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**THIRTY STUDIES IN
REPRESENTATIVE LEADERS OF ISRAEL
FOR BOYS IN JUNIOR MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN CHINA**

by

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A THESIS

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PREFACE

In the fall of 1932 the Biblical Seminary received from a missionary in China a letter requesting the preparation of a course on the Old Testament for use in the mission schools of that country. The course was to consist of thirty lessons for pupils in the Junior Middle Schools. This matter was presented to a group of students in the Biblical Seminary of which the writer was a member, and the following lessons represent her attempt to fulfil the missionary's request.

Two qualifications of the writer justify her attempt to undertake this work. She was born in China and played as a child with Chinese children; and for the past five years she has been teaching Bible classes in a school for missionaries' children in the Orient. Some of the classes in the Old Testament at this school have been composed of adolescents, the age-group for which the present lessons are intended. The need for a course such as the present one was indicated thus by the missionary who requested it:

"The government does not allow the Bible taught in school hours, but we have voluntary Bible classes meeting Sunday mornings. This is the usual condition throughout China. There is a good supply of Chinese text-books available on the life of Christ, but not so much on the Acts and Epistles, and still less on the Old Testament. Indeed, many Chinese Christians have New Testaments, but not Bibles. In most churches the Old Testament is a good deal neglected."

The aim of the present course, to quote an expression often used by Dr. W. W. White, is to promote "the intelligent and affectionate use" of the Old Testament by the students for whom the lessons are designed.

The method by which it is hoped to realize this aim may be stated thus: The stimulation of recourse to the records in the Old Testament by the student himself. The writer shares the conviction held by the Biblical Seminary that a student brought into direct and vital contact with the Scriptures cannot fail to have his interest awakened. In order to bring the student into this kind of contact with the Scriptures, definite readings are assigned and numerous questions asked which will stimulate curiosity and send the student delving into the Biblical material itself for answers. It is hoped that the inductive method used will offset to a great extent the didactic attitude so characteristic of the average Chinese teacher

of religion. As Professor Garman of Amherst has said, the important thing in education is "not what we can give the student, but what we can induce him to get and give his estimate of."

There is a strong feeling these days that Bible teaching for children should not be material-centered, as these lessons are. A very definite attempt has been made, however, to relate the material studied to the everyday life situations and interests of the pupils, such as family relationships, school activities, and national customs. Chinese proverbs are used occasionally to lend flavor, since as Plopper says they are the common heritage of all classes of Chinese.¹ Animated maps are given with many of the lessons to explain and add life to otherwise meaningless geographical data.² And it will be seen by what is said in the next paragraph that a dominant interest in the lives of Chinese school children has been kept in mind in the selection of the Biblical material to be studied. Although, then, they appear to be entirely material-centered, it will be seen that these lessons are not unrelated to the life and interests of the pupils.

Now, a word as to the basis on which the selection of material has been made. At the present time the school in China is the hotbed of the most rampant nationalism. This interest has been capitalized in these lessons by placing emphasis upon the development of Israel as a nation under the guidance of a God-inspired and God-directed leadership, from Abraham to Nehemiah. Ten strategic men have been chosen, and the largest amount of space has been given to the two who led Israel during her critical formative periods: Moses and David. The Messianic note has been stressed, and is used as the climax of the last lesson and of the whole course.

As regards procedure, the lessons are self-teaching. A student who follows them through thoughtfully will really need very little outside help. Provided the pupils prepare week by week, the teacher's chief function will be to guide class discussions. And if the basic assumption of this course is correct--that direct and vital contact with the Scriptures will awaken inter-

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1. Chinese Religion as Seen Through the Proverb, p.2.
2. These maps have been frankly adapted from The Graphic Bible, by Lewis Browne (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1928). When the present lessons are translated, the maps will be changed by Chinese artists so as to avoid violation of the copyright.

est in them--then there should be no failure on the part of the pupils to prepare their lessons at least to the extent of reading the material assigned. The teacher who has prepared carefully himself, to the point of reading all suggested as well as assigned passages (except of course when whole books are suggested), can scarcely fail to make his class interesting. He will, by his own enthusiasm, stimulate his class to a keen desire to share with each other what they have gotten out of their study of the lesson. The expressional activities suggested occasionally, such as dramatization and story-telling, should also contribute to the vitalizing of the course.

In preparing this course, boys rather than girls have been uppermost in the writer's mind, and therefore the course is named as it is. However, there are very few places in the lessons where the interests of boys clash with those of girls to the exclusion of the latter. In teaching girls a lesson on Ruth might be included somewhere, perhaps in the form of a voluntary dramatization, in order to make them feel as if women had some part in the life of Old Testament days. It would be well to stress Ruth's connection with David and the Christ.

The lessons presented in this course have come out of a fresh first-hand study of the Old Testament. The writer trusts that some of the inspiration which she herself received in the process of preparing them may have communicated itself to the pages which follow. And should these studies prove to be helpful in challenging the youth of China to consider and respond to God's claim on their lives, she will feel amply repaid.

The Biblical Seminary in New York
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THIRTY STUDIES IN
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INTRODUCTION

What Are These Lessons?A Word About the Bible

You are about to begin the study of a book which is called the Holy Volume. Yet this is not one book at all, but is made up of many parts, written by different men at different times. If you look inside the cover of your Bible, you will find there a list of the books in it. You will also find that it is divided into two main sections, called the Old Testament and the New Testament. Many of you have already studied the Life of Christ, and perhaps the Acts of the Apostles also, and so you already know that the New Testament begins with the coming of Christ. But you probably have not had much chance to study the Old Testament yet. It is in order to help you in your study of the Old Testament that this little book has been prepared.

Beginning the study of a strange book is like visiting a strange city. You know how lost you feel when you go to a city for the first time, especially if it is very large. If you have a map of the city, with the streets clearly marked, you know what a great help it is in finding your way around. And if you have a list of the most important shops or interesting places marked on this map, this makes it easier still to go where you wish.

Suppose you wanted to visit Peiping, for instance, and had only a certain amount of time in which to see the most important places there. You would appreciate it, would you not, if a friend were to say to you, "Now, here are ten places which I consider the most important in Peiping, and I suggest that you visit them"? He would probably choose such well-known sights as the Temple of Heaven, the Altar of Heaven, the Winter Palace, the Summer Palace, the Dragon Screen, the Imperial Museums in the old Forbidden City, the Hall of Classics, Coal Hill, the Marble Boat, and the Jade Buddha. If you had no friend, you would probably consult a guide book.

Now, after having visited these, you would know Peiping fairly well, even though you had not visited all of the city. Your friends would of course tell you of other points of interest, and you might find out from guide books many other places that you would like to visit if you had time, or if you returned later. Most people en-

joy finding interesting places by exploring alone, also, and so you would keep this in mind for a later visit.

Purpose of These Lessons

The lessons in this course are trying to do for you in the great unexplored book of the Old Testament what your friend or a guide book would do for you in an unexplored city. They will introduce you to ten important people in this great book. After you have finished them, you will feel as if you know the Old Testament fairly well, even though you may not have read all of it. Like the friends and guide books of which we spoke above, these lessons suggest other places in the Old Testament which you will enjoy visiting; and you will also wish to take trips of your own into parts of the Old Testament which are perhaps not even mentioned in these lessons, in order to see what interesting stories and beautiful thoughts you may find.

A good guide book suggests interesting things to notice in the places to which it directs you. It does not usually contain many photographs of those places, because that is not necessary, since you are going to see them yourself. Of course, if you never have a chance to visit Peiping, you can still find a great deal of pleasure in looking at photographs of places there. But interesting as they are, these photographs can never give you a full idea of the beauty of the places they picture. There are some books about the Old Testament and the people in it which tell the stories of the Bible, and you never need to have a Bible in your hands at all to read these books. They are like photograph albums. The lessons in this course, however, are a real guide book, because they send you to the Old Testament itself, and ask you to read from it, and to observe what you read. The stories as they are written in your Old Testament are far more alive and beautiful than any of the attempts which people have made to rewrite them. People less fortunate than you perhaps need to have the stories in simpler form, but you are old enough and have enough education to understand them just as they are in the Bible. It may be that you will be able to interest others who cannot even read by telling them these Bible stories after you have studied them yourselves.

People You Will Meet in These Lessons

In the stories which you are going to read, you will meet people who lived hundreds of years ago. Yet you will find them in many ways very much like the people you know to-

day. "All within the four seas are brothers",¹ you know. Some of them will be very young, others much older. Some you will admire, others you will not. But moving through all these stories of different people you will discern one Person; and you will find that this Person is the One who binds all these stories together. The Bible is the Book About God. Open your Bible to the first verse of the first book, and you will find God there; and He is present all the way through.

Method and Material of These Lessons

You will find that these lessons do not begin with the first chapter of the first book in the Old Testament. Since we have only thirty short lessons in which to do our exploring, we have to choose what we shall study. And so we are beginning with the story of the Jewish or Hebrew nation, the nation which God chose through whom to tell the world about Himself. Before you begin the stories in the lessons you may wish to read the first eleven chapters of this first book of the Bible, Genesis. You will find them full of interest.

When you begin studying the lessons, you will of course want first of all to read before you come to class the parts which are suggested at the beginning of each. Then you will find in the rest of the lesson questions and interesting things to notice about what you have read. Often there will be suggestions about other reading, also, as we have said. And there are maps to help you with the hard names of places. To study one of these lessons may take some time at first; but you would not be in a voluntary Bible class unless you wanted to find out something about the Bible; and so you will want to do whatever you can to make the classes interesting. At first you may find it a little hard to look up the chapters and verses asked for in the discussions, but don't be discouraged. "A hundred things are hard at first."² You will soon find that it is great fun hunting up verses. And you will find that the most interesting classes are the classes for which you have prepared best. You know the proverb, "Every man gets what he cultivates."³ This is true in the study of the Bible perhaps more than in the study of any

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1. C. H. Plopper, Chinese Religion as Seen Through the Proverb, p. 2, no. 1.
2. Common Chinese proverb.
3. Plopper, op. cit., p. 284, no. 1863.

other book. And so, as you begin the study of this wonderful Book, may you find for yourself the greatest reward--may the God whom you meet in it become your very close Friend.

A Chart to Help You

In the chart which follows, you will see the 66 books of the Bible grouped together according to the different kinds of writing in them. The names of the ten men whom you will meet in these lessons are given with the books in which you will be doing some of your reading about them. Since you will be asked to turn to certain chapters and verses in the New Testament in some of the lessons, the New Testament books are also given on this chart. You will find that it will help you a great deal in your study to learn the names of all the books in the Bible in the order in which they come. Chinese children generally have very good memories, and so perhaps you will not find it so hard to learn the names of these books. You might have a contest in your class to see who can learn them all first. If you do not learn them, you will have to keep looking back at the table of contents at the beginning of your Bible to find verses in other books, and that will take a great deal of time; so it will really save time to learn the books of the Bible now.

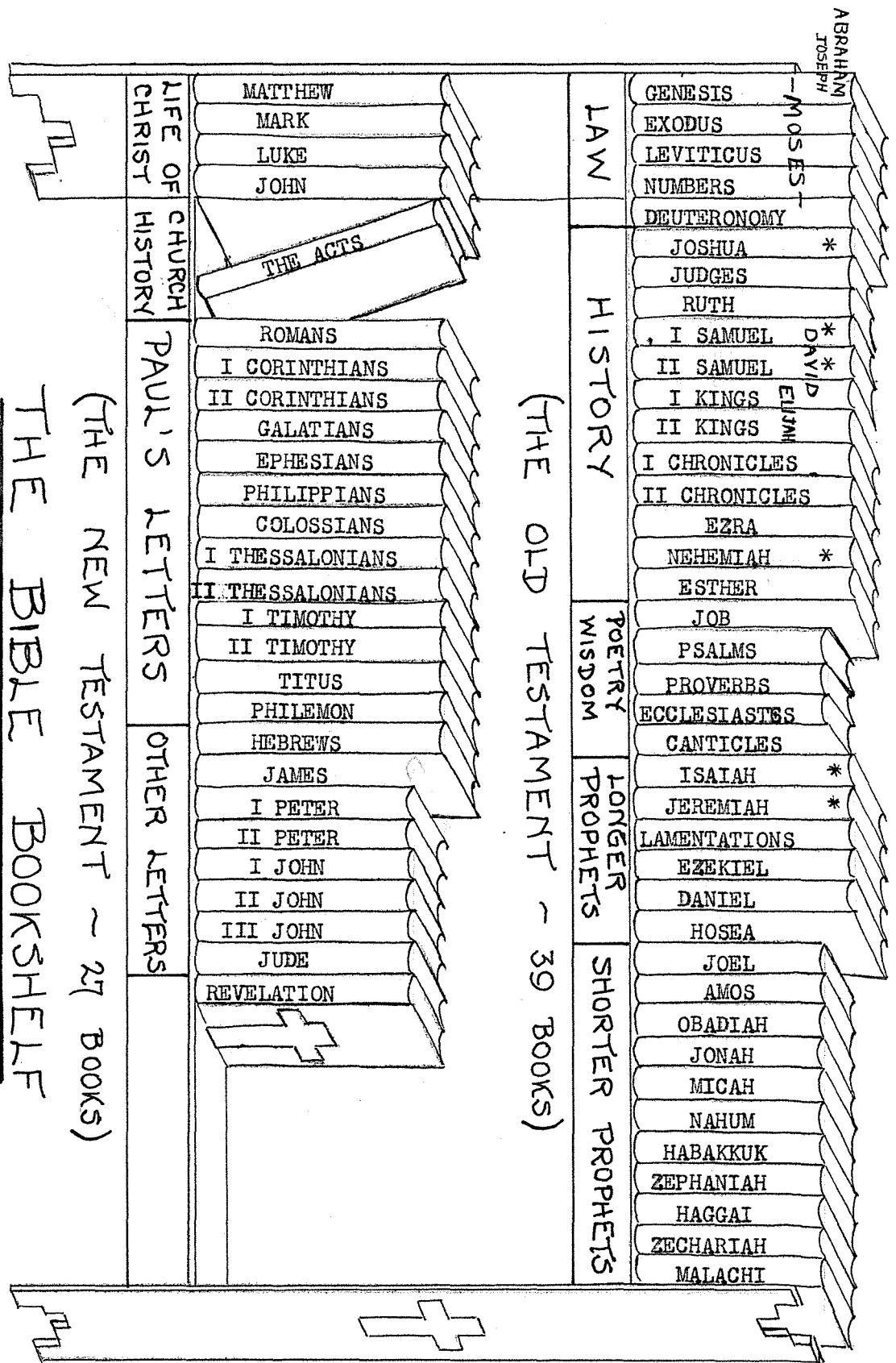


PLATE I.
The Bible Bookshelf

ABRAHAM

The Father of A Great Nation

Reading: Genesis 11:27 - 12:9

Introduction

Don't let all these names and places frighten you when you first meet them. You are not supposed to remember them all! Let's see what there is about this story that you can find out.

A Family Moves

You notice that the story starts with a family, living in a certain city, just as you and your family are living in a city or village now. Who do you think was the most important member of this family? We can usually tell the most important person in a story by the number of times his name is mentioned.

Now look at the map, and find where this family lived. Then see if you can find the country to which they decided to go. Did the family get there? How far did they get? (11:31)

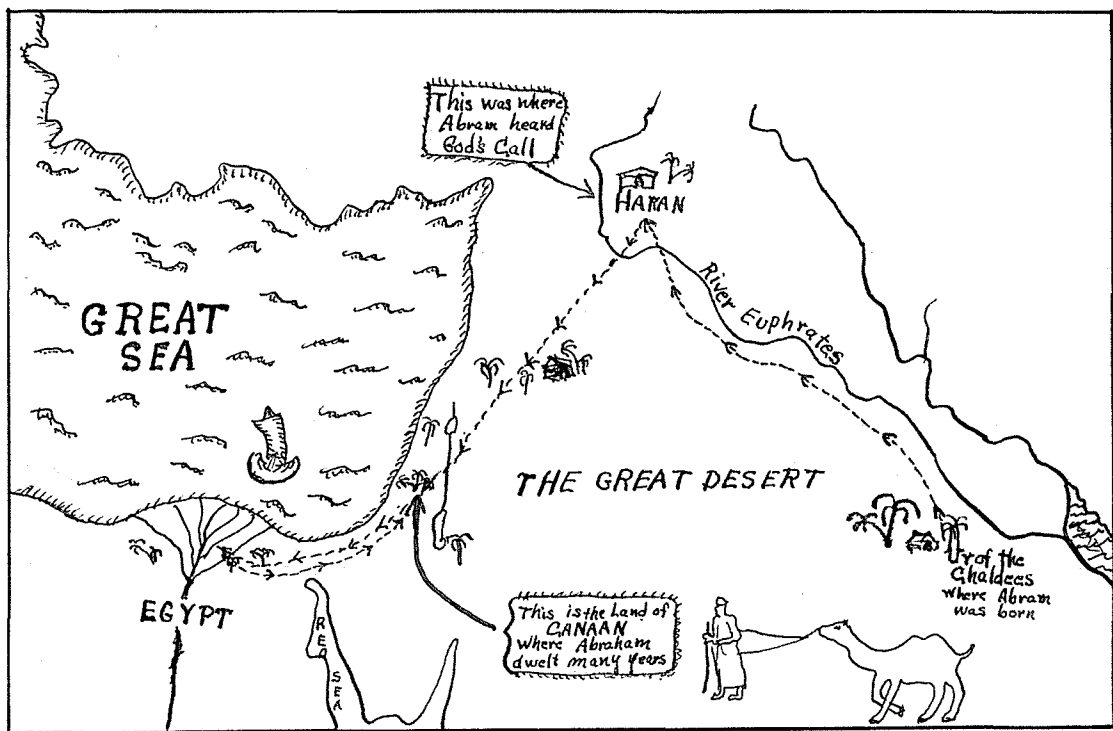
When people decide to go on a journey, they usually have a very good reason. Travel in the days of Abram was by camel caravan, as it is today in Tibet and Mongolia, and was slow and dangerous. We know that Ur was a city where many gods were worshipped. Abram's family left the city because they wanted to get away from the worship of these false gods. You found out from 11:31 that the family did not reach the place where they were going. They stopped long before they arrived. But what happened to Abram in the place where they stopped, Haran? You will notice that the name given to the true God is Jehovah. Somehow Abram was not happy living in Haran. He remembered that Canaan was the place to which the family had first meant to go. One day the true God, Jehovah, commanded Abram to go on.

