

NOON BIBLE STUDY: 2 KINGS 10

WE FINISHED 2 KINGS 9 WITH ELIJAH'S PROPHECY AGAINST THE HOUSE OF AHAB COMING TO FULFILLMENT. THE WORD OF THE LORD WAS THAT AHAB'S HOUSE WOULD BE CUT OFF COMPLETELY.

1 KINGS 21:21 - "BEHOLD, I (THE LORD) WILL BRING EVIL UPON YOU (AHAB), AND WILL UTTERLY SWEEP YOU AWAY, AND WILL CUT OFF FROM AHAB EVERY MALE, BOTH BOND AND FREE IN ISRAEL;

JEZEBEL, THE EVIL QUEEN WHO PROPPED UP AHAB AND SPREAD IDOLATRY THROUGH THE LAND IS ALSO NO MORE (AND NOT JUST FIGURATIVELY). WE ARE SEEING THAT THE NEW KING OF ISRAEL, JEHU IS COMMITTED TO CLEANING HOUSE ON BEHALF OF THE LORD. BUT THERE IS MORE WORK TO BE DONE...

2 KINGS 10:1-5 - AHAB'S SEVENTY SONS

JEHU CALLS FOR THE RULERS OF ISRAEL WHO WERE GUARDING AHAB'S CHILDREN TO SET ONE OF HIS SONS UP AS THEIR CHOICE FOR KING. HE CHALLENGES THEM TO FIGHT FOR AHAB'S DYNASTY. THE ELDERS RECOGNIZE THAT JEHU HAS BEEN STRONG AND VICTORIOUS IN HIS ATTACKS AGAINST JEHOAM (AHAB'S SON, KING OF ISRAEL) AND AHASIAH (SON IN LAW OF AHAB AND KING OF JUDAH) AND CHOOSE INSTEAD TO SUBMIT TO JEHU'S RULE.

2 KINGS 10:6-11 - AHAB'S SONS BEHEADED

JEHU WELCOMES THE ALLEGIANCE OF THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL. HE COMMANDS THEM TO BEHEAD ALL OF THE SONS OF AHAB THAT WERE UNDER THEIR PROTECTION. AND THEN THESE HEADS ARE PILED UP AT THE GATE OF THE CITY OF JEZREEL.

V. 9 - WHO KILLED THESE? - IN AN ODD SCENE, JEHU IMPLIES THAT THERE IS SOME MYSTERIOUS OR DIVINE SOURCE THAT BROUGHT THESE HEADS TO JEZREEL. "I KILLED JEHOAM...BUT WHO KILLED THESE?" HE SAYS. THE PEOPLE WERE LIKELY IN SHOCK AND FEARED JEHU.

"JEHU'S AIM IS TO CONVINCE THE PEOPLE THAT RESISTANCE IS FUTILE. HE KNOWS WHO STRUCK DOWN ALL THESE, BUT THE PEOPLE DO NOT; AND HE INVITES THEM TO BELIEVE THAT THE HEADS MEAN THAT THE REVOLUTION IS BIGGER THAN HE IS, INVOLVING MYSTERIOUS POWERS MORE LETHAL THAN HIS (HE KILLED ONLY HIS MASTER); IT IS TRULY THE LORD WHO IS AT WORK IN OVERTHROWING THE HOUSE OF AHAB. AS FAIR-MINDED (IMPLIED BY INNOCENT) PEOPLE, THEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO ARRIVE AT THE CORRECT INTERPRETATION OF THE EVIDENCE." (ESV STUDY BIBLE, 2 KINGS 10:8-10)

V. 10 - "THERE SHALL TO THE EARTH NOTHING OF THE WORD OF THE LORD" - IN OTHER WORDS, NOTHING THAT THE LORD SAID WILL NOT BE ACCOMPLISHED

2 KINGS 10:12-14 - AHASIAH'S SONS KILLED

REMEMBER, AHASIAH WAS THE SON IN LAW OF AHAB. HIS SONS WOULD HAVE BEEN GRANDSONS OF AHAB. SO ACCORDING TO THE PROPHECY (1 KINGS 21:21), THEY MUST BE KILLED AS WELL.

