

Jehu

Introduction / Review

For the third time in the history of the ten tribes, God passed harsh judgment on a king and all his posterity. It began with Jeroboam because he chose human wisdom over trusting in the LORD with all his heart.

Jeroboam

*Go, tell Jeroboam, ... **YOU HAVE DONE MORE EVIL THAN ALL WHO WERE BEFORE YOU, for you have gone and made for yourself other gods and molded images to provoke Me to anger, and HAVE CAST ME BEHIND YOUR BACK** — 10 therefore behold! **I will bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male in Israel, bond and free; I will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as one takes away refuse until it is all gone. 11 The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Jeroboam and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field; for the Lord has spoken!**" 1 Kings 14:7-12*

Jeroboam had introduced the worst kind of substitution. When they went to idols, they knew they were not following God. But when the worship of the Lord was perverted, even though they were in sin, it did not feel like they were. We see this today in the denominations. They all worship God and follow Jesus. The variants that characterize each one still leave them in sin and condemnation, but it is much more difficult to see and to prove.

Baasha

Later God gave this same punishment to Baasha because he continued Jeroboam's legacy.

*Then the word of the Lord came to Jehu the son of Hanani, against Baasha, saying: 2 "**Inasmuch as I LIFTED YOU OUT OF THE DUST AND MADE YOU RULER OVER MY PEOPLE ISRAEL, and YOU HAVE WALKED IN THE WAY OF JEROBOAM, and HAVE MADE MY PEOPLE ISRAEL SIN, TO PROVOKE ME TO ANGER** with their sins, 3 surely **I will take away the posterity of Baasha and the posterity of his house, and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. 4 The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Baasha and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the fields.**" 1 Kings 16:1-4*

Omri, the Father of Ahab

The third and final dynasty where God gave this same punishment was Ahab. He not only walked in the sins of Jeroboam, but also added to it. Yet it did not begin with Ahab. His father Omri who took the throne before him, "**did worse**" than all the kings before him.

*Omri did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and **DID WORSE THAN ALL WHO WERE BEFORE HIM**. 26 For **he walked in all the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin, PROVOKING THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL TO ANGER WITH THEIR IDOLS.** 1 Kings 16:25-26*

After his death, his son Ahab is introduced to us. The degeneration which began with sins of Jeroboam continued under Ahab as he too "**did evil more than all who were before him**" to provoke God than all(**NOTE: not just kings, but ALL**).

*So Omri rested with his fathers and was buried in Samaria. Then **Ahab his son reigned in his place.** 29 Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. 30 Now **AHAB THE SON OF OMRI DID EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD, MORE THAN ALL WHO WERE BEFORE HIM.** 1Kings 16:28-30*

Ahab

Yet it did not stop there! Ahab went far beyond the others.

31 And it came to pass, **AS THOUGH IT HAD BEEN A TRIVIAL THING FOR HIM TO WALK IN THE SINS OF JEROBOAM THE SON OF NEBAT**, that **HE TOOK AS WIFE JEZEBEL THE DAUGHTER OF ETHBAAL**, king of the Sidonians; and **HE WENT AND SERVED BAAL AND WORSHIPED HIM**. 32 Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. 33 And Ahab made a wooden image. **AHAB DID MORE TO PROVOKE THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL TO ANGER THAN ALL THE KINGS OF ISRAEL WHO WERE BEFORE HIM**. 1Kings 16:31-34

Jezebel

The reason for Ahab's progression is placed at the feet of His decision to marry Jezebel.

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**. 26 And **HE BEHAVED VERY ABOMINABLY IN FOLLOWING IDOLS**, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. 1Kings 21:25-26

Yet it was not until after the death of Naboth at the hand of Jezebel and the tacit silence of Ahab who knew there was no godly way to get the vineyard after Naboth's refusal. It was then that the words Elijah had been longing to say since Horeb were spoken.

