

Twenty Prophetic Rebukes For 2020 Politics

From 1 Kings 21

by Phil Kayser

2020-10-25

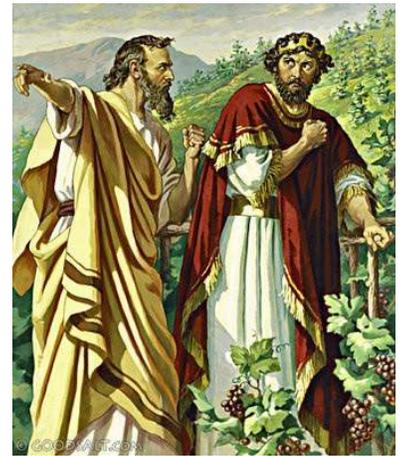


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Sermon on 1 Kings 21 by Phil Kayser at DCC 10-25-2020

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Twenty Prophetic Rebukes For 2020 Politics From 1 Kings 21

Sermon Preached by Phil Kayser 2020-10-25

Introduction - this passage is relevant

1 Kings 21 applies perfectly to the politics of today. God hates the same issues today that he said He hated in 1 Kings 21. So we are going to dive straight into the text.

Verse 1 introduces us to two characters who will represent the conflicting interests of liberty and tyranny in our own nation. It says,

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.

Side by side lived a man of liberty and a man of tyranny. And you don't have to be in Washington DC to be that close to the tyrannical actions of modern-day Ahabs. Our city council has intruded into private businesses by giving privileges to the LGBTQ crowd that no one else has. It impinges on everyone. Everywhere you look in America, unconstitutional Ahabs are becoming more and more bold.

And one of the problems that I haven't even put on your outline today is that Naboths tend to be all alone. Nobody has their back. That's a shame. They are vulnerable when they are alone. Benjamin Franklin understood the danger of that and said, "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately." It is only when there is a large uprising of networked Naboths who demand that lost liberties be restored that we will start seeing politicians taking notice - that is, unless God brings revival. But of course, revival will produce exactly that - a united church that applies the whole Bible to the whole of life - including politics.

We must have the backs of Christian Naboths in DC, in the Universities, in the State Capitol, in the medical arena, and in other areas of life where the tentacles of government have intruded. This is a story that is as relevant today as it was when it was written. It is a story that brings twenty prophetic rebukes to our 2020 politics.

Problem one - citizens put unbelievers into power (v. 1)

And I'll be quite frank that the first problem was that the citizens of Israel put Ahab into power. Israel was a republic, and at least some of Israel's leaders were elected by the people. That's the way it was supposed to be. And interposition and impeachment was always an option. They should have impeached Ahab. Ahab was an unbeliever who allowed his wife to bring foreign religions into Israel. He was disqualified for office.

Granted, Ahab was one of the most capable leaders of Israelite history. He was a charismatic leader who was able to work across the aisle and form coalitions with otherwise sparring factions. Secular history tells us that he was an incredibly capable politician within the nation as well as in foreign affairs. He commanded a better military than Solomon before him, and the *New International Dictionary of the Bible* says, “The number of his chariots was far greater than the number credited to any other king.”¹ He represents the Republican hawks in American politics. And many in Israel felt that a strong leader like Ahab was needed to ward off the powerful threat of the Assyrians. But at the same time he also represents the Democrats on many social issues.

But the main point is that God’s evaluation of Ahab here was that he was an unbeliever, and as such did not even meet even the lowest qualification for kingship. The lowest level is given in 2 Samuel 23:3 - “He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.” God does not look at politics as we do, and the list of problems that flowed from his unbelief are consistent with that unbelief. I mean, think about it: if you don’t believe in a higher law to which you are subject, you can make up your own laws. If you do not believe in God’s ability to enforce His standards, you won’t fear violating God’s law. It’s as simple as that. Of course, Ahab put on a good show of being a good king. In politics you have to do that. But God wants us to look behind the scenes and see what is going on from His perspective. Today’s sermon is as much a rebuke of the church for lacking a Biblical political worldview as it is a rebuke of 2020 politics.

Problem two - Ahab wants your property (v. 2)

Problem number two - Ahab wants your property. Verse 2 says,

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.”

