

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to 2 Kings 10

We are going to go back into 2 Kings after a two week break –

In the 1700's there lived a famous French free thinker by the name of Voltaire.

This was during the age of enlightenment when free thinkers like Voltaire sought to make the world a better place through the use of thinking/philosophy, science and progress.

He was not an atheist – he was a deist.

He believed in god – but he also believed that god didn't really intervene in the matters of the world – he believed that we were created and left off to live on our own and that it was our own responsibility to figure everything on our own.

No divine revelation (His Word) – no divine intervention (God would leave us alone).

So Voltaire lived in Geneva – and he spent his time printing all his writings so that people would be enlightened by what he wrote.

And in his writings, he was very critical of Christianity and the bible.

In 1764 he wrote, "The Bible. That is what fools have written, what imbeciles commend, what rogues teach and young children are made to learn by heart"

In a 1767 letter to Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, he wrote: "Christianity is the most ridiculous, the most absurd, and bloody religion that has ever infected the world...My one regret in dying is that I cannot aid you in this noble enterprise of extirpating the world of this infamous superstition."

He also predicted that within 100 years of his death Christianity would be swept from existence and passed into history. Nobody would be reading the bible – everyone would be reading his works.

In his words, "We are living in the twilight of Christianity"

Voltaire died in 1778 at the age of 83 –

50 years after his death, Voltaire's own printing presses that he employed to print his anti-Christian sentiment were being used to print thousands of bibles by the Geneva Bible Society and his home was used as a storehouse to house and distribute those Bibles.

Jesus warns us in Matt 7

[Mat 7:24-27 NKJV] 24 "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25

"and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that

house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

We need to take God's word seriously and do what it says.

That is going to be the lesson we are going to learn in our study today.

Let's pray...

As we have been studying 2 King, we have been looking at the ministry of Elisha –

And from chapter 2 to the end of chapter 8, we were looking at how God used Elisha to bring repentance to the Northern Kingdom – to Israel.

This was the period of grace.

But after Israel rejected God's grace, God had Elisha anoint Jehu as the next king of Israel and his instructions were to bring judgment on the house of Ahab.

Ahab was a very wicked king – the bible tells us over and over again.

He was married to the equally wicked Jezebel

Not only did they bring the worship of Baal to Israel, they murdered God's servant

Naboth –

So God is going to avenge the death of Naboth by using this imperfect instrument (Jehu).

And we saw in chapter 9 as Jehu kills the king of Israel (Joram) and the king of Judah (Ahaziah) as well as Jezebel.

[2Ki 10:1-36 NKJV] 1 Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote and sent letters to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to those who reared Ahab's [sons], saying: 2 Now as soon as this letter comes to you, since your master's sons [are] with you, and you have chariots and horses, a fortified city also, and weapons, 3 choose the best qualified of your master's sons, set [him] on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house. 4 But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, "Look, two kings could not stand up to him; how then can we stand?" 5 And he who [was] in charge of the house, and he who [was] in charge of the city, the elders also, and those who reared [the sons], sent to Jehu, saying, "We [are] your servants, we will do all you tell us; but we will not make anyone king. Do [what is] good in your sight."

I had you make a note of the seventy sons –

This could mean two things, Ahab could have had other wives/concubines in the palace or some of the sons are grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Jehu is in Jezreel (which was like a winter home for the king of Israel) while all of Ahab's sons are in the capital of Samaria.

And therefore Jehu sends a message to the care takers of the sons to pick one of the sons – put him on the throne so that he could challenge them.

And the caretakers knew what Jehu had already done – they don't want to select the next one that is going to die at the hands of Jehu – so they send a message back telling Jehu that their allegiance is toward him.

6 Then he wrote a second letter to them, saying: If you [are] for me and will obey my voice, take the heads of the men, your master's sons, and come to me at Jezreel by this time tomorrow. Now the king's sons, seventy persons, [were] with the great men of the city, [who] were rearing them.

Jehu sends a message back – you want to show your allegiance to me.

Cut the heads off of the seventy sons you raised and bring them to me.

I guess Jehu was one of those guys who was always trying to get ahead in life.

7 So it was, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons and slaughtered seventy persons, put their heads in baskets and sent [them] to him at Jezreel. 8 Then a messenger came and told him, saying, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons." And he said, "Lay them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until morning."

The piling of heads at the entrance of the gates was done to show people who was in charge.

As people entered the city and left the city – they would see the piles of heads and it would be an effective way of showing that Jehu was the man.

