

II Kings 8:16-29 and II Chronicles 21

Beloved Congregation of Our Lord Jesus Christ,

Before we come to the final destruction of the house of Ahab there is yet one more charge that is brought upon Ahab and Jezebel, namely that their insidious 阴险 influence had wormed its way into the House of David. See Satan is never content with destruction accomplished; his is the never ending quest for the destruction of the people of God ever since his doom was predicted in the Garden of Eden. When the Devil was unable to stop David by Goliath or by David's own sins he turned to the progeny of David. Temptation with women and idols seemed to be the sins of choice for David's family. Finally, Solomon gave into his wives and worshipped their gods, yet the Lord faithful to the covenant he made with David allowed the Davidic line to sit on the throne of Judah. Perhaps Judah and her kings were more obedient or moral by degree but not by much. Samuel's inspired and prescient 有先见之明 words (2 Sam. 8:10-18) described the debacle that would be Israel's theocracy 神权统治 because they wanted a human king instead of the divine. There too Satan worked to bring destruction on the line of David. He understood as we do that the Mosaic Law still functioned alongside the Davidic covenant. The king was governed by Torah because the human was to be governed by God **the** King. When you add to the sordid 污秽 mix the fact that the Levites seemed unconcerned at best or ineffectual at least, we have the recipe for spiritual and national disaster. As we work through the text we will develop the theme of headship, fatherhood, grand-fatherhood and brotherhood. We will also see the importance of the first commandments for all the others. So where God is persecuting the house of Ahab and now the more so because of its influence on the house of David, we will also see the faithful God who purges 清除 David's house and as always we are left with the amazing and faithful God who brings us hope each day again. I bring to you the Word of the Lord under theme:

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The LORD Purges the Leaven of Ahab from David's House

1. The Curse on Jehoram and 2. The Demise 禅让 of Ahaziah

The Curse on Jehoram's House Jehoram reigned for two years with his father Jehoshaphat.

We last met this king of Judah in 2 Kings 3 where he with Joram went up to fight Moabites.

Then Elisha spoke harshly to Joram son of Ahab but spoke of the respect that he had for

Jehoshaphat as a righteous man. However at some point an alliance was made with the house of

Ahab with Jehoram of the house of David when he took the daughter of Ahab to be his wife.

You can imagine that this brought some political strength and perhaps some unity by means of

diplomacy 外交手腕. But genuine unity ought to have been found in the Word of the Lord. So

the house of David invited this wicked Baal worshipper into the house and in fact the King of

Judah was now one with her.

There is that remarkable pattern again of how Satan uses women against weak men

dating all the way back to the beginning of time. His work was to use Eve to tempt Adam who

by listening to his wife and not the Lord brought the curse of death and weeds and difficulty of

work and life on the whole of humanity and the whole planet. That is how God begins to speak

to Adam, "...because you listened to you wife..." And it was Abraham who got into all kinds of

difficulty when he heeded the voice of his wife Sarah and took Hagar to himself and then with

great difficulty had to send Ishmael away. We have already mentioned Solomon, and Ahab was

putty in the hands of Jezebel (we need only remind ourselves of the whole Naboth monstrosity.)

This daughter of Ethbaal brought the Baals to Israel even as Solomon had allowed his wives their

religious freedom. Freedom turns to the mixing of the truth with the lie and the lie nearly always

dominates until God steps in.

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Once more the pattern continues. The daughter of Ahab comes to David's house and once more a wicked wife influences her husband and because Jehoram listened to his wife the people of Jerusalem have to pay and his family of course had to pay.

We note that the Chronicler tells us a little more about this fiend 恶魔. Jehoshaphat loved his children and left them riches, but the Kingdom he gave to the oldest. Was it greed? Was it paranoia 妄想? Was it his wicked wife? Whatever, the man killed all his brothers and sisters and took their possessions in order to solidify the throne! Certainly this demanded the judgement of God. If God is getting ready to wipe out the house of Ahab—Jehu's chariots 战车 can be heard right around the corner now—Shouldn't God bring down the house of Judah?

Both the writer of Kings and the Chronicles give us the marvellous beacon of light of the good news of God grace. The Lord has made a covenant with David and he is not ready to snuff that light out yet. You can imagine for those who are reading "Kings" in the exile and "Chronicles" while Jerusalem and Judea are being rebuilt are on the one hand understanding what went so horribly wrong and yet the preserving and protecting grace of a God who is good and compassionate to his people. He is forever with them and for them protecting them. For it is not now just the kings that have rebelled but the people who follow into the rebellion are in great peril 冒险 for the rule of grace— that looked forward to the fullness of that grace when Messiah came— was no longer evident. Judah had become like Israel and Israel had become like the world because Ahab's daughter was given control over the spiritual matters of the house.

