

TH
B 278

PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN THE PREPARATION OF BIBLE
STORIES FOR EFFECTIVE TELLING TO PRIMARIES

By

Ann Barron

A.B., Erskine College

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
in

The Biblical Seminary in New York
April, 1954

**BIBLICAL SCHOOL OF
THEOLOGY LIBRARY**
HATFIELD, PA.

20547

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
INTRODUCTION.....	i
A. Statement of the Problem.....	i
B. Importance of the Problem.....	ii
C. Plans and Methods of Procedure.....	v
I. MEETING AREAS OF EXPERIENCE OF THE PRIMARY CHILD BY BIBLE STORIES.....	2
A. Introduction.....	2
B. Needs and Interests of the Primary Child.....	3
1. Intellectual Needs and Interests.....	3
2. Social Needs and Interests.....	3
3. Emotional Needs.....	6
4. Spiritual Needs and Interests.....	7
C. The Place of the Bible in Meeting the Needs of a Primary Child.....	8
1. The Place of the Bible in Meeting the Story Needs of Children.....	10
2. The Place of Bible Stories in the Child's Overall Experience.....	15
3. The Place of Bible Stories in Particular Phases of Children's Programs.....	17
D. Summary.....	18
II. PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN THE PREPARATION OF BIBLE STORIES FOR TELLING.....	21
A. Introduction.....	21
B. Preliminary Preparation.....	22
C. Structural Elements Involved in Building the Story.....	26
1. Beginning.....	26
2. Body or Series of Events.....	28
3. Climax.....	29
4. Ending or Conclusion.....	30
D. Elements to Add Interest and Variety.....	32
1. Unity.....	32
2. Variety in Language.....	32
3. Direct Discourse.....	33
4. Additional Elements.....	34
E. Problems to Be Avoided.....	34
1. Liberties with the Bible text.....	35
2. Clumsiness in making over a story.....	35
F. Necessity of Selectivity.....	36
G. Summary.....	37

III. AN EXAMINATION OF SELECTED CURRICULA TO DETERMINE TREATMENT OF SPECIFIC BIBLE STORIES.....	40
A. Introduction.....	40
1. Treatment by the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.....	40
a. Use of structural elements.....	41
b. Elements to add interest and variety....	43
c. Liberties with the Bible text.....	43
d. Selectivity.....	44
2. Treatment by United Lutherans.....	44
a. Use of structural elements.....	45
b. Elements to add interest and variety....	46
c. Liberties with the Bible text.....	46
d. Selectivity.....	47
3. Treatment by Gospel Light Press.....	47
a. Use of structural elements.....	47
b. Elements to add interest and variety....	49
c. Liberties with the Bible text.....	50
d. Selectivity.....	50
4. Treatment by Scripture Press.....	51
a. Use of structural elements.....	51
b. Elements to add interest and variety....	53
c. Liberties with the Bible text.....	53
d. Selectivity.....	54
C. Story of the Nativity.....	54
1. Treatment by Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.....	54
a. Use of structural elements.....	55
b. Elements to add interest and variety....	56
c. Liberties with the Bible text.....	56
d. Selectivity.....	57
2. Treatment by United Lutherans.....	57
a. Use of structural elements.....	57
b. Elements to add interest and variety....	59
c. Liberties with the Bible text.....	59
d. Selectivity.....	59
3. Treatment by Gospel Light Press.....	60
a. Use of structural elements.....	60
b. Elements to add interest and variety....	62
c. Liberties with the Bible text.....	62
d. Selectivity.....	62
4. Treatment by Scripture Press.....	63
a. Use of structural elements.....	63
b. Elements to add interest and variety....	65
c. Liberties with the Bible text.....	65
d. Selectivity.....	65
D. Summary.....	65
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.....	68
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	72

INTRODUCTION

PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN THE PREPARATION OF BIBLE STORIES
FOR
EFFECTIVE TELLING TO PRIMARIES

INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of the Problem

It is becoming more and more evident that children throughout the world must come face to face with the Bible while they are yet young, if they are to have all possible advantages for reaching true Christian maturity. The primary concern of this study is to make more readily accessible the material necessary for the preparation of Bible stories directly from the Bible. This will be done with the primary child principally in mind. These materials will be usable by many persons who have contact with children, including those in the home, the church and the school.

Jeanette Perkins Brown has said:

An understanding of the laws governing any art makes mastery of that art easier, modifications and adaptations in practice more possible.

It is in the light of this truth that this study will endeavor to set forth some basic laws governing the art of

.....

1. Jeanette P. Brown: The Storyteller in Religious Education, p.26

storytelling, with special emphasis on Bible stories.

In order for the Christian teacher to imbue the child with the truth which controls his own life and to make the truth effective in the child's life, it is necessary to appeal to the child on his own level, by the methods which most easily reach him.

Margaret Eggleston stressed this point:

A story is a life-message that passes from one soul to another.

Great stories promote right attitudes of mind, and suggest modes of behavior, with their results. You may teach facts by telling a story; you may arouse a crowd by giving them a tale of love, heroism, or adventure, but if that is all you have done, you have failed. A well-told story should stir the emotions and create the desire to be more like the hero at his best; it should speak to the soul life of the hearer.¹

Realizing then the importance of the Bible story in the teaching and directing of children, it is the writer's purpose to set forth some principles that will be helpful to the Christian educator in presenting the Bible in story form to children of the primary age.

B. Importance of the Problem

The value of a story cannot be judged by the time spent in its telling. The story may be quickly given, but it may last throughout life in the mind of the hearer. It can be brought out at any time, in any place, and used to

.....

1. Margaret Eggleston: The Use of the Story in Religious Education, p. 2

advantage.

Neither can the story be judged by its reception. An eager reception sometimes causes the teacher to feel that inasmuch as there is little conscious effort on the part of the child, little learning has actually taken place. W. J. May disputes this:

Let it be said at once that there is nothing abnormal in the demand for stories. The demand for a story, the inbred love of a story is good mother nature's endeavor to persuade us to teach in the easiest way and in the most effective way.Stories --your stories -- will be remembered and acted upon when all your arguments are forgotten.¹

He adds that the story is "the natural way of teaching and because it is natural, it is effective."²

The story is a gentle means of teaching which is so enjoyable that it draws no rebuffs even when the hardest and least desired lessons are being taught. E. P. St. John believed this so strongly that he stated:

Ages ago the law said, This do, and thou shall live, and men broke the law and paid the penalty. Then came Jesus, living a life and saying, Follow me; and what the law could not do because it was weak, the story of the gospel has accomplished.³

How often the greatest Teacher of all used the story as a means of conveying His message which was so hard for sin-hardened men to understand! Yet He was the "Master Teacher," and He stressed the importance of the story by His example

.....

1. W. J. May: Bible Stories and How to Tell Them, p. 11

2. Ibid., p. 13

3. E. P. St. John: Stories and Story Telling, p. 38

in using it.

Historically speaking, the story has proved itself to be one of the oldest and most effective means of transferring ideas and ideals. Socrates and Plato early used the story as a way of teaching a philosophy. Confucius propagated his religion by the use of the story, as did Mohammed.

But what is this wonder called the story which can so greatly affect many people and can mightily arouse men to action? E. P. St. John defines a story thus:

A story, then, may be said to be a narrative of true or imaginary events which form a vitally related whole, so presented as to make its appeal chiefly to the emotions rather than the intellect.¹

The appeal to the emotions is one of the distinguishing characteristics of a story. It presents a picture that arouses interest and feeling, and has dramatic action. St. John contends:

If a story is to be told, a first essential is a situation that appeals to human interest, and some sort of a hint at a solution of a problem in human life.²

When these things have been included properly in the story, its value is limitless. Herein lies the reason for its utilization in the Christian training of the young.

Again St. John asserts:

.....

1. St. John, op. cit., p. 9

2. Ibid., p. 86

From the very first the Christian church has utilized this power. The stories of the gospels have done infinitely more to influence the lives of men than all the books of systematic theology that the church has produced in twenty centuries of time.¹

The desired end cannot always be assured when presenting the truth to primary children. May presents the problem in this way:

You have to make the truth so attractive, so interesting to those whom you teach that they will want it so badly that they will be willing to pay the price of obedience to secure it. And if you are going to rouse interest and kindle desire to that degree, you must be willing to tell an interest-compelling, desire-arousing story.²

There is much involved in the preparation of stories for telling, and the preparation should be based on tested principles. For purposes of cutting down on the time required for preparation and of assuring reasonably successful storytelling, the narrator will do well to observe ruling principles in his preparation of Bible stories.

C. Plans and Methods of Procedure

The first step in the plan of this study is to set forth the needs and interests of a primary child, in the hope that these will form a basis for further study. The needs will be examined from the intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual points of view. After this has

.....

1. Ibid., p. 3

2. May, op. cit., p. 13

been done, an examination will be made of the place of the Bible story in meeting these needs, considering the use of Bible stories in the various phases of the child's life.

When the need for Bible stories in the life of the primary child has been established, there will be a setting forth in the second chapter of the principles involved in the preparation of stories for telling. The chapter will include a presentation of the basic elements involved in and requisite to every story. It will also include elements to add interest and variety to stories and some problems to be avoided in Bible story preparation.

In the final chapter, there will be an examination of some selected curricula of present-day church schools with the purpose of seeking to discover the extent to which the application of the principles as discussed in chapter II has been made. The curricula selected will be chosen from two denominational publishing houses and from two non-denominational publishers.

CHAPTER I

MEETING AREAS OF EXPERIENCE OF THE PRIMARY CHILD
BY BIBLE STORIES

CHAPTER I
MEETING AREAS OF EXPERIENCE OF THE PRIMARY CHILD
BY BIBLE STORIES

A. Introduction

The storyteller must know the child if he would select and prepare a story for him.

Before even half of its possibilities can be realized those who tell stories must know the story interests of childhood and must choose materials, not only because they are beautiful in theme and language and embody high ideals, but because they are fitted to the psychological period of the child who is to hear them. They must realize that the purpose of storytelling is not merely to entertain, although it does entertain, but that in addition to delighting young listeners there must be a higher aim, of which the narrator never loses sight. Every tale selected must contribute something definite toward the mental, moral or spiritual growth of the child, just as each pigment chosen by an artist must blend into the picture to help make a beautiful and perfect whole.¹

In saying this, Katherine Cather has set before the reader the reasons necessary for the following examination of the needs and interests of the primary child. A study of the general needs and interests of the primary child will show more clearly the important place that the Bible has in meeting these needs.

