Evolutionists contend that human life, as we now enjoy it, evolved from a single cell over millions of years. This type of evolution cannot be believed by a thinking person simply because honest reason would insist that for unaided matter to jump from one cell to a human being is an impossible jump. A human being is so tremendously complex that one isolated cell in the human brain is more intricate than the most sophisticated computer man can build. Who could believe that one cell could grow and multiply—without miraculous, divine help—into a human being, complete with a spirit that thinks, loves, hates, and dreams? The theory of evolution, as a belief system, falls apart before it ever gets to the research laboratory, the place where true science is tested.

In addition to being unbelievable, evolution fails another test: It has no valid explanation for marriage and the home. The basis for a family is two people, not one, who are different from each other but compatible—a male and a female, who are drawn to live together by love and commitment. The existence of the home doubles the evolutionist’s difficulties. He would have to argue for the evolving of two, male and female, who would reach evolutionary maturity at the same time and who would share the idea of establishing a home. The necessity of two having to evolve at the same time makes evolution doubly inconceivable.

The reality is that one of the most beautiful things about life is the Christian home. It cannot be explained, except to say that it is God’s gift to man and to society. When we open the Bible, God’s inspired record of how all things came to be, we are immediately told in Genesis of God’s creation of the home (Genesis 2: 3). It did not evolve; it was created. God’s account of origins agrees with all that we know about life; therefore, it should be easy for us to believe and accept.

The home, according to Genesis, was not only given to us as an act of God’s kindness, but it was placed within the confines of our free moral agency, our spiritual nature. That is, we have been given the ability to have a family, but we must choose whom we will marry and what kind of family we will have. The home, with all of its meanings and marvels, is dependent upon the choices that we make. Each of us can decide to have a home that is a heaven upon earth or a home that is a hell upon earth. The choice is ours.

We sometimes say of a marriage that seems to be ideal, “That marriage was made in heaven.”
Although we never say it, the converse is also true. Because of the poor choices some people make, marriage can be a disaster. We might say that such a marriage was made in hell. That is, the devil influenced the decision of the two to marry and has influenced the conduct of the married couple; consequently, the marriage is achieving the devil’s design, not God’s.

An example of this type of marriage in the Scriptures—one that stands out above all others—is the marriage of Ahab and Jezebel. It was a royal marriage between the son of Omri, king of Israel, and the daughter of Ethbaal, king of Tyre. Ahab was the eighth king of Israel, whose twenty-two-year reign at Samaria extended from 874 to 853 B.C. The marriage of Ahab and Jezebel greatly influenced any spiritual tendencies that remained in Israel. Perhaps no home has ever wielded such an ungodly influence on a nation as this one did.

Let us look at this marriage from the standpoint of what made it go awry and why it became so destructive to Ahab and Jezebel, as well as to the nation.

**CONCEIVED FOR THE WRONG REASON**

In Old Testament times, marriage was sometimes used by kings as a method of creating peace and good relations between two nations. When a king’s daughter was given to another king in marriage, it was a sign of the agreement between those two nations to try to work together. Although it is not expressly stated in the Scriptures, it appears that the marriage of Ahab and Jezebel was really a marriage of convenience, a type of seal for an alliance made between Omri and Ethbaal, tying the two nations of Israel and Tyre together. Perhaps such a move did solidify peaceful relations and monetary agreements between the nations, but it goes without saying that using marriage in this way lowers the dignity and value of a union, turning it into a mere bargaining chip. It takes marriage—the beautiful, God-given joining of two lives—and makes it into a “tool” to be used for whatever advantage one can get from it. God intended for marriage to be for the happiness of the two entering into the marriage, not for commercialism or financial gain for individuals or for nations.

The basic purposes for marriage can be narrowed down to two: companionship and the establishment of a family. These purposes are discernible in the divine record of the creation of marriage:

And the man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him (Genesis 2:20).

So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh at that place. And the Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. And the man said, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Genesis 2:21–23).

For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh (Genesis 2:24).

And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; . . .” (Genesis 1:27, 28).

