

Ahab's Last Battle: Micaiah's Warning

05-29-16 AM

The Bible says about king Ahab of Israel: *"Surely there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife incited him"* (1 Kings 21:25). What a terrible way to be remembered in history. God promised that Ahab's dynasty would be destroyed, and in 2 Chronicles 18 God told Ahab how his story would end.

Summary: We read how Ahab made peace with King Jehoshaphat of Judah, and how they conspired to go to war together against the Arameans. Ahab and Jehoshaphat called the prophets to tell them how the battle would go. The first prophets (led by Zedekiah) promised a victory. But Jehoshaphat wanted a real prophet (it is unclear what he saw false in the first prophets), and Ahab agrees to call his enemy Micaiah son of Imla to speak. Ahab explains to Jehoshaphat that Micaiah never has anything good to say. Micaiah's first message is one of victory, but when pressed by Ahab, he promises defeat and explains why the other prophets had a false message. For his honesty he is assaulted by the other prophet and imprisoned, while Ahab proceeds to his death.

There are three important lessons in this chapter. Each of these lessons corresponds to one of the people in the record. First, Micaiah teaches us that prophets have a degree of power to withhold the message they are given. Second, Ahab teaches us that sometimes God permits the unrighteous to be deceived. Finally, through Jehoshaphat we learn that we ought to be careful with whom we have association.

Why did Micaiah not speak the message when first asked? Consider the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:32: *"The spirits of prophets are subject to prophets"*. It is not clear if Micaiah was hiding the answer or answering with the deceiving spirit, but we can deduce that Micaiah likely had some choice not to tell Ahab the truth, and at first (perhaps with God's permission) chose not to do so.

Application: There is an important verse for us to consider: *"But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God"* (2 Peter 1:21). We need to make an important observation from this passage (and others similar in the New Testament): today, the prophecies of God come through the Scripture. We (as Christians who have put on Christ) are God's prophets, and our message is the Gospel.

Consider this important prophecy we hold from God: *Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat* (2 Peter 3:11-12). We (through the Scriptures) have been told by God that the world is coming to an end, and that it will come without warning. We are told that there is a resurrection coming (Acts 17:30) and a judgment for all men (Matthew 25:31-34). This is our prophecy. Will we share it with the world as God desires, or will we simply allow men to remain deceived? It took great courage for Micaiah to tell Ahab a truth he did not want to hear; so it is with our prophecy.

You have a choice; the spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophets. You can keep your silence, or you can speak the words of the prophecy.