

Jehu

Used of God to

Punish

King Ahab

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Overview

KING JEHU WAS USED BY GOD TO PUNISH KING AHAB

Jehu's story is told in 1 Kings 19:16-2 Kings 10:36. He is also mentioned in 2 Kings 15:12; 2 Chron. 22:7-9; Hosea 1:4-5.

Jehu had the basic qualities that could have made him a great success. From a human perspective, in fact, he was a successful king. His family ruled the northern kingdom longer than any other. He was used by God as an instrument of punishment to Ahab's evil dynasty, and he fiercely attacked Baal worship.

He came close to being God's kind of king, but he recklessly went beyond God's commands and failed to follow through on the obedient actions that began his reign. Within sight of victory, he settled for mediocrity.

Jehu was a man of immediate action but without ultimate purpose. His kingdom moved, but its destination was unclear.

He eliminated one form of idolatry, Baal worship, only to uphold another by continuing to worship the golden calves Jeroboam had set up.

He could have accomplished much for God if he had been obedient to the One who made him king. Even when he was carrying out God's directions, Jehu's style showed he was not fully aware of who was directing him.

Jehu took the throne from Ahab's family and destroyed his evil influence. He founded the longest-lived dynasty of the northern kingdom. He was anointed by Elijah and confirmed by Elisha and destroyed Baal worship.

Had a reckless outlook on life that made him bold and prone to error
Worshipped Jeroboam's golden calves. He was devoted to God only to the point that obedience served his own interests

Jehu Son of Nimshi, king of Israel

1 Kings 19:16

Then anoint Jehu son of Nimshi to be king of Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel-meholah to replace you as my prophet.

God asked Elijah to anoint three different people. The first was Hazael, as king of Aram. Elijah was told to anoint an enemy king because God was going to use Aram as his instrument to punish Israel for its sin. Aram brought Israel's *external* punishment.

Israel's internal punishment came from Jehu, the next man Elijah was to anoint. As king of Israel, Jehu would destroy those who worshiped the false god Baal (2 Kings 9-10).

The third person Elijah was told to anoint was Elisha, the prophet who would succeed him. Elisha's job was to work in Israel, the northern kingdom, to help point the people back to God. At this time, the southern kingdom was ruled by Jehoshaphat, a king devoted to God.

Jehu reigned over Israel 28 years.

2 Kings 10:36

In all, Jehu reigned over Israel from Samaria for twenty-eight years.

Jehu did much of what the Lord told him to, but he did not obey him with all his heart. He had become God's *instrument* for carrying out justice, but he had not become God's *servant*.

As a result, he gave only lip service to God while permitting the worship of the golden calves. Check the condition of your heart toward God. We can be very active in our work for God and still not give the heartfelt obedience he desires.

Jehu's descendants will be kings over Israel.

2 Kings 15:12

So the Lord's message to Jehu came true: "Your descendants will be kings of Israel down to the fourth generation."

Jehu made a fatal mistake.

2 Chron. 22:7-9

But this turned out to be a fatal mistake, for God had decided to punish Ahaziah. It was during this visit that Ahaziah went out with Joram to meet Jehu son of Nimshi, whom the Lord had appointed to end the dynasty of Ahab.

While Jehu was executing judgment against the family of Ahab, he happened to meet some of Judah's officials and Ahaziah's relatives who were attending Ahaziah. So Jehu killed them all.

Then Jehu's men searched for Ahaziah, and they found him hiding in the city of Samaria. They brought him to Jehu, who killed him.

Ahaziah was given a decent burial because the people said, "He was the grandson of Jehoshaphat—a man who sought the Lord with all his heart." None of the surviving members of Ahaziah's family was capable of ruling the kingdom.

King Jehu's dynasty to be punished

Hosea 1:4-5

And the Lord said, "Name the child Jezreel, for I am about to punish King Jehu's dynasty to avenge the murders he committed at Jezreel. In fact, I will put an end to Israel's independence by breaking its military power in the Jezreel Valley."

Elijah had predicted that the family of Israel's King Ahab would be destroyed because of their wickedness (1 Kings 21:20-22), but Jehu went too far in carrying out God's command (2 Kings 10:1-11).

Therefore, Jehu's dynasty would also be punished—in the Valley of Jezreel, the very place where he carried out the massacre of Ahab's family. God's promise to put an end to Israel as an independent kingdom (“break Israel's bow”) came true 25 years later when the Assyrians conquered the northern kingdom and carried the people into captivity.

Lessons from his life:

As he did with Jehu, God gives each person strengths and abilities that will find their greatest usefulness only under his control.

Outside that control, however, they don't accomplish what they could and often become tools for evil.

One way to make sure this does not happen is to tell God of your willingness to be under his control. With his presence in your life, your natural strengths and abilities will be used to their greatest potential for the greatest good.

Fierce commitment needs control because it can result in recklessness. Obedience involves both action and direction.

Key verse:

“Yet Jehu was not careful to keep the law of the Lord, the God of Israel, with all his heart. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam, which he had caused Israel to commit” (2 Kings 10:31).

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: Living Bible Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*.

Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print