***Jezebel's Demise

RV24-01***

We are studying the letter to the church in the city of Thyatira in Revelation 2:18-29. We have paused on verse 20, which reads, "Notwithstanding, I have against you because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants; to commit fornication; and, to eat things sacrificed unto idols."

In the local church of Thyatira, there was a female – not a woman, but a female. She was reminiscent of the Old Testament female Jezebel who was being tolerated in Thyatira. She corrupted sound doctrine with the practices of paganism. The ancient Jezebel, with whom she is compared, was a devotee and a promoter of Baal worship. The Baal worship that she brought into the Kingdom of Israel was an expression of Nimrod's ancient Babylonian religion which originated at the Tower of Babel incident as an attempt to pervert the worship of the true God. It was an expression of the sun worship that was at the heart of the Babylonian mystery cult.

**Jezebel**

Jezebel of old was, in short, a Cleopatra-type whom men desired and who indulged her, though her influence was satanic and extremely destructive. God, as we saw, brought in time, judgment upon apostasy. We want to look a little more at the agent of this divine vengeance. In 2 Kings 9:1-13, we have described for us the agent of this divine vengeance – a man named Jehu. Jehu at this time was a commander in the Israelite army of the northern kingdom of Ahab's son, Jehoram. Elijah gets the word to anoint Jehu to become not only the new king of the northern kingdom of Israel, but to begin a new dynasty. Ahab's dynasty is going to be wiped out of existence completely because of what Jezebel did. Jehu is now raised up to bring about the judgment of God upon Jezebel's family. The prophet Elisha sends his agent to Ramothgilead. At the time that the word comes that Jehu is here at a place called Ramothgilead. Ramothgilead was a key point in the north/south trade routes, and it was being held defensively in the war which was currently being fought with Syria.

**Jehoram**

Jehoram, the King of Israel, had been wounded in a battle against the Syrians. He therefore goes to a summer residence, which Ahab, his father, had established at a place called Jezreel. He's there at Jezreel recuperating from his wounds. Jezreel, you may remember, was the place where Naboth's Vineyard was that his father Ahab, through his mother Jezebel's instigation, took the vineyard from Naboth by means of murdering Naboth, the Jezreelite.

**Ahaziah**

Ahaziah, the King of Judah at this time, who had been allied in this battle with Jehoram in which Jehoram was wounded, decides to visit the King of the North, the King of Israel, as he's recuperating at Jezreel. So here in the city of Jezreel you end up with both Jehoram, the King of Israel, and Ahaziah, the King of Judah, in the same place at the royal residence. Also at this time, apparently the whole court had shifted to Jezreel because the queen mother Jezebel was visiting in Jezreel at the same time.

**Jehu**

Elisha's emissary, therefore, goes to Ramothgilead. He anoints Jehu as Israel's next king and the first king of a new dynasty. So the young prophet anointed Jehu here at Ramothgilead; delivered his message; told him how God was selecting him to exercise His vengeance upon the evil house of Ahab because of the influence of Jezebel on that family; and, then he left. This appointment of Jehu is immediately recognized by his fellow officers. Jehu directed his fellow officers to prevent anyone from leaving Ramothgilead in order to go to Jezreel to take the message concerning the appointment and the anointing of Jehu. Jehu himself then proceeded to Jezreel to execute the divine vengeance on the house of Ahab.

We have already seen, from the other side of the picture, the people in Jezreel watching him as he comes down this road from Ramothgilead, and they knew from the way he was driving that that could be no other but one of the officers that they knew by the name of Jehu. Jehu is met by Jehoram and by Ahaziah. Jehoram, the king of Israel, is recuperating from wounds. Ahaziah, who has been allied with him in the battle against the Syrians, is there visiting him as he's recuperating here in Jezreel. We looked last time at this meeting. We won't go into that detail. They did see him coming, and they did recognize who it was. So they go out to meet him, and they meet Jehu near the royal garden which was taken from Naboth. There, Jehu kills King Jehoram of Israel in the city of Jezreel, near the garden of Naboth (2 Kings 9:22-24). We looked at this last time where we have described how Jehu announced that he was there to kill him because of the harlotries of his mother, Jezebel. And there could be no peace until God's orders for the destruction of this family were executed.