.....

1. Katherine D. Cather: Educating by Story-Telling, p. 9

B. Needs and Interests of the Primary Child

✓ Variety is the keynote of the primary age level. The primary's needs and interests cover a wide area, and the ability to recognize and meet his demands takes much time and effort on the part of the storyteller. Generally, these needs may be classed as intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual.

1. Intellectual Needs and Interests

The primary child is the child who is between the ages of six and eight years. Even in this narrow age range there is a variety of interests and needs. Gesell and Ilg set forth the differences in this way:

The 6-year-old is in a bipolar phase, trying at one and the same time to find himself and to find out his new environment. Choice and reconciliation between the two poles create tensions and hesitations... The 7-year-old has himself better in hand. He shows less liability and a greater capacity to absorb and organize his new cultural experiences... At 8, he shows more initiative and spontaneity in going out to meet the environment.¹

Katherine Cather expresses the necessity for the storyteller to consider the intellectual development of the child thus:

If storytelling is to be a power in building Christian character, the material used must be suited to the age and understanding of those to whom it is given. A perfectly constructed tale may be exquisitely told, yet make no appeal to those who hear it because it is

.....

1. Arnold Gesell and Frances L. Ilg: The Child From Five to Ten, p.14

too old or too young for them.¹

In the intellectual realm, the primary child's greatest advancement is his acquiring the ability to read. V In the beginning of this period, the reasoning ability of the child is still very low, but the imagination tends to reach its height. Common absurdities do not seem to the primary child to be in the least absurd.

Ligon mentions other traits of the primary child:

The voluntary attention span increases now very rapidly and reaches about fifty per cent of adult capacity. Every effort should be made to develop it as far as possible.²

The senses of the primary child are keen and his mind is open to any appealing truths that should be taught him. He is questioning how things got to be as they are and therefore is open to the wonders of God. This age is a restless one and even when interested in what is being said, the child is apt to sit not perfectly still.

Cather stressed the fact that the mental age must be understood when she said:

In using material from the Bible, as from any other source, it is necessary to keep in mind the story interests of childhood, and to remember that the skeletons of tales, not the style and vocabulary in which they are written, must be the test for selection.

.....

1. Katherine D. Cather: Religious Education through Story Telling, p. 74
2. Ernest Mayfield Ligon: Their Future Is Now, Chart

If the framework is suited to the period of mental development, the language can be adapted, while otherwise no amount of simplifying can bring it within the understanding and powers of enjoyment.¹

2. Social Needs and Interests

One of the most important social adjustments for the child of early primary age is going to school. Due to the fact that he is extremely sensitive to the moods or tensions of people around him, his reactions in social situations are often unpredictable. While the child has much interest in others, he tends to be more selfish than at any other time. He demonstrates this by demanding his own way frequently.

His emotions are captured by stories of people whom he admires and whom he can imitate. Hensley maintains:

The primary child is a born imitator. He not only wants to do what other people do, but he wants to be like unto the one he is imitating. This is the time to capture and motivate his imitative ability in teaching him the great truths of life by allowing him to impersonate characters whose lives are God lived.²

Gesell and Ilg explain the social situation of the primary child in this way:

Although given to self-absorption the 7-year-old is not an isolationist. He is becoming aware not

.....

1. Cather: Educating by Story Telling, p. 120
2. Elma Hensley: Selection of Stories for the Primary Child Which Create the Desired Attitude toward God, p. 16

only of himself, but of others. He is increasingly sensitive to the attitudes of others. He is beginning to see his mother in new perspective. He achieves a measure of detachment from her, by developing added attachments to other persons... We can see his personal-social reactions deepening at home, on the playground, and in the schoolroom.¹

Children during this age show keen interest in people and their problems, if they can understand the people. They prefer an element of the known, even in stories of the unknown. Cather states this clearly when she says:

Each individual responds only to those stories that reflect his world or his desires, or that reflect an environment different from his own, about which he feels curiosity.²

3. Emotional Needs

Smither emphasizes the importance of the consideration of the child's emotional needs:

The most important limitation for the teacher of religion to understand is the primary child's emotional immaturity. The religion of a primary child differs greatly from that of an adult. His very lack of experience makes this true. Just as we adults differ from each other because of our differing ability to respond, so children are not like adults. If we teach beyond their ability to respond emotionally, we only confuse them or force them to develop too quickly and to become superficial.³

The primary child lacks prejudice, has a friendly attitude toward adults and is quick in response to weakness,

.....

1. Gesell and Ilg, op. cit., p. 133
2. Cather: Religious Education through Story Telling, p. 74
3. Ethel Smither: Teaching Primaries in the Church School, p. 19

hunger or suffering.

There is still little emotional or moral reaction to general situations because of the child's interest in the individual. His emotional stability reaches a much higher level after he begins to attend school, because he makes more contacts outside the home. In the latter part of this period, the child begins to realize his mental and physical deficiencies, as he competes with his associates.

He has a great need for reassurance, and a story with feeling can aid in his emotional development, as well as give him this assurance.

Bailey declares:

The story which a child feels is going to be a force in his emotional development... Each emotion that will prevail over and influence human action in adult life may be appealed to in childhood through stories.¹

Cather adds:

Telling Bible stories will develop the emotional nature of the average child; it will broaden his sympathy and increase his capacity for feeling, make him more sympathetic, more responsive to the joys and sorrows of his fellow men and better fitted to become a useful citizen.²

4. Spiritual Needs and Interests

Since, at the primary age level the imagination reaches its height, this characteristic may be used

.....

1. Carolyn S. Bailey: For the Story Teller, p. 193
2. Cather: Educating by Story Telling, p. 130

intelligently by the Christian educator. Cather affirms:

Present day scientific teaching tends to make older boys and girls scoff at miracle tales unless, when little children, they have received them as wonder stories and have caught from them the spiritual message they never fail to leave when belief in the miraculous runs high.¹

The primary child is seeking approval, the approval of his fellow students and also adult approval. If desirable behavior can attract the attention wanted and still gain approval, this behavior can be achieved. Hero worship is an outstanding characteristic and can lead, with proper guidance, into desirable behavior.²

The spiritual assets which make it easier to reach the primary child with the Christian message are his readiness to ask questions, his unspoiled sense of wonder, his sense of dependence, and his realization of his own personal need.

C. The Place of the Bible in Meeting the Needs of a Primary Child

ways Bible stories may be used in many ways in meeting the needs of children. One way is by helping to mold character. Cather propounds this truth:

The tales heard during childhood become fixed and lasting possessions. They stay with the hearer through the years and because their ideals become

.....

1. Cather: Religious Education through Story Telling, p. 93
2. Cf. Ligon, op. cit., chart

his ideals, do much in shaping his character.¹

One of the primary uses of the Bible story is that of teaching. Not only can it be used to teach facts from the Bible, but it can enrich the children's ideas of God. It can be used to arouse interest and sympathy for others and, thereby, bring about the sharing of worthwhile experiences with others.

As is true of the secular story, so the Bible story can be used for a variety of purposes. Margaret Eggleston has listed nine such purposes which are as applicable to Bible narratives as to stories in general. They may be used to:

1. Arouse emotional life and cause hunger for better things.
2. Help correct unfortunate habits by showing their consequences.
3. Help in the making of decisions by suggesting results of similar choices.
4. Develop a keener sense of humor.
5. Develop imagination and lead into wider channels of thought.
6. Create the desire to pass on the story.
7. Give a truer knowledge of people and life.
8. Promote broader sympathies.
9. Create the desire to give happiness to others.²

Bailey adds another use when she suggests that memory work can best be inspired by means of a story:

Every well told story means an added possibility of a recall in the child's mind and strengthens the general process of memory... Memory is a process of association

.....

1. Cather: Educating by Story Telling, p. 7
2. Eggleston, op. cit., p. 3

of ideas. Not repetition of an idea, but surrounding it with a host of witnesses gives it permanency in the mind.¹

✓ The story may be used to arouse interest in a cause.

It may drive home a point that could not be effected by any other means. Stories often relieve tensions and bring about happy relationships between individuals or groups.

St. John says they may be used to aid the learner to gain a clear conception of some unfamiliar truth by calling to mind some well-known experience or fact and pointing out the likeness of the new idea to one whose meaning has been mastered.²

A Bible story may supplement an experience by helping to give the answer to a problem, by suggesting a way of acting or by bringing about new appreciation.³

✓ Of course, the main purpose of the Bible story is the moral and religious aim. It must introduce the child to Christ, give him a better understanding of God and seek to bring about true dedication to Christ.

the main purpose of Bible story

1. The Place of the Bible in Meeting the Story Needs of Children

The purpose of storytelling is given by Cather thus:

The purpose of storytelling in religious education is to build up Christian character, to establish in the child a permanent consciousness of God and a knowledge of the inevitable working of God's laws,

.....

1. Carolyn S. Bailey: For the Story Teller, p. 108
2. cf. St. John, op. cit., p. 82
3. cf. Brown, op. cit., p. 74

developing that consciousness from lower to higher stages; to create an abiding reverential attitude toward all things religious; to establish ideals and strengthen beliefs.¹

She continues:

Whoever tells Bible stories skillfully and with sincerity can hardly fail to awaken reverence and establish belief in God, because the Bible is the
✓ greatest storybook the world has ever known.²

To foster reverence and trust among those with whom he works is a major goal of the Christian educator. In that the Bible contains many stories and that the telling of them furthers his goals, the Christian educator sees the
✓ Bible as a valuable source book. He desires to instill in the children a love for God's Word as well. The person who can learn to present the Bible to a child in the form of an effective and enjoyable story will find that greater accomplishments can be made.

Amid the wide variety of stories in the Bible are many which can hold a child's interest and instruct him at the same time. Cather asserts:

The only reason why children look upon the Bible as a dull, ponderous book is that they are not familiar with the Old Testament adventure tales and it is a mistake to think present-day boys and girls will turn away from them.³

The fact that the characters are not perfect and yet aspire to high endeavors helps the children learn more readily

.....

