

2 Chronicles 18 — “Jehoshaphat’s Unholy Alliance: The Widespread Results of Making Foolish Decisions!”**Introduction**

Elijah was a man of God who was called by God to unflinchingly give truth to the Wicked King Ahab!

A bit of an overview/summary of the life & ministry of Elijah (who primarily prophesied against the apostate, King Ahab)

- ✓1 Kings 17 - Elijah prophesies drought
- ✓1 Kings 17 - Elijah raises a widow's son
- ✓1 Kings 18 - the **contest** on Mt Carmel (Yhwh and prophets of Baal)
- ✓1 Kings 19 - Ahab's wife JEZEBEL threatens Elijah
- ✓1 Kings 19 - Elijah at Mt Sinai (Horeb) >> and meets with God there
- ✓1 Kings 20 - Ahab is victorious & growing powerful (against Ben Hadad & Aram (up north))
- ✓1 Kings 21 - Ahab's wife Jezebel plots to kill Naboth and get his vineyard for the whiney king Ahab (it's here that Elijah prophesies that King Ahab will die in Samaria, in his hometown; 21.19)!!
- ✓1 Kings 22 - Ahab is going to war against the North (Ramoath Gilead) & asks Jehoshaphat to join in!
... and this is precisely where we are in 2 Chronicles 18 (parallel to 1 Kings 22)

Background & the Ancient Near Eastern World at This Time:

The battle of Qarqar (853BC) —

THESIS — 3 headings will guide us as we walk through this event together.

I. PREEMPTIVE DECISION! (1-3) [UNWISE!]

- The main character of these vss is *King Jehoshaphat* (of Judah).

“Flirting with those in apostasy is flirting with catastrophe ...
The requirement to show Christian fellowship *must* be balanced with discernment and fidelity to God’s Truth & Gospel.”
(J.A. Thompson)

Profile of the Apostate & Wicked King Ahab:

- ✓ a liar/deceiver
- ✓ a flatterer/manipulator
- ✓ an idolater
- ✓ an apostate (God-hater)
- ✓ a hater (of God’s Word/Truth)
- ✓ a self-lover/self-worshiper (had 400 yes-men//prophets who only spoke well of the king)
- ✓ an unbeliever (rejected the prophetic Words)
- ✓ a harsh man (fed the prophet sparingly)
- ✓ a persecutor (put him in jail/prison)
- ✓ under God’s wrath (v.33-34)
- ✓ a wicked man (19:2)

II. PROPHETIC DECLARATION! (4-27) [UNFLINCHING]

- The main character: *Micaiah*, son of Imla [name: “Who is like Yahweh?”]

2 Chronicles 18 — “Jehoshaphat’s Unholy Alliance: The Widespread Results of Making Foolish Decisions!”

- One of the clearest accounts of true/false teachers & men of God/charlatans & prophets/frauds

A. False prophets (frauds/charlatans/hucksters/men of hot hair; not preachers but performers) (vv4-11)

B. Faithful prophet (Micaiah, the son of Imla, a man of God) (vv12-27)

The Portrait of Micaiah, the true man of God, the spokesman for God.

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A FAITHFUL PROPHET/PREACHER OF GOD’S TRUTH??

- ✓ a prophet of the LORD (v6)
- ✓ hated by wicked men (v7b)
- ✓ preaches evil (hard truths) to unbelievers (v7b)
- ✓ unknown, unpopular, undesired man (v8b)
- ✓ he was available and ready to preach (v12)
- ✓ he would speak exactly what GOD SAYS (v13)
- ✓ he courageously, unflinching spoke Truth (v15-16)
- ✓ he used biblical phraseology and metaphors (shepherd) (v.16)
- ✓ he ignored trivial arguments and didn’t self-defenses but only spoke GOD’S Word (v.18)
- ✓ saw God as the Sovereign one on his heavenly throne – a big view of God (v.18)
- ✓ he exposed and unmasked the hypocritical false prophets (v.22)
- ✓ he said the LORD proclaims disaster for evildoers (v.22b)
- ✓ he received opposition and persecution (beating) from a fellow ‘prophet’ (v.23a)
- ✓ he was locked up in prison and fed sparingly by the king for his faithful message (v.26)
- ✓ he provided one final word of GOD’S truth that came from his mouth (v.27)
- ✓ he called ALL PEOPLE to listen to him (v.27b)

ONE criterion by which the TRUE PROPHET was recognized in the OT [Old Testament] was that he, IN HIS PREACHING, often stood ALONE, running against the tide of popular expectation; his opposition to the voice of the populous became a hallmark of the true prophet (2 Chron 36:16; 2 Kings 17:13-15; Neh 9:26; Jer 25:4; Jer 26:4-5; Jer 29:24-32). (Raymond Dillard)

“When the Word of God is preached faithfully today and when preachers dare to say what God’s Word says about sin, there will be a similar reaction to US as there was THEN to Micaiah...