So Jehu shoots an arrow; hits him in the back between the arms; it comes out of the heart; and, Jehoram drops dead. Ahaziah, the king of Judah, when he sees what's going on, decides that this is time for him to split. So he makes tracks and he heads out for Ibleam, which is in this southwest direction out of Jezreel. However, Jehu's men pursue him under Jehu's command, and Jehu orders his men to kill him. They do give him a mortal wound. Ahaziah swings off toward the city of Megiddo, which is back toward the north, and there he dies. 2 Kings 9:27-28: "But when Ahaziah, the king of Judah, saw this, he fled by the way of the garden house (that is, the vineyard of Naboth), and Jehu followed after him and said, 'Smite him also in the chariot.' They did so at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there. His servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David."

Jehu turns around and he goes back to Jezreel. Having finished off Ahaziah, he swings back north, back to the city of Jezreel. There he comes into the city. Again, we have already looked at the story. You will remember how Jezebel made herself look as attractive as she could; undoubtedly did a very good job at it; and, stood at the window and tried to seduce Jehu. Instead, he called for the eunuch servants to throw her over the banister into the street, and he ran over her with the chariots and smashed her under the wheels of the chariots and under the hooves of the horses. You can read about that in 2 Kings 9:30-33.

**God's Wrath**

Then Jehu liquidated all the relatives of the house of Ahab to terminate their dynasty and to preclude all further revolt. We have this in 2 Kings 10:1-11, where we have described for us this very shocking and straightforward picture. I want to read it to you. This is the God of Israel. This is one of the passages in the Bible why some people in our evangelical camp are beginning to veer off from the doctrine of inerrancy. They do not believe that what is presented in such passages as this, describing the God of the Old Testament, could possibly be a true portrayal of what this God told these people to do. Is Jehu, at this point, acting under divine instruction, or is he not? From everything the Bible says, he is obviously acting from the divine viewpoint. He is acting in perfect obedience to what God told him to do. We shall see proof of that in just a moment.

2 Kings 10: "And Ahab had 70 sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters and sent to Samaria unto the rulers of Jezreel; to the elders; and, to those who brought up Ahab's children, saying, 'Now as soon as this letter comes to you, seeing your master's sons are with you, and there are with you chariots and horses, a fortified city, also an armor, select the best and most fit of your master's son; set him on his father's throne; and, fight for your master's house.'" He sends back word to Jezreel and says, "You've got all these descendants and relatives of Ahab. You've got the military power. I would suggest that you select one of them now to stand as the replacement for your fallen king, and put him upon the throne of the northern kingdom of Israel." One reason he's doing this is that Jehu knows it is Semitic characteristic to be very loyal to the royal line. Therefore, he's trying to get some action on the part of a larger group than himself so that he cannot simply be accused of being some kind of a brutal, bloody tyrant who has wiped out Ahab's family and taken the throne by usurpation.

Verse 4: "But they were exceedingly afraid and said, 'Behold, two kings did not stand before him. How, then, shall we stand?'" So these rulers in Jezreel say, "Hey, wait a minute, boys. Neither Jehoram nor Ahaziah had been able to stand before Jehu. Do you think we ought to do this and think that we can stand before him?" And they said, "Nothing doing. You can't whip him. We'll join him."

Verse 5: "And he who was over the house, and he who was over the city, the elders also, the guardians of the children, sent to Jehu saying, 'We are your servants, and we'll do all that you ask. We will not make any king: do that which is good in your eyes.'" Remember that we're reading about the judgments and the vengeance of God because of what Jezebel did in the Baal worship that she introduced to Israel. Don't lose track that all of this is because of this woman, Jezebel.

Continuing: "Then he wrote a letter the second time to them saying, 'If you be mine, and if you will hearken until my voice, take the heads of the men, your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by this time tomorrow.'" Do you understand what he's saying? He says, "You've got 70 of them. I want all 70 heads and a bunch of baskets. Bring them to me by tomorrow. That's your deadline if you're really for me."

