

1 Kings 21 Commentary

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Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission
[1 Kings Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

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(NOTE: Many consider Amaziah and Hezekiah as "good" kings)
SEE ALSO:
[ESV chart - kings of Israel - more information](#)
[ESV chart - kings of Judah - more information](#)
[Another Chart with Variable Dates for Reigns of Kings](#)

1 Kings 21:1 Now it came about after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

KJV 1 Kings 21:1 And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

BGT 1 Kings 20:1 κα μπελ ν ε ς ν τ Ναβουθαι τ Ιεζραηλ τ παρ τ λ Αχααβ βασιλ ως Σαμαρε ας

LXE 1 Kings 21:1 And Nabuthai the Jezraelite had a vineyard, near the threshingfloor of Achaab king of Samaria.

NET 1 Kings 21:1 After this the following episode took place. Naboth the Jezreelite owned a vineyard in Jezreel adjacent to the palace of King Ahab of Samaria.

CSB 1 Kings 21:1 Some time passed after these events. Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard; it was in Jezreel next to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

ESV 1 Kings 21:1 Now Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

NIV 1 Kings 21:1 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.

NLT 1 Kings 21:1 Now there was a man named Naboth, from Jezreel, who owned a vineyard in Jezreel beside the palace of King Ahab of Samaria.

- **after these things:** 1Ki 20:35-43 2Ch 28:22 Ezr 9:13,14 Isa 9:13 Jer 5:3
- **Jezreel:** 1Ki 18:45 Jos 19:18 Jdg 6:33 1Sa 29:1 Ho 1:4,5
- Robert G Lee's classic sermon on 1Kings 21 - Pay Day, Some Day
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

NABOTH'S VINEYARD PRIME REAL ESTATE

[Paul Apple](#) gives a good summary of chapter 21 - How many of the Ten Commandments can Ahab and Jezebel break in this short story? Here we have a case study regarding Covetousness – but other commands are violated as well. The depths of their depravity are exposed in this selfish land grab of poor Naboth's family vineyard. Naboth stands on his biblical convictions but is quickly removed from the scene by a wicked abuse of power on the part of Jezebel who shows no remorse or even a conscience. Ahab is more than just complicit in this sordid affair as he salivates at the prospect of taking over this coveted vineyard just outside the palace grounds. Elijah is dispatched to courageously confront Ahab and pronounce judgment.

Alexander Maclaren noted three types of dangerous characters in this chapter: - (1) Ahab, who was wicked and weak. - (2) Jezebel, who was wicked and strong. - (3) The Elders of Jezreel, who were wicked and subservient.

Now it came about after these things - CSB - "Some time passed after these events" Always pause when you see time phrases and ask "What time is it?" In this case it would seem to be after we have left King Ahab "sullen and vexed" in 1Ki 20:43.

That Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria- The writer sets the scene for another sullen scene! Here **Samaria** as the capital stands for the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

[Dave Roper](#) - Jezreel was the summer capital of the nation of Israel, the northern kingdom. It is located on the northern slopes of Mt. Gilboa, so it is shaded from the summer sun and overlooks the valley of Jezreel. It gets the winds that blow in from the Mediterranean during the summer, so it is a very cool and delightful place. Ahab had taken his court to Jezreel and had set up residence there. There is only a sleepy little Arab village there today, but in Ahab's time it was a thriving and bustling center of national life. Apparently, Ahab's palace was right on the wall that was a part of the citadel, and from his palace he could look down into a neighboring vineyard which belonged to Naboth. It was evidently a lovely vineyard, and because of its location it was very much desired by Ahab. He wanted it for a vegetable garden

Complete Biblical Library Commentary - The neighborhood of Jezreel, as is still shown by the ancient winepresses cut out of the rock in the neighborhood of its ruins, was enriched by vineyards, and one of these vineyards adjoining the palace belonged to a citizen named Naboth.

[Robert G Lee's assessment of Ahab](#) - I introduce to you Ahab, the vile human toad who squatted upon the throne of his nation -- the worst of Israel's kings. King Ahab had command of a nation's wealth and a nation's army, but he had no command of his lusts and appetites. Ahab wore rich robes, but he had a sinning and wicked and troubled heart beneath them. He ate the finest food the world could supply -- and this food was served to him in dishes splendid by servants obedient to his every beck and nod -- but he had a starved soul. He lived in palaces sumptuous within and without, yet he tormented himself for one bit of land more. Ahab was a king with a throne and a crown and a scepter, yet he lived nearly all of his life under the thumb of a wicked woman -- a tool in her

hands. Ahab pilloried himself in the contempt of all God-fearing men as a mean and selfish rascal who was the curse of his country. The Bible introduces him to us in words more appropriate than these when it says:

But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel . . . And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him (1 Kings 21:25,26; 16:33).

I like **J R Macduff's** analysis of Voices from Naboth's Vineyard - (1) Beware of covetousness, (2) Keep out of the way of temptation, and (3) Be sure your sin will find you out! For expansion of each of these subtopics see the full message [Voices from Naboth's Vineyard](#)

QUESTION - [Who was Naboth in the Bible?](#) | [GotQuestions.org](#)

ANSWER - Naboth's story in the Bible (1 Kings 21) involves the downfall of the wicked king Ahab of Israel and his infamous wife, Jezebel. Because of their mistreatment of Naboth, Ahab and Jezebel were each promised an untimely and violent demise.

Naboth was a Jezreelite. He had a vineyard in close proximity to Ahab's palace in Jezreel. Ahab wanted to turn Naboth's vineyard into a vegetable garden, since it was so near the palace (1 Kings 21:2). So the king offered to pay Naboth for his vineyard or give him a better vineyard someplace else. Naboth, however, was unwilling to give up the land he had inherited from his fathers; it was not for sale at any price (verse 3). Ahab was upset and went home "sullen and angry" because he could not have Naboth's vineyard. The sulking king refused to eat (1 Kings 21:4).

It may seem strange that Naboth would refuse the king's offer, but Naboth was doing the right thing. God had commanded that a family's inheritance not be sold: "**The land must not be sold permanently**" (Leviticus 25:23+); and "**No inheritance in Israel is to pass from one tribe to another, for every Israelite shall keep the tribal inheritance of their ancestors**" (Numbers 36:7+). Naboth was simply following the Law; it was King Ahab who wanted to ignore the Law, and then he pouted when the righteous Naboth would not agree.

In the palace, Queen Jezebel noticed that her husband was unhappy, so she asked him what was wrong. Ahab told her about his encounter with Naboth. Jezebel told him that, since he was the king, he could have anything he wanted. Then she promised to take action herself: "Get up and eat! Cheer up. I'll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite" (1 Kings 21:7). Jezebel proceeded to make arrangements to have Naboth disposed of. First, she forged letters from the king (verse 8), directing the noblemen and elders of the city to "proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people" (verse 9). Near Naboth were to be placed two "scoundrels" who would falsely accuse Naboth of cursing both God and the king. On these trumped up charges, Naboth was to be taken outside the city and stoned to death (verse 10). The evil plan against Naboth worked. Jezebel had been careful to plant two false witnesses, since a death sentence could not be carried out on the basis of only one witness (Deuteronomy 17:6). So she followed the Law when it suited her; that is, when she could twist it to facilitate her ability to lie, steal, and murder. An especially heinous part of Jezebel's plan was her proclamation of a day of fasting—using a religious ceremony to cover her murderous intent and ensure Naboth's presence was depraved in the extreme. When the queen received word that Naboth was dead, she told Ahab that he could now take possession of Naboth's vineyard, which Ahab was all too happy to do (1 Kings 21:15).

Because of Ahab and Jezebel's shocking murder of Naboth, God condemned them both. Elijah the prophet came to the king with a message from God. In fact, Elijah met Ahab while the king was touring his ill-gotten vineyard. The prophet said, "Have you not murdered a man and seized his property? . . . This is what the Lord says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!" (1 Kings 21:19). Next, Elijah prophesied that the Lord would bring disaster on the house of Ahab, so that every male in Ahab's household would die and, rather than receive an honorable burial, they would be eaten by wild animals (verse 21 and 24). Then the prophet foretold the queen's fate: "Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel" (1 Kings 21:23).

After hearing this terrible pronouncement, Ahab repented of his actions toward Naboth; he [tore his clothes](#), put on [sackcloth](#), and humbled himself before God (1 Kings 21:27). Because of Ahab's response, the Lord chose not to bring the promised disaster on Ahab during his lifetime but during his son's days instead (verse 28). Ahab was indeed an evil man. In fact, he "sold himself to do evil" (1 Kings 21:25), and he "did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him" (1 Kings 16:30). One of the things the Lord hates is "hands that shed innocent blood" (Proverbs 6:17), and Ahab and Jezebel were certainly stained with the innocent blood of Naboth. Yet, even in God's judgment of Ahab, He showed mercy in response to a humbled heart.

The Lord was true to His word. Ahab was killed in battle; his blood was washed out of the chariot in the same place where Naboth had been stoned to death, and the dogs were there, just as Elijah had said (1 Kings 22:34–38). Jezebel was killed, and her body was eaten by dogs (2 Kings 9:30–37). And Ahab's family were all killed (2 Kings 10:1–17). Thus Naboth was avenged.

1 Kings 21:2 Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden because it is close beside my house, and I will give you a better vineyard than it in its place; if you like, I will give you the price of it in money."

KJV 1 Kings 21:2 And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money.

BGT 1 Kings 20:2 κα λησεν Αχααβ πρ ς Ναβουθαί λ γων δ ς μοι τ ν μπελ ν σου κα σταί μοι ε ς κ πον λαχ νων τι γγ ων ο το ς τ ο κ μου κα δ σω σοι μπελ ν αλλον γαθ ν π ρ α τ ν ε δ ρ σκει ν πι ν σου δ σω σοι ρ γ ριον ντ λλαγμα το μπελ ν ς σου το του κα σταί μοι ε ς κ πον λαχ νων

LXE 1 Kings 21:2 And Achaab spoke to Nabuthai, saying, Give me thy vineyard, and I will have it for a garden of herbs, for it is near my house: and I will give thee another vineyard better than it; or if it please thee, I will give thee money, the price of this thy vineyard, and I will have it for a garden of herbs.

NET 1 Kings 21:2 Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard so I can make a vegetable garden out of it, for it is adjacent to my palace. I will give you an even better vineyard in its place, or if you prefer, I will pay you silver for it."

CSB 1 Kings 21:2 So Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard so I can have it for a vegetable garden, since it is right next to my palace. I will give you a better vineyard in its place, or if you prefer, I will give you its value in silver."

ESV 1 Kings 21:2 And after this Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house, and I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money."

NIV 1 Kings 21:2 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."

NLT 1 Kings 21:2 One day Ahab said to Naboth, "Since your vineyard is so convenient to my palace, I would like to buy it to use as a vegetable garden. I will give you a better vineyard in exchange, or if you prefer, I will pay you for it."

- **Give me:** Ge 3:6 Ex 20:17 De 5:21 1Sa 8:14 Jer 22:17 Hab 2:9-11 Lu 12:15 1Ti 6:9 Jas 1:14,15
- **garden:** 2Ki 9:27 De 11:10 Ec 2:5 Song 4:15
- **if you like:** Heb. be good in thine eyes, Ge 16:6 1Sa 8:6 29:6
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

1 Samuel 8:14+ "He (THE KING) will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his servants. (THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT AHAB DID!)

2 Samuel 24:24+ However, the king said to [Araunah](#), "No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price, for I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God which cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

AHAB'S REQUEST OF NABOTH

One could also entitle this passage "Ahab's Covetous Craving of Naboth's Vineyard." Or simply "The High Cost of Coveting."

Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden because it is close beside my house, and I will give you a better vineyard than it in its place; if you like, I will give you the price of it in money - The request of Ahab, at first view, appears fair and reasonable. The problem was that evidently Ahab wished Naboth to sell the land permanently, which was expressly forbidden in the law of God, (Lev 25:14-28+) it was sinful for Ahab to tempt him to do it. Ahab's coveting Naboth's land showed the depravity of his soul.

According to Leviticus 25:25-28+, if someone sold their land, it could only be temporary and had to be returned in the [Year of Jubilee](#).

One might ask why could [David](#) buy the threshing floor from [Araunah \(Ornan\)](#) (2Sa 24:24+ - "No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.") and Ahab not be able to buy the vineyard from Naboth? Araunah in contrast to Naboth actually offered the land to David for free, but David insisted on paying. Even more significant is the fact that [Araunah](#) was not subject to the inheritance laws of the Mosaic Covenant because he was not an Israelite but a Jebusite (thus a [Canaanite](#)) (2Sa 24:16+). Naboth on the other hand was an Israelite and was simply obeying God's law, while [Araunah](#) had no such restriction. The land purchased from Araunah was eventually used as the site of Solomon's temple, the "House of God." (See [Who was Araunah the Jebusite?](#))

Peter Wallace: Think of the symbolism here. Every day Ahab has to look out his window at this Israelite vineyard— this symbol of the permanence of the blessing of Yahweh upon his people. And he wants to turn it into a vegetable garden— a symbol of Egypt—of transience. I doubt that Ahab was thinking of this, but the author of Kings probably was. Ahab is the antichrist, who is leading an assault on the inheritance of Israel, turning the Promised Land into a waste land. (See his sermon entitled "[The Vineyard and the Vegetable Garden](#)" - google may say it is not safe but I had no issues using it).

Iain Provan has an interesting, pithy comment on the vineyard becoming a vegetable garden - When one realizes that Israel is sometimes portrayed in the OT as a vine under God's special care (e.g., Isa. 3:13-15; cf. Mark 12:1-12 and parallels; John 15:1-17), then it becomes clear that Ahab's desire to replace a vineyard with a vegetable garden is meant to be seen as symbolic of a deeper desire. This is a king who wants to make Israel like Egypt [see Deut. 11:10], as did that earlier king [i.e., Solomon] with his foreign wives (cf. ... 1Ki 3:1; 4:21-28; 9:10-14; 10:14-29). (See [1 & 2 Kings - Understanding the Bible Commentary Series - Page 21](#))

The Cure For Greed

Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. --Colossians 3:2

A man who lived with his elderly aunt expected to inherit her small fortune. But he didn't wait for her to die naturally. The newspaper reported that he killed her by giving her an overdose of medication. He's now in prison.

In 1 Kings 21, we read about wealthy King Ahab, who wanted a vineyard so much that he allowed his wife to murder the owner. God was so displeased that He sent Elijah to tell Ahab that dogs would lick up his blood in the very place where Naboth had been murdered. Not only that, but his wife and every male descendant would be slaughtered. The terrifying prophecy was fulfilled 3 years later (2 Ki. 9:4-10:11).

We should fear the sin of greed because it leads people to do terrible things. We should hate it because it is idolatry (Col. 3:5), causing us to value earthly things above God.

The good news is that we can escape greed's grip. In his letter to the Colossians, Paul wrote, "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col 3:2). He urged us to focus on our relationship with Christ and to look forward to meeting with Him when He returns (Col 3:1-4).

Think of Christ and all that He has given you. That's the cure for greed. --H V Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Thinking It Over

Why is greed so pointless? (Mt. 6:19-24).

What's more important than possessions? (vv.25-34).

What do I desire most in life?

If we have Christ, what more do we need?

Mastery of self

Sir Richard Grenville said of Thomas Stukeley, "He was a knight who wanted but one step to greatness, and that was, that in his excessive hurry to rule other people, he forgot to rule himself." The true victor is he who leads his own captivity captive, is master of his own heart by giving it over to the Master Himself. Until the kingdom that has been divided is united, how can it conquer its foes?

