

Micaiah's Description of the Lying Spirit

1 Kings 22:19-28

1 Kings 22:19-28 – *“Then Micaiah said, “Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left. And the LORD said, ‘Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?’ So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, ‘I will persuade him.’ The Lord said to him, ‘In what way?’ So he said, ‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And the LORD said, ‘You shall persuade him, and also prevail. Go out and do so.’ Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you.”*

Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near and struck Micaiah on the cheek, and said, “Which way did the Spirit from the LORD go from me to speak to you?” And Micaiah said, “Indeed, you shall see on that day when you go into an inner chamber to hide!” So the king of Israel said, “Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king’s son; and say, ‘Thus says the king: “Put this fellow in prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction, until I come in peace.”’” But Micaiah said, “If you ever return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me.” And he said, “Take heed, all you people!”

Background Notes for 1 Kings 22:19-28

Earlier in this chapter wicked King Ahab was trying to twist King Jehoshaphat’s arm. Jehoshaphat was one of the good kings of the southern kingdom of Judah. Ahab wanted Jehoshaphat to go with him into battle against King Ben-Hadad of Syria.

Micaiah, the one true prophet of the Lord declared in no uncertain terms that Israel would lose to Syria and Ahab would be killed. He also stated that a “lying spirit” had come upon the false prophets of King Ahab. For stating this truth, Micaiah was thrown into prison.

Doctrinal Point for 1 Kings 22:19-28

God permits but controls the activities of evil spirits.

The prophet Micaiah indicated that he saw a vision of all the hosts of heavens standing before the Lord: hosts of angels, both good angels and bad angels. A similar situation is described in Job 1. The prophet Micaiah said that one of the

angels came forward. This may have been one of the fallen angels. He said that he would be a “lying spirit” in the mouth of Ahab’s false prophets, and thus Ahab would be persuaded to try to capture Ramoth-Gilead by going into battle against the Syrians.

The Lord said, “*Go out and do so.*” The Lord permitted this fallen angel, or lying spirit, to cause the false prophets to tell lies. So Micaiah was able to say, “*The Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the Lord has declared disaster against you*”(v23).

What is the Bible teaching here? It’s teaching that God permits - but controls - the activities of evil spirits at the present time. Matthew 25:41 says that hell was prepared for the devil and his angels - the fallen angels. Eventually Satan and all fallen angels, or evil spirits, will be in hell. But right now, they do have a measure of freedom to do evil – but only as God permits.

However, God is able to take even this evil activity and use it for His purposes, as we see here. This in no way takes away from God’s perfection and holiness. God permits but controls the activities of evil spirits at this present time.

Practical Application for 1 Kings 22:19-28

Watch out for people who falsely claim to speak by the Spirit of God.

All of Ahab’s 400 false prophets told him that he would win the battle, and they claimed that the Spirit of the Lord God had given them that revelation! Verse 24: “*Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah [the chief spokesman for the false prophets] went near and struck Micaiah on the cheek, and said, “Which way did the Spirit from the Lord go from me to speak to you?”* What he meant was, “I was speaking by the Spirit of the Lord, so how can you, Micaiah, be speaking by the Spirit of the Lord?” Zedekiah was actually claiming that the false prophets were speaking by the Spirit of the Lord. Watch out for false prophets who claim to speak by the Spirit of God!

It can happen today. David Koresh, leader of the “Branch Davidians” cult was a false prophet, even though he claimed that his words were from the Spirit of the living God. He was wrong. His words were false, and many people died because they believed him and followed him. So be careful. There are many other false prophets.

In Matthew 7:21-23 Jesus said, “*Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’*”

Watch out for those “false prophets” who claim to speak by the Spirit of God!

