

30 AMAZING BIBLE STORIES YOU MAY NOT KNOW

#21 Government Gone Amuck

A LONG HISTORY OF INTRUSION

- Theologians are in almost total agreement on *when* and *why* Government began.
 - When: Genesis 9:6a.
 - Why: *Because individual lives matter!* Genesis 9:6b.
- The Scripture is in total agreement on *why* Government exists.
 - Romans 13:4 – a **revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.**
- From the very beginning, governments have sucked power unto themselves.
 - Babylon – the first *government gone amuck*. Both anti-god and anti-individual. Its pattern is seen in almost every age.
 - Samuel’s warning – 1 Samuel 8:9-17.

A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

- Individual rights are fundamental to all rights. When individual rights are disregarded, all rights dissolve.
- This being the case, it serves all of us well to work for the development of healthy-thinking morally-driven individuals.
- The absence of character and morality in *some* can never be the basis for the removal of rights of *all*.

A BIBLICAL EXAMPLE | 1 KINGS 21:1-16

- Verses 1-2 – The request, in itself, was neither unreasonable nor sinful.
- Verse 3 – Naboth, however, was “a man of the book.” He had religious convictions that his inheritance must remain within his family.
 - Leviticus 25:23 – a prohibition against selling the land of Israel.
 - Numbers 36:7 – a command to keep the land within the tribe.
 - Ezekiel 46:18 – a future (millennial) prohibition against using oppression to take inheritance.
- Verse 4 – Ahab (the fat toad that squatted illegitimately on the throne of Israel) was **heavy and displeased**.
 - This seems to be somewhat of a pattern. See 1 Kings 20:43, as well as 1 Kings 20:5, where the same word for **heavy** is translated **sad**.
 - The word translated **heavy** comes from the Hebrew root which means *stubborn*. See the root in Deuteronomy 21:20.

- The word translated **displeased** comes from the root that means *enraged*. See the root in 2 Chronicles 16:10.
- Verses 5-6 – Naboth whines to his wife.
 - Naboth’s problem #1: He needed to get in control of his emotions.
 - Naboth’s problem #2: He needed to respect the rights of his neighbors.
 - Naboth’s problem #3: He needed to overcome his covetous ways. This was the *root* of his problem – see 1 Timothy 6:10.
- Verse 7 – Naboth’s weakness
 - Jezebel (the coiled-up snake next to the toad) had two errors.
 - She thought that just because Ahab **governed the kingdom of Israel** that he could get whatever he wanted. This was an abuse of God-given authority.
 - She ignored the fact that *Ahab* governed Israel and said **I will give thee the vineyard**. There is no way she will be able to do this in legal (let alone ethical) ways.
- Verses 8-10 – Sons of Belial
 - Note that when government abuses its people by stepping outside of its Biblical role, *it almost always uses some government pawn*.
 - In this case, the pawn were two **sons of Belial**. When the Hebrew word is translated, the word used is *wicked* or *evil* or *ungodly*.
 - Notice that they use *pretense* to cover their crime.
- Verses 11-16 – Calling good evil and evil good
 - The wicked plot is carried out, and Naboth (the righteous) is stoned to death for “blasphemy.”
 - When the fat-toad of a fake-king hears about it, he has no word about its morality, but simply uses the opportunity to take that which he always wanted.
 - Note: *while this sermon ends, the story doesn’t. Read on to see the payoff to Jezebel and Ahab.*

EVERY GENERATION’S CHALLENGE

- Every generation of man (it seems), from Babylon to the present day, has faced the challenge of a *government gone amuck*.
- When evaluating the activities of government, ask yourself, “How will Naboth fare?”
 - Naboth represents the “little guy” who has individual rights, property, convictions, family, and dreams.
 - If Naboth is going to become the “bad guy,” then the government has gone amuck.