The discontented man

A contented man may have enough, but a discontented man never can; his heart is like the "[Slough of Despond](#)", into which thousands of waggon loads of the best material were cast, and yet the slough did swallow up all, and was none the better.

Discontent is a bottomless bog into which if one world were cast it would quiver and heave for another. A discontented man dooms himself to the direst form of poverty, yea, he makes himself so great a pauper that the revenues of empires could not enrich him. Are you impatient in your present position? Believe me that, as George Herbert said of revenues in times gone by, "He that cannot live on twenty pounds a year cannot live on forty"; so may I say: he who is not contented in his present position will not be contented in another though it bring him double possessions. When the vulture of dissatisfaction has once fixed its talons in the breast it will not cease to tear at your vitals. (C H. Spurgeon.)

1 Kings 21:3 But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid me that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers."

KJV 1 Kings 21:3 And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.

BGT 1 Kings 20:3 κα ε πεν Ναβουθαι πρ ς Αχααβ μ μοι γ νοιτο παρ θεο μου δο ναι κληρονομ αν πατ ρων μου σο

LXE 1 Kings 21:3 And Nabuthai said to Achaab, My God forbid me that I should give thee the inheritance of my fathers.

NET 1 Kings 21:3 But Naboth replied to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should sell you my ancestral inheritance."

CSB 1 Kings 21:3 But Naboth said to Ahab, "I will never give my fathers' inheritance to you."

ESV 1 Kings 21:3 But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers."

NIV 1 Kings 21:3 But Naboth replied, "The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers."

NLT 1 Kings 21:3 But Naboth replied, "The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance that was passed down by my ancestors."

- **The LORD forbid:** Ge 44:7,17 Jos 22:29 24:16 1Sa 12:23 24:6 26:9-11 1Ch 11:19 Job 27:5 Ro 3:4,6,31 6:2,15 7:7,13 1Co 6:15 Ga 6:14
- **I should give:** Lev 25:23 Nu 36:7 Eze 46:18

Related Passages:

Leviticus 25:23+ **The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently**, for the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me.

Numbers 36:7+ "Thus **no inheritance of the sons of Israel shall be transferred from tribe to tribe** for the sons of Israel shall each hold to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers.

[1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

NABOTH REFUSES AHAB'S OFFERS

But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid me that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers- The LORD did in fact forbid it! Naboth's refusal was based on **God's law**, which forbade Israelites from permanently selling their inherited land because ultimately the land belonged to the LORD (Lev 25:23+). The law provided that the land could be leased for a period, but that it could never be sold outright (Leviticus 25:13-15+) In short, Ahab was in the wrong and Naboth was in the right. In the final analysis Ahab's request was actually a violation of the Mosaic Covenant. Naboth believed God's Word and that He had said Israel's inheritance was sacred and inalienable. He would not trade the gift of God for the gift of a king.

1 Kings 21:4 So Ahab came into his house sullen and vexed because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and ate no food.

KJV 1 Kings 21:4 And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

BGT 1 Kings 20:4 κα γ νετο τ πνε μα Αχααβ τεταραγμ νον κα κοιμ θη π τ ς κλ νης α το κα συνεκ λυψεν τ πρ σωπον α το κα ο κ φαγεν ρτον

LXE 1 Kings 21:4 And the spirit of Achaab was troubled, and he lay down upon his bed, and covered his face, and ate no bread.

NET 1 Kings 21:4 So Ahab went into his palace, bitter and angry that Naboth the Jezreelite had said, "I will not sell to you my ancestral inheritance." He lay down on his bed, pouted, and would not eat.

CSB 1 Kings 21:4 So Ahab went to his palace resentful and angry, because of what Naboth the Jezreelite had told him. He had said, "I will not give you my fathers' inheritance." He lay down on his bed, turned his face away, and didn't eat any food.

ESV 1 Kings 21:4 And Ahab went into his house vexed and sullen because of what Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him, for he had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and would eat no food.

NIV 1 Kings 21:4 So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat.

NLT 1 Kings 21:4 So Ahab went home angry and sullen because of Naboth's answer. The king went to bed with his face to the wall and refused to eat!

- **sullen and vexed:** 1Ki 20:43 Job 5:2 Isa 57:20,21 Jon 4:1,9 Hab 2:9-12
- **I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers** 1Ki 21:3 Nu 22:13,14
- **And he lay down on his bed:** Ge 4:5-8 2Sa 13:2,4 Ec 6:9 7:8,9 Eph 4:27 Jas 1:14

Related Passages:

1 Kings 20:43+ So the king of Israel went to his house sullen and vexed, and came to Samaria.

[1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE POUTING POTENTATE

So Ahab came into his house sullen(sar; Lxx - [tarasso](#) - troubled, unsettled) **and vexed** - **Sullen** means Ahab was moody, sulking, pouting, and withdrawn because he didn't get what he wanted, like a petulant child that did not get their way! It is interesting that the effect of the words from Naboth had the same effect on Ahab as the words from Elijah (1Ki 20:43+), both causing Ahab to be **sullen and vexed**.

because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." - Jezebel a Sidonian and Baal would have had no Biblical understanding of Naboth's reason for not selling the land (Lev 25:23+).

And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and ate no food He acted like a spoiled, resentful child, refusing to eat or face others. He was acting like a child crossing their arms and refusing to talk after being told "no." Ahab's sinful emotional behavior is setting the stage for a much greater sin once evil Jezebel becomes involved!

THOUGHT - The Scripture is clear that uncontrolled emotions can incite great sins including murder as a result of Cain's anger (Ge 4:5-7+). Uncontrolled anger can give the devil an opportunity to gain a foothold in your life! (Eph 4:26-27+).

*The problem with Ahab was
he had not learned to be content with what he had.*

[Rod Mattoon](#) notes that "The problem with Ahab was he had not learned to be content with what he had. Matthew Henry said, "Paul had contentment in prison, but Ahab did not have contentment in a palace." The Lord was not a part of Ahab's life. A person with

contentment realizes that true happiness is not hindered by material conditions or possessions. The word content has two slightly different pronunciations and meanings. Content= That which is inside of something. Content = Satisfaction with present circumstances. Contentment is being happy with present contents. It is being happy with what I've got rather than focusing on what I don't have. Ahab was a pouting potentate because he focused on what he did not have. The process of acquiring things results in emptiness. Ahab was the king, yet, he felt empty now because he did not have Naboth's vineyard. He had not learned to be happy with what he already had. The process of acquiring character is what brings fulfillment in a person. Character development increases who I am on the inside, not just what I own on the outside. Fulfillment has far more to do with my internal condition than my outward circumstances. A person with character has learned to be content in any circumstance. (Php 4:11+, 1Ti 6:6,8+)...A person with contentment has learned self-control and restraint from wishing for that which is not available. (See [Christian Contentment](#))

*Better is a little with the fear of the LORD
Than great treasure and turmoil with it.*
-- Proverbs 15:16

Robert G Lee's vivid description of the POUTING POTENTATE (from the classic sermon [Pay Day, Some Day](#))

What a ridiculous picture! A king acting like a spoiled and sullen child -- impotent in disappointment and ugly in petty rage! A king, whose victories over the Syrians have rung through many lands -- a conqueror, a slave to himself -- whining like a sick hound! A king, rejecting all converse with others, pouting like a spoiled and petulant child who has been denied one trinket in the midst of one thousand play-things! A king, in a chamber "cieled with cedar, and painted with vermilion" (Jer. 22:14), prostituting genius to theatrical trumpery.

Ahab went into his ivory house, while the sun was shining and the matters of the daytime were all astir, and went to bed and "turned his face to the wall" - his lips swollen with his mulish moping, his eyes burning with cheap anger-fire, his wicked heart stubborn in perverse rebellion against the commandment of God. Servants brought him his meal, plenteously prepared on platters beautiful, but he "would eat no bread." Doubtless, musicians came to play skillfully on stringed instruments, but he drove them all away with imperious gestures and impatient growlings. He turned from his victuals as one turns from garbage and refuse. The conqueror of the Syrians is a low slave to dirt-cheap trivialities. His spirit, now devilishly sullen, is in bondage.

What an ancient picture we have of great powers dedicated to mean, ugly, petty things. Think of it! In the middle of the day, the commander-in-chief of an army seized by Sergeant Sensitive. General Ahab made prisoner by Private Pouts! The leader of an army laid low by Corporal Mopishness! A monarch moaning and blubbering and growlingly refusing to eat because a man, a good man, because of the commandments of God and because of religious principles, would not sell or swap a little vineyard which was his by inheritance from his forefathers. Ahab had lost nothing -- had gained nothing. No one had injured him. No one had made attempt on his life. Yet he, a king with a great army and a fat treasury, was acting like a blubbering baby. Cannon ability was expressing itself in popgun achievement. A massive giant sprawling on the bed like a dwarf punily peevis! A whale wallowing and spouting angrily about because he is denied minnow food! A bear growling sulkily because he cannot lick a spoon in which is a bit of honey! An eagle shrieking and beating his wings in the dust of his own displeasure like a quarreling sparrow fussily fighting with other sparrows for the crumbs in the dust of a village street! A lion sulkily roaring because he was not granted the cheese in a mouse trap! A battleship cruising for a beetle!

What an ancient picture of great powers and talents prostituted to base and purposeless ends and withheld from the service of God! What an ancient spectacle! And how modern and up-to-date, in this respect, was Ahab, king of Israel. What a likeness to him in conduct today are many talented men and women. I know men and women -- you know men and women -- with diamond and ruby abilities who are worth no more to God through the churches than a punctured Japanese nickel in a Chinese bazaar! So many there are who, like Ahab, withhold their talents from God -- using them in the service of the devil. People there are, not a few, who have pipe organ abilities and make no more music for the causes of Christ than a wheezy saxophone in an idiot's hands. People there are, many of them, who have incandescent light powers who make no more light for God than a smoky barn lantern, with smoke-blackened globe, on a stormy night. People there are -- I know them and you know them -- with locomotive powers doing pushcart work for God. People there are -- and how sad 'tis true -- who have steam-shovel abilities who are doing teaspoon work for God. Yes! Now look at this overfed bull bellowing for a little spot of grass outside his own vast pasture lands -- and, if you are withholding talents and powers from the service of God, receive the rebuke of the tragic and ludicrous picture.

1 Kings 21:5 But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, "How is it that your spirit is so sullen that you are not eating food?"

KJV 1 Kings 21:5 But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?

BGT 1 Kings 20:5 κα ε σ λθεν Ιεζαβελ γυν ατο πρ ς ατν κα λ λησεν πρ ς ατν τ τ πνε μ σου τεταραγμ νον κα ο κ ε σ σθ ων ρτον

LXE 1 Kings 21:5 And Jezebel his wife went in to him, and spoke to him, saying, Why is thy spirit troubled, and why dost thou eat no bread?

NET 1 Kings 21:5 Then his wife Jezebel came in and said to him, "Why do you have a bitter attitude and refuse to eat?"

CSB 1 Kings 21:5 Then his wife Jezebel came to him and said to him, "Why are you so upset that you refuse to eat?"

ESV 1 Kings 21:5 But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, "Why is your spirit so vexed that you eat no food?"

NIV 1 Kings 21:5 His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, "Why are you so sullen? Why won't you eat?"

NLT 1 Kings 21:5 "What's the matter?" his wife Jezebel asked him. "What's made you so upset that you're not eating?"

- **Jezebel:** 1Ki 21:25 16:31 18:4 19:2 Ge 3:6
- **How is it that your spirit** 2Sa 13:4 Ne 2:2 Es 4:5
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JEZEBEL QUESTIONS AHAB'S SULLEN STATE

But - Term of contrast and this is a very bad change of direction in the narrative!

Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, "How is it that your spirit is so sullen(sar; Lxx - [tarasso](#) - troubled, unsettled) **that you are not eating food** - NET - "Why do you have a bitter attitude and refuse to eat?"

Sydney Smith once said, "Never give way to melancholy, for if you do, it will encroach upon you like an overflowing river and overwhelm you."

Lord Byron...

Melancholy
Sits on me as a cloud along the sky,
Which will not let the sunbeams through, nor yet
Descend in rain and end; but spreads itself
'Twixt heaven and earth, like envy between man
And man--and is an everlasting mist.

Nemesis of a selfish life-A man who lives entirely for himself becomes at last obnoxious to himself. I believe it is the very law of God that self-centeredness ends in self-nauseousness. There is no weariness like the weariness of a man who is wearied of himself, and that is the awful Nemesis which follows the selfish life. (J. H. Jowett.)

The tyranny of self

There can be no real happiness in the heart, where self is enthroned. If you would have peace, you must seize, bind, and never again let loose, for self is the cruellest tyrant, the deepest shadow, and the blackest blot that darkens life. To be rid of the despot, you must begin by placing others first in all your thoughts and actions; at this the coward drops his head; he hates another to be

first. Next, give him no thought or consideration at all, and though at this neglect he cry out piteously, heed him not, for now is the time to bind him hard and fast with the cords of forgetfulness; then cast him far behind, and be careful to allow neither the call of pain nor pleasure to entice you into loosening one jot or tittle of his bonds, or, once set free, the monster will rise again, hydra-headed, and, towering above all else, enfold and crush you within his clutches, until you are no more free, but a slave, bound hand and foot, in the deadly meshes of over-mastering self. (Great Thoughts.)

Unholy Alliances

The history of the various kings of Judah and Israel, as recorded in 2 Chronicles, does not gloss over the ugly facts. True, Asa “did that which was good...in the eyes of the Lord,” Jehoshaphat “departed not from it, doing that which was right,” and Joash, Uzziah, Hezekiah, Josiah, and others reigned uprightly. Yet, the shameful deeds of the wicked rulers are also openly chronicled. We are told, for instance, that “when Rehoboam had established the kingdom...he forsook the law of the Lord,” and that “Ahaziah...also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab...to do wickedly.”

Other examples could be cited, but let’s stop for a moment at Jehoram because of the explanation given for his evil behavior. We read that “he walked...as did the house of Ahab; for he had the daughter of Ahab as his wife, and he wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord” (2 Chron. 21:6). Jehoram’s reign was a failure, and he died “without being desired” (v. 20) because of one mistake: he married a worldly woman—Ahab’s daughter. **The Bible tells us that “there was none like unto Ahab, who did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel, his wife, stirred up”** (1 Kings 21:25).

Unholy alliances always lead to compromise and spiritual disaster. Paul wrote, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers” (2 Cor. 6:14), and in verse 17 he added, “...be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.” Yes, separation unto God calls for separation from the world!

1 Kings 21:6 So he said to her, “Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, ‘Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you a vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’”

KJV 1 Kings 21:6 And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard.

BGT 1 Kings 20:6 κα ε πεν πρ ς α τ ν τι λ λησα πρ ς Ναβουθαι τ ν Ιεζραηλ την λ γων δ ς μοι τ ν μπελ ν σου ργυρ ου ε δ βο λει δ σω σοι μπελ να λλον ντ α το κα ε πεν ο δ σω σοι κληρονομ αν πατ ρων μου

LXE 1 Kings 21:6 And he said to her, Because I spoke to Nabuthai the Jezraelite, saying, Give me thy vineyard for money; or if thou wilt, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers.

NET 1 Kings 21:6 He answered her, "While I was talking to Naboth the Jezreelite, I said to him, 'Sell me your vineyard for silver, or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.' But he said, 'I will not sell you my vineyard.'"