I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked Me to anger, and made Israel sin.' 23 And concerning Jezebel the Lord also spoke, saying, ***'The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.'*** 24 ***The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field.***" 1 Kings 21:22-24

Ahaziah & Jehoram(Joram), Sons of Ahab

Yet Elijah died long before Jehu was called to fulfill this. After Ahab's death, his son Ahaziah reigned for two years, then another of Ahab's sons, Jehoram also reigned, and Elijah was taken to heaven during the reign of Jehoram.

Ahaziah the son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and ***reigned two years*** over Israel. 1 Kings 22:51

Now ***Jehoram the son of Ahab*** became king over Israel at Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and ***reigned twelve years***. 2K. 3:1-2

Jehu

The reign of Jehu was revealed to Elijah many years earlier(1K. 19:15-17). During this time of extreme wickedness in both Israel and Judah, God proclaimed through Elisha that the time had come and the prophesy was to be fulfilled.

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. 2 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. 3 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." 2 Kings 9:1-3

After the prophet had anointed Jehu, he revealed exactly what God wanted him to do. All Ahab's posterity was to die.

And he said, "For you, Commander." 6 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. 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. 8 **For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; and I will cut off from Ahab all the males in Israel, both bond and free.** 9 **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.** 10 **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. 2 Kings 9:5-10

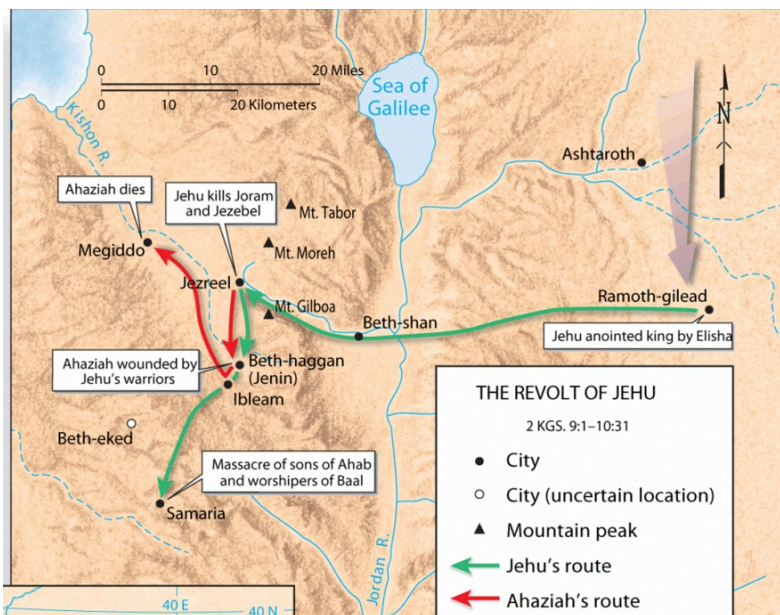
As soon as the prophet leaves and the friends see Jehu with the oil of the anointing still upon him, the immediately recognize something important has happened.

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." 12 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.'**" 13 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!"** 2 Kings 9:11-13

Jehu is King

Armed with the knowledge of God's will, Jehu quickly made his plans. While Jehoram(now Joram) was recovering in Jezreel from would suffered in battle, Jehu came to the city to begin to fulfill what God had told him to do. They move quickly and force all who are in the city and knew of the prophesy to remain and not tell it prematurely. For that reason, Jehoram was completely unaware of what was coming.

So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, conspired against Joram. (Now Joram had been defending Ramoth Gilead, he and all Israel, against Hazael king of Syria. 15 **But King Joram had returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds which the Syrians had inflicted on him when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.)** And Jehu said, "If you are so minded, **let no one leave or escape from the city to go and tell it in Jezreel.**" 2 Kings 9:14-15



Jehu then began the journey to Jezreel. As he neared the city, Joram recognized him and sent out several messengers to question him, but Jehu did not let them return. Finally Joram gets into a Chariot with his brother-in-law Ahaziah who is the king in Judah.

