

A Prophecy Against Ahab

Key Verse: “Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.”
—I Kings 22:23

Selected Scripture:
I Kings 22:1-40

DURING THE CLOSING

years of Israel’s wicked King Ahab, God used and blessed the Prophet Micaiah because of his fidelity to tell the truth, irrespective of how he might be affected. Although Micaiah was placed in trying circumstances, he was determined to relate God’s message as he received it, regardless of how much it might displease the king.

Ahab solicited the help of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, in capturing Gilead from the Syrians. Jehoshaphat indicated his willingness to cooperate but suggested they first consult the Lord in the matter by inquiring of his prophets whether or not they could expect divine guidance and help. King Ahab had surrounded himself with “prophets” who were quite willing to speak pleasant things to make him happy. Four hundred of them were summoned, and they all assured Ahab he would be victorious in capturing Gilead.—I Kings 22:1-6

Jehoshaphat was not convinced and asked if there was another prophet of Jehovah of whom they might inquire. Ahab told him about Micaiah, but said he did not favor him because, “He doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.” This statement reveals the perverse attitude of

Ahab. He was determined to have his own way, even if he had to silence God's prophets who were bold enough to tell him the truth. He desired to listen only to those who were willing to compromise their message in order to please him. Jehoshaphat, however, insisted that Micaiah be consulted. Since Ahab greatly needed his help he yielded, and this lone prophet of the Lord was summoned.—vss. 7-9

The messenger sent to bring Micaiah before Ahab and Jehoshaphat was evidently a devout associate of King Ahab. He warned the prophet that it would be in his best interest to prophesy good rather than evil. However, Micaiah was not dissuaded by this from telling the truth.—vss. 13,14

The prophet's account of the vision by which the Lord gave him this information is most interesting, although it should not be understood literally. Using the form of a story, Micaiah tells Ahab that the Lord had declared disaster for him, but God had put a "lying spirit" in the mouth of all the king's prophets to entice him to the battle. His lesson is that God will often permit those to be deceived whose hearts are already perverse and wicked. (vss. 15-23) The apostle Paul tells us about a similar class during the Gospel Age to whom the Lord would send a "strong delusion" that they might believe a lie.—II Thess. 2:11

Here is a heart-searching lesson for every follower of the Master concerning the great importance of keeping our hearts pure and sincere before God. If we love the Heavenly Father's will more than we love ourselves, or our family and friends, his providence will direct us. No matter how hard Satan may try to deceive us, he will not be able to accomplish his evil purposes. However, if we are looking for a way other than that of truth and righteousness, the Lord may permit the great Deceiver to lead us astray. Just as the Prophet Micaiah was eventually vindicated, so also it will be with all those who remain faithful to the truth which the Lord gives to them. ■