

(2 Kings) Jehu: Zealous, but Not Enough

by David Guzik

David Guzik's sermon explores the life of Jehu, emphasizing his zealous character and God's sovereignty in appointing leaders for judgment in Israel.

Duration: 56:43

Scripture: 2 Kings 10:16-17, 2 Kings 10:32, Matthew 18:6, Romans 12:11, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Colossians 3:23

Topics: "Zeal For God", "Heart Worship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story of Jehu from the Bible. Jehu was a man of great power and momentum, known for his zeal and authority. The people of Jezreel, recognizing his strength, surrendered to him and acknowledged him as their king. However, despite being used as an instrument by God, Jehu lacked a true relationship and fellowship with God. The sermon emphasizes the importance of not just being zealous for God's work, but also having a genuine heart of worship and fellowship with Him.

Transcript

Tonight, we're going to take a look at Second Kings chapters nine and ten, and you're going to see the life, the career of one of the more impressive men of the Old Testament, among the kings of Israel, especially this man, King Jehu. It's really a remarkable story that I think a lot of people don't know or don't appreciate. You'll know this man much better at the end of our study here tonight.

Before we jump into verse one of Second Kings chapter nine, I have to remind you of the setting where we left from chapter eight. King Joram is the king over Israel. This is the descendant of Ahab, right? Remember Ahab and Jezebel.

So we're still in the dynasty of Omri, who was Ahab's father. And this descendant of Omri and Ahab named Joram is the king over Israel. God has promised judgment upon this family line.

And most recently, Joram was injured in a battle against the Syrians. He was taken away in his injured state to the city of Jezreel. So that's where we're at coming into chapter nine here of Second Kings.

The injured king of Israel, Joram, is in the city of Jezreel. Now, verse one. And he lies to the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets and said to him, get yourself ready.

Take this flask of oil in your hand and go to Ramoth Gilead. Now, when you arrive at that place, look there for Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimishi, and go in and make him rise up from among his

associates and take him to an inner room. Then take the flask of oil and pour it on his head and say, Thus says the Lord, I have anointed you king over Israel.

Then open the door and flee. Do not delay. Isn't this interesting? Elisha won't do this himself.

He sends one of the sons of the prophets. Maybe he thought it was a dangerous trip and he didn't want to do it himself. No, I don't think that's the reason.

If you take a look at the ministry of Elisha, you find something really remarkable in it. This was a man who was very interested in the principle of delegation. Whenever he could, he had someone else do the work, not because he wasn't interested in doing it, but because he wanted them to have the blessing as well.

And so we're not surprised to see him delegating again at this point, telling this son of the prophets to do this job of going and anointing Jehu, the next king over Israel. Now, at this time, we remind ourselves, Joram, the son of Ahab, was the king of Israel. This was the dynasty of Omri, but the dynasty was about to come to an end.

The next king would be Jehu, who was not a descendant of Omri or Ahab, and he would begin a new, albeit it would be a very short dynasty, it would be a new dynasty. And I just want to remind you of something here. Though Israel had abandoned God, God had not abandoned Israel.

In other words, Israel acted like they didn't want God to interfere in the affairs of their kingdom whatsoever. But I want you to see God's not taking no for an answer. God's saying, I am going to put my hand in your business, so to speak.

I'm going to select the next king over Israel, even though you don't really want me to. God would still appoint and allow kings as he chose, either to bless an obedient kingdom of Israel or to curse a disobedient nation, all according to the covenant that he made with them way back in the days of Moses on Mount Sinai. So anyway, the prophet's going to do exactly what Elisha told him to do.

Look now, starting at verse four. So the young man, the servant of the prophets, went to Ramoth Gilead. And when he arrived, there were the captains of the army sitting.

And he said, I have a message for you, commander. Jehu said, for which one of us? And he said, for you, commander. Then he arose and went into his house.

And he poured the oil on his head and said to him, Thus says the Lord God of Israel, I have anointed you king over the people of the Lord over Israel. You shall strike down the house of Ahab, your master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants, the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house of Ahab shall perish.

And I will cut off from Ahab all the males in Israel, both bond and free. So I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and like the house of Basha, the son of Ahia. The dog shall eat Jezebel on the plot of ground at Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her.

And he opened the door and fled, just like Elisha told him to do. Well, this is a very interesting prophecy, but you have to imagine the setting here. He comes to this army encampment of Israel, and there's all these captains of the army of Israel sitting around.

Now, remind yourself, Jehu at this time was a commander in the army of Israel before even King Joram reigned. Jehu was a commander in the army of Israel even under King Ahab, the previous king of Israel. And Jehu was previously anointed as a future king of Israel who would overthrow the dynasty of Omri and Ahab.

We saw that way back in 1 Kings chapter 19. That was a long time before this. And now he is anointed again to show that the fulfillment of the previous prophecy was now at hand.

In other words, many years before this, God spoke to Jehu in a prophecy that he would bring judgment upon the house of Ahab and that he would be the next king of Israel. But Jehu, I would say, wisely didn't do anything about it. Now, at this time, the prophecy comes to him again.