1. Cather: Religious Education through Storytelling, p. 39
2. Ibid., p.32
3. Ibid., p.127

the lesson they teach. There are impassioned tribal leaders, kings, slaves, and ordinary people. The material is ideal for meeting the emotional and spiritual needs of the child.

The ideals set forth in the Bible are the highest, and the child needs to have them instilled in him at an early age. It is the place of the Christian educator to inspire Christian attitudes. It is necessary to make the child see obedience as a road to happiness. One may more easily make goodness attractive through the Bible story. Cather believes that the purpose of the story is to mirror life so as to awaken feeling and desire, to create moods that make possible the establishment of ideals that shall function in behavior.¹

Some of the reasons set forth by Ethel Smither for teaching the Bible to children are these:

1. It is the Word of God.
2. It is great literature.
3. It will teach the child to obey.
4. It is a source book of knowledge of what is worth learning.
5. It is the most important biography.
6. It is a guide for daily living, a comfort in adversity.
7. It is a guide to a Christian philosophy of life.
8. It leads men to God and reveals God to men.
9. It helps Christian character to grow.²

If these things were accomplished, and the child were in-

.....

1. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 44

2. Smither: *The Use of the Bible with Children*, p. 13

troduced to Christ as Saviour, many of the needs of the primary child would be met. Cather declares:

The point needs to be emphasized that the story is the carrier, and will remain the natural carrier of racial tradition or information and ideals. The story in education has two functions: (1) it is the molder of ideals, and (2) it is the illuminator of facts... Some stories are valuable because of the standardizing sentiments they carry, but truth is as important at least as the aesthetic.¹

These things are doubly true of the Bible story because the Bible is truth throughout.

The children's own needs and interests are met through Bible stories. Primaries want their stories to be sincere and yet to have a strong emotional appeal. Without being able to name the quality as such, children like unity in their stories, and the Bible is not only one whole unit, but is made up of smaller complete units. Other characteristics of desirable stories are action, vividness, sensitiveness, and accuracy; all of these are found in Bible stories. Cather says:

The Biblical narratives are perfect ones for telling. Dr. Fuchs of Vienna declares that we might, if we lacked material, give children nothing but Bible stories and yet satisfy every craving of their natures, because the Bible contains every type of tale that appeals to the child.²

On looking ahead to the child's future, it is obvious to the Christian that the child will require a knowledge

.....

1. Cather: Educating by Story-Telling, p. xiii
2. Ibid., p. 119

of the Bible and its basic truths in order to develop as he should into a mature person. At the primary age, there are specific things that the child will receive more readily than at any other period in his life. Cather believes that no matter how spiritual or beautiful a narrative may be, or what ideals it embodies, the child must make his first acquaintance with it in the period of his development when he craves material of its type, if it is to benefit him to the full limit of its possibilities.¹

When the child is older, he may view some of the facts from Bible stories in a different light than when he first heard them, but much of the spirit and religious feeling that came on his first hearing will not leave him.

The primary child realizes in a new way his lack of experience, and this realization often causes a feeling of inferiority. The desire for experience can be met by the storyteller's helping the child to re-live the worthwhile experiences of the Bible characters. Cather emphasizes this:

The secret of the story-teller's power is in his ability to make the characters of the story so alive and human that those who hear it live with them and enter their experiences... The story touches the heart, it arouses the emotions and makes people feel with the character whose acts make the plot.²

.....

1. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 119

2. Cather: *Religious Education through Story Telling*, p. 25

Many of the intellectual needs of the primary child may be met with Bible stories. They are easily used to answer the questions which so often arise in the child's mind concerning how and why he is in the world. They suggest actions which are constructive and in accordance with the child's physical abilities. By suggestion, they make proper action attractive. Cather explained this when she said that stories that are properly selected and well told quicken latent energies, help to set up channels of energy release, and provide action patterns to guide this energy, bringing it to desirable points of expression.¹

Another look at Cather might help to summarize the effectiveness of the Bible story in meeting the story needs of the primary child:

Every type of narrative is to be found in the Bible. There are wonder stories illustrating lessons of the Hebrew narrators and recounting achievements that have all the moving appeal of fairy tales to the young child. There is the counterpart of myth, of fable, of legend, of epic, of historical romance and there is history itself... In fact, if one knows the Bible well enough, it is possible from it alone to satisfy every story need of the child from infancy to manhood.²

2. The Place of the Bible Stories in the Child's Overall Experience

With the modern advancements in the field of religious education, many advantages have been gained for the Bible

.....

1. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 9

2. *Ibid.*, p. 175

storyteller. In the past, there were few chances for the child to hear Bible stories except in the home and the Sunday school. Even in these two places, comparatively few children were privileged to hear well-prepared and well-told stories. Now the trained storyteller has an added opportunity in the Daily Vacation Bible School, in Bible camps, and in the numerous local church organizations for children. Miller might well have meant Bible stories when he said:

The Scoutmaster, the teacher, the Y.M.C.A. secretary, the nature guide, the playground director, the social worker, the camp counselor or director, in fact, all people who deal with children in groups, find the use of the story almost indispensable.¹

The Bible story may be employed to prepare a child or group for an experience, or it may be used to interpret an experience that they have already had. If a project is to be launched, a story gives it a good beginning. The subject for discussion or planning may be introduced through a story.

The story can awaken religious feelings as nothing else can do. It puts listeners into a reverent attitude and makes them fertile soil in which to sow the thought seeds of spirituality. Through the medium of the story the boy or girl can be led to reverence God and His handiwork, to do his or her part toward keeping the laws of Christ vitally operative in society.²

In teaching the child the Bible in story form, the

.....

1. Miller, op. cit., p. 30

2. Cather: Religious Education through Story Telling, p. 31

Christian educator is not merely trying to give him a knowledge of God's law, but is also seeking to deal with his actions and the motives behind them.

Because the story is so valuable in the religious education of children, it is extremely important that the mother be a good storyteller. Eggleston expresses it this way:

While the children are small, there are many times when a story solves a real problem. The tired child needs relaxation, the sick one longs to be amused; the lonely girl craves companionship; the discouraged boy wants suggestions and challenge. Every day, and all the day, the story is a good friend to have in all types of education.¹

The Bible has stories to meet all of these experiences of the child and many others that may arise. The Bible has limitless materials, but the Christian educator who has the challenge of child-training always before him must know the Bible, if he is to know where to find appropriate and effective stories.

3. The Place of Bible Stories in Particular Phases of Children's Programs

Within these larger areas of the child's experience there are specific parts of the program in which the Bible story plays an important part. In the Sunday school, for example, the Bible story may be used as the principal element of the lesson, as a feature of the worship experience

.....

1. Eggleston, op. cit., p. 44

or even in surrounding the memory work with interest and understanding.

In the past, there has been a tendency to feel that any learning that came with pleasure could be of little effect. Recent studies prove this untrue. The Bible story was, in the past, used only as the lesson in Sunday school. It is now used as a part of the sermonette in many children's worship services. Not only are the stories enjoyed, but they teach the child God's Word and are used for such purposes as solving problems, guiding in relation to other races, meeting special situations, and making religious principles real.¹

Ministers and junior church leaders have found that the Bible story is well received by the children and still is filled with possibilities for guiding children into channels of thinking that are desirable for any particular situation. The Bible story lends itself admirably to dramatization, which holds much interest for the primary child.

D. Summary

In this chapter, the importance of the story in the training of children has been considered. The place of the Bible story has been stressed and its importance in guiding the primary child to Christian maturity. After a consideration of the value of the story, the needs and interests

.....

1. Cf. Smither, op.cit., p. 31

of the primary child were set forth. These were considered in the light of the child's intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual needs.

With the needs presented, the writer pointed out the ways in which the Bible stories could meet both these specific needs and the other general ones. The variety of ways in which the Bible can be used in meeting the many needs of the child were discussed also.

It was shown that there are many places in the experience of the modern child where a Bible story can be influential in guiding in a choice, inspiring to action or helping in the solution of a problem. The realms of experience that are touched now with the Bible story were presented and some suggestions as to how to approach these presentations were made. It was emphasized that there is a definite place for the Bible story in the guidance of the primary child and that the importance of this place cannot be ignored.

CHAPTER II

PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN THE PREPARATION OF BIBLE STORIES FOR TELLING

CHAPTER II
PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN THE PREPARATION
OF BIBLE STORIES FOR TELLING

A. Introduction

The first requirement for an effective Bible storyteller is an inner spiritual quality. Without this, his story will lack the power to stir a child to action. The storyteller must believe the narrative which he tells and must conduct himself in the manner in which he would have the child conduct himself.

The spiritual quality needs to be coupled with thorough preparation. Cather feels that the narrator must rise above the level of a mere lesson-giver and approach the plane of the artist, which he can do only by giving an artist's preparation to his work.¹

At the outset of his preparation, the Christian storyteller will do well to read his basic source of material, the Bible itself. Katherine Cather stresses this by saying:

It cannot be successfully challenged that the story-book which undertakes to guide the child's spiritual training should be the Bible itself. But the stories should not be prepared entirely from the retold narratives as given in lesson leaflets. For the heart

.....

1. Cf. Cather: Educating by Story-Telling, p.10

and substance of the tale, one should go to the fountainhead, to the two Testaments, which are a never failing source of food and inspiration. Then the teacher will have a standard by which to judge supplementary materials.¹

She adds that, although for many years artists have been writing Bible stories, the world has yet to see one that equals the original either in spiritual or literary beauty.²

✓ The reason for retelling is not to improve upon the Bible, but to adapt it for those who will hear it.

There are basic principles which can make this adapting process easier and more effective. These principles will be discussed in this chapter.

B. Preliminary Preparation

The first step in preparation is determining the purpose of the story. According to St. John:

It is not enough to assume the moral or religious aim; this must be defined in a specific way. The teacher must have clearly in mind the particular virtue to which the story is to incite the hearer or the very fault of which it is designed to warn him.³

The purpose should be determined by the group involved: its problem, its degree of understanding of the problem, and its suggested solution.

(Familiarity with the story is a necessity. This does not mean that the story must be memorized, but rather grasped

.....

