

CATECHISM QUESTION.

27. What is the difference between the visible and the invisible Church?

By the visible Church is meant the whole number of those who belong to Christian societies; the invisible Church is the company of all true believers in every age.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Story of a Crime.

I. COVETOUSNESS.

1. *Heavy and displeased.* v. 4.
"No peace...to the wicked." Isa. 57. 21.
2. *Because...Naboth...not give...inheritance.* v. 1.
"Woe to him that coveteth." Hab. 2. 9.
3. *Would eat no bread.* v. 4.
"His days are sorrowful, and his travail grief."
Ecc. 4. 22.

II. COUNSEL.

1. *Jezabel...came to him.* v. 5.
"Take counsel...that they may add sin to sin."
Isa. 30. 1.
2. *Why is thy spirit so sad?* v. 5.
"Pierced...through with many sorrows." 1 Tim. 6. 10.
3. *Doth thou now govern?* v. 7.
"Better...he that ruleth his spirit." Prov. 16. 33.
4. *Let thine heart be merry.* v. 7.
"Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." Luke 12. 19.
5. *I will give thee the vineyard.* v. 7.
"Covet fields, and take them by violence." Micah 2. 2.

III. CONSPIRACY.

1. *Wrote letters...to the nobles.* v. 8.
"Wicked plotteth against the just." Psa. 37. 12.
2. *Proclaim a fast.* v. 9.
"A cloak of maliciousness." 1 Pet. 2. 16.
3. *Set Naboth on high.* v. 9.
"Conspired against him to slay him." Gen. 37. 18.
4. *Set two men...to witness.* v. 10.
"Such as breathe out cruelty." Psa. 27. 12.
5. *Stone him that he may die.* v. 10.
"Make haste to shed innocent blood." Isa. 59. 7.

IV. CRIME.

1. *Nobles did...as Jezabel had sent.* v. 11.
"No fear of God before their eyes." Rom. 3. 18.
2. *Men of Bethel witnessed.* v. 13.
"He that speaketh lies shall perish." Prov. 19. 9.
3. *Naboth did blasphemy.* v. 13.
"Laid to my charge things that I knew not." Psa. 35. 11.
4. *Carried him forth...and stoned him.* v. 13.
"Woe to the bloody city!" Ezek. 24. 9.

V. CONDEMNATION.

1. *Thus saith the Lord.* v. 19.
"Provoked the Holy One." Isa. 1. 4.
2. *Where dogs licked the blood.* v. 19.
"Cast him into the pit." 2 Kings 9. 26.
3. *Shall dogs lick thy blood.* v. 19.
"The dogs licked up his blood." 1 Kings 22. 38.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

Thoughts on Naboth's Vineyard.

1. How much of evil and trouble comes from worldly possessions! Naboth's vineyard cost its owner a dear price.
2. How much harm comes from looking with covetous desire upon the things of others!
3. A sin, though done for fear or for favor, is none the less a sin.
4. We may sin by proxy, but we must suffer in person.
5. Not even a king has power to make wrong right, or good evil.
6. He who sells himself to work evil gets a small price for his pains.

English Teacher's Notes.

THERE is no human being we feel more inclined to pity than a slave, one who is considered the property of another, and whose time, and strength, and talents, and energies, are absolutely at that

other's disposal. To put an end to slavery among her people, America laid down the lives of thousands of her brave sons. For the same cause England has given freely of her gold, and to this day her vessels watch for the slave dhows on the East African coast, and rescue many of the unfortunate beings who have been stolen from their homes and destined to pass their lives in bondage. To be sold as a slave is to descend to a condition of the utmost degradation, of misery, and of hopelessness. A slave is of no account in the world; his feelings, his wishes, his opinions, go for nothing. A slave must work for his master, and work without payment. A slave must suffer whatever his master chooses to put upon him; he has no redress. If such a one had a chance to regain his freedom, would he not seize it eagerly? What then should we think of a man who would sell himself into slavery—who would of his own choice give up his freedom, and become the property of another! Such a man could not even enjoy the price paid him for his voluntary surrender: once a slave, all that he possessed must be at his master's disposal.

Yet we read to-day of one who sold himself, and sold himself to a definite work under a hard taskmaster.

Who is this poor slave? It is Ahab, king of Israel. A king a slave! One would have thought that he who ruled others must himself be free. But we shall see that he was not. He had much to make life pleasant to him. He had great opportunities for usefulness. God had been very merciful to him, first in sending rain upon the land, and giving him room to repent of his misdeeds, as well as a prophet at his side to help and guide him; and secondly, in delivering him and his country from the Syrians. Chap. 20. But he has used none of his opportunities; he is not even enjoying his beautiful palace and gardens at Jezreel. Though he has the name and state of a king, he is actually a poor slave.

Look at this poor slave at work. Ver. 4. There he lies, moody and miserable, refusing even to eat, because he cannot have Naboth's vineyard. But some will say this is not work. Not work with the hands, certainly, and not work in the sense of profitable labor. But it is work, or, rather, hard toil. His mind has no rest. It is a prey to discontent. It is desiring, and coveting, and brooding over its disappointment. The ceaseless working, thinking, wishing, regretting, worrying, of the mind is far harder toil than that of the laborer in the fields or the blacksmith at the forge. And Ahab gets weary and warm with this fretting, useless labor.

But see him working in another way. There is a solemn assembly at Samaria. A man is brought forth to be tried for blasphemy. Witnesses come forward and swear that he is guilty. And yet all this is a mere mockery. The judges very well know that Naboth is innocent, and that the witnesses are liars. Why then does the innocent suffer the terrible punishment of blasphemy? Be-

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