



Questions to Be Studied at Home.

1. Describe the character of Ahab.
2. Tell of a covetous person in the New Testament.
3. Why should Naboth not have sold his land?
4. Why was Ahab's family destroyed?
5. What lesson do we learn from this?

Practical Points.

A. H. CAMERON.

July 31.

A child may pout, but why should a king be so childish? Verse 4.

What a contrast between Naboth and Esau. Verses 5-6. Compare Gen. xxv., 32-34.

Jezebel had great decision of character, and might have been a power for good, had her heart been opened to receive the grace of God. Verses 7, 8.

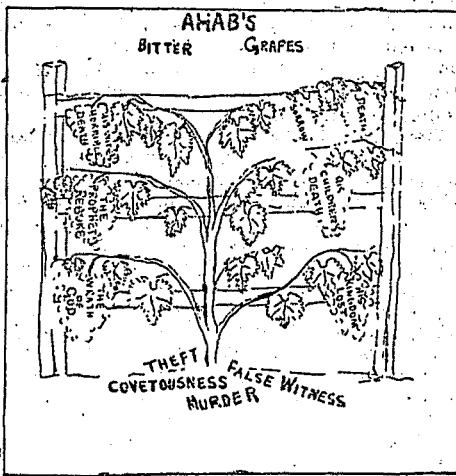
A mock trial, a false accusation, an unjust sentence and a cruel death. How like the trial and treatment of a greater than Naboth. Verses 9-13. Compare Mark xiv., 55-65.

If God is angry with the man who steals his neighbor's property, what about him who ruins the soul of his fellow-man? Verses 15, 16. Also Habak. ii., 15.

Tiverton, Ont.

The Lesson Illustrated.

The devil's grapes always have glossy leaves on the vine and a beautiful bloom upon the fruit. They always look tempting, but their taste is the bitterness of hell. Naboth's vineyard looked so fair in Ahab's eyes that at last, after failing to buy it honorably, he paid a terrible price for it. His own covetousness. Jezebel's evil plans and terrible orders, signed with the seal of the kingdom, the false witnesses and wicked



elders of the village, the hypocritical feast day and its culminating crime.

Then, as he steps inside, to enjoy his dear-bought vineyard, the prophet meets and rebukes the false king. Then the prophet treads out the vintage that Ahab has already begun to taste. Naboth's vineyard, that gave sweet fruit for honest toil, watered with covetousness, false witness, murder and theft, bears as its fruit the bitterness of sin, a horrible death for Ahab and Jezebel, the destruction of their children, the loss of the kingdom and the wrath of God.

Christian Endeavor Topics.

July 31.—The evils of covetousness.—Ex. xx., 17; Luke xii., 13-21.

What Teachers Need.

(From address by Marianne Farningham, in Yorkshire.)

May I suggest that as Sunday-school teachers, that which we need the most is an increase of faith—faith in God, and faith in the Sunday-school as the best possible means of training men and women for the future. Faith in God. 'It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.' 'The promise is to you and to your children.' 'Who-soever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved?' We believe that we all even the little ones, need a Saviour; but we believe that we and that they have the Saviour we need. There is something in him that draws the hearts of the little ones

to himself, and we are sure that he is able to keep them. Very young children may make the great decision, and often do. Why should we expect a break between this early love to Jesus and the love of later years which leads to the church? Is it necessary that our young people should go down into the depths of sin before they can be uplifted to the heights of holiness? Must they become prodigals from the Father's house, and waste their substance in riotous living before it becomes possible for them to say, 'I will arise and go to my Father?' You do not believe that for your own children, why then for others? We pray that our children may be brought to Jesus. Indeed, we ourselves, in prayer and love, bring them to him! 'If our faith were but more simple, we would take him at his word'; and believing that they are in the kingdom we would train them as 'King's sons and daughters.' We believe that the children as children can be converted. What is conversion? Is it not turning round to Christ? And do not we believe that even the little ones in our infant classes can and often do, much oftener than we think, turn their loving, trustful eyes to him? They turn their faces to him and are glad; it is we who get the vision obscured. But they cannot see and believe unless they be led, and the Sunday-schools, to which they come in their thousands must be, above all else that they may be, the places of meeting between the Lord Jesus and the children. This is our calling—to reveal Christ to the young. I know that they cannot see him unless their eyes are opened by the Holy Spirit, but he is promised to us and to our children. Let us only believe, and we and they will see. I wish we might aim at nothing else for a while but this one great object, to teach Christ and him crucified, his life and words and work, his kingdom and how it is formed in the world, and especially how and by whom it is to be carried on now. We want to teach them more and more that Christianity is a life, and that the life is to be lived in vital connection with the Life-Giver. 'He that abideth in me, and I in him; the same bringeth forth much fruit.' It is Christ's men who are to be the men of influence and true power in the New Century. The aristocracy of the future will be the aristocracy of character. In the past we have had so little faith that the school could train them for this. Let us pray, 'Lord, increase our faith.' Let us go up and possess this land, for we are able.

