

JUNE 26

2 Kings 9:14-10:31

2 Kings 9:14-37 These are Jehu's first actions against the house of Ahab.

Vs. 14-16 This sets the stage. Joram was wounded and recovering at Jezreel. Ahaziah the king of Judah, and fellow descendant of Ahab, was there with him. They were awaiting news of the battle at Ramoth-gilead.

Vs. 17-20 Remember that Joram was hoping for news of a victory and peace. He thought that Jehu was still one of his best and most loyal leaders. Jehu was coming on so fast that the riders had to fall in line behind him. Jehu's reply to the messengers will be explained in a few verses.

V. 20 This could be a cool bumper sticker: Driving like a Jehu!

Vs. 21-26 Joram and Ahaziah went out thinking there was a message of peace. They got a big surprise.

V. 22 This is what Jehu meant by his cryptic words about peace.

V. 26 This is where we understand that earlier (1 Kings 21:13) when Naboth was killed, his sons (probably wife and daughters too) were killed with him. It is interesting to note that Jehu and all of these men knew about this word from the Lord.

V. 27-29 Ahaziah, though from Judah, was still related to Ahab through Ahab's daughter. Jezebel was his grandmother! Killing him was a fulfillment of the judgment on Ahab. Jehu didn't need to pursue him since he was interested in Ahab's descendants in Israel, not Judah.

V. 29 With Joram dead, Jehu officially began his reign.

Vs. 30-37 And here was Jehu's first order of business. It is apparent from her words that Jezebel knew this would be her last appearance so she wanted to go out looking good. I can imagine that Jezebel was not well liked and these eunuchs were finally living their dream.

V. 36 Notice again how well they knew what the Lord had spoken. So, why didn't they obey earlier? Better yet, why won't they obey in the future?

Just so we don't get too caught up in the aftermath of Jezebel's "burial," remember that she wasn't there. The minute her head hit the pavement, she shot into the presence of God, which would have been a great place to have been, had she not been the person she had been. Those moments in God's presence and being sent into Hades were far worse than the dogs eating her corpse. The thing with the dogs was to show those still living that God is faithful to His words of judgment. Jezebel could have repented but didn't. And then too, we should give a care for those poor dogs.

2 Kings 10:1-31

Vs. 1-11 Notice in all of this that Jehu was very tactical and that he also appealed to the prophecy against the house of Ahab.

Vs. 9-10 It is interesting that Jehu took the responsibility on himself for this event. That was a good thing.

V. 11 It should be noted that God judged Jehu, among other things, for his excessive zeal and violence (Hosea 1:4). I think killing all of the great men and close friends might have been part of this. If Jehu worked for Ahab and Jezebel and hated them, there were probably many in the government who also hated them and would have been loyal to Jehu. Killing everyone was excessive and it might have shown some insecurity on Jehu's part, clearing the field of any would-be competitors.

Vs. 12-14 Talk about being in the wrong place at the wrong time. This apparently was an intersection ordained by God. Some of this may have been warranted, since Jehu had the

command to kill everything related to Ahab. But not all of these people were related. It may be that Jehu got carried away, killing the innocent with the guilty.

Vs. 15-28 Jehu's final step was to eliminate Baal worship (and the other associated gods) from Israel.

In v. 15 we meet Jehonadab the son of Rechab. We don't know it here, but this guy is a full, 100% follower of Yahweh. He's one of those 7000 who hadn't bowed the knee to Baal. In Jeremiah 35 we'll hear about him (called Jonadab there) and meet his kids. God will make an eternal promise to his family, to the effect that one of Jehonadab's descendants is running around today, as we speak, and is a fully devoted follower of Christ. Maybe it's you!

Apparently Jehonadab was known to be a follower of Yahweh, but Jehu had only recently appeared to be following the Lord. Jehu wanted to be seen as united to Jehonadab.

