

# Historic Baptist Sermons

## ***Payday Someday***

*Robert G. Lee*

**"Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."**

**Jeremiah 6:16**

# Payday Someday

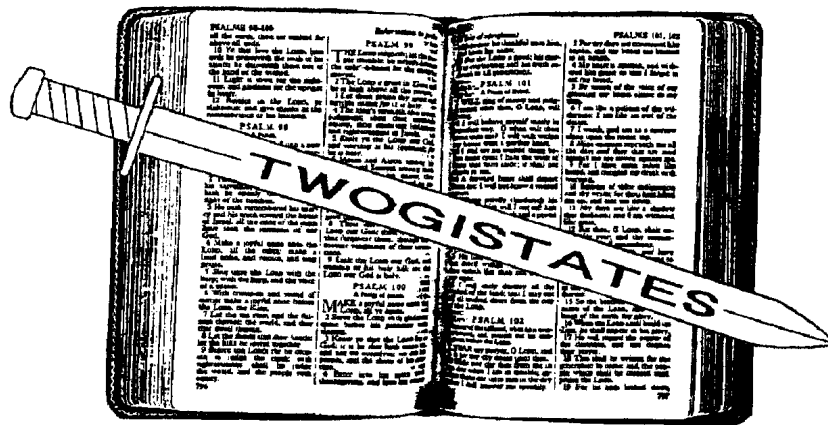
A Classic Reprint of a Sermon by Robert G. Lee  
(1886 – 1978)

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E-mail: [carlgraham@twogistates.com](mailto:carlgraham@twogistates.com)  
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For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any  
twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of  
soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a  
discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.  
Hebrews 4:12

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Dr. Lee originally published the following message in 1926. It is said that he developed it following the suggestion of a deacon at a prayer meeting in 1919 and that he preached it at least once a year at his home church. All total, it is related that he preached the message 1,275 times.

Dr. Robert G. Lee was the pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee for thirty-two years. During his lifetime he was a strong leader in the Southern Baptist Convention, known as a preacher's preacher, and was highly respected among his peers. This sermon has been accepted as a classic by all that have heard and read it, and through its message, the Lord still speaks to mankind. We at Carl Graham Ministries hope you get a blessing from this message written by the prince of preachers.

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Historic Baptist Sermons are reprints of sermons by Baptist preachers of the past who were noted for their unswerving stand on the Bible and "the faith once delivered to the saints."

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## Payday Someday

*“Go down to meet Ahab, king of Israel, thou shalt speak unto him, saying in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.” (I Kings 21:18,19)*

*“The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.” (I Kings 21:23)*

I introduce to you Naboth, a devout Israelite, who lived in the foothill village of Jezreel. From his home on the hillside he could look far down the valley of Esdraelon. He was a good man—a man who “abhorred that which is evil and clung to that which is good.” He would not exchange his heavenly principles for loose expediences. He would not dilute the stringency of personal righteousness for questionable compromises.

Now Naboth had a vineyard surrounding his home. This vineyard, fragrant with blossoms in the days of the budding branch and freighted with fruit in the days of the vintage, was a cherished inheritance of the family. This vineyard was near to the summer palace of Ahab, situated about twenty miles from Samaria.

I introduce to you Ahab. Ahab had command of a nation’s wealth and commanded the armies of Israel, but he had no command of his lusts and appetites. Ahab wore rich robes, but had a sinning, wicked, and troubled heart beneath them. Ahab ate the richest food the world could supply, and this food was served him on fine dishes and by servants obedient to his every beck and nod, yet he had a starved soul. Ahab lived in palaces, sumptuous within and without, yet tormented himself for one bit of land more. Ahab was king, with a crown and scepter and a throne, yet he was under the thumb of a wicked woman.

Ahab is pilloried in contempt of all right-living, God-fearing men through history as a mean rascal, the curse of his country. The Bible gives us a better and more apt introduction in these words: “There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up!” (I Kings 21:25)

I introduce to you Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, King of Tyre. (I Kings 16:31) A woman infinitely more daring and reckless than her husband. A devout worshipper of Baal, she hated any and all who spoke against her false and helpless god. She was as blunt in her wickedness and as brazen in her lewdness, doubtless, as Cleopatra, fair sorceress of the Nile. She had something of the subtle and successful scheming of a Lady Macbeth, something of the genius of a Mary Queen of Scots, something of the beauty of a Marie Antoinette. Much of that which is bad in the worst of women found expression through this painted viper of Israel. She had all that fascinating endowment of nature, which a good woman ought always to dedicate to the service of her

generation. But, alas, she became the evil genius, which wrought wreck and blight and death.

