

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
AHAB COVETS NABOTH'S VINEYARD
1 KINGS 21:1-4

Introduction

Have you ever seen a spoiled brat of a child who did not get his own way and pitched a *“conipion fit”*? I’m talking about when a child has a **multi-faceted meltdown in public that increases in intensity until eventually the parent caves in and gives them what they want!**

My parents did not tolerate such behavior from me and my two brothers. Yes, I know we were raised in different times. But I, for one, think that it is sad commentary on parenting that we are seeing more and more of this *“spoiled brat syndrome”* in our society. Moms and Dads used to could *“parent”* out in public and folks would applaud them! Now if a mom or dad try to take care of it in public they most likely will get either the cops or the Department of Family and Children’s Services called to them.

Nevertheless, I believe **parents should still take care of the issue in private so that it doesn’t develop into a character flaw as the child gets older.** It doesn’t say much for the parent if that kind of behavior is tolerated over and over without it being dealt with. And it doesn’t say much for the child as that kind of behavior will most likely be carried over into adulthood where it continues to manifest itself in their character!

That’s my editorial on parenting for this evening. Now that won’t cost you any extra.

But I’ve said all that to say this: **Ahab’s behavior in our text this evening points to a major flaw in his character!** We don’t know for sure because the Scripture doesn’t say, but don’t you imagine that as little Prince Ahab was growing up, his Daddy King Omri made sure that little Ahab got whatever his little heart desired! After all, he was the crown prince!

After all, Omri his father was more wicked than all those kings before him! *1 Kings 16:25– “But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that were before him.”*

Omri was used to getting what he wanted and none of it was of the LORD! What we see in the parents usually comes out in their children! Amen!

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
AHAB COVETS NABOTH'S VINEYARD
1 KINGS 21:1-4

And let me say this here. **If you’re an adult and you have an attitude that pouts and manipulates until you get your way, YOU, like Ahab, have a character flaw that needs to be repented of and forsaken!**

Maybe your pouting is more civilized such as **using the silent treatment**, where you don't talk to the person who denied your request or **maybe you hide yourself in your room? It can manifest itself in different ways!**

However, if the *“spoiled brat syndrome”* manifests itself in your life, **you need to see it as the SIN that it is and confess it and forsake it! The LORD can give us victory over that if we know Him and want the victory!**

I want us to see from Ahab’s life **how damaging this kind of coveting, pouting, and “got to have my way” attitude is in one’s life.**

Ahab was NOT a child here! He was a grown man, but you wouldn’t know it! His actions were childish! He was a man who, **when didn't get his own way, went home and pouted and refused to eat. Let’s look at the details here:**

I. WE SEE NABOTH’S VINEYARD. (Vs 1)

Obviously, years had passed since the earlier drought and accompanying famine in Israel. The vineyards were growing in Jezreel once again. Don’t you love to see a well kept, thriving vineyard? *(e.g. I grew up next an uncle that had one we enjoyed the fruit from!)*

Well, a man named Naboth was the one who owned this particular vineyard that happened to be adjacent to the royal palace in Jezreel.

No doubt Naboth had worked hard to get his vineyard to where it was flourishing again after the drought!

SO, WE SEE NABOTH’S VINEYARD...

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
AHAB COVETS NABOTH'S VINEYARD
1 KINGS 21:1-4

II. WE SEE AHAB'S COVETOUSNESS! (Vs 2-3)

It appears that at first, Ahab was at least **trying** to treat Naboth right in this matter. Here we see that **Ahab offered Naboth either a better parcel of land or money for his vineyard.**

Naboth could probably have named his price and Ahab would have paid it! However, we see that **Naboth didn't want to sell!** And it was **a matter of principle**, Naboth was right to **not sell** the parcel to Ahab!

Naboth's answer was governed by the Word of God! God's Word stated that the Israelites were not supposed to give up the land of their inheritance, but rather it was supposed to stay in their family!

Numbers 36:7 - "So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe: for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers."

Leviticus 25:23 - "The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me."

Now Ahab should have known the Law of God being the King!

Deuteronomy 17:18-20 - "And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: 19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: 20 That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel."

