***Jezebel and Baal Worship

RV23-01***

We are studying the letter to the church at Thyatira in Revelation 2:18-29. We have seen that the church at Thyatira was faced with a decreasing body of spiritually positive and spiritually active believers who were serving the Lord, and an increasingly expanding body of paganism. Jesus Christ approached this church with the title Son of God. The reason in part that He did that was to emphasize that what some human religious leader may think of their ministry is not the important issue. How God evaluates them is what really counts. Authority relating to God rests with Jesus Christ alone, and not on some human religious leader or organization, whether it's a pope or denomination. There is a great deal of self-deceit in Christendom today as there was here in the church of Thyatira: human basis of judging and of complimenting what the church was doing, where God, from his point of view, could only condemn it. The genuine believers at Thyatira were literally finding that they were becoming an island in a sea of paganism.

Thyatira, historically, of course, reflects the condition which developed in Christendom during what we call the Middle Ages, from about the year 600 to about the year 1520 when the Protestant Reformation came along. The body of genuine Holy Spirit-led believers who were worshiping and serving God in spirit and in the truth of doctrine declined over these centuries before the Reformation. There was never a time when there were not some people like that, and there was never a time when there were not believers who were making a serious impact for the Lord, but they were increasingly becoming fewer in numbers as the centuries rolled by.

The reason for this was that the church had absorbed its pagan surroundings. The practices of the satanic religion begun by Nimrod in Babylon was increasingly incorporated into Christianity of the Middle Ages. The result, of course, was what we know today as the Roman Catholic Church. The apostasy of this church in the Middle Ages was represented as being the ultimate in devotion to Jesus Christ, when in fact it was merely a religious system that was leading millions upon millions of people who lived during those ages straight into hell itself.

The church, which was centered in the city of Rome (we know from Scriptures) began as an example to believers everywhere. In Romans 18, Paul says, concerning this church, "First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world." So when Paul wrote to the Roman Christians, one of the things he could say is, "I'm happy to report to you that I have discovered, in the course of my travels around the ancient world, that your faith and your Christian lifestyle are known everywhere. You're a great asset to the Christian community, and you're a great encouragement to believers everywhere, and I thank God for you." This is the same church; this is the same group of Christians; and, this is the same religious organization in Rome, which in time, during these Middle Ages, was infiltrated by the beliefs and rituals of the Babylonian mystery religion. Consequently, it became a system so completely corrupt and so completely perverted that it fulfilled the description of the Pharisees that Jesus gave in Matthew 23:15 when He said, "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you compass sea and land to make one proselyte. And when he is made, you make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves." That is the summary of the ministry of the church of the Middle Ages, and an apt summary of the ministry of the Roman Catholic Church today. It is taking human beings and making them two-fold the children of hell than what they were before the church got its hands upon them.

What the Thyatira letter is picturing for us, therefore, is the Roman Catholic Church fully developed as it evolved from the previous church era which was represented by the church at Pergamum. The church at Pergamum, you will remember, was a church that was now released from persecution. It was consequently, a church that now could breathe more easily, and it was a church that found acceptance with the world system because the civil authorities now approved of Christianity and began favoring it. So consequently, the period of Pergamum began a period of letting down on doctrinal principles. It began to be a period when the key word was: "get along;" "play ball;" and, "compromise." That compromise (that playing ball with the evil religious pagan system), which was begun by Nimrod at the Tower of Babel in opposition to the Kingdom of God on this earth, eventuated in time into the full blown corruption of the Roman Catholic Church. This letter describes for us that situation. It pictures for us what eventually came about as the result of accommodating to the paganism in the Pergamum period, and the incorporating of those systems of ritual and practices into the Thyatira period: the full blown paganistic system of Roman Catholicism.