So the watchman reported, saying, "He went up to them and is not coming back; and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he drives furiously!" 21 Then Joram said, "Make ready." And his chariot was made ready. Then Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot; and they went out to meet Jehu, and met him on the property of Naboth the Jezreelite. 2 Kings 9:20-22

The providence of God is clearly seen in the fact that they meet on the very property of Naboth, whose death had brought about the very events that were now transpiring.

And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. 1 Kings 21:1

Now Jehu drew his bow with full strength and shot Jehoram between his arms; and the arrow came out at his heart, and he sank down in his chariot. 25 Then Jehu said to Bidkar his captain, "Pick him up, and throw him into the tract of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite; for remember, when you and I were riding together behind Ahab his father, that the Lord laid this burden upon him: 26 'Surely I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons,' says the Lord, 'and I will repay you in this

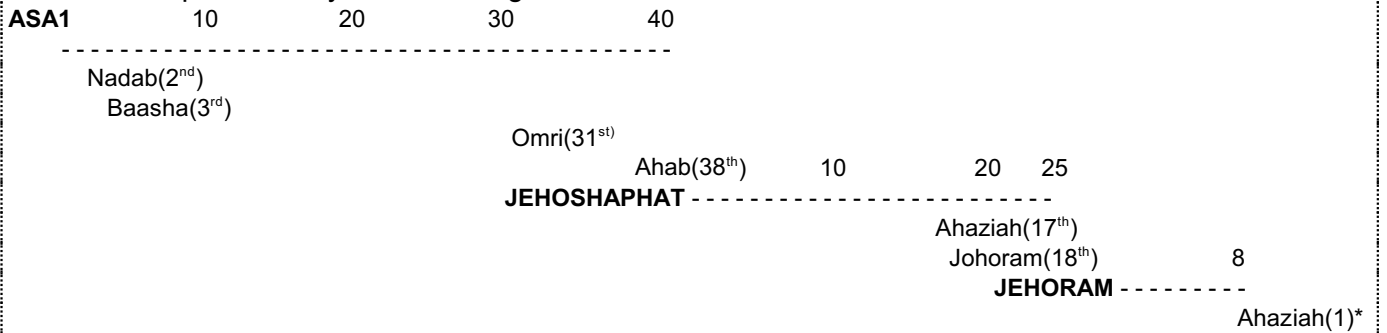
plot,' says the Lord. Now therefore, take and throw him on the plot of ground, according to the word of the Lord." 2 Kings 9:24-26

Jezebel's & Ahab's Influence in Judah

Before we can move to the next event that occurred in the historical account of Jehu, there are some things we need to understand. We have to go back to the an earlier time. From the chart on the next page we learn that Jehoshaphat began his reign in the 4th year of Ahab's reign and continued to reign into reign of Jehoram(Ahab's second son). Jehoshaphat made some terrible decisions during this time.

Asa(good king) reigned 41 years, beginning his reign while Jeroboam was still king in Israel. 1K 15:9
 Jeroboam's son Nadab began his reign in the 2nd year of Asa 1K 15:25
 Baasha began to reign in the 3rd year of Asa 1K 15:28
 Omri began to reign in the 31st year of Asa 1K16:23
 Ahab began to reign in the 38th year of Asa 1K 16:29
 Jehoshaphat began to reign in the 4th year of Ahab. 1K 22:41
 He was 35 when he began to reign and reigned 25 years. 1K 22:42
 Ahaziah(Ahab's son) began to reign in the 17th year of Jehoshaphat's reign. 1K 22:51
 In Jehoram's(Ahab's 2nd son) 5th year, Jehoram(Jehoshaphat's son) began at age 32 for 8 years 2K 8:16-17

Each dash represents a year of the reign.



*(Jehoram and Ahaziah died at the same time at the hand of Jehu.)

Evil Companionship Corrupts Good Morals

The far reaching influence of wicked Jezebel was felt even in Judah. Though Jehoshaphat was a good king, he foolishly worked in fellowship with the kings of Israel.

