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Old Testament Literature BIB102OC

March 06, 2023

The Good, the Sort of Bad, and the Ugly

At the end of the First Book Kings, we find the story of the prophet Micaiah and the Kings Jehoshaphat and Ahab. There are many lessons to learn from this story when examined up close. There is the righteous prophet of God Micaiah, the good but fallible King of Judah Jehoshaphat, and the wicked King of Israel Ahab.

King Ahab was one of the most if not the most wicked king in the history of Israel. He married Jezebel who together introduced all sorts of false worship during their reign in Israel. Some of the abominations they introduced included baal worship, temple prostitution, the construction of temples to foreign gods, and persecuting God's faithful people. In the story of Ahab, Jehoshaphat, and Micaiah the former asks the King of Judah if he would join him in battle to take the city of Ramoth Gilead. Jehoshaphat the King of Judah agrees but on one condition, they first consult with a prophet of God. King Ahab calls forth four hundred prophets who all predict that the conquest of Ramoth Gilead will be successful.

Jehoshaphat asks if there are any more prophets they can consult. Ahab admits there is still one more prophet, but he hates him because he always predicts evil against the king. Many sinful people today act the same way as King Ahab did towards God's prophet. Since God is a just God and warns that He will punish sin, many sinful people do not like God or want to know about Him. They make excuses like there are contradictions in the Bible or they don't agree with one thing or another. They have a prejudice against true religion because it makes them feel bad much like Ahab in relation to the prophesies of Micaiah. In the end Ahab chooses to avoid the truth and dies in his sins much like sinners

will unless they turn and repent. Micaiah warns Ahab that of his fate and that the conquest will be a failure. Ahab brushes the prophet's warnings aside because he wants to believe what he wants to believe.

Jehoshaphat the King of Judah allows himself to foolishly follow Ahab into battle. At first, he was right to inquire of the Lord before going to war, but he ultimately failed when he didn't heed God's warning. This is a lesson for all erring believers. "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? (2 Corinthians 6:14)." Jehoshaphat entered into an alliance with the worst of Israel's kings and he came out scathed. In life we are sometimes presented with difficult choices to make. It is very important to know who to follow if we want to be successful. In the scriptures we are admonished, "Do not turn to the right or the left; Remove your foot from evil (Proverbs 4:27)." Jehoshaphat, falling to the allurements of human wisdom forsook the way of the Lord and joined with King Ahab. Fortunately, God spared his life and he later repented of his folly.

The prophet Micaiah was a righteous man who was not afraid to speak the truth. Unlike the false prophets who spoke flattering words to gain the favor of powerful people, Micaiah put his faith in the living God. Since he spoke the truth King Ahab hated him and before the king's death, he threw Micaiah into prison. Micaiah suffered persecution for righteousness' sake. He knew that earthly kings who sat on thrones are only temporary but the God who sits on His throne in heaven reigns forever. His faith made him courageous, and he even placed his reputation as a true prophet on the line by telling everyone that if Ahab did not die while fighting for Ramoth Gilead, then God did not speak through him.

In the story of the prophet Micaiah and the Kings Jehoshaphat and Ahab we see three very different kinds of people. The wicked Ahab who resembles many sinful people that have a prejudice against God

and His Word. King Jehoshaphat whose intelligent but weak in faith and the prophet Micaiah who is righteous and not afraid to speak for God even if means persecution.