

Auburn Baptist Church

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July 29, 2018

The House of Ahab

Part 3: The Queen and the First Lady

1 Kings 16:29-31

Three weeks ago, we laid some ground work for a new series of teachings that have great impact on America today. We covered some familiar ground in which we discussed the concept of foreshadowing in the Bible. A foreshadow is a person, event, situation, nation, etc. that existed in the past that serves as a pattern, symbol, or example of a person, event, situation, nation, etc. that exists or will exist at a later time in history.

I also reminded you of some studies we have done in the past in which we have discovered how the ancient nation of Israel has served as a foreshadow or example of our own modern nation of America. Many of the same events that occurred in ancient Israel have and are occurring in our country today.

More specifically in our study we are looking at the ancient northern kingdom of our modern counterpart that went by the name of Israel and had the city of Samaria as its capitol. The ancient northern kingdom of Israel underwent a metamorphosis over time, especially in its spiritual realm. Of course, this change in the spiritual realm ended up affecting every other part of its national existence, too. We spoke about the fact that they turned their backs on God, adopted the idols and gods of the surrounding nations, and how this in turn led to them accepting and then establishing and then celebrating and enforcing sin that was once considered taboo and even illegal.

Some of the specific sins we spoke of were the sexual sins that degraded the sacredness of marriage and family, that placed what was once private out into the public domain. The sins that added confusion of gender and redefined what was once holy. This in turn began to degrade and coarsen the society and culture of Israel as a whole. We also mentioned the sin of killing the innocent as sacrifices to the pagan gods. What once was considered vial and evil became endorsed by the government and seen as a right. And we saw how these practices are being echoed in our own country today as we turn our back on God and accept other gods of self.

Then we started an even closer look at Ancient Israel and America by noticing that not only do we mimic each other in an overall national sense, but that even our leaders are following the same pattern. Specifically, we saw that when Ancient Israel found itself under the reign of the house of Ahab the nation began a swift and deep descent into apostasy. In modern America, we too began to see a swift and deep descent into apostasy under the leadership of a specific political dynasty: the Clintons.

What was interesting was how closely the ancient king of Israel, Ahab, and the modern President, Bill Clinton, mirrored each other in character, will, actions, and influence. Today, I

want to continue to show you that this mirroring of leaders extends beyond just the men in the forefront of power. The ancient queen of Israel also has a modern counterpart and the mirroring of these two women is uncanny.

I. THE QUEEN

We noted a little bit about the infamous Queen of Israel when we mentioned her negative influence on King Ahab in part 2 of this study.

1 Kings 16:29-31, "In the thirty-eight year of Asa King of Judah, Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria over Israel twenty-two years. Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him. He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him."

Jezebel was a stranger to the land of Israel and its God. She was a Phoenician or Sidonian princess born to the king of Sidon, Ethbaal. Ethbaal (Ithobaal), who murdered the previous Phoenician king to take his place, was a high priest of the Canaanite goddess, Astarte (Ashtar, Ashtaroth, Ishtar, Isis). She was raised in a culture steeped in paganism. Israel's worship of an invisible God with no connect to idols was complete foreign to her.

A. POLITICAL MARRIAGE

Her marriage to Ahab was probably political. Ahab's father, Omri, seeking to strengthen Israel's security would likely have arranged it to form an alliance with their neighbor to the north. But instead of strengthening Israel, it corrupted and divided it and send it into a violent cultural upheaval that threatened its very existence.

B. COSMOPOLITAN UPBRINGING

Phoenician culture was centered on the coast and its ports. In ancient times the Phoenician's were known as great seafarers whose economy was based on its sea trade. Jezebel grew up in what we could call a cosmopolitan and diverse culture. And being a princess would have represented the elite of that culture. On the other hand, in her eyes, Israel, a nation built on separation from surrounding cultures and founded on holiness, would have looked conservative, insular, narrowminded, intolerant, and backward.

C. REFUSED TO ADAPT TO NEW CULTURE

She came from a land where the king had absolute power and could do what they wished. "But, in Israel, even in its fallen state, no one but God had absolute power and no king was above His authority" (Cahn 32). In Phoenicia, there was no line between the monarchy and the priesthood. The royal family was a priestly family, the keepers of the cult of the gods. Jezebel was the daughter of the king, but also the daughter of a pagan high priest. She ascended to the throne in Israel as not just queen but also as a pagan priestess.

There had been other queens who had come to Israel from pagan lands. But they had joined themselves to the nation and had embraced its faith and calling. Jezebel never did. She refused to adapt to the ways of her new nation. "She would be an activist queen, and agent for societal [and religious] and culture change" (Cahn 33)

D. HAD HER OWN AGENDA

Jezebel was a woman who would maneuver and battle not only for her husband's power but for her own, as well. She is entering a country that had never had a queen hungry for political power in her own right. She not only influenced her husband, but at times would appear to dominate him. Jezebel did things that Israel might have expected from a tyrannical king but not from his wife. "She waged war against those who offended her or whom she deemed a threat to her authority" (Cahn 34).

