

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
FOUR THINGS “SPIN” CAUSES
1 KINGS 22:4-34

Introduction

Last week we began to look at Ahab’s “*Spin Doctors*”, the 400 false prophets that told him what he wanted to hear rather than the truth!

Micaiah was a true prophet who stood alone and spoke the truth when the majority of the prophets here were presenting to the king what we now call “*SPIN*”.

“*SPIN*” is the present day word for “*fudging the truth.*” We might call it “*the inclination to make truth what you want it to be.*”

The danger of *SPIN* is that **it can serve to make the audience quite content with the illusion of truth rather than the reality of truth.**

WE SAW HOW AHAB’S CAMPAIGN AGAINST SYRIA BEGAN.

**Israel Was Not Being Provoked By Syria This Time!
Judah’s King Jehoshaphat Joined Affinity With Ahab!
Ahab thought that would be a good time to battle Syria!**

WE SAW JEHOSHOPHAT CALL FOR AHAB TO ENQUIRE AT THE WORD OF THE LORD ABOUT WHAT THEY SHOULD DO!

WE SEE AHAB CALLED HIS SPIN DOCTORS IN!

God’s truth was available to King Ahab and to the people of Israel.

Tonight we’ll see that God’s truth was presented to the king and to the people by the Prophet Machaiah.

But Ahab wanted to DO what he wanted to DO! And so he wanted to HEAR what he wanted to HEAR! He didn’t want ANYONE telling him that it was NOT OK for him to go to battle!

I said last week that I was going to share four things that happen when we try to SPIN GOD’S TRUTH!

Read Scripture: 1 Kings 22:5-12

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I. SPIN CAN CAUSE US TO ACCEPT FALSE ASSURANCES REGARDING OUR PLANS OR PURPOSES RATHER THAN GOD’S WARNINGS!

In *Verses 5-6*, we see that **King Ahab had already decided what he wanted to do! His mind was made up!** He was going to enter into battle with Ben-Hadad, the King of Syria, whether God wanted him to do it or not!

The ONLY reason that Ahab called upon these prophets was because his important new ally, Jehoshaphat, wanted him to!

So, the king found 400 prophets that were his “*SPIN-doctors.*” These were 400 “*yes-men*” who would confirm his plans.

It didn’t matter if they spoke the truth or not. You see **Ahab had not only made up his mind regarding what he wanted to do, but he had also made up his mind about what he wanted the Word of God to be regarding his plans!**

Have you ever met people like that? Have you ever done that yourself?

Some folks have figured out exactly what they think God ought to say about something they are involved in or a loved one of their’s is involved in and they won’t hear anything else!

If the Word of God agrees with their ideas, if it agrees with their plans, if it agrees with their practices, then they’ll listen to it. But if not, they don’t want to hear it or they will twist it to mean what they want it to mean!

But, the Word of God must be taken in its entirety, not just selectively. We aren’t just pick and choose what we want to hear from God’s Word!

Notice something about these prophets in *verse 6*. Ahab called in about 400 of them, all who all agreed in their testimony.

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(As if by sheer numbers, they could make a lie to be the truth.)

Listen, **Truth is not up for a vote and it is not majority rule!**

These prophets came while feigning to speak for the LORD God! Listen, the most seductive enemy we face is not the one who comes to us bearing the name of another god; it is the one who comes to us falsely in the name of our LORD!

They may **look and sound similar** to us, they may even **bear the same name that we do and use our terminology**; but, **they are not of us if they don't speak the true Word of God!**

Jehoshaphat seemed to be very discerning here in *verse 7!* His question indicates that he wasn't falling for the spin! He wasn't being fooled by the parade of these false prophets who he could tell were pandering to Ahab!

Notice also that these prophets are what I call very **“charismatic dramatic.”** *In Verse 11*, we see the one called Zedekiah even acted out some of his prophecy!

But, notice something else about their prophecy! What they say is actually quite vague in certain respects! **Note verses 6 and 12-** *“Go up; for the Lord will deliver it into the hand of the King”*

Deliver what into the hand of the king? The battle? The city? The army? Your life? **What king?** Ben-Hadad? King Ahab?

Now, I ask you—what kind of prophecy is that? It has a deliberate **“double meaning”**—a prophecy that can go both ways, so that even if the king loses, the prophet doesn't lose his credibility. The prophets could say, *“We weren't wrong; we were just misunderstood.”*

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There are many today who give similar vague words said to be representing the Word of the LORD. They say them with conviction, and it may sound so certain; but, when you check it out against what God really says, you find out it is not God's Word at all!

Then, there is God's true Word, spoken by the minority who are MOCKED and OPPOSED and SCORNEED by the majority for being so narrow-minded!

