

Jezebel Stirred Him Up

1Kings 21:17-26

Jezebel Stirred Him Up

- Jezebel - 'dʒɛzəbəl; Hebrew: ,אִיזָבֵל; Modern - Izével
- 9th century BC princess, identified in the Book of First Kings as the daughter of Ethbaal, King of Tyre (A Sidonian of Phoenicia) and the wife of Ahab, king of northern Israel.
- The marriage of King Ahab to the daughter of the ruler of the Phoenician empire was a sign of the power and prestige of Ahab and the northern Kingdom of Israel. It was considered a brilliant stroke of international diplomacy.
- Her father's name, Ethbaal, means "living under Baal's favor" He was originally the high priest of Ashtarte who took the throne by force from his Phoenician predecessor.

Jezebel Stirred Him Up

- Her name is a question: “Where is the Prince?” a ritual cry from worship ceremonies in honor of Baal during periods when the god was considered to be in the underworld.
- Jezebel incited her husband Ahab to abandon the worship of Jehovah and encouraged the worship of Baal and Ashtarte instead.
- She dallied with false prophets, dressing herself in provocative clothing and putting on makeup.

Jezebel Stirred Him Up

- She persecuted the prophets of God - 1Kings 18:4
- She fabricated false evidence of blasphemy against an innocent landowner who refused to sell his property to Ahab, causing the landowner to be put to death - 1King 21:1-16
- For these and other transgressions against God and the people of Israel, Jezebel met a gruesome death.

Jezebel Stirred Him Up

- In the New Testament, the name Jezebel came to be associated with false prophets, false doctrine, promiscuity, and seducing others into sin, a byword for an utterly wicked woman.
 - Rev. 2:20-23 - “Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. 22 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. 23 I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.”

A Forbidden Marriage

- Jezebel brought her religion to her marriage. And why not... she was a preacher's kid; her father preached for Baal.
- Ahab acceded to her wishes and promoted her religion in Israel.
- It is to be noted that Ahab was of the Omride family line, which was the most wicked dynasty to ever rule Israel.

A Forbidden Marriage

- God warned Israel about this problem.
 - Deut. 7:3-4 - “Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. 4 For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly.”
- Solomon succumbed to this problem.
 - 1Kings 11:1-2 - “But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites- 2 from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods. Solomon clung to these in love.”

A Forbidden Marriage

- Ahab and Jezebel made life difficult for those who wanted to follow Jehovah.
- In every decision we make in life, whether what career to pursue, where we will live, where we will worship, who we will marry, we must ask ourselves honestly and earnestly: will this help or hinder my relationship with God?
 - Matt. 6:33 - “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

A Forbidden Marriage

- Ahab's choice of a spouse had profound consequences in his life and the lives of his children, subjects, and succeeding generations for many years to come.
 - 1Kings 21:25 - “But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up.”

A Forbidden Marriage

- The person we marry will have a position of great influence over our lives. They will have input on matters related to money, schedule, children, activities, and especially worship.
 - 1Peter 3:7 - “As being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.”

A Sanctioned Persecution

- Jezebel worked systematically to destroy God's prophets.
 - 1Kings 18:3-4, 7-16
- She sought the life of Elijah.
 - 1Kings 19:1-2
- She gave safe haven to the priests and priestesses of Baal and Ashtarte, 850 total.
 - 1Kings 18:19
- Just because evil occurs with official approval, does not make it right, nor will those who do evil and the leaders who approve it escape the justice of God.

A Sanctioned Persecution

- The Lord's response:
 - Matt. 5:11-12 - "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."
 - Luke 6:22 - "Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake."

A Sanctioned Persecution

- The Lord's response:
 - 1Peter 4:14 - "If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified."
- Wherever there are competing religious ideologies, God's people will more often than not be the ones who are oppressed.

A Legalized Covetousness

- Jezebel played a leading role in dishonorably acquiring Naboth's vineyard - 1Kings 21
 - Jezebel and Ahab committed conspiracy, told lies, pressed others into sin, and committed murder, all in the name of covetousness.
 - When we allow desire for this world's possessions to take control of our lives, there is no end to the evil that we would be willing to do.

A Legalized Covetousness

- Covetousness is a vile sin that brethren often overlook or diminish.
- It was part of the law given to Noah and the Patriarchs.
- It was part of the Law of Moses.
 - Ex. 20:17 - “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.”

A Legalized Covetousness

- It is one of the reasons given to withdraw fellowship - 1Cor. 5:10
- The apostle Paul says it is simply another form of idolatry.
 - Col. 3:5 - “Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”
- Covetousness is evidence of a lack of trust in God.
 - Heb. 13:5 - “Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

A Just Reward

- Jezebel's end was terrible to say the least. Regardless of what we may think of it, the manner of her death makes a statement: sin is offensive to God, and He will reward it accordingly.
 - Gal. 6:7-8 - “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”