

KCLC Radio: Feelin' Good

5-Day Devotional

Day 1: The Trap of the Game

Reading: 1 Kings 22:1-28

For three years there was no war between Aram and Israel. But in the third year Jehoshaphat king of Judah went down to see the king of Israel. The king of Israel had said to his officials, "Don't you know that Ramoth Gilead belongs to us and yet we are doing nothing to retake it from the king of Aram?"

So he asked Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to fight against Ramoth Gilead?"

Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, "I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses." But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, "First seek the counsel of the Lord."

So the king of Israel brought together the prophets—about four hundred men—and asked them, "Shall I go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain?"

"Go," they answered, "for the Lord will give it into the king's hand."

But Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there no longer a prophet of the Lord here whom we can inquire of?"

The king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, "There is still one prophet through whom we can inquire of the Lord, but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah."

"The king should not say such a thing," Jehoshaphat replied.

So the king of Israel called one of his officials and said, "Bring Micaiah son of Imlah at once."

Dressed in their royal robes, the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting on their thrones at the threshing floor by the entrance of the gate of Samaria, with all the prophets prophesying before them. Now Zedekiah son of Kenaanah had made iron horns and he declared, "This is what the Lord says: 'With these you will gore the Arameans until they are destroyed.'"

All the other prophets were prophesying the same thing. "Attack Ramoth Gilead and be victorious," they said, "for the Lord will give it into the king's hand."

The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, "Look, the other prophets without exception are predicting success for the king. Let your word agree with theirs, and speak favorably."

But Micaiah said, "As surely as the Lord lives, I can tell him only what the Lord tells me."

When he arrived, the king asked him, "Micaiah, shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or not?"

"Attack and be victorious," he answered, "for the Lord will give it into the king's hand."

The king said to him, "How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord?"

Then Micaiah answered, "I saw all Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd, and the Lord said, 'These people have no master. Let each one go home in peace.'"

The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Didn't I tell you that he never prophesies anything good about me, but only bad?"

Micaiah continued, "Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne with all the multitudes of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left. And the Lord said, 'Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?'"

"One suggested this, and another that. Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the Lord and said, 'I will entice him.'"

"'By what means?' the Lord asked.

"'I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all his prophets,' he said.

"'You will succeed in enticing him,' said the Lord. 'Go and do it.'"

"So now the Lord has put a deceiving spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The Lord has decreed disaster for you."

Then Zedekiah son of Kenaanah went up and slapped Micaiah in the face. "Which way did the spirit from the Lord go when he went from me to speak to you?" he asked.

Micaiah replied, "You will find out on the day you go to hide in an inner room."

The king of Israel then ordered, "Take Micaiah and send him back to Amon the ruler of the city and to Joash the king's son and say, 'This is what the king says: Put this fellow in prison and give him nothing but bread and water until I return safely.'"

Micaiah declared, "If you ever return safely, the Lord has not spoken through me." Then he added, "Mark my words, all you people!"

Devotional: The king of Jerusalem was a good man caught in a dangerous temptation. The pressure to play by the world's rules, to accumulate power, to keep pace with those around him, pulled him away from what he knew to be true. We all recognize this trap. The game promises victory but keeps moving the finish line. Today, consider where you feel that pressure most. Where are you chasing something because everyone else seems to be chasing it? Goodness of heart does not automatically protect us from the seduction of corrupt systems. Only honest listening to God's voice does.

Reflection:

- Where in your life do you feel pressure to "play the game" by the world's rules rather than God's?
- What would honest listening to God's voice look like for you this week?

Day 2: The God Who Sees the Overlooked

Reading: Matthew 6:25-34

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"

"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be

given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Devotional: Jesus did not show up in Rome. He did not build a platform or count his followers. He showed up in small towns and looked directly at the people standing in front of him. He saw children, fishermen, tax collectors, and outsiders, and told each one that they mattered. The birds are not anxious. The flowers do not strive. They simply exist within the care of the One who made them. Today, release your grip on the scoreboard. You are not defined by what you have accumulated or achieved. You are seen, known, and valued by God right now, exactly as you are.

Reflection:

- What "scoreboard" are you tempted to measure your worth against?
- How does knowing God sees and values you change the way you approach today?

