

Outrageous Grace Part 1_ Despicable King

October 22, 2023

1 Kings 21

>>1 Kings 20:43, King Ahab was sullen and displeased (angered) by the Word of the Lord given to him from a prophet of God. Ahab had also displeased the Lord in rebuilding Jericho, marrying Jezebel (a Sidonian), and worshipping Baal, 1 Kgs. 16:30-34.

1 Kgs. 21:9, a fast is called by Jezebel, written in Ahab's name and using his signet.

Why did she (Jezebel) do this?

1 Kgs. 21:1, Naboth had a vineyard next to the palace of Ahab. **V2**, Ahab offered money or a better vineyard so that he could use the land to make a vegetable garden. Lev. 25:23, refers to the land given to Israel as the Lord's land. God's people are sojourners and couldn't permanently sell the land.

V3, Naboth responded to Ahab that he wouldn't give him the land he inherited from his fathers. Naboth demonstrated covenant loyalty to Yahweh.

V4, Ahab is again sullen and displeased because of the Word of the Lord. Ahab clearly had open animosity against the Lord's prophets because they always prophesy against Ahab's wickedness, 1 Kgs. 22:7-8, 20:42-43.

V5-6, Jezebel asks why the king isn't eating. It is because Naboth won't give Ahab his vineyard.

V7, Jezebel tells Ahab to get up and eat because she will get the vineyard for him. Jezebel asks Ahab *if he is the king of Israel or not*, "You now exercise authority over Israel."

V8-10, Jezebel wrote a letter to the elders in order to get rid of Naboth for his act of covenant disloyalty in rejecting the king and ultimately rejecting God. She calls for a fast which has traditionally been an act of repentance and in times of difficulty for the nation, not for the use of murdering a man and stealing his property, (ex: 1 Sam. 7:1-8, 2 Chron. 20:3).

- She hires two scoundrels to bear false witness against Naboth according to Deut. 17:6. She attempted to make this false testimony seem like an act of godly obedience.

V11-13, the fast had began and Naboth had been seated in the place of high honor. The scoundrels came in and proclaimed Naboth was a blasphemer against God and the king.

V14, Jezebel received word that the elders had stoned Naboth to death.

V15-16, Jezebel tells Ahab to go and take possession of Naboth's vineyard.

>>Ps. 44:22-26, does God hear our plight and see injustice? Is He attentive to us, Job 16:11-14?

V17-18, Elijah, God's prophet, hears from the Lord to go and confront Ahab who is at that very time in Naboth's field. God is present in the situation. He is not absent, always seeking His glory and our good. Matt. 6:7-8, 9 instructs us to pray even though God knows all things, ask of Him what you need.

V19, Elijah confronts Ahab about murdering Naboth and taking his vineyard.

V20-23, Elijah delivers to message to Ahab. Ahab has sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord. Elijah prophesies that calamity will come upon Ahab. Ahab's descendants will be killed for sinning against the Lord and causing Israel to sin. Jezebel will be eaten by dogs at the wall of Jezreel (fulfilled 2 Kgs. 9:30-37).

V25-26, a pause in the story to retell of Ahab's extensive wickedness and angering of the Lord.

V27, Ahab mourned and repented of his sin at that time and the Lord relented.

V28-29, Elijah again received from the Lord that Ahab's judgement would be delayed until the days of his son. 1 Pet. 5:1-5-6, humility towards God brings grace. The most vile of sinners finds grace when humble before God.

Further Discussion and Application

Ahab's mourning and humility stayed the judgement of God. If the vilest of sinners (even the king of God's people and nation) can receive grace from humility, how much more will God's people receive if they are humble before the Lord. What blessings follow the humble? What actions in Romans 12 demonstrate a humble heart towards the Lord?

Humility is the proper posture towards God. 1 Pet 5: 5-6, gives us God's view of the proud and humble. In the immediate context of this passage in 1 Peter, it is mentioning elders in the church and young men who are to be submissive to the elders. What is the warning found in verse 8 & 9? What is the promise of humility in verse 10? What is God's purpose we find in giving grace and His discipline of the proud in verse 11?

Humility properly aligns our view of God and of ourselves. It allows us to see the world properly. How does God define what our focus in life should be from 1 Jn. 2:15-17? How does God's word prepare us for heaven, 1 Jn. 3:1-3, Tit. 2:11-15? What is living soberly, righteously and godly in this present age?

Application #1: Don't hold God's grace arrogantly. God's grace is for others as well. Sharing the Gospel with others demonstrates humility towards the Lord. How do we carry and share the hope we have in Christ and demonstrate that hope to others? Why is our life different?

Application #2: If you are outside of the grace of God, do not linger while grace is available to receive. God's grace is present to pardon and cleanse. How does the believer purify their lives? According to Romans 6:15-22, what is the response of believers to God's grace? What is the response to God's grace in Eph. 4:17-32?

Thanksgiving is the natural response of believers to God's grace. Joy accompanies thanksgiving. Humility brings joy and thanksgiving. Share the results of God's grace in your life that brought lasting change and knowledge of sin that you could see and repent of? How did your worship (singing, obedience, giving, serving, etc.) of God change as a result?