



The Establishment of the Kingdom

PRIMARY NOTES — 5 to 8 Years

STAGE TWO OF FIVE STAGES

CHRISTADELPHIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 20, MODBURY NORTH, 5092, SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

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STAGE 2 of 5 STAGES

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FOREWORD

In this second stage of Primary notes we follow the children of Israel out of the wilderness into the Land of Promise. They faced many other problems there, but God never left them without a faithful leader. There are many, many lessons children can learn from these stories of God's people entering into their inheritance.

They have been written, primarily for children of 5 to 9 years of age. We hope the older ones of this group will read the lessons for themselves. A set of activity work has been designed to accompany the notes, and these can be adapted by deleting sections not appropriate for the younger 5 and 6 year olds. We trust that they will be used, both at Sunday School and at home with a minimum of adult help. Teachers and parents should of course use the activity sheets as a means of revising and impressing the lessons and as a further aid to their own preparation. The activity sheets are not intended to replace the teacher's work.

We trust then that the children will enjoy having a book of their very own to help them learn what God requires of them.

Please note: Where a dot • appears beside a question it indicates that the question requires a longer answer. Questions in section 'B' of the Div. 4-6 annual examination paper and sections 'B' and 'C' of the Div. 7-8 paper will be selected from these.

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"I come to thee in the name of Yahweh of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied" 1 Samuel 17:45

1. MEAT FOR ISRAEL

“Who shall give us flesh to eat?”

Aim

To show that God will provide our needs if we trust Him. He will look after all those who love Him.

Synopsis

The people of Israel were on their way to the Promised Land, but they began to grumble and complain. God gave them what they asked for, but many were greedy and forgot all the good things God had done for them.



Num. 10:33-36; 11:4-6, 10-23, 31-35

THE PEOPLE LEAVE MT SINAI

God had brought His chosen people out of Egypt. He was leading them to a good land – the very land which He had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God loved that land. He told the people that it was a land *“flowing with milk and honey”*.

He had chosen Moses to lead them on their journey. Moses led them safely through the waters of the Red Sea. At Mt Sinai God had given them laws to teach them to worship Him. He fed them each day with manna and led them by a pillar of cloud. When they left Mt Sinai they really only had a few days to travel to the Promised Land. The priests blew the trumpets and the banners of the tribes were held high.

THE PEOPLE LOOK BACK TO EGYPT

But instead of remembering God's promise and looking forward to the new land, the people began to grumble and complain. They were tired of travelling and camping. They were sick of the food God provided for them. They really wished they were back in Egypt. They said to each other, "*Remember the fish we often ate in Egypt; remember the cucumbers and melons, the leeks and the onions and the garlic. Now there is nothing to eat except this manna*". They forgot how they had hated working so hard in Egypt as slaves. They forgot that their baby boys had been thrown into the river to drown. All they remembered now were the things they had loved to eat.

MOSES SPEAKS TO GOD

Moses heard everyone crying by the doors of their tents. God became very angry with His people and Moses was very worried. He asked God what he could do, for all the people were complaining and asking for meat to eat. The work of leading God's people seemed too difficult for him.

GOD PROVIDES SEVENTY HELPERS

God saw that Moses needed help straight away. He told him to choose 70 wise old men from among the people. These men would be able to share the work with Moses. God would guide them by His spirit, just as He guided Moses.

ENOUGH MEAT FOR A MONTH

Then God said, "*Be ready tomorrow to eat meat. You have grumbled and forgotten why I brought you out of Egypt. So I will give you enough meat to last ... not just one day, or two days, or five days, or ten days, or twenty days, but a whole month until you feel really sick of it*". Such a miracle in that

barren wilderness seemed impossible. Moses was amazed, *“How shall we get enough food for all these people?”* he said. *“Shall we kill the flocks and herds; or shall we gather all the fish in the sea?”*

But God answered him, *“Do you think that My power is not as great as it used to be? You shall see whether My word shall come to pass or not”*. And, of course, it did.

The next day, there came a wind from God bringing thousands and thousands of quails to the camp of Israel. Meat at last. You can imagine how excited the people would be. They would be able to eat meat again. In fact, they forgot everything else and went out all that day, and all through the night and all the next day, gathering the birds. But instead of being sensible about the food that God had so graciously provided, they behaved very foolishly. They had only one thought in their minds. Eagerly and greedily they started eating the meat without remembering who had given it.

THE GREEDY ONES PUNISHED

God became very angry with His people so that even while they were eating they became ill and many died. They were buried there in the wilderness. God gave the place a special name, Kibroth-Hattaavah. It means, The Graves of the Greedy. So the people would never forget that this was the place where the greedy people were punished.

The journey to the Promised Land took much longer because of the sin of the people. If only they had helped each other on the way and been thankful to God for His goodness. But they were not. They had been very selfish.

LESSON FOR US

We should always be thankful to God for giving us all we need each day. If we are really thankful we will never grumble or complain. Every day is part of our journey to the

Kingdom of God. If we love God and look forward to the Kingdom, He will help us now in all our troubles.

Remember these points:-

- * God was leading the people of Israel to the Promised Land
- * The people remembered the food they had eaten in Egypt and cried out to Moses for meat to eat.
- * Moses asked God for help and God chose 70 wise men to help him.
- * God used a strong wind to bring quails to the camp for the people to eat.
- * God punished the greedy people. The name of the place was called Kibroth-Hattaavah.

Questions Div. 5-8

1. *God's people, Israel, left Egypt and were going on a journey. Where was God leading them?*
2. *Why did the people of Israel stand by their tent doors weeping?*
3. *What did God tell Moses to do, so that he would have some help in leading the people?*
- 4. (a) *What did the people do when God sent quails into the camp?*
(b) *What happened to the greedy people, who forgot that it was God who gave them their food?*

Additional Questions Div. 7-8

- 5. *Tell what happened when God's people became tired of manna and asked for meat.*
6. *Why did God punish the people as they ate the quail meat they had collected around the camp?*

2. TWELVE SPIES IN THE LAND

“They brought up an evil report of the Land”

Aim

To show that God will reward those who trust Him (such as Caleb and Joshua), but will not tolerate those who do not believe His Word.

Synopsis

The Promised Land of Canaan was before them, but Israel did not trust in God. So He made them turn aside to wander for 40 long years in the wilderness.

Num. 13; 14:1-39



TWELVE MEN SPY THE LAND

The people of Israel had come to the edge of the Promised Land. They came to Moses and said, “*Let us send men before us to explore the Land*”.

So God commanded Moses to choose twelve men – one important man from each tribe in Israel. These men were to find out what kind of people lived in Canaan – whether they were strong or weak, few or many; whether they lived in tents or in strong cities. Moses told them to find out what kind of trees and plants grew there. He asked them to bring back some of the fruit of the land too.

Moses sent the men on their way. They travelled all through the land for 40 days, looking carefully at everything there was to see. They saw the beautiful green valleys, the rich soil, fine crops and pastures, flocks and herds. They came to the Valley of Eshcol at the time of the first ripe grapes.

They found one beautiful bunch so big that two men carried it between them on a pole. They gathered pomegranates and figs too.

THE SPIES TELL WHAT THEY SAW

The twelve men returned to the camp of Israel. They came before Moses and Aaron and all the people and showed them the fruit they had brought. They said, "*We came unto the land and truly it is a good land, flowing with milk and honey*". But though they all said what a good land it was, there were only two men who had complete faith in God. Caleb and Joshua believed that the Israelites could easily go and live in the land. The others were frightened, thinking of the cities they had seen with high walls around them and the men that were very big. They thought they could never fight the tall strong people.

Then faithful Caleb, one of the spies, said, "*Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it*". But the other ten terrified men answered again, "*We are not able to go up against the people of the land. They are tall and strong like giants and we felt like grasshoppers alongside them*". They had forgotten that God was with them and would help them.

ISRAEL CRIES ALL NIGHT

Then the whole camp of Israel became afraid when they heard these words. They cried and cried all night long. They said, "*Why has God brought us to this land so that we will be killed, and our wives and our children. It would be better if we went back to Egypt*". What a dreadful way to speak after all God had done for them. They even wanted to choose a new leader and return to Egypt. Joshua and Caleb (the only faithful spies) did what they could to encourage everyone not

to be afraid, but the people would not listen. Instead, they wanted to kill those two good men.

GOD SPEAKS TO ISRAEL

Suddenly God made His glory appear in the Tabernacle – a bright, blinding, glowing light. The whole congregation of Israel heard the voice of God. Moses pleaded with God to pardon this sin of His people. Then God told Moses that even though these people had not pleased Him, His purpose would surely come to pass. He said, *“As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with My glory”*.

THE PUNISHMENT

But now God was going to punish the people by not letting them enter the Promised Land. They would all die in the wilderness except those younger than 20 years old and the faithful Caleb and Joshua. These would enter into the Promised Land – but not straight away.

If Israel had been faithful and remembered that God would help them, they could have gone straight into that beautiful land. But now the whole nation was made to wander for 40 years, one year for every day that the spies had searched out the land.

LESSON FOR US

How careful we must be to remember to trust in God always. We must be faithful, like Caleb and Joshua, who really believed God’s promises. He has said, *“As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with My glory”*. God wants us to share in that glory when Jesus Christ reigns as king over all the earth. Then everyone everywhere will learn of God’s purpose.

Remember these points:–

- * Twelve men were chosen to spy out the Promised Land.

- * They returned after searching the Land for 40 days.
- * Only Caleb and Joshua showed faith in God and wanted to enter the Land.
- * God was angry with the people because they were afraid of going into the Promised Land, and they spoke in a dreadful way about God. He punished them by making them wander in the wilderness for 40 years.

(Division 8: Find Numbers 14:21 in the Bible and learn it.)

Questions Div. 5–8

1. *When Israel wanted to know about the Promised Land what did God tell them to do?*
- 2. (a) *When the 12 spies went to search the Promised Land what did they see?*
 (b) *When they returned to the camp, what did the two faithful spies tell Moses?*
 (c) *What did the ten frightened spies tell Moses?*
3. *How did the Israelites feel when they heard the report of the unfaithful spies?*
4. *What are the names of the two faithful spies who searched out the Promised Land?*
5. *How did God punish the people when they became afraid of going into the Promised Land?*

Additional Questions Div. 7–8

- 6. *Why were Joshua and Caleb the only ones over 20 years to be allowed into the Promised Land?*
7. *God said to Moses, “As truly as I live all the earth shall be filled with my glory”. When will this come to pass?*

3. REBELLION IN ISRAEL

“The earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up”

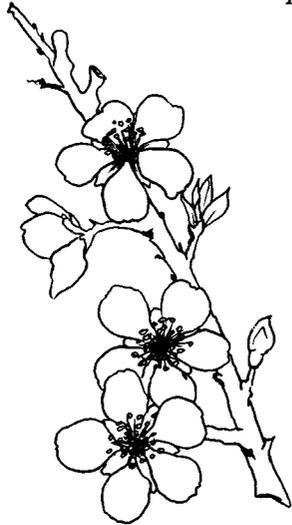
Aim

To show that God will reject those who ignore His commandments.

Synopsis

Korah, Dathan and Abiram were jealous of Moses and Aaron. God destroyed them suddenly in a strange way, to show all His people that He had chosen Moses and Aaron to lead them.

Numbers 16; 17 (Numbers 26:9-11)



MOSES AND AARON – THE CHOSEN LEADERS

God had chosen Moses to be the special leader of His people Israel. Aaron was the High Priest chosen by God to work with Moses. God knows all things, even before they happen. So He chose Moses, because He knew Moses was the very best person His people could have for a leader. He knew that Aaron was the best helper Moses could have too.

KORAH, DATHAN AND ABIRAM BECOME JEALOUS

But some men in Israel forgot that God knows all things. They were jealous of Moses and Aaron and wished they could be leaders instead. They did not want to take notice of Moses any more. Their names were Korah, Dathan and Abiram.

They came to Moses and said, *“We have had enough of you. All the people of Israel are holy, every one of them. So why should you make yourself leader over them all”*. They did not care that God had chosen Moses.

Moses was amazed when he heard these wicked words.

He fell on his face to the ground. He said to them, *“Tomorrow God will show who are His friends, and who are holy. He will show you the one He has chosen to be leader. Take your censers, and all your friends take censers and put fire in them. Bring them to the Tabernacle tomorrow. Then God will show us who is holy and whom He will choose”*.

Dathan and Abiram said they would not come to the Tabernacle. *“We will not come. You have brought us into this wilderness to kill us. You have not brought us into the land flowing with milk and honey at all. Now you just want to be lord over us. We will not come”*. Moses was very angry.

THEY COME BEFORE THE TABERNACLE

The next day they gathered as Moses had said. Moses and Aaron were on one side. Korah was on the other side with 250 men who had listened to the evil words. They all carried their bowls of burning coals (called censers) with sweet smelling spices (incense) burning in them. All the people of Israel gathered there to see what would happen. Some had listened to what Korah said and were on his side. Then God's glory appeared before them all.

God said, *“Tell everyone to get away from Korah, Dathan and Abiram. Make everyone get away from all their tents and from everything that is theirs”*.

Then Moses said, *“If these men die in an ordinary way then you will all know that God has not made me the leader. But if God should perform a special thing here and open up the earth and destroy these men, then understand that these men have made God angry”*.

THE GROUND OPENS UP

Just as he had finished saying these words, the ground broke open underneath Korah, Dathan and Abiram. They, and all their belongings and tents, fell into the hole in the

ground and the earth closed up again. So they died.

All the people ran away in fright in case they should fall into the ground as well. God also punished the 250 men who had followed Korah, Dathan and Abiram. They had come with their censers to burn incense too. God sent a fire which destroyed them, and their censers were later beaten into flat plates to cover the altar.

So the people of Israel were shown that God will not allow men to go against His will and His plans.

ANOTHER SIGN

God gave another sign to Israel. He wanted to show for certain that He had chosen Aaron to be the High Priest.

God told them to get 12 wooden sticks – rods, they were called – and write on each rod the name of the leaders of the tribes, one name for each rod. The rods were to be put in the Tabernacle. God said, *“You will know whom I have chosen because the rod will have blossoms growing on it. This will make you stop speaking against my leaders”*.

So they chose the rods and wrote the names on them and Moses placed them in the Tabernacle.

AARON’S ROD GROWS FLOWERS AND ALMONDS

The next day Moses went into the Tabernacle. He found that Aaron’s rod had grown leaves and blossoms. More amazing still, there were even almonds growing there as well. The other eleven rods were just dry, dead sticks, the same as they were before.

God used this wonderful miracle to show Israel His will. God’s power had made the dry dead wood of Aaron’s rod to become alive again and grow leaves and flowers and even fruit. Because of this, Israel would know that Aaron was the one God had chosen to be the High Priest.

