Jezebel

Her name means "chaste" - morally pure and virtuous. Yet she was the total opposite! A God-hating, murderous, shameless, impudent, scheming woman.

1. Who she was:
   a. She was the daughter of a Sidonian King - 1 Kings 16:31. [Sidon was located north of Israel, along the Mediterranean coast. Today it is a part of Lebanon.]
   b. Ahab, King of Northern Israel, married her - 1 Kings 16:31. [She would complement and reinforce his own evil character.]

2. About her "religious perspective":
   a. She was deeply involved in both idolatry and witchcraft - 2 Kings 9:22.
   b. She had a strong negative influence on Ahab - 1 Kings 21:25.
      i. Ahab became more evil than any of Israel's kings before him - 1 Kings 16:30; 21:26.
      ii. Ahab began to serve Jezebel's false gods. He constructed an altar for Baal (the "sun god"), and built an Asherah pole (in honor of the "fertility goddess") - 1 Kings 16:31-33.
   c. She zealously pursued her idolatry and opposed the God of Israel.
      i. She had at her services 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah - 1 Kings 18:19.
      ii. She attempted to exterminate the Lord's prophets -1 Kings 18:4, 13. [She did not completely succeed. Obadiah managed to keep 100 of them alive, by hiding them in two caves. Also Elijah had "disappeared" from the land - 1 Kings 17:2-3, 8-9; 18:10 (+context).]
   d. She threatened to kill Elijah.
      i. Elijah had just proved that the prophets of Baal and Asherah were fakes, and he had them put to death (in accordance with God's Law - Deuteronomy 18:20) - 1 Kings 18:21-40; 19:1.
      ii. This angered Jezebel (of course) so she swore that she would kill Elijah within 24 hours - 1 Kings 19:2.
      iii. When Elijah heard this, he ran for his life - 1 Kings 19:3. [Jezebel's threat was not mere empty words. She had already succeeded in killing many of the Lord's prophets. If Elijah had stayed in Jezreel, it would have been a simple matter for Jezebel to accomplish what she threatened to do.]
      iv. [Later, God gave Elijah the task of appointing those who would eventually judge Ahab and his family - 1 Kings 19:15-18.]
3. **Her scheming plot to have Naboth murdered:**
   a. **Ahab wanted Naboth's property, but Naboth would not sell it to him** - 1 Kings 21:1-3.
      i. God prohibited the selling of one's inheritance property; it was to be kept within the family - Leviticus 25:23; Numbers 36:7.
      ii. Land could temporarily exchange hands - Leviticus 25:24-28, but Ahab’s offer was apparently intended as a permanent transaction.
   b. **Jezebel plotted to have Naboth falsely accused and put to death, so that Ahab could take over the property** - 1 Kings 21:4-16.

4. **God's judgment pronounced against her (and the rest of Ahab's family), by Elijah:**
   a. **Jezebel would be killed and her body eaten by dogs, by the wall of Jezreel** - 1 Kings 21:23; 2 Kings 9:10, 36.
      i. This is where Naboth had lived - 1 Kings 21:1, 15.
      ii. This judgment meant that there would be little left to bury. Her body would become dog excrement. There would be no tomb, where people could build a memorial in her honor - 2 Kings 9:37.
   b. **All of Ahab's family would be destroyed** - 1 Kings 21:24.
      i. Part of this judgment was delayed, because Ahab humbled himself - 1 Kings 21:27-29. [Ahab restrained his actions; but his heart did not change. He was still unwilling to follow the Lord - compare to chapter 22.]
      ii. King Ahaziah, his son, was just as evil, for he walked in the ways of his parents - 1 Kings 22:52.

5. **God's judgment accomplished by Jehu:**
   a. **He was an army officer, who was appointed by God to do this** - 2 Kings 9:1-13.
   b. **How Jezebel was killed:**
      i. Jehu went to Jezreel, where Jezebel was residing.
      ii. Jezebel was thrown out a window in the city wall; then her body was trampled by horses - 2 Kings 9:30-33.
      iii. While Jehu was inside the city eating a meal, dogs were outside the city eating Jezebel's body. In the end, nothing could be found of her, except for her skull, feet and hands - 2 Kings 9:34-35.
   c. **How the rest of Ahab's family was killed:**
      i. Chapters 9 & 10 describe how Jehu killed the rest of Ahab's family.
      ii. Note that Jehu went beyond what God told him to do, by killing others who were not a part of Ahab's family - 2 Kings 10:11. He also failed to remain loyal to God - 2 Kings 10:31. In the end, his family would also be judged by God - Hosea 1:4.
6. **Being like Jezebel - a person mentioned in Revelation (2:20-25):**

a. **There was a woman (perhaps even a prominent leader) who was encouraging the same types of sins as what Jezebel encouraged.** She was a corrupting influence on the people in the church, just as the Jezebel of the Old Testament was a corrupting influence on Ahab (and the rest of the nation).

   i. Committing sexual immorality - perhaps comparable to the worship of Asherah, who was supposed to be the "goddess of fertility."

   ii. Eating food sacrificed to idols (understood as an acceptance of what those idols represented) - perhaps comparable to the worship of Baal. Baal was supposed to be the "sun god," who could provide light and heat - or (if angry) fierce heat, plague and destruction. Sacrifices to Baal were quite common during Jezebel's day. (At times, they even sacrificed children - compare to Jeremiah 19:5.)

   iii. Learning Satan's "deep secrets" - perhaps comparable to the witchcraft (occult practices) that Jezebel was involved in. [Or it may simply represent the sum total of her evil ways (as well as their evil source).]

b. **Like the Jezebel of the Old Testament, this New Testament "Jezebel" (most likely not her real name) would be judged by God, along with everyone associated with her.**

c. **NOTE:** Perhaps, within the context of the church, this New Testament "Jezebel" may have introduced the sinful practices, rather than emphasizing the idols themselves. (She would have taught that those practices were acceptable and compatible with Christianity.) Or she may have begun with less-obvious sins and (once she gained a following) progressed to the more obvious ones.