good, and You are intending it for good, and You are doing good. Forgive us for all of the sin that would justify You in giving us over to false

preachers and false doctrine. Forgive us for responding to conviction with irritation instead of repentance. Forgive us for preferring what we think is "encouraging" to what is true, when those are different things. Forgive us for when we forget that You work all things according to the counsel of Your will. And make us to be faithful, trusting, and humble under Your mighty hand—even as did Micaiah and his Master, our Lord Jesus Christ, in Whose Name we pray, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP1 "How Blessed the Man" or TPH1A "That Man Is Blest"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

First Kings, 22 versus 1 through 40. These are God's words. Now three years passed without war between Syria and Israel. And then it came to pass in the third year that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah. Went down to visit the King of Israel and the king of Israel said to his servants.

Do you know that? Ramoth and Gilead is ours. He hesitated to take it out of the hand of the king of Syria. So he said to just Hoshaphat, will you go with me to fight at Ramoth Gilead? The host of that said to the king of Israel, I am as you are my people as your people, My horses is your horses.

Also Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, Please inquire for the Word of Yahweh today. Then the king of Israel gathered. The prophets together about 400 men and said to them. Shall I go against Ramoth Gilead to fight or shall I refrain? So they said go up for the Lord will deliver it into the hand of the king and Jehoshaphat said, is there not still a prophet of Yahweh here that we may inquire of him.

So the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat. There is still one man Micaiah. Son of Melech by whom, we may inquire of Yahweh, but I hate him because he does not prophesy good. Concerning me but evil and Jehoshaphat said, let not the king say such things. Then the king of Israel called an officer and said, bring Makaya the son of Imlaqi quickly, King of Israel, and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah. Having put on the robes set each on his throne, and it's rushing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria and all the prophets prophesied before them.

Now, is that Makaya, the son of Hannah had made horns of iron for himself and said, thus says Yahweh. But these you self-gore the Syrians until they are destroyed and all the profits prophesied. So saying, go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper for you all, faith will deliver it into the king's hand, then the messenger, who had gone to call my Makaya spoke to him saying.

Now, listen, The words of the prophets, with one accord encourage the king, please let your word be like the word of one of them and speak encouragement. In my Makaya said, as Yahweh lives. Whatever you always says to me that I will speak, Then he came to the king.

And the king said, Tim my Makaya. So we go to war against Ramoth Gilead or shall we refrain and he answered him. Go and prosper for Yahweh will deliver it into the hand of the king. So the king said to him how many times. So I make you swear that you tell me nothing but the truth in the name of Yahweh and he said I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains as sheep.

That have no shepherd. And you always said these, have no master. Let each return to his house in peace and the king of Israel said to Jehovah that. Did I not tell you he would profit not prophesy good concerning me. But evil and my Makaya said, therefore here, the word of Yahweh, I saw.

You all play sitting on his throne and all the host of heaven standing by on his right hand and on his left. And you always said who will persuade Ahab to go up? He may fall at Ramoth Gilead. So one spoken this manner and another spoken that manner than a spurt came forward and stood before you all answered, I will persuade him.

Then you always said to him in what way. So he said I will come out and be a lying spirit and the mouth of all his prophets and you always said you shall persuade him and also prevail go out and do so. Therefore look you always has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours and Yahweh has declared disaster against you now Zedekiah, the son of Hannah went near and struck.

My Makaya on the cheek and said, Which way did the Spirit of Yahweh go from me to speak to you and my Makaya said, indeed, you shall see on that day, when you go into an inner chamber to hide. So, the king of Israel said, take my Makaya and return him to Ammon, the governor of the city into Joash the king's son and say thus, says, the king put this fellow in prison and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction till I come in.

Peace. But my Makaya said, if you ever return in peace, Yahweh has not spoken by me and he said, take heed all you people. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth Gilead. Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat. I will disguise myself and go into battle but you put on your ropes.

So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle. Now, the king of Syria had commanded the 32 captains of a chariot saying fight with no ones smaller. Great. But only with the king of Israel. So, it was when the captains the chariot soldier hesh fat. They said surely it has the gang of Israel.

Therefore they turned aside to fight against him and his fat cried out and that happened when the captains of the chariot saw that. It was not the king of Israel that they turn back from pursuing him Now a certain man drew a bow at random and struck the king of Israel between the joints of his armor So he said to the driver of his chariot turn around.

Take me out of the battle for. I am wounded the battle increased that day and the king was propped. Up in his chariot. Facing the Syrians and died at evening. The bow ran out from the wound onto the floor of the chariot. Then as the sun was going down, a shout went throughout the army saying, every man, to his city, every man to his country.