I introduce to you Elijah, prophet of God. Heir to the infinite riches of God, he! Attended by the hosts of heaven, he! Almost always alone, he, but never lonely, for God was with him. He wore a rough sheepskin cloak, but there was a peaceful, confident heart beneath it. He ate bird's food and widow's fare, but was a physical and spiritual athlete. He had no lease of office or authority, yet everyone obeyed him. He grieved only when God's cause seemed tottering. He passed from earth without dying - into celestial glory. Everywhere where courage is admired and manhood honored and service appreciated he is honored as one of earth's heroes and one of heaven's saints. He was "a seer, and saw clearly; a hero, and dared valiantly; a great heart, and felt deeply." And now with these four persons introduced we want to turn to God's Word and see the tragedy of payday some day! We will see "the corn they put into the hopper" and then behold "the grist that came out the spout."

### **A Real Estate Request "Give me thy vineyard."**

And it came to pass after these things that Naboth, the Jezreelite, had a vineyard which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab, king of Samaria. And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, "Give me thy vineyard that I may have it for garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house; and I will give thee for it a better vineyard that it; or, if it seem good unto thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money." (I Kings 21:1-2)

Thus far, Ahab was quite within his rights! Perfectly fair was Ahab in this request, and, under circumstances ordinary, one would have expected Naboth to put away any more sentimental attachment for the pleasure of the king, especially when the king's aim was not to cheat him or to defraud him.

Ahab had not, however, counted upon the reluctance of all Jews to part with their inheritance of land. By peculiar tenure every Israelite held his land, and to all land-holding transactions there was another party, even God, "who made heavens and earth."

So, though he was Ahab's nearest neighbor, Naboth stood firmly on his rights, and with an expression of horror on his face and in his words, refused to sell his vineyard to the king. Feeling that he must prefer the duty he owed to God to any danger that might arise from man, he made firm refusal. Fearing God most and man least, and obeying the one whom he feared the most and loved the most, he said: "The Lord forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee." (I Kings 21:3)

True to the religious teachings of his father, with "real-hearted loyalty to the covenant God of Israel" he believed that he held the land in fee simple from God. His

father and grandfather had owned the land before him. All the memories of childhood were tangled in its grapevines. His father's hands, folded now in the dust of death, had used the pruning blade among the branches, and because of this every branch and vine was dear.

His mother's hands, now doubtless wrapped in dust-stained shroud, had gathered purple clusters from those bunch-laden boughs, and for this reason, he loved every spot in his vineyard and every branch on his vines.

He felt that his little plot of ground, so rich in prayer and fellowship, so sanctified with sweet and holy memories, would be tainted and befouled and cursed forever if it came into the hands of Jezebel. So, with "the courage of a bird that dares the wild sea," he took his stand against the king's proposal.

### **The Pouting Potentate** ***"He came to his house heavy and displeased."***

Naboth's quick and firm and final and courteous refusal "took all the spokes from the wheels" of Ahab's plan and desires. The stream of his desire ran against a barrier that turned it aside and changed it into a foiled and foaming whirlpool of sullen sulks.

"And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezeelite had spoken to him, for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread." (I Kings 21:4)

What a ridiculous picture! A king acting like a spoiled child, impotent in disappointment and ugly in petty rage. A king whining like a sick hound. A king pouting like a spoiled and sullen child. He went to bed in the middle of the day, and "turned his face to the wall," his lips swollen with his mulish moping, his eyes full of cheap anger fire, his heart stubborn in its petty rebellion.

### **THE WICKED WIFE** ***"but Jezebel, his wife!"***

When Ahab would "eat no bread" his servants doubtless went and told Jezebel. What she said to them we know not. What she said to Ahab we do know.

Puzzled at the news that her husband would not eat and that he had gone to bed when it was not bedtime, Jezebel sought him out in his room. She found him moaning and peevishly petulant, having refused to eat or to cheer up in the least. At first, in a voice of sweet concern, she sought the reason of his choler. In sweet and anxious concern, she asked "Why is thy spirit so sad that thou eatest no bread?" (I Kings 25:5).