ISRAEL WANDERS IN THE WILDERNESS

Israel went on wandering in the wilderness, with Moses as their leader and Aaron as their High Priest. God fed them each day with manna and led them by a pillar of cloud. They worshipped Him at the Tabernacle. During all this time in the wilderness, God cared for them. Their clothes and their shoes did not wear out and their feet did not get swollen.

LESSON FOR US

We should not be jealous of others or always wanting things that belong to someone else like Korah, Dathan and Abiram. God loves all those who do their best for Him with what they have got.

Remember these points:–

- * God had chosen Moses as Leader and Aaron the High Priest to help him.
- * Korah, Dathan and Abiram were jealous, and wanted to be leaders too.
- * The people were gathered together so that all could see whom God had chosen.
- * God caused the ground to open up and swallow Korah Dathan and Abiram and destroyed the 250 men who were with them.
- * Aaron's rod grew leaves and blossoms and almonds, showing that God had chosen him to be the High Priest.

Questions Div. 5–8

1. *Who were the two men God chose above all others to be leader and High Priest in Israel?*
2. *Who wanted to be leaders instead of Moses and Aaron?*
- 3. *How did God show Israel that Korah, Dathan and Abiram had made Him angry?*
4. *What did Moses have to do with the 12 rods?*

5. *What happened to Aaron's rod?*

Additional Questions Div. 7-8

- 6. *Tell how Korah, Dathan and Abiram made trouble in the camp of Israel.*
- 7. *Why did God make Aaron's rod grow leaves, flowers and almonds?*



4. WATER AT KADESH

“With his rod he smote the rock twice”

Aim

To show how important it is to follow the commandments of God if we desire to have a place in the Kingdom.

Synopsis

Israel needed water in the desert. God provided it for them by a miracle. At the same time Moses and Aaron forgot to give honour to God.

Numbers 20



THE PEOPLE COME TO KADESH

The forty years of wandering in the wilderness were nearly over. God’s chosen people of Israel came again to Kadesh, at the edge of the Promised Land. But the wanderings in the desert had been long, hot and dry. The people were tired of moving about. There was no water for them at all. They lost faith in God to give them what they needed.

ISRAEL COMPLAINS TO MOSES

At Kadesh they gathered before Moses and Aaron and complained, just as their fathers had done so many years before. *“How we wish we had died when God punished the people”,* they said. *“You have brought us here with our cattle so that we will all die. Why have you brought us out of Egypt to this evil place? There are no seeds, no figs, no vines or pomegranates and there is no water to drink”.*

Moses and Aaron knew that God was the only one who

could help them. The two men went straight to the door of the Tabernacle and humbly bowed themselves to the ground. God's glory appeared unto them in the Tabernacle.

GOD TELLS MOSES WHAT TO DO

God said to Moses, *“Take the rod and gather all the people together and Aaron your brother, and speak unto the rock before their eyes and it will give water. Then everyone will be able to drink and all the beasts as well”*. It was quite clear what Moses had to do. So he took the rod – it was Aaron's rod, the one that had grown leaves and flowers and almonds – and he gathered all the people together by the rock.

MOSES BECOMES ANGRY

Moses had become very angry with the people. They would not be patient or trust in God. He said, *“Hear now you rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock”*. He forgot for the moment that God was the one who would give the water, not he and Aaron. Then instead of being careful to do EXACTLY as God had said, instead of speaking to the rock, he hit it twice with the rod. This was wrong.

WATER AT LAST

Straightaway water gushed out of the rock. Not just a trickle but streams of water. Everyone had plenty to drink and all the animals as well. Imagine how happy the people would have been to have water again. God had provided for His people. It was a miracle.

PUNISHMENT FROM GOD

But Moses and Aaron had done wrong. Even though they had been so faithful and earnest up till this time, God could not overlook what they had done. He said, *“You did not believe Me and did not give the honour to Me when all the*

people of Israel were watching. So you shall not bring these people into the land which I have given them".

Moses had done wrong in two ways. First he had said, "*Must we fetch water*", as though he and Aaron were providing the water and not God. Then he struck the rock, instead of just speaking to it as God had commanded. This was disobedient.

How sorry and disappointed they would have been. After all their work of leading the people, now they were not to go into the land. But they knew too that everything God does is right and fair. It was really right for Him to punish them because they had done wrong.

LESSON FOR US

We learn from this lesson how important it is to obey God's commands EXACTLY. By reading His Word carefully, we find out what He wants us to do. When Moses was angry he said things which did not please God. How careful we must be, then, to give honour to God when we are speaking to people.

Remember these points:-

- * The 40 years wandering of the children of Israel was almost finished, when they came to Kadesh.
- * The people murmured because they had no water to drink.
- * Moses became angry with the people and smote the rock with Aaron's rod instead of speaking to the rock.
- * God punished Moses by not allowing him to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land.

Questions Div. 5-8

- 1. (a) *What did God tell Moses to do when there was no water for the people at Kadesh?*

- (b) *What did Moses say when everyone was gathered at the rock?*
- (c) *Did Moses do exactly as God commanded him?*
2. *What happened when Moses struck the rock?*
 3. *Moses and Aaron did not believe God and honour Him when they struck the rock. How did God punish Moses and Aaron?*

Additional Questions Div. 7–8

- 4. *Tell the story of what happened when Israel were at Kadesh and there was no water.*
- 5. *Why did God punish Moses and Aaron?*



5. FIERY SERPENTS

“When he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived”

Aim

To show that we cannot expect everything to be easy for us in this life, but we must try not to grumble about the things that go wrong. God will look after us if we trust Him.

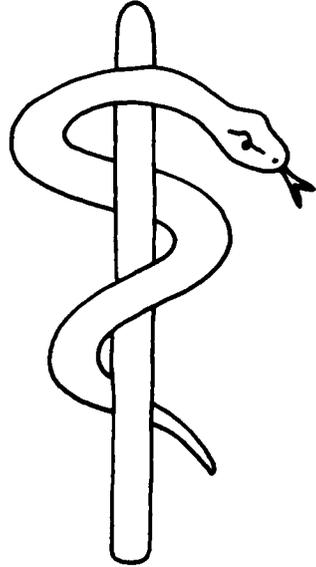
Synopsis

Forty years of wandering was nearly over. But the people still grumbled as before. So God sent a plague of fiery serpents.

Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14

A LONG JOURNEY

The people of Israel were coming closer to the Land which God had promised them. The king of Edom would not let them go through his country. So they had to go on a long and tiring journey around Edom to reach the edge of the Promised Land. You can imagine how hot it was travelling along on foot, and the people began to complain. They complained that they did not have much water to drink and they were thirsty. They complained about the manna God gave them each day. *“We hate this light bread”*, they said. They spoke against God and against Moses and said, *“Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?”* They wished they were back in Egypt. How foolish they were. It was so easy for them to forget that God had been looking after them ever since they left Egypt. He had given them the manna every day during their long journey. He had never forgotten them. But they



were unthankful and selfish. They should have remembered that the 40 years were nearly finished and helped each other to keep going.

GOD SENDS FIERY SERPENTS

God became very angry when He heard the people grumbling again, just as their fathers had done 40 years before. He sent a plague of poisonous serpents (snakes) in the hot sand among the people. Many of the people died because of the fiery bites. All Israel were frightened. They realised that they had sinned. They were sorry now that they had grumbled so much, so they came to Moses and said, *“We have sinned, for we have spoken against God and against thee. Pray unto God for us now so that He will take away the serpents from us”*.

So Moses prayed to God for the people.

THE SERPENT OF BRASS

God told Moses to make a fiery serpent out of brass, just like the ones that were biting the people. He was to put it on a pole and hold it up high so that everyone could see. God said that anyone who had a serpent bite must look up at the brass serpent on its pole. When the people did this they would not die. So Moses made the serpent of brass as God had commanded. He put it on the pole and set it up high above the people. When anyone was bitten, if they looked up at the brass serpent they did not die.

Once again God had answered Moses' prayer for the people of Israel. He had shown mercy and forgiveness even though they complained and said wrong things about Him and His servant Moses.

Many years later the Lord Jesus Christ spoke about what Moses did. Just as Moses had lifted up the brass serpent on a

pole for everyone to see, so Jesus was lifted up when he was crucified. The children of Israel looked at the brass serpent and God saved them from death. Jesus died (and was raised again) so that anyone who truly believes in him can be saved from dying forever. If they obey him they will be in God's Kingdom.

LESSON FOR US

How often we complain, just as Israel did long ago. We must trust that God will always look after us and give us what we need.

The people of Israel obeyed God's command to look up at the serpent of brass in faith and they lived. We must believe God's Word too. We must be baptised to show that we obey Him. Then we will be saved from death and be given a place in His kingdom.

Remember these points:-

- * The children of Israel complained about the manna.
- * God sent a plague of poisonous serpents, and many of the people who were bitten died.
- * Moses prayed for the people and God commanded him to make a serpent of brass and put it on a pole.
- * Those who looked on the brazen serpent did not die from the serpent bite.

Questions Div. 5-8

1. *What did the people of Israel say about the manna God gave them?*
2. *God was angry when the people complained about the journey and the manna – what did God do?*
3. *When the people were bitten by the fiery serpents they became frightened and sorry for complaining. What did they say to Moses?*

- 4. *What did God tell Moses to do so that the people of Israel could be saved from dying from the serpents bites?*
- 5. *What did the people have to do to be saved from the serpent bite?*

Additional Questions Div. 7-8

- 6. *Tell what happened when the people complained about their hot tiring journey and said they were sick of the manna.*
- 7. *What did Jesus say about Moses and the brass serpent?*



6. THE NEW LEADER

“Be strong and of good courage – as I was with Moses so I will be with thee”

Aim

To show that Moses’ work was finished and that God had chosen a new leader to take the children of Israel into the Land.

Synopsis

Moses’ work had come to an end. God chose faithful Joshua to lead His people when Moses died.

Deuteronomy 34; Joshua 1



MOSES COMES TO THE END OF HIS WORK

Moses’ job of leading the people of Israel was finished. He had been very brave and faithful. The Bible tells us that he was *“very meek, above all the men that were upon the face of the earth”* (Num. 12:3). This means that he was not proud, thinking himself important but always humble and ready to listen to God. He knew that he was doing God’s work. God must have the glory and not Moses. Now it was time for him to die and be laid in the dust of the earth, until Jesus would return to raise the dead.

There was a high mountain near the Promised Land. It was called Mt Nebo in the land of Moab. God led Moses up to the top, stretching far away before him was a beautiful view. God was showing him the vast extent of the land that He had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and to their seed, the people of Israel. *“I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes”, said God, “But thou shalt not go over into it”*. He could see,

too, the camp of Israel beneath him. It was laid out in four groups with the Tabernacle in the middle. So Moses died there, in the land of Moab. God buried him, but nobody knows where.

Moses was 120 years old when he died, but he was still strong. He had been a wonderful leader and prophet.

God's people were very sad when they learnt that Moses was dead. They mourned and wept for him a long time – for 30 days. Perhaps they realised more than ever before what a wonderful leader he had been.

A NEW LEADER CHOSEN – JOSHUA

So now a new leader was needed to go in front of the people and lead them right into the Promised Land. Remember the two faithful spies – Joshua and Caleb? Well, God chose Joshua for this great work. *“As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee”*, God said. *“I will not fail thee nor forsake thee”*. Joshua was very brave, courageous and faithful and he had learned many things from Moses. He was just the right person to lead God's people.

GOD SPEAKS TO JOSHUA

God told Joshua to lead the people of Israel over the river Jordan. *“Be strong and of good courage”*, God said. *“Don't be afraid or dismayed. Yahweh your God is with you wherever you go”*. He would surely give the land to the people as He had promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God also told Joshua to read from the book of the law and think about it every day. This *“book of the law”* is the first five books of our Bible, which were written by Moses so long ago. God said that he must obey all of it. If he did this, then everything would go well, and the people of Israel would prosper in the Land of Promise. Then he commanded Joshua again, ***“BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE”***.

LESSON FOR US

Moses was obedient and brave and faithful. He sleeps now in the grave, awaiting the resurrection and the Kingdom when he will live forever in the Promised Land. If we want to be in the Kingdom with Moses, then we must also believe God's Word and obey Him. We must obey our parents now, because they teach us God's ways.

Remember these points:-

- * God showed Moses the Promised Land from Mt Nebo in the land of Moab.
- * Moses died and God buried him in the Land of Moab.
- * God chose Joshua to take Moses' place and lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land.
- * God's message to Joshua was, "Be strong and of good courage".

Questions Div. 5-8

1. *Where did God take Moses just before he died?*
2. *What did God show to Moses when he was on the top of Mt Nebo in the land of Moab?*
3. *When will Moses live again and be able to walk in the Promised Land?*
4. *Whom did God choose to be the new leader after Moses died?*
5. *Why did God choose Joshua to lead the children of Israel?*

Additional Questions Div. 7-8

- 6. *Tell what happened when Moses' work for God was finished.*
- 7. *What must we do if we wish to be in the Kingdom with Moses?*

7. TWO MEN IN JERICHO

“The LORD hath given you the Land”

Aim

To show how the people of the Land were afraid of the Israelites but Rahab was not afraid because she trusted in God to save her.

Synopsis

Joshua sent two spies to Jericho. Rahab saved their lives by hiding them in her house. She believed in the God of Israel and He later rewarded her for her faith.



Joshua 2; Heb. 11:31; James 2:25

THE SPIES SENT OUT BY JOSHUA

Before the children of Israel could live in the Promised Land of Canaan, God wanted them to drive out the wicked people who were already there. Just across the Jordan was a city called Jericho, which had a very high wall around it. Joshua wanted to know more about Jericho and the people who lived there. He sent two men to search the city secretly. Joshua no doubt chose brave men, who believed that God would care for them. If the king of Jericho had found the spies, he would certainly have killed them.

RAHAB HIDES THE TWO MEN

The walls of Jericho were very thick and houses were built along the top. God led the two brave spies to one of these houses. In it lived a woman named Rahab.

Now someone had told the king of Jericho that men of

Israel had come into Jericho to search the city. He sent soldiers to look for them. They came to Rahab and said, *“Bring out the men that are come to you”*. But faithful Rahab had taken the two Israelites to the roof of her house. It was a flat roof and she had hidden the men under some stalks of flax (like straw) which were laid there. So Rahab said to the king’s men, *“Two men did come to me but I didn’t know where they came from. When it was dark the men went out. I do not know where they went. Go after them quickly and you will be able to catch them”*. So the soldiers hurried away and the gates of the city were shut for the night.

RAHAB HELPS THE SPIES ESCAPE

How relieved and thankful faithful Rahab would be as she went up to the men on the flat rooftop. *“I know that Yahweh has given you this land”*, she told them. *“All the people here are terrified of you. We have heard how Yahweh dried up the waters of the Red Sea for you, when you left Egypt. Your God, Yahweh, is God in heaven above and on the earth”*. She asked them to promise that, when Joshua and his men came to fight against Jericho, they would not harm her or her family. The two spies made the promise, *“You have saved our lives”*, they said, *“And we will save yours if you do not tell anyone about this”*. Then Rahab let them down safely by a scarlet cord through the window and over the wall.

