

BAD GIRLS: JEZEBEL NEMESIS OF ELIJAH

1 King 16:31 He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him.

19:1 Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. ² So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them."

INTRODUCTION.

- Jezebel—A Phoenician princess, she was married to Ahab, one of Israel's worst kings. Her name meant "Where is the prince?" She was a Baal worshipper.
- The worship of Baal went against the Ten Commandments and the most foundational Israelite statement of belief the Shema. THE SHEMA is the central prayer in the Jewish prayerbook (Siddur) and is often the first section of Scripture that a Jewish child learns. The Shema is one of only two prayers that are specifically commanded in Torah (the other is Birkat Ha-Mazon -- grace after meals):

Sh'ma Yisra'eil Adonai Eloheinu Adonai echad.

Hear, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

- Jezebel is a name synonymous with evil; she is the epitome of the wicked woman. To call a woman a "Jezebel" is the greatest insult imaginable. Jezebel was the daughter of Ethbaal, a priest of the cruel, sensuous, false god Baal. Ethbaal, the priest-king of Tyre who murdered his own brother to take over the throne, was hardly a good father figure. But Jezebel followed in her father's footsteps and was herself a power-hungry murderess who stopped at nothing to get what she wanted.
- Jezebel did have some positive qualities that could have been used to the glory of God:
 1. Jezebel was assertive. She did not act like her weak husband.
 2. Jezebel possessed a sharp intellect.
 3. Jezebel had strong leadership abilities.
 4. Jezebel came from a royal lineage.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM JEZEBEL

- **She did not realize that the love of God triumphs over the schemes of men and women.**

Isaiah 3:14 The LORD enters into judgment with the elders and princes of His people, "It is you who have devoured the vineyard; The plunder of the poor is in your houses.

- **Jezebel had the wrong priorities.** Power was ultimately not the most important priority. Her cowardly, weak husband also did not pursue God or justice.
- **Jezebel abused her position.** The king of Israel at the time was Ahab, a weak, self-pitying man. In spite of God's laws forbidding idolatry and the worship of any god but the Lord, Ahab allowed Jezebel to practice Baal worship, a cult that tended to destroy manhood and drag womanhood into shame. Jezebel was such a domineering person that she soon became master over her weak husband. Neither husband or a wife should dominate a marriage. If we love our spouses, then we will care about their emotions and opinions. In the same way, a pastor, Board, or church member; should not seek to dominate others. We should all be quick to listen to other people. Marriage should be a partnership. We should treat family members with love and respect. We also should treat strangers and retail staff with respect.

Matthew 10:42(NIV) And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward."

1 Corinthians 13: 4-7 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

One of her first acts was to order the extermination of the prophets of the Lord (**1 Kings 18:4, 13**) and set up altars to Baal. So, pervasive was her idolatrous influence in Israel that Jesus later used her name to refer to a woman who led the church at Thyatira into immorality and the worship of false gods (**Revelation 2:20**).

Jezebel's strongest enemy was the great prophet Elijah, who defied her and opposed her evil rule. First, he pronounced the punishment of God upon Israel in the form of a drought which lasted three years (**James 5:17**). This culminated in a contest on Mount Carmel between the powers of Israel's true God and the Baals. After the 850 priests of Baal spent the day beseeching their gods with wailing and self-mutilation to end the drought, all to no avail, Elijah prayed to his omnipotent God who responded by accepting the sacrifice, having the false prophets slaughtered, and providing an abundance of rain (**1 Kings 18:16-46**).

Instead of acknowledging the awesome power of the one true God, Jezebel was enraged and vowed to kill Elijah (**1 Kings 19:1-2**). Elijah fled from her wrath to the wilderness (**1 Kings 19:3-8**).

Jezebel stubbornly opposed Yahweh. She refused to follow God's divine rules or listen to the prophets. That is like someone moving to Texas and not knowing how to behave.

As with all who defy the Lord, Jezebel's end was not a pretty one, although it was more gruesome than most, perhaps as an object lesson to all who set themselves up against the one true God. Her doom was sure, having been prophesied by Elijah in **1 Kings 21:23**.

"And also concerning Jezebel the Lord says: 'Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.

Once God says something, it is as good as done. God is the master of space and time. His purposes cannot be thwarted. In addition, vengeance belongs to God and not to us.

Romans 12: 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

CONCLUSION

- God's judgment on wickedness is certain. God's timing is not ours. The wicked may prosper for a season, but ultimately God will hunt them down.
- Her thirty years of tyranny over Israel had ended. The terror visited upon Jezebel was a testimony to the Israelites, and to us, that God's power is supreme and those who defy Him will meet a terrible end.