So, the king died and was brought to Samaria. And they buried the king in Samaria and someone washed the chariot at a pool in Samaria and the dogs licked up his blood. While the harlots bathed According to the Word of Yahweh, which you had spoken, Another rest of the activate have and all that he did the ivory house which he built and all the cities would she build?

They're not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. So they have rested with his father's and a Heziah. His son, Brandon his place.

So far the reading of God's inspired and an air at work.

Often there's a lot going on in the world that gets people's attention. That people either fret about worried about or happy about rejoicing over exulting in that seem to be the things that matter. The things that are determining the course of history. But what determines the course of history is actually the sovereign rule of God.

And the way that we interact with God and his sovereign rule is through, has worked and especially his word, preached by the faithful men whom he has called to do. So we know that not only was this conflict going on between the combined forces of Israel and Judah, really a small portion of the forces of Israel with the forces of Judah, against the aramans.

But shamanes are of Assyria had already ascended to the throne and there was a 12, King coalition, fighting him and the bulk of Israel's army was actually the northern kingdoms army was actually in that 12, King Coalition. That's recorded that Ahab provided the second largest contingent and they actually were able to resist the Assyrians.

They didn't overthrow them, but neither did the Assyrians gain their objective and military history. It's a it was a stalemate. That's a big deal. That's what the secular histories write about. That's what most of Ahab's men were actually doing. And even here you have this Again routine comment that we've seen at the end of so many of the king's reigns.

Now, the rest of the Active Ahab and all that he did the ivory house, which he built and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the King's of Israel. In other words, Ahab built a house out of ivory. Not just a throne a house which means he was very powerful and he controlled trade routes and and so forth.

But it's just an afterthought throw away. Word for him. He built entire cities but that's not the stuff that mattered Everyone else during his reign. I'm sure apart from the godly thought that was what mattered. But that's not what rules history. That's not what drives history, what rules and drives history, is the sovereign rule of God and our interaction with that is through His word.

So, at the beginning of chapter 22, it's three years later, Jehoshaphat comes down to the king of Judah. There's our judge, that is the king of Judah, Jehovah. That was actually a godly king but he was a fool. He let his son. Mary Ahab's daughter, Athalaya. And we're going to hear in the record of Jehoshaphat and, and following in the southern kingdom.

How that turns out he's just not he's not walking in wisdom. Anyway, Ahab has, at least a little bit of his army held back from the big war with Assyria. And when Jehoshaphat comes up Ahab just kind of drops in verse 3, the the hint to his servants about romant Gilead and then you know, so that Jehoshaphat can over here And Jude at this time was much weaker both militarily and economically and which was one of the reasons why Jehoshaphat might be tempted to marry his son into an alliance with the North.

And with most of the northern army occupied Ahab asking Jehoshaphat for a military favor in verse 4, he finally gets the chance to come to the rescue and cement his importance. A lot of reasons, the additional financial whatever that there could be. But that's kind of the, the big one in the relationship between the northern and the southern kingdom here.

Jehoshaphat however, is not like Ahab. He worships at the temple. They've actually had Reformation and revival during his day and he's not accustomed to doing things without the word of Yahweh. However, he's in the North, or at a threshing floor outside, the, the gate of Samaria in verse 10.

And he's gone down to Israel to the northern kingdom up in verse 2. And so profits are hard to come by. So he says, he please, please inquire the word of Yahweh today and he Ahab has 400 preachers. Now You remember he used that 400 profits of Astra but they are now exterminated and you know, Jeroboam had the the syncretistic Yahweh called that.

He I had set up the bulls for the worship of in the in the style of Aaron's Yahweh. Festival at the foot of Mount Sinai from Exodus. And we know that these are up claim to be profits of Yahweh because their prophesying in the name of Yahweh in verse 12.

And apparently the the big steeple preacher is Zedekiah, son of Canada. Who seems to be the most vocal or the lead profit, among the these others. He also in verse 11 is prophesying in the name of Yahweh. This is a reminder to us that, while it is God, who rules over all things, and while it is his word through which we interact with him, our directed by it.

Yet, there are many who speak in the name of the Lord, who do not speak the Word of the Lord. And Jehov had apparently saw right through them. This can be has a blessing that happens when someone gets to sit under faithful preaching. For a time, I pray that the Lord helps me to be and then to remain a faithful preacher for you, so that you will be spoiled for all of the fools who try to speak for God, or try to claim that they are preaching the scripture, but they're not opening the word of God.

