

WEEK ELEVEN

**RULE 10: DO NOT BE ENVIOUS**

**BIG IDEA**

*Don't be envious of others. Being greedy stops you being content and*

**ENJOYING WHAT YOU HAVE**

A LESSON FROM NABOTH

**PREP:** *(Kids can help!)*

- Get out the jar with Ten Commandment cards.
- Buy a can of fizzy drink.
- A sandwich bag for each person, containing a different number of sweets (between 1-10).
- Get a crown from dress-up box (or make a circle of foil or paper).

**WHAT GOES IN THE BOX?**

- The can of fizzy drink.
- A tea towel.
- A necklace (bigger beads are better).
- The bags for each person.
- The crown.



**INTRO**

We have learned 9 of the commandments so far. Now we are up to the final one.

Can you remember the first commandment? Jesus said all the other commandments were kept if we kept that one? This last commandment is one that can help us keep many of the other ones too. If we obey this commandment, we won't end up lying or stealing or wanting to hurt others.

- Lay out together the commandment cards in the correct order and get the children to guess which commandment is left.

The last commandment is 'Don't be envious of others'.

• **What does 'envy' mean?**

This means that we shouldn't wish to have things that someone else has.

There is always a new toy or game – there is always something that we want to get. We do not need to feel envy – we can trust God to look after us.

**OUT OF THE BOX**

- Take the can of fizzy drink and go outside.
- Let everyone take a turn at shaking the sealed can while sharing something they don't have, but really want.
- Throw the can to someone else, who then does the same thing.

After everyone has had at least a couple of turns, make sure everyone steps back, then open the can. It will explode!

### Questions:

- **What happened when we shook the can?** (The gases built up inside it.)\* If we think a lot about things we wish we had, what do we feel inside?

When we feel envious, it is like shaking the can.

- **If we let envy build up inside us, what sort of messes might we make in our relationships with others?**

### READ

#### A Crime Story from the Bible (1 Kings 21)

- Take out the dress ups (necklace, bags and crown).

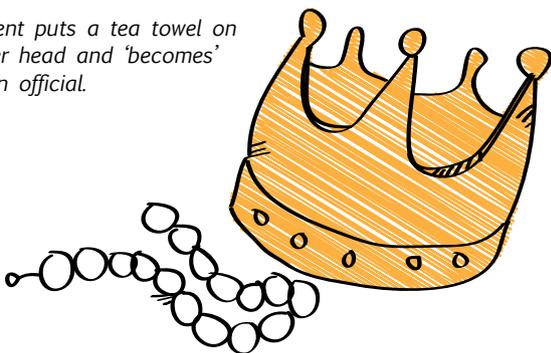
This is a true crime story from a long time ago. And like most murder mysteries, this tale begins with a body.

The man's name was Naboth. He grew grapes for a living. At least that's what he did until he was found dead one day under a pile of rocks outside his hometown of Jezreel.

Perhaps we could be detectives and find out who did it and why...

We would need to find someone who was there to ask questions...

*A parent puts a tea towel on his/her head and 'becomes' a town official.*



“ **Town official:** All right, I confess!! I hired some guy to throw rocks at Naboth and kill him, but it wasn't my fault. It was that Queen Jezebel – she ordered me to do it!

**Narrator:** (to children) Who do you think we should interview now? What about the Queen?

*The parent takes off the tea towel, and places the towel around their shoulders as a robe, puts the necklace on, and speaks in a 'queenly' voice:*

**Narrator:** Did you order Naboth to be killed?

**Queen:** What rubbish! Who do you think you are – taking up my time like this with such trivia. Out of my way! I was just being a good wife to my darling King Ahab. Naboth was like a pesky mosquito – annoying my precious king. Ahab had become so sad he wouldn't even eat the delicious dinners the servants prepared for him! Little do you know – it got so bad he wouldn't even get out of bed. Now out of my way – I have important things to do!

**Narrator:** The only person we haven't interviewed is the king – let's talk to him!

*The parent takes off the tea towel and necklace, puts on the crown, and speaks in a 'kingly' but quieter voice.*

**King:** Don't bother me. I'm working to become the best grape grower in my entire empire. I have a brand new vineyard – the best there is!