The result was a church which was morally corrupt. It was a church which practiced idolatry. It was a church which persecuted biblical Christians wherever it could find them, such as in the Spanish Inquisition. It was a church which practiced every conceivable evil and immorality under the cloak of religion and under the guise of serving God. These church leaders themselves gradually became increasingly corrupted. They increasingly were absorbed by a desire for power and for wealth. Consequently, they found it easy, as the centuries rolled by, to actually cater to the old sin nature desires and to practice deceit. This is the kind of deceit that today we would associate only with politicians. It was not uncommon for the papal authorities of the Middle Ages to be themselves deeply involved with prostitutes and immoral women, and at the same time to be making moral pronouncements. It is something we expect of a politician who is going to say things in order that he may achieve his goal for power and status.

One interesting little book that came out before President Carter was elected ... was called Jimmy Carter, Jimmy Carter. One of the interesting things that that book presented was how consistently candidate Carter lied. For example, on one occasion, he stood before a group of high school students, and the newsmen observed that Carter has a charisma such that when you're in his presence, you just are overwhelmed by it. You just cannot evade it. Even when you know he's lying to you, you love him. These students who, of course, didn't know anything, were told how he was a poor boy, and he gave the story of how he had come from nothing, even though his mother said they never were poor. He told how he had become a nuclear physicist at Annapolis, although he never became a nuclear physicist at Annapolis. He told them how he wanted them to write letters, and that was the punchline. The reporters were just appalled because he said to the kids, "You write me with whatever you think." The reason he was doing this was because the kids in this state were able to vote. He said, "I want you to write me. Just write me at Jimmy Carter, Plains, Georgia, and it'll get to me. I read every letter. I open every letter I get, and I read it myself.

Well, the kids had tears in their eyes. The reporter, however, who was reporting on it, gagged on it because he knew that Carter never saw those letters. They go through central agencies; they're processed; they're answered in an orderly computerized fashion; and, he never touches them. However, this kind of deceit to gain an end is justified among politicians. It's very difficult today to be a politician and to be a biblical Christian. They are almost mutually exclusive. It is almost impossible. There was an era in our country (earlier) when I think that was possible, but now you're dealing with an electorate which itself is so morally and spiritually degenerate, that it simply cannot look upon a moral candidate (a biblical candidate) and say, "This is where it's at for our well-being."

The nation is in such reversionism. You know what reversionism does. It pulls the trick of a photographer's camera on you. When you look through the lens, everything turns upside down, and everything goes backwards. That inversion is what sets upon the American mentality. But it is hard to envision a whole vast church system (a hierarchy of religious leaders) who played the politician's role entirely. The reason for this was that in time, the Roman Catholic Church found that its power spiritually had expanded so tremendously through the bishop of Rome that the result was that they saw, that as the Roman Empire weakened, that they could move into the vacuum and take over the political power. Consequently, they had already degenerated to the point where they could be politicians without missing a beat.

So they moved into the picture politically as well as temporally. So today, when the pope puts on his official crown, you will notice that it's in three tiers (three stages) in order to declare that he is the supreme authority over everything spiritual in this world. He is the supreme authority over every nation in this world. He is the supreme authority over everything that has to do with hell.

**Condemnation**

The commendations of Jesus Christ to the remnant of divine viewpoint believers in this letter are now balanced by a severe warning and condemnation of the human viewpoint of a growing majority in that church. So we're going to take it up now in Revelation 2:20: "Notwithstanding, I have against you." The word "notwithstanding" is the Greek conjunction "alla." This is a word expressing adversity, and we would translate it as simply "but." It introduces the problem in the Thyatira church which Jesus Christ is going to condemn so severely. "I have." The Greek word for "have" is "echo." This simply means "to possess." It is in the present tense which tells us that this is the continual attitude of Jesus Christ. He's got something against these people. It's not just something that's floating in and out. It's not just something that they missed a beat here; it's not too bad; and, He's not indignant with them anymore. It's a continual problem, and it's getting worse. The present tense indicates that there's no letup of the anger and the indignation of Jesus Christ against this church. It is in the active voice which tells us that this is the personal viewpoint of the Lord. It's indicative mood which is a statement of fact.

