

2 Kings 10

Written by K B Napier
Friday, 09 September 2016 20:30

Here we come across a very graphic illustration of God's wrath, and how He brings about His judgment upon a nation and king for their sins. Christians should see this as a warning, that God will not tolerate our evils for long, and may strike at us without further warning. We see how God sometimes uses bad people to bring about such judgments, even when they later continue in sin. Today, we must see the onslaught of Islamic murderers in this light – they are being used as God's judgment upon a lax and sinful Church. The only protection is to stand up firmly, claim Christ as Lord, obey holy laws, and live as we ought. Otherwise, the hordes of Islam WILL overwhelm us very soon.

Verses 1-3

1.

And Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to them that brought up Ahab's children, saying,

2.

Now as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master's sons are with you, and there are with you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armour;

3.

Look even out the best and meetest of your master's sons, and set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house.

From this chapter we see that Ahab, married to Jezebel, had concubines who bore him many children. Amongst these were 70 sons living in the city of Samaria; possibly, he had many more children scattered here and there. The sons were mentioned because they were legal heirs to the throne.

Having just killed Joram, Jehu was a most dangerous man. He developed a scheme – to pretend to want Ahab's sons to inherit the throne. He commended the armed might of Samaria and asked for the elders and wards of the sons to enthrone the best son they could find. He told them to "fight for your master's house"... but this was an elaborate deception.

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Verses 4-7

1.

But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, two kings stood not before him: how then shall we stand?

2.

And he that was over the house, and he that was over the city, the elders also, and the bringers up of the children, sent to Jehu, saying, We are thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any king: do thou that which is good in thine eyes.

3.

Then he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye be mine, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to morrow this time. Now the king's sons, being seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, which brought them up.

4.

And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent him them to Jezreel.

When the leaders in Samaria read the letters, they were extremely afraid. They argued that they could not possibly stand against the man who killed both the king of Israel and the king of Judah. Those who received a letter replied to Jehu, saying they were all his servants, so would not elect another king – he must do what he thought was best. After all, if they did as he asked, they would prove to be disloyal and would die; it would be better for him to do as he wished!

They received a swift reply from Jehu – if they were indeed as loyal as they claimed, they must kill every son of Ahab. The elders, and those who had brought up the sons, promptly cut off the heads of the seventy sons, and put them in baskets to be sent to Jezreel. This is what fear does. And yet, this was part of God's judgment upon the line of evil Ahab and Jezebel... there was more to come.

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Jehu openly said he was obeying God's prophecy, but, inwardly, it suited his brutal purpose. He was pleased to do what God said, because it furthered his own career as warrior-turned-king: to get rid of the sons would ensure his own safety from assassination by Ahab's family. Even so, it brought about God's prophecy.

Verses 8-11

1.

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

2.

And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the people, Ye be righteous: behold, I conspired against my master, and slew him: but who slew all these?

3.

Know now that there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spake concerning the house of Ahab: for the LORD hath done that which he spake by his servant Elijah.

4.

So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his kinsfolks, and his priests, until he left him none remaining.

Someone went to Jehu and told him that the seventy heads were in Jezreel. Jehu commanded that they be put into two piles in the main gateway to the city. Next morning he went to the gate and spoke to the assembled people. He said he had killed Joram, but 'who killed the sons of Ahab?' He was showing the people that their deaths were at the behest of God.

Though he was himself sinful, Jehu spoke the truth from God – that whatever God decreed must come to pass. Therefore, all these deaths were according to the prophecy given to Elijah.

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Then came a day of horrors, as Jehu commanded the deaths of everyone linked to Ahab's line, his family (no matter how remotely related), those in his tribe, his former lords, the false priests... all were put to death.

Often, God brought about His prophecies through bad men. I know that many Christians will try to ignore this kind of activity, because they do not want to think that God would do these things. He did then, and does so today. And He will consummate His wrath on the Day of Judgment, when all who deny Him will be sent to their eternal damnation. "Until he left him none remaining"! Would you obey such a mandate from God?

Verses 12-14

1.

And he arose and departed, and came to Samaria. And as he was at the shearing house in the way,

2.

Jehu met with the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who are ye? And they answered, We are the brethren of Ahaziah; and we go down to salute the children of the king and the children of the queen.

3.

And he said, Take them alive. And they took them alive, and slew them at the pit of the shearing house, even two and forty men; neither left he any of them.

When almost all connected to Ahab were dead, Jehu travelled to Samaria with a band of his soldiers. Somewhere along the road was a shearing house, a place used by herdsmen or shepherds. Possibly, he was watering the horses of his chariot. Whilst there, a band of people arrived, close friends of the dead Ahaziah, king of Judah (though it seems they were not yet aware of his death).

Jehu asked them who they were. They said they were of Ahaziah's family, come to pay their respects to Ahaziah and his children. Immediately, Jehu ordered his men to arrest the band,

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forty two in total, and killed them all near a well attached to the shearing house. You might remember when Samuel commanded the king to kill certain enemies and cattle, but they were spared. Samuel was incensed and he personally killed what remained with the sword.

What man of God has this kind of godliness today? I cannot think of any. As I said years ago, I would readily hang a murderer if no-one else would do it. I would find it horrific and stomach-churning, but it is what God demands. When a nation ignores God's direct commands, it falls into further sin. This is a test of our resolve and faithfulness. How obedient are *you*?