But we have seen that Ahab, in spite of repeated efforts by the LORD to show Ahab that He is the LORD God, chose to remain in his sinful condition of unbelief! **The Law of God didn't matter to him! Ahab wanted what he wanted! And here is where we're going to park for a bit tonight and talk about the SIN OF COVETOUSNESS!**

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
AHAB COVETS NABOTH'S VINEYARD
1 KINGS 21:1-4

Covetousness is a sin that both CAN and WILL bring trouble in one's life if not dealt with properly—by that I mean confessed and forsaken!

What does the Bible have to say about *covetousness* in one's life?

Well did you know that , *covetousness* was involved in the original sin: *Genesis 3:6 - "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."*

Covetousness is tied to lust:

*James 1:14-15 - "14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own **lust, and enticed.** 15 Then when **lust** hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."*

The LORD God Jehovah gave his view of *covetousness* in the law:

*Exodus 20:17 - "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, **thou shalt not covet** thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."*

Deuteronomy 5:21 basically says the same thing but uses the wording "**neither shalt thou desire**". *Covetousness* is tied to our *lusts* or our *desires*. (i.e. **It is a work of our flesh that is rotten to the core!**)

Listen to what Jesus said in Luke 12:15 - "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of *covetousness*: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

The Apostle Paul listed it as one of the things that we as Believers are to put to death in our lives!

*Colossians 3:5 - Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection [i.e. a suffering unrestrained passion], evil concupiscence [i.e. a strong lust or passion for the forbidden], and *covetousness, which is idolatry:**

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
AHAB COVETS NABOTH'S VINEYARD
1 KINGS 21:1-4

Notice that **COVETOUSNESS** is a form of **IDOLATRY!**

The Apostle Paul lived a life of contentment which is the opposite of a life of covetousness! (*Philippians 4:11-13*)

The Apostle Paul also taught Timothy to be content!
(*1 Timothy 6:6-10*)

The Prophet Habakkuk was content with God's way and trusted Him even in the hard times!

Habakkuk 3:17-19 "17 Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: 18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. 19 The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places..."

The writer of the Book of Hebrews tells us to be content!

Hebrews 13:5 – "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

That word translated "**conversation**" in our King James Bible speaks of our **behavior!** We are to be **content** in our **behavior!**

WE SEE NABOTH'S VINEYARD...
WE SEE AHAB'S COVETOUSNESS!

III. WE SEE AHAB'S POUTING! (Vs 4)

Ahab pouted here because he didn't get his own way!

The problem with Ahab was that he had **NOT** learned to be **content** with what he had. He was king of Israel!

Matthew Henry said this about verse 4, "*Paul had contentment in prison, but Ahab did not have contentment in a palace.*"

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
AHAB COVETS NABOTH'S VINEYARD
1 KINGS 21:1-4

Think about that! That is because the LORD was not a part of Ahab's life!

A person that is **content** realizes that true happiness is not hindered by material conditions or possessions. **The word spelled "content" has two slightly different pronunciations and meanings.**

CON-tent = *Is that which is inside of something.*

con-TENT = *Is satisfaction with present circumstances.*

To be "con-TENT" is being happy with present "CON-tents."
(i.e. It is being happy with what I've got rather than focusing on what I don't have.)

Ahab pouted because he focused on what he **coveted** that he did not have instead of all that he already had!

The process of acquiring things can result in emptiness and **discontentment**. Ahab was the king, yet, he felt empty now because he did not have Naboth's vineyard. He had not learned to be happy with what he already had!

Fulfillment and satisfaction have far more to do with our internal condition than our outward circumstances. **A person with character has learned to be content in any circumstance.**

I'll remind you again, two verses we looked at previously:

Philippians 4:11– "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

1 Timothy 6:6,8– "6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. 8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."

Conclusion

If we are to learn to be content as Believers, then we must learn to focus our affections in the right places.

BOOK OF 1 KINGS
AHAB COVETS NABOTH'S VINEYARD
1 KINGS 21:1-4

Colossians 3:1-2 – “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”

Naboth learned to be *content* with what he had and was not willing to compromise God’s Word to get more!

Ahab on the other hand was not *content* even with all he had and we see he was miserable! He was “*heavy and displeased*” (i.e. He was both sad and mad—pouting!)

Have you learned to be *content* with what you have? If not, your *discontentment* may lead to destructive decisions.

That is what happened to Ahab and LORD willing we’ll come back next week and look at where this road of *covetousness* and *discontentment* led Ahab! Spoiler alert! It was NOT good places!