The next few words are: "But I have a few things." The words "a few things" are not in the Greek Bible, so you just take a pencil and cross those out of your King James translation. It simply says, "I have against you." The word "against" is the Greek word "kata." This is a preposition which indicates a condemnation: "I have against you." The word "you" is the Greek word "su." This is a personal pronoun. It's in the second person singular, so it is referring to the Thyatira congregation as a whole (the singular group). However, you want to remember that verse 18 tells us that this letter is addressed to the angel (that is, to the messenger) of the church in Thyatira; that is, to the pastor-teacher authority in the church at Thyatira. So we may sense here a suggestion as well that Jesus Christ is saying that He has some indignation toward the pastor of this church because he has permitted something to develop within the church that he should not have tolerated.

So we translate these opening words in this way: "But I have this against you." These words are going to introduce a discussion about a growing group within the congregation which is as much under divine condemnation as the previous group was under divine commendation. The condition of toleration toward false doctrine, which is being promoted in this church, is the issue. Jesus Christ is indeed speaking to the pastor-teacher. He does not want under-shepherds of His flock to be teaching with loopholes for error. Obviously, this man (if not teaching that) left loopholes for error, and was teaching in such a way that people felt comfortable to get away with doctrinal error. They did not feel threatened in his presence when they came up with that which was false doctrine. They felt quite at ease to promote practices and ideas which were contrary to the Word of God.

Then we come to a corrupting female: "But I have this against you because." The word "because" is the Greek word "hoti." This is a conjunction which is introducing the reason for the divine condemnation. A good way to translate that is simply "that." "I have this against you, that allow." The word "allow" is the Greek word "aphiemi." "Aphiemi" here means "to tolerate." This refers to something which is being done in the local church at Thyatira which should not have been permitted. It is in the present tense which means that it was continually done. There wasn't even a time when somebody raised at least a voice once in a while of objection. Here was a condition that was constantly being tolerated within this church. It's in the active voice which shows that the church and pastor were themselves actively permitting it. It is indicative. Again it is a statement of fact. They were tolerating something.

These were spiritual believers, whom we have seen that the Lord has highly commended, who were tolerant of serious evil by a carnal element which was daily becoming greater within the congregation. The reversionists in the congregation were given non-condemning treatment for the sake of Christian peace and unity, and probably under the guise of love. That is a code word among preachers who do not want to face doctrinal error. They tell you to treat people in a non-condemning way. I suppose they were sort of like the way Paul treated Peter when Peter refused to eat with gentile believers in order to accommodate himself to the legalism of the Jewish believers. Paul gets up in front of the congregation and condemns Peter for his legalism and for his false practice of his denial of grace. I suppose that's the kind of thing they mean – non-condemning. I'm sure Peter did not feel condemned when Paul pointed his finger at him for that event. I suppose they're talking about the kind of language that Paul used, for example, when he talked about Alexander the coppersmith, and he warned the believers, "Don't have anything to do with that guy. Steer a clear course from him. He's done me a lot of dirt." That doesn't sound very condemning, does it?

This is the nonsense of human psychology. There is no other course of action when false doctrine is involved except to condemn it. I don't know what Jesus Christ ever did with the Pharisees and the religious leaders of Israel except to condemn them. I can't conceive of language like "snakes," and "sepulchres full of rotting dead men's bodies," and so on, as descriptions of these religious leaders. That sounds awfully condemning to me. But then I have limited mentality, so I have to struggle with that. So I don't know how the Christian education departments teach all these wonderful things about not being condemning when you deal with people.

Here was the problem. These people in this congregation were teaching a serious false doctrine at Thyatira. This was in spite of the fact that there was a tremendous body of really functioning believers, as we have seen from those characteristics that we've studied. Yet that functioning body was being non-condemning. They were being tolerant. They were being "aphiemi," and continually tolerant. They just did not want to disrupt their so-called Christian unity. Perhaps they hoped that these reversionists would get straightened out. That's not very likely. They were short-sighted in their view of the seriousness of false doctrine. They perhaps thought that it was just a fad that would pass. They were dealing with church members who were negative to sound doctrine and to the decisions of the pastor-teacher, and they should have recognized it.

