

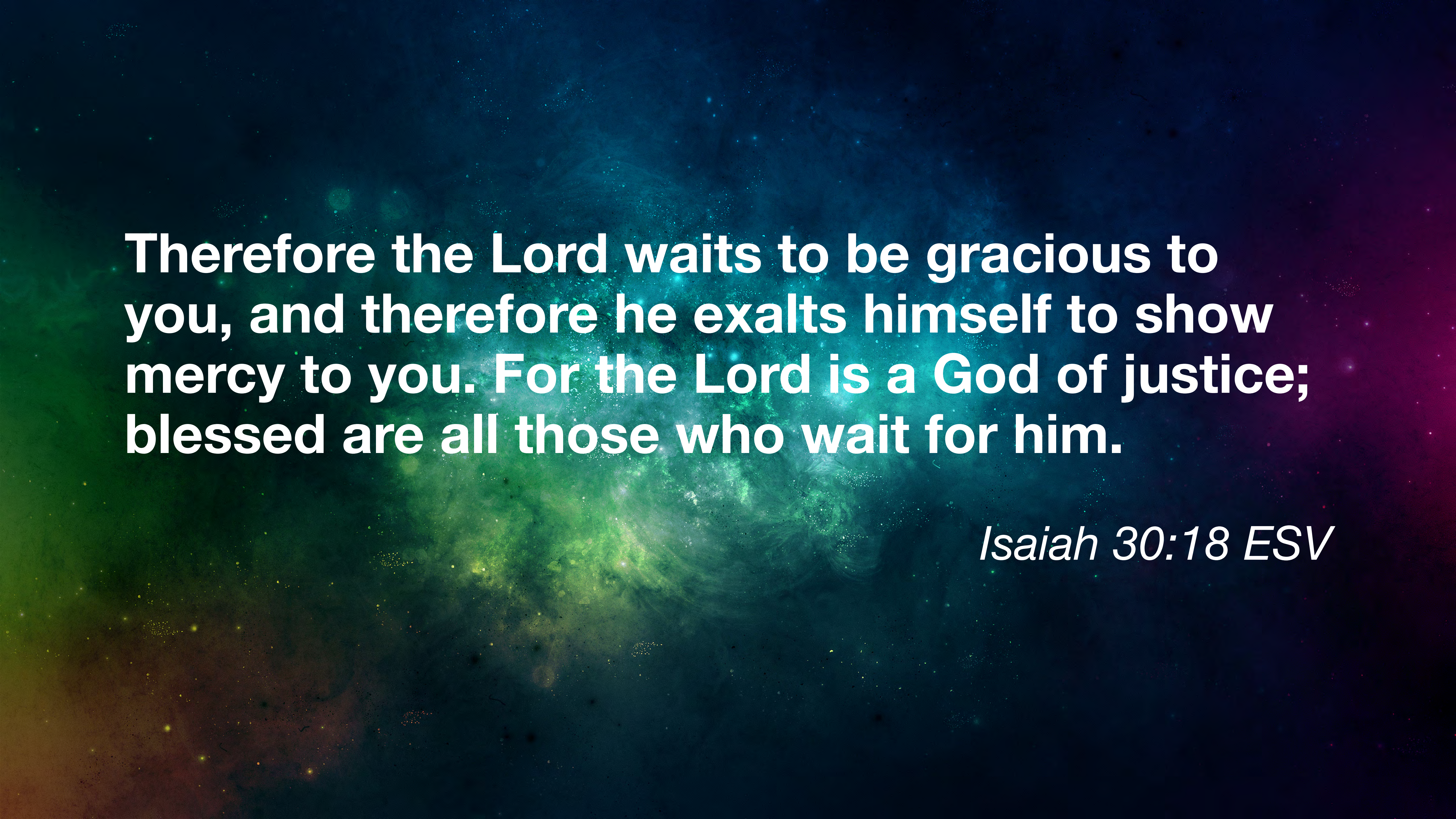


The **Attributes of God**

Attributes of God

Week 5: 1 Kings 21 - Justice and Mercy

Pastor David Wright - Reston Bible Church - Sunday, August 10, 2025



Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.

Isaiah 30:18 ESV

The background is a vibrant cosmic scene featuring a large, swirling nebula in shades of green and blue. The nebula is set against a dark, star-filled space. The colors transition from a deep blue on the right to a bright green on the left, with a purple hue on the far right. Numerous small, bright stars and dust particles are scattered throughout the scene, creating a sense of depth and wonder.

Justice & Mercy

1 Kings 21



God's mercy never violates His justice, and
God's justice never overpowers his mercy.