“Tie this scarlet cord to your window”, the two men said, *“And you and your family will be safe. You must stay inside your house when we come into the land”*.

Rahab then told the spies to flee to the mountains. They must hide there for three days until the search for them was over.

THE TWO SPIES RETURN TO JOSHUA

Thanks to the kindness of Rahab and God’s care for them,

the two spies returned safely to Joshua, their leader. They were able to tell all about the wall, the gates and the soldiers of Jericho.

More than that, they had found out that all the people were really afraid of the Israelites. All the land of Canaan had heard of the many wonderful things the God of Israel had done for His people.

LESSON FOR US

God cared for both the spies and for kind Rahab. God has promised to care for us too if we believe His promises.

Remember these points:-

- * God commanded Joshua to drive out the wicked people from the land of Canaan.
- * Two spies were sent to spy out the first city, Jericho.
- * God led the spies to the house of Rahab.
- * Rahab believed in God and that Canaan was the land promised to the children of Israel.
- * Rahab hid the two spies under the flax on her roof.
- * The two spies told Rahab to hang a scarlet cord from her window and to stay inside.
- * They promised Rahab she would be saved if she did as they had commanded.

Questions Div. 5-8

1. *What did the people of Israel have to do before they could live in the Promised Land of Canaan?*
2. *What was the name of the city in the land of Canaan which had a very high wall around it?*
3. *How many spies did Joshua send to Jericho?*
4. *Where in the city was the house where Rahab lived?*
- 5. (a) *Tell what Rahab did to help the spies who came to her house?*

- (b) *What did Rahab say to the spies when she talked with them upon the rooftop?*
- (c) *What was faithful Rahab told to tie in her window?*

Additional Questions Div. 7–8

- 6. (a) *Tell the story of what happened when Joshua sent two men to spy out the city of Jericho.*
- (b) *What news did the two spies tell when they returned to Joshua from Jericho?*



8. ISRAEL CROSSES JORDAN

“Israel came over this Jordan on dry land”

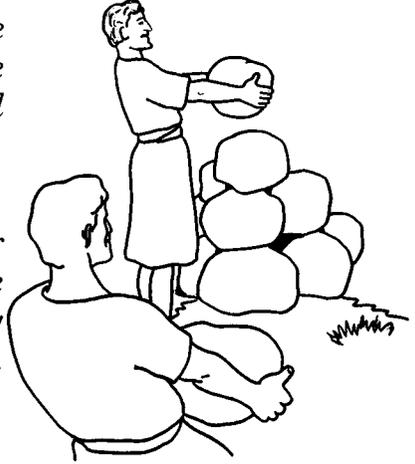
Aim

To show how God turned back the waters of Jordan so that the people might remember that he had brought them into the Land.

Synopsis

Israel came to the Jordan River which lay between them and the Promised Land. God made a dry path in the river for them to cross. They were never to forget that day.

Joshua 3 and 4



THE PEOPLE WAIT BY THE JORDAN RIVER

At last Israel had come to the Promised Land, the land of Canaan. This very land had been promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob many years before. They camped beside the river and could see the high walls of Jericho over the other side. Before they could come to Jericho Joshua and the people had to cross the River Jordan. It was flooded at the time and flowing right over its banks.

For three days they waited. How were they ever to cross those rushing floodwaters? Faithful Joshua needed encouragement to lead the Israelites across the river and then to fight against the people of Jericho.

God helped his brave leader by saying to him, *“Today I am going to show all Israel that as I was with Moses so I will be with you”*. Then God told Joshua exactly what he and the priests and the people were to do. He carefully obeyed

everything that God commanded. The Ark of the Covenant – that part of the Tabernacle in which God showed His presence – was to go first.

CROSSING THE JORDAN

The priests carried the Ark to the water's edge. They walked ahead of the rest of the people. As soon as their feet touched the water of the river the great power of God stopped the swiftly flowing waters. The people looked with amazement at the wonderful sight.

They saw the waters heap up and begin to flow backwards. Dry land appeared where once there was a river. The priests carried the Ark to the middle and stood still there while the Israelites went across. What a procession it would have been. They had to take all their goods, their animals, little children and old people – all passed over on dry ground to the other side.

The people could certainly see now that with God nothing was impossible.

ISRAEL WERE NOT TO FORGET THIS WONDERFUL EVENT

God did not want His people ever to forget this great miracle. He told Joshua to choose twelve men of Israel – one of every tribe. The twelve men were each to take a stone out of the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet stood firm. These twelve stones were to be carried right up out of the river and placed on the other bank at Gilgal. Joshua was to take twelve more stones and set them up in the middle of the river, where the priests had stood with the Ark. *“These stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel forever”*, God said.

So years later, when children would look upon this heap

of stones, they would ask their fathers or mothers about them. Then, of course, they would be able to tell them of how their grandparents crossed the river. They had been able to walk over the river bed on dry ground, while God held back the waters. God wanted these stones to remind Israel of His mighty power, so that they would love Him and fear Him forever.

ISRAEL CAMPS AT GILGAL

When everyone was safely across, God commanded that the priests with the Ark should come up out of the water. As soon as the soles of their feet had come to the land on the other side, the river Jordan returned to its place. It flowed on again just as it had done before. Joshua set up the stones which they had brought out of the Jordan where they camped that night in Gilgal.

Now the people knew for sure that Joshua was their new leader. He had led them right into the Promised Land.

LESSON FOR US

God is pleased if we ask about the many wonderful things He has done. The more we learn of His mighty acts and of the faithful men and women who helped Him, the more we will grow to love Him. Jesus Christ will return to the earth soon to set up God's Kingdom. Our families must be busily learning of God and doing His work when He comes.

Remember these points:-

- * Israel camped for three days on the banks of the river Jordan.
- * The priests carried the Ark.
- * As soon as the priests' feet touched the water it moved back and they walked over on dry land.
- * The priests stopped in the middle of the river while all

the people walked over to the other side.

- * God commanded Joshua to get 12 men (one from each tribe) to carry a stone up out of the river.
- * Another 12 stones were placed in the river.
- * When all the people had gone over the priests came last and the river started to flow again.

Questions Div. 5–8

1. *Before going to Jericho the Israelites had to cross a flooded river. What was its name?*
- 2. *What happened as soon as the priests' feet touched the river?*
3. *What did the priests hold up in the middle of the river?*
4. *How many stones were heaped up at Gilgal?*
5. *Why did God ask that the stones be set up like that?*

Additional Questions Div. 7–8

6. *How did God encourage Joshua before they crossed the River Jordan?*
- 7. *Tell how the priests and the people passed over the River Jordan.*



9. JERICHO

“Shout! for Yahweh hath given you the city”

Aim

To show the wonderful way in which God helped the children of Israel to capture Jericho.

Synopsis

The people of Israel had crossed the River Jordan into the Promised Land close by the city of Jericho. This was the first wicked city in the Land, which was destroyed when they carefully followed God’s plan.

Josh. 5:13-15; 6:1-25; Heb. 11:30-31



THE PEOPLE OF JERICHO ARE AFRAID

The gates of the city of Jericho were shut all day and all night. No one came in or went out. The people were really afraid. Everyone had heard about the powerful God of Israel and how He had turned back the River Jordan so that Israel might cross over on dry ground.

AN ANGEL TALKS TO JOSHUA

Then as Joshua was by the city of Jericho he looked up and saw a man ready for battle with a sword in his hand. “Are you for us, or for our enemies?” Joshua asked him. “No”, the man replied. “But I have come as captain of God’s army”. He was really an angel, the captain of God’s host. Joshua was amazed and fell to the ground before him to worship him. What did the captain of God’s army want him to do? “Put off your shoes from your feet”, the angel told him. “For the place

where you stand is holy". The angel then began to tell Joshua that God would help them take this city. God wanted them to kill the wicked king of Jericho and all the people. Everyone in the city was to be killed and the whole place destroyed by fire. Only the silver, the gold, and vessels of brass and of iron were to be saved. These valuable metals were to be kept as an offering to God and to be put in God's treasury. The angel then gave Joshua a special plan. The Israelites had to follow the plan exactly.

GOD'S SPECIAL PLAN

For six days the armed men of Israel had to march around the walls of Jericho, once each day. The soldiers marched in front. Seven priests had to follow behind the soldiers, each blowing a trumpet made of ram's horn. Other priests followed them, carrying the Ark of the Covenant. Then came more soldiers behind the priests. They were to make no noise at all, not even to speak to each other, until told to do so by Joshua. On the seventh day the priests and people had to march around the city seven times. On the seventh time the priests were to blow a very long blast on the trumpets. At the sound of the trumpet Israel had to shout with a great shout. If they did all these things, the angel said, the walls of Jericho would fall down flat.

JERICHO FALLS

Joshua and the Israelites faithfully did all these things just as the angel had said. The soldiers marched around the city. They were followed by the seven priests with the seven trumpets. Then came the other priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant. The rear guard marched on behind them. They did this once each day for six days. How the men of Jericho would have wondered at what was going on. They would be more and more worried and afraid as each day passed. Then

on the seventh day the Israelites marched around seven times. When the priests gave a long blast on their trumpets Joshua called to the people. “*Shout! For Yahweh hath given you the city*”. The people shouted. What a great shout it was. The strong stone walls of the city fell down flat. All except one little part. It was the part of the wall of the city where Rahab’s house was.

RAHAB IS SAVED

The Israelites then went straight in as they were commanded. They killed everyone in Jericho – except faithful Rahab and her family. She had remembered to put the scarlet cord in her window and had kept her family inside the house. The two spies kept their promise and saved Rahab, and her mother, and her father, her brothers and all inside her house. They took them near to the camp of Israel. Everything else in that wicked city of Jericho was then burned with fire. Only the silver, the gold, the brass and the iron were kept and given as an offering to God.

LESSON FOR US

Israel successfully took Jericho because they believed in God and obeyed His plan for them.

Faithful Rahab and her family were saved because she believed God and did what the spies had told her.

So we must believe that God will do just what He has written in the Bible. He will save us and find a place for us in His Kingdom, if we obey Him.

Remember these points:–

- * Joshua met the angel who was captain of God’s army.
- * The armed men of Israel and the Priests marched around the city once a day for six days.
- * On the seventh day they marched around seven times.
- * When the trumpets sounded on the seventh day all the

army of Israelites shouted and the walls fell down.

- * Everybody in Jericho was killed except Rahab and her family.
- * The silver, gold, brass and iron were saved and put in God's treasury.

Questions Div. 5–8

1. *Why was the city of Jericho shut up?*
2. *God's angel, the captain of God's army, appeared to Joshua – what did he tell Joshua?*
- 3. *God was going to destroy the city of Jericho.*
 - (a) *What did the men of Israel have to do each day for six days?*
 - (b) *What did they have to do on the seventh day?*
 - (c) *What happened when Joshua told the people to shout?*
4. *What part of the wall of Jericho did NOT fall down?*

Additional Questions Div. 7–8

5. *Why was Rahab and her family saved in Jericho?*
6. *What was done to the wicked city of Jericho after the spies had rescued Rahab and her family?*
7. *Why was Israel successful in taking the wicked city of Jericho?*
- 8. *Tell the story of how the Israelites took the wicked city of Jericho.*



10. ATTACK ON AI

“The name of that place was called the valley of Achor”

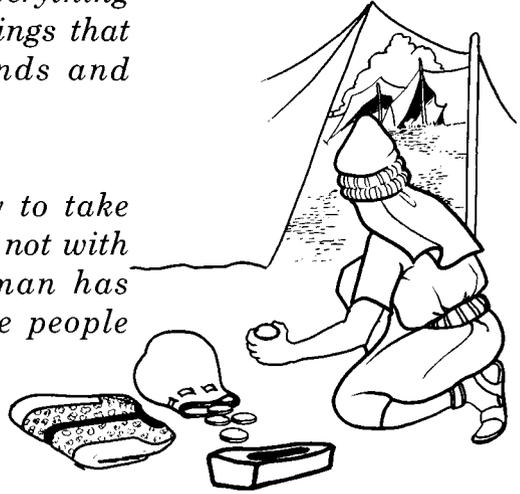
Aim

To show that God sees everything that we do. Even the things that we hide from our friends and parents.

Synopsis

The people of Israel try to take another city – but God is not with them this time. One man has disobeyed – and all the people suffer.

Joshua 7; 8:1-2



THE ATTACK ON AI

The people of Israel had taken the city of Jericho. After that Joshua sent some of his men to go to another city of Canaan, called Ai, to see what it was like. When they came back, they told Joshua not to bother to send all his fighting men. He should send just a few, because the city was not very big. So Joshua sent about 3,000 soldiers. He thought that God would help them and they would soon be back to say that Ai was taken. It certainly was not long before they were back. But they were being chased back by the men of Ai. Joshua’s men were badly beaten. Thirty six of them were dead. The people of Israel became very frightened.

JOSHUA PRAYS TO GOD FOR HELP

Joshua was very distressed and rent his clothes. He lay on his face by the Ark of God all day. Then he did the best

thing that he could do. He prayed to God. Joshua asked God why it was that Israel had been brought this far into the Promised Land, only to be beaten by their enemies. These enemies, the Canaanites, would mock at the God of Israel. They would not bring honour to His great name.

GOD TELLS JOSHUA WHAT TO DO

God told Joshua to get up from off the ground. "*Israel has sinned*", God said. Someone had stolen something that belonged to God. When Jericho was taken, God had specially said that they must burn everything in the city (except the gold and other metal which had to be kept in the treasury as an offering to God). But someone had disobeyed. Someone had kept something for himself and because one man had sinned, all Israel suffered. God was angry. He had made Israel fall before the men of Ai. God would not be with them any more until this disobedient person was found. The very next day the people were to gather together. The guilty person would be found in a special way and then punished for disobeying God.

THE DISOBEDIENT ONE IS FOUND OUT

Of course, God knew who the person was, for God sees and knows everything. But Joshua and the people did not know. Joshua arose early the next morning. He gathered Israel together in their tribes. God was going to show him the person who had sinned. First the tribe of Judah was taken. Out of that tribe each family came before Joshua. In one of these families was a man named Achan. His name means '*trouble*' – he certainly had troubled Israel. This was the man that God wanted Joshua to find – the one who had brought trouble to Israel.

ACHAN TELLS WHAT HE HAD DONE

Joshua asked Achan to speak before all the people and say what wrong thing he had done. Achan then told of how he had sinned in the sight of the God of Israel. Amongst the things in Jericho he had seen a goodly Babylonish garment, 200 pieces of silver money and a large piece of gold. He wanted these fine things for himself. So he had stolen them. He had hidden them in the ground under his tent – but we cannot hide anything from God.

Joshua sent messengers straight away to Achan's tent. They found the things there just as he had told them. They brought them out and showed them to the people in the sight of God.

