

**2Chronicles 18:1** ¶ Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab.

**2Chronicles 18:2** And after *certain* years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that *he had* with him, and persuaded him to go up *with him* to Ramothgilead.

**2Chronicles 18:3** And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramothgilead? And he answered him, I *am* as thou *art*, and my people as thy people; and *we will be* with thee in the war.

**2Chronicles 18:4** ¶ And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to day.

This chapter basically mirrors chapter 22 of 1Kings.

We are reminded once again that Jehoshaphat was a very wealthy king. Sadly, he was closely connected to King Ahab in Israel through marriage. Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram married Ahab's daughter.

*2 Chronicles 21:5–6 "Jehoram was thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife...."*

Guzik provides some insight: "This manner of linking kingdoms by the bond of marriage was common in the ancient world, yet it was unwise policy for Jehoshaphat. The wisest strategy for the protection of his kingdom was *obedience* instead of compromise with the ungodly King Ahab of Israel and his wife, Queen Jezebel."

After some time, Jehoshaphat went to visit Ahab in Samaria; and Ahab made a great feast for him and his entourage. During that visit Ahab asked Jehoshaphat to go to war with him against Ramothgilead, and the king of Judah agreed to join forces with him. He did ask, however, that Ahab make enquiry to see if this action was in accordance with God's will.

V2 "he went down to Ahab in Samaria" – The IVP Old Testament Commentary explains: "Jerusalem is quite a bit higher in elevation than Samaria, but even if they had been equal, one would still have gone down to Samaria because of the descent out of the Jerusalem hills to go in most any direction. The distance between these two capital cities was about forty miles."

More insight from Guzik: "Previously, the King of Syria promised to return certain cities to Israel in exchange for leniency after defeat in battle. Apparently this was a city that Ben-Hadad never returned to Israel and it was in a strategically important location."

**2Chronicles 18:5** Therefore the king of Israel gathered together of prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramothgilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for God will deliver *it* into the king's hand.

**2Chronicles 18:6** But Jehoshaphat said, *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD

**besides, that we might enquire of him?**

Ahab gathered his prophets together; in all they numbered 400. He asked them if he should go to war to reclaim Ramothgilead or not. As a group, they told him to go because God would give him the victory.

Jehoshaphat realized that these men were not true prophets of the LORD God of Israel. He asked Ahab if there were a prophet of the LORD that they could ask.

**2Chronicles 18:7 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *There is yet one man, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla.* And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.**

**2Chronicles 18:8 And the king of Israel called for one of *his* officers, and said, Fetch quickly Micaiah the son of Imla.**

Ahab answered that there was one man (in Samaria – Elijah and Elisha were somewhere else), Micaiah the son of Imlah, through whom they could seek the LORD's will. He quickly pointed out that he hated Micaiah because he never prophesied good for him. Jehoshaphat admonished the king for his remark. So Ahab called one of his officers and sent him to get the prophet Micaiah.

Some commentators infer from the context in 1Kings that Micaiah was in prison at the time.

*1 Kings 22:26 "And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him **back** unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son...."*

**2Chronicles 18:9 And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah sat either of them on his throne, clothed in *their* robes, and they sat in a void place at the entering in of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them.**

**2Chronicles 18:10 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made him horns of iron, and said, Thus saith the LORD, With these thou shalt push Syria until they be consumed.**

**2Chronicles 18:11 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramothgilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king.**

Both Ahab and Jehoshaphat sat on thrones in their royal robes in an open area at the entrance of the gate to Samaria. Guzik notes: "This illustrates the ancient custom of holding court and making decisions at the gates of the city."

Zedekiah, son of Chenaanah, made himself a set of horns out of iron and told Ahab that they testified to the fact that he would gore or wound the Syrians until they were all dead. The rest of the prophets affirmed him and continued to declare that the LORD (this time referencing the God of Israel) would give Ahab the victory.

**2Chronicles 18:12 And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake to him, saying, Behold, the words of the prophets *declare* good to the king with one assent; let thy word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and speak thou good.**

**2Chronicles 18:13 And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak.**

The soldier sent to fetch Micaiah told him that the rest of the prophets had assured the king that he would be victorious over the Syrians. He urged Micaiah to join that affirmation. Some commentators conclude that the soldier felt pity for Micaiah and hoped to help him find favor with the king and get released from prison.

Micaiah answered that he would surely speak whatever “my” God (the LORD God of Israel) told him to say.

**2Chronicles 18:14 And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramothgilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And he said, Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand.**

**2Chronicles 18:15 And the king said to him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me in the name of the LORD?**

When Micaiah arrived, Ahab asked him if he should go and fight for Ramothgilead. The prophet told him to go because the LORD would give him the victory.

Ahab must have sensed from the prophet’s tone that his answer was not sincere. He basically told Micaiah that he only wanted to hear the truth as revealed by the LORD (the God of Israel).

**2Chronicles 18:16 Then he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master; let them return *therefore* every man to his house in peace.**

**2Chronicles 18:17 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee *that* he would not prophesy good unto me, but evil?**

So Micaiah told Ahab that he saw the troops of Israel scattered on the mountains like sheep without a shepherd. The LORD declared that they were men without a master and should go back home. That they did not have a master indicated that Ahab would die.

Ahab immediately turned to Jehoshaphat and basically said, “I told you so.” He complained that Micaiah never prophesied good for him.

