

VINEYARD OF NABOTH

1 Kings 21

Lesson Memory Verse: 1 Timothy 6:6 "But godliness with contentment is great gain."

Lesson Aim: Be satisfied with what you have, so you do not covet what others have.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): The stores at Christmas-time have toys, dolls, games and many things that are fun to have. Ask the children to tell what presents they would like to receive if Christmas were today. Write all the names of these presents on the board. Then tell them that God only promises to give us what we **need**. He does not promise to give us all that we **want**. Many times we **want** things that we really do not **need**. Since we do not **need** everything that we **want**, we should not get angry if God does not give us all that we **want**. Make this clear to them. Now have the children look at the list of presents on the board and have them tell you whether it is something that they **need** or if it is something that they **want**. It is not a sin to want toys, dress-up clothes, bikes, games and fun things, but it is a sin to want them so much that we get angry or pout or cry, if we do not get them. God calls it the sin of coveting. Our memory verse today tells us why we should be content or satisfied, even though we do not get all that we want.

HE (for Authority): Our memory verse is found in 1 Timothy 6:6. It says we will have "great gain" if we are godly and content. What does it mean to have "great gain"? That means we have made great progress in our Christian life. What does it mean to be godly? It means we are acting like Jesus, who is God. This is done by reading and obeying the Bible; by coming to our Bible class every Sunday, if possible; by coming to church; by doing what your parents tell you; by praying; and by telling others how Jesus can save them. "Contentment" means we should be satisfied with the many things that God has given to us. We should be satisfied with our clothes, with our home, with our food, and all the good things that God gives to us. If we are satisfied, we will not complain or get angry, but we will be thankful to God for what we have.

Explanation of difficult words and phrases:

"Godliness" – being like God or Jesus

"Contentment" – being satisfied or happy with what we have

"Great gain" – a reward from God that will give us great joy

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. Our story today tells us about King Ahab who could not get what he wanted and so he pouted and was very unhappy. (The following outline used in the lesson is given to help the teacher remember the main points. It is not intended for the children to. Simply tell the story to the children and make applications as you teach.)

I. Sadness of Ahab (21:1-4) Covetousness

King Ahab greatly desired a vineyard that was owned by his neighbor, who was Naboth. The king wanted this land so he could grow a special garden close to his house. Naboth, however, did not want to sell his vineyard. He had received it from his father, and his father had received it from his father and this had been done by many fathers in his family. So the vineyard was very precious to him. When King Ahab offered to give Naboth a better piece of land for his vineyard, Naboth still refused his offer. That ruined Ahab's perfect plan for a special garden next to his house. So he was unhappy and felt sorry for himself. This was sin.

WE: When we get unhappy because we did not get what we wanted, we sin. The Bible says that we are to rejoice always (Phil 4:4). God wants us to be content (satisfied) with what we have. If the thing we wanted was something that He knew we needed, He would be sure that we got it.

II. Stoning of Naboth (21:5-14)

Ahab's wife, Jezebel, saw that he was unhappy and asked him the reason for his sadness. When Ahab told her that Naboth would not sell his vineyard to him, she told him to cheer up because she would get Naboth's vineyard for him. What did she do? She wrote a letter in the name of the king to all the officials

of the country to come to a feast where Naboth was set in a high place. Then she got two wicked men to lie about Naboth, saying that they had heard him speak against God and the king. Then they were to carry him out and stone him until he died. Why did Jezebel do such a wicked thing against Naboth? (So Ahab could take Naboth's vineyard and make it into a special garden near his house.) Explain that Ahab would be just as guilty as Jezebel for these sins. He started to sin by being unhappy when he could get Naboth's vineyard. Jezebel added to sin by having Naboth stoned so Ahab could get Naboth's vineyard.

WE: We sin when we want something so much that we get angry, pout or cry. We add to our sin when we let others sin to help us get what we want so badly. One sin begins to multiply and soon we are guilty for many sins.

III. Sins of Ahab (21:15-18)

When Ahab went down to take Naboth's vineyard, God sent Elijah to meet him in the vineyard. God saw all the sins that Ahab and Jezebel had done to get Naboth's vineyard and He sent Elijah to tell him the punishment they would receive for their sins. Can you name the sins that they did? (They coveted Naboth's land; they lied about Naboth; they murdered Naboth, an innocent man; they stole his land.) To make matters worse for Ahab, he got caught and did not enjoy the land that he coveted.

WE: We will be caught, if we sin. God sees all that we do. We cannot escape the penalty for our sins. We will soon find out that the thing we wanted so much will not make us happy. Sin destroys the joy that we thought that we would have. Our memory verse says the godly will be content (satisfied), but the opposite is true for the ungodly; they will not be satisfied.

IV. Sentence by Elijah (21:19-24)

God gave Elijah the sentence of judgment that Ahab received for his sin against Naboth. Elijah boldly told Ahab that all his possessions would be taken from him and all members of his family would be cut off. He would die violently and the dogs would lick up his blood in the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood (see 1 Kings 22:34-38). And the dogs would eat the body of Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel where she would suffer a horrible death (see 2 Kings 9:30-37).

WE: We can expect God's sentence of punishment, if we cry and whine for things that we want, when He knows that it is not good for us to have them. He sees our complaining as sin. We need to go to Jesus to be cleansed of our sin, so He does not have to punish us. He wants us to trust Him to give us what is good for us.

V. Sorrow of Ahab (21:25-29)

When Ahab heard God's message of judgment from Elijah, he humbled himself before God for his sin against Naboth. When God saw this, He showed Ahab some mercy for being sorry for that sin. God told him that the punishment would not come on his family until he had died. But Ahab did not confess and turn away from his sin of worshipping idols, so he was not forgiven for those sins.

WE: When we have sinned, we need to be sorry for it and confess it to God. Then He will forgive us and put the punishment that we deserve on Jesus. That is why Jesus died on the cross. He paid the punishment for us. If we believe that Jesus took the punishment for all of our sins, we should be thankful that He did this for us.

BE (for Action): King Ahab sinned when he did not get the land from Naboth that he wanted. That sin caused him to commit several other sins. After God told him the punishment that he would receive for his sins, Ahab humbled himself before God and He showed Ahab some mercy. However, Ahab was never sorry for the worship of his idols, so he was not forgiven of those sins.

We need to confess all our sins to God and turn away from them, so we can be forgiven. Have you confessed and turned away from all or your sins that you can remember? If not, do it today. Then, if you remember more sins later, confess and turn from them, too. If you believe that God has forgiven your sins, be sure to thank Him. Thank Him every day. Have you thanked Him today?