

centers of Temple prostitution. While our modern sensitivities probably find Baalism immoral and distasteful, it was the cultural milieu in which Jezebel grew up. She was just as devoted to her religious beliefs as Elijah was devoted to the one true God of Israel. The conflict between them was the result of that unwavering devotion and resulting hatred for what they perceived as the enemy of an opposing faith. There was no movement to coexist, no attempt to understand each other fully, no sensitivity to the other's point of view. How things might have been different if those ideas existed 2800 years ago! Write your thoughts here.

Thursday, August 8

Read I Kings 21:1-25. The desire of Ahab to take Naboth's vineyard from him was offensive on so many levels. Deep was Naboth's belief that the land he occupied was a gift from God to not only him but previous generations of his family. Naboth's story is about the misuse and abuse of power, and the disregard and ignorance of one's own faith. Remember, Ahab was an Israelite! Pastor Jack mentioned that the Naboth story was really the last straw for Elijah and he pronounced punishment upon Ahab, his children and upon Jezebel. Ahab was spared himself because he repented but his children died and Jezebel died a horrible and cruel death. It is difficult to embrace Elijah's stance as one that represents our loving Creator. How far must we go to preserve the integrity of our faith without visiting violence on others? Meditate on that question and write your thoughts here.

Friday, August 9

Take some time today to reflect on the passion of our faith and beliefs. To what length will we go to defend our faith? To what degree will we fight for our beliefs? How can we live together with people of different faith and contrary beliefs? Meditate on these questions and write your reflections here. Pray for our world, for peace, for understand for God's love to be shared with all others.

Message Notes – August 4, 2024

Women of the Bible – *Jezebel, Talk about Wicked!**

- I. The name of Jezebel conjures images of a manipulative woman who is wicked and _____, taking advantage of her position and _____ in life.
 - A. Author Edith Deen writes “Though the daughter of a king, the wife of a king, a mother and grandmother of kings, she was neither a _____ wife and mother nor a _____ ruler.”
 - B. Pastor Barbara Essex writes of Jezebel, “Her handling of Elijah is legendary. Her handling of Naboth is infamous. Yet in many ways, Jezebel has gotten a _____.”
 - C. First, let's understand how Jezebel, a Phoenician _____ from the city of Tyre came to be the wife of the _____ of Israel, Ahab.

- II. The result of Ahab and Jezebel's marriage is that worship of _____ flourished in Israel; after all, it's the _____ religion.
 - A. Baal was the great _____-god of the Phoenicians; Baal was believed to control the _____ and to give or withhold _____.
 - B. Pastor Barbara Essex, writes, “Ahab is harshly evaluated not because of his _____, but because of his wife, Jezebel, who worshiped Baal.”

*I kings 21:1-25

- III. Now Elijah was from a small town, Tishbe, in Gilead and his _____ was to destroy the _____ of Baal in Israel.
- A. One of the greatest conflicts between Jezebel and Elijah is the battle between Elijah and the _____ of Baal that took place on Mount Carmel.
- B. The story of Naboth is sort of the _____ in Ahab's reign and Jezebel's influence supporting and promoting Baal worship.
- C. _____ years after Ahab died; Jezebel had continued to propagate Baal worship in Israel and ruled through her two sons.
- IV. Jezebel was a foreign princess, who brought her _____ and _____ with her to Israel.
- A. The clash between Jezebel and Elijah is an example of people pitting their _____ against one another.
- B. I am thankful for our scripture that makes it clear that our God is a God of _____.
- C. When I listen to all the viciousness and judgmental acrimony spewed out of people in the name of their God, I wonder if they would be a different _____ if they had a different _____ of _____.

Daily Devotional Guide

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, August 5

The Message yesterday began, "The name of Jezebel conjures images of a manipulative woman who is wicked and cruel, taking advantage of her position and status in life." The Cambridge English Dictionary defines jezebel as "an immoral woman who deceives people in order to get what she wants." While it is not commonly used today, to call someone a jezebel, often spelled with the lower case "j," would have been a very severe accusation. Before the message yesterday, did you know the name Jezebel and if you did, were you aware of its demeaning nature? There are many different names that might be used to depict the same meaning but perhaps none have the same history as "Jezebel." Write your reactions and thoughts here.

Tuesday, August 6

Read I Kings 16:30-33. This is the first passage of our Hebrew Scriptures and mention Jezebel. She was a Phoenician Princess in the city of Tyre. She came from where modern day Lebanon is located. She was groomed to be a Phoenician Princess but in an attempt to bring peace and prosperity among both the Phoenicians and Israelites, the union of Jezebel and Ahab was created. Theirs is what we could call today an arranged marriage with deep political motivations. Arranged marriages still occur today and those who grew up in the tradition will often defend those marriages as good and strong as well as loving. Along with the background shared during the message, what do you think of this arranged marriage and the resulting ramifications of this political union? Write your reflections here.

Wednesday, August 7

Many of the attributes of the Baal faith was shared during the Message. Baal was a nature-god responsible for the weather and the gifting of fertility. Baal had a female counterpart or wife called Asherah. She was a fertility God and her Temples became