



The Preparation of the Kingdom

JUNIOR NOTES – 9 to 12 Years

STAGE ONE OF FIVE STAGES

CHRISTADELPHIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 121, ST. AGNES 5097, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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FOREWORD

With these lessons, entitled “*The Preparation Of The Kingdom*”, we begin a Five Stage Course of Bible Study designed to take us through the entire Scriptures of Truth. Each Stage consists of twenty-five lessons, constructed to gather in the main points of the Bible Story as it flows and unfolds.

In Stage One our lessons commence with God, the Author of the Bible and traverse the story of Creation to the ruin of the Old World in the days of Noah, when only a remnant was preserved.

Then we follow faithful Abram as he leaves Babylon and travels with his band of pilgrims to the land of promise. We watch as his family grows and those around him increase. First a son, Isaac. Then a grandson, Jacob, who became the father of twelve sons — whence came the twelve tribes of Israel.

We consider the drama of Jacob’s flight into exile, and his return, and of Joseph being brought a captive to Egypt, where God delivered him, and then worked through him to deliver His people.

Finally, we review what happened in Egypt when the years passed; how

- * Another Pharaoh arose, who “knew not Joseph” and who made the lives of all the Israelites bitter with hard bondage;
- * God raised up Moses as leader of His people; and
- * they were delivered and brought through the Red Sea to Sinai where they were given God’s Law and constituted His Kingdom.

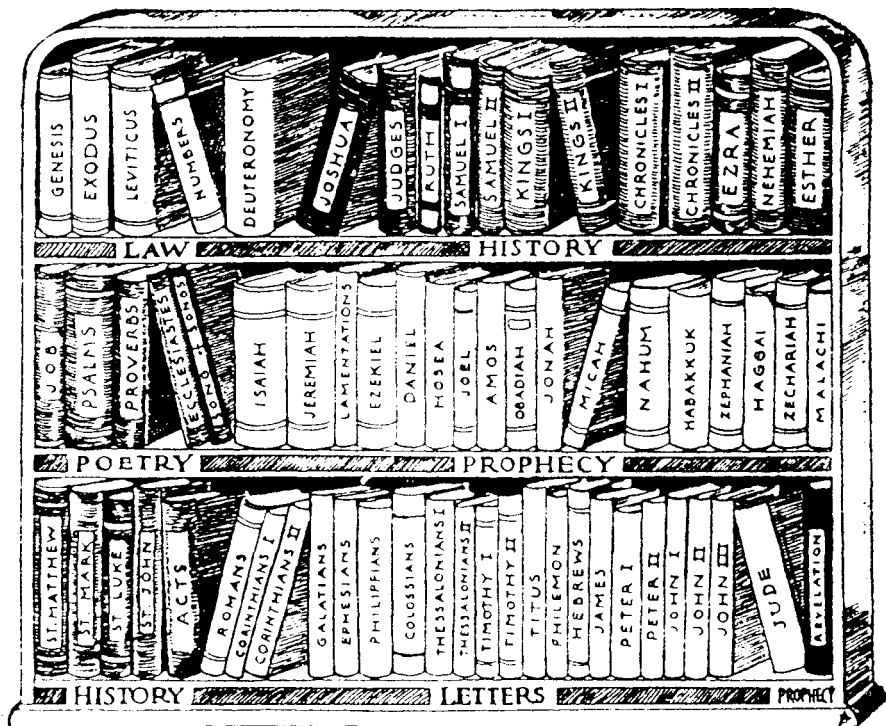
Remember that these notes, as Junior Notes, have been drafted to convey the main lesson or lessons in the studies presented. They are a simplified presentation, intended to assist both teacher and student alike in presenting and grasping the essential truths of God’s Word, but they are not intended in any way to limit additional matter or more detailed presentation that a teacher or student may wish to undertake. Private investigation of God’s Word is to be encouraged at all times.

The Bible is a book filled with wonders, interesting, challenging, always up to date, and the studies to engage our attention are of absorbing interest. They contain numerous principles of Divine Truth, and it is essential that those lessons be well learned and thoroughly understood because we are laying here the foundation of further understanding that will later engage our attention.

Remember that if further information or assistance is required, a letter addressed to the Secretary will receive our prompt attention.

May Yahweh's blessing and guidance continue to be with His children and servants who hearken diligently to His Word.

The Committee



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1. THE BIBLE: GOD'S MESSAGE TO MAN

“Thy Word is Truth.”

Aim

To show that the Bible is the Word of God.

The Bible is a miracle in our hands. It is a book which not only tells us of the past, but it also prophesies, which means it tell us of the future, something which no other book can do. It teaches us all that we need to know about God, what He has done in the past, what He is doing now and what He plans to do in the future. It also shows us the way that we must live to please Him.

2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

THE BIBLE

The word Bible means “book”. The word “holy” means “separate” or “set apart”. So the Holy Bible is a book set apart from all other books. God has set it apart as the only book which tells the Truth about God and His purpose with men. When we open it we find that it is really a collection of sixty six books bound together into one. The Bible is divided into two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Old Testament has 39 books. Moses began to write the first five books about 1,500 years before Christ was born. The last book of the Old Testament was written by Malachi about 1,000 years later.

The New Testament contains 27 books. It tells us of the life and work of Jesus and how his disciples spread the good news about the Lord Jesus Christ and his coming Kingdom throughout the world. This part of the Bible was written during the first hundred years after Jesus was born.

Learn the names of the books of the Bible off by heart. It will help you in your daily Bible reading and study.

We see then that the Bible was written over a very long time, about 1,600 years in all; yet all the writers tell the same wonderful story. They all tell us in different ways, God's great plan for this earth and man upon it.

HOW THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN

How is it that the Bible, which was written over such a long period of

time and by many different men in different places, tells one special message? Peter tells us that “holy men of God spoke **as they were moved by the Holy Spirit**” (2 Peter 1:21). It was God’s Holy Spirit power that put the thoughts in their minds and they spoke God’s thoughts. So, although many people wrote the Bible, **God Himself is the Author of it.**

WHY THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN

In the Bible we are told all we need to know about God and His plan for the earth and men upon it. He wants us to know and love Him. There are many wonderful and exciting stories in the Bible about faithful men and women who loved and obeyed God. These stories help us learn to be faithful and obedient too. So the more we read the Bible, the more we will love God and try to please Him. Our thoughts will become His thoughts and our ways will be changed to be like His ways.

GOD’S FUTURE PLAN WITH THE EARTH

God’s purpose is to fill the earth with His glory. “As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord” (Num. 14:21). To do this He will send Jesus Christ back again to set up God’s Kingdom upon the earth (Acts 1:10-11; Dan. 2:44). He will first raise the dead ones who have known the Truth and give eternal life to all those who have loved and obeyed him. They will then help him teach the world God’s righteous ways. He will destroy the wicked and reign in Jerusalem as King over all the earth. Then for a thousand years Christ and the saints will change the world into a place where all creation will give glory and praise to God forever.

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT GOD

The Bible tells us about God:—

- (1) That God is immortal or never dying.
- (2) That there is only one God (Deut. 6:4), the Creator of all things.
- (3) That God is kind and patient and will help and guide those who trust in Him. He is also righteous and just and will punish the wicked who reject Him and His ways.
- (4) That the Holy Spirit is God’s power by which He performs His mighty works.

- (5) That the angels are His immortal servants or messengers who do His will.

LESSON FOR US

In the Bible we learn what God wants us to do. There are things we must do and things we must not do. The people who **do** what God wants because they love and trust Him, will one day be given eternal life in God's Kingdom. Nowhere else but in the Bible do we find the way to everlasting life and happiness. We should read the Bible every day and He will guide us through all our life. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

What is prophecy? When "holy men of God" prophesied, they foretold the future. We cannot of ourselves say what will happen in the future but God can do this.

The Bible contains many prophecies. Those that have already come to pass have been so accurately fulfilled in every detail that we can confidently believe that those prophecies which are yet to be fulfilled will just as surely come to pass.

Many of the prophecies of the Bible clearly show that Jesus Christ will return to the earth, and they speak of the conditions which will exist in the world just before he returns.

Consider some of these signs:

- (1) There will be great trouble and wars among the nations of the earth (Dan. 12:1; Luke 21:25-26).
- (2) Wickedness and sin will increase all over the world (Matt. 24:37-39).
- (3) Children will not respect their parents and elders, and people will be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God (2 Tim. 3:1-5).
- (4) Russia will become a great power, seeking to rule the world (Ezek. 38).
- (5) The Jews will return to their own land (Ezek. 38:8,12).

These prophecies are today being fulfilled before our very eyes and are a testimony that the Bible is indeed God's Word and that the day is very near when He will send Jesus Christ back to the earth to set up His Kingdom.

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

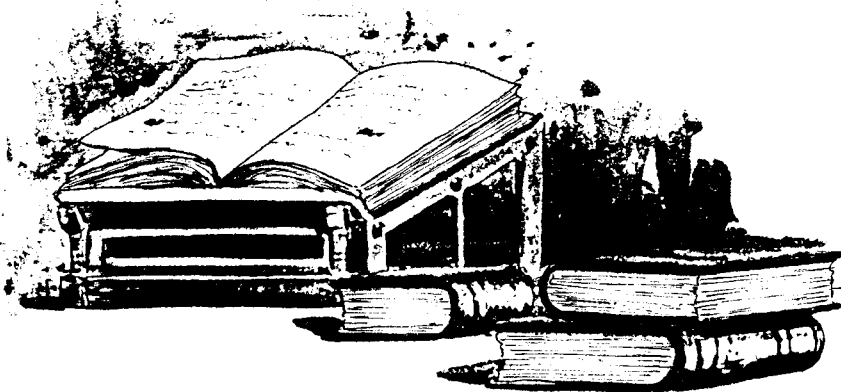
- 1. Who is the Author of the Bible?
- * 2. What does “Holy Bible” mean?
- 3. How many books are there in the Bible?
- * 4. Why did God want the Bible to be written?
- o 5. What is God’s purpose with the earth?
- 6. What is the Holy Spirit?
- o 7. Who are the angels?
8. What is God’s plan for those who love Him?

Detailed Answers

1. What does the Bible teach us about God?
- * 2. Tell what you know of God’s future plan for the earth.

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

3. The Bible contains prophecies which show that Jesus Christ will soon return to the earth. What are some of these prophecies?



2. CREATION

“God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.”

Aim

To show that God made all things so that the earth might be filled with His glory.

The Bible opens with the book of Genesis. “Genesis” means “beginning”. The first verse in the Bible says “In the beginning God created the heaven and earth”. We do not know exactly when God created the heaven and the earth; all we do know is that God, Who is eternal, created the earth a long time ago. Gen. 1:2 says that “the earth was without form and void” which means it had become “waste and empty”. We are not told why, but we are told, in Genesis chapter 1 that God decided to do something with the earth. He wished to rearrange it so that people could live upon it, bringing forth praise and glory to Him. He did this about 4,000 B.C. (that is, 6,000 years ago).

Genesis 1 to 2:7,18-25

THE PURPOSE OF CREATION

The first chapter of Genesis tells us that when God created all things and placed them upon the earth, He had a plan already in mind. From the beginning, it was the purpose of God that all creation should give glory to Him. “As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD” (Num. 14:21). By filling the earth with “His Glory”, God means that all things in the earth will give honour to their Creator. There will be no more sin, disease or death, for the earth will then be filled with people whom God has rewarded with immortality. We read of this great change in Rev. 21:3-4.

SIX DAY’S WORK: Genesis 1 to 2:3,7,18-25

The earth was not very beautiful at all when God set about putting it in order. It was just black and empty. It had no life, or light, or beauty of any kind. Then God set out to change it and to make it a fit place for man to live in. He set His angels to work. In Psalms 103:20 we read that His angels, who are mighty in strength, “do His commandments, hear-

kening unto the voice of His Word”. “God spoke and it was done” (Psalm 33:9).

It was a huge task, but because God is all-powerful, the work of Creation was done in only six days — each of “an evening and a morning”, twenty-four hours long. “In six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is” (Exodus 20:11).

As each of the six days of Creation passed, something new and necessary had been added to the world, until it was fully ready for the man, whom God planned to make last of all. Then God “rested” on the seventh day.

Let us see what was done in that Creation week.

1st Day (vv. 3-5). First God **said** “Let there be light”. (Note — God **spoke** and the angels did as He commanded.) The earth had been in complete darkness, but now God divided the light (which He called “day”) from the darkness (which He called “night”).

2nd Day (vv. 6-8). When it says God made a “firmament” between the waters above and those beneath, it is talking about the atmosphere, the air we breathe. This was necessary before plants, or animal or man could live upon the earth. So God made this next.

3rd Day (vv. 9-13). On this day God separated the waters from the dry land; the waters He called Seas and the dry land He called Earth. When God did this He set the bounds of the seas so that they would go no further. God then made grass, herbs and fruit trees to grow upon the earth, each one with its seed inside itself. That is why when we plant apple seeds, we get apple trees, or when we plant corn we get corn. Apples do not change to pears, or corn to wheat. We should stop and think about how well planned all God’s work of creation were for “in wisdom He has made them all” (Psalm 104:24).

4th Day (vv. 14-19). The sun, moon and stars were then put in their right places in the sky, to give light by day and night. They were to be for signs, seasons, days and years. So we have four seasons every year, and 24 hours every day. The sun rises and sets without fail every day, it has always done since this 4th day of Creation, and days and years do not get longer or shorter.

5th Day (vv. 20-23). On this day God created all the creatures that live in the sea, and all the birds that fly in the air.

6th Day (vv. 24-31). Finally, on the sixth day, God made all creatures that live on the dry land — cattle, reptiles and wild beasts. Then,

before this sixth day ended, He made man. “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7).

God put the man, Adam, in a beautiful garden which He had planted in Eden. He brought all the animals there to Adam and he gave them their names. But God saw that it was not good for Adam to be alone. He needed a companion like himself, who could help him praise God. So God created a “help meet (suitable) for him”. God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and, taking a rib from his side, He made a woman from it. (“Woman” means “out of man”). Then God gave this woman, Eve, to the man as his wife (Genesis 2:18-24).

All this God did on the **6th day**.

7th Day (2:1-3). “On the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He **rested** on the seventh day” (v. 2). The word “rested” does not mean that God was tired and needed to relax, for He is all-powerful and never stops working (Psalm 121:4; John 5:17). He rested because He had finished the great work, which He had set out to do. He “rested” means that He “stopped creating”. In six days He had formed the earth and placed man and all the creatures upon it.

LESSON FOR US

There are two things which children must learn to do — to praise God and to thank Him for His goodness. David said, “I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well” (Psa. 139:14). So whenever we look at the heavens above, or see the tiny insects so perfectly made, or smell the delightful perfumes of the flowers, or watch the waves break on the seashore let us praise God, the great Creator of all these things.

And how can we best thank him for all that He has done for us — by believing His Word and being obedient to His commandments. “O LORD, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all” (Psa. 104:24).

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

Very few people today believe that God created all things. Children in our schools and universities are being taught instead the theory of evolution. It is a theory (i.e. a suggested idea) put forward by many sci-

entists to explain how people came to be different from the other animals. They say that life on earth has evolved (i.e. developed or changed) over millions of years. It all began by chance, they say. Men like to believe this man-made theory, because then they do not need to believe in God or obey Him. Such a theory cannot be proved. The Bible is true and can easily be shown to be true. (See Lesson 1, Additional Notes.) The Lord Jesus Christ himself believed and taught that God alone is the wise Creator of all things (e.g. Mark 10:6). The apostles also taught that “God made the world and all things therein” (Acts 17:24-26, cf. 1 Pet. 4:19).

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- *1. Who created the world and all things?
- 2. Who helped God when He set the earth in order?
- *3. What were the names of the first man and woman whom God made?
- 4. What does the word “woman” mean?
- 5. Where did the first man and woman live?
- *6. How many days did God take to make all things?
- 7. God “rested” on the 7th day. What does this mean?

Detailed Answers

In the beginning God made all things.

- 1. Tell what God created on —
 - (a) the 1st day.
 - and on (b) the 4th day.
- *2. How did God create the first man?
- 3. How did God create the first woman?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

In the beginning God set in order all things upon the earth.

- 4. Tell all you know about the six days of Creation.
- 5. Most people today believe that life on earth has evolved over millions of years. What does the Bible teach?

3. DISOBEDIENCE IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN

“The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden.”

Aim

To show what happened when Adam and Eve disobeyed God.

God had prepared a lovely garden for the man and woman to dwell in. It was called the garden of Eden, which means “delight”. It was full of trees that were “pleasant to the sight and good for food”. A river watered the garden and Adam was to “dress it and keep it”, though no weeds or thistles yet spoiled it. In such pleasant surroundings Adam and Eve were able to enjoy the beautiful things that a loving Creator had provided for them. God decided to test their love for Him.

Genesis 2:15-17: 3

THE TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL: Genesis 2:15-17

In the midst of the garden of Eden God had planted two special trees — the “tree of life” and the “**tree of the knowledge of good and evil**”. Adam and Eve could eat of the fruit of every other tree in the garden, but of this second tree God said: “thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (2:17). They were not even allowed to touch it (3:3).

This command was very simple and God warned that if they disobeyed they would “surely die”. Disobedience of God’s law is **sin** and “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23).

DISOBEDIENCE IN EDEN: Genesis 3:1-6

For a while all went well, but in this garden of Eden there was a very cunning animal called a “serpent”, to which God had given the power of speech. Genesis 3:1-5 tells how the serpent told a lie and the woman believed the serpent instead of believing God. The serpent, like all animals, had no understanding of right and wrong, for God had not given it a mind like man’s. It had overheard God’s words to Adam and Eve, but thought that if they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, surely that would make them as wise as the angels. So it said to Eve, “ye shall **not** surely die”.



Once this thought had been put into Eve's mind she began to wonder about that tree. She could see that it was "good for food" and "pleasant to the eyes", and the more she now looked at its fruit, the more she desired it. And if it would really make her wise like the angels, as the serpent suggested.....

Suddenly Eve put forth her hand and took of the fruit and ate it. Then she offered some to Adam "and he did eat".

Eve had been deceived by the serpent's lie and disobeyed God's command. Adam sinned too, choosing to please his wife, rather than to obey God.

SIN BRINGS SHAME AND FEAR: Genesis 3:7-13

As soon as Adam and Eve ate that fruit, they knew that they had sinned. They suddenly felt ashamed and afraid. So they sewed fig leaves together and made aprons to cover themselves. Then they hid in the garden, knowing that God would be angry. This is just what happens when we sin. As soon as we realise that we have disobeyed God's ways, we feel ashamed and guilty before Him. When God called to Adam, guilty Adam blamed Eve, and when God questioned Eve, she blamed the serpent. But they themselves had known God's law and had disobeyed.

GOD'S PUNISHMENT: Genesis 3:14-20

Upon the Serpent. Because the serpent had lied and deceived Eve, God cursed it. It was to go upon its belly and eat dust all the days of its life.

Upon Adam. God told Adam, that, instead of living in the beautiful garden where everything was in harmony with God, they would be driven out. From now on he would have to work hard to provide food for himself and Eve. The earth would now grow thorns and thistles making this task more difficult. In the end Adam would die and return to the dust of the earth from which he was made, for God said, "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return" (v. 19). Man therefore became a dying mortal creature because of sin, for "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Because we are all descended from Adam we share that same nature, and we die. (See Instructor Question 35).

Upon Eve. Eve was told she was to have much sorrow and be ruled over by her husband.

GOD PROVIDES A COVERING: Genesis 3:21

Adam and Eve had covered themselves with fig leaf aprons to try to hide their shame, but this was not acceptable to God. He provided them both instead with a coat made from the skin of an animal. God had a wonderful reason for this that taught Adam and Eve a lesson about sin. To provide the skins, an animal had to be slain and its blood shed. This all pointed forward to the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Through his death God provided a way for us, to have our sins covered or forgiven. When a person is baptised, the Bible speaks of that person “putting on Christ” (Gal. 3:27), just as Adam put on the covering God provided for him.

DRIVEN OUT OF THE GARDEN: Genesis 3:22-24

After God had told Adam and Eve of the punishment for their sin, He drove them out of the garden of Eden “lest they should take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever”. So God drove them from the garden and placed at the east of the garden, cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life (vv. 22-24).

LESSON FOR US

It is very easy to be tempted to do wrong. Eve’s first mistake was to listen to the serpent’s words. If we listen to the suggestions of those who do not love the Truth, we will disobey God too. The only way to be sure to obey Him, is to keep His Words in our minds. Let us be like the psalmist, who said, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee” (Psalm 119:11).

Sin was brought into the world by man’s disobedience, and because we are the children of Adam, we must die too. But God does not want all men to die forever. In His mercy He has made a way for our sins to be forgiven — through baptism into the Lord Jesus Christ.

Learn to love God’s laws and put them in your heart, so that you may grow up to be baptised and to have God’s gift of eternal life (Rom. 6:23).

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

In Genesis 3:15 God tells of enmity (or hatred), that would always be found between the “seed of the serpent” and “the seed of the

woman". The serpent's "seed" are all those who do not know God's ways and do not love the Truth. The woman's "seed" are all those who speak the Truth (as Eve first did, 3:2-3).

There is only one who has ever perfectly obeyed the Truth; that is, the Lord Jesus Christ. We are told that the serpent's seed would "bruise his heel" (3:15). This was fulfilled when the enemies of the Truth (the wicked Jews and the Romans) put him to death upon the cross. Because of his perfect obedience to God, he did not remain in the grave, but God raised him after three days. The "serpent's" attack on him was but a "bruise" that was healed.

The "seed of the woman", however, was going to "bruise the head" of the serpent's seed (3:15). This would be a fatal blow. Because the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the grave to die no more, sin and death have lost their power. He has destroyed them and opened the way to life eternal for all those who love the Truth and put their trust in him.

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- 1. What was the one commandment which God gave to Adam and Eve?
- o 2. Who tempted Eve to break this commandment?
- 3. What is sin?
- * 4. What did God say would happen to Adam and Eve if they sinned?
- * 5. What happens to all people because of the sin of Adam and Eve?
- 6. What covering did God provide for Adam and Eve?
- o 7. What did God do with Adam and Eve after they sinned?

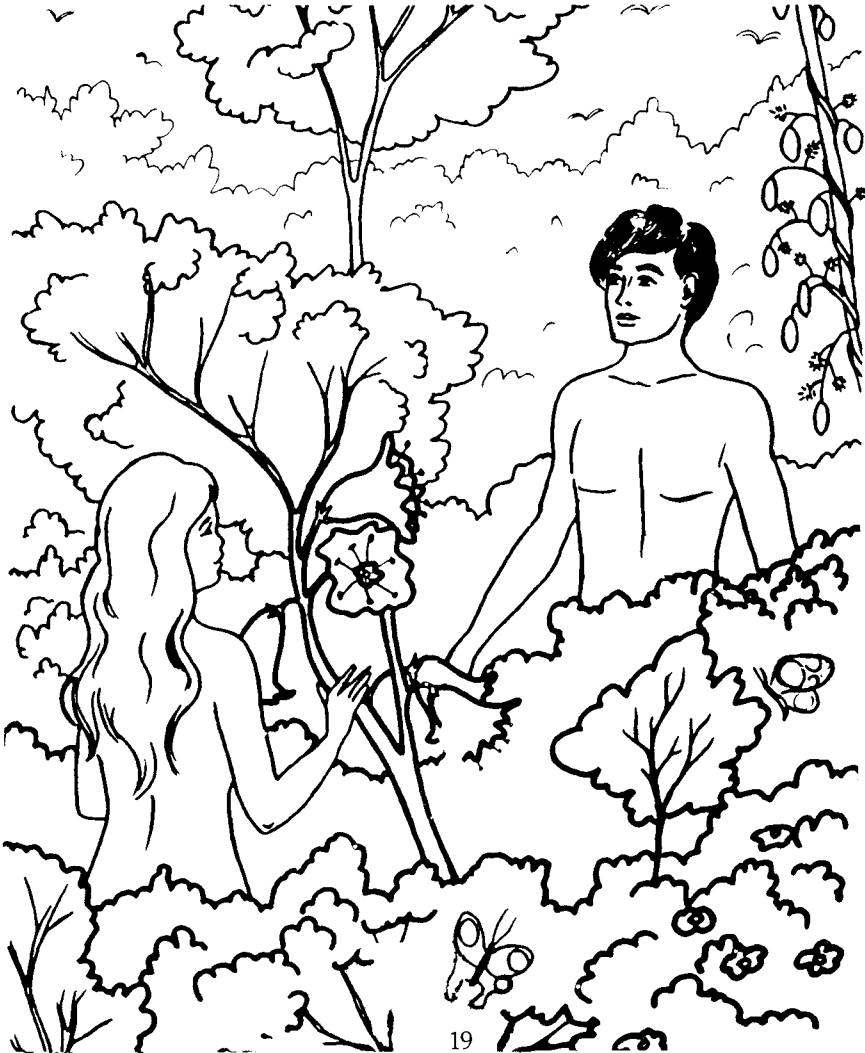
Detailed Answers

1. How did Adam and Eve disobey the command of God in the garden of Eden?
2. How did God punish Adam and Eve for their disobedience?
- * 3. (a) What covering for sin did God provide for Adam and Eve?
(b) Whom does this point forward to?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

4. Tell what happened as soon as Adam and Eve ate of the fruit of the tree.

5. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life." What does this mean?
6. Tell what is meant by the following:—
- (a) the seed of the serpent
 - (b) the seed of the woman
 - (c) thou shalt bruise his heel
 - (d) it shall bruise thy head.



