

Checkin' Out My Walk
#15 - Thyatira - **Spirit of Jezebel**

Rev. 2:21-25 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. ²³ I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works. ²⁴ "Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. ²⁵ But hold fast what you have till I come.

The Spirit of Jezebel: Without question, the nastiest, evil, most disgusting, cunning, and seductive spirit in Satan's hierarchy has to be the Jezebel spirit. It is the source of obsessive sensuality, unbridled witchcraft and hatred for authority. While she uses every means of sexual perversity known, immorality is not the issue: CONTROL is what she seeks.

Spiritual Jezebel was the tempter to the church of Thyatira as was literal Jezebel to Ahab and Israel of old.

Her spirit was virtually responsible for corrupting an entire nation and causing over 10 million Hebrews to bow to Baal and "forsake the covenant, destroy the sacred altars and kill the prophets." (I Kings 19:14-18)

During her relentless persecutions the 7,000 of Israel who did not worship Baal, had to flee to the mountains and hide in the caves of the earth. Jezebel was swift to shed the blood of the prophets of God. A price was set on the head of Elijah.

There is an ancient war between the spirit of Elijah and the spirit of Jezebel. Elijah represents the interests of Heaven; A call to repentance and a return to God. Jezebel represents the unique principality whose purpose is to hinder and defeat the work of repentance.

These adversaries are the spiritual counterpart of one another.

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| 1. Elijah is BOLD. | Jezebel is BRAZEN. |
| 2. Elijah is ruthless toward evil. | Jezebel is vicious toward righteousness. |
| 3. Elijah speaks of the way & words of God. | Jezebel is full of witchcraft & words of deceit. |

Elijah was the head of the school of prophets. Under him were literally hundreds of sons of the prophets who proclaimed the word of the LORD. In this particular war, Jezebel had viciously and systematically murdered all of God's servants until only Elijah remained.

I Kings 18:22 I alone am left a prophet of the LORD.

Elijah challenged the 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah, satanic priests who ate at Jezebel's table, to a demonstration of power; their gods against the power of the LORD. They were the most powerful, demonized individuals the hosts of darkness could produce. The nation came to witness the conflict between the God of Elijah and the demigods of Jezebel.

The God of Elijah prevailed. Immediately after this powerful display, Elijah had the prophets of Baal put to death. What was Elijah's next step? Though he had killed all the demon-possessed prophets of Baal, the most powerful demon remained and was determined to get him. He came under spiritual warfare. Jezebel, in a fit of rage, released a flood of witchcraft and demonic power against Elijah that put fear into his heart. Elijah ran and tried to hide. I Kings 19:4 tells us Elijah is sitting under a juniper tree, "It is enough! Lord, Take my life." What pressure overwhelmed him that he would fall prey to fear and discouragement? The spirit of Jezebel.

Consider: When you war against the spirit of Jezebel you must guard against the power-demons of fear and discouragement she sends to distract you from your warfare and victory!

Do we see this same conflict later? Consider: The "spirit of Elijah" was activating and creating in John the Baptist the same kind of intensity which dwelt in Elijah himself. Luke 1:15-17 John was to go as a forerunner before the Lord. "He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah." Jesus said of John the Baptist, in Matt. 11:14, he himself is Elijah who is to come. The "spirit of Elijah" was sent into the world.

Like Elijah, John proclaimed the need for repentance wherever he saw sin. One such area was in the adulterous lives of King Herod and Herodias. When John confronted them, Herodias had him imprisoned. (Mark 6:19) Who was this manipulating and controlling in the dark, spiritual side of Herodias? As Elijah's spirit was ministering through John, the spirit of Jezebel was working through Herodias.

What Jezebel did to Elijah in the wilderness, Herodias now did to John. Jezebel hurled fear and discouragement which leads to self-doubt and confusion, against the servant of God. John the Baptist, who had visibly seen the Spirit descend as a dove upon Christ, who heard God's audible voice bearing witness that Jesus was the Son of God, was now asking if Jesus truly was the Messiah, or should they look for another. (Matt. 11:3)

A strategic (perfect timing) day came when Herod gave a banquet. (Mark 6:21) In this war between the spirits of Elijah and Jezebel, Herodias had her daughter dance before Herod, enticing out of him a promise to give whatever she asked. At her mother's request (Jezebel's request), she demanded the head of John the Baptist. Jezebel spirits always take the necessary time to set traps by enlisting the help of toadies, her unsuspecting husband and complicitous daughter. It was a powerful affront to God.

The demonic spirit working through a heavily scorned and angry woman brought the severed head of God's prophet to an ecstatic Herodias.

The undisputed role of Jezebel continued three and a half years, which was a time of spiritual drought and darkness. It was the "Dark Ages" of Israel's history.

The period (Dark Ages) during which spiritual Jezebel dominated the earth was likewise a time of persecution for the people of God.