That sounds like a win-win situation, doesn’t it? Ahab is a good negotiator. He had the art of the deal down pat. The problem was, he was negotiating in politics like he did in business. And God does not shine to government’s taking property.

I want you to notice that this passage indicates Naboth’s right to own and control his property whatever the government wishes might be. And in this case, it was tangible property. In verse 2 even Ahab recognizes that the land belonged to Naboth and he must ask for it. “Give me your vineyard,” he asks. The vineyard was Naboth’s to give or to withhold. He was able to say “No,” to the government. You might say, “Nobody denies our property rights today. The government has not taken away our property.” But I would beg to differ.

¹ J.D. Douglas & Merrill C. Tenney, *The New International Dictionary of the Bible*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), p. 25.

Government surveillance is an intrusion into private property all by itself. Roadside strip searches, asset forfeiture, and eminent domain - these are just four of dozens of ways that the county, state, and federal governments have intruded into private property. Taxation of property is another. Taxation of the land is a declaration of ownership of the land, as Karl Marx so correctly noted. If you think you own your house, just try withholding your property taxes and see how long you can live there. Your taxes give you a license to live there. You are a feudal serf. Estate taxes and income taxes all have been interpreted by courts as a government's ownership. What you take home, you are allowed by the government to keep. Our founding fathers would not have stood for this. They fought to free our country from the very things that our politicians take for granted as proper. John Whitehead of the Rutherford Institute said,

We no longer have any real property rights. That house you live in, the car you drive, the small (or not so small) acreage of land that has been passed down through your family or that you scrimped and saved to acquire, whatever money you manage to keep in your bank account after the government and its cronies have taken their first and second and third cut...none of it is safe from the government's greedy grasp. At no point do you ever have any real ownership in anything other than the clothes on your back. Everything else can be seized by the government under one pretext or another (civil asset forfeiture, unpaid taxes, eminent domain, public interest, etc.).²

Did you know that the Dodd-Frank Act of 2008 authorizes the government to seize money from your bank accounts? True - they say that they will compensate you with an equivalent amount of stock in that failing bank - worthless stock. Other countries have laws that allow them to take up to 50% of a person's savings during an emergency with no compensation whatsoever (worthless stock or otherwise). This is worse than Ahab's view of property.

Here's another example: The law states that,

In order to prevent hoarding, no person shall accumulate: (1) in excess of the reasonable demands of business, personal, or home consumption...

Who determines what's a reasonable amount of food storage? The Act goes on to say that the president (presumably through the agencies) is authorized

... the accumulation of materials in excess of the reasonable demands of business, personal, or home consumption as he deems necessary to carry out the objectives of this Act...

That's an Ahab property grab. They haven't done it yet. All they have done was to ask, as Ahab politely did. And with little to no resistance, they believe they have permission. Hundreds of similar examples of the permission to steal from citizens have been granted by legislatures and courts over the past one hundred years. This is not a new thing.

Here's the point - we can no longer be one-issue people. If you do not oppose these incursions into property it may end up being a life issue, just like it was with Naboth. Life, liberty, and property are bound up with each other. You erode one and others will soon be eroded - as can be seen by no-knock break-ins by police where innocent people die. Well,

² <https://www.fff.org/explore-freedom/article/nullify-government-tyranny/>

all three (life, liberty, and property) have been evaporated in America. We have gone way beyond Ahab's actions in this chapter.

Problem three - Ahab resents your God-given rights (v. 3-4)

Problem three is that Ahab resents it when you assert your God-given rights. He resents it. Naboth was supposed to just politely cooperate. After all, the government asked very nicely, didn't they? He was supposed to be a good citizen and trust that the king always has everyone's best interests in mind. Verses 3-4:

1Kings 21:3 But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!"

1Kings 21:4 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.

There were basically three rights that Naboth asserted. He had the right to receive an inheritance from his fathers and to pass on that inheritance to his children unimpeded by the civil government. Second, He had a right to his own property. And third, he had a right to be left alone. It seems reasonable. Ahab could get property elsewhere. But no, Ahab was very perturbed and sullen that a citizen would dare to refuse his offer. With that kind of an attitude, it's not really an offer, is it? It's a demand.

Just the possibility of civil anger (such as Ahab had) has caused some Christians to give up their rights. A misinterpretation of Romans 13 has caused many Christians to insist that we Christians ought to be the first dogs to roll over and allow the alpha male state to assert his dominance. Dr. Robert Fugate will be publishing a book soon on the true meaning of Romans 13.

