

man, under a vow not to drink liquor. Another rule for the Nazirite was not to touch a dead body. He could not enter a house where a corpse lay, nor follow it to the grave. This was also a law for the high-priest. It was a token of purity, not to be defiled by any polluting contact. But the "total-abstinence vow" was the most marked peculiarity of the Nazirite. Even in those ages the use of wine tended to excite passion, and the man who was specially set apart to God's service must abstain from it. No vinegar of wine. Much of the ancient wine was very sour, like our vinegar. A man might have wine-vinegar which was not wine; but in those times the distinction was not clearly made, and to keep the Nazirite out of temptation, he was directed to abstain even from wine vinegar. Here is a lesson for us. Why abstain from sweet cider, since it is only apple juice? Because sweet cider soon becomes hard cider, with intoxicating qualities, and it is not easy to draw the line between them. Hence it is best to avoid both, and keep out of temptation. **Liquor of grapes.** That is, any liquor made from grapes, whether called wine or not. **Moist grapes, or dried.** This was to keep the Nazirite out of temptation, for the vow was very strong and the rules explicit. We are not to infer from this that it is a sin to eat grapes, or to use vinegar made from wine. That was the childhood of God's Church, and children must be directed differently from grown people. A mother would say to her child, "Don't touch any of the bottles on that shelf, for some of them contain poisons." But her older son, who can read labels, and tell the poisonous from the harmless, needs no such general command. So the lesson for us is to watch and avoid those products of the grape which will intoxicate. Our vinegar, though made from grapes, is not at all like wine in its taste. But that of the Bible was mainly sour wine, hence it was necessary to warn the Nazirite against it.

4. All the days of his separation. Whether the vow was for a given period or for life. **Nothing that is made of the vine tree.** This made the abstinence very thorough, like that of a certain order of priests among the ancient Romans, who were forbidden even to walk under a grape arbor. A complete and total abstinence is the safe rule. Better that a reformed drunkard should not take a sip of fermented wine at the communion table, than that he should fall under the dominion of his former appetite!

HOME READINGS.

M. Josh. 3, 9-17. 7th. Matt. 2, 1-13. W. Josh. 6, 12-20. 7th. Josh. 14, 5-15. F. Josh. 24, 14-22. S. Judg. 7, 15-23. S. Ruth 1, 16-22.

GOLDEN TEXT.

For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. Luke 1, 15.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 162, Dominion Hymnal.

Tell me the Old, Old Story,
Of unseen things above.

No. 134, Dominion Hymnal.

I need thee every hour,
Most gracious Lord.

No. 237, Dominion Hymnal.

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.

TIME.—1491 B. C.

PLACE.—Mount Sinai.

This lesson has no connection with the lessons of the quarter.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Temperance.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. Separation from Sin.

What was a Nazirite?

From what things were Nazirites obliged to totally abstain?

Could not a man be holy unto the Lord without such separation?

What was the great principle which underlay this abstinence?

What is the best and noblest part of man?

To what does self-indulgence always lead?

What is the effect of sin upon the soul?

Of what is the Nazirite's separation typical?

What was Christ's teaching concerning this law of self-denial? Matt. 16, 24.

What is the great sin of modern society?

2. Consecration to God.

What was the purpose of the Nazirite's separation of himself from the world?

How would such self-denial promote the spirit of consecration?

What place do you think consecration should occupy in a Christian's life?

What did Christ do for us? Phil. 2, 5-8.

What ought we to do in return for him?

What are some of the ways in which we may show our consecration?

Is it right for a man to gratify his appetite even if he can do it without danger to himself?

What was the character of Christ's forerunner?

Practical Teachings.

Notice the law for total abstinence was prescribed by God himself, ver. 1.

There was no place in the Nazirite's diet for any liquor, or any thing like it, or any thing that could suggest it.

Total abstinence—no moderate drinking.

Total abstinence—no wine, or grape, or tendrils of a vine.

Total abstinence, total abstinence, TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

Hints for Home Study.

1. Find who of the Bible characters were Nazirites.
2. Find all the places that speak of separation from sin.
3. Find if the Bible teaches that drunkenness is a sin.
4. Find what the destination of drunkards is declared to be.
5. Find five Bible characters who lived lives of consecration to God, and study them.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Separation from Sin.

Whose commands does this lesson record?

To whom were the commands given?

From what sinful indulgences was separation demanded?

What was the Nazirite forbidden to drink?

What was he forbidden to eat?

How long was this prohibition to be in force?

What demand for separation from sin does God now make on all Christians? 2 Cor. 6, 17.

To what wise prohibition ought we all to give heed? Prov. 23, 31.

2. Consecration to God.

Upon whom were the commands to total abstinence binding?

To whom did a Nazirite devote himself?

To whom are we called upon to devote ourselves? Rom. 12, 1.

To what effect will true devotion have on our eating and drinking? 1 Cor. 10, 31.

How will it lead us to guard our influence over others? Rom. 14, 21.

What will true consecration decide as to the use of intoxicating drink? 1 Cor. 8, 13.

Teachings of the Lessons.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That we ought to devote ourselves to God?

2. That we ought to avoid every thing that God disapproves?

3. That wine-drinking is both harmful and sinful?

Hints for Home Study.

Find two eminent Nazirites whose history is in the Bible.

Find the history of a whole tribe who were Nazirites.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who gave laws to govern Israel? The Lord.

To whom did he give them? To Moses.

To whom did Moses then give them? To the Israelites.

What law is given in this lesson? The law of separation.

What was one called who separated himself to the Lord? A Nazirite.

What did a Nazirite make? A vow.

What was a vow? A solemn promise.

What did he promise not to drink? Wine or strong drink.