

Dr. John Oswalt, Kings, Session 21, Part 3

2 Kings 8-9, Part 3

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We turn now to the, as I said earlier today, to the other bookend. The one bookend was the appointment of Hazael, the king of Syria. Now, we have come to Jehu's appointment.

This is very interesting. Jehu is the general. He is in charge of the army over here, especially now that the king is back in Jezreel, recovering from his wounds.

Jehu is the man on the spot here at Ramoth Gilead. And it's very mysterious. Again, a mystery the Bible doesn't answer for us, but one that testifies to its historical accuracy.

Elisha says to one of his disciples, a son of the prophets, I want you to take this oil and go as fast as you can. The Hebrew says, gird up your loins. The NIV that I'm looking at here says, tuck your cloak into your belt.

Well, that's correct. But what's the idea? The idea is you reach down, you get the hem of your robe and you pull it up and you tuck it in your belt. Instant Bermuda shorts.

Run. Don't let that robe tangle up your ankles. Pull it up.

Tuck it in your belt. Move. Take this flask of oil.

When you get there, find Jehu, son of Jehoshaphat. Now, probably not the Judean Jehoshaphat. Although, again, we can't prove it.

But the fact that it says son of Nimshi and not son of Asa argues that this is a different Jehoshaphat. Go to him. Get him away from his companions.

Take him into an inner room. Take the flask. Pour the oil on his head.

Declare, this is what the Lord says. I anoint you, king of Israel. Then open the door and run.

What's that about? Well, conspiracy is not something you want to mess around with. If you're going to do it, do it. Don't sit around talking about it.

Don't sit around thinking about it. Get in and get out. Again, I say this is a testimony of the historical accuracy of the account.

So that's what happened. He did it. Now, it's interesting that what the messenger says is a lot more than what Elisha told him to say.

And we don't know. Did Elisha, in fact, tell him to say more? Or has he embroidered on things? Or has the Lord said more to him on the spot? We don't know. I think it's the latter.

I think there, at that moment, the Lord came upon him, and he said more than he had planned to say. I anoint you, king. This is verse six.

I anoint you king over Yahweh's people, Israel. Elisha had said king over Israel. It's Yahweh's people.

You'll destroy the house of Ahab, your master, and I will avenge the blood of my servants, the prophets, and the blood of all the Lord's servants shed by Jezebel. We had a little glimpse of that way back in 1 Kings when Ahab and Obadiah were looking for grass to keep a few of the horses and mules alive. And the Bible tells us Obadiah had hidden these prophets from Jezebel, who was killing them.

So here it is. Why is this happening? Is this happening simply because it's a war between Baal and Yahweh? No. Oh, that's part of it.

But much more deeply, it's the result of God's compassion for his people. You don't mess with God's people. Now, personally, I think that still applies.

How is it that that great, modern, technologically competent nation of Germany ended up in absolute, total ruins? Because they put their hand on God's people. Most Israelis today are not believers. God isn't done with them.

Not everything that the nation of Israel chooses to do militarily or politically ought to be approved. But I believe the nation that protects God's people is in line for blessing. And the nation that allows God's people to be broken and ruined and hurt is in desperate trouble.

I appoint you king over Yahweh's people, Israel. I will avenge the blood of my servants, the prophets, and the blood of all the Lord's servants shed by Jezebel. There's six million multiplied by how many quarts? Blood spread across Europe today.

I will cut off from Ahab every last male, slave and free. I'll make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, like the house of Basha, son of Ahijah, the first two powerful kings of the north. As for Jezebel, dogs will devour on the plot of ground.

Oh, my. The plot of ground at Jezreel. What plot of ground? Naboth's vineyard plot of ground.

So, it happened. Now, we can't answer the question of why Elijah didn't go personally. But I'm confident if we knew all the details, we'd be able to say, oh, yeah, sure.

So, Jehu goes back in. And again, the narration in this book is so interesting. He goes back in, and the guys say, what happened? Who was that? And Jehu said, oh, you know.

You know the crazy kinds of things these prophets do. Never mind. That's not true.

Tell us. You're lying. We know something significant happened in there.

There's oil all over your head. Well, here's what he told me. This is what the Lord says.

I anoint you king over Israel. Now, isn't it interesting? Verse 13, they quickly took their cloaks, spread them under him on the bare steps, blew the trumpet, and shouted, Jehu's king. Wow.

Wow. No ifs, no ands, no buts. No, well, do you think this is a good idea? I don't know about that.

To me, it's a testimony of Jehu's position as commander. Clearly, they loved him. Clearly, this is a man they would follow anywhere.

You have to wonder again about other parts of the story. Was Jehoram, Joram, looked down upon? Was Joram thought to be weak? We don't know the answer. But instantly, yes, this is what we ought to do.

So, Jehu, with at least some of the army, maybe all of it, starts back for Jezreel. Jezreel sits on a little rise. And you can look down the valley toward the Jordan and the crossings there at Beth-Shan.

And here he comes. You can see the cloud of dust. When the lookout standing on the tower of verse 17 in Jezreel saw Jehu's troops approaching, he called out, I see some troops approaching.

Get a horseman, Joram ordered. Send him to meet them and say, do you come in peace? Did he have an intimation that everything was not well in his kingdom and that very possibly a revolt might be brewing? It kind of looks that way to me. You see a bunch of troops coming.

Wait a minute. Wait a minute. What are they coming for? Do you come in peace? The horseman rode off to meet Jehu and said, this is what the king says.

Do you come in peace? What do you have to do with peace? Jehu replied, fall in behind me. And he did. Again, is there this sense? Ah, Jehu, that's a kingly sort.

Joram, not so much. I think I know where I am, which side of my bread is buttered on. I'm joining him.

Looks that way to me. The same thing happened with the second horseman. And when that did, and then this wonderful line, the driving is like that of Jehu, son of Nimshi.

He drives like a maniac. Over the years, many, many pastors have been called Jehu. Because they drive like a maniac.

Well, that's not only pastors. Again, the power of the narration here. The power of the story.

We see the picture. We see the cloud of dust. We see it's being led by this chariot coming like mad.

Hitch up my chariot, Joram ordered. When it was hitched up, Joram, king of Israel, and Ahaziah, king of Judah, rode out, each in his own chariot to meet Jehu. They met him at the plot of ground that had belonged to Naboth.

The story goes on. So, we see the stage set for the final conflict between Yahweh and Baal. Again, as I've said before, this book of Kings is not an objective history covering equally all the things that have happened.

No, we've seen six chapters of 1 Kings here now. And so far, nine chapters of 2 Kings are devoted to a period of about 40 years. Critical years.

Breathtaking years. When everything hangs in the balance, will Yahweh be replaced by Baal? That's what Elijah thought there in his depression on Mount Sinai.

It's over. I've given all I've got. And I'm the only one left. They're trying to kill me. Yahweh, face it. We're defeated.

And Yahweh says, oh, for pity's sake. I've got 7,000 people that haven't bowed the knee to Baal. Look, just go anoint Hazael.

Anoint Jehu. Call Elisha. No problem.

We tend to be a little bit that way. Oh, my. What are we going to do? Oh, quick.

Mobilize—God's in charge. God is going to accomplish his purposes.

He's not going to be defeated, friends. The question is, are you and I in line with his purposes? Are you and I people who, though in the world, are not of the world and, therefore, can be used by him? God bless you.