This divine design for marriage cannot be changed or twisted without harming the two entering the marriage and hurting the influence that the marriage will have on others. Anyone who enters into matrimony—the most enduring and most intimate of all relationships—for money, position, status, or for any other unworthy motive, has corrupted God’s plan for marriage.

Biblical marriage is the foundation of society, the bricks upon which all people are to walk and build their lives. Take away marriage, and society falls apart; distort marriage, and miseries and ills of all kinds plague mankind.

The marriage of Ahab and Jezebel started out in the wrong way, with the wrong purpose. This difficulty must have affected their marriage; however, the Bible does not give any details about it, except to picture their marriage as developing into a tragedy. Perhaps their reason for being together was a major contributing factor to the bad way their marriage turned out. Any marriage arranged for sinister purposes is headed for trouble.
CONTROLLED BY A WRONG RELATIONSHIP

A clear characteristic of their marriage that caused it to sour and disintegrate was the relationship that Ahab and Jezebel had with each other within the marriage. From the very beginning, God chose for the husband to be the head of the home and the wife to be the queen of the home (Ephesians 5:23, 25; 1 Timothy 2:11–15). God’s administrative order is for the happiness of both man and woman, and for the best interest of the children. Entrance into marriage does not automatically bestow an appropriate, functional relationship upon the husband and wife to make the marriage beautiful. The relationship needed and required by the Scriptures must be recognized and maintained by the choice of both the husband and the wife.

From one viewpoint, Ahab could be considered an effective king. For one thing, he established peaceful relations with the Southern Kingdom. This alliance with Jehoshaphat, the good southern king, assisted Ahab and had some good effects on the nation. Second, Ahab is pictured in the Scriptures as a capable ruler who led his nation in building enterprises that moved the nation forward economically. He left behind a palace that was artistically crafted, as well as cities that he had built, fortified, and prepared for self-defense against any attackers.

Now the rest of the acts of Ahab and all that he did and the ivory house which he built and all the cities which he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? (22:39).

Further, Ahab seemed to be a strong, astute soldier who could lead an army effectively. Twice he defeated Aramean forces in harmony with the predictions of “a prophet” of Jehovah (20:1–34).

Despite these good points, Ahab, as the leader of his home, had three glaring faults. First, he did not lead in his home. He was a spineless husband. Someone asked a man, “Are you henpecked?” He responded, “Just a minute. I’ll ask my wife and see.” That husband depicts Ahab. He would never have admitted it, but the truth is that Jezebel dominated him as a bridle controls a horse. Ahab was more weak than he was wicked. He allowed jezebel to lead him into evil purposes and plans. Jezebel, to use the figure of R. G. Lee, was the devil’s grindstone on which he sharpened his wicked weapons to do his evil works. She ruled her husband and the nation, and she established throughout Israel the worship of Baal to which she was so devoted (21:25).

The second fault of Ahab was selfishness. He is an example of the lengths of wickedness to which a selfish man may go. His attitude toward Naboth and his vineyard is an illustration of his self-centeredness (21:1–16). He wanted Naboth’s vineyard, which was near his palace, for a garden of herbs. This desire became a passion with him. It was on his mind constantly. It possessed him. After legitimate attempts to get the vineyard failed, he went to his palace and sulked like a spoiled child. Jezebel heard how upset he was, approached him, and said, “I’ll get it for you. Leave it to me.”

She sent word for Naboth to be killed by judicial murder in order to get the vineyard. Ahab knew what she was doing; but, being spurred on by his devilish desire for the vineyard, he did not stop her. Ahab did not commit the murders. His hands had no blood on them, but he did not interfere with Jezebel’s plans. When word came to him that the deaths had occurred and the vineyard was his, he immediately took possession of it, as a boy runs to the mailbox when he knows a gift has been delivered to him by the postman. It did not seem to concern Ahab that Naboth and his sons had been killed to satisfy his selfish greed. To Ahab’s surprise, Elijah met him at the vineyard and announced God’s judgment upon him. The king trembled at Elijah’s words:

… “Thus says the Lord, ‘In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth the dogs shall lick up your blood, even yours’” (21:19)

“And of Jezebel also has the Lord spoken, saying, ‘The dogs shall eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel’” (21:23).