These were people who arose in a local congregation who've got their own program. When people arise in the local congregation with their own program, it spells trouble. When that program happens to be wrong, and it usually is, then once it gets started and is in force, it's very difficult to stop. A church has a ministry, and that ministry is in alignment with the Word of God, or else it doesn't belong within that local congregation. When you get these hotshots (usually people who can verbalize, and who are good at talking, and good at emoting) who get up and begin rallying with a crew of people toward a course of action that's their own program, then you must either recognize that your program is going to be destroyed and their program will be substituted, or else you will take action and stop their program and maintain the one that the Lord has led you into. Don't ever think that there are two programs going on in any local church. You either condemn their program, or thereby condemn your own.

**Female Leadership**

What did they allow? Well, they allowed a "gune" in their congregation. The King James translates this as "woman," but the Greek language is more specific. This is not "woman." This is specifically a point of gender. This is "female." You tolerate this female in your congregation. This is a feminoid. She's not really human. She just has the parts of a female, and can't make it as a woman. So she's a feminoid. This creature within your congregation is bringing false doctrine. She is bringing a program of her own in, and you are going along with it.

In the Bible, when you have a woman in a position of spiritual influence and spiritual leadership, it's always an indication of evil. This is illustrated for us in Matthew 13:33-35, where the Lord gives the parable of the woman making the loaf: "Another parable spoke He unto them, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is like leaven.'" In the Bible, leaven is a symbol consistently for evil: "'Which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened.' And all these things spoke Jesus unto the multitude in parables, and without parables, He spoke not unto them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, saying, 'I will open my mouth in parables. I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.'" And here was a very important secret. There was a very important mystery – that women in positions of spiritual leadership always mean contamination from Satan.

Historically, of course, we have great denominations like Christian Science; Seventh Day Adventists; and, other cult groups which have been begun by women as an example of this very thing. So when we have this picture in Thyatira of a woman in a place of spiritual influence and leadership, you immediately know that what you are seeing is something which is from Satan; which is false; and, which is being promoted in that congregation.

**Jezebel**

Her name is "iezabel" in the Greek Bible: "Jezebel." This is probably not the female's real name in Thyatira. I think it's obvious that he is using this name symbolically to tie back to the Jezebel of the Old Testament. We're going to see more in the next session on how that tieback fits in. But what he is saying here is the way we would say, "That Jezebel of a woman. That is the idea that he has: "This I have against you, that you tolerate that Jezebel of a woman."

In order to appreciate what is being said here, we immediately, of course, have to stop and think through a little bit about what we know about the Jezebel of the Old Testament. You remember that she was the wife of Ahab, who was the queen of the northern section of the Jewish nation, the kingdom of Israel. Ahab was the king and Jezebel was his wife. They were married about 871 B.C. In 1 Kings 16:31, we have this descried: "And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sin of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, that he took as his wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshiped him." Right off the bat, in that verse, you've got everything pretty well summed up for you as to what the problem is.

Here was this woman. Her name is Jezebel. Ahab was not a very serious godly man or godly leader to begin with. As if his own sins were not great enough, he compounded them by making what, in effect, was a political alliance at the time by marrying Jezebel. Jezebel was the daughter of Ethbaal who was the king of Zidon. The father was himself a priest of Astarte. Astarte was one of the names given. There is a variety of names given. In whatever country you were in in the ancient world, the name changed: Ishtar; Venus; and, so on. But here the Scripture uses Astarte as the mother in the cult religious system which originated under Nimrod in Babylon: the mystery religion of Babylon. Astarte was one of the names of the deity that was worshiped under the form of a mother holding a child. This, of course, was completely taken over by the Roman Catholic Church, and just given the new names of Mary and Jesus. Jezebel herself was a worshiper of the phallic cult of Baal, the Canaanite god of fertility. That's what we're told. This was her religion. When she married Ahab, Ahab went along, and he served Baal and worshiped him as well.