Look again at 11:31, and compare it with 12:5. What kind of man was Abram compared with his father?

A Promise is Given

Read 12:2,3 again to see what Jehovah promised Abram. Was this promise to Abram just for himself and his children? Or do you think China and America and other nations were meant by God when He said that "all the families of the earth" would be blessed by the nation that Abram was to

PLATE II.



ABRAHAM TAKES A LONG JOURNEY

found? Turn over to the New Testament, to the fourth book, the Gospel by John, and read in 8:56 what Jesus said about Abram. Then turn to the first verse of the first chapter of the New Testament, in the Gospel by Matthew, and see whose son Jesus is called there. Now, do you begin to see how important this promise to Abram was?

In order to become the father of a great nation, Abram of course had to have a son. Look in 11:30 to see whether or not he had one at this time. Then look in 12:4 to see how old Abram was when this promise was given to him. Do you think it was easy for him to believe that he would become the father of a great nation? You notice in 12:7 that God again makes this promise to him; and if you will turn to 13:15-18, you will see another time when God repeated the promise. In our next lesson we shall find out about the son through whom Abram became the father of a great nation.

There is one more interesting fact about Abram. See if you can find it by looking carefully at 12:7, 12:8 and 13:7. What do you find here about Abram's feeling for the true God, Jehovah, who had commanded him to leave his kindred and who had given him such a great promise? When Christians worship this same true God in hymns and prayer, they are doing very much the same thing as Abram did here. They are saying that they believe on this God, and that they thank Him for what He has done for them, and that they will remember Him.

You have perhaps seen pictures of the beautiful Altar of Heaven in Peiping. This was built by an Emperor who wished to worship Shang-ti. When there is worship and love in our hearts, we must find some way to show it, must we not? How do you show your love for your parents? How do you think boys and girls who accept God as their Father, through Jesus their Savior, can show their worship of God in their lives?

ABRAHAM

The Father's Heir

Reading: Genesis 17:1-21

Introduction

In our first lesson we found that God promised Abram that he would be the father of a great nation, and that nation would have the land of Canaan as their home. Today we are going to hear more about the promise of the son through whom Abram was going to become great.

The Promise is Repeated

You remember that Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran to obey God's call to go into the land of Canaan. You also remember that Abram and Sarai had no son when they moved to Canaan. Now read 15:1-3. How was Abram beginning to feel about this son who was promised? You know how often a man in China will adopt a son when he has no son of his own. Well, Abram seemed to wonder if he was to become great through adopting Eliezer, a servant born in his own house. Read God's answer to Abram, in 15:4-6. How did Abram feel after this beautiful promise?

The Promise is Delayed

We do not know exactly how long Abram and Sarai had been in Canaan when the promise you have just read was given; but if you will look now in 16:1-4, you will see how many years they had been in Canaan and still had no son. How old was Abram by this time? Ten years is a long time to wait for a son, especially when a man is getting old; and so finally Sarai decided that she could wait no longer, and told Abram to take a concubine. Of course, as in China, the concubine's son would be counted as Sarai's own. In this case the concubine was only an amah! In 17:4-6 you read about the unhappiness in Abram's household after this. You may be interested to read the story that follows in verses 7-14 also. Verse 15 tells about the son of the amah being born. How old was Abram when this child was born? How do you think he felt about the baby?

The Promise is Repeated Again

At the beginning of the reading for today, how old is Abram? Then how many years had it been since God's first promise to him that he should become the father of a great

nation? If you compare 16:16 and 17:1, you will find that there had been 13 years in Abram's life when we have no record of God's speaking to him. These 13 years began with the birth of the amah's son. Now God again speaks to Abram, and you have read the story of the wonderful promise. Notice these interesting facts about this story:

1. A Name is Changed

Abram's name is changed. When you were small, you had a "milk name" which was used at home. But when you started to school, you changed your name, didn't you? This change in your name meant that something important was happening in your life. Now, Abram means Exalted father, and that was a fine name. But God gave Abram a new name, Abraham, which means Father of a multitude.¹

2. An Agreement is Signed

God told Abraham that he was to do something this time. From that time on, all the sons of Abraham were to be known by a special sign, which was the sign of circumcision. (17:9-14). You see, God and Abraham were making an agreement at this time, and instead of putting a stamp on paper, with seals, as we do in China and as people do in other countries, they signed in another way. This agreement that was signed between Abraham and God was called a covenant. God's way of signing was the birth of a son to Abraham, which you will read about next time. Abraham's sign was made in the flesh of his son Ishmael, the son of the amah, and the other males of his household. This was a very wonderful and unusual way of signing an agreement, wasn't it? A piece of paper with seals on it may be thrown away and forgotten, or lost, but a sign made on living flesh from father to son would keep God's great promise to Abraham from ever being forgotten, if every father was careful to keep his part of the covenant. Today in the city of New York in America, where there are about three million Jews, "sons of Abraham", the baby boys are still circumcised on the eighth day, and it has been about 4000 years since the promise was given to Abraham by God.

Now, look at 17:17 and see how Abraham acted when he found that it was not Ishmael, the amah's son, but a son which Sarah should bear, who was to be the child through whom the great nation should come. How old was Abraham's wife now? (Notice that her name had also been changed, to Sarah, which means Princess.)² How did she act when she

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1. Marginal reading, Genesis 17:5, American Standard Version.

2. Ibid., Genesis 17:15.

heard the news about a son? You will find the answer to this in 18:9-15. Do you blame these two old people, one 99 and one 90, for finding it hard to believe God's promise at first? Turn to the New Testament, to the Letter to the Hebrews, 11:11, and read what a man said about 2000 years later. You see that even though Sarah doubted at first, she believed afterwards. How do we know that Abraham also believed God's promise? Doesn't it take faith to sign an agreement first yourself, as Abraham did? (17:22-27).

God would like to make a covenant with each of us. He offers us eternal life as His part of the promise if we are willing to accept Jesus as Savior, on our part. (John 3:16)

ABRAHAM

The Father's Sacrifice

Reading: Genesis 21:1-8
22:1-19

Introduction

We left Abraham and Sarah last time with the promise of a son within a year, after 24 years of waiting for God's first promise to be fulfilled. Today's stories are both about that son.

A Baby is Born

You know what great joy there is in a family in China when a baby boy is born. Can you imagine how Abraham and Sarah felt when their first son was born? You remember in the last lesson you read that the name of this baby boy was given before he was born. What was his name to be? In the Chinese this name does not mean anything, but in the Hebrew language in which it was given it meant Laughter. Now look back at 21:5-7. There you will find two good reasons for the baby to have been named Laughter. What are these two reasons? How do you suppose Abraham and Sarah felt when they remembered that they had laughed at God's promise of this little new son of theirs? Do you know any children whose names show how glad their parents were when they were born?

You remember that we read last time about a covenant between God and Abraham. We said that God's way of signing that covenant was the birth of the promised son. What was Abraham's way of showing that he trusted God's promise? How does he fulfil his part of the covenant after Isaac is born?

If you have time, you will be interested in reading the rest of the story of the amah's son, Ishmael, 21:9-21. Don't forget this boy's name, because we shall notice it in a later lesson. Don't you think it would have been much better for Abraham and Sarah to have waited until God sent them their own little son whom He had promised? When people do things in too great a hurry, they are often sorry afterwards. You see how Sarah treated Ishmael's mother, Hagar.

A Sacrifice is Asked

Now, after 25 years of waiting since God's first promise to him, Abraham has this son, who is to be his heir, little Laughter, or Isaac, as he is called in the story. How

does Abraham show his pride in this baby boy? (21:8). You see, in Abraham's time that was a way of showing happiness, just as it is today in China. But one day God tests Abraham again. You have read chapter 22. After waiting 25 years to give him this son, God now asks Abraham to give up the boy! Notice how Abraham obeys. See if you can find a single word of refusal or complaining in the whole story. Look at 22:3 and see how long it was before Abraham obeyed. How do you think Abraham felt when little Laughter asked him about the lamb? How did Abraham's answer to the boy's question come true? The name Jehovah-jireh means Jehovah will provide.¹

How did Abraham's obedience please God? (22:12, 15-18). How did God reward Abraham? Compare 22:17, 18 with 15:5 and 12:3. It is said that there are now in the world some eleven million Jews, descendants of Abraham. But they are not the ones through whom the nations of the earth are being blest. Abraham's great Son, Jesus, is that one. If you are in a Christian school studying, it is because of this great Son of Abraham, who was also God's only begotten Son. This brings Abraham very near you, doesn't it? It was because this man dared to believe in the one true God, and dared to leave his family and move into a strange land, and dared to believe God's promise to him of a son, and was willing to sacrifice even that one beloved son, that God chose him to be the founder of the race of people who should tell the world about Himself, and from whom should come the Savior, Jesus Christ.

Turn again to the Letter to the Hebrews, and read what is said about Abraham in 11:8-12 and 17-19. What word is used very often here about Abraham?

There is one thing said about Abraham in the Bible which is said about no other man. Turn to the prophecy of Isaiah, and you will find in 41:8 the wonderful name given to Abraham by God. Turn now to the Letter of James, in the New Testament, and see what you find in 2:23. What did Abraham do to deserve this title. Would you not like to have such a name?

Choose any of the following things about Abraham which you admire:

Obedience

Faith

Courage

.

1. Marginal reading, Genesis 22:14, American Standard Version.

Lesson IV

Abraham - C

Try for a week to follow out what you have chosen, and perhaps you will tell each other in the class next week how well you each succeeded.

JOSEPH

Why A Lad Left Home

Reading: Genesis 37
39

Introduction

We are going to study about a boy today who was the great-grandson of Abraham. You remember that Abraham's son was called Isaac, or Laughter. Well, he had twin sons, one of whom was called Jacob. You would enjoy reading about these men. If you have time, read these stories:

Genesis 24 Isaac Gets a Wife

25:19-34 Isaac and his Twin Sons, Jacob and Esau

27 The Quarrel of the Twins; Jacob's Flight

28,29,30:1-24

Jacob and His Family; Joseph Born

32,33 The Twins' Reconciliation

35:9-29 Jacob's Return; Joseph's Brothers

These stories are very interesting, and will reward you if you read them.

The Lad and His Family

The story begins with Joseph and his brothers. Joseph's father was Isaac's son, and was called Jacob. Like Abraham, he also had his name changed. Jacob means One who supplants; his name was changed to Israel, meaning One who has wrestled with God. If you have read the above selections, you will know why Jacob received both these names. (25:19-34; 27; 32:22-30; 35:9-15). You will also know that Jacob, or Israel, had four wives, two of which were amahs. Jacob loved only one of these wives, Rachel, the mother of Joseph and of Joseph's younger brother, Benjamin. If you have not done so, read 29:18-20 and 30:1-8. What does this remind you of in the story of Abraham? Now read 30:22-24 and find out why Joseph was so named. The word for Joseph means Add in the Hebrew language.¹

Jacob had how many sons altogether? (36:22b-26). These men were the sons of Jacob, or Israel, and after this the Jewish people were called the "Children of Israel", you see; although they were of course the children of Abraham

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1. Marginal reading, Genesis 30:24, American Standard Version.

and of Isaac too. The nation was growing; first one man, and now how many? Joseph was the eleventh.

Points to Notice

In the story for today, notice these things about Joseph:

1. What kind of men were his brothers?
2. Find three reasons for his brothers' hatred of Joseph. Do you blame the brothers for feeling as they did? Do you like boys and girls who are "tell-tales", or who are "pets", or who boast?
3. How did Joseph's father, Israel, show his feeling for Joseph? Have you ever known of a family where the sons of two or more mothers were jealous of each other? Do you think it is a good idea to have "little wives" or concubines? What do you think is a good plan when a man's wife has no son?
4. What did Joseph's brothers call him in 37:19. Don't forget this. It really means Master of Dreams.¹
5. Which of the two brothers, Reuben or Judah, do you think was the kinder? Look in 35:23 and see why Reuben spoke and acted as he did.
6. In the caravan you notice that there were some Ishmaelites. Whose descendants were they? Isn't it interesting that we find one group of Abraham's great-grandchildren selling their brother to another group of Abraham's great-grandchildren?
7. Be sure to find out and remember the name of the country where Joseph was taken and sold as a slave. (37:36). Find it on your map. This country is a very important one, as you will see later.

The Lad Away from His Family

We have now the story of a young man far from his home, a slave in the house of an Egyptian military official. Some of you when you went away from home to come to school were very homesick and lonely. Can you imagine how Joseph must have felt? You go home for your holidays; he had no hope of ever seeing his family again. It would have been easy for him to act like a spoiled child. But something must have happened to him after his brothers sold him. Perhaps he saw his foolishness, and decided to be different.

Find out from 39:4,6 what kind of a young man Joseph was now, both in his character, and in his looks. Then after

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1. Marginal reading, Genesis 37:18, American Standard Version.

reading the story that follows in verses 7-20, tell something else about Joseph's character.

The imprisonment was the second great hardship in Joseph's life. How did he behave in prison? Compare 39:4, 6 with 39:22, 23. What is alike about them?

Have you found the secret of Joseph's early life in Egypt yet? If not, look in 39:2, 3, 21, 23, and see what it was.

It is not easy to do right when you are away from home. Remember, Joseph was only a slave now; yet he showed trustworthiness and purity, and great ability. In what ways can boys who are away from home at school follow Joseph's example? Read what Jesus says in Matthew 5:8. Learn this verse.

JOSEPH

Joseph Is Rewarded

Reading: Genesis 40
41

Introduction

We left Joseph in prison in Egypt in our last lesson. Today we shall see what happened to him there.

Joseph in Prison

What do you notice about Joseph again in 40:4 that you found out last time? Remember that these two prisoners, Pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker, were very important men; if anything had happened to them, Joseph's life would probably have been taken. Pharaoh was the title given to the king of Egypt, as Huang-ti or Wang was in former times in China.

How do you think Joseph treated these prisoners? Notice what he asks them in 40:7. Joseph himself had plenty of reason to be sad. He was away from his family, with no hope of seeing them again; he was a slave; and he had been in prison some time. Yet he noticed the faces of these two men. Do you know any boys and girls who are quick to notice how other people are feeling? This is one of the finest ways to show real love. If you are sad yourself sometime, as Joseph was, try to find someone who is perhaps feeling worse than you are, and like Joseph, do all you can to help. Homesickness is one reason for sadness in boarding school, isn't it?

You will notice that Joseph asks the butler to do something in return for him. (40:14,15). Can you see Joseph's face as he tells his story? What do you think of this butler? Do you sometimes forget to be kind to those who have helped you? Is forgetting a real excuse?

Joseph in Power

What was it that finally made the chief butler remember Joseph? (41:9). How long had it been since the butler had been restored? (41:1). Now try to imagine the scene in the prison on the morning described in 41:14. How must Joseph have felt? How do you suppose the other prisoners felt?

Read 41:16, 25, 28 again. What do they show about Joseph's feeling toward his God? You remember in the last

lesson you found the sentence, "And Jehovah was with him". Is this still true?

You remember that Joseph's brothers called him "Master of dreams". How do the stories in today's lessons show that they were right, even though they called Joseph that in hatred? Can you imagine how Joseph felt when he heard Pharaoh's words after the interpretation of the dream? At the beginning of chapter 41 we find Joseph in prison, a slave; at the end of the chapter, in the very last verse, who is he and what is he doing?