CSB 1 Kings 21:6 "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite," he replied. "I told him: Give me your vineyard for silver, or if you wish, I will give you a vineyard in its place. But he said, 'I won't give you my vineyard!'"

ESV 1 Kings 21:6 And he said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money, or else, if it please you, I will give you another vineyard for it.' And he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'"

NIV 1 Kings 21:6 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.'"

NLT 1 Kings 21:6 "I asked Naboth to sell me his vineyard or trade it, but he refused!" Ahab told her.

- **Because:** 1Ki 21:2 Es 5:9-14 6:12 Pr 14:30 1Ti 6:9,10 Jas 4:2-7
- **I will not give:** 1Ki 21:3,4

**AHAB SULKING
EXPLANATION**

So he said to her, “Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, ‘Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you a vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard - Ahab’s greedy desire led to Naboth’s righteous refusal, and his request would be one that led to his ruin. One could say Ahab went from Desire to Destruction, which is too often the price of coveting.

1 Kings 21:7 Jezebel his wife said to him, “Do you now reign over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”

KJV 1 Kings 21:7 And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

BGT 1 Kings 20:7 κα ε πεν πρ ς α τ ν Ιεζαβελ γυν α το σ ν ν ο τω ς ποι ε ς βασιλ α π Ισραηλ ν στηθι φ γε ρτον κα σαυτο γενο γ δ σω σοι τ ν μπελ να Ναβουθαι το Ιεζραηλ του

LXE 1 Kings 21:7 And Jezabel his wife said to him, Dost thou now thus act the king over Israel? arise, and eat bread, and be thine own master, and I will give thee the vineyard of Nabuthai the Jezraelite.

NET 1 Kings 21:7 His wife Jezebel said to him, "You are the king of Israel! Get up, eat some food, and have a good time. I will get the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite for you."

CSB 1 Kings 21:7 Then his wife Jezebel said to him, "Now, exercise your royal power over Israel. Get up, eat some food, and be happy. For I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

ESV 1 Kings 21:7 And Jezebel his wife said to him, "Do you now govern Israel? Arise and eat bread and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

NIV 1 Kings 21:7 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."

NLT 1 Kings 21:7 "Are you the king of Israel or not?" Jezebel demanded. "Get up and eat something, and don't worry about it. I'll get you Naboth's vineyard!"

- **Do you now reign:** 1Sa 8:4 2Sa 13:4 Pr 30:31 Ec 4:1 8:4 Da 5:19-21
- **I will give:** 1Ki 21:15,16 Mic 2:1,2 7:3
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Proverbs 29:27 An unjust man is abominable to the righteous, And he who is upright in the way is abominable to the wicked.

KING'S WIMPERING LEADS TO QUEEN'S WICKEDNESS

Jezebel his wife said to him, “Do you now reign over Israel? - CSB - "Now, exercise your royal power over Israel" **NLT -** "Are you the king of Israel or not?"

Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful - NIV - "Get up and eat! Cheer up." It's hard to picture Jezebel even having a concept of what truly made one joyful!

I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite - NLT - "I'll get you Naboth's vineyard!" Jezebel does not own the vineyard but has clearly already concocted her plot which would get the vineyard for Ahab.

Wives who mar their husbands

By the fate of Ahab, whose wife induced him to steal; by the fate of Macbeth, whose wife pushed him into massacre; by the fate of James Ferguson, the philosopher, whose wife entered the room while he was lecturing and wilfully upset his astronomical apparatus, so that he turned to the audience and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I have the misfortune to be married to this woman"; by the fate of Bulwer, the novelist, whose wife's temper was so incompatible that he furnished her a beautiful house near London, and withdrew from her company; by the fate of John Milton, who married a termagant after he was blind, and when somebody called her a rose,

the poet said, "I am no judge of colours, but I may be so, for I feel the thorns daily"--by all these scenes of disquietude and domestic calamity, we implore you to be cautious and prayerful before you enter upon the connubial state, which decides whether a man shall have two heavens or two hells, a heaven here and a heaven there, or a hell now and a hell hereafter. (T. DeWitt Talmage, D. D.)

Robert G Lee's vivid description of THE WICKED WIFE (from the classic sermon [Pay Day, Some Day](#)) THE WICKED WIFE

"And Jezebel his wife."

When Ahab would "eat no bread," the servants went and told Jezebel. What she said to them, we do not know. Something of what she said to Ahab we do know. Puzzled and provoked at the news that her husband would not eat -- that he had gone to bed when it was not bedtime -- Jezebel went to investigate. She found him in bed with his face turned to the wall, his lips swollen with mulish moping, his eyes burning with cheap anger-fire, his heart stubborn in wicked rebellion. He was groaningly mournful and peevishly petulant -- having, up to the moment when she stood by his bedside, refused to eat or cheer up in the least.

Looking at him then, she doubtless, as is the custom with women until this day, put her hand on his forehead to see if he had fever. He had fever-without doubt! He was set on fire of hell, even as is a wicked tongue (Jas. 3:6). Then, in a voice of "Sweet" solicitation, she sought the reason of his anger. She asked, to put it in the semi-slang language of our day: "What's the matter with you, Big Boy?" But, in the words of the Bible: "Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread?" (I Kings 21:5). Then, with his mouth full of grouches, with his heart stubborn in rebellion against the commandment of God, he told her -- his every word full of mopish petulance:

Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard (I Kings 21:6).

Every word he said stung like a whip upon a naked back this wickedly unscrupulous woman who had never had any regard for the welfare of anyone who did not worship her god, Baal -- who never had any conscientious regard for the rights of others, or for others who did not yield to her whimsical imperiousness.

Hear her derisive laugh as it rings Out in the palace like the shrill cackle of a wild fowl that has returned to its nest and has found a serpent therein! With her tongue, sharp as a razor, she prods Ahab as an ox driver prods with sharp goad the ox which does not want to press his neck into the yoke, or as one whips with a rawhide a stubborn mule. With profuse and harsh laughter this old gay and gaudy guinea of Satan derided this king of hers for a cowardly buffoon and sordid Jester What hornet like sting in her sarcasm! What wolf mouth fierceness in her every reproach! What tiger fang cruelty in her expressed displeasure! What fury in the shrieking of her rebuke! What bitterness in the teasing taunts she hurled at him for his scrupulous timidity! Her bosom with anger was heaving! Her eyes were flashing with rage under the surge of hot anger that swept over her.

"Are you not the king of this country?" she chides biting, her tongue sharp like a butcher's blade. "Can you not command and have it done?" she scolds as a common village hag who has more noise than wisdom in her words "Can you not seize and keep?" she cries with reproach. "I thought you told me you were king in these parts! And here you are crying like a baby and will not eat anything because you do not have courage to take a bit of land. You! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! You, the king of Israel, allow yourself to be disobeyed and defied by a common clodhopper from the country. You are more courteous and considerate of him than you are of your queen! Shame on you! But you leave it to me! I will get the vineyard for you, and all that I require is that you ask no questions. leave it to me, Ahab!"

And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite (I Kings 21:7).

Ahab knew Jezebel well enough to know that she would do her best, or her worst, to keep her wicked promise. So, as a turtle that has been sluggish in the cold winter's mud begins to move when the spring sunshine warms the mud, Ahab crawled out of the slime of his sulks -- somewhat as a snake arouses and uncoils from winter sleep. Then Jezebel doubtless tickled him under the chin with her bejewelled fingers or kissed him peckingly on the cheek with her lips screwed in a tight knot, and said: "There now! Smile! And eat something. I will get thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite!"

Now, let us ask, who can so inspire a man to noble purposes as a noble woman? And who can so thoroughly degrade a man as a wife of unworthy tendencies? Back of the statement, "And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in

the sight of the Lord above all that were before him" (1 Kings 16:30), and back of what Elijah spoke, "Thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord" (1 Kings 21:20), is the statement explaining both the other statements: "Whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." She was the polluted reservoir from which the streams of his own iniquity found mighty increase. She was the poisonous pocket from which his cruel fangs fed. She was the sulphurous pit wherein the fires of his own iniquity found fuel for intenser burning. She was the Devil's grindstone which furnished sharpening for his weapons of wickedness.

Search the pages of the Bible all you will; study history all you please. And you will find one truth that stands out above some other truths. What is that truth? The truth that the spiritual life of a nation, city, town, school, church, or home never rises any higher than the spiritual life of women. When women sag morally and spiritually, men sag morally and spiritually. When women slump morally and spiritually, men slip morally and spiritually. When women take the downward road men travel with them. When women are lame morally and spiritually, men limp morally and spiritually. The degeneracy of womanhood helps the decay of manhood.

Yes -- we ask again -- who can so degrade a man as a woman of wicked tendencies and purposes? Is not a woman without spiritual religion and love of God in her heart like a rainbow without color -- like a strong poisoned well from which the thirsty drink -- like a heated stove whose heat is infection -- like kissing lips spread with deadly poison?

What a tragedy when any woman thinks more of paint than purity, of vulgarity than virtue, of pearls than principles of adornment with righteous adoration, of hose and hats than holiness, of dress than duty, of mirrors than manners! What a tragedy when any woman sacrifices decency on the altar of degradation -- visualizing the slimy, the tawdry, the tinsel!

We ask -- just here -- some questions. Who dominated the papacy in its most shameful days? Lucretia Borgia -- a woman. Who really ordered the massacre of Saint Bartholomew's day? Catherine de Medici -- a woman. Who breathed fury through Robespierre in those dark and bloody days in France when the guillotine was chopping off the heads of the royalty? A woman -- determined, devilish, dominant! Who caused Samson to have his eyes punched out and to be a prisoner of the Philistines, after he had been a judge in Israel for twenty years? Delilah -- a woman! Who caused David to stake his crown for a caress? Bathsheba -- a woman. Who danced Herod into hell? Herodias -- a woman! Who was like a heavy chain around the neck of Governor Felix for life or death, for time and eternity? Drusilla -- a woman! Who, by lying and diabolical stratagem, sent the spotless Joseph to jail because he refused her dirty, improper proposal? Potiphar's wife. Who suggested to Haman that he build a high gallows on which to hang Mordecai, the Jew? Zeresh -- a woman -- his wife! Who told Job in the midst of his calamities, financial and physical, to curse God and die? A woman -- his wife. Who ruined the career of Charles Stewart Parnell and delayed Home Rule for Ireland in the good days of good Queen Victoria? Kitty O'Shea -- a woman. Who caused Anthony to throw away the world at the battle of Actium and follow the enchantress of the Nile back to Egypt? The enchantress herself, Cleopatra -- a woman - - the lovely serpent coiled on the throne of the Ptolemies.

So also it was a woman, a passionate and ambitious idolatress, even Jezebel, who mastered Ahab. Take the stirring crimes of any age, and at the bottom, more or less consciously concerned, the world almost invariably finds a woman. Only God almighty knows the full story of the foul plots hatched by women.

But we know enough to say that some of the foulest plots that have been hatched out of Satan's incubator were hatched out of eggs placed therein by women's hands.

But let me say, incidentally, if women have mastered men for evil, they have also mastered them for good -- and we gladly make declaration that some of the fairest and most fragrant flowers that grow in the garden of God and some of the sweetest and most luscious fruit that ripens in God's spiritual orchards are there because of woman's faith, woman's love, woman's prayer, woman's virtue, woman's tears, woman's devotion to Christ.

But as for Ahab, it was Jezebel who stirred him up to more and mightier wickedness than his own wicked mind could conceive or his own wicked hand could execute.

1 Kings 21:8 So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and sent letters to the elders and to the nobles who were living with Naboth in his city.

- **she wrote:** 2Sa 11:14,15 2Ch 32:17 Ezr 4:7,8,11 Ne 6:5 Es 3:12-15 8:8-13
- **the elders:** Nu 11:16 De 16:18,19 21:1-9

- **the nobles:** 1Ki 21:1 2Ki 10:1-7,11
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Proverbs 31:10 An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels. 11 The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain. 12 She does him good and not evil All the days of her life. (JEZEBEL IS THE ANTITHESIS OF AN EXCELLENT WIFE - SHE WOVE AN EVIL WEB THAT EVENTUALLY TOOK OUT ALL OF AHAB'S FAMILY LINE!)

FORGERY IN HIGH PLACES SEALED WITH DECEIT!

So - Term of conclusion. In light of Naboth's refusal and Ahab's sullen state Jezebel begins to hatch an evil plot.

she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal - Apparently she did this secretly, forging Ahab's name and using his royal seal to make it look like a legitimate letter from Ahab. This woman is a snake!

and sent letters to the elders and to the nobles who were living with Naboth in his city- She selects her audience to lay the trap for Naboth. Sadly these godless men, even though they were leaders, would be willing accomplices in the murder of Naboth!

1 Kings 21:9 Now she wrote in the letters, saying, "Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth at the head of the people;

KJV 1 Kings 21:9 And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people:

BGT 1 Kings 20:9 καὶ γράψομαι ἐν τοῖς βιβλίοις λέγων νηστεύσατε νηστεύσαντες καὶ καθύστερον Ναβουθαίον ἔστητε ἐνώπιον τοῦ λαοῦ

LXE 1 Kings 21:9 And it was written in the letters, saying, Keep a fast, and set Naboth in a chief place among the people.

NET 1 Kings 21:9 This is what she wrote: "Observe a time of fasting and seat Naboth in front of the people.

CSB 1 Kings 21:9 In the letters, she wrote: Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth at the head of the people.

ESV 1 Kings 21:9 And she wrote in the letters, "Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth at the head of the people.

NIV 1 Kings 21:9 In those letters she wrote: "Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people.

NLT 1 Kings 21:9 In her letters she commanded: "Call the citizens together for fasting and prayer, and give Naboth a place of honor.

- **Proclaim a fast:** Ge 34:13-17 Isa 58:4 Mt 2:8 23:14 Lu 20:47 Joh 18:28
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

PROCLAIM A FAST PLACE NABOTH AT HEAD

Now she wrote in the letters (scrolls), **saying, "Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth at the head of the people;**

1 Kings 21:10 and seat two worthless men before him, and let them testify against him, saying, 'You cursed God and the king.' Then take him out and stone him to death."

KJV 1 Kings 21:10 And set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die.

BGT 1 Kings 20:10 καὶ ἔστησαν ἔναντί του δύο υἱοὶ παρανομῶν ἕναντι αὐτοῦ καὶ καταμαρτυρήσωσάν

α το λ γοντες η λ γησεν θε ν κα βασιλ α κα ξαγαγ τωσαν α τ ν κα λιθοβολησ τωσαν α τ ν κα ποθαν τω

LXE 1 Kings 21:10 And set two men, sons of transgressors, before him, and let them testify against him, saying, He blessed God and the king: and let them lead him forth, and stone him, and let them die.

NET 1 Kings 21:10 Also seat two villains opposite him and have them testify, 'You cursed God and the king.' Then take him out and stone him to death."

CSB 1 Kings 21:10 Then seat two wicked men opposite him and have them testify against him, saying, "You have cursed God and the king!" Then take him out and stone him to death.

ESV 1 Kings 21:10 And set two worthless men opposite him, and let them bring a charge against him, saying, 'You have cursed God and the king.' Then take him out and stone him to death."

NIV 1 Kings 21:10 But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them testify that he has cursed both God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death."

NLT 1 Kings 21:10 And then seat two scoundrels across from him who will accuse him of cursing God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death."