**Baal Worship**

Let's take a look and see what's involved in this matter of worshiping Baal, and see if it's all that bad. This is all very critical to your understanding of what's taking place in Thyatira. The supreme god of the Canaanites who were in the land that the Jews took over was the god named El. Those of you who know a little Hebrew (or even in English), will recognize that this is the name of the true God, as in Elohim. This was taken over as a satanic deception. El, in the Canaanite pantheon was viewed as the supreme father god. He was viewed as the seducer of human females, and was probably (in the background) involved in the seduction of Genesis 6 of human females and satanic demonic beings. This was the cohabitation that took place in Genesis 6 that produced the hybrid race of giants that covered the earth before the Noahic flood.

El is known in Greek and Roman cultures by other names. In the Greek culture, he's known as Zeus, and in the Roman culture, he's known as Jupiter. Everything that began with Nimrod in the Babylonian mother-and-child system of religion spread throughout all the ancient world, and they just changed the names. When it came down to what is represented by Thyatira as a church in the Middle Ages, they did the same thing again. The Roman Catholic Church had exactly the same thing. They took over the system. They just changed the names.

**Human Sacrifices**

Baal worship was a counterfeit of Satan for the true worship of God because Baal was viewed as the son of El, and thus Baal was viewed as the counterfeit of the Lord Jesus Christ. Baal worship involved great sexual immorality. It involves, among other things, human sacrifices. What, in short, is happening (just giving you a little preview) is that what we are describing to you now from the ancient world and the ancient practices that we find in the Old Testament, and that surrounded the Jews, was taken over into the Christian church. So if you want to understand what this Jezebel-like woman in Thyatira did, you first have to understand what the system of Baal worship was, because it was taken over wholesale into the Christian church. That is what you have, in one form or another (in variant forms), in the Roman Catholic Church today.

One of the things it involved was human sacrifices. We have this described for us in Leviticus 20 where the Jews were warned not to do this. Another name for Baal is Molech, and that's the name which is used here in Leviticus: "And the Lord spoke unto Moses saying, "Again you shall say to the children of Israel, 'Whosoever he is of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, who gives any of his seed unto Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones.'" "Giving your seed to Molech" meant that you gave your children in human sacrifice to the god Molech, which was what was practiced: "And I will set My face against that man and will cut him off from among the people, because he has given of his seed unto Molech to defile my sanctuary, and to profane My holy name. And if the people of the land do, in any way, hide their eyes from the man when he gives his seed unto Molech, and don't kill him, then I will set My face against that man and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that played the harlot after him to commit harlotry to Molech from among their people."

**Abortion**

Sexual immorality was involved in the worship of Baal (or Molech), as well as human sacrifices. You will notice that here is a doctrinal principle. God said, "The man who is guilty of sacrificing his children to Molech is to be killed (is to be executed). The society which refuses to obey My rules (relative to execution for capital crimes) is a society that I will destroy." This is a point of doctrine. The United States is in trouble today because it is a society which refuses to function on divine viewpoint principles. One of the places is in the executing of those who are guilty of capital crimes for which the penalty is death. God is not overlooking what this nation and its judicial system has for years been doing, any more than he's overlooking the fact that genuine 100% human beings are being destroyed by the millions in this nation through abortion. Anybody who tries to defend abortion in any way whatsoever is facing the same condemnation. This is a variation of feeding Molech, and a variation of sacrificing to Baal. The whole concept of abortion is a satanic idea that Satan has long since practiced. Anybody who rejects that you, can just put down as being out of it relative to divine viewpoint.

