

Anoint Three

#0897

Study given by W.D. Frazee—March 12, 1982

Turn to 1 Kings, the 19th chapter. My subject is anoint three. Keep in mind that God takes the long view of things. He's determined to give everybody every opportunity to get all they want; so He has to have multiple choices available. What would suit you might not suit somebody else. What would suit someone else might not be appetizing to you at all. God has set Himself the task of pleasing everybody in the universe. Some people have a hard time pleasing even one other person. Some can't even please themselves. So God has quite a task. This explains part of the reason why we have three people to be anointed in this text.

Let's look at the setting. Elijah the prophet had a great meeting on Carmel. He faced Israel with the challenge whether they were going to serve Baal or serve Jehovah. After the mighty miracle of fire falling to consume the sacrifice in answer to Elijah's prayer, Elijah believed he was going to get the whole nation back. But that night the word was brought to him that Jezebel, the wicked queen of King Ahab, was threatening his life. Weary with the toil and anxiety, and suddenly wakened out of sleep, he ran for his life and missed a glorious opportunity.

God didn't forsake him. God knew his weaknesses. The angel found him out in the desert where he had fled. The angel fed him, gave him some water, let him sleep some more, and fed him again. Elijah then went 40 days and 40 nights down into the Sinai Peninsula until he came to Horeb, the mount of God. There he found a cave and went in. Elijah was through as far as *he* was concerned. He had despaired of ever reaching Israel with the true message. He thought he was the only one left.

God spoke to Elijah at the cave and asked him what he was doing there. Elijah said, Oh Lord, you know I have been very jealous for your honor. The children of Israel haven't been true to you. They have broken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and slain your prophets with the sword; I'm the only one left, and they're hunting me. I had to come way down here to escape their wrath.

Then God spoke, and this is the message we want to get tonight:

"The Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room" 1 Kings 19:15-16.

There were three men to be anointed. Hazael was to be anointed king over Syria. Syria was a great enemy of Israel, a heathen king over a heathen people. What did God have to do with that? That's what I want to study with you. Jehu was to be anointed to found a new dynasty, to establish a new administration in the kingdom of Israel. And then a prophet was to take Elijah's place. His name was Elisha.

"It shall come to pass that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" verse 17.

Elijah thought that he was the only one left that was true to God. God told Elijah that He had 7,000 others scattered all through the kingdom. He was trying to encourage him.

What is the meaning of this verse in which God tells Elijah to anoint three men: Hazael to be king over Syria, Jehu to be king over Israel, and Elisha to be prophet in his place? It is God's answer to the great apostasy of Israel. It took three men to meet it, each in an entirely different way. There is much for us to learn today in a time of great apostasy in the world, and as it seeps in even among the remnant people of God. We need to study this lesson. As we shall see, God has seen fit through inspiration to make the application of these characters to our own time.

Who was Hazael? Hazael was the servant of King Hadad of Syria. In the providence of God, Elisha, the one that took Elijah's place, was sent by God over to Damascus, and found the opportunity, in the providence of God, to anoint Hazael king over Syria. We may wonder what a prophet of God would be doing in a heathen country dealing with a heathen king and his servant, and anointing him to be king over Syria.

When you read it, you will find that Elisha wept as he anointed Hazael. Hazael asked him why he was weeping. He said, Because the Lord has shown me the terrible things you are going to do to the people of Israel. You are going to desolate their cities, kill their young men, and kill their women and children. Hazael said, Is your servant a dog to do a thing like that? That's what's going to happen, Elisha said. The Lord has shown me.

The spirit of prophecy knows more about men than they know about themselves.

We question further, why would the Lord have anything to do with what was happening over there in Syria? And why of all things would He anoint a cruel, deceitful man to be king over that nation? The answer is that it was to be a scourge to idolatrous Israel. Years later, Nebuchadnezzar was appointed king over Babylon by God to be a scourge to the southern kingdom of Judah. God uses the most

wicked men in this world to accomplish certain things, and we had better remember it.

