
2CHRONICLES 18: 1 Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance; and he joined affinity with Ahab.

Jehoshaphat joins affinity with Ahab, king of Israel, 2Chr 18:1, 2Chr 18:2; who invites him to assist him in the war against the Syrians, to which Jehoshaphat agrees, 2Chr 18:3. They consult the prophets concerning the success of the war; and all, except Micaiah, promise Ahab victory, 2Chr 18:4-17. Micaiah relates his vision concerning the lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets, 2Chr 18:18-22. Zedekiah, a false prophet, opposes Micaiah; and Micaiah is put in prison, 2Chr 18:23-27. Both the kings go against the Syrians; the confederate armies are defeated, and the king of Israel slain, 2Chr 18:28-31.

Verse 1

Jehoshaphat had riches and honor - The preceding chapter gives ample proof of this.

Joined affinity with Ahab - Took his daughter Athalia to be wife to his son Joram.

2CHRONICLES 18: 2 After certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. Ahab killed sheep and cattle for him in abundance, and for the people who were with him, and moved him to go up with him to Ramoth Gilead.

2CHRONICLES 18: 3 Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "Will you go with me to Ramoth Gilead?"

He answered him, "I am as you are, and my people as your people. We will be with you in the war."

Verse 3

To Ramoth-gilead - This place belonged to the Israelites, and was now held by the king of Syria.

The whole of this chapter is circumstantially explained in the notes on 1 Kings 22:1-53.

2CHRONICLES 18: 4 Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Please inquire first for the LORD's word."

2CHRONICLES 18: 5 Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, four hundred men, and said to them, "Shall we go to Ramoth Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear?"

They said, "Go up; for God will deliver it into the hand of the king."

2CHRONICLES 18: 6 But Jehoshaphat said, "Isn't there here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we may inquire of him?"

2CHRONICLES 18: 7 The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD; but I hate him, for he never prophesies good concerning me, but always evil. He is Micaiah the son of Imla."

Jehoshaphat said, "Don't let the king say so."

2CHRONICLES 18: 8 Then the king of Israel called an officer, and said, "Get Micaiah the son of Imla quickly."

2CHRONICLES 18: 9 Now the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah sat each on his throne, arrayed in their robes, and they were sitting in an open place at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them.

Verse 9

The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat - "Ahab consulted false prophets; but Jehoshaphat sought instruction from the presence of the Lord, and prayed at the entering in of Samaria; and before these all the false prophets prophesied lies." - Targum.

2CHRONICLES 18: 10 Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron, and said, "Thus says the LORD, 'With these you shall push the Syrians, until they are consumed.'"

2CHRONICLES 18: 11 All the prophets prophesied so, saying, "Go up to Ramoth Gilead, and prosper; for the LORD will deliver it into the hand of the king."

2CHRONICLES 18: 12 The messenger who went to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, "Behold, the words of the prophets declare good to the king with one mouth. Let your word therefore, please be like one of theirs, and speak good."

2CHRONICLES 18: 13 Micaiah said, "As the LORD lives, what my God says, that will I speak."

2CHRONICLES 18: 14 When he had come to the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear?"

He said, "Go up, and prosper. They shall be delivered into your hand."

2CHRONICLES 18: 15 The king said to him, "How many times shall I adjure you that you speak to me nothing but the truth in the LORD's name?"

2CHRONICLES 18: 16 He said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. The LORD said, 'These have no master. Let them return every man to his house in peace.'"

2CHRONICLES 18: 17 The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Didn't I tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?"

2CHRONICLES 18: 18 Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the LORD's word: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the army of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left.

2CHRONICLES 18: 19 The LORD said, 'Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead?' One spoke saying in this way, and another saying in that way.

2CHRONICLES 18: 20 A spirit came out, stood before the LORD, and said, 'I will entice him.'

"The LORD said to him, 'How?'"

Verse 20

Then there came out a spirit - The Targum gives a strange gloss here: "Then the spirit of Naboth of Jezreel came out from the abode of the righteous, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will deceive him. And the Lord said, By what means? To which he answered, I will be a spirit of false prophecy in the mouth of his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou mayest then. But although the power of deceiving them is given unto thee, nevertheless it will not be lawful for thee to sit among the righteous; for whosoever shall speak falsely cannot have a mansion among the righteous. Therefore go forth from me, and do as thou hast said." - Targum.

2CHRONICLES 18: 21 "He said, 'I will go, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.'

"He said, 'You will entice him, and will prevail also. Go and do so.'

2CHRONICLES 18: 22 "Now therefore, behold, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these your prophets; and the LORD has spoken evil concerning you."

2CHRONICLES 18: 23 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and struck Micaiah on the cheek, and said, "Which way did the Spirit of the LORD go from me to speak to you?"

2CHRONICLES 18: 24 Micaiah said, "Behold, you shall see on that day, when you shall go into an inner room to hide yourself."

2CHRONICLES 18: 25 The king of Israel said, "Take 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 says 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 Micaiah said, "If you return at all in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me." He said, "Listen, you peoples, all of you!"

2CHRONICLES 18: 28 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth Gilead.

2CHRONICLES 18: 29 The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself, and go into the battle; but you put on your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went into the battle.

Verse 29

I will disguise myself - See the note on 1Kgs 22:30.

2CHRONICLES 18: 30 Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of his chariots, saying, "Fight neither with small nor great, except only with the king of Israel."

2CHRONICLES 18: 31 When the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, "It is the king of Israel!" Therefore they turned around to fight against him. But Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him; and God moved them to depart from him.

Verse 31

But Jehoshaphat cried out - "Jehoshaphat cried, and the Word of the Lord brought him assistance." - Targum.

2CHRONICLES 18: 32 When the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.

2CHRONICLES 18: 33 A certain man drew his bow at random, and struck the king of Israel between the joints of the armour. Therefore he said to the driver of the chariot, "Turn your hand, and carry me out of the army; for I am severely wounded."

Verse 33

A certain man drew a bow - The Targum tells us who it was. "Now, Naaman, the captain of the host of the great king of Syria, drew a bow against him, (that the prophecy of Elijah the Tishbite, and of Micaiah the son of Imla, might be fulfilled), and smote the king of Israel between the heart and the caul of the liver, through the place where the coat of mail is joined." See the note on 2Kgs 5:1 for this tradition.

2CHRONICLES 18: 34 The battle increased that day. However the king of Israel propped himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the evening; and about the time of the going down of the sun, he died.

Verse 34

Stayed himself up - against the Syrians - There was a great deal of true personal courage and patriotism in this last act of the king of Israel: he well knew that if his troops found that he was mortally wounded, they would immediately give way, and the battle would not only be lost, but the slaughter would be great in the pursuit; therefore he stayed himself up till the evening, when the termination of the day must necessarily bring the battle to a close: and when this was done, the Israelites found that their king was slain, and so they left the field of battle to their foes. Thus Israel had a great loss, and the Syrians had got a great deliverance. Had it not been for this accident, the Syrians had probably been defeated. See on 1Kgs 22:36 (note).

In the notes referred to above, the quibbling predictions of false prophets and lying oracles are mentioned, and several instances given; and the whole account of the lying spirit going forth from the Lord to deceive Ahab, particularly considered. See especially the notes as above on 2Chr 18:19 (note), 2Chr 18:23-24 (note).

The reader should never forget a truth so very frequently occurring in the Bible, that God is repeatedly represented as doing what, in the course of his providence, he only permits to be done.

