Elijah/Elisha #7 Pastor Rick Baker

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1 Kings 21 **State Tyranny and a God Who Sees Everything**

History is splashed with the blood of the powerless innocents who encounter state-sponsored tyranny. In order to entrench power and increase wealth, the powerful take advantage of the weak “legally”, by declaring their actions legal. Once tyranny is made “legal”, the powerful are able to justify their actions and conscript other officials.

Naboth, an upstanding and otherwise loyal-to-the-king citizen, became an enemy of the state because he held land the king coveted.

*How does state-sponsored cannibalism happen, what does God see, and what is the take away lesson(s)? —***the anatomy of the abuse of power**

Sin scorecard—coveting (*sin is crouching at your door*), bearing false witness, murder, theft, disobeying God’s Word

1. Beware, when you possess something the state wants (21:1-2).

*When the state goes rogue, it is about* ***power****,* ***control****,* ***money****—concerning the Omri Dynasty (Samaria—Sabastiya; Jezreel). The battle of every overseer is resisting the intoxication of control.*

* Freedom (dampens/deadens control)
* Conflicting worldview (pricks consciences)

1. There is further danger when religious convictions (God’s word) clash with current government policy (21:3-7).

Naboth wasn’t being obstinate, disloyal, or disrespectful; he was being biblically obedient. (Lev. 25:23-28; Num. 36:7) “Crown Land”

1. Wicked governments find ways to scapegoat their evil and justify their actions—crisis forces action and legitimizes desired change (21:8-16).

*How abusive governments socially engineer what they want...*

* Cause fear (Jezreel is under sanctions, a city-wide emergency order to fast)
* Create a scapegoat (a person, a people, a parasite)
* Politicize all officials (a clear and present danger is fabricated; orders passed down the chain of sycophants)
* Make corrupt laws to “protect” the people (manipulate the facts to “legally” justify the actions)
* Actions legitimate and justified (masses duped, polls soar)

1. Spiritual rights are sacred to God and violations, through the exploitation of people, attract His wrath (21:17-26).

* God sees!
* The enduring biblical principle of ruling is to protect the rights of the citizens as fellow brothers (Deut. 17:14-20)
* Engaging in the manipulation of facts, functions, or structures to accomplish a personal agenda at the expense of people in the way of your agenda, makes you an enemy of God because you too have sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD.
* Violating rights resulted in Israel being driven into exile (Is. 5:8-10)

1. The God of all grace is always ready to relent from discipline when repentance is genuine

(21:27-29).

Humility that crushes arrogance catches the attention of God every time.

*Our sinful schemes are an open book to the Lord. Every detail hatched in secret is fully known and processed by a God who is fixed on justice, mercy, and humble character (Mic. 6:8). Whatever you think is in hiding is not—bring it into the light of confession and repentance and the grace of God will deal with you. Consequences may not be avoidable, but* ***getting to God’s grace before you have to face his discipline is essential.***

***There is a day of justice scheduled for all human tyranny.*** *No one will escape. Absent forgiveness in Christ, those who have exploited others will spend eternity feeling the hard sting of God’s just law of lex talionis— (21:19—as you have done, it will be unendingly done to you—punishment resembles the kind and degree).*