With our limited vision, we get the idea that the only people God can use is good men, saintly men, men who are straight on theology and every other subject. We think those are the only ones He can use. But God is using *all* men, one way or another, to accomplish certain things.

Don't misunderstand me. I wouldn't want to work with Hazael. Would you? I wouldn't want to be with Nebuchadnezzar's army when he came down and burned up Jerusalem. Would you? But the point is, God was using them. When God can't get at his chosen people in one way, He will use something else. When he can't help us through prosperity, He allows adversity to come.

Let's take a look at Elisha. Elisha was appointed to be the prophet in Elijah's place. Elisha was a farmer. He was a farmer's son. He was plowing in the field when Elijah came and threw his mantle on him and called him to the prophetic office. Thank God, Elisha was willing to leave his home and kindred and follow Elijah around in an uncertain life, pouring water on Elijah's hands and helping as he could.

After years of being with Elijah and helping in the schools of the prophets, Elisha had the great experience of seeing his master taken up and translated to heaven without seeing death. A double portion of that spirit was given to Elisha, and all his life he carried on the work of the schools of the prophets.

Where did Jehu come in? Jehu was the one to be king over Israel in Ahab's place. Ahab was the one who had led Israel into Baal worship, and his wife, Jezebel, was the one who had slain the prophets of the Lord, and led Israel deeper and deeper into idolatry. God said that has got to go.

It's interesting to read 2 Kings, the 10th chapter; this is the story of the anointing of Jehu and his revolution against Ahab. We haven't time to read the whole story, but I want you to notice the *spirit* of Jehu. He had already slain many of the house of Ahab.

"And when he was departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him: and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered it is. If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot" 2 Kings 10:15.

Here Jehu is riding in his work of exterminating Baal worship, exterminating the whole house of Ahab. He saw Jehonadab and told him to come up in the chariot. What did he want?

"And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord. And when he came to Samaria he slew all that

remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the Lord, which he spake to Elijah” verses 16-17.

Baal worship had a death blow. Would you have liked to have been in Jehu’s forces? Wait a minute before you answer. You notice that he was riding in his chariot. Most people who have ever heard about Jehu have heard that he was a furious driver.

“And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously”
2 Kings 9:10.

He would have been right at home in a high-powered car charging down the highway. But the fastest thing he had was horses and a chariot. He was a furious driver and a furious captain. And he called on Jehonadab to see his zeal for the Lord.

Who was it that anointed Jehu? Elijah was told to. He gave the job to Elisha. Elisha did it later through one of the sons of the prophets. But it was God that commanded Elijah to do this. Would God take a man like Jehu who would slaughter right and left? The sad thing is that Jehu never went all the way in total reform. He still clung to the sins of Jeroboam.

We have here a picture of God using three different people. He used Hazael, the heathen king with his terrible onslaughts against Israel; He used Jehu to take over the kingdom from Ahab, and slaughter right and left until he had destroyed Baal worship; the third one He used was Elisha—a prophet.

I want to read you an inspired summary of Elisha’s work:

“Like the Saviour of mankind, of whom he was a type, Elisha in his ministry among men combined the work of healing with that of teaching. Faithfully, untiringly, throughout his long and effective labors, Elisha endeavored to foster and advance the important educational work carried on by the schools of the prophets. In the providence of God his words of instruction to the earnest groups of young men assembled were confirmed by the deep movings of the Holy Spirit” *Prophets and Kings*, page 240.

Elisha was engaged in the work of Jesus in healing and teaching and preaching. He was a Gospel medical missionary. Under Elijah’s leadership, the schools of the prophets were reestablished. Several are mentioned in the Bible. One was at Jerico, one at Bethel, and one at Gilgal; there were some others. In every one of these, Elisha fostered a simple spirit-filled educational program. What for? This was God’s answer to the Baal worship program.

Why did God have Jehu and Elisha both working against Baal worship? Let's go back in our thinking to that first text we had in 1 Kings 19. God said to Elijah, I want you to anoint three men. I want you to anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. He will scourge My people for their Baal worship. Not that Hazael was against Baal worship. Hazael was a Baal worshiper himself. But Israel needed to be punished by those who advocated that false religion.

