

# Justice and Repentance

It can be hard to admit our own sins and faults. Our natural reaction is to hide them. Our pride stops us from displaying to others that we might be mistaken or worse still, sinned. What has made it worse in our society today is that there does not seem to be any kind of forgiveness for those who have made sinned. This must not be the case for Christians. Christians are called to be people who would confess their sins and also forgives others of their sins. That does not mean that there are no repercussions on their actions, but forgiveness must be part of the Christian experience.

In our passage today, we see a king who wilfully sinned, but was rebuked for it. What was commendable about his response when confronted is that he repented of his sins. As king, it would have been exceedingly easy for him to sweep away or ignore his sins – who had the authority to call him to repentance? No one in his kingdom...except God himself. Let us look at the passage.

## Launch

- 1) Tell of a time where you have sinned and confessed that sin to someone else. What happened after that?

## JUSTICE AND REPENTANCE

**Read 1 Kings 21:1-29**

- 2) What did Ahab want and how did Naboth respond? (v1-3)
- 3) What does it show about Ahab's character in the way that he responded to Naboth's rejection? (v4-6)
- 4) What did Jezebel, Ahab's wife, did in response? (v7-14)
  - a. How would you describe her actions? What does this show you about her character?
- 5) How did Ahab react when he found out that Naboth was dead? (v15-16)
- 6) What was the word of the Lord that came to Elijah? (v17-19)
- 7) What were the consequences of Ahab's sins as laid out by Elijah? (v20-24)



- a. What does this show you about the severity of his sins?
  - b. What do you think Elijah felt when telling that to king Ahab?
- 8) How was Ahab described by the author of 1 Kings? (v25-26)
- 9) How did Ahab respond to the Elijah's declaration of the consequences of Ahab's sin? (v27)
- a. What was the result of his repentance? (v28-29)
  - b. How is it just that the Lord's punishment is now passed on to his son?
- 10) What can we learn about our sins and the repentance of our sins from Ahab?
- 11) How can we find the courage to confront sin around us, particularly amongst our brothers and sisters?

## Conclusion

Ahab was in many ways an immature, childish king. When he did not get what he wanted from Naboth, he behaved in ways that are unbefitting a king. When his wife, Jezebel, managed to take possession of the vineyard he wanted through evil means, Ahab did not question the validity of her actions. It did not matter to him that Naboth was innocently murdered through the actions of Jezebel. Instead, all he seemed to care for was the fact that he is now the owner of the vineyard.

Elijah was sent by God to confront Ahab. This must have been scary for Elijah. He was merely a prophet, coming to confront a king whose queen just murdered the previous person who opposed him. That must have taken courage. Ahab's response was equally surprising. He repented, and never blamed his wife, even though he could have easily done so. However, just because the judgement of God did not come upon Ahab, does not mean that his sins have no consequences. Imagine growing up in a household of Ahab and Jezebel and the values that one would learn and see from their parents. Disaster came upon the house of his son eventually because his son was equally wicked and sinful.

Like Elijah, we should confront sins when we witness them, particularly in our brothers and sisters in Christ. We should do it gently and not harshly. When we ourselves are confronted by our own sins, we should be blaming no one else. However, while we are forgiven of our sins through Christ, unfortunately there are times when there are consequences to our sins. That is why we need to continue to encourage and support one another in our own growth to holiness.