E. ADVOCATE OF CHILD SACRIFICE

Her views regarding men and women and her ambitions for political power would strike her subjects in Israel as radical. She was power hungry, refused to be cowed, and could be vicious and ruthless in her exercise of power. But more than anything, "She was an emissary of Baal and as such was a "zealous proponent for the most chilling and distinctive rite of his worship - the sacrificing of children on his altars...The ultimate effect of her rule and advocacy was that multitudes of Israel's children would be killed" (Cahn 34).

F. A THREAT TO THE CULTURE OF CONSERVATISM

Those who remained faithful to God during her rule could clearly see what a danger she was not only to their nation's spiritual life, but that she could easily destroy their entire way of life by affecting their culture and every level of their society. Their nation would face the judgment of God Almighty, the God of Israel, because of their acceptance of the actions of this queen.

II. THE FIRST LADY

That was the kind of queen ancient Israel had to deal with when Ahab ascended to the throne at his father's death. But what kind of first lady did we as America get with the election of Bill Clinton to the White House? If the foreshadow or pattern that we discovered between Israel's apostasy and America's holds true, did Clinton's wife hold to the same character and characteristics as her ancient prototype?

A. COSMOPOLITAN UPBRINGING

Hillary Clinton was born in a cosmopolitan city, Chicago. She left that city and culture to become the first lady of the state of Arkansas, a very conservative part of America. Jezebel held the culture of her adopted homeland in contempt. While we don't know her personal views, Hillary Clinton was distrusted by many in the state her husband governed and was seen by many to hold to values and ideas that were foreign to their conservative culture as well as having her own personal agenda.

B. REFUSED TO ADAPT TO NEW CULTURE

Jezebel tenaciously held to her pre-Israelite identity. Hillary Clinton refused to take Bill's last name after their marriage and even through his first term as Arkansas' governor. It was only after he was defeated and bid for the seat a second time that she acquiesced to taking the name of Clinton. However, she seemed to have an aversion to accepting the standard functions of first lady and even the role of wife. She was radically feminist and the idea of female submission to

male authority which was predominant in the conservative culture of America was abhorrent to her.

C. POLITICAL MARRIAGE

Though historians agree that the marriage of Ahab and Jezebel appeared to be of a political nature, we presume that the marriage of William and Hillary Clinton was not completely of a political nature however, you can't argue that there does seem to be political factors in the mix. "As far back as the early 1970's, before their marriage, Hillary was telling others that one day Bill Clinton would become president of the United States" (Paris 56). More than any other union in the modern world the marriage of Bill and Hilary Clinton was seen, as a vessel for a political agenda.

D. OWN MISSION AND AGENDA

Like her ancient predecessor, Hillary was continually in conflict with the religious conservative values held throughout the United States that seems to constantly stand in the way of her personal agenda. She was/is an activist with a mission.

In modern times, Jezebel would be considered an icon of feminism. So, too, has this been a major part of Hillary Clinton life.

King Ahab would campaign for societal change, but that campaign was first and foremost Jezebel's cause. While her husband would advance the new morality, Jezebel personified it. Hilly Clinton, in her own words stated, "While Bill talked about social change, I embodied it" (Paris 70).

E. ADVOCATE OF ABORTION

And just as Jezebel would become the chief advocate and ambassador of the practice of sacrificing children on the altar or pagan gods, Hilly Clinton can likewise be especially linked to the act of killing children in abortion. "If there is one thing she has consistently advocated for and battled over, it is this one specific act" (Cahn 39). Clinton has championed abortion as a sacred right.

F. A THREAT TO THE CULTURE OF CONSERVATISM

Finally, we see that Jezebel was never fully accepted or trusted by most of her subjects even those who agreed with her agenda. Her motives and ambitions were always suspect. For those who remained faithful to God in Ancient Israel during the time of great apostasy marked by her reign, the queen's impact was dangerous and dividing to their culture.

So too, Hillary Clinton would never be fully trusted even by many who agreed with her agenda. In the eyes of most Americans her motives and ambitions would remain suspect.

For those of us who remain faithful to God today, Clinton's impact on our nation has been dangerous and had she won the last election it would have been devastating to the point that we may have completely sealed our fate as an apostate nation deserving of God's imminent judgment.

We have now seen the first two players of both the Ancient foreshadow and their modern counterparts and the two nations they governed. But what happens now that the king and queen are brought together to rule on the ancient throne of Israel and the modern Presidency? Are there more similarities to uncover? If so what can they tell us about God and unrepentant man? Can what occurred a couple thousand years ago in the Middle East be happening once again in contemporary America?

We have been shown that there is nothing new under the heaven's, that history does repeat itself if there is no one wise enough to see it happening. Ancient Israel followed a pattern of apostacy that lead to its destruction. America is following that same path. Will the end results be the same? We'll find out more as we continue our study next week.

Sermon Sources:

Cahn, Jonathan. *The Paradigm*. Lake Mary: Front Line, 2017.

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