

Life Lesson 90

Jehu

Text: II Kings 8 – 10:36

Introduction

Ever since Omri defeated Zimri, the family of Omri ruled Israel. And ever since Omri began to reign, Israel had a wicked king.

The Story

Omri was bad enough, but his son Ahab was the worst of all the bad kings of Israel. He encouraged the people to worship Baal. Baal, or Baalzebub, is another name for the devil. You can see how very wicked Ahab was! His wife, Jezebel, spurred him on to do evil things. She even had an innocent man killed because he wouldn't sell his land to Ahab.

King Ahaziah, Ahab's son, and King Jehoram, his second son who was king after Ahaziah, weren't a bit better as king. The whole family was evil. Since they refused to repent, God took the kingdom away from their family.

"Take this box of oil," Elisha told one of the other prophets. "Go to Ramoth-Gilead and anoint Jehu to be the new king of Israel. That is what God has commanded for us to do."

The prophet did as Elisha commanded and a revolution broke out in the land of Israel. Most of the people were so tired of the wicked Jehoram that they willingly followed Jehu. Others were aware that God had appointed Jehu to execute judgment on the house of Omri. Still others were afraid not to follow him.

There were still some people, though, who fought for King Jehoram.

Jehoram had been injured while he was fighting the Syrians. He was recovering from his wounds in Jezreel and King Ahaziah (Jehoshaphat's son) of Judah was visiting him.

A watchman told Jehoram, "There's someone coming in a chariot with a company of soldiers."

"Send a messenger out to meet him to find out who he is," King Jehoram commanded.

The messenger rode out to meet the chariot.

"Do you come in peace?" the messenger asked.

"What have you to do with peace? Follow me," the charioteer answered. He was Jehu, coming to face King Jehoram.

"The chariot is still coming," the watchman reported. "The messenger reached him but didn't come back."

"Send another messenger," the king ordered.

The second messenger rode out to meet Jehu.

"Do you come in peace?" he asked.

"What have you to do with peace?" Jehu replied as before. "Follow me."

"The second messenger met the charioteer, but he isn't coming back, either," the watchman reported. "I think it must be Jehu, because only he drives furiously that way."

The king gave up on messengers and ordered his own chariot. He and King Ahaziah of Judah went out to meet Jehu.

"Do you come in peace?" Jehoram asked him.

“How can there be peace when your mother Jezebel is still alive and practicing witchcraft?” Jehu replied.

When Jehoram heard that, he turned and ran. Jehu drew his bow and sent an arrow flying into the air. It struck Jehoram in the back and killed him.

King Ahaziah of Judah tried to get away, but Jehu’s men followed him and killed him, too.

When Jezebel heard that Jehu was coming to Jezreel, she fixed her hair and put on her makeup, and waited at the window. When Jehu drove up in his chariot, she called down to him.

“Do you remember what happened to Zimri when he slew his master?” she asked mockingly. She knew Jehu would remember Zimri who reigned only one week before he was killed. She thought it would worry Jehu, but it didn’t.

“Who is on my side?” he called out. Two or three servants looked out the window behind Jezebel.

“Throw her down,” Jehu commanded.

The servants gave a big push and the wicked queen fell to her death. Years before, Elisha had predicted that dogs would eat Jezebel. That is just what happened. When they looked for her after a while to bury her, she was gone. The dogs left only her skull, her feet, and the palms of her hands.

Because God gave her time to repent, Jezebel thought God wouldn’t send the judgment He had promised. She thought she was safe. Be sure that what God says, He will do.

Jehu won the revolution and was crowned the new king of Israel. His biggest job was just beginning. He had a trick to play on the servants of Baal.

“We are going to have a big party to honor Baal for our victory,” Jehu declared. “Have all the priests come as special guests and to help offer the sacrifices.”

All the priests and servants of Baal came to the party, ready to earn the favor of the new king. Once they were all there, Jehu commanded his servants to kill them all.

If the servants of Baal knew the king was out to kill them, they would go into hiding. They would still be practicing witchcraft undercover in towns and cities all over Israel. By pretending to be a Baal worshipper, too, he was able to trick them into coming out into the open.

Jehu’s servants then took the idols of Baal and broke them up and burned them.

By his crafty trick, Jehu had rid Israel of those wicked idol worshipers in just one day.

Had Jehu kept on as he had started, he might have had a peaceful reign. After his good beginning, though, he began to backslide. He allowed worship of the golden calves in the hills of Samaria. He didn’t follow the Lord with all his heart, so God allowed the Syrians to keep on attacking and bothering the Israelites. Little by little the Israelites lost their land to the Syrians.

The Life Lesson

Jehu was king of Israel for 28 years. He was a good king part of the time, but was bad part of the time, also.

I hope that when you stand before the Lord at the judgment day, you won't have a mixed record like Jehu. God wants you to love Him with all your heart and serve Him faithfully all your life.

Review Questions

Were the sons of King Ahab good kings or bad?

Bad.

Who did Elisha anoint as the next king of Israel?

Jehu

How did the lookouts recognize Jehu coming toward the city?

By the way he was driving "furiously."

What happened to the messengers who came to meet Jehu?

They decided to follow Jehu and didn't go back to give the message to King Jehoram.

What happened when Jehoram went to meet Jehu?

Jehu killed him.

What did Queen Jezebel say to Jehu when he came into the city?

"Do you remember what happened to Zimri when he killed his master?"

How did Jezebel die?

Her servants pushed her out the window.

What happened to her body?

Dogs ate it, just like the prophet had foretold.

Was Jehu a good king?

He did some good things, but turned to idols in the end.