

Lesson 5 – 1 Kings 19-21

Text: 1 Kings 19-21

Main Characters: God, Elijah, Ahab, Ben-Hadad, Naboth, Jezebel

Key Passages:

- 1 Kings 20:13, 28 – God told Ahab that He would help Israel win so the people would know Him.
- 1 Kings 21:20-24 – God promised a terrible end for Ahab, Jezebel, and his house for their sin.

Main Storyline:

Jezebel was furious with Elijah because of what had happened on Mount Carmel. She told Elijah that she wanted to kill him for killing the prophets of Baal. Elijah was terrified. He hid in the wilderness near Beersheba (in Judah), sat under a tree, and prayed that he would die. Eventually he fell asleep, but while he slept, an angel touched him and told him to wake up and eat. When he woke up, Elijah found a cake and a jar of water to eat and drink. After eating, he fell asleep again, but was awoken a second time by the angel again, who instructed him to eat and drink again. After eating and drinking, he journeyed for forty days without any additional food to Horeb (Mount Sinai), where he slept in a cave.

God spoke to Elijah at Horeb, asking him about what he was doing. Elijah lamented that, though he had been very zealous for the Lord, the children were trying to kill him, the last remaining servant of God (as he perceived). God showed his power to Elijah with a mighty wind, an earthquake, and a fire, perhaps to remind him that He was still in control. God repeated his question, but Elijah still answered the same way. God instructed Elijah to anoint a new king over Syria, Hazael, a new king over Israel, Jehu, and a new prophet in Israel to take Elijah's place, Elisha. He also told Elijah that there were still 7000 people who had not worshipped Baal. Elijah went to anoint Elisha, who became his servant.

Ben-Hadad, king of Syria, assembled his men along with 32 other kings and their men (note: this may or may not have been the same man that attacked Israel by Asa's request in 1 Kings 15). He sent word to Ahab in Samaria, demanding his wealth, wives, and children. Ahab had no choice but to agree to whatever terms Ben-Hadad set forth. Ben-Hadad followed up by sending another messenger, informing Ahab that he would be sending his servants to pick and choose through Ahab's wealth and family. Ahab was insulted and told Ben-Hadad's servant that he would not comply anymore.

Ben-Hadad and his men were drinking in their tents while these messages were being sent back and forth with Ahab. He told his men to prepare to attack Samaria. Meanwhile, a prophet from God went to Ahab and informed him that He would be helping Ahab to win the battle. The prophet instructed Ahab to attack the Syrians preemptively in order to win the battle. Ahab did as the prophet instructed, and the Israelites won the battle against the Syrians even though their forces were smaller. After another battle, Ahab made a truce with Ben-Hadad. God was not pleased with this, so he sent a prophet to rebuke Ahab and inform him that he would be punished for his actions.

There was a man named Naboth who had a vineyard in Jezreel, next to the palace of Ahab. Ahab told Naboth to sell it to him, but Naboth refused. Ahab became very depressed about it, so Jezebel schemed to have Naboth killed so that Ahab could take his vineyard. God sent Elijah to tell Ahab that he and Jezebel would be punished, and that his house would be destroyed. Ahab humbled himself, so God decided not to destroy Ahab's house until after Ahab's death.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) Though we may feel all alone in our faith in God, we must remember that there are others.
- 2.) God has the power to be in total control of this world; we must not lose our trust in Him.
- 3.) God sometimes allows good things to happen to evil people in order to help teach them.