

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Jan. 14

MONDAY

Once the prophets of Baal are all assembled and all exits secured, Jehu orders his men to kill them all. And they burned the sacred stone and destroy much of the building. Later, those ruins were used as a public bathroom. So Jehu destroyed the worship of Baal, but he did not turn from all idol worship, for he did not stop the worship of the golden calf at Bethel and Dan.

READ: II Kings 10:25-29

Destroying Baal worship in Israel was no easy matter. It had been around awhile and almost everyone was somehow or another part of it. It took a genuine committee and a fierce determination to stop it. But that was what Jehu brought to the table. And because he kept at it, in the end, he was able to destroy the false worship. Persistence is a good thing as long as we keep at it. Doing good? Keep at it! Following God? Keep at it!

TUESDAY

The Lord is pleased with Jehu's zeal and promises him that his descendants will sit on the throne of Israel. But even that promise is not enough to spur Jehu onto righteous living, and he fails to follow the Lord with all his heart.

READ: II Kings 10:30-31

These two verses remind us - in capsule form - how God works. He rewards those who seek Him and He rejects those who do not. Jehu's story is another example of one who started out well but somehow got off track. His own political ambition seems to have gotten the upper hand. A great prayer for believers is that God we keep us from falling (He is able to do that!) and that we would always be zealous to keep His commandments with all our heart.

WEDNESDAY

The Lord allows Assyria's King Hazael to defeat Israel on the battlefield, and claim most of the land on the east side of the Jordan. That must have taken a number of years because we read that Jehu ends up ruling for twenty-eight years. Then he dies and is buried in Samaria. His son becomes king.

READ: II Kings 10:32-36

God, we are told, is reducing the size of Israel. That's because back about 700 years before, He told Israel (see Lev. 26) that disobedience will result in enemies defeating Israel and power being lost and people dying off. And God is not slack about keeping his word. But, if they would confess their sin (see Lev. 26:40) God will bless them and multiply them upon the earth. What was true for Israel is true for us: confession of sin is crucial in our relationship with God. It's a good way to start today - as soon as you finish reading this line!

THURSDAY

Meanwhile, back in Judah (the southern kingdom), after King Ahaziah was killed, his mother Athaliah, kills the rest of the royal family. Or so she thinks. But in fact, her sister takes the youngest living son, Joash, and hides him away in the Temple. He hides out there for six years.

READ: II Kings 11:1-3

We need to see that Satan was at work here. In prompting Athalia to kill off her own children and grandchildren, he was oh so close to destroying the family line of David thru whom the Messiah would come. He was within one person! But God's ways are amazing and He works here, in an unusual way, to protect the family line. Do not doubt for an instant that He is at work in your heart and life to accomplish His purposes in you and thru you. He who is at work in you is completing His work even today!

FRIDAY

When Athalia was starting her seventh year as queen, Jehoida, the chief priest in the Temple, calls for a gathering of the guards. And swearing them all to secrecy, he shows them the six-year-old heir to the throne, Joash, and tells them about his plan to put the boy on the throne, giving instructions on where they are to position themselves, and so on.

READ: II Kings 11:4-8

The chief priest, of course, knows about Joash hiding in the Temple for six years. When he feels the time is right, he takes a huge risk and announces the young boy's existence and whereabouts to Temple guards and some mercenaries from Caria who were there, too. The announcement goes along with some precautionary steps to safeguard the boy. In other words, Jehoida used great wisdom in how he tried to carry out his plan to get Joash on the throne. Since God is the Giver of wisdom, we see God is all of this! God gives wisdom to those who ask for it today, as well. For those who need it. For us!

SATURDAY

Things unfold just as the priest Jehoida had ordered. All the troops that were assigned Temple duty are given weapons and each one positions himself in the place where he was directed. Jehu is presented to them, and crowned as king. They anointed him with oil (as was the custom) and clapped and cheered, shouting, "Long live the king!"

READ: II Kings 11:9-12

The weapons came from David's day - possibly captured in a battle - and were stored in the Temple - probably in closet. David had no idea when he stockpiled those weapons 150-200 years before that they would one day be used at such a significant moment in Israel's history. You and I have no idea how God may choose to use the deeds we do or the testimony we share or the tracts we hand out down the road 10, or 20, or even 50 years from now. Or even in some distant and future generation. All we are called upon is to be faithful, and He will take care of the rest. But how exciting that rest might be! #116