

Wicked

Payday Ahab

1 Kings 22:1-48

August 5, 2018 am

HDBC

Today we continue our examination of one of the *bad couples* of the Bible; Ahab and Jezebel. Ahab was the 8th king of Israel and Jezebel was his wife. The simple testimony of scripture about Ahab is that he was **more evil** than all the kings who had come before him. He and Jezebel led the people into immorality and idolatry. Simply put . . . they were **Wicked!**

They have led the nation into gross idolatry, which led to major sanctions coming down from the Lord in the form of a three-year drought. However, Ahab and Jezebel continued to lead selfish, arrogant, immoral lives.

They were behind one of the great injustices of their era when they stole the vineyard of Naboth, by having him falsely accused and executed. There seems to be no evil they will not do.

However, the Bible and history make it clear that wickedness will not go unchecked forever. Eventually Ahab and Jezebel would experience judgment for their actions. To quote R. G. Lee there would be a **Payday Someday**.

This morning we will look at **Ahab's Payday**. The story of Ahab's payday begins the day he took possession of Naboth's vineyard. For that, we need to look at back at 1 Kings 21.

1. Prediction of His Death (21:17-26) Read the text. 4 things to note:

A. The Timing

While Ahab is preparing to take the vineyard, God is preparing to intercept him. He will not stop the action, but will make Ahab aware of the consequences. Even while evil rulers are plotting their next moves, God is planning for judgment. God is never without a plan. Twice in the narrative

we find Jezebel telling Ahab to get up and now we find God telling Elijah to get up. For every Jezebel who tells an Ahab to get up and do evil, God has an Elijah who is called to get up and speak justice.

B. The Details

There is great detail in the message that Elijah shared with Ahab. Specifics about Ahab's death, Jezebel's death and the death of their children. Their future would not be pleasant!

Ahab

Die and the dogs lick his blood. Ahab was smart enough to know that he would die, but this is assurance that his death would be premature and would be the consequence of his present action. **As RG Lee put it, Ahab probably jumped every time he heard a dog bark.**

Jezebel

The dogs would eat her. Elijah making it clear that he knew Jezebel was behind this. God is sovereign and knows all the players involved in any crime. In judging her, he is going to the root of the poison that has infected his people. Even references death of children. **Why so harsh?**

C. The Justification (25-26)

God reminds Ahab that he has brought all of this about because of his wickedness. He has been a rotten ruler, has failed miserably and results will be bad. Sin has consequences and they are not pleasant. The severity of the judgment points to the ugliness of the sin.

D. The Delay (27-29)

Surprising twist in the narrative. Without warning Ahab does the unthinkable. He repents. It was serious enough to catch the eye of God. In response God postpones the judgement. **Amazing mercy.** This man deserved to be cutoff immediately, but God responded in mercy. Remind you that God always responds to a repentant heart.

Was he truly repentant? I think it was real, but limited. He came up short in demonstrated absolute repentance. Where was the restoration? Where were the tangible signs of a true change of heart?

2. Circumstances of His Death (22:1-38)

After 3 years of peace, Ahab decided it was time to attack Syria over a disputed piece of land. He asked King Jehoshaphat of Judah to join him in going to war against Syria to retake this land. **Jehoshaphat agreed**, but encouraged Ahab to seek a word from the Lord. Smart move!

A. Conflicting Advice (22:6-7)

Ahab gathered 400 prophets and asked if they should go to war. They said yes! But Jehoshaphat was suspicious. Something did not feel right.

Ahab responded that there was one man, Micaiah, but he hated him because he never prophesied anything good for Ahab, but only evil. Jehoshaphat insisted and they sent for him.

Those who enlisted him, warned him about what was taking place. All the prophets were telling Ahab what he wanted to hear. They encouraged him to do the same. **It could be costly to speak the truth.** It would be better to tell Ahab what he wanted to hear. However, he told them he would only say what God told him to say.

When Micaiah was asked the question, he responded that they should go up to battle and that they would be victorious. **(22:15)** However, there must have been clear sarcasm in his voice. For the king chastised him and told him to tell the truth.

In a nutshell, Micaiah revealed the bad news that they would be defeated. **(22:17)** Ultimately Micaiah was imprisoned and the armies of Israel and Judah ignored his warning and went to war. **Bad Decision!**

B. Divine Fulfillment (22:36-38)

Ahab went into battle. Disguised himself because he knew he would be a target. Encouraged Jehoshaphat to wear his royal robe. (30)

The writer informs us that the king of Syria instructed his leaders to specifically go after the king of Israel. He was to be their primary target. They saw Jehoshaphat and assumed he was Ahab. So, they pursued him. After a short pursuit they realized the mistake and stopped.

It looked as if Ahab and Jehoshaphat were going to escape death that day. However, an arrow shot in a random direction penetrated a weak place in Ahab's armor and he was mortally wounded. **(22:34-38)**

As his chariot raced back to the city it began to fill up with his blood. He watched his army defeated by the Syrians just before he died. His body was brought back to Samaria for burial. Later that night a servant took the chariot and washed the blood from it. Dogs of the village were quickly drawn to it and licked the blood that was washed from it.

Takeaways:

1. The mercy of God is not limited in scope.

We are surprised at the mercy of God shown to Ahab. This may be the most surprising part of the story. God can show mercy to anyone, anywhere, anytime. Let's be careful not to attempt to box God in.

2. The justice of God is not limited in time.

For a season it looked as if Ahab was going to get away with his actions. Days, weeks, months and years went by with no reaction from God. God's inactivity should never be confused with indifference. Ultimately, God defended and avenged Naboth.

This story is no guarantee of immunity from harm, but of assurance of justice, even though it may come in a time that is beyond what we desire. This truth is woven throughout the Bible.

1 Kings offers an example of this truth.

1 Thessalonians 1:5-7 offers the **theology**.

This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering— ⁶ since indeed God considers it **just to repay with affliction those who afflict you,** ⁷ and to **grant relief to you who are afflicted** as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels

On the cross, Jesus paid enough for the afflicted and the afflicters!

