**NABOTH’S VINEYARD**

1 Kings 21:1-29

Key verse 20

Ahab said to Elijah, “So you have found me, my enemy!” “I have found you,” he answered, “because you have sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord.

**Introduction**



Ahab did an evil deed again in this passage by killing Naboth. James 4:1-2 reads, “What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have it because you do not ask God.” Ahab was driven by his own greed and committed a sin of murder. But God sent Elijah to rebuke his terrible sins. Then he repented of his sins this time. God was graciously accepting his repentance although it was not proven to be his genuine repentance. May the Lord help us to fight the good fight against our sins and humbly repent of our sins to please the Lord.

1. Read verses 1-14. Why was Ahab sullen and angry? (1-4) What did Jezebel do for him? (5-10) What did the elders and nobles’ deeds reveal about them? (11-14)

1-1, Read verses 1-14.

Some time later there was an incident involving a vineyard belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. The vineyard was in Jezreel, close to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. 2 Ahab said to Naboth, “Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth.” 3 But Naboth replied, “The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my ancestors.” 4 So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my ancestors.” He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat. 5 His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, “Why are you so sullen? Why won’t you eat?” 6 He answered her, “Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, ‘Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’” 7 Jezebel his wife said, “Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I’ll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.” 8 So she wrote letters in Ahab’s name, placed his seal on them, and sent them to the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth’s city with him. 9 In those letters she wrote: “Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people.10 But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them bring charges that he has cursed both God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death.” 11 So the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth’s city did as Jezebel directed in the letters she had written to them. 12 They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth in a prominent place among the people. 13 Then two scoundrels came and sat opposite him and brought charges against Naboth before the people, saying, “Naboth has cursed both God and the king.” So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death. 14 Then they sent word to Jezebel: “Naboth has been stoned to death.”

1-2, Why was Ahab sullen and angry? (1-4)

***Some time later there was an incident involving a vineyard belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. The vineyard was in Jezreel, close to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. 2 Ahab said to Naboth, “Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth.” 3 But Naboth replied, “The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my ancestors.” 4 So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my ancestors.” He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat.***

* Ahab wanted to have a vineyard next to his palace in order that he may enjoy fresh vegetables.
* But Naboth refused to sell his land because he believed that the Lord forbade it. Leviticus 25:23-24 says, “‘The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers. Throughout the land that you hold as a possession, you must provide for the redemption of the land.”
* Ahab was a king in Israel, but he had no holy fear for the Almighty God of Israel and he had no idea about what the Scripture says. He wanted to do this and that according to his selfish and self serving desire.
* Still there are 7000 believing people who fear God did not bow to Baals. Maybe Naboth was one of them and knew when he had to say, “No” by faith.
* Ahab did not understand where Naboth came from. Then Ahab should’ve asked why and learned from him about the will of God. But he had no desire for it at all.

1-3, What did Jezebel do for him? (5-10)

***5 His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, “Why are you so sullen? Why won’t you eat?” 6 He answered her, “Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, ‘Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’” 7 Jezebel his wife said, “Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I’ll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.” 8 So she wrote letters in Ahab’s name, placed his seal on them, and sent them to the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth’s city with him. 9 In those letters she wrote: “Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people.10 But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them bring charges that he has cursed both God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death.”***

* We can see here that Jezebel had real authority and Ahab was a spineless man. Jezebel sent letters to leaders in Naboth’s town, asking them to declare a fast.
* Then they were asked to have two scoundrels who would accuse Naboth of cursing God and Ahab so that the people would stone Naboth to death.
* Jezebel now assumes Ahab’s role, his authority and even his name. Death sentence was due to blasphemy and treason.
* Thus, the people take the innocent man and stone him to death. Having executed Naboth and his family (2 Ki 9:26), his property is now forfeited to the crown. In this way, Ahab and his wife committed sins of both murder and stealing

1-4, What did the elders and nobles’ deeds reveal about them? (11-14)

***11 So the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth’s city did as Jezebel directed in the letters she had written to them. 12 They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth in a prominent place among the people. 13 Then two scoundrels came and sat opposite him and brought charges against Naboth before the people, saying, “Naboth has cursed both God and the king.” So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death. 14 Then they sent word to Jezebel: “Naboth has been stoned to death.”***

* They participated in the evil deeds of Ahab and Jezebel. They were like religious leaders in Jesus’ days who planned together to kill Jesus.
* Jesus was charged with similar crimes, accused of offending both God and Caesar. Naboth, just like Jesus, was completely innocent of such accusations and was murdered without cause.

1. Read verses 15-20. How did Jezebel encourage Ahab? (15-16) What was the word of the Lord that came to Elijah? (17-19) What can we learn from Elijah’s definition of “enemy”? (20)

2-1, Read verses 15-20.

As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, “Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell you. He is no longer alive, but dead.” 16 When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of Naboth’s vineyard.17 Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite: 18 “Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is now in Naboth’s vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it. 19 Say to him, ‘This is what the Lord says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?’ Then say to him, ‘This is what the Lord says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth’s blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!’” 20 Ahab said to Elijah, “So you have found me, my enemy!” “I have found you,” he answered, “because you have sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord.