But we will see in this story that Naboth's refusal was a godly refusal that honored his ancestors, honored his family, honored the 8th and 10th commandments, and was good for society. It's good for the *whole* of society when an individual stands up for his God-given rights. And I say "God-given" because what goes for rights nowadays is license and abomination in God's eyes. As the Declaration of Independence points out, the only rights we have are endowed by our Creator. They are God-given rights. They are rights enumerated in the Bible. We don't just make those up on our own.

Anyway, look at the boldness of Naboth in verse 3. He is not intimidated by power. I'm sure this is something that mystifies moderns. Verse 3: "And Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!" Naboth knew that because he was a steward of the land that he could not cave in to pragmatism. And being a believer, he probably despised the thought of his property being used by this wicked man. He was a steward of that property, and he knew that God would require him to answer for how he handled his affairs. This was what gave him boldness. And unless we are more conscious of God's demands upon us than we are of government's demands, we will not have the courage to tell the government, "This far, but no further!"

I want to challenge God's people to stand with the Naboths of our day who are being robbed of their inheritance and to bring the kind of prophetic rebuke that Elijah brought to Ahab in verses 17-29. How do you bring a prophetic rebuke? By quoting the Scripture pointedly.

Modern Ahabs have used every sort of pressure to get us to relinquish the inheritance of our fathers. It may not be tangible property. America's founding fathers defined property much more broadly than we tend to. For example, Madison said,

...a man's land, or merchandise, or money is called property... he has property of peculiar value in his religious opinions, and in the profession and practice of them... He has an equal property in the free use of his faculties, and the free choice of objects on which to employ them... when an excess of power prevails, property of no sort is duly respected. No man is safe in His opinions, his person, his faculties, or his possessions." (in "Property," 1792)

We are seeing exactly this happening today where Critical Race Theory, Critical Queer Theory, and other critical theories are taking away our rights to have our own opinions. Madison was describing what the phrase, "the pursuit of happiness" in our Declaration of Independence was about - freedom from government intrusion into property whether tangible or intangible. The Declaration does not guarantee happiness (as socialists claim). It guarantees being left alone so that we can pursue what Biblically lawful things we want pursue and hold to what opinions we want to hold. The free market of opinions is fast being eroded.

What are some of the other ways in which our inheritance is being given up? A ruling of the Houston federal district court said, "parents give up their rights when they drop the children off at public school." And my response is, "Then quit dropping the children off at government school." Of course, many in government want to *force* us to send our children to government schools, and we must say, "No! God has given children as a stewardship trust to parents and we will not cave in to government demands to control education. We will not give up the inheritance of our fathers." It is my opinion that it would be better to flee the country than to send your children to government indoctrination centers.

And there are many aspects of our inheritance that the government has asked us to give up. The Child Protection Services wants us to remove the rod from the home. The IRS on a number of occasions has asked churches to stop preaching on certain topics. This is giving up the heritage of our fathers. Many politicians want to disarm the populace. The Health and Human Services has sought to make us entrust our health to the government. The Department of Commerce has sought to regulate business. The Department of Agriculture and other departments have brought most farmers into socialism. This is not just an ancient story for ancient times. It is relevant for today.

Problem four - thinking that Naboth owes the state (vv. 4-6)

Problem four can be seen in verses 4-6 where it is obvious that Ahab thinks that Naboth owes him something. The modern nanny state similarly thinks we owe them. Verse 4-6.

1Kings 21:4 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. 5 But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said to him, "Why is your spirit so sullen that you eat no food?"

1Kings 21:6 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.'"

What a self-centered spoiled brat! But I think this Ahab represents modern politics, which sacrifices nothing for the people, but the people are increasingly sacrificing everything for them. Of course, the government makes it look like they are being generous and thinking about Naboth's interests, but when Naboth says "No," the true state of affairs arises. Whatever problems C. S. Lewis had (and he had plenty), he definitely took a stand against the socialistic state that thinks they have our interest in mind. He said,

Of all tyrannies, a tyranny sincerely exercised for the good of its victims may be the most oppressive. It would be better to live under robber barons than under omnipotent moral busybodies. The robber baron's cruelty may sometimes sleep, his cupidity may at some point be satiated; but those who torment us for our own good will torment us without end for they do so with the approval of their own conscience.

Problem five - failing to see that all true authority must come from God (v. 7)

Problem five - failing to see that all true authority must come from God. Verse 7 says,

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."

She is discounting Naboth's authority over his home. She is discounting any limits to Ahab's authority. She makes Ahab the source and definition of authority. If he wants it, he can take it. We need to get used to saying that there are limits to what a government can do. We need to get used to saying that there is a law above kings by which kings are judged and held accountable.

I have been analyzing the votes of candidates for decades and I have found that even Christian candidates routinely violate their oath of office by voting for things prohibited by the Constitution. And when confronted they have their excuses about how no one follows the constitution on that point and we wouldn't get anywhere if we didn't take some pragmatic actions. These Republican politicians are violating the Constitution in the hopes of offsetting worse violations of the Constitution. And I point out that their oath of office doesn't allow them to be pragmatic. But you seem to get nowhere with them. It's time for Elijah's rebukes to the statism of today.

In any case, Ahab's sullenness shows that he thought Naboth owed him. He's treating Naboth as the servant. In contrast, Romans 13 calls the magistrate "God's *servant* for your protection"(v. 4 Phillips). We have taken God out of the government and as a result we see little servanthood. Let's stop treating the State as if it lacked accountability. The state is

servant, not master, and it is time we started instructing what Paul calls the “God’s servant” (Rom. 13:4) that they have limits on their authority. Their limits are to protect the good and to punish the evil. Their limits are to only do the enumerated things that Scripture says the government may do - an exceedingly small government. But you would have almost as small a government if they only did the powers enumerated in the Constitution.

Problem six - letting unelected officials run the government (vv. 7-8)

Problem six - letting unelected officials run the government. We’ve already read verse 7 where Jezebel offers to fix the problem. There was nothing in Israel’s constitution that allowed her to do that. She did not have the authority to act on his behalf. Period. Verse 8 says,

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.

Notice that she uses Ahab’s seal to take this action, but she isn’t Ahab.

Well, this continues to be a problem today. In fact, for all of my lifetime Congress has allowed agencies to pass laws that the Constitution only allows Congress to do. Modern books on Federal laws will list four sources of American law. They say that 1) statutory law comes from Congress, 2) executive orders come from the president, 3) case laws come from the courts, and 4) regulatory laws come from the agencies. And they don’t question whether those laws are legitimate - just as the nobles and elders of 1 Kings 21 failed to question the authority of Jezebel to do what she was doing. Or, if they thought it was Ahab, to question Ahab’s authority.

Article 1, section 1 of our Constitution stipulates, “All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States...” That first phrase could not be more explicit. The word “all” rules out any legislation from the courts or the executive office or agencies. The phrase “herein granted” indicates that there can be no legislative powers that the federal government has than those powers that are explicitly enumerated in the Constitution. We have gone way, way, way beyond that. The word “granted” means the States gave certain powers to the Federal government and created the federal government, not vice versa. The word “vested” means that these powers are fixed in one location and may not be delegated to agencies, committees, the twelve member Super Congress, the president, the courts, or any other body. And people say, “Well, the Congress is delegating their authority and so the agency’s rules are still the Congress’s rules.” But the Congress cannot confer lawmaking power by statute since the Constitution gives no enumerated power of creating lawmakers. Sorry, but there is no way of legitimately getting around the limits placed by Article I, section 1 of the Constitution. There are very few Congressmen who have not perjured themselves with their oath of office. And we need to confront them about that.

But far more important than the fact that they are violating their oath of office is the fact that their laws contradict God’s laws. We need to be far more concerned about God’s honor than the Constitution’s honor.

Problem seven - an unregulated use of executive orders (v. 9)

And of course, what I've said relates to the next problem - an unregulated use of executive orders. Verse 9 says,

She wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth with high honor among the people...

She is giving orders in the king's name. Well, even the king didn't have authority to do that. This executive order went beyond the purpose of executive orders. The federal government of Israel had no authority to dictate such things. These letters that were sealed with Ahab's seal had the force of law as far as she was concerned, but Biblically had no force of law. We must distinguish between what is lawful and what is legal. What is legal is many times unlawful, and numerous Supreme Court decisions of the past have said that unconstitutional statutes have no force of law. The vast majority of statutes and regulations today are Constitutionally unlawful and are certainly Biblically not lawful. And Christians need to begin pointing that out. With no resistance, this state of affairs will continue. It's not going to change on its own.

When you realize how far reaching some of the executive orders have been, it is breathtaking. On the graphic in your outline of executive orders you will see that Franklin D. Roosevelt issued the most at 3,721. And that didn't even count the many informal ways that he dictated policy through agencies. And both Democrat and Republican presidents have left most of those unlawful executive orders in place. The sad part of it is that Democrats never complain when their president issues the orders and Republicans never complain when their president issues them. They are being partial to the sins of their own president. President Trump has not even finished his first term, and he has already done more Executive Orders than Obama did in his first term. But Christians praise him. We need to realize that this abuse concentrates way too much power in the hands of one man. The fact that he has done a lot of good things does not excuse the bad things he does. Misuse of executive orders started with Abraham Lincoln and it has increased since then.

Problem eight - when lying comes easy in civics (vv. 9-10)

Problem eight has been with us for a long time - liars and lying in politics. The Clintons appear to have been masters of this, but the public knows that most political regimes seem to be riddled with lies. This is a stronghold that needs to be prayed against. Jezebel is asking people to lie for her and for Ahab. I've already read verse 9. Verse 10 says,

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.

Modern times are not the only times when politicians have used religion to pander to the public and to increase their power. Deceitfulness is everywhere.

Problem nine - when human life is expendable (v. 10)

And of course, treating human life as expendable is also illustrated in that verse. Naboth's life was taken without due process of law, just as the lives of millions of unborn babies have been snuffed out in America without due process of law. But notice that Ahab didn't do it himself, even though he is to blame. In verse 7 Jezebel says, "I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite." She did it, not Ahab. And Ahab didn't even know what was done till Jezebel told him. Yet verse 19 still holds him accountable because he didn't resist it. Ignorance is not an excuse for a politician. Nor is it enough for him to say, "Hey, I didn't commit the abortion. I'm pro-life." When a politician refuses to do all in his power to stop abortion, he is still treating life with less regard than God is. He should have brought his wife up on charges of murder. Are our leaders really pro-life when they support fetal tissue research, or the use of fetal tissue in vaccines? No. And by the way, some of the Covid-19 vaccines have fetal tissue. Scripture gives the life issue as a litmus test. It says that people are not qualified for the position of civic office if they are unwilling to "save the children of the needy" (Psalm 82:2-4). Psalm 82 is talking about politicians, and God holds them guilty if they do not save the children of needy.

But its not just the blood of babies that is on our hands. There appears to be strong evidence that previous presidents have knocked off inconvenient people in America. But certainly the CIA's involvement in starting wars, overturning regimes, and destabilizing regions counts as a violation of the sixth commandment on a huge scale. Ungodly wars are another disregard for life. But what has been most horrific to me is the blatant disregard for life in the abortion holocaust. I don't take a politician seriously if they aren't willing to do more than mere tokenism against abortion. I would call people to join with End Abortion Now in Nebraska. Call it what it is, murder.

Problem ten - when lower officials refuse to engage in interposition (vv. 11-12)

Problem ten - when lower officials refuse to engage in interposition. Look at how scurrilous and cowardly these lower officials were in verses 11-12:

1Kings 21:11 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. 12 They proclaimed a fast, and seated Naboth with high honor among the people.

When those elders, nobles, and other officials saw that letter, they could have united in resisting Jezebel and Ahab. They could have. But their careers were more important to them than their standing before God.

Interposition is a thoroughly Biblical doctrine. It's a thoroughly American doctrine. You can think of the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions of 1798, the Hartford Convention of 1814, the South Carolina ordinance of nullification of 1832 and many others.

In verses 8-13 we see the elders and nobles of the city unwilling to do that; unwilling to buck the king; unwilling to do their God-given duty to uphold the Constitution against all

enemies external or internal. And by the way, most of America's enemies have been internal. It is God's mandate to a lower magistrate to protect the citizens under their care from the tyranny of another magistrate. It is not just an option; it is a duty. And to the cowardly civic officers who prefer popularity to principle and opt for silence rather than having outrage against murder, Psalm 58 says,

1 Do you indeed speak righteousness, you silent ones?

What's He accusing them of when he calls out the magistrates for being "silent ones"? He's calling them out for not speaking against the evil. The rest of the verses call them out for not taking action - not interposing themselves between tyrants and the citizens they are called to protect. "Do you indeed speak righteousness, you silent ones?"

Do you judge uprightly, you sons of men?

2 No, in heart you work wickedness; You weigh out the violence of your hands in the earth.

He blames the silent ones with murder simply for failing to interpose. They didn't do what they could have done to protect a Naboth.

Problem eleven - when government judges without due process (vv. 13-14)

Problem eleven - courts that judge without due process. Verses 13-14:

13 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. 14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."

This sounds so similar to David Daleiden's court case in which the criminal organization acts the victim and Daleiden (who exposed their crimes) was treated as the criminal. It's totally upside down. Yet in April of this year unsealed documents in the court trials revealed exactly what Daleiden had said. One of the documents showed Planned Parenthood violating federal law by charging \$25,000 for fetal tissue and maternal blood samples in 2012. They have been marketing the murder of babies and then marketing the parts of those murdered babies. Planned Parenthood is a criminal organization.

But similar problems could be pointed out in courts across this nation. Wicked judges have repeatedly acted in wicked ways to prosecute people like General Flynn or to let criminals off the hook. We need to pray against the courts and ask God for court reform. Do you check out the records of the judges, whom you have the privilege to vote to retain them or not retain them? We can at least do that. I voted to not retain 11 of the 13 judges that were up for confirmation on my ballot. Why? Because their decisions have been scandalously unlawful.

Problem twelve - theft by eminent domain (vv. 15-16)

Problem twelve - theft by eminent domain. Verses 15-16 says,

1Kings 21:15 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." 16 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.

Something to keep in mind is that only Naboth is dead. His family should have inherited the land from Naboth after Naboth's death, but without Naboth's manly opposition, the government is able to swoop in and confiscate the land from that family.

Our nation has been guilty of this thousands of times. And sadly, the Supreme Court made Eminent Domain for any reason a legal thing to do in the *Kelo v. City of New London* case of 2005. They "Declared that using the power of eminent domain to take property from poorer people and give the property to large corporations (who pay more taxes) to be a 'public use' under the Takings Clause of the 5th Amendment." It's really sad, and I think it is appropriate to pray imprecations against such thieves. We are going to be doing so at the end of this service.

Problem thirteen - lack of an Elijah-like black-robed regiment (v. 17)

Problem thirteen is a lack of an Elijah-like black-robed regiment in America that will fearlessly preach against the evils of our civil government. Israel had it back then. Verse 17 has Elijah on the scene to bring the Word of God to the State and to be willing to stand in the gap for the innocent. But who is willing to bring the Word of God to the state today? There is a small growing movement, of which I am a part, that is called the Black Robed Regiment. The name comes from the time of the War for Independence. Pastors back then used to wear black robes as a sign of a teacher. Because pastors were so involved in preaching from the Bible about the political issues of the day, and because they got involved in fighting for independence and encouraging others to do so, the British called these patriotic pastors the Black Robed Regiment. They actually credited the clergy (and especially the Presbyterians) with the American War for Independence. Horace Walpole told the House of Commons when news of the American War for Independence arrived in England, "Cousin America has run off with the Presbyterian parson, and that is the end of it." The presbyterian parson he was referring to was pastor John Witherspoon. Historians estimate that half of the revolutionary army was made up of Presbyterians. The point is, the churches were salt and light and made a difference in politics. But what happens when the salt loses its saltiness? Jesus says that it becomes worthless and fit only for being cast out and trampled under foot of men (Matt. 5:13).

Problem fourteen - assuming that Scripture and politics don't mix (vv. 17-19)

Problem fourteen - assuming that Scripture and politics don't mix. This bad theology has been a scourge upon America. Pietists, Dispensationalists, and Radical Two Kingdom advocates have explicitly excluded the Bible from politics. They have opted for natural law, which is a rubber nose that can be twisted however a politician wants to twist it. Is it any wonder that our government has become more and more antiChrist? Preachers aren't salt. And Matthew 5:13 says, "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men." Are we under the boot of ungodly men? Yes we are. But Jesus blames that condition on the church failing to be salt and light; failing to apply God's Word to culture.

Elijah had no problem bringing the inspired word to kings. Verses 17-19.

1Kings 21:17 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 18 "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. 19 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.' ' ' "

Problem fifteen - Christians are too nice (v. 19)

Problem fifteen - Christians are too nice. For sure they would not pray the inspired imprecatory Psalms that God calls us to pray. For sure they would not say the not-very-nice words of verse 19. Let me repeat those words because they may become prophetic words against at least some politicians today.

19 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.' ' ' "

Here's the thing. The enemy expects Christians to be nice and roll over. They are not prepared for Elijah's who rock their world. I am praying that God would raise up not just a couple dozen such men, but thousands of such men in America; men who are connected to God, connected to each other, and ready to do spiritual battle with the forces of darkness.

Problem sixteen - tyrants calling the freedom lovers the "enemy" (v. 20)

Problem sixteen is tyrants calling the freedom lovers the enemy. It's turning reality upside down.

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.

We are seeing this increasing antithesis in America where pagans are becoming increasingly vicious in their attacks and hatred against the freedom lovers. They are finally realizing that Christianity is a threat to their goals. Senator Al Franken's labeling of the Alliance Defending Freedom (an incredible Christian organization that defends Christians against persecution) as a "hate group" is just one of thousands of examples of a polarization such as Ahab saw between those who stand for law and liberty and those who don't. Rather than denying that they are enemies (as so many Christians have done - trying to be nice) we should admit that any politician who trashes the Constitution has engaged in treason, and any politician who trashes God's law has engaged in treason against God. And we should pray God's imprecations against them. They are indeed enemies; dangerous enemies. Their own oath of office recognizes the presence of internal enemies. Well, now the foxes are defending the chicken coop.

Problem seventeen - assuming that God doesn't judge nations (vv. 21-24)

Problem seventeen - assuming that God doesn't judge nations. Ahab might have come to the conclusion that because God had done nothing about his overturning of the Constitution that God doesn't judge nations. He may have concluded that he could get away with anything. But nothing could be further from the truth. Ahab himself *was* a judgment on the nation. The nation was under judgment *already*. But there is more. Starting to read at verse 21:

21 "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. 22 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.' 23 And concerning Jezebel the LORD also spoke, saying, "The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.' 24 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.

We should be willing to agree with God in praying similar judgments against anyone who is as wicked as Ahab was. Sadly, the church at large is not willing to do so. The consequence is laid out in James 4:2 - "you do not have because you do not ask." You don't have liberty because you refuse to ask for those tyrants to be judged - the precondition to liberty. If the bride would be like the importunate widow in Luke 18 and ask for justice against her enemies, God would give it. He guarantees it. He says,

will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly.

The problem is, the church of Jesus Christ has not been like that widow. They have refused to use God's imprecatory Psalms to petition God for justice. Those are the prayers of Jesus. You could not get more holy prayers! We are simply coming into agreement with Jesus. God lays the blame for America's problems at the feet of the church - "you do not have because you do not ask." In our closing inspired Psalm, we will be asking God to do exactly this in our singing.

Problem eighteen - Assuming that character doesn't matter in candidates (v. 25-26)

Problem eighteen - assuming that character doesn't matter in candidates. Just because a nation is prosperous (as it was under Ahab), and just because a nation has a strong defense against external enemies (as it did under Ahab), and just because businesses prospered (as they did under Ahab), does not mean that God is pleased. Christians seem to be pleased with candidates who give us a few things that we want while standing against the Constitution and against the Bible on other things. God's evaluation of Ahab is given in verses 25-26:

1Kings 21:25 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. 26 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.

God wants us to consider not only the character of the candidate but the character of the candidate's wife. There are other qualifications, of course, but character should be an important one. At the end of every king's life there was an evaluation of his whole reign *based on his character*. We have given up doing that in the last few decades and have opted for more pragmatic criteria for our votes. I would urge our congregants to try to justify their voting from the Bible. I'm not saying that we can't have room for differences of opinion on our application of the Bible (we can), but apply the Bible rather than voting out of fear or pragmatism.

Problem nineteen - assuming that judgment can't be reversed (vv. 27-29)

Problem nineteen - assuming that judgment can't be reversed. This attitude makes people give up and not try. But consider this: who would have thought that wicked king Ahab would repent? Who would have thought that God would relent on His judgment? We cannot guarantee that God will bring judgment soon. Only God knows the timing, and He is an incredibly patient God. Yes, judgment is looming, but if we call for repentance we might see a reversal of judgment. Verses 27-29 say,

1Kings 21:27 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.