**Narrator:** Can you tell us what happened to Naboth?

**King:** It wasn't my fault Naboth died. I wanted to buy his vineyard, but he wouldn't sell it. I would have paid a good price. And I wanted it sooo much! I wanted it! I wanted it!

” *The king leaves stomping his feet!*

WEEK ELEVEN

FAMILY TALK TIME

Questions:

- Right you detectives – what do you think happened to Naboth?
- Who do you think was responsible?

(See what ideas the children come up with.)

Ahab really wanted his neighbour Naboth's vineyard, even though he already had plenty of his own things and didn't need anything more.

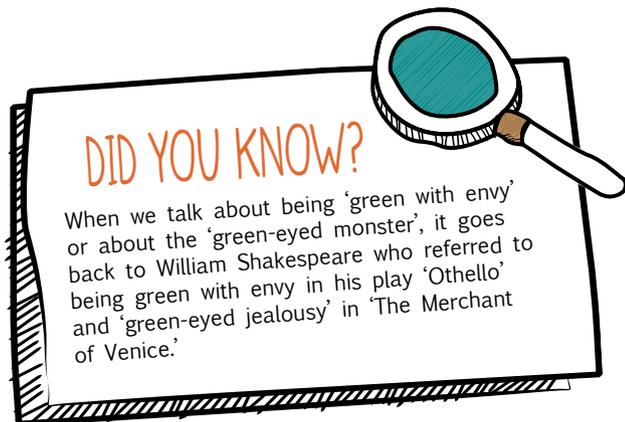
The Queen joined in his envy and made her wicked plan to hire a bunch of people to kill Naboth.

But God knew who was responsible. He sent a prophet called Elijah with a special message. He asked Ahab "Haven't you killed a man and taken over his property? Because you have done this, there will be terrible consequences."

Ahab of course got very upset. Getting what he wanted hadn't made him happy at all. In fact, his envy ended up causing a terrible trouble and a murder.

EXPLORE

God knows that it is not good for us to look at what others have and wish we could have it for ourselves.



He wants us to be content, not envious and unhappy.

- When you want something that someone else has, how does it feel?
- What do you do?

The trouble with letting these feelings build up is that they lead to sin, as they did with king Ahab.

OUT OF THE BOX

Envy

- Take out the bags and give one to each person.
- Invite everyone to open their bags.
- Does everyone have the same number of lollies?
- How does that feel? (Some may feel annoyed or disappointed because they have less. Some may feel bad that they have more.)

Two minutes ago everyone was content and happy.

Now everyone has been given something extra, but not everyone is feeling as content as they were before.

- What happened?
- How could we better share out the lollies?

God gives us so much, and yet we still look sideways to see what the person next to us has. Our attitude makes us feel less content.

We each can learn to live contentedly, knowing there will always be people who have more than us and others who have less.

God's people can always trust God to look after them. St Paul taught us, "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation." Philippians 4:11-12 NIV

“ENVY IS THE ART OF COUNTING THE OTHER FELLOW'S BLESSING INSTEAD OF YOUR OWN.”

- HAROLD COFFIN -

## PRAY

- Have the family join hands and let the youngest lead you in prayer. Ask God to help you be happy with what you have.

## LIVE

This week, encourage all the family to learn the following memory verse:

*“I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.”* – Philippians 4:11

Adults could learn the longer version.



**NOTE TO PARENTS:** If you have older children, you may like to explain that in the interests of simplicity, we have used the words ‘The gasses build up inside’. Actually this is not scientifically accurate. When you shake the can, the carbon dioxide that has been on the surface below the cap is suspended back into the liquid, and the equilibrium is broken.

## OTHER IDEAS

- **Weight of Envy Relay**  
Use two buckets filled with sand or rocks. Run a relay race – first with the sand or rocks, and then without them, to demonstrate how jealousy and anger weigh us down.
- **Make a simple “We are Thankful” chart** for the wall, on which everyone can add things over time which they are thankful for – with words or a drawing. Teaching thankfulness helps to overcome envy.
- **Have a prayer request list and praise list each on a clothes peg.**

As you see prayers answered, transfer the ‘requests’ to the ‘praise’ peg.

**CHECK OUT WHAT YOU NEED FOR NEXT WEEK...**

