

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church
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Famous Falls from the Bible Series

A WICKED WOMAN'S FALL

2 Kings 9:30-37

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Here are the three points to today's message:

- Evil can come in a pretty package.
- The enemy knows how to taunt.
- The sinful ways of people lead to death.

INTRODUCTION: Today's message has several characters, and you'll have to pay attention or you may get lost. I'll introduce them:

1. **Queen Jezebel** was one of the most evil people who ever lived. While we generally associate terrorists with men, this woman was as ungodly as a person could be. She was Phoenician, and her father was a king.
2. **King Ahab** was the husband of Jezebel, and he was King of the Israelites. He was the tenth king. King Saul, King David, King Solomon – all of them had come and gone many years earlier. King Ahab had married this foreign woman, Jezebel, who was the daughter of King Ethbaal, king of Sidon. King Ahab was far from God and by modern definition was a terrorist leader.

It's likely that Ahab and Jezebel's marriage was a political marriage, which would ensure peace, safe travel, and open trade between the two countries. But among the Israelites, their reign was nothing more than a reign of terror.

3. **Jehu** - Since today's message is not really about Jehu, I'll keep it brief. Jehu was appointed by God as the new king and to take out what was called the house of Ahab, meaning everything related to his ruling authority.

What was at stake in this story was the restoration of the worship of God and the removal of the worship of Baal. You see, Jezebel grew up under the false and idolatrous religion of Baalism.

Having been raised under this false religion, Jezebel was a devoted and ardent worshipper of Baal and wanted Baalism to become the Israeli national religion. Ahab failed to win her over to God, and she succeeded in winning him over to Baal. As soon as they were married, Ahab had an altar built for Baal.

With the consent of Ahab, Jezebel amassed a large number of priests and priestesses of Baal and tried to wipe out the prophets of God.

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 21:25

There was never anyone like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, urged on by Jezebel his wife.

For the Bible to rate Ahab like this is incredible! I challenge you to go back and read about Jezebel. Today's message comes after the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal.

Elijah prophesied that both rulers would die violent, gruesome deaths. Let's pick up their story in 2 Kings.

1-EVIL CAN COME IN A PRETTY PACKAGE

SCRIPTURE: 2 Kings 9:30

Then Jehu went to Jezreel. When Jezebel heard about it, she put on eye makeup, arranged her hair and looked out of a window.

EXPLANATION: Jehu was the newly anointed king of Israel. God appointed him to overthrow the house of Ahab. At this time, Ahab was dead. Just prior to this visit, Jehu, with the support of the military, had overthrown and killed Jezebel's son who was ruling in his father's stead. Jezebel heard the news of her son's death. Instead of repenting of her misdeeds or begging for her life, she put on makeup and fixed her hair.

ILLUSTRATION: Sometimes nasty things come in pretty packages. If you've ever bought and sold used cars you may know what I am talking about. Susan and I were a one-car family when the kids were little. We got a second car, a Ford Tempo. It looked great and had no problems. As soon as we bought it, it had to go to the shop. Then again it went to the shop, then again. We did not have it very long. We got rid of it before it was even paid for. I remember looking at another used car once and saying that it looked good from a distance but up close it had a lot of flaws. My friend said, "Yes, just like you and everyone else."

Not every pretty package is a blessing. The outside of things is often very different from the inside. Take people, for example. People are the masters of disguise. From an early age, we enjoy dressing up and pretending to be things we are not. As children, we donned a cape and called ourselves superheroes or grabbed a stick horse and a hat and acted like cowboys.

APPLICATION: All those things are innocent and fun. But the Bible tells us that Satan is particularly good at this game. 2 Corinthians 11:14-15 tells us that he and his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness.

Satan has a way of clothing his misdeeds in unsuspecting words like love, equality, freedom, and kindness. He covers evil with superficial acts of mercy, grace, and goodness. Wise people pull back the covers and examine what's really inside.

Jezebel may have made herself up to be physically attractive, and perhaps she was, but her heart was darkened by disobedience. She refused to know God or follow his ways. It's a stark reminder to us all that we must be vigilant and stay aware and not be pulled in by evil in a pretty package.

2-THE ENEMY KNOWS HOW TO TAUNT

SCRIPTURE: 2 Kings 9:31

As Jehu entered the gate, she asked, "Have you come in peace, you Zimri, you murderer of your master?"

EXPLANATION: Jezebel knew what Jehu was up to. She knew he was the newly appointed king. Her greeting was sarcastic. It was the same question asked of Jehu before he killed her son. She mocked Jehu by referring to him as "Zimri." About fifty years before, there was a king named Zimri who ruled for only seven days.

Jezebel's use of this name might be akin to us calling someone a "Judas" or a "Benedict Arnold." It was her way of saying that his authority was weak, and his throne destined to fail quickly.

Jezebel dressed in her finest, stuck her head out the window and taunted her enemy. She did not try to reason with Jehu.

- She did not repent of her wickedness and throw herself at the mercy of God or God's appointed.
- She did not pretend to be friends or try to defend herself.
- She did not lament the death of her sons by Jehu's men.
- She knew the end was coming, but still she acted out of malice. She insulted and mocked Jehu with her words.

