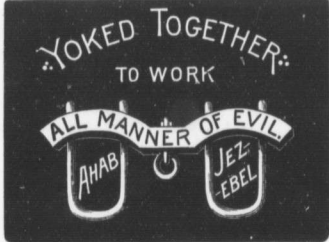


Lesson Word-Pictures.

How choice is the vineyard of Naboth! How desirable are its purple clusters in vintage-time! How favored its location, so near the king's premises! Naboth does not forget these facts. He walks the vineyard in pride. He is aware also that outside of his vineyard is an evil eye, a covetous eye, a cruel eye? Does Naboth see it, that eye of Ahab looking toward his vineyard? "Come, Naboth, sell thy vineyard!" "No, Ahab." And now, like a petted child crossed in his whims, Ahab lies down on his bed, turns his face to the wall, and will not eat his dinner! What dark face, harder, more brazen than Ahab's, is bending over this sulky king? It is the face of Jezebel, and she pets him and cheers him and says, "Naboth's vineyard shall be yours." She is writing letters now and uses the seal of Ahab. It is all about Naboth. When Jezebel turns letter-writer, owners of vineyards may well tremble. She has told her willing tools what to do to Naboth, and they do it. They have proclaimed a fast. Naboth, they "set on high among the people." They hire two perjurers who charge upon Naboth blasphemy of his god and king. What a tumult now! It is a mob without heart that rushes upon Naboth. He is hustled out of the city, and then all about him they make a circle that is a death-line. The cruel stones fly at him, faster, heavier, and when night comes, there is no living owner of the vineyard "hard by the palace of Ahab." The dead Naboth weltering in his blood lies outside the gates and the hungry dogs from the city are about him. It is an hour when the royal thief goes down to his new vineyard. Perhaps he looks at the thrifty vines and says, "Mine," or at the stretching, sunny slopes, and says, "Mine." Is he rubbing his hands and chuckling over his good luck? He starts back. Has he stepped on a snake? No, but that man over there, in a prophet's garb, who sternly eyes the king, what does he want? Ahab may have thought he was hiding away in a cave in some wilderness, and here he is to say a word for the dead Naboth! How did Elijah know? "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" asks Ahab. Yes, he has found the royal culprit, and in words that sink into Ahab's soul like an iron brand red-hot into the flesh he tells him that dogs shall lick his blood even as they licked Naboth's and in the same place.

Blackboard.

BY J. A. PHIPPS, ESQ.



The diagram explains itself. Ahab and Jezebel are yoked together to work all manner of evil. Satan has united his forces, and they marched rapidly down the road of Covetousness, past the hill of Evil Counsel, through the short and bloody lane of Murder, to the vineyard of Naboth. Let some scholar finish the story, and tell of the swift steps of pursuing justice.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

A plan for teaching this lesson would be, to begin by drawing a diagram to represent an imaginary vineyard, not Naboth's vineyard, but *Ahab's heart*; hence draw it in the form of a large heart. Now, what were the vines growing in this vineyard? Write the name of each as it is shown in the lesson, while the story is told. . . . 1. *Covetousness*—explain what it is, a desire for the possessions of others. 2. *Discontent*. 3. *Conspiracy*—in which Ahab was as guilty as his queen. 4. *Falseness*—since the charge was a lying one. 5. *Hypocrisy*—

since it was in the sacred name of religion. 6. *Robbery*—for it was to obtain the possessions of another. 7. *Murder*—for it ended the life of Naboth. . . . Show the result of the crime in Ahab's sentence. ILLUSTRATION. A duke of Austria once hired some men to murder an enemy, and then paid them in counterfeit coin, saying, "False money is good enough for false knaves." So Ahab was paid when he sold himself to work evil.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 8: Seals, 333. Ver. 13: Executions outside the walls, 737.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *How Sin Grows*. Interest children at the outset of this lesson in talking about Ahab. Who was he? To whom did Israel belong? How ought the king of Israel to have ruled his people? Show that as God is the King of all nations, who that kingdom can prosper which owns him as God. Call from children events in Ahab's life which show how he had turned away from the Lord, and tell that the lesson shows to what this leads.



1. Put lesson-symbol on the board, or, still better, show a bunch of grapes. Question something in this way: Upon what did these grow? Did they look like the last spring? Why not? What have they done since they were just little specks? What was there before the grapes could be seen at all? Would there have been any blossoms if there had been no vine. So make the thought of *gradual growth* clear, and teach that no great wrong-doing springs up all at once. These are first little ways in which we step aside from the right path. The boy who keeps a penny that belong to another is in danger of becoming a thief, etc., etc.

2. What commandment did Ahab break in worshipping idols? When we break a commandment it becomes easy to break another. Tell the story of Ahab's desire to have Naboth's vineyard, and ask what command Ahab broke in wanting this. Tell of his childish grief because Naboth refused to sell the vineyard, and Queen Jezebel's plan for relief. Show that although it was Jezebel who planned the falsehood and the murder, Ahab was responsible for it, for he allowed her to do it. It is as bad to consent to wrong-doing as to do wrong. 3. Show that when we have gained some coveted pleasure by wrong means, God does not leave us to enjoy it. Tell how the prophet Elijah went to meet Ahab, as he was on his way to take possession of the vineyard, and told him of God's anger and the punishment that would overtake him. Ask if God notices the acts of children as well as the acts of kings? Show a tiny flower, and tell the children that it is just as perfect in all its parts as is the great oak-tree. Nothing is little in God's sight. Warn against what may seem little sins, deceit, petty thefts, indulgence of temper, etc., since these things are sure to grow, and no one can tell to what great crimes they may lead.

LESSONS FOR SEPTEMBER, 1885.

- SEPT. 6. Elijah Translated. 2 Kings 2. 1-15.
SEPT. 13. The Shunammite's Son. 2 Kings 4. 15-37.
SEPT. 20. Naaman the Syrian. 2 Kings 5. 1-16.
SEPT. 27. Third Quarterly Review.

Book Notice.

Rob Claxton's Story. By Parthena B. Chamberlain. New York: T. Y. Crowell & Co. This story opens with the departure of C. vain Claxton, Rob's father, for the war in behalf of the Union. His son has promised to keep a journal, honest, recording his conduct and the incidents of family life. This journal occupies about half the book, and is just such a story as a thorough boy, who has in him the stuff for a man, would write. After his father's return home, wounded, the story is continued, but not in the form of a diary, and Rob is brought up to a good, worthy manhood. We can recommend this book as good for Sunday-school libraries.