

God's Prophet Jailed for Refusing to Compromise Prophetic Word

What's your **prophetic** reputation? Are you known as the **prophet** who refuses to water down—or, worse, manufacture—a **prophetic word** to tickle the ears of those listening, or will you speak the **prophecy** boldly despite the persecution it may bring you?

Would you be willing to go to jail to maintain the purity of your prophetic ministry? Or would you instead go along with the hundreds of other prophets who give way to spirits of divination, Jezebel spirits, witchcraft or lying spirits in order to make hearers happy (and keep the offerings pouring in)?

Put another way, will you be like Ahab's prophets or like Micaiah?

Pontificating False Prophets

Here's the scene. There was no war between Aram and Israel for three years when Judah's King Jehoshaphat made a visit to Ahab's palace. The kings discussed going to war against Ramoth Gilead, but Jehoshaphat had enough wisdom to seek the counsel of the Lord before hitting the battlefield (1 Kings 22:1-6).

Ahab summoned about 400 **prophets** to ask, "Shall I go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain?" Unanimously, they told him to go and that he would succeed in overtaking the land.

Jehoshaphat wasn't so quick to put his faith in the false prophets. He asked Ahab if there was a prophet of the Lord available to weigh in.

"The king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, 'There is still one

prophet through whom we can inquire of the Lord, but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah'” (v. 8, NIV). Despite expecting bad news, Ahab called for Micaiah even as the **false prophets** continued their prophetic pontificating about his sure success in battle.

Don't Let Ahab's Messengers Intimidate You

Before Micaiah appeared before the two kings, the messenger who fetched him gave him a warning: “Look, the other **prophets** without exception are predicting success for the king. Let your word agree with theirs, and speak favorably” (v. 13). But Micaiah stood his ground and told the messenger he would only speak what the Lord told him.

Imagine the **prophetic** pressure that was on Micaiah! He knew what Ahab wanted to hear—and he knew the 400 **false prophets** had pumped Ahab up with expectation to take new land for his kingdom. Would Micaiah tell Ahab what he wanted to hear or truly stand on God's truth?

When Ahab asked Micaiah if he should go to war or not, the **prophet** first told him what he wanted to hear—not out of compromise but because, much like Balaam, the wicked king was determined to go to war no matter what the Lord's will was. It didn't really matter what Micaiah said. But Ahab picked up on Micaiah's clear undertones and insisted the **prophet** tell him the truth in the name of the Lord (vv. 15-16).

That's when Micaiah let it loose: “I saw all Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd, and the Lord said, ‘These people have no master. Let each one go home in peace.’

“Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne with all the multitudes of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left. And the Lord said, ‘Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?’

“One suggested this, and another that. Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the Lord and said, ‘I will entice him.’
...

“‘I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all his prophets,’ he said. ...

“So now the Lord has put a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The Lord has decreed disaster for you” (vv. 17, 19-21, 22, 23).

True Prophets Face Persecution

And that’s when the persecution began. Ahab completely disregarded the true **prophetic word**, even though the Lord was gracious enough to reveal what was going on behind the scenes.

Zedekiah, son of Kenaanah, slapped Micaiah in the face. Ahab ordered Micaiah put in prison with nothing but bread and water until his safe return. For Micaiah’s part, he didn’t back down from his God-breathed **prophecy**, boldly telling Ahab that if he ever returns safely, the Lord had not spoken through him (vv. 24-28).

Of course, Micaiah was right. Ahab was killed in battle. We don’t know if the **prophet** ever got out of prison or not. But Micaiah was a good and faithful witness for the Lord. Even if his earthly fate was to die in prison for his **prophetic** purity, he gains in eternity.

Unfortunately, too many in today’s **prophetic** ministry have a temporal view rather than an eternal view of their calling. Many would rather hang out in Ahab’s house than in caves or prisons eating bread and water.

But, modern-day **prophets**, I urge you to remember Micaiah. He set the example for us. Micaiah was familiar with Ahab’s displeasure in the wake of true **prophetic words**. Ahab’s own confession was that Micaiah never had anything good to tell

him. It's possible that Micaiah had faced persecution at Ahab or Jezebel's hand—or at the hands of the party-line prophets—throughout his ministry. But he stood strong. He spoke what he heard the Lord saying—nothing more and nothing less. Let the Micaiahs arise in this prophetic generation and be faithful witnesses to the truth! Amen.

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