Continuing: "Now the king's sons, being 70 persons, were with the great men of the city who brought them up. And it came to pass when the letter came to them that they took the king's sons and slew 70 persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent them to Jezreel." What's Jehu doing? Is he doing what God told him to do: collecting these heads in baskets and sending them up to Jezreel? You betcha. If he has the heads, he knows the people are dead. It's very hard to stay alive without your head.

Continuing: "And there came a messenger and told him, saying, 'They have brought the heads of the king's sons,' and he said, 'Lay them unto heaps at the entrance of the gate until the morning.'" Now how do you like them bananas? Just pile them up: two big piles of heads here, right outside the gates of the city where everybody comes in can see them. This was an evidence that God's vengeance is being executed.

Continuing: "And it came to pass in the morning that he went out and stood and said to all the people, 'You are righteous. Behold, I conspired against my master and slew him. But who slew all these? Know now that there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the Word of the Lord which the Lord spoke concerning the house of Ahab. For the Lord has done that which he spoke by His servant Elijah.'" Jehu goes out and says, "In case you had any doubts on the legitimacy of my action relative to the execution of these two kings, I want to remind you that the people who executed these sons of the descendants of Ahab are part of your own rulers. They are part of your own officialdom. And they did it because God said to do it. They are acting under divine instructions."

Continuing: "So Jehu slew all who remained in the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his familiar friends, and his priests until he left him none remaining." So Jehu proceeds to liquidate all the relatives of the house of Ahab to terminate the dynasty, and to preclude all further revolt. Jehu then moves on down to Samaria. Samaria was the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel. On the way, 42 relatives of Ahaziah, the King of Judah, who were traveling to Jezreel, are also killed by Jehu. King Ahaziah has 42 relatives who say, "Let's go up there and visit our uncle at his palace in Jezreel." So they didn't get the word as to what's happening. So they're on this picnic, and they're having a gay and wonderful time, laughing and having a lot of fun on their way north to Jezreel, while Jehu is on his way south to Samaria, and he catches them along the road. And he liquidates them and ends their fun.

We have this in 2 Kings 10:12 concerning these relatives: "He arose and departed and came to Samaria. As he was at the shearing house in the way, Jehu met with the brethren of Ahaziah, king of Judah, and said, 'Who are you?' And they answered, 'We are the brethren of Ahaziah, and we go down to greet the children of the king and the children of the queen.' He said, 'Take them alive.' They took them alive, and slew them at the pit of the sharing house, even 42 men; neither left he any of them." In Samaria, Jehu liquidates all the remaining of the kin of the house of Ahab.

2 Kings 10:15-17: "When he was departed from there, he came upon the son of Rechab coming to meet him, and he greeted him and said unto him, 'Is your heart right as my heart is with your heart?' And Jehonadab answered, 'It is. If it be, give me your hand.' And he gave him his hand, and he took him up with him into the chariot." This man, Jehonadab, was expressing his loyalty to what Jehu was doing. Jehu extended him a hand of friendship, and he said, "Come up in my chariot with me:" "And he said, 'Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord.' So they made him ride in his chariot." What Jehu says is, "I want you to come with me now down to Samaria to see my zeal for the Lord." Isn't that an interesting expression: "My zeal for the Lord? I am slaughtering these human beings in my zeal for the Lord."

**Killing**

This is a biblical principle of warfare. I get pretty sick and tired of all the ignorant human viewpoint discussions that are constantly pervading our society today about the evils of killing. It is not wrong to kill people under certain conditions. The Bible only precludes ever murdering a person under any condition. But killing is part of God's plan of controlling Satan's efforts to undermine the human race in this era of the angelic conflict. What Jehu was doing was zeal for the Lord.

Continuing: "And when he came to Samaria, Jehu slew all who remained unto Ahab in Samaria until he had destroyed him according to the saying of the Lord, which he spoke to Elijah. Jehu, we also found, purged out the worship of Baal in Israel, and thereafter he reigned for 28 years. 2 Kings 10:18-28 describe for us how he exterminated the Baal worship by the subterfuge of getting all the priests into one place under the guise that he was going to join them in the festival, and then he destroyed them.