A.W. Tozer

Outline of 1 Kings 21

Ahab's Request (vv.1-2)

Naboth's Refusal (v.3)

Ahab's Reaction (v.4)

Jezebel's Ruse (vv.5-16)

God's Ruling (through Elijah) (vv.17-26)

Ahab's Repentance (vv.27-29)

Ahab's Request

Now Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And after this Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house, and I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money."

1 Kings 21:1-2 ESV

Naboth's Refusal

**But Naboth said to Ahab,
“The Lord forbid that I should give you the
inheritance of my fathers.”**

1 Kings 21:3 ESV

Ahab's Reaction

And Ahab went into his house vexed and sullen because of what Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him, for he had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.” And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and would eat no food.

1 Kings 21:4 ESV

Jezebel's Ruse

But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, “Why is your spirit so vexed that you eat no food?” And he said to her, “Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, ‘Give me your vineyard for money, or else, if it please you, I will give you another vineyard for it.’ And he answered, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’”

Jezebel's Ruse

And Jezebel his wife said to him, “Do you now govern Israel? Arise and eat bread and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”

1 Kings 21:5-7 ESV

Jezebel's Ruse

So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and she sent the letters to the elders and the leaders who lived with Naboth in his city. And she wrote in the letters, "Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth at the head of the people. And set two worthless men opposite him,

Jezebel's Ruse

**and let them bring a charge against him,
saying, 'You have cursed God and the king.'
Then take him out and stone him to death.'"**

1 Kings 21:8-10 ESV

Jezebel's Ruse

And the men of his city, the elders and the leaders who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them. As it was written in the letters that she had sent to them, they proclaimed a fast and set Naboth at the head of the people. And the two worthless men came in and sat opposite him. And the worthless men brought a charge

Jezebel's Ruse

against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death with stones. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned; he is dead."

1 Kings 21:11-14 ESV

Jezebel's Ruse

As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money, for Naboth is not alive, but dead." And as soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

1 Kings 21:15-16 ESV

God's Ruling (through Elijah)

Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, "Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria; behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone to take possession. And you shall say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, Have you killed and also taken possession?'

God's Ruling (through Elijah)

And you shall say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick your own blood.'"

1 Kings 21:17-19 ESV

God's Ruling (through Elijah)

Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" He answered, "I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight of the LORD. Behold, I will bring disaster upon you. I will utterly burn you up, and will cut off from Ahab every male, bond or free, in Israel. And I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son

God's Ruling (through Elijah)

of Ahijah, for the anger to which you have provoked me, and because you have made Israel to sin. And of Jezebel the LORD also said, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel within the walls of Jezreel.' Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city the dogs shall eat, and anyone of his who dies in the open country the birds of the heavens shall eat."

1 Kings 21:20-24 ESV



**the wrath of a man does not accomplish the
righteousness of God...**

James 1:20 ESV

I used to think that wrath was unworthy of God. Isn't God love? Shouldn't divine love be beyond wrath? God is love, and God loves every person and every creature. That's exactly why God is wrathful against some of them. My last resistance to the idea of God's wrath was a casualty of the war in former Yugoslavia, the region from which I come. According to some estimates, 200,000 people were killed and over 3,000,000 were displaced.

My villages and cities were destroyed, my people shelled day in and day out, some of them brutalized beyond imagination, and I could not imagine God not being angry. Or think of Rwanda in the last decade of the past century, where 800,000 people were hacked to death in one hundred days! How did God react to the carnage? By doting on the perpetrators in a grandparently fashion? By refusing to condemn the bloodbath but instead affirming the perpetrators' basic goodness?

Wasn't God fiercely angry with them? Though I used to complain about the indecency of the idea of God's wrath, I came to think that I would have to rebel against a God who wasn't wrathful at the sight of the world's evil. God isn't wrathful in spite of being love. God is wrathful because God is love.

Miroslav Volf

(There was none who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the LORD like Ahab, whom Jezebel his wife incited. ²⁶ He acted very abominably in going after idols, as the Amorites had done, whom the LORD cast out before the people of Israel.)

1 Kings 21:25-26 ESV

Ahab's Repentance

And when Ahab heard those words, he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his flesh and fasted and lay in sackcloth and went about dejectedly. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, "Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself before me, I will not bring the disaster in his days; but in his son's days I will bring the disaster upon his house."

1 Kings 21:27-29 ESV

The Lord does not delight in the destruction of the wicked.

Ezekiel 33:11 ESV

You are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.

Jonah 4:2 ESV

[The Lord is] not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

2 Peter 3:9 ESV

Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you.

Isaiah 30:18a ESV