1Kings 21:28 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 29 "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."

So this chapter is a call to prepare for the worst but hope for the best. But it is also a reminder that repentance is unlikely to come from our politicians if the church is unwilling to bring the rebukes of God's Word.

Problem twenty - interpreting God's patience as grounds that judgment will not come (v. 29)

The last problem is the opposite extreme - interpreting God's patience in the past as grounds that He will be patient forever and that judgment will never come in history. And of course, the last verse that I read shows how that is a false assumption. Judgments always *eventually* come to every nation that is in rebellion.

So let me end by encouraging us to join with Elijah in pronouncing God's curses upon His enemies in this nation. We will be doing so by singing Psalm 94A. God can answer such prayers in two ways. If His enemies repent, then God will save them because Christ bore that curse in their place. We will rejoice in their repentance and rejoice that they have avoided that judgment. But if they don't repent, God can take them out. I believe God will take out His enemies when the church more widely begins to sing such imprecatory Psalms. But we can begin the process.

And by leaving this judgment in God's hands we are freed from bitterness and revenge and are able to love our enemies and preach the Gospel to them. We don't take vengeance; "Vengeance is Mine" says the Lord. But America is in such a crisis situation that it is imperative that we not ignore God's opinions of the statism that is rife in all but two of the over fifty national political parties.³ I was astounded to find 50 parties that had alternative views of statism.

³ The two that are not statist are the Constitution Party and the Christian Liberty Party. All the parties that I am aware of are listed here by size and/or the number of votes for a presidential candidate: Democratic Party, Republican Party, Libertarian Party, Vermont Progressive Party, Independence Party of New York, Reform Party, Green Party, Conservative Party of New York State, Constitution Party, Conservative Party of New York Stat, Constitution Part, Working Families Part, Party for Socialism and Liberatio, Peace and Freedom Part, Women's Equality Part, American Delta Part, Legal Marijuana Now Part, Socialist Workers Part, American Solidarity Part, Prohibition Part, Workers World Part, Socialist Party US, Natural Law Part, Socialist Equality Part, Liberty Union Part, Transhumanist Part, Christian Liberty Part, Alliance Part, American Freedom Part, American Independent Part, Citizens Party of the United State, Freedom Socialist Part, Humane Part, Justice Part, Socialist Actio, Socialist Alternativ, United States Marijuana Part, United States Pirate Part, Alaskan Independence Part, Independent Party of Delawar, Grassroots-Legalize Cannabis Part, Liberal Party of New Yor, Rent Is Too Damn High Part, Serve America Movemen, Charter Part, Independent Party of Orego, Oregon Progressive Part, Socialist Party of Orego, Sovereign Union Movemen, Puerto Ricans for Puerto Rico Part, Working People's Party of Puerto Ric, Moderate Party of Rhode Islan, United Citizens Part, United Utah Part, Independent Citizens Movemen, Progressive Dan, Unity Part, Independent Greens of Virgini, Working Class Part, Approval Voting Part, Aloha 'Āina Party.

But rather than feeling hopeless, I turn to the God who can move mountains, who can bring Reformations, who can judge enemies, and who can revive the church. May our church have faith that this is possible. Amen. Let's pray.

Father God, with Elijah we pray your curses upon the statist politics of our nation - from whatever party that statism arises. We pray that You would take out Your enemies who have been raising their fist against You in a more and more high handed way. As you declared perpetual war against Amalek in Exodus 17:16, I pray that you would declare perpetual war against all who are casting off the bonds of Christ. Please conquer Your enemies in our nation, either through conversion and discipleship or through other means. But we long to see Your glory lifted up in our nation. Help us not to be overcome by evil, but to overcome evil with good. Help us not to become bitter, but to have love. Help us never to become hopeless but to be filled with hope and faith by the infilling of Your Holy Spirit. Your enemies in this nation are no match for You. We believe that. And so as we close this service by singing Your inspired prayer in Psalm 94, may you hear, may you vindicate Your name and glory; may you exalt Your Son above His enemies. We pray this in the strong name of Jesus. Amen.