

Introduction to the Life of Elijah (1 Kings 23)

- It was only a vineyard, but King Ahab wanted Naboth's vineyard
- But the king does not need the vineyard! But that is not the end of the matter
- Coveting, sulking, combined with power and cruelty make for destruction
- Our text is not about Naboth's vineyard or Ahab's obsession: it's about theology
- It means to speak more about the LORD's justice than Naboth's vineyard

I. God's People Must Expect to Suffer Injustice in the World (vv1-16)

- Ahab's idea was that Naboth's vineyard would make a good vegetable garden
- Ahab's offer was literally the bargain of bargains that couldn't be passed up (v.2)
- But Naboth's response was an emphatic no, he could not do such a thing (v.3)
- Naboth declined because of what land represented in Israel (Gen 15:14,16)
- The land belonged to God, and God giving it was a redemptive act, hence (v.3)
- Naboth's response shows he is one who cares for God's law & is under His care
- Vs 4-7 tell us Ahab went about like a spoiled child, even missing his dinner
- Jezebel rebukes Ahab & swings into action to settle Ahab's annoyance (vv8-10)
- With her sinister plan executed & Naboth murdered, Ahab is relieved (vv11-16)

II. Paying the Price for Serving God and Standing for Justice (vv.8-14)

- It could have been stopped, Jezebel's plan went like clock work, with no protest
- Local magistrates could've stopped it but like bureaucratic robots they went along
- Injustice flourishes not only in climate of wickedness but also in one of weakness
- At the heart of the matter is the age-old idol: the fear of man, or as here, of woman
- These men were ready to ignore the law, wiping out Naboth's family (2 Kng 9:26)

III. God Will Intervene to Bring Justice to His Wronged People (vv.17-26)

- At the end of vs.16 it seems everything was over. The Naboth case was closed
- Vs 17 the word of God disturbs the peace, after what seems to be a perfect crime
- Vs 17-18 shows us that nothing evades the close scrutiny and judgment of God
- No one, whatever his status, success, can escape the jurisdiction of the living God

IV. God Delights To Exercise Mercy While Imposing His Justice (vv.27-29)

- When Ahab heard these words of terror directed at him, note his response (v.27)
- But what really surprises us is the way the LORD responds, not His words (v.29)
- It shouldn't surprise us, God does not delight in the death of the wicked (Rom 2:4)