

## **Naboth's Vineyard**

1 Kings 21

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Ahab king of Israel, egged on by his wife Jezebel, had become a truly despicable person in the eyes of the Lord. Near his palace in Jezreel there was a vineyard owned by a man named Naboth. Ahab wanted to buy the vineyard to use as a vegetable garden. But Naboth refused to sell, "This vineyard has been in my family for a long time. The Lord forbid that I should sell it."

Ahab went home and lay on his bed sulking and refusing to eat. Jezebel asked him what was wrong. He explained why he was so depressed, and she scolded him, "Is this any way for the king of Israel to act? Get out of bed and eat something. And cheer up! I'll get the vineyard for you."

Jezebel arranged for Naboth to be falsely accused of cursing God and the king. As a result Naboth was stoned to death.

Jezebel told Ahab, "Naboth is dead. The vineyard is yours." So Ahab went to take possession.

The Lord sent the prophet Elijah to the vineyard with a message for Ahab, "You have murdered Naboth and stolen his property. In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, they will lick up your blood. Yes, yours. Dogs will devour Jezebel. Everyone in your family will die and become carrion, eaten by wild animals."

When Ahab heard the word of the Lord, he went into mourning.

Then the Lord said to Elijah, "Because Ahab has humbled himself before me, the disaster you told him about will not happen during his lifetime, but after his son has come to power."