



## MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

[www.mzluth.org](http://www.mzluth.org)

June 11, 2023

Pastor Randy Ott

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson/Sermon Text: [1 Kings 22:10-28](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 78 CW

Second Lesson: [2 Peter 1:20-2:3](#)

Gospel Lesson: [Matthew 7:15-29](#)

### Stand on the Truth of God's Word

Welcome to worship today at Morrison Zion Lutheran Church. We exist to glorify God. We have set out to do this by gathering around the Gospel so that we may grow in the Gospel and go to others with this Gospel.

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus. Amen.

In Christ, dear fellow redeemed:

When I was going to grade school at St. John's Lutheran Church in Hemlock, Michigan, one of my favorite things during recess in the winter was to play "King of the Hill." The parking lot was in the back of the school. They would plow the snow into big piles. Even when I was a little kid I stood against the littler, younger kids and couldn't stay on the hill at all, but I thought that was great fun. Then as I got older, I was the biggest kid in school so you'd think I'd be able to stay up there all the time but quite often, because my feet were standing on snow and snow can be slippery and, as we all know, snow is evil, you could get knocked off your feet by little kids if they come at you in waves. It was what I enjoyed most in the winter at recess.

I said that Thursday night in worship and someone said "So, you do like snow pastor." I was a kid then! I still thought the Lions would win in the playoffs every year! When you are a child, you have childish thoughts.

It makes me think of that whenever we get to this Sunday in the church year when the theme is, as Christians we want to stand firm on the rock-solid truth of God's Word. The rock-solid truth of God's Word isn't slippery. But you have to have good footing on it because they're coming at you in wave after wave trying to knock you off. So today, as we consider these words from [1 Kings](#), we see a prophet of the Lord who is tempted to take care of himself and not speak the truth of God's Word. We maybe even see at times what it is going to cost us as we speak the truth of God's Word.

It said the kings were sitting on their thrones at the threshing floor by Samaria. It's the king of the Northern Kingdom (who was Ahab) and the king of the Southern Kingdom of Judah (which was Jehoshaphat). We're in that period of the history of the children of Israel where they were the divided kingdom. Saul, then David, then Solomon had ruled over all Twelve Tribes of Israel but when Solomon died, the Ten Northern Tribes rebelled and split off. We are told in Scripture that their kings were all godless. They started out by setting up golden calves in two places so that people wouldn't go to Jerusalem (the capital now of their enemy) to worship the Lord. They said "Worship the Lord here by worshiping these golden calves who brought you out of Egypt." So God was never happy with their kings. But the King we're dealing with here, Ahab, is the one who God uses to describe all the rest: "They did evil and were wicked like Ahab."

Ahab and Jezebel, the prophets had been largely slaughtered because of them. Remember Elijah on Mount Carmel thought he was the only one left because they promoted (not the worship of the Lord with golden calves) the worship of Baal and Asherah. In fact, Jehoshaphat is commended by God's prophet (if you read in [Chronicles](#)) because he got rid of high places where they were worshiping Asherah. But Ahab and Jezebel, they were just wicked and hated the Lord. Ahab had (in just a few chapters before in [Kings](#)) wanted Naboth's vineyard and he took that by basically killing him by bringing charges against him that weren't true and then taking the vineyard. The prophet had told Ahab, ***"In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!"*** That's what he said was going to happen to him.

Now we are at the end of 1 Kings and they are sitting there and they are going to go to war against Ramoth Gilead. We looked at this recently in a Bible study (about a month or two ago) how they had defeated Aram and then Ahab, instead of doing what the Lord had told him to do, set up trade agreements with the king of Aram. The king of Aram had said, "You can have Ramoth Gilead back," but he didn't really keep his word like he was supposed to. They had just recently been allied together against the Assyrians and now Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, had come to meet with Ahab. They were saying, "Let's go and attack Ramoth Gilead and take it back." Ahab asked, "Will you go to war with me," and Jehoshaphat said, "Your people are my people. My horses are your horses," and so on. They were going to go war.

The king of Judah said "First of all, let's ask the prophets if the Lord is going to grant us success." So they have the 400 prophets there. They are all prophesying success. One guy even takes the time to make iron horns. Did he have them just laying around the house in case a king asks for a prophecy? I don't know how he had these horns ready to go, but he says "With these horns you are going to gore the Arameans" and all this stuff. Then Jehoshaphat says, "Isn't there a prophet of the Lord?" Evidently all these guys are prophets of Baal or some other prophets that are just using the Lord's name and so on.

This was Ahab's answer, which is about two verses before what I started reading to you. He said, "There is one, but I hate him. He never says anything good." You heard him say that. "He only says bad things for me." That's because Ahab was evil and the prophet was rebuking him. He says to send for him. Did you notice at the end of what I read to you how it says to send him back there and put him in prison? I wonder if he was already in prison and they had him brought out of prison to come and say "What does the Lord say." Then they ask Micaiah, "What does the Lord say? Should we go to battle?"

