

Do You Limit God? I Kings 20

1. Ben-hadad's greed.

Now King Ben-hadad of Aram assembled his entire army. Thirty-two kings, along with horses and chariots, were with him. He marched up, besieged Samaria, and fought against it. ² He sent messengers into the city to King Ahab of Israel and said to him, "This is what Ben-hadad says: ³ 'Your silver and your gold are mine! And your best wives and children are mine as well!'" ⁴ Then the king of Israel answered, "Just as you say, my lord the king: I am yours, along with all that I have." ⁵ The messengers then returned and said, "This is what Ben-hadad says: 'I have sent messengers to you, saying, "You are to give me your silver, your gold, your wives, and your children.'" **1 Kings 20:1-5 (Christian Standard Bible)**

⁶ But at this time tomorrow I will send my servants to you, and they will search your palace and your servants' houses. They will lay their hands on and take away whatever is precious to you.'" Then the king of Israel called for all the elders of the land and said, "Recognize that this one is only looking for trouble, for he demanded my wives, my children, my silver, and my gold, and I didn't turn him down." ⁸ All the elders and all the people said to him, "Don't listen or agree." ⁹ So he said to Ben-hadad's messengers, "Say to my lord the king, 'Everything you demanded of your servant the first time, I will do, but this thing I cannot do.'" So, the messengers left and took word back to him. Then Ben-hadad sent messengers to him and said, "May the gods punish me and do so severely if Samaria's dust amounts to a handful for each of the people who follow me." ¹¹ The king of Israel answered, "Say this: 'Don't let the one who puts on his armor boast like the one who takes it off.'" **1 Kings 20:6-11 (Christian Standard Bible)**

A prophet approached King Ahab of Israel and said, "This is what the LORD says: 'Do you see this whole huge army? Watch, I am handing it over to you today so that you may know that I am the LORD.'" ¹⁴ Ahab asked, "By whom?" And the prophet said, "This is what the LORD says: 'By the young men of the provincial leaders.'" Then he asked, "Who is to start the battle?" He said, "You." ¹⁵ So Ahab mobilized the young men of the provincial leaders, and there were 232. After them he mobilized all the Israelite troops: 7,000. ¹⁶ They marched out at noon while Ben-hadad and the thirty-two kings who were helping him were getting drunk in their quarters. ¹⁷ The young men of the provincial leaders marched out first. Then Ben-hadad sent out scouts, and they reported to him, saying, "Men are marching out of Samaria." ¹⁸ So he said, "If they have marched out in peace, take them alive, and if they have marched out for battle, take them alive." **1 Kings 20:13-18 (CSB)**

Now the king of Aram's servants said to him, "Their gods are gods of the hill country. That's why they were stronger than we were. Instead, we should fight with them on the plain; then we will certainly be stronger than they are. ²⁴ Also do this: remove each king from his position and appoint captains in their place. ²⁵ Raise another army for yourself like the army you lost — horse for horse, chariot for chariot — and let's fight with them on the plain; and we will certainly be stronger than they are." The king listened to them and did it. **1 Kings 20:23-25 (CSB)**

Then the man of God approached and said to the king of Israel, “This is what the LORD says: ‘Because the Arameans have said, “The LORD is a god of the mountains and not a god of the valleys,” I will hand over all this whole huge army to you. Then you will know that I am the LORD.’” **1 Kings 20:28 (CSB)**

2. Do you believe that God is limited?

They camped opposite each other for seven days. On the seventh day, the battle took place, and the Israelites struck down the Arameans — one-hundred-thousand-foot soldiers in one day.³⁰ The ones who remained fled into the city of Aphek, and the wall fell on those twenty-seven thousand remaining men. Ben-hadad also fled and went into an inner room in the city. **1 Kings 20:29-30 (CSB)**

Where can I go to escape your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?⁸ If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.⁹ If I fly on the wings of the dawn and settle down on the western horizon,¹⁰ even there your hand will lead me; your right hand will hold on to me.¹¹ If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me, and the light around me will be night” —¹² even the darkness is not dark to you. The night shines like the day; darkness and light are alike to you. **Psalms 139:7-12 (CSB)**