9 So it was, in the morning, that he went out and stood, and said to all the people, "You [are] righteous. Indeed I conspired against my master and killed him; but who killed all these? 10 "Know now that nothing shall fall to the earth of the word of the LORD which the LORD spoke concerning the house of Ahab; for the LORD has done what He spoke by His servant Elijah."

So now we see that the piling of heads was done for another purpose.

You see, Jehu knew that the people knew that he had become king through a coup d'état.

So he tries to vindicate his actions by comparing what he did – kill their king (Joram) to the pile of heads that were before them.

Plus – he adds, that he was simply following the command of God.

Don't miss this church – he is doing this because he seeks their approval.

This was the problem with King Saul –

And we saw that it led to compromise –

Let's see what happens to Jehu -

11 So Jehu killed all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men and his close acquaintances and his priests, until he left him none remaining.

When Elisha's servant anointed Jehu –

Jehu was given God's command – You shall strike the house of Ahab.

That is it!

Never did God command Jehu to strike his officials –

Why does Jehu do this?

Because he wanted to eliminate anyone who had loyalty to the house of Ahab and might seek to undermine his position.

12 And he arose and departed and went to Samaria. On the way, at Beth Eked of the Shepherds, 13 Jehu met with the brothers of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, "Who [are] you?" So they answered, "We [are] the brothers of Ahaziah; we have come down to greet the sons of the king and the sons of the queen mother." 14 And he said, "Take them alive!" So they took them alive, and killed them at the well of Beth Eked, forty-two men; and he left none of them.

Jehu sets out to Samaria, and he comes to the place of shearing.

That is what Beth Eked means –

This was the place where the shepherds would take their sheep to get haircuts.

And Jehu comes across 42 brothers of Ahaziah –

Ahaziah was the king of Judah that Jehu killed in chapter 9.

Ahaziah was related to Ahab through his mother Athaliah.

So he was Ahab's grandson.

So it would be safe to assume that many of these brothers were half-brothers – only those whose mom was Athaliah were Ahab's grandsons.

So they are going up to Samaria – they have no clue to what has happened to Jezebel or Joram.

Jehu takes them and has them all killed.

15 Now when he departed from there, he met Jehonadab the son of Rechab, [coming] to meet him; and he greeted him and said to him, "Is your heart right, as my heart [is] toward your heart?" And Jehonadab answered, "It is." [Jehu said], "If it is, give [me] your hand." So he gave [him] his hand, and he took him up to him into the chariot. 16 Then he said, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD." So they had him ride in his chariot.

After killing Ahaziah's brothers, Jehu has an encounter with Jehonadab.

The name Jehonadab means “Yahweh is willing”

He was the leader of these nomadic people – the Rachabites!

And he was a wonderful man of God.

How do we know he was a wonderful man of God?

Because in the book of Jeremiah 35 – write it down.

230 years after Jehu –

God tells Jeremiah to do something strange.

He tells him to go to get the Rachabites, bring them to the temple and give them wine.

So Jeremiah goes, he brings them and put bowl of wine for them to drink – and they refuse.

And the reason they refuse was because Jehonadab had given them instructions to not drink wine, to not live in houses, to not have fields because they were sojourners.

This was not their home – they were simply passing through.

And the example that God was giving Jeremiah and the People of Israel was that the Rachabites had been faithful all these years to the instructions of their father – yet the people of Jerusalem did not incline their ear or obey the words of their father.

[Jer 35:18-19 NKJV] 18 And Jeremiah said to the house of the Rechabites, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts and done according to all that he commanded you, 19 'therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not lack a man to stand before Me forever." ' "

So Jehu brings this godly man with him.

They form an alliance – Jehonadab wants reform in Israel.

And I had you make a note of the words that Jehu said in verse 16

Come with me and see my zeal for the Lord -

Jehu is showing the early signs of his downfall here

Why?

1. He is boasting about his zeal for the Lord
2. He wants his service to the Lord to be noticed

17 And when he came to Samaria, he killed all who remained to Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed them, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to Elijah. 18 Then Jehu gathered all the people together, and said to them, "Ahab served Baal a little, Jehu will serve him much. 19 "Now therefore, call to me all

the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests. Let no one be missing, for I have a great sacrifice for Baal. Whoever is missing shall not live." But Jehu acted deceptively, with the intent of destroying the worshipers of Baal. 20 And Jehu said, "Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal." So they proclaimed [it]. 21 Then Jehu sent throughout all Israel; and all the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left who did not come. So they came into the temple of Baal, and the temple of Baal was full from one end to the other. 22 And he said to the one in charge of the wardrobe, "Bring out vestments for all the worshipers of Baal." So he brought out vestments for them. 23 Then Jehu and Jehonadab the son of Rechab went into the temple of Baal, and said to the worshipers of Baal, "Search and see that no servants of the LORD are here with you, but only the worshipers of Baal."