APPLICATION: Isaiah 5:20 says, *Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.* Jezebel and Ahab were evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord appointed Jehu to end their reign of terror. Jezebel, in her last earthly moments, tried to make Jehu out to be the bad guy. She accused him of being the one in the wrong because he had overthrown the earthly king. However, Jehu recognized that he answered to a higher authority.

Satan knows his end is coming, and he wants to take as many people with him as possible. When we recognize his lies and his deception, when we call his works by the wickedness they are, we must be prepared. He will try to turn it around. He knows how to taunt.

- When we take a stand against sin, he will call us unloving.
- When we stand against what is wrong, he will say we are judgmental.
- When we speak the truth, he will say we are telling lies. The Bible tells us that he is a liar and a thief. So, his attacks are not a surprise.

So we see that:

- Evil can come in a pretty package.
- The enemy knows how to taunt.

Now we see the end to Jezebel's reign of terror.

3-THE SINFUL WAYS OF PEOPLE LEAD TO DEATH

SCRIPTURE: 2 Kings 9:32-37

He looked up at the window and called out, “Who is on my side? Who?” Two or three eunuchs looked down at him. ³³ “Throw her down!” Jehu said. So they threw her down, and some of her blood spattered the wall and the horses as they trampled her underfoot. ³⁴ Jehu went in and ate and drank. “Take care of that cursed woman,” he said, “and bury her, for she was a king’s daughter.” ³⁵ But when they went out to bury her, they found nothing except her skull, her feet and her hands. ³⁶ They went back and told Jehu, who said, “This is the word of the LORD that he spoke through his servant Elijah the Tishbite: On the plot of ground at Jezreel dogs will devour Jezebel’s flesh. ³⁷ Jezebel’s body will be like dung on the ground in the plot at Jezreel, so that no one will be able to say, ‘This is Jezebel.’”

EXPLANATION: Jehu did not engage Jezebel. He did not acknowledge her in any way. Instead, he spoke to those beside her. He gave them a choice, and they chose to side with him. God prophesied through Elijah that Jezebel would come to a gruesome end, and she did.

Make no mistake, evil will not prevail. Our God is a holy and just God, and while he is patient and desires everyone to be saved, he will not tolerate wickedness forever.

Ecclesiastes 12:14 says, *For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.*

Proverbs 14:12 says, *There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.*

Jezebel and Ahab paid a price for their sins. The price was death—death on earth and death in the afterlife.

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APPLICATION: Like Jezebel and Ahab, we too are born sinners. You and I may not worship statues or kill prophets, but we are sinners, nonetheless. The Bible tells us that no one is righteous, not even one. In Romans 3:23, we read, *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*. As one pastor used to say, “All means all, and that’s all all means.” You, I, every man, woman and, child in this room are sinners. When Adam and Eve first ate the forbidden fruit, they opened the door of sin for all the rest of us. Some of us may be more tender-hearted than others, but at our core, our human nature is to do evil, to rebel against the authority of God. When left to our own devices, we are all self-centered and disobedient.

Our sins come at a price. Romans 6:23(a) says, *For the wages of sin is death...* Just as Ahab and Jezebel paid for their sin with their lives, all sin is punished by death. In the beginning, God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden where they could eat freely from the Tree of Life. They were not created as eternal beings. They were created to live in fellowship with the Lord forever. When they sinned, they faced the punishment of death. No, they did not keel over immediately, but they were removed from the Garden. They no longer had access to the Tree of Life, and their bodies immediately began to deteriorate. Eventually they died a human death. However, because we were created for eternity, the punishment for sin carries with us into the afterlife. Therefore, because of sin, every one of us is destined to live in eternal separation from God. This we refer to as hell.

But praise God, there is good news. It’s the gospel message.

ILLUSTRATION: Have you ever wished to have someone take your place? Maybe you were taking a big test, and you were not prepared. Maybe you wished your smart friend could take the test for you. Or maybe you failed to complete a project at work, and you were called into the boss’s office. Maybe you thought how nice it would be if your coworker could go in your place. I imagine there has been at least a time or two in every one of our lives when we would have gladly allowed someone else to take our place. It rarely happens though, does it?

Well, I can assure you of this. There was one time when it did, and it just so happens that it was the most important time of all. We are born sinners. We sin by nature and by choice, and because of our sin, we are destined to an eternity in hell, separated from God and every good thing he ever created. But God was not satisfied with that arrangement. He created us, and despite our sinfulness, he loves

us. He wants a relationship with us. So, he sent someone to take our place, to pay the price for our sins.

Remember Romans 6:23 that I read earlier. It says, *For the wages of sin is death...* But it does not stop there. It says, *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

John 3:16 says, *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

Jesus left the throne of Heaven, came to earth as a human, lived a sinless life, and gave himself as the perfect sacrifice to pay for our sins. He died on a cross, and three days later he rose again. He defeated sin and death, and because of him, we do not have to remain in bondage in sin. We can be freed and forgiven. We can be in relationship with God again.

Romans 10:9-10 says, *If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*

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Sincerely, Paul Gunn
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