Spiritual Jezebel will rule the world and persecute the saints for three and a half prophetic years during the Great Tribulation - a time of spiritual drought and darkness.

During this time God's people will have to flee to the mountains and remain in hiding.

Millions have suffered and will continue to suffer martyrdom because they refused to join the majority in doing obeisance to an apostate power.

I. Rev. 2:21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.

A. Jezebel's Stubbornness - God does not immediately execute judgment upon sinners.

In His great mercy and longsuffering He gives time to repent but she refused to do so.

Now, His patience has run out and she is slated for judgment.

Recall the event of Ahab and his desire for Naboth's vineyard in I Kings 21:1-29.

1. Jezebel arranged the murder of Naboth so Ahab could have the vineyard.

2. In I Kings 21:17-24, Elijah pronounced God's sentence upon Ahab (In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours.)

Jezebel (The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.)

3. This prophecy was fulfilled several years later for Ahab after its pronouncement.

4. War broke out between the Israelites and the Syrians. Ahab, while riding in his chariot, received his death wound. The blood-soaked chariot was taken to the spring and the dogs came and licked up the bloody water.

Note: The death of the one whom she had "stirred up to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord" revealed her to be as incapable of remorse as of fear. She would live another 14 years.

B. Just as Jesus foretold, the Church of the Middle Ages was called to repentance by many Christians who were torn by its apostasy. Among those Christians we find: Peter Waldo (Italy); John Wycliffe (England); John Huss (Bohemia); Martin Luther (Germany); Ulrich Zwingli (Switzerland); Jean Calvin (France); John Knox (Scotland).

But the Church preferred to turn a deaf ear. She persecuted and killed > 1 million.

This statement, "gave her time to repent," indicates that this condition of compromise and corruptness in the church was not something new, but had already existed for some time.

C. Haman, an example of being controlled by the "Jezebel spirit," was obsessed with malice, revenge, and treachery as he conspired with unusual determination to exterminate the Jews, God's people and his people's (Amalekites) ancient enemy.

God hated everything about Haman, the Amalekite.

Prov. 6:16-19 These six *things* the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him:

¹⁷ A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood,

¹⁸ A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil,

¹⁹ A false witness *who* speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren.

1. Haman's initial purpose was to achieve authority and recognition. He was given great authority from the king.
2. Haman's vanity - Esther 3:2 And all the king's servants who *were* within the king's gate bowed and paid homage to Haman, for so the king had commanded concerning him.
3. When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow or pay him homage, Haman was filled with wrath.
4. Haman sought to destroy all the Jews. His hatred is like a cancerous tumor. Esther 3:6
5. Haman consults the court astrologers to determine the day for the destruction of the Jews.
6. God's providence: The selected date gives the Jews one year to prepare.
7. Haman's subtlety: He exaggerated the danger of the people who were scattered throughout the kingdom.
8. Haman's apathy: He could send out the death warrants for thousands of innocent people and sit down to a banquet with the king.
9. Because of Haman's decree about 15 million Jews are appointed to die.
10. Haman was filled with rage against Mordecai. Malice is a deep-seated hatred that brings delight if our enemy suffers and pain if our enemy succeeds.
11. God used circumstances, Haman's advisors, and his wife to give him time and warn him to repent and change his ways.

Note: God's longsuffering led Haman to believe he was safe.

Eccl. 8:11 Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

II. Rev. 2:22-23 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

A. Jezebel- God's patience has run out and she is slated for judgment.

Elijah had prophesied Jezebel would be eaten by the dogs. This was literally fulfilled 14 years after Ahab's death. Jehu, the newly crowned king of Israel, had been appointed and anointed as the avenger of Jehovah to fulfill God's promise regarding Jezebel. He set about his grim task of meting out justice to those who had polluted the land. Jezebel's son and grandson met Jehu in the blood-stained vineyard Naboth had once possessed.

II Kings 9:21-26 King Jehu and his men furiously drove their chariots toward Jezreel. King Joram and Ahaziah came out to meet King Jehu. "Is it peace Jehu?" He answered, "What peace, so long as the harlotries of your mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?" Jehu slew Jezebel's son, Joram, and her grandson was overtaken in flight and was slain.

1. No sign of repentance in her, as she went out proudly to meet her prophesied doom. "The still proud, defiant queen-mother knew her last hour was not far away, and great-grandmother though she was, she took time to arrange her hair and paint her face, and looked out at a window to greet Jehu as he passed by."
2. She knew what was about to happen, but she was going to die like a queen, arrogant, self-willed and unrepentant to the end.
3. She shouted abuses at Jehu from her upstairs window.

Jehu commanded Jezebel's servants to throw her down from a second floor window. When they did Jehu drove his chariot over her body and trampled her underfoot. When they went out to retrieve her body, all that was left was her skull, her feet and the palms of her hands. The dogs had eaten the rest. This fulfilled the prophecy in II Kings 9:36-37 On the plot of ground at Jezreel dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; and the corpse of Jezebel shall be as refuse on the surface of the field, in the plot at Jezreel, so that they shall not say, "Here lies Jezebel.""

