

CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
3RD-5TH GRADE
TEACHER'S PACKET

SUNDAY MORNING

Study 10

Naboth's Vineyard



Naboth's Vineyard

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To teach that God sees every injustice, judges wickedness, and shows mercy to the humble.

Key Verses

1 Kings 21—Main Teaching Passage

Leviticus 25:23-28

Leviticus 24:15-16

Deuteronomy 19:15

Romans 12:19

James 4:6

Memory Verse - Proverbs 15:3

The eyes of the LORD are in every place,
Keeping watch on the evil and the good.

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, _____.

Ask the students, "Have you ever done something wrong and hoped nobody saw you?" Allow a few responses.

Then ask, "If no one else saw, does that mean it wasn't wrong? Can we ever hide anything from God?"

Today we're going to read about some people who thought they had gotten away with something horrible and wicked. They believed no one knew what they had done. But they forgot something important: God sees all things and is the perfect Judge who will make every wrong right.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Sometime after God's judgment had been declared against King Ahab, he returned home sullen and displeased (depressed and angry). Not long afterward, Ahab set his eyes on a vineyard that belonged to his neighbor, Naboth. He offered to buy it or trade for it, but Naboth refused because it was his family's inheritance. Once again, Ahab returned to his palace sullen and displeased. He went to his room and refused to eat.

Jezebel came to Ahab and asked him why he was so upset. Ahab explained that Naboth would not sell him his vineyard. Jezebel told Ahab not to worry because she would get the vineyard for him. Using Ahab's name and the king's seal, Jezebel wrote letters to the leaders of Naboth's city. She told them to hold a public fast, seat Naboth in a place of honor, and have two false witnesses accuse him of blaspheming God and the king. The leaders obeyed Jezebel's instructions. Naboth was declared guilty and taken outside the city where he was put to death.

When Jezebel heard that Naboth was dead, she told Ahab to go and take possession of the vineyard. As Ahab went to claim it, the LORD sent Elijah to meet him with a message of judgment. God declared that because Ahab had murdered Naboth and taken his vineyard, and because he had continually led Israel into sin, disaster would come upon Ahab and his household. Jezebel would also be judged for her wickedness. There had never been another king like Ahab, who did evil in the sight of the LORD, and whose wife Jezebel stirred him up to even greater wickedness.

When Ahab heard God's message, he humbled himself. He tore his clothes, wore sackcloth, fasted, and mourned before the LORD. Because Ahab humbled himself, God told Elijah that the judgment would not come during Ahab's lifetime, but during the lifetime of his son.

LOOK

Can you believe that Ahab and Jezebel thought they could get away with what they did? It all began with a sin that takes place in the heart—covetousness. Covetousness is wanting something God has not given you. Instead of being thankful for everything he already had, Ahab wanted one thing that belonged to someone else. His sinful desire led to lies, murder, and injustice. Sin begins in the heart, but if left unchecked, it grows and often ends up hurting others.

There are several things we learn about God from this chapter. The first is that God sees every injustice. Ahab and Jezebel may have thought no one knew what they had done. The false witnesses lied, the elders went along with it, Naboth was killed, and Ahab took possession of the vineyard. It may have looked like the perfect crime, but nothing was hidden from God. God saw it all—the plan, the lies, and the murder. That is why He sent Elijah to confront Ahab. Even when no one else sees what

The interpretation/
exegesis of the passage.
What does this passage
mean? How does this
passage apply to my
life?

LOOK (Continued)

is happening, God always does. That's true for us as well.

The second thing is that God judges wickedness. God's judgment is never unfair. He always knows the whole truth, and He always judges rightly. If God only saw evil but never acted, there would be no hope for those who are treated unfairly. But because God is perfectly just, He will one day make every wrong right. No one will escape His judgment. That is good news for everyone who has ever been hurt by someone else's sin. But it also means that every one of us must answer to God, because we have all sinned against Him. None of us can stand before the holy God on our own.

That is why the gospel is such good news! Even though we deserve God's judgment, Jesus willingly took that judgment upon Himself when He died on the cross. God's justice was not ignored—it was satisfied. Because Jesus paid the penalty for our sin, everyone who turns to Him in faith can receive forgiveness instead of condemnation.

The third thing we learn is that God gives mercy to the humble. After Elijah confronted Ahab, something unexpected happened. Ahab humbled himself before the Lord! God saw his humility and delayed the judgment that He had announced. Even in this chapter filled with so much wickedness, God's mercy shines through the darkness. God delights in showing mercy to those who humble themselves before Him.

But Ahab's humility did not become lasting repentance. He was sorry for the consequences of his sin, but his heart was never truly changed. Our response should be different. Instead of hiding our sin like Ahab and Jezebel tried to do, we should confess it to God knowing that He is faithful and just to forgive us. We can trust that He sees every injustice, will judge every wrong, and gladly extends mercy to everyone who humbly turns to Him.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Proverbs 15:3

Pray: God, thank You that You see everything and that You are always just. Thank You for showing us mercy through Jesus, who took the punishment for our sin. Help us to humble ourselves before You, confess our sin, and trust You even when life seems unfair. Amen.

Family Question: What does the account of Naboth's vineyard teach us about God?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 1 Kings 21 by David Guzik

THE MURDER OF NABOTH

A. Naboth is murdered for his vineyard.

1. ([1 Kings 21:1-3](#)) Naboth refuses to give up his land.

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. 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.” But Naboth said to Ahab, “The LORD forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!”

a. **Give me your vineyard:** This account begins as a simple attempted real estate transaction.

Ahab wanted the vineyard near his royal house in Jezreel so that he might have it as a **vegetable garden**. He was willing to trade for the land or to pay for it.

b. **The LORD forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you:** Naboth’s response was an emphatic “No.” His rejection of the otherwise reasonable offer was rooted in the ancient Israelite idea of the land. They believed that the land was an inheritance from God, parceled out to individual tribes and families according to His will. Therefore, land was never really sold, only leased — and that only under the most dire circumstances. Real Estate offices in ancient Israel didn’t do very good business.

i. “For God hath expressly, and for divers weighty reasons, forbidden the alienation of lands from the tribes and families to which they were allotted, [Leviticus 25:15](#), [25:23](#), [25:25](#); [Numbers 36:7](#); [Ezekiel 46:18](#).” (Poole)

2. ([1 Kings 21:4-7](#)) Ahab pouts before Jezebel.

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. But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said to him, “Why is your spirit so sullen that you eat no food?” 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.'" 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."

a. **Ahab went into his house sullen and displeased:** This seemed entirely characteristic of Ahab. He seemed to be a spineless, pouting man who reacted this way when he met any kind of adversity.

i. "So the scene is a vivid picture of peevish Ahab turning his face to the wall and refusing to eat. He was like a sulking child who could not get his own way." (Dilday)

ii. "Poor soul! He was lord over ten-twelfths of the land, and became miserable because he could not get a poor man's vineyard added to all that he possessed!" (Clarke)

b. **You now exercise authority over Israel... I will give you the vineyard of Naboth:** Jezebel's manner of speech revealed who really exercised **authority** in the palace of Israel.

i. "Alas, was it not *she* that governed it really, with more daring ungodliness than Ahab, her puppet husband?" (Knapp)

3. ([1 Kings 21:8-14](#)) Jezebel plots and orders the murder of Naboth.

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. She wrote in the letters, saying, "Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth with high honor among the people; 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." 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. They proclaimed a fast, and seated Naboth with high honor among the people. 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. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."

a. **She wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles:** This shows that Ahab was in agreement with what Jezebel did and had to know *something* of her plot.

i. "She involved Ahab by the use of his seal on the directives to the local magistrates. The use of the king's royal, dynastic, administrative or even personal seal to gain his authority would require Ahab's collusion." (Wiseman)

ii. 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.

b. **Proclaim a fast:** The idea was that some evil or calamity came upon Israel, and a scapegoat had to be found for the evil. Jezebel intended that Naboth be revealed as the scapegoat.

c. **Seat Naboth with high honor among the people:** This was a treacherous plan; first, to set Naboth in a high place of **honor**, and then to destroy him with lies from the mouths of **scoundrels**.

d. **Naboth has blasphemed God and the king:** Jesus was charged with similar crimes, accused of offending both God and Caesar. Naboth, just like Jesus, was completely innocent of such accusations and was murdered without cause. The stoning of Naboth over a piece of land for a vegetable garden shows the brutal and amoral character of Jezebel and Ahab.

i. [2 Kings 9:26](#) indicates that the crime was even worse than this, connecting the murder of Naboth with the *blood of his sons*. It is likely that the entire family of Naboth was murdered, so no heirs were left to claim his property.

4. ([1 Kings 21:15-16](#)) Ahab takes possession of Naboth's land.

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." 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.

a. **Ahab got up and went down to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth:** This added evil to evil. Even with Naboth dead, the land did not belong to Ahab or the royal house of Israel. It belonged to the heirs or family of Naboth. Ahab probably claimed the land as a royal right because the crown seized the land of any executed criminal.

i. Although, "Some say that Ahab was his next kinsman, his sons being dead; which they judge more likely, because his land was next to the king's" (Poole). "Hence some make Naboth to have been Ahab's uncle; but that is uncertain" (Trapp).

B. Elijah confronts Ahab.

1. ([1 Kings 21:17-24](#)) God pronounces judgment upon Ahab.

Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, "Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who *lives* in Samaria. There *he is*, in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone down to take possession of it. 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 dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours."'" So 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: 'Behold, I will bring calamity on you. I will take away your posterity, and will cut off from Ahab every male in Israel, both bond and free. 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 made Israel sin.' And concerning Jezebel the LORD also spoke, saying, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of

Jezreel.' The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field.'

a. **Arise, go down to meet Ahab:** Ahab ran out to get his new toy (the land gained by betrayal, lies, and murder), and instead he ran into the prophet of God.

b. **Have you murdered and also taken possession:** Elijah did what few other men had the courage to do — confront this wicked, brutal, and amoral king and queen of Israel. He pointedly charged them with the two crimes of both murder and theft of Naboth's land.

i. We notice that Elijah confronted Ahab (**you murdered**) over the sin of Jezebel and her wicked associates. God clearly held Ahab responsible for this sin as *husband*, as *king*, and as *beneficiary* of this crime.

ii. "This is added to show that temptations to sin are no excuse to the sinner." (Poole)

c. **In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours:** This was a strong and startling prophecy. It was not fulfilled, because Ahab died in *Samaria* and the dogs licked his blood *there* ([1 Kings 22:38](#)), instead of in Jezreel where Naboth was murdered.

i. This unfulfilled prophecy has needlessly troubled some. Various explanations have been made, including the ideas that Elijah meant a general area and not a specific place, or that there were pools or streams that carried the blood from Ahab's chariot to the waters of Jezreel, or that this was fulfilled in the blood that ran in the veins of Ahab's son Joram ([2 Kings 9:25](#)). A far better explanation is found in the fact that because of Ahab's sorrow and repentance at the end of the chapter, God relented from this judgment and instead brought it upon Ahab's son (in [2 Kings 9:24-26](#)) as the LORD said He would in [1 Kings 21:29](#).

ii. "And see how literally the prediction concerning *his son* was fulfilled, see [2 Kings 9:25](#), where we find that the body of Jehoram his son, just then slain by an arrow that had passed through his heart, was thrown *into the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite*; and there, doubtless, the dogs licked his blood, if they did not even devour his body." (Clarke)

d. **Have you found me, O my enemy:** "Though the king knew it not, Elijah was his best friend; Jezebel his direst foe." (Meyer)

i. "To the widow of Zarephath Elijah was an angel of light; whilst to Ahab he was an enemy... What you are, determines whether Elijah will be your friend or your enemy." (Meyer)

e. **You have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD:** "See a similar form of speech, [Romans 7:14](#). Thou hast totally abandoned thyself to the service of sin. Satan is become thy *absolute master*, and thou his *undivided slave*." (Clarke)

f. **I will take away your posterity, and cut off from Ahab every male in Israel:** This was a severe judgment against anyone, in particular against a king. A king's legacy was in his **posterity** succeeding him on the throne, and here God announced an end to the dynasty of Omri (Ahab's father). His dynasty would come to a dead-end, just like the dynasties of **Jeroboam** and **Baasha**.

i. “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... That which is gained by fraud is never possessed.” (Morgan)

g. **The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel:** Though the prophecy of judgment was focused against Ahab, it did not forget Jezebel. Her end would be both horrible and disgraceful.

2. (1 Kings 21:25-26) Ahab's great wickedness.

But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up. And he behaved very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

a. **There was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up:** Ahab's sin was multiplied not only because of the sin itself, but because by his permission, **his wife stirred him up** to do it.

i. This reminds us of what God said to Adam in pronouncing the curse after the sin in the Garden of Eden: *Because you have heeded the voice of your wife* ([Genesis 3:17](#)). Apparently, God holds husbands who follow their wives into sin to a special accountability.

b. **According to all that the Amorites had done, whom the LORD had cast out:** In likening the sin of Ahab to the sin of the **Amorites**, God prepared the ground for the future eviction of Israel from the Promised Land. As the **Amorites** were cast out of Canaan for their continued idolatry and rejection of God, so would the northern kingdom of Israel be cast out.

3. (1 Kings 21:27-29) Ahab humbles himself and God relents from judgment in his life.

So it was, when Ahab heard those words, that he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his body, and fasted and lay in sackcloth, and went about mourning. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, “See how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the calamity in his days. In the days of his son I will bring the calamity on his house.”

a. **When Ahab heard those words, that he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his body:** For all his wickedness, Ahab received this prophecy of judgment exactly as he should have. He understood that the prophecy of judgment was in fact an invitation to repent, humble one's self, and to seek God for mercy.

i. “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, 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 in-

famous wife; but in the very next chapter you find him returning to his former vomit.” (Poole)

ii. Three years later, Ahab was dead under God’s judgment. “I will recompense his temporary repentance with a temporary deliverance.” (Trapp)

b. **Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the calamity in his days:** God honored Ahab’s initiative. This shows the power of both prayer and humble repentance. If Ahab *did not* humble himself in this way, then the judgment would have come in his own day. This shows that God gave the prophecy of judgment as an invitation to repentance, and God opened the door of mercy when Ahab properly responded to that invitation.

i. There is no record of Jezebel’s humility or repentance; therefore, we can expect that God’s judgment will come upon her *exactly* as He first announced.

ii. “The *penitent* heart ever meets the *merciful* eye of God; repentance is highly esteemed by the Father of compassion, even where it is comparatively shallow and short-lived.” (Clarke)

iii. This shows us the character of God’s mercy: *it is given to the undeserving*. By nature, the innocent does not *need* mercy. Ahab was a great sinner, but he won great mercy (in this life) through humble repentance. The worst sinner should not disqualify himself from receiving God’s mercy, if that sinner should only approach God in humble repentance.