Jehoshaphat the son of Asa had become **king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab** king of Israel. 42 Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. 43 And he walked in all the ways of his father Asa. He did not turn aside from them, **doing what was right in the eyes of the Lord. NEVERTHELESS** the high places were not taken away, for the people offered sacrifices and burned incense on the high places. 44 Also **JEHOSHAPHAT MADE PEACE WITH THE KING OF ISRAEL.** 1 Kings 22:41-44

It is inconceivable that a good king like Jehoshaphat could have a peaceful relationship with Ahab and all the wickedness he was doing. That peace later led to a fellowship with Israel in which they not only began to work together, but Jehoshaphat actually allied himself with the king of Israel through marriage.

Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance; and **BY MARRIAGE HE ALLIED HIMSELF WITH AHAB.** 2 After some years he went down to visit Ahab in Samaria; and Ahab killed sheep and oxen in abundance for him and the people who were with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth Gilead. 3 So Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "Will you go with me against Ramoth Gilead?" And he answered him, **"I AM AS YOU ARE, AND MY PEOPLE AS YOUR PEOPLE; WE WILL BE WITH YOU IN THE WAR."** 2Chr. 18:1-3

He had learned nothing from Solomon! This alliance was fraught with terrible peril. Jehoshaphat had no know something of Jezebel's persecution of the prophets and her great wickedness. Yet he still chose to allow his son to marry into this family, which was a direct violation of some very important principles.

Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals." 1 Cor 15:33-34

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; I will be their God, and they shall be My people." 17 Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you." 18 "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor 6:14-18

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. Gal 6:7

The consequences of this alliance were far worse than anything Jehoshaphat could have imagined. If he had known, he never would have done such a foolish and despicable thing. We are first introduced to this son after he began to reign. He did not follow in his father's steps regarding faithful service to the Lord, but instead, married to a daughter of Jezebel and Ahab, she swayed him to walk in all the ways of the kings of Israel.

Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat began to reign as king of Judah. 17 He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. 18 And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, FOR THE DAUGHTER OF AHAB WAS HIS WIFE; AND HE DID EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD. 2K. 8:16-18

Yet far worse than this was the manner in which this king, influenced by Jezebel's daughter began his reign. As soon as he became strengthened as king he killed all his brothers. Leaving Jehoshaphat with no heirs except himself. Obviously if Jehoshaphat had know such a terrible consequence would follow would never have made such a tragic mistake. BUT HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN!

*And Jehoshaphat rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. Then **Jehoram his son reigned in his place.** 2 He had brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azaryahu, Michael, and Shephatiah; all these were the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel. 3 Their father gave them great gifts of silver and gold and precious things, with fortified cities in Judah; but **he gave the kingdom to Jehoram, because he was the firstborn.** 4 Now **when Jehoram was established over the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself and killed all his brothers with the sword, and also others of the princes of Israel.** 2 Chron 21:1-4*

The life he lived over the next 8 years was so evil and wicked, that Elisha was called upon to take a hand and wrote him a letter.

5 Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem... 12 **And a letter came to him from Elijah the prophet,** saying, Thus says the Lord God of your father David: because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father, or in the ways of Asa king of Judah, 13 but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and have made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot like the harlotry of the house of Ahab, and also have killed your brothers, those of your father's household, who were better than yourself, 14 behold, the Lord will strike your people with a serious affliction — your children, your wives, and all your possessions; 15 and you will become very sick with a disease of your intestines, until your intestines come out by reason of the sickness, day by day. ... 20 He was thirty-two years old when he became king. He reigned in Jerusalem eight years and, to no one's sorrow, departed. However they buried him in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings. 2Chr. 21:5, 12-15, 20

All of this can be laid at the feet of Jehoshaphat for making a treaty with Ahab and taking his daughter to be his wife. Yet even this was not the worst consequence of Jehoshaphat's foolish decision.

Athaliah

This daughter's name was Athaliah, who was also the mother of the next king in Judah as well as the granddaughter of Omri. Yet not only was this king the son of a daughter of Ahab, but was also son-in-law to the house of Ahab. Hence he had a mother and a wife who were of Ahab's and Jezebel's lineage.