V. 27 Nice touch.

Vs. 28-31 So, in spite of all of the prophecies and their fulfillments, Jehu still did not follow God. Rather than simply trusting and honoring God, there was fear of losing the kingdom if the people were to return to Jerusalem. He took care of Baal worship, but he left the calves up and didn't honor God. And then, even though people knew there was a presence of God because of Elisha, they still were not interested in asking God's will and following His leading. In order to do that, they needed to get rid of the calves and embrace worshiping God's way in Jerusalem. Ironically, at this moment, God wasn't being worshiped in Jerusalem either.

I think these events show us that as disciples we need to be very serious and devoted in serving the Lord in the harvest as He says we are to serve. Jehu obeyed to a point, but then stopped. Had he been personally devoted to the Lord, he would have made his own copy of Deuteronomy and read from it daily, all under the instruction of the Levites. He would only have sacrificed at the altar in the temple. He would have fearlessly followed the Lord and been a model to his people.

Acts 17

Vs. 1-9 This is the beginning of the church in Thessalonica. In saying that Paul was in the synagogue for three Sabbath days, it means that was the length of time he worked in the synagogue. He was in Thessalonica longer than that. In Philippians Paul says he received financial gifts from the church in Philippi two times. Paul also worked there for some time as, literally, a tent maker.

V. 5 It could be that Jason was a relative of Paul's who is mentioned in Romans 16:21.

Vs. 10-15 It is funny that Luke wrote that the Bereans were more noble than those in Thessalonica. Didn't they think this book would circulate? Apparently they took time to hear Paul and search the Scriptures, and on verifying what Paul said, many more came to faith.

V. 13 When they had worked long enough to establish the church, these God-ordained agitators were used by God to show Paul and the new church that Paul had to leave. It was time for them to get organized and begin working in the harvest, following Christ.

V. 14 Compare this verse to v. 9.

V. 15 Notice the similarities of Paul's work in Thessalonica and in Berea. Notice too, that when Paul fled to another city, he immediately began to work. Everything was seen as God's leading and will.

Paul sent word for Silas and Timothy to return to him. Silas and Timothy had remained and gone back to Thessalonica to see if the church there was OK.

Vs. 16-34 Some people go nuts, and say this was a total failure by Paul, and that Paul became vague and wishy-washy in his preaching. What do you think? The reality is - people were saved.

I could live with that. Paul began in the synagogues like usual, but this was a totally secular and confused environment. God blessed with fruit. I think I'd have been happy.

When you look at Paul's message, what do you think were the high points? In a way, it looks like what Jesus told His disciples to preach. There is one God whose kingdom is coming. He will judge mankind, so turn to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ.

As disciples, we should keep the message simple and biblical, and remember that only those who the Father draws to His Son will come forward. Our job is to work in the harvest and be clear and clearly in love with our Lord.

Athens, the cultural center of Greece, had gone to seed and was full of confusion. It didn't have a fraction of the importance of Corinth, Paul's next stop.

Psalm 144

This psalm of David looks like it could have been written after he finally became king of the entire nation. In those early days he faced many foreign enemies and God brought them into submission to Israel. What do you think the purpose of this prayer is? What is David asking for the nation?

Take notice of the repetitions of words that give structure to different sections of the psalm, like *may*.

Vs. 1-2 David had come to know God's *steadfast love* in his days of running and during the civil war with Saul's house and northern tribes. Now as king of the entire nation, David was beginning to see God's plan unfolding that would bring the nations into submission to Israel.

Vs. 3-4 You have to wonder why David says this. It's almost like a moment of reflection.

Vs. 5-8 David again was asking God for help and deliverance. In spite of what God had given, David didn't take God's help for granted or think that he himself was sufficient for any task without God.

Vs. 9-11 I wonder if these verses were penned just before David was going into battle.

Vs. 12-15 This seems like a prayer for the blessing God promised to Abraham. God promised that Israel would be a light and a blessing to all nations because He was with them. The nations would see this blessing and be drawn to seek the Lord.

Proverbs 17:27-28

So, what kind of knowledge gives you the ability to keep cool and control your words?