

Please review the following readings where Jezebel is mentioned.  
I have provided below information to help make this study a bit easier.  
1Kings 16:31; 18:4, 13, 19; 19:1-2; 21:5, 7, 11, 14-15, 23, 25.  
2Kings 9:7, 10, 22, 30, 36-37. Revelation 2:20 Thanks, Donna

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**Jezebel** (Hebrew: ‏יְזַבֵּל‎‎ / ‏יְזַבֵּל‎‎, *Modern* *Izével* / *Izável* *Tiberian* ‏יְזַבֵּל‎‎ / ‏יְזַבֵּל‎‎; historically translated as "not exalted") is the name of two women in the Bible.

<b>Occupation</b>	Queen of Israel
<b>Children</b>	<u>Ahaziah</u> , <u>Jehoram</u> , and <u>Athaliah</u>
<b>Parents</b>	<u>Ithobaal I</u>

**In the Hebrew scriptures** - As recounted in 2Kings 9:1-10, Yahweh speaks through Elijah's successor, the prophet Elisha, and has one of his servants anoint Jehu as king in Jehoram's place, adding: "You are to destroy the house of Ahab your master." Acting on this divine commission for revolution, Jehu kills King Jehoram as he attempts to flee in his war chariot.

Jehu then confronts Jezebel in Jezreel and urges her eunuchs to kill the queen mother by throwing her out of a window. They comply, tossing her out of the window and leaving her corpse in the street to be eaten by dogs. Only Jezebel's skull, feet, and hands remain.

According to the television show, The Naked Archaeologist, Jezebel was an altered name. Originally her name would have been translated as "Virgin of Baal", but a letter was added to the name so as to give it a negative spin, and so changing its meaning to "Whore of Baal".

**In the New Testament** - In Revelation 2:20, a prophecy is uttered against a prophetess in the church of Thyatira named Jezebel. She is accused of inducing members of the church there to commit acts of sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols.

**As a cultural symbol** - The name *Jezebel* has come down through the centuries to be used as a general name for evil women. Her Biblical account depicts her as a scheming, manipulative woman who did more than anyone to promote an evil religion. Thus, in

Christian tradition, a comparison to Jezebel suggests that a person is a pagan or an apostate masquerading as a servant of God, who by manipulation and/or seduction misleads the saints of God into sins of idolatry and sexual immorality, sending them to hell.

In particular, Jezebel has come to be associated with promiscuity. The phrase "painted Jezebel", with connotations of immorality and prostitution, is based on 2 Kings 9:30-33<sup>[4]</sup>, where Jezebel puts on her cosmetics just before being killed. (She may have done this to encourage her captors to keep her alive as a consort rather than kill her.) While the Bible generally depicts Jezebel as a faithful wife, she is remembered more for her introduction of Baal worship and its accompanying promiscuity to the Israelites.

While Jezebel's sexual image often has a negative connotation, some embrace it, as is evidenced by various lingerie designs named after Jezebel.

In modern usage, the name of Jezebel is sometimes used as a synonym for sexually promiscuous and sometimes controlling women, as in the title of the 1938 Bette Davis film Jezebel or the 1951 Frankie Laine hit "Jezebel".

In the 2009 Danity Kane song "Bad Girl", there was a phrase, saying: "Some say that love is all that I'm missing, some call it Jezebel, I call it attention", referring to the biblical person.

**Non-religious modern interpretations** -In feminist readings of the Bible and of later Jewish and Christian traditions, Jezebel is seen as a strong and assertive woman, who was attacked and finally murdered by the fanatic male representatives of a male-dominated religion, and whose memory was continually vilified for thousands of years for the same reason — i.e. *"because she was a strong and independent woman who did not let men dominate her, and who continued to defy the aggressive males to her last breath"*

- Secularists and atheists sometimes take Jezebel's side, as they see themselves as "the victim of aggressive religious fanatics who did not scruple to resort to mass killing in order to enforce their point of view"
- Isaac Asimov, an outspoken atheist who had a Jewish upbringing, mentioned Jezebel in his novel The Caves of Steel. The main character saw Jezebel as an ideal wife and a woman who, in full compliance with the mores of the time, promotes her own religion conscientiously.
- Some Israeli peace activists such as Uri Avnery use the story of Naboth as a symbol of the theft of Israeli lands.

**Historical interpretation** - For the historian, the story of Ahab and Jezebel gives a detailed account of an intense religious-political struggle — the most detailed of any period in the history of the Kingdom of Israel — but written from a highly partisan point of view, and with no surviving documents that represent the other side of the controversy. Moreover, the account is mainly interested in the religious side of the events, with the

political, economic and social background — highly important to modern historians — given only incidentally. A modern historian must therefore try to reconstruct the historical events, taking into account the bias of the only source available.

As noted by Barzowski, Ahab's marriage to Jezebel was - at least to begin with - obviously a dynastic marriage intended to cement a Phoenician alliance going back to the times of King Solomon. This alliance gave the inland Kingdom of Israel access to international trade. The monarchy (and possibly an urban elite connected with it) enjoyed the wealth derived from this trade, which gave it a stronger position vis-a-vis the rural landowners and made for a more centralized and powerful monarchical administration.

The story of Naboth, a landowner who was killed at the instigation of Jezebel so that the King could acquire his land, certainly points in this direction — Jezebel, with her foreign religion and cosmopolitan culture, representing a hated Phoenician alliance from which the landowners had little to gain and much to lose. Their resentment was expressed in religious terms (as in many other times and places), and eventually got a political expression in Jehu's bloody coup, instigated and supported by the prophets whose side of the story the Bible preserves.

Roger Williams, the founder of the American colony of Rhode Island and the co-founder of the First Baptist Church in America, wrote about Naboth's story in *The Bloody Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience* as an example of how God disfavored Christians from using government force in religious matters, such as the religious decrees by Jezebel and Ahab. Williams believed using force in the name of religion would lead to political persecution contrary to the Bible's teachings.

Lesley Hazelton, author of three books about the Middle East, has written *Jezebel, The Untold Story of the Bible's Harlot Queen*. Far from acceding to traditional interpretations, Ms. Hazelton, using "historical imagination", her own translations of the Hebrew texts, and using the original dialogue and places, recreates the story of the Jezebel that has been hidden from us. A Jezebel who was vilified and made the incarnation of sexual wickedness, but who was in fact the sophisticated Queen engaged in mortal combat with the fundamentalist prophet Elijah.