Day 3: When the City Burns

Reading: Lamentations 3:1-24

*I am the man who has seen affliction
by the rod of the Lord's wrath.*

*He has driven me away and made me walk
in darkness rather than light;
indeed, he has turned his hand against me
again and again, all day long.*

*He has made my skin and my flesh grow old
and has broken my bones.*

*He has besieged me and surrounded me
with bitterness and hardship.*

*He has made me dwell in darkness
like those long dead.*

*He has walled me in so I cannot escape;
he has weighed me down with chains.*

*Even when I call out or cry for help,
he shuts out my prayer.*

*He has barred my way with blocks of stone;
he has made my paths crooked.*

*Like a bear lying in wait,
like a lion in hiding,*

*he dragged me from the path and mangled me
and left me without help.*

*He drew his bow
and made me the target for his arrows.*

*He pierced my heart
with arrows from his quiver.
I became the laughingstock of all my people;
they mock me in song all day long.
He has filled me with bitter herbs
and given me gall to drink.*

*He has broken my teeth with gravel;
he has trampled me in the dust.
I have been deprived of peace;
I have forgotten what prosperity is.
So I say, "My splendor is gone
and all that I had hoped from the Lord."*

*I remember my affliction and my wandering,
the bitterness and the gall.
I well remember them,
and my soul is downcast within me.*

*Yet this I call to mind
and therefore I have hope:*

*Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.
They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him."*

Devotional: The words "great is your faithfulness" were not written from a place of comfort. They were written from the ash and silence of total loss, by someone whose world had collapsed and whose grief went unwitnessed by those around them. This is what makes those words so powerful. Faith declared in the ruins is a different kind of faith than faith declared from abundance. If you are carrying grief today, grief that feels unseen or unacknowledged, know that this passage was written for you. God's mercies are not paused by your suffering. They are new this morning, regardless of what yesterday held.

Reflection:

- Is there grief or loss you've been carrying quietly? What would it look like to bring it honestly to God?
- How have you experienced God's faithfulness even in a hard season?

Day 4: A New Dawn, A New Mercy

Reading: Lamentations 3:22-26

*Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.
They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.*

*I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him."*

*The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him,
to the one who seeks him;
it is good to wait quietly
for the salvation of the Lord.*

Devotional: Every morning is a reset that no corrupt game can take from you. The world's systems can change the rules, silence voices, close doors, and withhold opportunity. But they cannot stop the sun from rising. They cannot exhaust the mercies of God. The writer of Lamentations held onto this truth while sitting in the wreckage of everything familiar. You are invited to hold onto it too. Whatever weight you carried into this day, it does not have to define the day itself. God's faithfulness is not contingent on your circumstances. It is simply, steadily, and completely there. Begin again today.

Reflection:

- What would it mean for you to "begin again" today, regardless of yesterday?
- Where do you need to trust that God's mercy is renewed, even when circumstances haven't changed?

Day 5: Singing for What Matters

Reading: Psalm 121

*I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth.*

*He will not let your foot slip—
he who watches over you will not slumber;
indeed, he who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.*

*The Lord watches over you—
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;
the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.*

*The Lord will keep you from all harm—
he will watch over your life;
the Lord will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.*

Devotional: There comes a moment for each of us when we have to decide whether we will keep playing by rules that diminish us or live for something that genuinely matters. That decision often costs something. It may cost approval, status, or the comfort of fitting in. But on the other side of that decision is a freedom that the game can never offer. Lift your eyes, as this psalm invites. Look beyond the narrow field of competition and striving. The God who made the mountains is the same God who watches over your daily life. You are not alone in this. You never were.

Reflection:

- What might it cost you to step away from a "game" that diminishes you — and what freedom might be on the other side?
- Where do you need to "lift your eyes" today and remember God's constant watch over you?

Closing Prayer:

Lord, thank You that You are our keeper, and that You neither slumber nor look away. Forgive us for the times we've measured our worth by the world's scoreboard instead of Your steadfast love. Help us to lift our eyes above the striving and the noise, and to trust that Your mercies are new every morning. Give us the courage to choose what truly matters, even when it costs us something. We rest in knowing we are seen, known, and never alone. In Jesus' name, Amen.