Until God’s Spirit softens the hearts of sinners, they will [continue to] say: “I don’t like that man of God. He has nothing positive to say. His preaching is always so negative.” (Andrew Stewart)

III. PRECISE DESTRUCTION! (28-34) [UNSTOPPABLE]

2 Chronicles 18 — “Jehoshaphat’s Unholy Alliance: The Widespread Results of Making Foolish Decisions!”

- The main character: Ahab + **GOD!**

Verses 30-34 - the account of the battle is a “bizarre comedy of errors”

Even Ahab’s lies and manipulation in battle could *not* guarantee his safety. Mark it: It’s impossible to FLEE from the LORD (Ps 139.7)

Conclusion:

Jehoshaphat receives divine grace!

Ahab receives divine judgment! Ahab’s death fulfills the prophecy of Micaiah (v.27) & of King Elijah (1 Kings 21:19)

A very helpful comment on Micaiah, the prophet.

“The four hundred prophets who were first paraded before Jehoshaphat were the pawns of Ahab. They were in the fullest sense, politicians. They spoke just what their benefactor wanted to hear. They doubtless ever kept a finger in the air to see “which way the wind was blowing” and were quick to move in that direction. They were not God’s prophets; to Ahab, Micaiah correctly described them as “these thy prophets” (1 Kin. 22:23). These were surely not the last to try to dignify their own opinions, imaginations, and philosophies by claiming as their source a revelation or a vision from God. False prophets, false Christs, and false apostles all made their appearance in the first century (Mat. 7:15; 24:23–24; Rev. 2:2). Mohammed, the popes, Joseph Smith, Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy, Ellen G. White, Charles Taze Russell, Oral Roberts, and all others of their ilk who claim a revelation from God since the close of the New Testament fit the mold of the four hundred.

Ahab’s hireling preachers serve as arch-types of every man who has ever claimed to be a Gospel preacher, but who is so concerned with maintaining his popularity or preserving his position that he will deliver whatever “oracle” his pressure-sensitive elders or his pleasure-seeking and wealthy members demand of him. Such are also described by Paul: “For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent” (Rom. 16:18). Men, if you’ve not got the spine and fortitude to preach the Gospel Truth when men hate you as well as love you for it, then be honest enough to refuse to let yourself be called a “Gospel preacher”—and find some other kind of work.

Learn from these four hundred hirelings the ugliness and folly of purchasing a pulpit, a position, a favor of whatever sort, at the expense of teaching error or withholding the Truth. The real and final rewards are not received on this earth and the final Rewarder is not the man or men who put groceries on our tables. Micaiah belonged to no man or group of men. The Lord—not the king—was his employer and keeper.

Therefore, as surely as Jehovah lived, so surely would he speak what Jehovah said to him. This meant he would speak no more, no less, but all the Lord’s message. Here is found the motto, the motive, the modus operandi of every faithful prophet and preacher.

The faithfulness of God’s truly dedicated servant is seen in the number of pressures Micaiah withstood:

1. The wrath of a king—who hated him, apparently already had him shut up in prison, and had the power to take his life—did not silence or intimidate him.
2. The earnest persuasion of the king’s messenger to speak the same pleasing message as the false prophets did not seduce him.
3. The fact that his four hundred peers had already spoken a message with one voice that was utterly contrary to what he must speak did not influence him.
4. The verbal and physical assault of Zedekiah did not move him. His message was proved true by the events that followed.

However, his confidence in his message as the Truth of God was surely proved by the unshakable boldness he exhibited in spite of these powerful pressures at work, any one of which might have broken a lesser man. Micaiah stood erect while all these fierce pressures closed in upon him. He was a man who could not be frightened into retreat or compromise and he serves as an extraordinary example of the dedication to Truth that God has always expected of his preachers.

And he concluded...

Micaiah is truly one of the unsung heroes of the Bible. He was determined that regardless of what Ahab did to him, he would not betray the Truth by perverting or withholding it, even if it meant death. This is the trademark of every faithful servant of God, but especially must it be of God’s preachers. He knew that whatever wicked Ahab did to him, God’s Truth would still stand. As one unknown writer stated: “The truth cannot be burned, beheaded, or crucified. A lie on the throne is a lie still and truth in a dungeon is still truth.” Centuries later, in his last imprisonment, which likely eventuated in his execution, Paul echoed Micaiah’s spirit: “I suffer hardship unto bonds, as a malefactor; but the word of God is not bound” (2 Tim. 2:9).

We who preach must commit Micaiah’s words to memory and his convictions to conscience: “As Jehovah liveth, what my God saith, that will I speak.” Only if we faithfully follow this principle, even to die rather than abandon it, will the Lord give us the crown of life (Rev. 2:10).”

— Dub McClish

Speak O Lord

Speak, O Lord, as we come to You
To receive the food of Your Holy Word.
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us;
Shape and fashion us in Your likeness,
That the light of Christ might be seen today
In our acts of love and our deeds of faith.
Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us
All Your purposes for Your glory.

Teach us, Lord, full obedience,
Holy reverence, true humility;
Test our thoughts and our attitudes
In the radiance of Your purity.

Cause our faith to rise; cause our eyes to see
Your majestic love and authority.
Words of pow’r that can never fail—
Let their truth prevail over unbelief.

Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds;
Help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us—
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time
That will echo down through eternity.
And by grace we’ll stand on Your promises,
And by faith we’ll walk as You walk with us.
Speak, O Lord, till Your church is built
And the earth is filled with Your glory.