

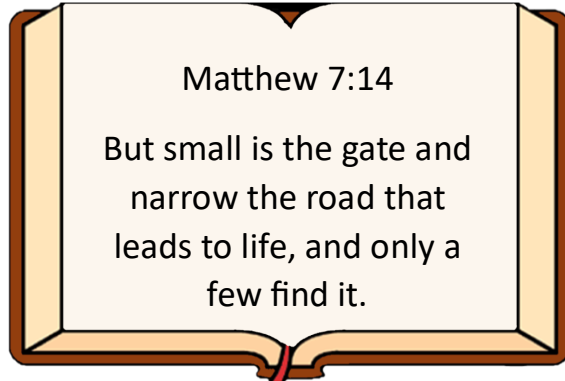
1 Kings 19, 20, 22 Name _____

2 Kings 9

King Ahab Steals from Naboth

Draw a picture of King Ahab and Naboth from the lesson today.

Weekly Memory Verse



What size is the gate that leads to life? _____

What type of road leads to life? _____



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King Ahab continued to walk on the wide road, doing what he wanted to do when he returned to the palace in Samaria. When he told Queen Jezebel all that had happened and how Elijah had the prophets of Baal put to death, she was furious! Jezebel sent a message to Elijah saying that he was going to be dead by the next day. Elijah left the country to hide from Jezebel.

One day while King Ahab was looking out his window, he noticed a beautiful vineyard just next door to the palace. The vineyard belonged to a man named Naboth. King Ahab decided he needed to have that piece of land. He spoke to Naboth, saying, "Let me have your vineyard. It is so close to my palace; I want to make it into a vegetable garden. I will trade you for a better vineyard, or I can pay you whatever your land is worth." It sounded like a fair and good deal. Right?

But Naboth answered, "No, I cannot sell it. God's law forbids me to sell the land I inherited from my family.

Ahab left and went to the palace and pouted.

When Jezebel found her husband sulking, she asked him, "What is the matter with you? Why are you acting so miserably? Why won't you eat?"

King Ahab answered her, "Because I tried to make a deal with Naboth for his vineyard. I offered him a better vineyard or money for his land, but he refused."

Then Jezebel wrote letters to some of the important men in the city. The letters told the men to plan a celebration and invite Naboth. Then she told them to get two men who would tell lies about Naboth in front of everyone. They were to say he had spoken against God and the king. The Jewish law said that anyone who spoke against, or cursed God should be stoned to death. Queen Jezebel made up lies about Naboth.

The men obeyed the instructions in the letters completely without question. During the celebration, the two witnesses lied about Naboth. He was taken outside the city and put to death by stoning.

King Ahab had no idea that Jezebel had planned the murder of Naboth; but when she told him that Naboth was dead and encouraged him to act, he went right out and took Naboth's vineyard for his own.

Jezebel, Ahab, and the leaders thought that they were the only ones who knew what really happened. But God knew. Their sin made God angry, but it also made God very sad that His own people were acting in such sinful ways.

Because God is holy, He had to punish Ahab's sin. God immediately said to Elijah, "Go and speak to Ahab. He has gone to take Naboth's vineyard as his own." Elijah obeyed God and went to see King Ahab.

Jezebel said she (*would, would not*) get Naboth's vineyard for the king.

Ahab said to Elijah, "So, you have found me, my enemy!"

"Yes," replied Elijah, "I have found you. You have always chosen to do what God says is wrong, and now God is going to punish you because of your sin. You are going to die along with all your family.

When Ahab heard these terrible words, he tore his clothes and put on burlap, which people wore when they were extremely sad. He also stopped eating. These were signs that Ahab was truly sorry for his sinful ways. When God saw that Ahab had changed his mind and behavior, He showed love and mercy to Ahab. God spoke to Elijah and said, "Because Ahab has humbled himself before Me and is sorry for his sin, I will not bring these terrible things on him while he is alive. I will wait until his son is king."

King Ahab was killed *in* battle a few years later. Jezebel also died a terrible death just as God had said she would. Ahab's son, Ahaziah, became the next king; but after a few years all of Ahab's sons were killed, leaving no family to carry on his name.

All of us are on one of two ways in life—the broad (wide) way, which is our own sinful way, or *The Narrow Way*, which is God's Way. We start out on the broad (wide) way, but we can choose to stay there or go onto *The Narrow Way*. Ahab and Jezebel chose the wide road. They turned away from God and led the people of Israel in worshiping false gods or idols. When Ahab didn't get Naboth's vineyard, he got very angry. To get the vineyard, Jezebel committed murder, and this led to stealing Naboth's vineyard. Their sinful way resulted in death. Ahab was sorry after he got caught and realized God was going to punish him. How sad that it had come to this, when he had been given so many opportunities to turn from his sinful ways and choose God's Way.

Unless we choose God's Way, we too will be punished for our sin, for sin separates us from God now and forever when we die. But God has given each one of us the opportunity to have our sins forgiven and to follow His narrow way. He has made this possible through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, who took the punishment for our sin when He died on the cross.

Do you want to choose God's narrow way and receive Jesus today? Here is how you do it: tell Him that you admit you are a sinner and deserve to be punished in hell. But you now accept the death of Jesus Christ as the punishment you deserve, and you thank Him for dying on the cross for you. Then God will remove your punishment, forgive your sin, give you everlasting life, and place you on *The Narrow Way* to heaven.

When King Ahab heard what God was going to do he (was sorry, was not sorry) for what he had done.