

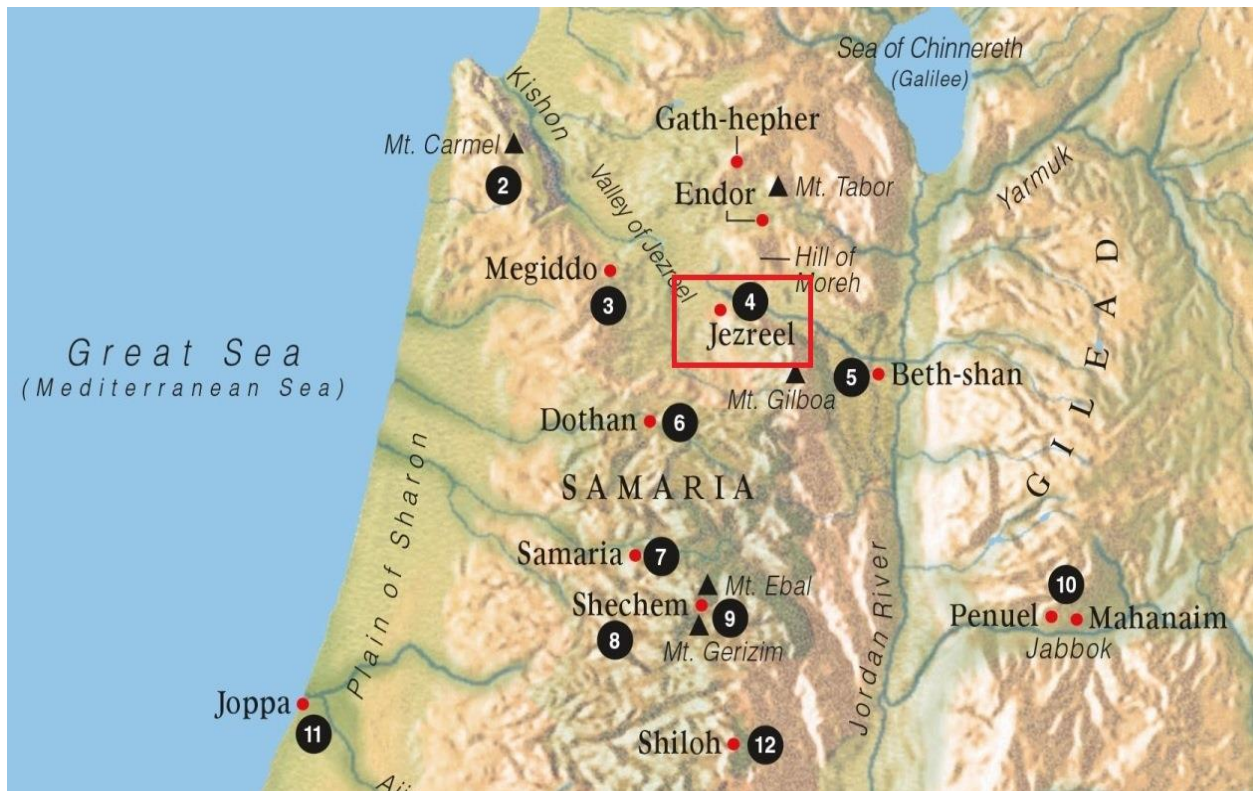
## 1 Kings 21

Verses 1-4

Now it came about after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. <sup>2</sup> Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden because it is close beside my house, and I will give you a better vineyard than it in its place; if you like, I will give you the price of it in money." <sup>3</sup> But Naboth said to Ahab, "The Lord forbid me that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers." <sup>4</sup> So Ahab came into his house sullen and vexed because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and ate no food.

Now it came about after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

See Maps 2105



**<sup>2</sup> Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, “Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden because it is close beside my house, and I will give you a better vineyard than it in its place; if you like, I will give you the price of it in money.”**

In most cases this would have been contrary to the law.