ACHAN IS PUNISHED

Joshua and all the people then took hold of Achan, the troubler. They took the money, the garment and the piece of gold, as well as his sons, daughters, animals and his tent. They took them all to the Valley of Achor. There they stoned them to death with stones. They burned all Achan's things with fire. A great heap of stones was piled up on that place, to remind Israel that disobedient people must be punished.

AI IS TAKEN

Now that the cause of Israel's trouble had been taken away, God told Joshua not to be afraid. He must send his soldiers once more, to take the city of Ai. This time, with God helping them, they were allowed to keep all the animals and things they found in it.

LESSON FOR US

Let us not be like Achan and bring trouble upon ourselves and others. He saw what he should not have and he wanted it; so he took it. But he received a dreadful punishment. Let us be happy with the things we have and not be greedy for

more. God is a wise Father who provides us with all that we need and many other blessings as well.

Remember these points:–

- * When Israel went up against Ai, they were defeated and 36 men were killed.
- * God showed Joshua that someone had disobeyed His command and had kept something from Jericho for himself.
- * The guilty person had to be found and punished before God would help Israel again.
- * Achan was found to be the person and he had hidden a Babylonish garment, 200 pieces of silver and some gold.
- * Achan, and his family, and all his possessions were destroyed.
- * After this God helped Israel and they captured Ai easily.

Questions Div. 5–8

1. *What was the name of the next city to be captured by the children of Israel after Jericho?*
2. *Did the Israelites take the city of Ai the first time they tried?*
3. *When Joshua’s men were beaten by the men of Ai, what did God tell Joshua to do?*
4. *Who was the man that had made God angry with Israel when they went out to battle the first time at Ai?*
- 5. (a) *What had Achan done that was wrong?*
(b) *How was Achan punished?*
(c) *Were the Israelites at last able to take Ai?*

Additional Questions Div. 7–8

6. *Why were the soldiers of Israel beaten at Ai the first time?*
- 7. *The men of Israel were beaten at Ai because someone had sinned. How was the guilty person found and punished?*

11. JOSHUA DIES

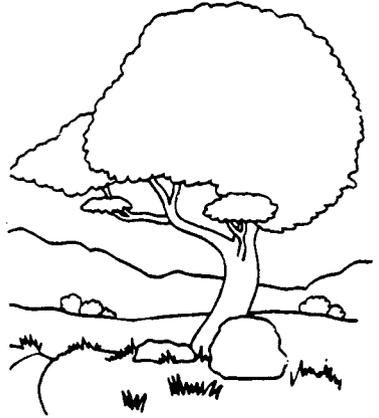
“As for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh”

Aim

To show that Joshua was faithful to God until he died but that the people soon forgot their promise to be obedient.

Synopsis

Joshua encouraged the children of Israel before he died. He told them that if they continued to serve God they would be blessed. If they turned from Him, then they would be cursed. They chose to follow God.



Joshua 24:1-31

JOSHUA HAD FAITHFULLY SERVED GOD

Joshua had led God's chosen people Israel in to the land of Canaan. He knew now that the time had come when he must die. He had obeyed God and with God's help had fought many battles against the wicked Canaanites. He had given to each of the twelve tribes a portion of the land for their inheritance.

JOSHUA'S STORY

Joshua gathered the twelve tribes of Israel to Shechem to speak with them for the last time. He wanted to make sure that, after he died, the people would continue to serve their God and obey His laws. Only then would God be pleased with them.

Joshua reminded the people of Israel of all the wonderful things God had done for them – from the time of Abraham

right up to their own day.

- * He told them how God had called **Abraham** to leave his father's house and to go into the land of Canaan.
- * He reminded them of **Isaac**, who had been given to Abraham, and of Isaac's two sons, Jacob and Esau.
- * He told how **Jacob** and his children went to live in Egypt.
- * He told how God had sent **Moses** and **Aaron** to lead them out, after sending dreadful **plagues** upon the Egyptians. So God had brought them out of Egypt. He had been with them and had done many mighty miracles.
- * He had opened up the **Red Sea** for them to cross.
- * He had turned back the waters of the **River Jordan** and knocked down the walls of **Jericho**.
- * Joshua told them of God's great goodness towards them in **giving them the land of Canaan**. They had vineyards and oliveyards which they themselves had not planted and they had plenty to eat.

JOSHUA WARNS THE PEOPLE

Because the God of Israel had done all these wonderful things for them, Joshua said that they must serve God truly and with all their heart. He warned Israel that, if they obeyed God, He would be good to them and bless them. But if they forgot Him and turned to other gods then He would bring evil upon them. They must forget all about the idols of wood and stone they had worshipped in Egypt. They must forget about the gods that the people around them worshipped. They must serve the only true God, the God of Israel. If there is anything in our lives which is more important to us than serving God, then that is like idolatry. If we think that fine clothes, cars, houses, fashions, money or success is more important than serving God, then we are no better than God's people in Joshua's time.

THE PEOPLE CHOOSE TO SERVE YAHWEH

Joshua said, *“You must choose for yourselves whom ye will serve, but as for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh”*. The people didn’t like to think that they would ever worship idols, so they made a promise to Joshua. They said, *“Yahweh our God will we serve and His voice will we obey”*. Joshua wrote down what the people had said in the book of the law. He took a large stone and put it under an oak tree. Whenever they saw the stone, the people would remember their promise to serve God and not idols.

After this the people returned to their own homes. Joshua died then. He was 110 years old. He was buried in the hills in his own inheritance. Joshua had been such a good leader – strong, courageous, brave and faithful – and while he was alive Israel had served God. For a while after he died they did remember their promise to obey, but as time went by, and things went well for the people, then they forgot about their God and began to serve idols.

LESSON FOR US

Joshua asked the people to remember God’s goodness and His laws. He hoped they would obey God, even when Joshua himself was not there to help them. Sometimes when you are left by yourself, do you always remember to do what you know is right? We must always try to be obedient even if we are on our own. God’s spirit is everywhere. He sees the things we do and knows our thoughts always, even when we think that nobody is around. Remember Lesson 10 and how Achan was found out.

Remember these points:–

- * When Joshua knew that he was soon to die he called all the people together to remind them that they must serve God.

- * Joshua reminded the people of all the good things God had done for them.
- * Joshua told the people to make up their minds about whom they would serve.
- * The people said, “We will serve Yahweh our God”.
- * Joshua put a big stone under an oak tree to remind the people of their promise.

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *Why did Joshua call the people together at Shechem before he died?*
2. *When Joshua spoke to the people for the last time what did he remind the people of?*
3. *What did the people say when Joshua spoke to them for the last time?*
4. *Why did Joshua put a big stone under an oak tree?*
5. *After Joshua died, did the people continue to obey God?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

- 6. *Joshua spoke to the people at the end of his life.*
 - (a) *What were the two choices Joshua put before the people of Israel?*
 - (b) *What did the people promise Joshua?*
 - (c) *What did Joshua do to remind them of their promise?*
- 7. *How does God know if we are disobedient?*

**You must choose for yourselves
whom ye will serve,
but as for me and my house,
we will serve Yahweh**

12. GIDEON – STRENGTHENED FOR THE BATTLE

"Yahweh is with thee, thou mighty man of valour"

Aim

To show that God punished the children of Israel when they forgot Him but when they turned to Him again He helped them.

Synopsis

This lesson brings us to the time of the Judges. After Joshua died Israel soon forgot their God, who had brought them into the Promised Land. They began to do just as they pleased. So God punished them, until they cried to Him to save them.



Judges 6

GOD PUNISHES THE PEOPLE FOR THEIR SIN

God had promised the children of Israel blessings of peace if they obeyed His voice. But they began to worship the gods of the Canaanites about them. One of these idols, made of wood and stone, was called Baal. So God brought upon them the punishment that He had said would come, if they disobeyed Him.

For seven years God let the Midianites come into the land. The people had to hide in caves and dens. When Israel planted crops their enemies came in and destroyed them. Hungry and frightened Israel called out to God for help. And when they cried God heard their cry. He chose a faithful man called Gideon to guide and help them. He would deliver them out of the hands of the Midianites. Gideon's name means

“great warrior”, and Gideon really was a great warrior who turned the people’s hearts back to the true God.

AN ANGEL APPEARS TO GIDEON

One day Gideon was secretly threshing wheat. He wanted to hide it from the Midianites. An angel of God suddenly appeared to him there. The angel said, *“God is with thee, thou might man of valour”*.

Gideon could not understand what the angel meant. He had thought that because Israel had been given into the hand of the Midianites, God had forsaken them. But the angel told him that he would have an easy victory over them and be able to slay them as though they were one man. Gideon still was not sure. He asked for a sign to show that God was really with him. He prepared a meal for the angel and set it upon a rock. The angel touched it with his staff. Straightaway fire came out of the rock and consumed the food. The angel then disappeared from Gideon’s sight.

But now Gideon was afraid. He had seen an angel face to face. He had seen his power and was frightened of what might happen to him. But God comforted him and said, *“Be at peace, do not be afraid, you shall not die”*. So then Gideon was ready to work for God and destroy the Midianites. But first he must get rid of the idols and show the people of Israel that Yahweh was the only true God.

GIDEON DESTROYS THE ALTAR OF BAAL

Not far from where Gideon lived there was a large altar to Baal. God told Gideon that he must destroy this altar. During the night, with ten of his trusted servants, Gideon pulled down this altar to Baal and destroyed it. Then he built an altar to Yahweh and offered a sacrifice upon it. In the morning all the men of the city saw what Gideon had done.

GOD GIVES GIDEON A GREAT SIGN

Then the enemies of Israel gathered themselves together to fight. They were a mighty army of soldiers. What a frightening sight they would have been when they came up and camped in the Valley of Jezreel. But God strengthened Gideon and gave him courage. He blew on his trumpet to gather men to him for the battle. Many men answered Gideon's call. Then Gideon asked God for another sign, to show that He would help him. God granted his request.

This was the sign – that night Gideon would lay a fleece of wool out on the ground. In the morning as he had asked, the fleece was wet with dew but the ground around was dry. Gideon wrung a bowlful of water from the fleece. The next night Gideon put out the fleece again. In the morning the fleece was dry but the ground round about was wet with dew. This really was an amazing miracle from God. Now Gideon knew for sure that God was with him and would deliver the Midianites into his hand.

LESSON FOR US

The children of Israel forgot all about God until they were in trouble. We must be like faithful Gideon and serve Him all the time. If we thank Him for His care when we are happy then He will look after us when troubles come.

Remember these points:–

- * God let the Midianites rule over the Israelites because Israel had started to worship idols.
- * When they turned back again to God then He appointed Gideon to lead them.
- * An angel showed himself to Gideon and gave him God's message.
- * After God had shown Gideon the signs of the wet and dry fleece, then Gideon knew that God was with him

and would help him.

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *In the days of the judges, why did the children of Israel cry out to God for help?*
2. *An angel appeared to Gideon very suddenly.*
 - (a) *What did the angel say to him?*
 - (b) *Tell what happened when Gideon prepared a meal for the angel.*
3. *What did Gideon have to do before God would help him?*
- 4. *Gideon was told to put out a wool fleece so that God could give him a sign that He would be with him. Tell what happened to the fleece on the first and second night.*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

5. *An angel spoke to Gideon when he was threshing wheat. How did the angel show Gideon that God was with him?*
6. *How did Gideon call men to him to fight the battle against the Midianites?*



13. GIDEON – THE MIDIANITES DEFEATED

“The sword of Yahweh and of Gideon”

Aim

To show that numbers do not mean anything when God is prepared to help.

Synopsis

The great army of the Midianites had come to make war on Israel. God had chosen Gideon to lead His people. By God’s power he saved them from their enemies.

Judges 7



ISRAEL FACES THEIR ENEMIES

Early in the morning Gideon and all the soldiers of Israel, 32,000 men, went to look at the huge army of the Midianites. When they saw so many thousands of their enemies across the valley, a lot of the Israelites were afraid. But God told Gideon a strange thing. *“The people that are with you”,* God said, *“are too many”*. If God helped the army of Israel win the battle, He knew that they would feel proud and boast of how clever and brave they had been. So He told Gideon to announce to all his men that whoever was afraid was to go back home. When the men heard that, twentytwo thousand went away – most of the army – and only ten thousand brave men were left.

GOD CHOOSES WHO WILL FIGHT

But still God said to Gideon, *“There are too many left even now”*. So God told Gideon how he was to choose which men were to go to the battle. He was to bring them down to

the edge of the water nearby and there God would test them. All the soldiers had a drink of the water and Gideon had to note very carefully how they drank. Most of them got down on their knees and put their face in the water and drank, but some cupped the water in their hands and drank that way. There were only 300 who drank water out of their hands. Even while they drank they could look carefully around them and watch the enemy. All the others, who got down on their knees to drink, would not be able to see what was happening for the moment. So God told Gideon, *“By the three hundred men that lapped the water out of their hands will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hand. Let all the others go to their own homes”*. God was going to save Israel by His own great power.

GIDEON ENCOURAGED BY A DREAM

That night Gideon learnt from God what he must do next. He took his servant, Phurah, and crept down to the camp of the Midianites. The first thing that they noticed was what a huge army the Midianites had and they remembered the small band of 300 men whom God had chosen to win the battle against them.

As the two men stood in the darkness they heard someone telling one of the soldiers about a strange dream. *“Behold, I dreamed a dream”*, he said, *“and lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian, and came to a tent, and struck it so that it fell, and turned it upside down, so that the tent lay flat”*. The other soldier said, *“This is nothing else than the sword of Gideon, a man of Israel. God has given Midian and all the army into his hand”*.

When Gideon heard all this, he praised God. Then he went straight back to Israel’s camp and said to the 300 men, *“Come on now, for God has given the army of Midian into our hands”*.

A STRANGE PLAN

Gideon divided his men into three groups. He gave each man a trumpet, an empty pitcher or jug, and a flaming torch. They hid the torches inside the pitchers and followed Gideon. *“Watch me”,* he said, *“And do exactly as I do. When I blow with a trumpet, then you blow with a trumpet too, all around the camp”.* They all crept up to the outside of the camp. A fresh lot of soldiers had just come on guard. So just at that moment Gideon blew his trumpet and broke his pitcher, and all his men did the same. Their torches flashed and they all shouted, *“The sword of Yahweh and of Gideon”.*

The Midianites were completely taken by surprise. They all panicked and ran about shouting. While Gideon’s men blew their trumpets, the Midianites were so terrified that they ended up fighting each other in the darkness. They thought a huge army was attacking them – but it was only 300 men. These men chased the Midianites for kilometres across the land and many other Israelites came out to help them.

LESSON FOR US

The Midianites were really fighting against God. Three hundred men could never win against so many thousands unless God was helping them. It was God’s plan and God had chosen the men to do it. So Israel learnt a very great lesson that day. They had to trust in God and not in themselves.