And he says, you know, this son of the prophet, the anonymous prophet whom Elisha sent, comes and says to Jehu, come, commander, I have a message for you. They go inside the house. What does he do? He whips out this little bottle of oil and he pours it all over Jehu's head.

Jehu says, what is this going on? And then he explains. He says, listen, this is what God has called you to do. First, it says, I have anointed you king over the people of the Lord, over Israel.

Now notice this. He was anointed, but he was not to take the throne immediately. I think it's very interesting.

In each one of the instances of God anointing a king over his people here, Jehu over the northern king of Israel and then Saul and then David, of course, each one of them was anointed for the job before they actually took it. In other words, you would almost expect that they would be anointed as part of almost their coronation ceremony, right? Put the crown upon their head, maybe pour the oil and then put the crown or something symbolic like that. That's not how God did it.

He anointed them for the job before they ever took it. And sometimes this is a painful thing for a person in ministry. They're anointed for something and they genuinely are anointed for it.

But God has not given them the position from which they will exercise that anointing yet because he has a work that he wants to develop in their life. And this is a cause of great frustration for people. They say, I'm anointed to do this.

Why can't I do it? Well, I'll tell you why you can't do it, because it's not time yet. God hasn't opened the doors. But you just need to be confident and have the peace that the same God who anointed you will also, in his timing, give you the right way, the right area, the right arena in which for you to carry out that anointing that he's given you.

But just remind yourself, it was true with Saul. It was true with David. It was true with Jehu.

They were both anointed before they actually took the position that they received. Now, the other thing to remember is Jehu is the only king of the northern kingdom, that is of the kingdom of Israel, to have been anointed. It seems that God was trying to say something to Jehu here.

He's trying to say, listen, I will bless you just like I bless David. I'm anointing you just like I anointed David. If you will be faithful to me, if you will walk in my ways, you will see that I will establish a great dynasty from you and from your people.

But then it's very interesting what the prophet said after that. He went on to say, you shall strike down the house of Ahab, your master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants, the prophets, and so on and so forth. Elisha, in the previous verses, did not tell him specifically to say that.

Now, perhaps he did tell them and it's just not recorded. Perhaps this came upon the prophet spontaneously as he anointed him and began to prophesy that more came than Elisha originally told him. Nevertheless, this was an important prophecy for Jehu to hear.

He wasn't just going to take the place of the present king of Israel, but God was calling him to bring judgment upon the present king of Israel. Now, that's a heavy job, isn't it? Not just to say you're going to be the next king, but God is calling you to be an instrument of his judgment against the present king. And so he says, the whole house of Ahab shall perish.

I will cut off from Ahab all the males in Israel and then dogs shall eat Jezebel. Clearly, God intended to use Jehu as a tool of judgment against the royal house of Ahab. Now, might I say that I think that this is unique in biblical history, not this specific instance, but the general idea of God commissioning individuals in this way to be instruments of his judgment.

I have run across misguided individuals during the years of my ministry who felt that God had called them to be the instrument of judgment against an individual or against a ministry. And my advice to them has always been the same. Let God do the judging.

You step aside. We're not under the Old Testament dispensation anymore. We don't operate under the theocracy of ancient Israel.

This is a different dispensation, a different covenant. If there is any judgment to be done, if there is any cursing to be done, let God do it. You don't want to put yourself in the position of being against or causing to stumble one of God's little ones.

And so this was a unique thing that God called Jehu to do. Now, verse 11. Then Jehu came out to the servants of his master.

And one said to him, is all well. Why did this madman come to you? Now, again, you have to picture this in your mind. What does Jehu look like when he comes out of the house to the tent? There's oil dripping from his head.

And they're all saying, what happened to you? What did that man do to you inside of the house? That madman. All you see is you see Jehu and this kind of crazy looking prophet walk into the house together. And then all of a sudden you see the prophet running out of the house and running all the way down the road until he's gone.

And then Jehu comes out just a moment later and his head is dripping with oil. And they said, why did this madman come to you? It's a very logical question in light of what you would see. And he said to them, you know, the man and his babble.

And they said, a lie. Tell us now. So he said, thus and thus, he spoke to me saying, thus says the Lord.

I have anointed you king over Israel. You can imagine just how nervous Jehu was when he said that. He wondered if the men would draw their swords and say, that's treason against our king.

How dare you say that? Or they say, what, you're crazy. Now you're listening to crazy prophets who go around dumping oil over everybody's heads everywhere they go. Jehu, you've gone crazy.

You can imagine just how nervous Jehu was to finally say what had happened. But when he said it, look at what the reaction was. Then each man hastened to take his garments and put it under him on top of the steps.

They blew the trumpet saying, Jehu is king. Now, what does that tell you? That tells you that the people were very dissatisfied with Joram, right? The present king of Israel. They were very dissatisfied with him.

They were ready for something new. They were ready because a moment before these men regarded the prophet as a madman. Now they take his word seriously and proclaim the reluctant Jehu, the king of Israel.

Again, this displays the great sense of satisfaction they had with King Joram. And so here they recognize him. They spread out the garments.

