**Micaiah: The Prophet Who Stood Alone**

1 Kings 22:12-14 NKJV

*And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, “Go up to Ramoth-Gilead and prosper, for the LORD will deliver it into the king’s hand.” Then the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, “Now listen, the words of the prophets with one accord encourage the king. Please, let your word be like the word of them, and speak encouragement.” And Micaiah said, “As the LORD lives, whatever the LORD says to me, that I will speak.”*

When examining the prophets in Scripture, one would find that being commissioned by God to be His voice on Earth was not always the easiest of callings. It sometimes meant traveling from place to place with little-to-no provision. Prophets like Elijah and John the Baptist did not have a permanent place to call home and ate what they could find in the wilderness. Besides lacking necessities, the message which prophets carried was often unpopular and led to their ridicule and persecution, or even their death. The story (contained in only two chapters in Scripture) of a little-known prophet named Micaiah proves that we can learn important things like courage, integrity, and faithfulness, despite not having any writings of his own in the Bible.

Micaiah was a prophet who lived during the overlapping reigns of Kings Ahab and Jehoshaphat in about the years 870-850 B.C. By this point, Israel had been a divided kingdom for almost 80 years. Ahab ruled the Northern Kingdom (called “Israel”) while Jehoshaphat ruled the Southern Kingdom (called “Judah”). Three years before Micaiah’s story, Israel had gone to war against Ben-Hadad, an Aramean king, and won. Part of the treaty was for Ben-Hadad to give back the city of Ramoth-Gilead, once held by Israel; however, he went back on his promise. This leads to Ahab asking Jehoshaphat if he would join him in war against Aram (modern day Syria) to take back control of the city. Jehoshaphat agrees, but not without a request of his own.

As any good leader should do, or any good Christian for that matter, Jehoshaphat wants to inquire for the word of the LORD first. How often have we made decisions, great or small, without seeking *any* guidance whatsoever from God? While some of those decisions may not have ended in disaster, it is certain we could have spared ourselves some heartache at times had we sought Godly wisdom. Ahab, being a wicked and disobedient king, seeks counsel, not from God, but from about 400 false prophets, and they tell him exactly what he wants to hear: *“Go up, for the LORD will deliver it into the hand of the king”* (1 Kings 22:6). Jehoshaphat knows better than to take the advice from pagan prophets and asks for a prophet of God to be summoned. Ahab reluctantly tells him about Micaiah, but there is a huge problem…Ahab hates him! *“I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil”* (vs 8). This leaves Micaiah in quite the precarious situation: tell the king what he wants to hear and get on his good side or tell the king the truth and risk punishment.

Ahab calls for a messenger to retrieve Micaiah. Micaiah’s reputation for truth-telling is such that even the messenger tries to convince him to go along with what the other prophets had told the king. But Micaiah is a man of honor and integrity. He does what is right whether people see him or not. So, he will only speak the truth: *And Micaiah said, “As the LORD lives, whatever the LORD says to me, that I will speak”* (vs 14). Micaiah did not waiver in his loyalty to the truth. Do we compromise our honor and integrity to appease the masses? Do we satisfy the majority to avoid being the “odd man out?” When others hear our name, words like *truth, honesty,* and *integrity* should come to their minds. But are we pushovers when it comes to our word? Are we pushovers when it comes to God’s word? As Christians, TRUTH should be behind all that we do and say.

When King Ahab asks Micaiah if he should go to war, he sarcastically answers the king: *And he answered him, “Go and prosper, for the LORD will deliver it into the hand of the king!”* (vs 15). The king knows he is being facetious and angrily tells him to be truthful. So, he does, and it costs him: *“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…* (vss. 23,24) Micaiah’s punishment for speaking truth does not stop there. King Ahab says, *“Put this fellow in prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction, until I come in peace* (vs 27). “Bread of affliction” and “water of affliction” would have been the absolute minimum to keep him alive. King Ahab does not simply want to humiliate Micaiah. He wants to torture him! Like Jesus found out, truth comes with a price. It may cost us friends, family, freedom, or even our life, but siding with the enemy will always cost us much more. How willing are we to stand alone for the truth?

An important aspect of this story that cannot be lost is that prophecies were only considered “from God” if they came true. Micaiah says, *“If you ever return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me”* (vs 28). The only way of knowing if Micaiah is telling the truth is if King Ahab does not return from war. Ahab knows this, and he tries to thwart Micaiah’s prophecy by convincing Jehoshaphat to wear kingly garments into the war while he wears common clothes to disguise himself; however, God’s word will not be denied. An archer, at random, shoots an arrow into the air, and it pierces Ahab between the plates of his armor, and he dies exactly as Micaiah had prophesied. God’s word proved true, as it always does! The war to take the city was a disaster!

Micaiah stood firm on truth despite what it cost him. He obeyed God even though it meant standing all alone. That is the part we must understand. Sometimes the truth is a scary, lonely place to stand because, like God’s early prophets, we, too, carry an increasingly unpopular message according to the world. The question – will you obey God even if it means standing alone?