In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel, Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, king of Judah, began to reign. 26 Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri, king of Israel. 27 And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab, for he was the son-in-law of the house of Ahab. 2Kings 8:25-27

As soon as Jehu had killed both Ahab's son Joram and Joram's & Athaliah's son Ahaziah, she moved to do a terrible deed. She killed all the offspring of David who could have taken the throne. Only one son was left of the seed of Ahaziah and David.

When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal heirs. 2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away ... 3 So he was hidden with her in the house of the Lord for six years, while Athaliah reigned over the land. 2 Kings 11:1-3

Jehu Finishes His Commission from the Prophet

Because of the alliance between Israel and Judah, Jehu broadly interprets his commission, killing the son-in-law of Jehoram.

27 But when Ahaziah king of Judah saw this, he fled by the road to Beth Haggan. So Jehu pursued him, and said, "Shoot him also in the chariot." And they shot him at the Ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. Then he fled to Megiddo, and died there. 28 And his servants carried him in the chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his tomb with his fathers in the City of David. 29 In the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab, Ahaziah had become king over Judah. 2 Kings 9:27-29

His going to Joram was God's occasion for Ahaziah's downfall; for when he arrived, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom the Lord had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.

Then Jehu enters the palace portion of Jezreel and Jezebel does her best to use her femininity to deter Jehu, but it fails to move Jehu.

Now when Jehu had come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she put paint on her eyes and adorned her head, and looked through a window. 31 Then, as Jehu entered at the gate, she said, "Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of your master?" 2 Kings 9:30-31

She is then cast from the window, and all of God's words against her are then fulfilled.

And he looked up at the window, and said, "Who is on my side? Who?" So two or three eunuchs looked out at him. 33 Then he said, "Throw her down." So they threw her down, and some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses; and he trampled her underfoot. 34 And when he had gone in, he ate and drank. Then he said, "Go now, see to this accursed woman, and bury her, for she was a king's daughter." 35 So they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. 36 Therefore they came back and told him. And he said, "This is the word of the Lord, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'On the plot of ground at Jezreel dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; 37 and the corpse of Jezebel shall be as refuse on the surface of the field, in the plot at Jezreel, so that they shall not say, "Here lies Jezebel."'" 2 Kings 9:32-37

After this event, Jehu finishes the commission as he had interpreted it. First, he writes a letter to the city of Samaria where Ahab's 70 sons were living offering them an opportunity to defend Ahab's sons.

Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote and sent letters to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to those who reared Ahab's sons, saying: 2 Now as soon as this letter

comes to you, since your master's sons are with you, and you have chariots and horses, a fortified city also, and weapons, **3 choose the best qualified of your master's sons, set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house.** **4** But they were exceedingly afraid, 2 Kings 10:1-4

Due to their fear, they do not wish to stand with Ahab's sons, so Jehu sends a second letter.

*"Then he **wrote a second letter** to them, saying: **If you are for me and will obey my voice, take the heads of the men, your master's sons, and come to me at Jezreel by this time tomorrow.** Now the king's sons, seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, who were rearing them. **7** So it was, **when the letter came** to them, that **they took the king's sons and slaughtered seventy persons**, put their heads in baskets and sent them to him at Jezreel. 2 Kings 10:5-7*

Jehu now reveals his knowledge of Elijah's prophesy and reveals that they had taken part in fulfilling it.

*So it was, in the morning, that he went out and stood, and said to all the people, "You are righteous. Indeed I conspired against my master and killed him; but who killed all these? **10 Know now that nothing shall fall to the earth of the word of the Lord which the Lord spoke concerning the house of Ahab; for the Lord has done what He spoke by His servant Elijah.**" 2K 10:9-11*

Jehu then continues his work in Jezreel to fulfill the prophecy of Elijah by seeking and destroying all who remained to Ahab, along with his advisers, friends and priests.

