

2Kings 10:1 ¶ And Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to them that brought up Ahab's children, saying,

2Kings 10:2 Now as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master's sons are with you, and *there are* with you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armour;

2Kings 10:3 Look even out the best and meetest of your master's sons, and set *him* on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house.

The historian notes that Ahab had 70 sons/grandsons (male descendants) living in Samaria. Jehu wrote letters to the rulers of Jezreel, the elders and those that took care of Ahab's children. He basically said: Declare whichever of Ahab's sons you choose as king and prepare for battle against me to protect your choice.

2Kings 10:4 But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, two kings stood not before him: how then shall we stand?

2Kings 10:5 And he that *was* over the house, and he that *was* over the city, the elders also, and the bringers up of the children, sent to Jehu, saying, We are thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any king: do thou *that which is good* in thine eyes.

The letters put fear into the hearts of the people because they were well aware that Jehu had already killed two kings. They gathered together and prepared a response to Jehu. They basically said, "We surrender; we will serve you and do as you deem good."

2Kings 10:6 Then he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye be mine, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to morrow this time. Now the king's sons, *being* seventy persons, *were* with the great men of the city, which brought them up.

2Kings 10:7 And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent him *them* to Jezreel.

2Kings 10:8 And there came a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay ye them in two heaps at the entering in of the gate until the morning.

So Jehu wrote a second letter. It basically said: If you are telling the truth, you will do as I ask. Kill Ahab's sons and send their heads to me at Jezreel by this time tomorrow. Upon receiving Jehu's letter, the men taking care of the king's sons killed them all, put their heads in baskets and sent them to Jezreel.

When the baskets arrived in Jezreel, a messenger went to tell Jehu. He ordered that the heads be laid in two heaps at the entrance to the gate until the next morning. (Seems to imply on both sides of the entrance.)

2Kings 10:9 And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the people, Ye be righteous: behold, I conspired against my

master, and slew him: but who slew all these?

2Kings 10:10 Know now that there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spake concerning the house of Ahab: for the LORD hath done *that* which he spake by his servant Elijah.

2Kings 10:11 So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his kinsfolks, and his priests, until he left him none remaining.

In the morning, Jehu went out and addressed the people. He asserted that they were in no way responsible for the deaths of the sons of Ahab. He admitted that he had killed Joram. He then asked who they thought had killed the king's sons.

Then Jehu declared a very important truth to the people. Not one word of judgment that God had pronounced against the house of Ahab would fail to prove true. What had been done was in fulfillment of the word of God spoken by Elijah.

Jehu then proceeded to kill all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel—all his assistants, his kinfolk and his priests. Not one was left alive.

This is what the LORD had declared through Elijah:

1 Kings 21:20–24 “And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD. Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin. And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.”

I see nothing in that prophecy about killing Ahab's assistants, kinfolk and priests. At this point it seems that Jehu is intent on eliminating any that might possibly be a threat to him and justifying his actions as being in accordance with the word of the LORD.

2Kings 10:12 And he arose and departed, and came to Samaria. *And as he was at the shearing house in the way,*

2Kings 10:13 Jehu met with the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, *Who are ye?* And they answered, *We are the brethren of Ahaziah; and we go down to salute the children of the king and the children of the queen.*

2Kings 10:14 And he said, *Take them alive.* And they took them alive, and slew them at the pit of the shearing house, *even two and forty men; neither left he any of them.*

Jehu then left to go to Samaria (presumably to assume the throne in the capital city). Along the way he encountered some of the family of Ahaziah, the king of Judah. When he asked them to identify themselves, they noted that they were

relatives of Ahaziah and were on their way to check on the well-being of the children of the king and queen. Jehu then ordered his men to capture them. When they did, they took them to the pit at the shearing house that was nearby and killed all 42 of them.

Guzik adds this information: "Since Jehu was committed to execute all those connected with the house of Ahab, these men were also targets of judgment. Ahaziah was a descendant of King Ahab through his mother (who was the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel)."

2Kings 10:15 ¶ And when he was departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him: and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot.

2Kings 10:16 And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD. So they made him ride in his chariot.

2Kings 10:17 And when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the LORD, which he spake to Elijah.

As he continued on his way, Jehu next encountered Jehonadab, son of Rechab, who was on his way to see him.

Easton's Dictionary tells us more about the Rechabites: They were "the descendants of Rechab through Jonadab or Jehonadab. They belonged to the Kenites, who accompanied the children of Israel into Palestine, and dwelt among them. Moses married a Kenite wife (Judg. 1:16....The main body of the Kenites dwelt in cities, and adopted settled habits of life (30:29); but Jehonadab forbade his descendants to drink wine or to live in cities. They were commanded to lead always a nomad life. They adhered to the law laid down by Jonadab, and were noted for their fidelity to the old-established custom of their family in the days of Jeremiah...."

Jeremiah 35:8–10 "Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters; Nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed: But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us.... And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you: Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever."