- **two worthless men:** De 19:15 Mt 26:59,60 Ac 6:11
- **worthless** - sons of Belial: De 13:13 Jdg 19:22
- **You cursed God and the king:** Ex 22:28 Lev 24:15 Mt 26:59-66 Joh 10:33 Ac 6:13

TWO MEN FALSELY ACCUSE LEADING TO STONING NABOTH

and seat two worthless ([beliyyaal](#); Lxx - paranomos = lawless) men before him, and let them testify against him, saying, 'You cursed ([barak](#)) God and the king.' Then take him out and stone him to death - Note the progression (1) 2 worthless/lawless men, (2) giving false testimony and (3) stoning.

Notice the Hebrew word for "cursed" is [barak](#) which is actually the word for blessed! Are you confused. As it turns out ancient Hebrew writers avoided directly writing the phrase "curse God" (qalal" - curse + God) out of reverence and to avoid being guilty of Ex 20:7, taking the name of the LORD in vain. Instead, the Hebrew writers used "[barak](#)" (most often rendered *bless*) as a euphemistic substitute, meaning the opposite, as in 1Ki 21:10. In other words "[barak](#)" was used euphemistically to avoid blasphemy when referring to cursing God. There is a similar use in Job 2:9 which says "Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse ([barak](#)) God and die!"

[John Schultz](#): The suggestion that the council proclaim a day of fasting makes the whole deal a godless mockery. Fasting suggests invoking God's Name and seeking His will. Jezebel had no qualms using God for the achievement of her own evil purposes. . . Jezebel orders them to employ 'scoundrels' to give false testimonies. The fact that they obeyed made them scoundrels themselves. The word 'scoundrel' is the translation of the Hebrew 'sons of Belial,' meaning 'sons of Satan.'"

Worthless (wicked, Belial)([01100](#)) [beliyyaal](#) rom **belî** + **ya'al**: "not, without" and "to be of use, worth, or profit.") A worthless person, good for nothing to himself or others, and capable of nothing but mischief. Some feel that the word **Belial** can be traced to the false god Baal, and is also a term for yoke (they cast off the yoke of decency), and a term for entangling or injuring. The LXX renders it according to the context by the terms paranomos, anomia, and aphrōn, i.e. "lawless, lawlessness, witless." By the NT time, Belial had become synonymous with Satan (cf. 2 Cor. 6:15+).

Usually it occurs in such expressions as "son(s) of Belial" (Deut. 13:14; Judges 19:22+; 1 Samuel 2:12; 2 Chr 13:7), a "daughter of Belial" (1 Samuel 1:16), "man or men of" (1 Samuel 25:25; 2 Samuel 16:7; 1 Kings 21:13; Proverbs 16:27), or a "worthless witness" (Proverbs 19:28).

There is one use we would all do well to ponder and in the power of the Spirit affirm or declare (or pray) to be true in our life from time to time...

I will set no **worthless** ([beliyyaal](#)) thing before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not fasten ([dabaq](#)) its grip on me. (Psalm 101:3+) (MARK IT DOWN - WORTHLESS IMAGES CAN BE VERY "STICKY" IN YOUR MIND'S EYE! I AM SPEAKING ESPECIALLY TO YOU MEN AS YOU KNOW TO WHAT I AM REFERRING!)

BELIYYAAL - 27X/26V - base(1), destruction(1), rascally(1), scoundrels*(1), ungodliness(1), wicked(3), worthless(18), worthless one(1). Deut. 13:13; Deut. 15:9; Jdg. 19:22; Jdg. 20:13; 1 Sam. 1:16; 1 Sam. 2:12; 1 Sam. 10:27; 1 Sam. 25:17; 1 Sam. 25:25; 1 Sam. 30:22; 2 Sam. 16:7; 2 Sam. 20:1; 2 Sam. 22:5; 2 Sam. 23:6; 1 Ki. 21:10; 1 Ki. 21:13; 2 Chr. 13:7; Job 34:18; Ps. 18:4; Ps. 41:8; Ps. 101:3; Prov. 6:12; Prov. 16:27; Prov. 19:28; Nah. 1:11; Nah. 1:15

1 Kings 21:11 So the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them, just as it was written in the letters which she had sent them.

KJV 1 Kings 21:11 And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them.

BGT 1 Kings 20:11 κα πο ησαν ο νδρες τ ς π λεως α το ο πρεσβ τεροι κα ο λε θεροι ο κατοικο ντες ν τ π λει α το καθ π στειλεν πρ ς α το ς Ιεζαβελ καθ γ γραπται ν το ς βιβλ οις ο ς π στειλεν πρ ς α το ς

LXE 1 Kings 21:11 And the men of his city, the elders, and the nobles who dwelt in his city, did as Jezabel sent to them, and as it had been written in the letters which she sent to them.

NET 1 Kings 21:11 The men of the city, the leaders and the nobles who lived there, followed the written orders Jezebel had sent them.

CSB 1 Kings 21:11 The men of his city, the elders and nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had commanded them, as was written in the letters she had sent them.

ESV 1 Kings 21:11 And the men of his city, the elders and the leaders who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them. As it was written in the letters that she had sent to them,

NIV 1 Kings 21:11 So the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city did as Jezebel directed in the letters she had written to them.

NLT 1 Kings 21:11 So the elders and other town leaders followed the instructions Jezebel had written in the letters.

- did as Jezebel: Ex 1:17,21 23:1,2 Lev 19:15 1Sa 22:17 23:20 2Ki 10:6,7 2Ch 24:21 Pr 29:12,26 Da 3:18-25 Ho 5:11 Mic 6:16 Mt 2:12,16 Ac 4:19 5:29
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JEZEBEL'S EVIL PLOT BEGINS TO UNFOLD

So the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them, just as it was written in the letters which she had sent them - The implication is that the elders and nobles were aware of the evil plot and agreed to go along with it.

Forgery, perjury, and murder is the plan of the day.

-- [Rod Mattoon](#)

William Barnes: Being executed "outside" the town would avoid contamination by contact with the dead (Lev 24:13–14, 23; Num 15:35–36). If the procedure detailed in Deut 17:2–7 was followed here, the accusers (here, the "two scoundrels" of 21:10) would have had to throw the first stones. (See [1-2 Kings - Page 177](#))

1 Kings 21:12 They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the people.

KJV 1 Kings 21:12 They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.

BGT 1 Kings 20:12 κ λεσαν νηστε αν κα κ θισαν τ ν Ναβουθαι ν ρχ το λαο

LXE 1 Kings 21:12 And they proclaimed a fast, and set Nebuthai in a chief place among the people.

NET 1 Kings 21:12 They observed a time of fasting and put Naboth in front of the people.

CSB 1 Kings 21:12 They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the people.

ESV 1 Kings 21:12 they proclaimed a fast and set Naboth at the head of the people.

NIV 1 Kings 21:12 They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth in a prominent place among the people.

NLT 1 Kings 21:12 They called for a fast and put Naboth at a prominent place before the people.

- 1Ki 21:8-10 Isa 58:4
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

NABOTH SEATED AT HEAD OF TABLE

They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the people.

1 Kings 21:13 Then the two worthless men came in and sat before him; and the worthless men testified against him, even against Naboth, before the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death with stones.

KJV 1 Kings 21:13 And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.

BGT 1 Kings 20:13 κα λθον ο νδρες υ ο παραν μων κα κ θισαν ξ ναντ ας α το κα κατεμαρτ ρησαν α το λ γοντες η λ γηκας θε ν κα βασιλ α κα ξ γαγον α τ ν ξω τ ς π λεως κα λιθοβ λησαν α τ ν λ θοις κα π θανεν

LXE 1 Kings 21:13 And two men, sons of transgressors, came in, and sat opposite him, and bore witness against him, saying, Thou hast blessed God and the king. And they led him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, and he died.

NET 1 Kings 21:13 The two villains arrived and sat opposite him. Then the villains testified against Naboth right before the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they dragged him outside the city and stoned him to death.

CSB 1 Kings 21:13 The two wicked men came in and sat opposite him. Then the wicked men testified against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth has cursed God and the king!" So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death with stones.

ESV 1 Kings 21:13 And the two worthless men came in and sat opposite him. And the worthless men brought a charge against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death with stones.

NIV 1 Kings 21:13 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.

NLT 1 Kings 21:13 Then the two scoundrels came and sat down across from him. And they accused Naboth before all the people, saying, "He cursed God and the king." So he was dragged outside the town and stoned to death.

- **the two worthless men** Ex 20:16 De 5:20 19:16-21 Ps 27:12 35:11 Pr 6:19 19:5,9 25:18 Mal 3:5 Mk 14:56-59
- **cursed God** Job 1:5,11 2:9 Mt 9:3 Ac 6:11
- **the king:** Ec 10:20 Isa 8:21 Am 7:10 Lu 23:2 Joh 19:12 Ac 24:5
- **they took him outside the city:** Lev 24:11-16 Nu 15:35,36 De 13:10 21:21 22:21,24 Jos 7:24,25 2Ki 9:26 Ec 4:1 Ac 7:57-59

Related Passages:

Acts 7:57-59+ (ANOTHER GODLY MAN STEPHEN STONED OUTSIDE THE CITY) But they cried out with a

loud voice, and covered their ears and rushed at him with one impulse. 58 When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him; and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 They went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

Leviticus 24:16+ 'Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

CONDEMNED BY LIES EXECUTED WITH STONES

Then the two worthless men came in and sat before him; and the worthless men testified against him, even against Naboth, before the people, saying, "Naboth cursed (see [barak](#)) God and the king." - False witnesses come forth just as they did against our Lord (Mt 26:59-61+). The trap was sprung and the deception played out exactly according to Jezebel's malicious design.

So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death with stones - Who is "they?" This is those at the fast, including elders and nobles, all accomplices to Naboth's murder! day. Naboth is falsely accused by scoundrels, men of Belial ("children of the devil" Jn 8:44+). He is accused of blasphemy, which is a stoning offense (Lev 24:16+). Naboth's sons would be stoned too as the heirs are removed (2Ki 9:26).

THOUGHT - Being faithful to the Word of God does not mean your life will go smoothly! But if you've walked with Jesus a few years, you probably already knew this truth. It's good to be reminded from time to time so we are not caught off guard when persecution comes because we are holding fast the Word of Life. (cf 2Ti 3:12, Jn 15:19-21, Acts 14:22, Php 1:29)

Peter Wallace: Naboth believed God's promises. And he was content with that inheritance. Content enough that he did not fear the power of the king. (cf Pr 29:25) Therefore, Naboth died in faith—murdered by Jezebel's henchmen. He deserves a place among the heroes of Hebrews 11:37, those who were stoned to death for their faith. Are you content in your inheritance? We don't have a piece of real estate as the token of our inheritance today! We have something better! We have the Holy Spirit. Naboth had the glory of God dwelling in a temple of stone in the middle of the land. We have the glory of God dwelling in a temple of living stones, dwelling in our hearts by faith.

Rod Mattoon asks "Where is God in all of this? Why didn't the Lord intervene? Naboth has suffered for doing right. We need to realize that nothing happens unless God permits it. In God's wisdom, Naboth is allowed to die, just like the Christians in Rome. Whenever His children suffer for righteousness, God will reward them." (cf Mt 5:10-11+)

1 Kings 21:14 Then they sent word to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."

KJV 1 Kings 21:14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead.

BGT 1 Kings 20:14 κα π σπειλαν πρ ς Ιεζαβελ λ γοντες λελιθοβ ληται Ναβουθαι κα τ θνηκεν

LXE 1 Kings 21:14 And they sent to Jezabel, saying, Nabuthai is stoned, and is dead.

NET 1 Kings 21:14 Then they reported to Jezebel, "Naboth has been stoned to death."

CSB 1 Kings 21:14 Then they sent word to Jezebel, "Naboth has been stoned to death."

ESV 1 Kings 21:14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned; he is dead."

NIV 1 Kings 21:14 Then they sent word to Jezebel: "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."

NLT 1 Kings 21:14 The town leaders then sent word to Jezebel, "Naboth has been stoned to death."

- **Naboth has been stoned:** 2Sa 11:14-24 Ec 5:8 8:14
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE VERDICT DELIVERED, INNOCENT BLOOD SPILLED!

Then they sent word to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned and is dead - The question arises why did they send word

to Jezebel and not to Ahab because she had forged his name and his seal? They clearly knew who was behind this evil plot.

What the perpetrators of this crime either did not know or seem to forget, in the first murder God says to Cain "the voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground." (Ge 4:10+) So too, Naboth's blood would cry out against Ahab (1Ki 21:19) and all the accomplices.

1 Kings 21:15 When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead."

KJV 1 Kings 21:15 And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.

BGT 1 Kings 20:15 κα γνετο ς κουσεν Ιεζαβελ κα επεν πρ ς Αχααβ ν στα κληρον μει τ ν μπελ να Ναβουθαι το Ιεζραηλ του ς ο κ δωκ ν σοι ργυρ ου τι ο κ σιν Ναβουθαι ζ ν τ τ θνηκεν

LXE 1 Kings 21:15 And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard it, that she said to Achaab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Nabuthai the Jezraelite, who would not sell it to thee: for Nebuthai is not alive, for he is dead.

NET 1 Kings 21:15 When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, "Get up, take possession of the vineyard Naboth the Jezreelite refused to sell you for silver, for Naboth is no longer alive; he's dead."

CSB 1 Kings 21:15 When 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 who refused to give it to you for silver, since Naboth isn't alive, but dead."

ESV 1 Kings 21:15 As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money, for Naboth is not alive, but dead."

NIV 1 Kings 21:15 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."

NLT 1 Kings 21:15 When Jezebel heard the news, she said to Ahab, "You know the vineyard Naboth wouldn't sell you? Well, you can have it now! He's dead!"

- **Arise:** 1Ki 21:7 Pr 1:10-16 4:17
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

AHAB ARISE! THE WICKED HAVE PREVAILED!

When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead." - Jezebel gives Ahab two commands and he responds without objection or complaints about her evil plot. Ahab did not reprove her but by taking possession of Naboth's vineyard, he tacitly approved of her evil plan. It is also worth noting that 2Ki 9:26 indicates Naboth's sons were murdered to assure there would be no contesting heirs (Nu 27:8-11 indicates they should have become the heirs not Ahab)! God avenged the blood of Naboth and sons by putting an end to Ahab's line and Jezebel's life. Yes, there was momentary triumph for treachery, but the fruit would be the doom of a dynasty. Ahab paid a high price for Naboth's vineyard!

James Smith - ELIJAH, THE REPROVER 1 Kings 21:15–29

"Life is beautiful wholly, and could we eliminate only
This interfering, enslaving, o' ermastering demon of craving,
This wicked tempter inside us, to ruin still eager to guide us,
Life were beatitude."

—CLOUGH.

If spotless angels fell through the sin of ambition, how can a sinful man hope to succeed by it? The scheming Jezebel had brought the honest Naboth to an untimely death, that her weak but ambitious husband might get possession of his inheritance. The greed of gain has driven others than Jezebel into terrible deeds of darkness. The love of the world is as cruel as the grave. It is as the nursing of a beautiful serpent that will one day send its poisonous fang into the soul. There was a—

I. Seeming Success. “When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he rose up to take possession of the vineyard” (v. 16). It was nothing to him how Naboth had died as long as he was now out of his way to the taking possession of his valuable garden. “Get, get,” by hook or by crook, is the creed of iron-heeled selfishness. What better are those drink-dealers, who by their craft and cunning have enticed multitudes to ruin and death that they might get possession of their money, which was their only vineyard?