*So **Jehu killed all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men and his close acquaintances and his priests, until he left him none remaining.** 2 Kings 10:9-11*

The final judgment against the house of Ahab almost appears as a coincidence, as the children of Ahab and Jezebel's daughter Athaliah had come to see to Ahaziah.

*And he arose and departed and went to Samaria. On the way, at Beth Eked of the Shepherds, **13 Jehu met with the brothers of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, "Who are you?"** So they answered, "**We are the brothers of Ahaziah; we have come down to greet the sons of the king and the sons of the queen mother.**" **14** And he said, "Take them alive!" So they took them alive, and killed them at the well of Beth Eked, forty-two men; and he left none of them. 2K. 10:12-14*

Yet it was not a coincidence, but the fulfillment of the letter Elijah had written.

Elijah's Letter

Jehoshaphat's son, Jehoram had begun his reign with great bloodshed and treachery against his father and brothers. He then brought to Judah the wickedness that was in Israel because of the daughter of Ahab who was his wife. Due to this wickedness of Jehoram in killing all his brothers, Elijah had sent him a letter with a prophesy that God would punish all his offspring because of his deeds.

And a letter came to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, ... Thus says the Lord God of your father David: Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father, ... behold, the Lord will strike your people with a serious affliction — your children, your wives, and all your possessions; 2Chr. 21:14-15

Jehu was the instrument through which this terrible prophecy was fulfilled.

*His going to Joram was **God's occasion for Ahaziah's downfall**; for when he arrived, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom the Lord had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab. **8** And it happened, **when Jehu was executing judgment on the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's brothers who served Ahaziah, that he killed them.** **9** Then he searched for Ahaziah; and they caught him (he was hiding in Samaria), and brought him to Jehu. When they had killed him, they buried him, "because," they said, "he is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the Lord with all his heart." 2Chr. 22:7-9*

And when he came to Samaria, he killed all who remained to Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed them, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke to Elijah. 2 Kings 10:17

This completed Jehu's part in the bloody end to the house of Ahab. Ahab's His own daughter

Athaliah finished it.

When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal heirs. 2 Kings 11:1-2

Jehu's Reign

Although he reigned over Israel for 28 years, God only revealed one event about his reign. The zealous manner in which he carried out the commands to destroy the house of Ahab revealed something about his character, but it is hard to deduce exactly what it revealed. If he had gone on to completely reform Israel, we would conclude that he was the most devout king that Israel ever received. But since he did not, it is very difficult to assess his exact motives.

Perhaps like so many, all that God asked him to do that he enjoyed and he agreed with he was willing to do with great zeal and determination, and when it came time to do those things that God demanded, but he had no interest in doing, they parted ways.

His first act as king was the attempt to completely destroy the worship of Baal in Israel. Once again we have the facts revealed to us without an inspired explanation or commentary. This is exactly what happened, but how God felt about it is not revealed. He began with lies and deceit.

*Then Jehu gathered all the people together, and said to them, "**Ahab served Baal a little, Jehu will serve him much.** 19 Now therefore, call to me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests. Let no one be missing, for I have a great sacrifice for Baal. **Whoever is missing shall not live.**" But Jehu acted deceptively, with the intent of destroying the worshipers of Baal. Then Jehu sent throughout all Israel; and all the worshipers of Baal came, so that **there was not a man left who did not come.** So they came into the temple of Baal, and the temple of Baal was **full from one end to the other.** 2 Kings 10:18-20*

After completely filling the temple, he makes a proclamation to be certain no one who truly sought Jehovah was present. He had already stationed 80 armed soldiers and warned them that if anyone escaped they would forfeit their own lives.

*"Search and **see that no servants of the Lord are here with you, but only the worshipers of Baal.**" 24 So they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now **Jehu had appointed for himself eighty men on the outside, and had said, "If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escapes, whoever lets him escape, it shall be his life for the life of the other."** 2Kings 10:23-24*

He then carried out his plan by executing everyone who was in that temple of Baal, tearing down the temple and making it a refuse dump. It is clearly revealed that this destroyed Baal from Israel.

