

“Fragmented Faithfulness”
2 Kings 10
(Preached at Trinity, April 24, 2022)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Jehu is an interesting character. We were first introduced to him in **1 Kings 19** as God gives orders to Elijah on Mount Horeb.
1 Kings 19:15-16 NAU - "The LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus, and when you have arrived, you shall anoint Hazael king over Aram; ¹⁶ and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place."
2. Elijah never anointed Hazael king over Aram, or Jehu king over Israel. Both of these kings were anointed during the ministry of Elijah's successor, Elisha. At the beginning of **Chapter 9** Elisha sends one of the sons of the prophets to anoint Jehu.
3. We need to see several things about Jehu.
 - A. First, Jehu was raised up by God to destroy the house of Ahab. He is called of God.
2 Kings 9:7-8 NAU - "You shall strike 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 every male person both bond and free in Israel."
 - B. Second, we need to see how zealous Jehu is in carrying out his task. He was brutal and thorough in his assignment, killing every last heir. One would presume that his heart was filled with zeal for the honor of God. He appears to be a faithful servant of God. But we're going to see that it's a fragmented faithfulness.
4. The text describes in detail how thorough Jehu was in destroying the house of Ahab. God commanded that he was to destroy the house of Ahab.
2 Kings 9:7-8 NAU - "You shall strike 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 every male person both bond and free in Israel."
5. He began by killing Joram, the king of Israel. But he also then killed Ahaziah, the king of Judah, and we begin to question, was this for God or for Jehu? We can't dismiss who Ahaziah's mother was – Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. But this did not make Ahaziah of the house of Ahab. He was not an heir to the throne. Was the death of Ahaziah by the command of God? Jehu was zealous, but his zeal was sometimes lacking knowledge. And sometimes Jehu's faithfulness to God seemed motivated by his own ambition.

6. He then executed Jezebel. He ordered her to be thrown from the upper window. As soon as she hit the street Jehu directed his horses and she was trampled under foot. He again saw himself as the agent of God.
2 Kings 9:36 NAU - "And he said, "This is the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'In the property of Jezreel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel;'"
7. The bloodbath continues as we enter **Chapter 10**. He orders the execution of Ahab's seventy sons.
- A. In gruesome fashion, they were beheaded, and their heads were delivered in baskets.
2 Kings 10:8 NAU - "When the messenger came and told him, saying, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons," he said, "Put them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until morning."
- B. On one hand, this was according to God's righteous judgment, but we can't help again catching a hint of Jehu's ambition. Yes, he was destroying Ahab's heirs, but the text implies he was also removing any threat to his own reign.
2 Kings 10:2-3 NAU - "Now, when this letter comes to you, since your master's sons are with you, as well as the chariots and horses and a fortified city and the weapons, ³ select the best and fittest of your master's sons, and set *him* on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house."
8. But again, Jehu makes it clear that this is according to the will of God. He seemed to be a faithful agent of God's justice.
2 Kings 10:10 NAU - "Know then that there shall fall to the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spoke concerning the house of Ahab, for the LORD has done what He spoke through His servant Elijah."
 He continued the slaughter until there were none left of Ahab's house.
2 Kings 10:11 NAU - "So Jehu killed all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men and his acquaintances and his priests, until he left him without a survivor."
9. The gruesome task was over. It was time to put an end to the executions and death. But no, he was not through. On his way to Samaria he met some relatives of Ahaziah and killed them too, all 42 of them. After all, Ahaziah's mother was Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab.
10. Jehu saw himself as full of zeal for God. He next met Jehonadab and bid him to come onto his chariot and he said to him:
2 Kings 10:16 NAU - "Come with me and see my zeal for the LORD." So he made him ride in his chariot."
 He then concluded his work:
2 Kings 10:17 NAU - "When he came to Samaria, he killed all who remained to Ahab in Samaria, until he had destroyed him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to Elijah."
10. We are told that God was pleased with Jehu's faithfulness in carrying out God's justice.
2 Kings 10:30 NAU - "The LORD said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in executing what is right in My eyes, *and* have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in My heart, your sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel."
 His zeal was a good thing. Nothing is worse than a passionless Christianity. But zeal can be misdirected, and even sinful.