But they're not opening the Word of God, onto the glory of God and dependence upon the Spirit of God, with with accurate study and exegesis of the words and exposition of the passages and application and so forth. I hope that you will be like Jehoshaphat that if 400 preachers tried to preach to you and you listen to every one of them you'd be like, that's not preaching, that's not preaching.

That's not preaching, that's not preaching. So he's got the 400 prophet Ahab's, got the 400 profits Jehoshaphat, hears them any. He says in verse 7, is there not still a profit of Yahweh here that we may inquire of him. Jehoshaphat is discovering that the North might be economically and militarily rich but they are spiritually.

Poor because he hadn't heard a single one. Speak in the name of Yahweh, the way the Lord has maintained prophets to the southern kingdom at this point to speak. It's a lot. Like I'm sorry to say the the case of much of Americans so-called Christianity King of Israel says well we do have one But I hate it.

These guys say the stuff that I want to hear, I keep them around the the other guy. He says whatever the Lord tells him to say and it's always bad about me, which the obvious answer for you then would be Repent. Repent and believe the gospel. Apparently that moment to repentance that genuine repentance, Perhaps not saving repentance but at least remorse and humiliation that God had granted to Ahab.

At the end of chapter 21, you know, as time passes you can become spiritually, dull, spiritually, cold, slide back into former ways of thinking, three years pass. At the beginning of verse 1, My dear children Beware of coming into seasons of your life. When you are not interacting with the Lord in a sincere way where you're not soft hard towards it.

Where you're not delighting in the, His goodness. And the goodness of the gospel where you're not seeing the hatefulness of sin and resolving and dependence upon him to stop all of your sin anyway. So my kaya son of emble always prophesied evil concerning him to his vet says but not the king say such things, he

brings my kaya Before my kayak and talk is that Akaya does his thing.

He's not necessarily being overly showy except for him. It's fake. But God did sometimes call prophets to, to act out in parables, but since Zatariah doesn't know the Lord, and it's a lying spirit, who is in his mouth. Which, by the way, may mean that Zedekiah, thought that he was an actual servant of Yahweh.

There are those who think they serve the Lord's. Truly, but they are deluded. And we must not just take it face value. Even even those who are genuinely sincere, they may be sincere but deceived themselves and therefore instruments of deception for others. And you could tell that the Lord has Micaiah in verse 14, speaks sarcastically, I tried to remember to use a sarcastic voice when I read it when he said as Yahweh lives.

Oh no. Not verse 14. Verse 15 go and prosper for y'all able to deliver it into the hand again. Okay. So he said whatever you always says to me that I will speak. So we know that verse 15. He's saying as the Lord told him to do and it may not have been even sarcastic, he may have just been imitating.

The voices of the other prophets because that's what they had told him to do, right? The messenger, had gone to call my kaya. Spoked him saying, now, listen to the words of the prophets, the words of the prophets, with one accord encourage the king, please let your word be like the word of one of them and speak encouragement.

You know how many times I have been told that we should study what? How the winsome preachers preach. So that we can preach encouragingly. Now it's not necessarily with a winsome preacher. I have a friend who once listened to so much preaching of a reform Baptist man named Al Martin that my friend who is a slender little fellow Al's, we call him Big L for a reason, but this tiny little fell and he was a Presbyterian.

I don't know why. He was listening to how Martin so much. But for a long time, he actually had tried to like affect a similar voice and similar mannerisms or whatever. It's likely that. That's what my kaya is doing here. That the Lord has told Micaiah to imitate and ape just like he was told so that it would be obvious, not only what he was doing but that it was false and that all of their prophesying was false.

Whatever the case, you know, you don't have tone of voice and such in the scripture, we're just pulling, contextual clues here, whatever the case, Ahab knew what was going on because in verse 16, he says how many times. So I make you swear that you tell me nothing but the truth in the name of Yahweh.

Okay. So, even Ahab new of the 401 in front of me, only one of them actually has the word of Yahweh and he actually valued you knowing what you always said, but she should because, you know, the nameless profit to and condemn him and Elijah who had condemned him and and so forth.

What you always said was, was very important to him. Not that he obeyed or anything, but he wanted to have at least one accurate set. It's like the guy who has, you know, the good set of commentaries but still reads all the rubbish Everyone's in a while, he pulls a the commentary off the shelf to see what a passage really says.

And then he goes back to reading his rubbish and lives by the rubbish and not by the commentary or by the actual teaching of the actual scriptures. And so my kaya, it does tell him the truth. And I have complaints and my kaya tells him, more truth. Not just not just that Ahab is going to die fighting at Rammoth Gilead.

But that God had planned for Ahab to die by a demon could deceiving 400 prophets so that they all spoke with one accord and that Jehoshaphat himself who wanted the word of Yahweh in order to follow it and Ahab. Who knew that only one of them had the actual word of Yahweh would still listen to the ones.

Who told them? What they want to hear, Notice that it happens not just to Ahab but to Jehoshaphat. False preaching is profoundly dangerous and extremely effective. When God is judging someone, when God is giving people over to judgment and certainly, that has been happening in our nation for a very long time.

And as we read the Bible, it's not hard to find out why. It's because God values, the purity of his worship above, almost anything else on earth and the descent into the addition of man-made things in religion in the 19th century, and well, in the 19th century, among Presbyterians, and, and reformed, but, and even before that among others, but the Lord has given us over to much false preaching, he is righteous and just to do.

So and we ought to continue to cry out for mercy and to pursue Reformation and repentance seeking that the Lord who has given his church over. He's sovereign over all of the false preachers and all of the false preaching and they're being taken in by lying spirits. These things don't happen, apart from his sovereign rule, We have to wrestle with that reality.

It's one of the lessons of this chapter that. Yes, he rules over things like random arrow shots that fly through the air and strike the disguised kings in the one joint between the armor where he could be mortally wounded. But the sovereignty of the Lord also extends to overruling in his goodness to do that, which is good through what evil spirits do that is evil.

And what evil men do that is evil. It's the same principle, isn't it? As Joseph. The I'll say it again, in a minute, it's the same principle that Joseph tells his brothers, You meant it for evil, and of course what they did was evil, but God meant it for good.

And what God was doing was good. Same thing. Here executing Ahab was good, giving Israel over to destruction for their continued syncretistic worship and false prophets and listening to them. And you know using the bull worship and in Dan and Bethel as quote. Unquote worship of Yahweh, giving Israel over and destroy, you know, taking their king was good.

It was righteous of God, the spirit however was evil and it did evil. So we may not make God the author of this sin just because he's sovereign in his goodness to do. What is good through? What those who are evil do that is evil. These are two things that have to be held together.

God who was good is sovereign over and through to do good through that, which spirits like this spirit and men like whatever evil men there are who are evil do that is evil.

Of course, that doesn't mean that things always go pleasantly. For those who serve the Lord, it means that since we know that God rules, and that his word must direct us. And then being faithful to him and faithful to his word is worth, whatever the cost. How does my kaya get repaid in the passage?

I mean, he gets repaid for what Christ has done for him because he's hoping in Christ and it's going to receive everlasting blessedness, right? But in the passage, how does he get repaid for being the? The only faithful man in the room or the currently faithful man. Jehoshapact was a A godly King, He walked in all the ways of his father Asa.

We'll hear in the next passage, Dr. Hoshaphat was going along with Ahab. Well, Mike, I gets repaid by being put in prison and with the instruction that every bite, he take be a miserable bite and every sip he drink be a miserable sip in verse 27.

But the Lord's word rules and it is worth whatever the cost. And this life to remain faithful to the Lord and faithful to his work. So the Lord help us to do that by his spirit and spare us from such famines of the word as the northern kingdom had at the time or being sucked in been given over to listening to the just be encouraging like everyone else and talk like them type of preaching.

Let's pray.

Father, we thank you that even when the teaching and leading and our family worship is disorganized that we still have exactly what you direct us to in this passage. The fact that it is you who work and it is by your word that you work. And so we pray.

I pray, Lord. That you keep me faithful to your word for the sake of honoring. You and my Redeemer. The Lord Jesus. He would help me by his spirit and then, especially for the sake of my wife, and my children, for the sake of your flock him. Even trusted my spiritual care and preaching and teaching in shepherding.

Oh Lord. We pray that you would Grant Reformation to your church. That the good cause that we have given you to give us over to false. Preaching would be removed that we would stop desecrating your worship with man-made additions that we would stop desecrating your day. That we would stop rejecting you as Lord of every moment of our life and trying to live for and delight in pleasures and comforts of this world O Lord, we know that for many generations.

Now, we have been addicted and worship and life. Generally speaking, we have been addicted to those things that offend you. So that if in your sovereign rule, you give so deceived men and deceived by lying spirits. And speaking from lying spirits mixing truth with error and away, that destroys that you are righteous, that you are true.

And we are the liars. So we pray that you'd have mercy have mercy upon us in our own hearts, in our own family Lord that we would honor you from the heart that we would be governed by your word that Christ having taken on himself. All of the punishment you would give us of your spirit to purify us from that, which offends.

You thank you for giving us this time, just now in your word and we pray that it would have its effect and Jesus name. Amen.