Men do we hear and are we listening? Do you take an interest in and are you actively involved advising and teaching your sons about the woman your sons take home? Men are we leading or are we being led? Do we take the way of least resistance or do we go the way of truth

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and righteousness by leading and loving our wives and our households? For brothers, we see the generational damage that an ungodly wife brings not only to the home but too the damage this problem brings to the church when we are not careful about our home, about headship and who our sons and daughters marry. The leadership of this church is warned of the slick way that that Satan enters and divides a people from God. He works to bring to bring destruction to the household of God. A bad woman, a weak husband and many, many, people are led astray 误入歧途. Will we hear and understand?

And yet let us never forget the promises of God because of the great Son of David, true to his bride, the gates of Hades cannot prevail against the church. Yes things looked rather bleak 苍凉 for Israel and the house of David. But God was moving. First the Edomites revolt and Jehoram and his men narrowly escape. The power of the house of David is broken because they have rejected the power of grace and turned to Baal. Baal once more is futile 枉然 hope. Then to add insult to injury, Libnah successfully revolted and the already limited kingdom of Judah is seriously weakened and in peril! Now they are surrounded by hostile armies that can destroy them. What's more Jehoram had dishonoured God setting up high places of worship. He needs the Lord and he rejects the Lord. He rebels and the kingdoms rebel against him. Yes it did look bleak!

Then the Lord sent a letter that Elijah had written several years early for it was now some several years that Elijah was with the Lord in heaven. Elijah identified the sin of leading the nation in whoredom 邪淫, namely prostitution, the king had caused the wife to become little more than whore. Do you see how this marriage motif is important here? Covenant as marriage demands love, loyalty, submission and leadership. The difference is that in the bride the leadership is not loving and loyal and is not easily led but with the divine husband there is

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faithfulness and justice. The Lord is not mocked by this murdering petty little man who cannot stand up to his own wife. Now a curse will come on Jehoram's house. He will lose his wives and children and all those possessions of his father that he had so loved. His bowels would be cursed and spill out. And it was so when the Philistines and the Arabian came. Family and fortune was taken, and the people of Jerusalem were routed. Only his youngest son Ahaziah was left. Jehoaram died in ignominy, without honour and no one regretted his death, no fires in his honour; not even a place in the Davidic sepulchre 坟墓.

How desperately the people of God needed a leader and a lover who would die in defeating the enemy rather being led to death by the enemy. In that wonderful and amazing work of Christ we have been so blessed to know and have a king and shepherd like Jesus Christ who had destroyed the enemy by His work on the cross and amazing resurrection from the dead. Even there by the Word God is preserving the line that the coming His Son, who is David's son, would be ensured! This is providence 护理 and response! We read and learn about God and we are confronted 对抗 once more of the influence of evil and as men, leaders, parents, teachers we must be aware, taking heed that we do not lead in the way of unrighteousness but always in the surety that God is faithful to His covenant Word to us!

The Quick Demise of Ahaziah A grandfather's influence now grows when the only living son of Jehoaram takes the throne. Too young, really, to rule, he is surrounded by the advisors of the house of Ahab. Heeding 听取 these advisors was, I suppose, all that he knows. When you are brought up by the wicked, wickedness does not seem all that wicked any more does it? We wonder however in Jerusalem what had happened to the priests of the day. We wonder too what happened to the city elders. What happened to the people that there is no uprising or revolting

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against this horrible turn of events? It is one thing now that Athaliah and her ilk have wormed their way into the courts of David, it is another that they are so easily accepted, tolerated and then allowed to rule.

The wickedness continued and rather than seek the Lord's counsel Ahaziah joins his uncle out on the battle field where uncle is injured. Ahaziah then instead of going home to rule his kingdom decides it is better to take care of his suffering uncle. Blood is thick I suppose. But the blood will flow. We get some insight now into the way the Lord is working to keep the house of David pure. Ahab's flesh and blood has brought a curse on the house and now the Lord will remove that curse. See Ahaziah went to Samaria by the will of the Lord so that Jehu would assassinate 暗杀 him thus executing the judgement of the Lord and purifying the house of the David.