II. Forgotten Factor. The Lord said unto Elijah, “Behold, Ahab is gone down to possess the vineyard of Naboth” (vv. 17:18). That secret chamber has never yet been built where a plot can be formed without the eyewitnessing of God. The forgotten factor in the schemes of worldly men and women is GOD. God is not in all their thoughts. Such may succeed for a time, like Ahab and the Babel builders, but all man’s works, to be a final success, must pass muster with a righteous God (Gen. 11:5; 1 Cor. 3:13).

III. Stern Command. “Go down to meet Ahab, and speak unto him, saying, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine” (vv. 17:19). This was a terrible message that Elijah got from the Lord Almighty, who is so infinite in love and compassion. God is love. Yes; but while he “keepeth mercy for thousands” (Exod. 34:7) He will by no means clear the guilty impenitent. The prophet might have preferred to have taken a more gracious message to the king, but to tone down the solemn warnings of Jehovah would be to prove himself a traitor to God and a deceiver of souls (Acts 20:20–27).

IV. Startling Question. “Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?” (v. 20). The messenger of God found out Ahab, as the writing on the wall found out the profane Belshazzar. Sudden surprises are sure to overtake the secret sinner (Luke 12:20). “Be sure your sin will find you out” (Num. 32:23). But why was the prophet of God his enemy? Just because he was living at enmity with God. Was Elijah His enemy because he told Him the truth? (Gal. 4:16). If the sinner is not found by the servant of God he will one day be found by God Himself. Will it then be as an enemy? Light is always the enemy of darkness.

V. Straight Answer. “I have found thee; because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord” (v. 20). When a man has sold himself to the work of the Devil it is surely high time that he was “found out,” and what a mercy it is to be arrested in such a fatal course. Ahab, in selling himself, like every other such sinner, had stifled his conscience and deliberately become the abject slave of lust and pride. To sell one’s self “to work evil in the sight of the Lord” is one of the most culpable and dastardly transactions of which a human soul is capable. Yet for greed of gain and love of the world how many there be who are daily doing it.

VI. Terrible Prospect. “The dogs shall lick thy blood; ... evil upon thee and upon thy posterity; ... the dogs shall eat Jezebel” (vv. 21–24). What a dismal outlook for wealthy royal sinners! The woe that slumbereth not against the covetous has come (Hab. 2:9). “With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again” (Matt. 7:2). These judgments were of God’s appointment, not the prophet’s. All workers of iniquity have a fearful future, which sooner or later will reveal itself in awful reality (Rev. 21:8). “The hope of the wicked shall be cut off” (Prov. 2:22).

VII. Merciful Deliverance. “When Ahab heard those words he rent his clothes, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. Then when the Lord saw that Ahab humbled himself before Him, He promised not to bring the evil in his days” (vv. 27–29). Repentance and humility before God is the only way whereby the guilty may hope to escape Holy and fiery indignation. There is nothing like a discovery of our sinfulness before Him to make us go softly. Here is another proof of God’s readiness to forgive the penitent. He delighteth in mercy; judgment is His strange work. The great outstanding and unailing testimony to God’s willingness to save is the Cross of Christ (Isa. 57:7).

1 Kings 21:16 When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

JV 1 Kings 21:16 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

BGT 1 Kings 20:16 κα γ νετο ς κουσεν Αχααβ τι τ θνηκεν Ναβουθαι Ιεζραηλ της κα δι ρρηξεν τ μ πια αυτο κα περιεβ λετο σ κκον κα γ νετο μετ τα τα κα ν στη κα κατ βη Αχααβ ε ς τ ν μπελ να Ναβουθαι το Ιεζραηλ του κληρονομ σαι α τ ν

LXE 1 Kings 21:16 And it came to pass, when Achaab heard that Nabuthai the Jezraelite was dead, that he rent his garments, and put on sackcloth. And it came to pass afterward, that Achaab arose and went down to the vineyard of Nabuthai the Jezraelite, to take possession of it.

NET 1 Kings 21:16 When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

CSB 1 Kings 21:16 When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite to take possession of it.

ESV 1 Kings 21:16 And as soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

NIV 1 Kings 21:16 When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of Naboth's vineyard.

NLT 1 Kings 21:16 So Ahab immediately went down to the vineyard of Naboth to claim it.

- **Ahab arose to go down** 2Sa 1:13-16 4:9-12 11:25-27 23:15-17 Ps 50:18 Isa 33:15 Ob 1:12-14 Ro 1:32 2Pe 2:15
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Proverbs 21:6 The acquisition of treasures by a lying tongue Is a fleeting vapor, the pursuit of death.

Proverbs 22:16 He who oppresses the poor to make more for himself Or who gives to the rich, will only come to poverty.

Jeremiah 17:11 "As a partridge that hatches eggs which it has not laid, So is he who makes a fortune, but unjustly; In the midst of his days it will forsake him, And in the end he will be a fool."

AHAB'S POSSESSION WITHOUT CONSCIENCE

When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it - Ahab takes possession of the spoils of treachery. In effect Ahab is guilty of a "double theft," first from Naboth, but ultimately stealing from Yahweh! (See Owner in Lev 25:23+).

The **Septuagint** has and an interesting addition "he rent his garments, and put on sackcloth." Even if has a shred of validity, clearly Ahab was not sincere. The official Masoretic Text makes no mention of Ahab tearing his clothes or wearing sackcloth.

1 Kings 21:17 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

KJV 1 Kings 21:17 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

BGT 1 Kings 20:17 κα ε πεν κ ριος πρ ς Ηλιου τ ν Θεσβ την λ γων

LXE 1 Kings 21:17 And the Lord spoke to Eliu the Thesbite, saying,

NET 1 Kings 21:17 The LORD told Elijah the Tishbite:

CSB 1 Kings 21:17 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite:

ESV 1 Kings 21:17 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

NIV 1 Kings 21:17 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite:

- 2Ki 1:15,16 5:26 Ps 9:12 Isa 26:21
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Proverbs 15:3+ The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Watching the evil and the good.

ELIJAH CALLED BACK INTO SERVICE

Then - Marks progression in the narrative. In this case it marks God beginning to intervene for He had witnessed the entire evil endeavor. How long it had been since Elijah had heard a word from the LORD we do not know but many think it was several years.

THOUGHT - Perhaps God has used you in the past, but now seems to have you on the "back burner" (and not because of discipline for sin, etc). I think the message Elijah would give you is "Stay ready so you can hear and heed His call!"

The word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying - Just as suddenly as Elijah appeared in chapter 17 only to vanish in chapter 19, now he again appears suddenly on the scene at the behest of Yahweh.

THE WORD OF THE LORD - to Elijah - 1Ki. 17:2; 1Ki. 17:5; 1Ki. 17:8; 1Ki. 17:16; 1Ki. 17:24; 1Ki. 18:1; 1Ki. 18:31; 1Ki. 19:9; 1Ki. 20:35; 1Ki. 21:17; 1Ki. 21:28

1 Kings 21:18 **“Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria; behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth where he has gone down to take possession of it.**

KJV 1 Kings 21:18 Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it.

BGT 1 Kings 20:18 ν στηθι κα κατ βηθι ε ς παντ ν Αχααβ βασιλ ως Ισραηλ το ν Σαμαρε δο ο το ς ν μπελ νι Ναβουθαι τι καταβ βηκεν κε κληρονομ σαι α τ ν

LXE 1 Kings 21:18 Arise, and go down to meet Achaab king of Israel, who is in Samaria, for he is in the vineyard of Nabuthai, for he has gone down thither to take possession of it.

NET 1 Kings 21:18 "Get up, go down and meet King Ahab of Israel who lives in Samaria. He is at the vineyard of Naboth; he has gone down there to take possession of it.

CSB 1 Kings 21:18 "Get up and go to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria. You'll find him in Naboth's vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it.

ESV 1 Kings 21:18 "Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria; behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone to take possession.

NIV 1 Kings 21:18 "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.

NLT 1 Kings 21:18 "Go down to meet King Ahab of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He will be at Naboth's vineyard in Jezreel, claiming it for himself.

- **is in Samaria:** 1Ki 13:32 2Ch 22:9
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

YAHWEH INSTRUCTS ELIJAH TO GO TO AHAB

Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria- Remember that God's commandments always include His enablements. Here Yahweh gives Elijah commands and undoubtedly gives him the Spirit enablement to carry them out. Elijah had once run from Jezreel, but now will go down to meet Ahab.

The way this verse reads it suggest Ahab was in Samaria and that he was also in the vineyard. But we know from 1Ki 21:1 that Naboth's vineyard was in Jezreel, not in Samaria. The renderings of the NIV, NRSV, NAB and NLT help resolve this dilemma, because both say Ahab "rules in Samaria," which is true because that was the capital. The next clause begins with a **behold** (pay attention) Ahab is in the vineyard of Naboth in Jezreel. In other words Ahab was not in Samaria but in Jezreel (both cities had royal palaces).

Behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth where he has gone down to take possession of it- Yahweh sends Elijah essentially to the scene of the crime or at least the cause of the crime.

1 Kings 21:19 “You shall speak to him, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Have you murdered and also taken possession?”’ And you shall speak to him, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD, “In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth the dogs will lick up your blood, even yours.’””

KJV 1 Kings 21:19 And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.

BGT 1 Kings 20:19 κα λαλσεις προς αυτον λεγων τδε λεγει κυριος ο σφνευσας και κληρονμησας δι το τδε λεγει κυριος ν παντ τπ λειξαν αες και ο κνεστ αμα Ναβουθαι κε λεξουσιν ο κνεστ αμ σου και απρναι λο σονται ν τ αματ σου

LXE 1 Kings 21:19 And thou shalt speak to him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast slain and taken possession, therefore thus saith the Lord, In every place where the swine and the dogs have licked the blood of Nabuthai, there shall the dogs lick thy blood; and the harlots shall wash themselves in thy blood.

NET 1 Kings 21:19 Say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: "Haven't you committed murder and taken possession of the property of the deceased?"' Then say to him, 'This is what the LORD says: "In the spot where dogs licked up Naboth's blood they will also lick up your blood— yes, yours!"'

CSB 1 Kings 21:19 Tell him, 'This is what the LORD says: Have you murdered and also taken possession? ' Then tell him, 'This is what the LORD says: In the place where the dogs licked Naboth's blood, the dogs will also lick your blood! ' "

ESV 1 Kings 21:19 And you shall say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, "Have you killed and also taken possession?"' And you shall say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: "In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick your own blood.'"

NIV 1 Kings 21:19 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! ' "

NLT 1 Kings 21:19 Give him this message: 'This is what the LORD says: Wasn't it enough that you killed Naboth? Must you rob him, too? Because you have done this, dogs will lick your blood at the very place where they licked the blood of Naboth!'

- **Have you murdered** Ge 3:11 4:9,10 2Sa 12:9 Mic 3:1-4 Hab 2:9,12
- **In the place:** 1Ki 22:38 Jdg 1:7 2Sa 12:11 2Ki 9:25,26 Es 7:10 Ps 7:15,16 Ps 9:16 58:10,11 Mt 7:2
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ELIJAH'S ACCUSATION YAHWEH'S CONDEMNATION

You shall speak to him, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Have you murdered and also taken possession?”’- NLT - "Wasn't it enough that you killed Naboth? Must you rob him, too?" Notice that even though Jezebel hatched the plot without Ahab's consent, Ahab is still held responsible for Naboth's murder. Jezebel is like a modern version of Eve who took the forbidden fruit and offered it to Adam and it was Adam who was held responsible for sin entering the world (Ro 5:12+).

And you shall speak to him, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD, “In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth the dogs will lick up your blood, even yours.’” - NLT - "Because you have done this, dogs will lick your blood at the very place where they licked the blood of Naboth!" After Ahab was fatally wounded in a battle with the Arameans his bloody chariot was brought back to Samaria and "They washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria, and **the dogs licked up his blood** (now the harlots bathed themselves there), **according to the word of the LORD which He spoke.**" (1Ki 22:38+)

Donald Wiseman has an interesting note on the fulfillment of this prophecy against Ahab: The fulfillment of prophecy is sometimes by stages. Here it was partially fulfilled by the dead body of Ahab being exposed at Samaria (1Ki 22:38) and then, due to the deferment promised by God (1Ki 21:29), when the body of his son Joram was left on Naboth's ground (2Ki 9:25–26). (See [1-2 Kings - Page 178](#))

*When you sell yourself to do evil, you call evil good
and good evil, light darkness and darkness light*

Warren Wiersbe has a great comment - Ben-hadad as the man Ahab should have killed, but he set him free; and Naboth was the man Ahab should have protected, but Ahab killed him! When you sell yourself to do evil, you call evil good and good evil, light darkness and darkness light (Isa. 5:20).

Norman Geisler - 1 KINGS 21:19—How could the prophecy of this verse claim to be fulfilled in the events recorded in 1 Kings 22:37–38?

PROBLEM: God told Elijah to prophesy to Ahab that his blood would be licked by the dogs in the same place where dogs had licked the blood of Naboth. According to 1 Kings 22:37–38, when the chariot of King Ahab was washed in a pool in Samaria, the dogs licked the blood according to the word of the Lord. However, if Naboth was executed outside the city of Jezreel, and since Ahab's chariot was washed in a pool in Samaria which was over 20 miles away, how can the one be the fulfillment of the other?

SOLUTION: Nowhere in the Bible do we find a specific statement about where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth. First Kings 21:13 states that Naboth was taken outside the city of Jezreel and stoned to death. However, there is no statement about the dogs licking the blood of Naboth. Although it may seem likely that the licking of Naboth's blood took place in the same place where he was stoned, this is only an assumption. It is possible that those who killed Naboth transported his body to Samaria, perhaps for verification by Jezebel, in which case the washing of Naboth's chariot, and the licking of Ahab's blood would have taken place in the same spot.

G Campbell Morgan - Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?—1 Kings 21.19

Ahab had allowed the selfish and corrupt coveting of his evil heart to drive him to the murder of Naboth, in order to gain his vineyard. And now he had gone into the vineyard to take possession of it. But men do not so easily possess the things which they obtain by unrighteous methods. Right there, in the midst of the coveted garden, with startling abruptness, Elijah, the rough prophet of Horeb, stood before him. Thus God perpetually confronts the evil-doer, and spoils for him the gain of his wrong-doing. One can easily imagine the mixture of terror and of anger in the voice of the king as he exclaimed: "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" Elijah rose to the full dignity of the prophetic office. There was neither fear nor faltering in the awful message which he delivered. Men may outwit their fellowmen, may deceive and wrong them, may even murder them to rob them, The last word is always with God. He cannot be outwitted or deceived. This question which the prophet asked rings with holy satire. There is a taking possession which never results in possessing. Ahab never possessed the vineyard of Naboth. He held it, but that very fact became to him a torment. However fine the vintage, for him the grapes were acrid, poisonous. Nothing is ever possessed by any man, save that which is his by righteousness and truth and as the gift of God. Not the overlords of injustice, but the meek, inherit the earth. That which is gained by fraud is never possessed.

1 Kings 21:20 Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" And he answered, "I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD.

KJV 1 Kings 21:20 And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD.

BGT 1 Kings 20:20 κα ε πεν Αχααβ πρ ς Ηλιου ε ε ρηκ ς με χθρ ς μου κα ε πεν ε ρηκα δι τι μ την π πρ ασαι ποι σαι τ πονηρ ν ν πιον κυρ ου παροργ σαι α τ ν

LXE 1 Kings 21:20 And Achaab said to Eliu, Hast thou found me, mine enemy? and he said, I have found thee: because thou hast wickedly sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger;

NET 1 Kings 21:20 When Elijah arrived, Ahab said to him, "So, you have found me, my enemy!" Elijah replied, "I have found you, because you are committed to doing evil in the sight of the LORD.

