**A deceiving spirit**

**1 Kings 22:1-28**

**Key Verse 22:22**

**22“‘By what means?’ the Lord asked. “‘I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all his prophets,’ he said. “‘You will succeed in enticing him,’ said the Lord. ‘Go and do it.’**

I read one man’s written testimony. He was deceived. He was almost deceived by a deceiving spirit and almost lost his life. He was a Christian. He married and he had children. And around that time he lost his daughter. One day he was standing by the window of his apartment which was around 10th floor. Someone spoke to him in his heart. “Do you see the people walking on the ground peacefully without pain?” And he said, “Yes.” “Do you want to be one of them who can be without pain and in peace?” He said, “Yes.” “Can you open the widow?” So he opened the window. The voice spoke to him, “Do you really want to be among them?” He said, “Yes.” And the voice said to him, “Can you step out of the widow?” And the man said, “I am afraid to die.” And the voice said, “No, you will not die. But rather you will be completely free from your pain. People, even your wife, your children, your parents, your relatives do not understand your pain, and you are not important to them. But I guarantee you will be completely free from pain. By grace he was not deceived to the end and did not kill himself. Later the Christian realized he was deceived by an evil spirit, a deceiving spirit. Deception is everywhere because the main strategy of our enemy the devil and its subjects, evil spirits, is deception. Evil deceiving spirits attack not only Christians but also unbelievers. In the bible, in the Old Testament, Genesis, in the garden of Eden, the Lord asked Eve “Why did you eat the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?” Eve said, “The serpent deceived me.” (Genesis 3:13b) In the New Testament, in Romans chapter 7, apostle Paul said, “sin deceived me.” (Romans 7:11)

In today’s passage, Ahab was deceived by a deceiving spirit. So today we would like to think about how to overcome deception from deceiving spirits and live a victorious life. My message has two parts.

**Part I. The Lord will give it into the king’s hand (v.1-14).** That is the message from 400 prophets.

**Part II. The Lord has decreed disaster for you (v.15-28).** This is the message from Micaiah.

Part I. The lord will give it into the king’s hand (v.1-14)

I will go over all the bible verses and in the end I will discuss about the main point, how we can overcome deception from deceiving spirits and live a victorious life. But I need to go over all the bible verses first because they lay the foundation for our main topic. So let us read responsibly from verses 1-5. I will go first.

(Responsible bible reading from Verses 1-5)

**1 For three years there was no war between Aram and Israel. 2But in the third year Jehoshaphat king of Judah went down to see the king of Israel. 3The king of Israel had said to his officials, “Don’t you know that Ramoth Gilead belongs to us and yet we are doing nothing to retake it from the king of Aram?” 4So he asked Jehoshaphat, “Will you go with me to fight against Ramoth Gilead?” Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, “I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.” 5But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, “First seek the counsel of the Lord.”**

Three years of peace refers to the time after two years of battle between the king of Aram Ben Hadad and the king of Israel, Ahab. In the third year Jehoshaphat visited Ahab because he was related to Ahab. Jehoshaphat’s son married the daughter of Ahab. And Ahab expressed his desire to retake Ramoth Gilead from the king of Aram. Originally Ramoth Gilead was one the major towns belonging to the tribe of Gad. Look at the map. (show the location of Ramoth Gildead in the map.) It is in the right side. The red arrow started from Jerusalem, the capital city of southern kingdom, and goes to Samaria, the capital city of northern kingdom and it goes to Ramoth Gilead on the right side.

So when Jehoshaphat visited Ahab, Ahab wanted to secure his support. So he said, “Will you go with me to fight against Ramoth Gilead?” Jehoshaphat replied, “I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.” Meaning all mine are yours. But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, “First seek the counsel of the Lord.” “The counsel of the Lord refers to the word of the Lord.” He was saying, “Seek first the word of the Lord.”

I was wondering why Jehoshaphat say to Ahab, “I need to seek first the counsel of the Lord. So let me have time and I will get back to you.” When Ahab asked him, “Will you go with me to fight against Ramoth Gilead?” Because it was such a important decision, all nations plunging into a war which involves the lives of many young soldiers and people. It was not a small decision. But somehow Jehoshaphat replied immediately, “I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.”

But at least Jehoshaphat said to Ahab, “Fist seek the counsel of the Lord.” Ahab already secured the full support from Jehoshaphat. So he could not reject his request.

