**Lesson 5 Jezebel - Manipulative and Murderous**

**1 Kings 18:1-19:7; 21:1-25**

***18****After a long time, in the third year, the word of the Lord came to Elijah: “Go and present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the land.”****2****So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab.*

*Now the famine was severe in Samaria,****3****and Ahab had summoned Obadiah, his palace administrator. (Obadiah was a devout believer in the Lord.****4****While Jezebel was killing off the Lord’s prophets, Obadiah had taken a hundred prophets and hidden them in two caves, fifty in each, and had supplied them with food and water.)****5****Ahab had said to Obadiah, “Go through the land to all the springs and valleys. Maybe we can find some grass to keep the horses and mules alive so we will not have to kill any of our animals.”****6****So they divided the land they were to cover, Ahab going in one direction and Obadiah in another.*

***7****As Obadiah was walking along, Elijah met him. Obadiah recognized him, bowed down to the ground, and said, “Is it really you, my lord Elijah?”*

***8****“Yes,” he replied. “Go tell your master, ‘Elijah is here.’”*

***9****“What have I done wrong,” asked Obadiah, “that you are handing your servant over to Ahab to be put to death?****10****As surely as the Lord your God lives, there is not a nation or kingdom where my master has not sent someone to look for you. And whenever a nation or kingdom claimed you were not there, he made them swear they could not find you.****11****But now you tell me to go to my master and say, ‘Elijah is here.’****12****I don’t know where the Spirit of the Lord may carry you when I leave you. If I go and tell Ahab and he doesn’t find you, he will kill me. Yet I your servant have worshiped the Lord since my youth.****13****Haven’t you heard, my lord, what I did while Jezebel was killing the prophets of the Lord? I hid a hundred of the Lord’s prophets in two caves, fifty in each, and supplied them with food and water.****14****And now you tell me to go to my master and say, ‘Elijah is here.’ He will kill me!”*

***15****Elijah said, “As the Lord Almighty lives, whom I serve, I will surely present myself to Ahab today.”*

***Elijah on Mount Carmel***

***16****So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah.****17****When he saw Elijah, he said to him, “Is that you, you troubler of Israel?”*

***18****“I have not made trouble for Israel,” Elijah replied. “But you and your father’s family have. You have abandoned the Lord’s commands and have followed the Baals.****19****Now summon the people from all over Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.”*

***20****So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel.****21****Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.”*

*But the people said nothing.*

***22****Then Elijah said to them, “I am the only one of the Lord’s prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets.****23****Get two bulls for us. Let Baal’s prophets choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it.****24****Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by fire—he is God.”*

*Then all the people said, “What you say is good.”*

***25****Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire.”****26****So they took the bull given them and prepared it.*

*Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. “Baal, answer us!” they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.*

***27****At noon Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder!” he said. “Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.”****28****So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed.****29****Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.*

***30****Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come here to me.” They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, which had been torn down.****31****Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, “Your name shall be Israel.”****32****With the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+18%3A1-19%3A7%3B+21%3A1-25&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9374a)*] of seed.****33****He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, “Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood.”*

***34****“Do it again,” he said, and they did it again.*

*“Do it a third time,” he ordered, and they did it the third time.****35****The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench.*

***36****At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: “Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command.****37****Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.”*

***38****Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.*

***39****When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, “The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!”*

***40****Then Elijah commanded them, “Seize the prophets of Baal. Don’t let anyone get away!” They seized them, and Elijah had them brought down to the Kishon Valley and slaughtered there.*

***41****And Elijah said to Ahab, “Go, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a heavy rain.”****42****So Ahab went off to eat and drink, but Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees.*

***43****“Go and look toward the sea,” he told his servant. And he went up and looked.*

*“There is nothing there,” he said.*

*Seven times Elijah said, “Go back.”*

***44****The seventh time the servant reported, “A cloud as small as a man’s hand is rising from the sea.”*

*So Elijah said, “Go and tell Ahab, ‘Hitch up your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.’”*

