

AHAB, JEZEBEL, & ELIJAH. 1 KN. 16:29-17:7. 2/5/23. #25.

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☞ In the thirty-eighth year of Aza king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. ☞ Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him. ☞ And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. ☞ Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. ☞ And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him. ☞ In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation with Abiram his firstborn, and with his youngest son Segub he set up its gates, according to the word of the LORD, which He had spoken through Joshua the son of Nun. **17** And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word." ☞ Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, ☞ "Get away from here and turn eastward, and hide by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. ☞ And it will be that you shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there." ☞ So he went and did according to the word of the LORD, for he went and stayed by the Brook Cherith, which flows into the Jordan. ☞ The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank from the brook. ☞ And it happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

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1. Ahab, Israel's most wicked king

- a. Just like his father, Omri, Ahab sought to do worse wickedness than any other ruler
 - a1. He married Jezebel, daughter of King Ethbaal (*Baal is with him*) of Sidon (not only was Jezebel not of Israel, she was a high priestess of Baal)
 - a2. Ahab set up a wooden image of Baal in Baal's temple for Israel to worship
- b. Ahab provoked God to wrath more than all the other kings
 - a1. God introduces Elijah into the narrative
 - a2. 7 chapters are spent summarizing Ahab's evil acts & Elijah's warnings & interaction with Ahab (who never repents)

2. Fulfillment of a curse

- a. Joshua had cursed Jericho after he the city was destroyed, stating that whoever rebuilt Jericho would do so at the cost of his first son when he set the foundation & his youngest son when he set the gates (Josh. 6:26)

- b. Hiel rebuilt the city & lost 2 of his sons as Joshua had predicted

3. The ministry of Elijah

- a. God raised up Elijah (*the Lord is God*) to be a prophet to oppose Ahab
 - a1. God attempts to warn, chasten, & demonstrate his power to draw Israel to himself
 - a2. Even though Israel is wicked, God still loves the nation & seeks to save & protect them
- b. Elijah is unique among the prophets
 - a1. 8 miracles are recorded done via him
 - a2. He spends months by the Brook Cherith between Jerusalem & Jericho & is fed by ravens there
 - a3. He is not a writing prophet
 - a4. Except for Enoch, Elijah is the only man ever translated to heaven without dying
 - a5. The only man taken up by a chariot
 - a6. According to Mal. 4, Elijah will return to earth & precede Christ's second coming "before the great & dreadful day of the Lord" (The Great Tribulation)
- c. Elijah's 1st act is to declare a drought (no rain)
 - a1. Crops & all life on earth depends on water
 - a2. Dt. 28 God stated that he would send 4 types of trial on Israel to try to bring repentance (famine, pestilence, plagues, & foreign invaders in the land) before exile
 - a3. This is the 1st step to get Israel's attention
- d. The drought becomes so severe, the Brook Cherith dries up, forcing Elijah to move
 - a1. Ahab still does not repent (neither does Israel – a pride willing to suffer & not submit)
 - a2. Ahab will not submit even when his land is stricken & he is threatened with death
- e. Even when Ahab ceases his evil for a while due to fear, there is no permanent change of heart
- f. Elijah will suffer much due to opposition to God by evil Israel (God's servants suffer as they serve)