God said, I am going to give them a different king who will kill all the house of Ahab that has led Israel into this terrible apostasy. Besides that, I am going to give them a prophet who will lead them gently, firmly, and carefully in the paths of proper instruction and in the work of combining physical healing with spiritual healing. The inspired gift of prophecy will be manifest in the schools of the prophets.

With that summary of ancient times, I want to share with you some things from the inspired commentary that God has given His people today:

“God has shown me that these men are Hazael's to prove a scourge to our people” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, page 79.

Men who have a spirit of opposition to the plain Word of God and to the testimony of His Spirit are being discussed here. Whenever human reason is exalted above the wisdom of God, that is the spirit of Hazael which is to prove a scourge today.

The prophet continues, “There are men among us in responsible positions who hold that the opinions of a few conceited so-called philosophers are more to be trusted than the truth of the Bible or the testimonies of the Holy Spirit.” Whenever there is a disposition to exalt human reason above the Word of God and the testimony of His Spirit, that's the spirit of Hazael. I don't want any part in that, do you? But why would God allow it? Why would He anoint Hazael to be king over Syria? Because God is letting everybody have what they want. The answer is not for you and me to get out and work against the providence of God.

Let's take a look at Jehu. Again and again, in the inspired writings that have come to this people, the example of Jehu is set forth as one for you and me not to follow. Take this interesting sentence from the *Review and Herald* of 1885:

“Gentleness is mightier far than a Jehu spirit”
Temperance, page 261.

Jehu was zealous. He was trying to get rid of Baal worship. Who had given him the job? God. But he did it in *his* own way. Do you think Jehu will be in the kingdom? No. Read the story and you will see. Will Hazael be in the kingdom? No, but Elisha will. I want to be with those who are working in the spirit of Elisha rather than either Hazael or Jehu. “Gentleness is mightier far than a Jehu spirit.” Elisha was the gentle one. Oh, that God may teach us the lesson.

What does it mean when God tells Elijah to anoint Hazael, Jehu, Elisha, and it shall come to pass? That whoever escapes from their swords, who will slay them? See if we can get a ray of light here:

“Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth” Hosea 6:5.

The slaying of Hazael was very literal. The slaying of Jehu was very literal. But the slaying of Elisha was a *spiritual* work. I wonder if there is anybody here who is willing to be slain by Elisha, willing to have the Spirit of Prophecy hew you, willing to take the Word of God from Genesis to Revelation and let it square you and trim you and cut you until you are hewed and squared for the building. This is the sword of Elisha. It takes the power of the Spirit to accomplish it.

It will not be done with the zeal of Jehu, and certainly it will not be done with the scourging of Hazael. God has a purpose in the scourging of Hazael that it may be exhibited to all what the end result of that program is. God has a purpose in the zealous, furious driving and awful slaughter that Jehu brings. It's to help get rid of Baal worship, but it's also to exhibit to those who are willing to learn the lesson—the sad thing that happens when God's work is done in man's way.

“Men are slow to learn the lesson that the spirit manifested by Jehu will never bind hearts together. It is not safe for us to bind our interests with a Jehu religion; for this will result in bringing sadness of heart upon God's true workers. God has not given to any of His servants the work of punishing those who will not heed His warnings and reproofs. When the Holy Spirit is abiding in the heart, it will lead the human agent to see his own defects of character, to pity the weakness of others, to forgive as he wishes to be forgiven. He will be pitiful, courteous, Christlike” *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol 2, page 1038.

Oh, friends, I have ridden with Jehu more than once. In fact, I have driven the chariot at times, and I am sorry. I want to be a student in the school of the prophets and learn the lesson of Elisha—the prophet of peace. Don't think that Elisha was any compromiser. Not a bit of it. Not once did he compromise. He is one of the few men in Bible history of whom no fault is recorded. He was gentle and loving and kind and courteous, and God used him to reach those who could be reached by those methods. Those who couldn't had to deal with the scourging of Hazael and the sword of Jehu. Which will you respond to? Let us learn to say with David, “Thy gentleness hath made me great.”