They proclaim that he's king. And what's going to happen next now with Jehu? Well, look here, verse 14. So Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimishi, conspired against Joram.

Now, Joram had been defending Ramoth Gilead, he and all Israel, against Hazael, king of Syria. But King Joram had returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds which the Syrians had inflicted on him when he fought with Hazael, king of Syria. That's where we left it at the end of chapter eight.

Anyway, now, and Jehu said, if you are so minded, let no one leave or escape from the city to go and tell it in Jezreel. So Jehu rode in a chariot and went to Jezreel for Joram was laid up there. And Ahaziah, king of Judah, had come down to see Joram.

Now a watchman stood on the tower in Jezreel and he saw a company of Jehu as he came. And he said, I see a company of men. And Joram said, get a horseman and send to him and meet him and let him say, is it peace? So the horseman went to meet him and said, Thus says the king, is it peace? And Jehu said, what have you to do with peace? Turn around and follow me.

So the watchman reported saying the messenger went to them, but is not coming back. Thus says the king, excuse me. Then he sent out a second horseman who said that he came to them and said, Thus says the king, is it peace? And Jehu answered, what have you to do with peace? Turn around and follow me.

So the watchman reported saying he went up to them and is not coming back. And his driving is like the driving of Jehu, the son of Nimishi, for he drives furiously. All right, you can picture this in your mind, right? There often the distance is this chariot coming towards, you know, the city of Jezreel.

And the first messenger goes out and says, well, who are you and are you coming peacefully? And Jehu looks at him and he says, listen, this is not a time for peace. This is a time for you to come and to join me in my campaign against this corrupt king of Israel. By the way, the mere fact that Joram was there in Jezreel, sending out messengers to test these things, show how suspicious Joram was and how weak he knew his position was.

In any regard, when the messengers go out, first one and then a second one, they agree with Jehu, we're going to be on your side. And so finally, as the chariot gets closer and closer, now there's other riders with him, right? Because the two messengers have come on his side. The watchman cries out to King Joram there in the city of Jezreel.

He says, listen, I know that's Jehu. He's driving like a wild man. Yeah, I think that there's a lot of people like Jehu out there, right? There's a lot of people who drive furiously like Jehu, the driving style of him.

But I want you to see this. This tells you something about the personality of Jehu. Now, you'll learn more about this as we go on.

But if there's anything that characterized the personality of Jehu, it's zeal. This man grabbed hold of everything the best he could, or at least most of the time he did. We're going to notice that before we're done here tonight at the end of chapter 10.

Nevertheless, this was a man that when he felt he had something to do from God, he did it with all his strength. So if he's going to go to Jezreel, he's going to drive there furiously. And so what does he do when he gets there? Look at it here, verse 21.

And Joram said, make ready. And his chariot was made ready. Then Joram, the king of Israel and Ahaziah, the king of Judah, went out, each in his chariot.

And they went out to meet Jehu and met him on the property of Naboth, the Jezreelite. Now, I want you to stop and just consider here for a moment. They seem to not suspect anything because remember who Jehu is.

He works for the king. He's just thinking, oh, my commander has come in from a distant place. He's going to give me some news in battle.

He's going to give me some intelligence about the enemy, something like that. So these two kings don't seem to suspect that there's any revolution in the works, an overthrow of the king in any regard. It says now it happened when Joram saw Jehu that he said, is it peace, Jehu? And he answered, what peace? As long as the harlotries of your mother Jezebel and her witchcraft are so many.

Then Joram turned around and fled and said to Ahaziah, treachery, Ahaziah. Now Jehu drew his bow with full strength and shot Joram between his arms. And the arrow came out at his heart and he sank down in his chariot.

Did you notice where this took place? Way back there, it said it met him on the property of Naboth, the Jezreelite. This was the land that Ahab and Jezebel had so wickedly obtained by murdering the innocent owner of the land, Naboth. On this very land, which as far as God was concerned, it still belonged to Naboth.

The dynasty of Omri would meet its judgment. By the way, I want you to notice that it is a very important point here. It says that he went out to meet Jehu and met him on the property of Naboth, the Jezreelite.

I thought that Ahab took that property from him. Do you remember that in previous chapters? I want you to notice, not as far as God is concerned. As far as God is concerned, that's still the property of Naboth, the Jezreelite.

Anyway, when Joram comes out to Jehu, he cries out to him. Is it peace, Jehu? The wicked, compromising Joram wanted peace with Jehu. None of the dynasty of Omri wanted peace with God, nor did Ahab and Jezebel want peace with Naboth.

But they want peace with Jehu because they know that he brings judgment. And so he cries out back in response, Jehu, to Joram. He says, what peace as long as the harlotries of your mother Jezebel and her witchcraft are so many.

That's in verse 22. This shows that Jehu took his previous anointing by Elijah and his more recent anointing very seriously. At this point, Jehu's mind was not filled with thoughts of political gain.

He wasn't thinking about how great it would be to be king. No, he did this for the honor of God. He was a conscious executor of divine judgment against the house of Ahab.

And so what did he do? Isn't that amazing how it describes that there in those verses, how in verse 24, he pulled back the bow at full strength and he shot Joram right between the arms. It's clear that he killed him with a powerful shot and the arrow went right through him and came out his heart. Seemingly, Joram had turned around and was going away from him and he shot him right in the back and the sword came out his heart.

So what happened then with Joram's body? Look at here at verse 25. Then Jehu said to Bidkar's captain, pick him up and throw him into the tract of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite. But remember, when you and I were riding together behind Ahab, his father, that the Lord laid this burden upon him.

Surely I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his son, says the Lord. And I will repay you in this plot, says the Lord. And therefore take and throw him on the plot of ground, according to the word of the Lord.

Again, it's very clear that at this time, Jehu sees his place as something spiritual. He's fulfilling God's command of judgment against the house of Omri. Now on to verse 27.

But when Ahaziah, king of Judah, saw this, now we remind ourselves, Azahiah, the king of Judah, is there with them at the same time. He fled by the road to Beth Hagin. So Jehu pursued him and said, Shoot him also in the chariot.

And they shot him at the ascent of Gur, which is by Eblim. Then he fled to Megiddo and died there. And his servants carried him in the chariot to Jerusalem and buried him in the tomb with his fathers of the city of David.

In the eleventh year of Joram, the son of Ahab, Ahaziah had become king over Judah. Do you understand what just happened here? Right, we understand that the tribes of Israel are split up into two different kingdoms, right? You have the northern kingdom of Israel, you have the southern kingdom of Judah. And in one day, both kings are killed by Jehu.

Joram, the king of the northern kingdom, Ahaziah, the king of the southern kingdom. You say, this is pretty harsh. Why did the judgment come against the king of the southern kingdom of Judah as well? Well, think about this for a moment.

Didn't God promise judgment against all the descendants of Ahab? Yes, he did. Well, do you understand that Ahaziah was a descendant of Ahab? His mother was the daughter of Ahab. Do we remember that? How the previous king had married off his own son to this daughter of Ahab and Jezebel.

And I think it's tragic here. Here you have this king of Judah, Ahaziah, who was happy to associate himself with the northern kingdom of Israel and with their wicked kings. Therefore, he died in the same judgment that came upon the king of Israel.

Listen, if you associate yourself with the wicked, don't be surprised if the same judgment that's going to come upon the wicked comes upon you as well. Now, you have to say that other passages of scripture, 2 Chronicles chapter 22, for example, it describes other details of this whole death of Ahaziah. But I just want you to understand that when Ahaziah was killed in battle, they gave him a dignified burial, not only for his own sake, but also because his ancestor Jehoshaphat and David before him were godly men.

All right, now on to verse 30. Now, when Jehu had come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it. Now, stop the process here for a moment at verse 30.

Jezebel is still alive. Do you understand this? She's an old woman by now, but she's still alive. And there she is there in the city of Jezreel.

So what's going to happen with Jezebel? Well, it says now when Jehu had come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it. And she put paint on her eyes and adorned her head and looked through a window. Then as Jehu entered at the gate, she said, Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of your master? Now, you have to understand this.

Jezebel called Jehu Zimri after a man who had assassinated a previous king of Israel. King Basha of Israel was assassinated by Zimri. So it was her way of calling Jehu a despicable rebel.

It's like saying, Is that you, Judas? You know, it's sort of that sort of idea. That's why she says the word Zimri. But by the way, you should also know that this was an implied threat.

Because do you know who ended the brief reign of Zimri? Omri, Jezebel's father-in-law. By implication, Jezebel said the dynasty of Omri will defeat you just like it defeated Zimri. And so there she is painted up in her face.

You know, don't you imagine when you read that? She's got that really thick makeup on that just looks kind of gross. And, you know, maybe she's trying to appear like a majestic queen, even though judgment is about to come upon her. But anyway, look what happens here.

We left it off. It says, And he looked up at the window and said, Who is on my side? Who? So two or three eunuchs looked out at him. Then he said, Throw her down.

So they threw her down. And some of her blood splattered on the wall and on the horses. And he trampled her underfoot.

And when he had gone in, he ate and drank. Then he said, Go now, see to this accursed woman and bury her. For she was a king's daughter.

So they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. Therefore, they came back and told him. And he said, This is the word of the Lord, which he spoke

by his servant, Elisha the Tishbite, saying, On the plot of ground at Jezreel, Dog shall eat the flesh of Jezebel.

And the corpse of Jezebel should be as refuse on the surface of the field in the plot at Jezreel, so that they shall not say, Here lies Jezebel. Isn't that amazing? These eunuchs who worked for Jezebel, they didn't like her very much. And as soon as Jehu says, Well, who's on my side? You know, the eunuchs don't say anything, but they give Jehu that look.

They're probably going, You are pointing to themselves. We're on your side. So he says, Throw her down.

And that's exactly, exactly what they did. They threw her down in the street. And then it says he trampled her underfoot.

There's her dead body there in the street. And he says, Well, let's ride into the city. And they just ride in with the horses trompling over her dead body.

By the way, in the ancient Near East cultures, this desecration of the dead body was a fate worse than death. They really felt that there was something worse than just dying. To have your dead body desecrated like this was a fate worse than death itself.

But it didn't bother Jehu one bit. He went in, he ate and drank. And then he says, Well, you know, now that I'm full, maybe we should do something about this body.

But when they get out, what did they see? There's nothing but her skull and the palms of her hands and the soles of her feet. I've been told, I'm no scientist, but I've been told that it's true that dogs will eat every part of a human body, except for the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet. I don't know why, but I've been told that this is the case.

And if it is the case, then that's the nature of dogs. And that's exactly what they did to Jezebel in this situation. And it totally fulfilled the promise against Jezebel and the house they have, as it says in verse 36.

This is the word of the Lord. Now, I want you to notice something, though, right here as we end chapter nine and get ready to go into chapter 10. What do we think of Jehu? We say, Praise the Lord.

Here's a man who was given a divine commission, and he fulfilled it with energy, with strength. He fulfilled it with seemingly everything that he had. He brought judgment upon the house of Omri and upon the descendants of Ahab.

Well, that's a good start for Jehu. Let's see how he continues as we get into chapter 10. Now, Ahab had 70 sons in Samaria.

And Jehu wrote and sent letters to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to those who reared Ahab's sons, saying, Now, as soon as this letter comes to you, since your master's sons are with you, and you have chariots and horses, a fortified city also, and weapons, choose the best qualified of your master's sons and set them on his father's throne and fight for your master's house. But they were exceedingly afraid and said, Look, two kings could not stand up to him. How then can we stand? So do you see what Jehu's doing? It's a very logical challenge.

He says, All right, look, I'm taking over. You guys want to resist me. So if you want to resist me, then let's do it.

Establish one of Ahab's sons as a king, muster up an army, and let's go. Let's fight. Let's fight it out right now.

It's really a very dignified way to put it. But the response of the men of Jezreel was logical as well. They say, This man Jehu, he just killed two kings.

He's a man of great power. He's a man of great momentum and authority. What are we going to do? So it goes on here now in verse... Oh boy, where did we leave off? Verse five there.

It says, And when he arrived... Now, excuse me, verse five. But they were exceedingly afraid. We'll start at verse four here.

But they were exceedingly afraid and said, Look, two kings could not stand up to him. How then can we stand? And he who was in charge of the house and he who was in charge of the city, the elders also and those who reared the sons sent to Jehu saying, We are your servants. We will do all that you tell us, but we will not make any one king do what is good in your sight.

In other words, what do you understand what they're doing here? They're waving the white flag of surrender. They say, OK, you know what? You're the boss. We're not going to make anybody king.

You're going to be the king. Tell us what to do. And actually, it was a very intelligent choice of them.

They said, If we battle against you, we're not going to win anyway. So let's figure out a way around this. Verse six.

Then he wrote a second letter to them saying, If you are for me and will obey my voice, take the heads of the men, your master's sons, and come to me at Jezreel by this time tomorrow. Now, the king's sons, 70 persons were with the great men of the city who were rearing them. So it was when the letter came to them that they took the king's sons and slaughtered 70 persons, put their heads in baskets and sent them to him at Jezreel.

Wow. Well, now I want you to remember here. God had called Jehu to bring judgment against the entire house of Ahab.

And that's exactly what he's doing. And so they slaughtered these 70 persons. They put their heads in the baskets and they sent him to him.

The nobles were so afraid of Jehu that they sent this grim evidence of their obedience. And so they said, This is what we're going to do. Now, look here.

Verse eight. Then a messenger came and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until morning.

So it was in the morning that he went out and stood and said to all the people, You are righteous. Indeed, I conspired against my master and killed him. But who killed all these? Know now that nothing shall fall to the earth of the word of the Lord, which the Lord spoke concerning the house of Ahab.

For the Lord has done what he spoke by his servant Elijah. So Jehu killed all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel and all his great men and his close acquaintances and his priests until he left none of them remaining. Now, you see, when the people saw the severed heads of 70 descendants of Ahab, they were afraid.

They thought the judgment of God is going to come upon us. So Jehu came and he said, Listen, I'll take the blame for this. You are righteous.

If anyone's to blame, it's me. I'm the one who rebelled against Joram. And I'm the one who did that at the instigation of God.

Well, he assured them that this was God's judgment and they could move on. So now on to verse 12. Then he arose and departed and went to Samaria.

On the way, Beth Eched of the shepherds, Jehu met with the brothers of Ahaziah, king of Judah, and said, Who are you? And they answered, We are the brothers of Ahaziah. We've come down to greet the sons of the king and the sons of the queen mother. And he said, Take them alive.

So they took them alive and killed them at the well of Beth Eched, 42 men and left none of them. Now, I have to say that this, of course, was to the great misfortune of these men who met with Jehu at this time. It was great reforming zeal because they tried to mention the queen mother.

They tried to say that they if you notice there, it says. So they answered, We are the brothers of Ahaziah. We have come down to greet the sons of the king and the sons of the queen mother.

That's not going to score you any points with Jehu because he just killed all those people. And so he left none of them. Again, characteristic of Jehu, wholehearted and energetic obedience.