CSB 1 Kings 21:20 Ahab said to Elijah, "So, you have caught me, my enemy." He replied, "I have caught you because you devoted yourself to do what is evil in the LORD's sight.

ESV 1 Kings 21:20 Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" He answered, "I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight of the LORD.

NIV 1 Kings 21:20 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.

NLT 1 Kings 21:20 "So, my enemy, you have found me!" Ahab exclaimed to Elijah. "Yes," Elijah answered, "I have come because you have sold yourself to what is evil in the LORD's sight."

[CEB](#) 1 Kings 21:20 Ahab said to Elijah, "So you've found me, my old enemy!" "I found you," Elijah said, "because you've enslaved yourself by doing evil in the Lord's eyes."

- **Have you found me:** 1Ki 18:17 22:8 2Ch 18:7,17 Am 5:10 Mk 12:12 Ga 4:16 Rev 11:10 Am 5:10 Mk 12:12 Ga 4:16 Rev 11:10
- **you have sold yourself** 1Ki 21:25 2Ki 17:17 Isa 50:1 Isa 52:3 Ro 7:14
- **to do evil** 1Ki 16:30 2Ki 21:2 2Ch 33:6 Eph 4:19
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

1 Kings 21:25 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.

2 Kings 17:17 Then they made their sons and their daughters pass through the fire, and practiced divination and enchantments, and **sold themselves to do evil** in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him.

Romans 7:14+ For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, **SOLD** ([piprasko](#) -perfect tense = past completed action with lasting effect) into bondage to sin.

1 Kings 16:30+ Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD more than all who were before him.

Ephesians 4:19+ and they, having become callous, **have given themselves over** to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

THE PROPHET'S REBUKE THE KINGS GUILT

Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" - Ahab thought he had gotten away with the murder of Naboth and theft of his vineyard. He clearly did not know Nu 32:23+ "behold, you have sinned against the LORD, and be sure your sin will find you out." Ahab had called Elijah "troubler of Israel" (1Ki 18:17) but now gets personal calling him **my enemy!** Ahab is so blind that he mistakes his friends for foes and foes for friends, thinking Elijah was his enemy and Jezebel his friend! You can mark it down that the person who leads you to sin is not your friend! If we had any doubts about the Spirit enabled boldness of Elijah, passages like this should put a stop to such thinking!

*The worst enemy of the sinful heart is the voice
that either tempts it into sin, or lulls it into self-complacency,*

Alexander Maclaren - SIN IS BLIND TO ITS TRUE FRIENDS AND ITS REAL FOES. "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" Elijah was the best friend he had in his kingdom. And that Jezebel there, the wife of his bosom, whom he loved and thanked for this thing, she was the worst foe that hell could have sent him. Ay, and so it is always. The faithful rebuker, the merciful inflictor of pain, is the truest friend of the wrong doer. The worst enemy of the sinful heart is the voice that either tempts it into sin, or lulls it into self-complacency...THE SIN WHICH MISTAKES THE FRIENDLY APPEAL FOR AN ENEMY, LAYS UP FOR ITSELF A TERRIBLE RETRIBUTION. Elijah comes here and prophesies the fall of Ahab. The next peal, the next flash, fulfil the prediction. There, where he did the wrong, he died. In Jezreel, Ahab died. In Jezreel, Jezebel died. That plain was the battlefield for the subsequent discomfiture of Israel. ([Ahab and Elijah](#))

F B Meyer - Elijah was his best friend; Jezebel his direst foe. But sin distorts everything. It is like the grey dawn which so obscures the most familiar objects that men mistake friends for foes, and foes for friends: as in the old story, the frenzied King of Wales slew the faithful hound that had saved his child from death. Many a time have men repeated the error of the disciples, who mistook Jesus for an evil spirit, and cried out for fear.

And he answered, "I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD- CSB = "I have caught you because you devoted yourself to do what is evil in the LORD's sight." Ahab made a bad sale, trading righteousness for ruin! His selling out to sin would be paid with the wages of death. In short, Ahab sold himself short...literally!

The phrase "**sold yourself to do evil**" is interesting. The [CEB](#) renders it "**you've enslaved yourself by doing evil in the Lord's**

eyes." The Septuagint translates the Hebrew verb for **sold** ([makar](#)) with the verb [piprasko](#) (in perfect tense = past completed action with lasting effect) which is used in Romans 7:14+ ("sold into bondage to sin") with the figurative meaning of becoming enslaved to **Sin**, where **Sin** is personified as master who gains control which is exactly what happened to King Ahab. I think that is what Elijah in effect is saying to Ahab -- You are a slave to **Sin**!

Pleasure won by sin is peace lost.

-- Alexander Maclaren

As **Rod Mattoon** says "Ahab was a slave to his own sinfulness. He sold himself into bondage. Ahab traded the valuable for the cheap. This is what sin leads us to do. We have abundant examples of people who made this mistake. Ahab traded Naboth's life for dirt, for a garden. Judah traded his peace of mind for 30 pieces of silver. Achan traded his life for silver and clothes. Anytime you choose to live wickedly, you lose out on the deal and make foolish decisions. Elijah pronounces judgment upon Ahab."

Wallace writes that "Israel had been called to kill the Canaanites and take possession of their land, but when Ahab kills Israelites and takes possession of their land, it has become clear that Israel has reverted to Canaanitism."

J D Parker - Success that fails

Ahab went out to take possession of a garden of herbs, and there he stands face to face with righteousness, face to face with honour, face to face with judgment. Now take the vineyard! He cannot! An hour since the sun shone upon it, and now it is black as if it were part of the midnight which has gathered in judgment. There is a success which is failure. We cannot take some prizes. Elijah will not allow us! When we see him we would that a way might open under our feet that we might flee and escape the judgment of his silent look. If any man is about to take unholy prizes, let him remember that he will be met on the road by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of righteousness. If any man is attempting to scheme for some little addition to his position or fortune, in the heart of which scheme there is injustice, untruthfulness, covetousness, or a wrong spirit, let him know that he may even kill Naboth, but cannot enter into Naboth's vineyard.

F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily - 1 Kings 21:20 And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?

Ahab got his garden of herbs, but he had Elijah withal, who stood at the gate like an incarnate conscience. Men may get the prize on which they have set their heart; but if they have obtained it wrongfully, the conscience of the wrong done will haunt them, and take away the pleasure on which they counted, and ultimately bring them like a quarry to the ground.

We turn our best friends into enemies, as Ahab did Elijah. The cloud that lights Israel is darkness to Pharaoh; the angel that protects Jerusalem, slays the host of Sennacherib; the gentle love which anoints the Savior, instigates in Judas a jealousy which ends in murder. The God who shows Himself merciful to the merciful is froward to the froward. The cause of the alteration is to be sought within ourselves. The sun that melts wax hardens clay, but the difference is in the clay. To the widow of Zarephath Elijah was an angel of light; whilst to Ahab he was an enemy. The difference lay in their hearts; the one being holy and loving, the other dark and turbid. What you are, determines whether Elijah will be your friend or your enemy.

This word "sold thyself" is very awful. It underlies Goethe's tragedy of Faust, in which the soul sells itself to the devil for so many years of worldly pleasure. A few promises which are never kept; a mirage that is dissipated in thin air when we approach it; a bribe of gold or silver that burns the hands which receive it— such are the price for which men sell themselves. "They sell themselves for nought." Truly the devil drives a hard bargain. When he gets the soul into his power, he laughs at his former promises, and pays as wages, death.

PROVERBS 27:5

READ: 1 Kings 21:17-29

I LIKE people and I want them to like me. So to tell them that their conduct is dishonest or immoral is not easy for me. On several occasions men have told me how they got out of a speeding ticket by making up a touching story or how they got even with some rascal in a shady business deal. I've responded by saying, "That was clever, but was it honest?"

When I get acquainted with people and they tell me they are living immorally, I may ask, "Do you believe in God and that everyone must one day answer to Him? Or do you think we are accidents of nature with no more meaning than an insect and that it doesn't matter how we live?" When they express some belief in God (and almost everyone does), I gently explain what God says about their conduct. Many times this results in an opportunity to tell them the good news about Jesus.

King Ahab called Elijah an enemy (1 Kings 21:20), but he was wrong. Elijah was really the king's best earthly friend. And if he had listened to Elijah, he could have been a child of God and a good king. To be a friend is not to overlook sin; it's to show the way out

of sin. —HVL (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, may I accept as messengers from You those who criticize me. May I then turn to You for guidance in determining which part of the criticism is true. Keep me from becoming defensive and making excuses. May I instead acknowledge my offenses and make confession. And when it is my turn to point out a friend's error, may I do so with gentleness and love.

FRIEND OR ENEMY?

Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed. -- Proverbs 27:5

I like people and want people to like me. So to tell them that their conduct is dishonest or immoral isn't easy for me. On several occasions, men have told me how they got out of a speeding ticket by making up a touching story, or how they got even with some rascal in a shady business deal. I've responded by asking, "That was clever, but was it honest?"

When I get acquainted with people and they tell me they are living immorally, I may ask, "Do you believe in God and that you must answer to Him? Or do you think we are accidents of nature with no more meaning than an insect, and that it doesn't matter how we live?" When they express some belief in God (and almost everyone does), I'll gently share with them what He has said about their conduct. Many times this opens the door to present the good news of salvation.

Ahab called Elijah an **enemy** (1 Ki. 21:20). But he was wrong. The prophet was really his best earthly friend. If only he would have listened to God's servant, he could have been a good king and a child of God.

Lord, help us to be loving as we confront people with their sin. And help us to see that those who point out our sins are not our enemies but our true friends. --H V Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

True friends will say what's kind and true,
Though it may cause us pain;
They're thinking of what's good for us
And all we stand to gain.
--DJD

Faithful are the wounds of a friend. -- Proverbs 27:6

1 Kings 21:21 "Behold, I will bring evil upon you, and will utterly sweep you away, and will cut off from Ahab every male, both bond and free in Israel;

KJV 1 Kings 21:21 Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel,

BGT 1 Kings 20:21 τ δε λ γει κ ριος δο γ π γω π σ κακ κα κκα σω π σω σου κα ξολεθρε σω το Αχααβ ο ρο ντα πρ ς το χον κα συνεχ μενον κα γκαταλειμμ νον ν Ισραηλ

LXE 1 Kings 21:21 behold, I bring evil upon thee: and I will kindle a fire after thee, and I will utterly destroy every male of Achaab, and him that is shut up and him that is left in Israel.

NET 1 Kings 21:21 The LORD says, 'Look, I am ready to bring disaster on you. I will destroy you and cut off every last male belonging to Ahab in Israel, including even the weak and incapacitated.

CSB 1 Kings 21:21 This is what the LORD says: 'I am about to bring disaster on you and will sweep away your descendants: I will eliminate all of Ahab's males, both slave and free, in Israel;

ESV 1 Kings 21:21 Behold, I will bring disaster upon you. I will utterly burn you up, and will cut off from Ahab every male, bond or free, in Israel.

NIV 1 Kings 21:21 'I am going to bring disaster on you. I will consume your descendants and cut off from Ahab every last male in Israel--slave or free.

NLT 1 Kings 21:21 So now the LORD says, 'I will bring disaster on you and consume you. I will destroy every one of your male descendants, slave and free alike, anywhere in Israel!

- **Behold:** 1Ki 14:10 Ex 20:5,6 2Ki 9:7-9 10:1-7,11-14,17,30
- him that pisseth: 1Sa 25:22,34
- him that is shut up: 1Ki 14:10 De 32:36 2Ki 9:8,9 14:26
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Ecclesiastes 12:14 For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

Proverbs 11:21 Assuredly, the evil man will not go unpunished, But the descendants of the righteous will be delivered.

YAHWEH WILL BRING ABOUT FALL OF AHAB'S HOUSE

Behold (pay attention), **I will bring evil upon you, and will utterly sweep you away, and will cut off from Ahab every male, both bond and free in Israel** - **I will** is Elijah speaking but he is speaking for the LORD. Ahab had sown evil and now would reap evil (cf Gal 6:7-8+). Ahab was cruel and his death would be cruel.

1 Kings 21:22 and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked Me to anger, and because you have made Israel sin.

KJV 1 Kings 21:22 And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin.

BGT 1 Kings 20:22 κα ὁ ὄσων τὸ κν σου ῥ τὸ κον Ἰεροβοαμ υ ο Ναβατ κα ῥ τὸ κον Βαασα υ ο Αχια περ τὸν παροργισμ τῶν ν παρ ργισας κα ἕμαρτες τὸν Ἰσραηλ

LXE 1 Kings 21:22 And I will make thy house as the house of Jeroboam the son of Nabat, and as the house of Baasa son of Achia, because of the provocations wherewith thou hast provoked me, and caused Israel to sin.

NET 1 Kings 21:22 I will make your dynasty like those of Jeroboam son of Nebat and Baasha son of Ahijah because you angered me and made Israel sin.'

CSB 1 Kings 21:22 I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat and like the house of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked My anger and caused Israel to sin.

ESV 1 Kings 21:22 And I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the anger to which you have provoked me, and because you have made Israel to sin.

NIV 1 Kings 21:22 I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat and that of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked me to anger and have caused Israel to sin.'

NLT 1 Kings 21:22 I am going to destroy your family as I did the family of Jeroboam son of Nebat and the family of Baasha son of Ahijah, for you have made me very angry and have led Israel into sin.'

- **I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam** 1Ki 15:29 16:3,11
- **you have made Israel sin** 1Ki 14:16 15:30,34 16:26
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

TWO COMPARISONS TO KINGS WITH TERMINATED LINES

and I will make your house like (term of comparison - simile) **the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah** - What were these two "houses" like? They were two lines which God totally annihilated from the face of the earth. Ahab may not know much of the Word of God, but he surely knows the recent history of the fate of the families of these

two wicked kings. The house of Ahab will suffer the same fate!

because of the provocation with which you have provoked Me to anger, and because you have made Israel sin- How did Ahab make **Israel sin**? In the present context the elders and nobles were co-conspirators and thus share guilt for Naboth's murder. Of course the main provocation was Ahab's replacing Yahweh with Baal worship.

EQUAL BEFORE GOD 1 Kings 21:1-19

there is no respect of persons with God. Romans 2:11

The preamble of the Constitution of the United States declares that God has created all men equal. This statement, however, has sometimes been challenged. Obviously people are not equal in attractiveness, physical strength, intelligence, background, or opportunity. Nor are people equally inclined toward evil, even if they have the same hereditary and environmental factors. (Because of this, the efforts of the communists to produce a society of equal people are doomed to failure.) The writers of our Constitution were not wrong, however, for they did not intend to say that all men are equally talented, industrious, or trustworthy, but only that every person is entitled to be regarded with respect, that all possess the same rights, and that every effort should be made to give each an equal opportunity. This truth is also taught in the Bible. God is just as concerned with the poorest family in the slums as He is with millionaires and their offspring; and He will deal in absolute justice with all, "For there is no respect of persons with God."

The story of Ahab and Naboth in our reading for today reveals both God's concern with the individual and His justice in punishing wrongdoers. Naboth was a poor man, but God was interested in him and his rights. Ahab was a king, but he could not get by with his sin. This is a wonderful message of comfort for the downtrodden, and it constitutes a grim warning to the strong who oppress the weak or dishonor the name of God.