*And they **killed them with the edge of the sword**; then the guards and the officers threw them out, and went into the inner room of the temple of Baal. 26 And they brought the sacred pillars out of the temple of Baal and burned them. 27 Then **they broke down the sacred pillar of Baal, and tore down the temple of Baal and made it a refuse dump to this day.** 28 Thus **Jehu destroyed Baal from Israel.** 2Kings 10:25-28*

Yet from that moment on Jehu made no attempt at all to serve God or remove the apostasy that Jeroboam had introduced. God promised Jehu his family would reign to the fourth generation.

*However **Jehu did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin, that is, from the golden calves that were at Bethel and Dan.** 30 And the Lord said to Jehu, "Because **you have done well in doing what is right in My sight, and have done to the house of Ahab all that was in My heart, your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation.**" 31 But **Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart; for he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin.** 2 Kings 10:29-31*

Yet the entire 28 year reign of Jehu is summed up these verses. There is nothing more to say. He was used to destroy the house of Ahab and the worship of Baal and did God's will, but that was the end of his service to God as he then walked in his own path choosing to continue to serve God through Jeroboam's calves.

The Four Generations of Jehu and His Sons

God had promised Jehu, **"your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation."** These "sons" followed in their father's footsteps, and little is written of their reigns except for their continued battle losses to the Syrians. These events fulfill the final words of God to Elijah after he fled from Jezebel's wrath. Although Hazael was mentioned first, his work lasted the longest as it continued through his sons.

Then the Lord said to him: "Go, return on your way to the Wilderness of Damascus; and when you arrive, anoint Hazael as king over Syria. 16 Also you shall anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi as king over Israel. And Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place. 17 It shall be that whoever escapes the sword of Hazael, Jehu will kill; and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu, Elisha will kill. 1 Kings 19:15-18

Jehu(28 years)

It began in the reign of Jehu. God continued to use Hazael to complete the cutting off of Israel. In Jehu's reign the entire eastern side of the Jordan by Hazael.

In those days the Lord began to cut off parts of Israel; and Hazael conquered them in all the territory of Israel 33 from the Jordan eastward: all the land of Gilead — Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh — from Aroer, which is by the River Arnon, including Gilead and Bashan. 2 Kings 10:32-33

Jehoahaz(17 years)

After the death of Jehu, his son Jehoahaz began to reign, God's longsuffering was now coming to an end, and as His anger began to burn and the enemies God raised up against Israel began a different work. Always before, through the judges and kings, conquerors were used to bring repentance to Israel. God had only wanted them to return to Him. But now things have changed. Now it is not just repentance but the beginning of judgment. Israel is being removed from it's land and the prophesies of Moses are being fulfilled.

Jehoahaz the son of Jehu became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years. 2 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. He did not depart from them. 3 Then the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel, and He delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-Hadad the son of Hazael, all their days. 2 Kings 13:1-4

Repentance Still has Power

Yet even during these days when God saw repentance, He relented for a short time and allowed that repentance to shine brightly for us to see today. Regardless of how wicked the person and no matter how strongly God had determined to destroy, repentance always met with favor and grace.

So Jehoahaz pleaded with the Lord, and the Lord listened to him; for He saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them. 5 Then the Lord gave Israel a deliverer, so that they escaped from under the hand of the Syrians; and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents as before. 2Kings 13:4-5,

Yet before this repentance and promised deliverance, terrible destruction had been poured out on Israel.

He left of the army of Jehoahaz only fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand foot soldiers; for the king of Syria had destroyed them and made them like the dust at threshing. 2Kings 13:7

Jehoash/Joash(16 years)

We are not told why this king began his reign as Jehoash and ended it as Joash, but both names mean exactly the same thing:

Yehow'ash — Jehoash = "given by the Lord" (BDB OT:3060), and Yow'ash or Yo'ash — Joash = "given by the Lord" (BDB - 3101)

His sixteen year reign proceeded along the same lines as his father and grandfather. He did evil, but God's grace and mercy are once again given. This time it was the death of Elisha that led God to show His power to bless instead of to curse them. When Joash went to show his respect to Elisha at his death, God allowed Elisha to give Joash a promise of victory.

