

Bible Survey



“...to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord...” (Ephesians 3:10-11)

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Lesson One

The Periods of Bible History

I. Eternity

- A. In eternity before time God purposed the salvation of sinful people. - Ephesians 3:8-12
- B. The history of the world, properly viewed, is the story of the development of this plan.
- C. The Bible tells this story until God has brought His plan to perfection through Christ and in His saved people, His church.

II. Creation

- A. In six days the Lord created the universe, including the earth, all living things on earth, and the first man and woman, Adam and Eve.
- B. God created man and woman in His own image. - Genesis 1:27
- C. He gave man dominion over all His creation. - Psalm 8:3-9
- D. He placed Adam and Eve in a beautiful home where they had everything they could properly desire, including direct, intimate communion with God. - Genesis 1:31; 2:8-9; 3:8

III. The Fall

- A. But Adam and Eve sinned, i.e., they violated God's law. - Genesis 2:16-17; 3:6
- B. Death and sorrow resulted. - Genesis 3:16-19
- C. Adam and Eve lost their beautiful home and their intimate companionship with God. - Genesis 3:22-24
- D. All since have likewise sinned. - Romans 5:12
- E. With the curses the Lord gave the first, faint promise of a Savior. - **Genesis 3:15**

IV. Before the Flood

- A. Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel.
- B. Cain killed His brother and became the first murderer.
- C. Adam and Eve had another son, Seth.
- D. Eventually all people except Noah and his family became wicked.

V. The Flood

- A. The Lord destroyed the world of that time by a great Flood that lasted over a year and covered the entire earth.
- B. Noah and his family were the only people saved in the ark.

VI. Mankind Scattered

- A. After the Flood God commanded people to repopulate the earth.
- B. They rebelled and built a great tower as a symbol of unity so they could remain together.
- C. God caused them to speak different languages, so they were scattered across the earth.
- D. All the different kinds of people on the earth descended from the three sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

VII. Fathers

- A. Over time the Lord God appeared to a man named Abram who lived in the Ur of the Chaldees (modern Southern Iraq).
- B. He gave Abram three great promises and told him to leave his home to go to a land He would show him.
- C. These three promises outline the Old Testament and connect the Old to the New. -
Genesis 12:1-3,7
 - 1. Nation
 - 2. Seed
 - 3. Land
- D. These promises, in the form of a covenant, were passed down to Abram's (Abraham) heirs: Isaac and Jacob (Israel).
- E. God sent Jacob's son Joseph into Egypt to preserve Jacob's family, the children of Israel, until it was time for them to inherit the promised land.

VIII. Egyptian Slavery

- A. Over time the Egyptians forgot Joseph and made the Israelites their slaves.
- B. God raised up a deliverer, Moses.
- C. When Pharaoh refused to let Israel go, God sent ten plagues on Egypt to show He is the only true God.
- D. After the tenth plague, the Passover, Pharaoh let Israel go.

IX. Wilderness Wandering

- A. Moses the servant of God led Israel through the Red Sea on dry land and through the desert to Mt. Sinai.
- B. At Mt. Sinai:
 - 1. Moses received from God and gave to Israel the Law, including the Ten Commandments, which became Israel's covenant with God.
 - 2. Moses built the tabernacle by a divine pattern as God's dwelling among Israel and Israel's place of worship.
 - 3. Moses organized Israel's worship based on priests from the tribe of Levi and animal sacrifices.
 - 4. Moses counted their soldiers and organized the nation of Israel as an army.
 - 5. The Nation promise had been fulfilled. - **Deuteronomy 26:5**
 - 6. Israel was to keep the knowledge of God alive until the coming of Christ and was to provide the human lineage through which Christ would come.
- C. Israel set out for Canaan.
- D. They sent twelve men to spy out the land.
- E. Ten of the twelve gave an evil report, and Israel believed them and rebelled.
- F. Therefore, they were condemned to wander forty years in the wilderness until that generation died.
- G. At the end of forty years, the next generation went into Moab.
- H. There Moses repeated to them the Law and exhorted them to keep it.

I. Moses died on Mt. Nebo, and Joshua became leader of Israel.

X. Conquest of Canaan

- A. Israel crossed the flooded Jordan River on dry ground and entered Canaan.
- B. God gave them Jericho.
- C. They conquered the land of Canaan and divided it among the tribes.
- D. The Land Promise was fulfilled. - **Joshua 21:43-45**

XI. Judges

- A. Because Israel disobeyed God and did not drive out the Canaanites, God left them as a thorn in Israel's side.
- B. The generation after Joshua did not know the Lord.
- C. They had no central government to defend the people.
- D. God wanted them to depend on Him as their King.
- E. For four hundred years they went through the oft repeated cycle:
 - 1. Sin (They would turn to idolatry.),
 - 2. Servitude (God would allow an oppressor to conquer them.),
 - 3. Sorrow (They would repent and pray to God.), and
 - 4. Salvation (God would raise up a judge to deliver them.).
- F. God raised up fourteen judges, and one evil man proclaimed himself king.

XII. United Kingdom

A. Saul

- 1. Israel demanded that Samuel, the last judge, make them a king to fight their battles, as the other nations had.
- 2. They were rejecting God as their King.
- 3. God told Samuel to do what Israel wanted, and Saul, the kind of man Israel wanted, the tallest man in Israel, became their first king.
- 4. Saul became proud and rebellious, and God chose a king after His own heart, David.

B. David

- 1. Though David was guilty of great sins, he was a man of great faith.
- 2. God promised that an heir of David would reign forever. - **1 Chronicles 17:11-14**
- 3. David ruled over all the land God promised Abraham. - 2 Samuel 8:3

C. Solomon

- 1. Solomon, David's son, asked God for wisdom, and God made him the wisest and wealthiest man in the world.
- 2. Solomon built a magnificent house for God, the Temple.
- 3. Because Solomon married many foreign wives, who turned his heart from the Lord to idolatry, the Lord determined to take the kingdom from his son but to leave him a remnant to rule.
- 4. We remember Solomon for his wisdom, wealth, women, and works.

XIII. Divided Kingdom

- A. Solomon's son, Rehoboam, foolishly refused to listen to the elders and lighten the people's burdens, and the ten Northern tribes, hereafter called Israel, selected Jeroboam as king.
- B. Israel
 1. Jeroboam corrupted the worship of God in Israel, and every king of Israel followed his sinful example.
 2. Israel had ten dynasties of kings, and all of their kings were evil.
 3. The worst was Ahab, who, along with his Phoenician queen, Jezebel, introduced the horrible worship of Baal in Israel.
 4. God sent Israel great prophets, Elijah and Elisha, but they would not listen.
 5. God sent Jehu, and he killed all who sided with Ahab and destroyed Baal worship, but Jehu kept the calf worship Jeroboam had begun.
 6. God sent other prophets, Jonah, Hosea, and Amos, but, although the Assyrians listened to Jonah, Israel would not hear.
 7. God destroyed Israel by the Assyrians in 721 B.C. and scattered them throughout the Assyrian Empire.
- C. Judah (Southern kingdom)
 1. Judah's kings were of the lineage of David.
 2. Some were good, and some were bad.
 3. King Jehoshaphat was personally righteous, but, because he allied himself with wicked Ahab, the lineage of David, through whom Christ was to come, was almost destroyed.
 4. Under good King Hezekiah, and with the help of the prophets Isaiah and Micah, Judah successfully resisted the Assyrians.
 5. More than any other prophet, Isaiah prophesied of the Messiah (Christ) to come.

XIV. Judah Alone

- A. King Manasseh was even more wicked than the kings of Israel, and through his influence Judah was doomed.
- B. Good King Josiah restored the worship and service of God, but the damage was done.
- C. Neither the kings nor the people would listen to the prophet Jeremiah, and God brought Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, against them.
- D. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem three times - 606 B.C., 597 B.C., and 586 B.C. - and finally destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in 586.

XV. Babylonian Captivity

- A. In fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecies, Judah was taken into Babylonian captivity for seventy years. - Jeremiah 25:11
- B. Ezekiel prophesied to the captives in Chaldea.
- C. Daniel prophesied about the nations and the Kingdom of God in the palace in Babylon.
- D. Daniel prophesied of four great empires: Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman.
- E. During the time of this fourth kingdom, God would establish His kingdom, it would replace all these kingdoms, and it would stand forever.

XVI. Restoration

- A. In further fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecies, in 536 B.C. King Cyrus of Medo-Persia allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem.
- B. A group returned under Zerubbabel in 536 and gradually rebuilt the Temple.
- C. Haggai and Zechariah encouraged them to finish the Temple and to serve the Lord.
- D. A second group returned with Ezra in 458 B.C., and Ezra taught the people how to keep the Law of God.
- E. Esther, a Jewess in Shushan, the capital of Persia, became queen, and God showed He was with His people wherever they went by preserving them through Esther from the attempt by Haman to destroy all Jews.
- E. A third group returned with Nehemiah in 444 B.C., and Nehemiah led them in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.
- F. God completely fulfilled His promise to restore national Israel. - Ezra 2:70
- G. Both the destruction of Israel and their restoration as a nation, all in fulfillment of prophecy, were witnesses to the nations that the Lord alone is God. -Isaiah 46:9-10

XVII. Silence

- A. After the prophet Malachi, there was a four hundred year period of silence during which God did not speak to His people by a prophet. - Amos 8:11
- B. In 331 B.C., Alexander the Great conquered Persia and established the Grecian Empire.
- C. After Alexander's death, his empire was divided between his generals.
- D. Israel was ruled first by the Ptolemies in Egypt then by the Seleucids in Syria.
- E. In 167 B.C. the Maccabees successfully resisted Syrian attempts to destroy the Law and the worship of the Lord and managed to set up an independent Jewish state.
- F. The Romans defeated the Seleucids in 64 B.C., and Palestine became a part of the Roman province of Syria.

XVIII. Life of Christ

- A. God spoke to Zacharias the priest as he ministered in the Temple and promised him a son who would be the promised fore runner of the Messiah.
- B. The years of silence had ended.
- C. Christ was born of the virgin Mary in Bethlehem in fulfillment of prophecy.
- D. He was descended from Abraham and David in fulfillment of prophecy.
- E. The fullness of the time had come. - Galatians 4:4
- F. John, the promised son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, preached that the kingdom was about to be established and called on the Jews to repent.
- G. Jesus Christ went about Palestine, preaching the good news of the coming kingdom, calling on the people to repent, teaching the nature of the kingdom, and working great miracles
- H. Jesus selected and sent out twelve apostles to preach the kingdom to Israel.
- I. In fulfillment of prophecy, the Jews rejected Christ and had Him crucified by the Romans
- J. Also in fulfillment of prophecy, on the third day He arose from the dead and was seen by a number of witnesses.

XIX. Spread of the Gospel

- A. Jesus told His apostles to preach the good news of salvation to the whole world and to teach His disciples to do so as well.
- B. On the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection, the Holy Spirit came on the apostles and gave them the power to bear witness for Christ, to preach the good news of salvation, and to confirm their message by great miracles
- C. The kingdom of God had come.
- D. The church, God's people saved through His Son Christ Jesus, began with the salvation of 3,000 people on Pentecost.
- E. The church grew dramatically.
- F. Peter preached the good news of salvation through Christ to Gentiles.
- G. Paul made three preaching trips to the Gentiles and was sent as a prisoner to Rome.
- H. The disciples fulfilled the Lord's command to take the gospel to the world in just one generation.
- I. The third promise to Abraham, the Seed Promise, has now been fulfilled. - **Galatians 3:8,16**
- J. People of every nation and language may now become the children of God, the children of Abraham, and heirs of the promise. - **Galatians 3:26-29**

XX. Letters to Christians

- A. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John recorded the story of Christ in books to show He is the Christ, the Son of God.
- B. Luke recorded the spread of the gospel by the first generation of disciples.
- C. Paul, James, Peter, John, and Jude wrote letters to Christians, thus leaving a record of the teaching of Christ.

XXI. Victory

- A. John wrote from exile on the island of Patmos to seven congregations in the Roman Province of Asia.
- B. He told of the final defeat of all the enemies of Christ, including Satan, and the victory of Christ and His faithful followers.
- C. John promised that when Christ returns:
 - 1. Paradise will be restored in Heaven,
 - 2. God will once more dwell with His people,
 - 3. We will reign with Him eternally, and
 - 4. Sin, sorrow, and death will be no more.

XXII. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus!

The Periods of Bible History

(Commit them to memory!

(Consult this page until you can say them all without looking.)

- 1. Eternity**
- 2. Creation**
- 3. The Fall**
- 4. Before the Flood**
- 5. The Flood**
- 6. Mankind Scattered**
- 7. Fathers**
- 8. Egyptian Slavery**
- 9. Wilderness Wandering**
- 10. Conquest of Canaan**
- 11. Judges**
- 12. United Kingdom**
- 13. Divided Kingdom**
- 14. Judah Alone**
- 15. Babylonian Captivity**
- 16. Restoration**
- 17. Silence**
- 18. Life of Christ**
- 19. Spread of the Gospel**
- 20. Letters to Christians**
- 21. Victory**

Bible Survey Lesson Two The Divine Plan of the Ages

On July 20, 1969, Neil A. Armstrong, American astronaut, became the first human to set foot on the moon. The plan devised by scientists at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to get him there was truly remarkable for its technical complexity and accuracy and is indeed a monument to the skill of American technology. Yet, the plan that God devised for the salvation of mankind is as much higher in grandeur than the program devised by NASA, or any other human scheme, “as the heavens are higher than the earth” (Isaiah 55:8-9). What is God’s plan of salvation?

God’s scheme of redemption first existed in **purpose** (Ephesians 3:8-12). That purpose was in the mind of God “from the beginning of the world” (verse 9), indeed, it is an “eternal purpose.” (verse 11) Before there even was a man, an earth, moon or universe, in eternity before time, God purposed His plan for our salvation.

God created all things and set the first man and woman in the garden of Eden to keep it. But they sinned and fell. God was forced to bring curses upon them. But even with the curses grace was manifested as God promised that the seed of woman would bruise the serpent’s head (Genesis 3:15). Thus, the scheme entered the state of **promise**.

After many centuries had passed, God appeared to Abram in Ur of the Chaldees, commanded him to depart from there to a country He would show him, and delivered to Abram a grand three part promise (Genesis 12:1-3, 7). The Lord pledged to make Abraham “a great nation” (verse 2), give his descendants the land of Canaan (verse 7), and through him to bless “all the families of the earth.” (verse 3) When Abraham’s descendants, Israel, were in Egypt, God fulfilled the first part of the promise by making them “a nation, great, mighty, and populous.” (Deuteronomy 26:5) Under the leadership of Joshua Israel received in fulness the land of promise, for “All came to pass.” (Joshua 21:43-45) But the spiritual promise, “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed,” remained unfulfilled.

Then the plan entered the stage of **prophecy**, as prophets foretold the coming salvation. For example, Isaiah prophesied of a Savior to come (Isaiah 9:6-7), of a Way of Salvation to be revealed (Isaiah 35:8-9) and of a Realm of Safety to be built (Isaiah 2:2-3).

After more centuries had gone by, John the Baptist came preaching repentance and baptizing in the wilderness of Judea in fulfillment of the prophecy:

Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; Make His paths straight.’ (Mark 1:1-8)

Thus, the plan entered the stage of **preparation**. All things were in readiness. Indeed, *after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand.’ (Mark 1:14-15).*

Even the angels in heaven waited anxiously the revelation of the wonderful plan of the ages

(1 Peter 1:10-12).

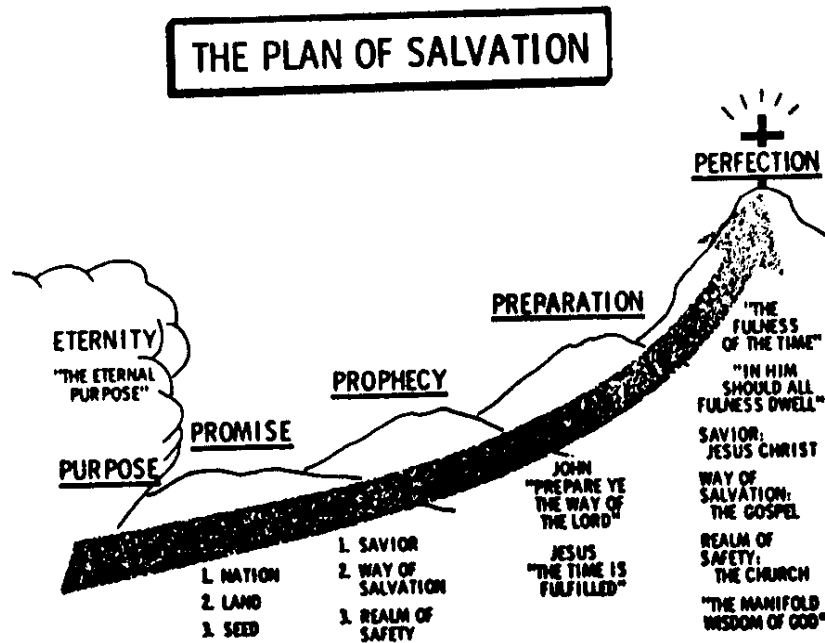
Then, “when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son.” (Galatians 4:4) He was the Savior prophesied before by Isaiah (Luke 1:30-33; 2:11). Salvation is only through Him (Acts 4:10-12). He is the fulness of God’s plan for man (Colossians 1:19). God’s eternal plan of human redemption had entered the phase of **perfection**.

In God’s infinite wisdom, He used whole peoples and nations to prepare the world for “the fulness of the time.” The Romans helped prepare the world by developing a sense of the unity of mankind under universal law and by establishing the *Pax Romana* whereby preachers of the gospel could travel to all parts of the Empire on Roman roads protected by Roman soldiers. The Greeks helped by giving people a common language, *Koine* Greek, in which they could hear the Word and, negatively, by being at a low spiritual ebb, leaving a void for the gospel to fill. The Jews also helped by holding up the one true God to the world, by keeping alive the hopes

of the Messiah, by providing the Old Testament, which paved the way for God’s plan, by giving the pure morals of the Law of Moses, and by providing the synagogue as a place the Gospel could be preached. How glorious “the manifold wisdom of God” is shown to be (Ephesians 3:10).

God also revealed a Way of Salvation, Christ Jesus (John 14:6), by the

Gospel (Romans 1:16). Likewise, He built a Realm of Safety, in Christ (2 Timothy 2:10), His body, the church (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23). At last, In Christ Jesus the Savior, the promise to Abraham, “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed,” is fulfilled (Galatians 3:8, 16). By faith in Christ and through baptism all people can become “Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Galatians 3:26-29) Indeed, the Way of Salvation is open to you; you are invited to enter the Realm of Safety (Revelation 22:17). Will you come?



Study Questions

Define the following terms:

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Purpose | 7. Preparation |
| 2. Eternal | 8. The Fulness of the Time |
| 3. Seed of Woman | 9. Perfection |
| 4. Bruise the Serpent's Head | 10. Pax Romana |
| 5. Promise | 11. Koine Greek |
| 6. Prophecy | 12. Messiah |

Short Answer:

1. How much greater is God's plan for human salvation than any man-made plan?
2. What three promises did God make to Abraham?
3. Of what three things did Isaiah prophesy?
4. What part did John the Baptist play in the scheme of redemption?
5. What was Jesus Christ's role in God's plan for human salvation?
6. How did the Greeks help prepare the world for "the fulness of the time?"
7. How did the Jews help prepare the world for "the fulness of the time?"
8. How did the Romans help prepare the world for "the fulness of the time?"

Fill in the Blanks

God's Plan for Human Salvation

Stage 1: Purpose

Stage 2: _____ (Nation, _____, Seed)

Stage 3: Prophecy(Savior, _____, Realm of Safety)

Stage 4: _____

Stage 5: Perfection

Lesson Three

The Greatest Book in the World

If ever there were a people endangered of being buried alive beneath the mass of their own writings, it is we Americans. We are today overwhelmed by an almost infinite number of books about an almost unlimited variety of subjects. The Library of Congress, the world's largest library, contains more than 29 million books, and this number grows daily. One is reminded, "of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh." (Ecclesiastes 12:12)

This is a book report. But the volume I am to describe is completely unique in all history. This one book has had more influence on men and has done more good for mankind than the totality of all other volumes ever recorded. I want to introduce to you the greatest book in the world.

Who wrote this wonderful book? Approximately forty men over a period of around 1550 years, from Moses in ca. 1500 - 1450 B.C. to John in A.D. 64-96, took part in writing "the Book." These men not only lived in various times, they came from exceedingly different walks of life - a great deliverer and lawgiver, a shepherd-warrior-king, a priest, a wise and wealthy king, a statesman, a herdsman, a fisherman, a medical doctor, a tax collector, a lawyer, and so on.

What is "the Book" about? The authors wrote about many different subjects, such as law, history, love stories, poetry, prophecy of the future, biography, evidences, conditions of churches, advice on how to live, and so forth.

Yet these men all wrote with perfect harmony and unity. Impossible? If they had written without divine aid, yes. For example, do you think ten men today, from the same profession and period of time, all writing separately about just one subject, would agree on every detail? What about forty men from various walks of life and separate times, writing about a wide assortment of subjects? Such "unity in diversity" is possible with this great "Book of books," the Bible, because God is its ultimate author.

The Bible was written by inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16-17). "Inspiration" is from a Greek word, "theopneustos," meaning "God-breathed."

This means the Bible is the Word of God.

Also, this great volume was given by revelation (Ephesians 3:1-7). A revelation is an "unveiling" or "uncovering." The Gospel was a mystery, that is, "a hidden purpose or counsel" (J.H. Thayer, **A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament**. 420). But the Holy Spirit uncovered the mystery to the apostles and prophets, who in turn wrote it down for

Inspiration (Theopneustos)
Theos (God) + pneustos (breathed) = "God breathed"



us to read and understand. Every word of this original revelation was God-given (1 Corinthians 2:9-13).

Furthermore, the Bible was given by prophecy (2 Peter 1:19-21). When God commanded Moses and Aaron to go to Pharaoh, Aaron was to be “as a mouth,” that is a

PROPHECY

MOSES (“as God”)	AARON (“as a mouth”)
MOSES (“as God”)	AARON (“a prophet”)

“spokesman” for Moses, whereas Moses was to be “as God” to Aaron (Exodus 4:15-16). When the command was repeated, Aaron was called a “prophet,” while Moses was “as God.” (Exodus 7:1-2) Thus, the prophets of God, who wrote the Bible, were God’s mouths or spokesmen.

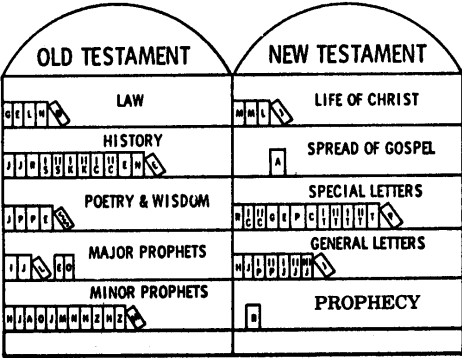
The Book of God is divided into two great categories: the Old Testament and the New Testament (Hebrews 9:15). The Old Testament consists of thirty-nine separate

books which may be placed into five categories: law, history, poetry & wisdom, major prophets and minor prophets. The New Testament is composed of twenty-seven books which may also be divided into five categories: life of Christ, spread of the Gospel, special letters, general letters and prophecy.

But, despite the extreme diversity of this “divine library,” it has a steel cable of unity tying it all together. God’s twofold physical promise to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3, 7), that his seed should become a great nation and inherit the land of Canaan, provides the outline for the Old Testament, while the spiritual part of that promise, “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Genesis 12:3), completes the Old Testament and ties it to the New Testament.

This grand promise also helps introduce the very theme of the Bible. In Christ we “are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Galatians 3:26-29) Jesus Christ, the fullness of God’s plan to save the world, is the theme of the Bible (Colossians 1:19). Christ is

THE DIVINE LIBRARY



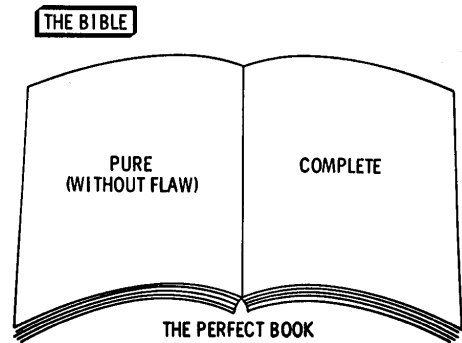
the great Keynote of God's beautiful Song of Redemption, and every note in the song is in perfect harmony with that Keynote.

How good is this book? It is the one perfect book in all the world (Psalm 19:7), for the Bible is absolutely pure, or flawless (Psalm 119:140) and is absolutely complete (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is the only book which has the power to save your soul (Romans 1:16; James 1:21). Nor has that power lessened over the centuries (1 Peter 1:22-25). This great book of God stands as the unbreakable anvil that can withstand all the hammer blows of unbelievers. As John Clifford so beautifully penned in his poem, "The Hammer and The Anvil":

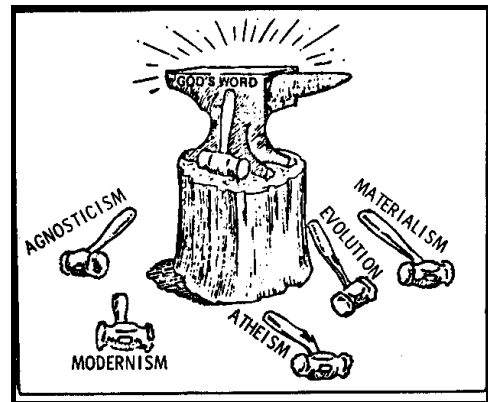
*Last eve I passed a blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime,
When, looking in, I saw upon the floor
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.*

*'How many anvils have you had,' said I
'To wear and batter all these hammers so?'
'Just one,' said he, then said with twinkling
eye
'The anvil wears the hammers out you
know.'*

*And so, I thought, the anvil of God's word
For ages skeptics blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was
heard,
The anvil is unharmed—the hammers gone!*



Will you not make this marvelous book, the Bible, your rule of life and guide to Heaven?



Study Questions

I. Define the following terms:

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. Inspiration | 4. Prophecy |
| 2. Revelation | 5. Old Testament |
| 3. Mystery | 6. New Testament |

II. Short Answer:

1. About how many men helped write the Bible?
2. Who is the ultimate author of the Bible?
3. What are the two great divisions of the Bible?
4. What is the keynote of the Bible?
5. How many books are there in the Old Testament?
6. How many books are there in the New Testament?
7. How good is the Bible?

III. Fill in the Blanks:

Five Divisions of the Old Testament	Five Divisions of the New Testament
Law	_____
_____	Spread of Gospel
Poetry & Wisdom	Special Letters
_____	_____
Minor Prophets	_____

IV. Recite in Class:

the periods of Bible history

Lesson Four

Creation

Genesis chapters 1 and 2

Genesis chapters one and two contain the divine account of creation, the true story of how all the material universe began. Genesis 1:1 - 2:3 tell us the order of creation. Genesis 2:4-24 gives the details of the sixth day that pertain specifically to mankind. The first chapter tells of the creation of all things. The second chapter tells of the creation of man and his original home and the beginning of the family.

Unbelievers consider this account to be a myth,. But Christ and the apostles treated the creation account as sober history (e.g., Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 2 Peter 3:5). The creation account of Genesis chapters one and two is the only written record in existence that relates how all things began by the One Who actually made the universe. It is the foundation on which the rest of the Bible is built. At this point either faith comes to rest or unbelief begins.

It is not the purpose of this lesson to give a defense of creation as opposed to evolution. There are many good books and web sites which do this.

But It is important that we understand that true science does not uphold the general theory of evolution and does not contradict the Bible account of creation. The God who made the world is the same God who gave us the Bible. The world is the first and general revelation of God to man (Romans 1:18-21); the Bible is the second, special, complete, and final revelation (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Corinthians 2:9-13; Galatians 1:6-9). From the world we can know there is a God; from the Bible we know His will for us and His plan for our salvation.

How long did creation take? Of course evolutionists teach that the universe and the earth are billions of years old and that it took hundreds of millions of years for life to begin, evolve into the various kinds of plants and animals, and for mankind to arrive. Many people try to accept both the Bible and evolution. They try to find a way to make the six day creation of Genesis one fit the billions of years evolutionists demand.

Some say there is a time gap between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2 of billions of years in which one world evolved and was destroyed because of mankind's wickedness. They claim this is where fossils came from.

Others claim the days of Genesis one are figurative days each covering hundreds of millions of years. Thus, they assert the six days refer to six eons.

A more recent assertion is that, although the six days are literal twenty-four hour days, each day is separated by millions of years. Thus, they suggest God did create everything in six literal days scattered over a vast time period.

The first thing that should strike us about each of these positions is that people do not take them because of evidence from the Scriptures but because they want to harmonize the Bible with the basic premise of atheistic evolutionists, that the universe is billions of years old. Evolutionists must have enormous amounts of time for the gradual changes in which they believe to take place. Thus, people who assert there are millions or billions of years in Genesis one are allowing human philosophy to determine what they believe the Bible means.

This is not faith in God and His Word but is trust in man and his philosophy (1 Corinthians 1:18-29; Colossians 2:8-10).

Furthermore, none of these theories about Genesis one can be reconciled with the Bible account. The writer of Genesis, Moses, paralleled the creation week with all other weeks (Exodus 20:11). If the creation week covers six eons, so do our weeks. If the seventh day of the creation week is a vast period of time, so was the Jewish Sabbath.

Here are some simple reasons the days of Genesis chapter one have to be six literal days in a literal seven day week. God created vegetation the third day, but He made the sun on the fourth day. How did plants grow on the earth without the sun for millions of years? The word “day” is never used in a figurative sense in the Old Testament in a numbered sequence (“first day,” “second day,” etc.). Each day of creation had an “evening” and a “morning.” The Jewish day begins at sundown. Jesus stated that man and woman have existed “from the beginning of creation” (Mark 10:6). But if the creation week was billions of years long, humans didn’t exist until billions of years after creation began.

After six days God ceased His work of creation (Genesis 2:1-3). If evolution is true, that creative work continues even now.

God pronounced His creation to be “very good” (Genesis 1:31). According to theistic evolution, the law of the jungle, the survival of the fittest, kill or be killed, eat or be eaten, is very good. No, this principle of nature is the result of sin, not the basis of the “very good” world God created.

It is crucial to our salvation to reject theistic evolution and to accept the Genesis account of creation as literal fact. We must not only believe in God; we must also believe His Word (John 12:48).

According to evolution, people are just apes who grew bigger brains and lost most of their body hair. One evolutionist wrote a book about mankind entitled “**The Naked Ape.**” According to Genesis, God made both the man and the woman “in His own image” (Genesis 1:27). The difference between evolution and creation is the difference between a naked ape and a child of God.

If we’re just animals who happen to walk on two legs and have bigger brains, why should we have any higher moral standards than any other animal? Why not obey the law of the jungle, kill or be killed? Why not mate whenever and with whomever we feel like? Since most people accept evolution as a proven fact, is it any wonder that their morals, or the lack thereof, are like jungle animals?

If evolution is true, the family relationship just evolved over time, and we can change it any way we want. But according to the Bible, God started marriage, and we must order our families in the way He commands (Matthew 19:4-6).

In Genesis chapters one and two, the inspired account of creation, the Lord God the Creator tells us how the universe, the earth, life, all the kinds of life, people, and the family began. God spoke all the material universe and all kinds of living things, including mankind, into existence. He made the first people a perfect home in which they had everything they could properly desire. He gave them a simple law to obey. He gave them the marriage relationship made up of one man and one woman united for life as the closest of all earthly ties and the perfect relationship for happiness on earth. Indeed, “All creation was good.”

Activities

I. Here are the definitions of key words in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

1. myth: a legendary story by ancient people which attempts to explain natural occurrences they do not understand
2. History: the written record of the past
3. Science: knowledge gained by observation and experimentation
4. Eon: a vast period of time
5. Evolution: the belief that all the universe, including people, came about by purely natural causes by gradual changes over a huge amount of time
6. Atheistic Evolution: the belief there is no God and that evolution explains how all things got here and how all things operate
7. Theistic Evolution: the belief that all things came about by evolution under God's control
8. Philosophy: human systems of thought and belief
9. Theory: an explanation arrived at by human reasoning rather than by divine revelation

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. what was created on each of the six days of creation
5. the first five books of the Bible in order

III. Genesis chapters one and two tell how the following things began.

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

IV. Discussion Questions

1. Is the creation account history or myth?
2. Do the Bible and science contradict each other?
3. How long did creation take? (Discuss the various explanations.)
4. Why is the debate over creation or evolution important?

Lesson Five

The Fall

Genesis chapters 2 and 3

Since God pronounced His creation to be “very good” at the end of the sixth day, and since the first people lived in a beautiful home where they knew no death, disease, pain, or sorrow, how did the world get to be so full of pain, evil, and death? Genesis chapter three, the story of the Fall, tells how all these evil things began. But, in tribute to the grace of God, the chapter also introduces the story that will be told in the remainder of the Bible, the unfolding over the ages of the divine plan for our salvation.

Satan, the great deceiver of man, slanderer of both God and man, and ruler of the spiritual hosts of evil, is present and ready to begin his evil work of leading men to sin when the story begins. The Bible does not tell us where he came from, and it is vain and sinful to speculate (Deuteronomy 29:29).

Satan came to Eve through a serpent (cf. Revelation 12:9; 20:2). He tempted her to do the only thing God had forbidden, to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-5). To prepare her to succumb to temptation, the devil made it appear that God’s law was harsh, whereas in reality Adam and Eve were lavishly blessed. He caused Eve to doubt the goodness of God (Genesis 3:1-3).

He turned God’s true warning of death into the lie of false security by adding just one three letter word, “not,” to the divine decree (Genesis 2:17; 3:4). He became the originator of lies and death (John 8:44).

Then he tempted her through the lust of the flesh (“the woman saw that the tree was good for food”), the lust of the eyes (“that it was pleasant to the eyes”), and the pride of life (“a tree desirable to make one wise”) (Genesis 3:7). Satan tempts us to sin in the same three ways (1 John 2:15-17).

Eve took the lead, although she was created to be man’s helper, and gave of the forbidden fruit to Adam. Whereas Satan deceived Eve, Adam saw through the deception but sinned anyway (2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:14).

Immediately Adam and Eve received the wisdom they sought and Satan promised, but it was not the blessing they thought it would be. With the knowledge of good and evil came the fear and shame that sin brings.

Both the man and the woman tried to shift the blame to someone else. In essence, Adam blamed God.

Sin brings a curse. The serpent, Satan’s tool, was reduced to a contemptible creature. Woman was condemned to painful, difficult, dangerous childbirth and to submission to her husband. The man, who was to rule God’s creation (Genesis 1:26), was condemned to eke out a difficult living from an unruly world.

The decree of physical death, along with the pain and suffering that precede it, entered the world.

Adam and Eve were cast from their beautiful home and lost the close communion with God they had enjoyed. Thus, just as God threatened, they died that very day. Being separated from God, they died spiritually.

Adam and Eve passed on physical death to all their offspring, the human race, because of their separation from the tree of life. But the guilt of sin and the spiritual death it brings is not inherited, but we each are accountable for our own sins (Ezekiel 18:20; Romans 5:12).

But, even as we read the horrible results of sin entering the world, we are introduced to the grace of the loving Lord God. The first faint promise of a Savior accompanies the curse of sin. The seed of woman, Christ, will one day destroy the power of the serpent, Satan (Genesis 3:15).

The remainder of the Bible unfolds the story of the development of this divine purpose brought to perfection in Christ. Therefore, the story of the Bible can be summarized thus: Christ is coming; Christ has come; Christ is coming again.

Activities

I. Here are the definitions of key words in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

1. lust of the flesh: sinful desires that arise from within our flesh
2. lust of the eyes: sinful desires that come through our senses
3. the pride of life: thinking more of ourselves than we should
4. temptation: enticement to sin
5. physical death: the result of the separation of the spirit from the body
6. spiritual death: the result of the separation of the spirit from God
7. the seed of woman: one born of a virgin, Jesus Christ

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. the first ten books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation

III. Discussion Questions

1. What is the role of Satan?
2. Explain the process that leads to sin (cf. James 1:13-15).
3. What are the results of sin?
4. How did sin change the world?
5. How did the sin of Adam and Eve affect each of us?
6. Explain Genesis 3:15.

IV. Chief Characters (Be able to tell the story of each.)
Adam and Eve

V. For Deeper Study

1. What kind of fruit was the forbidden fruit?
2. How did the temptations of Jesus compare to that of Eve? (Matthew 4:1-11)
3. Why did Jesus overcome His temptations, whereas Eve did not?



Lesson Six Before the Flood Genesis chapters 4 and 5

Genesis chapters four and five tell of the period before the great Flood and trace the genealogy of mankind from Adam to Noah.

Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel. They offered sacrifices to God, and God approved Abel and his sacrifice, but rejected Cain and his. Cain became angry, and, despite the Lord God's warning, murdered his brother Abel. The Lord drove Cain away to the East.

The remainder of Genesis chapter four gives the genealogy of Cain. His descendants made a number of inventions.

In direct contradiction to the bias of evolutionists, this demonstrates that early people were quite intelligent. Adam could communicate with God and gave an appropriate name to each kind of animal. Cain and Abel built fires for offerings. Cain was a farmer, and Abel was a shepherd.

Adam and Eve had another son named Seth. Genesis chapter five gives the lineage from Adam to Noah through Seth. Noah was a descendant of Seth, so all people today are descended from Seth.

It is not possible to harmonize the immense number of years evolutionists contend people have been on the earth with the genealogy of Genesis chapter five (repeated in 1 Chronicles 1:1-4 and Luke 3:36-38). Remember, secular science and ancient history books give these huge numbers because they are written by evolutionists, and evolutionists need these immense numbers of years for evolution to work. They do not give enormous numbers of years because evidence demands them.

It is remarkable to us how long the people lived before the Flood. Men lived to be almost a thousand years old. There is biblical evidence that conditions on earth were better suited for long life before the Flood than after.



Activities

I. Here is the definition of the key word in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

Genealogy: record of the descent of a person or family from ancestor to ancestor

II. Fact Questions: Name the Man

1. first farmer
2. first shepherd
3. first polygamist
4. first city dweller
5. first nomad
6. inventor of musical instruments
7. first metal worker
8. man who lived the longest (and his age)
9. man who never died

III. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. the first fifteen books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation

IV. Discussion Questions:

1. Why did God accept Abel and his offering but reject Cain and His? (Genesis 4:3-4; Hebrews 11:4; Romans 10:17; John 4:23-24)
2. Explain the second part of Genesis 4:26.

V. Key People: Tell the story of each of these people and what we can learn from him.

- A. Cain
- B. Abel
- C. Lamech
- D. Enoch (cf. Hebrews 11:5)

Lesson Seven

The Flood

Genesis chapters 6 - 9

Many years went by after Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden of Eden. As the earth became more populated, there were both good people and bad. But something terrible happened that resulted in all people becoming wicked. The sons of good people chose wives from the daughters of wicked people simply because of their beauty. People became so wicked that God decided to give mankind 120 years to repent, or he would destroy them.



At this time there were “well-known men of great stature, physical force, and violent will, who were enabled by these qualities to claim and secure the supremacy over their fellow-men” (Albert Barnes). All mankind had become wicked, and they only thought about evil things, and that continually. It was such a terrible situation God was sorry He had even made man. So the holy God in all justice decided to destroy all people from the earth along with all the air breathing animals.

Two words describe the way men lived then: “corrupt” and “violent.” No one was safe. That’s the way all people became before the Flood, and that’s the reason the righteous Lord God destroyed them.

But Noah was the one man in all the earth who found favor (grace) with God. Despite living in such a wicked generation, Noah was “perfect,” he had the complete character the Lord desires of us, and he “walked with God,” that is, he lived his life in fellowship with God. Noah preached to these wicked people for 120 years, but only his wife, their three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their wives listened.

God told Noah He was going to destroy all the people and animals on the earth. He said He would make it rain forty days and forty nights and cause a great Flood over the whole earth.

The Lord God made a covenant with Noah and his family. He commanded him to build an ark 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. Noah believed God and built the ark exactly the way God commanded. This was the biggest boat ever built before the twentieth century. It had over 1,500,000 cubic feet of cargo space, the size of 500 single deck cattle cars.

God caused a pair, male and female, of every kind of unclean animal and seven, males and females and one extra, of every kind of clean animal to come to Noah. He directed Noah to gather food for his family and all these animals.

Noah did everything exactly the way God commanded. Thus, he was righteous before God.

God Himself closed up Noah and his family in the ark. The Lord both caused it to rain forty days and nights and broke up all the sources of water beneath the earth. This miracle of God was the greatest calamity ever to occur. It changed all the geology of the earth. Creation

and the Flood rather than billions of years of evolution account for the geological record.

The inspired writer Moses makes it very clear that this Flood covered the entire world. Rain fell continuously for forty days and nights. All the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. The water rose over 20 feet above the tops of the highest mountains. The waters continued at this depth over the whole earth for six months. Then the waters began to subside, and 17 days later the ark rested on the top of Mt. Ararat, which is over 16,000 feet high. After ten months Noah and his family could see the tops of the mountains.



Noah first sent out a raven then a dove to test if the water had subsided. After one year and ten days the earth was dried, and God told Noah and his family to leave the ark with all the animals.

The first thing Noah and his family did after leaving the ark was to build an altar and offer sacrifices of each clean animal to the Lord. This pleased the Lord, and He decided never again to destroy the world by water. As long as the earth lasts, the seasons will continue as they are.

At this time God blessed Noah and his sons. He told them to multiply and fill the earth, just as He had told Adam and Eve in the beginning. For the first time the Lord allowed people to eat meat. But the Lord God wanted them to remember that life belongs to God. So he told them not to eat blood. He also commanded that anyone who murders another person is to be put to death.

Then the Lord God established a beautiful covenant with all people and land animals. He promised never again to destroy the world by water. As a sign of this covenant He placed the rainbow in the cloud. Every time we see a rainbow, the faithful Lord God is showing us He will never again destroy the world by water.

Some time afterward, Noah sinned by getting drunk and laying naked in his tent. Ham saw his father and told his brothers. Shem and Japheth showed proper respect for their father by walking in backward so they would not see Noah and covering him. When Noah awoke, he blessed Shem and Japheth and placed a curse on Canaan, the son of Ham, to be their servant.

All people who live on the earth are descended from Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Activities

I. Here are the definitions of key words and phrases in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

1. corrupt - morally ruined
2. violent - forcefully doing wrong to others
3. perfect - blameless, having the complete character God desires
4. walked with God - lived in fellowship with God
5. ark - box
6. unclean animals - animals that Israelites could not eat under the law of Moses

7. clean animals - animals that Israelites could eat under the law of Moses
8. righteous - right before divine law, accepted by God
9. geology - the structure of the earth, including the layers of rocks beneath the ground
10. geological record - the layers of rocks beneath the ground and the fossils they contain
11. altar - a place to offer slain animals as sacrifices
12. sign - reminder and guarantee
13. cursed - condemned

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. the first twenty books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation

III. Discussion Questions

1. Why did God destroy the world?
2. Why was Noah righteous?
3. How big was the ark?
4. How big was the Flood?
5. How was the world different after the Flood?
6. How do we know God will never again destroy the world by water?

IV. Class Report

One young person should tell the story of Noah to the class. The sources of information are Genesis chapters 6-9; Hebrews 11:7; and 2 Peter 2:5. Other young people should suggest corrections or additions to the story.

V. Place these Bible characters in proper time order.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____

Abel
Adam
Cain
Enoch
Eve
Ham
Japheth
Lamech
Noah
Seth
Shem

Lesson Six

Mankind Scattered

Genesis chapters 10 - 11

Remember that the purpose of the Bible is to show us how to be saved from our sins and to go to live with God in heaven in eternity. To do this, the Lord inspired Moses to give us a brief history of all mankind up to the time of Abraham, at which point he narrows the story to the descendants of Abraham and only tells about other peoples as they had an impact on Abraham's family. We will see that God chose to bring the Savior, His Son Jesus Christ, into the world through Abraham.

Genesis chapters ten and eleven give us the historical background for Abraham. They contain a very brief outline of the history of mankind from Noah to Abraham.

It is very interesting that, in giving this short overview, Moses leaves the only record we have of where the various kinds of people and the different languages people use came from. Why is it that there are so many different kinds of people with such a wide variety of languages? Let's find out.

Noah had three sons - Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Each of them had sons. As these families left the high country around Mt. Ararat in modern Eastern Turkey, they traveled south to the plain in the land of Shinar, in the Southern part of modern Iraq, between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.

God had commanded Noah and his sons to repopulate the earth. But the people of this time wanted to stay together. They began to build a great tower that could be the monument to keep them united.

But the Lord frustrated their rebellious plan. He caused them to begin speaking different languages. They couldn't understand each other, so, just as people do today, they gathered in groups according to language. They called the place where the tower was located "Babel," which means "confusion."

Apparently each group was also descended from a common father. They began to travel out from Shinar to the other places around and eventually into all parts of the world.

Generally speaking, the descendants of Japheth traveled to the north. They are the people the rest of the Old Testament deals with the least.

Eventually Ham's family traveled west and south. The descendants of Canaan, Ham's son whom Noah cursed, settled along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, including Palestine. Other descendants of Ham traveled to Southern Arabia or Africa.

The family of Shem over time settled closest to Mesopotamia, the general name for the land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, the heart of the present nation of Iraq. They are the ones the Old Testament deals with the most. Thus, most Old Testament peoples are Semitic, meaning they descended from Shem.

From the line of Arphaxad, one of the sons of Shem, eventually a man named Terah was born. He became the father of Abraham, from whom Jesus Christ descended.

We learn from Genesis chapters ten and eleven where all the different kinds of people on the earth originally came from and how all the many languages got started. But, though this is fascinating and important, we learn something much more important from these chapters.

We learn that every person on earth, regardless of language, skin color, facial features, body build, or culture, came from one common set of parents, Noah and his wife (and ultimately Adam and Eve). As the apostle Paul stated of God, “And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth” (Acts 17:26). Despite all our differences, we are all basically the same. You and I are kinfolks, and so are all people on the earth.

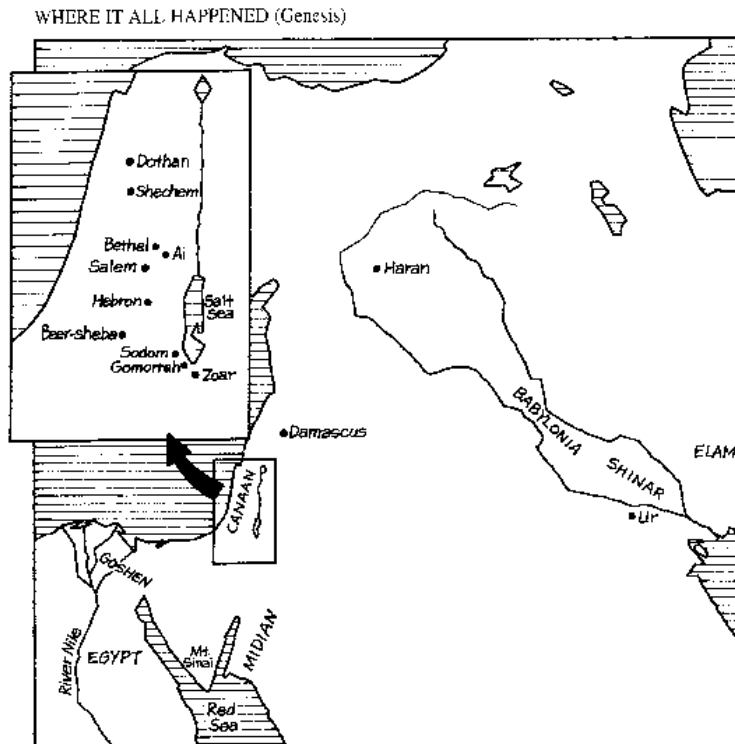
Activities

I. Here are the definitions of key words and phrases in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

1. history - the record of the past
2. Babel - confusion
3. Mesopotamia - the land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers
4. Semitic - descended from Shem

II. Map Work: Locate all these places on the map.

1. Mt. Ararat
2. Shinar
3. Tigris River
4. Euphrates River
5. Mediterranean Sea
6. Palestine
7. Africa
8. Arabia



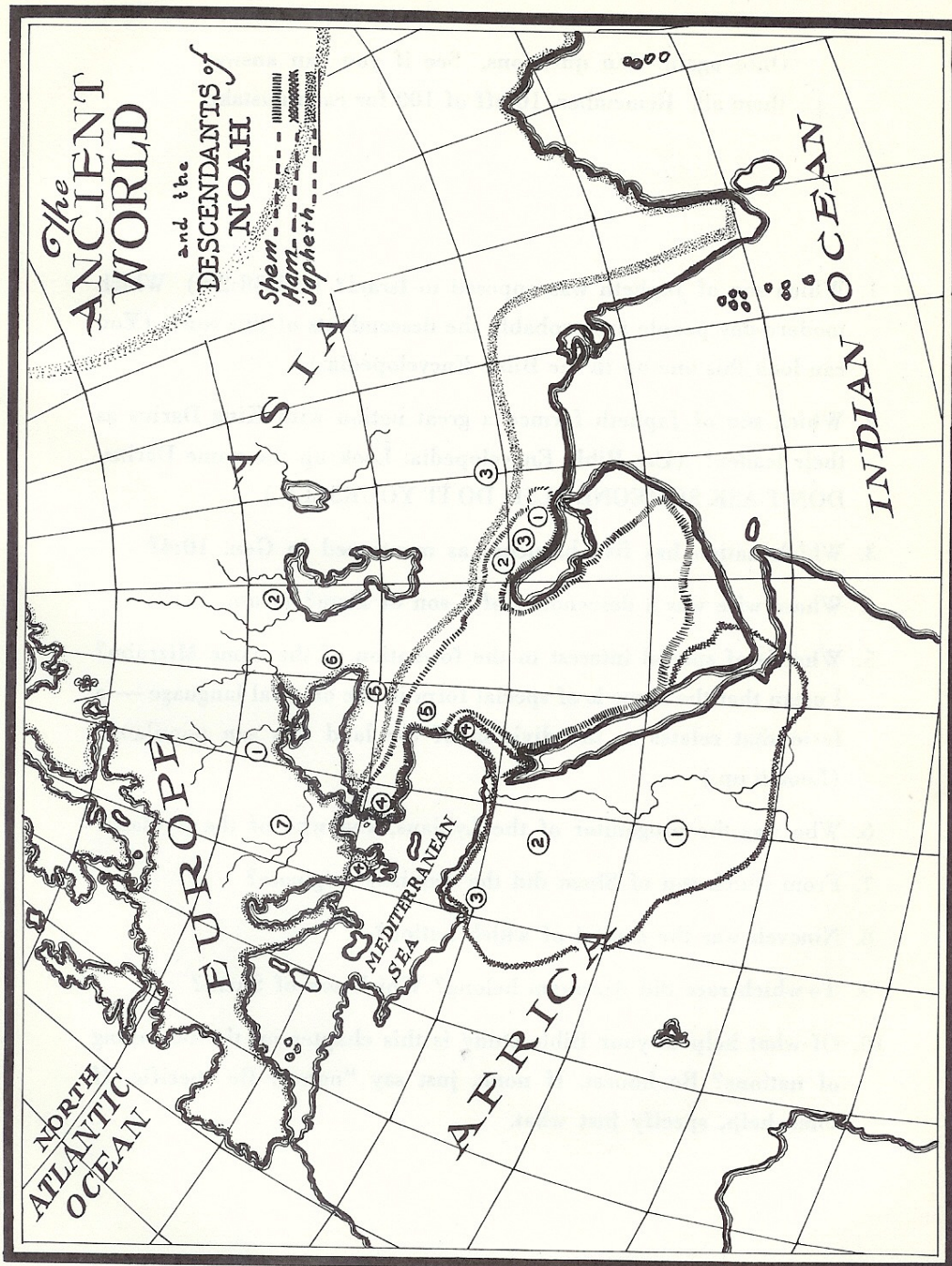
III. Descendants of Noah: In the table below, write beside the numbers in the second column the sons of Noah and beside the numbers in the third column the sons of each of Noah's sons. They are all found in Genesis chapter ten. The fourth column contains the names of the ancient nations scholars think descended from each of the grandsons of Noah.

Noah	1.	1.	Cimmerians
	(Genesis 10:2-5)	2.	Scythians
		3.	Medes
		4.	Greeks
		5.	(?)
		6.	(?)
		7.	(?)
		2.	1.
	(Genesis 10:6-20)	2.	Egyptians
		3.	Libyans
		4.	Canaanites
		3.	1.
	(Genesis 10:21-31)	2.	Assyrians
3.		Chaldeans	
4.		Lydians	
5.		Syrians	

IV. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. the first twenty-five books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation

V. Map Work: On the map on the following page write the name of each nation of people next to the number that locates where they settled. The numbers correspond to column four of the descendants of Noah.



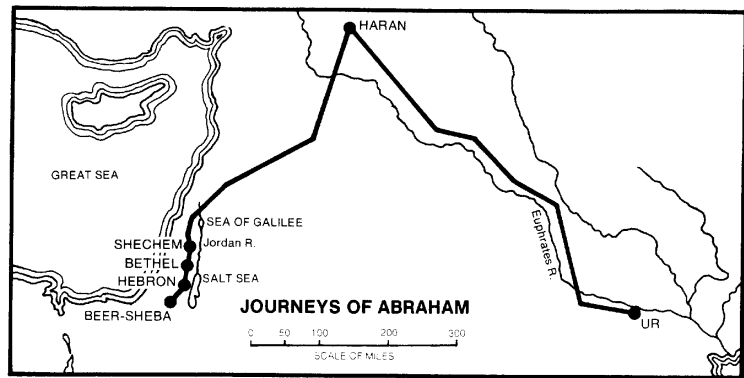
Don DeWelt, Sacred History and Geography. 33.

Lesson Nine The Patriarchs Genesis chapters 12 - 50

After people had been scattered across the world of Genesis ten and ancient nations had been formed, the Lord appeared to a man named Abram in far off Ur of the Chaldees (modern Southern Iraq) and gave him one command and three promises which together outline the development of the divine plan for the salvation of mankind from sin.

Now the Lord had said to Abram: 'Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed' (Genesis 12:1-3).

Abram obeyed the Lord, left Ur with his wife Sarai, his father Terah, and his nephew Lot, and traveled north to Haran, where Terah died. After this the pilgrims crossed Syria and the Jordan River, and came into Canaan, stopping at Shechem in the hills of Central Palestine.



“Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your descendants I will give this land.’ And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him” (Genesis 12:7).

In all the Lord made seven specific pledges to Abram, but the seven boil down to three great promises: “I will make you a great nation” (**The Nation Promise**), “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (**The Seed Promise**), and “to your descendants I will give this land” (**The Land Promise**). The divine fulfillment of these three promises outline the entire Old Testament and connect the Old and New Testaments. All that came before in the Genesis story laid the background for them. All that follows in the Bible show their fulfillment.

There are many stories in Genesis chapters 12 - 50 that are important to know because they contain lessons that help us understand God and how we can please him. We will have to study these when we study the book of Genesis in more detail. For now we will simply concentrate on the Lord’s promises to Abraham.

When Abram was concerned because he did not have a son to be his heir, the Lord repeated to him the Nation and Land promises. When Abram asked for assurance, the Lord turned the promise into a covenant with Abram, told him it would be four hundred years before his descendants inherited the land, and specified the extent of the land, “from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates.”

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord once more revealed Himself to him. He renewed the covenant with Abram by changing his name to Abraham and giving him the command to circumcise all the males of his household then and his descendants thereafter as a sign of the covenant. At this time the Lord God also changed the name of Sarai, Abraham's wife, to Sarah and promised that she, though barren, would have a son, whom Abraham was to name Isaac and who would be the heir through whom the promises would be fulfilled.

When Abraham was one hundred and Sarah ninety, Isaac, the child of promise, was born.

When Isaac was a lad old enough to carry the wood for a sacrifice up Mount Moriah, the Lord God tested Abraham by commanding him to offer this darling son, the object of all his hope and the dearest thing on earth to him, as a burnt offering. (The Lord demanded no more of Abraham than He Himself later did for you and me.) When Abraham obeyed, the Angel of the Lord stopped the aged, faithful patriarch just as he was poised to plunge the knife into that dear boy. Then God added His oath by His own Name, the highest name by which He could swear, to the promise and covenant, and repeated the Nation and Seed promises. The three-fold promise now had three-fold divine assurance: the **Promise**, **Covenant**, and **Oath** of the Lord God Who cannot lie.

Isaac

The Lord repeated all three promises to Isaac. Isaac and his wife Rebekah had twin sons, Esau and Jacob. Though Jacob was the younger, the Lord chose him even before he was born to be the heir of the promise.

Jacob

The Lord revealed Himself to Jacob at Bethel in a dream and gave to him all three of the divine promises, as Jacob was fleeing for his life from Esau, who was very angry with him. Jacob went to Haran, where he met and married sisters, Leah and Rachel. Twenty years later the Lord appeared to Jacob in Haran and commanded him to return to Canaan, promising He would "deal well" with him and make his "descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." Jacob obeyed the Lord at the risk of his life, both from his father-in-law Laban and his brother Esau. As Jacob approached Canaan the Lord changed his name to Israel.

Israel had twelve sons through his wives Leah and Rachel and their servant women, Bilhah and Zilpah. He loved Joseph, the elder son of his favorite wife Rachel, more than the sons of the other women. This led the other sons to hate Joseph. They sold him into Egyptian slavery, but by the providence of God Joseph became the ruler of Egypt under Pharaoh.

Thus when a famine later arose, when Israel was one hundred thirty years of age the Lord used Joseph to bring Israel and his family into Egypt. At the time Israel began his sojourn in Egypt, his family was comprised of seventy-five people. With the deaths of Israel (Jacob) and Joseph, the book of Genesis and the age of the patriarchs closes.

At the time of the deaths of Israel and Joseph none of the Lord's three promises to Abraham had been fulfilled. Would God not keep His word? We'll see.

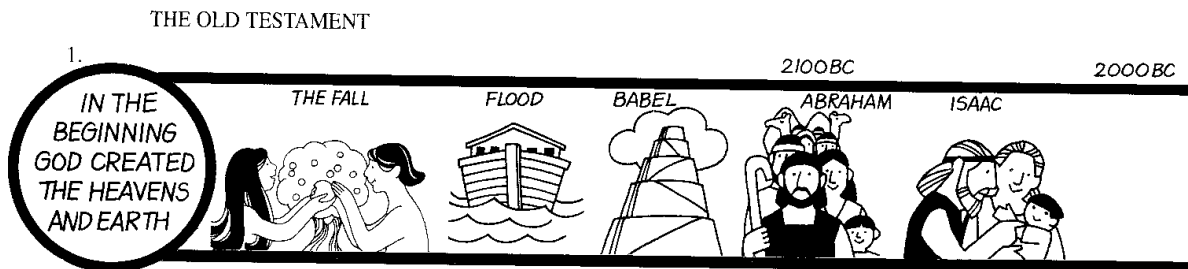
Activities

I. Here are the definitions of key words and phrases in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

1. pilgrims - those who are traveling as foreigners in a land where they are strangers
2. covenant - legal agreement
3. Abraham - father of a multitude
4. Sarah - princess
5. Isaac - laughter
6. patriarch - father
7. oath - a promise made by swearing, that is, calling on something or someone as a witness
8. Israel - God prevails or a prince with God
9. providence - forethought and watchful care
10. Pharaoh - Egyptian title for their king

II. Recite in Class:

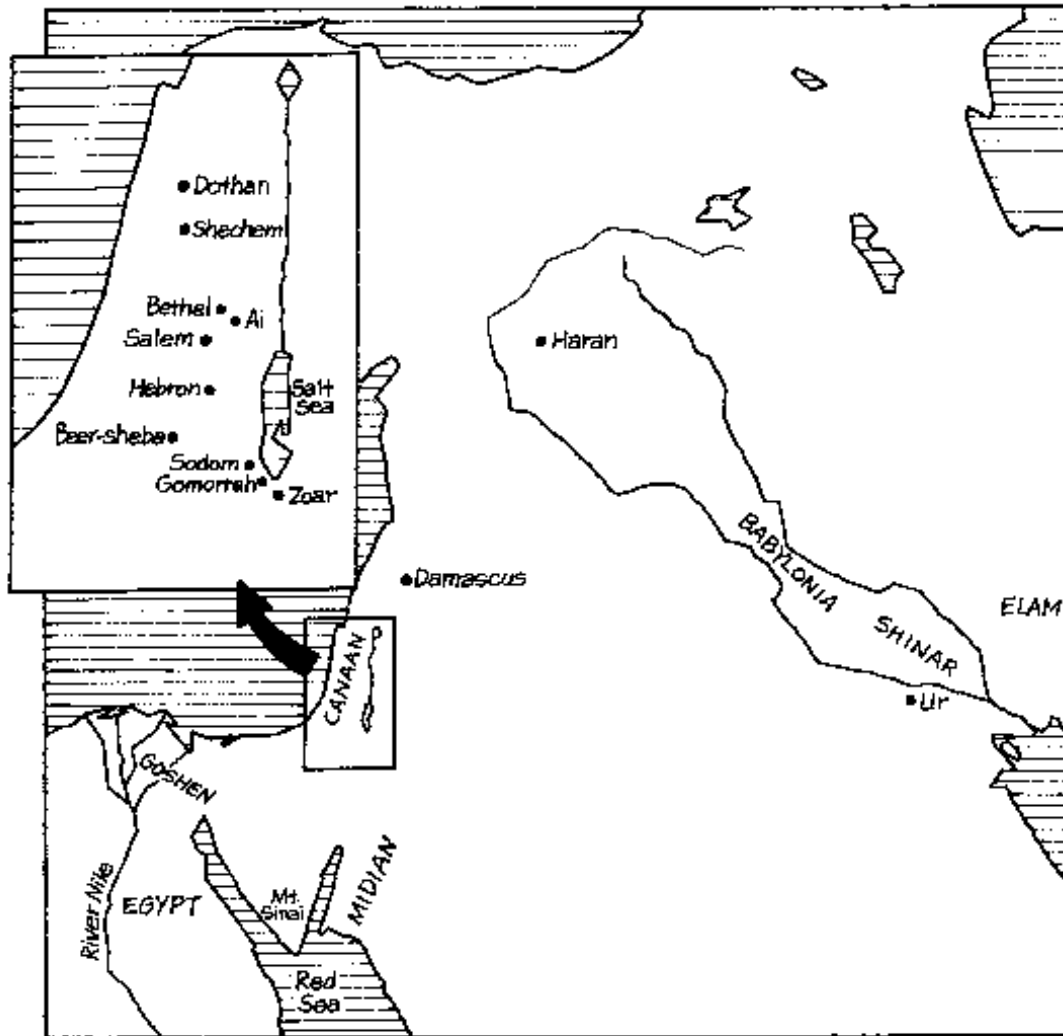
1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. the first thirty books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham



III. Map Work: Locate each of these places on the map.

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. Ur | 5. Shechem | 9. Egypt |
| 2. Haran | 6. Palestine | 10. Mt. Moriah |
| 3. Syria | 7. River of Egypt | 11. Bethel |
| 4. Jordan River | 8. Euphrates River | 12. Canaan |

WHERE IT ALL HAPPENED (Genesis)



IV. Class Reports: Each young person should choose a favorite story found in Genesis chapters 12 - 50, tell that story to the class, and tell the class what the main lesson is that we should learn from this story.

V. Class Reports: Each young person should choose a favorite story found in Genesis chapters 12 - 50, tell that story to the class, and tell the class what the main lesson is that we should learn from this story.

V. Place these Bible characters in proper time order.

- | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|
| 1. _____ | 11. _____ | Abel | Japheth |
| 2. _____ | 12. _____ | Abraham | Joseph |
| 3. _____ | 13. _____ | Adam | Lamech |
| 4. _____ | 14. _____ | Cain | Leah |
| 5. _____ | 15. _____ | Enoch | Noah |
| 6. _____ | 16. _____ | Esau | Rachel |
| 7. _____ | 17. _____ | Eve | Rebekah |
| 8. _____ | 18. _____ | Ham | Sarah |
| 9. _____ | 19. _____ | Isaac | Seth |
| 10. _____ | 20. _____ | Jacob | Shem |

Lesson Ten

Egyptian Slavery

Exodus chapters 1- 15

At the end of Genesis Joseph has died and Israel's family of 75 people are in Egypt. Many years elapsed between the time Jacob and his family entered Egypt and the beginning of Exodus. The Egyptians had forgotten Joseph, and the Israelites had multiplied until they were found throughout Egypt. Thus, Pharaoh and the Egyptians were frightened by the possibility the Israelites would join with an Egyptian enemy, fight against the Egyptians, and leave Egypt, thus depriving the Egyptians of cheap laborers.

Pharaoh proposed to deal shrewdly with the Israelites. So they turned the Israelites into slave laborers to build supply cities for Pharaoh. The lives of the Israelites were bitter, and they cried to the Lord for help.

But the more the Egyptians oppressed the Israelites, the more they multiplied. This frightened the Egyptians. They made their lives very difficult with extremely hard work in brick making.

When this did not stop the growth of the Israelite population, Pharaoh commanded the midwives who assisted the Hebrew women in giving birth to kill the male babies but keep the girl babies alive. But the midwives feared God and didn't cooperate. So Pharaoh commanded his people to kill the male babies of Israel.



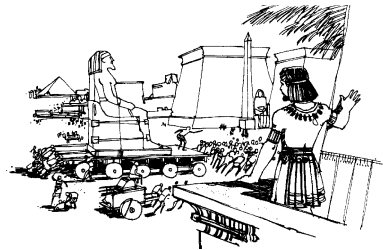
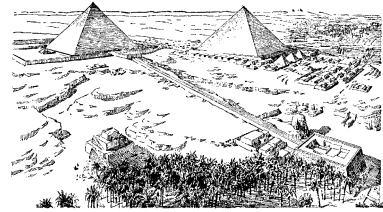
At this time a Hebrew baby boy was born to Amram and Jochebed. By the providence of God and the loving care of his mother Jochebed and his older sister Miriam, he not only was kept alive but was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter. She named him Moses.

Moses learned of God and his Israelite heritage from his mother, who nursed him for the Egyptian princess. Because he was in the Egyptian royal family, he received the best education available in the world at that time. Moses was a well educated, eloquent man of action. God was preparing a great man for a great work.

When he was forty years old, Moses tried to join his people, Israel. Because of his faith in God, he was willing to give up the riches and pleasures of Egyptian royalty to suffer with slaves. He wanted to deliver them, but instead he had to flee for his life to Midian, in the region of Mt. Sinai.

There Moses met Reuel the priest of God in Midian and eventually married his daughter, Zipporah. Another forty years passed by as Moses led the quiet life of a shepherd in the desert of Sinai. God was still preparing him for a very great work.

When Moses was eighty years old, God appeared to him in a burning bush and told



him to go back to Egypt and to tell Pharaoh to let Israel go. The Pharaoh who had tried to kill Moses was dead.

Moses, who had been overly aggressive forty years earlier, was now overly cautious. He didn't want to go. After God had answered all Moses' excuses, He simply commanded Him to go. Because Moses now did not think he could speak well, God sent Aaron his older brother with him to be his spokesman. He equipped Moses and Aaron to work miracles.

God knew Pharaoh was stubborn and would not let Israel go. So he planned to do great miracles to show His power so Pharaoh and the Egyptians would know their idol gods were powerless and the Lord was the only true God.

Sure enough, Pharaoh was stubborn and did not believe in the Lord. Not only did he refuse to let Israel go, he just made the Israelites work harder. They became discouraged and complained against Moses and Aaron.

So the Lord sent Moses and Aaron back to Pharaoh to work miracles before him. Although the Egyptian magicians could do impressive tricks, the miracles God worked through Moses and Aaron were greater. The Lord was giving Pharaoh opportunity to repent, but because Pharaoh was proud and stubborn, these opportunities only further hardened his heart.



Thus the Lord sent nine great plagues on the Egyptians. Each time Moses warned him to let Israel go or the plague would come.

The Lord turned the waters of the great Nile River, the source of all Egypt's water, to blood. When the magicians turned water to blood also, Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he refused to listen to Moses.

The Lord caused frogs to come up from the Nile River and cover the land, swarm into the Egyptian houses, and get into their cooking utensils. Egyptians worshiped frogs. The Egyptian magicians also made frogs appear. But the plague was so loathsome, Pharaoh promised to let Israel go if Moses would remove the frogs. Moses did so, but Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to let God's people go free.

Then Moses caused lice to cover all the Egyptian people and animals. The magicians could not duplicate this and confessed it was from God. But Pharaoh hardened his heart again.

So God sent swarms of flies throughout the land, but only on the Egyptians. Pharaoh agreed to let Israel go three days journey into the wilderness, but, when Moses removed the flies, Pharaoh hardened his heart again.

Next the Lord sent disease on all the Egyptian farm animals but spared the farm animals of the Hebrews. But Pharaoh was stubborn again.

Thus Moses caused boils to come on all the Egyptian people and farm animals. Even the magicians had boils. But Pharaoh hardened his heart even more.

So God caused a great hail storm to come on Egypt. It destroyed the Egyptian crops but did not affect Israel. Pharaoh confessed his sin and asked Moses to stop the hail. But when Moses prayed to God, and the hail stopped, both Pharaoh and his people hardened their

hearts.

Then the Lord sent such great swarms of locusts on Egypt that they darkened the sky. No such swarms of locusts had ever been seen in Egypt before. All the crops that had survived the hail were destroyed. Again, Pharaoh confessed his sin, but then hardened his heart and refused to let Israel go.

So God sent three days of such thick darkness over Egypt that people couldn't even see to get up from bed. Pharaoh again confessed then hardened his heart.

Nine great plagues had demonstrated to Pharaoh and Egypt that the Lord alone is God. But Pharaoh was still stubborn, even though his land was destroyed. So God sent one last terrible plague that would break Pharaoh's stubborn will and give Israel its freedom.

The Lord passed throughout the land of Egypt and killed the first born of man and animal. Great crying was heard throughout the land.

But the Lord commanded the Israelites to make this night a great feast that they would keep forever, the feast of Passover. Each family was to eat a lamb. The Israelites put the blood of the lamb on the entrances of their houses, and the Lord passed over and spared them. At last the Lord delivered Israel from Egyptian slavery. The Feast of Passover commemorates Israel's beginning as a nation.

Pharaoh drove the Israelites from Egypt. They journeyed to the Red Sea, as the Lord led them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

When they came to the Red Sea, they had nowhere to go. Pharaoh decided to recapture them, and he pursued them with his army. They were surrounded by desert, sea, mountains, and the army of Pharaoh.



But Moses commanded Israel to remain calm. He stretched out his staff over the Red Sea. A strong east wind blew all night and caused the waters of the sea to part. The next morning Israel marched through the sea on dry ground. Pharaoh's army pursued them, but the waters came back and drowned them. Moses and Israel stood on the other side and sang a song of praise to God for delivering them. Israel was free. The Lord had shown His great power to all the people of the world and had delivered His people from the most powerful nation on earth.

The Ten Plagues

- ☹ **Water to Blood**
- ☹ **Frogs**
- ☹ **Lice**
- ☹ **Flies**
- ☹ **Disease of Livestock**
- ☹ **Boils**
- ☹ **Hail**
- ☹ **Locusts**
- ☹ **Darkness**
- ☹ **Death of First Born**

Activities

I. Here are the definitions of key words and phrases in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

1. midwife - a woman who assists other women in childbirth
2. Hebrew - one from beyond, another name for an Israelite, because Abraham came from beyond the Euphrates River
3. miracles - acts that cannot be explained naturally and thus demonstrate the power of God
4. plague - means a stroke or blow, great catastrophes
5. locusts - insects similar to grasshoppers which fly in great swarms, eat every green plant, and cause much damage to crops
6. pillar - upright column

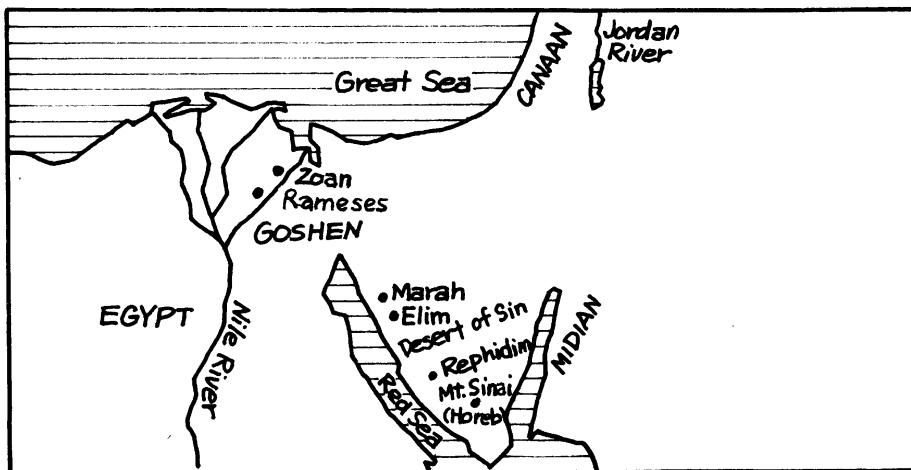
II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. the first thirty-five books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham
8. the ten plagues on Egypt

III. Map Work: Locate each of these places on the map.

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. Midian | 4. Nile River |
| 2. Mt. Sinai | 5. Red Sea |
| 3. desert of Sinai | |

WHERE IT ALL HAPPENED (Exodus)



IV. Class Reports: Young people should be selected to study ahead and tell each of these stories in class.

1. Moses before he was forty (Read also Hebrews 11:23; Acts 7:20-22)
2. Moses' faith when he was forty years old (Read also Acts 7:23-29; Hebrews 11:24-26)
3. the excuses Moses made not to go to Pharaoh
4. the first nine plagues
5. the Passover

V. Place these Bible characters in proper time order.

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|---------|
| 1. _____ | 13. _____ | Aaron |
| | | Abel |
| 2. _____ | 14. _____ | Abraham |
| | | Adam |
| 3. _____ | 15. _____ | Cain |
| | | Enoch |
| 4. _____ | 16. _____ | Esau |
| | | Eve |
| 5. _____ | 17. _____ | Ham |
| | | Isaac |
| 6. _____ | 18. _____ | Jacob |
| | | Japheth |
| 7. _____ | 19. _____ | Joseph |
| | | Lamech |
| 8. _____ | 20. _____ | Leah |
| | | Miriam |
| 9. _____ | 21. _____ | Moses |
| | | Noah |
| 10. _____ | 22. _____ | Rachel |
| | | Rebekah |
| 11. _____ | 23. _____ | Sarah |
| | | Seth |
| 12. _____ | | Shem |

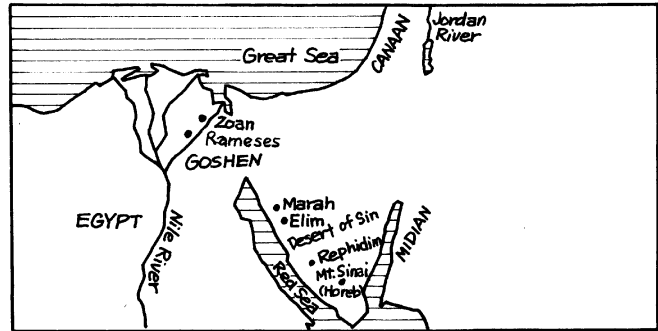
Lesson Eleven

Wilderness Wandering

Exodus 15 - Deuteronomy 34

The Lord promised Abraham that his descendants would become a great nation, that they would possess the land of Canaan, and that all nations of the earth would be blessed through a descendant of Abraham. When Jacob, Abraham's grandson, and Joseph, his great-grandson, died in Egypt, none of the three great promises had been fulfilled. But in the 430 years Israel lived in Canaan, they "became a great, mighty and populous nation" (Deuteronomy 26:5, **New American Standard Bible**). The Nation promise had been fulfilled. But, this nation of people, the people of God, needed to be organized with laws, an army, and a land to call their own.

WHERE IT ALL HAPPENED (Exodus)



Rather than leading Israel directly to Canaan, the Lord took them south into the burning deserts of Sinai. There He could teach them to depend on Him by faith for all their needs. There He could give them their national laws, their religion as a theocracy, and their military organization.

As Israel went from one camping place to another in the journey toward Mt. Sinai, rather than praying to God for their needs, they rebelliously, faithlessly complained to Moses. Moses interceded in their behalf, and God gave them the food and water they needed.

After a three month trek, they came to Mt. Sinai. God informed Israel through Moses: *Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation* (Exodus 19:5-6, **New King James Version**).

The Lord God gave this covenant through angels to Moses on Mt. Sinai. This law was the national law for Israel.



God spoke the heart of this law in the form of the Ten Commandments by His own mouth from Mt. Sinai to Israel, as the mountain quaked and was covered with smoke. The Ten Commandments were the highest religious and moral law known to man until the coming of Christ.

They may be divided into two parts by the two great commandments of the law. The greatest commandment is to love God (Deuteronomy 6:5;

The Ten Commandments

- ✧ **You Shall Have No Other Gods Before Me.**
- ✧ **You shall not make for yourself a carved image.**
- ✧ **You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.**
- ✧ **Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.**
- ✧ **Honor your father and your mother.**
- ✧ **You shall not murder.**
- ✧ **You shall not commit adultery.**
- ✧ **You shall not steal.**
- ✧ **You shall not bear false witness.**
- ✧ **You shall not covet.**

Matthew 22:35-38). The first four of the Ten Commandments told Israel how to love God. The second greatest commandment of the law is to love your neighbor (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:39). Commandments five through ten

reveal how to do this.

Then the Lord gave Israel through Moses all their laws as a nation.

Moses was on Mt. Sinai forty days receiving the law. Israel decided he wasn't going to return. They had Aaron erect a golden calf to represent God and to lead them. They held a lewd, idolatrous feast to worship their self-made god. Moses, at God's command, returned at this moment with the Ten Commandments on two tables of stone only to find Israel in this shameful condition. God threatened to destroy Israel, and only through Moses' intercession did He spare them and renew His covenant with them.

God then gave Moses the pattern for the tabernacle, where He would dwell in the midst of Israel as their God, and they would come to worship Him. The Lord gave Moses a detailed pattern for this tabernacle and commanded him to follow this pattern exactly. Moses did so, "and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle" (Exodus 40:34).

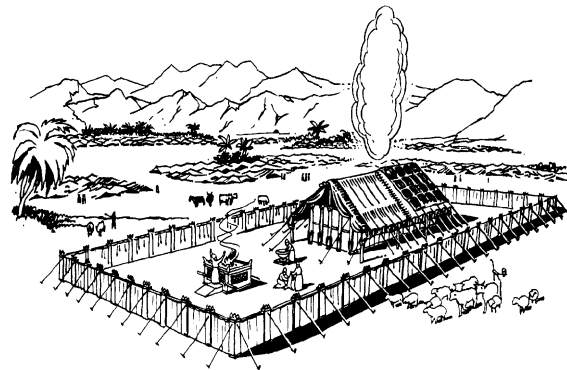
The Lord gave to Moses detailed laws for the priests of the family of Aaron and how they were to offer sacrifices for the people.

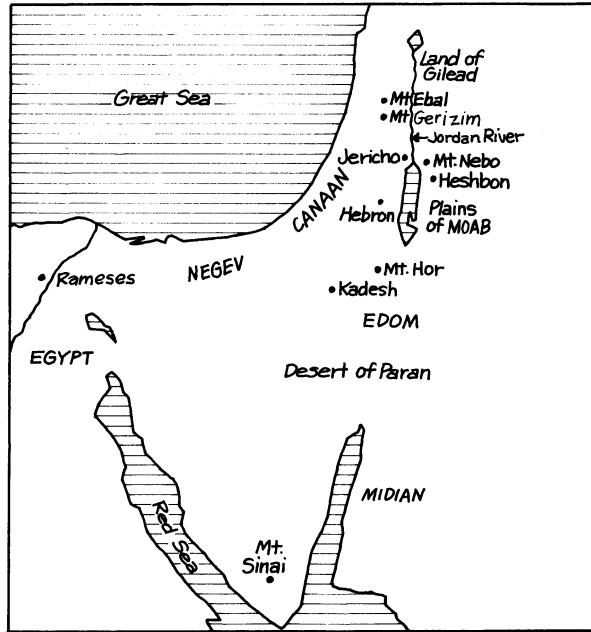
God is holy. He was teaching Israel how to become holy and to remain holy as His people.

Then the Lord had Moses take a census of all the mature men of Israel able to be in the army, except for those of the tribe of Levi, who served at the tabernacle. He organized this army around the tabernacle to journey through and camp in the wilderness on their way to Canaan. Israel had an army of 603,550 men!

Israel had been in the wilderness two years. The Lord now had them ready to go into Canaan and take the land as their own.

In preparation for this conquest Moses sent twelve spies to go throughout the land and bring back a report. They were gone for forty days. When they returned, all the spies agreed





that it was a land of plenty. But ten of the spies declared they could not take Canaan, because the people of the land were too strong for them. Only Joshua and Caleb had faith that God could give them the land.

The people believed the ten evil spies, rebelled against Moses and Aaron, and tried to kill them. The glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle before all Israel. Again, the Lord threatened to destroy Israel, and only because Moses interceded did He spare them. He decreed that that generation would not enter Canaan, but that they would wander in the wilderness 38 more years, till all of that generation, except Joshua and Caleb, were dead. The ten evil spies who caused Israel to disbelieve God died

immediately.

Thirty-eight more years of miserable wandering in a burning, desert waste filled with scorpions and poisonous snakes followed. The people of that generation repeatedly rebelled and eventually all but Joshua and Caleb died. Korah and his followers even tried to take the priesthood from Aaron and were swallowed by the earth.

Toward the end of this period, when Israel once more complained and rebelled, Moses lost patience, and he and Aaron sinned. Thus, they also were not allowed to enter Canaan.

As Israel journey to the east around the southern end of Edom, God had Moses take Aaron to the top of Mt. Hor. There Aaron died, and Eleazar his son became high priest.

As they journeyed north on the east side of the Dead Sea, Israel met and defeated Sihon of the Amorites, Og, King of Bashan, Balak, King of the Moabites, and the Midianites. Thus, they controlled the land east of the Jordan River. This was good pasture country, and the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh, who were shepherds, settled there.

Now the old generation had died. The Lord was ready for the new generation to take Canaan. Moses preached three great sermons to the new generation of Israel in the plains of Moab. He reviewed their history of rebellion in contrast with the faithfulness of God, he reviewed the good law God had given them, and he foretold their future, dependent on whether or not they obeyed God. In all three sermons he exhorted Israel to obey God.

The Lord chose Joshua to take the place of Moses to lead Israel into Canaan. Then He took Moses to the top of Mt. Nebo and allowed His servant to look across the Jordan Valley to that beautiful land Israel would inherit. For eighty years this great man of God had longed to go there. There was no other prophet like Moses, to whom the lord spoke plainly face to face. But now, at the age of 120 but with his vigor undiminished, Moses died on Mt. Nebo. The Lord buried him in a grave unknown to this day on the eastern side of Jordan.

Activities

I. Here are the definitions of key words and phrases in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

1. theocracy - government by the immediate direction of God
2. interceded - acted between in order to make enemies become friends
3. covenant - agreement, contract
4. priests - acted between God and men to offer men's sacrifices to God and to teach God's laws to men
5. holy - set apart from everything impure
6. angels - spirit beings higher in nature than man who serve God and minister in behalf of God's people
7. lewd - shameless, unrestrained lust
8. idolatry - worship of anything other than God
9. tabernacle - dwelling place, tent
10. worship - acts by which we express to God our love for and awe of Him
11. prophet - one through whom God speaks

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. the first forty books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham
8. the ten plagues on Egypt
9. the Ten Commandments

III. Map Work: Locate each of these places on the map.

1. Edom
2. Moab
3. Midian
4. Jordan River
5. Mt. Nebo

IV. Class Reports: Young people should be selected to study ahead and tell each of these stories in class.

1. Discuss the meaning and application of each of the Ten Commandments.
2. Which one has the Lord not incorporated into the New Testament?
3. Assign teenagers to discuss the background in the Old Testament for each of these passages.
 - a. John 3:14-15
 - b. First Corinthians 10:1-13
 - c. Hebrews 3:7-19

V. Place these Bible characters in proper time order.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 17. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 20. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 21. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 22. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 23. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 24. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 25. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 26. _____ |
| 12. _____ | 27. _____ |
| 13. _____ | 28. _____ |
| 14. _____ | 29. _____ |
| 15. _____ | 30. _____ |

- Aaron
- Abel
- Abraham
- Adam
- Balak
- Cain
- Caleb
- Eleazar
- Enoch
- Esau
- Eve
- Ham
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Japheth
- Joseph
- Joshua
- Korah
- Lamech
- Leah
- Miriam
- Moses
- Noah
- Og
- Rachel
- Rebekah
- Sarah
- Seth
- Shem
- Sihon

Lesson Twelve

Conquest of Canaan

Joshua

Moses had died, and Joshua, Moses' servant, had become leader of Israel, Israel had become a nation with an army of 601,730 soldiers (Numbers 26:51) hardened and disciplined by years of wilderness wandering and by victorious wars with the Amalekites, the Amorites, the people of Bashan, the Moabites, and the Midianites. The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh had chosen to settle in this pasture land east of the Jordan River but agreed that their soldiers would go with the rest of Israel to conquer the land God had given them. It was time for Israel to take Canaan, a "land flowing with milk and honey," that God promised Abraham hundreds of years earlier.

At the time God promised the land to Abraham, the inhabitants of the land were not wicked enough for God in justice to destroy them and give their land to Israel. But in the centuries since they had thoroughly corrupted themselves in Baal and Ashera worship. They sacrificed their children to the idol Baal, and committed fornication in worship of the Ashera. They were so corrupt that justice demanded their extermination. If they were left to live beside the Israelites, Israel would learn their wicked ways.

The Lord appeared to Joshua to prepare him to lead Israel into Canaan. He promised to give him the land and exhorted Joshua:

Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go (Joshua 1:7).

We also must "be strong and very courageous" to do all the Lord commands us.

The city of Jericho guarded the pass from the plain of Jordan to the high country beyond. Before Israel could proceed further into Canaan, they had to conquer Jericho, a city with strong walls for defense.

Joshua sent two spies to determine the situation. They entered Jericho, but the king heard of their presence. The harlot Rahab hid them and gave them the information that the people of the land had heard of the great miracles the Lord had done for them and the mighty victories He had given them, and the inhabitants of Canaan were paralyzed with fear. She helped them escape back to the camp of Israel, and the spies agreed to spare Rahab and her family when Jericho was destroyed.

Israel set out to cross the Jordan River when the river was at flood stage. As the Levites bearing the ark of the covenant before Israel stepped into the edge of the river, the waters were stopped upstream, and Israel crossed on dry ground. At Joshua's command one leader from each tribe gathered a stone from the river bed, and with them they built a monument at Gilgal, on the western bank of the Jordan.

The Israelites had neglected to circumcise their boy babies in the wilderness, so here at Gilgal all the men were circumcised. Here the Lord appeared to Joshua, as He had in the wilderness of Sinai to Moses, but now as "as Commander of the army of the LORD" (Joshua 5:14).

Israel came to Jericho, and the Lord commanded them to march around the city one time a day for six days. On the seventh day they were to go around the city seven times, the

priests were to blow on rams horns, and the people were to give a mighty shout. They obeyed the Lord, and the walls of Jericho fell down flat. Israel took the city and spared only Rahab and her family.



Joshua decided to send only 3000 men against the little city of Ai, but the Israelites were defeated. They found out that Achan had taken some of the plunder from Jericho, in violation of the Lord's command, and had caused their defeat. Achan and his family were stoned to death, and then Israel conquered Ai.

Then Joshua obeyed the command God had given Moses in the wilderness. All Israel went to Shechem, where Abraham had first worshiped the Lord in the land. Joshua built an altar to the Lord on Mt. Ebal and wrote a copy of the Law on it. Then, as half of Israel stood on Mt. Gerizim and half on Mt Ebal, he stood between the mountains and read the blessings and cursings of the Law to them.

5.

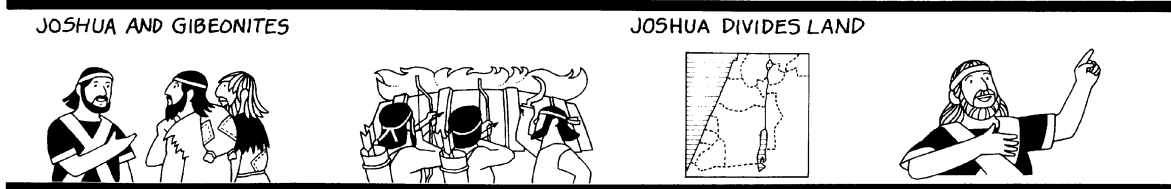


The people of Gibeon tricked Israel into signing a treaty with them to allow them to live. Joshua and the leaders of Israel should have consulted the Lord before agreeing to the treaty. When the deceit was discovered, Israel made the Gibeonites their servants, but they kept their promise and did not kill them.

When the Amorite cities of central Canaan learned that Gibeon had made a treaty with Israel, they banded together and attacked Gibeon. The Gibeonites sent word to Joshua, and Israel marched quickly from Gilgal to Gibeon, surprised the Amorites, and routed them. As Israel pursued the defeated enemy, God killed many of the Amorites with hail stones. Joshua prayed to the Lord that the daylight would continue so Israel could finish their victory, and the sun stood still for about a day. The Israelite victory was complete.

6.

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Afterward Israel conquered the cities in the southern part of Canaan.

When Jabin, King of Hazor, heard of Israel's victories, he gathered an alliance of all the peoples in the North of Canaan. They assembled near the waters of Merom to fight Israel.

Once again, Joshua and Israel quickly attacked the enemy and destroyed them. The conquest of Canaan was complete.

Now the land had rest from war and was divided among the tribes by lot. Only Levi, the priestly tribe, did not inherit land. Rather, they were given forty-eight cities throughout Israel. The tabernacle was set up at Shiloh.

So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. The LORD gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass (Joshua 21:43-45).



The Lord God kept completely the Land promise He had made to Abraham hundreds of years earlier.

Joshua allowed the men of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh to return to their families east of Jordan. As they returned, the men built a great altar next to Jordan as a witness that they too belonged to Israel and that the Lord was their God. Those west of the river thought this was an idolatrous altar and prepared to go to war with them. When, however, the men from east of the Jordan told them the purpose of the monument, they went home in peace.

Some time after the land had been divided, when Joshua was very old, he called Israel together to give them his farewell speech. This brave soldier of the Lord exhorted Israel:

And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD (Joshua 24:15).

The people replied, “We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God” (verse 18).

Joshua died at the age of 110. “Dare to stand like Joshua. Dare to say the word, ‘As for me and for my house, we will serve the Lord.’”

Activities

I. Here are the definitions of key words and phrases in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

1. Baal - lord, special name of the supreme god of the Canaanites and Philistines, each locality having its own 'Baal,' generally worshiped by offering human sacrifices, particularly, the first born child burned alive
2. plural name for leading female deity of Canaanites, moon goddess, worshiped by temple prostitution
3. Levites - men of the tribe of Levi who assisted with the tabernacle
4. ark of the covenant - the chest which contained the tables of stone upon which were written the Ten Commandments and which represented the presence of God
5. blessings - pronouncements of good
6. cursings - pronouncements of evil

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. the first forty-five books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham
8. the ten plagues on Egypt
9. the Ten Commandments

III. Map Work: Locate each of these places on the map.

- | | | |
|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Jericho | 4. Shechem | 7. Gibeon |
| 2. Gilgal | 5. Mt. Ebal | 8. waters of Merom |
| 3. Ai | 6. Mt. Gerizim | 9. Shiloh |

IV. Class Reports: Young people should be selected to study ahead and tell each of these stories in class.

1. Rahab (Joshua 2:1-21; 6:22-25; cf. Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25)
2. Israel Crosses the Jordan River (Joshua chapters 3 - 4)
3. The Fall of Jericho (Joshua chapter 6; cf. Hebrews 11:30)
4. Achan (Joshua chapter 7)
5. The Battle for Ai (Joshua 7:2-9; 8:1-29)
6. The Long Day Battle (Joshua 10:1-27)

V. Place these Bible characters in proper time order.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 17. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 20. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 21. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 22. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 23. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 24. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 25. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 26. _____ |
| 12. _____ | 27. _____ |
| 13. _____ | 28. _____ |
| 14. _____ | 29. _____ |
| 15. _____ | 30. _____ |

- Aaron
- Abel
- Abraham
- Adam
- Balak
- Cain
- Caleb
- Eleazar
- Enoch
- Esau
- Eve
- Ham
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Japheth
- Joseph
- Joshua
- Korah
- Lamech
- Leah
- Miriam
- Moses
- Noah
- Og
- Rachel
- Rebekah
- Sarah
- Seth
- Shem
- Sihon

Lesson Thirteen The Judges Judges - 1 Samuel 8

From the death of Joshua until Saul became the first king of Israel was the approximately three hundred fifty year period of the Judges in Israel (cf. Judges 11:26; 1 Kings 6:1), from about 1370 B.C. to around 1020 B.C.

In violation of God’s command, Israel failed to destroy all the idolatrous inhabitants of the land, but made covenants with them (Judges 1:27-36). God decreed that He therefore would not drive out these people but would leave them to be “thorns” in the side of Israel (Judges 2:1-5). These nations would prove Israel, whether they would remain faithful to God or not (Judges 2:20 - 3:4). Joshua’s generation, which knew the Lord, died (Judges 2:6-10). Later generations intermarried with the idolatrous Gentiles in the land and served their gods (Judges 3:5-6). Israel went through a repeated cycle: (1) **SIN** - they sinned against God; (2) **SERVITUDE** - God allowed oppressors to overcome them; (3) **SORROW** - they repented of their rebellion; (4) **SALVATION** - God sent a judge to deliver them (Judges 2:11-19). The book of Judges records twelve such judges. Eli and Samuel, recorded in 1 Samuel, complete the list of judges (14, and one evil, self-proclaimed king, Abimelech).

The word “judges” means “saviors.” Essentially the judges were deliverers of the people of Israel from foreign oppressors. At least some of them also acted as rulers and judges of disputes.

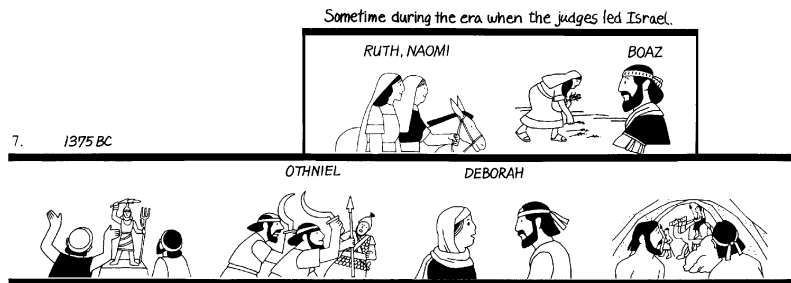
Othniel, Caleb’s younger brother and the first judge of Israel, delivered the people from oppression by “Cushan-Rishathaim” (i.e., twice wicked Cushan), king of Mesopotamia (Judges 3:7-11).

Ehud, a left handed man of Benjamin, stabbed grossly fat King Eglon of the Moabites and then led Israel to victory over Moab (Judges 3:12-30).

Deborah, a mother in Israel, judged the people from the mountains of Ephraim while Jabin king of Canaan oppressed them. She summoned Barak to lead a 10,000 man army taken from Naphtali and Zebulun against Sisera, Jabin’s commander, though the Canaanites had 900 iron chariots. Because Barak would not go without Deborah, the Lord gave Sisera into the hands of a woman, Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite. She drove a tent peg through Sisera’s temple as he slept in her tent (Judges chapter 4).

Afterward the Midianites oppressed Israel. Though it took three miraculous signs from God to embolden Gideon (Jerub-baal) to attack the huge Midianite army, God called him a “mighty man of valor.” With 300 men he routed the Midianites. Gideon refused Israel’s offer to be ruler, saying “the Lord shall rule over you” (Judges chapters 6-8).

Abimelech, Gideon’s son by a concubine, murdered Gideon’s 70 other sons and made himself king in Shechem. He eventually was killed when a woman of Thebez threw a millstone off the wall of the city and crushed his skull as he and

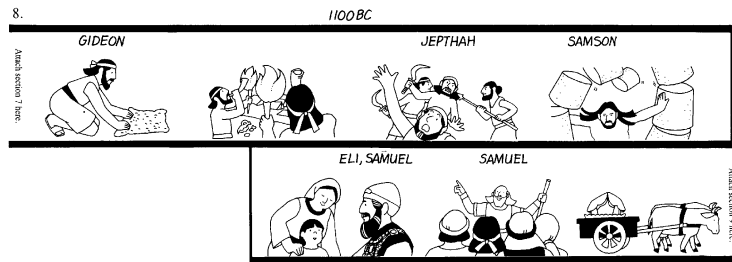


his lawless men besieged it (Judges chapter 9).

Later, because of Israel's idolatry, both the Philistines in the Southwest and the Ammonites in the East oppressed Israel (Judges 10). When Israel repented and cried to the Lord, He raised up Jephthah, the son of a harlot, to deliver Israel from Ammon. Jephthah foolishly vowed to the Lord that, if the Lord would give him victory over Ammon, he would sacrifice the first thing that came out of his house to greet him. The Lord gave him victory, his daughter, his only child, was the first to greet him, and Jephthah kept his vow (Judges 11).

To begin the deliverance of Israel from the Philistines, God gave Samson, a Nazirite from birth, miraculous strength through the Holy Spirit as long as he was faithful as a Nazirite (Judges chapters 13 - 16). Samson repeatedly fell victim to the schemes of ungodly, Philistine women whom he loved, but God used these events to bring defeats upon the Philistines. Though Samson was an undisciplined character who eventually committed suicide, he began the eventual victory of Israel over their most entrenched enemies, the Philistines.

Eli was both high priest and judge. Samuel, born to his mother by divine promise, lived with him and ministered to the Lord even as a child. Because Eli did not restrain his wicked sons who defiled the worship of God, God caused his sons to be killed in battle with the Philistines, the ark of God to be taken, Eli to die, and a curse to be placed on his lineage (1 Samuel chapters 1 - 4).



Samuel was the last judge of Israel as well as the first prophet of the kingdom of Israel (1 Samuel 3:19-21). He also ministered before the Lord as priest (1 Samuel 2:18). He persuaded Israel to put away their idols. The Philistines were subdued during his day, and he went to various cities to judge Israel (1 Samuel 7). When he was old, his sons were also wicked, and Israel desired to have a king (1 Samuel 8).

The primary characteristic of the period was, **“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”** (Judges 17:6; 21:25) Every man followed his own conscience. There was no rule of law. The result was a time of anarchy: outward oppression and inward decay (Judges chapters 17-21). This shows the results for both individuals and nations when people simply do what they feel is right without regard for divine law.

During this dark period a young woman lived whose story offers a bright contrast of righteousness. The young woman Ruth, whose story is recorded in the book bearing her name, is a moving example of loyalty, service, and obedience that our daughters may emulate. No more exalted statement of loyalty has ever been made than the stirring request of Ruth to her mother-in-law Naomi (Ruth 1:16-17).

The Judges of Israel

Judge	Enemy	Years Oppressed	Tribes Affected	Where Was Battle?	Years Judged	Years of Peace	How to Remember
Othniel	Mesopotamia	8	All		40	40	1st Judge
Ehud	Amon, Amalek, Moab	18	All	Ephraim at Jordan		80	Left-handed
Shamgar	Philistines						Killed 600 Men with Ox Goad
Deborah	Canaanites	20	Zebulun Naphtali	River Kishon	40	40	Woman Judge
Gideon	Midianites, Amalekites	7	Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun Naphtali	Valley of Jezreel	40	40	300 Men
Abimelech			Manasseh	Shechem & Thebez	3		Bramble King
Tola					23	23	Son of Puah, Son of Dodo
Jair					22	22	30 Sons, 30 Colts, 30 Cities
Jephthah	Ammonites	18	Reuben, Gad, Manasseh, Ephraim Judah, Benjamin	Aroer to Minnith	6	6	Rash Vow Judge
Ibzan					7	7	30 Sons 30 Daughters
Elon					10	10	Zebulunite
Abdon					8	8	40 Sons 30 Grandsons, 70 Donkeys
Samson	Philistines	60	All	Several	20	None	Strongest Man
Eli	Philistines	40	All	Ebenezer, Aphek	40		High Priest
Samuel	Philistines		All				Prophet & Priest

Activities

I. Here are the definitions of the key words in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

judges - saviors

anarchy - a state of society, when there is no law or supreme power, and individuals do whatever they please with no punishment

Nazirite - literally, "the separated," one who vowed to live a separate life for the Lord and His service

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. the first fifty books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham
8. the ten plagues on Egypt
9. the Ten Commandments
10. the four part cycle during the period of the judges

IV. Class Reports: Young people should be selected to study ahead and tell each of these stories in class.

1. Deborah (Judges 4:1 - 5:31)
2. Gideon (Judges 6:1 - 8:32)
3. Abimelech (Judges 8:33 - 9:57)
4. Jephthah (Judges 10:6 - 12:7)
5. Samson (Judges 13:1 - 16:31)
6. Ruth (Book of Ruth)
7. Samuel (1 Samuel chapters 1 - 8)

V. Place these Bible characters in proper time order.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 17. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 20. _____ |
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| 15. _____ | 30. _____ |

- Aaron
- Abel
- Abimelech
- Abraham
- Adam
- Cain
- Caleb
- Deborah
- Enoch
- Esau
- Eve
- Gideon
- Ham
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Japheth
- Jephthah
- Joseph
- Joshua
- Leah
- Miriam
- Moses
- Noah
- Rachel
- Rebekah
- Ruth
- Samuel
- Samson
- Sarah
- Shem

Lesson Fourteen The United Kingdom

1 Samuel 9 - 2 Samuel 24; 1 Chronicles 1 - 2 Chronicles 9

Anarchy prevailed under the judges. Samuel revived the institution of prophecy in Israel, thus giving guidance in the right way to individual Israelites.

But how could national guidance be provided? When Samuel was old, the people rejected God's rule in favor of a king "like all the nations." God warned them through Samuel that the kind of king they desired would be oppressive. However, they stubbornly insisted on such a king. Thus, God through Samuel gave them the kind of king they wanted - Saul, a physically impressive but head-strong ruler.

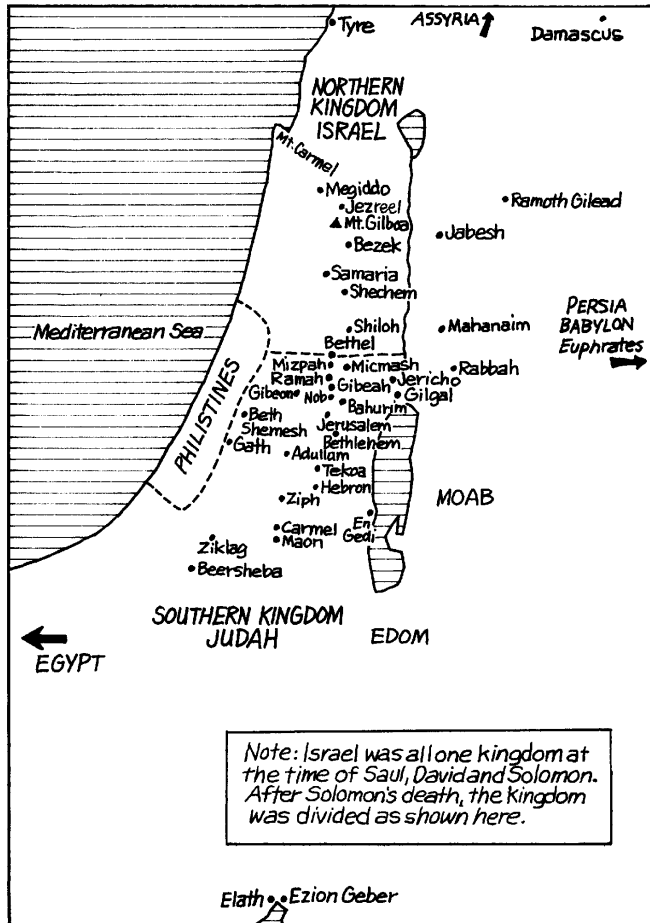
Samuel anointed Saul as King of Israel at the Lord's direction. As a young man, Saul was very humble. He began his rule well by delivering the people of Jabesh-gilead from the Ammonites and treating with gracious leniency the Israelites who had opposed his rule.

But then Saul began a series of presumptuous sins caused by pride and stubbornness which led to his fall. First, when he was hard pressed by the Philistines, and Samuel had not arrived at Gilgal to offer sacrifice to God, Saul took it upon himself to do so. Then, he made a foolish command that, had it

been carried out, would have caused the death of his brave and righteous son, Jonathan. The last straw came when Samuel directed Saul to destroy the Amalekites, and Saul kept their king, Agag, and the best of their flocks and herds alive, claiming he wanted to sacrifice them to the Lord. When Saul refused to admit his sin, Samuel sternly replied:

*Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
As in obeying the voice of the LORD?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
And to heed than the fat of rams.
For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft,
And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,*

WHERE IT ALL HAPPENED (1 and 2 Samuel; also 1 and 2 Chronicles, Psalms)



He also has rejected you from being king (1 Samuel 15:22-23).

Samuel mourned for Saul, but the Lord directed Samuel to anoint another king to replace Saul. God selected a young shepherd named David, the youngest of the eight sons of Jesse of the tribe of Judah.

David first served King Saul while quite young by playing soothing music on his harp to the king because the king was troubled by a distressing spirit from the Lord. Saul liked him so much that he made David his armor bearer.

Later, David came from his home in Bethlehem to find Saul and the army of Israel unwilling to fight against the Philistine giant Goliath. David was very courageous because of his deep faith in the Lord. He volunteered to fight Goliath alone, and when the giant cursed him,

Then David said to the Philistine, 'You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands (1 Samuel 17:45-47).

Young David killed the heavily armed, giant warrior with a stone from his sling shot and became the hero of Israel.

David became a captain in Saul's army and behaved very wisely. The Israelite women praised him even above Saul. So Saul became jealous and wary of David and sought to kill him.

Thus David became a fugitive from Saul for years and gathered his own army. This lasted until King Saul and three of his sons, including David's best friend, Jonathan, were killed by the Philistines in a showdown battle at Mt. Gilboa.

Saul reigned for forty years, including a number of years after David was the rightful king. The Lord allowed Israel to have the kind of king they wanted, and he failed to be what they needed. Now the Lord provided a man after His heart, David.

Judah anointed David as their king in Hebron, but Ishbosheth, son of Saul and the pawn of Saul's general, Abner, claimed to be king of Israel. Finally, Abner turned against Ishbosheth, and Ishbosheth's own servants murdered him. David was anointed King of all Israel.

David took Jerusalem from the Jebusites and made it his capital. From there he led his army to victory over the Philistines. He then brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, where he had erected a new tabernacle.

David wanted to build a temple for the Lord, but the Lord, through Nathan the prophet, told him his son would build him a house. He promised David that a descendant of his would reign on the throne of the Lord forever (2 Samuel 7:12-16). God had not forgotten

that He had promised Abraham a thousand years earlier that all nations of the earth would be blessed through his seed. Hereafter, we look for the Savior to be descended both from Abraham and David.

David conquered all the foes of Israel on every side. He ruled over all the land God had promised Abraham.

But when David became great, he committed great sins. He committed adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of his courageous and loyal soldier Uriah and had Uriah killed. When the prophet Nathan charged him with his sins, David repented and asked forgiveness.

God forgave David, but he paid the price for his sins the rest of his life. His baby son born to Bathsheba died. His son Absalom led a rebellion against him and was killed by David's commander, Joab.

David was guilty of great sins, but he was a great man of faith in God. Under David Israel had what it needed as a nation, the rule of a righteous king. Israel came to the height of its power and glory as a nation.

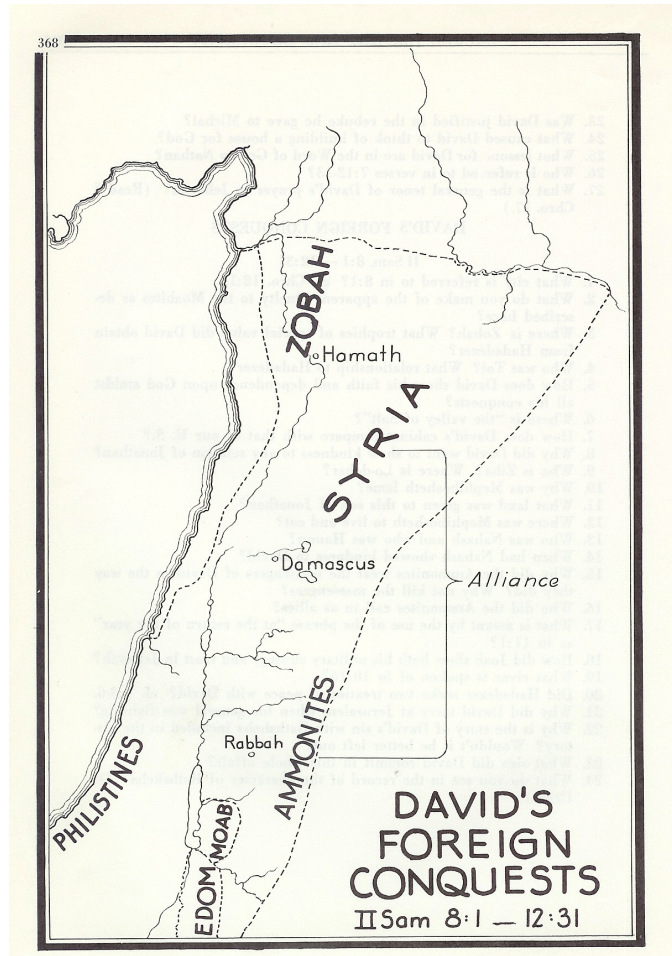
David was also "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Samuel 23:1). Many of the psalms, the poetry of the Hebrews, were written by David. These psalms beautifully express the deepest emotions of the soul, especially praise to God and longing for fellowship with Him. Is any passage more comforting in times of trouble and sorrow than the Shepherd Psalm, Psalm 23, by David, himself a shepherd?

Though David could not build the Temple, the house of God, he drew the plans for its construction and designed the worship connected with it. He also gathered the material for its construction. David also ruled for forty years.

David oversaw the coronation of his son Solomon as king in his stead. Soon after Solomon ascended the throne, God appeared to him in a dream and told him to ask what he desired. Rather than asking for victory, wealth, or fame, Solomon humbly asked for the wisdom to rule God's people. God was pleased with this request, and promised him wisdom and wealth. Solomon became the wisest and wealthiest man in the world.

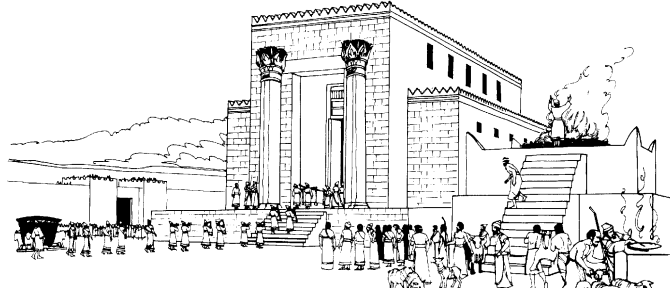
Solomon built for the Lord a magnificent Temple on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. After he had built the Temple, he built himself a great palace.

Israel had peace and prosperity throughout the reign of Solomon. People came from many nations to marvel at his wealth and wisdom. The Queen of Sheba came from Southern Arabia and was overwhelmed by his magnificent wealth and wisdom.



Don DeWalt, *Sacred History and Geography*. 368.

But Solomon married many foreign wives as a means of making peace treaties. His queen was the daughter of Pharaoh of Egypt. He gathered a harem of one thousand wives. These pagan wives became the undoing of Solomon and Israel, in that they reintroduced idolatry into Israel and even turned Solomon to idolatry.



Furthermore, to finance his fabulous building projects, Solomon taxed Israel heavily and pressed their young people into his service, just as Samuel had warned. Thus, in Solomon's old age he sowed the seeds that germinated in the division of the kingdom and the eventual falling away and destruction of Israel. The Lord promised Jeroboam, Solomon's servant, that he would take ten of the tribes from Solomon's son and give them to him to rule.

Solomon's wisdom is expressed in his book Ecclesiastes, in the many wise sayings of Solomon found in the book of Proverbs, and in the poetic Song of Solomon. Solomon, too, reigned forty years.

Israel has now reached its pinnacle of glory, but trouble is clearly on the horizon.

Activities

I. Here are the definitions of the key words in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

1. presumptuous sin - violating God's law in high handed rebellion
2. harem - a group of wives all married to one man
3. pagan - one who worships many gods, especially idols

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. the first fifty-five books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham
8. the ten plagues on Egypt
9. the Ten Commandments
10. the four part cycle during the period of the judges
11. the kings of the United Kingdom

III. Map Work: Locate each of these places on the map.

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| 1. Jabesh-gilead | 4. Hebron |
| 2. Bethlehem | 5. Jerusalem |
| 3. Mt. Gilboa | 6. Arabia |

IV. Class Reports: Young people should be selected to study ahead and tell each of these stories in class.

1. Saul and the Amalekites (1 Samuel 15)
2. David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17)
3. Jonathan Sends David Away (1 Samuel 20)
4. Saul and David in the Cave (1 Samuel 24)
5. Saul and the Woman of Endor (1 Samuel 28)
6. The Death of Uzzah (2 Samuel 6:1-10)
7. The Lord's Promise to David (2 Samuel 7)
8. David, Bathsheba, Uriah, and Nathan (2 Samuel chapters 11:1 - 12:23)
9. The Wisdom of Solomon (1 Kings 3)
10. The Wealth of Solomon (1 Kings 10)

V. Place these Bible characters in proper time order.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | Abimelech |
| 2. _____ | David |
| 3. _____ | Deborah |
| 4. _____ | Gideon |
| 5. _____ | Jephthah |
| 6. _____ | Ruth |
| 7. _____ | Samuel |
| 8. _____ | Samson |
| 9. _____ | Saul |
| 10. _____ | Solomon |

Lesson Fifteen The Divided Kingdom

1 Kings 1 - 2 Kings 17; 2 Chronicles 10 - 32
ca. 925 B.C.- 722 B.C.

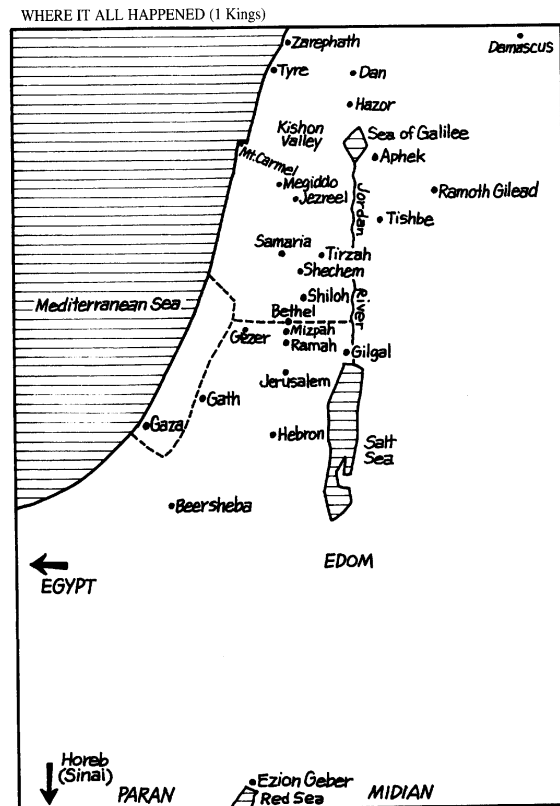
When Rehoboam, the son of Solomon ascended the throne,
Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you
(1 Kings 12:3-4).

Rehoboam asked for three days to consider their request. He consulted the older men who had advised his father, and they counseled him to speak good words to the people and to serve them and that, as the result “they will be your servants forever.” He then sought the advice of the younger men his own age, and they urged him to answer roughly and to assert his authority. Rehoboam foolishly followed the counsel of the younger men, and Israel revolted and chose Jeroboam to be their king.

Israel

The Lord promised Jeroboam that, if he would faithfully serve Him, his descendants would rule Israel forever. But Jeroboam lacked faith in the Lord, and fearing that by going to Jerusalem to worship at the Temple his people would turn back to Rehoboam, he corrupted the worship of Israel. He set up calves at Dan and Bethel, in the North and South of Israel, for Israel to worship, just as they had worshiped the calf in the wilderness long before. These calves were to represent the Lord, but by worshiping them Israel was guilty of idolatry. He allowed anyone from any tribe to be a priest. Thus, Jeroboam corrupted Israel by changing the object, place, and time of its worship and by changing the priesthood.

Now Israel was divided. The ten northern tribes are hereafter called Israel. Over a span of approximately 200 years they had 19 kings and 9 dynasties. These dynasty changes were due to murder brought about by the kings’ unfaithfulness to the Lord. None of their kings were good, for all of them followed Jeroboam’s bad example of calf worship.





Ahab, brought Israel to a new low. He married the Phoenician princess Jezebel, who introduced

the horrible worship of Baal and the Ashtoreth into Israel. She even tried to kill all the prophets of the Lord.

In Ahab's day, God tried to turn Israel back to Himself by raising up a great prophet, Elijah. Elijah decreed it would not rain again until he said so, and there was a three and a half year drought. At the end of this time Elijah came to Ahab to challenge the prophets of Baal and the Ashtoreth to a contest. The wicked king greeted the prophet of the Lord with a rebuke, "Is that you, O troubler of Israel?" Elijah replied, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and have followed the Baals" (1 Kings 18:17-18). Those who leave God's way to follow man's way cause trouble among the people of the Lord.

Elijah met the four hundred prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel to see if the Lord or Baal would consume the sacrifice by fire. Of course Baal, who was just an idol, did nothing, but the Lord sent down fire which consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the altar, and the water Elijah had poured on and around the altar. The people acclaimed the Lord as God, and Elijah killed the prophets of Baal. Then Elijah prayed to God, and a great rain storm ended the drought.

But Jezebel sought to kill Elijah. Elijah fled to Mt. Sinai. There the Lord appeared to him through "a still small voice." He told Elijah to anoint Hazael as King of Syria, Jehu as King of Israel, and Elisha as prophet to replace him. Through these three men the Lord would destroy the Baal worshipers from Israel.

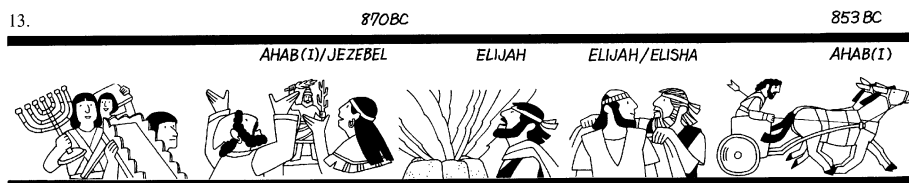
Ahab and Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, went to fight against Syria at Ramoth Gilead. Ahab was killed, just as Elijah and Micaiah prophesied.

Elijah ascended to heaven in a chariot of fire with horses of fire as Elisha, his servant and successor, looked on. As Elijah departed, Elisha cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen" (2 Kings 2:12). The Lord, as made known through His word by His servants the prophets, was Israel's true strength.

Elisha returned to Israel and worked eleven great miracles to prove his word was from God (2 Kings chapters 2-6). He even foretold the miraculous delivery of Samaria from a terrible Syrian siege, which was fulfilled exactly as Elijah foretold. In this siege Israelite

women ate their own children, just as Moses had prophesied (Deuteronomy 28:53-57; 2 Kings 6:26-29).

The wicked lineage



of Ahab still worshiped Baal, despite the work of Elijah and Elisha. So the Lord had Jehu anointed king,

and he killed all the family of Ahab, including Jezebel, and all the worshipers of Baal. But Jehu kept the calf worship begun by Jeroboam.

Jehoahaz his son became king and was evil. Thus, the Lord began to cut off part of Israel by Hazael of Syria. Jehoahaz did pray to the Lord then, and later the Lord sent a deliverer to Israel.

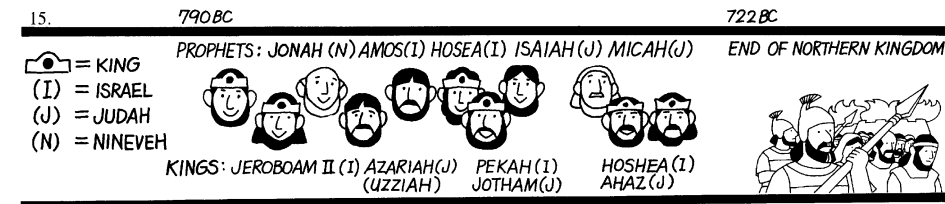
Jehoash, son of Jehoahaz, had three victories over Syria, in fulfillment of the last recorded words of Elisha. As Elisha was dying, Jehoash cried, "O my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen" (2 Kings 13:14).

Jeroboam II, son of Jehoash, became king. He was wicked also, but under his reign the Lord gave Israel the deliverance He had promised Jehoahaz. The kingdom became rich and powerful. Once again, Israel and Judah had all the land God had promised Abraham, just as they had under Joshua, David, and Solomon.

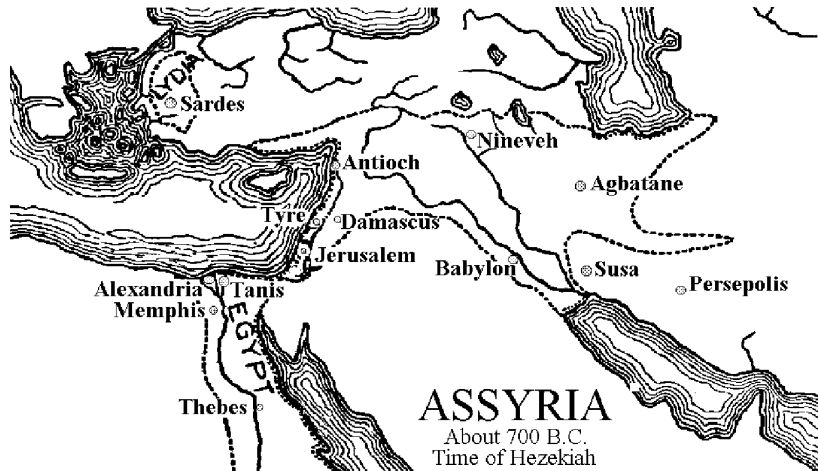
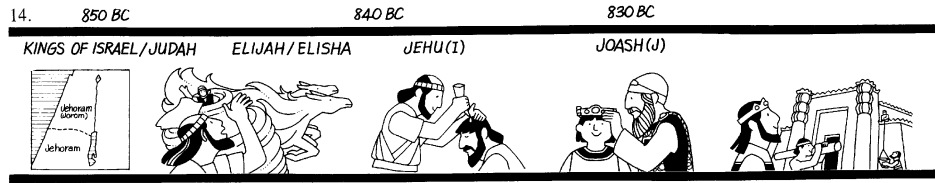
During these days the Lord sent Jonah to Nineveh, capital of Assyria, to command them to repent of their sins. He also sent the prophets Amos and Hosea to Israel. Assyria repented, but Israel did not. Thus, after Jeroboam, Israel quickly declined. The Lord now

gave up on the Northern kingdom, Israel.

In the ninth year of the reign of Hoshea, Sargon, King of Assyria, captured



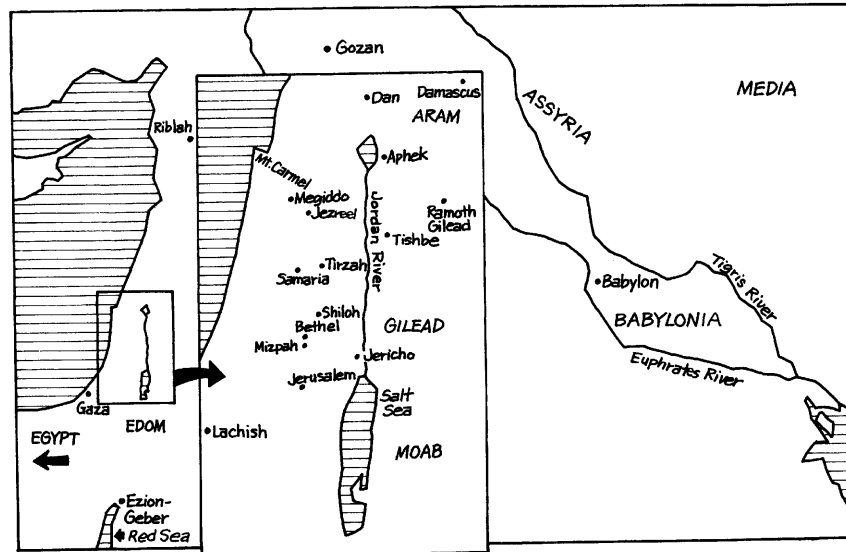
Samaria and took the Israelites into captivity. Sargon brought peoples from other parts of His empire and settled them in Samaria. These people intermarried with the Israelites who were left and combined their paganism with a corrupted form of the worship of the Lord. The result was the Samaritans we read about in the New Testament.



Judah

Rehoboam was faithful to the Lord for three years, and the priests, Levites, and other faithful worshipers of the Lord from Israel came to Judah. But after three years Rehoboam forsook the Lord. Judah also became idolatrous and immoral. Shishak of Egypt came with a huge army against Jerusalem and took away the treasures of the king and the Temple as well as the three hundred gold shields Solomon had

WHERE IT ALL HAPPENED (2 Kings)



hung in the armory. Rehoboam replaced them with bronze shields. Rehoboam and Jeroboam had constant war, despite the fact the Lord commanded Rehoboam not to invade Israel.

There were also 19 kings of Judah, but Judah continued another 136 years after the fall of Israel. Also, all the kings of Judah were of the lineage of David. There was one queen, an evil usurper of the house of Ahab, named Athaliah.

Rehoboam's grandson, King Asa, "did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did his father David" (1 Kings 15:11). During his rule "the high places were not removed. Nevertheless Asa's heart was loyal to the LORD all his days" (1 Kings 15:14). Zera the Ethiopian invaded Judah with a million man army, but because Asa called on the Lord, he defeated the Ethiopians with an army of 300,000. Asa restored the worship of the Lord. But in his later years, Asa used the treasuries of the Lord's house to make a treaty with Ben-Hadad of Syria against Baasha of Israel. When the seer Hanani rebuked him, Asa persecuted him and some of the people.

In some ways Jehoshaphat, the son of Asa, was one of the best kings of Judah. *Now the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the former ways of his father David; he did not seek the Baals, but sought the God of his father, and walked in His commandments and not according to the acts of Israel. Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah gave presents to Jehoshaphat, and he had riches and honor in abundance. And his heart took delight in the ways of the LORD; moreover he removed the high places and wooden images from Judah* (2 Chronicles 17:3-6).

Jehoshaphat taught the people throughout the land the law of the Lord. Judah became strong, and the surrounding nations feared them. He set up righteous judges in the land.

But Jehoshaphat allied himself to wicked King Ahab of Israel by taking Ahab's evil daughter Athaliah to be the wife of his son Jehoram. Jehoshaphat even went with Ahab to

fight the Syrians in the battle in which Ahab was killed. This unholy alliance almost led to the extinction of the royal house.

Jehoram followed the ways of Ahab, as did Jehoram's son Ahaziah. When Jehu killed Ahaziah, along with Jehoram of Israel, Athaliah killed Ahaziah's sons, her own grandsons, so she could usurp the throne. Baal worship, eliminated in Israel by Jehu, prevailed in Judah.

Jehosheba, daughter of King Jehoram of Judah and wife of the High Priest, Jehoiada, saved the infant Joash, one of the sons of Ahaziah, or all the male heirs would have been killed. When he was seven, Jehoiada brought Joash from hiding and had him proclaimed king and Athaliah killed. Baal worship was destroyed, the worship of the Lord was restored, and the Temple was repaired. But after Jehoiada died, Joash listened to the princes of Judah, who persuaded him to turn to idolatry. Joash even killed Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, for protesting against this. Thus a small Syrian army defeated a large army of Joash. When he was sick, his own servants murdered Joash.

Amaziah, son of Joash, followed the Lord but not with his whole heart. He defeated the Edomites. Thus, in his pride he challenged Jehoash of Israel to war, but Jehoash thoroughly defeated him. Finally, his own servants killed him.

Uzziah (Azariah) his son was a good king who obeyed the Lord. Thus, Judah became strong and defeated their enemies. But Uzziah became proud and went into the Temple to offer incense, a work only the priests could perform. The Lord struck him with leprosy, and he was isolated the remainder of his life.

Ahaz, the grandson of Uzziah, was terribly wicked. He sacrificed his own son to Baal. He was totally defeated by both the Syrians and Israel. Israel carried 200,000 of their kinsmen from Judah captive but returned them at the rebuke of the prophet Oded. Ahaz sought aid from mighty Assyria against Syria and Israel. This brought about the downfall of first Syria then Israel, but also led Tiglath-pileser of Assyria to invade Judah. Ahaz perverted the Temple into a place to worship the gods of Assyria.

Activities

I. Here are the definitions of the key words in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

1. dynasty - a succession of kings of the same line or family
2. siege - the setting of an army around or before a fortified place for the purpose of forcing it to surrender
3. treaty - formal agreement between nations
4. seer - one who has a vision, the older name for a prophet

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. the first sixty books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham
8. the ten plagues on Egypt

- 9. the Ten Commandments
- 10. the four part cycle during the period of the judges
- 11. the kings of the United Kingdom

III. Map Work: Locate each of these places on the map.

- | | | | | |
|-----------|---------------|------------------|------------|--------------|
| 1. Dan | 3. Phoenicia | 5. Syria | 7. Samaria | 9. Assyria |
| 2. Bethel | 4. Mt. Carmel | 6. Ramoth Gilead | 8. Nineveh | 10. Ethiopia |

IV. Class Reports: Young people should be selected to study ahead and tell each of these stories in class.

- 1. The Man of God Sent to Samaria (1 Kings chapter 13)
- 2. Elijah and the Prophets of Baal (1 Kings chapter 18)
- 3. Elijah and the Chariot of Fire (2 Kings chapter 2)
- 4. Elisha and the Shunamite Woman (2 Kings 4:8-37)
- 5. The Cleansing of Naaman (2 Kings 5:1-14)
- 6. Uzziah Becomes a Leper (2 Chronicles 26)

V. Place these Bible characters in proper time order.

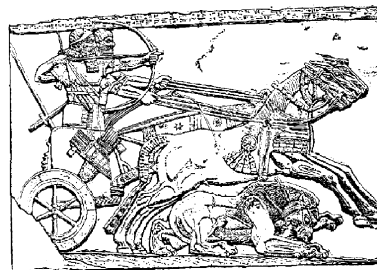
- | | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| 1. _____ | Ahab |
| 2. _____ | David |
| 3. _____ | Elijah |
| 4. _____ | Elisha |
| 5. _____ | Hoshea |
| 6. _____ | Jehoash (of Israel) |
| 7. _____ | Jehoahaz |
| 8. _____ | Jehu |
| 9. _____ | Jeroboam |
| 10. _____ | Saul |
| 11. _____ | Solomon |

Lesson Sixteen Judah Alone

2 Kings 18 - 25; 2 Chronicles 29:1 - 36:21
722 B.C. - 586 B.C.

Hezekiah

At the time Sargon of Assyria swept into Israel, the Northern kingdom, Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, had been king of Judah for six years. He reigned 29 years. In contrast with his evil father Ahaz, Hezekiah was one of the best kings of Judah. He worked diligently to restore Judah to the Lord and successfully resisted the power of Assyria, the mightiest nation in the Jewish world at that time.



It was no accident that the greatest of the literary prophets, Isaiah, was serving the Lord in Jerusalem in close alliance with King Hezekiah throughout his reign. Isaiah began to prophesy in the year King Uzziah died, ca. 750 B.C. until the death of King Hezekiah. Through the righteous rule of the king, and the mighty preaching of Isaiah and his less known, younger, country contemporary Micah, Judah remained loyal to the Lord and was spared destruction by Assyria.

Hezekiah called upon the people to renew their covenant with the Lord. Under the direction of King Hezekiah, the Levites and priests cleansed and restored the temple and restored the sacrifices to the Lord. Hezekiah restored the temple worship as King David had arranged it. The people throughout the land tore down all the high places where they had offered unlawful and idolatrous worship. The king summoned Israel throughout all Palestine to keep the Passover to the Lord in Jerusalem. They had the greatest Passover since the beginning of the reign of Solomon. The king restored the tithes and free will offerings for the support of the priests and Levites, and the people willingly followed his lead.

In the fourteenth year of the reign of Hezekiah, Sennacherib, King of Assyria, came against Judah with a great army and destroyed all the fortified cities of Judah. King Hezekiah agreed to submit to Assyria and sent King Sennacherib the huge payment of 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold he demanded. To do this, he had to strip the gold from inside the temple.

But this didn't satisfy Sennacherib. He sent his officials to Jerusalem to demand that they surrender the city and submit to being taken to another land. His officials shouted crude, insulting language to the Jewish officials on the wall of Jerusalem and blasphemed God. They did this in the Hebrew language so all the Jews could understand their threats.



King Hezekiah sent word of this to Isaiah, and Isaiah prophesied that Assyria would not be able to harm the city and that Sennacherib would return to his own land and there be killed by the sword. Hezekiah took the insulting, blasphemous letter of Sennacherib to the house of God, spread the letter out before the Lord, and prayed to the Lord for deliverance. Isaiah again promised him deliverance. During the night 185,000 Assyrian soldiers died in their

camp. Sennacherib returned to his capital, Nineveh, and later two of his own sons murdered him with swords as he worshiped in the house of his idol god, Nisroch.

Later King Hezekiah became mortally ill with a boil, and Isaiah told him he would die. Hezekiah wept and prayed fervently to the Lord, and the Lord revealed to Isaiah that Hezekiah would live another fifteen years. The Lord granted Hezekiah a stupendous sign that he would indeed live. He allowed the shadow of the sun to go backward ten degrees on the sun dial. Time went backward!

Later King Hezekiah did wrong by showing all his treasures to a delegation from the king of Babylon. Isaiah rebuked him and prophesied that in years to come the Jews would be carried captive to Babylon.

Manasseh

When Hezekiah died, his twelve year old son Manasseh became king and reigned 55 years. Manasseh was as wicked as Hezekiah was righteous. He was the worst king of Judah. He turned the people to every form of idolatry, false worship, and immorality and corrupted the temple into a place of idol worship. His rule was unjust and cruel. Because of Manasseh's very long, extremely evil reign, Israel became more wicked than the Canaanites they had displaced, and the Lord decided the nation would have to be destroyed.

During the latter part of Manasseh's reign, Assyria came against Judah and led Manasseh as a captive to Nineveh. There Manasseh repented and prayed to the Lord. The Lord allowed him to return to Judah, and he tried to undo the great harm he had caused. But it was too late. The people had become thoroughly corrupt, and Judah was doomed.

The prophet Habakkuk may have written his book during the reign of Manasseh.

Amon

At Manasseh's death, his son Amon ascended the throne. He was wicked and idolatrous, and after a reign of only two years his servants assassinated him.

Josiah

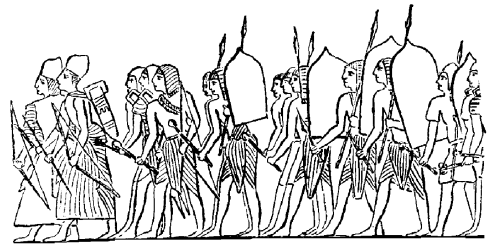
Josiah, son of wicked Amon, was perhaps the best king Judah ever had. He became king when he was just eight years old, and he began seeking the Lord when he was sixteen. At the age of thirty he began to cleanse the temple and all Israel of all the idolatrous and false worship that had been practiced from the times of Solomon, Jeroboam, Ahab, and Manasseh. He tore down all the high places, burned the idols, and defiled their places of false worship. He restored the temple and its worship, and all Israel observed a great Passover.

As they were cleaning out the temple, Hilkiah the high priest found a copy of the lost book of the law of Moses. Shaphan the scribe brought it to King Josiah and read from it the punishments with which the Lord had threatened Israel for idolatry and disobedience. King Josiah tore his clothes in sorrow, for he knew Judah had been committing all these sins. The king sent to Huldah the prophetess to inquire of the Lord if these curses would come upon Judah. She answered that they would but, because of Josiah's faithfulness, not in his day.

Then the king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. The king went up to the house of the LORD, with all the men of Judah and the

inhabitants of Jerusalem - the priests and the Levites, and all the people, great and small. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the LORD. Then the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book. And he made all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin take a stand. So the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. Thus Josiah removed all the abominations from all the country that belonged to the children of Israel, and made all who were present in Israel diligently serve the LORD their God. All his days they did not depart from following the LORD God of their fathers (2 Chronicles 34:29-33).

As Josiah's reign drew to a close, world events, under the providential hand of the Lord God, quickly turned toward Judah's downfall. Babylon revolted against the rule of Assyria, defeated Assyria, destroyed Nineveh, and pursued the Assyrian army to obliterate it. Pharaoh Necho of Egypt sided with Assyria, and raced northward with his army to fight Babylon. King Josiah went out to stop him at Megiddo, and the Egyptians killed him



During the days of Josiah, Zephaniah prophesied against the nations, and Nahum foretold the fall of Assyria. The great prophet Jeremiah began his work in the latter part of the reign of Josiah and mourned Josiah's death. All during the turbulent period that followed Josiah's death until Jerusalem was destroyed, Jeremiah unsuccessfully tried to get Judah to repent and accept Babylonian rule as punishment for their sins.

Jehoahaz

The people made Jehoahaz, son of Josiah, king upon his father's death. But Pharaoh Necho deposed and imprisoned him after a three month reign, put Judah under tribute, and made Jehoiakim his brother king. Jehoahaz and the kings who followed him were all very wicked. Now things fall apart in Judah quickly. Judah has sown the wind and will reap the whirlwind.

Activities

I. Here are the definitions of the key words in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

1. literary - those who wrote books of the Bible
2. tribute - an annual or stated sum of money or other valuable thing, paid by one prince or nation to another
3. talent - about 120 pounds
4. blasphemed - spoke of God in terms of impious irreverence; spoke reproachfully of God
5. sun dial - an instrument for measuring time by where the shadow of the sun is cast
6. repented - changed his mind as the result of godly sorrow
7. prophetess - woman who speaks for God
8. curses - statements that evil things will happen
9. providential - pertaining to foresight and care

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. All the books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham
8. the ten plagues on Egypt
9. the Ten Commandments
10. the four part cycle during the period of the judges
11. the kings of the United Kingdom

IV. Class Reports: Young people should be selected to study ahead and tell each of these stories in class.

1. A Great Passover - 2 Chronicles 30
2. The Lord Delivers Judah from Assyria - 2 Kings 18:13 - 19:37; 2 Chronicles 32:1-21; Isaiah chapters 36 - 37
3. The Sun Dial Turns Backward - 2 Kings 20:1-11; Isaiah 38
4. The Evil Reign of King Manasseh - 2 Kings 21:1-18; 2 Chronicles 33:1-19
5. Josiah Destroys Idolatry - 2 Kings 23:1-25; 2 Chronicles 34:1-7

V. Place these Bible characters in proper time order.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
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9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

- Ahab
- David
- Elijah
- Elisha
- Hezekiah
- Hoshea
- Isaiah
- Jehoash (of Israel)
- Jehoahaz
- Jehu
- Jeremiah
- Jeroboam
- Josiah
- Manasseh
- Saul
- Solomon

Lesson Seventeen **Babylonian Captivity** (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel chapters 1-5 (606 B.C. - 536 B.C.)

From the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah (627 B.C.) until the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C., the great prophet Jeremiah called on the Jews to repent. But neither the kings after Josiah nor the people would heed his warnings.

Jehoiakim (Eliakim)

Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon made King Jehoiakim his vassal. Jehoiakim served him three years, then revolted. In 605 B.C. the Babylonians took Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar bound Jehoiakim to carry him to Babylon as a prisoner but apparently accepted hostages instead, for Jehoiakim reigned eight more years, whereas some of the sons of Israel, including some of the royal family and the nobles were taken to Babylon at this time. The Babylonians also carried off some of the temple vessels to place in the pagan temple in Babylon.



Daniel and his companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were among the captives taken to Babylon in 605. They became advisors to the king, and Daniel rose to be second only to King Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel prophesied throughout the period of Babylonian dominance and into the Persian period.

At this time, Jeremiah prophesied that the Jews would serve Babylon seventy years (Jeremiah 25:11-12). He later told the captives to build houses, go about their business as at home, and pray for the welfare of their captors, and that the Lord would bring them back home after seventy years (Jeremiah 29:4-10).

After Jehoiakim had reigned eleven years (597 B.C.), Nebuchadnezzar came again, bound him, and either killed him or carried him to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar wanted Judah to prosper as a buffer between Babylon and Egypt, but the Jews refused to cooperate, foolishly placing their faith in Egypt to help them.

Jehoiachin (Coniah, Jeconiah)

Jehoiachin, Jehoiakim's son, reigned only three months. Nebuchadnezzar again besieged Jerusalem, and Jehoiachin and all his court went out of Jerusalem, surrendered, and were carried captive to Babylon. At this time Nebuchadnezzar took all the treasures of the temple to Babylon. He also took 10,000 of Judah's leading citizens to be captives in Babylon.

The prophet Ezekiel was among the captives taken at this time.

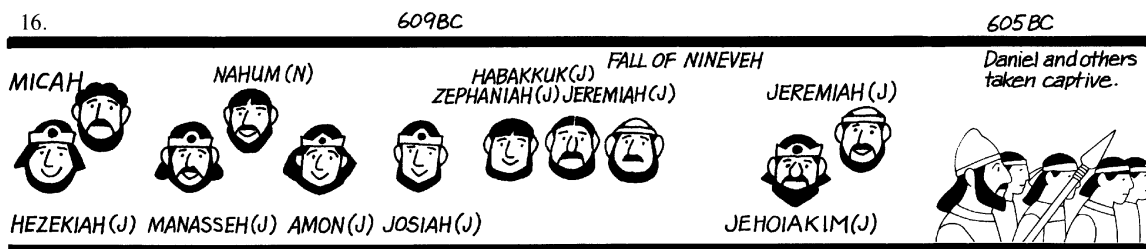
Thus, three great Old Testament prophets were contemporaries with differing roles: Jeremiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel. Jeremiah, the eldest of the three, was the prophet to the Jews in the land of Palestine, sorrowfully and vainly trying to get them to return to the Lord. Daniel was the prophet in the court of Gentile kings, prophesying to mighty rulers of empires about the universal rule of the Lord. Ezekiel was the prophet to the Jews in exile (3:4-5), preserving a faithful remnant to God from among the Dispersion (33:10-11).

Zedekiah

Nebuchadnezzar placed Mattaniah, another son of Josiah, on the throne and changed



his name to Zedekiah. Zedekiah served Babylon nine years then rebelled. After a two year siege, Jerusalem finally fell in 586 B.C. The Babylonians killed Zedekiah's sons before his eyes, then blinded him and led him off captive to Babylon. The temple was destroyed, the valuables of the temple were carried to Babylon, and the city of Jerusalem was destroyed. All who had survived except the poor of the land were taken to Babylon as captives. Because the Jews refused to obey Moses and the prophets, national Israel had been destroyed. Never again would Israel have an earthly king.



Gedaliah

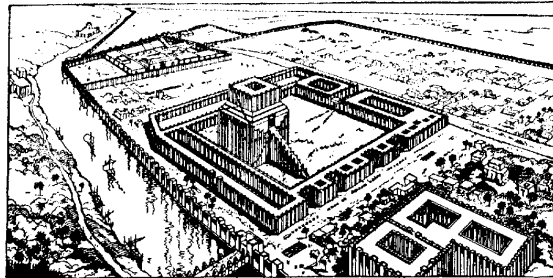
After he had destroyed Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar set up Gedaliah, who was not of the royal lineage of David, to be governor in Mizpah. But in the seventh month of his rule, Ishmael, who was of the royal lineage, in collusion with the king of Ammon, murdered Gedaliah. Then the Jews who remained in the land, in defiance of the preaching of Jeremiah, took Jeremiah with them and fled to Egypt.

Judah was now left a desolate land. Samaria was home to Gentiles who practiced idolatry and a corrupted worship of the Lord. Jews were scattered throughout the Middle East without a home land and without power. The temple was gone. Jerusalem was in ruins. There was no longer a king of the lineage of David.

Was the Lord unfaithful? Had He forgotten His promise to Abraham, to bless all the world through his descendant? Had He been unfaithful to Israel, to restore them to Canaan if they would repent? Had He turned His back on David in allowing the reign of his descendants to cease?

No, the Lord was just working out His plan in ways beyond human comprehension. Daniel was proclaiming the universal rule of the Lord in the courts of great Gentile kings, laying the foundation for the universal spread of the gospel six centuries later. Ezekiel was helping to maintain a faithful remnant in the Dispersion, so Israel could be restored and Christ, the seed of Abraham and seed of David, could come. God fearing Jews were meeting together to worship the Lord and study His Word in far off lands and beginning the synagogue system that provided places for Jesus and His apostles to preach and laid the ground work for the organization of congregations of Christians. The Jews were learning that the Lord's blessings came, not through being a Jew or going through an outward form of worship, but through personal faith and righteousness. God's plan was right on track.

As the end of the seventy years approached, a man named Cyrus, whom Isaiah had called by name about two centuries earlier (Isaiah 44:28 - 45:4), from far off Anshan Province in Persia, defeated his own grandfather and became King of Media. Cyrus led the combined armies of Media and Persia against mighty Babylon. As Nabonidus the King of Babylon was gone to Arabia, and his son Belshazzar was having a drunken feast with the Babylonian leaders, the army of Cyrus diverted the flow of the Euphrates, marched under the impenetrable wall of the great city, and took Babylon without a fight.



Daniel, in Babylon, knowing that the seventy years prophesied by Jeremiah was coming to a close, bowed in prayer to God, confessed Israel's sins, and pleaded that God would restore His people Israel and His sanctuary in Jerusalem (Daniel 9:1-19). Would Daniel's prayer be answered?

Activities

I. Here are the definitions of the key words in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)

1. vassal - one who owes loyalty to a superior
2. buffer - small country between two major powers that keeps them apart
3. Gentile - one who is not a Jew
4. Dispersion - The Jews scattered throughout foreign lands

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. All the books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham
8. the ten plagues on Egypt
9. the Ten Commandments
10. the four part cycle during the period of the judges
11. the kings of the United Kingdom

III. Map Work: Locate each of these places on the map.

- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| 1. Persia | 3. Arabia |
| 2. Media | 4. Euphrates |

IV. Class Reports: Young people should be selected to study ahead and tell each of these stories in class.

1. King Jehoiakim Burns Jeremiah's Scroll - Jeremiah chapter 36
2. Daniel Refuses to Eat the King's Delicacies - Daniel chapter 1
3. King Nebuchadnezzar Destroys Jerusalem - 2 Kings 25:1-21; Jeremiah 39:1-9
4. Shadrac, Meshach, and Abed-nego Refuse to Worship Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image - Daniel chapter 3
5. The Handwriting on the Wall - Daniel chapter 5
6. Daniel in the Lion's Den - Daniel chapter 6

V. Place these Bible characters in proper time order.

- | | |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| 1 _____ | Ahab |
| 2 _____ | Cyrus |
| 3 _____ | Daniel (beginning of ministry) |
| 4 _____ | David |
| 5 _____ | Elijah |
| 6 _____ | Elisha |
| 7 _____ | Ezekiel (beginning of ministry) |
| 8 _____ | Hezekiah |
| 9 _____ | Hoshea |
| 10 _____ | Isaiah |
| 11 _____ | Jehoash (of Israel) |
| 12 _____ | Jehoahaz |
| 13 _____ | Jehu |
| 14 _____ | Jeremiah |
| 15. _____ | Jeroboam |
| 16. _____ | Josiah |
| 17. _____ | Manasseh |
| 18. _____ | Nebuchadnezzar |
| 19. _____ | Saul |
| 20. _____ | Solomon |

Lesson Eighteen Restoration

**2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
536 B.C. - ca. 400 B.C.**

In 536 B.C. Israel was scattered throughout the Persian Empire, which covered the greatest land area of any Middle Eastern Empire up to this time, about two million square miles, roughly two thirds the size of the lower forty-eight States of America. But the time had come for a remnant to be restored to the Land of Promise, in fulfillment of the prophecies of Moses (Deuteronomy 30:1-5), Isaiah (Isaiah 44:21 - 45:7), and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 25:11-12; 27:19-22; 29:10).



Zerubbabel

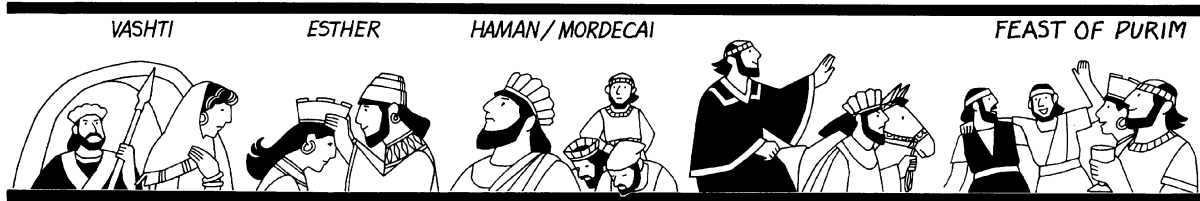
In 538 B.C. Cyrus, King of Persia, issued the decree for willing Jews to return and rebuild the Temple of God in Jerusalem. A great contribution was made by the Jews and by Cyrus to accomplish this. Forty-two thousand three hundred sixty Jews returned to Jerusalem under the leadership of Zerubbabel the governor. The Gentile populace of the land wanted to help, but Zerubbabel rejected them. They then opposed the work by discouraging the Jews and by hiring counselors to write the kings of Persia to try to get the work stopped. This opposition continued even after the time of Zerubbabel and into the reign of Artaxerxes I (465-425 B.C.). They succeeded in temporarily halting the building of the Temple, but Haggai and Zechariah prophesied to the people, encouraging them to finish the Temple. Under Zerubbabel's leadership the Jews resumed the work, overcame opposition, and completed the Temple in 515 B.C. The people joyfully worshiped God.

Esther

King Xerxes, known as "Ahasuerus" in Esther, ruled Persia from 485 to 464 B.C. He deposed his queen, Vashti, just before setting off in a great, spectacularly unsuccessful attempt to conquer Greece. Upon his return he conducted an empire wide beauty contest to select a new queen. The Jewish orphan girl Hadassah (Esther), raised by her cousin Mordecai, won, and became the Queen of Persia in 483 B.C.

Wicked Haman, the king's next in command, not knowing the queen was Jewish, planned the destruction of all the Jews. This was the greatest threat the descendants of Israel ever faced. Esther bravely foiled wicked Haman's scheme, the Jews were saved, many Gentiles were converted, the Jews' enemies were killed, and Mordecai replaced Haman as the

19. 460 BC



king's adviser. God cares for His people, where ever they are, throughout the whole world.

Ezra

Ezra came to Jerusalem from Babylon with a large number of Jews in 458 B.C. He was a skilled scribe in the Law of Moses, an expert in the Law, and a priest. He had diligently prepared himself to keep and to teach God's Law. He was commissioned by King Artaxerxes I of Persia in 458 B.C. to go from Babylon to Jerusalem to provide the finances to restore the worship of God in the Temple and to beautify the Temple, to set up rulers over Palestine, and to teach the people the Law of Moses.

Ezra was dismayed to find that the people, including many of the priests, had intermarried with the pagan inhabitants of the land, repeating the very mistake that began Israel's downfall under Solomon five centuries earlier. Under Ezra's leadership the people put away their foreign wives.

Nehemiah

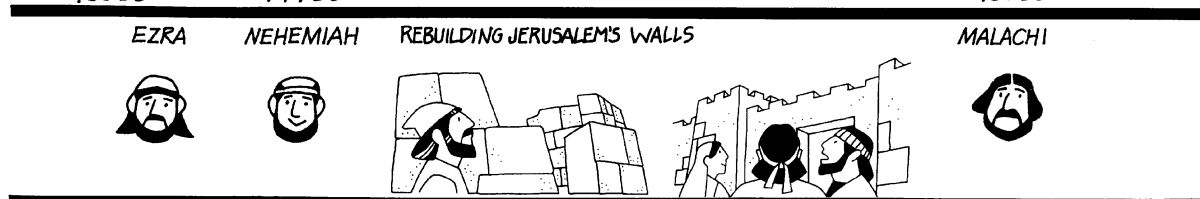
Nehemiah was cupbearer to King Artaxerxes I of Persia, who appointed him governor of Judah for twelve years, from 445 to 433 B.C. and then allowed him to return as governor again. Nehemiah loved his people the Jews deeply and was a man of prayer, courage, tireless energy in working for the Lord, extraordinary zeal for the Law of God, and generosity. Above all, he was a man of deep faith.

Nehemiah was serving the king in Shushan (Susa) the capital of Persia in 445 BC when word came to him of the desperate conditions of the Jews in Judah. Nehemiah wept, mourned, and prayed to God about this problem. King Artaxerxes granted his request to go to Jerusalem and rebuild the city. He was immediately opposed by the Gentiles in Palestine, led by Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arab. After secretly surveying the situation at night, Nehemiah revealed his plans to the leaders of the people. The people were willing to work and rebuilt the walls and gates of the city in an astonishing fifty-two days! In doing so they overcame the opposition of their enemies manifested in mockery,

20. 450 BC

444 BC

430 BC



threats, offers of compromise, and lies. They also had to overcome the sins of their own nobles, some of whom did not join in the work. The people accomplished this great task because God was with them and because they worked willingly. The Jews were then able to dwell safely in Jerusalem and in their cities around Palestine.

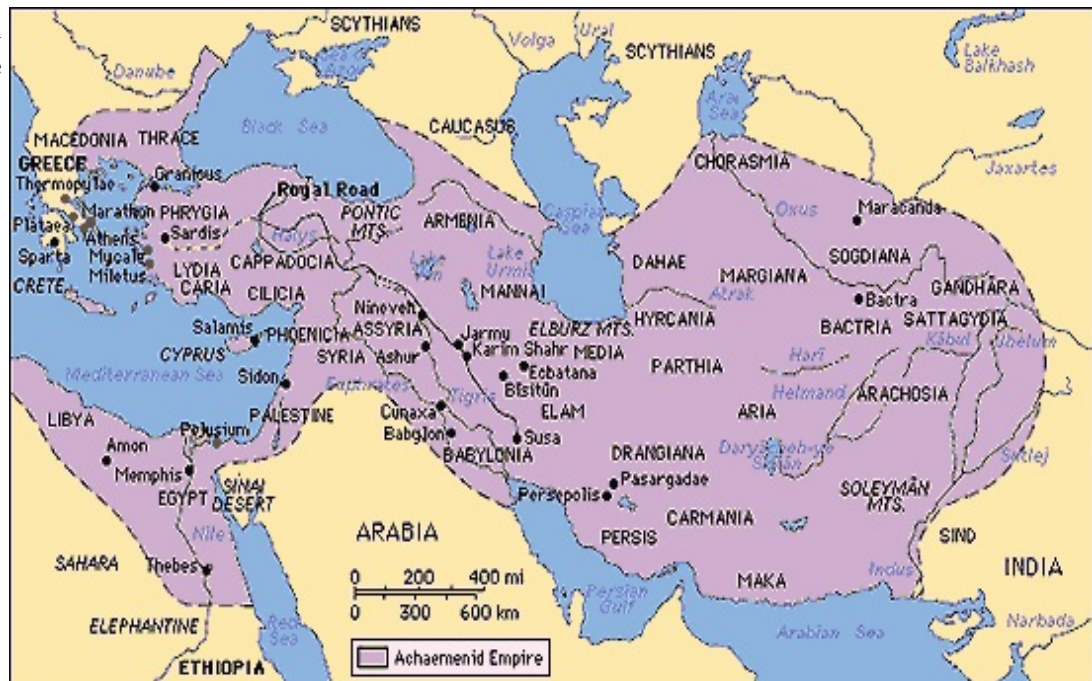
When this great work was completed, Ezra read and expounded the Law to the people. A great holy day was proclaimed, and the festival of booths was celebrated in a manner unknown since the days of Joshua. Israel separated themselves from foreigners and confessed their sins to God. Ezra led the people in renewing the covenant with the Lord and in supporting the priests and Levites. The leaders of the people and another tenth of the people were selected to dwell in Jerusalem, the holy city. The wall was dedicated with joy, and the Levites and priests received their portions.

Finally, Nehemiah, upon his return from Shushan, separated all Gentiles from the Temple, insured that the priests and Levites would be supported, restored the Sabbath, and forbade the people to marry the pagans of the land.

Around this time the prophet Malachi tried to revive the Jews from their lethargy by pleading with them to return to God..

Thus the Old Testament history comes to an end with the restoration of national Israel to the land. Zerubbabel rebuilt the Temple, Ezra restored the Law, and Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem.

Persian Empire



II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. all the books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham
8. the ten plagues on Egypt
9. the Ten Commandments
10. the four part cycle during the period of the judges
11. the kings of the United Kingdom
12. What did each of these people accomplish?
 - a. Zerubbabel
 - b. Esther
 - c. Ezra
 - d. Nehemiah

III. Map Work: Locate this place on the map.
Shushan (Susa)

IV. Class Reports: Young people should be selected to study ahead and tell each of these stories in class.

1. Zerubbabel Rebuilds the Temple - Ezra chapters 1 - 6
2. Esther Saves the Jews - Book of Esther
3. Ezra Restores the Law - Ezra chapters 7-10; Nehemiah chapters 8 - 10
4. Nehemiah Rebuilds the Walls of Jerusalem - Nehemiah chapters 1 - 6

Lesson Nineteen Silence

“Behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the LORD’” (Amos 8:11).

The history related by the canonical books of the Old Testament closes in ca. 400 B.C. There follows a four hundred year period in which there were no prophets in Israel and thus no inspired books to tell us about Israel. What we know about the Jews during this era is primarily from the apocryphal books, found in the Old Testament section of Catholic Bibles, and the books of the Jewish historian Josephus.

Persia (536 B.C. - 330 B.C.)

As the written record of the Old Testament comes to an end, tiny Israel, occupying a small area of Judah around Jerusalem, is an obscure part of the great empire of Persia. The Jews were loyal subjects of Persia and enjoyed the mild rule of the early Persian kings, who were the first ancient rulers to treat their conquered subjects kindly.

Beginning with the rule of Artaxerxes II (B.C. 404 - 358), the Persian Empire declined in power and glory.

Across the Aegean Sea lay the Greeks in the Southeastern corner of Europe. At the height of its power, Persia had temporarily ruled some of Greece, but in a series of famous battles, the Greeks had expelled the Persians from Europe.

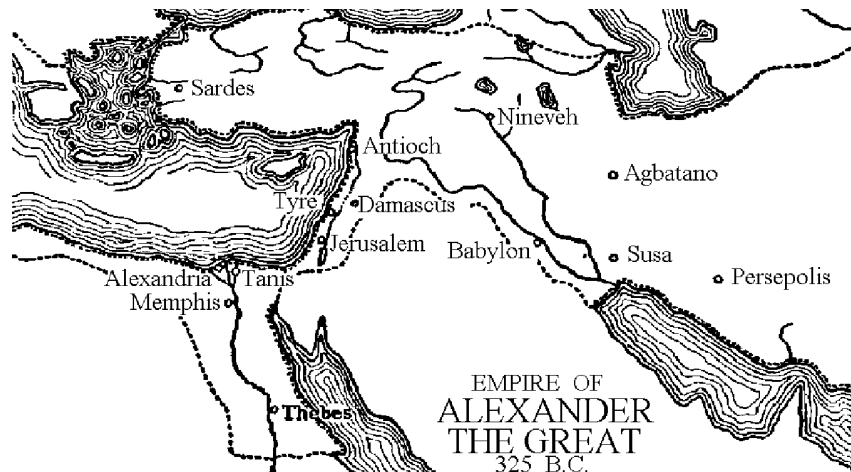
Greece (330 B.C. - 142 B.C.)

Philip of Macedon conquered the rest of Greece and united the Greeks under Macedonian rule. When he was assassinated in 336 B.C. , his twenty year old son, Alexander, who had been educated by the great Greek philosopher Aristotle, became king. Alexander believed Greek culture (Hellenism) to be the best in the world and determined to spread it everywhere.

Alexander crossed the Hellespont and invaded Persia. He met and defeated King Darius in a series of battles concluded by the decisive battle of Gaugamela in 331 B.C. In 330 B.C. he sacked the Persian capital Persepolis and brought the Persian Empire to an end.

Alexander and his army marched with stunning rapidity across Southern Asia conquering as they went. They even crossed the Indus River into India. There his troops refused to go farther, and Alexander returned westward to Babylon, where he died in 323 B.C. at 33 years of age, having put together the largest empire the world had known to that time.

Alexander’s two heirs were killed as young children, so four of his generals, Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Cassander, and Seleucus, after ten years of struggle, divided



up his empire among themselves. A period of constant warfare followed. Palestine, where the Jews lived, was between Syria, ruled by the Seleucids, and Egypt, ruled by the Ptolemies.

The Jews were nominally ruled by the Ptolemies from 323 - 198 B.C., but the Seleucids and the Ptolemies fought many wars for control of Palestine during this time, and rule over the little country went back and forth.

Alexander had built a city in Egypt bearing his own name which remains to this day, Alexandria. There Ptolemy Philadelphus built a great library, which made Alexandria the center of learning for the world. A large Jewish colony grew up there which became Greek speaking. Here the Old Testament was translated into Greek. This translation was called the "Septuagint" (abbreviated LXX), because tradition held that seventy Jewish scholars made the translation. This translation enabled the Gentiles to read the Old Testament, it is often quoted in the New Testament, and it was the Old Testament used by Christians for the first three centuries the church existed.

The Greek rulers forced the Greek language and culture on their subjects, including the Jews. They emphasized enjoying life and being cultured. They built planned cities full of statues of Greek heroes, gods, and goddesses, gymnasiums for exercise (where people exercised naked), theaters for the arts, stadiums for athletic contests, and hippodromes for chariot races. They dressed in the latest styles and openly engaged in immoral practices.

In 198 B.C. Antiochus III ("The Great") finally defeated the Ptolemies and gained control of Palestine for the Seleucids.

Antiochus Epiphanes ("the brilliant one"), as he called himself, the son of Antiochus III, was determined to enforce Hellenism (Greek culture) on the Jews. Many Jews loyal to the Law of Moses were killed or sold into slavery. He plundered the Temple and put an end to observance of the Jewish feast days. He forbade the Jews to observe the Sabbath, read the Scriptures, or circumcise their sons. He outraged Israelites by sacrificing a hog on the altar and building an altar in the Temple court to the Greek god Zeus.

In 167 B.C. a Seleucid representative required that the aged priest Mattathias offer sacrifices to pagan gods in his home village. When he refused, another Jew stepped forward to do so. Mattathias was enraged and killed both the king's emissary and the compromising Jew. Then he and his five sons fled to the hills.

Many other loyal Jews joined them, and the Maccabean revolt began. The family of Mattathias were called by the people the Maccabees ("hammerers"). Mattathias' third son, Judas, was chosen to lead a guerilla army. Judas won a series of brilliant victories over the armies of Antiochus. Antiochus eventually died of a loathsome disease without reconquering the Jews.

On December 25th, 165 B.C. the family of Mattathias rededicated the Temple to the Lord. This was memorialized by the eight day Feast of Dedication (cf. John 10:22), which is today called "*Hanukkah*."

Antiochus' successor, Lysias, defeated Judas in battle but needed to return to Antioch to meet a crisis. So he granted the Jews religious freedom but not political freedom.

Macabees (142 B.C. - 63 B.C.)

In 142 B.C. Simon, Judas' brother, was made high priest and the Jews were granted independence from Syria. Thus, under Maccabean rule the Jews became an independent nation for the first time since 606 B.C. and even enjoyed prosperity. During the rule of Simon's son, John Hyrcanus, Israel expanded to almost the extent of its size under David and Solomon.

During this time religious-political parties grew up in Israel. The "*Hasidim*" ("pious") believed in strict observance of the Law and no compromise with Hellenism. They became the Pharisees (separatists). This was the party popular with the people. Those who were willing to compromise with the Greeks in order to obtain power and prestige became the Sadducees. They

were a small party of politically powerful aristocrats who controlled the high priesthood. Strife between these two parties led to the decline of the nation and eventual loss of freedom.

Romans (63 B.C. - A.D. 105)

Rome, which was still a republic but going through great turmoil, was the powerful nation expanding from the west. Romans had already conquered Egypt and Greece and were poised to take Syria. When civil war broke out in Palestine over who would be high priest, the Roman general Pompey used the opportunity to take control for Rome in 63 B.C.

In 48 B.C. Julius Caesar defeated Pompey in the Battle of Pharsalus and was made dictator of Rome. Antipater, an Idumean (Edomite), who had backed Pompey, convinced Caesar of his loyalty, and Caesar made him Procurator of Judea. The Jews hated Antipater, and he was poisoned after one year of rule. Three years later Caesar was assassinated.

Herod, the son of Antipater, and thus an Idumean, won favor with Mark Antony, who appointed him governor of Judea. When Octavius was victorious over Antony in the Battle of Actium (31 B.C.) and became the first Emperor of Rome under the title Caesar Augustus, Herod managed to retain power. Herod married Mariamne who was descended from the Maccabees.

Herod was unscrupulous and suspicious of everyone. He had Mariamne and his own sons murdered. He tried to curry favor with the Jews by building them a magnificent Temple, but they hated him. He carried on a reign of terror.

The Lord God had now accomplished His purpose through the Jewish nation and several Gentile nations. The time and conditions were right. All things were now ready for the Christ to come into the world and for the universal kingdom of God to be established on earth.



Activities

- I. Here are the definitions of the key words in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)
 1. canonical - belonging to the group of books accepted as inspired of God
 2. apocryphal - religious writings which the Septuagint and Vulgate (with trivial differences) contain in addition to the writings constituting the Jewish and Protestant canon
 3. assassinated - murdered
 4. philosopher - one who employs reason and science to study reality
 5. Hellenism - Greek language and culture
 6. Septuagint - Greek translation of the Old Testament made in Alexandria, Egypt in 3rd century B.C.
 7. hippodromes - places in which horse races and chariot races were performed, and horses exercised
 8. Maccabees - "hammerers," descendants of Mattathias who ruled Judea
 9. guerilla - "hit and run" warfare carried on by irregular soldiers who do not officially represent a nation
 10. Feast of Dedication - eight day feast celebrating the purification and dedication of the Temple by Judas Maccabaeus after Antiochus Epiphanes had defiled it

11. *Hanukkah* - Hebrew word meaning “dedication,” Hebrew name for “Feast of Dedication”
12. *Hasidim* - “pious”
13. Pharisees - “separatists,” Jewish party (sect) which believed in strict observance of Law and traditions of Jewish fathers
14. Sadducees - Jewish party (sect) who were willing to compromise with the Greeks in order to obtain power and prestige, a small politically powerful group of aristocrats who controlled the high priesthood
15. Idumean - Edomite
16. Procurator- - Roman governor who represented the Emperor

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. all the books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham
8. the ten plagues on Egypt
9. the Ten Commandments
10. the four part cycle during the period of the judges
11. the kings of the United Kingdom
12. the king who introduced calf worship
13. the king who introduced Baal worship
14. the two great miracle working prophets of Israel
15. the great literary prophet and the king who worked together to save Judah from Assyria
16. the most wicked king of Judah
17. the king who restored the Law of the Lord to Judah
18. the three prophets during the captivity and to whom they prophesied
19. What did each of these people accomplish?
 - a. Zerubbabel
 - b. Esther
 - c. Ezra
 - d. Nehemiah
20. the nations, in order, that ruled the Jews during the period of silence
21. The man who conquered Persia and established the Grecian Empire
22. Seleucid ruler who severely persecuted the Jews
23. Popular name of Jewish family who led the revolt against the Seleucids
24. Idumaeen whom Caesar Augustus allowed to rule the Jews

III. Map Work: Locate these places on the map.

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Aegean Sea | 5. Indus River |
| 2. Macedonia | 6. Palestine |
| 3. Hellespont | 7. Alexandria |
| 4. Persepolis | 8. Rome |

IV. Class Reports: Young people should be selected to study ahead and tell each of these stories in class (You will need to read in an encyclopedia or history book).

1. Alexander the Great
2. Antiochus Epiphanes
3. Judas Maccabaeus
4. Herod

V. Place these characters in proper time order.

- | | |
|-----------|----------------------|
| 1. _____ | Alexander the Great |
| 2. _____ | Antiochus Epiphanes |
| 3. _____ | Antiochus the Great |
| 4. _____ | Artaxerxes II |
| 5. _____ | Herod |
| 6. _____ | John Hyrcanus |
| 7. _____ | Judas Maccabaeus |
| 8. _____ | Mattathias |
| 9. _____ | Philip of Macedon |
| 10. _____ | Pompey |
| 11. _____ | Ptolemy Philadelphus |
| 12. _____ | Simon |

Lesson Twenty **Life of Christ** **(Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts 1:1-11)**

“When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son” (Galatians 4:4). He was the Savior prophesied before by Isaiah (Luke 1:30-33; 2:11). Salvation is only through Him (Acts 4:10-12). He is the fulness of God’s plan for man (Colossians 1:19). God’s eternal plan of human redemption had entered the phase of preparation. The third and greatest of the three promises the Lord God had made to Abraham almost two thousand years previously was about to be fulfilled. The long awaited Seed of Woman, Seed of Abraham, Seed of Judah, Seed of David had come.

At the time Jesus was born Augustus Caesar, the first Roman Emperor, ruled the mighty Roman Empire, of which little Palestine was an insignificant part. Cruel Herod ruled Palestine as the King appointed by the Romans. Herod apparently died almost immediately after Jesus’ birth (4 B.C.). When Herod died, the Romans divided his kingdom between three of his sons. Archelaus ruled Judea and Samaria, Antipas ruled Galilee and Perea, and Philip was over the area Northeast of the Sea of Galilee. After ten years, the Romans deposed Archelaus for misrule, and Judea and Samaria became one Roman province ruled by a Roman procurator. Pontius Pilate, the fifth procurator of this region, ruled from 26 to 36 A.D.

The Jewish leaders were divided into parties. The Pharisees were the conservative party who held tightly to the traditions of the fathers and were self-righteous. The Sadducees were the priestly leaders who had inherited power and prestige and were unbelieving toward the spirit realm. The Herodians backed the rule of the Herod family. The Zealots were willing to kill Romans to gain Jewish independence.

The word translated “gospel” in the New Testament means good news. This term is used to describe the entire message which came through Christ, the New Testament. However, the books which record the life of Jesus - Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John - are popularly called “the Four Gospels.” They are the only authoritative sources of information on virtually all the life of Christ. These books are the only accurate sources of the historical facts of His life and the primary records of what He taught. They were “written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31).

Six months before Jesus was born, his cousin John was born to the aged priest Zacharias and his wife Elisabeth. John the Baptist was the promised forerunner who prepared the way for Jesus by preaching to the Jewish people they must repent to be prepared for the beginning of the promised Kingdom, which was about to be established.

In fulfillment of the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah, Jesus, the divine Son of God, was born of the virgin Mary in the village of Bethlehem, in the hill country five miles south of Jerusalem.

To escape Herod’s murder of the baby boys, Joseph, Mary’s husband, took his little family to Egypt. Then they returned to their home in the village of Nazareth in Galilee.

Jesus grew up like other children. The only incident we know of his childhood occurred when he was twelve. Joseph and Mary took Jesus with them to the Passover feast in Jerusalem. There He amazed the great



teachers of the law with His wisdom and knowledge and expressed to Mary his realization He was the Son of God. Otherwise, as all children should, he grew physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually, and was subject to His parents (He behaved toward Joseph as if he were His father) in all things. He even learned the carpenter's trade from Joseph.

When Jesus was thirty, He went to the Jordan River and was baptized by His cousin John. As He came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove. He then began His ministry.

Before Jesus began preaching, the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. He fasted forty days, after which Satan came to Him and tempted Him through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, all the ways in which we are tempted. Jesus overcame all these temptations by appealing to the Word of God. Of all men, Jesus Christ alone never sinned, and His life is our perfect example.

The ministry of the Master lasted only about three years. He never wrote a book, and He never traveled far from Palestine. Yet His three year ministry changed the course of history and brought hope and spiritual light to a hopelessly sinful, spiritually darkened world.

The Lord first taught in Judea, especially Jerusalem, the center of Judaism. There John first testified that Christ was the promised Savior, and He there called His first disciples, worked His first miracle, first cleansed the Temple, and spoke with Nicodemus, a Jewish ruler, about salvation.

Jesus then walked with his small group of disciples through Samaria to Galilee. Along the way in Samaria, He spoke with a sinful Samaritan woman about true worship and led her to believe and to testify to others.

When Jesus arrived in His home country, Galilee, He began His Galilean ministry, which lasted most of His career. He only returned to Jerusalem for the Jewish feasts, at which times He would engage in exchanges with the Jewish leaders and give evidence to all that He was the Son of God.

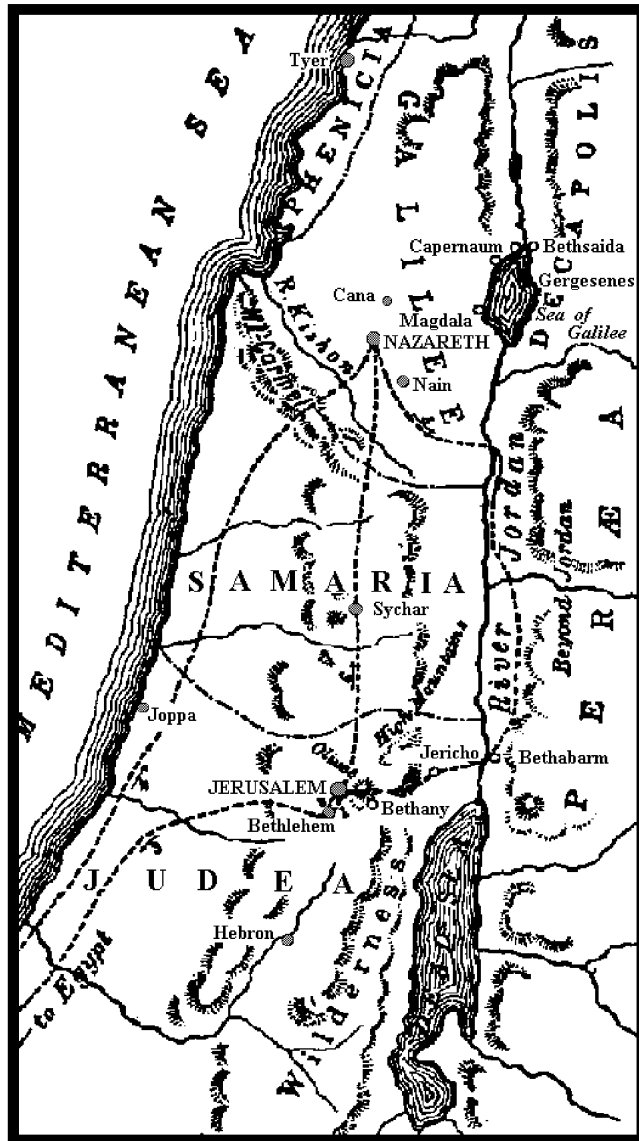


Figure 56 Journeys of Jesus

Jesus made Capernaum, on the Sea of Galilee, His headquarters and went with His disciples around Galilee three times, preaching, as John had, that people should repent because the Kingdom of God was about to come. He worked many great miracles to demonstrate He is the Son of God.

Jesus then chose twelve of His disciples to be apostles. He delivered to them and to all the disciples the principles of the Kingdom of Heaven in the Sermon on the Mount.

During His second circuit of Galilee, the Jewish leaders demonstrated their stubborn dishonesty by accusing Him of casting out demons by the power of Satan. Thereafter, Jesus characteristically taught in parables. These stories concealed His message from the dishonest, made His message understandable to the honest, and helped them remember His message.

The Master sent His twelve apostles out to preach only to the Jews about the soon to come Kingdom of God.

Jesus condemned the Pharisees because they bound their traditions and loosed God's Law. The main point of conflict was the Jewish traditions about the Sabbath. Jesus observed all God's Law and taught others to do so, but He refused to be bound by their traditions.

After His third trip around Galilee, Jesus withdrew into Gentile territory just North of Galilee. On a high mountain he was transfigured before Peter, James, and John, and the Father spoke from heaven, confirming Jesus is His only begotten Son.



Jesus finally went to Jerusalem for His last Passover supper, knowing He would be crucified at this time. He triumphantly entered Jerusalem as the long awaited Christ and once again cleansed the Temple.

During this last week of His life the Lord taught in the Temple, engaged in exchanges with the Jewish leaders, announced God's rejection of the Jewish nation as His Kingdom, predicted the destruction of the Jewish nation and the Temple, and warned His disciples to be ready for His return.

At His last Passover supper, the Master instituted the Lord's Supper for His disciples to remember His death. He spoke at length to His apostles, preparing them for His death and promising them the Holy Spirit to take His place as their Helper.



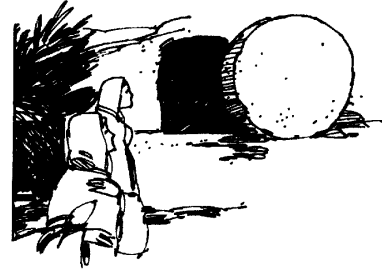
Jesus then retired to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray for strength to face the crucifixion. Judas, one of His apostles, betrayed the Lord by leading the Jewish leaders to the Garden.

The Jewish leaders arrested Jesus and took him to the house of the High Priest to try to find charges to bring against Him. Early Friday morning of the Passover week they took Him to the Roman governor Pilate and accused Him of trying to be a king in violation of Roman rule. Pilate knew the charges were false, but he lacked the courage to dismiss them. He sent Jesus to Herod, who mocked the Lord and sent Him back to Pilate. Then Pilate, unwilling to resist the clamor of the Jews, condemned Jesus to die.

The soldiers mocked and beat Jesus and put a crown of thorns on His head. They took Him to Calvary and crucified Him between two thieves.

Jesus died for the sins of the world. He willingly gave Himself as the only sacrifice that will take away our sins.

He was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, a tomb that had never been used for burial. A large stone was rolled across the mouth of the cave, the Roman seal was placed on the stone to prevent anyone from tampering with it, and a Jewish guard was posted to insure no one touched the stone.



There the body of Jesus Christ remained for three days, according to the Jewish way of counting days. But early on the first day of the week, the stone was rolled away, and Jesus arose from the dead.

He appeared repeatedly to His apostles and others for forty days. They saw Him, gazed intently at Him, heard Him speak, and even touched Him. His resurrection from the dead is the ultimate proof He is the Christ, the Son of God.

The Lord, claiming all authority in heaven and earth, delivered to His apostles the Great Commission to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”



After forty days, while with His disciples on the Mount of Olives, He ascended with the clouds from their sight. He has returned to Heaven where He now reigns as Lord of lords and King of kings. Some unknown day He will return in the same way He left to receive His faithful disciples to be with Him in Heaven. “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Activities

- I. Here are the definitions of the key words in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)
1. Emperor - title of the rulers of the Roman Empire
 2. Pharisees - strictest sect of the Jews; believed in angels, spirits, and resurrection; held traditions of the Jewish fathers
 3. Sadducees - wealthy and politically powerful sect of the Jews; denied angels, spirits, and resurrection
 4. Herodians - Jewish political party which favored Herod Antipas
 5. Zealots - part of the sect of the Pharisees who were extreme in their bitter antagonism to the Romans, who constantly fanned the flames of Jewish rebellion; term literally means one who is uncompromising in his party loyalty
 6. gospel - good news
 - a. message of Jesus and John that the Kingdom of Heaven was about to be established
 - b. message of the Great Commission of salvation through Jesus Christ
 7. tempted - tested by being enticed to sin
 8. lust of the flesh - desires that arise from within
 9. lust of the eyes - desires that come through our senses
 10. pride of life - thinking more of ourselves than we ought
 11. apostles - those sent with authority
 12. parables - stories about familiar things in the natural realm that illustrate spiritual truths
 13. transfigured - changed in form

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. all the books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham
8. the ten plagues on Egypt
9. the Ten Commandments
10. the four part cycle during the period of the judges
11. the kings of the United Kingdom
12. the king who introduced calf worship
13. the king who introduced Baal worship
14. the two great miracle working prophets of Israel
15. the great literary prophet and the king who worked together to save Judah from Assyria
16. the most wicked king of Judah
17. the king who restored the Law of the Lord to Judah
18. the three prophets during the captivity and to whom they prophesied
19. What did each of these people accomplish?
 - a. Zerubbabel
 - b. Esther
 - c. Ezra
 - d. Nehemiah
20. the nations, in order, that ruled the Jews during the period of silence
21. the Roman Emperor at the time Jesus was born
22. the King over Palestine when Jesus was born
23. the Roman governor when Jesus was crucified
24. the two main parties of the Jews

III. Map Work: Locate these places on the map.

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Judea | 7. Nazareth |
| 2. Samaria | 8. Capernaum |
| 3. Galilee | 9. Garden of Gethsemane |
| 4. Perea | 10. Calvary |
| 5. Sea of Galilee | 11. Mount of Olives |
| 6. Bethlehem | |

IV. Class Reports: Young people should be selected to study ahead and tell each of these stories in class

1. The Birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-7)
2. Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13)
3. Jesus Talks with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21)

4. Plucking Grain on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-8)
5. Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12)
6. The Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:3-23; Mark 4:3-25; Luke 8:5-18)
7. Jewish Rulers Try to Ensnare Jesus (Matthew 22:15-46)
8. Jesus Feeds 5000 (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:33-44; Luke 9:11-17; John 6:2-14)
9. Jesus Raises Lazarus (John 11:1-46)
10. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:44-49)

V. Place these Bible characters in proper time order.

- | | |
|-----------|----------------------|
| 1. _____ | Alexander the Great |
| 2. _____ | Antiochus Epiphanes |
| 3. _____ | Antiochus the Great |
| 4. _____ | Artaxerxes II |
| 5. _____ | Herod |
| 6. _____ | Jesus |
| 7. _____ | John Hyrcanus |
| 8. _____ | John the Baptist |
| 9. _____ | Judas Maccabaeus |
| 10. _____ | Mattathias |
| 11. _____ | Philip of Macedon |
| 12. _____ | Pompey |
| 13. _____ | Ptolemy Philadelphus |
| 14. _____ | Simon |

Lesson Twenty-one

The Spread of the Gospel

(Acts)

Shortly before Jesus Christ ascended to His Father He had commanded His apostles “not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the” baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5). He had previously promised not to leave them as orphans but to send the Holy Spirit to replace Himself as their Helper (John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15).

They asked Him if He would restore the kingdom to Israel at that time. He would not give them a time, but He gave them the key to know when the kingdom would be established by coupling the beginning of the kingdom with the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them. In harmony with the Great Commission, their job was to be witnesses of His resurrection from Jerusalem “to the end of the earth.”

While the apostles waited in Jerusalem for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, they selected Matthias to take the place of Judas as an apostle.

Jerusalem

Ten days after the Lord went back to heaven, on the day of Pentecost, when many thousands of Jews were gathered in Jerusalem from around the world, the Holy Spirit did indeed come upon the apostles. The apostle Peter took the leading role as speaker. He proved to His audience that Jesus is the Lord by appealing to the evidence of the miracles Christ performed, His fulfillment of prophecy, and His resurrection from the dead, of which the apostles were witnesses. He commanded them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). Those “who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand” became disciples of Christ.

This band of disciples all remained in Jerusalem and were taught daily by the apostles. They worshiped together regularly and gave their money to the apostles to share with the disciples who were in need.

On that memorable Pentecost, with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the powerful preaching of the gospel, and the faith and obedience of three thousand souls, the gospel of salvation through Christ was first preached, the kingdom of God was established on earth in the hearts of those who accepted the gospel message by faith, repentance, confession, and baptism, and the church of Christ, His body of saved people, was begun.

From that point on, for the following thirty years recorded in the book of Acts, we read how the gospel was carried by apostles, prophets, evangelists, and disciples to the whole world, how many people became disciples of Christ, and how the church - those who were saved - lived, worshiped, worked, and were organized.

At first the disciples were confined to Jerusalem. There, through the preaching of the apostles, their number grew spectacularly. They overcame threats and persecution by the Jewish council and sin and social divisions within.

Stephen aroused opposition from a synagogue of Jewish proselytes through his preaching. They brought him before the council to be tried on false charges. His defense, in which he proved to the Jewish rulers that they were continuing Israel’s history of rebellion against God by rejecting Christ, so enraged the Jewish leaders that these respected jurists

became an angry lynch mob. They rushed Stephen outside the city and stoned him to death. A highly respected young Jew named Saul of Tarsus took part in this horrible crime by holding the coats of those who cast stones at Stephen.

Judea and Samaria

After the death of Stephen a great persecution of the disciples by the Jews broke out in Jerusalem. Saul fervently took the lead in trying to eradicate all disciples of Jesus.

All the disciples except the apostles fled Jerusalem, many undoubtedly returning to their far away homes, carrying the gospel with them to these remote places. Luke, the author of Acts, relates how, at this time, the gospel was spread to Samaria, Ethiopia, throughout Judea, and to Antioch, the third largest city in the Roman Empire.

As Saul was on his way to Damascus to arrest disciples and return them to Jerusalem for trial, the Lord appeared to him in a vision. He instructed Saul to go into Damascus to be told what to do. The Lord sent Ananias to Saul, and Ananias instructed him, “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). Saul not only became a disciple, he also became an apostle of Christ. He turned his fervor from trying to destroy the church to being the most zealous apostle.

The disciples to this point were all Jews or Jewish proselytes. They had not understood that salvation through Christ is for all people. So the Lord sent Peter to Cornelius, a godly Roman centurion, to preach the gospel to him, his family, and his friends. The Holy Spirit came upon this Gentile audience in the same manner He had come upon the apostles on Pentecost. Thus, the disciples learned that God accepts all people of every nation, race, and language on the same basis, and that we must do the same.

The church in Antioch was now growing. Barnabas and Saul began working together here teaching the disciples. It was at this time in Antioch that disciples of Christ first received the name “Christians.”

Time Line of Acts

A.D. 33	A.D. 36	A.D. 41	A.D. 42	A.D. 44
Church Begins	Saul Converted	Cornelius Converted	Gospel to Antioch	Alms from Antioch to Judea

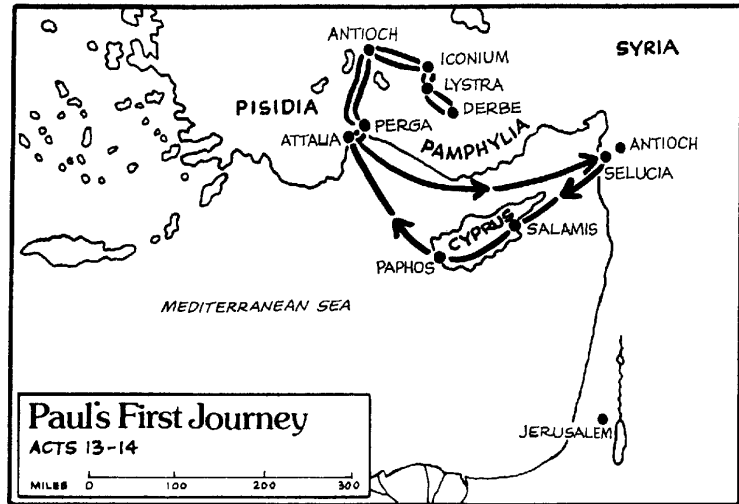
Herod Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great who sought to kill the infant Jesus, was at this time King over Judea. He decided to please the Jews by persecuting disciples of the Lord. Thus he killed the apostle James. When he saw this pleased the Jewish people, he arrested Peter, intending to have him murdered during the Passover celebration. But an angel of the Lord released Peter from prison. After this Herod died a horrible, disgusting death.

To the End of the Earth

Paul's First Journey

As Saul, Barnabas, and other prophets were teaching in Antioch, the Holy Spirit instructed them to send out Barnabas and Saul. They traveled to Cyprus and preached across that island. Here Saul began to be called "Paul." Then they traveled to Southern Asia Minor, to Antioch of Pisidia, preaching to both Jews and Gentiles there, and at Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Everywhere Paul and Barnabas preached, unbelieving Jews persecuted them.

After the preachers had been in Derbe, they returned through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, and appointed elders in each church. The organization God has given to His people is independent, local congregations with elders overseeing each church.



Paul and Barnabas then returned to Antioch of Syria from where they had been sent out and reported their work to the church.

Controversy Over the Law

After Paul and Barnabas had been at Antioch a long time, some men came there from Jerusalem teaching that Gentiles had to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses to be saved. This would have made the church just another Jewish sect, and it was the most important issue the beginning church faced. Paul and Barnabas disputed with these men, but the brethren at Antioch sent them to Jerusalem to see what the apostles and brethren in Jerusalem taught. The apostles and elders of the church in Jerusalem came together to discuss the matter, then, along with Paul and Barnabas, and after the other side presented their views, gave their conclusion and the reasons for it to the congregation in Jerusalem. The apostles, elders, and church agreed that Gentiles did not have to be circumcised or keep the law but that they had to abstain from the sinful Gentile practices of idolatry, fornication, and eating blood. They sent a letter with this proclamation by apostolic authority to other congregations. This letter, contained in Acts 15:23-29 and sent out about A.D. 50, is probably the earliest portion of New Testament Scripture.

Paul's Second Journey

Soon after Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, they decided to set out on another preaching trip. They strongly disagreed over whether they should take John Mark, so they



decided to work separately. Barnabas and Mark went to Cyprus, whereas Paul and Silas set out by land through Syria and Cilicia.

As Paul and Silas journeyed through Iconium, young Timothy joined them. In Troas the physician Luke, author of Luke and Acts, entered the traveling company.

By divine call, they passed by several areas in Asia Minor and sailed across the Aegean Sea to Philippi in

Macedonia. The evangelists preached in Philippi, the first recorded example of the gospel being preached in Europe, and began a congregation there and in Thessalonica and Berea. Then they traveled into Achaia, where Paul preached in Athens and then in Corinth, where he remained a year and a half. From there Paul journeyed to Jerusalem, then returned to Antioch of Syria.

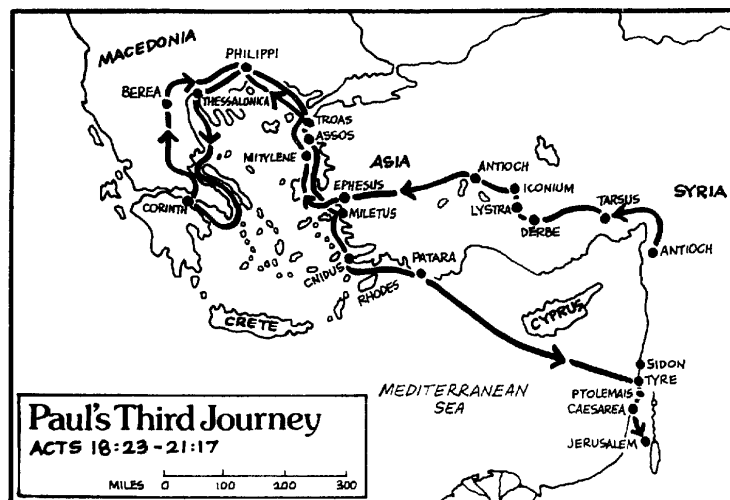
Paul's Third Journey

Paul did not remain in Antioch long but soon retraced his steps through Galatia and Phrygia strengthening the disciples. He came to the great Asian city of Ephesus and remained for over two years. From there he went through Macedonia and Greece again.

On this third journey Paul was taking a contribution from Gentile congregations for the needy Christians in Jerusalem. This would encourage the Jewish disciples to love their Gentile brethren.

Then the apostle sailed back across the Aegean and stopped first at Troas, then at Miletus. At Miletus he summoned the elders of the church at Ephesus and delivered to them a stirring address that summarized the work of elders and of preachers.

Though he was warned by prophets that he faced imprisonment in Jerusalem, Paul pressed on to Tyre, Ceasarea, and finally Jerusalem. There he and the messengers of the churches delivered the contribution from Gentile churches to the elders



of the church in Jerusalem.

Time Line of Acts

A.D. 50	A.D. 50-53	A.D. 53-58
Controversy over the Law	Paul's Second Journey	Paul's Third Journey

Prison in Jerusalem

Unbelieving Jews used the occasion of Paul being in the Temple with other Jews to incite a riot and to try to kill Paul. Paul was rescued by Roman soldiers, but, though Paul tried to appeal to the Jews by relating on the guard house steps his own witness to Christ, they would not listen, but continued to riot, and the Roman commander put Paul in prison.

The following day the commander took Paul before the Jewish council, hoping to learn why they wanted to kill Paul. But this august body dissolved into a shouting match between factions, and the commander had to rescue Paul again.

Prison in Caesarea

The Roman commander learned of a desperate attempt to assassinate Paul, so, under heavy guard, he took Paul by night to the Roman headquarters at Caesarea. There Paul appeared before the Roman governor Felix and defended himself from the accusations of Tertullus, a lawyer hired by the Jews.

Felix deferred a judgment and later heard Paul speak concerning the faith. He conversed often with the apostle, hoping to receive a bribe for Paul's release. Of course, Paul wouldn't do this, so after two years, when Festus replaced Felix as governor, Paul was still in prison.

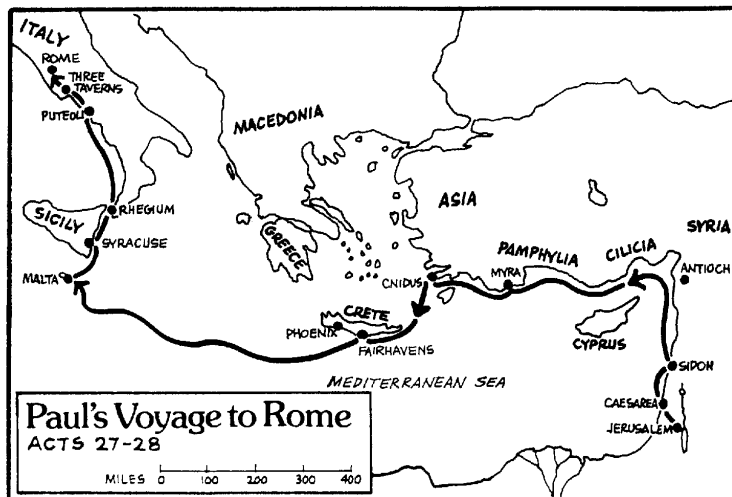
Festus tried to gain favor with the Jews by asking Paul to go to Jerusalem for trial. Paul knew this would mean his death, so he exercised the right he had as a Roman citizen, and appealed his case to Caesar himself.

Festus now was obligated to send Paul to Rome to appear before Caesar, but he was in the embarrassing situation of having no charges to send with him. He was then visited by King Agrippa, son of Herod Agrippa I who had murdered the apostle James, and Agrippa's sister, Bernice. Festus knew King Agrippa understood the affairs of the Jews, so he asked the king to hear Paul, to which King Agrippa agreed.

To this noble audience the apostle simply related the story of his own conversion to Christ and even appealed to King Agrippa to become a Christian.

Journey to Rome

Paul the prisoner was sent by ship across the Mediterranean Sea toward Rome for trial. The ship encountered a fierce winter storm and, after many days of hopeless drifting, was wrecked on the island of Malta. In fulfillment of an angelic promise to Paul, all 276 passengers were saved. After three months Paul was put aboard another ship to Italy.



Prison in Rome

Paul was given special privileges as a prisoner in Rome and allowed to live in a rented house with a Roman guard. He spoke to the chief Jews of the city, received visitors, and even managed to convert some within the Roman guard and the household of Nero, the Emperor at that time.

After two years imprisonment in Rome, the inspired history of Acts comes to a close. By this time the

Christians had fulfilled the Great Commission and had taken the gospel to the world (Mark 16:15; Colossians 1:5-6,23).

Time Line of Acts

A.D. 58	A.D. 58-60	A.D. 60-61	A.D. 61-63	A.D. 63
Paul in Prison in Jerusalem	Paul in Prison in Caesarea	Paul Goes to Rome	Paul in Prison in Rome	Acts Closes

Activities

- I. Here are the definitions of the key words in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)
 1. witnesses - those who testify what they have seen and heard
 2. Pentecost - means, "the fiftieth day," Old Testament "Feast of Weeks," the second of the three great Jewish feasts, celebrated at Jerusalem yearly, the seventh week after the Passover, in grateful recognition of the completed harvest
 3. proselytes - converts from one religion to another
 4. council -the Sanhedrin, the great council at Jerusalem, consisting of the seventy one members, viz. scribes, elders, prominent members of the high priestly families and the high priest, the president of the assembly. The most important cases were brought before this tribunal, inasmuch as the Roman rulers of Judaea had left to it the power of trying them, and also of pronouncing sentence of death, with the limitation that a capital sentence pronounced by the Sanhedrin was not valid unless it was confirmed by the Roman procurator.
 5. centurion - a commander of 100 men in the Roman army
 6. Gentiles - literally, "nations," Jewish word for all non Jews
 7. elders - literally, "older men," overseers and spiritual shepherds in the local church
 8. Scripture - literally, "a writing, thing written," technical word for the written word of God

II. Recite in Class:

1. the five divisions of the Old Testament and the five divisions of the New Testament
2. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
3. the periods of Bible history
4. all the books of the Bible in order
5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
7. the three divine promises to Abraham
8. the ten plagues on Egypt
9. the Ten Commandments
10. the four part cycle during the period of the judges
11. the kings of the United Kingdom
12. the king who introduced calf worship
13. the king who introduced Baal worship
14. the two great miracle working prophets of Israel
15. the great literary prophet and the king who worked together to save Judah from Assyria
16. the most wicked king of Judah
17. the king who restored the Law of the Lord to Judah

18. What did each of these people accomplish?
 - a. Zerubbabel
 - b. Esther
 - c. Ezra
 - d. Nehemiah
19. the nations, in order, that ruled the Jews during the period of silence
20. the Roman Emperor at the time Jesus was born
21. the King over Palestine when Jesus was born
22. the Roman governor when Jesus was crucified
23. the two main parties of the Jews
19. the apostles of Christ
20. Mark 16:15-16
21. three things that began on the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection

III. Map Work: Locate these places on the map.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Ethiopia | 11. Troas | 21. Phrygia |
| 2. Antioch of Syria | 12. Aegean Sea | 22. Asia |
| 3. Damascus | 13. Philippi | 23. Ephesus |
| 4. Cyprus | 14. Macedonia | 24. Miletus |
| 5. Antioch of Pisidia | 15. Thessalonica | 25. Tyre |
| 6. Iconium | 16. Berea | 26. Ceasarea, |
| 7. Lystra | 17. Achaia | 27. Rome |
| 8. Derbe | 18. Athens | 28. Mediterranean Sea |
| 9. Syria | 19. Corinth | 29. Malta |
| 10. Cilicia | 20. Galatia | |

IV. Class Reports: The book of Acts contains a number of "cases of conversion," examples of how lost people were saved, became disciples, and were added to the church. Young people should be selected to study ahead and tell each of these stories in class.

1. Jews on Pentecost - Acts 2:1-41
2. Samaritans - Acts 8:5-13
3. Ethiopian Eunuch - Acts 8:26-40
4. Saul of Tarsus - Acts 9:1-18; 22:1-16; 26:12-18
5. Cornelius - Acts 10:1 - 11:18
6. Lydia - Acts 16:13-15
7. Philippian Jailor - Acts 16:16-34
8. Bereans - Acts 17:10-12
9. Corinthians - Acts 18:1-8
10. Ephesians - Acts 19:1-7

V. Match the following.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. _____ Peter commanded the audience on Pentecost to do this. | A. Christians |
| 2. _____ Ananias told Saul to do this. | B. the whole world |
| 3. _____ The disciples were first given this name in Antioch. | C. "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." |
| 4. _____ God has given His people this organization. | D. elders |
| 5. _____ These men are to be overseers and shepherds in each congregation. | E. Must Gentiles be circumcised and keep the Law to be saved? |
| 6. _____ This controversy threatened the early church | F. independent, local congregations |
| 7. _____ The first century church took the gospel this far. | G. "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" |

VI. Place these events in Acts beside the proper date.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. _____ A.D. 33 | A. Beginning of Church in Antioch |
| 2. _____ A.D. 36 | B. Paul's Journey to Rome |
| 3. _____ A.D. 41 | C. Conversion of Saul of Tarsus |
| 4. _____ A.D. 42 | D. Acts Closes |
| 5. _____ A.D. 44 | E. Paul's Second Journey |
| 6. _____ A.D. 50 | F. Paul in Prison in Jerusalem |
| 7. _____ A.D. 50-53 | G. Church Established |
| 8. _____ A.D. 53-58 | H. Paul's Third Journey |
| 9. _____ A.D. 58 | I. Paul in Prison in Rome |
| 10. _____ A.D. 58-60 | J. Alms from Antioch to Judea |
| 11. _____ A.D. 60-61 | K. Conversion of Cornelius |
| 12. _____ A.D. 61-63 | L. Paul in Prison in Caesarea |
| 13. _____ A.D. 63 | M. Controversy over the Law |

Lesson Twenty-two Letters to Christians

When the Lord Jesus Christ was preparing His apostles for His own eminent death during their last Passover supper together in the upper room in Jerusalem, He promised to send them the Holy Spirit as their “Helper” in His absence (John 14:16-17). The Holy Spirit would give them a perfect memory of the things their Master had spoken to them (John 14:26), enable them to testify of Him (John 15:26-27), guide them into all truth (John 16:13-15), and give them the ability to foretell the future (Ibid). Furthermore, the Spirit would give them the power to confirm the Word they proclaimed by mighty miracles (Mark 16:17-18).

The Lord kept His promise. On the first Pentecost after His ascension on high, the Holy Spirit came with mighty power upon the twelve (Acts 2:1-4). They were guided into all the truth of the Gospel (1 Corinthians 2:6-13; 2 Peter 1:2-4). They bore witness to Christ (Acts 2:22-42; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8) and prophesied the future (e.g. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4), and their teaching and testimony were miraculously confirmed (Mark 16:19-20; Hebrews 2:1-4).

Furthermore, through the laying on of the hands of the apostles, other Christians received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14-17; 19:1-7; Romans 1:11-12; 2 Timothy 1:6). In this way the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit was extended to a second generation of disciples (1 Corinthians 12:7-11).

But it was the intention of the Lord that the message of the Gospel would be for the whole world until the end of time (Matthew 28:19-20). After the deaths of the apostles and those who had received spiritual gifts from the apostles, how would the Gospel be kept pure and carried to the world in each succeeding generation?

Of course, the Lord knew this problem would arise, and He made the necessary provisions to meet the need. The apostles and prophets of the first century realized that they would soon be gone and that with their deaths the age of inspired men would cease. They left behind an inspired book, the New Testament, to take the place of inspired men. The apostle Paul wrote letters to churches and to individual Christians so they would have a record of his teaching (Ephesians 3:1-7). The apostle Peter knew his death was approaching and wrote to the disciples so they would be reminded of the truth after his departure (2 Peter 1:12-15). They intended for all in the church to read what they wrote (1 Thessalonians 5:27) and for the churches to circulate their letters to one another



P-52, the “John Rylands Fragment,” a parchment fragment containing John 18:31-33 on one side and verses 37-38 on the reverse. It has been dated by paleography (study of writing styles) to the period of the Roman Emperor Hadrian (117 - 138). It is the oldest known copy of any part of the New Testament.

(Colossians 4:16).

The term the Jews and early Christians used as the name for all the books given from God by inspiration was “Scripture” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Peter called the books of Paul “Scripture” (2 Peter 3:14-16), and Paul included Matthew’s and Luke’s records of the life of Christ with the Old Testament books as “Scripture” (1 Timothy 5:18; cf. Deuteronomy 25:4; Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:7).

Perhaps even before the middle of the first century, the apostles and prophets began writing inspired books. James may have been written as early as A.D. 44.

Paul wrote First and Second Thessalonians in about A.D. 51-52 (cf. Acts 18:5; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-6). He wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus in A.D. 57 (1 Corinthians 16:3-9) and Second Corinthians shortly thereafter (2 Corinthians 1:15-16; 2:13; 7:5; 8:1-2). He penned Romans and probably Galatians in A.D. 58 (Romans 15:25-26).

Luke, a physician, was Paul’s traveling companion (Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11). He probably wrote the account of the life of Christ that bears his name in A.D. 60, toward the end of Paul’s imprisonment in Caesarea, when he had had the opportunity to interview Judean eye witnesses of the life of the Lord (Luke 1:1-4). Early Christians characteristically considered the account by Matthew to be the earliest record of Jesus’ life, so the apostle Matthew probably wrote before A.D. 60.

The apostle Paul sent letters to churches in Ephesus (Ephesians 3:1; 4:1), Philippi (Philippians 1:12-14; 4:22), and Colosse (Colossians 4:10,18) while in prison in Rome (A.D. 61-62). He wrote to a wealthy Christian named Philemon while in prison there but shortly before his release, probably in A.D. 62 (Philemon 1-3,8-11,23-24).

Luke wrote Acts in A.D. 63 after Paul had been in prison in Rome two years (Acts 1:1-2; 28:30-31).

Paul seems to have written Hebrews, though he is not certainly the author of this book, after release from Roman prison, perhaps in A.D. 63 (Hebrews 13:23-24), after which he wrote, while still free, First Timothy around A.D. 64 (1 Timothy 1:3) and Titus in about A.D. 65 (Titus 1:5; 3:12). He sent his last letter, Second Timothy, his farewell to his beloved Timothy, shortly before he was executed and while he was again in prison in Rome, probably in A.D. 68 (2 Timothy 1:8; 4:6-21). Thus the apostle Paul certainly wrote thirteen New Testament books and probably penned fourteen.

The apostle Peter wrote First Peter from Babylon (1 Peter 5:13) shortly before a great persecution was to engulf the church (1 Peter 4:12), perhaps A.D. 64 or 65. He wrote Second Peter not long before his death (2 Peter 1:16-17), probably around A.D. 67.

Mark was as close to Peter as Timothy was to Paul (1 Peter 5:13). Writers of the second century believed that Mark recorded Peter’s sermons about the life of Jesus Christ. In fact, Peter’s sermon on Jesus to the Roman centurion Cornelius is almost a very brief version of Mark (Acts 10:36-43). Early Christians generally believed his account of Christ was third in time order.

John lived longer than the other apostles, though he was exiled to Patmos for the cause of Christ (Revelation 1:9). He wrote five New Testament books: John, First, Second, and Third John, and Revelation. They were probably written toward the end of the first century. Revelation, which closes the New Testament canon, promises ultimate and eternal victory to those who are faithful to Christ despite persecution (Revelation 2:10; 12:11; 17:14; 21:7).

Jude (Judas), the brother of James (Jude verse 1) and half brother of the Lord (Mark 6:3) wrote the one chapter book bearing his name sometime in the second half of the first

century and apparently after Second Peter.

These twenty-seven books compose the New Testament canon, the authoritative collection of books inspired by the Holy Spirit and revealing the Will of the Lord Jesus Christ. They did not derive their authority from a church council, but the early church, long before the age of councils, recognized them as the Word of God, in the same way a child recognizes its mother.

The writings of many early Christians and heretics, particularly Gnostics, from the second and third century have been preserved and are available in English translation. In the first generation after the apostles there is Clement (letter to Rome, A.D. 95), Ignatius (martyred before 117), Polycarp (letter, 108-117), Basileides, a Gnostic (117-139), the Epistle of Barnabas (not the New Testament Barnabas, sometime between A.D. 70 and 130). The second generation includes Marcion, a Gnostic, before 140, Papias, about 140, and Justin (martyred in 148). Other early witnesses to the New Testament canon of Scripture are the Muratorion Canon (about 170), the Peshitto (Syriac New Testament, mid second century), and the Old Latin Version (second century). By the year 170, there is credible witness to the existence and acceptance of every one of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament and to no others. As Professor R. Laird Harris has written:

It seems clear that the New Testament books arose in the latter half of the first century A.D., and almost all of them were clearly known, revered, canonized, and collected well before a hundred years had passed (202).

This is almost incredible, when we consider that Christians were a small, persecuted, group of social outcasts without means of publishing books, communicating, or enforcing a standard on all believers in Christ. Furthermore, the various books were originally hand written parchments produced in a single copy.

By the middle of the third century (about A.D. 250), all the books of our present New Testament and no others were known and accepted as Scripture. Origen (185 - 253) “names the books of the New Testament as we recognize the canon now” (Frost, 12). This was a life time before the Emperor Constantine or any church councils.

These twenty-seven canonical New Testament books are the record of Christ Jesus

The Muratorian Fragment (about A.D. 170)

*The Muratorian Fragment is the oldest known list of New Testament books. It was discovered by Ludovico Antonio Muratori in a manuscript in the Ambrosian Library in Milan, and published by him in 1740. * It is called a fragment because the beginning of it is missing. Although the manuscript in which it appears was copied during the seventh century, the list itself is dated to about 170 because its author refers to the episcopate of Pius I of Rome (died 157) as recent. He mentions only two epistles of John, without describing them* **(Biblical Studies Info Page**, provided by Ferrel Jenkins [<http://www.biblicalstudies.info/>]).

and His will for all mankind (Ephesians 1:18-23; 1 Corinthians 14:37). They were written by the holy apostles and prophets through the inspiration of the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 2:6-13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17) and are the Word of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13). They constitute an authoritative pattern for our guidance which we must follow and not change (2 Timothy 1:13; 2 John 9). The curse of God is upon any who would add to, take from, or change this divine revelation (Galatians 1:6-9; Revelation 22:18-19). The Lord in His good providence has preserved this sacred message for us through the centuries, so that no part of it is either lost or corrupted (1 Peter 1:22-25). It is the duty of all to study the New Testament in order to learn and follow the will of God (1 Thessalonians 5:27; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 2:15; James 1:22-25; 1 Peter 2:1-3; Revelation 1:3).

Works Cited

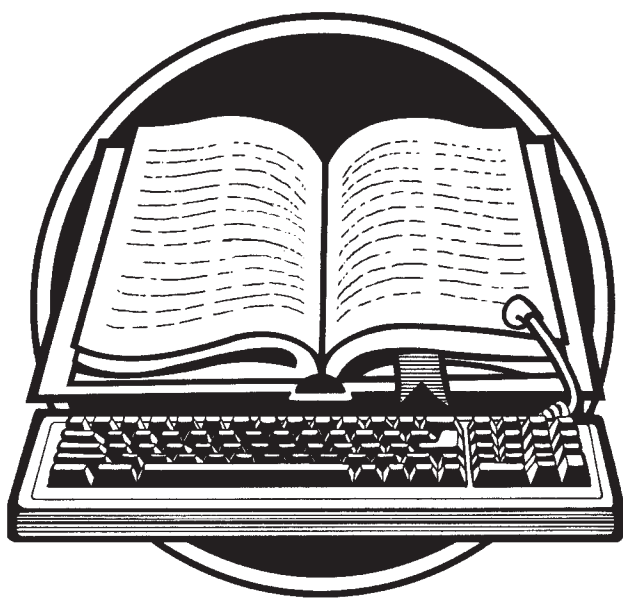
Gene Frost, **History of Our English Bible.**

R. Laird Harris, **Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible.**

Activities

- I. Here are the definitions of the key words in the lesson. (Parents, please help your children with difficult words not defined below.)
1. testify - to bear witness, i.e., to affirm what one has seen or heard
 2. confirm - make sure
 3. inspired - God breathed
 4. Scripture - a writing, thing written, term used for those books considered to be inspired
 5. canon - literally, a reed or measuring rod, thus, norm or rule; came to mean a rule of faith, and eventually a catalogue or list; signifies the collection of divinely inspired, authoritative, books that belong in the Bible
- II. Recite in Class:
1. the books of the Bible in order
 2. the periods of Bible history
 3. the five stages in the development of the plan of salvation
 4. the five divisions of the Old Testament and five divisions of the New Testament
 5. what was created on each of the six days of creation
 6. Genesis 12:1-3,7
 7. the three divine promises to Abraham
 8. the ten plagues on Egypt
 9. the Ten Commandments
 10. the four part cycle during the period of the judges
 11. the kings of the United Kingdom
 12. the king who introduced calf worship
 13. the king who introduced Baal worship
 14. the two great miracle working prophets of Israel
 15. the great literary prophet and the king who worked together to save Judah from Assyria
 16. the most wicked king of Judah
 17. the king who restored the Law of the Lord to Judah
 18. What did each of these people accomplish?
 - a. Zerubbabel
 - b. Esther

Book	Author	Date
James	James	44 (?)
1 Thessalonians	Paul	51
2 Thessalonians	Paul	52
1 Corinthians	Paul	57
2 Corinthians	Paul	57
Romans	Paul	58
Galatians	Paul	58
Matthew	Matthew	(?)
Mark	Mark	(?)
Luke	Luke	60 (?)
Ephesians	Paul	61
Philippians	Paul	61
Colossians	Paul	61
Philemon	Paul	62
Acts	Luke	63
Hebrews	Paul (?)	63 (?)
1 Timothy	Paul	64
1 Peter	Peter	64-65
Titus	Paul	65
2 Peter	Peter	67 (?)
2 Timothy	Paul	68 (?)
John	John	90's (?)
1 John	John	90's (?)
2 John	John	90's (?)
3 John	John	90's (?)
Jude	Jude	90's (?)
Revelation	John	96-98 (?)



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