So let’s read verses 6-9 responsibly. I will go first.

**6So the king of Israel brought together the prophets—about four hundred men—and asked them, “Shall I go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain?”** **“Go,” they answered, “for the Lord will give it into the king’s hand.”7But Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there no longer a prophet of the Lord here whom we can inquire of?”** **8The king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, “There is still one prophet through whom we can inquire of the Lord, but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah.”** **“The king should not say such a thing,” Jehoshaphat replied.** **9So the king of Israel called one of his officials and said, “Bring Micaiah son of Imlah at once.”**

So Ahab brought 400 prophets. The number 400 prophets reminds me of 400 prophets of Asherah. Prophet Elijah killed 450 prophets of Baal, but 400 prophets of Asherah were not killed. But we don’t know these 400 prophets are the prophets of Asherah or compromised prophets of the Lord. Ahab asked them, “Shall I go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain?” Then they all said “Go, the Lord will give it into the king’s hand.”

But Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there no longer a prophet of the Lord here, the land of northern kingdom Israel, whom we can inquire of?” What Jehoshaphat said means “These 400 prophets are not prophets of the Lord.” That he implied. “Is there no longer even one prophet of the Lord here whom we can inquire of?” Then Ahab answered, “There is still one prophet through whom we can inquire of the Lord.”

Ahab did not dare to challenge Jehoshaphat, “No, what you say is wrong. These are prophets of the Lord.” He did not dare to challenge or could not challenge. We don’t know. But he did not say. By saying, “There is still one prophet through whom we can inquire of the Lord” Ahab acknowledged these people could not be prophets of the Lord as the word of Jehoshaphat.

And Ahab said, “but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah.” Ahab had the broken relationship with the prophet. And Ahab thought the prophet was the very cause of the broken relationship. Ahab never knew he was the very cause of the broken relationship.

When we have broken relationship with other people we should remember we are part of problems. We should never assume others are the cause of our broken relationship.

Jehoshaphat replied “The king should not say such a thing.” And Ahab called one of his officials and said, “Bring Micaiah son of Imlah at once.” How can he say, “Bring him immediately”? It means Micaiah son of Imlah was under the custody of Ahab. He was not free. That’s why he could say, “Bring him immediately.”

**Verses 10-14 10Dressed in their royal robes, the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting on their thrones at the threshing floor by the entrance of the gate of Samaria, with all the prophets prophesying before them. 11Now Zedekiah son of Kenaanah had made iron horns and he declared, “This is what the Lord says: ‘With these you will gore the Arameans until they are destroyed.’” 12All the other prophets were prophesying the same thing. “Attack Ramoth Gilead and be victorious,” they said, “for the Lord will give it into the king’s hand.” 13The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, “Look, the other prophets without exception are predicting success for the king. Let your word agree with theirs, and speak favorably.” 14But Micaiah said, “As surely as the Lord lives, I can tell him only what the Lord tells me.”**

Okay. We need to go through these verses together to reach the main point by the end of these verses because these verses lay the foundation of the main point which is how to overcome deception from deceiving spirits and live a victorious life.

Let’s read verse 10 together. Ready? Go. “Dressed in their royal robes, the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting on their thrones at the threshing floor by the entrance of the gate of Samaria, with all the prophets prophesying before them.”

When I read this verse it was very strange because why these two kings had to dress in their royal robes; why they have to sit on their thrones, probably portable thrones; why such a specific place in the threshing floor by the entrance of the gate of Samaria, capital city with all the prophets prophesying before them and all the other important officials. And I believe it was the custom in those times to make very important decisions by the gate of the capital city. What’s why they dressed in the royal robes and were sitting on their thrones, opening a formal court.

And one of 400 prophets Zedekiah was so sure of the victory of Ahab he made an iron horns, “This is what the Lord says: ‘With these you will gore the Arameans until they are destroyed.’” And all others were saying the same thing. “Attack Ramoth Gilead and be victorious, for the Lord will give it into the king’s hand.”

Even the messenger who went to summon Ahab (a mistake. It should be Micaiah) tried to persuade Micaiah the same thing. He said, ““Look, the other prophets without exception are predicting success for the king. Let your word agree with theirs, and speak favorably.” But Micaiah said, “No, I cannot do that. As surely as the Lord lives, I can tell him only what the Lord tells me.”

**Part II. The Lord has decreed disaster for you. (v.15-28)**

We need to over these bible verses because they lay the foundation of our main topic: how can we overcome deception from deceiving spirits and live a victorious life?

So let’s read verses 15-18 responsibly. I will go first.

**15When he arrived, the king asked him, “Micaiah, shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or not?” “Attack and be victorious,” he answered, “for the Lord will give it into the king’s hand.” 16The king said to him, “How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord?” 17Then Micaiah answered, “I saw all Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd, and the Lord said, ‘These people have no master. Let each one go home in peace.’” 18The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Didn’t I tell you that he never prophesies anything good about me, but only bad?”**

When Ahab arrived Ahab lost no time. He asked, “Micaiah, shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or not? Tell me yes or no.” And Micaiah answered surprisingly, **“**Attack and be victorious, for the Lord will give it into the king’s hand.” Because this is the very answer he said to the messenger of Ahab, “I would not do that!” But he exactly said.

But Ahab said surprisingly more. Ahab said to him, “How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord?”

He said “I want nothing but the truth!” He was the most wicked king. And he said, I demand nothing but the truth, Micaiah!” By telling Micaiah I demand nothing but the truth Ahab implied the prophecy of 400 prophets are not true. If he truly believed the prophecy of 400 prophets were true he would not (not is missing. Mistake) answered Micaiah in this way when Micaiah answered the same way of 400 prophets.

“That’s right! This is the first time you prophesied something good about me. Praise the Lord! I will go to the battle against Ramoth Gilead.” But he didn’t say. He said, “How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord?”

Also the phrase “how many times” shows this kind of incidents happened in the past many times. The Lord had mercy on Ahab so much. He sent his faithful servant Micaiah so many times who told him nothing but the truth. But Ahab hated him and put him in custody taking away freedom from the true prophet Micaiah.

Then then Micaiah said, “I saw all Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd, and the Lord said, ‘These people have no master. Let each one go home in peace.’”

In the bible old testament king was described as a shepherd or master. So without master, without shepherd, no master, means Ahab died in the battle. Message was very clear, and Ahab clearly understood. And Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, “Didn’t I tell you that he never prophesies anything good about me, but only bad?”

Ahab demanded “nothing but the truth”. But when nothing but the truth was given to him he said, “That is not true because it came from the habit of Micaiah.”

Let’s go over verses 19-23. At the end of today’s passage I will discuss the main point, how can we overcome deception from deceiving spirits and live a victorious life?

Let’s read verses 19-23 responsibly because all these passages lays the foundation of our main discussion. I will go first.

**19Micaiah continued, “Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne with all the multitudes of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left. 20And the Lord said, ‘Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?’ “One suggested this, and another that. 21Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the Lord and said, ‘I will entice him.’ 22“‘By what means?’ the Lord asked. “‘I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all his prophets,’ he said. “‘You will succeed in enticing him,’ said the Lord. ‘Go and do it.’ 23“So now the Lord has put a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The Lord has decreed disaster for you.”**

Did the Lord deceive Ahab because he sent a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all these prophets? No. Why not? Because the Lord revealed the whole truth, nothing but the truth, to Ahab through the prophet Micaiah. The Lord even revealed the truth the reason why 400 prophets were saying what they were saying to Ahab.

The Lord did not deceive Ahab. Did the Lord want Ahab to die? It sounds like. But why then did the Lord reveal the whole truth, nothing but the truth, which opens the door for the possibility for Ahab to believe and save his life?

One great servant of God said, “When all the grace of God are completely exhausted, what is only left is judgment.” When all the grace are completely exhausted, no grace is left, all are used for any person, the only thing left for the person is judgment.

This is the last grace of God and mercy of God for Ahab to save his life. That would be no more opportunity for Ahab to save his life. It was the grace of God, the last one. The Lord loved the most wicked king Ahab so much that he used all of his grace to be completely exhausted and this was the last one for Ahab.

These parts of the message reminds us of the first part of the book of Job. In the book of Job Satan communicated with the Lord and Satan tempted Job, and the whole story started. Today’s passage is very similar. It shows the truth – what is happening on earth is the result of what happened in heaven, decision in heaven.

If you look at today’s passage, there is no word name “Ahab” at all. All the time Ahab was referred to the king of Israel whereas Jehoshphat king of Judah was normally used. I was curious about it. Why?

I couldn’t find the reason completely. But I find one possibility. That is comparison, contrast between king on earth and king in heaven. Ahab was king on earth. The Lord was king in heaven. And both kings were sitting on their thrones. And both kings were surrounded by their subjects.

And the Lord, both kings, say. Ahab was saying. The Lord was saying. And the Lord sitting on the thrones surrounded by all the multitudes of heaven. “All” the multitudes of heaven. Because of the word “all” the multitudes of heaven probably refer to all angels, good angels, evil angels, and probably Satan too.

And the Lord asked, “‘Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?’ “One suggested this, and another that. 21Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the Lord so confidently and said, “I will do it.” “I will entice him.”

Who is the spirit? We don’t know. It could be Satan or Satan’s subject. We don’t know.

Let’s read verses 24-28 to think about the main point - how to overcome deception from deceiving spirits and live a victorious life.

Let’s read responsibly. I will go first.

**24Then Zedekiah son of Kenaanah went up and slapped Micaiah in the face. “Which way did the spirit from the Lord go when he went from me to speak to you?” he asked. 25Micaiah replied, “You will find out on the day you go to hide in an inner room.” 26The king of Israel then ordered, “Take Micaiah and send him back to Amon the ruler of the city and to Joash the king’s son 27and say, ‘This is what the king says: Put this fellow in prison and give him nothing but bread and water until I return safely.’” 28Micaiah declared, “If you ever return safely, the Lord has not spoken through me.” Then he added, “Mark my words, all you people!”**

Zedekiah could not believe words of Micaiah. So he went up and slapped Micaiah in the face, insulted him and he demanded the proof. “You saw the spirit of the Lord. Tell me which way did the sprit from the Lord go when I slapped you in the face?” Micaiah replied, ““You will find out on the day you go to hide in an inner room.”

The day refers to the day of the Lord’s judgment for the false prophet Zedekiah. On that day Zedekiah will go to hide in an inner room to save his life in vain. He will not be able to escape the Lord’s judgment.

Ahab ordered“Take Micaiah and send him back to Amon the ruler of the city”. So Amon was in charge of the capital city Samaria. And Joash the king’s son. So Micaiah was under the custody of Amon and Joash. And say, this is what Ahab said, “Put this fellow in prison”. So there is possibility that Micaiah was not in prison. But after telling Ahab nothing but the truth because of his demand now Ahab wanted to put Micaiah in prison and give him nothing but bread and water, the minimum food for survival until he returned safely.

Ahab wanted to punish Micaiah more after he returned safely, charging him prophesying lies in the name of the Lord and maybe execution after he returned safely.

Micaiah declared. This is declaration. “If you EVER return safely, the Lord has not spoken through me.” What it means is this: If you ever return safely I will be guilty of prophesying lies in the name of the Lord. I will be guilty of misrepresenting the Lord “as of iron” (“as of iron” is a mistake) I will be guilty of lying in the name of the word of the Lord, and I will deserve to die. That’s what he meant. “If you ever return safely the Lord has not spoken through me.”

And he added, “Mark my words, all you people!” There were many other people. 400 prophets, important officials of Ahab and Jehoshaphat. Micaiah wanted to know all these people (mistake. Micaiah wanted all these people to know is correct one), the Lord who is sitting on the heavenly throne is the true king instead of the king of Israel, Ahab who is sitting on his earthly throne.

And what the word of the Lord who is sitting in heaven matters than the words of the king on earth, Ahab, millions times more. The word of the Lord, the king in heaven, will be fulfilled, but the word of the earthly king, Ahab’s words, will not be fulfilled.

Two kingdoms, two kings, the words of two kings but there was total difference. (between them).

Now let us think about how to overcome deception from deceiving spirits and live a victorious life. What do we need to do?

First, we need to hear the word of the Lord. Otherwise we would not know even when we are deceived because the word of the Lord is nothing but the truth. For example, if I become angry and judge someone, that would be my emotion, my thought, and my desire. But if I hear the word of the Lord, it says, “Do not be angry. Do not judge others. Do not entertain revengeful thoughts” I would discern I was deceived.

If someone thinks, “I don’t have such a motivation or power. I am so low in my energy. I cannot fight my spiritual battels successfully” then hear the word of the Lord from **Romans 8:32**. Let’s read Romans 8:32 together. Ready. Go!**“He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”**

Our heavenly Father graciously gave us all things together with his son whom he did not spare but gave up for us all. We have all the strength. We have all the power. We have all the energies, we have all the motivation to overcome deception from deceiving spirits and live a victorious life.

The second thing we need to do to overcome deception from the deceiving spirits and live a victorious life is to do what the word of the Lord says. Let’s read **James 1:22.** Let’s go. **“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”**

I was very surprised to find that I can deceive myself. We know Satan deceives us. We know sin deceives us. But I didn’t know I can deceive myself. When we listen to the word and do not do what it says we deceive ourselves. We don’t get any benefit from the word of the Lord.

Let’s think about Jehoshaphat in today’s passage. He was the one who said to Ahab, “First seek the counsel of the Lord which is the word of the Lord.” When the counsel of the Lord was given to Jehoshaphat, did Jehoshaphat do anything to obey it? He didn’t do anything. By doing nothing to obey the word of the Lord he deceived himself. What happened to him? William will talk about in the next Sunday message. He almost died in the battle. When he came back he was rebuked by a prophet of the Lord.

What about Ahab. He demanded nothing but the truth. But when the nothing but the truth was given to him he didn’t do anything to obey it. What happened to him? He died despite millions of graces of the Lord.

In order to overcome deception from deceiving spirits and live a victorious life, there is one more thing we can do. That is to remember the suffering of our Lord and count our blessings which the Lord purchased through his suffering and death. Let’s read **1 Peter 2:24.** Let’s read together. Ready. Go! **“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.”**

There are three blessings the Lord purchased. The first one: die to sins. Second: live for righteousness. Third: healing.

In order to buy these blessings the Lord himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, and he was hung on the cross for 6 hours. He went through such a pain and suffering and death to bless us with all these blessings.

So we need to remember the suffering of our Lord and appreciate his blessings. In today’s passage, Micaiah suffered. Micaiah only delivered nothing but the truth to Ahab. But Ahab hated him and put him in custody something like house arrest. At the last critical moment of Ahab’s life Micaiah delivered nothing but the truth so that Ahab might save his own life. But he put Micaiah in the prison and gave him nothing but the bread and water and threatened him to persecute him more after he returned safely.

What happened to Micaiah? We don’t know. But his suffering was the glimpse of the suffering of our Lord. Micaiah suffered so much to share the blessings from the Lord for Ahab. So we must remember suffering of our Lord who purchased all the blessings for us and count our blessing.

(showing the logo of “count your blessings”) this is the logo missionary Petra uses. When you come to 6am daily bread meeting you see this.

“Count your blessings”. I personally convinced fully ‘count our blessings’ is one of our best ways to overcome deception from deceiving spirits and live a victorious life.

One day one pastor told me, “I want to quit my job as a pastor because it is too painful for me to bear the blames and complains from my church members.” I thought he was just releasing his stress to me. So I was very surprised later to find that he actually quit. Did he make a good decision or bad decision. Bad decision. Why? He only thought about his own pain, and he wanted to get rid of the pain like the man in my introduction. The deceiving spirit tempted him to commit suicide promising him, “You will be completely free from your pain!” when he died.

But the pastor did not count his blessings, numerous blessings from the Lord, the blessings the Lord purchased through his blood and pain and suffering. And he did not count. Bad decision. He was deceived by a deceiving spirit.

So what should we do in order to overcome deception from deceiving spirit and live a victorious life?

Fist, we need to hear the word of the LORD which is nothing but the truth.

Second, we need to do what the word of the Lord says. If we do not do we deceive ourselves and we don’t get any benefit from hearing the word of the Lord.

Third, we need to remember the Lord’s suffering for us and count our blessings which the Lord purchased through his blood.

One word: a deceiving spirit.

(Explanation of verses 24-28)

**24Then Zedekiah son of Kenaanah went up and slapped Micaiah in the face. “Which way did the spirit from the Lord go when he went from me to speak to you?” he asked.**

His question is basically saying “Micaiah, I cannot believe what you say. If you claim that you can see the Lord and the deceiving spirit was in our mouth can you see and tell me where did the spirit from the Lord go when he went from me to speak to you? I cannot believe you. You are lying. You are deceiving us.”

**25Micaiah replied, “You will find out on the day you go to hide in an inner room.”**

“On the day you go to hide in an inner room” means the day of the Lord’s judgment upon Zedekiah.

**26The king of Israel then ordered, “Take Micaiah and send him back to Amon the ruler of the city and to Joash the king’s son**

The word “back” from send him back shows that Micaiah was already under King Ahab’s custody if not in prison.