**Sexual Immorality**

There are certain elements that are involved in Baal worship that we need to look at, so that you can appreciate how the system worked, and what was brought now into the Christian church later. One of the elements that was involved was what was described in Scripture as "groves." These are elevated places with a grove of trees where the worship of Baal was performed. As you entered that grove, you would find there a statue of a nude female. This was part of the illicit sex (the immorality) which was to be stimulated in the process of worshiping this god. You would also find an image in that grove of a male sex organ on display. These, of course, have been profusely found in archaeological discoveries. Then you would also find in the grove the supply of animals of various kinds for the purpose of sex. Their worship then was basically built upon sinful illicit sex. Therefore, when you worshipped Baal, there would be included fornication; adultery; homosexuality; bestiality (sex with animals); and, incest (sex between family members).

This was something that was going on in the land. Satan had established this in the Promised Land long before the Jews came along. For that reason, again, God had to very carefully warn them not to absorb this system of religion into their own. In Deuteronomy 12:29, we have such a warning: "When the Lord Thy God shall cut off the nations from before you, where you go to possess them, and you succeed them, and dwell in their land;" that is, when God puts out these pagan nations and gives you this land: "Take heed to yourself not to be snared by following them after they are destroyed from before you, and that you don't inquire after their god saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? Even so, I will do likewise.'" God knew that one of the things that was going to happen, as these nations were conquered by the Israeli armies, and as the people moved in to take over the Promised Land, that they were going to find these groves. They were going to walk up there, and they were going to find these objects. They were going to see these things, and they were going to ask themselves, "What did they do here? This is a place of worship. How did they worship their God? This looks very interesting." And God says, "Don't even inquire about it. Don't even pursue it."

Verse 31: "You shall not do so unto the Lord your God: for every abomination to the Lord, which he hates, have they done up to their gods. For even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods." So the point that was made to Israel was: "You will not follow their practice. This is satanic. They have not only gone into immorality, but to the extent of taking their children and throwing them in the fire in sacrifice to Baal." This kind of Baal worship that we've been talking about is what was promoted in Israel by Jezebel after she married Ahab. Remember that she was a Phoenician. She comes with the background of these Canaan people into Israel. She comes into the northern kingdom, and she comes there as a devotee of this kind of worship of the Baal cult.

In 1 Kings 16:31 we read, "And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the sons of Nebat, that he took as his wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, the king of the side Zidonians, and went in search of Baal, and worshiped him." Then verse 32: "And he (Ahab) reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. They had made an idol, and Ahab did more to provoke the God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him." The reason Ahab did this, of course, was because he was seeking to please this new wife that had come to him from a Baal-worshiping family, and had come to him from this pagan culture. She brought her own Baal priests into Israel and Ahab again permitted her to do that, and the state of Israel supported them.

In 1 Kings 18:19, we read, "Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal 450, and the prophets of the idols 400, who eat at Jezebel's table." When they had the confrontation with Elijah to determine who the true God was – Baal, or Jehovah, they gathered the priests and the prophets of Baal, and the Scriptures indicate that they were financed. "They ate at Jezebel's table" means that they were financed by Jezebel. They were financed out of the government treasury. Ahab had built places for Baal worship all over the land of Israel. Jezebel herself persecuted the true, genuine prophets of God – men like Elijah.

In 1 Kings 18:4, we read, "For it was so when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, that Obadiah took 100 prophets and hid them by 50 in a cave, and fed them with bread and water." The prophets of God were under such threat and persecution from Jezebel, who was now in such commanding authority, that they actually had to hide. If you were a real spokesman for God, you had to hide, or you were going to become a martyr. Jezebel was a forceful enough type of female to strike fear even in the heart of the prophet Elijah himself.

In 1 Kings 19:1-3, we read, "And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had slain all the prophets with the sword." This is following their confrontation at Carmel: "Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I don't make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." This meant, "I'm going to knock you off:" "And when Elijah saw that (he got the message), he rose and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belonged to Judah, and left his servant there." When he got this message, Elijah got up and he ran. He was in such fear that he just moved out. This woman was not one to be taken lightly.