And then, as the manner of women is unto this day, her hand sought his brow to see if he had “temperature” or if some other ailment other than a “sad spirit” had laid hold upon him. Then he told her, every word full of petulance and mopish peevishness as he spoke: “Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money, or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it; and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard!” (I Kings 21:6)

“Are you not the King of this country?”, she chides bitingly, her tongue sharp like a butcher’s blade. “Cannot you command and have it done?”, she scolds as a common village hog who has more noise than wisdom on her words. “Can you not seize and keep?”, she cries with reproach. “I thought you told me you were king in these parts! And here you are crying like a baby and will not eat anything because you do not have courage to take a bit of land. You! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! You the King of Israel, and allow yourself to be disobeyed and defied by a common clodhopper from the country. You have been more courteous and considerate of him than you have of your queen! Shame on you! But you leave it to me, old dear! I will get the vineyard for you, and all that I require is that you ask no questions. Leave it to me, Bo!”

“And Jezebel, his wife, said unto him, dost thou not now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise and eat bread, and let thine hear be marry, I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth, the Jezreelite!” (I Kings 21:7)

Ahab knew Jezebel well enough to know assuredly that she would do what she said she would do. So he came out of his sulks, slowly, as a turtle drags itself from the slime, and asked her how she was going to do it. She tickled him under the chin or pecked him on the cheeks kissingly with lips screwed into a tight knot, and said “That’s my secret just now; just leave it to me, Honey!”

Now, let us ask who can so inspire a man to noble purposes as a noble woman? And who can so thoroughly degrade a man as a wife of unworthy tendencies? Back of the statement “And Ahab the son of Ormi did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him” (I Kings 16:30) and back of what Elijah spoke, “Thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord” (I Kings 21:25) is the statement explaining both the other statements: “Whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.”

She was the polluted reservoir from which the streams of his iniquity found mighty increase. She was the poisonous pocket from which his cruel fangs fed. She was the burning pit wherein his sulphurous cruelties were born, I suppose that Ahab considered himself the master of his wife, but it was her mastery over him that stirred him up to more and mightier wickedness than his own heart was capable of executing.

Let us come to the next terrible scene in this tragedy of sin.

## **A Message Meaning Murder** ***“She wrote letters.”***

Jezebel wrote letters to the elders of Jezreel. And in these letters she made definite and subtle declaration that some terrible sin had been committed in their city, for which it was needful that a fast should be proclaimed in order to avert the wrath of Heaven.

“She wrote letters in Ahab’s name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, saying, “Proclaim fast, and set Naboth on high among the people, and set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying Thou didst blaspheme God and the king; and then carry him out and stone him, that he may die.” (I Kings 21:8-10)

The letters being written, they must be sealed; and the sealing was done, as all those matter of letter writing and sealing were done, by rubbing ink on the seal, moistening the paper, and pressing the seal thereon. And when Jezebel had finished with her iniquitous pen, she asked Ahab for his signet ring; with that ring she affixed the royal seal. “She sealed them with Ahab’s ring!” When Ahab gave it to her, he knew it meant crime of some sort, but he asked no questions.

Moreover, Jezebel’s deeds showed that when she went down to market, as it were, she would have in his basket a nice vineyard for his husband when she returned. She said to herself “This man Naboth has refused my honorable lord on religious grounds, and by all the gods of Baal, I will get him yet on these very same grounds.” She understood perfectly the passion of a devout Jew for a public fast; and she knew that nothing would keep Naboth away. He and every member of his household would be there.

“Proclaim a fast!” Fasting has ever been a sign of humiliation before God, of humbling one’s self in the dust before the “high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity.” The idea in calling for a fast was clearly to declare that the community was under the anger of God on account of a grave crime committed by one of its members, which crime is to be exposed and punished. Then, too, the fast involved a cessation of work, a holiday, so that the citizens would have time to attend the public gathering.

“Set Naboth on high!” “On high” meant before the bar of justice, not in the seat of honor. “On high” meant in the seat of the accused, and not in the seat to be desired. “On high” meant that Naboth was put where every eye could watch him closely and keenly observe his bearing under the accusation. “And set two men, base fellows, before him.” How illegal she was in bringing about his death in a legal way! For the law required two witnesses in all cases where the punishment was death. “At the mouth of two or three witnesses shall he be put to death” (Deut.17:6). the witnesses required by Jezebel were men of no character, men who would take bribes and swear to any lie for gain.