1. Cather: Religious Education through Story Telling, p. 135
2. Cf. *ibid.*, 136
3. St. John: Stories and Story Telling, p. 48

as a whole. The storyteller should know the events, their order of occurring, and the characters involved. Familiarity may be obtained by a rapid first reading of the story to secure the overall picture that it presents, and then several more attentive readings in order to study the details.

The next step in the preparation of a Bible story is *2. analysis* an analysis of the story. The storyteller should determine first what the climax of his story will be and then decide what events are necessary to prepare the way for it. A written outline may be useful.

As has been mentioned before, the Bible contains many kinds of stories and a knowledge of the kind of story with which one is dealing helps in the analysis. Jeanette Perkins Brown presents the five most common types of stories as follows:

1. The plot story, as in the case of the Joseph narrative.
2. The problem story, shown in the answer to the lawyer's question to Jesus, 'Who is my neighbor?'
3. The quest story, wherein the hero finds the thing for which he is looking.
4. The journey story, in which the climax of the story is the arrival at the destination.
5. The character story, as in the case of Zacchaeus, in which a person is presented for examination.¹

Teachers complain often that the same Bible material is presented to the children repeatedly. The children, in turn, become so familiar with the stories that they are in-

.....

1. Cf. Brown: The Story Teller in Religious Education, p. 13

attentive. Two primary answers to the problem seem possible. One is to vary the material selected for use with the children. The Bible offers many stories which are rarely told, but are appropriate for primary children. The story of Elisha and the Syrian army in II Kings 6 is an example of this.

There are cases in which the teacher is not free to select his own stories. The second answer, then, is to present the familiar story in an unfamiliar way, as from another person's viewpoint. This may be done from the central character's point of view or in sympathy with him. It may be told as one of the subordinate actors would report the scene. An appealing variation is to ask the character to tell you the story himself, and then tell the story in the first person. Occasionally, a story may be presented from God's point of view, when carefully done. Such an approach may be considered in stories which seek to present the love of God or the giving of His Son for men.

Before the storyteller can relive the situations in which the people in the story find themselves, he must think through their personalities. He should be so well acquainted with the characters that he will be able to make the listener see pictures of them. Both their good and bad qualities should be presented.

In order to set the scene for the Bible story, the Christian educator must know something of the land in which

the story took place. May confirms this and points out the value of having background material thus:

If you would teach the Bible story, you must be familiar with the stages on which it is acted; you must know the geographical background, the lay of the land. You must have some acquaintance with the constantly changing story of the land, the historical background, for the story of Israel was constantly being influenced by the stories of Egypt and Babylon and Assyria. You must know the actors in the story, what manner of people they were, how they lived and felt and worked.¹

After the storyteller has progressed to this point in his preparation, he should be able to visualize the places, characters and actions of the story. The ability to visualize can be developed. It is often helpful to the beginner in the field of storytelling to write out the story, following an outline. A suggested outline will be discussed later in this paper. The storyteller will be able to train himself gradually so well that only the barest skeleton of the story will need to be written.

The final step in the preparation of the Bible story is a critical evaluation of the prepared story. Examine it for weak spots and work to make these more interesting and true to good form.

Margaret Eggleston has stated these as a summary of her hints on preparing a story:

1. Read it through for your own pleasure and note descriptions.

.....

1. May: Bible Stories and How to Tell Them, p. 58

2. Read again to study its main message.
3. Relive.
4. Choose the climax or high point in the story.
5. Pickout the events that are necessary to make the characters and message real.
6. Choose the theme around which you will tell the story.
7. Prepare the introduction and conclusion.¹

A story which is well put together is a story which is much easier to tell.

C. Structural Elements Involved in Building the Story

The construction or structure of a story determines greatly its effectiveness. In their original form, Bible stories have almost flawless construction. A well prepared narrative has four major structural units: (a) the beginning, (b) the succession of events, (c) the climax, and (d) the ending. According to St. John:

The power quickly and accurately to analyze a story into these essential elements is the most fundamental and the most important part of the storyteller's theoretical training... It makes it easy to condense a story that is too long and facilitates the successful expansion of one that is too brief.²

1. Beginning

Carolyn Bailey feels that the beginning of a story is so important that she says, "Each story told to children ought to be selected having in mind its beginning."³

The principles involved in the preparation of the beginning of a story should be approached with two questions

.....

1. Cf. Eggleston: Use of the Story in Religious Education, p.8
2. St. John, op.cit., p.69
3. Bailey, op.cit., p. 44

in mind: What should the beginning seek to do for the story? How can this be done? One of the purposes is to secure involuntary attention from the children. Many groups of primary children do not delight in Bible stories, because their past experiences with them have been unpleasant. For these groups, especially, the beginning must arouse interest and give a clue as to what is to come. The storyteller guards against revealing the plot at the outset and concentrates on setting the stage and whetting the appetite. Brown illustrates the type of beginning to avoid, when she relates that she once heard, "I'm going to tell you about a shepherd boy named David, who killed a wicked giant with his slingshot."¹ The climax was reached in the opening sentence.

Bailey suggest several procedures that will assure the narrative a brisk opening. They are:

Cutting out unnecessary description, avoiding any explanation as to why you are telling the story, introducing your thunderclap, your trumpet, your story hero in the first sentence - this is the way to begin a story.²

Others may be added to Bailey's list. Some authors suggest that a part of the conflict of the story should be imparted in the introduction. The beginning should be clear and not vague. Although the use of dialogue is an excellent medium

.....

1. Brown; op. cit., p. 19

2. Bailey: For the Story Teller, p. 51

for imparting a story, it is wiser for the amateur to use narrative beginnings, and then introduce dialogue as the plot develops. These principles, when properly applied, should help the storyteller to get his story effectively and fascinatingly launched.

2. Body or Series of Events

✓ The major part of the story is the body. It should be constantly moving in one direction. In this part of the story, the child can be made to live with the story character. Here, too, the conflict is set forth more clearly.

Margaret Eggleston gives the purpose of the body of the story this way:

The series of events in a story lead quickly and clearly to a crisis in the life of a hero, a place where he must decide between two courses of action. ..Sometimes the outcome is what he, and we, least expect it to be. A moral lesson is taught by his choice. The whole succession of events leads to this one act, or choice. Any description or act included in the story which does not point to the climax weakens the story as it is told.¹

Basic principles are helpful in carrying out the purpose of the body of the story. Interest, disappoint, and surprise the listener.

✓ They body of the story gives the storyteller the opportunity to make the characters into conscious, living, purposeful creatures who have problems. The way in which they solve them should guide the primary child in the

.....

1. Eggleston: The Use of the Story in Religious Education, p. 10

solution of his own problems. The body should be dramatic. As soon as the characters are introduced they should be put into action.

Carolyn Bailey adds suspense as a necessity for the succession of events. She contends:

Suspense is the story quality that stimulates curiosity and in this way develops concentrated thinking on the part of the child.¹

Cather suggests some "do nots" that are wise to heed:

1. Do not strike one note in the beginning and another in the body of the story.
2. Do not touch anything that is not a livewire leading direct to the heart of the story.
3. Do not describe what you can suggest.²

3. Climax

✓ The story climax is the high point of the tale. Here anticipation finds its fulfillment. The climax should be so definite that it cannot be missed, if there is to be a real story. Anything that weakens it, lessens the power of the story. Cather defines the climax this way:

The climax of a story is the revealment of a secret. It is the moment of discovery, the sudden straightening of a tangled thread. Because the conflict in the story has awakened expectation in the minds of the hearers, the climax is dramatic - unless it is spoiled and weakened by crude handling on the part of the teller.³

Certain recommendations might be made as to how to secure the desired results in the climax of a story. It

.....

1. Bailey: For the Story Teller, p. 59
2. Cather: Educating by Story Telling, p. 54
3. Cather: Story Telling for the Teacher of Beginners and Primary Children, p. 119

should be brief and free of extraneous details. An attempt to explain every detail of the unveiling of the destiny of the hero will not help the story, but will hinder it. Few children care that the flowers were blooming, the sun was low, or the birds were chirping, when the hero with whom they are associating themselves is nearing victory.

At the climax of the story, the hero shows his greatest strength. The events should surprise both the listener and the characters in the story. Interest should reach its zenith. Miller feels that one ought to sight the location of the climax and then, so build up to the point that one can make a "play" on this important part.¹ Cather gives two other aids to effective climaxes:

The climax must be expressed in simple language without any attempt at high-sounding style. In a word, it should be given in something of the manner in which a child tells a secret to another child. An analysis of climaxes of masterpieces shows that this is exactly what is done by all great artists in the field of narration and the more closely the beginner studies these the more confident he can be of success.²

4. Ending or Conclusion

The conclusion of the story should be brief and releasing. After the hero has received his reward, the mind needs to be set at rest and the suspense of the story terminated, so that the listener may relive the incidents and reflect upon the thought conveyed.³

.....

1. Cf. Miller, op.cit., p.83

2. Cather, op.cit., p. 169

3. Cf. Brown, op.cit., p.23

One of the most frequent mistakes that the Christian educator makes in using a Bible story is that of attaching ✓ a moral. A careful examination of the stories as they are given in the text reveals that their morals are an integral part of the tale itself. If the story is well told, no need for moralizing arises.

The main points to be remembered in the ending of a story are these:

1. Add nothing inconsequential.
2. Stop when you are through.
3. Uphold the unity of the story even in conclusion.
4. Have a restful conclusion.
5. Immediately follow the climax with the ending.
6. Do not moralize.
7. Leave with all characters accounted for.

To dispatch each person in the story satisfactorily requires considerable skill. St. John tells of one youthful storyteller who sought to accomplish this by concluding her story with, "And one beautiful morning as they were walking down the path to the front gate, they all died."¹

An easy solution to the conclusion problem is to follow Cather's advice:

The teller of Bible stories will find that if he keeps very closely to the Bible endings, his efforts will be crowned with success. Often it is necessary to modernize the wording, but the thought expressed ✓ should be that of the Hebrew storytellers expressed ✓ in terms that the child can understand... Therefore ✓ let the child have as nearly as possible the Bible version in beginnings, climaxes, and endings which are without parallel in literary artistry.²

.....