IT IS DIFFICULT TO READ ABOUT THESE LARGE SCALE KILLINGS. WE DON'T KNOW THE NAMES OF THESE MEN, BUT WE READ OF THEIR GRUESOME FATE. IT MIGHT BE TROUBLING FOR SOME TO TRY AND SORT OUT WHY THE LORD SANCTIONED SUCH ACTS, AND RECONCILE THAT WITH GOD'S REPUTATION OF A LOVING FATHER. THIS IS A REASONABLE CONFLICT TO HAVE.

HERE'S WHAT WE SHOULD REMEMBER. YAHWEH IS UNLIKE OTHER GODS IN SO MANY WAYS. HE IS NOT FICKLE OR PRONE TO EMOTIONAL OR IRRATIONAL SWINGS. HE DOESN'T GET UP ON THE "WRONG SIDE OF THE BED" AND DESTROY A NATION BECAUSE HE IS GRUMPY. THAT'S WHAT BAAL AND MOLECH ARE KNOWN TO DO. THE LORD IS FAITHFUL AND CONSISTENT. HE ALSO SPEAKS BEFORE HE ACTS. HE OFFERS MERCY BEFORE JUDGMENT COMES.

AHAB AND HIS HOUSE BROUGHT ABOMINATIONS IN THE HOMES AND HEARTS OF ISRAEL LIKE NO OTHER REIGN. AND YET THROUGHOUT HIS RULE, JUST LIKE IN OTHER SIMILAR INSTANCES, THE LORD WOULD RAISE UP THE PROPHETS TO CALL THE PEOPLE OF GOD BACK TO HIS SIDE. THROUGH THEIR MESSAGES, THE LORD WOULD OFFER CLEAR CHOICES AND CLEAR RAMIFICATIONS OF THOSE CHOICES.

IF YOU CHOOSE TO WORSHIP THE LORD → LIFE. IF YOU FORSAKE HIM AND TURN TO IDOLS → DEATH.

SO AHAB AND HIS HOUSE WERE NOT SURPRISED WHEN THIS JUDGEMENT CAME.

AND SECONDLY, AHAB AND HIS HOUSE WERE HELD TO A HIGHER STANDARD AS LEADERS AND RULERS OF THE PEOPLE. GENERATIONAL JUDGEMENT DOES NOT ALWAYS HAPPEN IN SCRIPTURE. MOST OFTEN THE "THE SOUL WHO SINS WILL DIE (EZEKIEL 18:4)." BUT IN THE CASE OF A ROYAL DYNASTY, THEIR RESPONSIBILITY BRINGS WITH IT A GREATER BLESSING, AND ALSO THE POTENTIAL FOR A GREATER CONSEQUENCE. A KING DOES NOT GET TO DESECRATE THE THRONE ONLY TO HAVE HIS SON COME AND DO IT AGAIN AFTER HIS DEATH. NO, THIS PATTERN MUST STOP.

AND IN THE INSTANCES (LIKE WE HAVE SEEN/WILL SEE IN THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM OF JUDAH) WHERE THE NEXT GENERATION REPENTS, THE LORD FORGIVES AND RESTORES. BUT THIS WAS NOT THE CASE WITH AHAB'S HOUSE. ENOUGH WAS A ENOUGH. THERE WAS NOT REPENTANCE AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN AND NOW IT WAS JUDGEMENT DAY - FOR THE ENTIRE HOUSE. AND WHILE THE EXACT TIMING OF THIS JUDGEMENT WAS NOT KNOWN, THE LIKELIHOOD OF IT COMING WAS NO WHERE NEAR A SURPRISE.