“And let them bear witness against him!” in other words, put him out of the way by judicial murder, not by private assassination. “And then carry him out and stone him that he may die!”

A criminal was not to be executed within a city, as that would defile it. Thus, Christ was crucified outside the walls of Jerusalem! We see that Jezebel took it for granted that Naboth would be condemned. And so one day while Naboth worked in his vineyard the letters came down to Jezreel.

And one evening while Naboth talked at his cottage door with his children, the message of murder was known to the elders of the city. And that night while he slept with the wife of his bosom, the shadow of death was creeping toward him every hour. The message meaning murder was known to many but not to him until they came and told him that a fast had been proclaimed—proclaimed because God had been offended at some crime and that his wrath must be appeased and the threatening anger turned away, and he himself, all unconscious of any offense toward God or the king, set in the place of the accused, even “on high!”

### **The Fatal Feast** ***“They proclaimed a fast.”***

And what concern that must have created in the household of Naboth—when they knew that Naboth was to be “set on high,” even in the “seat of the accused,” even “before the bar of ‘justice!’” And what excitement there was in the city. Curious throngs hurried to the fast to see him who had been accused of the crime which made necessary the appeasing of threatening wrath of an angered God.

Yes, the rulers of Jezreel, “either in dread of offending one whose revenge they knew was terrible, or eager to do a service to whom in temporal matters they were so largely indebted, or moved with envy against their own iniquity, carried out her instructions to the letter.”

They were ready and efficient tools in her hands. No doubt, she had tested their character as her “butcher boys” in the slaughter of the prophets of the Lord. (I Kings 18:4,13)

Endicott, in his comment on this tragic scene, says: “The programme, which may have been a familiar one in those wicked days, was carried out exactly as planned. The charge was made, a double charge, of treason and blasphemy, and this double charge was “substantiated” by false witnesses. With a great show of zeal for God and the king a band of hired ruffians seized the ill-fated Naboth, carried him out of the city, and, using the cruel, old punishment for his alleged crime, stoned him to death!”

And then, to make sure that his heirs would not and might not lay claim to the inheritance, his sons also were stained. (II Kings 9:26) Even had this not been so, the property of executed traitors would naturally fall to the king, although no enactment to this effect is found in the law.

Jezebel had planned that, when the fast was at its height and the religious frenzy, or enthusiasm, of the Jew had been fanned to a white heat, she would have two men rise up and accuse Naboth. And they did! Vulture mouths testifying, that the eagle's talons might hold unto death! Swine snouts grunting out complaint that the swine tusks might be strong unto fatal wounding. "And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him; and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. (I Kings 21:13)

Thus, it came the pass that in an orderly fashion, in the name of religion and in the name of the king, they stoned Naboth and his kin to death. And Naboth really fell, not by the king's hand, but by the condemnation of his fellow citizens. Yes, the old-fashioned conservatism of Naboth was, in the judgment of many, sorely out of place in that "progressive" state of society.

No doubt, Naboth's righteous austerity had made him extremely unpopular in many ways in "progressive Jezreel." And since Jezebel carried out her purpose in a perfectly legal and orderly way and in a "wonderfully" democratic manner, we see a fine picture of autocracy working by democratic methods.

And when these "loyally patriotic citizens" of Jezreel had left the bodies of Naboth and his sons to be devoured by the wild dogs which prowled after nightfall in and around the city, they sent and told Queen Jezebel that her bloody orders had been bloodily and completely obeyed! "Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned and is dead." (I Kings 21:14)

She received the news gladly, even with no attempt to hide her satisfaction. What was it to her that outside the city walls was the body of a good man whose bones the dogs would gnaw? What was it to her that, with the strength of youth still on their brows, there were the faces of his sons stone-bruised and torn by the fangs of hungry scavengers? What was it to her that God's holy name had been profaned? What was it to her that religious had been dishonored? What did she care if justice had been outraged just so she had gotten the little plot of land close by their summer palace of ivory? What pang did it give her heart that innocent blood had been shed? Nothing!

Trippingly, as a gay dancer, she hurried in to where Ahab sat. With profuse caresses and words glib with joy she told him the "good news." She had about her the triumphant manner of one who has accomplished successfully what others had not dared attempt. Her "tryout" in getting the vineyard was a decided "triumph." She had "pulled the stunt." She had been "brave" and "wise"—and because of this her husband now could arise and hie him down to the vineyard and call it his own.