How old was Joseph when he was made ruler of Egypt under Pharaoh? (41:46). Do you remember how old he was when we first began his story? (37:2). Then how many years had it been since he had left his father that morning to go and find his brothers? Yet in all these years, among people who did not know and worship the true God, Joseph had, we found, kept his trust in God. In what two hard periods of his life had God helped him to be trustworthy? God had given him ability, also, both to manage the affairs of others, and to tell the meaning of dreams. During all these years Joseph had been doing his best, and now he was rewarded. But God gave him all this honor for what great purpose? As you read the last verse of this lesson, do you begin to see how God's promise to Abraham, that all nations should be blessed through his descendants, is beginning to be fulfilled?

JOSEPH

An Unexpected Meeting

Reading: Genesis 42:1-43
43

Introduction

You remember that we learned at the close of our last class that there was a great famine, in other countries as well as in Egypt, and that people from those lands were coming to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain.

Ten Men Leave Home

Today we find Jacob, Joseph's old father, sending his sons to Egypt to buy grain! Which of the eleven did he keep at home with him, and why? (42:4). Do you remember who this boy's mother was, and what happened to her when he was born? If not, read again 29:16-20 and 35:16-20. How would this make him even more precious to his father?

Joseph Has a Surprise

Try to imagine how Joseph felt when one day ten foreigners came into his presence, tired and dusty from traveling, and he suddenly saw that they were his brothers. How long had it been since he had seen them? (37:2, 41:46, 54). Why do you think they did not know him, though he knew them? One reason might be found in 41:42, perhaps another in 42:23.

You notice in verse 9 that Joseph remembered his old dreams. Do you remember them? What was it that his brothers did that made him remember the dreams? (Verse 6). How did Joseph treat his brothers at the beginning? Notice how Joseph changed his treatment of them, in verses 15-17, and 18-20. What reason does he give for this change? (42:18). Notice also what he commands in verse 25. What made him do this, do you suppose? Do you see what is happening to his heart? There are two kinds of unhappy hearts here, Joseph's and his brothers'. Have you ever felt like Joseph that you would like to hurt someone else, because he has treated you unkindly? And have you ever had a guilty conscience, like Joseph's brothers? After twenty years, they still remember their cruelty to him. And this conscience makes them afraid all the time; read 42:28 and 43:18. If you have done something wrong, does it not make you afraid of being found out and punished? What is the best thing to do after you have done wrong?

Nine Men Return Home

Which brother first speaks to the old father, Israel, when they return? Why was he the one who would do this? (35:23). What reason may Joseph have had for keeping Simeon, the second brother, instead of Reuben? (42:22,23). You found out in the first lesson which of the two older brothers, Reuben or Judah, had a kinder heart. Now compare Reuben's offer (42:37) with Judah's (43:9), and see if you think the same way about them still.

What made old Israel change his mind about letting Benjamin go? You know the custom of selling children in famine years in China. The proverb says, "In a famine year one is without the six relationships".¹ Of course Benjamin was not being sold, but you can tell from 43:14 how Israel felt about letting him go. The present which the men took to Joseph (43:11) may seem to show that there was still plenty of food in Jacob's house in Canaan; but you know what they lacked. (43:2). Isn't it true that when the wheat crop in north China fails, or the rice crop in central and south China, there is a bad famine, no matter what other food there may be?

Ten Men Again Leave Home

Now, we find the nine older brothers and Benjamin again going down to Egypt, and arriving before Joseph. You have read the story of Joseph and his brothers to the end of chapter 43, where we must stop today.

Something For You to Do

Don't you think some of your schoolmates would be interested in seeing this story acted out by you? Why not begin today in the last few minutes of the class to decide how you would like to begin this? Of course you cannot act the story until you finish it after your next class, but you could begin today to prepare.

Think about the parts of the story which you find most interesting. You remember them so far:

Joseph telling his dreams	Chapter 37
Joseph sold by his brothers	" 37
Joseph in prison; the two dreams	" 40
Pharaoh's dreams: Joseph brought out and made ruler	" 41

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1. Plopper, op. cit., p. 341, no. 2307.

Joseph meets his brothers the first time Chapter 42
Joseph's brothers return home " 42
Joseph meets his brothers the second time " 43
You might meet with your teacher some time during the week
to talk some more about this plan.

JOSEPH

Joseph's Family Comes to Egypt

Reading: Genesis 44
 45
 46:1-7
 26-34
 47:5,6,11,12

Introduction

We left Joseph entertaining his brothers at a feast in his house, still unknown to them except as the "lord of the land". Simeon had been released and Benjamin was with them this time. The reading for today is rather long, but you will not want to stop until you have finished the story of Joseph and his brothers and his father.

A Heart Continues to Change

In the first part of the story of Joseph's meeting with his brothers, we noticed a change coming over his heart, and we saw a great fear in the hearts of his brothers. Do you see in the story today how both of these things were going on still? (45:1-8). What explanation of his hard life does Joseph give in 45:5,7, and 8? Now read again what he said to his brothers in 42:18. Do you see why his heart had changed so much? To finish the story of Joseph and his brothers, turn to 50:15-21. Notice in 50:18 what there was again to remind Joseph of his dreams as a boy. In 42:8 when he was reminded of these dreams, how did he treat his brothers? How does he treat them here? What has made this complete change? Read what Jesus said on this subject in Matthew 5:43-45.

God in Life

See if you can think back now over Joseph's life and see how God had helped him:

In Potiphar's house	Chapter 39
In prison	" 40
Before Pharaoh	" 41
In his treatment of his brothers	" 42,45,50

Israel, Joseph's old father, not long before he died, blessed Joseph's two sons. Read 48:15,16, and see what Israel thought about God's help in his life. He looked back to his grandfather Abraham also, and forward to his grandsons, whom he was blessing, and connected God with them all. How many are there of the "children of Israel"

in Egypt now? (46:27). Do you see how God's promise to Abraham is being kept?

More About Your Plan

You will want to spend some time at the end of this class also deciding on the parts of the story which you wish to act out for your schoolmates. If you would like to read the story in short form, to help you remember it and to help you choose the most important parts, turn to the New Testament and in the fifth book, called the Acts of the Apostles, you will find a speech by a man who was the first follower of Christ Jesus to give his life for Him. His name was Stephen, and his speech is found in chapter 7. The part about Joseph is in verses 8-15.

MOSES

Moses' Birth and Early Life

Reading: Genesis 50:22-26

Exodus 1

2

Introduction

Today we are going to begin the story of a third great man of the Hebrew race, the descendants of Abraham, who, you remember, were also called the children of Israel because of the twelve sons of Israel, or Jacob. Israel died in Egypt, but was not buried there. Read Genesis 50:12-14 to find out where he was buried. We are to begin a new book today, the second book in the Old Testament. Its name tells what it is about.

The Children of Israel in Egypt

You remember before his death old Israel blessed the two sons of Joseph. There were then how many of the children of Israel in Egypt? (Gen. 46:27). In your first reading above, you will see that before the death of Joseph, there were more. How many generations of the Hebrew people were there when Joseph died? Begin with Abraham, of course; and don't forget the two parts to God's covenant with Abraham: he was to become a great nation, and through this nation all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. In Exodus 1:7,9,12,20, what part of the covenant with Abraham is seen to be fulfilled?

What country had been promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as the home for their descendants? Are the children of Israel in that country now? Then, can you see why this book is called "Going-out-of-Egypt"? Read again Genesis 50:24-26 to see what Joseph believed about God's keeping of His promise. Then be sure to remember what Joseph said there about what was to be done with his body long after he was dead, when this going out should take place.

In verse 8 of Exodus 1, what change has taken place in Egypt? In verse 11 you find the title which is given to this king as to all the kings of Egypt, you remember. Tell three plans he had for hurting the children of Israel. Why did he not succeed in his plans?

If you had to choose between obeying God and obeying a great king, do you think you would have been as brave as

the two Hebrew midwives? You see how the true God whom Abraham worshipped was still being worshipped long years afterwards by his descendants, in a foreign land, where they were surrounded by the worship of many false gods, just as he had been.

Moses as a Baby

Tell the story of the birth of the baby Moses to someone who likes to hear stories. (Moses means "Drawn Out" in the Hebrew language.)

Moses as a Man

In the stories of Moses the man, in the latter part of chapter 2, what would you say are the two most interesting things in the character of Moses, one good and one bad? Think especially about his killing the Egyptian who was striking a Hebrew, reproving the Hebrew who was fighting another Hebrew, and helping the women in Midian water their flocks at the well. Remember these two things of Moses' character.

(If you have time and would like to read two other beautiful stories of wives and wells, turn back to Genesis 24, and 29:1-20.)

What is Going to Happen?

Have you ever been hearing or reading a story when suddenly you get very much excited? Or have you ever been to a moving picture when suddenly the whole audience begins to cheer and clap hands? What makes people act this way when they are following a story? What part of the story for today makes you feel the same way? Read it aloud.

What do you think is going to happen next to the children of Israel? It's about time for a hero to come along, isn't it? But look at the first verse of chapter 3 and find out from the map where our hero is and what he is doing now. Do things look very promising for the poor Israelites? We have a proverb which says, "Now heaven is near and recompense is swift".¹ Which verses in the last part of today's lesson have this same idea?

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1. Flopper, op. cit., p. 68, no. 373.

MOSES

How God Trained LeadersIntroduction

Today we are going to look back a little instead of taking new reading. Our last class left us with a feeling that something exciting was going to happen very soon. We found that God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and we knew that He was preparing to do something for His people, the children of Israel.

God's Unexpected Heroes

How had God already saved the Israelites once before? Read again Genesis 45:7. Who would have thought that a slave in prison in a foreign country could be the one chosen by God to save not only the Egyptians, but people of other countries, and especially the children of Israel? And who would think that a man who had to run away to a foreign country because he had done wrong, and was tending sheep there, would be the man chosen by God to deliver the children of Israel this time? You all know the story of Lincoln. Who would have thought that a poor country boy like him would have been chosen to become President of the United States and free the negro slaves?

Very often since the times of Moses, when people have been treated cruelly by a foreign nation, they have looked back to Moses and have wished for a leader like him. Later on in Bible times we find the great men called prophets speaking of the way in which God led the children of Israel out of Egypt by Moses. And yet Moses had to be trained for a long time before he was ready for his life work.

Joseph and Moses in Training

Let us glance back over the lives of Joseph and Moses to see how God was preparing them. First of all, their lives were spared. When was Joseph's life in danger once when he was still a boy? And what three times was Moses spared from death? Then, God had to teach the men He chose to do a great work for Him. What was the matter with Joseph when he was a boy of seventeen? What great lesson did he have to learn? The Chinese proverb says, "Pride brings loss, and humility receives increase."¹ Turn to the book called Proverbs in your Old Testament. And see what the Hebrew proverb says in 16:18. (By the way, you will find

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1. Flopper, op. cit., p. 281, no. 1839.

many interesting things in this book of Proverbs if you take time to read it. It had a good deal to say about children for one thing.) As for Moses, you found out in your first lesson about him that he had a great fault, too. Do you remember what it was? Moses' training in Pharaoh's court had taught him many things, but it had not taught him one very necessary thing for any man who is to be the leader of a great nation--patience. We have an interesting proverb which says, "In the character for 'patience' there is a knife; if there is no patience, calamities will be certain to come."¹ How had this been true in Moses' life once? You see, then, why we find the hero of this great drama keeping sheep in a foreign country.

Have you ever seen any sheep, or tried to keep them yourself? If you have, you will know what silly animals they are. Moses was having a fine opportunity to learn patience, doing the same thing day after day, and taking care of such stupid animals. Think of a man who had been the adopted son of the daughter of the great Pharaoh, king of Egypt, out watching sheep! Does the story tell how long Moses kept sheep in the land of Midian? Stephen, the first Christian martyr, a part of whose speech you read in the last lesson Joseph, tells how long Moses was supposed to have been in Midian. Read Acts 7:29,30.

When you come to the later lessons on Moses, and find out how the children of Israel acted toward the man who was doing his best to lead them, you will see more clearly than ever what fine training Moses was receiving here with his sheep!

All of you school children are in training, aren't you? How do you know that God is not training some of you to be leaders for Him? Now is your time to learn the lessons He is giving you a chance to learn--not just book lessons, but lessons in patience, humility, and so on. Close this class by talking over ways in which school life can help to train leaders.

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1. Flopper, op. cit., p. 243, no. 1516.

MOSES

The Deliverer Called

Reading: Exodus 3:1-12
4:10-17
4:27-31

Introduction

How God preserved and trained the leaders He chose to save His people, was the subject of our last lesson. Today one leader is called out on to the stage.

A Great Drama Begins

In the story which you have read, can you find who the other actors are to be in the great drama of deliverance? God of course is the one who is directing, as you see. If you look in verse 10, you will find the chief actors mentioned. Don't forget them, because you will be meeting them again.

At last the stage is set for action. Moses' long training was over; the king who had tried to kill him was dead. God spoke to Moses one day in a very beautiful and strange way, as he was alone with his sheep, probably when he was taking them out to graze in the early morning, or leading them back in the evening. Why did God tell Moses to take off his shoes? What else did Moses do to show his reverence? Have you ever been to the tomb of Sun Wen, and seen the first thing men do as they enter? How do men show reverence now in China? Why should you show reverence in church or Sunday School? Discuss ways of doing so. Read what Jesus said about worship in John 4:23,24.

The Hero Objects

How did Moses feel when God finally told him that he was to be the one to deliver the children of Israel? (3:11). Notice that Moses' question was, "Who am I?" In verse 13 Moses asks another question; what is it? In 4:1, what is his complaint? And what in 4:11? Of whom is Moses thinking all this time? Of whom does God want him to think?

God Answers Him

Now read Jehovah's answer in the first part of 3:12. Read also 4:12. What is God's promise to Moses? We have said that Moses had to learn the lesson of patience. What lesson was God trying to teach him now? Judging by 4:12-17 would you say that Moses had learned the lesson? You see,

Lesson XI

school children are not the only ones who have to be taught to understand things!

A Family Reunion Takes Place

Have you ever been away from your family for a long time? If you have, you know how Moses felt when he saw his brother again. And you know how much you always have to talk about when you see your family again after a long absence. Where did Aaron meet Moses? What had happened to Moses before in that place? Then what do you suppose was the first thing Moses told Aaron when they began their long talk? (4:28). (If you would like to know some other things that Moses told Aaron, read 3:13-22, 4:1-9.

The Scene Changes

What happened between 4:27 and 4:29? Where were Moses and Aaron now? How well did Aaron succeed as a speaker in his first speech? (4:31). Be sure to notice how the children of Israel acted here. What kind of news was Aaron bringing them?

You have seen today how God prepared Moses' heart for a great new step in his life. Perhaps God has been speaking to you, too, and wants you to take a great step in your life--to become a Christian, if you are not already one. But like Moses, you have perhaps been thinking, "I am not good enough", or "People will make fun of me". God wants you to stop thinking about yourself, and trust Him; and He says to you as much as to Moses, "Certainly I will be with thee."

MOSES

Moses Before Pharaoh

Reading: Exodus 5
6:1-13
7:1-7

Introduction

We noticed last time that the main actors in the story of Moses were, Moses and Aaron, Pharaoh, and the Israelites. In today's lesson we have a good chance to study these actors.

Pharaoh

How did he act toward

1. The true God, Jehovah, whom Moses and Aaron represented? (5:2).
2. Moses and Aaron? (5:5).
3. The Israelites? (5:6-9).

The Israelites

How did they act toward

1. Moses and Aaron, when the good news of deliverance was brought? (Recall 4:31).
2. God, at the same time?
3. Moses and Aaron, after the cruel treatment ordered by Pharaoh? (5:19-21; see 5:14).
4. Moses, after the good news which he brought them again? (6:9).

Moses

How did he act

1. In the presence of Pharaoh the first time? What did he ask Pharaoh to do this time?
2. Toward God after the Israelites had spoken so cruelly to him? (5:22-23).
3. Toward God after the Israelites refused to listen to Him? (6:10-12).

From the above study, perhaps you can tell now what each had to learn:

1. Pharaoh. He was too proud and stubborn. What did God have to teach him, and how was He going to do it? (7:2-5).
2. The Israelites. They were too rebellious. What did they need to learn? It is not only the leader of

a nation who has to be trained. The people themselves have to learn in order to follow.

3. Moses. We have seen that Moses needed patience. What shows that he still needed it? He was too much afraid, also. How did he show this? Read 7:1 and see how God helped him to conquer this fear. After this Moses never showed fear again.

Wanted--Leaders!

China needs strong leaders. You are learning in these studies what it means to be a good leader. Abraham had to wait how many years for the son God promised him?

Joseph had to wait how many years in prison before the chief butler remembered him?

Moses was how old before he was ready to become the deliverer of the Israelites? (7:7).

We have seen how God helped Moses to conquer his fear. Can you recall how Abraham showed his courage, and how Joseph did?

Suggest any ways you can think of in which some of the present leaders of China have shown courage, or lack of courage. What do you think of Chiang Kai-shek's joining the church? Does it take courage for a boy or girl to become a Christian and remain true to Christ?

How God Punished Pharaoh

In 7:3,4 you read that God was going to "multiply signs and wonders" and use "great judgments" in delivering His people. These were to show Pharaoh that he could not oppose God's will and remain unpunished. You remember what Pharaoh said: "I know not Jehovah, and moreover I will not let Israel go." (5:2).

Now turn to the book called The Psalms in your Old Testament. The Psalms were the religious songs of the Hebrew people written later on in their history. There are different kinds of songs in the collection of 150, and like many old Chinese songs, some of the Psalms sing of past history and national heroes, though of course God is always the One who is praised most in these songs. Since Moses was, as you can understand, one of the greatest heroes of Israel, we have the story of God's deliverance of the Israelites through him in several Psalms. For the story of Pharaoh and the plagues, read Psalm 78:43-51. In Psalm 105:26-36 you will find some of the same ones mentioned and some others. How many can you count from these two Psalms? Now if you want to read the whole story, and find out how Pharaoh acted, and how many plagues there were altogether, read some time this week chapters 7-12 of Exodus. If you start reading these stories, you will not want to stop.

JOSHUA

A General Looks Forward

Reading: Deuteronomy 34:1-8
Joshua 1:1-11

Introduction

Although you are beginning a new book today, you will see how closely it is joined to the last book. You will feel as if Joshua 1 comes right after Deuteronomy 34:8.

The Link Between the Two Books

Who is it that joins together the two books? Find out how many times this man's name comes in Joshua 1:1-7. When a great leader dies and the work which he began is not yet finished, how does a nation usually feel? How did China feel when Sun Wen died? Has China had any leader like him since?

Joshua's Training

You saw last time how God had been preparing another leader for the children of Israel. If you would like to know when this leader began his training, read Exodus 17:8-16. What is Joshua called in Exodus 24:13, and 33:11? What two very different kinds of training do we see Joshua getting? (If you read Exodus 33:7,8 you will understand better what is meant by the Tent. This was the holy place before the Tabernacle was built, you see.) And you remember from last time one other time in Joshua's life, when he received some very important training. Just as we saw God preparing Abraham, Joseph, and Moses for what He wanted them to do, so we see Him preparing Joshua for his life work.

Joshua Begins His Work

Now, what did God say to Joshua at the very beginning of his work as leader and general of the children of Israel? You will notice that there are two main divisions in what is said in 1:1-9:

1. Encouragement

What promise is given about the land? (2-4). Compare Genesis 15:18, and consult the map on the opposite page. What does God say about His help? (5,6,9). What is Joshua commanded in 6 and 9? What reason does God give each time?

2. The Condition of Success

What does God say this is? (7,8). What books

are included? (See Deuteronomy 31:24). Of course the Ten Commandments would be a part of this, wouldn't they?

In many schools each student is given a printed copy of the school rules. Perhaps your school has such a custom. If you do not know the rules, of course you will not know how to obey them; but if you have them read to you, or if you have a printed copy, in order to have "good success" as a student, you will like Joshua "observe to do." In the Letter of James, 1:22-25, we are given an interesting picture of people who obey only half of this command. Read also the picture Jesus gives of the same kind of people in Matthew 7:24-27.

You can tell from this first chapter what the stories in the book of Joshua will be about. If the second book of the Old Testament is called "Going-out-of-Egypt", what might be another name for this book of Joshua, taking 1:2 as a key verse? If you have forgotten the name of the "land" spoken of, go back to your first lesson on Abraham and find it.

Now that you know what kind of stories to expect in this book, it would be a pity not to hear at least some of them. There is not time to take them in different lessons, and so before your next class, divide the stories below among different members of your group. Then each of you read the story you select, and prepare to tell it in class next time. If the class is large, some of you may wait until a later lesson, when there will be a chance for you to tell some other stories. If the class is very small, some of you may choose more than one story. You will want to do two things in your story:

1. Make it interesting to your classmates.
2. Tell it in as short a time as you can, so as to give others a chance to tell theirs.

Stories For You to Tell Next Time

1. Two spies have a narrow escape	Chapter 2
*2. A river is crossed	3,4
3. A city's walls fall down	6
4. A man's sin causes defeat	7
5. A great victory is won	8
*6. A clever trick is played	9
7. An agreement is kept	10
*8. Two short stories about dividing the land	
a. An old friend asks a favor	14:6-15
b. Two tribes complain	17:14-18

*Notes on 2, 6, and 8

If you choose 2 or 6, read about the Ark first in Exodus 25:10-22 and 26:34, and Numbers 10:33-36, and tell the class about it before you begin your story next time.

If you choose 8, read first very carefully Joshua 13:7,8, 32,33, and Joshua 14:1-5. You will then be able to explain to the class how there were still 12 tribes that received a portion of land, even though one tribe had none.

Most of the rest of the book of Joshua is taken up with the division of the land among the tribes. If you are interested to see what part of the land each tribe was given, look at the map again. Next time we shall read Joshua's farewell speech after you have given your stories.

JOSHUA

A General Says Farewell

Reading: Joshua 23
24:14-32

Introduction

You will of course want to spend a good deal of your time in class today telling and hearing stories. This lesson will therefore be rather short. As we said last time, it will be on Joshua's farewell.

God and His People

In chapter 23 you will find the words "Jehovah your God" 13 times. Now Joshua is old, and knows that he must die soon and leave the children of Israel. Did you find in the lesson today anything about a leader to follow him? Then, do you see why he speaks so much about Jehovah your God? The leaders of the children of Israel had done all that was necessary to make Israel into a nation, and settle them in the land which had been promised to them. Now the nation was going to have to get along for a while with no great leader like Moses and Joshua. We shall see next time how well they succeeded.

Find, among these verses which have the words "Jehovah your God", the following facts:

1. What he had already done for the children of Israel.
2. What they were to do for Him.
3. What He would still do for them, if they obeyed.
4. What He would do if they disobeyed.

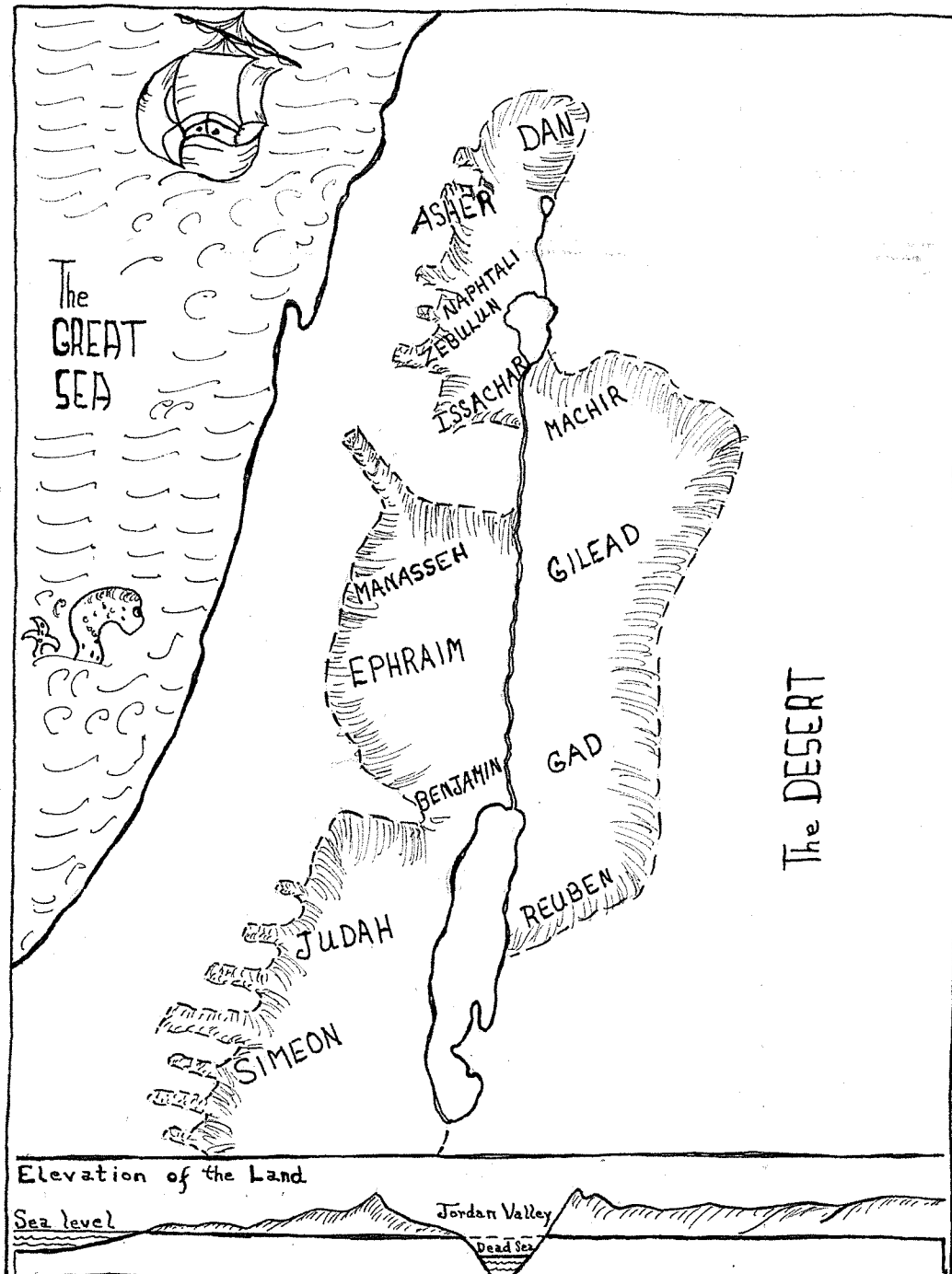
God and "Foreign Gods"

Notice the great sin against which Joshua warned the Israelites in 23:7,16, and in 24:14,20. What would help them not to commit this sin? (23:6). What verse in your first lesson about Joshua was very much like this?

What do you think of the answer of the Israelites in 24:16-18? What did Joshua think of it? (19,20) You know how easy it is to intend to do the right thing, and even to promise to do right. How were the children of Israel to show that they meant what they were saying? (14,23) What did Joshua do to help them remember their promise? How long did their promise last? (31)

Why do any people worship idols? What differences do

PLATE IV



THE ISRAELITES SETTLE DOWN

you see between idol worship in China and the worship of foreign gods by the Israelites? The Israelites understood perfectly why it was wrong for them. Read again Joshua 24:16-18. If you read also the first part of this chapter, you will not only have a good review of the history of the Israelites up to this time, but you will see even more clearly why idolatry was wrong for them. Jehovah is speaking here, and you will notice that the word "I" comes many times in verses 3-13. If someone has done a great deal for you, and has given you a great deal, and been very kind to you, how should you act toward that person? How would your parents feel, or some friend who is perhaps helping you through school, if you should be ungrateful, or should turn away from them and begin thanking people who had done nothing for you?

God has given His greatest gift to us--His only Son Jesus. And so we, like the Israelites, ought to show our thanks by our love. (23:11).

SAMUEL

A New Leader Arises

Reading: Judges 2:7-23
I Samuel 1
2:11-26
3
7:3-6

Introduction

Today you are introduced to two new books in the Old Testament. You will find that the first reading in the book of Judges is very much like the end of our last lesson in Joshua, and so again we find two books joined together very closely.

We noticed last time how long the children of Israel kept their promise to serve Jehovah. In the first reading for today you see again who kept the children of Israel true to their God. Compare the last part of Judges 2:7 and 2:10, and find out what caused the sin of 2:11,12. What great event in the past is again mentioned here?

The "Pattern" in Judges

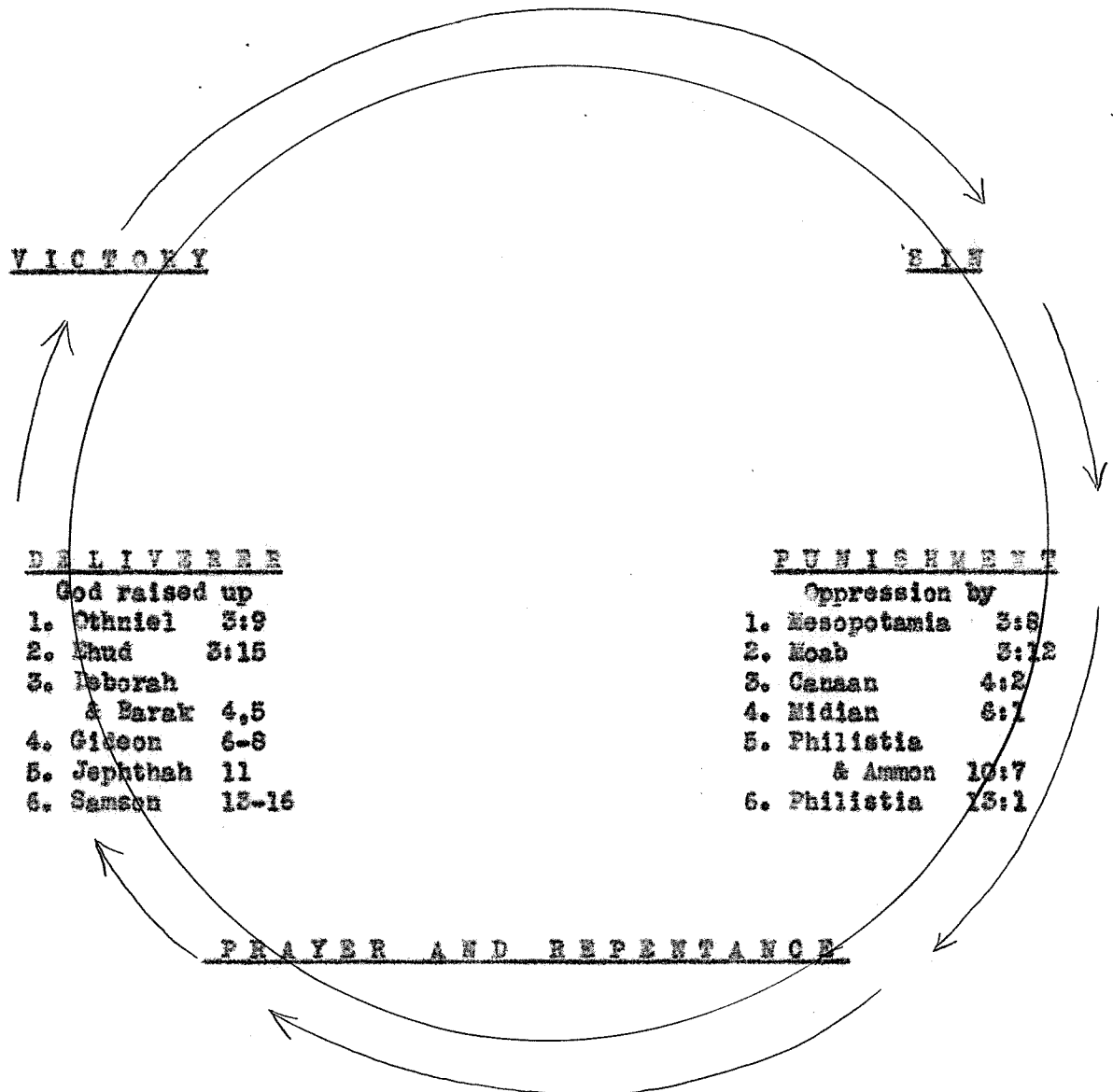
Verses 13-19 of chapter 2 sum up the book of Judges. Find out from this passage why the book has this name. You remember we found that Joshua did not appoint anyone to follow him. God did raise up leaders afterwards, as you see here, but none of them was as great as Moses or Joshua. And at the end of the book of Judges we find that things were in a very bad state. Read 17:6 and 21:25. What kind of a school would you have if there were no principal or teachers, and every pupil acted as the children of Israel did at that time? Sometimes it seems as if school would be a much nicer place if we could only do as we please all the time! If you read Judges 17-21, you will find the terrible results in Israel of having no leader, however; and what is true for a nation would also be true for a school.

Suggestions for Reading Judges

The diagram on the opposite page gives you a picture of the earlier chapters, Judges 3-16. If you compare this diagram with 2:13-19, you will see that it follows the general pattern given there. The same events come six times, beginning with 3:7. If you wish to read Judges 3-16, you will find the diagram a good guide, although the names will not mean anything to you, of course, un-

PLATE V.

THE RECURRING CYCLE IN JUDGES.



til you have read the stories. After you have read them you will be able to tell which of the judges won a battle with an army of just 300 men who had very strange weapons; and which one walked off one night with the city gates!