There is no respect of persons with our God,
All are equal and so precious in His sight.
King and peasant He doth weigh before His eye,
And His judgment of them shall be ever right!
—Anon.

Rulers and their subjects find a common level before the law and the foot of the cross—Colton, alt.

1 Kings 21:23 "Of Jezebel also has the LORD spoken, saying, 'The dogs will eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel.'"

KJV 1 Kings 21:23 And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.

BGT 1 Kings 20:23 κα τ Ιεζαβελ λ λησεν κ ριος λ γων ο κ νες καταφ γονται α τ ν ν τ προτειχ σματι Ιεζραελ

LXE 1 Kings 21:23 And the Lord spoke of Jezabel, saying, The dogs shall devour her within the fortification of Jezrael.

NET 1 Kings 21:23 The LORD says this about Jezebel, 'Dogs will devour Jezebel by the outer wall of Jezreel.'

CSB 1 Kings 21:23 The LORD also speaks of Jezebel: The dogs will eat Jezebel in the plot of land at Jezreel:

ESV 1 Kings 21:23 And of Jezebel the LORD also said, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel within the walls of Jezreel.'

NIV 1 Kings 21:23 "And also concerning Jezebel the LORD says: 'Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.'

NLT 1 Kings 21:23 "And regarding Jezebel, the LORD says, 'Dogs will eat Jezebel's body at the plot of land in Jezreel.'

- **Jezebel:** 1Ki 21:25 2Ki 9:10,30-37
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

2 Kings 9:30-37 (**FULFILLMENT OF ELIJAH'S PROPHECY AGAINST JEZEBEL**) When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it, and she painted her eyes and adorned her head and looked out the window. 31As

Jehu entered the gate, she said, "Is it well, Zimri, your master's murderer?" 32 Then he lifted up his face to the window and said, "Who is on my side? Who?" And two or three officials looked down at him. 33 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 he trampled her under foot. 34 When he came in, he ate and drank; and he said, "See now to this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter." 35 They went to bury her, but they found nothing more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. 36 Therefore they returned and told him. And he said, "This is the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'In the property of Jezreel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; 37 and the corpse of Jezebel will be as dung on the face of the field in the property of Jezreel, so they cannot say, "This is Jezebel.'"

JEZEBEL'S DOOM THE DOGS WILL FEAST

Of Jezebel also has the LORD spoken, saying, 'The dogs will eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel- Without any fanfare or apology Elijah gives Yahweh's judgment against Jezebel. There would be no burial for the queen of evil. While the dogs licked Ahab's blood, they would tear Jezebel's carcass to bits. One cannot imagine a more despicable, humiliating and ignominious end to this evil woman's existence before she "stokes" the hottest fires of hell!

Shocking as this must appear to minds that have been humanized by the kindly influence of Christianity, we still find similar instances in the accounts of modern travellers. Mr. Bruce says, that when at Gondar, "the bodies of those killed by the sword were hewn to pieces and scattered about the streets, being denied burial. I was miserable, and almost driven to despair, at seeing my hunting dogs, twice let loose by the carelessness of my servants, bringing into the court-yard the heads and arms of slaughtered men, and which I could no way prevent, but by the destruction of the dogs themselves." (**NOTE - Mr. Bruce** is James Bruce (1730–1794), a Scottish traveler and explorer. He is best known for his travels in Ethiopia and his quest to discover the source of the Blue Nile. **Gondar** was the imperial capital of Ethiopia during Bruce's visit in the 18th century.)

1 Kings 21:24 "The one belonging to Ahab, who dies in the city, the dogs will eat, and the one who dies in the field the birds of heaven will eat."

KJV 1 Kings 21:24 Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.

BGT 1 Kings 20:24 τ ν τεθνηκ τα το Αχααβ ν τ π λει φ γονται ο κ νες κα τ ν τεθνηκ τα α το ν τ πεδ φ γονται τ πετειν το ο ρανο

LXE 1 Kings 21:24 Him that is dead of Achaab in the city shall the dogs eat, and him that is dead of him in the field shall the birds of the sky eat.

NET 1 Kings 21:24 As for Ahab's family, dogs will eat the ones who die in the city, and the birds of the sky will eat the ones who die in the country."

CSB 1 Kings 21:24 He who belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, the dogs will eat, and he who dies in the field, the birds of the sky will eat."

ESV 1 Kings 21:24 Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city the dogs shall eat, and anyone of his who dies in the open country the birds of the heavens shall eat."

NIV 1 Kings 21:24 "Dogs will eat those belonging to Ahab who die in the city, and the birds of the air will feed on those who die in the country."

NLT 1 Kings 21:24 "The members of Ahab's family who die in the city will be eaten by dogs, and those who die in the field will be eaten by vultures."

- **who dies in the city**, 1Ki 14:11 16:4 Isa 14:19 Jer 15:3 Eze 32:4,5 39:18-20 Rev 19:18
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE PROPHECY AGAINST AHAB'S LINE

The one belonging to Ahab, who dies in the city, the dogs will eat, and the one who dies in the field the birds of heaven will eat.

1 Kings 21:25 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.

KJV 1 Kings 21:25 But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.

BGT 1 Kings 20:25 πλ ν ματα ως Αχααβ ς πρ θη ποι σαι τ πονηρ ν ν πιον κυρ ου ς μετ θηκεν α τ ν Ιεζαβελ γυν α το

LXE 1 Kings 21:25 But Achaab did wickedly, in that he sold himself to do that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his wife Jezabel led him astray.

NET 1 Kings 21:25 (There had never been anyone like Ahab, who was firmly committed to doing evil in the sight of the LORD, urged on by his wife Jezebel.

CSB 1 Kings 21:25 Still, there was no one like Ahab, who devoted himself to do what was evil in the LORD's sight, because his wife Jezebel incited him.

ESV 1 Kings 21:25 (There was none who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the LORD like Ahab, whom Jezebel his wife incited.

NIV 1 Kings 21:25 (There was never a man like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, urged on by Jezebel his wife.

NLT 1 Kings 21:25 (No one else so completely sold himself to what was evil in the LORD's sight as Ahab did under the influence of his wife Jezebel.

- **Surely there was no one like Ahab** 1Ki 21:20 16:30-33 2Ki 23:25
- **who sold himself to do evil** 1Ki 21:20 2Ki 17:17 Isa 50:1 52:3 Ro 6:19 7:14
- **Jezebel:** 1Ki 21:7 11:1-4 16:31 18:4 19:2 Pr 22:14 Ec 7:26 Mk 6:17-27 Ac 6:12 14:2
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

A DESPICABLE DYNAMIC DUO

Surely there was no one like Ahab who sold ([makar](#); Lxx - [piprasko](#)) himself to do evil in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife incited him - Note repetition of Ahab's selling his soul to sin! I would call this a "fire sale" for it will take a soul to the eternal flames of hellfire. [See notes on sold himself](#) in 1Ki 21:20.

Iain Paisley - The Apostate | 1 Kings 21:25-29

Ahab was once called by a prominent American preacher—"a slimy toad—with apologies to the toad". Men are sinful but a man stirred up by a sinful woman becomes exceedingly sinful. Sinless Adam, stirred up by Eve, damned the entire human race in sin.

Ahab's Reprobation

"But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel." 1 Kings 21:25-26

What a dark story of utter apostasy. Ahab was guilty of selling his soul to the devil. His employer was the devil and his employment devilry.

His wife, Jezebel, a murderess and a whore, stirred him to do exceeding wickedness. He was an idolater of idolaters. He reeked of his filthy abominations.

Ahab's Remorse

"And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth and went softly." (verse 27).

When, however, he heard the Word of God from the mouth of the faithful Elijah he was overcome with the bitterness of remorse

1 Kings 21:26 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.

KJV 1 Kings 21:26 And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

BGT 1 Kings 20:26 κα βδελ χθη σφ δρα πορε εσθαι π σω τ ν βδελυγμ των κατ π ντα πο ησεν Αμορρα ος ν ξωλ θρευσεν κ ριος π προσ που υ ν Ισραηλ

LXE 1 Kings 21:26 And he did very abominably in following after the abominations, according to all that the Amorite did, whom the Lord utterly destroyed from before the children of Israel.

NET 1 Kings 21:26 He was so wicked he worshiped the disgusting idols, just like the Amorites whom the LORD had driven out from before the Israelites.)

CSB 1 Kings 21:26 He committed the most detestable acts by going after idols as the Amorites had, whom the LORD had dispossessed before the Israelites.

ESV 1 Kings 21:26 He acted very abominably in going after idols, as the Amorites had done, whom the LORD cast out before the people of Israel.)

NIV 1 Kings 21:26 He behaved in the vilest manner by going after idols, like the Amorites the LORD drove out before Israel.)

NLT 1 Kings 21:26 His worst outrage was worshiping idols just as the Amorites had done-- the people whom the LORD had driven out from the land ahead of the Israelites.)

- **very abominably:** 2Ch 15:8 Isa 65:4 Jer 16:18 44:4 Eze 18:12 1Pe 4:3 Rev 21:8
- **according to:** Ge 15:16 Lev 18:25-30 20:22,23 De 12:31 2Ki 16:3 21:2,11 2Ch 33:2,9 36:14 Ezr 9:11-14 Ps 106:35-39 Eze 16:47
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

AHAB'S LEGACY: IDOLATRY & ABOMINATIONS

He acted very abominably ([taab](#); Lxx - [bdeugma](#) from [bdeo](#) = to stink) **in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the LORD cast out before the sons of Israel** - Ahab practice abominable evil like the evil Amorites had practiced. They were cast out of the Promised Land and Ahab's house will forever be cast out of the Promised Land.

Abominably (detest) ([08581](#)) [taab](#) related to [toebah](#) = detestable, loathsome, abomination) means to despise, detest, to loathe, to degrade, to have a hatred or very strong dislike for something. It expresses a strongly detestable activity or the logical response to such an activity. It describes "persons, things or practices that offend one's ritual or moral order." (NIDOTTE) In the niphal it means to be detestable, to be loathed (1Chr 21:6; Job 15:16; Isa 14:19). Taab can mean to behave in a vile manner or to act shamefully (1Ki 21:26; Ps 14:1; 53:2; Ezek 16:52) Taab implies not only contempt for that something, but also a low opinion of its value.

TAAB - 20V - abhor(5), abhorred(3), abhorrent(1), abhors(1), acted...abominably(2), committed abominable(2), despise(1), detest(2), detestable(1), made your abominable(1), rejected(1), utterly abhor(1). Deut. 7:26; Deut. 23:7; 1 Ki. 21:26; 1 Chr. 21:6; Job 9:31; Job 15:16; Job 19:19; Job 30:10; Ps. 5:6; Ps. 14:1; Ps. 53:1; Ps. 106:40; Ps. 107:18; Ps. 119:163; Isa. 14:19; Isa. 49:7; Ezek. 16:25; Ezek. 16:52; Amos 5:10; Mic. 3:9

Idols ([01544](#)) [gillul/gillulim](#) (attar is the plural form = all OT uses are plural) means logs, blocks, shapeless things. Strong's has "*logs, blocks, or dung-like idols.*" Some scholars suggest gillulim could be related to the word גִּלְגָּל (gelel), meaning dung or excrement. This word describes "an object (not necessarily three dimensional) which has been formed to resemble a person, god, animal." (Louw-Nida). In biblical usage, it refers to worthless idols—often associated with filth, dung, or detestable things. Of the forty-seven occurrences, thirty-eight are in Ezekiel. The basic meaning of this word is "logs," "blocks" or "shapeless things." It is used to mock the pagan gods, and it always views idols as contemptuous things (1 Ki. 15:12; Deut. 29:17; Ezek. 6:4). Idols are always an [abomination](#), and they pollute the people and the land.

HCSB Study Bible - Ezekiel's favorite word for idol (Hb gillulim) is based on the root gll, which means "to roll." Many believe the term is associated with round dung pellets, which would graphically express Ezekiel's disposition toward useless idols.

NKJV Study Bible - The word gillulim may be related to a similar Hebrew expression meaning "dung pellets." Later Jewish commentators mocked the gillulim as the "dung idols," idols as worthless as dung.

Mounce - Some scholars speculate that gillūlīm comes from the Heb. word for "dung, manure." Thus, gillūlīm ("idols") are as worthless as dung.

Homan Treasury of Bible Words - The prophet Ezekiel, who followed his fellow Israelites in 597 B.C. into exile, warned the exiles of the danger of worshiping idols. The Hebrew word gillulim is first used in Ezekiel 6:4 in a threatening prophecy, in which God declares that He will slay the people of Jerusalem and Judah in the very presence of their "idols." The word gillulim is used about forty times in Ezekiel. It is a derisive, almost lewd term. It comes from the root of galal, "to roll" or "to roll away," and literally means "**dung pellets,**" or "**dungy things.**" The prophets wasted no time seeking words to express their disgust of idols. "Idols" is a rather euphemistic translation of this word, for the word expresses Ezekiel's hatred and disgust for Israel's idols. They were worth no more than **dung**—yet Israel was worshiping them instead of their living God.

GILLULIM - 48X/40V - idols(48). Lev. 26:30; Deut. 29:17; 1 Ki. 15:12; 1 Ki. 21:26; 2 Ki. 17:12; 2 Ki. 21:11; 2 Ki. 21:21; 2 Ki. 23:24; Jer. 50:2; Ezek. 6:4; Ezek. 6:5; Ezek. 6:6; Ezek. 6:9; Ezek. 6:13; Ezek. 8:10; Ezek. 14:3; Ezek. 14:4; Ezek. 14:5; Ezek. 14:6; Ezek. 14:7; Ezek. 16:36; Ezek. 18:6; Ezek. 18:12; Ezek. 18:15; Ezek. 20:7; Ezek. 20:8; Ezek. 20:16; Ezek. 20:18; Ezek. 20:24; Ezek. 20:31; Ezek. 20:39; Ezek. 22:3; Ezek. 22:4; Ezek. 23:7; Ezek. 23:30; Ezek. 23:37; Ezek. 23:39; Ezek. 23:49; Ezek. 30:13; Ezek. 33:25; Ezek. 36:18; Ezek. 36:25; Ezek. 37:23; Ezek. 44:10; Ezek. 44:12

1 Kings 21:27 It came about when Ahab heard these words, that he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and fasted, and he lay in sackcloth and went about despondently.

KJV 1 Kings 21:27 And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.

BGT 1 Kings 20:27 κα π ρ το λ γου ς κατεν γη Αχααβ π προσ που το κυρ ου κα πορε ετο κλα ων κα δι ρρηξεν τ ν χιτ να α το κα ζ σατο σ κκον π τ σ μα α το κα ν στευσεν κα περιεβ λετο σ κκον ν τ μ ρ π ταξεν Ναβουθαι τ ν Ιεζραηλ την

LXE 1 Kings 21:27 And because of the word, Achaab was pierced with sorrow before the Lord, and he both went weeping, and rent his garment, and girt sackcloth upon his body, and fasted; he put on sackcloth also in the day that he smote Nabuthai the Jezraelite, and went his way.

NET 1 Kings 21:27 When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and fasted. He slept in sackcloth and walked around dejected.

CSB 1 Kings 21:27 When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put sackcloth over his body, and fasted. He lay down in sackcloth and walked around subdued.

ESV 1 Kings 21:27 And when Ahab heard those words, he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his flesh and fasted and lay in sackcloth and went about dejectedly.

NIV 1 Kings 21:27 When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly.

