

## מות איזבל

אבנר רמו



“The Death of Jezebel” by Giovanni Coli (1643-1681).

In the Book of Kings we read:

ולאהאב שבעים בנים בשמרון; ויכתב יהוא ספרים וישלח שמרון, אל-שרי יזרעאל הזקנים, ואל-האמנים אחאב,

“And Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, even the elders, and to them that brought up [the sons of] Ahab” (2 Ki 10:1).

ויכתב אליהם ספר שנית לאמר, אם-לי אתם ולקלי אתם שמעים קחו את-ראשי אנשי בני-אדניכם, ובאו אלי כעת מחר יזרעאלה; ובני המלך שבעים איש, את-גדלי העיר מגדלים אותם.

ויהי כבא הספר אליהם, ויקחו את-בני המלך וישחטו שבעים איש; וישימו את-ראשיהם בדודים וישלחו אליו יזרעאלה.

“And he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying: If you be on my side, and if you will hearken to my voice, take the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to-morrow this time. Now the king's sons, [being] seventy persons, [were with] the great men of the city, [who] brought them up.

And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew [them even] seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent them to him to Jezreel” (2 Ki 10:6-7).

Yet in the Previous chapter we find that when Jehu came to Jezreel and saw Jezebel and her attendants looking at him from the window, he told her attendants:

**ויאמר שמטהו (שמטוה), וישמטוה; ויז מדמה אל-הקיר ואל-הסוסים, וירמסנה.**

**“And he said: Throw her down, so they threw her down; and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses; and she was trodden under foot” (2 Ki 9: 33).**

However, while here the word **שמטהו** was translated to the English “**throw her**”, other words from the root **שמט** were translated to English as: “**release**” (Deu 15:1, 2, 9; 31:10). In addition, we have to wonder how the throwing down of Jezebel caused her blood to be sprinkled on the wall? However, after reading that Jehu ordered the slaughtering of all the sons of Ahab, we may reason that it is likely that Jehu also ordered the attendants of Jezebel to slaughter her. If that is the case then: **שמטהו (שמטוה), וישמטוה** is a letter-substitution error of **שחטוה, וישחטוה** - “slew her, and they slaughtered her.”

Furthermore, the reading in the Book of Leviticus: **והזה מדם החטאת על-קיר המזבח** - “**And he shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin-offering upon the all of the altar**” (Lev 5:9), and of: **וטבל אתם בדם הצפר השחוט, ובמים החיים; והזה אל-הבית שבע פעמים** - “**and he will dip them in the blood of the slain bird, and in the running water, and sprinkle on the house seven times**” (Lev 14:51), suggests that if indeed Jezebel was slaughtered, her blood could have been sprinkled on the wall (**ויז מדמה אל-הקיר**). In addition, the logic of this verse also suggests that here **וירמסנה** is an order-type error of **וימסרנה** - “and they delivered her.”