4. CAIN AND ABEL

“Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.”

Aim

To show that man cannot worship God as he pleases, but “they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth”.

We have already learned that God requires obedience. It was because Adam and Eve disobeyed God, that He drove them out of the garden of Eden. As punishment for their sin, their life would be full of hard work and sorrow, until they eventually died. This is what has also happened to all Adam and Eve’s descendants. All of them have been mortal, that is, they have all died; and all of them — except the Lord Jesus Christ — have been sinful.

We see in this story of their first children, Cain and Abel, how disobedience was once again punished.

Genesis 4

CAIN AND ABEL OFFER SACRIFICES: Genesis 4:1-7

Cain was the firstborn son of Adam and Eve. He grew up to be “a tiller of the ground”. He grew “the fruit of the ground”, probably various kinds of grain and vegetables (v. 2). The younger son, Abel became “a keeper of sheep”.

One day these two sons came to worship God and brought their offerings to the altar. Cain brought some of the things he had grown, no doubt the best of all his harvest. Abel brought one of the firstlings of his flock, the best lamb or kid he could find. But though each one wanted to please God with his offering, God only found one of them acceptable. “The LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect” (vv. 3-5). It was clear that Cain did not offer what God required. When he saw that Abel’s offering was accepted he became angry and jealous. God tried to reason with Cain: “If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?” (v. 7). God is always ready to forgive. All Cain had to do was humble himself before God and bring the right offering. But he would not.

Abel obeyed and did God’s will, but Cain was a man of self-will — he did as **he** wanted and not as God wanted.

REPRESENTED
THE SACRIFICE
OF THE LORD
JESUS CHRIST
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HATRED LEADS TO MURDER: Genesis 4:8-12

The more Cain thought about what had happened the angrier he became. He was too proud to change his mind and now began to hate his brother. Yet Abel had done nothing wrong; he had done what was right in God's sight.

Then one day, as they were in the fields, Cain killed his brother, Abel. Hatred had led to murder. It was a truly wicked act by Cain. Once again God spoke to Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" Cain replied sullenly, "I know not: am I my brother's keeper?" (v. 9). He tried to hide this horrible crime from God, talking as if he was not at all concerned about Abel. God, however, knew only too well what Cain had done and pronounced a terrible punishment on him. He had once enjoyed being a farmer, but now the earth would not bring forth good crops for him. He was to be driven away from his home and the altar of God to wander in the earth for the rest of his days.

GOD'S MERCY SHOWN TO CAIN: Genesis 4:13-16

Cain said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear" (v. 13). If Cain sounded sorry, it was only because he was punished, not because he had sinned. But God was merciful. He gave to Cain the promise that no man would harm him, for He put a mark upon him and said that anyone who slew him would be punished sevenfold. Cain was driven from God and went to live in the land of Nod, which means the land of Exile. Adam and Eve had another son, Seth, for God appointed another seed (son) instead of Abel (v. 25). This man grew to love God and to serve Him acceptably as Abel had.

THE DESCENDANTS OF SETH AND CAIN

Like Abel, Seth was a righteous man, and his descendants became known as the "sons of God" (Genesis 6:2).

Cain's descendants, like their father, were wicked and loved to take vengeance on their enemies.

So in the world before the flood there were two kinds of people — those who followed God's ways and those who did not. The latter group built huge cities and just did whatever pleased themselves. Music, art, wealth, or weapons of war (Gen. 4:19-24) were the things that interested them. The sons of God, however, for a time stayed separate from the world and its ways.

The only thing that is different today is the date! **We must not follow in the ways of Cain** (Jude v. 11).

LESSON FOR US

The real reason for Cain's sin was that he wanted his own way. This is selfishness — where all sin begins. First selfish, then stubborn, and proud, and then angry. He killed his brother and then told a lie. "Where is Abel thy brother?" asked God. "I know not," replied Cain adding, "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen. 4:9). He did not accept it as a duty to care for anyone but himself. Let us understand that sin is selfishness which grows from bad to worse. If we do not turn away from sin and turn to God, sin will destroy our lives, and as it grows, we become unhappy and hateful. When you do something wrong tell God you are sorry and ask for His help to turn away from the sin itself.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

We learned in the last lesson that God has provided a covering for sins. This was first shown when He provided coats of skins for Adam and Eve, by shedding the blood of an animal. This pointed forward to the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was shed upon the cross.

When we are baptised, we "put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27) and our sins are forgiven. Abel obviously understood this better than Cain. "By faith, Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain" (Heb. 11:4). He knew that the offering of a lamb pointed forward to "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). God is not willing that any should die forever, but that we should all be saved through His son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

1. What were the names of Adam and Eve's first two sons?
2. What did Cain do for a living?
3. What did Abel do for a living?
- ✱ 4. What did Cain offer to God?
- ✱ 5. What did Abel offer to God?
- ✱ 6. Whose offering did God accept?
- ☉ 7. What was the name of the son born to Adam in Abel's place?

Detailed Answers

- ✱ 1. Why did Cain kill Abel?
2. (a) Why was God displeased at the offering given by Cain?
(b) What should Cain have done then?
3. Tell what Cain did to Abel and how God punished him.

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

4. Why was Abel's sacrifice better than Cain's?





5. THE STORY OF THE FLOOD

“By faith Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his house.”

Aim

To show how God punished the wicked and saved Noah from the flood.

For many years the descendants of Seth (called “sons of God” Gen. 6:2) remained apart from the descendants of Cain, and at first did those things that were pleasing to God. They lived separate lives ignoring the wicked people around them. Cain’s descendants, although skilful and clever were wicked, always rebelling against God. But after a while some of the “sons of God”, led astray by the beauty of the “daughters of men”, married them. It was very wrong to do this. Very soon the “sons of God” were led away from that godliness for which they were known in the beginning and they turned to doing the same things as the descendants of Cain. The world had become a very wicked place. God saw that “every imagination of the thoughts of (man’s) heart was only evil continually” (Gen. 6:5).

Genesis 6, 7, 8; Hebrews 11:7

WICKEDNESS FILLS THE EARTH: Genesis 6:1-13

The people who lived on the earth at this time were very, very, wicked, and God looked upon all this evil and was grieved in His heart. At last He said, “I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of the earth” (v. 7). However, there was one man who pleased God. His name was Noah and he was a just or righteous man, one who trusted in God and “walked with God” (v. 9). He is described in 2 Peter 2:5 as “a preacher of righteousness”. He was told by God to preach to the people and warn them that, if they did not repent, God would destroy them. “I will destroy them from the earth,” said God — (v. 13). Noah did not hesitate to do as he was told. He began preaching, and continued for 120 years, always hoping that some might turn away from their wickedness and be saved.

GOD COMMANDS NOAH TO BUILD AN ARK: Genesis 6:14-16

Noah was commanded to build an ark and was given the measurements in cubits. A cubit measured between 500mm and 600mm. This shows that the ark must have been between 160m and 180m long, between 27m and 30m wide and between 16m and 18m high. It was built

of gopher wood, lined inside and out with pitch, and was three stories high. It had a door and a window. Such a great vessel would have taken many years to build. First the materials had to be prepared and then the long job of building was begun. All the time Noah would have carefully followed the instructions which God had given him. He continued faithfully, building and preaching, warning the people of the coming judgments, and patiently waiting until God would pour down His judgments on the wicked. The people laughed at Noah. They could not think of anything more ridiculous than a man to build a huge boat in the middle of the land, far away from the sea. Their laughters did not worry Noah for he was a faithful man. He patiently continued with his God-given task.

THE ARK OF SAFETY COMPLETED — THE FLOOD COVERED THE EARTH: Genesis 7

Because Noah loved God, he was invited to enter the ark, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation" (v. 1). Eight persons, Noah and his wife, his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth and their wives, entered the ark to wait and to be saved from the dreadful punishment that was to come upon all these evil people. Animals and birds had also been brought in as God had instructed. Seven pairs each of clean beasts and one pair of unclean beasts. Seven pairs of all the birds ("fowls of the air"). God finally shut the door. Then seven days later the rain began and continued for 40 days and 40 nights (v. 12). The waters rose until they had completely covered all the high mountains. "All flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man" (v. 21).

After the rain stopped, Noah had to remain in the ark until all was safe and the land was dry again. In the meantime the water covered the earth and the ark moved in safety over the waters. About eight months later Noah opened a window in the ark and sent out a raven and then a dove. The raven did not return but the dove returned, because there was "no rest for the sole of her foot". Seven days later she was again sent out and this time returned with an olive leaf, so Noah knew the water was slowly drying up, for the tops of the trees had begun to show.

Finally, seven days later, the dove was sent out again and this time did not return. Noah and his family had been in the ark a little over one

year when at last God spoke to Noah saying, “Go forth of the ark” (8:15-16). So they came out of the ark and brought out the animals, birds and creeping things, onto the dry land and went forth to “breed abundantly in the earth and be fruitful and multiply upon the earth” (v. 17).

NOAH GIVES THANKS TO GOD — GOD’S PROMISE: Genesis 8:20-22

The first thing Noah did was to build an altar and make a sacrifice to God. This pleased God and He blessed Noah and made a covenant with him. A covenant is a special agreement between two people or between God and a man (or a nation), as a sign that God will keep His promise. God cannot break a promise. The rainbow in the sky, which appears today in rainy weather, became a sign that never again would a flood destroy all creatures upon the earth: as God said, “neither will I again smite any more every living thing, as I have done” (vv. 21-22).

From the creation of Adam to the flood was about 1,656 years. The flood covered the earth in about BC 2348. From Shem, Ham and Japheth, after the flood, came ALL the peoples of the earth. All other living things had died in the flood, and this was now a new start.

LESSON FOR US

As we have seen from this lesson, when the world became filled with wickedness and violence, God punished the inhabitants of the earth by destroying them with a flood. Jesus warned his disciples that the world would again be filled with wickedness in the days just before his return to the earth (Matt. 24:37-39). “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall also the coming of the son of man be.” He said that people would go on living in their sinful ways, not taking any notice of his warning or expecting his return. We must thank God that He has taught us that Jesus Christ will return soon and so we must prepare ourselves for that day, by learning God’s way from the Bible and obeying Him. Only righteous people will be saved and given eternal life to rule with Jesus Christ in the Kingdom. All those who are wicked and disobedient will be destroyed.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

We must remember that Jesus Christ is our **Ark of Safety** and we

must enter through the door by baptism (Gal. 3:27). The “ark” of baptism is a place of protection and salvation. God will save all who are baptised into Jesus Christ and who keep His commandments; and we have an invitation to come to Him in this way (Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9).

The flood was a symbol of baptism. It washed away the sins of the old world so that there could be a new beginning. “Eight souls were saved by water, the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us” (1 Pet. 3:20-21; Acts 4:12; Mark 16:16).

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- 1. What were the descendants of Cain like?
- 2. What were the descendants of Seth like?
- o 3. After the descendants of Seth had married the descendants of Cain what were the people like?
- 4. What did God decide to do to all the wicked people?
- o 5. Were there any good people in the earth at all?
- o 6. When God saw so much wickedness on the earth, what two things did He tell Noah to do?
- 7. When the ark was finished, who went in?
- o 8. When did the rain begin?
- o 9. How long did it rain for?
- 10. How long did Noah have to stay in the ark?
- 11. How did God show Noah that He would never again destroy all the people by a flood?

Detailed Answers

- *1. Why did God send a flood upon the earth in the time of Noah?
- *2. How did God save Noah from the flood?
- 3. Why did God put the rainbow in the sky after the flood and what did it mean to Noah?
- 4. What is a covenant?
- 5. What did Noah and his sons have to do after the flood?
- 6. What warning did Jesus give to his disciples from the lesson of the flood?

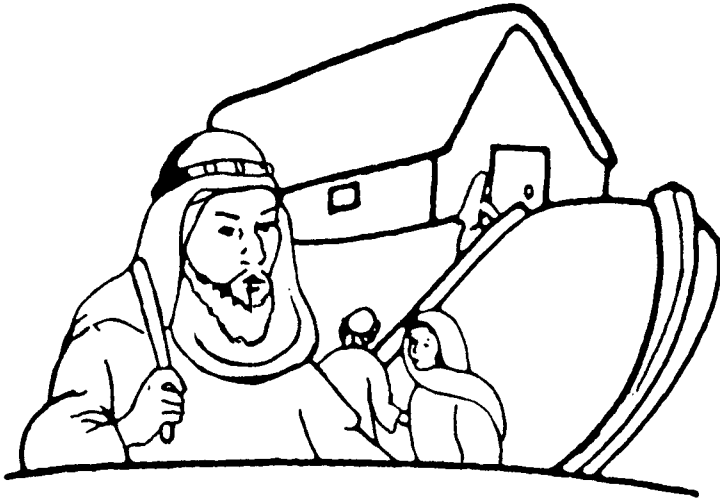
Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

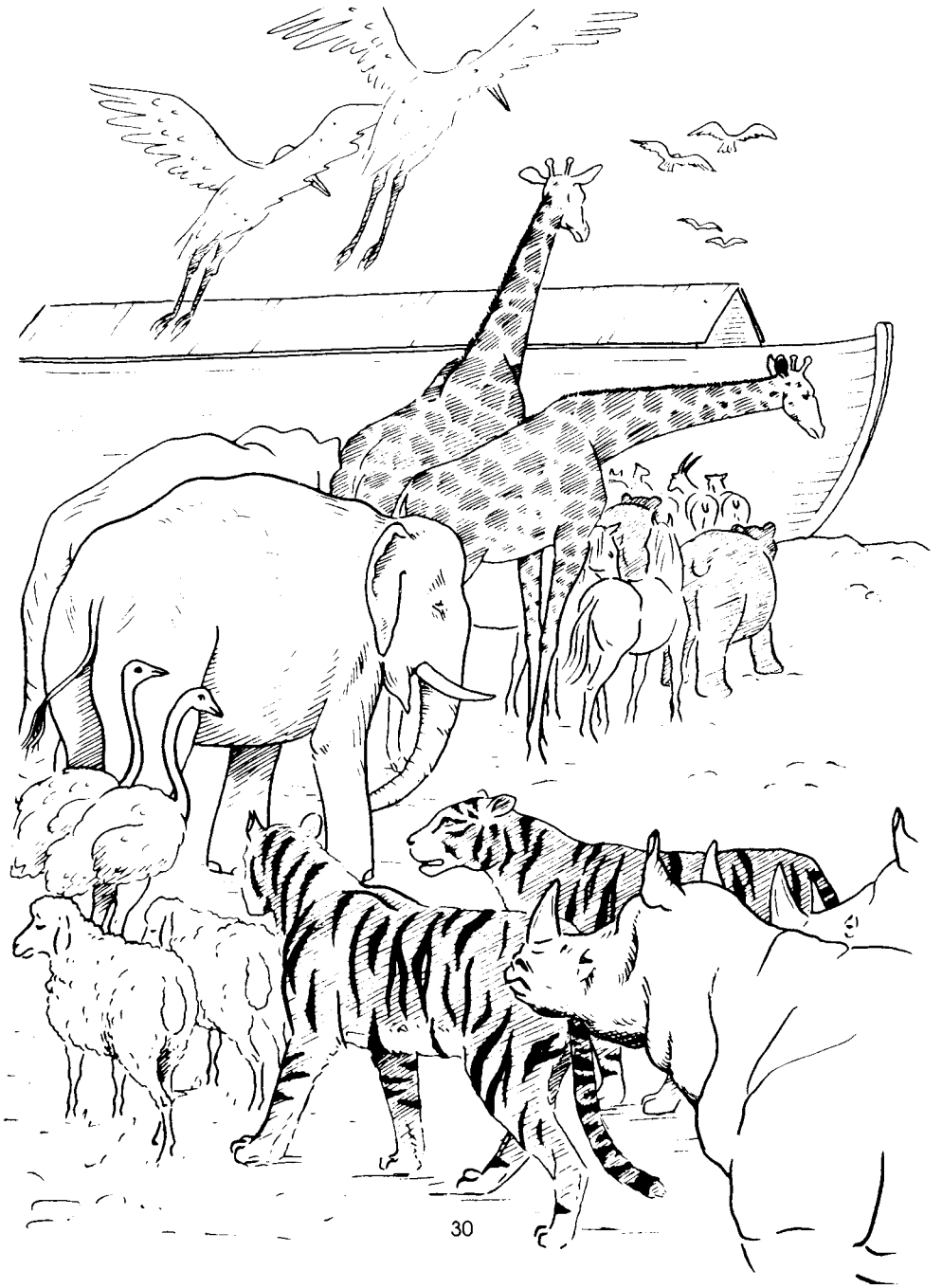
7. Tell the story of Noah and how he went into the ark.
8. How can we enter into an “ark of safety”?
9. Finish this quotation — “As it was in the days of Noah

What does this quotation mean?

Teacher’s Reference Library

- “The Visible Hand of God” — R. Roberts — chapter 5.
“Ur of the Chaldees” — C. Leonard Woolley — Chapter 1.





6. THE CALL OF ABRAM

“In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

Aim

To learn the promises God made to Abram, and what they mean.

People soon forgot the lesson of the flood and their wickedness again increased as they turned to the worship of idols. Abram dwelt in Ur of the Chaldees, close to the city of Babylon. Ur was one of the chief cities of Chaldea, with a magnificent ziggurat—temple where the people worshipped the moon god. Throughout that land the people bowed down to many gods—the sun, moon and stars and many others. The leaders in this false worship were magicians and astrologers like those later spoken of in Daniel 4:7.

Genesis 11:26-32; 12:1-10

THE FAMILY OF ABRAM LEAVE UR: Genesis 11:31-12:1

Abram was not taught the Truth from boyhood, for his parents worshipped idols as did the people around them. “Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood (i.e. of the River Euphrates) in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor, and they served other gods” (Josh. 24:2-4). Later however “Terah took Abram his son, Lot and Sarai and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees **to go into the land of Canaan**, and they came into Haran, and dwelt there” (Gen. 11:31).

In Acts 7:2-4 we are told why they left Ur and travelled north to Haran. God had spoken to Abram in Ur, telling him to leave that place and go to a land that He would show him. Terah, his father, and the rest of his family were obviously willing to go too. But when they reached Haran, they would go no further. There they all stayed until Terah died. Then Abram, in obedience to God’s command — “Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee” (Gen. 12:1), taking Sarai, his wife and Lot, his nephew, with their flocks, herds and possessions, he crossed over the river. So doing, he became known as “Abram the Hebrew”, which means “crosser-over” (Gen. 14:13). He thus began a new life.

ABRAM’S SECOND CALL AND GOD’S WONDERFUL PROMISE: Genesis 12:2-4

God spoke to Abram again in Haran. He gave the first great and

wonderful promise to Abram recorded in Genesis 12:2-3. God promised Abram that:

- a) He would become a great nation.
- b) His name would be great and he would become a blessing.
- c) God would bless those who blessed him and curse those who cursed him.
- d) In Abram, all families of the earth would be blessed. *1 Peter 3:9*

Truly this was a great promise. Abram, with great faith and courage, being 75 years of age, gathered his family Sarai, his wife (later called Sarah), Lot his nephew, his herdsmen and servants, and crossed the River Euphrates into the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:4).

The apostle Paul speaks of the great faith of Abram in Heb. 11:8, "By faith, Abraham, when he was called to go into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went."

ABRAM IN THE PROMISED LAND: Genesis 12:5-10

Abram and his family entered the land of Canaan and travelled to Shechem (v. 6), where he built an altar and worshipped God, no doubt thanking him for his safe journey. There God made a further promise saying, "Unto thy seed will I give this land (v.7). From Shechem, they travelled south to Bethel, and he built another altar there. He continued through the land, but because there was a severe famine in the land of Canaan he entered into Egypt and dwelt there for a time.

It had been a long journey from Ur in Chaldea, and there were still more kilometres to cover on the return journey to Canaan. God had said, "Unto thy seed will I give this land". Until this day, Abram and his seed have not received that land. But what God has promised, He will surely fulfil (see Acts 7:5). Abram will be raised from the dead, at the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and then he will receive the land promised to him and to his seed many centuries ago.

LESSON FOR US

During his travels, Abram built altars to offer worship to God, giving Him praise and thanks for the knowledge of His truth, and calling upon God to fulfil His will. We do the same today when we pray for God's Kingdom to come, and for the return to earth of Jesus Christ our Lord. Abram believed God's promises and we must do the same. He is a

wonderful example to us of faith (believing God) and obedience.

When Abram left Ur, he had left behind him his old way of life. No longer did he dwell in a comfortable house, surrounded by all the luxuries of life. Now he was a tent-dweller, “a stranger and a pilgrim in the earth” (Heb. 11:13). God had promised him the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, but he knew that this would not be fulfilled till after his resurrection. So he was content to wander through that land as a stranger, dwelling in tents all his life, until God should make him possess the land forever.

Although God does not expect us to leave our homes and go and live in tents, He does want us to show the same **faith** as Abram. He wants us to place no importance on the comfort and luxuries of life, but to look forward with joy to the happy time when we shall live in the land with Abram and all the faithful men and women of old.

We must stand apart from the ways of the world, just as Abram separated himself from the ways of the Canaanites and serve the living God in faithful obedience.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

“Crossing over” the River Euphrates meant leaving behind the wickedness and idolatry of Babylon to being a new life. The same thing happens to us when we are baptised into Christ: “We also should walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4). We leave the ways of the world to begin a new life. Although Abram was the “heir of the world” (Rom. 4:13), he received “no inheritance” of it during his lifetime (Acts 7:5), but was “a stranger and a pilgrim” there (Heb. 11:8-9). His faith was a pattern for all God’s people (Rom. 4:23-24). Although they also are “heirs of the world”, they must not seek after the attractions it offers in this day and age, but are to wait in patience for the Lord’s return from heaven.

The promise God made to Abram in Genesis 12:3 (“In thee shall all nations be blessed”) was the Gospel (Gal. 3:8). The Gospel means “good news” or “glad tidings”. The good news is, that through the seed of Abram (Jesus Christ) even we who are Gentiles can become related to Abram through baptism. When we are baptised we become part of the great family of God to which Abram belonged and therefore heirs of the promises of God made to him.

The Jewish people, now scattered because of their sins, will become a great nation (Gen. 12:2), when the redeemer (Jesus Christ) shall

come to Zion “and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob” (Rom. 11:26, Isa. 59:20).

So Jews and Gentiles shall be blessed together with faithful Abram when the Kingdom of God is established and the Lord Jesus Christ reigns as king over all the earth. It will be a glorious era of peace and happiness for all nations: “His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed” (Psa. 72:17).

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- # 1. Where did Abram and his family first live?
- ¥ 2. Did Abram and his family worship the true God there?
- ‡ 3. Why did Abram leave his home town?
- ↵ 4. Where did God want Abram to go to?
- ✓ 5. Who crossed over the River Euphrates with Abram?
- * 6. Why did Abram live in a tent in the land of Canaan?
- ↵ 7. Why did Abram go down into Egypt?