NLT 1 Kings 21:27 But when Ahab heard this message, he tore his clothing, dressed in burlap, and fasted. He even slept in burlap and went about in deep mourning.

- **he tore his clothes** Ge 37:34 2Ki 6:30 18:37 Jon 3:6
- **put on sackcloth:** 2Sa 12:17 Job 16:15 Isa 22:12 58:5-8 Joe 1:13
- **went about despondently:** Isa 38:15
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

AHAB'S HUMBLE RESPONSE

It came about when Ahab heard these words, that he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth([saq](#)) and fasted, and he lay in sackcloth ([saq](#)) and went about despondently (dejected, subdued, meekly, deep mourning) - Ahab has gone from SULLEN to SACKCLOTH. The question is was this genuine repentance? Obviously his outward actions indicate that Elijah's words from Yahweh had "hit a nerve" (or maybe better "a conscience") But for repentance to be true repentance the "proof is in the pudding." In other words, a truly repentant person demonstrates a definite "about face," a distinct change in their behavior and brings forth fruit in keeping with (and authenticating) repentance (Mt 3:8+). God Who sees the heart does say in v29 that Ahab truly humbled himself and this caused Yahweh to not bring disaster in his days. Marks of genuine repentance would have been returning Naboth's vineyard and renouncing Baal worship, but there is no evidence of these changes in Ahab's behavior. If this was repentance, it was short lived because in 1 Kings 22, he disregarded God's prophet [Micaiah](#) and went into battle against God's will, where he was ultimately killed. 'So while God delayed judgment, He did not remove it.

THOUGHT - Ultimately God is not looking for one to rend their clothes but to rend their heart and turn from sin and to God. Psalm 51:17 gives us a good barometer to assess the reality of our repentance, David writing "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise."

Warren Wiersbe adds "Later events proved that Ahab's repentance was short-lived, but the Lord at least gave him another opportunity to turn from sin and obey the Word. How much more evidence did Ahab need? But the influence of his wife couldn't easily be broken, for when Ahab married her, he sold himself into sin." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

Rod Mattoon says "He repents but it is not very deep. He feared judgment more than having a hatred for his sin."

Herbert Lockyer - " Ahab rent his clothes, but not his heart (1 Kings 21:27). His eye was watery, but his heart was like flint! How many there are who are made sensible of their sin and who shed copious tears, but who, after the tempest of conscience is past, have dry eyes! Walter Scott, in Rob Roy has the line, "But with morning cool repentance came." ([All the Doctrines of the Bible](#))

Matthew Poole - But this humiliation or repentance of Ahab's was only external and superficial, arising from the terror of God's judgments; and not sincere and serious, proceeding from the love of God, or a true sense of his sin, or a solemn purpose of amendment of his life, as appears, because all the particulars of his repentance here, 1Ki 21:27, are external and ritual only; nor is there the least intimation of any one sign or fruit of his true repentance, as that he restored Naboth's land, or reproved his infamous wife; but in the very next chapter you find him returning to his former vomit, hating and threatening the Lord's prophets, &c.

Life Application Study Bible -Although Ahab repented temporarily (21:27), he still maintained the system of false prophets. These false prophets would be instrumental in leading him to his own ruin. (1Ki 22:15-16).

F B Meyer - Ahab postponed their fulfilment, by a partial repentance, for some three years but, at the end of that time, he went back to his evil ways, and every item was literally fulfilled.

William Gurnall, a Puritan writer said "Hypocrites may have a great deal of profession.... They may humble themselves in sackcloth, with Ahab (1 Kings 21:27.)

Puritan **Thomas Watson** wrote "True godly sorrow is INTERNAL. It is inward in two ways: (1) It is a sorrow of the heart. The sorrow of hypocrites lies in their faces: "they disfigure their faces" (Matt. 6:16). They make a sour face—but their sorrow goes no further. It is like the dew which wets the leaf, but does not soak to the root. Ahab's repentance was in outward show. His garments were rent—but not his heart (1 Kings 21:27). Godly sorrow goes deep, like a vein which bleeds inwardly. The heart bleeds for sin: "they were pricked in their heart" (Acts 2:37). As the heart bears a chief part in sinning—so it must in sorrowing. (from [The Doctrine of Repentance](#))

Sackcloth ([08242](#)) **saq** means sack or sackcloth refers to a thick, coarse cloth, dark in color and typically woven from goat's hair and sometimes camel's hair. Sackcloth was worn traditionally to demonstrate mourning or despair; to convey the message dramatically. sackcloth was worn by mourners who lamented either because of a national catastrophe (2 Ki. 6:30ff; Lam. 2:10) or a personal tragedy (Gen. 37:34; Job 16:15; Joel 1:8). Sackcloth was used as a garment by mourners and those who wished to express contrition. It was worn in such a way as to leave the breast free for beating. As a garment of grief and self-abasement, sackcloth was sometimes the dress of the prophet who preached a message of repentance (cf. Rev. 11:3). Such a sight would be a call to trembling and repentance. Both Elijah and John, preachers of repentance, wore garments of camel's skin (2 Kings 1:8; Matthew 3:4). Persons might tear their clothes as well, especially at the death of a son. The word is also used of sacks used to transport various items of merchandise (Ge 42:25, 27, 35)

Ninevites wore sackcloth to express repentance (Jnh 3:8), as did Israelites (Neh 9:1). Sackcloth was worn on the skin (2Ki 6:30; Job 16:15) and involved self-humbling (1Ki 21:27-29). Mourning was the chief reason for wearing sackcloth (Gen 37:34; Joel 1:8). Ammonites (Jer 49:3) and Arameans (1Ki 20:32) wore sackcloth. Prophets called for it communally in the face of judgment (Jer 4:8). People might tear regular clothes and fast (Est 4:1,3), covering themselves with dust (4x; Jer 6:26) or ashes (7x; Jnh 3:6), perhaps shaving or cutting themselves (Jer 48:37). Sackcloth could signal protest (Est 4:1).

F W Krummacher - Ahab's repentance

I. **HOW AHAB'S REPENTANCE WAS CALLED FORTH.** A threefold crime is here laid to the charge of the King of Israel: that he had provoked God to anger--that he had made Israel to sin--and that he had sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord. It was for this cause that the sword of the Almighty had been whetted for the destruction of himself and his house. It is a common proverb that "Every man has his price"; that there is something for which every one will be found willing to sell himself. These are words of very awful import, and yet they are but too true concerning every natural man. The children of this world, proud as they are of themselves, may always be bought with one temptation or another: honours, profits, pleasures of one class or another, will induce them to debase themselves more and more. The idol to which Ahab sacrificed was his affection for Jezebel. His own will, his honour, his peace of conscience, the salvation of his soul, the favour of God--all that he had or hoped for, was laid at this idol's feet. Would that he were singular in such infatuation; or only one of a few! But alas, it is common in every age. Let any one ask himself, why he is an unbeliever; why he despises the people of God; why he serves the world and the devil, and endeavours to stifle every good conviction. What an accursed alliance, though it be under the sacred name of friendship itself, must that be, which is connected with enmity against God!

II. **WHAT KIND OF REPENTANCE IT WAS.** This mourning of the King of Samaria was real as far as it went. The wretched outward dress in which he appeared was a true expression of his inward temper and state of mind. Still, much was wanting in his repentance to render it a repentance unto life and salvation. It was not a mourning like that of the woman that was a sinner at the feet of Jesus, like that of the thief on the cross, or that of the poor publican. Ahab's repentance was utterly destitute of love; and it is love which hallows all our acts and deeds, and give them a real value. Now, when a sinner has, with heartfelt seriousness, pronounced sentence against himself before the throne of God, he has begun to die to the law. For here is an end of his supposed self-righteousness, and of his own supposed ability. But that true repentance, which the Scripture calls a godly sorrow, and a repentance which needeth not to be repented of, does not, as yet necessarily exist. This is but, as it were, dying before the Divine holiness; as we see was the case of St. Paul, in Rom 7:1-25,: "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." Now, this glorious and happy death comes by "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:2). And this law is no other than the Gospel; whereby alone it is that true, divine, and saving repentance is called forth.

*There was a delay of execution;
but no revocation of the sentence*

III. **WHAT WERE ITS CONSEQUENCES.** There was a delay of execution; but no revocation of the sentence. The curse still rested upon Ahab and his house. Yet even this respect shown to a repentance which had so little intrinsic worth, this exemption of Ahab from personally experiencing those storms which impended over his house, was an instance of great condescension and favour. **But why, it may be asked, if Ahab's humiliation was so little worth, was any Divine regard shown towards it?** This, we answer, was to show by a living example that self-condemnation and abasement before God is the way to escape His anger, and obtain His favour. Just as a novice in any art or trade may be cheered by words of encouragement at the first favourable attempt which he makes, however important it may be; so the exemption which the Lord made in Ahab's favour on repenting, was calculated to encourage him to aim at something better. Self-condemnation, self-abasement, and giving God the glory, are the first steps from spiritual death to spiritual life. (F. W. Krummacher, D. D.)

WHEN GOD SPEAKS, LISTEN! [NIV, Once-A-Day: Worship and Praise Devotional: 365 Days](#)

When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly. 1 KINGS 21:27

Back in the 1970s, E. F. Hutton, a well-known investment firm, took to the airwaves with a successful marketing campaign. It called attention to how investors trusted the advice of the Hutton brokers. The popular tagline to the television ads was this: "When E. F. Hutton speaks, people listen!"

Who's to say how accurate those commercials were? One thing we know for sure is that when our E (Everlasting) F (Father) God speaks, even those who are not accustomed to hearing his voice listen up. Ahab is a case in point. When approached by Elijah with

a word from the Lord, this wicked king humbled himself. God's disapproval of his past behavior was obvious. The Lord had succeeded in getting Ahab's attention. Unfortunately for this Machiavellian monarch, his humility was short-lived. God still speaks. Unwilling to let us wander off into a spiritual wasteland, he holds a mirror to our faces. In lieu of Elijah, he sometimes uses the prophetic voice of a pastor, counselor or friend. But more often than not, we hear him speaking through the pages of the Bible.

Have you heard that familiar voice recently? More than likely it will require silencing the din of daily activities. Easier said than done, right? Babies need to be cuddled and rocked. Kids need to be fed. Deadlines need to be met. But hearing from the God who has your best interests at heart is worth finding the time. Go ahead and listen for your Father's voice.

PRAYER Lord, as I pause before you in silence, I await the whisper of your presence ...

Ahab . . . tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his body, . . . and went about mourning (1 Kings 21:27).

John and Joe stole some money, but they reacted differently when confronted with the evidence. John broke down immediately, confessed his guilt, and offered to repay the money. But Joe refused to take any responsibility and blamed his companion. Later, with his parents supporting him, Joe claimed he was forced into this conduct because some of the young people in his church had never accepted him.

After more than thirty-five years of giving spiritual counsel, I can testify that people who try to cover their sins will not prosper, and that those who confess and forsake them find mercy (Pr 28:13). Many people never realize that they become their own worst enemies by blaming others instead of facing up to their own faults.

In 1 Kings 21, we read that King Ahab wanted a vineyard belonging to Naboth, but the owner refused to sell it. So Jezebel, Ahab's wife, had Naboth executed. Although Ahab merely allowed her to use his name in signing the orders, he didn't blame his wife when confronted with his evil deed. Instead, he acknowledged his crime, expressed grief over it, accepted responsibility, repented, and received a merciful reprieve.

Whenever we do wrong, we are wise to face up to it, take responsibility for our actions, and ask God to forgive us. We will be better people when we learn to say, "I'm to blame." -H V Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Only those willing to take blame can ever be trusted with responsibility.

1 Kings 21:28 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

KJV 1 Kings 21:28 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

BGT 1 Kings 20:28 καὶ γένητο μὲν κυρίου ἐν τῇ χειρὶ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγος ἡμεῶν περὶ Ἀχαάβ καὶ ἐπέμψεν κήρυξ

LXE 1 Kings 21:28 And the word of the Lord came by the hand of his servant Eliu concerning Achaab, and the Lord said,

NET 1 Kings 21:28 The LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite,

CSB 1 Kings 21:28 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite:

ESV 1 Kings 21:28 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

NIV 1 Kings 21:28 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite:

NLT 1 Kings 21:28 Then another message from the LORD came to Elijah:

Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

1 Kings 21:29 "Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days, but I will bring the evil upon his house in his son's days."

KJV 1 Kings 21:29 Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

BGT 1 Kings 20:29 ρακας ς κατεν γη Αχααβ π προσ που μου ο κ π ξω τ ν κακ αν ν τα ς μ ραις α το λλ ν τα ς μ ραις το υ ο α το π ξω τ ν κακ αν

LXE 1 Kings 21:29 Hast thou seen how Achaab has been pricked to the heart before me? I will not bring on the evil in his days, but in his son's days will I bring on the evil.

NET 1 Kings 21:29 "Have you noticed how Ahab shows remorse before me? Because he shows remorse before me, I will not bring disaster on his dynasty during his lifetime, but during the reign of his son."

CSB 1 Kings 21:29 "Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? I will not bring the disaster during his lifetime, because he has humbled himself before Me. I will bring the disaster on his house during his son's lifetime."

ESV 1 Kings 21:29 "Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself before me, I will not bring the disaster in his days; but in his son's days I will bring the disaster upon his house."

NIV 1 Kings 21:29 "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."

NLT 1 Kings 21:29 "Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has done this, I will not do what I promised during his lifetime. It will happen to his sons; I will destroy his dynasty."

- **Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before Me:** Jer 7:17 Lu 7:44
- **Ahab:** Ex 10:3 Ps 18:44 66:3 78:34-37
- **I will not** Ps 86:15 Eze 33:10,11 Mic 7:18 Ro 2:4 2Pe 3:9
- **bring the evil in his days:** 1Ki 21:21-23
- **I will bring the evil upon his house in his son's days:** 2Ki 9:24-26,33-37 10:1-7,11
- [1 Kings 21 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

2 Kings 9:24-26 And Jehu drew his bow with his full strength and shot Joram between his arms; and the arrow went through his heart and he sank in his chariot. 25 Then Jehu said to Bidkar his officer, "Take him up and cast him into the property of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite, for I remember when you and I were riding together after Ahab his father, that the LORD laid this oracle against him: 26 Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons,' says the LORD, 'and I will repay you in this property,' says the LORD. Now then, take and cast him into the property, according to the word of the LORD."

AHAB'S HUMILIATION DELAYS GOD'S JUDGMENT

Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before Me?

Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days,

but I will bring the evil upon his house in his son's days."Joram (also called Jehoram) was the son of Ahab and Jezebel who became the king of Israel after the death of his brother Ahaziah. He was killed by Jehu, fulfilling the prophecy that God would wipe out Ahab's lineage, but not do it in the days of Ahab.

Was Ahab's Repentance Genuine?

It was sincere but it was NOT a full repentance leading to lasting change.

Signs of Sincerity:

- He visibly humbled himself (sackcloth, fasting, walking in sorrow).
- God acknowledged his humility (1 Kings 21:29).
- God showed mercy by delaying judgment.

But His Actions Showed Incomplete Repentance:

- He **did not return Naboth's land** to Naboth's family.
- He **did not change his overall behavior**—he later imprisoned **Micaiah, God's prophet (1 Kings 22:26-27)**.
- He **continued to listen to false prophets** and pursued his own will instead of God's.
- He **still died under God's judgment** (1 Kings 22:34-38).

Ahab regretted the consequences of his sin but did not fully turn back to God.