

TEXT: 1 Kings 21:17-26

OPENING COMMENTS: Who here feels we are a fairly advanced, modern society? Who at least would say we HAVE made some progress as a society, overall, over the past 1,000 years?

For example:

- Do you know where SILK comes from? (Silk worms)
- Do you know where we get dairy MILK? (Cows)
- You know where MEAT comes from? (Pigs)
- You know what Social Media/Facebook is? (Social Media)
- You understand what decorating is? (Collecting and displaying)

So let me get this straight... By your own admission, you acknowledge that we adorn ourselves with worm excrement and plant fibers, guzzle cow mucus, mine animal carcasses for food, chatter and clatter in steady, documented streams, while surrounding ourselves with bits and bobs we've found scurrying about the nooks and crannies of our environment.

... Now, who here feels we are fairly advanced and modern society, making strides of progress overall?

TS: Not much changes, I suppose. But, if there was ONE CHANGE I could affect on mankind, it might be one such as portrayed in the following account of 1 Kings 21.

LESSON:

1. THE PROPHET - Elijah was quite the prophet of God. If anyone should have possessed the respect and clout to address Kings and Heads of States, it was Elijah!!!

In **1 Kings 21**, he is about to lower the boom on the current king of Israel. God has had enough.

Elijah has already:

- Escaped the clutches of the wicked Jezabel... The zidonian princess whom Ahab, King of Israel, had married. She seemed possessed of a maddening addiction to the false gods of the land.
- Has already pronounced a drought, sending the land into eminent famine!
- Built the famous alter on Mt. Carmel and is held responsible for the slaying of 450 false prophets of baal.
- Has already warned Ahab of the coming rain, and by the Spirit of God, outrun Ahab's chariot to the palace!!!

2. THE KING – The son of Omri, Ahab did not just do wickedly in God's sight. He has the distinct dishonor of bearing the phrase, “HE DID MORE TO PROVOKE THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL TO ANGER THAN ALL THE KINGS OF ISRAEL BEFORE HIM!”

In his days as king, there was complete open and utter disregard, disrespect, and distrust of God's Word!!!

ILL – Heil (of Bethel) attempted to rebuild Jericho!!! A cursed man with an accursed undertaking! There was an expressed forbiddance to rebuilding the walls of Jericho, but Heil, as many in the polytheistic and idolatrous generations spearheaded by Ahab's wicked leadership, had no interest nor respect for God's warnings or commandments!

Joshua 6

26 And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.

Interestingly enough, **1 Kings 16** records this prophecy coming to pass during the vile reign of King Ahab.

1 Kings 16

34 In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.

In Ahab's day, Elijah, the Tishbite, was on the run for having the boldness and audacity to speak out against the OBVIOUS wickedness of Ahab! And, along with many of the prophets of the Lord in that area, was on the run most of Ahab's reign!

Ahab failed to see a connection between his idolatry, his unbridled Zidonian wife, and their open defiance of everything Holy... and God's clear hand of chastening. Ahab had the audacity to accuse Elijah as the "One that troubleth Israel."

Ahab has witnessed the slaying of 450 false prophets of baal at Mt. Carmel, not by Elijah, but at the WORD of Elijah by the hands of his very own subjects!

Ahab witnessed PROOF POSITIVE that there was only one God, and saw the fire of God come down from Heaven and consume stone, water, and wood!

Ahab was NOT a strong leader. While he knows 100% positive there is a God in Heaven, his wicked wife is allowed to hunt Elijah, God's Prophet.

And then, there was the BenHadad scandal! When BenHadad, king of syria, demands tribute and rights to whatever Ahab has, Ahab accepts without any question or hesitation. HE MUST BE PROMPTED BY THE ELDERS OF THE CITY TO STAND UP FOR THE KINGDOM!

God, Himself, delivers not only the armies of BenHadad in to the quaking hand of Ahab, but also BenHadad, himself! God gives Ahab charge to destroy the wicked King BenHadad of Syria, but Ahab,

for greed (*of what he could have had ANYWAY*) makes a league with the defeated BenHadad, and lets the King escape the clear judgment of God.

--- Not to worry, as BenHadad is going to get his dues paid in just a few chapters.

Given to depression, Ahab's final straw comes from the controversial VINYARD-GATE, and the Naboth Scandal. While it was 'technically' Jezebel who had Naboth slain, it was Ahab who so absolutely no crime in this, but only what was to be gained.

Ahab and Elijah meet in **1 Kings 21** for a final time.

3. THE CURSE - Enough is enough.

1 Kings 21

17 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

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.

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.

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**.

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,

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.

23 And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.

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.

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.

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.

What jumped out at me was Wicked Ahab's response!

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.

28 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

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.

Can you believe that?!?! Can you believe how QUICK God Almighty is to bring mercy!? No wonder Jonah lamented God's mercy to Ninavah!!!

CLOSING:

If you are still breathing, it is proof that God is merciful. I have heard all my life people mock God and insist that the God of the Old Testament is an angry warlock and the God of the New Testament is a loving and forgiving grandpa.

These are gods of people's fantasy and prejudice. The God of the Bible delights in mercy and humility.