If in your heart there is a spirit like that of Jehu, something will happen to give you a chance to exhibit it.

“All who are longing for some engagement that will represent Jehu riding furiously will have opportunity

enough to distinguish themselves” *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 333.

When you see Hazael doing his cruel work, and when you see Jehu doing his furious work, remember that God appointed them to do their work, but He didn’t appoint *you* that work. If you are one of those that He is going to use in the latter rain and the loud cry program, He didn’t appoint you the work of either Hazael or Jehu. They are to take care of those who will not be hewed by the prophets and let the sword of Elisha deal with them.

I want to let the sword of Elisha deal with me. I want to get down on my knees day by day and let God speak to me through the Bible and through the Spirit of Prophecy, to trim my way of life according to the divine blueprint. If I will do that, I will never be influenced by the exaltation of human reason above divine revelation which is represented by Hazael today. Neither will I be influenced by the zeal and the furious efforts of men like Jehu who think that the way to deal with things is to say, “Come and see my zeal for the Lord,” and get out the sword and start cutting off heads.

“They cast aside all that has been said in regard to unity of sentiment and feeling, and trample upon the prayer of Christ as though the unity for which He prayed were unessential, and there were no necessity for His followers to be one, even as He is one with the Father. They go off on a tangent and, Jehulike, call to their brethren to follow their example of zeal for the Lord.” *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 55.

Oh friends, God save you and me from it. God give us a spirit like Elisha to do the quiet, simple, humble work of instructing in what God has said, and preparing people, young and old, to go out with the message of healing and education according to Christian principles.

Here is an interesting reference to Jehu. Notice again the contrast between the gentleness and love of Elisha and the furious zeal of Jehu:

“The truth should be presented with divine tact, gentleness, and tenderness. It should come from a heart that has been softened and made sympathetic. We need to have close communion with God, lest self rise up, as it did in Jehu, and we pour forth a torrent of words that are unbecoming, that are not as dew or as the still showers that revive the withering plants. Let our words be gentle as we seek to win souls” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, page 400.

Jehu wasn’t trying to win souls; he was trying to get rid of Baal worship. But Elisha is seeking to win souls. Are there other ways to be lost besides Baal worship? Thousands of ways. Jehu is one way to be lost.

Although God uses sin to punish sin, and He uses the zeal of misguided men to deal with apostasy, yet that which He is calling you and me to is the ministry of love, the ministry of gentleness, the ministry of courtesy, the ministry of kindness. This is helping to answer the prayer of Jesus in John 17.

I want to unite in prayer for my own heart, and for all who would like, that God will teach us these precious lessons of love. In the home we need it so much. I was reading one of the messages that God sent through His servant to a certain man who was the head of his house. He was the head all right. He was so domineering over his wife that, at family worship, he would read things and talk things to try to line her up. And even when he prayed, he would pray that his wife would accept his view of things. He was reprov'd for this. Why? It was a Jehu spirit.

Brethren, let's you and I who are husbands and fathers be like Elisha instead of like Jehu. Let's not try to make our companions see everything the way we do. Let's be leaders, not drivers—especially not driving furiously like Jehu.

Oh, for the power of love in home leadership, the same in the church and wherever we're called upon to exercise responsibility. Elisha may be quiet. He may not show up his leadership so much. We are told that the spirit of Elisha is something we need more sometimes than the spirit of Elijah, wonderful as that was. I want to learn it.

Shall we kneel and pray?

Our Father in Heaven, we thank Thee with all our hearts that we do have a choice. We choose to be hewed by the prophets, that the sword of Elisha may deal with us. As we listen to the plea of Jesus through the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, may our hearts be trimmed of all selfishness and all human manifestations that are not in harmony with the love of Jesus.

We pray that thou wilt pour upon us the spirit that again and again came to the schools of the prophets. Pour upon us the spirit of inspiration, the spirit of love, the spirit of kindly ministry, of true reform in our methods as well as in our theology and way of life. Melt and unite us all under the leadership of Jesus that we may help answer the prayer of Christ that His people and His church may all be one. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

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