**27and say, ‘This is what the king says: Put this fellow in prison and give him nothing but bread and water until I return safely.’”**

Ahab wanted to punish Micaiah for his prophecy by giving him nothing but bread and water, the minimum amount of survival. Ahab wanted to execute him as a false prophet after he returned safely.

**28Micaiah declared, “If you ever return safely, the Lord has not spoken through me.” Then he added, “Mark my words, all you people!”**

The bible says “If a false prophet prophecy something and it does not happen the prophet must be stoned to death.” Micaiah was ready to die for his prophecy. He declared, ““If you EVER return safely, the Lord has not spoken through me.” He also told all the people who heard him say, “Mark my words, all you people!”

Micaiah testified the word of the Lord.

**I have been saying, “The main point we want to think about is “how we can make sure (1) we do not to be deceived by deceiving spirit. (2) we hear the word of the Lord. and it will come at the end of the bible passages. That is why I am quickly going over bible passages.**

First, how we can make sure that we do not be deceived by deceiving spirits. The answer is to **compare our voices and thoughts and emotions with what the bible says.**  Knowing that whatever bible confirms as bad comes from our enemies. We need to check our thoughts, desires and emotions and idears with the word of the Lord in the bible. That is the way for us not to deceived by a deceiving spirit.

**Second, how we can make sure we hear the word of the Lord.** The answer is to **obey what the Lord says.** Without obedience hearing the word of the Lord does not mean anything. Not obeying means to believe the deception of our enemies.

In today’s passage, Jehoshaphat who wanted to inquire of the counsel of the Lord heard it. But he did not obey it. So what good for him to hear the word of the Lord? Nothing. In the battle he almost died because he did not obey the word of the Lord which he really wanted to hear.

Ahab demanded nothing but the truth. Then he got it. He heard it. But when he did not obey, there was benefit. He just lost his life later when he disobeyed.

Obeying the word of the Lord is the way for us not to be deceived by deceiving spirits and hear the word of the Lord.

For example. When you are angry, look at what the bible says. It says. “Do not be angry. Do not let your anger to sin.”

When you judge others, look at what the word of God says, “Do not judge. Forgive as I have forgiven you.”

When you feel down, look at what the Lord says, “No in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.”

When you feel that people blame you and criticized you too much, look at what the Lord says “Rejoice and be glad because your reward in heaven is great. For in the same way…”

When you think that you are not important to other people, look at what the Lord says, “I love you so much that I gave my life for you.” “you are very good!”

((one good example))

One pastor told me. "I want to quit my job as the pastor as soon as possible because I did not want to hear the blames and complaining of my church people. There are several people who are always complaining against me. And I hate them. They do not think about the benefits from me but always bad. So I am going to quit. But when I announced I will quit suddenly my church members did not want me to quit. I thought he was just releasing his stress and trouble to me. So I was very surprised later to hear that he actually quit.

Now what do you think about his decision? Do you think he made a right decision? (yes. He heard a deceiving spirit. He did not hear what the Lord says in the bible. His work as a pastor could have been so precious before God. But he quit because he did not want to suffer from the complaining and blaming from his own church people.

You know the deceiving spirit says to us all the time, mostly in the form of judging others or being angry or desiring some addicted behaviors and depressive mood, (mood swing).

1. Hear the word of the Lord – Ro 8:32
2. Do what the word of the Lord says – James 1:22
3. Remember the suffering of our Lord – 1 Peter 2:24
4. Count your blessings – the word of the Lord says “give thanks in all circumstances”. 1Th 5:18

**1 Thessalonians 5:18**

**“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”**

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also along with him graciously give us all things?

I like M. Petra’s zoom like title – that is “Count your blessings”. There are many things in life that we will be so thankful for.

In case of Ahab, the Lord blessed him to be the king of Israel. He had such a power and authority as the king. He could even imprisoned the prophet of the Lord. The Lord loved him so much that the Lord revealed himself on the Mount of Carmel, and two miraculous victories against Ben-Hadad, and the Lord even delayed his judgment when he repented. Even in today’s passage, the Lord revealed to him how he could save his life!

**Romans 8:32**

**“He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”**

1. Do what the word of the Lord says.
2. Remember the Lord’s suffering. Micaiah’s suffering to proclaim the word of the Lord is a shadow of Christ’s suffering

In sum, today we learned how we can make sure that we are not deceived by deceiving spirits but hear the word of the Lord. The way is to compare our thoughts, desires, emotions, and everything with the word of the Lord in the bible and obey it. Without obedience just hearing the word of the Lord does not mean anything. Without obedience hearing the word of God is just to deceiving us.