2 KINGS 10:15-17 - JEHONADAB

WE DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THIS MAN NAMED JEHONADAB FROM THE TEXT HERE EXCEPT THAT HE APPEARS TO BE ZEALOUS FOR THE LORD. WHEN JEHU MEETS HIM IT IS ALMOST AS IF JEHU WANTS JEHONADAB TO SEE HOW PASSIONATE HE IS FOR COMPLETING THIS WORK AGAINST AHAB. JEHU EXTENDS HIS HAND AS A PHYSICAL DISPLAY OF THEIR UNITED HEARTS (MENTIONED IN V. 15)

HOWEVER, JEREMIAH 35 GIVES US SOME MORE INSIGHT INTO THIS MAN, HIS FAMILY AND THEIR MORAL CHARACTER. THEY LIVED AS SOJOURNERS IN THE LAND, THEY DIDN'T DRINK WINE AND KEPT THEMSELVES PURE. THEY ARE HELD UP AS AN EXAMPLE OF FAITHFULNESS AND PURITY, IN CONTRAST TO THE EVIL PEOPLE OF THE DAY. AS A RESULT OF THEIR FIDELITY TO THE LORD, THEY ARE PROMISED TO BE PRESERVED AS A PEOPLE.

JEREMIAH 35:18-19 (NLT) - THEN JEREMIAH TURNED TO THE RECAPITES AND SAID, "THIS IS WHAT THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, SAYS: 'YOU HAVE OBEYED YOUR ANCESTOR JEHONADAB IN EVERY RESPECT, FOLLOWING ALL HIS INSTRUCTIONS.' 19 THEREFORE, THIS IS WHAT THE LORD OF HEAVEN'S ARMIES, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, SAYS: 'JEHONADAB SON OF RECAP WILL ALWAYS HAVE DESCENDANTS WHO SERVE ME.'"

WHAT A CONTRAST TO AHAB'S FAMILY. SEE, THE MERCIFUL GOD OF ISRAEL PRESERVES AND PROTECTS THOSE WHO ARE LOYAL TO HIM, FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION AND REMOVES THOSE WHO ARE NOT.

V. 17 - JEHU COMPLETES THE WORK OF THE CUTTING OFF OF THE ROYAL DYNASTY. ALL WHO "REMAINED TO AHAB" (MEANING THOSE WHO WERE RELATED OR LOYAL TO HIM) WERE KILLED.

2 KINGS 10:18-24 - JEHU CALLS FOR A BAAL WORSHIP GATHERING

JEHU FOOLS THE CONGREGATION OF THOSE WHO WORSHIP BAAL (THE GOD OF AHAB & JEZEBEL) THAT HE TOO WILL FOLLOW AFTER BAAL (V. 18). HE CALLS FOR A LARGE WORSHIP SERVICE TO BE ASSEMBLED TO GATHER ALL OF THE BAAL WORSHIPPERS FROM THE LAND. HOWEVER, HIS INTENT IT NOT TO JOIN THEM IN THE PROCESSION, BUT TO DESTROY THEM AS ONE GROUP.

V. 23 - ONE FINAL CHECK - JEHU ORDERS ONE FINAL CHECK OF THE GROUP TO MAKE SURE NO ONE WHO WORSHIPS YAHWEH MAY HAVE MISTAKENLY GOTTEN IN THE CROWD. THE LORD KNOWS WHO ARE HIS!

2 KINGS 10:25-28 - BAAL ERADICATED

IN ONE DRAMATIC EVENT, THE WORSHIPPERS OF BAAL ARE DESTROYED. THEY CAME TO WORSHIP BAAL AND IN THAT VERY PLACE THEY FOUND THEIR END. IDOLATRY DESTROYS. AND IN THIS INSTANCE IT WAS NOT A SLOW AND GRADUAL DESTRUCTION, BUT A SWIFT AND FINAL ONE.

ALONG WITH THE WORSHIPPERS THEMSELVES, THE "SACRED" ITEMS OF BAAL WERE ALSO DEMOLISHED. (V. 26-27).

2 KINGS 10:29-36 - JEHU'S REIGN

IN JEHU, THE LORD FOUND A SERVANT FOR HIS DIVINE PURPOSES (JUDGMENT AGAINST AHAB'S HOUSE). HOWEVER, IN JEHU, THE LORD DID NOT FIND A FAITHFUL WORSHIPPER.