The announcement got Ahab’s attention, to say the least. He responded with mourning and put on sackcloth (21:27), and God said, “I will not bring the evil in his days, but I will bring the evil upon his house in his son’s days” (21:29). God did not lift the entire judgment sentence, but He did lift part of it (22:37, 38).

Still another weakness of Ahab was his vacillation regarding the worship of Jehovah. He
had a *split religious personality*. He never gave up his worship of the true God, but he chose to worship Baal also. He gave in to Jezebel’s demands for high places to be built for her pagan religion. The Scriptures say that Ahab “sold himself” to do evil. That is, he completely gave himself over to wickedness:

Surely there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord, because Jezebel his wife incited him. And he acted very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the Lord cast out before the sons of Israel (21:25, 26).

Now, let us mix all these weaknesses together and let us see what comes out. The mixture produced a marriage that was dominated and controlled by a wicked woman whose heart was set on fire by hell and was determined to destroy the worship of Jehovah. The outcome meant havoc for Israel: Ahab was corrupted; Jezebel almost completely had her way with her demonic religion; their home became a cesspool of evil, and the nation sank to one of its lowest spiritual ebbs.

I was talking recently to a brother who had been married to a wonderful woman for sixty-five years. They had invited me to attend their anniversary celebration. After expressing my congratulations, I asked him, “To what do you attribute the success of your marriage?” He grinned and told me this story: “When we married, we mutually agreed that she would make all the minor decisions and I would make all the major ones. We have been married now sixty-five years, and we have not faced a major decision yet!” He was only joking with me, and we both laughed about it; but there is a serious side to his story. Let the wife or mother make all the decisions of the home, and that home cannot be what God has designed the home to be. It will fail, because it has no real husband, father, or head. A sad example of this is Ahab and Jezebel. If we have eyes to see and hearts to understand, we will learn from them.

God has given the husband and the wife divine responsibilities for the success and beauty of the home. When His designs are forsaken and broken, for whatever reason, the home runs amuck, and a foundation stone for love and peace and for the nation is destroyed.

**CORRUPTED BY THE WRONG RELIGION**

A third reason that we would say Ahab and Jezebel’s marriage was made in hell is that it advocated the wrong religion, the cult of Baalism. God has but one religion, and any rejection of it is disobedience and apostasy. The acceptance of Baalism is the acceptance of a lie.

Jezebel’s character was uniformly and consistently wicked, but Ahab was like a cake half-baked, done on only one side. He never abandoned the worship of Jehovah, and this was reflected in the names given to his children: Jehoram (“Jehovah is exalted”) and Ahaziah (“Jehovah is strong”). He maintained a servant, Obadiah, who was a devout believer in Jehovah. Thus Ahab, by name and confession, was a worshiper of Jehovah. His sin was not that he totally forsook Jehovah for Baal, but that he tried to serve them both (18:21). Jezebel probably turned out to be the most wicked woman of the Bible. She could have won a wickedness contest without anyone being a close second. She not only wanted to introduce her god to Israel, but she also wanted her god to dominate Israel and replace the worship of Jehovah. Vile in heart and soul, she even sought to kill the prophets of God (19:2). Since Jezebel was domineering and headstrong and Ahab was weak-willed and without courage, his fate was decided by his marriage to Jezebel.

When Jezebel married Ahab, she brought 450 prophets of Baal into Israel. She was a pagan missionary, devout and earnest. The earlier apostasy of Jeroboam, establishing the shrines at Dan and Bethel and authorizing the golden calves, had been serious enough; but this introduction of the Baal cult was much worse. It involved an even more outright substitution of deity—polytheism for monotheism—plus degrading, licentious observances, including religious prostitution. Jezebel’s coming into Israel was a crucial factor in Israel’s history. Due to the influence she was allowed to have, her presence in Israel plunged Israel into the darkest night of idolatry ever.