See Leviticus 25:23 – 28

**<sup>23</sup> ‘The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, because the land is Mine; for you are *only* strangers and residents with Me. <sup>24</sup> So for every piece of your property, you are to provide for the redemption of the land. <sup>25</sup> ‘If a fellow countryman of yours becomes so poor that he sells part of his property, then his closest redeemer is to come and buy back what his relative has sold. <sup>26</sup> Or in case someone has no redeemer, but recovers to find sufficient means for its redemption, <sup>27</sup> then he shall calculate the years since its sale and refund the balance to the man to whom he sold it, and so return to his property. <sup>28</sup> But if he has not found sufficient means to get it back for himself, then what he has sold shall remain in the hands of its purchaser until the year of jubilee; but at the jubilee it shall revert, so that he may return to his property.**

Naboth could sell the vineyard for a period of time due to a financial crisis but that was not the case here. Even if there was a financial crisis the sale of the land was governed by 3 conditions that had to be met.

1. A close relative had to purchase the land before others were considered..
2. If there was no close relative to redeem it, then the king could buy it.
3. But it would go back to Naboth at the Jubilee.

**<sup>3</sup> But Naboth said to Ahab, “The Lord forbid me that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers.”**

Even though much of the moral law was neglected by the people the civil law was adhered to in most cases because they were governed by the courts. However, it took a lot of courage for Naboth to say no to the king.

**<sup>4</sup> So Ahab came into his house sullen and vexed and he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and ate no food.**

Ahab acted like a little child that didn't get to play with his favorite toy.

Verses 5-10

**<sup>5</sup> But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, “How is it that your spirit is so sullen that you are not eating food?” <sup>6</sup> So 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 a vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’” <sup>7</sup> Jezebel his wife said to him, “Do you now reign over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.” <sup>8</sup> So she wrote letters in Ahab’s name and sealed them with his seal, and sent letters to the elders and to the nobles who were living with Naboth in his city. <sup>9</sup> Now she wrote in the letters, saying, “Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth at the head of the people; <sup>10</sup> and seat two worthless men before him, and let them testify against him, saying, ‘You cursed God and the king.’ Then take him out and stone him to death.”**

**<sup>5</sup> But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, “How is it that your spirit is so sullen that you are not eating food?”**

Instead of telling her husband the king to grow up she consoles him by reminding him that he is the king and she is quite happy to take care of this injustice.

**<sup>7</sup> Jezebel his wife said to him, “Do you now reign over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”**

Jezebel thought that a king had unlimited power and nothing should prevent him from doing as he pleased. This was never the case in Israel because the King was not greater than the law of God.

Ahab was an immoral and ineffective leader but his wife was truly evil and had no inhibitions about doing the wrong thing to get what she wanted.

**<sup>8</sup> So she wrote letters in Ahab’s name and sealed them with his seal, and sent letters to the elders and to the nobles who were living with Naboth in his city.**

The leaders of Jezreel were not noble men and Jezebel knew she could get them to present false charges against Naboth. No doubt this was not the first time that the elders & nobles had bowed down to their fearless leader.

**<sup>9</sup> Now she wrote in the letters, saying, “Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth at the head of the people;**

It sounds like they were there to honor Naboth but in fact it was a command to bring him before a court, for a public trial. This fake situation mimicked the sin of Achan in Joshua 7 where the guilt of the people could not be lifted until Achan was identified and he and his family was stoned to death.

**<sup>10</sup> and seat two worthless men before him, and let them testify against him, saying, ‘You cursed God and the king.’ Then take him out and stone him to death.”**

The law required at least two witnesses to condemn anyone accused of a crime.

See Deuteronomy 19:15

**<sup>15</sup> “A single witness shall not rise up against a person regarding any wrongdoing or any sin that he commits; on the testimony of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.**

Jezebel knew exactly what kind of a crime was punishable by death.

See Leviticus 24:15 – 16

**<sup>15</sup> You shall also speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘If anyone curses his God, then he will bear *the responsibility* for his sin. <sup>16</sup> Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the Lord must be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The stranger as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.**

She also knew that the stoning should be done outside the city.

See Leviticus 24:13 -14

**<sup>13</sup> Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>14</sup> “Bring the one who has cursed outside the camp, and have all who heard him lay their hands on his head; then have all the congregation stone him.**

Jezebel knew very little to nothing about God and His law but she knew how the courts applied the civil law.

Verses 11-16

**<sup>11</sup> So the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent *word* to them, just as it was written in the letters which she had sent them. <sup>12</sup> They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the people. <sup>13</sup> Then the two worthless men came in and sat before him; and the worthless men testified against him, even against Naboth, before the people, saying, “Naboth cursed God and the king.” So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death with stones. <sup>14</sup> Then they sent *word* to Jezebel, saying, “Naboth has been stoned and is dead.” <sup>15</sup> When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, 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.” <sup>16</sup> When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.**

**<sup>11</sup> So the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent *word* to them, just as it was written in the letters which she had sent them.**

The elders and nobles in Jezreel were all partners in this murder and robbery.

**<sup>14</sup> Then they sent *word* to Jezebel, saying, “Naboth has been stoned and is dead.”**

Normally, the land of Naboth would go to his heirs; however, the people of the city stoned all of Naboth's sons so there would not be any heirs!

See 2 Kings 9:26

**<sup>25</sup> And *Jehu* said to Bidkar his officer, “Pick *him* up and throw him on the property of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite; for remember, *when* you and I were riding together after his father Ahab, that the Lord brought this pronouncement against him: <sup>26</sup> ‘I have certainly seen yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons,’ declares the Lord, ‘and I will repay you on this property,’ declares the Lord.**

**<sup>16</sup> When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.**

The family of Naboth died because Ahab wanted a vegetable garden.

Verses 17-26

<sup>17</sup> Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, <sup>18</sup> “Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria; behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth where he has gone down to take possession of it. <sup>19</sup> 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 the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth the dogs will lick up your blood, even yours.”’ <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> Behold, I will bring evil upon you, and will utterly sweep you away, and will cut off from Ahab every male, both bond and free in Israel; <sup>22</sup> and 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 *because* you have made Israel sin. <sup>23</sup> Of Jezebel also has the Lord spoken, saying, ‘The dogs will eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel.’ <sup>24</sup> The one belonging to Ahab, who dies in the city, the dogs will eat, and the one who dies in the field the birds of heaven will eat.” <sup>25</sup> Surely there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord, because Jezebel his wife incited him. <sup>26</sup> He acted very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the Lord cast out before the sons of Israel.

<sup>19</sup> 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 the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth the dogs will lick up your blood, even yours.”’

One would assume the blood of Naboth was licked up by the dogs outside the city of Jezreel where he was killed.

See verse 13 above

<sup>13</sup> Then the two worthless men came in and sat opposite him; and the worthless men testified against him, against Naboth, before the people, saying, “Naboth cursed God and the king.” So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death with stones.

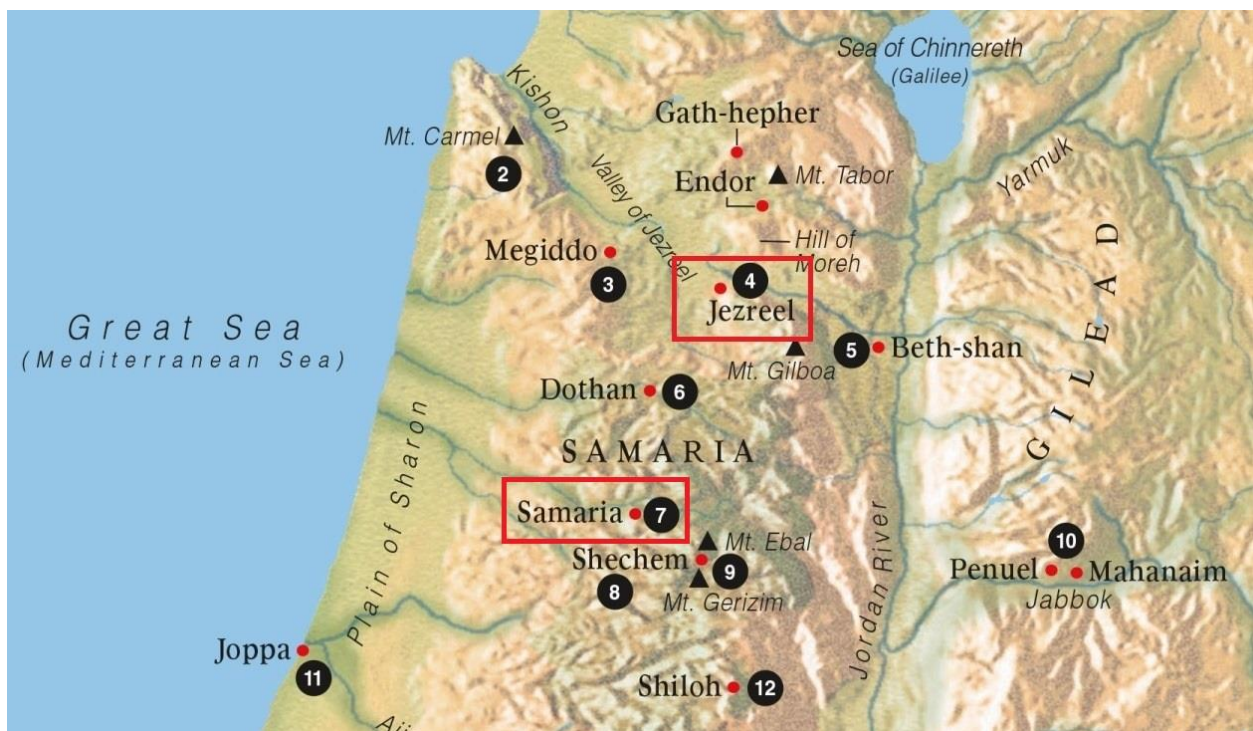
However, the dogs licked up the blood of Ahab at the pool in Samaria

