**Anatomy of the Rejection of Truth – Ahab and Micaiah**

*1 Kings 22 (2 Chronicles 18)*

**Introduction**

1. As those who have seen the light, loved it, accepted it, and seek to enlighten others by it, we sometimes struggle to understand why it is often rejected.
2. How can someone be presented with plain truths, and still accept obvious lies?
3. There are insidious nuances to the workings of Satan to cause so many to reject obvious truths and accept obvious lies.
4. We must make sure we are not headed down a path to reject truth and believe lies.
5. The Text in Context
6. Syria (King – Ben-Hadad) wars against Israel (King – Ahab), and Israel wins. (**1 Kings 20:1-22**)
7. Servants of Ben-Hadad convinced him they lost because God is of the hills, but not of the valleys. Syria fought with Israel again, this time in the plain, and lost again. (**1 Kings 20:23-30**)
8. God appointed Ben-Hadad to destruction, so when Ahab made a treaty with him and let him go, God sent a prophet to Ahab and said he would pay for his choice with his life. (**1 Kings 20:31-43**)
9. Ahab covets a man’s (Naboth) vineyard, and murders him to take it for himself. God said he’d die for it, and calamity would be brought on him and his house. (**1 Kings 21**).
10. **1 Kings 22:1** – 3 years of peace between Syria and Israel.
11. Ahab decides to make the first move this time, and seeks help from the southern part of the divided kingdom – Judah (King – Jehoshaphat). (**1 Kings 22:1-40**)
	1. Ahab seeks to take back Ramoth Gilead, which Ben-Hadad failed to restore as part of the treaty (**cf. 1 Kings 20:34**).
	2. Jehoshaphat agrees to help, but requests to inquire for the word of the Lord.
	3. Prophets are consulted – 400 false, 1 true.
	4. The false prophets tell Ahab what he wants to hear – the Lord is with him, go take Ramoth Gilead.
	5. The true prophet, Micaiah, tells Ahab what he feared – the Lord is not with him, and to go would mean sure disaster – **1 Kings 22:17**
		1. Micaiah explains that God revealed to him that He was allowing Ahab to believe a lying spirit.
		2. Ahab sends Micaiah back to prison and instructs for him to be treated poorly.
	6. Ahab and Jehoshaphat go out to take Ramoth Gilead from the Syrians and Ben-Hedad despite Micaiah’s warning.
		1. Ahab disguises himself, but is still killed – shot with a random arrow (**cf. 1 Kings 22:34**).
		2. The army of Israel scattered and returned to their homes as God said they would (**cf. 1 Kings 22:36**).
		3. Ahab was buried in Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood as the Lord said would happen after he had murdered Naboth for his vineyard (**cf. 1 Kings 21:19**).
12. Present Actions Can Make Us Vulnerable to Future Rejection of Truth
13. Ahab wanted Ramoth Gilead – **1 Kings 22:3**
	1. The reason Ramoth Gilead was still in Ben-Hadad’s (Syria’s) control was due to Ahab’s failure to follow God’s commands – **1 Kings 20:34, 42**
	2. The whole situation was contrived by Ahab’s failure to obey, and it set him up for the future rejection of revealed truth concerning this endeavor.
	3. If he had obeyed God, he would not be in this situation and would not be confronted with the temptation to reject Micaiah’s revelation.
14. Our decisions to disregard and disobey God’s word bring lasting consequences – **Psalm 1:1-2** – a progression in ungodliness – seeking counsel, sinning, scoffing.
	1. **Romans 6:19** – lawlessness leads to more lawlessness.
	2. We cannot convince ourselves that we can reject truth now and accept it later. It very seldom works like that.
15. Mere Appearance of Love for Truth Can Lead to the Rejection of Truth
16. Jehoshaphat asked to inquire for the word of the Lord, and Ahab brought prophets together to consult – **1 Kings 22:4-8**
	1. **(vv. 7-8)** – By Jehoshaphat’s response, and Ahab’s reply it was known that these prophets were false.
	2. It was not that Ahab cut out the idea of consulting God altogether. He wasn’t simply claiming to make decisions on his own, but by the false prophets made it appear that he sought the Lord’s will.
	3. **1 Kings 22:13** – these were “Yes men” who did not receive revelation from God.
		1. Their words meant nothing, and this was pretended godliness on Ahab’s part.
17. **2 Timothy 3:5** – Where there is mere outward show of devotion without sincere inward conviction it is meaningless and will be extremely inconsistent.
	1. Those of **vv. 1-4** are the ones of **v. 5.**
18. **2 Thessalonians 2:9-12** – those who do not truly love the truth and devote their entire lives to it will be deceived into believing a lie. (Note: not that they accept it as a lie, but are deceived by it because they have not truly loved the truth.)
19. Outward Circumstances Can Alter Our Discernment and Lead to the Rejection of Truth
20. Jehoshaphat and Ahab were connected by marriage – **2 Chronicles 18:1**
	1. Jehoshaphat was a good king for the most part, who did what was ***“right in the eyes of the Lord” (1 Kings 22:43).***
	2. Jehoshaphat allied himself with Ahab by having his son marry Ahab’s daughter – **2 Kings 8:18**
	3. **Jehoshaphat committed to helping Ahab before he thought to ask God.**
	4. Family can cloud our discernment. We must love Jesus more – **Matthew 10:34-37**
21. Relationships Affect Our Interactions with Truth
