

Wicked

Payday Jezebel

2 Kings 9:30-37

August 12, 2018 am

HDBC

Today we come to the conclusion of the story of Ahab and Jezebel, one of the really bad couples in the Bible. Ahab was the 8th king of Israel and Jezebel was his wife. The simple testimony of scripture about Ahab is that he was **more evil** than all the kings who had come before him. He and Jezebel led the people into immorality and idolatry. Simply put . . . they were **Wicked!**

Together, they killed the prophets of God, led the people to worship idols, and did all kinds of evil things. One example involved the killing of Naboth, an innocent and righteous man, simply because they wanted his land and he refused to sell it. They had him falsely accused of blasphemy and treason they executed by stoning.

Though it appeared for a time that they were going to get away with their deeds they did not. On the same day that they took possession of Naboth's vineyard, God revealed that each would die a violent death and that dogs would lick their blood and eat their flesh.

Three years later Ahab was killed in battle and the dogs did, indeed, lick his blood. It was payday for Ahab. Now we come to payday for Jezebel. She was the primary instigator of much of the wickedness that they were involved in. Her death happened about ten years after Ahab. She surely must have assumed that she escaped the judgment of God. But it was not so. The God of justice was not finished avenging the death of Naboth and judging the sins of Jezebel.

The death of Jezebel is recounted in 2 Kings 9:30-37. After Ahab's death, his son, **Ahaziah** ruled for two years. Evil, just like mom and dad. Following him, another son, **Joram**, ruled for 12 years.

Jehu anointed to be king even while Joram was still on throne. (David/Saul).

He would be used of God to bring judgment on Ahab's family.

Began when he killed Joram with an arrow. **Next**, he would deal with Jezebel. That brings us to 2 Kings 9:30-37. **Read the text.**

Three things . . .

1. Arrogant Defiance (30-31)

Everything that we know of Jezebel prior to this text reveals an arrogant defiance of God and of his word. She was her own god, living for self, taking what she wanted and often leaving death and destruction in her wake.

Now, when she knew that her death was imminent we see no repentance, no confession, no change of heart. Instead, she seems to double-down in her arrogant defiance of God. She does two things that indicate this.

First, the writer tells us she *painted her eyes and adorned her head.*

She put on her best make up and fixed her hair. She wanted to look like the queen when she died. This was a refusal to humble herself.

She was well aware of Jehu's mission. She knew that she was a target and would be unlikely to escape death. Rather than confession and repentance, which would have been evidenced by wearing sackcloth and tossing ashes on her head, she dresses up. If she was going to die, she would die like she lived, doing it her own way!

Second, she insults Jehu when he arrived. ***Is it peace, you Zimri, murderer of your master?*** It was not peace and this was not Zimri. She knew that. Calling Jehu Zimri was an attempt to insult him. Zimri had conspired against and killed his king, but only reigned for 7 days. **Again, rather than repentance** we see defiance.

If there is ever a time to become humble and repentant, it is on your deathbed. Many assume they will do that. However, there are at least two serious issues with that plan. **First**, you may not have a deathbed. Many people die suddenly, with no warning. It is an act of grace when an unbeliever is aware of his/her impending death and is given a chance to make things right with God. Not everyone has that.

Second, you are assuming that you will want to confess and repent. You are assuming that you will make the right choice at that time. Unfortunately many people have so hardened their hearts that even in the face of death and hell, they refuse to confess their sinfulness and trust Christ for salvation.

2. **Violent Death (32-35)**

Jehu ignored her insult and simply asked if there were any in the room with her who were on his side. He was calling for those who had served her to join the other side. The ship of Jezebel was about to do down, and he was giving those on board an opportunity to jump ship.

Two or three eunuchs looked out at him, apparently indicating their willingness to join with him. What happened next certainly shocked Jezebel. He commanded them to throw her down and they immediately complied.

As her body hit the ground her blood splattered the wall and some of the horses. The horses, being startled by what happened, trampled her. Man, that is one violent scene. Thrown from an upper window then trampled by horses. But that was not all that happened to her.

Jehu, satisfied that she would no longer be a problem, went inside and had lunch. I'm really not sure what to make of this. This either demonstrates in Jehu a righteous satisfaction that God's judgment has come to Jezebel or a callous and cold heart. I want to believe the first, but the text is unclear.

