

### Jehu Anointed as Next King of the Northern Kingdom of Israel

#### 2 Kings 9:1-13

**2 Kings 9:1-13** - *“And Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets, and said to him, “Get yourself ready, take this flask of oil in your hand, and go to Ramoth Gilead. Now when you arrive at that place, look there for Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, and go in and make him rise up from among his associates, and take him to an inner room. Then take the flask of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, ‘Thus says the LORD: “I have anointed you king over Israel.”’ Then open the door and flee, and do not delay.”*

*So the young man, the servant of the prophet, went to Ramoth Gilead. And when he arrived, there were the captains of the army sitting; and he said, “I have a message for you, Commander.” Jehu said, “For which one of us?” And he said, “For you, Commander.” Then he arose and went into the house. And he poured the oil on his head, and said to him, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘I have anointed you king over the people of the LORD, over Israel. You shall strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; and I will cut off from Ahab all the males in Israel, both bond and free. So I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah. The dogs shall eat Jezebel on the plot of ground at Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her.’” And he opened the door and fled.*

*Then Jehu came out to the servants of his master, and one said to him, “Is all well? Why did this madman come to you?” And he said to them, “You know the man and his babble.” And they said, “A lie! Tell us now.” So he said, “Thus and thus he spoke to me, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD: “I have anointed you king over Israel.”’” Then each man hastened to take his garment and put it under him on the top of the steps; and they blew trumpets, saying, “Jehu is king!”*

#### Background Notes

Back in 1 Kings 19 when the Lord re-commissioned Elijah, God said that one of his responsibilities would be to anoint Jehu as the next king of Israel. *“Also you shall anoint Jehu, the son of Nimshi as king over Israel” (1 Kings 9:16)*. That was twenty years before this 2 Kings 9 event.

It's possible that Elijah did anoint Jehu, and this was a second anointing twenty years later. Or on the other hand, it could be that Elisha was carrying out the commission that was originally given to Elijah, and that he had delegated to Elisha. In any case, Elisha delegated this responsibility to one of his subordinates, one of the “sons of the prophets” - a seminary student of the day.

Jehu was a military commander. He may have faced Naaman the Syrian, although maybe Naaman had retired by this time. However, it seems that Jehu was commander over all the Israeli army that was fighting the Syrian forces near the

Syrian border at Ramoth-Gilead. By the way - verse 2 tells us that Jehu's father's name was Jehoshaphat. This was **not** King Jehoshaphat, the former king of Judah.

Believe it or not, we actually have a "picture" of Jehu - the only king in ancient Israel or Judah of whom we have a image! Obviously it's not a photograph – it's an engraving on an Assyrian inscription known as the "Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III." King Jehu's image was engraved on the obelisk, bowing down and paying tribute to the Assyrian monarch, Shalmaneser III.

The unnamed "son of the prophets" came to Ramoth-Gilead, sought Jehu, and anointed Jehu with a flask of oil. Don't get the idea that he poured out a quart of motor oil on Jehu's head. No. In this symbolic gesture associated with becoming a king, a small amount of olive oil was poured out from a flask.

When the prophet left, Jehu's military officers wanted to know what it was all about. Why did this madman (as they referred to Elisha's servant) come here? Jehu responded, *"You know the man and his babble" (v11)*. What did Jehu mean? Either he meant, "You know these prophets, how they talk. There's nothing to it." Or he meant, "You guys know very well what he meant and why he was here. You actually hired him so that I would take the initiative and usurp the throne." But the officers replied, "That's not so! You're not leveling with us." So then Jehu told them exactly what took place: "This prophet came to anoint me, and he announced that I would be the next king of Israel."

Then officers set up a sort of mock coronation. Jehu was on a raised dais, and they laid down their garments on the steps leading up to Jehu. Then they declared, "Jehu is king!"

## Doctrinal Points

### 1. God can accomplish His purposes through unholy instruments.

There's no doubt that God Himself appointed Jehu as His instrument to do the Lord's work of judging and removing evil King Ahab's dynasty. Look again at verses 6-10: *"Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'I have anointed you king over the people of the Lord, over Israel. You shall strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; and I will cut off from Ahab all the males in Israel, both bond and free. So I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah. The dogs shall eat Jezebel on the plot of ground at Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her.'" And he opened the door and fled."*

So there's no doubt that God Himself designated Jehu to accomplish His purposes. But when you look at Jehu's life and character, he was by no means a believer - or even a good-living unbeliever. Far from it! Jehu was a proud, ruthless, and

godless person who took every opportunity to advance his own agenda. Jehu was certainly not a believer! But God used this unholy instrument to erase the evil dynasty of Ahab. God can accomplish His purposes through unholy instruments.

We see this truth taught throughout the Bible. God disciplined the Jewish people by the seventy years in captivity at the hands of the pagan Babylonians. God brought about the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem by using the greedy decree of a pagan Roman emperor, Caesar Augustus. God can accomplish His purposes through unholy instruments.

God can accomplish His purposes through unholy instruments in your life today. God can use an unholy boss, or an ungodly teacher, or a corrupt government official to accomplish His perfect goal for your life - to make you more like Christ. God can accomplish His holy purposes through unholy instruments.

## **2. God avenges the blood of His people.**

Look again at verse 7: *“You shall strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel.”* Under Ahab’s reign, many prophets and servants of the Lord had been killed. 1 Kings 18:4 says that Jezebel massacred the prophets of the Lord. But now their shed blood would be avenged. God was about to bring down the ax on those who dared to touch God’s servants. God avenges the blood of His people.

And God avenges the blood of His people today as well. In 2 Thessalonians 1:6 we read this, *“It is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you.”* Also, Romans 12:17-19, *“Do not repay anyone for evil... vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”* God **does** avenge His people! God will avenge the blood of His people.

## **Practical Applications**

### **1. Never take your own revenge.**

Let’s read Romans 12:19 but including the surrounding context: *“Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.”* So while the Bible teaches that God avenges the blood of His people, it also teaches that we’re not to avenge ourselves. Leave your people problems in the hands of God.

So if someone talks behind your back and tears you down - leave it in the hands of God. Don’t take your own revenge. If someone makes fun of you, or mocks you for being a Christian or for whatever reason, don’t take your own revenge. Leave it in the hands of God. He knows when to zap, and how much zapping to do. Never take your own revenge!

But what if someone lies about you or slanders you? What do you do then? You deny the lie, and you set the record straight - but you don't take revenge on the perpetrator! Leave that in the hands of God. Never take your own revenge.

This is probably the hardest of all to handle when the other person is a Christian, - maybe someone in your own church, or someone in same ministry. But here's the point. Whenever, wherever, whoever, whatever is said or done - never take your own revenge!

## **2. Don't be surprised if people say, "you're mad"!**

That's what the military colleagues of Jehu said about the unnamed prophet. They asked Jehu, *"Is all well? Why did this madman come to you?"* (v11).

Now don't get the idea that this servant of Elisha was some kind of wild looking, wide-eyed fanatic who burst in there with some kind of unintelligible oracle, and then took off. No. The reason they called him a madman was because he was a man of God! He was a prophet, and when he spoke God's message the soldiers looked on him as crazy. In their opinion, "What does this seminary student know about real life anyway?"

In John 15:19 Jesus said, *"If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world."* So don't be surprised if people say you're nuts. After all, you're into all that Christian stuff - reading the Bible and going to church all the time. You waste your summers counseling at Christian camps or helping with programs like VBS. You sit around singing songs to God, you crazy Christian. What do you know about the real world?

Has anyone ever told you that you've lost your mind because you're a Christian? Don't be surprised if people say "you're mad"!