1. St. John, op. cit., p. 13
2. Cather, op. cit., p. 123

D. Elements to Add Interest and Variety

The basic structure of a story is essential to effective story presentation, but true art in storytelling can come only when the narrator is giving more than the barest necessities. Interest and variety in stories may be obtained by unity, variety in language, direct discourse, and contrast.

1. Unity

It is possible to apply all of the basic principles of storytelling and still have a disunity which will detract from the story's effectiveness. The story is a logical unit and should be treated as such. Unity may be achieved by the exclusion of unnecessary characters and events; by emphasis on one moral lesson.

Examples of nearly perfect unity may be seen in the Bible. St. John points this out when he notes:

The parables of Jesus are splendid illustrations. Almost without exception they are marvels of unity and condensation. In the parable of the rich man in Luke 12:16-20, it would be difficult to leave out a single word.¹

2. Variety in language

A child becomes just as weary of hearing the same words over and over again as an adult does. Therefore, the storyteller, in adapting and simplifying the words in the tale, needs to guard against using dull and colorless language.

.....

1. St. John, op. cit., p. 36

The need for action in a story may be met partially by the use of action verbs. If a man is passing by, he may run, dash, ramble, tramp, stalk, or march. Descriptive words help produce the desired pictures in the child's mind. In describing a scene to a child, the describer will find it effective to choose words which appeal to his listener's senses. Descriptions which are too long and too wordy soon weary the audience.

Words and phrases may be repeated when the story is being told to younger children. Indeed, sometimes they can be invited to say the phrases along with the teacher, so that they may have a sense of sharing in the narrative. Whether or not they are to repeat these phrases audibly should be made clear to them before the story is begun.

3. Direct Discourse

Cather says, "Talking characters help to make the story vivid."¹ The caution of opening the story with dialogue before the characters are known to the audience has been sighted. But conversation in the body of the narrative will help carry along the series of events. It should be realistic and true to character. Brown feels that nothing can make a character come alive to the listener more than the use of direct discourse. Jesus made use of it in several of the parables He told.²

.....

1. Cather: Religious Education through Storytelling, p. 157

2. cf. Brown, op. cit., p. 65

St. John, op. cit., p. 38

4. Additional elements

✓ A story should be brief, lively and moving. The teacher who turns her story into a sermon or drags it out to cover a certain class period is abusing it.

From time to time, the use of contrast may help the children understand parts of the story better. The brightness of angels may be contrasted with the darkness of night in order to help the child gain a clearer picture. The worthy qualities of the hero in the story may be set over against the unworthy qualities of the villain, so that the children see what behavior to imitate and what demeanor to avoid. A warning should be included here. If contrasting such people as David and Goliath, the giant should not usurp the whole scene. He should not be made too large, but only proportionately larger than David.

And, of course, the value of letting the characters perform can hardly be overstressed. Children tend to be like adults in this respect:

We distrust the sincerity of the man who talks about his feelings. Tell us what he does and we will draw our own conclusions.¹

E. Problems To Be Avoided

Many of the problems encountered in story preparation may be avoided by thoughtful foresight. An awareness of

.....

1. St. John, op. cit., p. 37

the difficulties which arise frequently may prevent much trouble for the storyteller.

1. Liberties with the Bible text

Perhaps Jeanette Perkins Brown has touched the two keys to this problem, when she states that we must be true to the spirit of the basic material and also true to fact.¹ The emphasis in the Bible story must be put in the right place. Many Bible stories may be used in varied situations, but they should never be warped just to prove a point.

The correctness of background material is important. The educator can make use of much supplementary material, such as pictures, atlases, and books on Bible land customs to assure accuracy. Cather admonishes the storyteller: "Bible stories, being the perfect tales of the world, should be told as nearly as possible in the language and style in which they were written."²

2. Clumsiness in making over a story for special use

One of the most frequent complaints of the storyteller is that the narratives in the Bible are too long or too short for his purpose. The length of the story, as he tells it, should depend upon the size of the group, the age of the listeners, and the occasion for which it is being told. A story may be lengthened by the addition of background material that will aid in its understanding. An

.....

1. Brown, op. cit., p. 86

2. Cather: Educating by Story Telling, p. 128

elaboration of characters that is true to the Bible may help, also. For example, a man who has a child will be described as a father. The storyteller might point up the responsibilities and position of a father in Bible times at this juncture of the story. Such an addition would not alter or detract from the text. It is also possible to bring in the earlier threads of the story to add relevance to the account which is being given. Such is often the case when the Old Testament prophecies of Christ are being used with the nativity story.

Reducing the length of a story is easier, perhaps, than increasing it. Sara S. Bryant suggests that there are four things that may be eliminated in reducing its length. They are:

1. The secondary threads of the narrative.
2. Extra personages who are not needed for the meaning of the story.
3. Description at certain points.
4. Irrelevant events.¹

The storyteller should check to be certain that there are no unnecessary details, events, or people in the story.

F. Necessity of Selectivity

✓ The child's own interest should play a large part in selecting Bible stories. St. John says:

The child's spontaneous interests not only facilitate the assimilation of the lesson, but also give definite

.....

1. Sara C. Bryant: How to Tell Stories to Children, p. 82

clues to the selecting of the truth to be taught and the form which the lesson should take.¹

Bible stories should be chosen with as much care as any stories the children hear. Those in which there is extreme cruelty, hatred, and bloodshed should not be told to primary children. Likewise, symbolic teaching has little meaning to this age group. Children like stories that are simple, direct and action-filled. They also enjoy stories about other children.

Ethel Smither feels that the New Testament stories which are most valuable for children are those which tell of Jesus and what He taught of God, while in the Old Testament, those in keeping with Christ's teachings are most valuable.²

Marie Shedlock has listed some elements to avoid in the selection of material for children:

1. Stories dealing with analysis of motive and feeling.
2. Stories dealing with sarcasm and satire.
3. Stories of a sentimental character.
4. Stories containing strong sensational episodes.
5. Stories presenting matters quite outside the plane of a child's interest.
6. Stories of infant piety and death-bed scenes.³

G. Summary

In this chapter, the author has attempted to accomplish

.....

1. St. John, op. cit., p. 56
2. Smither: The Use of the Bible with Children, p. 90
3. Marie L. Shedlock: The Art of the Story Teller, p. 57

ation of principles to be used in the preparation of Bible stories for more effective telling. Some general hints as to overall preparation were made. Ways of becoming familiar with the stories, of visualizing characters and events, and of re-examination were made.

The structural elements of beginnings, series of events, climaxes and endings are the skeleton around which the story is built. The beginnings should arouse interest, secure involuntary attention, give a clue as to what is to follow, and often introduce the hero. The body must be moving continually toward the climax. Unnecessary details should be avoided and much activity and suspense should be included. The high point, the climax, should be terse, dramatic and free of details. The releasing of tensions and accounting for characters is done in the brief conclusion.

Unity, variety in language, direct discourse, action and contrast add interest and variety to the story. Ways of lengthening and shortening stories and bases for selectivity were also suggested.

CHAPTER III

AN EXAMINATION OF SELECTED CURRICULA TO DETERMINE TREATMENT OF SPECIFIC BIBLE STORIES

CHAPTER III
AN EXAMINATION OF SELECTED CURRICULA TO DETERMINE
TREATMENT OF SPECIFIC BIBLE STORIES

A. Introduction

In chapter two of this study a proposed set of principles for the preparation of Bible stories for telling to primaries has been set forth. With these principles as a basis for examination, this chapter will seek to present the findings of the writer concerning the application of the principles in the Sunday-School literature of selected publishers.

The general areas of approach which will be examined are the structural elements, the interest and variety, liberties with the Bible text, including problems in lengthening and shortening, and the selectivity of incidents included. These elements will be considered in the treatment of the story of Moses and of the Nativity by four publishers, two denominational and two non-denominational.

B. Story of Moses

One of the Old Testament stories which is most frequently told to children is the story of Moses' life. Therefore,

the writer has chosen this story as a typical primary story which all publishers at some time include in their material. All of the publications do not include the same incidents of the story, however, so this limitation should be recognized in any comparison or contrast that may be made.

1. Treatment by the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

The material of the cycle in which the story of Moses is found deals with the church, so the approach to the story is made with this in view. For this reason, the section of the Moses narrative chosen is the building of the tabernacle.

a. Use of structural elements

The introductory statements in the story are as follows:

Moses came down the mountainside with his face shining. When the people saw him they were filled with wonder. "He has been talking with God," they said.¹

The mention of Moses' shining face secures the involuntary attention and interest of the listener. The beginning given here is clear and not vague. Another element which the author includes in the first sentence is the general introduction of the chief character. The story begins, as it should, with no unnecessary explanations or details and it opens the way into the body of the story by showing the wonder with which the people react to Moses' shining face.

The body of the story includes God's command that they build a tabernacle, an explanation of how it will be con-

.....

1. Edith Agnew: Opening Doors, v.6:l, p. 29

structed, the command to Bezalel to build and the bringing of gifts until there were enough for the structure. It leads gradually to the point where the Tabernacle was finally built, but seems to contain an unwarranted amount about Bezalel, in proportion to the length of the story. There is an appreciable amount of variety in feeling and mood, so that interest is held. The people wonder, long, are silent, are glad, and are willing. All of these should move the children with the Israelites into like feelings. Conversation is employed as a means of holding interest. If there is a conflict in the story, it is between the desire of the people for a place of worship and their lack of such a place.

The conflict is settled and a small degree of drama is seen in the climax when the people are told to stop bringing gifts, because there is more than enough for them to use in building the Tabernacle. In the climax a secret is revealed and a desire is fulfilled. They have their church! Extraneous details are not included. Interest has reached its peak here.

Finally, the ending of the story is made in one sentence which says, "So the Tabernacle was built from the gifts the people brought- people who were of a willing heart to give and to work for a place in which to worship God."¹

.....

