**A KING WHO DID NOT LIKE THE TRUTH**

1 Kings 22:1-28

Key Verse 14

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

**Introduction**

It is not easy to say the truth of God always. This passage shows a great contrast in light of prophesying between 400 false prophets and one true prophet, Micaiah. He was overwhelmed by the pressure of Ahab and 400 prophets. But he did stick to his gun and served God’s message only. He ended up going back to prison. What an inconvenient life he had to live in prison! But he kept his position as a true prophet of God who can preach the word for God’s glory. May the Lord help us to learn the same spirit and preach the word. Amen.

1. Read verses 1-9. What did Ahab ask Jehoshaphat to do? (1-4a) Why did they bring Micaiah, son of Imlah despite the previous counsel of 400 prophets? (4b-9)

1-1, Read verses 1-9.

For three years there was no war between Aram and Israel. 2 But in the third year Jehoshaphat king of Judah went down to see the king of Israel. 3 The 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?”

4 So 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.” 5 But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, “First seek the counsel of the Lord.”

6 So 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.”

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

8 The 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.

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

1-2, What did Ahab ask Jehoshaphat to do? (1-4a)



***For three years there was no war between Aram and Israel. 2 But in the third year Jehoshaphat king of Judah went down to see the king of Israel. 3 The 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?”***

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* According to 2 Chronicles 18:1-3, “Now Jehoshaphat had great wealth and honor, and he allied himself with Ahab by marriage. Some years later he went down to see Ahab in Samaria. Ahab slaughtered many sheep and cattle for him and the people with him and urged him to attack Ramoth Gilead. Ahab, king of Israel asked Jehoshaphat king of Judah, “Will you go with me against Ramoth Gilead?”
* Ramoth Gilead was a city to the west and slightly to the south of the Sea of Galilee. The king of Aram was supposed to give the city back(20:34) as part of a treaty when Ahab spared his life, but after 3 years he did **not** give this city back.
* It was a result of his disobedience to the command of God who wanted him to demolish all Aramean army as well as the king.

1-3, Why did they bring Micaiah, son of Imlah despite the previous counsel of 400 prophets? (4b-9)

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* Jehoshaphat knows how to ask God at the time of important events ahead of time. He should have asked the Lord in prayer earlier regarding friendship or partnership with Ahab and could have avoided a shameful outcome later.
* As a result of his visit to Israel, he ended up having his child get married to a daughter of Ahab. In turn it became a disaster for Judah as well.
* So we can not emphasize too much about how important it is to seek after God’s will ahead of time. Instead of jumping into conclusion, we better humble ourselves to come to God first and ask His absolute will to save troubles.
* Again, why do we need to ask God humbly? It is because worldly minded or sinful minded king, Ahab was driven by his own desire always, even by asking false prophets to confirm what he wanted. But our foundation as believers is different.
* But thank God who did not abandon Ahab by sending one prophet who can speak God’s words regardless. Thank God for Jehoshaphat’s lead in asking God!

1. Read verses 10-20. Describe what was prophesied by the many prophets and then by Micaiah. (10-17) What else did he prophesy about Ahab? (18-20)

2-1, Read verses 10-20.

10 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. 11 Now 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.’”

12 All 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.”

13 The 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.”

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

15 When 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.”

16 The 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?”

17 Then 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.’”

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

19 Micaiah 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.20 And the Lord said, ‘Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?’

“One suggested this, and another that.

2-2, Describe what was prophesied by the many prophets and then by Micaiah. (10-17)

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* It might be very tempting for Micaiah to predict the same thing that other prophets had said. He could have chosen to join the club by telling lies.
* But at the end he chose to tell the truth before God, not before the kings and other false prophets by overcoming peer pressure.
* He must have loved the Lord God and obeyed the words of God. In this way he proved himself as the true prophet to represent God Himself.
* Jesus Christ did not speak on his own, but spoke what His Father speaks. May the Lord help us to follow His example.

2-3, What else did he prophesy about Ahab? (18-20)

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

***19 Micaiah 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.20 And the Lord said, ‘Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?’***

***“One suggested this, and another that.***

* Micaiah was brought out from prison when we look at verse 26. Because he had to speak God’s word that Ahab did not like to hear, he was in prison and all other false prophets were in the positions of safety and peace.
* But what he said further in verse 19 shows us the reason why he was so bold that he said nothing but the truth of God. “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.” What an amazing confession!
* He did not see two human kings sitting in the throne right and left each other. Rather he fixed his eyes on the Sovereign Lord, and all the multitudes sitting around him. It reminds me of the book of revelation that those who were beheaded by speaking the truth of God were blessed in Heaven the most!

1. Read verses 21-28. Describe the conversation between a spirit and the Lord. (21-22) What can we learn from the Lord who put a deceiving spirit in the mouths of false prophets? (23) What did Zedekiah and Ahab do to suppress the truth? (24-27) What was Micaiah’s warning?

3-1, Read verses 21-28.

Finally, 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.”

24 Then Zedekiah son of Kenaanah went up and slapped Micaiah in the face. “Which way did the spirit from[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Kings%2022&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9505a)] the Lord go when he went from me to speak to you?” he asked.

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

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

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

3-2, Describe the conversation between a spirit and the Lord. (21-22)

***Finally, 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.’***

* It is a very astonishing conversation between a spirit and the Lord. It reminds me of a conversation between a fallen angel and the Lord in regard to Job.

**Job 1:6-12 reads,**

*One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them. 7 The Lord said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Satan answered the Lord, “From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it.” 8 Then the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil.” 9 “Does Job fear God for nothing?” Satan replied. 10 “Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. 11 But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.” 12 The Lord said to Satan, “Very well, then, everything he has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger.” Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.*

* Apparently, one of the fallen angels volunteered to deceive Ahab. Ahab wanted to be deceived. God would give him what he really wanted because he did not listen to the word of truth.

3-3, What can we learn from the Lord who put a deceiving spirit in the mouths of false prophets? (23)

***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.”***

* We do not know why God allowed this kind of deceiving spirit in the mouths of all these prophets. Maybe God wants to reveal His truth and let his servant stand firm in the midst of all deceptive messages.
* God’s wisdom is beyond our understanding and we praise the Lord. May the Lord help us to rely on His wisdom rather than our wits and wisdom. Help us to discern different spirits so that we may dwell in the truth continually.

3-4, What did Zedekiah and Ahab do to suppress the truth? (24-27)

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* Being a man of truth is not easy in the hostile world where speaking the truth becomes harmful like the case of Micaiah who had to spend his life in prison.
* But serving the word of God itself is a great blessing in the world of lies because God is sitting in the eternal throne and all the multitudes who served His message will sit in the right and left places according to God’s promise.

3-5, What was Micaiah’s warning?

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

* It was his ultimate remark as a final warning. He was not intimidated by Ahab’s command to put him in prison again. Rather his spirit was robust enough to penetrate into everyone’s heart in the hall including the king Jehoshaphat.

**One word: Mark my words!**