

1 Kings Chapter 16 Verses 15-34

We note, this chapter is devoted solely to Israel, the ten tribes, and does not involve Judah and Benjamin.

1Ki 16:15 ¶ "In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign seven days in Tirzah. And the people were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines. 16 And the people that were encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king: wherefore all Israel made Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp. 17 And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah. 18 And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died, 19 For his sins which he sinned in doing evil in the sight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, to make Israel to sin. 20 Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and his treason that he wrought, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?"

Matthew Henry points out in his commentary what we see happening in Israel, in **Pr 28:2 ¶** "*For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof: but by a man of understanding and knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged.*" We see in Israel now the short reign of many kings, because of their transgression and how they made Israel to transgress the command of God.

We point out, what we see playing out before us is that man, left to his own will, will not turn to God, but will pursue to glorify his own name, and seek glory in power of position. We point out that Zimri, as were his predecessors, is attributed with doing evil in the sight of the Lord, walking in the way of Jeroboam, and for making Israel to sin. He sees that his treason to be king has failed, and Zimri commits suicide by burning the king's house upon himself. Zimri knew the penalty for treason was death and he decides to take his own.

21 "Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri. 22 But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned."

Israel divided itself again with half following Tibni and half following Omri. Omri prevailed, Tibni died, and Omri reigned over all Israel. The reason for this division seems to be political. Omri was a war general over Israel and upon the death of his king, the army appointed him king. The followers of Tibni sought a political king. They were afraid of a king who was a man of war.

23 "In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah. 24 And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria. 25 But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that were before him. 26 For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities. 27 Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might that he shewed, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 28 So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead."

Omri reigns in Tirzah for six years and then he buys the town of Samaria and makes it the capital of the northern kingdom.

Have you noticed that each king does worse than the one before him? This reminds us of what is happening in the world today. Man, left to his own will, can only do worse and worse. Each generation goes further down the pathway of sin and defiance to God. Just think about what happened from the fall of Adam until the flood that destroyed the occupants of the earth, except for those eight souls who found grace in the sight of God. We look around today, seeing that same progression of sin proliferating upon the earth, and wonder how long before God will finally destroy this world and sin.

29 ¶ "And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab, the son of Omri, to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years. 30 And Ahab, the son of Omri, did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him. 31 And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter

of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. 32 And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. 33 And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him."

Again, we see the progression of sin as Ahab comes on the scene, as we are told he does worse than all before him. It is worth noting that God says that Ahab added to his sins by taking Jezebel, a Phoenician, to wife. Jezebel was an idolatrous woman who worshipped Baal. This was a political ploy to make friends with a nation that God had commanded Israel not to do. Ahab even built an altar to Baal in the house of Baal and made a grove to Baal. This was an attempt to have a worship center, which was in the likeness of the Temple of God, which is a picture of false religion at work.

It is interesting that the definition of Jezebel is *unhusbanded*. Though she is married to Ahab, king of Israel, she acted as though she was not married and sought to carry out her own agenda. She also reminds us, prophetically, of the city of Babylon seen in *Re 18:7 "How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow."* Jezebel acted as though she had no husband by acting as the supreme leader of Israel, though she did profess to be married, for she said, "**I am no widow**,"

J. Vernon McGee, in his commentary, tells us that all false worship, of cults and isms of the world, are almost exclusively started and headed by women, who disregard the commandment of God for man to take the position of leadership, especially in the church, where women preachers are condemned, seen in *1Ti 2:12; 9 ¶ "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; 10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. 11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."* We know this is sin for God so declared it in his charge against the church of Thyatira in *Re 2:20 "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols."*

God's people are given many reasons to examine their lives and the motives of their actions in living life. To whose glory are we working? Are we following the footsteps of others, or are we following the word of God? It is very clear that to do anything aside from following the word of God will bring adverse results upon us, upon our children and friends, upon our churches, and even upon a nation.

People, church congregations, associations, and denominations, who do not live by the God given standards of the New Testament Church, are living in defiance of God, and can only expect the judicial judgment of God upon them. God help us to be followers of Christ Jesus in all that we do.

34 In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun."

We are told that during his reign Hiel, the Bethelite, rebuilds Jericho. We are told that he began building with the birth of his firstborn and finished with the death of his youngest son, which was according to the prophesy of Joshua in *Jos 6:26 "And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it."* Hiel began to build Jericho and his firstborn died. Any other children that Hiel may have had died in the interim. When he was ready to set up the gates of the city in completion of building Jericho, his last child died. Hiel, in building Jericho for the heritage of his children, had his lineage erased completely by blatantly defying the word of God, which we are sure that he knew of the curse upon Jericho.

This demonstrates to us, those who harden their hearts against the word, and will of God, will suffer the consequence of their hardness of heart and mind. It reminds us that when God pronounces a curse, it will be as God has said.

The actions of Hiel are what we call presumptuous sins, of which we are told in *2Pe 2:4-10; 4 "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; 5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of*

righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; 6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; 7 ¶ And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) 9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: 10 ¶ But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities."

May God keep us from presumptuous sins, and through His Holy Spirit power, lead us to be willing subjects to God and Christ, our King, we pray in the name of Jesus, Amen!