Detailed Answers

1. Describe Abram’s journey from Ur to the promised land.
2. What did God promise Abram in Gen. 12:2-3?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

3. When will the promise to Abram be fulfilled?
4. What is the good news which was preached to Abram?

7. THE SEPARATION OF ABRAM AND LOT

“Lo, the smoke of the country went up as a furnace.”

Aim

To show that Abram was faithful and Lot was foolish.

Abram and Lot had travelled through the land of Canaan but because of famine they continued on to Egypt in the south. There they lived for a time (Gen. 12:10). On their return, they pitched their tents between Bethel and Hai. Both were now very rich in “cattle, silver and gold”.

Genesis 13; 19:1-30 and 21; 2 Peter 2:6-8

ABRAM AND LOT DECIDE TO PART: Genesis 13:3-10

When Abram and Lot returned from Egypt, they faced real problems. Their herds and flock had increased and they needed more pasture but “the land was not able to bear them that they might dwell together” (v. 6). It was not long before the herdsmen of Abram and Lot quarrelled. Abram could see that the only thing for them to do was to go their separate ways. God had promised the land as a possession to Abram’s children — “unto thy seed will I give this land” (12:7) — but he would not use this promise as a cause of quarrelling between him and Lot. So Abram gave Lot the opportunity to choose whichever part of the land he wanted to dwell in saying: “Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself I pray thee from me . . . And Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere” (vv. 9-10). He saw the beautiful stretch of country before him and he was impressed. So Lot made his choice. It seemed so obvious to choose the green pastures near the Jordan. Life would surely be much easier down there. He said goodbye to Abram and set off to the east.

Abram was content. As a true pilgrim looking for the glorious Kingdom of God, he was satisfied with whatever God gave him. Everyday he called upon “the name of the LORD” (v. 4), knowing that He would provide for him.

Note how different Abram’s attitude was to Lot’s. Lot desired the things that appealed to the eyes, but Abram put his trust in **God**, who blessed him greatly. The Lord Jesus teaches us this lesson plainly:

“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matt. 6:33).

THE CHOICE OF LOT: Genesis 13:11-13 AND THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM: Genesis 19:1-29

Lot made his choice and finally went to live in the city of Sodom. “But the men of Sodom were sinners before the LORD exceedingly” (v. 13). It was unwise of him to choose to live among such evil people. No doubt he thought he could live separately from them and we know that he always hated their evil ways (2 Pet. 2:7-8). But although Lot himself never behaved like the people of Sodom, they were a bad influence on his family. His wife and children soon became friendly with the people of Sodom. Some of his daughters even married men of Sodom. When, later on, the angels of God came to bring them out before God destroyed the whole place, none of Lot’s family wanted to leave. They had grown to love the people and the way of life and had quite forgotten the great promises that Abram trusted in.

But God did punish all the wicked people in Sodom by destroying the city and its inhabitants with earthquake and fire. God “rained brimstone and fire from heaven” and the cities were “turned into ashes” (2 Peter 2:6). Two angels visited Abram and told him what God was going to do to Sodom. Abram was fearful for Lot and prayed for him and God was merciful. Lot and his two daughters were saved out of that terrible destruction (Gen. 19:29-30). Lot’s wife could also have been saved but they had been told not to look behind them as they ran from Sodom and she disobeyed. She found it hard to leave the worldly life of Sodom and the friends she had made there and she was punished by being turned into a pillar of salt. It is a very foolish thing to disregard what God says we ought to do. Those who treat God’s Word lightly always end up being unhappy, but great happiness comes to those who obey.

THE CHOICE OF ABRAM: Genesis 13:14-17

God was pleased with the unselfishness and faith shown by Abram. Now He made a further wonderful promise to him. Read Genesis 13:14-17. “Lift up now thine eyes,” said God, “and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest to thee will I give it, and to thy

seed forever.”

Remember our last lesson. We found out then that Abram did not inherit any of this land while he lived. However the promise of God still stands. The land belongs to Abram and his seed for an everlasting possession (Rom. 4:13). Abram is now dead. But Jesus (who is the seed of Abram) will return, and will raise the dead and reward the faithful. At that time Abram will receive his inheritance, together with all those who have shown the same faith as Abram (Gal. 3:29).

THE SON OF PROMISE — ISAAC: Genesis 17:15-22; 21:1-5

When Abram received this promise, he did not have any children. Both he and Sarai were growing old and because it seemed to Sarai that she was not going to have any children, she thought Abram might have a son if he married Hagar, her bondmaid. So Hagar was given to Abram as his wife, and eventually gave birth to a son, called Ishmael. He was not to be the promised seed to Abram, however, for God said **Sarai** would bear Abram a son, named Isaac, (which means “laughter”, or “joy”) (v. 19). Sarai’s name would be changed to **Sarah** and Abram’s name to **Abraham** — “for a **father of many nations** have I made thee” (vv. 5,15). Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah ten years younger when at long last she gave birth to the promised son.

Many years had passed since leaving Ur before the promised son was born. The faith of Abraham and Sarah brushed aside the problems they met. To them God was real and He did not disappoint them. In the son born to them, they could see another step in the fulfilment of God’s promise. They knew that from Isaac would come the promised seed through whom all nations of the earth would be blessed (v. 18).

LESSON FOR US

What a wonderful promise God has made! He has promised that people can become heirs with Abraham of eternal life upon this earth. Let us look forward to the great change which will take place upon the earth when the Lord Jesus Christ returns. Then Abraham and all those who have been baptised into Christ and have lived faithfully will inherit the world together with them.

Remember too Lot’s mistake in choosing what looked easy and good to him, but was very evil, and nearly cost him his life. Evil com-

panions turn us from the ways of God and make us evil (see Psa. 119:63). Rather let us be like Abraham, who trusted in God to care for him and provide what was necessary.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

THE SEED PROMISED

Consider the promises to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 and Genesis 13:14-17. They were made not only to Abraham but also to his SEED or son. God had promised Abraham a particular seed. Through a long line of descendants we can trace the family of Abraham to Jesus Christ many years later (Matt. 1:1). "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made: He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, **And to thy seed, which is Christ**" (Gal 3:16). We can belong to Abraham's family by being joined to Jesus Christ through baptism. "For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ.... and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29).

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- ✱ 1. Why did the herdsmen of Abram and Lot quarrel?
- ✱ 2. Where did Lot choose to go?
- ✱ 3. Where did Abram choose to live?
 4. Why was God pleased with Abram?
- 5. What were the men of Sodom like?
 6. How did God punish the people of Sodom?
 7. God promised Abram the land of Canaan. When will Abram live forever in the promised land?
- 8. Who is the seed promised to Abraham?
 9. What does the name Abraham mean?
- 10. Who was the **son** promised to Abraham and Sarah and what does his name mean?

Detailed Answers

1. Why did Lot leave Abram to live in a different part of the land?
2. Lot went to live in Sodom after he separated from Abram. Tell what happened to him and to the rest of the people in the city? What lessons do we learn from this?
- *3. Abram pleased God and because of his faith, received great promises. What was the promise God made to Abram after he had separated from Lot?
4. Abraham had two sons. Which son of Abraham was the “son of promise” and why?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

5. God made Abram a great promise. When Lot separated from Abram and went to Sodom, what was the promise? Explain how and when this will be fulfilled.
6. How can we share in the same promises made to Abram?



8. ABRAHAM OFFERS ISAAC

“By faith, Abraham when he was tried, offered up Isaac.”

Aim

To show how God tested Abraham and found him faithful.

Abraham was 86 years old when Ishmael was born (Gen. 16:16). It was not until 13 years later that God told Abraham that he and Sarah would have a son, whom they would call Isaac (Gen. 17:15-22). And so it came to pass as God had promised (Gen. 21:2,3).

Genesis 22:1-19

GOD TESTS THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM: Genesis 22:1-8

We can imagine the great joy Isaac brought to his parents. They had waited so long for him. As they watched him grow up, loving God's Word, and obedient to His truth, they saw him developing into a man fit to receive the blessing of God. We too can be like Isaac, believing and trusting in God, for we have His instructions in the Scriptures to show us how to live.

The years passed and Isaac grew to be a young man. Then, when the lives of Abraham and Sarah were made happy and full by the presence of their dutiful and obedient son, God said, “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Gen. 22:2). What a test of faith. Notice how God recognised Abraham's love for Isaac, calling him “thine only son whom thou lovest”. How heavy the heart of Abraham must have felt as he thought of slaying his beloved son of promise. But, though his love for Isaac was great, his love for God was greater. He realised the great truth that we must all remember that love for man must never take the place of the love of God. So Abraham willingly obeyed God's command and went to give his son for a sacrifice. He knew that even if Isaac died, God would raise him to life again and so fulfil the promise that had to come through him, for, God had said, **“In Isaac shall thy seed be called”** (Gen. 21:12).

Abraham did not hesitate. Early next morning he rose, made all the necessary preparations, and set out with Isaac and two young men for

Moriah, a distance of three days' journey. They took with them everything for a sacrifice, except the offering. That puzzled Isaac; so he asked, "My father, behold the fire and wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering" (vv. 7,8).

Before they got to the place God had appointed, Abraham left the young men behind, saying, "I and the lad will go yonder and worship and come again to you". It is clear that Abraham expected Isaac to return with him. But what if Isaac died? Abraham really believed that he would die, but he saw in Isaac the promised seed, and he knew God would raise him from the dead (see Heb. 11:19). They climbed the mountain alone. The Bible says, "They went both of them together". The father and his son were united together in a common purpose.

GOD PROVIDES AN OFFERING: Genesis 22:9-14

The altar was made ready and the wood laid in place. Abraham took Isaac, tied him up and lifted him onto the altar. He then stretched out his hand to take the knife to slay his son. Suddenly the silence was broken by an angel of God calling his name: "Abraham, Abraham!" Quickly he replied, "Here am I", and he was told, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, for now I know that thou fearest God" (vv. 9-12). Abraham looked around and turning, saw behind him a ram caught in a bush. God had provided Himself a sacrifice; so Abraham went and took the ram and offered it instead of his son (v. 13).

GOD BLESSES FAITHFUL ABRAHAM: Genesis 22:15-19

The angel called to Abraham a second time after he offered the ram upon the altar. He told Abraham that because of his great faith, God would

- *a) bless him;
- *b) give him a numerous seed, "as the stars of heaven";
- c) give his seed power to conquer and rule "in the gate of his enemies";
- d) bring peace and happiness to the world again, "for in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed".

So that faithful man Abraham and the son whom he loved, returned to the young men they had left waiting with the ass. God had shown His love for them and they rejoiced together in the promises He had

made. Now, as to these promises, they will all be fulfilled when Jesus comes again, for he is Abraham's seed (Gal. 3:16) with those who follow his example (Gal. 3:26-29). Abraham will be raised from the dead to receive God's blessing forever, together with all who are faithful to the things of God (Gal. 3:7,8).

LESSON FOR US

God made such wonderful promises to Abraham "because", He said, "thou hast obeyed my voice" (22:18). Once again we learn the simple lesson, that God wants us to **believe and obey** Him. It is a simple lesson, but we all know how hard it is sometimes to obey. Other things often seem more tempting and then we disobey. The choice seems hard. How hard it must have been for Abraham to believe that God really would look after Isaac; but he did believe and we must have that same faith.

Let us try, in all the little things our parents ask us to do to obey. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right" (Eph. 6:1). By obeying our parents we are pleasing God and He will accept us as His children.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

What Abraham had done in offering Isaac, pointed forward to what God would do in offering His only Son as a sacrifice to save us from sin and death. He died just outside Jerusalem near the same spot where Isaac was laid on the altar. Jesus died, but God raised him from the dead to die no more (Rom. 6:9). His resurrection is the guarantee that Abraham and Isaac will also be raised and God will give them all that He has promised.

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

1. What was the name of Hagar's son?
- *2. Was Hagar's son the seed God promised to Abraham?
3. How did God test Abraham's faith?
4. Where did Isaac and his father journey for the sacrifice?
5. How long did it take?
6. What did Abraham say to the young men who went with him and Isaac?

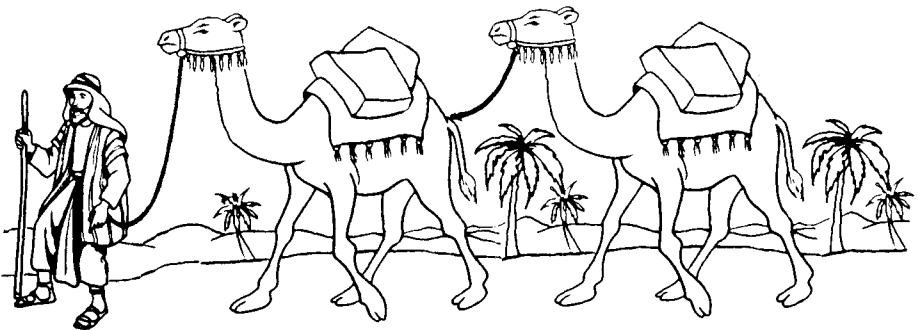
7. What did Abraham offer instead of Isaac?
8. Who provided the sacrifice?
- *9. Who was the great seed through whom God would bless ALL nations?
10. What two things did Abraham do that we must also do?

Detailed Answers

- *1. Abraham was called the “father of the faithful”. Tell the story of how God tested Abraham’s great faith by asking him to kill his son Isaac.
2. Because Abraham would willingly have offered his beloved son Isaac as a sacrifice, God made some wonderful promises to him.
 - a) What were the promises?
 - b) When will God fulfil all these promises to Abraham?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

3. Isaac went obediently with his father Abraham to Moriah.
 - a) Who was the greater than Isaac who obeyed his Father and became a willing sacrifice?
 - b) Did Abraham believe his son Isaac would receive his life again if he sacrificed him?
 - c) Why did he have such confidence to believe this fact?





9. CHOOSING A WIFE FOR ISAAC

“Isaac took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her.”

Aim

To show that we must seek God’s help in choosing life-long companions.

Abraham was now an old man. Sarah his wife had died when she was 127 years old. The promises were “to Abraham and to his seed”. They would have to come to pass through Isaac, and then through his children and so on until the time came when Jesus would be brought forth as Abraham’s seed (Matt. 1:1; Gal. 3:16). Because of this, Abraham was anxious that Isaac should have a suitable wife. In Abraham’s day it was the custom for the parents to arrange marriages for their children and usually the couple did not meet until the wedding took place. It was necessary that Isaac’s wife should be a worshipper of Abraham’s God, to help him throughout their life together. The people of Canaan were wicked and Abraham did not want Isaac to marry a Canaanite. He then remembered his own people living in Haran and he decided that he should seek there for a suitable bride for Isaac (Gen. 24:4).

Genesis 24

ELIEZER SENT TO FIND ISAAC A WIFE: Genesis 24:1-7

Abraham had a very trustworthy servant, Eliezer, who was “ruler over all that he had”. He was called into the tent of Abraham and given the task of seeking a bride for Isaac.

He had to make a solemn promise: “Thou shalt not take a wife unto my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell” (v. 3). It was an extremely difficult task. A long journey lay before him to Haran, where, even to find the right wife and encourage her to travel many long miles to marry a man she did not know, might be impossible. What if she would not come with Eliezer? Should he take Isaac back to Haran? No. Abraham was very definite about that — “Bring not my son thither (to that place) again”. He reminded his servant of the promise of God that “his seed” would inherit this land and his son must stay in the land and dwell there (v. 7).

ELIEZER MEETS REBEKAH: Genesis 24:7-24

The faithful servant set off, remembering the solemn promise he had made to Abraham to bring back a wife for Isaac because his family must remain in the land. On the long journey he was accompanied by ser-

vants on ten camels, bearing beautiful gifts of jewels and clothing, as it was the custom for a very rich man like Abraham to send presents to the family of the bride.

Abraham had encouraged Eliezer by telling him that God would help him in his task. “He shall send his angel before thee and thou shalt take a wife for my son from thence (from that place).”

At evening time on the last day of his journey, he rested at the well outside the city of Haran and watched the girls of the city come to draw water. He offered a prayer to God that he might be given a sign to find the right girl. He was to watch for a maiden who would give him a drink of water and offer to water his camels also (v. 14).

Even before he had finished praying, Rebekah appeared, and when the servant asked for a drink she offered to water his camels also. It seemed as though God had answered his prayer almost immediately. When she had finished her task, he gave her some of the valuable gifts he had brought and asked her, “Whose daughter art thou?” (v. 23). How pleased he was when he found that she came from the very family he was seeking. Here before him was the bride for Isaac. Eliezer was indeed thankful to God, and his faith had been rewarded. God had answered his prayer. *and notes 1*

ELIEZER ARRANGES THE MARRIAGE: Genesis 24:25-51

Rebekah led Abraham’s servant to her home and family, and to her brother Laban. That evening there was much talking, and the servant was anxious to tell why he had come even before he ate any food. “I will not eat until I have told mine errand” (v. 33). He spoke of his master, Abraham, and of his great wealth, “flocks, herds, silver and gold”, and how he had been guided by God to Rebekah. Laban and his family agreed that she should return with the servant. “Let her be thy master’s son’s wife, as the LORD hath spoken” (v. 51).

REBEKAH MEETS ISAAC: Genesis 24:63-67

Rebekah was willing to return with Eliezer to Canaan. With faith and trust, she departed with her maidens and Deborah her nurse, on the long journey into an unknown land to marry Isaac, whom she had not seen. Rebekah separated herself from her family and crossed over the river to become a “Hebrew”. She followed in the footsteps of Abraham to be joined to Isaac as his bride and faithful companion. When they

drew near to the camp, Rebekah saw Isaac walking in the fields, and quickly placed her veil over her face. This was the custom of the time to show that she was modest and as a sign that she should be a dutiful wife.

Isaac and Rebekah were married immediately, and there was great joy in the household of Abraham.

LESSON FOR US

Marriage may seem a long way off to younger ones, but it takes a long time to understand the importance of choosing the right husband or wife. Only God's Word will help us to make the right choice. Read the Bible everyday with your family to find out how God wants you to grow up. Then you will know how to choose friends who are right for you.

Always choose your friends carefully — never mix with those who will lead you away from God's ways, but choose friends who love God and are trying to learn His Word and obey Him too.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

1. **Eliezer's Mission** — Abraham's servant showed himself to be a man of faith, making his task a matter of prayer and waiting for God's guidance (Gen. 24:12-14). He did not choose Rebekah for her beauty (v. 16), but because God gave the sign that He had chosen her for Isaac (vv. 15-20). When God answered his prayers, "he bowed his head and worshipped the LORD" (vv. 26,52).

2. **The Importance of Wise Marriage** — Marriage is a life-long contract, and we must be careful that the best choice is made, prayerfully seeking God's help in the matter. The important things to remember are:

- a) A man and his wife should have the same beliefs so that the home will not be divided, and great joy will be shared in the worship of God. Read Proverbs 18:22: "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of Yahweh".
- b) True beauty is that which is in the heart. It is shown by obedience to God and in loving thoughtful actions towards others.

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- * 1. Who was sent on an important errand by Abraham?
2. Where did Abraham send his servant to seek a wife for Isaac?
3. What did Eliezer take with him on the journey?
- * 4. Whose help did the servant ask so that he might choose a good partner for his master's son?
- * 5. What was the sign Eliezer asked for to find the right wife for Isaac?
- * 6. Where did Rebekah go to live?
- * 7. Where did Rebekah first see Isaac?

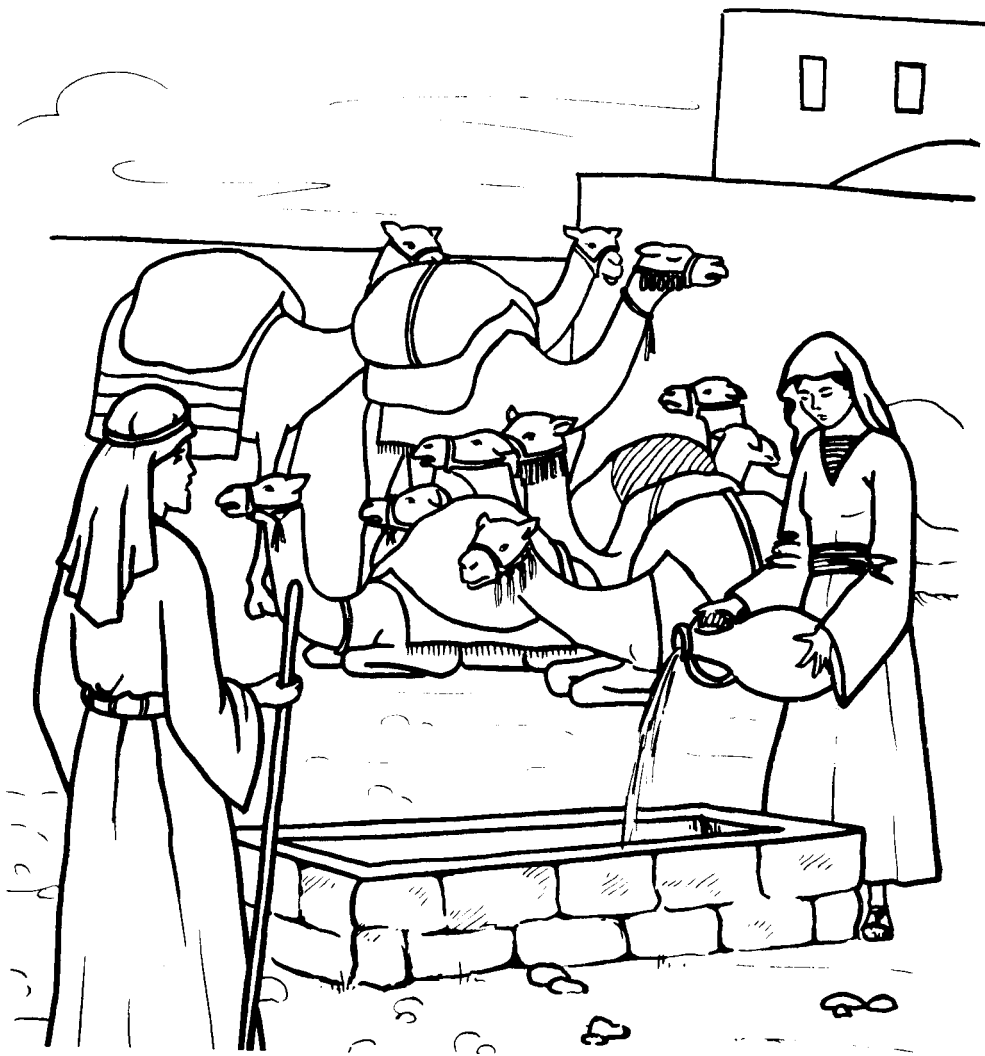
Detailed Answers

1. Why was it necessary to journey so far to find a suitable wife for Isaac?
2. What important lesson do we learn from the story of choosing a wife for Isaac?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

3. Abraham's servant wanted help to choose a wife for Isaac.
 - a) What did he do?
 - b) How did he know which girl was to be the right one?
4. What lessons do we learn from this story about choosing friends and especially about choosing a husband or wife?





10. JACOB AND ESAU — THE BIRTHRIGHT AND THE BLESSING

“Isaac loved Esau because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.”

Aim

To show why God loved Jacob more than Esau.

God made wonderful promises to Abraham and later repeated them to Isaac, the son of promise. It was at the time when Isaac was dwelling in Philistine country that God spoke to him. “And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 26:3-5). Note particularly v. 5 — it refers to Abraham as the man “who obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes and my laws”.

And regarding Isaac, he “waxed great and went forward for he had possession of flocks and possession of herds, and great store of servants”. Finally, Isaac dwelt in Beersheba (Gen. 26:23).

Genesis 25:23-34; 27

ESAU AND JACOB: Genesis 25:23-28

These were the twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah (Gen. 25:25,26). Before the babies were born, God told Rebekah that from these two boys would come “two nations....two manner of people;... and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger” (v. 23).

Esau the elder was a cunning hunter, a man of the field. He was self-willed and quick-tempered, and in Heb. 12:16, he is described as a “profane” person, that is, someone who was not at all interested in pleasing God. He was too busy enjoying life as a hunter to be bothered to stop to think about God. However he was Isaac’s favourite son and his father loved the venison that he prepared for him (v. 28).

Jacob was quite different, being quiet and peaceful, “a plain (or upright) man, dwelling in tents”. This was the man God chose. He was his mother’s favourite. Through this man (Jacob), came the people of Israel who became God’s chosen people. “The LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself” (Deut. 7:6).