Ahab, though a believer in Jehovah, acquiesced to the wishes of Jezebel, and she afflicted upon Israel the worst scourge of pagan religion that Israel had thus far experienced. It can only be said that this disaster for the nation grew out
of a marriage made in hell.

Implied throughout the Scriptures is the truth that a Christian should marry a Christian and Christian living should be the thrust of their home. The worship of Jehovah is not just a minor choice about life; it is crucial and central to happiness and faithfulness. Any marriage that sacrifices or neglects the sincere worship of Jehovah abandons the blessings of God and gives the devil a permanent guest room in that home.

Each young person should take out insurance against having a mistaken marriage by resolving early in life to marry only a devout Christian who will agree to let God have first place in their home. Nothing should have persuaded Ahab to marry anyone but a woman who sought to be God’s faithful servant. Marriage to a woman like Jezebel should never have entered his mind.

CONCLUSION

Here, then, was a marriage made in hell. Does it not make you shudder? Conceived for the wrong reason, controlled by the wrong relationship, and corrupted by the wrong religion, this marriage led Israel to the slaughter house. The devil got his way through this king and queen.

This marriage not only almost ruined Israel, but it brought on Ahab’s death. A bad marriage can kill you. This one killed Ahab. Because of Jezebel’s wickedness, Ahab’s death was a judgment from the Lord (22:1–22). Ahab and Jehoshaphat joined together to take back Ramoth-Gilead, which was controlled by the Syrians. Jehoshaphat said, “Please inquire first for the word of the Lord” (22:5). Ahab brought forth four hundred false prophets, and they all said, “Go up, for the Lord will give it into the hand of the king” (22:6). Zedekiah, one of their number, made horns of iron and put them on his head, proclaiming that with similar horns they would gore the Syrians (2 Chronicles 18:10, 11). Jehoshaphat, with good sense, said, “Is there not yet a prophet of the Lord here, that we may inquire of him?” (22:7). There was one, Micaiah, a prophet who would speak only what the Lord told him to say. The servant who brought him out urged him to go along with the false prophets, who were all in agreement. Micaiah said, in effect, “I must tell you what the Lord says” (22:14).

At first he mocked the false prophets, saying, “Oh, yes, you will succeed. Go on and do battle.” Then he then told them the truth:

I saw all Israel
Scattered on the mountains,
Like sheep which have no shepherd.
And the Lord said, “These have no master.
Let each of them return to his house in peace” (22:17).

Micaiah was telling them of a vision he had about the battle. He said he had seen spirits coming before the Lord. The Lord had asked who would entice Ahab to go to battle. A spirit offered to entice him by sending a lying spirit into all the prophets, and God had said, “Go and do so” (22:22). Incensed by such a prophecy, Zedekiah struck Micaiah on the cheek. Micaiah told him to wait and see the outcome; then he would know who had told him the truth. Micaiah was taken off to prison, where he was to be fed nothing but bread and water until the battle was over and the king returned safely (22:26, 27).

Ahab, discomforted by Micaiah’s prophecy, disguised himself for the battle. At the start of the battle, the king of Syria commanded thirty-two men to go after Ahab only. They almost killed Jehoshaphat, thinking he was Ahab. A soldier shot an arrow at “venture.” He has been called “the nameless, aimless bowman.” Guided by God’s providential radar, his arrow went into the air and came down just right, hitting Ahab. He died in the evening from the wound. God’s judgment had been fulfilled. Before the blood could be cleaned out of the chariot, the dogs came and licked it up, just as Elijah had predicted. As we see Ahab’s death and judgment, we think immediately of what caused it: a marriage made in hell.

God gave us marriage, but He put it within the parameters of our free moral choice. Therefore, you may choose, as Ahab did, a fool for a wife and be destroyed by her, or you may use heavenly wisdom, choose a lovely Christian for a wife, and have a heaven on earth, and, in that haven of love, have the finest encouragement to live for the heaven of the world to come.

Lesson To Be Learned:
Marriages should be made in heaven, not in hell.