2-2, How did Jezebel encourage Ahab? (15-16)

***As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, “Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell you. He is no longer alive, but dead.” 16 When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of Naboth’s vineyard.***

* Jezebel encouraged her husband to take the vineyard, for its owner was gone. But the author wrote that he took possession of Naboth’s vineyard.
* Even with Naboth dead, the land did not belong to Ahab or the royal house of Israel. It belonged to the heirs or family of Naboth.

2-3, What was the word of the Lord that came to Elijah? (17-19)

***17 Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite: 18 “Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is now in Naboth’s vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it. 19 Say to him, ‘This is what the Lord says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?’ Then say to him, ‘This is what the Lord says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth’s blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!’”***

* Ahab ran out to get his new land gained by betrayal, lies, and murder - and instead he encountered the prophet of God according to God’s will.
* Elijah confronted Ahab and God clearly held Ahab responsible for this sin as husband, as king, and as beneficiary of this crime.
* In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours. This was a strong and startling prophecy.
* This was fulfilled later that the blood from Ahab's chariot to the waters of Jezreel, or that this was fulfilled in the blood that ran in the veins of Ahab's son Joram.
* 2 Kings 9:25-26 reads, “Jehu said to Bidkar, his chariot officer, “Pick him up and throw him on the field that belonged to Naboth the Jezreelite. Remember how you and I were riding together in chariots behind Ahab his father when the Lord spoke this prophecy against him: 26 ‘Yesterday I saw the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons, declares the Lord, and I will surely make you pay for it on this plot of ground, declares the Lord.’ Now then, pick him up and throw him on that plot, in accordance with the word of the Lord.”

2-4, What can we learn from Elijah’s definition of “enemy”? (20)

***20 Ahab said to Elijah, “So you have found me, my enemy!” “I have found you,” he answered, “because you have sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord.***

* You have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD. In a similar way Romans 7:14, “We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin.” Sin and Satan became one’s master when one has sold oneself to do evil. One can not escape his responsibility to choose to do evil.

1. Read verses 21-29. What disaster was going to be brought upon Ahab and Jezebel? (21-26) What can we learn from God’s mercy shown to Ahab? (27-29)

3-1, Read verses 21-29.

He says, ‘I am going to bring disaster on you. I will wipe out your descendants and cut off from Ahab every last male in Israel—slave or free.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Kings%2021&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9473a)] 22 I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat and that of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have aroused my anger and have caused Israel to sin.’ 23 “And also concerning Jezebel the Lord says: ‘Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Kings%2021&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9475b)]Jezreel.’ 24 “Dogs will eat those belonging to Ahab who die in the city, and the birds will feed on those who die in the country.” 25 (There was never anyone like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, urged on by Jezebel his wife. 26 He behaved in the vilest manner by going after idols, like the Amorites the Lord drove out before Israel.) 27 When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly. 28 Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite: 29 “Have you noticed how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself, I will not bring this disaster in his day, but I will bring it on his house in the days of his son.”

3-2, What disaster was going to be brought upon Ahab and Jezebel? (21-26)

***He says, ‘I am going to bring disaster on you. I will wipe out your descendants and cut off from Ahab every last male in Israel—slave or free.[***[***a***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Kings%2021&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9473a)***] 22 I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat and that of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have aroused my anger and have caused Israel to sin.’***

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***25 (There was never anyone like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, urged on by Jezebel his wife. 26 He behaved in the vilest manner by going after idols, like the Amorites the Lord drove out before Israel.)***

* This was a severe judgment against Ahab and his family. His legacy was in his descendant who would succeed him on the throne, and here God announced an end to his dynasty.
* His dynasty would come to a dead end just like that of Jeroboam and Baasha. Ahab never possessed the vineyard of Naboth. He held it, but that very fact tormented him.
* The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel: Though the prophecy of judgment was focused against Ahab, it did not forget Jezebel. His end would be both horrible and disgraceful.
* Also Ahab’s sins were urged by his wife just as Adam was urged by his wife, Eve. As the Amorites worshipped idols and were expelled from the land, so would be the same with the northern kingdom, Israel.

3-3, What can we learn from God’s mercy shown to Ahab? (27-29)

***27 When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly.***

***28 Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite: 29 “Have you noticed how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself, I will not bring this disaster in his day, but I will bring it on his house in the days of his son.”***

* God honored Ahab's initiative in repenting of his sins. This also shows the power of both prayer and humble repentance.
* If Ahab did not humble himself in this way, then the judgment would have come on his own day.
* This shows that God gave the prophecy of judgment as a personal invitation to repentance, and God opened the door of mercy when Ahab responded to it.

**Conclusion**

This passage shows God’s justice and mercy very well. Ahab and Jezebel did evil acts and claimed the land of Naboth. But still God who had seen it from A to Z, was in charge and sent Elijah to deliver the message of judgement. God showed His great mercy on Ahab when he repented of his sins. Always, God is merciful to those who repent, even if they are very evil. The bottom line is, and all God ever wants is for us to realize our sins and repent, sincerely. Then we can receive God’s mercy. Praise the Lord whose characteristics are full of grace and truth! Thank God for enlightening us to know God better. Help us to not give up anyone who seems to be hopeless. Rather we may serve the life giving message by faith until they may turn from their sins.

**One word: Naboth’s vineyard!**