

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
AHAB'S "SPIN DOCTORS"
1 KINGS 22:1-8; 2 CHRONICLES 18:1-3

Introduction

We continue our series in the Book of 1 Kings tonight that takes us to this last Chapter! For a number of weeks now **we have seen the wickedness of King Ahab and his wicked wife Jezebel!**

Last time we saw how **the LORD sent the Prophet Elijah to deliver some bad news to Ahab!** Because Ahab and Jezebel were the ones responsible for Naboth's and his sons being killed so they could steal his vineyard, **the LORD was going to bring down Ahab and his whole house!**

However, because Ahab humbled himself before the LORD at hearing the prophecy of his demise, **the LORD said that he would not bring about the promised evil against Ahab's family while Ahab was still alive!**

Well, it had been three years since the last war between Syria and Israel according to *verse 1* here and **there is one prophecy that we will see fulfilled and another prophecy that will have a portion fulfilled here.**

The one prophecy that will be fulfilled is the one that came from the unnamed prophet of the LORD at the end of previous war with Syria! (*1 Kings 20:42ff*)

The portion of the other prophecy that we will see fulfilled here is part of the one we saw last week against Ahab and his family! The LORD said the dogs were going to lick Ahab's blood in the same place that they licked Naboth's blood when he was killed! When we get to the actual battle with Syria (which won't be tonight), we will see this fulfilled!

Now there are some characters in the Bible who are unknown or little known to us, but their stories are significant in God's plan and purpose in history. We have already seen **a couple of unnamed prophets** whom the LORD used to prophesy to Ahab **in addition to the Prophet Elijah who is named!**

In this chapter we have **a Prophet whom we know little to nothing about—The Prophet Micaiah!** We will see **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".** Let me illustrate "**SPIN**":

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There is a story I once heard about a major company who was looking for a new Marketing Director. After much advertising and many applications, three candidates entered the final selection process. The first one in for the final interview was asked a simple question: "What is 2+2?"

He was surprised, thought about it for a bit, wondered if it might be a trick question and then simply answered 4. The Managing Director looked at the Board, shook his head and thanked him for coming, but told him that he wasn't the candidate they were looking for.

The next candidate in was again asked the same question: "What is 2+2?" He paused, thought about it for a bit and then replied that statistically it was a number between 3 and 5. The Managing Director smiled and the Board was quite impressed. The candidate was thanked and ushered out.

The last candidate was also asked that same simple question: What is 2+2. Without batting an eyelid he replied: "What do you want it to be?" And he was hired on the spot.

Unfortunately there is a lot of that going on today. When I worked in the accounting industry I saw many people who wanted to put a good "**SPIN**" on their financial statements. (e.g. I gave up a job because of refusing to **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."**

"SPIN" was originally an acronym that stood for, **"Significant Progress In the News."**

"SPIN" now refers to **the tactics used to sway audiences away from a true presentation of the facts.**

*Fox News personality, Bill O'Reilly, used to have a program called "The O'Reilly Factor" on Fox News Network. He boasted that when you watched his program that you were entering a "**NO-SPIN ZONE.**" He was suggesting that he was going to give the stories to you straight without **spinning** them!*

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The techniques of SPIN include:

- Selectively presenting only the evidence that supports one's position.
- Non-denial denials OR non-affirming affirmations.
- Phrasing in a way that assumes unproven truths.
- Euphemisms to disguise one's real agenda.
- Disguising bad news by placing it on the back of more important or more favorable news.

Skilled practitioners of *SPIN* are sometimes called "*spin doctors*". Many of them have another name—some are called "*politicians*" others are called "*the media!*"

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**. Unfortunately, in our culture, **many seem to be content to live with illusions and SPIN rather than with the truth!**

David Wells in his book, "*Losing Our Virtues*" said this, "*This is the first time a civilization has existed that, to a significant extent, does not believe in objective right or wrong.*"

In other words, **when we lose any objective measure of what is right or wrong and what is true or false, we are far more vulnerable to both give and receive "SPIN" rather than truth.** We are far more likely to make truth "*what we or someone else wants it to be*" rather than what it truly is.