The interesting thing is that Jehu himself, having started so splendidly and with such complete obedience to the Lord, succumbed to the evils of the society that he had begun to purge. Notice 2 Kings 10:29: "Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin (the original leader of the nation), Jehu did not depart after them, to wit, golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in Dan." He did not destroy the worship centers at Bethel and Dan (the worship centers of the golden calf).

Notice also verse 31: "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 made Israel to sin." This is rather an interesting point that a man who begins so well, yet was in a contaminated society, was not able to override it. This society contaminated by Jezebel even affected the good man who said, "I'm for the Lord, and I'm going to be on the Lord's side." Even the men who were devoted to the Lord find themselves contaminated by the evils of the society that Jezebel created.

**Social Contamination**

Here's a point of doctrine that you better learn well. Those of us who fall and succumb to that which is evil, who are great loyalists, and totally devoted to the living God and to His Word, do so because at some point our vicious, filthy society contaminates us, and we do not reject it. Be careful how much you accept and take to your bosom the issues; the ways; the thinking; and, the ideals of our society. But nevertheless, you notice that Jehu's faithfulness in executing God's judgment on the house of Ahab was honored by God in spite of Jehu's own shortcomings, and God blessed his dynasty.

**God's Blessings**

2 Kings 10:30 says, "And the Lord said unto Jehu, 'Because you have done well in executing that which is right in My eyes, and have done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in My heart." Now do you see who told him to stack up those heads, and to get those heads of those sons? He did exactly what God was telling him to do. Notice: "Because you have done well in executing that which is right in My eyes." He did that which is right by divine viewpoint. There were a lot of people with human viewpoint who were complaining to high heaven about what Jehu was doing, just like the human viewpoint gang constantly complains and attacks the divine viewpoint people of our society, usually with such code words as saying that we're simplistic; we're uneducated; we're ignorant; we're out of touch; we're antiquated; or, we're obscurantists. There are any number of words, all of which are code words for saying, "You're striking at the evil that I want to promote because your arguments are threatening the evil that I want to pursue – that which is right in my eyes." "You did that which is right in My eyes, and now you have done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in My heart. Your children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel."

Jehoash; Joash, Jeroboam II, and Zechariah followed in systematic order of the dynasty of Jehu as God promised. So isn't it interesting, and isn't it encouraging to remember that God blesses positive believers in spite of themselves. Bible doctrine with positive volition is the all-preserving factor in our society today, and it is good to know that God blesses you and me in spite of ourselves. You may be mightily blessed of God while you are guilty of being evil.

I am amazed how juvenile some Christians are that they never learn that. That is a Bible doctrine principle. But you may come to a certain point in your evil where you go over the line, and then God cuts you off. What that point is, you never know. That's why it's dangerous to play the line of evil. You might think because God is blessing you, that He is indifferent to your evil. That's the point. God was not at all indifferent to the evil that Jehu propagated after he became king. But God was blessing him in spite of that evil because of his overwhelming devotion and commitment to God's viewpoint. The family of Jehu then was blessed because of its heritage. These four descendants were not being blessed entirely because of the kind of men they were. Was lot blessed because of Abraham? You bet. Lot was not blessed because he was such a fine fellow. He was horrible in many respects. The very fact that he lived in a filthy society of homosexuality like Sodom and Gomorrah showed what Lot was like. But because he was associated with Abraham, blessing's descended upon Lot.

So this is another thing to remember. Why is God blessing me? He may be blessing me because of my godly parents. He may be blessing me because of my godly grandparents. And the evil that you yourself are aware that you're guilty of, and that you play around with, should not be excused, and should not be glossed over as being something that God is not too upset with you about after all, because, after all, He is blessing you. That's how we're built. If God blesses us, we assume that what we're doing is all approved by Him. But God blesses us in spite of great areas in our lives that He does not approve. Now, He brings pressure on those areas, and He brings discipline on us for those areas, but He continues blessing us for other reasons. Jehu is a tremendous example of a man whom God is blessing in spite of tremendous shortcomings.