We often think we are strong enough or brave enough or clever enough to do great things. That is being proud. God can do all things and He will help us whenever we are in trouble if we trust in Him.

Remember these points:–

- * God told Gideon that all the men who were afraid had to go home.
- * Only those that took water up into their hand and drank

were chosen.

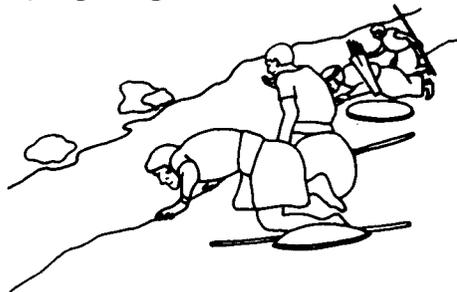
- * There were only 300 men left with Gideon to fight the Midianites.
- * God showed Gideon in a dream that the Midianites were very frightened.
- * The Midianites fled and fought each other in the dark after Gideon and his men attacked them.

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *The Midianites had a huge army, but God wanted Gideon to take only a few men with him to fight them. Which men did Gideon send home first?*
2. *How many men did Gideon take with him to fight the Midianites?*
- 3. *Tell how God chose the men to go with Gideon.*
- 4. *What was the dream the Midianite soldier had?*
5. *What did Gideon's men take with them for the battle?*
6. *What did Gideon tell his men to do?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

- 7. *"The people that are with you are too many", God told Gideon.*
 - (a) *Why did God say that?*
 - (b) *How did Gideon get the army from being 32,000 men down to 300 men?*
 - (c) *Tell the story of how Gideon and his 300 special soldiers fought against the Midianite army.*



14. SAMSON

“He shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines”

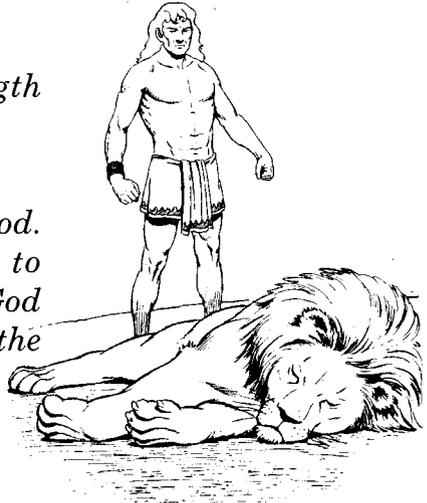
Aim

To show that Samson’s strength came from God.

Synopsis

The children of Israel forgot God. So God sent the Philistines to punish them. After 40 years God chose Samson to save them from the wicked Philistines.

Judges 13:1-5, 24; 16



THE PROMISED SON

In Israel lived a faithful man and his wife, who pleased God. The man was called Manoah and he and his wife had no children. But one day, the angel of God appeared to Manoah’s wife with the wonderful news that God would give them a son. This child was to be very special because he was to do God’s work and save Israel from their enemies. So the mother had to take special care. *“Drink not wine nor strong drink”,* the angel told her, *“And don’t eat any unclean thing”*. When the child was born he was to be called a Nazarite; one who promises God that he would always serve Him. To show that he meant to keep his promise, he was never to cut his hair.

When the time came and the child was born, his name was called Samson. As he grew up, God blessed him.

SAMSON’S AMAZING STRENGTH

Samson was very strong. He did some amazing deeds because of the great strength that God gave him. He became

the hero of Israel but the Philistines hated him. Many times they tried to trap him but he always escaped. Once they shut him in a city at night, but he carried away the gates with the locks and bars on his shoulders and escaped.

SAMSON LOVES DELILAH

Now Samson loved a woman called Delilah. But Samson did not know that the Philistines had made a plan with Delilah. They wanted her to find out why Samson was so strong. What could they do to hurt him? He was so strong that they could never find out. They promised to give her eleven hundred pieces of silver money if she helped them.

So when Samson came to her Delilah asked him, *“Please tell me wherein your great strength lies and how you could be bound so that you would become weak”*.

“If they bind me with seven new cords, then I shall be weak and be like any other man”, said Samson.

Then Delilah went and told the Philistines and they hid themselves in her room, ready to capture him when she had tied him up with new cords. Suddenly Delilah said, *“The Philistines are upon you Samson”*. But he was easily able to snap the cords.

So Delilah asked Samson again, *“Please tell me how you can be bound”*.

“If they tie me tight with new ropes that have not been used, I shall become weak and be like any other man”.

Once again the Philistines lay in wait until Delilah said, *“The Philistines are upon you Samson”*. But Samson was easily able to break the new ropes.

Delilah said to Samson, *“You have only laughed at me and told me lies. Please tell me how you can be bound”*.

“If you weave the seven locks of my hair together, then shall I become weak and be like any other man”. But this

time too, Samson escaped from the Philistines and they could not bind him.

So Delilah said to Samson, *“How can you say that you love me, when you have laughed at me these three times? Now please tell me wherein your great strength lies”*. She kept on pestering him until at last he told her the truth.

“My hair has never been cut since I was born, because I have been a Nazarite to God. If my hair is cut, my strength will go from me”. Now Delilah could tell that he really meant it this time. So when Samson fell asleep she called for a Philistine man to shave off his long hair. Straightaway he became as weak as any other man. When Delilah said, *“The Philistines are upon you Samson”*, he was easily tied up and taken to prison. They also put out his eyes, and set him to work grinding corn in the prison.

SAMSON IS STRONG AGAIN

Poor Samson was blind and weak because he had disobeyed God’s word. But while he was in prison his hair began to grow again. One day he was brought out to be shown to thousands of Philistines. They wanted to have a great feast to thank Dagon their god for delivering Samson to them. He was led in by a little boy and when he appeared they all laughed and made fun of Samson. Now while he had been in prison Samson had no doubt thought a lot about the God of Israel who had given him his great strength. So now he prayed, *“Remember me, O God, and strengthen me just this once”*. God heard his prayer for help. Samson asked the boy who had led him into the hall to let him touch the pillars of the great building where all the important Philistines were gathered. Then Samson took hold of those two pillars. As he strained on the pillars, the whole building collapsed. Thousands of Philistines were killed and Samson died too.

He killed more Philistines at his death, than he had killed in his lifetime.

LESSON FOR US

Samson was strong when he obeyed God. He became weak when he disobeyed. We must not listen to people who try to make us do something which God will not be pleased with. This was what happened to Samson – he listened to the wicked Delilah for too long. God will help and strengthen us if we obey Him.

Remember these points:-

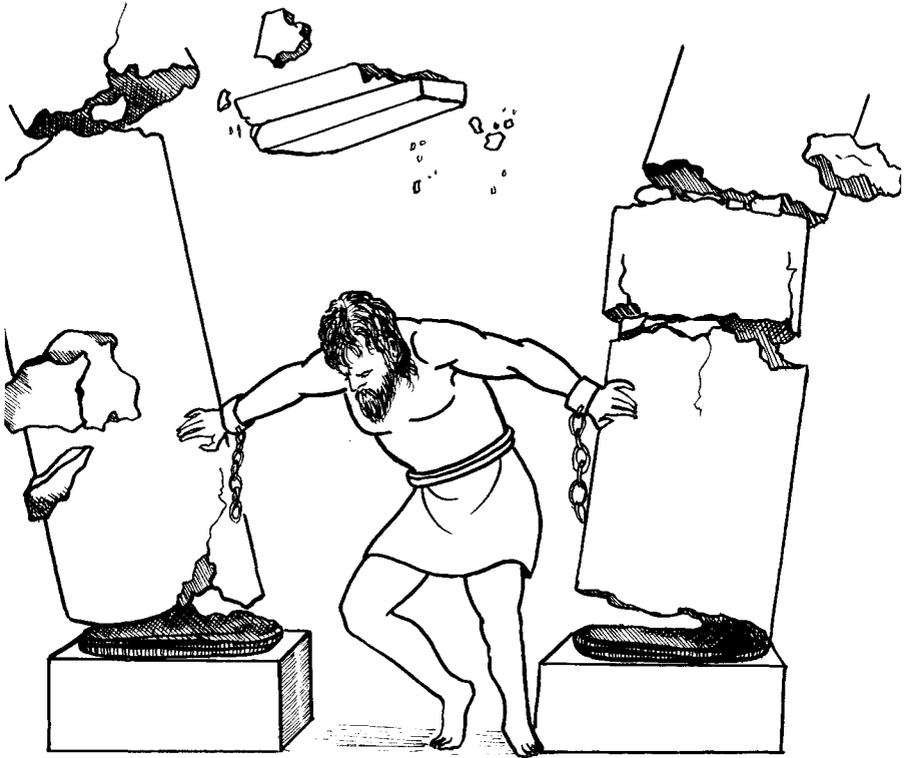
- * Samson was a Nazarite and was not allowed to drink strong wine or to cut his hair.
- * God gave Samson his great strength.
- * Delilah betrayed him to the Philistines.
- * Samson remembered God and prayed to Him for strength when he pulled down the pillars of the Philistines' house.

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *What special care did Samson's mother take before he was born?*
2. *What special work did God have in mind for Samson?*
3. *What did Delilah want Samson to tell her?*
4. *What were the Philistines going to give Delilah if she found out why Samson was so strong?*
- 5. (a) *What did Samson say would happen if his hair was cut?*
(b) *Tell what happened to Samson when Delilah found out why he was strong.*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

- 6. *Samson was taken out of the prison one day to be shown to the Philistines at their feast. Tell the story of how God helped Samson to punish the Philistines.*
- 7. *What lesson do we learn from the story of Samson?*



15. RUTH

“Thy people shall be my people and thy God my God”

Aim

To show that God will bless all those who choose to follow Him even though they might not be Israelites.

Synopsis

A young woman of Moab, named Ruth, learned about the God of Israel from Israelites who came to her land. She became one of the most faithful women of the whole family of Israel.



Ruth 1; 2:1-12; 4:13-22; Deut. 24:19

RUTH LEAVES MOAB

Elimelech and his wife Naomi left their home town of Bethlehem in the land of Israel because of a famine. They took their two sons and went to the land of Moab. Here their sons married two young women named Orpah and Ruth. Later Elimelech died and his sons died as well. So his wife Naomi, and her two daughters-in-law were sadly left as widows. Naomi felt very unhappy and wanted to go back to her own land. When she heard the famine was ended, she decided to return. Orpah and Ruth set off with her. But on the way Naomi thought that it was better for her daughters-in-law to stay in their own land, in their mother's house, for she had no more sons for them to marry. Orpah and Ruth were very sad. They had learned to love Naomi. They wept at the thought of leaving her. But in the end Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and turned to go home to her own people. So Naomi said to Ruth, *“See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her own people*

and to her own gods. You go back with her". But Ruth would not. She said to Naomi: "Please don't ask me to leave you. For where you go, I will go; where you stay, I will stay; your people will be my people and your God will be my God". When Naomi saw that she really meant it in her heart, she said no more and they both went on to Israel. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

GOD CARES FOR RUTH

Ruth lived with Naomi as she had promised. They were very poor, but Ruth worked hard to look after Naomi. God's law provided for poor people. They could gather enough to eat from those who had plenty. God had said, *"When you are reaping a field, if you forget some, don't go back for it. Leave it there for the poor people, and those without fathers and for widows"*. So Ruth went out to gather corn behind the reapers in the fields. This was called "gleaning".

Now it happened that God directed her to the field of a very rich man named Boaz. He was a good, kind man who loved God. Ruth found out too, that he was related to Naomi's husband who had died. He was a kinsman, that is, a close relation. So she was very glad that God had guided her to this field.

When Boaz came from Bethlehem to the field, he asked his servants who the stranger was that was gathering corn. They said that her name was Ruth and she had come back with Naomi from the land of Moab. Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Don't go to glean in any other field, but keep close to my maidens".

Ruth was very grateful for his kindness and said, *"Why have I found favour in your eyes? Why have you taken notice of me, seeing I am a stranger?"* Boaz told her that he had heard from his servants of the love she had shown to Naomi;

that she had left her father and mother; she had left her own land where she was born and come to the land of Israel. “*God reward you*”, he said, “*For all that you have done, because you have learned to trust in Him*”. He told his reapers to drop some handfuls on purpose so that Ruth would have plenty to gather.

BOAZ MARRIES RUTH

Boaz grew to love Ruth and he married her. God blessed them with a baby boy, whom they called Obed. Not only were Ruth and Boaz very happy, but Naomi was happy again too, and she helped to care for her little grandson. So God blessed all those who put their trust in Him. Obed later became the father of Jesse, who was king David’s father. Many hundreds of years later another baby was born into that family – his name was Jesus.

God had called Ruth out of Moab and blessed her because she was faithful and kind.

LESSON FOR US

What a lovely person Ruth was. We can learn from her to be kind and thoughtful, thinking of how to please others.

We are Gentiles, just as Ruth was, but we can join the family of God and become Israelites. This is what happens when we are baptised into the Lord Jesus Christ. Then the God of Israel will bless us as He blessed Ruth.

Remember these points:-

- * Ruth chose to leave her people in Moab and return with Naomi to Israel.
- * She wanted to serve the God of Israel.
- * She took care of Naomi.
- * God blessed Ruth and made Naomi very happy.

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *What were the names of Naomi's daughters-in-law?*
2. *What happened to Naomi's husband and sons?*
- 3. *Ruth did not want to leave Naomi. What did Ruth say to her?*
4. *Who was Boaz?*
5. *What did Ruth do in the fields of Boaz?*
6. *What was the name of the baby born to Ruth and Boaz?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

7. *How could poor people get food in Israel?*
- 8. *Tell the story of how God guided Naomi and Ruth when they returned to Bethlehem with no money and no food.*
9. *How can we grow up to be like Ruth?*



16. A BABY FOR HANNAH

“As long as he liveth he shall be lent to Yahweh”

Aim

To show that God answers prayer.

Synopsis

Hannah was very unhappy. She prayed to God to help her and her prayer was answered.

I Samuel 1; 2:1-21



HANNAH GOES TO WORSHIP

Hannah was a lovely lady. She loved God and tried to please Him all the time. Her husband's name was Elkanah. He loved Hannah very much. You would think that Hannah must be very happy. But something made her quite sad. Hannah had no children. This made her so unhappy that she often cried.

Every year Elkanah and Hannah went to worship at the city of Shiloh. That was the place where they used to offer sacrifices to God in those days. One year when they went, Hannah felt very unhappy indeed. Elkanah said to her, *“Hannah, why do you weep? Am I not better to you than ten sons?”* So Hannah tried to be happy to please Elkanah her husband.

