

## “Micaiah...I Hate Him!”

On one occasion Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, visited Ahab, the wicked king of Israel. Ahab seized the opportunity to solicit the help and cooperation of Jehoshaphat in going to battle in order to wrestle Ramath Gilead from the hands of the King of Syria. Jehoshaphat accepted Ahab's invitation, saying, *“I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.”* However, Jehoshaphat felt that, before they engaged in battle, they should first *“inquire for the word of the Lord”* to determine if the Lord would be with them in the proposed endeavor. Accordingly, Ahab gathered together some 400 of his hired, back-scratching, ear-tickling *“wolves-in-sheep's-clothing”* false prophets, who, with regards to his proposal, prophesied, saying, *“Go up, for the Lord will deliver it into the hand of the king”* (I Kings 22:1,2,4,5,12).

However, Jehoshaphat the king of Judah did not feel completely at ease about the matter. He must have known that these *“prophets”* were paid hirelings who were more desirous of pleasing King Ahab than speaking the word of the Lord. Therefore Jehoshaphat posed this question: *“Is there not still a prophet of the Lord here, that we may inquire of Him?”* (I Kings 22:7). Ahab replied, *“There is still one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord; but I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil,”* I Kings 22:8. In this reply, Ahab reflected a desire on his part to only listen to *“prophets”* who would agree with what **he** wanted to do. Nevertheless, at the insistence of Jehoshaphat, they sent for Micaiah.

And, surely enough, Micaiah, when he arrived, portrayed in his prophecy a rather dismal scene for Israel if she went to battle against Syria. He let Ahab know that his life would be taken, that he would not successfully return from battle, and that his soldiers would be scattered. Specifically, he said, *“I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd,”* I Kings 22:17. King Ahab then turned to Jehoshaphat and said, *“Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil,”* I Kings 22:18. Whereupon, concerning Micaiah, Ahab said, *“Put this fellow in prison, and feed him with the bread of affliction and water of affliction, until I return in peace,”* I Kings 22:27. But Micaiah replied, saying in essence that Ahab would not return alive, I Kings 22:28. However, Ahab's mind was already made up — perhaps being emboldened by the conflicting report of the 400 false *“prophets,”* in whom was a *“lying spirit,”* I Kings 22:22.

So, being dismayed but not deterred by Micaiah's counter prophecy, both Ahab and Jehoshaphat went to battle against the king of Syria. Ahab, however, *“disguised himself,”* I Kings 22:30, seeking to conceal his true identity, evidently thinking that his clever disguise could circumvent the saying of a true prophet of God. However, as fate would have it, *“a certain man drew a bow at random, and struck the king of Israel between the joints of his armor,”* I Kings 22:34. One perhaps would not consider Ahab to be mortally wounded, but as the battle wore on he *“propped up in his chariot...the blood ran out of the wound onto the floor of the chariot,”* I Kings 22:35. Later in the day Ahab *“died and was brought to Samaria,”* where he was *“buried,”* I Kings 22:37. Afterwards someone washed Ahab's chariot *“at a pool in Samaria, and the dogs licked up his*

*blood,*” I Kings 22:38, which fulfilled the words previously spoken by the prophet Elijah, I Kings 21:38.

Ahab had made plans which did not include God. He rejected the word of God’s prophet who warned him against his ill-conceived endeavor. His mind was made up, and facts would not deter him. He went into battle with the full intention of winning, and yet the combined strength of his and Jehoshaphat’s armies, plus the counter statements of 400 false prophets, could not prevent the fulfillment of God’s word as had been clearly stated by His true prophet Micaiah.

How true to life! When men today make up their minds to do something wrong, they often refuse to be dissuaded by the word of God. Somewhere, they manage to find a preacher who will agree with their nefarious schemes, and off they go in quest of fulfilling their sinful desires. And what about those faithful preachers who speak the word of God in an effort to prevent such wrong doings? They are generally labeled and libeled as narrow-minded, old-fogy, unlearned, behind-the-times mossbacks who should have more love in their hearts. And, like Ahab, some by their words and actions, even manifest a hatred of those Bible-believing, Bible-quoting preachers who preach against those sins in which they are determined to engage! Of course, this is not a new thing. King Herod cut off the head of John the Baptist who preached against His adulterous marriage to Herodias, who actually belonged to “*his brother*” Philip, Matt. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29. Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God, was crucified at the demand of the Jewish leaders, Matt. 26:37-66, whose sins He had strongly denounced, Matt. 23. All the apostles, except John, died a martyr’s death because they chose to preach Christ and Him crucified.

#### **Conclusion:**

Regarding Jehoshaphat (who was basically a good king, 2 Chronicles 17:3), it is hard to reconcile his having “*joined affinity with Ahab,*” 2 Chron. 18:1. However, like Jehoshaphat, when faced with a questionable proposition, we should “*inquire...at the word of the Lord,*” and we should do it “*today,*” I Kings 22:5; 2 Chron. 18:4. May we all be open minded. The truths of God do not change just because men want to sin. That being the case, lest we suffer the consequences (both in the here and in the hereafter!), let us follow the truth of God in all things — in “the plan of salvation,” the work and worship of the church, in the relationships we enter into, and in the lives we live. Who know? The soul you save may be **your own!**

\*\*\*\* —Bobby Witherington

#### **Time**

Imagine there is a bank which credits your account with \$86,400, carries no balance from day to day, allows you to keep no cash balance, and every evening cancels whatever part of the amount you had failed to use during the day. What would you do? Draw out every cent of course!

Well, everyone has such a bank. Its name is **Time**. Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever of this you have failed to invest to good purpose. It carries no balance. It allows no overdraft. Each day it opens a new account for you. Each night it burns the records of the day. If you fail to use the day’s deposits, the loss is yours.

There is no going back. There is no drawing against “tomorrow.” You must live in the present on today’s deposits. Invest it so as to get from it the utmost in health, happiness and success!

The clock is running. Make the most of today. To realize the value of **one year**, ask a student

who has failed a grade. To realize the value of **one month**, ask a mother who has given birth to a premature baby. To realize the value of **one week**, ask an editor of a weekly newspaper. To realize the value of **one day**, ask a daily wage laborer who has ten kids to feed. To realize the value of **one hour**, ask the courting couple who are waiting to meet. To realize the value of **one minute**, ask a person who has missed his plane. To realize the value of **one second**, ask the person who narrowly missed a fatal car accident. To realize the value of a **millisecond**, ask the person who won a silver medal in an Olympic race.

Treasure each moment that you have and remember time waits for no one.

\*\*\*\* —Author Unknown