So here is the heritage of Jezebel's worship of Baal. Her husband Ahab was killed in battle, as we have found. Her son Ahaziah died from injuries suffered in a fall after a reign of two years. The son Jehoram is killed by Jehu after a reign of 12 years – enough opportunity to change. Jezebel herself, who survived her husband Ahab by 14 years, is killed by Jehu, who rejected her advances. Jehu himself wipes out all the relatives of Ahab, and the line of the Omri dynasty comes to an end, and the Jehu dynasty begins. That is the heritage of the Baal worship that Jezebel brought to this kingdom.

**Athaliah**

But that's not all. We have an influence over on the other side now, because Ahab and Jezebel also had a daughter named Athaliah. Jehoshaphat, was a man who, by and large, sought to serve the Lord. For 25 years, he was, by and large, a good king. Yet, he was willing to compromise with evil. And one of the evils he compromised with was agreeing to have his son Jehoram marry Ahab and Jezebel's daughter, Athaliah, so that the northern and southern kingdoms could have some political unity. It was an arranged marriage for political purposes.

So Athaliah was every bit Jezebel's daughter; every bit as devoted to Baal worship; and, every bit as contaminated with the evil, perverted sex and human sacrifices of Jezebel and the Baal cult. Athaliah comes into the southern kingdom of Judah, and marries Jehoram, who is in the line from which Jesus Christ is to be born, because farther up is David. This is the Davidic line of descent. This marriage of political alliance spells disaster of monumental proportions for the southern kingdom. Deuteronomy 7:3-4 forbad this kind of a marriage: "Neither shall you make marriages with them. Your daughter shall not be given unto his son, nor his daughter shall you take unto your son. For they will turn away your son from following Me that they may serve other gods, so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy you suddenly." Now that, in Deuteronomy, is as pristine, clear statement of doctrinal principles as you can ask in the Scriptures. There was no reason for Joshua, who knew Scripture, not to understand the doctrinal principle that is laid out here: "Do not permit your son to marry a pagan woman. That pagan woman will turn your son against the living God, and I will have to destroy him."

**Don't Marry a Spiritually Inferior**

You would have to be a fool to think that doctrinal principles do not work. We've got plenty of fools around the Christian community today who think these principles don't work. Certainly you have to know them. That's why we teach Bible doctrine. But these principles are irrevocable. They are not optional. And when you say they're not optional, that's when people begin to reverberate. The sin nature always reacts against a doctrinal principle.

This principle was very clear. This marriage should never have been permitted no matter what they thought the political advantages of the union would be. The same principle is enunciated for us, to be sure, so that we don't have some young high school girl who's going to be fool enough to marry somebody who's her spiritual inferior, or maybe somebody who's a little older than a high school girl who might be fool enough to marry somebody who is her spiritual inferior. 2 Corinthians 6:14 says, "Don't be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion has light with darkness?" And the answer is none. Don't marry an unbeliever if you're a Christian. The implication is don't marry somebody who is a spiritual dud. Particularly if you're a woman, you at least ought to have somebody who is your spiritual equal in your background information and in the knowledge of doctrinal principles. But it's bad even if you marry a woman who is inferior to you, because you hope you're going to bring her up.

How many divorces are the result of men who find they couldn't bring this clod up? This is what the marriage of Athaliah and Jehoram was – godliness with ungodliness. Jehoram, while not all that hot, yet came from a father that had a lot of divine viewpoints to pass on to him, and did pass it on.

Well, Athaliah brought all her mother Jezebel's devotion to Baal with her, and she corrupted the southern kingdom. 2 Kings 8:18: "And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord (talking about Jehoram). The daughter of Ahab was his wife. And He did evil in the sight of the Lord." She brought it all with her into the southern kingdom.

After eight years of Jehoram's reign, she was widowed. This we have in 2 Chronicles 21:12. This gives us the background of what happened to this man. Again, this will remind you that he has come under the influence of Athaliah who has brought with her the influence of Jezebel relative to Baal worship and all that that connoted in sexual immorality and human sacrifices: "And there came a writing to him from Elijah, the prophet, saying, 'Thus said the Lord God of David, your father. Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father, nor in the ways of Asa, King of Judah, but have walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and has made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot like the harlotries of the house of Ahab, and also have slain your brethren of your father's house, who were better than yourself, behold, with a great plague the Lord will smite your people and your children and your wives and all your goods. And you shall have great sickness by disease of your intestines (or of the bowels) until they fall out by reason of the sickness day-by-day."