B. Middle Age Church - Resolutely steeped in a generalized apostasy, Europe indeed went through "a *time of great tribulation*," especially from 1300-1500 AD.

The Great European Famine of 1315 to 1317 was the first of a series of large scale crises that struck Northern Europe. It caused millions of deaths over a number of years.

1). A dreadful famine struck at the beginning of the 14th century. During the 1300's & 1400's, the temperature of Europe began to cool which resulted in violent storms and unpredictable rainfall which dramatically dropped crop yields.

The worst years were 1315-1317. Europe did not fully recover until 1322.

Results: 1. 10-50% of the population starved to death.

2. Dramatic increase in violent crime.

3. Life expectancy was relatively short and many children died. According to records of the Royal family, amongst the best cared for in society, the average life expectancy in 1276 was 35.28 years. Between 1301 and 1325 during the Great Famine it was 29.84.

4. Widespread reports of cannibalism and infanticide

Those near starvation ate what they could find: the last of their livestock, cats, dogs even vermin, and then finally fellow human beings. Cannibalism was seen as a survival measure.

5. To provide some measure of relief, draft animals were butchered, seed grain was consumed, children were abandoned to fend for themselves, and some elderly people voluntarily refused food in order to feed the younger generation.
6. The powerlessness of the Church and King to deal with the crisis began to raise questions. In a society where the final recourse to all problems had been religion, no amount of prayer seemed effective against the causes of the famine, which undermined the institutional authority of the Catholic Church. This helped lay the foundations for later movements that were deemed heretical by the Church because they opposed the Papacy and blamed the failure of prayer upon corruption within the church.
7. The failure of the Medieval governments to deal with the crisis: Just as God seemed unable or unwilling to answer prayers, the earthly powers were equally ineffective, with the famine eroding and undermining their power and authority.

2). The Black Death of 1347-1351

Between 1348 and 1375, during the Black Death and subsequent plagues, average life span was down to only 17.33. The mysterious Black Death would kill more than 25 million people in Europe—almost one-third of the continent's population.

The disease was also terrifyingly efficient. People who were perfectly healthy when they went to bed at night could be dead by morning. The Italian writer Boccaccio said its victims often "ate lunch with their friends and dinner with their ancestors in paradise."

God's Punishment? Many people believed the Black Death was a divine punishment—retribution for sins against God such as greed, blasphemy, heresy, fornication and worldliness.

By this logic, the only way to overcome the plague was to win God's forgiveness.

Some people believed they should purge their communities of heretics and other troublemakers. Many thousands of Jews were massacred in 1348 and 1349.

Some upper-class men joined processions of flagellants that traveled from town to town and engaged in public displays of penance and punishment. They would beat themselves and one another with heavy leather straps studded with sharp pieces of metal while the townspeople looked on. For 33 1/2 days, the flagellants repeated this ritual three times a day.

Then they would move on to the next town and begin the process over again.

3). Finally, the Hundred Years War (1337-1453) added to these murderous scourges.

C. Haman - Cast her into a sickbed and kill her children

The king becomes enraged when he discovers the decree Haman presented to him was a conspiracy to exterminate the Jews. He had signed the death warrant for his own wife. Haman, who had been his favorite officer and confidant, was now the enemy and adversary.

Paradox: Haman had been furious because a Jewish man would not bow down to him.

Now Haman was prostrate before a Jewish woman, begging for his life.

Haman was impaled on his own gallows. Later the 10 sons of Haman were slain and hanged on Haman's gallows as a warning to the enemy.

What does Jezebel hate? 1. Repentance

2. Humility - servant-minded Note: Spirituality is measured in meekness; not power.

3. Prophets -She hates the Spoken Word of God.

4. She hates prayer. When you pray for a submissive heart and humble spirit, it is like the trampling of Jehu's horse upon her body.

5. She hates God and the grace God lavishes upon His bond-servants.

Jesus came to Thyatira as "He who searches the minds and hearts."

The access the devil has to our souls has increased through the mass communications media and literature. There is a flood of words and visual images coming out of the mouth of Satan. Sins of the minds and hearts of men are much more accessible. The carnal mind is being structured into a powerful stronghold for the devil. Jezebel's spirit flows unhindered in the entertainment industry. It flaunts itself in the fashion world and holds degrees in the philosophical departments of our schools.

Tolerance to Jezebel begins in the inner sanctuary of our private soul-life. You cannot worship God on Sunday morning and tolerate Jezebel through immoral entertainment on Sunday night. Where are the satanic inroads in my own life? Cut them off.

Tolerance for Jezebel must end.

Jesus said in Rev. 2:23 all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

We shall ALL stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ.