Commandment 9: Ahab Covets

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house"

Exodus 20:17; 1 Kings 21:1-21, 27-29

Goal: Students learn about the ninth commandment through the story of king Ahab coveting Naboth's vineyard. Naboth refused to give Ahab his vineyard, so Ahab and Jezebel plotted his death. When Elijah heard about it, he confronted Ahab and told him that he and Jezebel would die.

Process: Choose activities for the 4 parts of the lesson from the chart below. For multi-aged groups, teach the lesson to the entire group and select activities that suit your students. Online Extras provide additional activity choices.

Lesson Overview

Lesson Parts	Activities	Materials Given	Supplies Needed
1. Introduction (2-3 minutes)	All Ages *The Ninth Commandment*	introduction p. 2	
2. Readings & Questions (5-7 minutes)	All Ages Select readings for your group	readings pp. 2-3 questions p. 4 talk-about picture p. 5	Bible for ages 11-14
3. Activities choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes) *Note*: Activity ages are approximate. Choose activities that will work for your group.	Ages 3-6 ***Ahab's Window*** 3D picture	directions p. 6 ***Ahab's Window*** p. 7 ***Naboth's Vineyard*** p. 8	scissors; crayons, colored pencils or markers; stapler
	Ages 7-10 *Ahab and Jezebel Bingo* game	directions p. 9 *Calling Cards* pp. 10-13 The Story of Ahab and **Naboth's Vineyard p. 14** *Bingo Boards* pp. 15-20	scissors; markers to cover bingo squares, e.g. coins, poker chips *or* pencils to mark squares
	Ages 11-14 *Tees on Parade* design a T-shirt	directions p. 21 *Tees on Parade 1 & 2* pp. 22-23	colored pencils or markers; *optional*: string and tape to display **finished shirts on a "clothes line"**
	Ages 3-10 picture to color	*Elijah Talks to Ahab* p. 24	crayons or markers
4. Closing & Recitation (2-3 minutes)	All Ages Wrap-up	*Recitation Slips* p. 25	scissors or paper cutter
Online Extras	All Ages additional activities	online links p. 25	various

© 2021 General Church Education

Introduction: The Ninth Commandment

The ninth commandment is on the second table of the Commandments. The Lord tells us,

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's house. Exodus 20:17

The Lord tells us that we are not to covet things that belong to others. There are many kinds of coveting. For example, we might want a toy, or to take a wonderful vacation, or to have a pool to swim in. We might also covet other people's awards, friendship, talents, or respect.

Coveting is more than just wishing for something another person has. Coveting is wanting something so much that you are willing to break the Ten Commandments to get it. You are willing to hurt another person in some way by stealing or lying. It is important to notice when a wish for something begins to turn into coveting. One way we can do this is to notice how we are thinking about the person who owns what we want and how we feel about them. If we still feel kindly towards them, our desire isn't coveting. But if we start to think mean things about the person or feel angry with them, that is a sign that we are falling into coveting. The Lord wants us to push covetous thoughts away, and not act on what we are thinking or feeling.

Our story today is about king Ahab. Although Ahab had many things, he wanted a vineyard which was next to his palace. The vineyard belonged to Naboth. It was his inheritance from the Lord. Ahab knew that Naboth could not sell it. But he and his wicked wife Jezebel were willing to do terrible things so Ahab could get it. Jezebel called a "fast day". A fast day was a day on which a meeting was called to discuss important problems. Pay attention to how Jezebel set up the meeting.

Reading Ages 3-6: Ahab Covets

This is a short retelling of the story for young children. To tell the story in your own words using a picture, see the talk-about picture on p. 5.

Ahab was the king of Israel. But sadly, he did not love the Lord. Ahab's palace was next to a beautiful vineyard, a place where delicious grapes grew. The vineyard belonged to a man called Naboth. Ahab wanted Naboth's vineyard badly so he could grow vegetables in it. He wanted it so much that he *coveted* it.

Ahab asked Naboth if he could buy the vineyard. But the vineyard was Naboth's inheritance—his gift from the Lord. So he said "No", he could not sell it to Ahab. This made Ahab angry. He went to his room in the palace. He lay on his bed and would not eat. He stared at the wall. When Ahab's wife Jezebel heard what had happened, she went to Ahab. She told him to cheer up and said she would get the vineyard for him.

Jezebel wrote letters saying there would be a fast day. Naboth would sit in front of everyone. Two evil men would sit next to him. They would tell lies about Naboth and say he had done something wrong so they could punish him.

Jezebel's plan worked. The bad men took Naboth out and killed him. When Ahab heard Naboth was dead he cheered up and went to take the vineyard.

But the Lord told the prophet Elijah to warn Ahab that he would lose his kingdom and his family would die because of the terrible thing he had done. When Ahab heard the Lord's message, he tore his clothes. He was sorry. He put on scratchy clothes. So the Lord said that for now, Ahab's family would live.

© 2021 General Church Education

Reading Ages 7-10: Ahab Covets

New Church Concept
Teacher Background

'You are not to covet your neighbor's house, you are not to covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant nor his maidservant, nor his ox nor his ass, nor anything that is your neighbor's.' In the Catechism in general use today this passage is divided into two commandments. One, the ninth, is 'You are not to covet your neighbor's house.' The other, the tenth, is 'You are not to covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant nor his maidservant, nor his ox nor his ass, nor anything that is your neighbor's.' See *True Christian Religion* 325

These two commandments look back to all the preceding ones, and teach and command that evil actions must not be done, nor even longed for. They are therefore not merely for the external person, but also for the internal; for if anyone refrains from evil actions, but still longs to do them, they actually do them. See *True Christian Religion* 326

A retelling of the story for children.

Ahab was king of Israel in the north of Canaan. Many of the kings in the north did not follow the Lord, however the Word tells us that Ahab was even more evil than the other kings. He did what he wanted even when he knew it was wrong.

Ahab's palace was in the Jezreel Valley, which was rich, fertile land. The palace was next to a vineyard owned by a man named Naboth. Ahab wanted the vineyard to grow vegetables. So he asked Naboth if he could have it. He said that he would give Naboth another vineyard or else money. But Naboth's fruitful vineyard was his inheritance from the Lord. The Lord had commanded him not to sell it. So with great courage, he told King Ahab that he could not let him have it.

In his heart Ahab knew Naboth was right, but he did not seem to care. He coveted the vineyard. He angrily went to his room and lay on his bed in a temper. He turned his sullen face to the wall and refused to eat.

When Ahab's wife, Jezebel the queen, heard what had happened, she went to her husband and told him to get up, eat and cheer up. She said she would get the vineyard for him. While Ahab sulked, Jezebel wrote letters to the elders and nobles in the king's name. She told them to proclaim a fast day and invite Naboth to take a high position. Jezebel also told them to seat two evil men next to Naboth. They would falsely accuse him of blasphemy. Jezebel sealed the letters with the king's seal and sent them.

The elders and nobles did as Jezebel asked. Naboth sat at the head of the table. The evil men acted as false witnesses against Naboth, and he was taken out of the city and stoned. Then the elders and nobles told Jezebel that Naboth was dead. When Ahab heard this, he cheered up and went out to claim Naboth's vineyard.

But the Lord told the prophet Elijah to go to Naboth's vineyard to accuse Ahab of this awful act and give him a warning. The Lord's message was: 'Have you murdered and also taken possession?' Elijah told Ahab that not only would he die, but that his family would die too.

When Ahab heard the words of the Lord, he tore his clothes. He showed that he was sorry by putting on clothes made from a scratchy and uncomfortable material called sackcloth. He fasted and mourned. Because Ahab had humbled himself, the Lord told Elijah that Ahab would not lose the kingdom and his family would be not destroyed until after his death.

Reading Ages 11-14: Ahab Covets

Read 1 Kings 21:1-21, 27-29 or use the retelling above.

© 2021 General Church Education

Questions Ages 3-6

1. What did king Ahab want or covet? (He coveted Naboth's vineyard, which was next to his palace.)
2. What is a vineyard? (A place where grapes grow.)
3. How did Ahab feel when Naboth told him that he could not have the vineyard? (He was angry.)
4. How did Ahab handle his feelings? (He went to bed, looked at the wall and would not eat.)
5. Did Ahab get what he wanted? (Yes, but Jezebel did many bad things so he could have it.)
6. What did the Lord tell Elijah to warn Ahab about? (He would lose his kingdom and his family would die.)
7. What did Ahab do then? (He was sorry. He tore his clothes and put on scratchy fabric instead.)

Questions Ages 7-10

1. Where was Naboth's vineyard? (Naboth's vineyard was next to Ahab's palace. He saw it every day.)
2. Why couldn't Naboth sell Ahab the vineyard? (It was his inheritance from the Lord.) The Lord had told the children of Israel they were not to sell their inheritance.
3. What did Ahab do when Naboth said "no"? (He was angry. He stopped doing the useful things he should have done as king, went to bed and would not eat.)
4. How did Jezebel make things worse? (She got Ahab what he wanted, but broke the Ten Commandments.)
5. The Lord told Elijah what Ahab had done. What message did He tell Elijah to bring to Ahab? (Elijah told Ahab that the kingdom would be taken from him and his family would die.)
6. What did Ahab do when he heard this? (He was sorry. He mourned. Because of this, the Lord said that losing his kingdom and his family's death would not happen right away.)

Questions Ages 11-14

1. Do you think the location of Naboth's vineyard made it easier or harder for Ahab to resist coveting it? Is it easier or harder not to covet things we see every day, or that we only see occasionally?
2. Was it wrong of Ahab to wish he could have Naboth's vineyard? What turns wishing for something into coveting it? (While we wish for things others have, coveting is doing or saying things against the Ten Commandments to get what we want.)
3. How did Ahab's anger make the situation worse? (Anger comes from loving evil. In allowing himself to become angry Ahab did not recognize the terrible things Jezebel would do.)
4. The Lord told Elijah, his prophet, what Ahab had done. How does the Lord alert us when we have broken the commandments? (The Lord speaks to us through our conscience, which is formed by true ideas we know from the Word.)
5. How did hearing that he would die change Ahab's behavior? (He humbled himself by tearing his clothes, dressing in sackcloth and refusing to eat.) People acted like this when mourning for someone who died.

© 2021 General Church Education

Talk About It Picture



This illustration is copyright Moody Publishers and can be found at https://freebibleimages.org/illustrations/moody-ahab/.

© 2021 General Church Education

Ages 3-6: Ahab's Window

Materials Needed

A copy of *Ahab's Window* and *Naboth's Vineyard* for each child, crayons or markers, scissors, stapler or tape

Prepare in Advance

Print *Ahab's Window* and *Naboth's Vineyard*. Gather supplies. Depending on the ages of your children, you may wish to cut out the *Ahab's Window* page as described in #s 3 & 4 of the directions before class.

New Church Concept

Teacher Background

"Love of the world is a desire to draw to oneself the wealth of others by any device whatever, to set the heart upon riches, and to permit the world to withdraw and lead one away from spiritual love." *True Christian Religion* 400

While He was in the world the Lord taught the interior doctrines of the church; and these forbid one to long for evil actions. This He taught, so that the internal and external person should make one. This is being born anew, as the Lord said to Nicodemus. No one can be born anew or regenerated, and so become an internal person, except by the Lord's doing. See *True Christian Religion* 326

Ahab saw Naboth's vineyard from his palace and wanted it for himself. Children will create a diorama that shows Ahab lying in his bed, coveting Naboth's vineyard which is visible through the window. Jezebel stands near by, plotting to get the land for Ahab.



1. What did Ahab want? (Naboth's beautiful vineyard)
2. How did Jezebel feel about the vineyard? (She wanted Ahab to be happy and helped him get what he wanted.) She didn't care that it was wrong of Ahab to want it so much, and wrong of her to do the things she did so he could get it.
3. Give each child a copy of *Ahab's Window* and markers or crayons. Color Ahab and Jezebel. Notice how unhappy they both look! We are unhappy when we want things we shouldn't and think about doing bad things to get them.
4. Bend the finished picture of *Ahab's Window* on the dashed line in the middle of the window. Cut out and remove the window along the solid black lines.
5. Trim the sides of *Ahab's Window* along the solid black lines. This will make the window narrower than *Naboth's Vineyard,* but the same height.
6. Give each child a copy of *Naboth's Vineyard.* Staple or tape *Naboth's Vineyard* and *Ahab's Window* together at the sides with the picture of the vineyard shows through the window. Since *Naboth's Vineyard* is wider than *Ahab's Window* it will bow out behind it to create a 3-D effect, allowing the project to stand like a diorama.

New Church Concept

Teacher Background

"In the spiritual sense these commandments forbid all longings which are against the spirit, that is to say, those which oppose the spirituality of the church, which relates chiefly to faith and charity. If these longings were not tamed, the flesh left to its own devices would rush into every crime. For it is well known from the writings of Paul that the longings of the flesh are contrary to the spirit, those of the spirit contrary to the flesh." *True Christian Religion* 327

© 2021 General Church Education

Ahab's Window

Cut along dark line.



Cut along dark line.

© 2021 General Church Education

Naboth's Vineyard



© 2021 General Church Education

Ages 7-10: Ahab and Jezebel Bingo

Materials Needed

Bingo Boards for each student (6 different boards are provided); *Calling Cards and The Story of Ahab and Naboth's Vineyard* for the teacher; bingo markers such as coins, poker chips or pencils to mark off the squares

Prepare in Advance

Print *Bingo Cards* and *Calling Cards.* Cut calling cards apart. Gather bingo square markers.



Note: Many of the illustrations used in this bingo game are copyright Moody Publishers and can be found at https://freebibleimages.org/illustrations/moody-ahab/.

Reinforce the story of Ahab coveting Naboth's vineyard by playing *Ahab and Jezebel Bingo*.



1. Give each student a *Bingo Board*. Encourage students to look through the pictures.
2. Go over the words and discuss what part each picture plays in the story. Use *The Story of Ahab and Naboth's Vineyard* with the highlighted words for help as needed.
3. Give each student enough coins, poker chips, etc. to cover squares as they are called, or a pencil to mark pictures that are called. Start by placing a marker on the center square.
4. Shuffle the *Calling Cards*. Pick up the top card and hold the picture up while calling out the word on the card. Make sure each child can see the card and find the matching picture on their boards. When the matching picture is identified, children will cover the picture using a bingo marker.
5. The player who places five markers in a row first—vertically, horizontally or diagonally—wins!
6. If there is interest, replay, perhaps with a student caller.
7. *Optional*: for small groups, make the game more interesting by giving each student two boards to complete simultaneously.



New Church Concept
Teacher Background

By not coveting a neighbor's house is meant not to covet anyone's goods, which, in general, are possessions and wealth, and not to appropriate them to oneself by evil arts. This lust is of the love of the world. See *Apocalypse Explained* 1021.2

New Church Concept
Teacher Background

There are two loves from which all lusts, like streams from their fountain, spring and perpetually flow. Those loves are called the love of the world and the love of self. Lust is a love continually willing; for what a person loves, this they continually covet. But lusts pertain to the love of evil, whereas desires and affections pertain to the love of good. Now because the love of the world and the love of self are the fountains of all lusts, and all evil lusts are forbidden in these two last precepts, it follows that the ninth precept forbids the lusts flowing from the love of the world, and the tenth precept, the lusts from the love of self. See *Apocalypse Explained* 1021.2

© 2021 General Church Education

You shall not covet











© 2021 General Church Education













© 2021 General Church Education









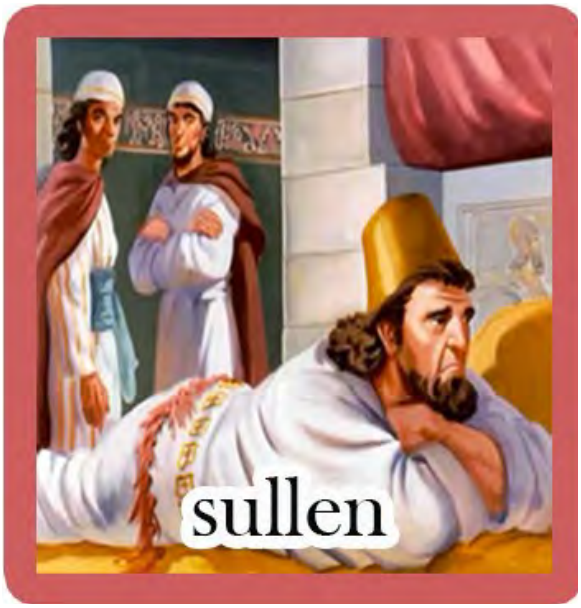




© 2021 General Church Education













© 2021 General Church Education

The Story of Ahab and Naboth's Vineyard

*The ninth commandment tells us, "**You shall not covet** your neighbor's house."*
The story of Ahab and Naboth's Vineyard shows us a picture of how terrible coveting can be.

Ahab was **king** of Israel in the north of Canaan. Many of the kings in the north did not follow the Lord, however the Word tells us that Ahab was even more evil than the other kings. He did what he wanted even when he knew it was wrong.

Ahab's **palace** was in the Jezreel **Valley**, which was rich, fertile land. The palace was next to a **vineyard** owned by a man named **Naboth**. Ahab wanted the vineyard to grow **vegetables**. So he asked Naboth if he could have it. He said that he would give Naboth another vineyard or else **money**. But Naboth's fruitful vineyard was his inheritance from the Lord. The Lord had commanded him not to sell it. So with great courage, he told King Ahab that he could not let him have it.

In his heart Ahab knew Naboth was right, but he did not seem to care. He **coveted** the vineyard. He angrily went to his room and lay on his **bed** in a temper. He turned his **sullen** face to the wall and **refused to eat**.

When Ahab's wife, **Jezebel** the **queen**, heard what had happened, she went to her husband and told him to get up, eat and cheer up. She said she would get the vineyard for him. While Ahab sulked, Jezebel wrote **letters** to the **elders and nobles** in the king's name. She told them to proclaim a fast day and invite Naboth to take a high position. Jezebel also told them to seat two evil men next to Naboth. They would falsely accuse him of blasphemy. Jezebel sealed the letters with the king's **seal** and sent them.

The elders and nobles did as Jezebel asked. Naboth sat at the head of the table. The evil men acted as **false witnesses** against Naboth, and he was taken out of the city and stoned. Then the elders and nobles told Jezebel that Naboth was dead. When Ahab heard this, he cheered up and went out to claim Naboth's vineyard.

But the Lord told the prophet **Elijah** to go to Naboth's vineyard to **accuse** Ahab of this awful act and give him a warning. The Lord's message was: 'Have you **murdered** and also taken possession?' Elijah told Ahab that not only would he die, but that his family would die too.

When Ahab heard the words of the Lord, he tore his clothes. He showed that he was sorry by putting on clothes made from a scratchy and uncomfortable material called **sackcloth**. He fasted and mourned. Because Ahab had **humbled** himself, the Lord told Elijah that Ahab would not lose the kingdom and his family would be not destroyed until after his death.

© 2021 General Church Education

B I N G O



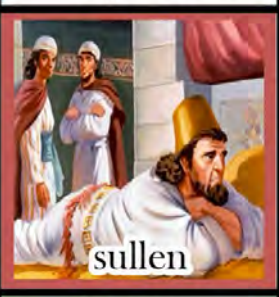
© 2021 General Church Education

B I N G O



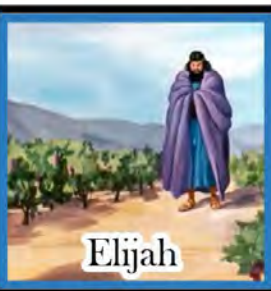
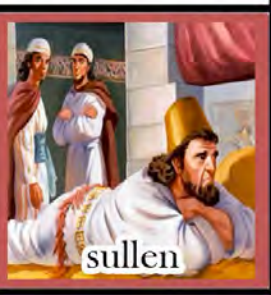
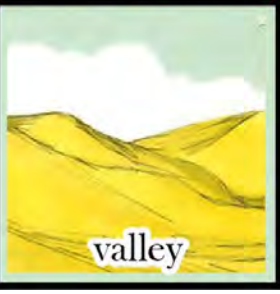
© 2021 General Church Education

B I N G O

 murder	 accuse	 humble	 vineyard	 bed
 elders & nobles	 vegetables	 false witness	 queen	 refused to eat
 palace	 sullen		 sackcloth	 seal
 Jezebel	 covet	 king	 Ahab	You shall not covet
 letter	 Elijah	 Naboth	 valley	 money

© 2021 General Church Education

B I N G O

 vegetables	 elders & nobles	 queen	 Elijah	 bed
 king	 murder	 letter	 refused to eat	 Ahab
 sackcloth	 covet		 Naboth	 palace
 Jezebel	 seal	 sullen	 vineyard	 false witness
You shall not covet	 valley	 humble	 accuse	 money

© 2021 General Church Education

B I N G O

You shall not covet	 seal	 vineyard	 money	 valley
 refused to eat	 vegetables	 Naboth	 Jezebel	 sullen
 bed	 king	★	 humble	 accuse
 Ahab	 elders & nobles	 Elijah	 letter	 sackcloth
 false witness	 palace	 murder	 queen	 covet

© 2021 General Church Education

B I N G O



© 2021 General Church Education

Ages 11-14: Tees on Parade

Materials Needed

copies of *Tees on Parade*, markers or colored pencils

Prepare in Advance

Print *Tees on Parage* pages for each student.

New Church Concept

Teacher Background

'You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male slave nor his female slave, nor his ox nor his ass, nor anything that is your neighbor's' means that one must be on one's guard against self-love and love of the world, and so one must take care to prevent the evils contained in the preceding commandments from becoming present in the will and consequently going out of it. This is clear from the meaning of 'coveting' as a wanting that springs from an evil love. The reason why 'coveting' has this meaning is that all covetousness or craving exists as the result of some kind of love. For nothing is coveted unless there is a love of it, and therefore covetousness extends as a continuation from some kind of love, in this instance from self-love and love of the world. See *Arcana Coelestia* 8910

Images and slogans are great ways to encapsulate big ideas. This activity invites students to transform the ninth commandment, " You shall not covet", into a short slogan and/or a picture to decorate a T-shirt.



1. Advertisers use catchy slogans and fun images to impact our thinking. This is because short statements that are to the point captivate our interest easily and better than long complicated explanations. Such statements are a sometimes referred to as a "call to action".
2. Invite students to brainstorm impactful slogans for the ninth commandment, "You shall not covet". For example, "Curb coveting".
3. Now consider what behaviors the Lord wants us to do instead of coveting. Flip statements to encourage positive behaviors people can do instead of coveting. For example, "Be Thankful".
4. Hand out copies of *Tees on Parade* T-Shirts 1 and 2, pens or pencils. Invite students to design one or more T-shirts that express a call to action about coveting. They can choose whether to frame their slogan as a "you shall not" statement or to transform it into a positive action the Lord wants us to do. Choose compelling language to encourage people to want to obey this commandment.
5. Decorate and illustrate a T-shirt with your chosen slogan.
6. Share your T-shirts with the group and explain your choices.
7. *Optional*: Showcase student's ideas by displaying the T-shirts taped or clipped to a piece of string, like a clothesline.

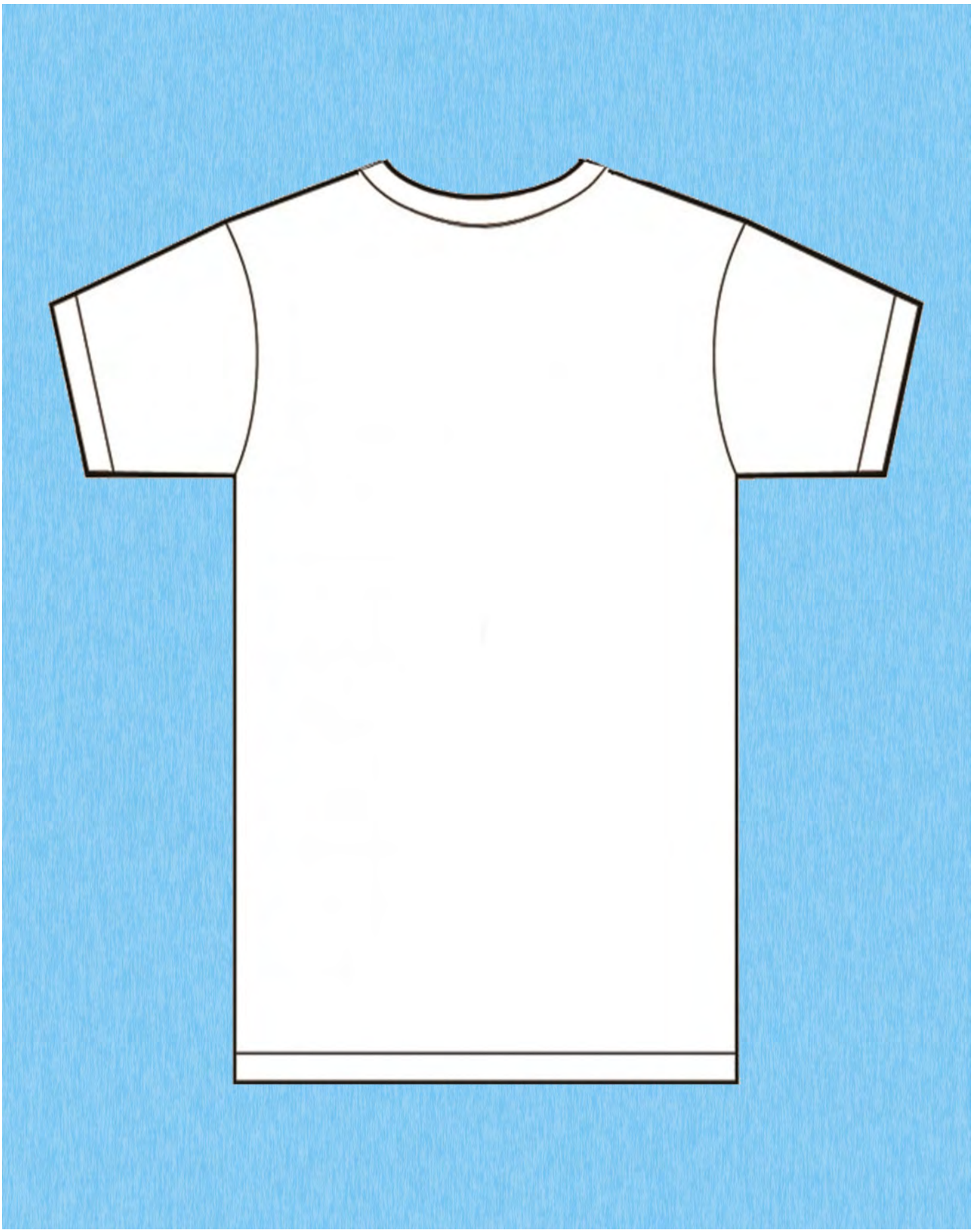
New Church Concept

Teacher Background

It is so to speak the life of what those loves breathe, for what an evil kind of love breathes is called covetousness or craving, whereas what a good kind breathes is called desire. The love itself belongs to one of two parts of the mind, which is called the will; for what a person loves, that they will and intend. but covetousness belongs to both parts, to both the will and the understanding, that is, it is an attribute of the will within the understanding. See *Arcana Coelestia* 8910

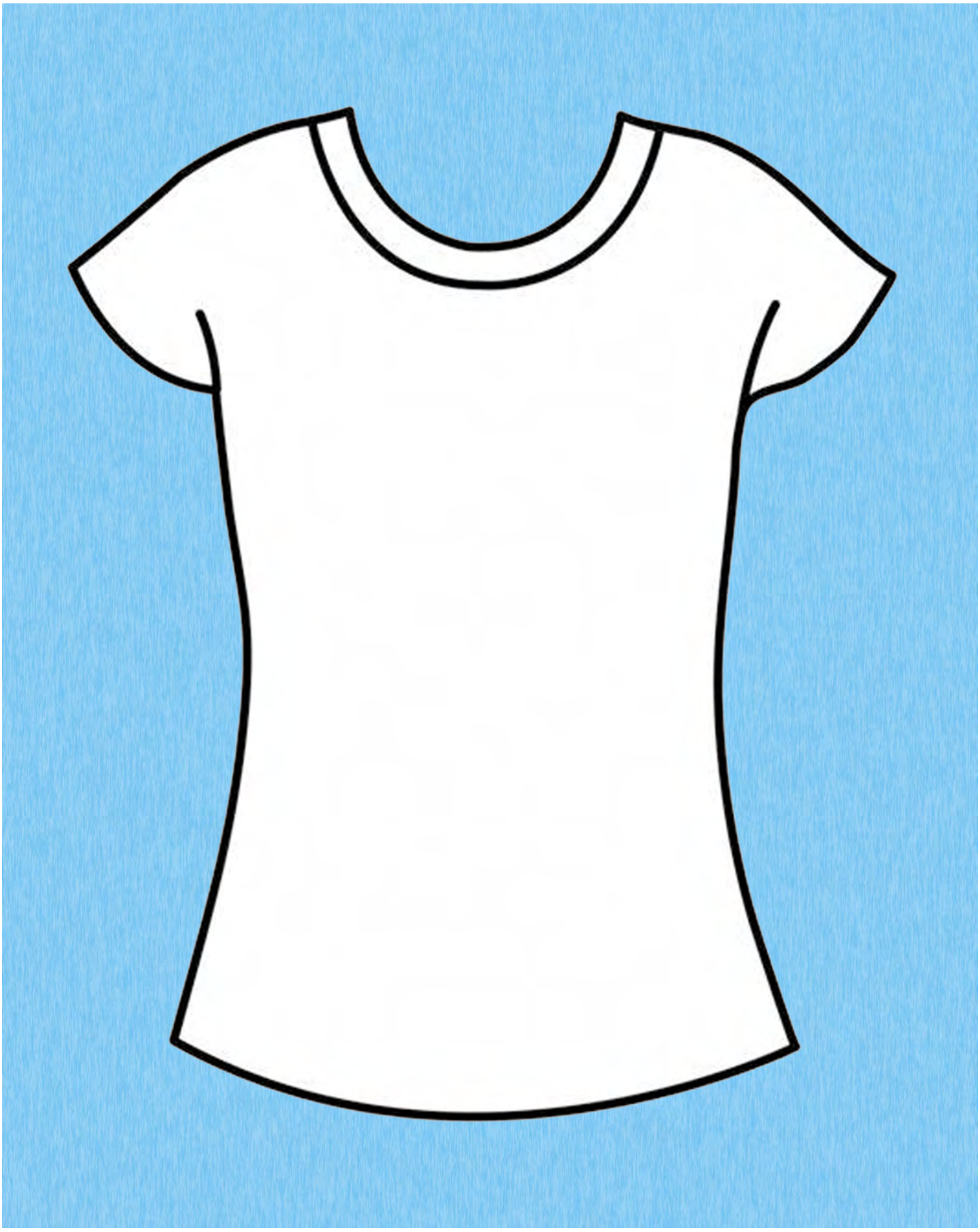
© 2021 General Church Education

Tees on Parade 1



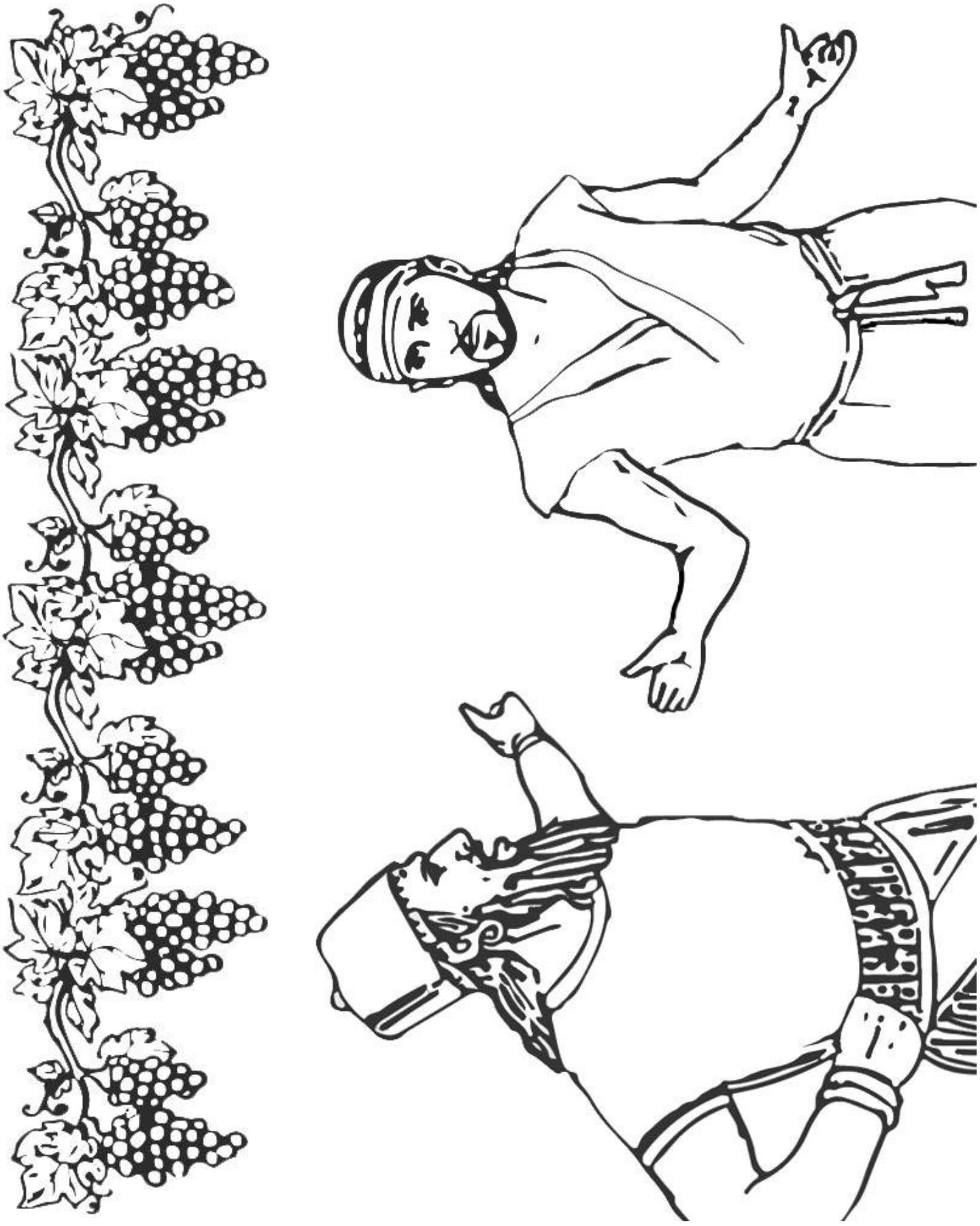
© 2021 General Church Education

Tees on Parade 2



© 2021 General Church Education

Elijah Talks to Ahab



© 2021 General Church Education

Closing & Recitation

The ninth commandment, "You shall not covet your neighbor's house" means we are not to want things that belong to other people, whether they are a physical things, ideas, or even others' gifts from the Lord.

Today we add the ninth commandment to the commandments which we have already learned. You shall not covet your neighbor's house. Let's say it together now. Take home a recitation slip and practice the first nine commandments each day.

The Ten Commandments	The Ten Commandments
1. You shall have no other gods before My face.	1. You shall have no other gods before My face.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.	2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.	3. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
4. Honor your father and your mother.	4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not murder.	5. You shall not murder.
6. You shall not commit adultery.	6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.	7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.	8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your **neighbor's house.**	9. You shall not covet your **neighbor's house.**
Exodus 20:3-17	Exodus 20:3-17

Online Extras

Looking for something "extra"? Try these online ideas!

Ages 3-6 *Take Action: Let's Share* https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/ss-journey-elijah-6a-elijah-confronts-ahab.pdf

Ages 7-10 *Ahab Is Sorry* https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/ss-journey-elijah-6b-elijah-confronts-ahab.pdf

Ages 11-14 *Handling Our Wants* https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/ss-journey-elijah-6c-elijah-confronts-ahab.pdf

© 2021 General Church Education