Jehu arrives in Samaria – he finds a few more descendants of Ahab and takes care of them – he then goes after the worshippers of Baal.

And he pretends to have the intentions of wanting to worship Baal – and orders everyone who worships Baal to show up for a sacrifice and if there is anyone who worships Baal that chooses not to show up – they will be killed.

And everyone shows up.

He then calls for the wardrobe people – and they brought out the wardrobe for the people to wear.

Jehu wants everyone to have the Baal costume on – that way it will make them easier targets in case one got away.

He also gives instruction to make sure that there is no one who worships Yahweh in there – it was going to be exclusive to those who worship Baal.

24 So they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had appointed for himself eighty men on the outside, and had said, "[If] any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escapes, [whoever lets him escape, it shall be] his life for the life of the other."

So Jehu positions people outside the temple and tells them that if they allow anyone to escape, they will pay with their own life.

25 Now it happened, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, "Go in [and] kill them; let no one come out!" And they killed them with the edge of the sword; then the guards and the officers threw [them] out, and went into the inner room of the temple of Baal. 26 And they brought the [sacred] pillars out of the temple of Baal and burned them. 27 Then they broke down the [sacred] pillar of Baal, and tore down the temple of Baal and made it a refuse dump to this day.

When Ahab married Jezebel –

Jezebel brought the worship of Baal to the Kingdom of Israel –

It was Ahab and Jezebel that had ordered the temple of Baal to be built.

And now, Jehu orders them to destroy the temple of Baal and make it a refuse dump – or a public toilet.

28 Thus Jehu destroyed Baal from Israel.

The worship of Baal was destroyed in Israel – but it still continued in the Southern Kingdom because of Athaliah.

29 However Jehu did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin, [that is], from the golden calves that [were] at Bethel and Dan. 30 And the LORD said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in doing [what is] right in My sight, [and] have done to the house of Ahab all that [was] in My heart, your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth [generation]."

31 But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart; for he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin.

Jehu destroyed the worship of Baal in Israel – but notice, he didn't destroy the worship of the golden calves.

Why?

First we need to look at the reason for what Jeroboam did.

Jeroboam was the first king of the northern kingdom.

Jeroboam didn't want his people going to south to the kingdom of Judah, to the city of Jerusalem to worship Yahweh at the Temple.

So he devised a cheap substitute by setting up two smaller temples in the north.

These Temples didn't have the Ark of the Covenant, but they had golden calves to be worshipped.

For Jehu, the golden calves were things that his kingdom had grown up with, things that everyone was comfortable with – so in his heart. He didn't feel the need to eliminate it.

The other reason – if Jehu did away with the worship of the golden calves – his people would then have to travel to Jerusalem – he would then lose control and the power of the throne that he just sat on.

Notice also that God commends Jehu for what he did to the house of Ahab – and therefore God allows his children to reign over Israel for four generations.

Where Jehu failed was in a willingness to follow wholeheartedly after the LORD.

Jehu, in hating one sin, loved another and thus proved that he did not have the fear of God in him.

He was merely a hired servant and received the throne of his wages – but a child of God he never was.

32 In those days the LORD began to cut off [parts] of Israel; and Hazael conquered them in all the territory of Israel 33 from the Jordan eastward: all the land of Gilead--Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh--from Aroer, which [is] by the River Arnon, including Gilead and Bashan. 34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, all that he did, and all his might, [are] they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 35 So Jehu rested with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria. Then Jehoahaz his son reigned in his place. 36 And the period that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria [was] twenty-eight years.

Here we see the consequences of Jehu's actions.

Little by little, God began to use the Syrian King, Hazael to weaken Israel.

This is the beginning of the events that lead the kingdom of Israel to their destruction at the hands of the Assyrians.

Jehu had the opportunity to bring Israel back to LORD, but instead he had been too concerned about his own affairs.

How tragic it will be for us also if our lives are so overtaken with compromise and religious half-heartedness that we too fail to serve God faithfully.

AMEN.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I

accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word

and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 'May the LORD bless you and protect you. 25 May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you. 26 May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