As a matter of fact, she was so successful in her attack upon true religion and Israel that Elijah became a very discouraged preacher. 1 Kings 19:10: "And he said (Elijah, speaking to God), 'I've been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant; thrown down Your altars; and, slain Your prophets with the sword. I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away." He was so blue that he thought he was the only one left who was a true believer in Israel, and the Lord had informed him, "No, you're wrong. There are 7,000 other staunch true believers who have not bowed the knee to Baal beside you. But it does indicate to us that this woman was a powerful and forceful creature here in Israel, and was able to frighten even Elijah, and cause him to be discouraged. Jezebel, as you know, is the one who ruthlessly murdered Naboth, the Jezreelite, and confiscated his vineyard because her husband Ahab wanted it, and he couldn't buy it from Naboth. 1 Kings 21 describes this.

So you have this female creature, Jezebel. She's a domineering woman. A domineering woman tends to marry a weak man, but she wants one who is in authority. Ahab was made to order. He was weak. She had exactly what she wanted in a man who was a king and a weak male. As a husband, he had no religious convictions, so as a Jew, he could easily be carried by Jezebel into Baal worship. Ahab, in other words, lacked the manhood necessary to control a wife. This is why some males should never get married. They simply don't have the manhood to control a woman. If you don't have the manhood to control a woman, then do her a favor and don't get married. Ahab ignored the truth of the Old Testament which he possessed when he went along with Jezebel. I wonder what must have gone through his mind. I've heard the same satanic conclusions uttered in the mouths of Christian men many times. So we find that in Ahab's case, since he thought he had to live with her, he settled for religion.

1 Kings 21:25 says, "But there was none like unto Ahab, who did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. He was a weak man. His wife could stir him up to evil. That is a horrible woman to be married to. Instead of this woman ennobling him and stirring him up to godliness and enhancing his manhood, she stirred him up to that which was evil.

**The Adam Syndrome**

This is the Adam syndrome. It's the same thing that you see in Adam. Here was a man who had a genuine relationship with God. Here was a man who was capable of producing divine good. Here was a man who had a maximum walk with God. Potentially, if not in reality, Adam certainly did. Then along comes a woman who tells him that there's something more for him in another way elsewhere. That's the Adam syndrome. He listens to her, and what happens? His maximum fantastic relationship with God is lost. He degenerates into something monstrously inferior to what he once knew because he listened to the woman who told him that she had something better and greater for him than what he knew through his doctrinal relationships to God.

You have here illustrated in Ahab this Adam syndrome. He loses everything he once had with God. He's in reversionism. Finally he goes so spiritually insane that he thinks he has something better than he had before. He actually thought he had something better in the Baal worship than what he had in the worship of God. This man loses his eternal rewards. He suffers the misery of having prostituted his manhood to a feminoid. Jezebel rejected the spiritual authority of Elijah, who spoke divine viewpoint truth, and therefore she wanted to silence him. This is the way with domineering carnal women. They do not want to refute what they hear. They want to gag what the preacher says.

Jezebel was a troublemaker for one simple reason. She lacked male authority over her. She had a weak husband. She had no guidance. So any woman who does not have male authority and guidance over her inevitably goes to human viewpoint evils. This is because this is part of the punishment upon the female and upon the race of women as a result of the fall. If you'll go back to the book of Genesis, you will discover that the husband ruling over the woman is part of her punishment.

Jezebel claimed that her religion was simply another approach to Ahab's god, and it was a lot more fun, and I'm sure Ahab could readily see that it certainly was a lot more fun to worship Jezebel's way than the way that he'd been doing it. Dignifying evil is what she was doing. She was a sensual type of woman who manipulates weak men with sex appeal in order to gain her goals.

That is the woman, Jezebel. That is the woman with whom we are dealing. That is the background of this expression inside Thyatira which says that a Jezebel-like woman was in that church. What do you think that Jezebel-like woman in Thyatira did on the background of this historical Jezebel? What do you think the Thyatira Jezebel did that brought down such immense condemnation and judgment from the Lord Jesus Christ? If you'll come back next time, you'll find out.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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