The Teacher's Trophy.

Charlotte was an angel in the house where she served. She went about her work so quietly that you would not know she was moving at all. If any one were sick, she was the kindest, most helpful, person in the house. If any one was cross she knew how to speak, and how to be silent, so as to put the crossness away. If any one was discontented, Charlotte's content made them ashamed of themselves. The children loved her, and well they might. She had good words and kind words for them all. And withal she was tidy, and thoughtful and true.

There never was a girl of her age—and she was only fourteen—who walked more habitually and truly in the way of Christian life. And this was the secret of it—she walked by the light of God's lamp. Her teacher was one who took great pains with her class, and tried to find out the disposition of each scholar. And she found out Charlotte's. And then she searched out a chapter fitting her disposition and said, 'Now, Charlotte, you will read that chapter, and think over some part of it every day.' It was the chapter in Corinthians about Charity. And Charlotte read that chapter three times a day; and it was a lamp to her feet.

Day by day she consulted her lamp, and hid the light of it in her heart, and from thence it would stream out, and show her paths of meekness, goodness, and gentleness to travel in.

Charlotte is grown up to be a young woman. I try sometimes to look into the future, and I see her old and feeble, and dying and buried out of view. But always I think, when that sad vision comes up, that her lamp will never be old—never be buried. 'Charity never faileth.' And her charity, I am sure, will pass on, when she dies, and burn among the lamps that burn before the throne of God.—Dr. Alexander Macleod.

LESSON V.—JULY 31.

Naboth's Vineyard.

I. Kings xxi., 4-16. Memory verses, 4-6. Read chapters xxi. and xxii.

Golden Text.

'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.'—Ex. xx., 17.

Home Readings.

- M. I. Kings xxi., 1-16.—Naboth's vineyard.
- T. I. Kings xxii., 1-36.—The death of Ahab.
- W. I. Kings xxii., 37-53.—His son Ahaziah's evil reign.
- T. Luke xii., 13-30.—'Take heed and beware of covetousness.'
- F. I. Tim. vi., 1-11.—'Man of God, flee these things.'
- S. Psa. xciv., 1-23.—Vengeance belongeth to God.
- S. Jas. v., 1-11.—'Ye have condemned and killed the just.'

Lesson Story.

We have this week a story of robbery and murder. Ahab, the wicked king of Israel, coveted the garden of Naboth, whose grounds joined those of the palace at Jezreel. Naboth would not sell the inheritance of his fathers, therefore Ahab went sulkily to his own room, and refused his food, like a spoiled child. He told Jezebel of his disappointment, and she instantly promised to secure the vineyard for him. With wicked ingenuity she instantly planned a way to get rid of Naboth. She wrote letters in Ahab's name, and with his seal sent them to all the elders and nobles of the city. She bade them proclaim a fast as though some dreadful calamity had come to the city. Then they were to set Naboth up for a mock trial and bribe two worthless fellows to accuse him of blasphemy. After which they should carry Naboth out and stone him to death.

All this they did, and sent word to Jezebel that Naboth was killed. Then Jezebel said to her weak-minded husband that the vineyard was now his because Naboth was dead. And Ahab with the guilt of blood still fresh upon his soul arose and took possession of the vineyard, for which he and Jezebel had committed such crimes.

As Ahab walked in the vineyard, trying to enjoy it Elijah suddenly stood before him with a message from God. Because Ahab had done so wickedly, and had sold himself to sin, God said his family should be cut off entirely. Jezebel must die a dreadful death for her awful iniquities. But because Ahab repented, God promised that this should not happen in his lifetime.

Lesson Hints.

'Jezebel'—'Satan's most dangerous agents are not revolting creatures. I have no doubt that Jezebel was very handsome, very tasteful in dress, and very fascinating in her manners. But she was wicked and she encouraged Ahab to do wickedly. By that token he ought to have known her as an agent of Satan. By the same token you ought to know that any one who influences you to sin is selling you to the devil, no matter how clever or gifted or interesting he or she may be.—Rev. H. A. Nelson, D.D. 'Naboth'—was quite right in refusing to sell his inheritance, (Lev. xxv., 23).

'Ahab'—was as guilty, but not as bold as Jezebel.

'Sealed them'—each man had his own seal with which to sign all documents instead of writing his name.

'Belial'—not a proper name, but literally translated, worthlessness, or 'sons of recklessness.'

'Blaspheme'—curse. An awful sin, the Orientals are very careful for the honor of God's name. This was an entirely false charge, but Naboth was given no chance to defend himself.

'The elders and nobles'—the same who some years later slew Ahab's own sons. (II. Kings, x., 1, 6, 7.)