***45****Meanwhile, the sky grew black with clouds, the wind rose, a heavy rain started falling and Ahab rode off to Jezreel.****46****The power of the Lord came on Elijah and, tucking his cloak into his belt, he ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel.*

***Elijah Flees to Horeb***

***19****Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword.****2****So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, “May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them.”*

***3****Elijah was afraid[*[*b*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+18%3A1-19%3A7%3B+21%3A1-25&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9391b)*] and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there,****4****while he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. “I have had enough, Lord,” he said. “Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.”****5****Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep.*

*All at once an angel touched him and said, “Get up and eat.”****6****He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.*

***7****The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, “Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.”*

***21****Some time later there was an incident involving a vineyard belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. The vineyard was in Jezreel, close to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.****2****Ahab said to Naboth, “Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth.”*

***3****But Naboth replied, “The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my ancestors.”*

***4****So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my ancestors.” He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat.*

***5****His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, “Why are you so sullen? Why won’t you eat?”*

***6****He answered her, “Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, ‘Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’”*

***7****Jezebel his wife said, “Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I’ll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”*

***8****So she wrote letters in Ahab’s name, placed his seal on them, and sent them to the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth’s city with him.****9****In those letters she wrote:*

*“Proclaim a day of fasting and seat Naboth in a prominent place among the people.****10****But seat two scoundrels opposite him and have them bring charges that he has cursed both God and the king. Then take him out and stone him to death.”*

***11****So the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth’s city did as Jezebel directed in the letters she had written to them.****12****They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth in a prominent place among the people.****13****Then two scoundrels came and sat opposite him and brought charges against Naboth before the people, saying, “Naboth has cursed both God and the king.” So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death.****14****Then they sent word to Jezebel: “Naboth has been stoned to death.”*

***15****As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, “Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell you. He is no longer alive, but dead.”****16****When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of Naboth’s vineyard.*

***17****Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite:****18****“Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is now in Naboth’s vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it.****19****Say to him, ‘This is what the Lord says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?’ Then say to him, ‘This is what the Lord says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth’s blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!’”*

***20****Ahab said to Elijah, “So you have found me, my enemy!”*

*“I have found you,” he answered, “because you have sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord.****21****He says, ‘I am going to bring disaster on you. I will wipe out your descendants and cut off from Ahab every last male in Israel—slave or free.[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+18%3A1-19%3A7%3B+21%3A1-25&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9473a)*]****22****I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat and that of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have aroused my anger and have caused Israel to sin.’*

***23****“And also concerning Jezebel the Lord says: ‘Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of[*[*b*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+18%3A1-19%3A7%3B+21%3A1-25&version=NIV#fen-NIV-9475b)*] Jezreel.’*

***24****“Dogs will eat those belonging to Ahab who die in the city, and the birds will feed on those who die in the country.”*

***25****(There was never anyone like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, urged on by Jezebel his wife.*

1. After Elijah’s successful showdown on Mt. Carmel, why was he suddenly afraid?

2. What might tempt you to give up in your service to God and abandon your ministry?

3. Read 19:1-2, 21:7-8, and 21:15 and write down some words or phrases that describe Jezebel’s personality and character.

4. Do you identify with any of Jezebel’s traits? Explain

5. Read 19:1-2, 21:4-15. Pretend you are a maid in the palace, and write, in first person, as if in a secret diary, your observations and feelings about Queen Jezebel and her relationship with her husband, King Ahab.

6. Have you ever known a powerful, manipulative woman like Jezebel? How did she influence your thinking and your life? (Please don’t give any names, and please remember that anything of a personal nature that’s shared in your small group, is to be kept confidential and not repeated outside of your group.)

7. What does Ahab’s reaction to Naboth’s refusal to trade/sell his vineyard tell you about Ahab?

8. What does Jezebel’s solution tell you about her and her relationship with Ahab? Is she helping or hurting him in the long run? Explain.

9. What have you learned not to do from Jezebel?

10. Journal this passage “SOAP style” as explained in the introduction of this workbook.