

MacArthur Daily Bible

Reading for Today:

- 1 Kings 21:1–22:53
- Psalm 71:1-8
- Proverbs 18:3-5
- John 15:1-27

Notes:

**1 Kings 21:3 The LORD forbid.** Naboth's words implied that trading or selling his property would be a disregard of the law and thus displeasing in God's eyes (1 Sam. 24:6; 26:11; 2 Sam. 23:17). The reason was that the vineyard was his ancestral property. The Lord, the owner of all of the land of Israel, had forbidden Israelite families to surrender ownership of family lands permanently (Lev. 25:23–28; Num. 36:7–9). Out of loyalty to God, Naboth declined Ahab's offer.

**1 Kings 22:6 prophets.** These 400 prophets of Ahab were not true prophets of the Lord. They worshiped at Bethel in the golden-calf center set up by Jeroboam (12:28, 29) and were supported by Ahab, whose religious policy also permitted Baal worship. Their words were designed to please Ahab (v. 8), so they refused to begin with the authoritative "thus says the LORD" and did not use the covenant name for Israel's God, "LORD."

**John 15:14,15 friends.** Just as Abraham was called the friend of God (2 Chr. 20:7; James 2:23) because he enjoyed extraordinary access to the mind of God through God's revelation to him which he believed, so also those who follow Christ are privileged with extraordinary revelation through the Messiah and Son of God and, believing, become friends of God also. It was for His friends that the Lord laid down His life (v. 13; 10:11, 15, 17).

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**DAY 6: What serious warning is sounded in the lesson of the vine and branches?**

In John 15:1–17, Jesus used the extended metaphor of the vine and branches to set forth the basis of Christian living. Jesus used the imagery of agricultural life at the time, i.e., vines and vine crops (see also Matt. 20:1–16; 21:23–41; Mark 12:1–9; Luke 13:6–9; 20:9–16). In the Old Testament, the vine is used commonly as a symbol for Israel (Ps. 80:9–16; Is. 5:1–7; 27:2–6; Jer. 2:21; 12:10; Ezek. 15:1–8; 17:1–21; 19:10–14; Hos. 10:1, 2). He specifically identified Himself as the true vine and the Father as the vinedresser or caretaker of the vine.

The vine has two types of branches: 1) branches that bear fruit (vv. 2, 8), and 2) branches that do not (vv. 2, 6). The branches that bear fruit are genuine believers. Though in immediate context the focus is upon the 11 faithful disciples, the imagery also encompasses all believers down through the ages. The branches that do not bear fruit are those who profess to believe, but their lack of fruit indicates

genuine salvation has never taken place and they have no life from the vine. Especially in the immediate context, Judas was in view, but the imagery extends from him to all those who make a profession of faith in Christ but do not actually possess salvation. The image of non-fruit-bearing branches being burned pictures eschatological judgment and eternal rejection (Ezek. 15:6–8).

“Abide in Me,” Jesus said (vv. 4–6). The word “abide” means to remain or stay around. The remaining is evidence that salvation has already taken place (1 John 2:19) and not vice versa. The fruit or evidence of salvation is continuance in service to Him and in His teaching (8:31; 1 John 2:24; Col. 1:23). The abiding believer is the only legitimate believer. Abiding and believing actually are addressing the same issue of genuine salvation (Heb. 3:6–19). “Abide in My love” (vv. 9, 10; Jude 21). This is not emotional or mystical, but defined in v. 10 as obedience. Jesus set the model by His perfect obedience to the Father, which we are to use as the pattern for our obedience to Him.

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