	* 1. “When even a good man becomes too familiar with a wicked man, he is likely to join him in his schemes.” (Whiteside, R.L., Bible Studies Vol. 2, pg. 219).
		2. **Proverbs 13:20; Matthew 15:14** – when you associate with the unwise or ignorant, they will rub off on you.
	1. Sometimes we cannot help who we are around, but many times we make the decision ourselves – marriage, friendships, etc.
22. Ahab did not simply ask Jehoshaphat to go with him, but ***“persuaded him”*** with material things – **2 Chronicles 18:2-3**
	1. ***“persuaded him”*** – ***“induced him” (NASB, ESV)***
		1. “mislead, incite” (HALOT)
		2. “2 Chronicles 18:2; 32:11 (to deceive, Rudolph)” (ibid.)
	2. We must not be deceived by the pleasures of life – **Matthew 13:22**
23. Subjective Foundations of Inquiry Can Lead to the Rejection of Truth
24. Ahab’s desire preceded asking about the Lord’s desire – **1 Kings 22:3**
	1. When he spoke of Micaiah, it was made clear that his desire took precedent over God’s will – **1 Kings 22:8**
25. Jehoshaphat made a rash decision, AND THEN inquired for the word of the Lord – **1 Kings 22:4-5**
	1. Even after hearing the warning of Micaiah he went with Ahab – **1 Kings 22:17, 29**
		1. Perhaps he was afraid to go back on his commitment he made to Ahab.
	2. The Lord spared him despite this blunder – **2 Chronicles 18:31-32**
26. If we are looking to the truth with a preconceived notion/desire/made decision, we may be blinded to the truth – **Luke 10:29; James 1:6-8**
27. If we really want the truth we will seek it objectively.
28. A Prejudiced View of a Messenger Can Lead to the Rejection of Truth
29. Ahab already made up his mind to ignore anything coming from Micaiah because he just thought the prophet was out to get him – **1 Kings 22:8**
	1. It seems he may have had the same misunderstanding of the prophet’s ability as Balak (Balaam the prophet) – **Numbers 22:10-12, 18**
		1. Or Amaziah to Amos – **Amos 7:12-17**
	2. Micaiah’s word had nothing to do with his own feelings toward Ahab (even if they were poor feelings). God’s word is dictated by God!
30. The truth is impartial, and the messenger should not be a part of its evaluation – **Matthew 11:16-19; Mark 6:1-6** (Nazareth)
	1. Not smart enough, too smart, past conflict, past hypocrisy, etc.
31. Misuse of the Truth Can Lead to the Rejection of Truth
32. When Micaiah was on his way, Zedekiah sought to further persuade Ahab and Jehoshaphat that it was God’s will for them to go to Ramoth Gilead – **1 Kings 22:11-12**
	1. Horns likely a symbol – **Deuteronomy 33:17**
	2. However, just because the passage said as much, did not mean it was rightly applied to the current situation – **Deuteronomy 32:46-47** – contingent on their fidelity to God.
33. The devil uses scripture to persuade us about lies – **Matthew 4:5-7**
34. If we don’t rightly divide God’s word, and are careless in our handling of it we will put ourselves in the position to reject truth – **2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Peter 3:16**
35. Wanting to Believe a Lie Will Lead to the Rejection of Truth
36. After giving the warning, Micaiah described a vision the Lord gave him about the background to the whole situation – **1 Kings 22:19-23**
	1. God gave Ahab over to his desires and allowed him to be deceived by false prophecy.
	2. God has done this several times – **Isaiah 19:13-14** (Egypt); **Isaiah 29:9-10** (Judah); **Ezekiel 14:4-5**
37. God will allow us to believe what we want to believe – **2 Thessalonians 2:11; Romans 1:24, 26, 28**
38. Resentment Instead of Humility Can Lead to the Rejection of Truth
39. When Micaiah implicated Zedekiah and the other 399 prophets with false prophecy Zedekiah lashed out – **1 Kings 22:24**
	1. “The insolence of this man, the leader of the false prophets, seems to have been provoked by jealousy at Micaiah's assumed monopoly of the spirit of inspiration.” (Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary)
	2. Truth does not require retaliation to such deeds – **1 Kings 22:25**
40. Jesus to the incorrigible Pharisees – **John 9:39-41** – they were unwilling to admit their blindness, so they would never truly see.
41. When there is proof that we are in sin, or error, or mistaken in some sense, we must not react as though something has been taken from us, but should be thankful we have been corrected – **Galatians 6:1, 6** (the teacher has the good things, and the one corrected is to share in it with him instead of rejecting it)
	1. Apollos is a great case-study for this – **Acts 18:24-28**
42. Believing God’s Truth Can be Cheated Will Lead to the Rejection of Truth
43. Though God warned him through Micaiah, Ahab went to do what he wanted anyway. However, his actions show he knew the warning to be true, though he thought he could cheat God’s word and win – **1 Kings 22:30**
	1. There is no way to cheat God’s word and win.
	2. He died by a random arrow of all things – **1 Kings 22:34**
	3. The blood was on his own hands – **Ezekiel 3:18-19**
44. How will you escape?! – **Matthew 23:31-36**
45. God is not mocked – **Galatians 6:7-9**
46. God sees all, and will judge all by His word – **Hebrews 4:11-13**

**Conclusion**

1. The account of Ahab and Micaiah gives some details as to the underlying workings in regard to the rejection of truth.
2. We must make sure we avoid these mistakes, and seek truth always.