HANNAH'S PRAYER TO GOD

Hannah knew that everything she had was given by God. So she knew too, that if there was anything she wanted very much, she could ask God for it. If God thought it was good, He would answer her prayers and give her what she wanted. So she went to the Tabernacle to pray to God. Eli, the priest, was sitting beside the door. He watched Hannah as she was

praying. She prayed for a long time. Her lips moved, but no words could be heard, for she prayed to God in her heart. Eli came and spoke to Hannah. She explained to him how unhappy she was. Eli could see that Hannah loved God. He told her to go in peace and he said, "*The God of Israel answer your prayer that you have asked of Him*". Hannah left the Tabernacle feeling much happier. She was sure that God had listened to her and would answer her prayer.

In her prayer Hannah had asked God to give her a baby boy. She made a promise to God. If He would give her this little baby boy, she would bring him up to love God and serve Him all his life. Hannah did not pray for a baby just to please herself. She wanted to please God. So she promised to give her son back to God.

HANNAH'S PRAYER ANSWERED

The next morning Hannah and Elkanah got up early. They went to worship once more. Then they set off for home. God did answer Hannah's prayer, for a baby boy was born to her and Elkanah. She called the boy Samuel, which means 'Asked of God', because she said, "*I have asked him of God*". Hannah thanked God. She was very happy that God had answered her prayer.

SAMUEL SERVES GOD

While Samuel was still a small baby, Hannah cared for him at home. But when he was old enough, she took him to Eli the priest. "*I am the woman that stood by you here praying*", she said, "*For this child I prayed and God has given me what I asked for. So I have lent him to God. As long as he lives he shall be lent to God*". So she left little Samuel there with Eli, as she had promised. Hannah prayed a very special prayer of thanksgiving and rejoicing, praising God for His goodness, His mighty power and His wisdom. Samuel helped Eli to do

the work in the Tabernacle. Eli cared for Samuel and loved him dearly. Every year, when they came to worship, Hannah brought a little coat for Samuel. Because Hannah loved God and kept her promise, God blessed her with five more children.

LESSON FOR US

Hannah did not forget to thank God for the baby boy He gave her. We should thank God for all the good gifts He gives us. If we love God, He will bless us too and make us happy.

Remember these points:-

- * Hannah was unhappy and prayed to God knowing that He would help her.
- * She trusted in God and He answered her prayer, giving her a baby boy.
- * Hannah kept her promise to God to give her son back to Him.
- * God made Hannah even happier by giving her more children.

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *Why was Hannah unhappy?*
- 2. *Hannah prayed to God because she was unhappy.*
 - (a) *What did she ask for?*
 - (b) *What did she promise to do if God granted her request?*
 - (c) *Tell how God answered her prayer.*
3. *What does the name Samuel mean?*
4. *When Samuel was old enough Hannah took him to Eli. What did she bring him each year?*
5. *Besides Samuel, how else were Elkanah and Hannah blessed?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

- 6. *Tell the story of sad Hannah going to pray and how God made her happy.*
- 7. *When we think of all the good things God gives us, what must we remember to do?*



17. SAMUEL

“Speak, for Thy servant heareth”

Aim

To show that God answers those who will listen to Him and will punish those who only make a pretence like Eli’s sons.

Synopsis

As Samuel grew up, he served God and loved Him. He lived happily with Eli the priest. God spoke to Samuel while he was just a child.



I Samuel 2:34-36; 3

ELI’S WICKED SONS

Eli was God’s high priest in Israel. He had two sons. They were wicked men. They did not love God, nor serve Him as they were commanded. God was angry with Eli’s sons – but he was very pleased with Samuel, as he tried so hard to serve Him well. Samuel lived with Eli. He loved the old man and helped him each day in the things that needed to be done in the Tabernacle. The people of Israel came to worship there and to offer sacrifices.

GOD CALLS TO SAMUEL

Now one night, just before the lamp of God, that was in the Tabernacle, had gone out, Samuel lay down to sleep. He heard his name called, “*Samuel*”. He answered, “*Here am I*”, and ran to Eli. But Eli said, “*I did not call you. Go and lie down again*”. So Samuel went back to his bed. But once again he heard his name called, “*Samuel*”. He went to Eli again and said, “*Here am I. I’m sure you called me*”. But the

old man said, *“No my son. I did not call you. Go and lie down again”*. Then, the third time he heard his name called, *“Samuel”*. So he went to Eli the third time and said, *“Here I am, for I did hear you calling”*. By now Eli was beginning to realise what was happening. It was God who was calling the boy. So he told Samuel what to do. *“Go back to bed”*, he said, *“And if you hear God call again, say, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth”*. And that is just what happened.

Then Samuel listened very carefully to what God had to say to him. It was an important message for Samuel and for all Israel. God said He was very angry with Eli’s wicked sons. He would not allow them to be priests in the Tabernacle when Eli died. Eli’s family would be punished.

SAMUEL TELLS ELI GOD’S MESSAGE

In the morning Samuel opened the doors of the Tabernacle as usual. He was afraid to tell Eli what God had said, for he was very fond of the old man. But Eli wanted to know. *“Hide nothing from me”*, he said. Sadly, Samuel told him all the words of God. And Eli answered, *“Let God do what seems good to Him”*. His sons were wicked men and he knew it was right for God to punish them.

SAMUEL – A GREAT MAN IN ISRAEL

As Samuel grew up, he learnt more about the things God wanted him to do. God was with Samuel. All the people knew that God loved faithful Samuel. He was to be a great leader in Israel. Everyone listened to his wise words and learned to obey God, just as Samuel did.

LESSON FOR US

We cannot hear God speak to us as He did to Samuel. But we can listen to what God says, by reading the Bible. If you listen carefully to Bible stories, you will grow up to love

God. And when we love God we are happy to obey Him, just like Samuel.

Remember these points:-

- * Eli's sons were wicked and did not love or obey God.
- * God called to Samuel and told him that the wickedness of Eli's sons would be punished.
- * Samuel told Eli what God had said.
- * Samuel always listened to God even after he had grown to be an old man.
- * Because Samuel listened to God and obeyed His voice then Samuel was able to tell the people what was the right thing to do.

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *Did Eli's sons love and obey God?*
2. *Samuel heard someone calling him in the night.*
 - (a) *At first who did he think it was?*
 - (b) *Who was it really?*
 - (c) *What did Eli tell him to say the next time he heard the voice calling to him?*
- 3. *What was the important message that God told Samuel in the night?*
4. *Did Samuel tell Eli all the things that God had spoken to him?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

- 5. *It was young Samuel's work to help Eli in the Tabernacle. Tell the story of what happened one night after Samuel had lain down to sleep.*
6. *When Samuel told Eli what God had said to him in the night what did Eli say then?*
7. *How can we listen to what God has said?*

18. A KING FOR ISRAEL

“Make us a King to judge us”

Aim

To show that God gave the people the kind of King they wanted.

Synopsis

Samuel was a faithful prophet. He guided Israel for many years. When he grew old the people of Israel wanted a king to rule them.

I Samuel 8; 9; 10:1, 2, 24



THE PEOPLE ASK FOR A KING

When Samuel was old, he made his sons judges over Israel. But his sons did not serve God faithfully, as Samuel had. The people of Israel were no longer happy and content. They looked about them and decided that they wanted to be like the other nations about them. They wanted a king. They forgot that they already had a king, that is God, who was all-powerful, and had led them out of Egypt long ago. He had performed many miracles to help them. But they wanted a king they could see. The older men got together and went to see Samuel. He lived in Ramah. They said, *“You are getting old. Your sons do not walk in your ways. Choose a king for us to rule over us, like all the nations”*.

SAMUEL PRAYS AND GOD ANSWERS

Samuel was not at all pleased when he heard this. It worried him a lot. He did what we sometimes forget to do. He took this problem to God in prayer, and God answered him. God told Samuel to listen to what the people had to say. *“Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto*

thee. They have not rejected thee”, God told the old man, “But they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them”. He told Samuel to do as the people had asked. But first he must tell them what it would be like having a king to reign over them. A king would want the best of everything for himself. He would take their sons to be horsemen and soldiers in his army. He would take their daughters to be cooks or bakers. Part of everything that they owned would have to be given to the king. They would soon grow tired of this and complain about the king. When this happened it would be no use complaining to God then, because He would not listen. But the people took no notice of Samuel’s warnings. They kept on saying that they wanted a king like everyone else, who would go out in front of them to battle. At last God told Samuel to agree.

SAUL LOOKS FOR THE ASSES AND MEETS SAMUEL

Meanwhile, a man called Kish of the tribe of Benjamin, had lost his asses. He sent his son Saul to look for them. Now Saul was a handsome young man and so tall that he stood head and shoulders over the rest of the people. He was just the sort of person whom the people would like for their king.

Saul and his servant searched and searched without finding the asses. *“Let us go back”, said Saul, “Or my father will stop worrying about the asses and start worrying about us”. The servant suggested, “There is a man of God in this city. Perhaps he will tell us where to go”. So they both went into the city looking for the prophet or seer, as he was sometimes called.*

Now that day was a feast day. Samuel was going up to bless the sacrifice and met Saul on the way. God had told Samuel the day before, *“Tomorrow about this time, I will send a man out of the land of Benjamin. You shall anoint him to be captain over My people Israel, that he may save My people out of the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked upon My people because their cry is come unto Me”. So when Samuel saw*

Saul coming towards him, God said to him, *“This is the man I spoke to you about; he shall reign over My people”*.

SAMUEL INVITES SAUL TO THE FEAST

Samuel asked Saul to come with him to the Feast that day. A special place had been kept for him there. *“As for your asses which were lost three days ago”*, Samuel said, *“Don’t worry about them. They have been found”*. Samuel wanted to speak to him of more important things. Saul was to be the king of Israel. But Saul could not understand why he had been chosen. His tribe of Benjamin was the smallest of the tribes and his family one of the least important. Samuel took no notice of this, but took him to the Feast. He was given the best seat among the important people there. A special portion of meat was set aside for him. So Saul ate the sacrifice, showing he would accept the work of leading Israel. That night he slept at Samuel’s house.

SAUL IS ANOINTED KING

The next morning Saul got up early to go home. Samuel walked a little way with him and said, *“Tell your servant to go on ahead”*. Then Samuel took oil and poured it on Saul’s head and kissed him. *“God has anointed you to be ruler over His people”*, Samuel told him.

Samuel gathered all the people of Israel together and brought Saul before them. *“Do you see the man whom God has chosen?”* said Samuel. *“There is none like him among all the people”*. When they saw him they all shouted, *“Long live the king”*.

LESSON FOR US

Israel did not have enough faith to see into the future. They thought that when Samuel died they would be without a wise leader. They forgot that it was God who really guided

and looked after them through Samuel. They tried to tell God what to do. We must learn to be patient and wait for God's will to be done, not wanting the things that other people have, but trusting in Him and obeying His commandments.

Remember these points:-

- * The people of Israel asked Samuel to make them a king.
- * God told Samuel that He would give them a king.
- * Saul came to Samuel when he was looking for his father's asses.
- * Samuel anointed Saul to be king.
- * Saul pleased the people because he looked like a king and was what the people wanted.

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *Were the sons of Samuel good men?*
2. *Why did the people of Israel want a king?*
3. *Israel already had a king - who was their king?*
4. *What did Samuel do when the older men asked for a king?*
5. *What was the name of the man who was looking for his father's asses?*
6. *What did Saul, the man the people chose to be king, look like?*
7. *Samuel and Saul went together to the feast. Who was given the best seat there and best meal?*
8. *What did Samuel do to Saul as he was leaving the next day after the feast?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

9. *What did God say to Samuel when Israel asked for a king?*

19. GOD REJECTS SAUL

“To obey is better than sacrifice”

Aim

To show that God is only pleased with the things we do when they come from the heart and are what He has commanded.

Synopsis

King Saul failed to obey God’s commandments. He thought his own ideas were better than God’s. So God told him He would find a new king, who would serve Him faithfully.



I Samuel 15

GOD’S COMMAND TO SAUL

King Saul led the people of Israel in many battles. He defeated Israel’s enemies on every side and made the kingdom strong.

One day Samuel came to King Saul with a message from God. *“Now go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have and spare them not, but kill both men and women, children and babies and every animal”*. You might think that this sounds a very cruel thing to expect the Israelites to do, but God had a very good reason. Long ago – about 400 years before – when the children of Israel were being led across the wilderness, after coming out of Egypt, the Amalekites had attacked them. There had been a big battle, which Israel won in the end, with God’s help. The Amalekites were a very wicked nation and hated Israel. It was then that God told

Moses that the Amalekites must be completely destroyed. Now the time had come and Saul gathered his army together to fight. Because God was with them they had a great victory.

SAUL'S DISOBEDIENCE

But the king made a bad mistake. He did not do exactly what God had told him. Instead of killing every living thing, as God had commanded, Saul let his soldiers bring back to Israel the best of the sheep and cattle. He also kept alive Agag, the wicked king of the Amalekites. Saul had disobeyed God. He had decided to do things his own way. The animals, he decided, would be offered to God as sacrifices of thanksgiving. But that was not what God wanted. God spoke to Samuel saying, *"I am sorry that I have made Saul king; for he has turned from following Me, and has not done My commandments"*. When the old prophet heard this he was very angry with Saul. He prayed to God all night. In the morning Samuel was told that king Saul was on his way to Gilgal.

GOD REJECTS SAUL FROM BEING KING

With a heavy heart Samuel set out to meet him. But Saul was feeling very pleased with himself. He proudly boasted to Samuel that he had done all that God had told him. *"What then is the meaning of this bleating of sheep and lowing of cattle that I can hear?"* asked Samuel angrily. Now Saul did something we often do, which is not right. He blamed someone else. He said, *"The people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen to sacrifice unto God, and the rest we destroyed"*. But Samuel did not want to hear excuses. He said, *"Stop, I will tell you what God has said to me"*. He reminded Saul that, when he was humble, God had raised him to be king. Now that he was the king, God had told him

quite plainly: *“Go and completely destroy the wicked Amalekites”*. Why, then, had he disobeyed?

Saul still could not see that he had done wrong. Samuel had to explain, *“Is the Lord more pleased with burnt offerings and sacrifices than with people obeying His voice? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams”*. Being stubborn and doing just what we want is as bad in God’s sight as worshipping idols. *“Because you have rejected the Word of God, He has rejected you from being king”*, Samuel told Saul. God wants us to worship Him in the way He has set down in His Book, the Bible. Nothing else is good enough.

Saul could see now that he had sinned, but he still blamed the people. Saul asked Samuel to forgive him. But Samuel said again, *“You have rejected the Word of God and God has rejected you from being king over Israel”*. As Samuel turned to go, Saul caught hold of his long cloak to try and make him stay, but it tore in his hands. Samuel said, *“So God has torn the kingdom of Israel from you and is giving it to someone better than you”*. Still Saul asked again, *“Honour me now before all the people, and turn again with me that I may worship thy God”*. Samuel at last agreed. But first he had to teach the king and his people a lesson from God. Agag, the king of the Amalekites, was still there among them. Samuel asked for the king to be brought before him. Agag came fearfully and pleaded for his life. But God’s will must be done. Samuel took up a sword and killed that wicked man, as king Saul should have done in the first place. Now Samuel had finished God’s work and went home to Ramah. Saul had no one to help him now. Samuel was very sad for Saul, because he had grown to like him. But Samuel did not come to see him any more.