(You noticed probably that you were not given any readings in the book of Ruth, which comes between Judges and I Samuel. If you look at the first verse of this book, you will see again that here we have two books very closely connected. And after you finish reading Judges, you will surely want to turn to this book of Ruth and read the beautiful story in it, so different from most of the stories in Judges.)

From reading Judges 2:13-19, you will see that the history of the children of Israel during this time shows the truth of the Chinese proverb, "A people without fidelity cannot become established."¹ You can see how much Israel needed someone to take charge of her affairs. And in the first chapter of the first book of Samuel, you see whom God is preparing.

Another Baby Boy is Born

In our studies so far, we have had the stories of two other baby boys who were born after their mothers had waited many years for them. Can you recall who they were? (See Lessons IV and V). The father of one of these boys was commanded to sacrifice him. In the story today, what did the mother of this little boy do with him? How much do you think it cost her to do this? How does the story show her love for her little son? What kind of boy was he? (2:26; 3:4-11, 15-18)

Stories to Read

In chapter 4 you will find the end of the story of Eli and his wicked sons, and you will see how the word of Jehovah to Samuel came true. And in chapters 5 and 6 there are two more interesting stories of the Ark of God, about which you heard last time in the crossing of the River Jordan and the taking of the city of Jericho.

A Great Meeting

The real work of Samuel begins in chapter 7. What is there in verses 3 and 4 that reminds you of the last lesson on Joshua? This is the first time since Joshua died that there has been a leader great enough to call a meeting of

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1. Flopper, op. cit., p. 232, no. 1413.

the kind mentioned in verse 5. What was the result of the meeting? How did Samuel, like Joshua, help the people to remember that great day? (Joshua 24:27; I Samuel 7:12)

To Expect Next Time

In the next lesson you will read about a great change that took place in Israel, and you will meet a boy whom you will like very much, and about whom there are stories as interesting as those about your friend Joseph.

SAMUEL

Two Kings Are Chosen

Reading: I Samuel 8

9:1,2
10:1, 17-27
11:14, 15
12
15:17-23
16:1-13

Introduction

The readings for today look very scattered, but if you read them through, you will get enough of the story to understand what is happening. Of course, if you would like to read chapters 8-16 all through, you will find them well worth while. There is an especially good story in chapter 14, about a brave young prince.

A Leader is Rejected

What is the great change that took place in Israel at the beginning of this lesson? What three reasons did the people give for wanting this change? (8:5,20) Try to think how you would have felt if you had been in Samuel's place. Do you wonder that he lost face? How did Jehovah comfort Samuel? You see what a great change the people were asking for. Up to this time who had really been their king? (8:7; 12:12) What kind of king had he been? (8:8; 10:18, 19; 12:6-11) What was the only reason the Israelites wanted another kind of king? (10:19) Notice the patience of God with His people, even though they wanted to be like other nations. (12:22) And see what Samuel tells them to do, in 12:14,20,24.

The First King Fails

Now, what kind of king was the one whom Jehovah gave these stubborn and ungrateful people of His? First, how did he look? (9:2; 10:23) But most important, how did he act? Read 13:13,14 and compare it with 15:17-23. What was the great fault of this king, Saul?

The Second King is Chosen

You were promised in your last lesson that you would meet a boy whom you would like. Well, here he is at the end of our lesson for today. What is he doing when you first hear about him? What does he look like? What verse in 16:7-13 says that God does not choose people because of their faces? You know the proverb, "To picture the skin

of a tiger is easy, but to draw his bones is hard; we know people's faces, but not their hearts."1
If you will look back to 13:14, you will see why Jehovah chose this boy, David.

Samuel as Leader

Before we go on to the next lessons, which are about David, will you think about Samuel for a few minutes?

1. Why was he such a fine leader? (7:5; 8:6b; 8:21b; 12:19,23)
2. Although it hurt Samuel when the Israelites asked for a king, how did he act toward Saul after Saul was made king? (10:1, 16:1).
3. What kind of character did Samuel have? (12:1-5) Compare him with his sons. (8:3).

One of the hardest things for leaders is, as you know, not to become jealous of other leaders. Even in school life is it not very easy to be jealous of other students who seem to be cleverer or richer or more popular than we are? (In our next lesson we shall hear of some very bitter jealousy, which concerns our new friend, David.) Another hard thing for a leader, especially for a judge like Samuel, is never to accept any bribes. It was because he prayed so much to God that God could use him. Shall we not ask God to raise up leaders like Samuel for China?

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1. Common Chinese proverb.

DAVID

A Shepherd Lad Becomes Famous

Reading: I Samuel 17
18

Introduction

In the second lesson on the great leader Samuel, you read how he anointed Saul to be king, and later had to tell Saul that Jehovah had rejected him and chosen someone else. Then Samuel anointed the young shepherd lad, David. Of course Saul did not know about this. In today's lesson you start another great drama, in which there are three main characters: Saul, the king who had been rejected but was still reigning; David, the shepherd boy who had been secretly chosen; and Jonathan, Saul's son. The first story in today's lesson is perhaps the most famous one in the Old Testament; and the friendship in chapter 18 is the best-known friendship of the whole Bible.

A Great Giant is Killed. (Chapter 17)

After reading the story of David and Goliath, try to answer the following questions, to test your own memory. If you cannot remember, look up the verses given:

1. How were the two armies encamped? What was between them? (3,40).
2. What armor and weapons did Goliath have? How tall was he? (4-7).
3. What armor and weapons did David have? (50). What did David look like? (42).
4. What difference was there between David's and Goliath's past experience? (33).
5. What difference was there in their trust? (45).
6. What difference was there between the way Saul and the Israelites felt toward Goliath, and the way David felt towards him? (11,24,32).
7. What effect did the killing of one man have on the Philistines? On the Israelites? (51,52).

From the story of David and Goliath, pick out the parts that show how David was worthy to be the future king of Israel because of

1. His physical strength.
2. His courage.
3. His trust in Jehovah.
4. His ability to lead.

What is there about the story of David's visit to the

camp that reminds you of the story of the lad Joseph? There are several points in which the stories are alike. See if you can find them.

A Great Friendship is Begun. (Chapter 18)

What was strange about the friendship between David and Jonathan? Remember that Jonathan's father was still king, and David had already been anointed and told that he would be king. Yet these young men loved each other so much that like many other friends, they promised always to be true to each other. How did Jonathan show his love to his poorer friend?

A Great Hatred is Also Begun

What was it that first made Saul dislike David? How else did Saul feel toward him, and why? (12,15,29). In what ways did Saul show his bad feeling for David? Contrast Saul's acting toward David with Samuel's acting toward Saul when Saul was first made king. You see that Saul was not worthy to remain king because of his jealousy, which we found to be very bad in a leader.

A Great Leader is Being Prepared

How was David learning what Abraham, Joseph, and Moses had had to learn? What else was he learning? (5,14,30). There are three times in chapter 18 when it is said that someone loved David. (1,15,20). Perhaps his answer to Saul in 18:18 will help you to see why people loved him. Are boastful people ever really loved?

Stories to Tell Next Time

You were promised that you would have a chance to tell some more stories soon. Well, here they are, to be prepared for next time. See if you can improve in your story-telling from time to time. Be sure not to take too long in your telling, because your classmates will not like this, will they? Tell only the important things.

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| 1. A king breaks his promise | I Samuel 19 |
| 2. A king's son shoots some arrows | 20 |
| 3. A priest is betrayed | 21:1-9 |
| | 22:6-23 |
| 4. A wild chase is continued (See map) | 23:7-29 |
| 5. A life is spared | 24 |
| 6. A life is again spared | 26 |
| (If you choose this last, look up 23:7,13,19,25; 24:1, and see why David used the same word about himself in 24:14 and 26:20!) | |
| 7. A terrible battle is fought | 31 |
| 8. A sad song is sung | II Samuel 1 |

You see that the last selection takes us into a new book, but there is no break in the story. Of course there are interesting stories also in the chapters left out, but we have time only for the most important ones. Next time the whole class period will be taken up with story-telling. How would you like to invite some of your friends in to listen?

DAVID

A Future King Becomes a Fugitive

Story-Telling Hour

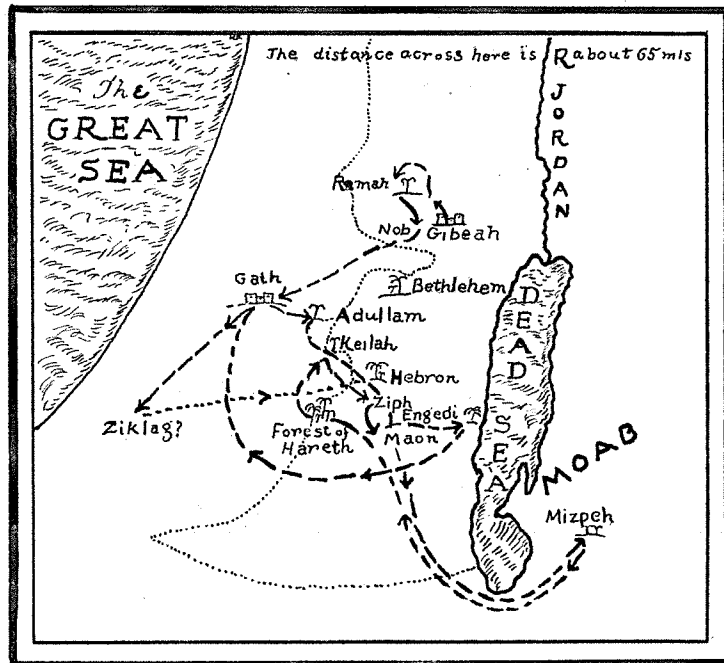
Introduction

You will spend the lesson period today in telling and hearing stories about the three main players in a great game of hide-and-seek.

How to Listen

As the stories are told, watch for the differences between Saul and Jonathan, and Saul and David. After hearing all the stories, tell what you admire most in David as he is seen in them.

PLATE VI.



SAUL CHASES DAVID

DAVID

A Fugitive Finally Becomes King

Reading: II Samuel 2:1-11
3:1-11, 17-21
4:5-5:10

Introduction

When David received the news of the battle in which Saul and Jonathan had been killed, he was in the country of the Philistines, where he had fled to get away from Saul. That is why we find him inquiring of Jehovah at the beginning of today's reading whether he should go up into any of the cities of Judah, his own tribe. His enemy, Saul, was dead, and David of course felt that the time had come for him to become king.

David Crowned King of Judah

Find the city of Hebron on the map. This city, chosen by David for his first capital, was one that had been given to a famous ancestor of his when the land was first divided. Who was this? (Joshua 14:13,14). Of how many tribes was David first made king? (2:11). In which part of the country did he reign, north or south?

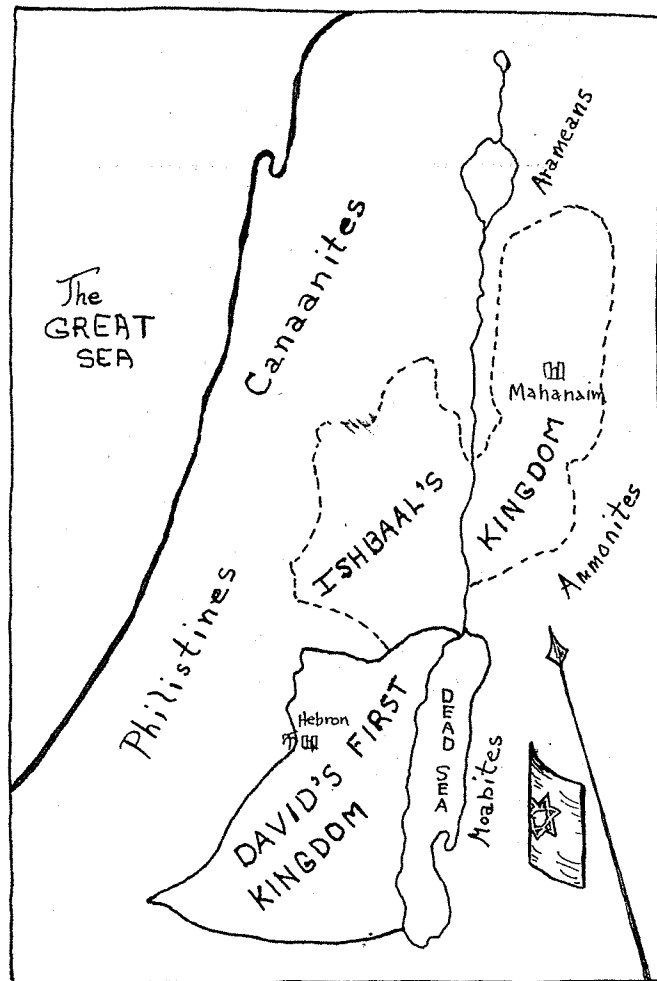
Seven Years of Waiting

Who was David's real enemy: Abner, the general, or Ish-bosheth, Saul's son? Look up I Samuel 14:50b to find out why Abner was so much interested in Saul's family remaining on the throne. Over what part of the country did Ish-bosheth reign? (See map). What kind of man was he, judging by the stories about him in chapters 3 and 4? How does the situation here at the beginning of David's reign remind you of conditions in China in the past few years?

You have found why Abner, Saul's general, was interested in putting Saul's son on the throne. Now, David had a general also, whose name you will find in 2:13-32. To see why this man was interested in David's being king, turn to the first book of Chronicles, 2:13-16. If you observe carefully, you will be able to pick out this man's name, and find his relation to David. And you will find out what kind of man he was if you read 2:12-32 and 3:22-27.

How does David's treatment of the men who murdered Ish-bosheth remind you of his treatment of the man who said he murdered Saul, in II Samuel 1? How do you know that he was not following the customs of his day in each case?

PLATE VII.



DAVID KING OVER ONE TRIBE

What made the difference between him and other kings of his time in this matter, do you think?

How long after the death of Saul did David wait before he was crowned king of all Israel? (5:5). Here again you see the difference between David and other kings. David did not go out and conquer Israel; he waited, and the other tribes came to him.

David Crowned King of All Israel

If you want to read a short account of the rejoicing that took place when David was crowned king of all Israel, turn again to I Chronicles and read 12:38-40. (The last three tribes mentioned there are those in the farthest north, as you will see if you refer back to your map in Lesson XVII). Notice what the tribes of Israel said to David in 5:2. You see how they realize now that David has been the leader prepared for them by God. What other word besides "prince" or "leader" do they use? What memories would that word probably bring back to David?

David's New Capital

Our lesson closes today with the taking of an important city by David, to be his new capital. The first thing he did after he was made king of Israel was to capture the fortified part of Jerusalem, called Zion. This part of the city had never before been captured, although the children of Israel had been in the land since Joshua's time, over 400 years. David realized that Hebron was not so good a capital as Jerusalem would be, just as the leaders of China realized that Peiping was not such a good city for a capital as Nanking, and changed as soon as North China was brought under Nationalist rule. From this time on in David's reign, we find his home is Jerusalem.

The Shepherd Psalmist

We have seen that David was called the shepherd of God's people. Perhaps you have heard of the Shepherd Psalm, written by David. Turn to Psalm 23 and see how David thought of his God. Only a man who had been a shepherd himself could have written this most beautiful of all the Psalms. Try to learn the Psalm by heart before the next class, so that you can open the class by saying it all together.

DAVID

A Great King Sins and Repents

Reading: II Samuel 11
12:1-25

Introduction

Before beginning some more stories of David today, let us find out what he was interested in doing, now that he had finally become king of all Israel.

1. He showed interest in the worship of God. Read II Samuel 6:1,2 and 7:1,2. If you finish chapter 7, you will have a fine idea of the beautiful relation between David and his God. Remember that David was called the "man after God's own heart". (13:14)

2. He showed interest in the family of Saul. Read 9:1-8. In the time of David it was the custom for a king of a different line when he came to the throne to kill all those in the family of the king before him. If you read 4:4, you will see that after the death of Saul and Jonathan one person, at least, was afraid that David would act as other kings of his time did.

David's Greatness

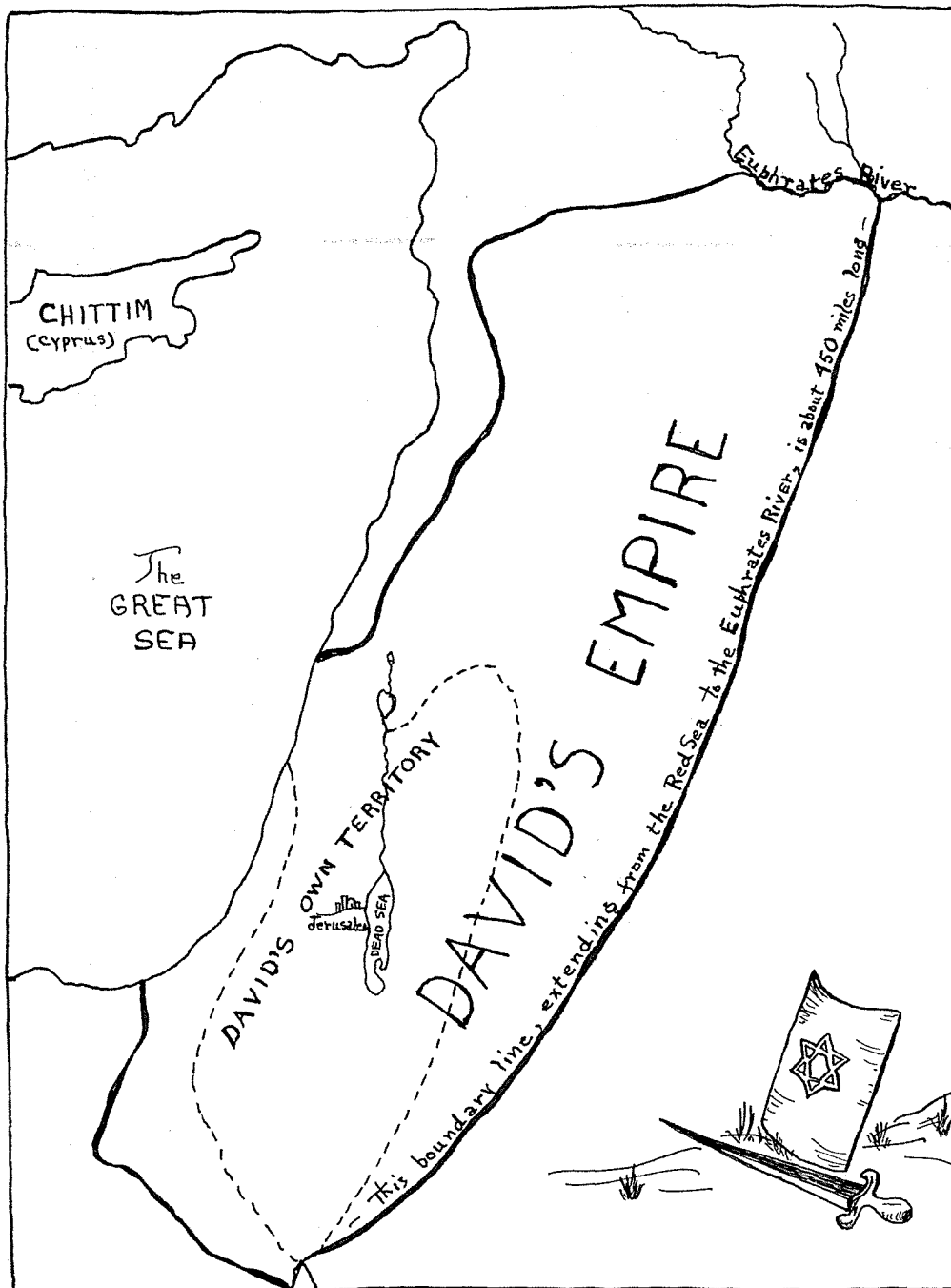
David started out, then, in a wonderful manner to be the "shepherd" of God's people. In chapter 8 there is a list of his victories over his enemies. If you compare the map in this lesson with the last map, you will see how much land David conquered. This was the first time that all the land promised to Abraham (Genesis 15:18) and Joshua (Joshua 1:4) had come under the rule of Israel, and so David helped to fulfil the promise of God to the Father of the Nation, Abraham, you see.

David's Sin

In the stories given to us in the Bible, no person except Jesus is ever pictured as perfect. You remember that Moses was not allowed to take the children of Israel into the promised land because he lost his patience with them once. (See Lesson XIV). And today we have the sad story of David's great sin. What three of the Ten Commandments did David break? Look back at Exodus 20:3-17.

The Nathan who is mentioned in 12:1 was a prophet of God, who, like Samuel, told the king what God wanted him to do or announced to him the fact that he had done wrong. Wasn't that a clever story that he told David? Imagine how David felt when Nathan pointed his finger at him and said, "Thou art the man!"

PLATE VIII.



DAVID KING OVER AN EMPIRE

David's Repentance

After Nathan had finished his long speech, telling David how great his sin had been, and what punishments would follow, did David try to excuse himself in any way? What was the only thing he said? (12:13) Of course you know that a king in David's time could take any woman he wanted, whether or not she was another man's wife, and nothing could be done about it. But David was a worshiper of the God who had given the Ten Commandments, and of course he knew he had sinned. However, knowing you have done wrong and being willing to confess it are two very different things, aren't they? How often are you willing to admit that you have done wrong? One of the hardest things teachers have to face is self-excusing on the part of students. Think of how hard it must have been for David, a great king, to be humble and say that he had sinned against Jehovah.

There is a Chinese proverb which says, "A man may have the sky full of his guilt, but it is as nothing as against the two words repentance and reformation."¹ In order to see how deeply David repented of his sin, turn to Psalm 51 and read what he said there. This Psalm has helped repentant sinners ever since the time of David, and may help you some time when you feel you need God's forgiveness.

More Stories of David to Tell

There are a few more stories about David that you may prepare to tell next time. In the punishments named by the prophet Nathan when he rebuked David for his sin, you noticed in 12:11 that David would have trouble from his own family. These stories for the next class are all connected with the rebellion of one of David's sons, named Absalom. The account of this rebellion and its results is found in chapters 15-19. As you read these stories, you will surely feel how sad a thing it was that David fell into sin and had to suffer so much for it afterwards, even though God forgave him.

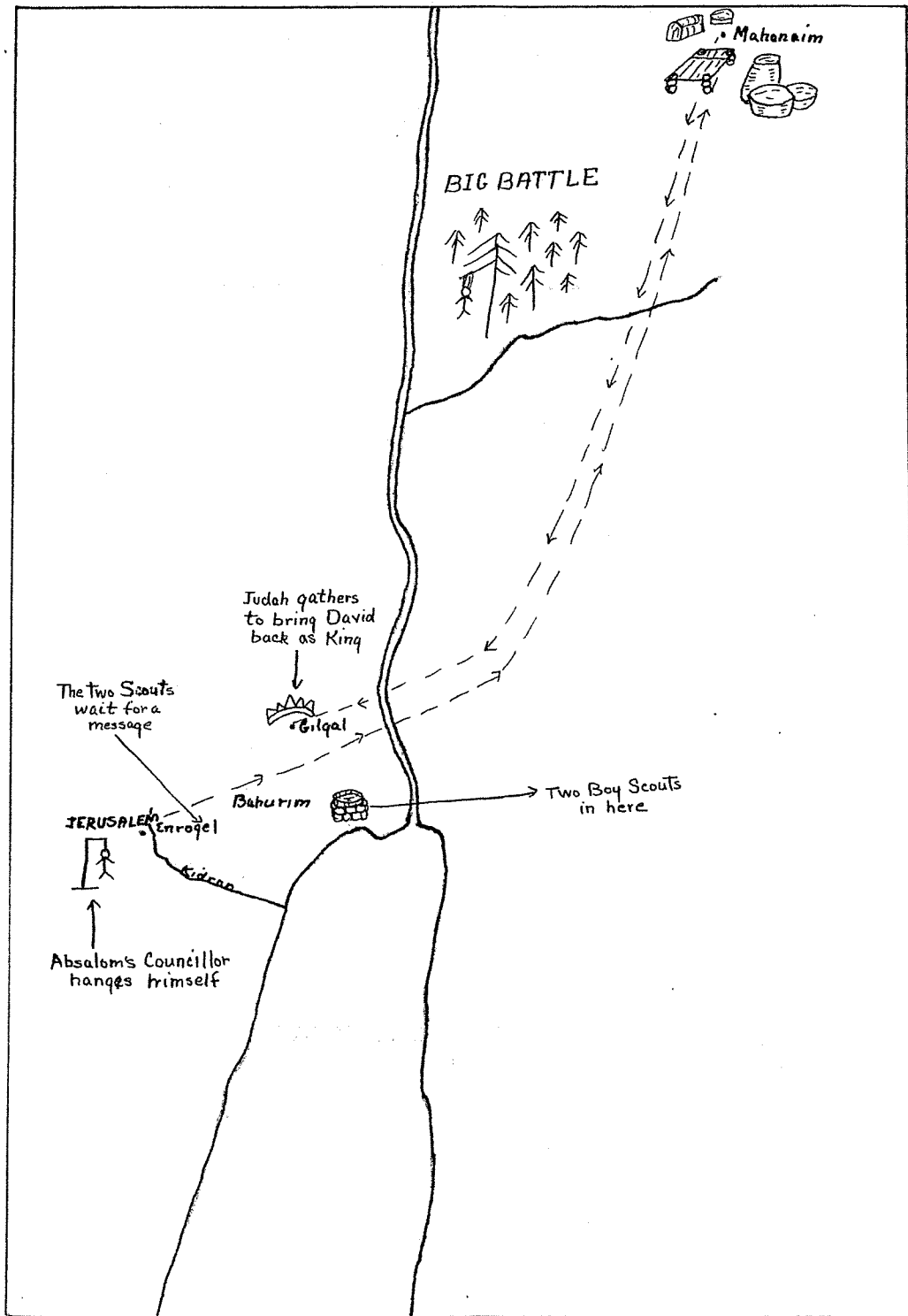
Here are the stories to tell next time:

1. A son rebels and a father flees Chapter 15:1-30
2. David has trouble again with the
house of Saul 16:1-14

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1. Flopper, op. cit., p. 267, no. 1726.

PLATE IX.



DAVID FLEES FROM HIS REBEL SON

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 3. Two men give different advice | Chapter 15:31-37 |
| | 16:15-17:14 |
| | 17:23 |
| 4. Two "Boy Scouts" do a good turn | 15:32-37 |
| | 17:15-22 |
| 5. The rebel is killed | 18:1-8 |
| | 14:25, 26 |
| | 18:9-18 |
| 6. One of the "Boy Scouts" and a negro
man bring a sad message | 18:19-33 |
| 7. A king prepares to return | 19:1-15 |
| 8. An enemy is spared | 19:16-23 |
| 9. A great lie is found out | 19:24-30 |
| 10. A foreigner is again kind | 19:31-39 |

Be sure to look at the map in this lesson as you follow the stories.

DAVID

A Great King Looks into the FutureIntroduction

There will be two parts to the lesson today.

1. Tell the stories which you have prepared. This should not take all of the time if you tell them well.
2. After you have finished telling the stories, read, either all together and aloud, or quietly to yourself, the passages given below, and notice what is said about them.

Story-Telling Period

As you listen to these stories of David, watch for the great power he had of attracting real friends. David had enemies, of course, and there were people who were false to him, as you will hear today; but he was able to make the best people love and be true to him. This ability to attract loyalty, even among foreigners, was one of David's greatest gifts as a leader.

Reading PeriodDavid Looks Ahead to the House of God

Reading: I Chronicles 22:6-13
29:1-10

Things to notice in these two passages:

1. We found last time that one of the first things David thought about after he became king of the whole country was the worship of God. Here in 22:7-10 he is telling the experience we read about in II Samuel 7.
2. Solomon's name means "Peaceful".¹ Contrast 22:8 and 9.
3. The advice and encouragement David gives his son in 22:13 is very much like that which was given to a great general whom you have studied. Do you remember him?
4. David prepared beautiful things for the house of Jehovah. As you read 29:1-5, try to see all these.
5. When David and the people had given their offerings to God, how did they feel? Don't you think

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1. Marginal reading, II Chronicles 22:9.

it is true that giving always makes people feel this way?

David Looks Ahead to the Son of God

Reading: II Samuel 23:1-4

Things to notice in this passage:

1. In the first verse David gives four important facts about himself. What is the last thing he says? You have already read two of David's songs, Psalm 23 and Psalm 51. This selection is also a Psalm, of course. You will find many more songs by David and other Hebrew singers in the book of Psalms.
2. In verses 3 and 4 David speaks of a Righteous Ruler who is to come on the earth. Like Abraham and Moses, David believed that the day was coming when God would send a Perfect Leader to lead the whole world. We know that that Leader did come, born as a baby in the same city in which David lived as a boy--Bethlehem--and dying in the same city in which David ruled--Jerusalem. Jesus Christ was, then, the Son of David, as well as the Son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1) and the Son of God.

ELIJAH

Why a Leader Was Needed

Reading: I Kings 16:29-33
17:1-16

Introduction

A great many things have happened since we left David. Before beginning to talk about today's stories, we shall look back for a few moments, and then look ahead.

We Look Back

You remember that David left a great kingdom to his son, Solomon. Solomon's reign is a very sad story. You may read about it in the first book of Kings, chapters 3-11. In these chapters you will see how Solomon began with everything that his heart could wish: wisdom, riches, honor, love for Jehovah. But in 11:1-8 you will see what caused his downfall. And in the next chapter you will find the result of Solomon's folly. There was a revolution, and the kingdom for which David had done so much, and which he had united in such a fine way, was divided. And from the time of Solomon's foolish son there were two kingdoms, the northern one, called the kingdom of Israel, and the southern one, with the tribe of Judah and the little tribe of Benjamin, called the kingdom of Judah. The capital of Israel was Samaria, and the capital of Judah was David's city, Jerusalem. (See map). Of course the land of Canaan was very small, being only about 150 miles long; but the situation there was a little like that in China in 1927, with Peking and Nanking two rival capitals. Only the land of Israel was never united again under one rule, as China was.

We Look Ahead

Solomon began to reign about 1000 years before Jesus was born, and for some 400 years his descendants sat on the throne of Judah. Among them were some very good men, who tried to be real leaders of their people and to help them to "love" and "serve" Jehovah their God, as we found Moses, Joshua, and Samuel urging them to do. But most of these kings of David's line were evil-hearted men, who did not try to set a good example to their people, but led them in serving other gods.

In the kingdom of Israel we find not one line of kings, but nine dynasties in about 250 years. The northern kingdom came to an end about 150 years before the southern, then,

you see. In the north there were no kings who tried to lead their people in loving and serving Jehovah.

How, then, you may ask, did the worship of the true God in whom Abraham believed, and whom Joseph, Moses, Joshua, and Samuel urged the people to love and serve, continue? The answer is found in the lesson for today. The real leaders in the time of the kings were the prophets, who like Elijah, were brave enough, as we shall see next time, to tell the evil kings and the priests and the false prophets that they were wrong. The next three leaders whom we shall study were all prophets. We are now ready for today's reading.

A King Breaks God's Law

Turn back to the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 and read again verses 3 and 4. What was it that Ahab had done that was contrary to God's law? You have probably noticed the name of Jeroboam the son of Nebat in the first reading above. He also broke God's law as given in the Ten Commandments, but Ahab did worse. Jeroboam was the first king of the northern kingdom, and he made two golden calves to represent Jehovah. Ahab brought in the worship of another god. So you see Ahab broke both the first and second commandments. (For the story of Jeroboam, and why he made these calves, read I Kings 12:25-33). Who caused Ahab to introduce this false worship? (16:31). Have you ever known families where the woman was the real head of the house?

A Great Leader is Again Prepared

How do you suppose Ahab felt when one day a man suddenly appeared before him and said what Elijah did? (17:1). To find out how Elijah looked, read II Kings 1:8. What did Elijah have to do after he made this announcement to the king? (17:2). How did God preserve the life of His servant Elijah during the time he was in hiding? Can you recall other times when God saved the life of a leader of His people?

Next time we shall hear more about Ahab and Jezebel, and we shall meet another brave man besides Elijah, and we shall see what Elijah did when he came out of hiding.

Why a Great Contest Was Held

Reading: I Kings 18
19

Introduction

When we left Elijah, he was living in the family of a widow in the foreign land north of Israel. Now he comes out of hiding, at God's call, and we have one of the most exciting stories in the Old Testament as a result.

Two Men Have Their Courage Tested

Who was Obadiah, and how had he showed his bravery? (18:3,4). Our last lesson was called, "Why a Leader Was Needed", and Obadiah's act shows how far conditions had gone in Israel when Elijah came to announce punishment on Ahab. Think of it--in God's chosen nation, a prophet of God was in danger of his life, because of a foreign queen and her idols! This Jezebel, with her strong will--which you will read more about later, if you follow the suggestions at the end of this lesson--might be compared in some ways to the Empress Dowager. It was as unsafe to be a true worshiper of Jehovah in Jezebel's time as it was to be a true Christian in the times of the Empress Dowager and the Boxer movement. (You have doubtless heard the stories of the wonderful faith of Christians, who died rather than deny their Savior. And perhaps you know that Marshal Feng Yu-hsiang first became a Christian because he saw Christians dying for their faith.¹) This, then, was the religious condition of Israel when Elijah came back.

What was the physical condition of the country at this time? (18:2,5). What had this to do with Elijah? (17:1; 18:10). How do you suppose Elijah felt toward Obadiah? Isn't it a comfort, when you are going to do something difficult, to know that there is someone else in sympathy with you? What was the secret of Elijah's courage? (17:1; 18:15). In the conversation between Elijah and Ahab, in 18:17-19, you see how Elijah's courage made Ahab respect and obey him. And don't forget that Ahab had a Baal-worshipping wife at home!

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1. Cf. Marshall Bromhall, Marshal Feng, a Good Soldier of Christ Jesus, p. 9.

Two Gods Have Their Power Tested

In the story of the great contest in chapter 18, notice these points:

1. Why did Elijah think the contest was necessary? (21).
2. Who were those in the contest? (22). You might put this in the form of arithmetic: 1 man Jehovah 450 men Baal.
3. What was the test Elijah gave? This is especially interesting, because Baal was the sun-god, from whom fire might be expected.¹
4. For whose sake was Elijah holding the contest? (36,37).
5. How did Elijah make fun of the prophets of Baal? (27).
6. How did Elijah make the test harder for himself than for the prophets of Baal? (33-35)
7. How well did Elijah's test succeed? (38,39).

You will be interested to know that Elijah's name means in the Hebrew, Jehovah is God.² Perhaps his name had helped Elijah to have such faith in Jehovah that he was willing to try a contest like this one.

It may be that some of you are like the Israelites; you are not sure whom you are going to worship. To you who are wondering whether to become Christians or not, Elijah says, "How long go ye limping between the two sides? If Jehovah be God, follow him!"

More Stories to Read

If you would like to read more stories of Elijah, you will find them as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Elijah is Encouraged by Jehovah | I Kings 19:1-21 |
| 2. Ahab Steals a Vineyard | 21:1-29 |
| 3. Elijah Goes to Heaven | II Kings 2:1-14 |

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1. A Dictionary of the Bible, John D. Davis, Second Edition, Revised 1903, p. 63.
2. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 195, and The Temple Dictionary of the Bible, W. Ewing and J. E. H. Thomson, 1910, p. 163.

ISAIAH

A Prophet Gives Comfort in a Crisis

Reading: II Kings 17:5-23
 18
 19:1-20; 32-37

Introduction

The account of Hezekiah and the siege of Jerusalem is found in the prophecy of Isaiah, chapters 36 and 37, in almost the same form as in II Kings 18:17-19:37. Again we find that a great deal has happened in the history of the children of Israel since we left them last. For the story of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah since the time of Elijah, you will have to read II Kings 3-16. There are accounts in these chapters of great revolutions, and brave prophets, which you will find most interesting. And there is one exciting boy king! The kings of Israel kept getting worse and worse, until finally the northern kingdom fell, and the people were carried away captive by a great nation to the northwest, Assyria. (See map).

Cause of the Fall of the Kingdom of Israel

In your first reading for today you have a fine summary of the causes for the punishment of the northern kingdom of Israel. You see again why idolatry was wrong for the children of Israel, just as you saw it in the time of Joshua. What same great event is again referred to? (II Kings 17:7).

Work of the Prophet

You also have a splendid idea of the work of the prophet given in II Kings 17:13,23. The prophet whose message was to an evil king said two things: first, "Repent!" and second, "If you do not repent, Jehovah will punish the nation!" Part of his message was for the present, and part for the future. The prophets loved God and listened so carefully to Him that they could see that certain things were going to happen. That is why they are called "Those-who-knew-first."¹

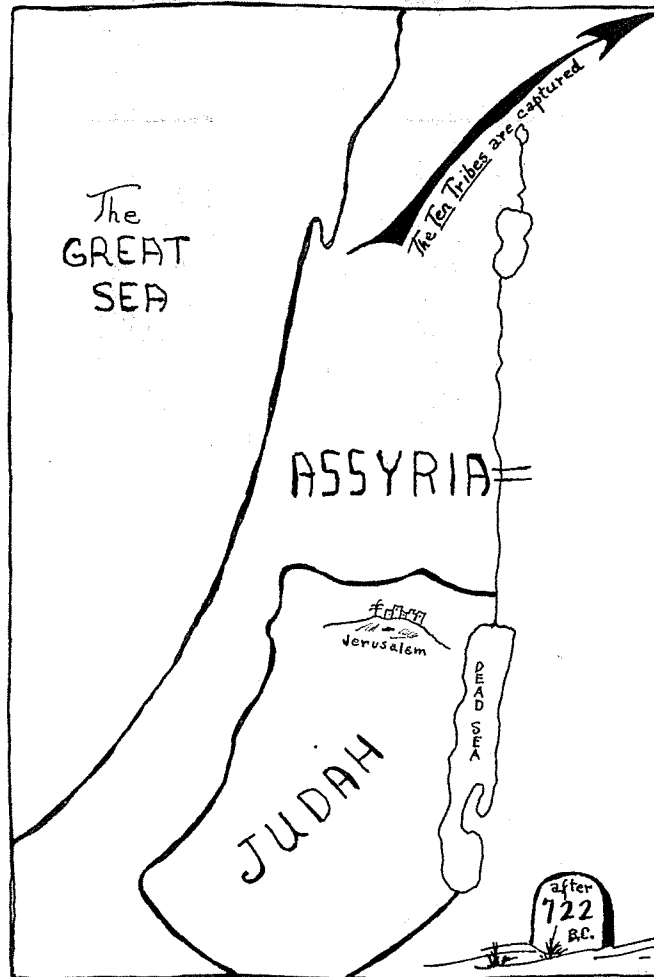
All prophets were not sent to evil kings, however. What kind of a king was on the throne in Judah when Israel fell? What famous father of his was Hezekiah like? (18:

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1. Chinese term for prophets.

PLATE X.

ASSYRIA THREATENS JUDAH



3-6). It is interesting to see the kind of message the prophet Isaiah gives to a king who is doing his best to be a worthy descendant of the "man after God's own heart."

The Situation in Hezekiah's Reign

In what year of Hezekiah's reign did the northern kingdom of Israel fall? (18:10). Again, what was the nation that conquered Israel. How many years afterwards did this same nation try to conquer the kingdom of Judah? (18:13). Try to picture in your mind the scene on the wall at Jerusalem. How would you have felt if you had been one of the officials of the Jews, and had had to listen to all the insults shouted up at you by the Assyrian officials? No wonder the Jewish officials tried to save their faces before the common people who had gathered, as a crowd will, on the wall to see the excitement. (18:26). How did the enemy try to weaken the trust of the common people in their king? (18:29-35). How did the Jews answer Rabshakeh? (18:36). You know how hard it is to keep quiet when someone insults your school, or your parents, or your friends, or yourself; and so you can sympathize with the Jews here, can't you?

Hezekiah's Defence

Notice what Hezekiah did in three times of danger:

1. When the Assyrian armies invaded Judah. (18:13-16).
In China in 1927 when the defeated Northern armies were retreating, sometimes cities would pay them thousands of dollars to pass by and not loot. What do you think of Hezekiah's plan here?
2. When the Jews came and told him of Rabshakeh's insults. (19:1-5). Do you think Hezekiah had learned a lesson from the result of his first plan to get rid of his enemies? On what is he depending now? Is he quite sure? (19:4).
3. When Rabshakeh's letter came. (19:14-19). How had the answer to Isaiah's prayer in the second experience helped Hezekiah to face this new danger? You cannot help seeing how his faith had grown. How did he answer the boast which Rabshakeh made on his first visit (18:33-35) and repeated in his letter? (19:11-13). Look in 19:17,18. What reason did Hezekiah give for asking God's help? (19:19).

Isaiah's Help

Perhaps you think that this is a lesson on a king, Hezekiah, more than on the prophet Isaiah. But try to read the story without the prophet, and you will see how incomplete it is. Isaiah is the one who gives hope to the

king--who answers him with "Thus saith Jehovah," and tells him what Jehovah is going to do. Isaiah gave Hezekiah three wonderful messages from Jehovah:

1. "Be not afraid." (19:6).
2. "I have heard thee." (19:20).
3. "I will defend this city to save it." (19:34).

How was God's promise fulfilled? (19:35,36).

Isaiah's name means in the Hebrew, "Jehovah has saved." Isn't it interesting that here we have another prophet whose name is very closely connected with his message?

Why was it that Isaiah was able to give such messages from God to Hezekiah? Don't forget what kind of king Hezekiah was. In our next lesson we shall meet another prophet who had very different things to say about this same city of Jerusalem, and we shall find out why.

The prophecy of Isaiah contains many of the most beautiful chapters in the Old Testament. Among these is chapter 53, which tells of the sufferings of One who was to come. Read this chapter when you have time, and see how it describes Jesus our Savior.

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1. Davis, op. cit., p. 323.

JEREMIAH

The Man Who Stood Alone

Reading: Jeremiah 38:1-23

Introduction

Today we are to have a story from the life of a third prophet, Jeremiah. Isaiah, you remember, gave his message in the time of Hezekiah, king of Judah, very soon after the northern kingdom of Israel fell and the people were carried away by Assyria. We found that the reason that Isaiah could give a message of safety was Hezekiah's goodness, and we said that the next prophet would have another kind of message, because he would be preaching in the time of a very different king. We shall see just how different things were with Jeremiah, about 125 years later.

What Was Jeremiah's Message?

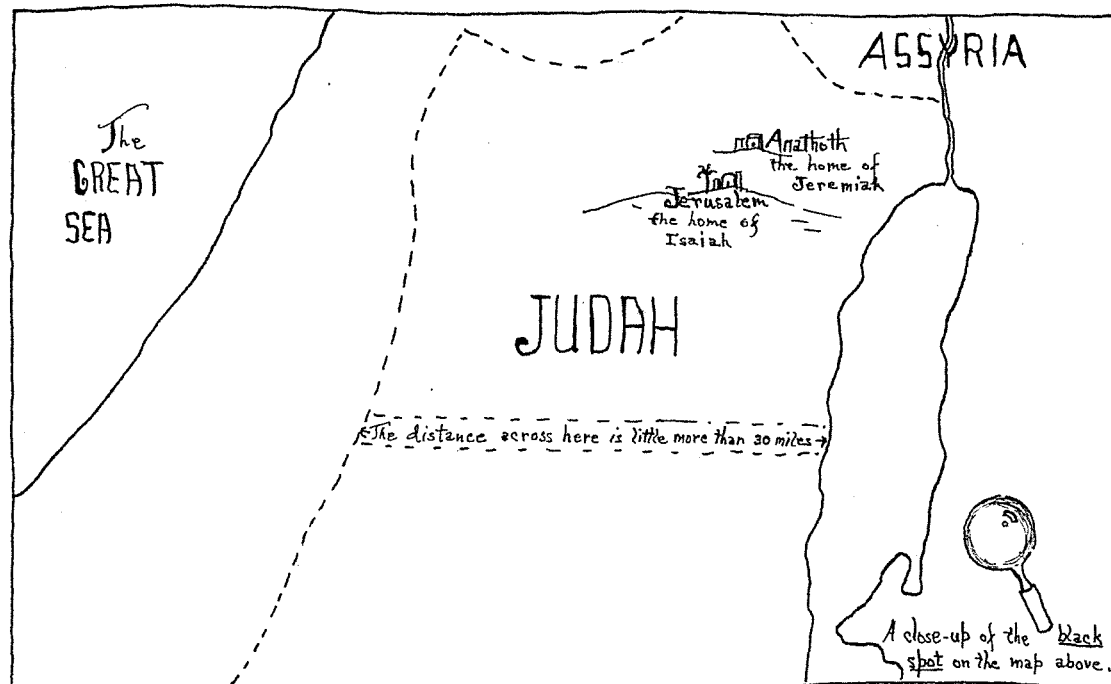
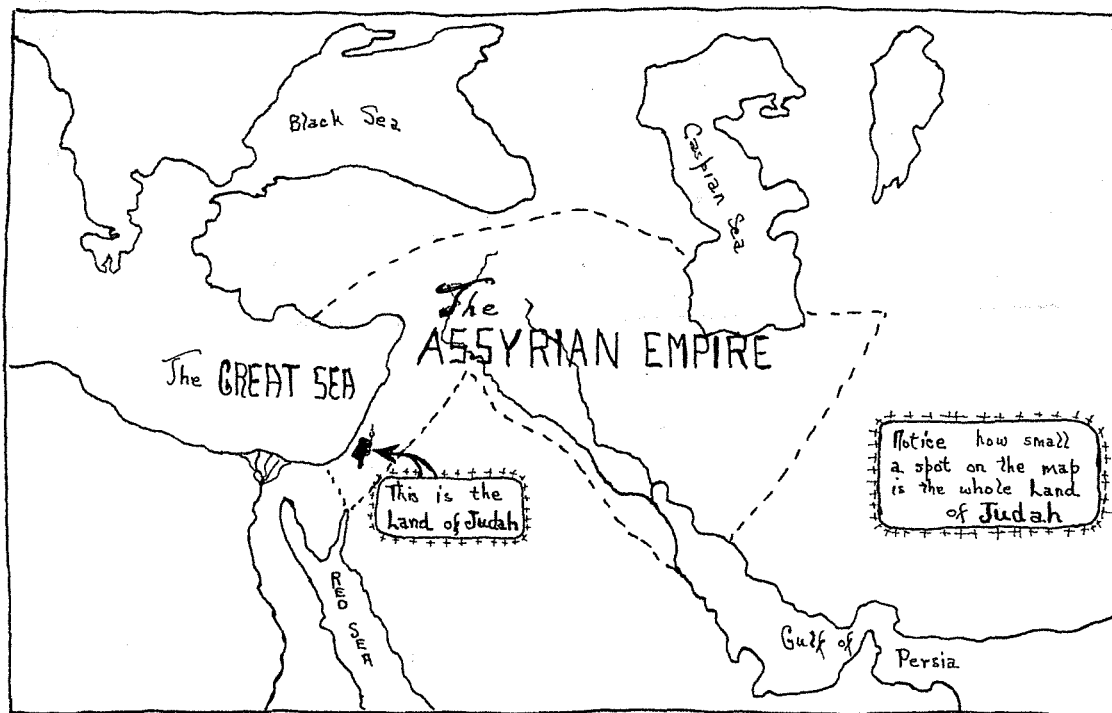
To understand the situation in today's lesson, try to imagine all of north China conquered 150 years ago by an enemy nation, with only the province of Kiangsu left. Imagine most of the province of Kiangsu now conquered by another enemy--Japan, for instance--who has put a Chinese king on the throne at Nanking, after carrying away to Japan the king before him. Suppose this last king has rebelled, and Japan has sent an army which is besieging Nanking. Imagine a Chinese Christian preacher going around Nanking telling the king and the people that God wants them to surrender to the Japanese, and that only by doing this can they save Nanking from being burned. Now you see how things were at the time chapter 38 begins, and you see how different Jeremiah's message was from Isaiah's. Read about the situation in Judah as given in II Kings 24:10-20. Here the enemy is Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, or Chaldea. (See map).

Why Was Jeremiah's Message Necessary?

But why was it necessary for God to send such a message to Zedekiah about Jerusalem, when He had sent such a hopeful one to Hezekiah 125 years before? As we have said, Zedekiah was a very different kind of king from Hezekiah. You have already found out what kind of man he was, from II Kings 24. And now read II Chronicles 36:11-13. In verses 12 and 13, what two wrong things do you find about Zedekiah

1. In his attitude toward God, and God's messenger, Jeremiah?
2. In his attitude toward Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon?

PLATE XI.



THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH IN JEREMIAH'S TIME

You may think that rebelling against a foreign king who has conquered most of your country is a patriotic thing, and not wrong at all. But notice in II Chronicles 13 what Nebuchadnezzar had made Zedekiah do when he put him on the throne. In II Kings 24:17 you saw that the king of Babylon had changed Zedekiah's name. His name had been Mattaniah, which means Gift of Jehovah,¹ and had been changed to Zedekiah, which means Righteousness of Jehovah.² The king of Babylon had in this way, you see, given Zedekiah a name which would remind Zedekiah that he had sworn by Jehovah to be a faithful servant to the foreign king. Nebuchadnezzar could have taken Zedekiah captive to Babylon along with the other princes whom he took before (II Kings 24:12), but instead of that he placed him on the throne and trusted him to be faithful.

You know how much Japan has been blamed, not only by China but by many other nations, for breaking an agreement in invading Manchuria. (Japan is not the only nation that has ever broken agreements, of course; to most nations a treaty is something to be kept only if it is convenient.) Yet if you were a loyal Japanese subject, you would probably think it very patriotic to do all you could to get for your fellow-countrymen a great and rich country like Manchuria to live in. But all life is based on agreements, and they should be held sacred. When you come to a school, you are really saying, "I agree to keep the rules of this school"; and the school agrees on its part to give you a good education for the money you pay. You see, then, that it was a serious thing for Zedekiah to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar after he had promised to serve him; and Jeremiah therefore told him that he should surrender.

