

Sunday, June 26, 2022

From Darren: 2 Kings 9:14-10:31 Acts 17:1-34 Psalm 144:1-15 Proverbs 17:27-28

2 Kings 9:14-10:31 — God uses Jehu as His muscle

Ps 144:1-15 — “He is my loving ally and my fortress, my tower of safety, my rescuer.”

Pro 17:27-28 — I have decided I should talk less

Acts 17:1-34 — The “Unknown God” becomes known to the Athenians

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2 Kings 9:14-10:31

9 14 So Jehu son of Jehoshaphat, son of Nimshi, led a conspiracy against King Joram. (Now Joram had been with the army at Ramoth-gilead, defending Israel against the forces of King Hazael of Aram.

15 But King Joram was wounded in the fighting and returned to Jezreel to recover from his wounds.) So Jehu told the men with him, “If you want me to be king, don’t let anyone leave town and go to Jezreel to report what we have done.”

16 Then Jehu got into a chariot and rode to Jezreel to find King Joram, who was lying there wounded. King Ahaziah of Judah was there, too, for he had gone to visit him.

17 The watchman on the tower of Jezreel saw Jehu and his company approaching, so he shouted to Joram, “I see a company of troops coming!” “Send out a rider to ask if they are coming in peace,” King Joram ordered.

18 So a horseman went out to meet Jehu and said, “The king wants to know if you are coming in peace.” Jehu replied, “What do you know about peace? Fall in behind me!” The watchman called out to the king, “The messenger has met them, but he’s not returning.”

19 So the king sent out a second horseman. He rode up to them and said, “The king wants to know if you come in peace.” Again Jehu answered, “What do you know about peace? Fall in behind me!”

20 The watchman exclaimed, “The messenger has met them, but he isn’t returning either! It must be Jehu son of Nimshi, for he’s driving like a madman.”

21 “Quick! Get my chariot ready!” King Joram commanded. Then King Joram of Israel and King Ahaziah of Judah rode out in their chariots to meet Jehu. They met him at the plot of land that had belonged to Naboth of Jezreel.

22 King Joram demanded, “Do you come in peace, Jehu?” Jehu replied, “How can there be peace as long as the idolatry and witchcraft of your mother, Jezebel, are all around us?”

23 Then King Joram turned the horses around and fled, shouting to King Ahaziah, “Treason, Ahaziah!”

24 But Jehu drew his bow and shot Joram between the shoulders. The arrow pierced his heart, and he sank down dead in his chariot.

25 Jehu said to Bidkar, his officer, “Throw him into the plot of land that belonged to Naboth of Jezreel. Do you remember when you and I were riding along behind his father, Ahab? The LORD pronounced this message against him:

26 ‘I solemnly swear that I will repay him here on this plot of land, says the LORD, for the murder of Naboth and his sons that I saw yesterday.’ So throw him out on Naboth’s property, just as the LORD said.”

27 When King Ahaziah of Judah saw what was happening, he fled along the road to Beth-haggan. Jehu rode after him, shouting, "Shoot him, too!" So they shot Ahaziah in his chariot at the Ascent of Gur, near Ibleam. He was able to go on as far as Megiddo, but he died there.

28 His servants took him by chariot to Jerusalem, where they buried him with his ancestors in the City of David.

29 Ahaziah had become king over Judah in the eleventh year of the reign of Joram son of Ahab.

30 When Jezebel, the queen mother, heard that Jehu had come to Jezreel, she painted her eyelids and fixed her hair and sat at a window.

31 When Jehu entered the gate of the palace, she shouted at him, "Have you come in peace, you murderer? You're just like Zimri, who murdered his master!"

32 Jehu looked up and saw her at the window and shouted, "Who is on my side?" And two or three eunuchs looked out at him.

33 "Throw her down!" Jehu yelled. So they threw her out the window, and her blood spattered against the wall and on the horses. And Jehu trampled her body under his horses' hooves.

34 Then Jehu went into the palace and ate and drank. Afterward he said, "Someone go and bury this cursed woman, for she is the daughter of a king."

35 But when they went out to bury her, they found only her skull, her feet, and her hands.

36 When they returned and told Jehu, he stated, "This fulfills the message from the LORD, which he spoke through his servant Elijah from Tishbe: 'At the plot of land in Jezreel, dogs will eat Jezebel's body.'

37 Her remains will be scattered like dung on the plot of land in Jezreel, so that no one will be able to recognize her.'"

10 1 Ahab had seventy sons living in the city of Samaria. So Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria, to the elders and officials of the city, and to the guardians of King Ahab's sons. He said,

2 "The king's sons are with you, and you have at your disposal chariots, horses, a fortified city, and weapons. As soon as you receive this letter,

3 select the best qualified of your master's sons to be your king, and prepare to fight for Ahab's dynasty."