SPIN is nothing new. In *1 Kings 22*, we see the wicked King Ahab again! We have become very familiar with the ways of Ahab in our studies here! He was undeniably the most wicked of the Kings of Israel up to this time. He is described in *1 Kings 16:30* as doing more "*evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him.*"

Well, we're going to see how four hundred lying prophets were nothing more than a bunch of "spin doctors" who told Ahab what he wanted to hear (and what he wanted his ally to hear), rather than tell the truth of the Word of the LORD!

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I. WE SEE HOW AHAB'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST SYRIA BEGAN.

A. Israel Was Not Being Provoked By Syria This Time!
(Vs 1-3)

Israel had a period of peace with Syria for 3 years. Israel was NOT being attacked! They were not being provoked into battle!

Yes, Ramoth-Gilead was one of the original cities of refuge. *(Deut. 4:43)* And yes, it had been taken from Israel by Syria in a previous Syrian campaign against Israel.

But understand that the desire to go get this land back seems to have come on a **whim** by Ahab! This desire to get back this tract of land all of a sudden became **important and urgent** to Ahab!

Now, God did NOT tell Ahab to go get this land back; but rather, it was prompted by Ahab's own selfishness and no doubt, by his new affinity with Jehoshaphat, King of Judah! He probably would not have done this without an ally!

B. Judah's King Jehoshaphat Joined Affinity With Ahab!
(Vs 2, 4)

While **Israel was suffering** under the rule of wicked King Ahab, **Judah was experiencing honor, prosperity** and even **revival** under the rule of Jehoshaphat, the son of Asa.

See *2 Chronicles 18:1-3*

Now, the question begs to be asked as to why the righteous King Jehoshaphat would join in affinity with wicked Ahab!

Well, when Jeoshaphat "*went down*" to see Ahab, Ahab held a "barbecue" for Jehoshaphat and his men and asked him to go into this campaign against Syria with him.

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The expression "*went down*" can refer to either a direction or it can be figuratively for a "*fall*". The later seems to be the case here.

Consider the fact that Samaria is located north of Judah! That is up, not down! **Consider also that an alliance or an affinity with the wicked is a "*fall*" for a righteous man!**

Consider also that after all this is said and done **the LORD sent a man of God named Jehu to rebuke Jehoshaphat for his unholy alliance with Ahab! (2 Chronicles 19:1-3)**

We need to be very careful about whom we yoke up with!

II. WE SEE JEHOSHOPHAT'S CALL FOR AHAB TO ENQUIRE AT THE WORD OF THE LORD WHAT THEY SHOULD DO! (Vs 5)

Jehoshaphat wanted Ahab to first seek the counsel of the LORD before they went to battle Syria!

Now, Jehoshaphat was wrong to yoke up with Ahab in the first place, but **at least he was interested in what the LORD would have to say to Ahab about what they were doing!**

III. WE SEE AHAB CALL HIS SPIN DOCTORS IN! (Vs 6-8)

The "*spoiled brat syndrome*" that we talked about in the last chapter shows up again in this chapter in Ahab's life!

At this time there appears to have been a great struggle between King Ahab and the prophet, Micaiah. We are not given the details, but only the statement from Ahab recorded in *Verse 8!*

Ahab could have gone to Micaiah first, but he knew that **Micaiah would probably not say what he wanted to hear!**

Think about that for a minute. **God's truth WAS available to King Ahab and to the people of Israel.**

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In fact, we'll see next week, Lord willing, that **God's truth was presented to the king and to the people** by 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!

God's truth was presented to protect the king and the people of Israel!

Ahab is a man who is under a death sentence and you would think that he would want to KNOW THE TRUTH about what he was getting into here! But, Ahab was not ready to receive the TRUTH!

The same thing happens to us sometimes! **God's truth is AVAILABLE TO US, it is PRESENTED TO US, and it is SENT TO PROTECT US, but we are not always ready to receive it.**

So, what do we do? We "SPIN" God's truth rather than receive it.

Oh how we need to learn that God's Word and God's Will are ALWAYS best!

That's all we have time for tonight.

Next week, Lord willing, we will see four things that happen when we try to SPIN GOD'S TRUTH!