1 Kings 22:29-40

1 Kings 22:29-40 – *“So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth Gilead. And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “I will disguise myself and go into battle; but you put on your robes.” So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle.*

Now the king of Syria had commanded the thirty-two captains of his chariots, saying, “Fight with no one small or great, but only with the king of Israel.” So it was, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, “Surely it is the king of Israel!” Therefore they turned aside to fight against him, and Jehoshaphat cried out. And it happened, when the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him. Now a certain man drew a bow at random, and struck the king of Israel between the joints of his armor. So he said to the driver of his chariot, “Turn around and take me out of the battle, for I am wounded.”

The battle increased that day; and the king was propped up in his chariot, facing the Syrians, and died at evening. The blood ran out from the wound onto the floor of the chariot. Then, as the sun was going down, a shout went throughout the army, saying, “Every man to his city, and every man to his own country!” So the king died, and was brought to Samaria. And they buried the king in Samaria. Then someone washed the chariot at a pool in Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood while the harlots bathed, according to the word of the Lord that He had spoken.

Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, the ivory house that he built and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Ahab rested with his fathers. Then Ahaziah his son reigned in his place.

Background Notes for 1 Kings 22:29-40

It's been said that in this battle, good King Jehoshaphat's life was miraculously saved, and wicked King Ahab's life was miraculously ended.

As Ahab was dying, he showed some courage by having himself propped up in his carriage facing the Syrians. But he never repented. It almost seems that God graciously gave him a final chance to repent of his many sins and wicked lifestyle while his life was lingering. But as far as the record goes, he died as an unrepentant sinner. The fact that the dogs licked up Ahab's blood by the pool of Samaria was a partial fulfillment of the prophecy that Elijah had pronounced upon Ahab in 1 Kings 21:19.

Ahab's ivory house (v39) has been uncovered in the ruins of Samaria. The internal wall panels of this palace were inlaid with ivory. You can see the ruins of that palace today.

Doctrinal Point for 1 Kings 22:29-40

God uses “random events” to accomplish His purposes.

Ahab was killed by an arrow shot at random - but it was not by chance! Maybe the man who drew his bow was a new recruit in the Syrian army, and maybe he hadn't yet been to the firing range for training. “Hey guys, how do you shoot this thing anyway? Oh, I see, you put this little notch on the string and pull back and...oh wow, I actually shot it.” The arrow was shot “at random” - but it was not by chance. God used a random event to accomplish His purposes.

Does God still use random events to accomplish His purposes? You better believe it! Ephesians 1:11 says that God “works all things after the counsel of His will.” **All things!** From God's perspective, there's no such thing as a random event. When something that appears to be a random event occurs in your life, you may feel you just happened to be in just the right place at the right time - or maybe you've felt you were in the wrong place at the wrong time. Have you ever had that experience, when events just seem to happen randomly? Remember, God uses “random events” to accomplish His purposes.

Practical Application for 1 Kings 22:29-40

How stupid can you get?

It's obvious that Ahab feared Micaiah's words, because he said, “I don't want to go into battle dressed up like a king. But you, Jehoshaphat - you wear your kingly robes.” And what Jehoshaphat was willing to do for King Ahab is almost unbelievable, because he replied, “OK. Whatever you say, Ahab.” Can you believe it? How stupid can you get? But the Lord miraculously preserved Jehoshaphat's life in spite of his stupidity!

That's a great lesson in itself. How often God bails us out of the consequences of our stupidity, even when the predicaments are of our own making. But that does not justify Jehoshaphat's stupidity, or our stupidity. If we had been able to describe this event to Jehoshaphat as he was coming to the throne, I'm sure he would have said, “You've got to be kidding. I'd never do something like that.” And no doubt we would say the same!

This passage warns us that we can get so entangled and ensnared in wrong associations that we may end up doing things - even shocking things - we never would have dreamed possible. 1 Corinthians 10:12 says, “*If you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!*” Is it possible that you're involved in a wrongful relationship or association? If so, you need to get out of that situation right away, before you're completely blinded and lose all sense of what's right and what's wrong. Let's pray that it will never be said of us, “How stupid can you get?”