4 But they were paralyzed with fear and said, "We've seen that two kings couldn't stand against this man! What can we do?"

5 So the palace and city administrators, together with the elders and the guardians of the king's sons, sent this message to Jehu: "We are your servants and will do anything you tell us. We will not make anyone king; do whatever you think is best."

6 Jehu responded with a second letter: "If you are on my side and are going to obey me, bring the heads of your master's sons to me at Jezreel by this time tomorrow." Now the seventy sons of the king were being cared for by the leaders of Samaria, where they had been raised since childhood.

7 When the letter arrived, the leaders killed all seventy of the king's sons. They placed their heads in baskets and presented them to Jehu at Jezreel.

8 A messenger went to Jehu and said, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons." So Jehu ordered, "Pile them in two heaps at the entrance of the city gate, and leave them there until morning."

9 In the morning he went out and spoke to the crowd that had gathered around them. "You are not to blame," he told them. "I am the one who conspired against my master and killed him. But who killed all these?"

10 You can be sure that the message of the LORD that was spoken concerning Ahab's family will not fail. The LORD declared through his servant Elijah that this would happen."

11 Then Jehu killed all who were left of Ahab's relatives living in Jezreel and all his important officials, his personal friends, and his priests. So Ahab was left without a single survivor.

12 Then Jehu set out for Samaria. Along the way, while he was at Beth-eked of the Shepherds, 13 he met some relatives of King Ahaziah of Judah. "Who are you?" he asked them. And they replied, "We are relatives of King Ahaziah. We are going to visit the sons of King Ahab and the sons of the queen mother."

14 "Take them alive!" Jehu shouted to his men. And they captured all forty-two of them and killed them at the well of Beth-eked. None of them escaped.

15 When Jehu left there, he met Jehonadab son of Recab, who was coming to meet him. After they had greeted each other, Jehu said to him, "Are you as loyal to me as I am to you?" "Yes, I am," Jehonadab replied. "If you are," Jehu said, "then give me your hand." So Jehonadab put out his hand, and Jehu helped him into the chariot.

16 Then Jehu said, "Now come with me, and see how devoted I am to the LORD ." So Jehonadab rode along with him.

17 When Jehu arrived in Samaria, he killed everyone who was left there from Ahab's family, just as the LORD had promised through Elijah.

18 Then Jehu called a meeting of all the people of the city and said to them, "Ahab's worship of Baal was nothing compared to the way I will worship him!

19 Therefore, summon all the prophets and worshipers of Baal, and call together all his priests. See to it that every one of them comes, for I am going to offer a great sacrifice to Baal. Anyone who fails to come will be put to death." But Jehu's cunning plan was to destroy all the worshipers of Baal.

20 Then Jehu ordered, "Prepare a solemn assembly to worship Baal!" So they did.

21 He sent messengers throughout all Israel summoning those who worshiped Baal. They all came—not a single one remained behind—and they filled the temple of Baal from one end to the other.

22 And Jehu instructed the keeper of the wardrobe, "Be sure that every worshiper of Baal wears one of these robes." So robes were given to them.

23 Then Jehu went into the temple of Baal with Jehonadab son of Recab. Jehu said to the worshipers of Baal, "Make sure no one who worships the LORD is here—only those who worship Baal."

24 So they were all inside the temple to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had stationed eighty of his men outside the building and had warned them, "If you let anyone escape, you will pay for it with your own life."

25 As soon as Jehu had finished sacrificing the burnt offering, he commanded his guards and officers, "Go in and kill all of them. Don't let a single one escape!" So they killed them all with their swords, and the guards and officers dragged their bodies outside. Then Jehu's men went into the innermost fortress of the temple of Baal.

26 They dragged out the sacred pillar used in the worship of Baal and burned it.

27 They smashed the sacred pillar and wrecked the temple of Baal, converting it into a public toilet, as it remains to this day.

28 In this way, Jehu destroyed every trace of Baal worship from Israel.

29 He did not, however, destroy the gold calves at Bethel and Dan, with which Jeroboam son of Nebat had caused Israel to sin.

30 Nonetheless the LORD said to Jehu, "You have done well in following my instructions to destroy the family of Ahab. Therefore, your descendants will be kings of Israel down to the fourth generation."

31 But Jehu did not obey the Law of the LORD, the God of Israel, with all his heart. He refused to turn from the sins that Jeroboam had led Israel to commit.