LESSON FOR US

God wants us to worship Him just as He has written in the Bible. His way is the best way. We must try to please Him and not worry what people think of us.

Saul did not think it mattered if he did things his own way. But God wants us to obey His words exactly. If we want to be in God's kingdom when Jesus is King, we must do better than Saul and obey God's Word.

Remember these points:-

- * God told Saul to destroy all the Amalekites and all that they owned.
- * Saul disobeyed God and saved the king of the Amalekites as well as the cattle and sheep.
- * Samuel was very angry and told Saul that God would not allow him to remain as king over Israel because of what he had done.
- * Samuel killed Agag the king of the Amalekites.

Questions 5 to 8 years

- 1. (a) *What did God tell king Saul to do to their wicked enemies the Amalekites?*
(b) *Saul did not really do what God said. What did he do wrong?*
- 2. *Who came to meet Saul when he returned from the battle?*
- 3. *Was God pleased with what Saul had done?*
- 4. *How was Saul punished for disobeying God?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

- 5. *Saul was pleased with himself as he returned from the battle with the Amalekites. Tell the story of how Samuel went to meet Saul and what they said to each other.*
- 6. *Why did God reject Saul from being king?*

20. GOD CHOOSES DAVID

*“Man looketh on the outward appearance,
but God looketh on the heart”*

Aim

To show that God looks at our hearts first and what is on the outside afterwards.

Synopsis

God chose David to be king of Israel in the place of Saul. He wanted a king who would love and obey Him. David was “a man after God’s own heart”.



I Samuel 16:1-13

A NEW KING NEEDED

God had rejected Saul from being king over Israel. Saul had tried to please the people instead of pleasing God. A new king must be chosen who would honour and obey God. God said to Samuel the prophet, *“How long will you be sad about Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and go. I will send you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen a king from among his sons”*. Jesse was a good man. He had eight sons and God had seen among them one who would be the best king for Israel.

SAMUEL GOES TO BETHLEHEM

When Samuel reached Bethlehem, the elders of the city came out to him trembling. They wanted to know if he had come in peace. God often sent His prophets to the people when they had done wrong. But Samuel told them that he had come to sacrifice unto God. He asked the elders to make

themselves ready and come to the sacrifice. Samuel called Jesse and his sons to the sacrifice too.

Samuel did not know which of Jesse's sons was to be chosen. Eliab, the eldest son was tall and good-looking. Samuel thought that he looked just the sort of man to be king. But God said, "*Don't take any notice of how tall or handsome he is, because I have not chosen this son*". God does not see as man sees. Man only looks on the outside. God looks on a man's heart.

One by one the seven sons of Jesse passed before Samuel. But God had not chosen any of them. Samuel was very puzzled. He asked Jesse if he had any other sons. Jesse told him that the youngest son, David, was out minding the sheep. Samuel said, "*Send and fetch him, for we will not sit down to the feast until he comes*".

DAVID IS CHOSEN AND ANOINTED

So they sent for David and brought him in before the old prophet. Samuel could see that he was a good-looking, healthy young lad. Then God said to Samuel, "*Arise, anoint him, for this is he*". Samuel took the horn of oil and poured it upon David's head, in front of all his brothers.

The spirit of God came upon David from that day on to show that God had chosen him.

God had looked on David's heart. He could see in David, a young man who would grow up to be faithful and obedient in all his ways. "*For the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart*".

David did not become king of Israel straight away. But this anointing was the beginning of God's plan for him to become a great and faithful ruler.

David had looked after his father's sheep. Now God was preparing him to look after the people of Israel – God's sheep.

LESSON FOR US

People look on the outside of us, but God knows our hearts and minds. He knows how we really feel and what we think. He sees inside our hearts and minds.

Remember these points:-

- * Jesse had eight sons and Samuel did not know which one God had chosen.
- * God showed Samuel that the king He would choose would be “a man after God’s own heart”.
- * David was anointed but did not become king straight away.
- * God was with David preparing him to be the king of Israel.
- * David learnt how to please God as he looked after his father’s sheep.
- * When David became king he then knew how to look after God’s sheep (the children of Israel).

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *Why did Samuel have to fill his horn with oil and go to Bethlehem?*
- 2 (a) *Jesse had eight sons, tell how Samuel found out which one God had chosen to be the new king?*
(b) *Where was the youngest son of Jesse?*
(c) *When David stood before Samuel what did God tell him?*
(d) *What did Samuel do to him in front of all his brothers?*
3. *Did David become king straight away after being anointed?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

- 4. *God told Samuel to fill his horn with oil and go to Jesse to Bethlehem. Go on and tell the story.*
- 5. *Why was David the one who was chosen to be king?*
- 6. *Finish the quotation – “For the LORD seeth not as man seeth ...”*



21. DAVID AND GOLIATH

“Yahweh saveth not with sword and spear”

Aim

To show that might and strength cannot defeat God.

Synopsis

The men of Israel were all frightened of the giant Goliath. God helped David kill Goliath because David trusted in God.

I Samuel 17



GOLIATH DEFIES ISRAEL

The Philistines had marched into the land of Israel. King Saul and his men came out to fight against them. The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side and the army of Israel stood on a mountain on the other side. A valley was between them.

In the camp of the Philistines was a giant man called Goliath. He was nearly twice as tall as anyone in Israel. He was dressed in very heavy armour made of brass, and he carried a huge spear. A soldier went in front of him with a large shield to protect him.

He came out and called to the Israelites to find a man to fight him. *“Send a man to fight with me”,* he shouted, *“If he kills me, then we will be your servants. If I kill him, then you will be our servants and serve us”.* When Saul and all Israel heard him they were very frightened – he was very big. They thought they could never win against a giant like that. Every morning and evening for forty days he came near the camp of Israel, shouting out for a man to come and fight with him.

DAVID HEARS GOLIATH

Jesse's three eldest sons were in the army of Saul. David, the youngest son, was minding the sheep. One day Jesse told David to go to his brothers and see how they were. He took some loaves of bread for them and some cheese for their captian. He got up early in the morning and went into the army. The battle was ready. The Philistines and the Israelites were facing each other, army against army. David found his brothers and was speaking with them, when Goliath came and shouted the same challenge again. David asked those around him, "*Who is this Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God. What will be done to the man who will kill him?*" He was told that the king would give great riches to that man and would give him his daughter in marriage.

When Saul heard what David had said he sent for him. David told him not to fear, for he would fight Goliath. Saul thought that he was much too young. But David told him that he was a shepherd and had killed a lion and a bear, while minding the sheep. "*God who rescued me from the lion and the bear will save me from this Philistine*", he said. David fully believed that God would help him.

Then Saul said unto David, "*Go, and God be with you*". Saul put his own armour on David. But David found it heavy and awkward for he was not used to it. So he took it off. Instead, he took his own staff and chose five smooth stones out of the brook to put in his bag. Taking his sling in his other hand, he went to meet Goliath.

DAVID KILLS GOLIATH

When Goliath saw David coming towards him, he laughed and said to him, "*Am I a dog, that you come to fight me with sticks?*" And he cursed David by his gods.

David answered him, *“You come to me with a sword and a spear and a shield, but I come to you in the name of the God of Israel, whose armies you have defied. This day will God deliver you into my hand and I will kill you. I will cut off your head and give your dead body and the bodies of the Philistines to the birds and the animals. All the earth will know that there is a God in Israel. And everyone here will know that God does not save with sword and spear. For the battle is God’s and He will give you into our hands”*.

Goliath came towards David. But David was not frightened. He ran to meet him. He put his hand in his bag and took a stone. He put it in his sling and slung that stone straight into Goliath’s forehead. Goliath fell on his face to the ground. Then David ran to that wicked Philistine, took the giant’s own sword, and cut off his head. When the Philistines saw that Goliath, their champion, was dead, they ran for their lives. The army of Israel shouted and chased them and killed many.

DAVID IS BROUGHT BACK TO SAUL

After the battle, Saul wanted to know more about the young man David. David came before the king with Goliath’s head in his hand. *“Whose son are you, young man?”* Saul said. David answered, *“I am the son of your servant Jesse from Bethlehem”*.

From that day Saul kept David with him and David became a close friend of Saul’s son, Jonathan.

LESSON FOR US

David was only young, but he knew and trusted God so much, that he showed more faith and courage than older people in Israel. This was why God helped him.

God will look after us whenever we need His help, if we try to please Him as David always did. He is our Father in

Heaven and He loves us, just as David loved his sheep and took great care of them.

Remember these points:-

- * When David heard Goliath shouting he knew that the giant man was defying the God of Israel.
- * David told Saul that God would help him to destroy the Philistine.
- * David told Goliath that he would fight him in the name of God.
- * A great victory was won when David slew the giant.

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *What army did Goliath belong to?*
2. *What did Goliath say to the men of Israel?*
3. *Why did David come down to the army of Israel?*
- 4. (a) *What did David take with him to fight Goliath?*
(b) *Tell how David killed Goliath.*
(c) *Why did God help David kill Goliath?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

- 5. *Tell the story of how David fought and killed Goliath. Start from when Jesse, his father, sent him to see how his brothers were getting on in Saul's army.*
- 6. *What did David say to Goliath before he killed him?*



22. DAVID AND JONATHAN

“Jonathan loved David as his own soul”

Aim

To show the meaning of true friendship and unselfish love.

Synopsis

David and Jonathan were such good friends, because they both loved God. They trusted in Him and understood His purpose.

I Samuel 18:1-4; 20



JONATHAN AND DAVID MEET

King Saul had a son whose name was Jonathan. He was a brave man who loved God and tried to do what was right in God’s sight.

After Goliath had been killed, and David had finished speaking with Saul, Jonathan could see how much David loved and trusted God. They became firm friends.

Because Jonathan was the king’s son, he would normally have been the next king when Saul died. But God had anointed David to be the king in Saul’s place.

JONATHAN GIVES DAVID HIS ROYAL CLOTHES

Instead of being jealous of David, Jonathan grew to love him more. To show that he understood that David was chosen of God as the next king, Jonathan gave David his royal coat and garments. He even gave him his sword, his bow and his girdle. They made a solemn promise to be friends.

SAUL HATES DAVID

The young man David became very popular with the people of Israel. Saul had made him captain of his armies and

he won many battles against Israel's enemies. Women sang songs in the streets – "*Saul has slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands*". This made Saul angry and jealous.

Saul no longer tried to please God, and God was not with him any more. But everyone could see that God was with David. Saul was so jealous of David that he tried to kill him. He had thrown his javelin at David, as he was playing music on his harp for him. Several times after that Saul tried to kill David. So David had to go away and hide.

A PLAN IS MADE

David met Jonathan and they talked together about their problem. David thought that Saul would still try again to kill him. But Jonathan felt sure his father would tell him all he planned to do. "*Your father knows of our friendship*", said David, "*So he will not tell you his plans. But I am certain that he will try again to kill me*".

They made a plan to find out who was right. A feast was to be held the next day and David was expected to be there. David planned to hide nearby for three days. Jonathan was to tell Saul that he had let David go to a yearly sacrifice at Bethlehem.

If Saul said, "*That's all right*", then they would know that David could safely return. But if he was angry, then David must stay away. Jonathan told David to hide in the field by a stone called Ezel. He would take a boy with him to the field and shoot three arrows. If Saul was no longer angry, Jonathan would shout to the boy, "*Behold, the arrows are this side of thee, take them*". But if he called out, "*Behold, the arrows are beyond thee*", then David would know that Saul really wanted to kill him. So he must flee away.

SAUL IS STILL ANGRY WITH DAVID

Then Jonathan went to the feast. The first day Saul said nothing but on the second day David's seat was still empty. He asked Jonathan where David was. "*David asked*

me if he could go to a sacrifice at Bethlehem”, Jonathan said, “That is why he has not come to the king’s table”.

Then Saul was angry with Jonathan. The friendship between David and Jonathan had worried him, and now Jonathan had spoiled his plans to kill David. *“Fetch him unto me”,* said Saul angrily, *“For he shall surely die”.* Jonathan answered his father, *“Why should he die, what has he done?”* Now Saul became so angry that he even threw his javelin at Jonathan, his own son, to hurt him. Jonathan left the table in fierce anger and did not return to the feast. He felt very worried and sad for his friend David.

JONATHAN GIVES THE SIGN AND BIDS DAVID FAREWELL

Next morning Jonathan took a boy with him and went out to the field where David was hiding. The boy did not know that David was there.

Then Jonathan fitted an arrow to his bow. When he had shot it, he called to the lad, *“Is not the arrow beyond thee. Make speed, haste, stay not”.* The lad gathered up the arrows and returned to his master. Jonathan gave him his bow and arrows and sent him away to the city. David, hiding behind the rock, knew now that Saul was angry and he must flee.

When no one was looking, he came out of his hiding place, to Jonathan, his dear friend. They kissed one another and wept for a long time. They were very good friends and now they must leave each other. Then Jonathan comforted David and said, *“Go in peace, for we have promised before the God of Israel that we shall be friends always”.* Then David went sadly away to hide from Saul. Although they were parted, the God of Israel would watch over them both. David only saw his friend Jonathan once again, when Jonathan secretly visited him to encourage and strengthen him. How happy they will be though when Jesus returns and raises the dead. Those

two close friends, who loved God, will meet again in God's Kingdom.

LESSON FOR US

The best friends we can have are those who truly love God and seek to understand His Word. Such friends will help us even when we are in trouble. Friends who love God can help each other obtain a place in God's Kingdom when Jesus returns.

Remember these points:-

- * Jonathan was not jealous of David even though he knew that David had been anointed to be king.
- * Jonathan and David promised to help each other in every way possible.
- * Saul tried to kill David but Jonathan did everything he could to help David.
- * The God of Israel will bring these two friends together again when Jesus returns to raise the dead.

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *What did Jonathan give David to show his friendship?*
2. *What did the women sing in the streets that made Saul angry and jealous?*
- 3. *What happened when Jonathan went to the feast and Saul saw that David's seat was empty?*
4. *What did David hear Jonathan call out to the lad after shooting his arrows?*
5. *What did Jonathan say to comfort David when they parted?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

- 6. *What was the plan Jonathan and David made to find out whether Saul still wanted to kill David?*
- 7. *What kind of people should we choose to be our friends?*

23. DAVID AND SAUL

“Love your enemies ... do good to them that hate you”

Aim

To show that we must wait on God and trust Him to show us what to do in times of trouble.

Synopsis

Saul came to rest at the place where David was hiding. David could easily have killed him. But instead he returned good for evil, for he knew that God Himself was the one who had made Saul king.



I Samuel 24; Matthew 5:44

SAUL HUNTS DAVID

Saul was so jealous of David that he constantly tried to kill him. David had to hide from the king, who hunted him from place to place.