The remarkable thing about the covenant with David is that it never put an end to the Mosaic covenant. The two were to work together, the one informing the other. The sons of David were to rule with the Torah by their side. They were to rule in obedience. Yet following Solomon's lead poor marriage partners were chosen, politics rather than the pastoral care of God's flock was chosen and the law of the Lord forsaken. The covenant broken the Lord must now act. From Chronicles we receive the word about Jehu that we hope to explore over the next Lord's Days if the Lord gives that to us.

The Lord went after Ahaziah who in hiding was found and executed by Jehu because the Lord was keeping His Word to Elijah when Elijah despondent could not understand God's tolerance 容忍 of the house of Ahab. But when Ahab's house now enters David's house, when Baal is worshipped in Jerusalem then the stench 恶臭 of the sin rises high unto heaven.

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And Ahaziah may well be the unpaid bill of all of this wickedness. He is of course responsible, but a wicked man raised by wicked parents in a society that though the church became wicked was so Ahaziah was left to his own thoughts and wisdom. He was passed by with the Holy Spirit. And yet because Jehoshaphat loved the Lord and served him Ahaziah was buried with honour in the Jerusalem. This is the way of the Lord God.

As the LORD says, “I the Lord am a jealous God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate, but showing love to a thousand generations who love me and keep my commandments.”

The Elijah/Elisha and Ahab cycle here in Kings was coming to a close. Its ramifications 后果 are wonderful for us who live in the world are called not to be of it. There is much wisdom there for us. We are reminded of the words of Christ to the church in Thyatira:

These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze 那眼睛像火焰、两脚像光铜的。 ^{Rev 2:19} I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.

^{Rev 2:20} Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. ^{Rev 2:21} I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. ^{Rev 2:22} So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. ^{Rev 2:23} I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds.

^{Rev 2:24} Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan’s so-called deep secrets (I will not impose any other burden on you 我不会把别的重担放在你们身上): ^{Rev 2:25} Only hold on to what you have until I come. ^{Rev 2:26} To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations— ^{Rev 2:27} ‘He will rule them with an iron scepter 铁杖; he will dash them to pieces like pottery’— just as I have received authority from my Father. ^{Rev 2:28} I will also give him the morning star. ^{Rev 2:29} He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

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The church in Thyatira tolerated what God hates: she is under judgment! The church had been too patient: Christ too has been patient: but now it is enough! They will not purge the evil: the Son of God will (recall: Elijah and Jehu). The church will be thrown on sick bed or bed of suffering and if one gets in bed with her and he will share that bed of suffering. Jesus speaks in Old Testament/tribulation terms there is judgment coming, Jerusalem better take notice, the Jews better take notice and these Jewish-pagan-church haters-marriage wreckers better take notice: and their children too! (Matthew 24:21, 34). Jesus and the faithful and those who repent will be vindicated 平反.

Jesus commands them to orthodoxy and purity and to hold fast. The deep things of Satan: chaos, sexual immorality, denying God, anarchy 无政府状态, salvation through chaos and sinning that grace may abound. There is really only one God so any worship of any god in any way is really the worship of God- this was the old Jewish problem: the incorporating 结合 of false worship into the true worship.

This God would purge from the church and punish. This, the unfaithful Israel in the Roman Empire never repented!

Sin is so easily predictable and in a way so is Satan but because he appeals to our pride in a way that we lose the sense of it. When Christianity is presented with a way of worship that appeals to the senses, a way of life that allows for lust the two god system that Jesus spoke of when he spoke of mammon taking over. False worship leads to judgment. Period!

Now you say and you are correct to say that we live in the Pentecost era. Our evangelism committee has been working hard to come up with ideas. We have received letters from the congregation with some excellent ideas about how to reach out. But we need to ensure that we

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have some place to bring the disciples that will bring them into the presence of God. To be Christ on earth is to be obedient and loyal and faithful. What is it to love God but to obey His commandments? Grace leads us to obedience. God had been gracious to Ahab, to his sons and to the nation of Israel, but as we have noted when Ahab's sins (read Jezebel) was tolerated and then embraced God had enough and the purging began. So we seek to bring a purity of life and doctrine speaking the truth in love to bring the lost into a place of fellowship, love and care founded on the Word that is Christ.

Israel had lost sense of Christ and so too had Jerusalem. Messiah had to come; Messiah had to die to save us. Satan had to be stopped. Unsubmissive women had to be stopped and men of no integrity or courage had to be stopped. So we hear the hoof beats 蹄声 of the horses of Jehu. Jehu was coming. Jesus is coming! Blessed be the name of the Lord! Amen.