Verse 18: "And after all this, the Lord smote him in his intestines with an incurable disease. And it came to pass that in the process of time, after the end of two years, his intestines fell out by reason of his sickness. So he died of severe diseases, and his people made no burning for him like the burning of his fathers. He was 32 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and departed without being desired. Howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the king."

So Jehoram was looked down upon with contempt even by his own people, because of his affiliation with his mother Athaliah's system of false religion. You notice in this passage that Jehoram was condemned with this painful, horrible, incurable disease of some kind that affected the bowel and intestine area of his body. He was afflicted with this disease, in part, because when he came to the throne, after his father Jehoshaphat died, one of the first things he did was kill off all of his brothers. That's what it means here that he has murdered his brethren in order to secure his throne, and to remove any threat to that throne.

In 2 Chronicles 21:4, we are told that: "Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself and slew all his brethren with the sword, and also some of the princes of Israel." Jehoram followed then the evil practices of Baal that were practiced in Israel. He did this because of the influence of his wife, Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. 2 Chronicles 21:6 says, "And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the House of Ahab, for he had the daughter of Ahab as his wife, and he wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord." And again we have this expression. It's how God looks at it that made it evil.

**The Davidic Covenant**

But there's one point that's to be made in verse 7, which was a very important point: "Howbeit the Lord would not destroy the house of David because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as He promised to give a light to him and to his sons forever." One of the things that God did was to promise (what we refer to as) the Davidic covenant to King David, that he would have a son who someday would rule forever on the throne of David. Of course, that ultimate son was Jesus Christ. But it had to come through the Davidic line.

Jehoram him and his family were placed under divine judgment, a judgment of doom, for the murders of the brothers, and for Baal worship, as we have read in 2 Chronicles 11:12-15. Jehoram, King of Judah, then died from a horrible disease as the result of God's judgment upon him.

Furthermore, Athaliah had a son, Ahaziah. She corrupted Ahaziah, who was the heir to the throne of Judah, with the evil of Baal worship. Athaliah was widowed after eight years that her husband reigned, and her son, Ahaziah came to the throne. We have this described for us in 2 Kings 8:26-27: "Ahaziah was 22 years old when he began to reign." That's interesting. He's 22 years old when he comes to the throne of the kingdom of Judah, the line of the tribe of Judah – the line through which Jesus Christ was going to come. He reigns less than a year. He's 22 years old. He has high hopes and aspirations, He certainly has great possibilities. But he comes with the contamination of his mother Athaliah dripping all over him – the evils of Baal worship. He reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri, king of Israel (going back up through the line through Ahab).

Continuing: "He walked in the ways of the house of Ahab and did evil in the sight of the Lord, as did the house of Ahab, for he was son-in-law to the house of Ahab." He did everything that this evil side of the family was doing. He picked it right up.

2 Chronicles 22:1-4 add further enlightenment on that: "And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son, king in his stead. For the band of men who came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram and king of Judah reigned. Ahaziah was 42 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem, and his mother's name was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri. He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother was his counselor to do wickedly." There's the point that we want to make. Athaliah, Jezebel and Ahab's daughter, actually point blank counseled her son Ahaziah to do wickedly, and particularly to do wickedly in the sight of the Lord.

Verse 4 says, "Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the Lord." It wasn't just what people thought was evil or people thought was right, but it was actually and truly absolute evil in the sight of God: "Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab, for they were his counselors after the death of his father to his destruction." Within a year, Ahaziah was killed, as we have already found. He was killed in the attack by Jehu. When Ahaziah was down here visiting Jehoram when he was recuperating from his wounds, the son gets killed. He hadn't even reigned for one year. He was 22 years old, and Jehu killed him as he tried fleeing from Jezreel, trying to get himself back down to safety. He goes toward Ibleam, and he's going to cut across to Samaria. He is killed (2 Kings 9:27).