“And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead!” (I Kings 21:15) And it was the plot hatched in her own mind and it was her hand, her lily white hand, her queen’s hand, that wrote the letters that made this tragic statement true.

### **The Visit to the Vineyard** ***“Ahab arose up to go down to the vineyard.”***

How Jezebel must have “strutted her stuff” before Ahab when she went with tidings that the vineyard which he wanted to buy was now his for nothing! How keen must have been the sarcasm of her attitude when she made it known by word and manner that she had succeeded where he failed -- and at less cost.

How gloatingly victorious were the remarks, which she made, which kept him warmly reminded that she had kept her “sacred” promise! What a lovely fabric, stained and dyed red with Naboth’s blood, she spread before him for his “comfort” from the loom of her evil machinations.

“And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth the Jezreelite, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it!” (I Kings 21:16)

Yes, Naboth, the good man who “feared the Lord,” is dead; and Ahab expresses no condemnation of this awful conspiracy, culminating in such a tragic horror. Though afraid or restrained by his conscience from committing murder himself, he had no scruple in availing himself of the results of such crime when perpetrated by another. He flattered himself that, by the splendid genius of his queen in bloody matters, he, though, having no part in the crime which did Naboth to death, he might, as well as another, “receive the benefit of his dying.”

And now Jehu and Bidcar, the royal charioteers, are called for. They are given orders to prepare the royal chariot. The gilded chariot is drawn forth. And soon, Jehu and Bidcar, furious charioteers in the service of the king, are directing the brief journey of the gilded chariot to Jezreel, just twenty miles away.

Ahab rode in something of military state. His outriders drive down with him as he goes, proudly and gratefully, to take possession of the desired vineyard, a gift of the queen to him. All the way from Samaria he congratulates himself, doubtless, that he has such a woman for a wife, so talented she was and successful in “putting things over!”

As he goes the voice of Jehu, as he restrains the fiery horses or the lash of his whip as he urges them on, attracts the attention of the grazing cattle in adjacent

pastureland. The sound of clanking hoofs of cantering horses resounds in every glen by the roadway.

The gilded chariot catches the light of the sun and reflects it brightly, but he who rides therein is unmindful of the bloodstains on the ground where Naboth died. Dust clouds arise from the chariot's wheels and wild winds blow them across the fields where the plowman or the reaper wonders who goes so swiftly along the highway. The neighing steeds announce to all that Ahab's royal horses tire not in carrying him down from Samaria to Jezreel. And soon many know that the chariot carried the king who was going down to possess what had reverted to the crown, even the vineyard of Naboth which Naboth refused to sell to him. Would the "game" be worth the "candle?" Would Ahab learn that sin buys pleasure at the price of peace? We shall see -- and that right soon!

### **Am Alarming Appearance** ***"The word of the Lord came to Elijah."***

The brief journey from Samaria to Jezreel is over. The restlessly prancing and easily panting horses are brought to a stop outside the gate to the vineyard. Strong hands of ready servants hold the fiery horses by the bits; the hands of servants open the gates; the bodies of the obedient servants bow courteously as Ahab enters the vineyard. Naboth is dead, and the coveted vineyard is now Ahab's through the "gentle scheming" of the queen of his house.

Perhaps Ahab, as he walks through the garden, sees Naboth's footprints in the soil. Or he sees Naboth's pruning hook among the vines. Perhaps in a corner of the vineyard is a seat where Naboth and his sons rested after the day's toil, or a well where sparkling water for the vines in time of drought.

And even then, out yonder somewhere God is talking to Elijah, his prophet whom we introduced to you a bit ago. And this is the record: "And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD!" (I Kings 21:17-19)

And while Ahab strolls among the vines that Naboth tended, what is it that appears? Snarling wild beasts? No! Black clouds full of threatening storm? No, not that. Flaming lightning which dazzled him? No! War chariots of his ancient enemies rumbling along the road? No! An oncoming flood sweeping things before it? No, not a flood. A tornado goring the earth? No. A huge serpent threatening to encircle him and crush his bones in its deadly coils? No, not a serpent. What then? What alarmed Ahab so? Let us follow him and see.