11. Jehu wasn't through with his executions. Next, he slaughtered all of the Baal worshippers, tore down the Baal temple and turned it into a toilet – **Verse 27**
Where do we read that God commanded Jehu to execute the Baal worshippers?
- A. We don't find it as a part of the destruction of Ahab's house, but God's command is clear in **Deut. 13**
Deuteronomy 13:6-10 NAU - "If your brother, your mother's son, or your son or daughter, or the wife you cherish, or your friend who is as your own soul, entice you secretly, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods ' (whom neither you nor your fathers have known, ⁷ of the gods of the peoples who are around you, near you or far from you, from one end of the earth to the other end), ⁸ you shall not yield to him or listen to him; and your eye shall not pity him, nor shall you spare or conceal him. ⁹ "But you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. ¹⁰ "So you shall stone him to death because he has sought to seduce you from the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."
- B. But were Jehu's motivations pure? Was he being faithful to God or did he have ulterior motives?
Dale Ralph Davis described it, "Jehu, then, likely purged the Baal worshippers not because he was so pro-Yahweh as that he was anti-Ahab. Eliminating Baal eliminated Ahab loyalists, dissolved support for Ahab's family, and so would consolidate Jehu's power."¹
12. This wasn't out of zeal to be faithful to God as it was a zeal for his own power and position.
Jehu's zeal was not sincere. His faithfulness was not fueled by God's glory.
How do we know? Because, while he put away one form of idolatry – Baalism, he embraced another—golden calfism.
The author is careful to give us the true nature of Jehu's fragmented heart.
2 Kings 10:29 NAU - "However, *as for* the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel sin, from these Jehu did not depart, *even* the golden calves that *were* at Bethel and that *were* at Dan."
2 Kings 10:31 NAU - "But Jehu was not careful to walk in the law of the LORD, the God of Israel, with all his heart; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, which he made Israel sin."
13. Jehu's zeal was like the zeal of many Christians. They are zealous in some areas but negligent or even sinful in others. They can become quite proud of their zeal and even look down upon others that aren't as zealous as them. But their zeal is fragmented, and often a zeal that is motivated more by selfish desires and personal agendas than a zeal for God's glory.
14. Jehu reveals two problems that can pervert our faithfulness to God.

¹ Dale Ralph Davis, *2 Kings: The Power and the Fury*, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2005), 163.

- I. Jehu's zeal for being faithful to God was actually a mask for accomplishing his own selfish desires – he was doing what would advance his own agenda.
- A. How do we know this?
1. Why did he slaughter the worshippers of Baal? On the surface we would applaud. After all, doesn't God condemn idolatry. Didn't righteous kings do the same thing?
2 Kings 23:19-20 NAU - "Josiah also removed all the houses of the high places which *were* in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made provoking the LORD; and he did to them just as he had done in Bethel. ²⁰ All the priests of the high places who *were* there he slaughtered on the altars and burned human bones on them; then he returned to Jerusalem."
2 Kings 23:24-25 NAU - "Moreover, Josiah removed the mediums and the spiritists and the teraphim and the idols and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might confirm the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD. ²⁵ Before him there was no king like him who turned to the LORD with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him."
 2. Jehu's faithfulness was partial and fragmented in so far as it suited his agenda as king of Israel.
 Although he removed the Baal worshippers he did not remove the golden calf worshippers. In this, he was little different from Jeroboam.
2 Kings 10:29 NAU - "However, *as for* the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel sin, from these Jehu did not depart, *even* the golden calves that *were* at Bethel and that *were* at Dan."
- B. Too often Christians are faithful as long as it suits their agenda.
1. They'll be faithful to obey the Word of God as long as it isn't in conflict with the desires of their life.
 2. I've always been amazed in the difference between attendance on Sunday mornings and Sunday nights. Is it a fragmented faithfulness?
 3. Christians can demonstrate great faithfulness as long as it is something they want to do.
 4. It is all a matter of the heart, and our hearts are so fickle.
 Do we choose music to fit our style and preference or is it directed towards the honor of God – all focus upon Him?
Mark 7:6 NAS - "And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me.'"

II. Jehu's faithfulness was from an impure heart or even an unregenerate heart. Jehu's heart was not directed towards the honor of God. It was not the new heart that characterizes God's people.

A. **Verses 29 & 31** reveal everything about Jehu's heart

2 Kings 10:29 NAU - "However, as for the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel sin, from these Jehu did not depart, even the golden calves that were at Bethel and that were at Dan."

2 Kings 10:31 NAU - "But Jehu was not careful to walk in the law of the LORD, the God of Israel, with all his heart; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, which he made Israel sin."

1. These verses reveal a heart little different from that of Jeroboam who is describes as the king, "which made Israel to sin."

This resulted in a fragmented faithfulness.

2. Jeroboam was also established as king by the hand of God. God promised to give him the kingdom if he served faithfully. But he did not.

3. Jeroboam functioned purely on what seemed good in his own eyes. He is the king who set up the high places and made golden calves for worship.

4. Jehu followed in the sins of Jeroboam. **Verse 31** tells us he failed to walk in the Law of God with all his heart.

He didn't have a heart to obey.

B. Zeal is no substitute for Christian conversion.

1. Zeal without Christ is a worthless zeal.

Paul spoke of the worthlessness of religion without a love for Christ and His people.

1 Corinthians 13:3 NAU - "And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

3. Some people are sadly substituting religion for a relationship with Christ We can already hear the echo of their voices on the day of judgment

Matthew 7:21-23 NAU - "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. ²² "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' ²³

"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

Conclusion:

1. We have a real problem today with Christians running around hot and cold in their faithfulness to Christ. We're often guilty of a fragmented faithfulness—faithfulness when it suits us, compromise when it doesn't.

2. We always must examine if our faith is genuine. But we must also never forget, No Christian is perfectly faithful. That's why we need the One who always faithful, even in the midst of our fragmented faithfulness.

1 Thessalonians 5:24 NAU - "Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass."

2 Timothy 2:13 NAU - "If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself."