

Lesson

4

Rule: Don't Covet or Steal!

BIBLE BASIS

God commands people not to steal (Exod. 20:15, 17). Ahab desires Naboth's vineyard and takes it (1 Kings 21:1-19).

BIBLE TRUTH

God's rules say that we should not want or take something that belongs to someone else.

MEMORY VERSE:

"You shall not steal."
Exodus 20:15

LESSON AIM

That your students will be thankful for what they have and be glad for what others have.

4

1

LIFE NEED (5-10 MINUTES)

Play a game show to discuss the effects of coveting.

- Materials: whiteboard and marker

2

BIBLE LEARNING (15-20 MINUTES)

Bible Words: Learn about King Ahab, Queen Jezebel, and Naboth's vineyard.

- Materials: *My Bible Book* p. 15, Bible Overview Chart Teaching Aid, Bibles

Bible Story: Hear what happened when King Ahab wasn't happy with what he had and wanted his neighbor's vineyard.

- Materials: "King Ahab Wants a Vineyard" Teaching Aid, Bibles

Bible Review: Match people with the commandments they disobeyed.

- Materials: *My Bible Book* pp. 16-17, pencils

Memory Work: Practice saying this week's memory verse.

- Materials: Bibles

3

BIBLE APPLICATION (5-10 MINUTES)

Discuss ways present-day children are or are not obeying God's rules.

- Materials: "God's Ten Commandments" Teaching Aid, whiteboard and marker

4

LIFE RESPONSE (5-10 MINUTES)

Choose ways to respond when tempted to steal or covet.

- Materials: *My Bible Book* p. 18, *Elementary Kid Crafts* for Lesson 4, glue or tape, *Friends* for Lesson 4



This symbol means extra preparation or supplies are needed.



Understanding the Bible

Overview of This Quarter: Today our story is on the commandments about coveting and stealing. We've studied the commands to worship only God, to have a special day to honor God, and to honor our parents. Next week we will study God's rules on honesty. Then we will study God's gift of redemption and becoming part of God's family. Our final unit is building relationships God's way.

This Week's Bible Story: The bad people in this story, King Ahab and Queen Jezebel, disobeyed four of God's commandments on coveting, lying, killing, and stealing.

Ahab's sin began when he coveted something that wasn't his—Naboth's vineyard. Ahab offered to buy the vineyard or give Naboth a better one somewhere else, but Naboth refused. Naboth had good reasons for refusing. According to Mosaic law, Naboth had a responsibility to his family to keep his inheritance. Selling the land would have broken the religious laws and wronged his descendants.

King Ahab didn't like being told no. So, like a spoiled little child, he went home and pouted. He even refused to eat.

Queen Jezebel told the king to quit pouting and promised to get him the vineyard. Then Jezebel ordered people to lie about Naboth so that he would be killed. Then the king could steal Naboth's vineyard. When Jezebel told Ahab of Naboth's death, Ahab took the coveted vineyard.

Ahab's envy led to lying, killing, and stealing. God told His prophet Elijah to tell of His judgment upon King Ahab, Queen Jezebel, and their family. Not even a king is above God's laws!

Anyone who has been stolen from knows that theft takes away more than just the stolen things. Victims say they do not trust others. Stealing hurts everyone.

God had good reasons for giving His people these commandments. Respecting what belongs to someone else also means not hungering after it. By disobeying this command we all lose. By obeying it we all win!

Understanding Your Students

Most of your students have a strong sense of ownership—especially when it comes to their own possessions. And they will readily admit that stealing is wrong. At the same time, elementary students are often tempted to take things that aren't theirs, or to "borrow" things without proper permission. With your help and encouragement they can begin to see how God's rules about coveting and stealing apply to them.

Classroom Tips

Some of these ideas can be helpful as you teach students to respect the property of others.