**2Chronicles 18:18 Again he said, Therefore hear the word of the LORD; I saw the LORD sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and *on* his left.**

**2Chronicles 18:19 And the LORD said, Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one spake saying after this**

**manner, and another saying after that manner.**

**2Chronicles 18:20** Then there came out a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will entice him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith?

**2Chronicles 18:21** And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And *the LORD* said, Thou shalt entice *him*, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do *even* so.

**2Chronicles 18:22** Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil against thee.

Micaiah declared that the LORD had given him a vision. He had seen the LORD sitting on his throne flanked by the hosts of heaven on his right and left. The LORD said, "Who will go and persuade Ahab to go to Ramothgilead and be killed?" After hearing from some of His servants, one of the spirits (angels in the host) came before the LORD and volunteered. The LORD asked him how he planned to accomplish his mission. He answered that he would put a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets. The LORD told the spirit that he would succeed in his mission and sent him out.

Micaiah concluded by explaining to Ahab that the LORD (through His angel) had put a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets because He had determined to destroy him.

Some commentators insist that the angel that volunteered to put the lying spirit in the mouths of the prophets was a fallen angel. I am not so sure. We know from other scripture that an angel killed 185,000 Assyrians. Is making people lie any worse than killing?

*Isaiah 37:36* "Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses."

I believe any action taken in accordance with the purposes of God is righteous. When done by evil men in accordance with their own desires, it is evil on their part even though it accomplishes what is righteous in accordance with God's will. When done by a servant of God in accordance with His will/word, it is righteous. Think of David killing Goliath and Samuel killing the Amalekite king.

*1 Samuel 17:45 & 49* "Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.... And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth."

*1 Samuel 15:32–33* "Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past. And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal."

**2Chronicles 18:23 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and smote Micaiah upon the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?**

The prophet's answer angered Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah; he stepped forward and slapped Micaiah across the face. Then he said, "How did the Spirit of the LORD go from me to speak to you?"

**2Chronicles 18:24 And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see on that day when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself.**

Micaiah basically said, "You'll soon find out when you find yourself hiding out" (in fear seems to be implied).

**2Chronicles 18:25 Then the king of Israel said, Take ye Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son;**

**2Chronicles 18:26 And say, Thus saith the king, Put this *fellow* in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I return in peace.**

**2Chronicles 18:27 And Micaiah said, If thou certainly return in peace, *then* hath not the LORD spoken by me. And he said, Harken, all ye people.**

Ahab ordered his men to take Micaiah back to Amon, the governor of the city, and Joash, Ahab's son. They were to tell them that Micaiah was to be put in the prison and fed with only bread and water until he returned in peace. Though Ahab's anger was directed at Micaiah, it was really the LORD with whom he was angry—whether he would admit it or not.

Micaiah boldly spoke up and declared that if Ahab returned, they would know that the LORD had not spoken by him. Then he addressed the others present and told them to take note of what he said. He basically said, "Mark my words." In other words, he was confident that the LORD would prove his message to be genuine and true.

**2Chronicles 18:28 ¶ So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramothgilead.**

So Ahab and Jehoshaphat headed out to war.

This is truly puzzling. Jehoshaphat made a point of wanting to hear from a true prophet of the LORD, yet disregarded his counsel.

**2Chronicles 18:29 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and will go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes. So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went to the battle.**

**2Chronicles 18:30 Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that *were* with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or great, save only**

with the king of Israel.

**2Chronicles 18:31** And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, *It is the king of Israel.* Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him; and God moved them *to depart* from him.

**2Chronicles 18:32** For it came to pass, that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again from pursuing him.

Ahab told Jehoshaphat that he was going to disguise himself as they went into battle; however, he wanted Jehoshaphat to wear his royal robes.

It seems that Jehoshaphat is a bit lacking in common sense. Didn't he realize that Ahab was making him a target?

The king of Syria, Benhadad, commanded the 32 captains that manned his chariots not to fight with anyone (except in their own defense I presume) except the king of Israel, Ahab. When the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat in his royal robes, they assumed it was Ahab. When they began to attack him, he cried out (in prayer I am sure) and the LORD intervened (supernaturally in some way I think) to make sure that they saw that it was not Ahab; so they quit chasing him.

**2Chronicles 18:33** And a *certain* man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: therefore he said to his chariot man, Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am wounded.

**2Chronicles 18:34** And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed *himself* up in *his* chariot against the Syrians until the even: and about the time of the sun going down he died.

During the fight, one of the Syrian soldiers hit Ahab with an arrow between the joint that connected his lower armor to his breastplate. He called out for the driver of his chariot to get him off the battlefield because he was wounded.

I liked this quote from Morgan that Guzik used: "Men may secrete themselves so that other men may never find them; but when the hour of their judgment has come, God takes hold on some ordinary event and makes it the highway on which He comes to carry out His purpose. 'It just happened,' says the man of the world. 'God did it,' says the man of faith."

And this one from Trapp: "And now what joy could Ahab's black soul, ready to depart, have of his ivory house? Who had not rather be a Micaiah in the jail than Ahab in the chariot? Wicked men have the advantage of the way, godly men of the end."

The battle intensified and continued all that day as the king watched, standing propped up in his chariot. Eventually, it seems he bled to death. The prophet

Micaiah was vindicated.

That Ahab tried to remain visible and supportive of his troops actually showed a bit of courage.

Finally, as the sun was setting, the troops of Israel were ordered to return home. I assume this was because of the death of the king.

King Ahab was taken to Samaria and buried.

*1 Kings 22:37 "So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria."*