And I have to say that some people believe that the execution of Ahaziah's family was an example of Jehu going too far. That this was a reckless and ambitious hand that God told him to do something. And in his own zeal and in his own effort, he fulfilled it.

But then went too far as well. It may be a case of that, although you have to say that these men were also descendants of Ahab because of their relation to Ahaziah, who was the grandson of Ahab in any regard. Whether or not Jehu went too far when he did this, it can be debated.

But take a look at what he does here, starting out verse 15. Now, when he departed from there, he met Jehonadab, the son of Rechab, coming to meet him. And he greeted him and said to him, Is your heart right as my heart is toward your heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is.

Jehu said, If it is, give me your hand. And so he gave him his hand and he took him up in his chariot. And he said, Come with me and see my zeal for the Lord.

So they had him ride in his chariot. And when he came to Samaria, he killed all who remained to Ahab in Samaria till he had destroyed them according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke to Elijah. Now, let's assume that up to this point, what Jehu did was correct.

I know that when we just took a look at the 42 descendants of Ahaziah, there could be some debate as to whether or not he did that. But let's just say that that was righteous from the Lord. You would say that up to this point, we're pretty happy about Jehu.

Here seems to be a man who is concerned with fulfilling the judgments of God. Here seems a man who seems to be concerned about fulfilling the prophesied role that God gave him to do. OK, we feel pretty good about Jehu.

He's bloody, but he's doing it because God told him to. But now in verse 15, it says he met Jehonadab, the son of Rehob. Now, this is very interesting.

Did you know that there was a order of Jews in the Old Testament times called the Rehobites, and this was a reform movement among the people of God? They were protesting the immoral and the impure lives of many people in Israel and Judah. It was sort of a pietistic movement among the nation of Israel. And so at that time, Jehu meets Jehonadab, the son of Rehob.

In Jeremiah chapter 35, God used the Rehobites and the memory of Jehonadab as an example of faithfulness and obedience to rebuke his unfaithful and disobedient people. Very interesting to mention of them in Jeremiah chapter 35, where it seems to be, again, as I said, this was a reform movement or a pietistic movement of people who really wanted to get right with God. Now, Jehu speaks to Jehonadab, who's this godly, righteous man, and he says, is your heart right as my heart is toward your heart? Jehu wanted to know if Jehonadab was on his side.

You see, Jehonadab was optimistic. He says, here's Jehu. He really seems to be concerned about fulfilling the will of the Lord.

Look at how energetic he's carrying out everything that God had for him. This furiously driving man seems to be furiously driving in the right direction. And this got Jehonadab, this reformer, excited.

Jehu was hungry for the approval of this popular religious leader and reformer. I don't think it's being too cynical to think that Jehu wanted to use Jehonadab to add legitimacy to his reign as king. He says, ah, here's a respected religious leader.

If I get him to support me, then the religious people will be on my side also. And so what does he do? Look at it in verse 16. Very interesting.

This is the first clearly negative thing we see about Jehu. When he says to Jehonadab, come with me and see my zeal for the Lord. Now, the zeal of Jehu was clearly noted in complete and energetic obedience to the Lord.

Oftentimes to the disregard of his own safety and comfort. Listen, it's not an easy thing to go out and kill kings. It's not an easy thing to go out and execute these judgments that he has done.

Yet this statement reveals the dangerous root of pride in Jehu. Any man who says, come with me and see my zeal for the Lord. You know pride is at work in that man, don't you? You see, he was proud of his own zeal.

And so he makes what you might call an ostentatious display of his reforming zeal and how he really doesn't so much have God's glory in mind as as much he does his own image. Here's the first crack in the nice picture that we see of Jehu. Well, look at what he does next here, starting at verse 18.

Then Jehu gathered all the people together and said to them, Ahab served Baal a little, Jehu will serve him much. Now, again, notice that you see what he said? Jehu gathered all the people together and said,

Ahab served Baal a little, Jehu will serve him much. Now, therefore, call me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants and all his priests.

Let no one be missing. For I have a great sacrifice for Baal. Whoever is missing shall not live.

But Jehu acted deceptively with the intent of destroying the worshippers of Baal. And Jehu said, proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. So they proclaimed it.

Then Jehu sent throughout all Israel and all the worshippers of Baal came so that there was not a man left who did not come. So they came to the temple of Baal and the temple of Baal was full from one end to the other. And he said to the one in charge of the wardrobe, Bring out the vestments for the worshippers of Baal.

So he brought out the vestments for them. And Jehu and Jehonadab, the son of Rechab, went into the temple of Baal and said to the worshippers of Baal, Search and see that no servants of the Lord are here with you, but only worshippers of Baal. You get what's going to go on here? Let's have a big Baal fest.

You know, here it is, the big party, the big concert, whatever you want to call. It's the big convention for Baal worshippers. And Jehu says, Oh, yeah, I'm into Baal.

I'm his biggest fan. Let's get all the Baal worshippers together. Get them in one place.

And let's make sure that there's no servants of the Lord here. As it says in verse 23, only worshippers of Baal. Get them all out of here.