According to the bible, arugably there is the greatest enemy of us. Do you know who? Ourselves!

Not only deceiving spirits, but we ourselves deceive ourselves. That is what James 1:22 says.

**James 1:22**

**22Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.**

**I need to talk about Jesus. If you hold to my teaching you are really my disciples.**

**Heb 5:8 “Though he was son he learned obedience from what he suffered.” He obeyed the word of his Father through suffering.**

* ***“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Mark 14:38***

**How can** we obey the word of the Lord? We should not be deceived by our enemy, the deceiving spirits. They say we cannot obey the word of the Lord because we are sinners. But when we look at what Jesus did and say, we know this is a deceiving. Jesus said, ‘It is finished.” Salvation is finished on the cross. When we believe Jesus is the Lord and Savior, we can defeat the deceiving spirit and we can obey God.

Who can save us from such deception? Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord! He saved us from our sin of disobedience and he gave us his authority to overcome the power of sin and death and obey the word of God.

One word: A deceiving spirit

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Text plain 1Ki 22 1 28

**For three years there was no war between Aram and Israel. 2But in the third year Jehoshaphat king of Judah went down to see the king of Israel. 3The king of Israel had said to his officials, “Don’t you know that Ramoth Gilead belongs to us and yet we are doing nothing to retake it from the king of Aram?”**

**4So he asked Jehoshaphat, “Will you go with me to fight against Ramoth Gilead?”**

**Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, “I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.” 5But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, “First seek the counsel of the Lord.”**

**6So the king of Israel brought together the prophets—about four hundred men—and asked them, “Shall I go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain?”**

**“Go,” they answered, “for the Lord will give it into the king’s hand.”**

**7But Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there no longer a prophet of the Lord here whom we can inquire of?”**

**8The king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, “There is still one prophet through whom we can inquire of the Lord, but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah.”**

**“The king should not say such a thing,” Jehoshaphat replied.**

**9So the king of Israel called one of his officials and said, “Bring Micaiah son of Imlah at once.”**

**10Dressed in their royal robes, the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting on their thrones at the threshing floor by the entrance of the gate of Samaria, with all the prophets prophesying before them. 11Now Zedekiah son of Kenaanah had made iron horns and he declared, “This is what the Lord says: ‘With these you will gore the Arameans until they are destroyed.’”**

**12All the other prophets were prophesying the same thing. “Attack Ramoth Gilead and be victorious,” they said, “for the Lord will give it into the king’s hand.”**

**13The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, “Look, the other prophets without exception are predicting success for the king. Let your word agree with theirs, and speak favorably.”**

**14But Micaiah said, “As surely as the Lord lives, I can tell him only what the Lord tells me.”**

**15When he arrived, the king asked him, “Micaiah, shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or not?”**

**“Attack and be victorious,” he answered, “for the Lord will give it into the king’s hand.”**

**16The king said to him, “How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord?”**

**17Then Micaiah answered, “I saw all Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd, and the Lord said, ‘These people have no master. Let each one go home in peace.’”**

**18The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Didn’t I tell you that he never prophesies anything good about me, but only bad?”**

**19Micaiah continued, “Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne with all the multitudes of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left. 20And the Lord said, ‘Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?’**

**“One suggested this, and another that. 21Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the Lord and said, ‘I will entice him.’**

**22“‘By what means?’ the Lord asked.**

**“‘I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all his prophets,’ he said.**

**“‘You will succeed in enticing him,’ said the Lord. ‘Go and do it.’**

**23“So now the Lord has put a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The Lord has decreed disaster for you.”**

**24Then Zedekiah son of Kenaanah went up and slapped Micaiah in the face. “Which way did the spirit from the Lord go when he went from me to speak to you?” he asked.**

**25Micaiah replied, “You will find out on the day you go to hide in an inner room.”**

**26The king of Israel then ordered, “Take Micaiah and send him back to Amon the ruler of the city and to Joash the king’s son 27and say, ‘This is what the king says: Put this fellow in prison and give him nothing but bread and water until I return safely.’”**

**28Micaiah declared, “If you ever return safely, the Lord has not spoken through me.” Then he added, “Mark my words, all you people!”**