

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XXVII

October 22, 2017

No. 43

What Do You Want To Hear?

(Jerry Fite)

This question is very important for us to honestly answer when we approach God’s Word for direction. Do we approach God’s Word with a preconceived idea of what God’s direction should be? Do we come to God for direction wanting God’s answer to be what we would like to be? Or, with a mind clearly wanting only the truth, do we seek God’s Word for the truth, and nothing but the truth?

Ahab desired to go up and take Ramoth-gilead from the hands of the King of Syria. On the surface, Ahab asked the prophets the right question: “*Shall I go up against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear*” (*I Kings 22:6*)? At the insistence of Jehoshaphat, the King of Judah, Ahab even allowed the input of the prophet Micaiah, whom Ahab “*hated...for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil*” (*I Kings 22:8*). It shocked Ahab when he heard Micaiah at first tell him to go up and take the city for God will deliver it to him. He retorts, “*How many times shall I adjure thee that thou speak unto me nothing but the truth in the name of Jehovah*” (*I Kings 22:16*)? When Micaiah explains that God was allowing a lying

spirit to speak within the prophets in order to destroy Ahab, the king reacted to Micaiah’s report of looming defeat, and ill fate for Ahab by imprisoning Micaiah (*I Kings 22:27*).

Ahab said he wanted “*the truth*.” About 400 prophets were telling Ahab he would prosper in going up to do battle in Ramoth-gilead. Zedekiah employed the visual aid of “*horns or iron*” dramatically showing how Ahab would “*push the Syrians, until they be consumed*” (*I Kings 22:11*). Surely 400 prophets prefacing their prophecy with “*thus sayeth Jehovah*” could not ALL be wrong! After all, they were ALL in agreement.

We know, behind the scenes, God was allowing a “*lying spirit*” to enter these prophets to entice Ahab to go up and be destroyed in battle at Ramoth-gilead (*I Kings 22:19-23*). They all had lied to Ahab, for when he went to battle, he was wounded and died in battle as prophesied by Micaiah (*I Kings 22:34, 37*).

We must be honest in our hearts as to what we want to hear from God. Ahab indicated he wanted “*nothing but the truth*,”

but really, he wanted “*only the truth that pleased him*.”

Instead of being in love with our desires, and coming to God for direction, we must approach God’s Word having a genuine love for truth. Paul reveals that God “*sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*” (*2 Thessalonians 2:11-12*). In the cases of Ahab and some in Thessalonica, God was allowing the lying spirit to come because God’s judgment was coming upon them for not believing the truth in the past. God’s longsuffering eventually gives way to righteous judgment for those who really do not want God’s Truth.

Two sobering thoughts stand out in this historical account of Scripture. First, God will allow us to believe a lie and perish. It is necessary therefore to purify our motives before we approach God for direction, and then take extra care to make sure we have heard only the truth. Secondly, 400 teachers imparting God’s Word can ALL agree that something is the truth, when they want to “*please you*.” Believe ONLY that which is THE TRUTH.