And the Baal worshippers were all excited. Yes, you know, we were worried about you, Jehu. You know, when you started killing the king and you started judging the house of Ahab, we thought you might be against us.

We're so happy to hear that you're on our side. And Jehu says, yes, yes, thank you very much. Come into the temple here of Baal.

Verse 24. So they went in to offer sacrifices and burn offerings. Now, Jehu had appointed for himself 80 men on the outside.

And it said, if any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escapes, whoever lets him escape, it shall be his life for the life of the other. Now, it happened as soon as he had made to the end of the offerings, offering the burn offerings that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, go in and kill them. Let no one come out.

And they killed them with the edge of the sword. Then the guards and the officers threw them out and went into the inner room of the temple of Baal. And they brought out the sacred pillars of the temple of Baal and burned them.

Then they broke down the sacred pillar of Baal and tore down the temple of Baal and made it a refuse dump to this day. Thus, Jehu destroyed Baal from Israel. And so here he makes the sacrifice and then he calls for the execution of all these worshippers of Baal.

Now, again, from what you know of Jehu, probably maybe just sort of getting to know him tonight, doesn't this seem just like him? He's always going for it, always energetic, always zealous. He doesn't do anything

small. Everything's big.

You know, he's not content just to, you know, let's get a couple of Baal worshippers here and there. No, he wants to get them all at one time and slaughter them in the most dramatic way possible. And so he did it.

He tore down the temple of Baal and made it a refuse dump. You might say, well, this is wonderful, wonderful. Jehu, we like you.

You're doing a great job until we come to verse 29. Notice this. It's so sad.

However, Jehu did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin, that is from the golden calves that were at Bethel and Dan. Have you noticed that? He did so many other things right, but he would not do this right. Do you remember what the sin of Jeroboam was? This was at the first time when the southern kingdom and the northern kingdom split.

Now, you know very well that Jerusalem was a city in the southern kingdom of Judah. And because the king of the northern kingdom, whose name was Jeroboam, did not want his people to go down to the southern kingdom to worship the Lord at Jerusalem. He set up two other centers of worship with golden calves to represent the Lord God of Israel.

And we've reminded ourselves, we've said this many times as we've gone through the books of 1st and 2nd Kings, but it's an important principle. The sin of Jeroboam was not the worship of a false god. It was the false worship of the true God, right? There's two different kinds of sins at work here.

Baal is worshiping a false god. Jeroboam's sin was a false worship of the true God. And might I say, I think that the sin of Jeroboam is alive and well among God's people today.

There's a lot of false worship of the true God that takes place. Worship that's very self-focused, worship that's all interested in the experience of the individual, worship that is in some ways idolatrous or superstitious. All of these things can, in one way or another, in a greater or lesser way, can be said to represent the false worship of the true God.

Now, good credit to you that you're worshiping the true God. We're happy about that. But that's not enough.

Jeroboam worshipped the true God, but in a false way. And now Jehu did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. And now we see here in verse 30, And the Lord said to Jehu, Because you have done well in doing what is right in my sight and have done to the house of Ahab all that was in my heart, your son shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation.

But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart, for he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam who had made Israel sin. And I have to say, isn't it a strange thing in the life of Jehu? Here was a man who was characterized by wholehearted zeal, and he did so many things in his life with a complete enthusiasm. But when it came down to the genuine worship of the true God, he was sort of indifferent about it.

So, yeah, well, look, as long as it's to the Lord, who cares how you do it? And that's not enough. He promoted this false worship of the true God. It seems that Jehu was content to be strong against evil, but he was not equally ambitious of good.

It's easy to put away and to judge the sins of other people, isn't it? To really pursue the Lord with the right kind of heart. That's a different thing altogether. You see, Jehu did obey God up to a certain point.

I would say, you might say that he obeyed God as much as it personally benefited him. Yes, it benefited him to exercise these judgments. It benefited him to get rid of the priests of Baal, who no doubt were closely aligned with the house of Ahab.

The things that God asked him to do that happened to be in his own benefit, those things he did. But the other things he left undone. Now, clearly, there was much good in the reign of Jehu.

That's why God says in verse 30, because you have done well in doing what is right in my sight. He was absolutely committed to fulfilling God's judgment against the house of Ahab and in driving the worship of Baal out of Israel. For this, he would be rewarded with a dynasty that would last for four generations.

This was a clear praise of Jehu's actions. Yet, if you turn to Hosea chapter 1 verse 4, there's a very interesting condemnation of Jehu and his actions. Hosea chapter 1 verse 4 says, For in a little while I will avenge the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu and bring an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel.

We can see that both Second Kings 10:30 and Hosea chapter 1 verse 4 are true in that Jehu was a combination of both good and bad. It was good that he carried out God's will, but he went too far and executed more people than God intended him to. It was good that he carried out God's will, but he did it for personal glory and out of pride.

It was good that he carried out God's will, but he only did it partially. He stopped at the idolatry of Baal, but he continued the sinful idolatry of Jeroboam. But the testimony about him there is very plain in verse 31.

But Jehu took no heart to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart. In this, Jehu was clearly disobedient. And I have to say, sometimes you have to scratch your heads.