See 1 kings 22:35 - 38

<sup>35</sup> The battle raged on that day, and the king was propped up in his chariot in front of the Arameans, and he died at evening, and the blood from the wound ran into the bottom of the chariot. <sup>36</sup> Then the word passed throughout the army close to sunset, saying, “Every man to his city, and every man to his country!” <sup>37</sup> So the king died and was brought to Samaria, and they buried the king in Samaria. <sup>38</sup> They washed out the chariot by the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood (*it was there that the prostitutes bathed themselves*) in accordance with the word of the Lord which He had spoken.

Samaria is about 20 miles away from Jezreel.

See map 2110



<sup>21</sup> Behold, I will bring evil upon you, and will utterly sweep you away, and will cut off from Ahab every male, both bond and free in Israel; <sup>22</sup> and 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 *because you have made Israel sin.*

See 2 Kings 10:11

<sup>11</sup> So Jehu killed all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, his acquaintances, and his priests, until he left him without a survivor.

**<sup>23</sup> Of Jezebel also has the Lord spoken, saying, ‘The dogs will eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel.’**

See 2 Kings 9:33 - 37

**<sup>33</sup> Then he said, “Throw her down.” So they threw her down, and some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses, and he trampled her underfoot.**

**<sup>34</sup> When he came in, he ate and drank; and he said, “See now to this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king’s daughter.” <sup>35</sup> So they went to bury her, but they found nothing of her except the skull, the feet, and the palms of her hands. <sup>36</sup> Therefore they returned and informed him. And he said, “This is the word of the Lord, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, ‘On the property of Jezreel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; <sup>37</sup> and the corpse of Jezebel will be like dung on the face of the field in the property of Jezreel, so they cannot say, “This is Jezebel.”””**

**<sup>25</sup> Surely there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord, because Jezebel his wife incited him. <sup>26</sup> He acted very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the Lord cast out before the sons of Israel.**

Ahab was responsible for his own sin because he “sold himself to do evil” but there is no doubt that his wife was a strong influence for evil in his life.

The Amorites were cast out of Canaan because of their sin and the same will happen to Israel because of their sin.

Israel was the chosen people of God but because of that blessing they had an even greater responsibility to follow God’s word. Also, God had warned Israel time and again that they would be blessed if they followed His law and they would be cursed if they did not obey His law.

Verses 27-29

**<sup>27</sup> It came about when Ahab heard these words, that he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and fasted, and he lay in sackcloth and went about despondently.**

**<sup>28</sup> Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, <sup>29</sup> “Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days, *but* I will bring the evil upon his house in his son’s days.”**



**<sup>27</sup> It came about when Ahab heard these words, that he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and fasted, and he lay in sackcloth and went about despondently.**

It's hard to know for sure why Ahab finally repented but it is likely that when he heard that God was going to cut off from Ahab every male (verse 21) that he finally came to understand the scope and consequences of his sin.

**<sup>28</sup> Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, <sup>29</sup> “Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days, *but* I will bring the evil upon his house in his son's days.”**

The punishment was not removed, but it was delayed. The repentance of the Ninevites put off their destruction for about a century.