While eating, Jehu instructs his people to go back outside and bury the body, after all, she was a king's daughter. When they go out they discovered that the only things remaining are skull, the palms of her hands and her feet. The street dogs have consumed the rest of her body.

What had already been a bloody, ugly scene, clearly got worse. When Jehu and his soldiers left the bleeding body on the ground and entered the building, the dogs were free to pounce and feed. That must have been an awful site. To see a human body ripped apart and eaten by stray dogs.

The Bible does not tell us if she was killed by the fall or by the horses or by the dogs. Either way, it was a terribly violent death.

3. **Prophetic Confirmation (36-37)**

When they reported this to Jehu, he properly pointed out that this was a fulfillment of divine prophecy. God had said this would happen to her. There would be no memorial service, no viewing of the body, no burial place where people could come to remember this person.

Her legacy would be as ugly as her life. In addition to a few body parts that even the dogs did not want, the only reminder of her sordid life would be the blood-stained faces of the dogs who had consumed her. She died as she had lived. There was nothing pretty or good about it.

Takeaways: Things I want you to do.

1. **Sin is ugly**

This story shows us just how ugly sin really is. We have a tendency to minimize the ugliness of sin and to actually convince ourselves that sin is not all that bad. This story reveals the absolute ugliness of sin. Don't be lulled into thinking sin is not a big deal.

The violence and ugliness of Jezebel's death is meant to remind us of just how foul, repulsive and hideous sin really is to God. We may grow calloused to its nastiness because we live so close to it, but that does not change the reality. **If you live in a town with a paper mill you don't smell it.**

2. **All sins are equally ugly**

I want you to avoid a false sense of security because you are not as bad as Jezebel. It would be really easy to walk away from this series with a sense of relief that we are not nearly as bad as these two.

Sins of selfishness, pride, lust, greed, envy and others that we so easily tolerate are just as noxious to God as those who Jezebel & Ahab.

3. **Sin requires justice**

The Hebrew word for "justice," *mishpat*, occurs in its various forms more than 200 times in the Old Testament. It means acquitting or punishing every person on the merits of the case, regardless of ethnicity or social status.

Justice is giving people what they are due; punishment, care, protection.

There is a universal principle revealed throughout the Bible but summarized in Romans 6:23: ***the wages of sin is death***. Justice of God requires that sin be punished. The punishment for sin is death. This involves death in this life, for sure, but also eternal death in a place the Bible calls hell.

As it applies to the story of Ahab and Jezebel, we realize that their violent deaths were seen as part of the justice of God. They received what they deserved. Of course, we know that the ultimate justice for their sins can only be seen in light of eternal punishment.

The punishment for sin is just one aspect of justice. Another aspect of justice is the idea of avenging the wrongs done to the innocent. Not only were Ahab and Jezebel punished by God for their sins against Him, but also as an act of justice for the wrongs done to Naboth and others.

In Revelation 6:9-10 there is a picture of martyred believers who are crying out to God, *how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on earth?* They were anticipating and longing for justice. So it is ok to seek justice for those who have been wronged, even yourself.

4. Mercy does not replace justice

The one thing that I wrestled with the most in preparing this message was the relationship between mercy and justice. The tension that I feel when thinking about those two things. How do they work together? Does one nullify the other? If God chooses mercy, have my sins gone unjustified, unpunished? When I am wronged, and I choose mercy, has justice be ignored?

Justice must be satisfied. It cannot simply be set aside.

Mercy can be offered because justice is satisfied in another.

First, God can offer mercy because justice has been satisfied through the death of Jesus. When Jesus died on the cross, he paid for my sins and your sins. He took our punishment. God can be merciful to us (forgive us) because the payment for our sins has been paid by another. In showing mercy to us, God is not ignoring the need for our sins to be punished, thus bringing justice. He has redirected our punishment to another (Jesus). He can be merciful precisely because justice has been satisfied.

Second, I can offer mercy to another because justice belongs to God. He can and will handle it. We may think that if we are merciful to those who mistreat us, we are somehow letting them off the hook. Naboth's surviving family were completely out of the picture in terms of justice that was due Ahab and Jezebel for their actions toward Naboth. God took care of it. I can love my enemies and do good to those who mistreat me, precisely because I trust the justice of God. He will take care of it as He sees fit.

**We can trust God to bring justice (avenge) for the wrongs done to us.
Therefore we can offer mercy and forgiveness to those who harm us.**

**We can trust God to forgive our sins because His Son has paid for them.
Justice for our sins has already been satisfied.**