1. Ibid., p.29

The last phrase might sound like an added moral, yet it might be considered as a summary of the point of the story. This ending leaves the listener relaxed and satisfied with the fact that all the characters are accounted for. It is brief and pertinent.

b. Elements to add interest and variety

Unity is maintained by one central theme. From this theme all the story events stem. The variety in language may be noted in the verbs used for speaking such as said, called, read, spoke, asked, told, cried, and commanded. The story is brief enough to be used with primary children, and yet not too brief to include some effective description. Although there is only a moderate amount of action on the part of the characters, there is a sense of movement and activity to the story. Little contrast is used, so the picture given is not as vivid as it might be.

c. Liberties with the Bible text

The spirit of willingness in giving, which is central in this story of Moses, is also central in the text used for it - Exodus 35:20-36:7. The author is true to the Scripture, as she goes back and picks up an early thread of the Moses narrative in order to have an effective beginning for the incident. The facts which are used are primarily true to the text. An unusual explanation concerning the shining of the people's faces is given. The story compares the shining of their faces with gladness to the shining of Moses'

face after he had talked with God. This explanation is not even implied in the text. Another slight difference, which may be due to the shortening of the story, is the use of only one workman's name, while in the Bible there are two of equal importance.

The process of shortening the amount of description given in the Bible is done by generalizing on the gifts brought, rather than specifically naming them all. Wisely, the author does not use extended repetition here. The necessary details of the story are elaborated and still kept true to the spirit of the Biblical account.

d. Selectivity

The selection of incidents is made with the aim of the lesson in mind. The aim is to help the children understand the importance of the church, therefore the selection is applicable. The story has children in it, enhancing its interest for the primary. The teaching is quite clear and the story is devoid of symbolism, cruelty, and sensational episodes, which should be avoided in children's stories. The listening children would tend to identify themselves with the action of the characters in the story, because they are capable of doing similar things, such as giving for God's house.

2. Treatment by United Lutherans

The United Lutherans have chosen that part of the Moses' narrative dealing with his birth, his concealment by his

and his discovery by the princess. The title given to the story is "A Princess Becomes God's Helper". The emphasis in the whole unit is on God's helpers.

a. Use of structural elements

The story begins as many of its predecessors have with the phrase, "Long, long ago". The element of the unknown in time might attract the child's attention. The paragraph continues with:

...God's people lived in a land called Egypt. They were not happy there. They were sad because they were being treated badly by the Egyptian people.¹

The mention of unhappiness should draw a child's sympathy immediately and arouse interest in what is to follow. The description used gives a clue as to what is to follow. The hero is not introduced in the beginning, but rather is introduced later with a group of all the baby boys born during that period.

The purpose of the story is not accomplished through the details of the story. The plot revolves around the baby's safety, and not the helpfulness of the princess. The conflict is immediately set forth in a positive way between the king's soldiers and the Jewish people. A feeling of suspense is created and holds until the climax when the problem is solved. The listener's sympathy is not sought for the hero alone but for the group with whom he is asso-

.....

1. Ella M. Osten: Our Primary Children, Child's Leaflet, Primary I, Quarter I

ciated. He is tempted to cry with the parents and feel sorry with the princess. Direct discourse is not used until the middle of the story. Three of the paragraphs begin with "then" and the word "said" is used in every incident of speaking except one, so variety in language is lacking.

The climax is indefinite, but perhaps it comes after the baby's mother is secured as a nurse. This statement is made, "Now the soldiers did not dare to kill the baby, for the baby belonged to the princess."¹ This solution is simply told and, though anticipated, it fulfills the desires of the listeners. Good reigns! To comply with the demands of the lesson's purpose, the characters are all accounted for in the end by proclaiming them all helpers of God. The ending is brief and leaves no sense of suspense or uncertainty.

b. Elements to add interest and variety.

The lack of variety in language has been noted, and yet there is a variety of activity presented. The changing scenes from the king's palace, to Jochebed's home, to the river, and back to Moses' home do much to add variety. A distinct contrast is drawn between the Egyptians in general and the Jewish people, as well as between the Egyptian soldiers and the Hebrew babies. The contrasts strengthen the power of the story.

c. Liberties with Bible text

The story is presented in the spirit of the Bible text except

.....

1. Ibid., p.x

at the end. There the purpose of the unit seemed to necessitate adding several lines describing the main characters as God's helpers. The facts are Biblical and, in places, contain almost the same wording as the Bible. The princess says the same words found in Exodus 1:6. The background material is true to the Bible and is presented only as an introduction. Very little lengthening or shortening is done save in the added ending and where a few words of explanation are necessary.

d. Selectivity

This incident in the life of Moses is the one recounted the most often to young children. It has the desirable characteristic of being about babies and children, and thus appeals to the primary child's interest. Although the drowning of the babies is mentioned, it is not given a prominent place in the story. The essence of the narrative is true to the teachings of Jesus, although it is an Old Testament story.

3. Treatment by Gospel Light Press

The Gospel Light Press uses the same incident in the Moses narrative that the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. used, and yet a different purpose is outlined. The story is approached, therefore, from another point of view.

a. Structural elements

The story is launched with a long paragraph which starts:

Moses and all the people of Israel traveled on and on for a long time. They could not go fast, for you remember they had to walk through the wilderness. In this

wilderness there were no houses along the way, where they could stop and rest...¹

Following this beginning there is a question, which apparently calls for an answer from the class. Such a procedure would tend to disrupt the mood of the class. The beginning must be viewed in light of the fact that this is one lesson in a series on the life of Moses. Therefore the children are familiar with some background material. The amount of involuntary attention that would be secured could depend on the child's past interest in this unit. Of the five sentences in the introductory paragraph, three are explanations of why things were as they were. These do not help the movement of the story. There can be no doubt as to who the chief characters are, for they are introduced in the first sentence. Little hint is given as to what is to happen in the story, except that the Hebrews travel on an on.

The body of the story contains a great many details that are true to Scripture, but unnecessary in the story's purpose. Not until the fourth paragraph does the story begin to move toward the climax. The first three paragraphs are stage settings and might well be condensed. The reason given for the request for materials with which to build the Tabernacle is that God wants them to give. "God wants" is repeated numerous times. The primary child responds more readily to appeals to his feelings or reason than to commands,

.....

1. Esther Ellinghusen: My Bible Story Book, Stories of Moses, Grade I, Part IV, p.44

but in the story the characters respond generously.

To add suspense another question has been placed in the body of the story. It says, "What do you think people did after Moses told them what God wanted them to do?"¹ This question might call forth any number of answers and none be the desired one, so the question would be better left unsaid. One way in which the primary child might live with the story character is in the bringing of gifts for the church. They might feel the joy that the women and children felt in giving their jewelry for God's house.

The climax is reached when the people must be told to bring no more. It is dramatically stated: "Just think! They had to make the people stop giving, for they gave too much."² It is brief and written in simple language. The climax is a surprise, for the reader hardly knows what the purpose of the story is until the climax is reached.

Because this story is one in a series on the life of Moses, the ending is somewhat unusual. The author uses it to give a preview of the next week's story. It does not release the listener or account for the characters, but rather points out the fact that they will learn more about the people next time.

b. Elements to add interest and variety

There is only one instance of direct discourse in the entire

.....

1. Ibid., p. 44

2. Ibid., p. 45

story. The variety in the story seems to lie in the activity of the characters and not in a varied style of presenting their activity. Little is done to appeal to any of the senses of the child. The addition of some contrast in characters, action, or situation would do much to add interest. The story is brief enough for a primary child, but the introductory material might be condensed in order to add interest.

c. Liberties with Bible text

Certainly this story is true to the Bible text in detail and spirit. Many words are used directly from the Bible, but they are ones that the children can understand. The extensive background material that is used is entirely true to fact, including the interjected explanations. True, too, is the emphasis given. The Bible points up the fact that the people gave so willingly that it was necessary to stop them.

In expanding the story, details have been included which, though true, might tend to lose the child's interest. The author has made use of historical background material for introductory purposes. No unnecessary people are brought into the story.

d. Selectivity

When wisely prepared, this oft-repeated story can arouse the child's interest and produce the desired behavior. There is nothing of cruelty, hatred or other undesirable qualities here. Other children are included, which attracts the listeners. There is no undue analysis of what motivated the

Hebrews to give. In fact the motives are not clearly defined until the end. Those things included are within the child's interest and understanding. The selectivity of incidents is wisely made from the point of child-interest and story-purpose.

4. Treatment by Scripture Press

This press, too, treats the phase of Moses' life in which the Tabernacle is built. But, the approach is entirely different from any of the others. The purpose here is immediately evident and all is planned to move with it in mind. One distinct difference is the inclusion of the purpose of each gift. A short study of how the silver, gold and bronze treasures were worked into objects for the Tabernacle is given.

a. Structural elements

The story begins with a reference to something familiar and then moves to the unknown. Such an approach attracts attention. The beginning reads, "You have no doubt seen a tent church, but you never saw one just like the tabernacle that God told His people to make"¹ The fact that there is something involved which they do not know will help hold the interest aroused. There is no superfluous description and the challenge is short and clear. No excuse for telling the

.....

1. Mary and Lois LeBar: Primary Teacher, All Graded Series, Oct.-Dec., 1952, p. 57

story is given, for none is needed. A general introduction is made to the children of Israel, but not to Moses as leader. A hint as to what is to follow has been given in mentioning that God told the people to make a Tabernacle, yet no unnecessary details are included.

Much of the appeal in the story lies in the unnoticeable way in which the authors included a call to the sense of right and wrong without doing it overtly. The emphasis is placed on the memory of what God had done for the people. This motivated their giving—not a command. Variety is added by the diversity of gifts, uses of gifts, and the people bringing them. There is little variety in feeling, for everyone immediately begins to give generously. The movement of the story is even and includes little of disappointment, surprise or suspense. No specific conflict is evident, other than the lack of a church and the desire for one. While the above is true, the story holds the child's interest by evoking curiosity as to what strange furnishings for the church are being shaped from the rings and bracelets given.

As in the other stories of this event, the climax comes when Moses tells the people to stop bringing their gifts. The climax is brief and free of details and it is effective because the entire story has led to it. Much emphasis has been placed on everyone's willingness to give. In the climax the giving is rewarded and the purpose is accomplished. The story ends with one brief sentence that leaves the people accounted for. The characters all were rejoicing,

so the listener would be released from any tension. He would be rejoicing, too. A little review is made of the story's purpose, without moralizing, by the sentence, "The people rejoiced that the Tabernacle would be made entirely of gifts of love to the Lord."¹

b. Elements to Add Interest and Variety

The story has unity. It has one aim and constantly moves to achieve it. While there is little variety in action, there is variety in presentation, an asset to any story. Direct discourse is employed to advantage and the feelings of a primary child are touched. The child in the story gives up a bracelet for the church, and the listening child feels the tug of heart. Little contrast is used. The language is clear and varied, with some words that a child seldom hears but can understand.

c. Liberties with the Bible Text

The Bible spirit and facts are constantly evident. Characters not in the Bible are introduced in order to give the listener specific examples of how the people must have felt in giving. An interesting use of Bible facts is made when the author is endeavoring to show why the people gave willingly. The reason is given by a review of Israel's past history. Presented in this way, the added facts do not prove burdensome to the listener. The emphasis is Biblical and

.....

1. Ibid., p.57

the style is reminiscent of the Bible and yet clear enough for a child to understand.

The account is longer than any of the other three stories examined thus far. It has been lengthened, but with little ill effect. Perhaps the details of what was brought to the Tabernacle might have been cut down, but otherwise, no extra people or irrelevant events are added.

d. Selectivity

The purpose of the story is to show the joy with which Christians should give. The note of joy is seen throughout, and this, without stretching the story's true point. The child's interest is considered in the inclusion of other children and their giving. Although the motive for giving is presented, it is done in a concrete way and not by an analysis. The teaching is truly Christian and the selection of events is carefully made.

C. Story of the Nativity

A New Testament story which never ceases to attract children is the birth of Christ and all the unusual happenings that attended it. The various publishers approach the subject from different points, but all present the story at Christmas time. The material to be examined here will cover the entire nativity story.

1. Treatment by Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

The aim of the presentation is to guide the children

in directing their praise and worship to Christ. Consequently the author has chosen the events concerning the visit of the Wise Men.

a. Use of Structural Elements

The attraction in the introduction to the story lies in the strangeness of the star described. The star is something with which the children are familiar, but different from any they know. This difference secures involuntary attention. The introduction of this strange star gives a clue as to what is to follow. The Wise Men are presented as the characters involved and the setting is given, yet the star remains central. No unnecessary description is added but the oddness of the star is given thus:

It was large - as large as several stars together in a cluster might be. It did not twinkle as small stars do. It glowed with a steady and warm light.¹

The story does not lapse into a listing of happenings after this beginning, but continues to hold the attention by immediately introducing direct discourse. The next sentence begins, "Look! cried one of the Wise Men."² The child senses the excitement that the characters feel, and lives with them. In one sense this may be considered a journey story; the peak is reached when the destination is reached. All the events lead to the finding of Christ. Variety is found in the number of difficulties to be overcome along the way.

.....

1. Agnew, op. cit., p.59

2. Ibid., p.59

The characters are in action at all times, and suspense is felt as each difficulty is met and surmounted. No one point is dealt with for an undue amount of time.

The climax comes, as has been mentioned, in the reaching of their destination. Upon finding Jesus, they worship Him and offer Him gifts. The climax and ending are one. The final sentence is from Matthew 2:11 "opening their treasures they offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh." With this, their journey's purpose is accomplished and all the suspense is released. All characters are safe and accounted for.

b. Elements to Add Interest and Variety

The continued reference to the star introduced in the first sentence adds unity to the story. The use of many descriptive words aids in giving variety. The account is filled with activity and, though brief, it covers the journey well. Contrast is employed in describing the star, the Wise Men, and the gifts.

c. Liberties with the Bible

The major events of the story are those given in Matthew 2: 1-11, but all of the discourse and description is added. While it is true to the spirit of the text, it is not actually presented thus in the Bible. The description of the star might have been recorded in some source other than the Bible. No Biblical background material is used. The emphasis which is placed on giving to Christ and worshipping Him

is certainly present in the text. The elaboration of characters may be true, but there is no Biblical basis for it.

d. Selectivity

Considering the aim of the lesson the selection of this incident is a very good one. It is within the child's interest and contains nothing symbolic or morbid. The fact that a baby is included in the list of characters adds much to its appropriateness for primaries. The aim is accomplished through the story and no attached moral is needed.

2. Treatment by United Lutherans

The aim of the United Lutherans in this story is to fill the children's hearts with true Christmas joy. They, therefore, present the account of Christ's birth night.

a. Structural elements

The story begins thus:

It was the very first Christmas Eve in Palestine, many hundreds of years ago. But no one in all Palestine knew that it was the first Christmas Eve. To them it was just like any other December evening.¹

The mention of Christmas attracts a child's attention immediately. A secret that is hidden from the story characters is revealed to the listener, and this involves him in the story. A sense of suspense is built up in the listeners, which keeps them alerted and interested. As the narrative moves along, the children will be watching to see when the

.....

1. Marion P. Athy: Our Primary Children, Teacher's Guide, Christian Growth Series, p.54

people in the story realize the secret, too.

The story moves constantly toward the fulfillment of the desire that someone know Christ. The feeling of oneness with the principal character is created by use of the listening child's previous knowledge of the importance of Christ's birthday. Little is said to secure new loyalty to Christ; rather, the writers appeal to loyalty they assume the children have already. There is a variety of moods and feelings in the story as the listener follows Mary and Joseph from inn to stable; as he stands in awe with the shepherds, while the angels sing. The suspense is upheld by mention of the fact that God is going to tell shepherds about His Son's birth in an unusual way. Some of the description is not needed, but most is used for creating an effective atmosphere.

The climax is not a brief one. It reveals the way in which God told the shepherds of Christ's birth. Most of the details are necessary for the effectiveness of the story. Interest reaches its height here, because, finally, the desire stirred in the beginning is satisfied.

The brief ending is a summary, but might well have been omitted. It reads, "And that is the story of the first Christmas Eve and of the coming of Jesus the Saviour."¹ The extended climax actually took the place of the ending in giving release and effectively accounting for the characters.

.....

1. Ibid., p.56

The shepherds had found Jesus and worshipped Him.

b. Elements to Add Interest and Variety

The story has no direct discourse save when the angels give their message. There is activity as one is taken from Augustus' palace, to a stable, to the hillside, and back to the stable. The sense of activity in Bethlehem is evident, too. Very little is actually done to get sympathy for Mary or Joseph or their situation of need. The authors have used both contrast and description to advantage. The description of what the shepherds saw when the angels came is vivid and suspense-filled. Following this description of light the paragraphs speak often of darkness.

c. Liberties with the Bible Text

The story is told with very little deviation from the text. Not only the spirit of the story, but the facts are true to Scripture. No background material is used except an explanation of the census. The story has been expanded only where explanations were necessary for the listener's understanding. In the quotations, the exact words of the Bible text are used.

d. Selectivity

Needless to say, the story is a well chosen one for helping a child feel the true Christmas joy. It has a secret that everyone should know. In seeking to show how the secret is revealed the child is carried along joyfully. No symbolism is used and the characters are people that the primary child

can understand. The element of wonder which is added by the angels attracts, also.

3. Treatment by Gospel Light Press

The coming of the Wise Men is presented by this Press, but in an extended way, including the flight into Egypt and the return. The objective of the lesson is to picture God as loving us and watching over us.

a. Structural elements

The story begins with the time-worn phrase, "Once upon a time." Several vague sentences follow. Finally the usual star is presented. The involuntary attention would be difficult to secure, because the introduction is "wordy." It presented no challenge and gives no clue as to what is to follow.

The events are presented to show God's care for Jesus and for us. The story does this, but not in good story form. The body of the story does not carry the listener with it, because there is little building toward one point. The attempt by Herod to kill Jesus is perhaps the chief conflict. But when the jealous king's plot fails, the story does not end. Indeed, three paragraphs ensue.

The first half of the story stresses the Wise Men's seeking for Jesus. The second half brings up the new problem of the conflict with Herod. There is variety in the actions of the characters, but not in presentation. Again, this Press inserts question in the story, which would bring

forth varied answers from the listeners and disturb the mood. Also interjected in the middle is a poem which first graders would have difficulty understanding. The long treatment of the journey of the Wise Men tends to be tedious for primaries. As example of this may be seen in the quotation:

The camels knelt down; the Wise Men got off their backs. They took down their boxes and bags of treasures. I think maybe Joseph, Mary's husband, opened the door for them and invited them in.¹

The suspense which could be produced fails to appear.

It seems that there are two climaxes. One comes when the Wise Men find and worship Jesus and the other when Mary, Joseph, and the baby are allowed to return to Nazareth. Both have a dramatic note, but each is marred by much unnecessary description.

Finally, the closing of the story is three paragraphs long even though the first of the three could have effectively closed it. The characters' happiness is expressed there and thereby they are accounted for. The last two paragraphs are added to explain what had happened in the story and to apply it to the listeners. The summary or explanation is valid, but its length is uncalled for. The last paragraph could well fit into a discussion of the story with the children, but should not be placed in the story itself.

.....

1. Esther A. Ellinghusen: My Bible Story Book, First Stories of Jesus, Grade 1, Part 2, p. 8

b. Elements to Add Interest and Variety

The story has more continuity than unity. Unity is hard to achieve when there are two major threads in the story. In a desirable number of cases direct discourse is employed, but brevity is in no way evident. The description used seeks to appeal to the senses of the child. Apart from the unnecessary length of these descriptions, they are well done.

One such paragraph is this:

Off they started across hills and valleys, over high mountains and through the hot, sandy desert. Their camels went as fast as they could, with their heads held high, the tassels swinging in the wind and the little bells on their harnesses making sweet music.¹

This appeals to the senses, but an undue number of such descriptions loses the child's interest.

c. Liberties with the Bible Text

The story retains the spirit of the Bible text, while adding descriptions that are not Biblical, but are probable. There are quotations from the Bible, with the words only slightly changed. The historical and geographical background material is correct. The extensions made have been done mostly for purposes of giving a clearer picture to the listener and for giving atmosphere.

d. Selectivity

The teaching here is quite clear and the numerous references to God in this story would help to accomplish the author's purpose. The selection of material is appropriate, because

.....

1. Ibid., p.9

it lies within the range of the child's interest. There is nothing to cause any unpleasant thoughts, even though there is a degree of cruelty on the part of Herod. Most of the incidents chosen, though not in the range of the child's own activity, are within the scope of his imagination and, therefore, are well chosen.

4. Treatment by Scripture Press

Scripture Press seeks to motivate love and giving at Christmas, because God first loved and gave to us. To do this, they select an account of the census and the shepherd's experience. They motivate giving by describing God's giving of His Son.

a. Structural elements

The introductory statements in the story tend to be longer than might be desired. The attention of the child is secured by the mention of a king. An explanation of why there was a census follows which might have been included later or omitted. There is some hint of what is to follow, but none of the principal characters are introduced until the second paragraph. The beginning is not as effective in arousing interest in what is to follow as the previously examined Scripture Press story.

The story moves toward the shepherd's recognition of Christ as Saviour, but it is hard to determine with whom the listener's sympathy is to rest. At first it is primarily with Mary and Joseph, and later with the shepherds.

Perhaps this change is necessary, but considering the statement of purpose by the author, some means of getting the listener to feel more love for Christ should be used. The only conflict seen is in the hardships met in reaching Bethlehem. Variety may be seen in the obstacles Mary and Joseph meet, the sweetness of the Baby, the fear of the shepherds on seeing the angels, and their joy at finding the Saviour. A hindrance to the movement of the story is an excess of description. There is a long descriptive paragraph concerning the sheep and the way in which the shepherds cared for them.

The main point of the climax is recorded in one sentence which says, "Kneeling before the Child, the shepherds worshipped Him as the Saviour, Christ the Lord."¹ The desires of all are fulfilled in this action. The Saviour has been born and the shepherds have found and worshipped Him. Added to this one sentence are several extraneous ones discussing what the shepherds told Mary and what she answered. The content is all quite good, but misplaced when included in the climax.

The ending is effectively presented by a few words concerning the joy of the shepherds and their spreading of the glorious news. It is brief and releasing and ends on a joyous, pleasant note. The characters are accounted for and

.....

¹. LeBar, *op. cit.*, p. 69

nothing inconsequential is added.

b. Elements to Add Interest and Variety

Variety in language is evident in this story, as is variety of action. There is a limited amount of direct discourse, but numerous changes of sentence structures, which add interest. In the description of scenes, the author has used contrast to strengthen the pictures. The descriptions do much to appeal to the senses of the listener.

c. Liberties with the Bible Text

An unusual element in the body of the story is the use of indefinite statements as "they may have" or "they must have." Perhaps this is done to let the child know that the content is not in the Bible, but is being assumed. The Bible text has been taken in its normal sequence of events and elaborated on. The spirit is true, and much has been done to give the child the feeling of the events. These additions are quite true and good, except in places where they are too extensive. The shepherds speak in actual quotations from the Bible, and the language is appropriate for the Bible story. Some of it is so like the Bible as to be hard for a primary child to understand.

d. Selectivity

Selected events are appropriate for children. But the impact of the story has been lessened, because too many incidents were blended together. The teaching is appropriate and the wonder of the event would be evident to a child. The story

would be of interest to the primary, except where the details are overly elaborated. The emphasis on Mary's tenderness and the discussion of babies would hold interest.

D. Summary

The application of the basic principles in storytelling has been made in much of the literature written for Christian education. This chapter has included an examination of the literature of four publishers - the United Lutheran, the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Gospel Light Press and Scripture Press. From these presses representative material was selected. The presentations of the story of Moses and of the Nativity were examined.

The examinations were made on the basis of the principles set up in the preceding chapter. Structural elements, interest and variety, liberties with the Bible text, and selectivity of incidents were considered.

The beginnings, series of events, climaxes, and endings were analyzed for their clarity, fulfillment of purpose and length. Liberties with the Bible text were considered as to their trueness of spirit and fact. Wisdom in selectivity was determined by child-interest, appropriateness of themes, and lack of symbolism, cruelty and hatred.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has sought to give a clear picture of the place of the Bible story in the life of a primary child. As an aid to all who may be called upon to tell Bible stories to children, helps in making the task of preparation easier and more effective have been suggested. In order that the reader might see samples of material in which these principles were applied and were not applied, a number of selected stories were examined.

In the first chapter, the use of the Bible story was seen in meeting needs in all areas of a child's experience. To understand the needs and interests of the primary child, a study was made of his intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual requirements. Various types of stories, reasons for teaching Bible stories to children, and ways in which the Bible meets the story needs were set forth.

In presenting the Bible story's use in the child's overall experience, such things were suggested as character molding, enriching ideas of God, arousing interest in and sympathy for others, aiding in memory work and guiding in choices. While in the past, the child seldom heard Bible stories except in the Sunday School, numerous opportunities for their use exist today in Daily Vacation Bible School, Junior Church, on playgrounds, and in camps.

The second chapter presented some basic principles

which should be applied to the preparation of Bible stories. The principles outlined how the storyteller could become familiar with the story, how he might visualize its characters and events, and how he could check his preparation to determine its adequacy.

The storyteller will determine first the task he wants his story to accomplish. He will then concern himself with the structural elements of the story. Its beginning should arouse interest, secure involuntary attention, give a clue as to what is to follow, and introduce the hero. The body must move constantly toward the climax, with all unnecessary details avoided and with much activity and suspense. The high point is reached in the climax, which should be brief and dramatic. The purposes of the ending are releasing tensions, setting minds at rest, accounting for all characters.

The added interest and variety desired may be produced by unity, variety in language, direct discourse, action and contrast. To avoid problems in the preparation of Bible stories, the spirit and facts of the texts should be retained. Ways of lengthening and shortening stories were presented. And finally, the things to be aware of in selecting stories for use with primaries were given.

Using the principles set forth in the second chapter as standards, the writer undertook in the third chapter an examination of selected curricula. The immediate ob-

jective was to ascertain how closely these principle were followed in the material for primary children. The curricula selected included two denominational and two non-denominational presses.

In all of the material examined, the selectivity of the events was appropriate. Often the same incidents within the narratives chosen were used by different presses. The stories included children, which would increase the interest children would have in them. The selection was sometimes altered due to a difference in the aims of the writers.

How the materials adhered to and diviated from correct structure varied with the presses. The stories had interest-provoking, brief beginnings, except the ones published by the Gospel Light Press. These latter tended to have lengthy beginnings. Length weakened the climaxes of the United Lutheran stories, too, while the short climaxes of the others were more effective. The endings of all of the stories, except one by the Gospel Light Press, were releasing. The Gospel Light material introduced the next week's lesson.

A major lack in each story examined was the absence of direct discourse. Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. material used more than any other Press, and the United Lutherans had an entire story with none. Among the items found to add interest and variety were the outstanding unity of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. material and

Scripture Press's unusual use of Biblical facts as background material.

All the stories were true to the spirit of the Bible, but at times wandered from the facts of the text. The Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. was the worst offender. Often the United Lutheran used almost the exact wording of the Bible.

The Gospel Light Press stories presented a unique problem in their use of questions in the body of the story.

No conscious attempt to follow the principles consistently for composing stories was evident in the materials. The Press which adhered to them more closely than the others was the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. The others often applied them, but the points in which they excelled in one story were weak in the other.

When the principles are applied, they make Bible stories more effective in meeting the needs of primary age children. It would follow, therefore, that the storyteller who extracted his narratives directly from the Bible and applied the principles in telling them would produce better stories and, thereby, accomplish worthwhile aims in the lives of the children with whom he was working.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Primary Sources

- Agnew, Edith J.: Opening Doors, Vol. 6, No.,1, Board of Christian Education of Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Crawfordsville, Indiana, 1953.
- Athy, Marion P.: Our Primary Children, Teacher's Guide, Christian Growth Series, Philadelphia, 1945.
- Ellinghusen, Esther A.: My Bible Story Book, First Stories of Jesus, Grade 1, Part 2, Gospel Light, Los Angeles, 1950.
- Ellinghusen, Esther A.: My Bible Story Book, Stories of Moses, Grade 1, Part 4, Gospel Light, 1950.
- LeBar, Mary and Lois: Primary Teacher, All Graded Series, Oct.-Dec., Scripture Press, Chicago, 1952.
- Osten, Ella M.: Our Primary Children, Teacher's Guide, Primary 1, Quarter 1, Christian Growth Series, Philadelphia, 1945.

B. Secondary Sources

- Bailey, Carolyn S.: For the Story Teller, Milton Bradley, Company, Springfield, Mass., 1921.
- Betts, G.H.: Teaching Religion Today, Abingdon Press, New York, 1934.
- Bible, Revised Standard Version
- Brown, Jeanette Perkins,: The Storyteller in Religious Education, Pilgrim Press, Boston, 1951.
- Bryant, Sara C.: How to Tell Stories to Children, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1905.
- Cather, Katherine Dunlap: Educating by Story-telling, World Book Company, Yonkers, 1905.

- Cather, Katherine Dunlap: Story Telling for the Teacher of Beginners and Primary Children, Caxton Press, New York, 1921.
- Cather, Katherine Dunlap: Religious Education Thru Story Telling, Abingdon Press, New York, 1925.
- Chaplin, Dora P.: Children and Religion, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1948.
- Danielson, Frances W.: The Practice Story Telling Class, Pilgrim Press, Boston, 1930.
- Eggleston, Margaret: The Use of the Story in Religious Education, Doran, New York, 1920, revised in 1936, Harper and Brothers.
- Hensley, Elma Lillian: Stories for the Primary Child Which Create the Desired Attitude Toward God, Athesis in the Biblical Seminary in N.Y., 1935.
- May, W.J.: Bible Stories and How to Tell Them, Cokesbury Press, Nashville, 1930.
- May, W.J.: Living Bible Stories, Abingdon Press, New York, 1931.
- Miller, George T.: Story Telling to Live-Wire Boys, Pilgrim Press, Boston, 1910.
- Munkres, Alberta: Primary Method in the Church School, Abingdon Press, New York, 1930.
- St. John, E.P.: Stories and Story Telling, Pilgrim Press, Boston, 1910.
- Sawyer, Ruth: The Way of the Story Teller, The Viking Press, New York, 1942.
- Shedlock, Marie L.: The Art of the Story Teller, Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1951.
- Smither, Ethel: Teaching Primaries in the Church School, The Methodist Book Concern, New York, 1930.
- Smither, Ethel: The Use of the Bible with Children, the Methodist Book Concern, New York, 1937.
- Stewart, Mary: Tell Me a True Story, Fleming H. Revell Co., New York, 1909.