Jehu basically asked Jehonadab if they were united in loyalty to one another, and Jehonadab assured him they were. So, Jehu told him to come with him in his chariot and witness his zeal for the LORD; and he did.

When they came to Samaria Jehu killed everyone that was loyal to the house of

Ahab until they were all destroyed. The historian notes that these actions were all in accordance with Elijah's prophecy.

The historian evidently didn't think that Jehu was going beyond what the LORD had intended. I'm confused—I thought the judgment was intended specifically to eliminate any future descendants from Ahab's progeny.

2Kings 10:18 And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, Ahab served Baal a little; *but* Jehu shall serve him much.

2Kings 10:19 Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a great sacrifice *to do* to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live. But Jehu did *it* in subtilty, to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal.

Next, Jehu gathered together all the people of the city and declared that he would serve Baal with more devotion than had Ahab. He then called for all the prophets of Baal, his servants and his priest to gather with him to make a great sacrifice to Baal. Any that did not come would be put to death.

Jehu, however, was setting a trap for the purpose of destroying all the worshippers of Baal.

JFB makes this observation about Jehu's plot: It was "...a measure in perfect harmony with the Mosaic law, and worthy of a constitutional king of Israel."

2Kings 10:20 And Jehu said, Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed *it*.

2Kings 10:21 And Jehu sent through all Israel: and all the worshippers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came not. And they came into the house of Baal; and the house of Baal was full from one end to another.

2Kings 10:22 And he said unto him that *was* over the vestry, Bring forth vestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth vestments.

2Kings 10:23 And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of Baal, and said unto the worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here with you none of the servants of the LORD, but the worshippers of Baal only.

Jehu commanded that a solemn assembly be called for the worship of Baal, and the edict was published throughout all of Israel. All the worshippers of Baal came to the house of Baal, filling it completely. He then instructed the man in charge of the wardrobe to give each of the worshippers a garment marking them as worshippers of Baal.

After this, Jehu and Jehonadab went into the house of Baal and commanded the worshippers assembled there to look around and make sure there were no servants of the LORD among them.

2Kings 10:24 And when they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings,

Jehu appointed fourscore men without, and said, *If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, he that letteth him go, his life shall be for the life of him.*

2Kings 10:25 And it came to pass, 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 slay them; let none come forth. And they smote them with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast them out, and went to the city of the house of Baal.*

2Kings 10:26 And they brought forth the images out of the house of Baal, and burned them.

2Kings 10:27 And they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a draught house unto this day.

2Kings 10:28 Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.

When they went in to offer the sacrifices and burnt offerings, Jehu appointed 80 men to stand guard outside. He commanded them not to let anyone escape from the building; if they did, they would forfeit their own life.

After the offering had been made, Jehu commanded his guards and captains to go in and kill every person in the building. Not one person was to be left alive.

They did as they were commanded, then threw all the bodies outside the house. After that, they went into the house of Baal and brought out the religious pillars, which they broke and burned. The building was destroyed and the remains used to make a “sewer”—most translations interpret this to reference a latrine or communal outhouse.

This is how Jehu destroyed the worship of Baal in Israel.

2Kings 10:29 ¶ *Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in Dan.*

2Kings 10:30 And the LORD said unto Jehu, *Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.*

2Kings 10:31 But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.

Jehu did not, however, get rid of the golden calves and the worship centers in Bethel and Dan.

The LORD told Jehu that he had done what was right in His eyes and according to all that was in His heart in judgment against the house of Ahab. As his reward, his children would occupy the throne of Israel to the fourth generation.

Even so, Jehu did not walk in obedience to the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart. He continued to promote worship as established by Jeroboam

in Bethel and Dan.

You would think that since he had demonstrated such zeal for accomplishing the word of the LORD, he would have chosen to show the same zeal and commitment to worshipping the LORD. I think his commitment stopped at the point he thought it might lessen his hold of power over the people of Israel. That was the main reason that Jeroboam had made the golden calves and established the worship centers in Bethel and Dan. He didn't want to take a chance on allowing worship at the temple in Jerusalem because the people might choose to unite as one again under the king in Judah.

1 Kings 12:26–29 “And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan.”

Jehu was guilty of the same thing that so many in the professing church are guilty of today. They think they can do “good” things and worship the LORD on their own terms as they ensure that it doesn't interfere with their way of life.

2Kings 10:32 In those days the LORD began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel;

2Kings 10:33 From Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan.

In the days of Jehu the LORD began to cut off parts of Israel. Hazael, king of Syria, captured sections along the borders. He conquered all of Israel that was east of Jordan—the land that had been settled by the tribes of Gad, Reuben and Manasseh, including Gilead and Bashan.

2Kings 10:34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

2Kings 10:35 And Jehu slept with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead.

2Kings 10:36 And the time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty and eight years.

The historian closes his account of Jehu's reign by noting that more was written about him in the chronicles of the kings of Israel (not scripture). Jehu reigned 28 years over Israel before he died. He was buried in Samaria; and his son Jehoahaz succeeded him to the throne.