ESAU SELLS HIS BIRTHRIGHT: Genesis 25:29-34

Esau as the firstborn or eldest, was the heir to twice as much of his father's goods as Jacob, but this privilege, which was known as the birthright, did not concern him much until later. One day Esau came in from hunting, tired and hungry, and saw his brother Jacob, cooking some food. It was just what he wanted and he asked Jacob for a bowl of the food. Quickly Jacob made a bargain with him. "Sell me this day thy birthright" (v. 31). So Esau exchanged his birthright, his special privilege in the family, for a bowl of food. "What profit shall this birthright do to me?" he said. (cp Heb.12:16) Such was his lack of interest in the precious gift of inheritance that he would give it away to his younger brother for bread and a bowl of pottage. (vv. 33-34)

ISAAC BLESSES HIS SONS AND GIVES JACOB THE GREATER BLESSING: Genesis 27:1-29

Years later, Isaac was going blind. He feared he would soon die, and wanted to bless his sons. He loved the venison that Esau hunted, and asked that he might have some before giving his blessing to his elder son. "Make me savoury meat such as I love."

So Esau took his bow and arrows to kill a deer for his father (vv. 1-5).

Rebekah overheard what Isaac had said to Esau, and she set out to make sure that it would be Jacob, not Esau, who would receive the blessing. She told Jacob to kill two young goats from which **she** would make savoury meat. Jacob was to dress in Esau's clothes and put the hairy goat skins on his hands and the smooth part of his neck, and to appear before his father so that Isaac would think he was Esau. (Remember that Esau was a "hairy man" and Jacob a "smooth man".) Hurriedly, they finished all their preparations before Esau returned from the fields. Isaac was a little surprised to learn that his venison was prepared so quickly, but Jacob lied to him and assured him that he was Esau. Isaac thought his voice sounded different. "The voice is Jacob's, but the hands are the hands of Esau." Satisfied that all was well, he blessed Jacob. "God give thee of the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee" (Gen. 27:28-29).

So Jacob was blessed. God had shown Rebekah that "the elder shall

serve the younger” (Gen. 25:23), but Rebekah was impatient. She thought that if she did not act quickly God would not be able to fulfil His promise! If only she had waited all the trouble that followed her deceitful plan would not have come upon her family.

ESAU IS ANGRY: Genesis 27:30-46

Jacob had only just gone out when Esau returned to seek the blessing from his father. How angry he was when he found out that Jacob had tricked him. Jacob was rightly named a “supplanter”, for he had now both the birthright and the blessing. Esau pleaded with Isaac to bless him too, but there was very little that Isaac could say except that, “By thy word shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother” (Gen. 27:40).

Esau now revealed his true character. He planned to kill Jacob as soon as his father died. Encouraged by Rebekah, Jacob realised that the time had come for him to leave home. Isaac too could see that it was wise for Jacob to flee. So he instructed him to depart for Haran to his mother’s people and marry a suitable wife from among them for, like Abraham, he realised how important it was that his son marry a godly woman. (Esau had married women of Canaan which greatly disappointed Isaac and Rebekah, Gen. 26:34-35). Before he left, Isaac prayed that God would give Jacob the blessing promised to Abraham (Gen. 28:3-4).

LESSON FOR US

Esau was sorry that he had not received the blessing. “He lifted up his voice and wept” (Gen. 27:38). But he only wept for himself, hoping to make his father change his mind. There was no thought in his heart of turning to God and changing his ways. His thoughts were only for himself. He was angry and proud and his heart was wicked — and it is the heart that God looks upon (1 Sam. 16:7).

We must be sure that we do not follow the ways of Esau. We must “humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God” (1 Peter 5:6), and have respect for His Word and His promises. We also learn that it was not right for Jacob to lie to his father and deceive him as he did. In later years Jacob was brought to learn this lesson and faced many troubles in his life, as he was deceived by his father-in-law Laban, as we shall learn in later lessons. God had decided long before that Jacob should receive the blessing (Gen. 25:23), but Rebekah and Jacob interfered.

They should have waited in faith for God to work in their lives. So we must patiently trust in God, always doing what is right and true, for He will not let us down.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

Consider now the great and precious promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the birthright and the blessing which came to Jacob. In all these things we see the pattern of the future. Esau became the father of the nation of Edom, a wild and warlike people who lived by the sword and found no favour in the sight of God. On the other hand, Hebrews 11:17-20 speaks of the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in their lifetime and the promises to them that have not yet been fulfilled. Jacob was placed above Esau and received the special blessing of a firstborn son. Later, Jacob's twelve sons became the nation of Israel and God gave them a special blessing and called them His firstborn (Exod. 4:22).

In the years that followed, Israel were forced from their homeland just as Jacob was, but they are going to return, and when Jesus Christ returns they will be, like Jacob, much changed in heart. It is then that they will settle back into their land in peace: "Jacob (i.e. the nation of Israel) shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid" (Jer. 30:10).

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- *1. Who were the two sons of Rebekah?
2. What kind of man was Jacob?
- *3. What did Esau give away to Jacob in return for a bowl of food?
4. Which son received the blessing from his father?
5. What did Esau plan to do to Jacob?
6. Where did Jacob go when he ran away from Esau?
- *7. Rebekah's plan to deceive Isaac was not wise. What should she have done instead?

Detailed Answers

1. Isaac and Rebekah had twin sons. God spoke to their mother before they were born. What did God tell Rebekah about her two sons?
2. What do you know about Esau?
3. Why did Esau give Jacob his birthright?
- * 4. Tell what happened on the day Isaac blessed his sons.

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

5. Isaac was old and wanted to give a blessing to his sons. Tell the story of how Jacob gained the blessing that Isaac wanted to give to Esau.
6. What blessings did Isaac give to Jacob and Esau?
7. When will Abraham, Isaac and Jacob inherit the promises God has given?



11. JACOB'S JOURNEYS

"I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of"

Aim

To show how God loved Jacob and cared for him.

Jacob's life was threatened by Esau, and his parents urged him to flee from his home. So he took the long journey which Eliezer had taken many years before to seek a wife for Isaac. Jacob also went now to find a suitable wife who would help him in the Truth. Isaac had told him that he must not marry one of the women of Canaan, for they were godless just like people in the world today. Many years were to pass before he would see Isaac again. Meanwhile he lived with Laban and his family at Haran and worked hard for his living.

There many important things happened which have continued to be important to this very day, for in this time the family of Jacob became the nation of Israel.

Genesis 28:1-22; 29:1-30; 31:1-7,24-29

THE DREAM AT BETHEL: Genesis 28:10-22

Jacob left his home in Beersheba and travelled north. As the sun set he settled down to sleep, using stones for his pillows. He was soon asleep, but as he slept, God spoke to him in a dream. In his dreams Jacob saw a ladder, or stairway, reaching from earth into heaven and angels of God were going up and down upon it and "behold, Yahweh stood above it". Again God repeated to Jacob the promise given to Abraham and Isaac that, "thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth". God said, "Behold I am with thee and will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (v. 15). God was telling Jacob that He would be with him and his seed until the promises were fulfilled. Jacob woke up afraid at the wonderful vision he had seen. He called the place Bethel, saying, "this is none other but the house of God" (v. 17). When he arose in the morning he set up the stone he had used for a pillow as a pillar and poured oil on it. He promised to worship God all his life and give him a tenth of all his possessions (vv. 19-22).

JACOB'S MARRIAGE: Genesis 29:1-30

The next morning Jacob journeyed on and finally arrived outside Haran. There at a well, as he helped to water the sheep, he met Rachel and was invited to the house of her father Laban, the brother of Jacob's

mother, Rebekah. Laban had two daughters, Leah, the elder, and Rachel, the younger. Rachel was beautiful, and Jacob loved her deeply. He wanted to marry her and as dowry, agreed with Laban to work seven years for her — and he did so. He loved her so much that seven years seemed to fly, but when the time came, Laban deceived him and gave him Leah for his wife instead of Rachel! Remember how Jacob had deceived his father when he lied to him and said he was Esau. Now he himself was deceived by Laban and others. God was teaching him a lesson. Jacob had to work another seven years for Rachel, but such was his love for her, he willingly did so. Jacob now had two wives after doing fourteen years of hard work for Laban. Each of his wives had a handmaid, Zilpah belonging to Leah, and Bilhah to Rachel. Both of these handmaids became Jacob's wives too and mothers of his children.

Laban expected Jacob to tend the flocks, and as part of the bargain, he was allowed to keep the poorer sheep and cattle. But God blessed Jacob “and the man increased exceedingly and had much cattle and maidservants and menservants, camels and asses”. During these years Jacob had 11 sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun and Joseph. He also had one daughter named Dinah. Benjamin, his youngest son was not born until later. Altogether Jacob had 12 sons who became the fathers of the 12 tribes of Israel. Learn their names off by heart.

JACOB LEAVES LABAN: Genesis 31:1-7,24-29

Eventually, Laban's sons became jealous of Jacob and God spoke to him: “Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee” (v. 3). While Laban was away shearing his sheep, Jacob packed his camels and set out with his wives and sons. Three days later Laban found that he had gone and set out to follow him.

A week later, while Laban journeyed, God spoke to him in a dream by night and warned him to be careful how he spoke to Jacob. So when Laban found Jacob he did not harm him, but after talking the matter over, they made a solemn covenant together. Laban blessed his daughters and their sons and allowed them to continue their journey (vv. 54-55) back to the land of Canaan to the place where Isaac lived.

JACOB PREPARES TO MEET ESAU: Genesis 32

Jacob was very much afraid of his brother Esau, because of what

had happened many years earlier. Now he prepared to meet him again. He knew God's help was needed and he cried to God: "Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he come and smite me, and the mother with the children" (v. 11). He sent ahead of him cattle and goods as gifts for Esau, to stop any anger Esau might still have for him. Then that night he arose and sent his wives and children across the River Jabbok for safety and he remained there alone.

JACOB WRESTLES WITH AN ANGEL: Genesis 32:24-32

Jacob "was left alone and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day" (v. 24). This was an angel and the record tells of a great struggle between them until the angel smote Jacob's thigh, putting it out of joint and making him limp. The angel wanted him to let go, but he would not, saying, "I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me". The angel then said "What is thy name?" Jacob answered, "My name is Jacob" (i.e. heel-tripper, or supplanter) (v. 27). The angel then told him that his name would be changed from Jacob to Israel which means 'a prince with God' and he blessed him there.

JACOB MEETS ESAU: Genesis 33:1-11

In the morning he joined his family on the other side of the River Jabbok and went on to meet Esau. When Jacob saw that Esau had 400 men with him, he placed his family behind him for safety and bowed to his brother seven times. Contrary to what Jacob expected, it was a joyful meeting. Esau ran forward and hugged and kissed his brother and they both wept. Esau was very rich and did not need the presents sent by Jacob, but he accepted them graciously and they became at peace with one another. God protected Jacob and his family and as time went on they became the very large nation of Israel through whom the promises would begin to take place. Let us remember that God cares for us as He did for Jacob provided we show our love for Him in return.

LESSON FOR US

We often get back in life what we give. Jacob deceived his father about the blessing, pretending he was someone else. As he had deceived his father Isaac, so Laban deceived him in the matter of Leah. But as troubles came upon Jacob, he learned the great lesson that only

God can deliver us from the difficulties of life — Someone who cannot be seen, but who is always there ready to listen and help. In all his years of toil and travel Jacob grew older and wiser. He recognised God as his only hope. He learned to talk to God in prayer and to find that each new trouble in his life taught him yet another lesson. We can learn the same lessons that God taught Jacob if we listen to Him and learn to do what is right. Truth, honesty, patience and trust in God will please the Father and He will help us in time of trouble.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

The ladder, or staircase, that Jacob saw in his vision was a ladder of time. It reached from Jacob's time until the time when his promised seed, the Lord Jesus Christ, will rule over God's Kingdom, and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will have inherited the promises. During all that long time God's angels have watched over Jacob and his children, "the children of Israel". The angels are God's messengers who guide and guard His children all their lives (see Psa. 34:7). Jacob was very conscious of the angels working in his life (see Gen. 48:16) and, as we learned in this lesson, he even wrestled with an angel because he wanted him to stay and bless him.

