

Dr. John Oswalt, Kings, Session 22, Part 1

2 Kings 9-10, Part 1

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Let's pray.

Father. Thank you for these moments. Thank you for Jerry's prayer.

Thank you for the opportunity to sing. Thank you to be together face to face. Oh, what a blessing help us now as we study your word and we'll thank you in your name.

Amen. If you remember, we are in what might be called the second main structure of the books of Kings. And that is the Elijah, Elisha narratives that began in 1 Kings 16 or 17, excuse me.

And it will actually go until 2 Kings 13 when Elisha dies. But we're coming right here to the, um, climax of the event. Basically, we've covered about 35 or 36 years.

Ahab came to the throne in about 875, and this event with Jehu was in 841. So, all of this material, five chapters here, or six, I should say six chapters here, 13 year, 19 chapters devoted to roughly 40 years. It's that important because the question is, will Baal replace Yahweh to a significant extent.

That's exactly what Elisha's complaint was back there in chapter 19 of 1 Kings. He says, God, they've all gone to bail. There's nobody left but me.

God says, well, that's not quite true. There are 7,000 who have not bowed their knees to bail, but nevertheless, Elijah's judgment is coming. Judgment is coming.

We need to keep that in mind. God's mills grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly fine. And that's the picture here.

So, he said to Elijah there in chapter 19, he said I want you to do three things. He said I want you to anoint the King Hazael of Syria. And I want you to anoint J Hugh, and I want you to call Elisha.

Now, I said last time that some people get a little bent out of shape and say, well, Elijah didn't obey God. He only did one-third of what he was supposed to do. He called Elisha.

Well, as a matter of fact, it would have been 10 years too early to call J Hugh. And Hazael. In fact, I think I've said this several times.

I'll say it again. This is not two ministries. This is one ministry.

And in fact, as Elisha carries out, as we saw last time, the anointing of Hazel and J Hugh, it's clear that Elijah had taught him. There's nothing about God saying now, by the way, you wouldn't know this, but no, it's quite clear that he knows this is part of his mandate. And so, we come then to this critical moment.

Hazel has been anointed, J Hugh has been anointed, and the hour is a hand. When we look at verses 14 through 20 in chapter nine, we see a character displayed—a character of great decisiveness.

J Hugh says, don't tell anybody here in the camp. We're over at Ramoth Gilead on the east side of the Jordan at the great intersection of the highway of the Kings running north and south and the highway that ran through the Jezreel Valley out to the Mediterranean. Don't tell anybody in the army I'm leaving.

And so, he goes to verse 16. He got into his chariot and rode to Jezreel because Joram was resting there. And Ahaziah, king of Judah, had gone down to see him.

And you see this picture. The messenger goes out and says the words, well, do you come in peace? And Jehu says, what do you get to do with peace? Get behind me. Another messenger comes.

Do you come in peace? What do you have to do with peace? Get behind me. And Joram says to his watchman, what do you see? Well, sir, the messengers have joined whoever is coming, and he drives like a maniac, so it must be Jehu. Many, many preachers across the years have followed in the train of Jehu.

He drives us furiously in the language of the King James—very decisive, no ifs, no ands, no buts. And so Joram then calls for his chariot.

We don't know how ill he was. He was back there because of his wounds that he received in the war. But whatever it is, he's going to go out and face it.

Now, that decisiveness will be something that we will have reason to think about. You know, every person's strength is also their weakness. The question is how to maximize the strength and how to guard against the weaknesses.

So why do you think the messengers didn't fuss with Jehu, but joined him immediately? You've gotten out of the habit. I'm sorry to hear this. All right.

I think that's number one. They would have known his reputation. All right.

What else? This guy doesn't mess around. Yes. For some reason or another, they realize this guy is going to win.

And we're going to join the winning side. Now, I think possibly, as we're going to see going on, people remembered what Elijah and Elisha had said in the past. And Elijah there at Naboth vineyard had said some things about Ahab's dynasty.

And remember, Omri was the father. He's the one that started this family and Ahab is his son. I wonder if, as we're going to see in a moment, J Hugh remembered what was said.

I wondered if other people remembered what I had said to Wow. God has pronounced the end of this dynasty. I want to be on God's side.

I do, too. Don't you? Where is he working? Where is he moving? What's happening? Let's be on his side. Let's be on his side.

So, Jehu shoots Joram between the shoulders and looks at verse 25. Jehu said to bid car, his chariot officer, pick him up and throw him on the field that belonged to Naboth, the Jezreelite. Remember how you and I were riding together in chariots behind Ahab, his father, when the Lord spoke this prophecy against him?

What does this tell us about J Hugh's sense of his calling? What's he doing here? He is carrying out the prediction of God. He's carrying out the words of Elijah, excuse me, Elijah. So again, there's this sense in which we're not dealing here as far as the biblical text is concerned with a military coup.

It is a military coup. J Hugh is the general. That's typically where military coups come from.

But he is clearly understanding this. I think not only from his memory of what happened at Naboth's vineyard, but also from his own anointing. I'm here under a divine mandate.

Now, sometimes we're pretty good at giving what we want to do divine mandate, but nevertheless, the text clearly says this in verse 26. Yesterday, I saw the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons declares the Lord. And I will surely make you pay for it on this plot of ground, declares the Lord.

But now look what happens. Verse 27, when Ahaziah, king of Judas, saw what had happened, he fled up the road to Beth Hagan. Jehu chased him, shouting, kill him too.

They wounded him in his chariot on the way up to Gur near Ibleam, but he escaped to Megiddo and died there. Had God said anything about killing Ahaziah? No, no. Now, to be sure, Ahaziah is not a good guy.

He is the son of Athaliah that we're going to see next week, who was not a nice lady. She was a daughter of Ahab married to Athaliah's father, Jehoshaphat's son. As I said last week, not a bright move.

Nevertheless, there's nothing in the text about, okay, we're done here. Ahaziah must die. Not there.

What does this suggest to us about J Hugh? Overzealous. Exactly. Exactly.

One of the things I want to say to you is that tonight, and I'll repeat it all the way through here. It's possible to do God's will in other than God's way. It is possible to do God's will in other than God's way.

So, Jehu goes back to Jezreel when Jezebel hears about it. She put on eye makeup, arranged her hair, and looked out the window. What about Jezebel's character? Pardon? It's all about appearance.

Yeah. By this time, she was not a young woman. What else though? I mean, exactly.

I mean, you don't, you don't see her whining. She's not begging for her life. She's going to play the game the way she played it all the way through, and that's intimidation.

She tried to intimidate Elijah. It succeeded pretty well. What does that say to us about the world? The world will seek to intimidate us.

The world will seek as she did to accuse J Hugh of simply treacherously killing the King for his own favor. That's the standard approach of the world to try to back us against the wall. When we're serving God, when we're attempting to do his will, the world is not going to ask for mercy.

The world is probably not going to whine, but it's going to do its dead-level best to push back. And that's exactly what she's doing. Yes.

Yes. So how did she die? She was thrown out the window by her servants. What does that tell us? There were some people who were sick and tired of that.

Some people who were willing to take radical action and in general, dealing with the world, that's what you got to do. It's a radical action. There is growth in holiness.

Yes. But there are also moments when we have to take radical steps. Some things have to be gotten rid of.

Some things have to be chosen, and it's not the time for pussy footing.