Elisha had become sick with the illness of which he would die. Then Joash the king of Israel came down to him, and wept over his face, and said, "O my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!" 2 Kings 13:14

After using a bow and arrow to promise deliverance from Syria, Elisha asked Joash to strike the ground with the arrows to symbolize his victory. When he only half-heartedly struck the ground

three times, Elisha became angry and told him he should have been more forceful and zealous and struck many times. His half-hearted attitude led Elisha to warn him he would not completely destroy Syria, but only gain the three victories he had sought for by striking only three times.

*And he said, "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance and the arrow of deliverance from Syria; for you must **strike the Syrians at Aphek till you have destroyed them.**" 18 Then he said, "Take the arrows"; so he took them. And he said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground"; so he struck three times, and stopped. 19 And the man of God was angry with him, and said, "**You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck Syria till you had destroyed it! But now you will strike Syria only three times.**" 2Kings 13:17-19*

The Holy Spirit added one more reason why God did not completely destroy them at this time. It was His covenant and oath to bless the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

*And Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. 23 But the Lord was gracious to them, **had compassion on them, and regarded them, because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not yet destroy them or cast them from His presence.** 2K. 13:22-23*

Jeroboam 2(41 years)

This Jeroboam is the third generation after the death of Jehu. He too continue to walk in the sins of his namesake. His 41 year reign brought prosperity and peace to Israel. This time it is in fulfillment of a prophesy made by the prophet Jonah. Three more reasons were given for this grace.

- (1) "the Lord saw that **the affliction of Israel was very bitter**;
- (2) there was **no helper for Israel**.
- (3) **the Lord did not say that He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven.**

He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hepher. 26 For the Lord saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter; and whether bond or free, there was no helper for Israel. 27 And the Lord did not say that He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash. 2 Kings 14:25-27

As we analyze these four reasons, few answers are recorded for us. We know nothing of the prophesy of Jonah, nor if this prophesy was given before or after the events recorded in his book. It may have been after and thus Jonah was also a sign to Israel, but there is no real way to know. God's mercy has often been kindled during Israel's anguish and bitterness, but with their destruction now decades away, and the prophet's Amos and Hosea already working, we can't pinpoint why this was happening. In the last two perhaps there is a hint. Although there was no helper in Israel, God had nowhere ever stated He would completely blot them out of existence. There may be an implication that someone had made such a comment or assumption and God was showing it to be false.

Yet though his reign is prospering, dark clouds are now forming. God sent both Amos and Hosea during the Jeroboam's reign.

*The words of **Amos**, who was among the sheepbreeders of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of **Uzziah** king of Judah, and **in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel**, two years before the earthquake. Amos 1:1*

*The word of the Lord that came to **Hosea** the son of Beer, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and **in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.** Hos 1:1*

This is all God revealed about Jeroboam's reign.

Zechariah(6 months)

The final son in Jehu's dynasty only reigned six months and evidently had no children since there is no one contesting the reign. There is also nothing said about all Jehu's posterity being killed. It only states that he was killed in front of the people and then began to reign. The Scripture makes it very clear that this completely fulfilled God's promise to Jehu.

*Zechariah the son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria six months. 9 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. 10 Then Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and struck and killed him in front of the people; and he reigned in his place. ... 12 **This was the word of the Lord which He spoke to Jehu, saying, "Your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation."** And so it was. 2 Kings 15:8-10,12*

Shallum only reigned one month before he was killed by **Menahem** who then reigned ten years. We don't know if Hosea and Amos were still preaching after the death of Jeroboam, but with only three kings and thirty-one years left to its existence, Israel has run out of time, grace, mercy and longsuffering and judgment is at hand.