Psalm 144:1-15

144 1 Praise the LORD, who is my rock. He trains my hands for war and gives my fingers skill for battle.
2 He is my loving ally and my fortress, my tower of safety, my rescuer. He is my shield, and I take refuge in him. He makes the nations submit to me.
3 O LORD, what are human beings that you should notice them, mere mortals that you should think about them?
4 For they are like a breath of air; their days are like a passing shadow.
5 Open the heavens, LORD, and come down. Touch the mountains so they billow smoke.
6 Hurl your lightning bolts and scatter your enemies! Shoot your arrows and confuse them!
7 Reach down from heaven and rescue me; rescue me from deep waters, from the power of my enemies.
8 Their mouths are full of lies; they swear to tell the truth, but they lie instead.
9 I will sing a new song to you, O God! I will sing your praises with a ten-stringed harp.
10 For you grant victory to kings! You rescued your servant David from the fatal sword.
11 Save me! Rescue me from the power of my enemies. Their mouths are full of lies; they swear to tell the truth, but they lie instead.
12 May our sons flourish in their youth like well-nurtured plants. May our daughters be like graceful pillars, carved to beautify a palace.
13 May our barns be filled with crops of every kind. May the flocks in our fields multiply by the thousands, even tens of thousands,
14 and may our oxen be loaded down with produce. May there be no enemy breaking through our walls, no going into captivity, no cries of alarm in our town squares.
15 Yes, joyful are those who live like this! Joyful indeed are those whose God is the LORD .

Proverbs 17:27-28

17 27 A truly wise person uses few words; a person with understanding is even-tempered.
28 Even fools are thought wise when they keep silent; with their mouths shut, they seem intelligent.

Acts 17:1-34

17 1 Paul and Silas then traveled through the towns of Amphipolis and Apollonia and came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue.
2 As was Paul's custom, he went to the synagogue service, and for three Sabbaths in a row he used the Scriptures to reason with the people.
3 He explained the prophecies and proved that the Messiah must suffer and rise from the dead. He said, "This Jesus I'm telling you about is the Messiah."
4 Some of the Jews who listened were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with many God-fearing Greek men and quite a few prominent women.
5 But some of the Jews were jealous, so they gathered some troublemakers from the marketplace to form a mob and start a riot. They attacked the home of Jason, searching for Paul and Silas so they could drag them out to the crowd.

6 Not finding them there, they dragged out Jason and some of the other believers instead and took them before the city council. “Paul and Silas have caused trouble all over the world,” they shouted, “and now they are here disturbing our city, too.

7 And Jason has welcomed them into his home. They are all guilty of treason against Caesar, for they profess allegiance to another king, named Jesus.”

8 The people of the city, as well as the city council, were thrown into turmoil by these reports.

9 So the officials forced Jason and the other believers to post bond, and then they released them.

10 That very night the believers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived there, they went to the Jewish synagogue.

11 And the people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul’s message. They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth.

12 As a result, many Jews believed, as did many of the prominent Greek women and men.

13 But when some Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God in Berea, they went there and stirred up trouble.

14 The believers acted at once, sending Paul on to the coast, while Silas and Timothy remained behind.

15 Those escorting Paul went with him all the way to Athens; then they returned to Berea with instructions for Silas and Timothy to hurry and join him.

16 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply troubled by all the idols he saw everywhere in the city.

17 He went to the synagogue to reason with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and he spoke daily in the public square to all who happened to be there.

18 He also had a debate with some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. When he told them about Jesus and his resurrection, they said, “What’s this babbler trying to say with these strange ideas he’s picked up?” Others said, “He seems to be preaching about some foreign gods.”

19 Then they took him to the high council of the city. “Come and tell us about this new teaching,” they said.

20 “You are saying some rather strange things, and we want to know what it’s all about.”

21 (It should be explained that all the Athenians as well as the foreigners in Athens seemed to spend all their time discussing the latest ideas.)

22 So Paul, standing before the council, addressed them as follows: “Men of Athens, I notice that you are very religious in every way,

23 for as I was walking along I saw your many shrines. And one of your altars had this inscription on it: ‘To an Unknown God.’ This God, whom you worship without knowing, is the one I’m telling you about.

24 “He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn’t live in man-made temples,

25 and human hands can’t serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need.

26 From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries.

27 “His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us.

28 For in him we live and move and exist. As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’

29 And since this is true, we shouldn't think of God as an idol designed by craftsmen from gold or silver or stone.

30 "God overlooked people's ignorance about these things in earlier times, but now he commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to him.

31 For he has set a day for judging the world with justice by the man he has appointed, and he proved to everyone who this is by raising him from the dead."

32 When they heard Paul speak about the resurrection of the dead, some laughed in contempt, but others said, "We want to hear more about this later."

33 That ended Paul's discussion with them,

34 but some joined him and became believers. Among them were Dionysius, a member of the council, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.