After a while a band of men, tired of Saul's evil ways, gathered around David. There were about 600 of them. David became their captain. They moved from one hiding place to another, always on the look-out for Saul and his men.

SAUL GOES INTO THE CAVE WHERE DAVID IS HIDING

Saul returned from fighting the Philistines and was told, *“David is in the wilderness of Engedi”*. So he took three thousand men with him and went to look for him.

At Engedi were many deep caves, where men could hide. In one of these David and his men hid from Saul's army. But into this very cave Saul came to rest when he was hunting for David. He did not know that David and his men were hiding

further back in the sides of the cave, for they had heard Saul and his men coming.

DAVID REFUSES TO KILL SAUL

Now David's men thought that here was the chance they had been waiting for. They suggested to David that God had given Saul into his hand. So he should do to him what seemed good.

David crept forward and cut off a piece of the skirt of Saul's robe. Saul did not even know that he had done it. Then David crept back to his men. Immediately he felt sorry for having done even this to God's anointed king. He said, "*It is not right that I should do anything to harm my master, God's anointed*". So he stopped his men from hurting Saul. By his actions, he had taught them two important lessons. They must return good for evil and they must honour those whom God had placed over them. Saul had been anointed by God and David would do him no harm at all. David put his trust in God and knew that God Himself would punish Saul for his wickedness in His own good time.

DAVID REVEALS HIMSELF TO KING SAUL

As Saul rose up to leave the cave, David followed and called out to him, "*My Lord the King*". In amazement Saul looked around. There, bowing before him, was the man he envied, the man he had been hunting to kill. David said to Saul, "*Why do you listen to men who say David intends to harm you? Today God has delivered you into my hand in this cave. Some wanted me to kill you, but I said I would not hurt God's anointed. See the piece of your robe here in my hand. I cut it off instead of killing you. May God judge between us and deliver me out of your hand*".

SAUL IS SORRY

Saul was humbled by David's kindness. When David had finished speaking, he said, "*Is this your voice, my son David?*" and he wept. He knew that David had spoken the truth. He realised that this young man had returned him good and spared his life, whereas he had intended only evil toward David. He said, "*You are more righteous than I, for you have rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded you evil*".

SAUL PLEADS FOR HIS FAMILY

Saul told David that he realised that God had given the kingdom to him. He pleaded for David to remember his family and not destroy them when God made him king.

David willingly promised. Saul went home, but David stayed at Engedi. He knew what was in Saul's heart. He knew that the king would soon forget his kindness and try again to kill him.

LESSON FOR US

The Lord Jesus Christ said: "*But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you*" (Matt. 5:44). We must love even those who hate us. Like David, we should return good for evil, remembering that God in heaven watches over all that happens on earth. In His good time He will make all things perfect.

We should try to be kind and loving always, even to those who think evil of us. We can show them the love of God and maybe even help them to learn about God and His plan to set up His Kingdom on earth.

Remember these points:-

- * Saul hunted David to try and kill him.
- * Saul went to rest in the cave where David and his men were hiding.
- * David refused to kill Saul because Saul was Yahweh's anointed king.
- * David promised Saul that he would look after Saul's family when he became king.

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *Why were David and his men hiding in the cave at Engedi?*
2. *Who came into the cave in which David was hiding?*
3. *What did David's men want him to do to Saul?*
4. *What did David do when Saul came into the cave at Engedi?*
5. *Why didn't David kill Saul when Saul came into the cave?*
6. *What promise did David make to Saul outside the cave at Engedi?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

- 7. *Tell what happened when David and his men were hiding in the cave at Engedi.*
- 8. *How does Jesus Christ say we should act towards those who hate us?*



24. DAVID – THE KING

*“David took the stronghold of Zion;
the same is the city of David”*

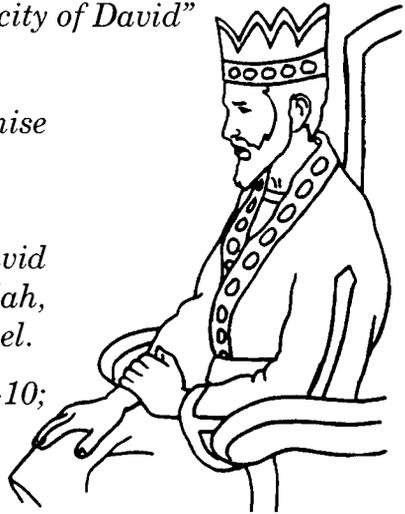
Aim

*To show how God kept His promise
to David and made him king.*

Synopsis

*After Saul’s death, God made David
the king, first of the tribe of Judah,
and seven years later of all Israel.*

*I Sam. 31:1-8; II Sam. 2:1,4; 5:1-10;
1 Chron 11:6*



THE DEATH OF SAUL

Once more the Philistines were fighting against Israel. If only Saul had trusted in God, God would have given him strength to defeat the Philistines. Instead, Israel fled from their old enemies, who chased after them, killing as many as they could. It was very sad to see so many killed. Jonathan, David’s special friend, and a very brave soldier for Israel, was slain as he fought in the battle. Two other sons of Saul were also killed. Even Saul, the king of Israel was badly wounded by an arrow. *“Kill me with your sword”,* cried Saul to his armourbearer, *“I don’t want to be killed by the Philistines”*. But the armourbearer was afraid to kill the king of Israel, so Saul fell on his own sword and died. When the armourbearer saw that his king was dead, he did not want to live any longer either. He too fell on his sword and died. When the men of Israel saw that their king was dead, they lost hope and fled from their cities, filled with fear.

So in one day Saul, his three sons, his armourbearer

and many men of Israel died. What a shame king Saul had not obeyed God. So many people suffered because Saul lacked faith in God. The people had wanted a king, and Saul was the kind of man they thought they wanted. But now God was going to provide Israel with a very different king. The one God chose would show them an example of faith. He was a man who always trusted in God. From now on the kingdom of Israel would prosper, and the people would be happy.

DAVID IS MADE KING OVER THE TRIBE OF JUDAH

When David heard that king Saul and Jonathan were dead, he was very sad. He had loved Jonathan very much and had never hated Saul. He turned to God in prayer and asked what he should do. God answered David, the man after God's own heart, and told him to go to the city of Hebron. David obeyed and, with his family and his band of men, he settled in Hebron. There the men of the tribe of Judah anointed David king. David was thirty years old when he became king over the tribe of Judah. But remember that God had chosen him to be king a long time before. David had waited patiently in faith through years of trouble and danger. He knew that God would make him king at the best time. Even now he had to wait patiently until he became king over all Israel.

DAVID IS KING OVER ISRAEL

After seven and a half years the chief men of the tribes of Israel came to David. They asked him to be king over all Israel. They realised that he would be a good king. They knew that God had chosen David to rule over the whole of His people. So they anointed David as king over all Israel. David wanted to reign from the city of Jerusalem. David the shepherd boy became a shepherd king. He cared for the people of Israel just as he had cared for his sheep. But in those days

the Jebusites lived in Jerusalem and they would not allow David into the city. David, however, was a wise man. When he set out to capture the city, he said to his strong soldiers, *“Whoever gets up into the city first and smites the Jebusites shall be the chief captain”*. This made Joab work hard and bravely. He climbed through an underground water tunnel up into the city and the Jebusites were defeated. Jerusalem became known as “the city of David”. It is God’s chosen city. Jesus loved that city, and said, *“It is the city of the great King”*. One day soon it will become the capital city of the whole earth. When Jesus Christ returns, he will reign from Jerusalem as king over all the earth. Then all people will come there to learn of God and worship Him.

LESSON FOR US

Let us trust in God at all times like David. Saul’s life ended in sadness, because he did not obey God. David obeyed God and God blessed him and all the people of Israel over whom he ruled. Let us be a good example to those about us of faith and trust in God.

Remember these points:-

- * Saul did not trust in God’s power. He trusted in his own strength.
- * David always trusted God and so he was made king.
- * David was a shepherd to the people of Israel just as he had been for his father’s sheep.
- * Jerusalem became known as “The city of David”.
- * Jerusalem will be “The city of the Great King”, Jesus Christ.

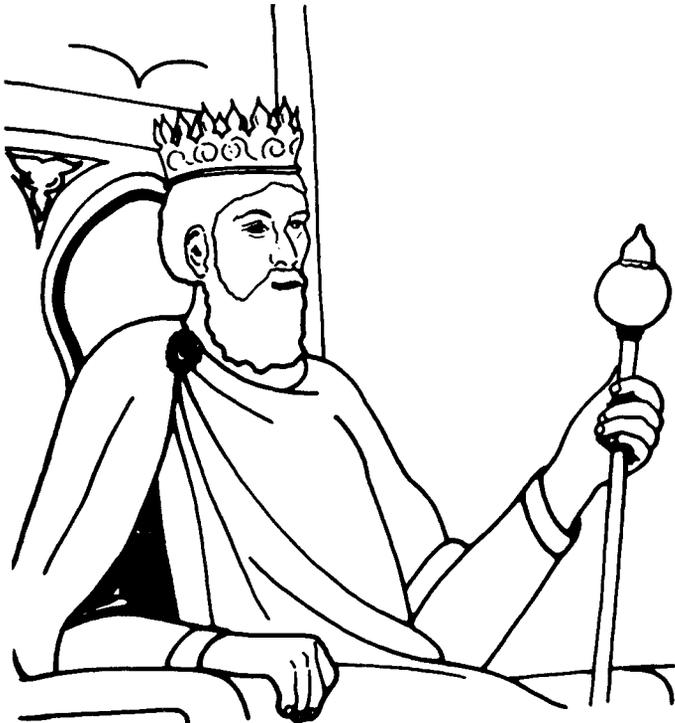
Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *What nation was Israel fighting when king Saul died?*
2. *Was David pleased when he heard Saul was dead?*

3. *What tribe wanted David to be king before the other tribes?*
4. *David was made king over all Israel. What city did David want to reign from?*
5. *Joab was a strong and brave soldier – how did he get into the city of Jerusalem?*
6. *Why is Jerusalem an important city?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

7. *The Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem thought the men of Israel could never get into city.*
 - (a) *What did David say to his strong soldiers?*
 - (b) *How did they get into the city?*
 - (c) *Who was the first soldier into the city?*



25. GOD'S PROMISE TO DAVID

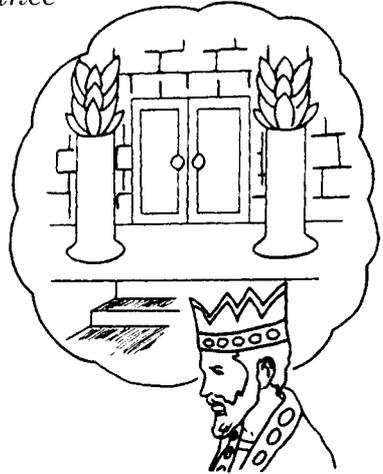
“Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee”

Aim

To show that God’s promise to David is for an everlasting Kingdom with Christ as the King.

Synopsis

Because David was such a good and faithful man God made a great promise to him. God’s own son would be a son of David. One day he will sit on David’s throne and rule the world forever.



II Sam. 7:1-17; I Chron. 17; 22:6-10

DAVID WANTS TO BUILD A HOUSE FOR GOD

God had given king David peace in all the land, so that no nation wanted to fight with Israel. One day as he sat on his throne, David thought of his own fine house. He thought of the strong cedar walls around him. He thought too of the Ark of God, the place where God showed His presence to His people. It was still in the Tabernacle, a tent of cloth hangings and curtains. David thought he would like to build a house for God – a fine building where the people of Israel could worship and sacrifice. So David spoke to the prophet Nathan. When Nathan heard his idea, he was pleased and said, “Go do all that is in thine heart, for the LORD is with thee”. He had not asked God!

But during that night God spoke to Nathan. He told Nathan that David was not the one to build God’s temple. David had been a man of war and lots of men had died in his

battles. But he would have a son who would be a man of peace. That son was Solomon and his name means “peaceable”. It was God’s purpose that Solomon should build a temple for God.

However, God was very pleased with David for wanting to serve Him in this way. He made a wonderful promise to David.

GOD’S PROMISE TO DAVID II Samuel 7

This is the promise God made:

1. After David had died a great, great great ... grandson of David’s would be king.
2. This special son would build God a house and God would make him king over it forever.
3. This special son of David would also be the son of God.
4. He would suffer pain and sorrow but God’s mercy would always be with him.
5. David himself would be raised from the dead to see his son reign on his throne forever.

THE PROMISED SON

That special son promised to David is none other than Jesus Christ, who was born long after David died and nearly two thousand years ago. God is the father of Jesus. His mother Mary was a descendant of king David. So Jesus was son of God, as well as son of David. Jesus suffered and died, just as God had told David. He died and rose from the dead so that those who obey God can be raised from the dead too. God’s mercy was always towards His son, as it is to all those who love Him. Now Jesus Christ is in heaven. He eagerly awaits the time when God shall send him to the earth to be King forever. Then this wonderful promise which God gave David will be fulfilled. David, himself will be raised from the dead and given eternal life. Those who love God look forward to

that time when the Lord Jesus Christ will build God's house in Jerusalem.

THE PROMISED HOUSE OF GOD

In God's Kingdom there will be a beautiful temple built in Jerusalem. All nations will come to worship there and to learn righteousness. But God's "house" is not just a building. God's "house" is the ecclesia. It is made up of people who love and obey Him.

DAVID IS THANKFUL

When David heard the wonderful promise, he was overwhelmed. He really felt that he did not deserve such glorious blessings. For the rest of his life he thanked God continually. So David prayed to God saying, "And let Thy name be magnified forever ... and let the house of Thy servant David be established before Thee".

LESSON FOR US

David was obedient and always thankful to God. So God loved him and made him wonderful promises. God's promises are sure and certain. They always come to pass. If we obey God and are always thankful to Him, He will bless us too. We shall live in God's Kingdom with people like king David, and the Lord Jesus Christ shall be our King forever.

Remember these points:-

- * David wanted to build a house for God but God told him that his son would do this.
- * God made a wonderful promise to David.
- * This promise was that a special son yet to be born would also be God's son and would be a King forever.
- * God promised David that he would be raised from the dead to see this special son.
- * The special son promised is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Questions 5 to 8 years

1. *David wanted to do something wonderful for God.*
 - (a) *What did he want to do?*
 - (b) *What did Nathan say when David told him what he planned?*
 - (c) *But what did God say?*
2. *Who is the son of David who shall reign as King forever?*
3. *Who is the Father of Jesus?*
4. *When will the promise to David be fulfilled?*
5. *What did David do after Nathan told him the wonderful promises God had made to him?*

Additional Questions 7 to 8 years

- 6. (a) *What was the wonderful promise which God gave to David?*
 - (b) *Why did God give the glorious promise to David?*
- 7. *What chapter in the Bible records God's promise to David?*