What Did Jeremiah Have to Suffer Because of His Message?
In the story for today you see how Jeremiah had to suffer for preaching as he did. And this is only one instance. There are many others given. For one thing, he was accused of being a traitor. (38:4). You can imagine how much that hurt him, because you know how you would feel if anyone accused you of being for the Japanese. To see how Jeremiah really felt about his country and about Jerusalem, read 9:1 in Jeremiah's prophecy, and 2:11,12 in his Lamentations, the next book.

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1. Davis, op. cit., p. 461.

2. Ibid., p. 795.

But you have seen in today's story that Jeremiah had to suffer in body as well as in soul. Because Zedekiah was so weak, this poor prophet was treated in a terrible manner. How would you like to be where he was put? And yet he was not without friends, as you see. The man who pulled him out of the pit was a negro! How do you know that he was a very kind-hearted man? If you read 39:15-18, you will see how he was rewarded.

At the end of the reading for today, you again see Jeremiah giving the message, "Surrender, or you, Zedekiah, will be captured, and Jerusalem will be burned with fire!" And you will see what happened, if you read 39:1-8. Of course many would blame Jeremiah when Jerusalem fell, and so it must have been a time of great sadness for him. What gave him the courage, knowing that this was going to happen, to stand up all alone and preach as he did? We shall find the answer to that next time.

JEREMIAH

The Man Who Stood With God

Reading: Jeremiah 1:4-10; 16-19

Introduction

At the end of our first lesson on Jeremiah, we asked the question, "What gave Jeremiah the courage to stand alone and preach as he did?" We shall try to answer that today.

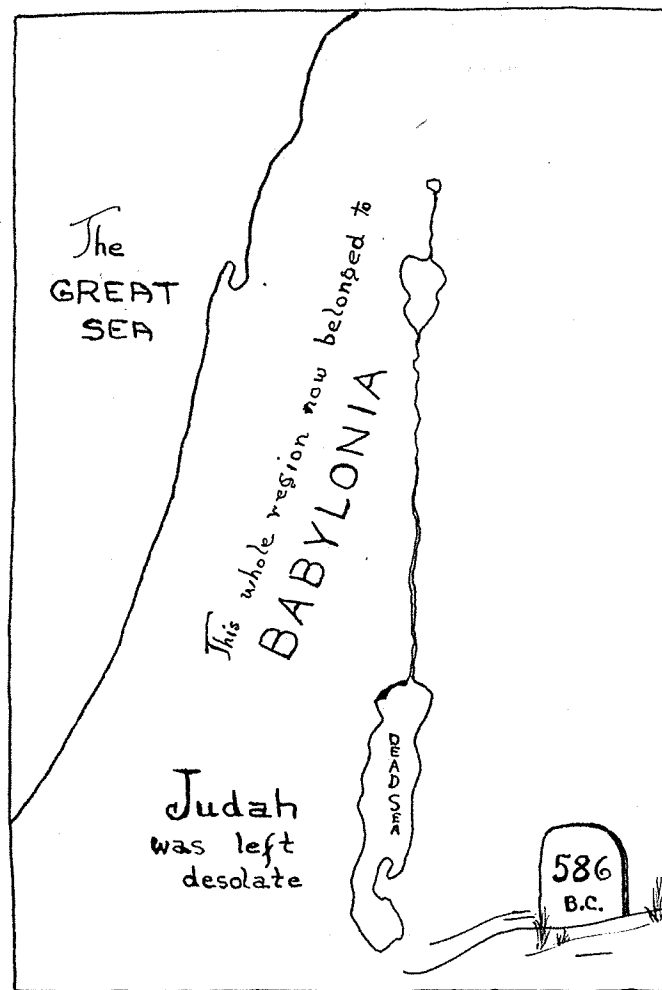
Jeremiah's Call

In the selections for this lesson we shall find answers to the following questions helpful in telling us the secret of Jeremiah's courage:

1. How did Jeremiah know that God had a special work for him to do? (5).
2. How did he feel when he realized this fact? (6). Does this make you think of another leader whom God called to a hard task, and who began thinking about himself? (See Lesson XI).
3. How did God encourage Jeremiah? (8a, 17b). Compare what God said to Joshua. (See Lesson XVI).
4. How can we tell from this great call of Jeremiah's that his message was not just something he made up himself? (7, 9, 17).
5. How did God prepare Jeremiah for what he might expect? (18, 19).
6. What parts of God's message to him as given in this first chapter would comfort Jeremiah most as he remembered them years later in experiences like the one we read about last time? Find these yourself.

Jeremiah's Hope

You will be glad to know that Jeremiah's work was not all "to pluck up and to break down and to destroy and to overthrow." It was also "to build and to plant." (1:10). Although he had to tell his people that God was punishing them for their sins (1:16), and although Jerusalem was captured and burned and the people were carried away to Babylon (39:1-10), Jeremiah told them also of a day when God would bring them back. Read 16:14, 15. Chapters 31-33 are sometimes called the "Book of Hope". Read 33:12, 16. Jeremiah, Moses, David, and Isaiah looked forward to the coming of a Righteous Ruler whom we see now to have been Jesus, the Christ. What verse in 33:12-16 tells about this Coming One?



BABYLON CONQUERS THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH

More About Jeremiah

We have had time for only one story from the life of Jeremiah. It would be a great pity for you to miss some of the other things that happened to him. You will find listed below a few of the most interesting stories about him in the rest of the book, which you may read some time.

Jeremiah as a Teacher

In order to attract the attention of people, or to teach some great lesson, Jeremiah often did some rather strange things:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. He buries a girdle | Chapter 13:1-12 |
| 2. He visits a potter | 18:1-12 |
| 3. He breaks a bottle | 19:1-13 |
| 4. He wears a yoke | 27:1,2 |
| | 27:12-22 |
| 5. His yoke is broken | 28:1-17 |
| 6. He buys a field | 32:1-15 |

(Remember that this last story is in the "Book of Hope".)

Jeremiah's Hardships

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. The men of his own city plot against him | Chapter 11:18-23 |
| 2. He is put in the stocks | 20:1-13 |
| 3. He is threatened with death | 26 |
| 4. He is arrested and put in prison | 37:6-21 |

Chapters 40-44 tell about Jeremiah after the fall of Jerusalem. You may be interested to see what happened to him then.

Jeremiah's Greatness

In Jeremiah we have the kind of leader who is so much needed everywhere in the world today--a leader who is not afraid to stand alone, if necessary, and suffer, in order to tell his nation her faults and try to bring her to see them and repent of them. We have found today the secret of Jeremiah's greatness. And Jeremiah's name, too, suggests the source of his strength: God makes firm.¹ May God raise up for China as well as for the rest of the world in these hard days, men who will so believe in Him that they will have the courage to speak the truth which shall turn nations into the right paths. May you students learn while young that God alone can give the courage and faith needed to be a leader anywhere.

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1. Cf. Davis, op. cit., p. 348.

NEHEMIAHA Patriot Builds a City's Walls

Reading: Psalm 126

Nehemiah 1:1-3; 10,11

2:1-15

9:1-3; 5b-38

Introduction

It has been a long time since the fall of Jerusalem, the last event we read about. You remember that Jeremiah looked forward to the day when the captive Jews would be brought back to their own land and to their great capital city, Jerusalem, just as they had been brought up out of Egypt to that land. In II Chronicles 36:22-23 you may read of the decree given by the man who had conquered Babylon in the 50 years since Babylon had conquered Judah and captured Jerusalem. This decree gave permission for the captives to return and rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. In the book of Ezra, just before Nehemiah, you may read the story of how the captives went back and did rebuild the Temple, and even had a great Passover feast. (Ezra 1-6). The first reading for today may help you to picture those returning captives. Think how you would feel if you had been away from China, a captive in a foreign country, for long years, and then were given permission to return!

A Man Who Loved His Nation

It was about 90 years after the first captives started back to Jerusalem that the story of Nehemiah begins.¹ The part we have for today is really only the beginning of the story, however. You must read the rest of the book some time, because it gives a picture of a man who loved his country so much that he went through all sorts of hardships in order to serve her. You will find that Nehemiah, like the other leaders of God's people, trusted God to help him; and you will see how God did help him against very clever enemies. If Nehemiah were a Chinese today, he would certainly belong to the "love-country" movement.

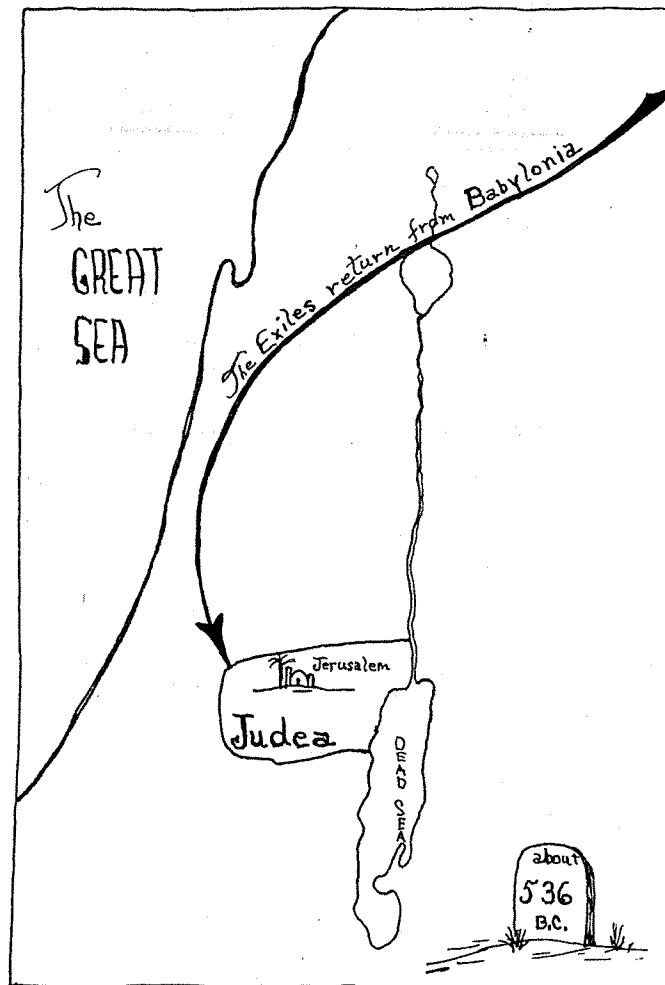
A Speech Reviewing the History of a Nation

We close our study of the Old Testament with the great speech given in Nehemiah 9. In this speech you find a splendid review of the history we have been over. Two of

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1. Cf. George Adam Smith, Jerusalem, Vol. II, p. 332.

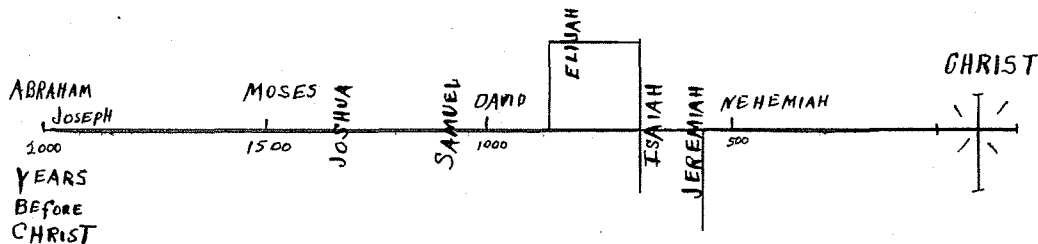
PLATE XIII.



THE EXILES COME HOME!

the great leaders of Israel are mentioned by name. See if you can find places in the speech where others fit in: Joshua; the Judges; Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah, and Jeremiah.

The little diagram below may help you to keep in your mind the leaders whom we have studied.



Questions Reviewing the Leadership of a Nation

Since this course has been a study in national leadership, perhaps we can try an experiment now, to see if we have discovered something special to admire in each of the ten great men whom we have met in these lessons.

In one column below you will see the names, in their proper order, of the ten leaders. In the other column are ten virtues which we have noticed as we have gone along. Now, try to fit a different virtue to each man, by recalling what we noticed especially about each in our studies. (The virtues are of course not in the same order as the names of the men they fit.)

<u>Leaders</u>	<u>Virtues</u>
1. Abraham	Unselfish love of country
2. Joseph	Courage to rebuke sin
3. Moses	Physical courage
4. Joshua	Courage to stand alone and speak truth
5. Samuel	Humility
6. David	Careful listening to God's voice
7. Elijah	Ability to comfort in distress
8. Isaiah	Purity
9. Jeremiah	Patience
10. Nehemiah	Faith in God's promises

Jesus, the Perfect Leader

We have noticed that many of these great men looked ahead and spoke of a Perfect Leader whom God would send into the world. Let us see, in closing, how He combines the virtues of all the great men in His nation before Him.

Unselfish love of country

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings...!" (Matthew 23:37.)

Courage to rebuke sin

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" (Matthew 23:13 ff.)

Physical courage

"And it came to pass, when the days were well-nigh come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem..." (Luke 9:51.)

Courage to stand alone and speak truth

"Then all the disciples left him, and fled.... And the high priest said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said.... Then the high priest rent his garments, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy...what think ye? They answered and said, He is worthy of death." (Matthew 26:56 ff.)

Humility

"Jesus...riseth from supper, and layeth aside his garments; and he took a towel, and girded himself. Then he poureth water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded." John 13:3 ff.)

Careful listening to God's Voice

"And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed." (Mark 1:35.)

Ability to comfort in distress

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28.)

Purity

"And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying... Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." (Matthew 5:2,8.)

Patience

"Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not." (1 Peter 2:23.)

Faith in God's Promises

"And he saith unto them....If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove

hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." (Matthew 17:20.)

We Review Our Work

In the very first lesson in this little book, we compared our study to a trip into an unknown city or country, with these lessons as a guide-book. Now that we have finished, we might compare what we have done to the conquest of a "promised land" in which there were many enemies, with the lessons which we have studied as a book of military tactics to guide us.

The greatest of these enemies was the tribe of giants called Ignorance, or "I-don't-know." We have conquered a great many of them with the sling of Study and the smooth pebbles of Memory.

Another enemy tribe was called Indifference, or "I-don't-care", and near by there lived a kindred tribe known as "Unwillingness, or "I-don't-want-to." These both lived in the hilly country of Laziness. We took the only road that led to their land--the Road of Awakened Interest, and they, too, have been conquered.

However, as in the days of Joshua, "there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." (Joshua 13:1). And so we shall hope to go on using our book of tactics and finding out other methods for ourselves until we have conquered all the "promised land" of the Old Testament.

APPENDIX

A LIST OF THE BIBLICAL MATERIALS USED IN THESE LESSONS

<u>Lesson</u>	<u>Assigned Readings</u>	<u>Other Readings</u>	<u>Suggested Readings</u>	<u>New Testament Readings</u>
II	Gen.11:27-12:9	Gen.13:15-18 " 13:7		John 8:56 Matt.1:1
III	Gen.17:1-21	Gen.15:1-3 " 16:1-4 " 16:16 " 18:9-15 " 17:22-27		Heb.11:11 John 3:16
IV	Gen.21:1-8 " 22:1-19	Gen.15:5 " 12:3 Is.41:8	Gen.21:9-21	Heb.11:8-12 " 11:17-19 James 2:23
V	Gen.37 " 39	Gen.29:18-20 " 30:1-8 " 30:22-24 " 36:22b-26 " 35:23	Gen.24 " 25:19-34 " 27 " 28 " 29 " 30:1-24 " 32,33 " 35:9-29	Matt.5:8
VI	Gen.40 " 41	Gen.41:16,25,28 " 37:2		
VII	Gen.42 " 43	Gen.29:16-20 " 35:16-20 " 37:2 " 41:46,54 " 41:42 " 35:23	(Review Stories) Gen.37 " 40 " 41	
VIII	Gen.44 " 45 " 46:1-7,26-34 " 47:5,6,11,12	Gen.42:18 " 50:15-21 " 42:8 " 48:15,16	(Review stories) Gen.39 " 40 " 41 " 42,45,50	Matt.5:43-45 Acts 7:8-15
IX	Gen.50:22-26 Ex.1,2	Gen.50:12-14 " 46:25 Ex. 3:1	Gen.24 " 29:1-20	
X		Gen.45:7 Prov.16:18		Acts 7:29,30

<u>Lesson</u>	<u>Assigned Readings</u>	<u>Other Readings</u>	<u>Suggested Readings</u>	<u>New Testament Readings</u>
XI	Ex.3:1-12 " 4:10-17 " 4:27-31	Ex.3:13 " 4:1-9	Ex.3:13-22 " 4:1-9	John 4:23,24
XII	Ex.5 6:1-13 7:1-7	Ex.4:31 Ps.78:43-51 " 105:26-36	Ex.7-12	
XIII	Ex.12:1-15 " 12:21-42 " 13:17-22 " 14	Gen.15:13,14 " 50:24,25 Ex.4:31 " 5:14 " 6:9 16:1-3 17:1-4		Heb.11:22 Mark 14:12,16 I Cor.5:7 John 1:29 " 3:16
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Matt. 17:20

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