The professor that taught me how to preach told me once "You can use sarcasm in your sermons as often as you find it in Scripture, which is never." You tell me Micaiah isn't being sarcastic when he says, "Attack, you'll win the victory, king." That's just pure sarcasm, isn't it, because King Ahab understood from his body language or whatever it was that it wasn't what Micaiah meant. So he says, "Haven't I told you? You have to swear to tell me what the Lord actually says." Then he tells him. You can understand why Ahab didn't like him now. "Okay, you want to hear what the Lord showed me? Here is the vision the Lord gave me. All of Israel was scattered like sheep without a shepherd because the king of Israel was supposed to be the shepherd of the people. You're going to die. Go to war and you are going to die. Let everyone go to their own home. Don't go and do this." "I hate this guy" is Ahab's response.

Then he says, "Here is what the Lord showed me." This part I'm not quite clear on. I've read different things and different ideas on it where these spirits come before God and in heaven, God says "Who is going to go and deceive Ahab to do this?" The one spirit's answer is "I'll go and put a deceiving spirit into his prophets so that they speak the wrong message. That will entice him to go and die." Some people say this might be the devil; this might be Satan just like with [Job](#) when Satan came in the presence of the Lord and did this. I don't know. I do know like with [Pharaoh in Egypt](#), remember how the first few plagues, Pharaoh hardened his heart? Then after the last few plagues, it was the Lord who hardened his heart. You turn your back on the Lord often enough, the Lord then hardens your heart, and this seems to be the case with Ahab, and his judgment comes. What is interesting to me is the rest of the chapter.

After they throw Micaiah in prison (perhaps back in prison) because he spoke God's Word faithfully, they go to war. I don't get Jehoshaphat because Ahab comes to Jehoshaphat with "Here's our battle attack plan. I have a great plan for success. You wear your kingly robes and I'll wear a disguise. Then let's go attack." Why would Jehoshaphat say "Yes"? They were told "Don't fight anyone else. Just find the king of Israel and kill him." They see Jehoshaphat in the royal robes, so they start going to attack and fight towards him and to kill him. They realize it's not Ahab. But it just so happens that a random arrow goes between the armor of Ahab and Ahab tells his chariot driver "Get me out of here!" They get out of there and he bleeds out and dies. They wash out the blood of the chariot and dogs lick the blood of Ahab up just as the

prophet of the Lord had told them would happen. Everything that Micaiah said had come true. Everything the false prophets had said was absolutely false.

You see Micaiah stand on the rock-solid truth of God's Word and it cost him, evidently, the rest of his life because Ahab said "Don't let him out. Only give him bread and water until I get back." And he said "You're never coming back, so I'm never getting out."

We don't have any enemy to the north that is coming to attack us, but we do have enemies attacking us. We do need to meet their attacks by standing on the rock-solid truth of God's Word. The world around us is constantly changing, constantly saying "This is terrible and wrong" and then a few decades later, "This is wonderful and great." I wonder a couple more decades from now what is going to be "wonderful and great" that is abhorrent to people right now.

The world around us is going to say a lot of different things that don't agree with God's Word. The temptation is going to come for every Christian to think *maybe they're right? Maybe they're right. Maybe that is the loving thing to do. Maybe that is something that we should be doing or saying or teaching.* The only way we are going to be able to continue to proclaim God's Word faithfully is first of all, to know it and to recognize when the world, the devil, or my own sinful nature is telling me "Are you sure about that God?" "Did God really say..." is the first line of Satan. He doesn't switch plays when it's working. He will continually come and say "Did God really say this?" The only way we are going to know it is if we know His Word.

We have so many opportunities to know His Word, to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, to know Him better and better and better. We have advantages to do this that no generation before us ever had and we might be as Biblically illiterate as any generation that has ever been around.

Too often we are content with having the fading faith of a 14-year-old instead of continually feeding that faith by growing in God's Word. And even when we do grow in God's Word, it is still going to be tempting to doubt it. I have no problem with Christians who have doubts. People have doubts. We're sinners; sinners sin. We are going to have doubts about God's Word. The only thing I implore people to do is when you have doubts about God's Word, go to God's Word and look and see what it actually says. Don't stop at your own sinful thoughts or what the world around you is telling you and use your own reason. Scripture is not always reasonable. Is Christ's life and death in your place, to take away the guilt of your sins, reasonable? Is that logical? Is that fair? Not a chance in this world is Jesus taking the punishment you deserved and giving you the holiness God demands of you fair! Yet that is what your God has done.

So get to know Him better. Get to know who He is and what He says and what He has done and what He desires that we do better. What we do will never save us, but

because He loves us and is incredibly unfair and gives eternal life to those who deserve eternal death, we want to know Him better and we want to live for Him.

There is a lot of slippery footing underneath our feet. It's inside of our own hearts. It's outside of us. Sometimes it's even from our fellow believers. But make sure you are looking to see what God says and know Him and know His Word, because in there, you will find a love for you that is unlike any other love in this world. Amen.

***And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*** [\(Philippians 4:7\)](#) Amen.