WE SEE IN THIS RECORD THE FINAL RIPPLE EFFECTS OF JUDGMENT UPON AHAB'S HOUSE FROM A GENERATION AGO. ELIJAH IS GONE (WE HAVEN'T HEARD FROM ELISHA IN A WHILE EITHER) BUT THE LORD IS NOT POWERLESS TO BRING ABOUT HIS PROMISED WORD AND DECISION. HIS TRUTH OUTLIVES DYNASTIES AND HIS WORD LASTS BEYOND EVEN THOSE WHO FIRST SPOKE IT.

YET, I THINK IT WOULD BE WISE TO CLOSE WITH A WORD ABOUT THESE FINAL ACTS OF JEHU. THE LAST 18 VERSES OF THE CHAPTER SPEAK NOTHING ABOUT AHAB'S HOUSE BUT RATHER AGAINST BAAL'S HOUSE. THOUGH JEHU DID NOT PROVE FAITHFUL TO THE LORD IN HIS OWN LIFE, HIS ACTS TEACH US ABOUT A BIGGER ISSUE IN ISRAEL. THIS BIGGER ISSUE WAS THE REAL REASON THE NATION WAS IN RUIN, AND IT DOESN'T RELATE TO AHAB AS A SPECIFIC CHARACTER IN OUR STORY.

THE REASON WHY JEHU'S WORK CONTINUED AFTER AHAB'S DESCENDANTS WERE KILLED WAS BECAUSE THERE WAS A ROOT CAUSE TO AHAB'S EVIL AND THE ROOT CAUSE WAS IDOLATRY. YOU CAN KILL AHAB AND BAAL WORSHIP WILL CONTINUE. YOU CAN EVEN KILL ALL OF AHAB'S DESCENDANTS AND BAAL WILL STILL RECEIVE PRAISE. IF YOU WANT TRUE CHANGE TO COME, YOU HAVE TO GET AT THE ROOT AND NOT JUST PLUCK THE TOP OF THE PLANT.

THIS IS TRUE IN OUR LIVES WHEN IT COMES TO IDOLATRY, RELATIONAL CHALLENGES, BEHAVIOR ISSUES, ADDICTION AND OTHER SINFUL PATTERNS. YOU HAVE TO GET TO THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM IF YOU WANT TO SEE IT CHANGE. YOU HAVE TO GET TO THE ROOT OF THE ISSUE IF YOU WANT TO BE DELIVERED.

IF YOU TAKE A STRATEGY THAT DOES NOT GET TO THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM, IT WILL APPEAR THAT THINGS HAVE CHANGED BECAUSE THE "OUTSIDE" EVIDENCE OF THE PROBLEM MAY GO AWAY. BUT THE ROOT IS WHERE THE PLANT GETS IT'S LIFE, AND WHERE OUR SINS GET RESURRECTED. BRUSHING THINGS UNDER THE RUG, IGNORING THINGS, DENYING TRUTH, AND MOVING AWAY FROM TEMPTATIONS ARE NOT THE WAY GOD WANTS TO BRING TRUE AND LASTING CHANGE INTO OUR LIVES.

HE WANTS TO GET TO THE VERY ROOT CAUSE OF WHY THINGS ARE THE WAY THEY ARE, REMOVE, CHANGE AND BREAK THOSE DEEP THINGS -- BRING HEALING TO THOSE PLACES -- AND THEN ALLOW NEW AND BEAUTIFUL LIFE GROW IN ITS PLACE. THIS IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. RATHER THAN FEARING THIS, WE SHOULD LONG FOR THIS KIND OF DEEP AND SUPERNATURAL WORK.

AHAB MIGHT BE GONE, BUT UNLESS THE ROOT OF THE IDOLATRY IS GONE, BAAL IS GOING TO COME TO LIFE AGAIN IN ISRAEL. AND THE SAME WILL HAPPEN IN US UNLESS THE MASTER GARDENER CAN DO HIS AMAZING AND MIRACULOUS WORK.