Nevertheless, it is a **clear Word! It is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword! It is piercing! It is discerning! It is the living Word of God! It is Truth! And it will be fulfilled in spite of what the SPIN doctors say!**

SPIN CAN CAUSE US TO ACCEPT FALSE ASSURANCES REGARDING OUR PLANS OR PURPOSES RATHER THAN GOD'S WARNINGS!

II. SPIN CAN CAUSE US TO CLOSE OUR EARS TO GOD'S TRUTH RATHER THAN OPENING OUR HEARTS TO HEAR AND DO WHAT HE SAYS!

In Vs. 7-8- Jehoshaphat recognized that he had not yet heard the Word of the LORD; and so, he asked if there were any others of whom they might inquire.

“One”, says Ahab, “His name is Micaiah- but I hate him...” Why?

Because he has been proven false? No!

Because he comes in the name of a false god? No!

“...because he never prophesies anything good concerning me.”

Jehoshaphat responded, *“Let not the king say so”* or *“The king should not say that.”*

In other words, he was saying. . . *“Don't prejudice yourself. Maybe your desire to hear only something good about you has prevented you from hearing the truth about you.”*

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In *Vs 13-18*, we see that Micaiah is brought to Ahab and Jehoshaphat. **Notice the warning of the messenger to Micaiah in verse 13.**

He was basically saying *“Micaiah, in this city, truth is majority rule. Truth is according to the vote of those who say what the king wants to hear. So, don’t blow it by your lonely, puny, solitary voice upsetting the way things are being done. You should say what the others say.”*

How many times have you heard somebody appeal to the same authority- *“Everybody’s doing it. We have the votes. The majority wants it that way, so that’s the way it is. Why don’t you just conform?”*

When that happens, **we need the courage to speak** as Micaiah did!
Vs. 14-“What the Lord saith unto me, that I will speak.”

Martin Luther was asked at one time if he knew that the whole world was against him because of his uncompromising commitment to God’s Word. His answer was— *“Then, I am against the whole world!”*

May our testimony agree with God’s Word rather than the statistical majority.

Vs. 15- Micaiah stood before the king; and Ahab asked him, *“Shall we go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle?”*

Micaiah could read him like a book. He knew that Ahab’s question was insincere. He knew that this whole scene was a charade; **so, he answered sarcastically and mockingly of the other prophets.**

Vs. 16- Ahab’s response was an interesting one.

Notice, he did not say, *“speak your mind”* or *“speak your opinion of what God’s Word says.”* He knew deep down that the response he had just heard was not the truth of God. So, he said, ***“speak the truth.”***

Vs. 17- Now we see where Micaiah’s tone changed. He said that Israel would lose their king (and become like sheep without a shepherd) and the people of Israel would be scattered and would retreat.

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Vs. 18- Ahab responded- ***“Didn’t I tell you that he never prophesies anything good about me, but only bad?”*** Can you beat that response?

You can’t ever win with a fellow like that! Here Ahab is, caught between truth and its consequences. He knew that the first assuring words from Micaiah were not a true Word from God!

But, he cannot accept the Truth either because he knew that it disagreed with his plans, it disagreed with his lifestyle, and it was not a good Word toward him. No response would be satisfactory for him!

Have you ever had that happen to you? Sometimes we hear the Word of the LORD, but it disagrees with us and our plans and our attitudes and our sins. We recognize that **the knowledge of God’s truth puts a claim on our lives!**

The Word of God requires not just our affirmation, but our obedience! So, we are caught between the truth and its consequences, and of course we don’t want to accept those consequences. So what do we do next? We try to rationalize it away!

I heard an excellent definition of rationalization- **rationalization is *“finding reasons in your mind to justify what you know is wrong in your heart.”***

When we know in our heart what God’s will is, but we see that doing right is going to cost us too much. We come up with very rational sounding arguments to justify our behavior:

“It feels right, so it must be right.”

“But, my friend does it, and he is a Christian.”

“I’m not really hurting anybody.”

“What I’m doing is not technically illegal.”

Know this for certain: it costs much more to walk any way other than the LORD’s way! It cost King Ahab his life, for a battle that didn’t matter much anyway.

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HE SAYS!*

**III. SPIN CAN CAUSE US TO USE OUR EFFORTS TO TRY TO
CHANGE THE REALITY OF GOD’S TRUTH RATHER THAN
JUST ACCEPTING IT AND SUBMITTING TO IT!**

Vs. 27-28-Ahab had Micaiah put into prison until he returned in safety!
It was as if he thought by putting Micaiah in prison, he could change
the reality of God’s Word against his actions!

