



## STORY

Naboth's Vineyard - I Kings 21-22, II Kings 9:30-37

## TEACHER PRAYER

Lord God, Your gracious forgiving love is before me every day as I labor for You in Your kingdom. I need Your forgiveness, Your guidance and Your constant love as I continue through this world of sin. Help me to accept the responsibility of teaching Your lambs Your precious Truths that they may clearly see You as the one true God and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. For in You and You alone will they reach the highest potential for true life here in time and for all eternity. In Your holy name I pray, Amen.

## VOCABULARY

*Jezeel* - 30 miles north of Samaria (21:1)

*Scoundrels* - wicked, immoral and dishonest men (21:10)

*Dogs* - classed as unclean animals in the Law of Moses, thus, viewed by Israel with contempt (21:19, 23, 24)

## OUTER AIM

As instruments of Satan Ahab and Jezebel carried out the devil's murderous plans.

## INNER AIM

A Godless life always leads to disaster in time and, unless there is repentance, for eternity.

## BACKGROUND

 (*Rupprecht Bible History References Vol. 1*, pp. 356-361)

Satan worked through Jezebel and the prophets of Baal who were successful in drawing King Ahab into the kingdom of Satan. He became a pawn in Satan's murderous schemes. Yet, we must realize that Ahab was responsible for his own actions. The Lord has said of Satan, "He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it." (John 8:44) Ahab became Satan's child.

The royal palace for the King of Israel was in Samaria, the capital city. However, Ahab had built his own private palace at Jezreel. Adjoining Ahab's property was the vineyard of Naboth. Ahab wished to expand his holdings by either buying Naboth's vineyard or trading a better vineyard in another location for it.

At this point, apparently, there is nothing unusual or sinful about the proposal itself. These kinds of transactions go on all the time and often are carried out for the benefit of both parties. However, there were circumstances which had to be considered. In the first place, "Naboth said to Ahab, 'the LORD forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you.'" The LORD forbade the people to sell their land permanently. (Cf. Lev. 25:23-28; Num. 36:7-9) Secondly, Naboth, evidently, wasn't interested in any proposition even on a temporary basis.

Ahab was accustomed to getting what he wanted. Besides, Jezebel was quick to remind him, "You now exercise authority over Israel!" Ahab was depressed. Jezebel devised a plan and promised Ahab, "Arise and eat food, and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite." Did Ahab caution Jezebel and urge her not to do anything illegal or contrary to the Word of God? Not at all. His silence was approval for the words and actions that followed.

## **STUDENT PRAYER**

Dear Lord, You have been so gracious to me and have provided for all my needs both physical and spiritual. Help me to realize this each day of my life. Forgive my sins of covetousness and lovelessness. Give me a heart, O Lord, which is not greedy but one which rather is ready to help my friends and neighbors keep what belongs to them. Give me Your Spirit that I may be able to recognize the activity of Satan and avoid it. And so may I live with you and for You in righteousness to the glory of Your holy name. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

## **PRESENTATION**

The greed of Ahab accompanied by the satanic devices of Jezebel led to a plan for murder. With Naboth out of the way Ahab could realize his petty desire of having Naboth's property. (Cf. King David's lust for Bathsheba led to adultery and murder.

Cain's jealous hatred of Abel led to murder.) Jezebel was well aware that, "Whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him..." (Lev. 24:16) Somehow, Naboth would have to be portrayed as blasphemer so that he could be put to death "legally" before the people. (Cf. Jesus on trial on trumped up charges.)

Jezebel, filled with the spirit of Satan, had beaten her conscience into submission and was governed totally by her sinful flesh. Might made right in her eyes. The forgery of the king's seal on fictitious documents was a minor matter in her devilish scheme. The fact that the forged documents especially called for "scoundrels" to bear witness against Naboth was an open admission that the charges were false. These "sons of Belial" (KJV) were lawless, vile persons who would stoop to any crime for a price.

Apparently, the "elders and nobles" of the city were so eager to follow the orders of the king (in fact, the orders of Jezebel) that they failed to be concerned about justice. The law of God was clear and guarded against this very kind of abuse. (Read Deut. 19:15-21) It would appear that Naboth had no heirs who could legally claim the property after his death. Such property reverted to the king. An honorable king would, of course, restore such property to heirs if they should be found in the future. (Cf. II Sam. 9:6-7)

The judgment of God upon Ahab and Jezebel was announced to Ahab, quite fittingly, as he was in the vineyard which he had stolen from Naboth. Elijah was given the task. Because of Ahab's spiritual blindness, he could see Elijah only as his enemy. Yet, Elijah would not be intimidated but told it like it was, "I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD." (I Kings 21:20) Both Ahab and Jezebel would die dishonorably. The dogs would drink the blood of Ahab and eat the flesh of Jezebel. It appears that Ahab showed signs of repentance after Elijah announced God's judgment upon him and Jezebel. (I Kings 21:27) Because of His infinite mercy the LORD delayed the action of His judgment upon Ahab until after his death. "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life." (Gal. 6:7-8)

## **APPLICATION**

Walking in ungodly paths always leads to disaster. Ahab and Jezebel had all the luxury, worldly comforts and honor before men imaginable. Yet, their life was a disaster. Not only did they destroy themselves but how many souls did they lead into the kingdom of Satan and finally into hell?

The world around us exonerates such things as worldly wealth, lust, prestige, power and honor before others. These are often bought at the price of rejection of God and His salvation in Christ. The unholy trinity of the world is wealth, sex and power. If we look around we will see the dedication and worship of this godless trinity everywhere.

“Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. (I Tim. 6:6-12)

Children are constantly bombarded with man-made religious philosophies as well as the thinking and ways of the world about us. Their friends, movies, television, neighbors all may become tools of Satan to draw these impressionable minds and hearts into a way of thinking, judging, talking and acting which may lead to a compromise of their faith in their Savior and could finally lead to a rejection of God and His Word.

Offense is also something which our children need to take seriously. We are called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. We are called upon to show forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.. Together with being one of God’s own in Christ comes responsibility. As God’s own we have been bought with a price-the price the Christ paid for us in love as He gave Himself a ransom for all.

There are many influences which threaten the faith of our children. However, none of them can rob us and our children of the blessings that are ours in the kingdom of God for time and for eternity as we remain close to our Lord and His Means of Grace.

Sometimes believers suffer because of the wickedness in the world. Naboth died, but he joined his Savior in heaven.

## **PASSAGES**

**These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.**

I John 2:15 - “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

I Timothy 6:6-9 - “Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. Having food and clothing, let us be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.

Galatians 6:7-8 - “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

Deuteronomy 5:7 - “You shall have no other gods before Me.

Deuteronomy 5:17 - "You shall not murder."

Deuteronomy 5:19-20 - "You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

Deuteronomy 5:21 - "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife; and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."

Psalms 1:6 - "For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

Matthew 22:37-39 - "Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

### **HYMN CHOICES**

O God, Thou Faithful God - TLH #395

My Soul, Be On Thy Guard - TLH #449

Fight The Good Fight With All Thy Might - TLH #447

How Shall The Young Secure Their Hearts - TLH #286

Lord, Keep Us Steadfast In Thy Word - TLH #261

Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways - TLH #416

The Man is Ever Blest - TLH #414