

VIPER IN THE VINEYARD. 1 KN. 21:1-16. 5/7/23. #57.

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21 And it came to pass after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel, next to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. **22** So Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near, next to my house; and for it I will give you a vineyard better than it. Or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its worth in money." **23** But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!" **24** So Ahab went into his house sullen and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken 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. **25** But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said to him, "Why is your spirit so sullen that you eat no food?" **26** 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 another vineyard for it.' And he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" **27** Then Jezebel his wife said to him, "You now exercise authority over Israel! Arise, eat food, and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite." **28** And she wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who were dwelling in the city with Naboth. **29** She wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth with high honor among the people; **30** and seat two men, scoundrels, before him to bear witness against him, saying, "You have blasphemed God and the king." Then take him out, and stone him, that he may die. **31** So the men of his city, the elders and nobles who were inhabitants of his city, did as Jezebel had sent to them, as it was written in the letters which she had sent to them. **32** They proclaimed a fast, and seated Naboth with high honor among the people. **33** And two men, scoundrels, came in and sat before him; and the scoundrels witnessed against him, against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth has blasphemed God and the king!" Then they took him outside the city and stoned him with stones, so that he died. **34** Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned and is dead." **35** And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, that 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." **36** So it was, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab got up and went down to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

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1. Tyrant tantrum

- a. Ahab had plenty of living space, food, servants, & everything else he needed or wanted
 - a1. Like Solomon, Ahab wanted more
 - a2. What his eyes saw, is what he desired
- b. Naboth owned a vineyard outside the palace wall
 - a1. Ahab thought that it would be nice to own that vineyard & turn it into a vegetable plot
 - a2. Ahab could walk out to his garden anytime
 - a3. Ahab did not need a vegetable garden, but he wanted one close to him
- c. Ahab offers to either trade another vineyard to Naboth for his vineyard or pay him money for it
- d. Naboth refuses to sell his vineyard to Ahab
 - a1. Inheritance by law stayed in the family
 - a2. Ahab did not care about the Law
 - a3. Naboth was a steward of God's heritage
- e. Like the end of ch. 20, Ahab goes home & sulks
 - a1. He lays on his bed & refuses to eat
 - a2. Ahab is childish & self-oriented
- f. Jezebel asks Ahab what is wrong
 - a1. Ahab tells her of Naboth's refusal

- a2. Jez. scolds Ahab – "do you not rule?"
- a3. Jez. instructs her husband to rise, eat, & cheer himself, for she will obtain the land

2. Cup of blood

- a. Jez. sends a letter to city elders in Ahab's name
 - a1. They are to declare a fast
 - a2. Naboth is to be in the seat of honor
 - a3. 2 scoundrels are to accuse Naboth of blasphemy against God & king
 - a4. Naboth is to be taken outside the city & then stoned to death
 - a5. Ahab could then take possession of land
- b. The abuse of power would be obvious to all there
 - a1. Naboth is depicted as an honorable man
 - a2. The 2 scoundrels were known as wicked men (it takes evil people to pervert justice)
 - a3. No mention of Naboth's family
 - a4. Probably due to fear, the elders go along with the plot (they share the guilt)
 - a5. When Ahab takes the land, no one could doubt that he was behind this plot

3. The stain remains

- a. Ahab & people like him act as if there are no consequences for their crimes
 - a1. Eph. 6:5 there is master over all masters who will judge all things
 - a2. All skulduggery will be short lived
- b. Ahab forgot the lesson taught after he spared Ben Hadad's life (his life will go for BH's life)
- c. All evil will be held to account for all eternity
 - a1. Those who are perverting children will be held to account
 - a2. Those who take the life of preborn babies
 - a3. Those who refuse to exercise justice
 - a4. Those who steal, abuse the innocent, & persecute God's saints
- d. Ahab will not be allowed to enjoy his ill-gotten gain for long, for God will hold him for judgment
- e. No one gets by with anything (Pv. 26:27)