Verses 15-19

1.

And when he was departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him: and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot.

2.

And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD. So they made him ride in his chariot.

3.

And when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the LORD, which he spake to Elijah.

4.

And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu shall serve him much.

5.

Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a great sacrifice to do to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live. But Jehu did it in subtilty, to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal.

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When Jehu left the shearing house, he came across a Rechabite, named Jehonadab, walking. Jehu greeted him and asked if he met without hate or a wish to harm. Jehonadab confirmed that he did. 'If you really are as one with me', said Jehu, 'come into my chariot'. Jehonadab took hold of his hand and he was pulled up to the chariot. Jehu then boasted to him of his zeal for God, and said he would take Jehonadab to see evidence of it.

Jehu reached Samaria with his men and immediately killed everyone remaining of Ahab's reign, as was prophesied by God. After this, he told the people that while Ahab worshipped Baal a little, he would worship him a lot! This underscores the fact that the kings of Israel had an odd mixed sense of religious fervour, mingling the true God with false gods. Or, is this image not as it seems? Jehu was an arch-conspirator and this was another example of that.

He called for all the prophets of Baal, Baal priests and helpers, to come to the city to perform a massive sacrifice to Baal. If some refused they would die. Jehu was hatching a plot to kill everyone who worshipped Baal, so he pretended to worship Baal himself, so as to root out the false religionists.

Verses 20-25

1.

And Jehu said, Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed it.

2.

And Jehu sent through all Israel: and all the worshippers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came not. And they came into the house of Baal; and the house of Baal was full from one end to another.

3.

And he said unto him that was over the vestry, Bring forth vestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth vestments.

4.

And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of Baal, and said unto the

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worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here with you none of the servants of the LORD, but the worshippers of Baal only.

5.

And when they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings, Jehu appointed fourscore men without, and said, If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, he that letteth him go, his life shall be for the life of him.

6.

And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, Go in, and slay them; let none come forth. And they smote them with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast them out, and went to the city of the house of Baal.

Jehu told his men to proclaim a coming feast and sacrifice for Baal. The message went out through all Israel and those who worshipped Baal came, thinking they at last had total freedom to worship falsely. The worshippers filled the temple built to Baal by Jezebel. Jehu ordered the ones responsible for keeping religious garments to bring out enough vestments to give to every worshipper. This was not for religious purposes, but for identification in the crowd – all who wore them were seen to be worshippers of Baal.

When they all wore the vestments, Jehu and his new friend, Jehonadab, went into the temple, and commanded the soldiers to remove all who were not worshippers of Baal (e.g. worshippers of God). The ruse was almost complete.

Jehu then brought 80 soldiers to stand outside the temple, and commanded them to kill all the Baal worshippers inside, easily identified by their vestments. Any soldier who allowed a Baal worshipper to escape would himself be killed.

When the first sacrifice was made, Jehu told the men to enter the temple to kill everyone, which they did, leaving none alive. This, friends, is what God thinks of idol worshippers! Do not think otherwise.

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Verses 26-31

1.

And they brought forth the images out of the house of Baal, and burned them.

2.

And they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a draught house unto this day.

3.

Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.

4.

Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in Dan.

5.

And the LORD said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.

6.

But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.

After the slaughter, all the images and idols in the temple were brought out and burned. The huge statue to Baal was toppled and the temple itself was destroyed. It became a place where sewerage could be found. Verse 28 might suggest that this would be a new era for Israel, but Jehu's zeal was more to do with enjoying violence than with obeying God. Instead of worshipping Baal, he simply transferred to worship of two golden calves at Bethel and Dan (referred to in 1 Kings 12:28).

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In spite of his idolatry, God promised that his family would occupy the throne of Israel for some time after his own death, because he got rid of Baal and brought about God's prophecy concerning Ahab's line. But, Jehu did not take heed and worship God alone. He still kept to the sins of previous kings. At the same time he also tended to worship the true God, but not fully. We see evidence for this in verse 31, in the words "took no heed... with *all* his heart". And so Jehu, too, encouraged all of Israel to sin. If the head is wrong, it will affect the whole body.

Verses 32-36

1.

In those days the LORD began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel;

2.

From Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan.

3.

Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

4.

And Jehu slept with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead.

5.

And the time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty and eight years.

I have often warned that a Christian who sins continuously will find God removing His active presence from him. The same thing happened to Israel when they fell away from their God. So, we find Israel given over to its enemies because of its failure to obey the Lord. As a result,

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Hazael of the Syrians attacked them everywhere in Israel. More can be found on Jehu in Chronicles. After ruling Israel for 28 years, when he died he was buried in Samaria, and his son, Jehoahaz, became king. Like his father, he was a bad king.

We must not deny that the reason Israel had ALL bad kings (after David, and when Solomon lost his spiritual path) was their slide into idolatry and sin. Literally, they got the kings they deserved. The same goes for modern countries who allow bad rulers to reign over them, who make bad laws and encourage sin.

Do not accept bad rulers just because they appear to give you what you want. Even wicked men can stumble upon things that help Christians! But, it does not mean we may elect them or choose them as leaders. Today, leaders are opposed to the Lord and His people, so we cannot choose them.

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