You look at some people. They have such devotion, such passion, such commitment after some things in their life, but not after God. You say, you know, if you'd only take that passion that you have after your hobby, if you only take that passion you have after that entertainment, if you only have that passion that you have after that career, if you would take that passion and also apply it towards the Lord, what a believer you would be.

But Jehu was a man who wouldn't do that. He was clearly disobedient in that he did not obey or serve God with all of his heart. We might see Jehu as a great Israelite patriot.

He protested against Joram and the house of Ahab for the harm they did to Israel. And he knew that to be strong, Israel had to be cleansed of Baal worship. He knew that Israel had to come back to the true God, but he didn't care how they did it.

You see, for Jehu, it was just as good to worship Yahweh at the Temple of the Golden Calves at Dan or Bethel as it was to worship him at Jerusalem. You see, when we compare Jehu to the other kings of Israel, what do you have to say? I would have to say he's the best of a bad group. No other king in Israel fought against idolatry as much as Jehu did.

But sadly, not even did he fight against it with all of his heart. And by not taking heed to walk in the law of the Lord is God, as it said there in verse 31, by failing to do that, it showed that Jehu did not live a life of fellowship with God. You know, he was a success in one regard.

He had a successful political career, a successful military career. Everybody could look and say, well, look, he's a zealous man. He drives furiously after everything he goes for.

But nevertheless, you could say that he was a successful failure. G. Campbell Morgan says this of him. How terrible a warning is the story of this man, that it is possible to be an instrument in the hand of God, and yet never be in fellowship with him.

Can anybody deny that God used Jehu? No, he was a mighty instrument in the hand of God. Yet where was the fellowship with God? Do you have any indication in the two chapters we've studied tonight that there's any real relationship between God and Jehu? None whatsoever. You know, you take a look at Jehu's business card.

What would it say? Jehu, zealous for Israel, zealous for God. But there wouldn't be any real heart of fellowship or worship towards the Lord. Well, verse 32 begins a summary of Jehu's reign.

In those days, the Lord began to cut off parts of Israel and Hazael conquered them all in the territory of Israel from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, Gad, Reuben and Manasseh from Arar, which is by the river Arnon, including Gilead and Bashan. You see, this was the work of the Lord. It says there in verse 32, in those days, the Lord began to cut off parts of Israel.

These neighboring rulers and their kingdoms were prompted and made successful by God in breaking away or in being cut away from the land of Israel. And it's sad for hundreds of years before this, since the time of the entry into the promised land, some 600 years before this time, Israel held substantial lands on the eastern side of the Jordan River. Now the land, the land that was once held by the tribes of Gad, Reuben and Manasseh was gone, taken by the enemies of Israel because of their sin and unfaithfulness to the covenant.

Verse 34, now the rest of the acts of Jehu, all that he did and all his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Jehu rested with his fathers and they buried him in Samaria. Then Jehoahaz, his son, reigned in his place. And the period that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was 28 years.

Again, what's our estimation of Jehu in his reign? Well, it depends what you compare him with. Compare him with King David, the man after God's own heart. Nowhere close to him, right? There's no relationship with God.

Compare him to just about any of the other kings of the northern kingdom of Israel. And he's the best of a very bad group. But he reigned for 28 years.

It was a long reign, but it was only notable at the beginning. It seems that Jehu had the energy and the influence to truly turn the nation back to God if he wanted to. What if that zeal that he had, that furious driving, what if he really would have turned it to turning the nation back to God? How different it could have been.

What wasted potential with Jehu. I have to say that in here, the lesson to be drawn from this very remarkable man's life is that we need to be constantly on guard. That even when God is using us, even when God is blessing us, even when God is lifting us up, you got to stay close to him and you got to apply the zeal of doing things for the Lord to yourself and to your own relationship with the Lord.

See, I love to be zealous about getting you right with God. I love to be zealous about confessing your sin. I love to be zealous about rebuking your life.

What did Jehu need to do and what do I need to do? We all do. We need to turn that zeal upon ourselves and say, no, Lord, I need to be right with you. My heart needs to be right with you.

It's not enough for me to put away the idols. I need to worship you in truth. We need to do the things that Jehu failed to do.

Yeah, come alongside the way he did. Admire his zeal. Admire his energy to do what he had to do.

Those are notable things. But nevertheless, we won't stop halfway as Jehu did. God willing, that's exactly how we'll do it.

So let's pray. Well, Lord, that is our heart. We don't want to stop halfway.

We want to have the zeal to follow through to the end. And it's interesting, Lord, how this man who had such tremendous zeal, yet somehow seemed to fall short when it came to applying the zeal to himself. Lord, we don't want to have the wasted potential of coming along to a certain place and not fulfilling everything you have for us.

So Lord, help us to admire what is good in Jehu and to thank you for the way you can work that in us. But Lord, even more so, we're very, very grateful that you've given us an example here, that we can turn our hearts to you wholeheartedly, not like Jehu, but really apply that zeal to ourselves and not just to others. Thank you and praise you for this passage of scripture tonight.

And pray that you impress it deeply upon us and show us more of the great ways that you deal with man. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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