What does his mother do? Athaliah his mother hears that her son has been executed by Jehu. Athaliah then proceeds to murder all of her grandchildren. She's got several grandchildren. They are in this line of the royal line of David. One of those grandchildren has to come to this throne in order that Jesus Christ can be born in the line of David. If Athaliah, in her anger and vengeance for the death of her son, can wipe out every one of her grandsons, there will not be a child through which Jesus Christ can be born. Was Jezebel a bad woman? What a fantastic maneuver this is of Satan. It was all brought about by Jezebel's indulgence of Baal worship. Satan is on the verge again, as he has been so often in history, of wiping out the human life through which Christ has to come. She goes through, and she just reeks of vengeance, killing every child, boy-after-boy. This was an attack on the royal line of Judah.

2 Chronicles 22:10 describes that for us: "But when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah." Ah, but wait. Into the picture comes the all-powerful living God who is going to again frustrate Satan's plans: "But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash, the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons who were slain, and put him and his nurse in a bed chamber. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of King Jehoram, wife of Jehoiada the priest, for she was the sister of Ahaziah (in other words, the boy's aunt grabbed him), and hid him from Athaliah so that she did not slay him. And he was with them, hidden in the house of God six years. And Athaliah reigned over the land." Her husband was a priest. They hid him in the temple. For six years, it seems that all the line of David has been executed. It hangs by the tender thread of one little boy named Joash, that they don't know was still alive within the precincts of the temple being preserved by his aunt.

Boy, would this make a great movie? "Will the boy make it? Will he survive? Will Jesus Christ be able to be born through the line of David? Come back next week and find out the exciting end of this story." No, I'm going to tell you right now. What a great dramatic structure this is, all on just one little boy now. This was the royal line through which Christ must come. No other child could do. Satan was using Jezebel's evil influence to try to frustrate the plans of God for fulfilling the Abrahamic covenant. Joash, the son of Ahaziah, was hidden by his aunt so that the line could be preserved.

When she thought that all were dead, Athaliah herself usurped the throne of Judah for six years. During the reign of Athaliah, did anything change relative to the evils of Jezebel? No. She took everything her mother taught her, and she put the Baal worship at a new height in Judah, the southern kingdom, as it had never been before. She brought all the filth of Baal worship across from Israel into Judah now that she had inherited and learned at her mother's knees.

2 Chronicles 24:7 records that for us when it says, "For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God, and also all the dedicated things of the house of the Lord they bestowed on Baalim." She went through, and what was in the house of the true God, she destroyed, and she converted that to a place of worship of Baalim: "For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman." Those words amply describe the daughter that Jezebel had reared.

Well, Athaliah was subsequently killed in a coup led by the high priest Jehoiada, whose wife was hiding the little boy. In 2 Kings 11:13-16, you can read about that: "When Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she came to the people and to the temple of the Lord. And when she looked, behold, the king stood by a pillar according to the custom, and the princess and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land rejoiced and blew with trumpets. And Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, 'Treason, treason.'" She hears a noise in the temple. She hears something going on: "Jehoiada brought forth the king's son; put a crown upon him; gave him the testimony; and, they made him king and anointed him. They clapped their hands and said, 'God save the king.'"

Athaliah says, "What's going on." She rushes in, and she drops her eyeteeth. There stands the little boy Joash that she thought had been killed along with the other sons. Here was the slender thread still kept alive by the God of magnificence. She yells out "Treason." Some treason! And she thinks that the people will rally to her: "But Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, "'Have her forth beyond the ranks, and him who follows her, kill with the sword,' for the priest had said, 'Let her not be slain in the house of the Lord.' They laid hands on her, and she went by the ways by which the horses came into the king's house, and there she was slain." They took her out, and they slew her outside in the pathway of the horses. So death reigned over the followers of Jezebel and her Baal worship.

Yet, Jesus Christ is a descendant of Ahab and Jezebel. You'll find that in Matthew 1:8-9 in the line of descent. Out of this evil, God brings good. Out of this evil, God brings His righteousness. You may think that the world has certainly gone crazy today. You may think that we live in a very filthy and vile society. Well, I'm here to tell you that the Word of God says, "As out of the evil of the Baalim worship influenced by Jezebel their came great good." So out of our day, God is yet going to bring fantastic good.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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