- Encourage respect for Sunday school supplies. Some students may need to be reminded to take good care of classroom books, chairs, tables, and other church property.
- Model respect for other people's property yourself. Even a paper airplane may be cherished by some child. If you have to take it away for discipline reasons, be sure to return it at the end of class.
- Don't insist that your children share personal belongings with each other unless they are willing.
- Encourage children to turn "ownerless" items in to the church "lost and found," rather than following the principle of "finders, keepers."

Presession Activities

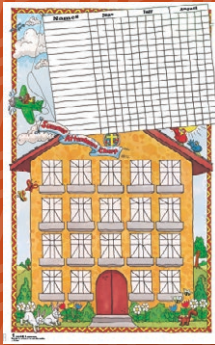
Activities for children who arrive early.

- Have students mark their attendance.

Materials: Summer Attendance Chart

- Students may use catalogs to find pictures of things they would like to have. When they've collected several pictures, ask them: **Can you have everything you want? Why not? Can you be grateful for what you have? Why?**

Materials: catalogs and scissors



"Attendance Chart" Teaching Aid

- Give the children an opportunity to consider the things they have. Ask them to draw a picture that includes all of their favorite things. They should set up the picture to look like a window display in a mall store.

Materials: drawing paper, crayons

- For Worship time: Sing "All of Our Days" from the Diskit CD.

Materials: Diskit CD, CD player



1

Life Need 5-10 minutes

Objective: That your students will realize that coveting hurts other people.

This activity will prepare your students for the Bible story of how King Ahab coveted and stole.

Before class, draw two columns on the board. Title the first one "New Video Game System." Divide the rest of the column into four spaces and write each of the following in a space: be hit in the pie with a face, talk back to parents, cheat on a test, double-cross a friend. Title the other column "7-day Admission to Fun World." Divide the rest of the column into four spaces and leave them blank.

Explain to the class that they are part of a game show and you are the host. Using a game show voice, dramatically read the following: **I'm your host.**

Welcome to the game show "Stretching Your Limits." In this show you decide what you would do in order to win GREAT PRIZES. Decide how far you would go by coloring in the squares of the paths.

Read the blocks in the first column. Have the children color that column down to what they think children their age might do. Encourage students to explain their reasoning.

Allow a couple of minutes for the children to silently think about how they would fill out the second column about themselves, which they can keep secret.

Some people really do crazy things to get what they want—even things they know are wrong. Do you think that's okay? Why or Why not?

- **Why do you think some people want what others have?** *(They aren't happy with what they have, they want to have the most stuff, they think they are missing out on something if they don't have what "everyone else" has, they want better or newer things, etc.)*

Sometimes it's hard to tell if we're wanting things in a bad way.

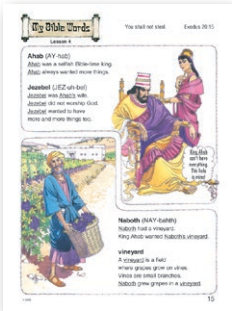
- **What could be some warning signs that show you're not happy with what you have?** *(Complaining about what you have, feeling sad or angry over what you don't have, being willing to do whatever it takes to get what you want, putting down the special things that others have, etc.)*

The king in today's Bible story didn't pick up on any warning signs before he went too far. Let's see what he did and what God had to say about his actions.

2

Bible Learning 15–25 minutes

Objective: That your students will learn from King Ahab's example that it is unwise to break God's law by coveting and stealing.



My Bible Book, page 15

Distribute *My Bible Book* and have students turn to page 15.

■ **What can you tell me about the first picture and the people in this picture?** (Encourage children to make inferences based on the given descriptions.)

Now let's look at the next picture. This man's name is Naboth. Another volunteer may read about Naboth.

■ **Naboth is in his vineyard. What is a vineyard?** (Allow for responses before reading the definition aloud. Did you know that we still get grapes from vineyards?)



Bible Overview Chart Teaching Aid

Introduce the books of the Bible for today's lesson with a "Find" game. After giving a clue, have a student point to the part of the Bible Overview Chart

that answers it. Challenge children to find: the part of the Bible that has Exodus (Old Testament), the part of the Bible that tells about King Solomon and the kings that came after him (1 and 2 Kings), the first of the Kings books (1 Kings).

Have students find and bookmark Exodus 20:17 and 1 Kings 21:2 to read during the Bible story. Help visitors who may not be familiar with their Bibles look in the table of contents to find the correct page number for both Exodus and 1 Kings. Use the "King Ahab Wants a Vineyard" Teaching Aid as you tell the story.

BIBLE STORY

King Ahab lived in a beautiful palace surrounded by trees and flowers. He had everything he could ever want, but he still wasn't happy. One of the palace

windows faced a vineyard that didn't belong to the king. It belonged to Naboth. The vineyard had rich, ripe grapes. King Ahab wanted that vineyard!

"I want Naboth's vineyard," said King Ahab to himself. "I'm going to tell him so."

Have the students read 1 Kings 21:2 aloud together to find out what King Ahab said. Show the "King Ahab Wants a Vineyard" Teaching Aid to the students.

"If you'll let me have your vineyard, I'll give you a better vineyard or pay you for this one," King Ahab told Naboth.

Naboth said, "This land has belonged to my family for a long time. It was my father's, my grandfather's, and even my great-great-grandfather's. God doesn't want me to give it up. I can't let you have it."

The king was angry. He wasn't used to people saying no to him about anything. How could Naboth refuse to give him the land he wanted? King Ahab went home and threw himself on his bed to pout. He even refused to eat.

When Queen Jezebel heard that the king was refusing to eat, she went to see him. "What's the matter with you?" she said. "Why won't you eat?"

The king said, "Because I want Naboth's vineyard, but he won't give it up!"

"This isn't the way the king is supposed to act," Queen Jezebel said. "Get up and eat. I'll get that vineyard for you."

Then Queen Jezebel did a terrible thing. She wrote a letter to the elders of the city. She asked the leaders to find two men who would say that Naboth had done something wrong so that they could have him put to death.

"Naboth is dead," Queen Jezebel told King Ahab. "Now the vineyard is yours!"

King Ahab was so happy, he went right out to look at his new vineyard. But God was angry. God sent His



"King Ahab Wants a Vineyard" Teaching Aid

prophet Elijah with a message for the king. “It is wrong to kill and steal,” Elijah told King Ahab. “God will punish you.”

King Ahab was sorry then. But it was too late. Nothing could change the terrible wrong he had done because he wanted something that didn’t belong to him.

King Ahab and Queen Jezebel’s story had a very sad ending. But where did all the trouble start? *Have students read aloud Exodus 20:17 and tell the commandment in their own words.*

When you are finished with “King Ahab Wants a Vineyard” Teaching Aid, hang it up with posters from other quarters to create a visual timeline.

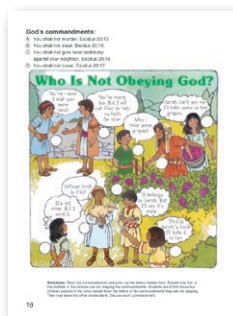
BIBLE REVIEW

Page 16 of *My Bible Book* will help students learn the commandments in the Bible story.

Read the commandments at the top of page 16. **All of these commandments were disobeyed by someone in today’s story. Before we tell who this was, let’s make sure we know what each commandment means.**

Draw your students’ attention to the children in the picture. **Four of these children are each disobeying one of these commandments.** Have the students decide which children are disobeying, and which commandment he or she is disobeying. Then have them write the letter in front of the commandment in the circle next to the child disobeying it. (A—a boy wishes his friend was dead; B—a girl is taking grapes from a basket; C—a boy is lying about a lamb; D—a girl covets the lamb.)

When the children have completed the page, discuss each commandment.



My Bible Book, page 16

Now let’s see which people from the Bible story disobeyed each of these commandments. Turn to page 17 of *My Bible Book*.

Read the directions at the bottom of the page to your students. Answers: Top left—D, top right—C, bottom left—A, bottom right—B.



My Bible Book, page 17

■ **What happened after King Ahab took Naboth’s vineyard?** (*Elijah the prophet told Ahab that God would punish him and Jezebel for the wrong things they had done.*)

MEMORY WORK

Open your Bibles to Exodus 20:15. Let students read the verse aloud. Now have them close the Bibles, and have everyone say the verse a couple of times.

Have the children form two lines facing each other. As the lines walk past each other (like two teams after a game) they say, “You shall not steal.” Then they turn about and walk past each other again, this time giving high fives while saying the verse, “You shall not steal.”



3

Bible Application 5–10 minutes

Objective: That your students will discuss how children today can be honest and unselfish.

The Ten Commandments are God's rules for us. When we obey them, God is happy, and we're happy too! God wants us to obey His rules, so let's learn them.



"God's Ten Commandments" Teaching Aid

Gather around the "God's Ten Commandments" Teaching Aid. Review the first five commandments. Continue with commandments 6, 7, 8, and 10.

(You'll do number nine next week.) Don't forget to read the poem and discuss the picture for each one. You might briefly talk about how some people in the pictures are or are not obeying the commandment. The following are some discussion suggestions.

Commandment 6—Help children see that when we try to hurt others, we are disobeying the idea behind this commandment. God doesn't want people to hurt one another. Even saying "I'm gonna kill you!" in fun is not right.

Commandment 7—This couple has promised to love each other, and only each other, forever. That's God's plan for marriage.

Commandment 8—This boy should have studied to know the answers instead of copying them. That's stealing. You should use your own ideas and work.

Commandment 10—Some children might see nice things in a store, or that others have them. They may want the things so much that it makes them unhappy and focused only on getting things. Other children might have nice things and gladly share those things with their friends.

God knows that it's good for us when we are thankful for what we do have and be glad for what others have.

■ **Is it always wrong to want something that you don't have?** *(Not if it's something that's good for you that you can get without harming anyone else. It's also not wrong if you don't dwell on it and become unhappy by not getting it. Point out that what we have or don't have is not what makes us important, valuable, or special. We are special because God has made us that way.)*

■ **What's something that you're having a hard time being happy with?** *(Some children may be comfortable answering aloud, but others might prefer to silently think through what they have and how they feel about it. Answers may include: the toys they have, a difficult family situation, not being allowed to do some things that their friends can do, etc.)*

■ **What are ways you can learn to be happier with what you have?** *Write ideas on the board. Some children may not verbalize their thoughts. They process just by listening to the discussion. Some ideas may include: don't ask for more things, don't spend time at stores looking at stuff and wishing it was mine, thank my parents and God for what I have, don't compare what I have with what my friends have, be grateful for my family and thank God for them, ask God to help me only want to do activities that He would be pleased with, etc.)*

4

Life Response 5–10 minutes

Objective: That your students will choose correct ways to act when they might be tempted to steal or covet.



My Bible Book, page 18

Have students turn to page 18 in *My Bible Book*.

Sometimes it's especially hard to obey God's rules. But God will help us be strong to make good choices even when we are tempted. Let's look at some times when it might be difficult to obey God and make good choices.

As you read each "if" situation, students should choose the way they would want to respond and circle it, or write a response on the blank provided. (Appropriate answers: save my money, ask if I can have the money, ask my friend if I can play with it, and ask God to help me be happy for my friend.)

For each option, discuss why God would or would not like students to act that way.

Finish today's lesson by having students create the "Tele-Thanks Viewer" from *Elementary Kid Crafts*, Lesson 4. Let the children follow the directions on *Kid*

Crafts, page 12, to assemble the Tele-Thanks Viewers. Then the children complete each "channel" as directed on the craft.

CLOSING ACTIVITY

Conclude by reading the prayer "channels" silently on the Tele-Thanks Viewer while you lead them through the different channels. You may send home *My Bible Book*, pages 15–18 and the *Elementary Kid Crafts* prayer reminder. Encourage students to use their "Tele-Thanks Viewer" throughout the week as one way to thank God for what they have.



Elementary Kid Crafts, Lesson 4