As Ahab went walking through the rows of vines, he begins to plan how he will have that vineyard arranged by his royal gardener—how flowers will be here and vegetables yonder and herbs there. As he converses with himself, suddenly a shadow falls across his path.

Quick as a flash Ahab whirls on his heels, and there, before him, stands Elijah, prophet of the living God. Elijah's cheeks are swarthy; his eye is keen and piercing; like coals of fire, his eyes burn with righteous indignation in their sockets; his bosom heaves; his head is held high. His only weapon is a staff; his only robe a sheepskin and a leather girdle about his loins.

To Ahab there is an eternity of agony in the few moments they stand thus, face to face, eye to eye, soul to soul! "And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" (I Kings 21:20) His voice is hoarse, like the cry of a hunted animal. He trembles like a hunted stag before the mouths of fierce hounds. Suddenly his face goes white. His lips quiver.

And Elijah, without a tremor in his voice, his eyes burning their way into Ahab's guilty soul, answered, "I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord." Then, with every word a thunderbolt, and every sentence a withering denunciation Elijah continued: "God told me to ask you this, Hast thou killed and also taken possession? Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs lick thy blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. Behold I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity.... And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger and made Israel to sin!"

And then, plying other words mercilessly like a terrible scourge to the cringing Ahab, Elijah said "And of Jezebel also spake the Lord, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel! Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat."

And with these words making Ahab to cower as one cowers and recoils from a hissing adder, Elijah went his way.

### **Payday Someday**

Yes, the evil spoken by Elijah did come. Payday came as certainly as the night followed the day. Let us note how it came, and when.

Consider how it came to Ahab! God spoke, and God said that the king's life was forfeited, and the lives of all that could succeed him on the throne, whatever their age. The destruction that had fallen on the preceding dynasties of Jeroboam and Baasha would fall upon Ahab's. They were not even to have decent burial, God said. Those that died in the city the dogs should eat, God said. Those that died in the field, the

buzzards should eat, God said. Queen Jezebel herself, sometime, somewhere was to be a feast for dogs, God said.

Ahab entered into league with Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah. In disguise, Ahab entered the battle against his old Syrian enemies. At Ramoth-Gilead a random arrow mortally wounded him, so that his chariot was filled with blood. (I Kings 22:34-35) And they took his body to Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armor, according unto the word of the Lord which he spake (I King 22:38) God said it—and it was done.

So did Ahaziah, Ahab's son, and Joram meet violent deaths. We know. Now consider Jezebel, and when her payday came. We learn as we think of her death that "the stag followed by hungry hounds with open mouths is far more happy than the woman who is pursued by her sins, that the bird taken in the fowler's net and laboring to escape is far more happy than she who has woven about herself a web of deception, that yon eagle beating against brass bars is far happier than the woman whose sin stares at her from dark rooms at midnight, and that the wild animal caught and suffering in the jaws of a steel trap is far happier than he who carries a guilty conscience in his bosom!"

"And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it." Pause. Who is Jehu? He is the one who, twenty years before the events of this chapter from which we quote, rode down with Ahab to take Naboth's vineyard, the one who throughout those twenty years never forgot those withering words of terrible denunciation, which Elijah spoke.

And who is Jezebel? Oh! The very same one who wrote the letters and had Naboth put to death. And what is Jezreel? The place where Naboth had his vineyard and where Naboth died, his life pounded out by stones in the hands of ruffians.

"And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, Had Zimri peace who slew his master?"

Pause again just here. "Had Zimri peace who slew his master?" No, "there is no peace saith my God to the wicked." "And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side? Who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, "Throw her down." So they threw her down, and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses; and he trode her under foot.

And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her, for she is a king's daughter. And they went to bury, but they found no more than her skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the Lord, which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel!" (I Kings 9:30-36)

“This is the word of the Lord which he spake by his servant Elijah!” Yes, and from this we learn the power and certainty of God in carrying out his own retributive providence that men might know that His justice slumbereth not. Even though the mill of God grinds slowly, it grinds to powder; “and though his judgments have leaden heels, they have iron hands.”

When I see Ahab fall in his chariot and when I see the dogs eating Jezebel by the walls of Jezreel, I say, as the Scripture saith, “O, that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments; then had thy peace been like a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea!” And as I remember that the gains of ungodliness are weighted with the curse of God, I ask you, “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?” And your labor for that which satisfieth not?”

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