Ahab’s anger here was directed upon God’s messenger, Micaiah! It is
also as if he thought Micaiah personally wished this defeat upon him!

Or it was as if Ahab thought Micaiah could get God to change His
Word somehow! I don’t know but maybe Ahab thought that the
prophet was not just a mouthpiece for God, but an influence upon Him!

Ahab may have thought that the prophet was just being judgmental and
not very loving toward him. But, the fact that he spoke God’s Truth
without compromise was the most loving thing that Micaiah could do.

Micaiah warned him about the decree of death that would result from
his foolish course of action! That decree came, not from Micaiah, but
from the sovereign, all-powerful God!

**Sometimes people vent their anger upon the messenger when their
real problem is with God and His message!**

Sometimes, when we try to warn people about disaster that will
certainly follow their foolish course of action, they may say to us,
“You are just being judgmental and unloving toward me!”

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When in fact, nothing can be further from the truth!

**If when we speak the Word of God folks get mad at us, their anger
is directed in the wrong place because we are just repeating what
God said!** They may respond in anger toward us, but God’s Word is
their problem! They are just taking it out on us because we speak it!

And even if they could force us to change what we speak, that doesn’t
change the Word of God or the Truth of it one bit!

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**IV. SPIN CAN CAUSE US TO WRONGFULLY THINK THAT
SOMEHOW WE CAN PREVENT GOD’S TRUTH FROM
BECOMING A REALITY IN OUR LIVES!**

Vs. 29-30- It is interesting to note that 400 prophets said, *“Go ahead,
and the Lord will give it into the hand of the king”*, and only 1 prophet
said, *“You will be utterly destroyed”*—yet, the words from Micaiah,
the lone prophet haunted the king, and prompted him to take action.
He disguised himself as one of his soldiers.

It was a foolish action. Maybe he thought he was less of a target to the
Syrians by doing this. **But he wasn’t any less of a target to God!**

How many people respond to God like that! The Word of God haunts
them and they can’t escape from it. Even though it may be a *“still
small voice”* from a small minority of people, **they are still troubled
by the truth!**

So, if one is not ready to change his life, what other option does he
have? Disguise himself...disguise his behavior...maybe try to take the
sting out of his sin, and perhaps even call it a virtue.

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So, sodomy is not called sin, but “*gay or an alternative lifestyle*”.

Adultery is not called sin, but “*an affair of the heart*”.

Greed and covetousness is not called sin, but rather “*ambition.*”

When we gloss over our sin or try to excuse our sinful behavior, we are attempting to disguise ourselves from God’s truth.

But, be assured, **no disguise can hide us from the penetrating Word of God.** Jesus said, *Luke 12:2-3*–“*For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. 3Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.*”

But, now, notice *vs. 31-34!* That is a great illustration of what the Word of God does! God’s Word penetrates deep, and penetrates the “*armor*” that we might try to put up to try to hide ourselves from it!

A. God Will Use The Arrow Of His WORD To Bring CONVICTION In Our Soul!

vs. 7-8- Both Jehoshaphat and Ahab agreed that the words spoken by the 400 prophets were not the Word of the LORD. **There was an inner conviction as to the truth of God, even though they both chose not to act on that truth.**

Micaiah’s message was a true and faithful Word from God that penetrated deep into the king’s soul!

God’s Word is always true!

How about us? **We know that when we hear the Word of God, there is His Holy Spirit, that inner voice that brings CONVICTION about God’s truth!**

John 14:26- “*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*”

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The question is: What is our response to the Holy Spirit’s CONVICTION? Will we allow Him to guide us in God’s truth? Are we willing to obey what we already know from His Word And His Holy Spirit’s working in our hearts to be true?

B. God Will Use The Arrow Of His JUDGMENT Or CHASTISEMENT If Need Be To Pierce Our Resistance!

Despite Ahab’s false hopes, false assurances, despite his attempts to close his ears to God’s truth and his attempts to prevent God’s truth from becoming a reality, and despite his best efforts to disguise himself, God’s truth did prevail!

The LORD caused an arrow to penetrate a weak spot in Ahab’s armor! He died according to God’s Word!

And, in the end, only one prophet was vindicated. One man among the 400 stood out and passed the test of being a true Prophet of God. (*Cf. Deuteronomy 18:21-22*)

Conclusion

Do we “*pass the test?*” Do we speak God’s truth without SPIN, despite being in the minority, despite being mocked, scorned and even rejected because of it?

May we speak it because of our love for God and our love for those who don’t know Him.

Whether we succeed or fail in bringing that person around isn’t the primary issue; the primary issue is, were we faithful to do what God wanted us to do? Were we faithful to say what God wanted us to say?”

The “SPIN” doctors will come and go, but God’s truth will remain forever!