We cannot see angels but they do watch over us, so long as we walk in the Truth. They are God's "ministers" or servants on behalf of all those who are "the heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14). If we continue to study God's Word and try to obey His commands, His angels will preserve us so that we may share the promised blessing with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- ✱ 1. What did Jacob dream when he slept on the stone at Bethel?
- ✱ 2. Whom did Jacob marry when he went to live with Laban?
- ✱ 3. How many sons did Jacob have altogether?
- ✱ 4. When Jacob decided to leave Laban, where did God tell him to go?
- ✱ 5. Who wrestled with Jacob at the River Jabbok?
- ✱ 6. What was Jacob's name changed to and what does it mean?
- ✱ 7. Whom did Jacob turn to when he felt frightened of meeting Esau?
- ✱ 8. Jacob was afraid to meet Esau again, but how did Esau greet him?

Detailed Answers

1. Tell about the dream Jacob had when he fell asleep at Bethel.
- *2. What are the names of Jacob's twelve sons?
- *3. Tell what happened to Jacob at the River Jabbok.

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

5. (a) Describe Jacob's dream at Bethel.
(b) What did this dream mean?





12. JOSEPH — PRISONER IN A FOREIGN LAND

“Jacob rent his clothes and mourned for his son many days and refused to be comforted.”

Aim

To show how Joseph was sold into slavery in Egypt.

Jacob had twelve sons, two of whom were the sons of his favourite wife, Rachel, Joseph (which means “the increaser”) and Benjamin. Of all his sons Jacob favoured Joseph above all others and made for him a coat of many colours. This made his brothers jealous, for such a coat set him apart from them as the firstborn of the family. As the later events in his life proved, Joseph was a godly and faithful young man, unlike his brothers, who grew to hate him.

Genesis 37, 39-40

JOSEPH’S DREAMS: Genesis 37:1-11

Not only had Jacob set Joseph apart from his brothers, but God also chose to give special dreams to him. His older brothers were already jealous of him, but this made them even more resentful. Joseph told his two dreams to his family.

“Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf” (v. 7)

His brothers were very scornful and said, “Shalt thou indeed reign over us?” (v. 8).

Then Joseph told his second dream. “Behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me” (v. 9). Even his father rebuked him this time, but knowing what a good and faithful lad he was, Jacob “observed the saying”, and took careful notice of it. God was showing Jacob’s family that Joseph would take the place of the firstborn in the family, but none of them knew just what strange events would take place in the years ahead.

JOSEPH SOLD INTO SLAVERY IN EGYPT: Genesis 37:12-28

One day Jacob told Joseph to go to Shechem to see if all was well with his brothers. They had taken a flock of sheep to feed there. When Joseph reached Shechem they had already gone on and finally he

found them at Dothan. When they saw him coming they began to plan evil against him. "Behold this dreamer cometh" they said, "let us slay him". Reuben, the eldest said, "Let us not kill him but put him in this pit" (vv. 19-22). He thought to come back and save Joseph for his father's sake.

"And it came to pass when Joseph was come unto his brethren that they stripped Joseph of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him; and they took him and cast him into a pit, and the pit was empty and there was no water in it" (vv. 23-24). Later, as they were eating, they saw a company of Ishmeelites coming from Gilead with their camels laden with goods to sell in Egypt. Judah said, "Come, let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hands be upon him for he is our brother and our flesh". So they sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver into slavery in Egypt. He was about 17 years old at this time.

JACOB'S GRIEF AT THE LOSS OF JOSEPH: Genesis 37:29-36

v. 29 When Reuben returned to the pit he found that Joseph was gone. He knew at once that his father would be distressed and he, Reuben, would be blamed. So the brothers thought of another plan. Taking Joseph's coat of many colours, they killed a kid and dipped the coat in its blood. Then they sent it back to their father, saying that they had found the coat and asked if it were Joseph's. Jacob recognised the coat at once as the one he had given his beloved young son. As the brothers had planned, Jacob supposed that a wild beast must have killed him and he mourned for many days and would not be comforted.

Meanwhile, in Egypt, the Ishmeelites had sold Joseph to Potiphar, the captain of the Egyptian guard. Joseph soon became a favourite in Potiphar's house, and was placed in charge of his house and riches because Potiphar could see that "Yahweh was with Joseph" (Gen. 39:3).

Although his brothers had treated him so hatefully, Joseph had no evil thoughts in his heart towards them. He trusted in God, even though he was now a slave in a foreign country.

JOSEPH IS CAST INTO PRISON: Genesis 39:19-23

Joseph still had many trials to face, but he always behaved very wisely and God blessed him. When Potiphar's wife falsely accused him to his master he was thrown into prison. God, however, was with

Joseph “and shewed him mercy” (v. 21). As he had found favour with Potiphar, he now also found favour in the sight of the prison-keeper, who gave him charge of all the other prisoners who were there. Whatever the difficulties, the blessing of God made Joseph prosper in everything he did.

THE BUTLER AND BAKER DREAM DREAMS: Genesis 40

The chief butler and the chief baker of the King of Egypt had offended their master. Pharaoh (i.e. the king) had them thrown into prison and there they were under Joseph’s care.

One morning Joseph noticed them looking unusually sad. They explained that they had each had a dream in the night and did not know what it meant. “Do not interpretations belong unto God?” said Joseph. “Tell me them, I pray you” (v. 8).

So first the chief butler told his dream.

“In my dream, behold, a vine was before me; and in the vine were three branches and Pharaoh’s cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh’s cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh’s hand” (vv. 9-11).

Then Joseph told the meaning of the dream. The three branches were three days and in three days’ time he would be taken out of prison and restored to his position as chief butler to Pharaoh once again. “But think on me when it shall be well with thee,” said Joseph, “and make mention of me to Pharaoh, and bring me out of this place” (v. 14).

When the chief baker heard such a happy ending to the butler’s dream, he told Joseph his dream.

“Behold, I had three white baskets on my head: and in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head” (vv. 16-17).

So Joseph interpreted the dream. The three baskets were three days and in three days’ time Pharaoh would command him to be hanged.

It happened exactly as Joseph had said. Three days later it was Pharaoh’s birthday and he restored the chief butler to the palace and the baker was hanged.

But the thing which Joseph asked the butler to do, he forgot. So Joseph remained in prison for another two years.

LESSON FOR US

What a wonderful example the young man Joseph is. He trusted in God always, enduring suffering without complaint. He returned good for evil and behaved wisely at all times, knowing that God could see him all the day long. Even in a foreign country, he remembered the God of Israel and remained faithful to Him. If we can take these lessons to heart, God will bless us and show us mercy now and give us an inheritance with Joseph in the Kingdom.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

Joseph is a **type** of the Lord Jesus Christ. This means that the life of Joseph pointed forward to the life of Jesus Christ in many interesting ways. Here are some from the lesson we have just considered.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Jacob loved Joseph more than his brethren (Gen. 37:4). | God said, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17). |
| 2. Joseph's brethren said, "Shalt thou indeed reign over us?" (Gen. 37:8). | The Jews said, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14). |
| 3. They hated him (Gen. 37:8). | They hated Jesus (John 15:25). |
| 4. They thought up an evil plan against Joseph (Gen. 37:18). | They also conspired against Jesus (Matt. 26:4). |
| 5. They said, "Let us slay him" (Gen. 27:20). | They said, "Let him be crucified" (Matt. 27:23). |
| 6. Joseph was cast into a pit and then lifted up (Gen. 37:23-28). | Jesus was crucified and then rose again (Matt. 28:5-6). |

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- #1. Jacob gave Joseph a special coat. Why did this make Joseph's brothers jealous of him?
- *2. Where did Joseph find his brothers with the sheep?
- *3. Which brother planned to rescue Joseph from the pit?
- *4. To whom did Joseph's brother's sell him and for how much?
- *5. Who bought Joseph in Egypt?
- *6. Why was Joseph placed in charge of Potiphar's household?
- *7. About how old was Joseph when he was sold as a slave?
- *8. Who had Joseph thrown into prison in Egypt?
- *9. Who else was in prison with Joseph?
- *10. How could Joseph interpret dreams?
- *11. What did Joseph ask the chief butler to remember?

Detailed Answers

1. What two dreams did Joseph have and why were his brothers angry?
2. Tell what Joseph's jealous brothers did to him when he was about 17 years old.
3. What was the dream of the chief butler and what did it mean?
4. What was the dream of the chief baker and what did it mean?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

5. In many ways the early life of Joseph was similar to the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. List some of these ways.





13. JOSEPH — RULER IN EGYPT

“Thou shalt be over my house and according with thy word shall all my people be ruled.”

Aim

To show how Joseph was brought out of prison and rose to be a ruler in Egypt.

When Joseph had, by God's power, interpreted the dreams of the chief butler and baker, he asked the butler to remember him before Pharaoh, but the butler forgot. Two full years passed. Joseph remained in prison, still faithful to God, but unable to move beyond the prison-house. Then God moved to release him and to promote him to be a ruler in Egypt. It was all part of God's purpose with Israel.

Genesis 41 and 42

THE BUTLER REMEMBERS JOSEPH: Genesis 41:1-31

One night Pharaoh, King of Egypt, had a remarkable dream. He dreamed that he stood by a river and saw seven fat kine (or cows), come up out of the river and feed in a meadow. Presently, seven thin, hungry-looking cows also came out of the river and they ate the fat cows, but they themselves did not become any fatter. Pharaoh was very puzzled and wondered what this strange dream meant. The same night he had **another** dream. This time he saw seven full ears of corn and seven thin ears dried by the east wind. Just as the lean cows had eaten the fat cows, so the thin ears of corn devoured the fat ears, but did not become any fatter themselves.

In the morning Pharaoh was troubled. He called for the magicians and wise men of Egypt, but there was no one who could tell him the meaning of his dreams. This made Pharaoh still more troubled.

At last the chief butler remembered Joseph, and how his own dream had been explained. Surely, he thought, the young Hebrew in the prison would be able to help the King. He told Pharaoh about Joseph and soon Joseph was brought to the palace. He was asked if it were true that he could tell what the strange dreams meant. Joseph answered Pharaoh, “It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace!” (v. 16). Joseph explained that the dreams both meant the same thing. The seven fat cows and the seven fat ears of corn meant

seven years of good harvests and plenty of food in Egypt; the seven thin cows and seven thin ears of corn meant seven years of famine that would follow.

JOSEPH BECOMES A RULER IN EGYPT:

Genesis 41:32- 57

Joseph warned Pharaoh that this would surely take place, “because the thing is established by God” (v. 32). He advised him to choose a man “discreet and wise and set him up over the land of Egypt”. He suggested that corn should be stored up in the seven years of plenty and used when the seven years of famine would come upon the land.

Pharaoh and his counsellors readily agreed. They could see the wisdom of this plan, and **Joseph himself** was appointed to be the ruler of the people! He was given fine clothes, a gold chain around his neck, and the King’s own ring. He was made second only to Pharaoh, and rode in the second chariot. Pharaoh had seen what a wise and godly man Joseph was and said to his servants, “Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?” (v. 38). In the next seven years Joseph proved to be a wise ruler indeed. He “gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much” (v. 49) and stored it away to use in the next seven years of famine. When the famine came, just as Joseph had said, the people cried to Pharaoh for food and he sent them to Joseph. “Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do” (v. 55).

So Joseph became famous through all the land of Egypt. By doing this God was slowly bringing to pass His purpose with the children of Israel.

JOSEPH’S BROTHERS COME TO EGYPT: Genesis 42:1-6

Many countries round about Egypt suffered from the famine too and sent their messengers down into Egypt to buy food. So it was that Jacob also, in the land of Canaan, heard that there was food in Egypt and said to his sons, “Get you down thither and buy for us from thence, that we may live and not die” (v. 2). Jacob kept Benjamin at home however, because he had still not got over the loss of Rachel’s other son, Joseph. (Remember how Jacob thought he had been killed by a wild animal). So the ten brothers came to the ruler of the land “and bowed down themselves before him” (v. 6). They did not know that here was their brother Joseph and the dreams he had told them about

many years before, were being fulfilled; but “Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them” (v. 9). How patiently Joseph had waited all those years, suffering many things but trusting in God. How wonderful it must have been for him not only to see his brothers again, but to know that God was bringing to pass what he had shown him in those dreams.

THEY ARE ACCUSED OF BEING SPIES: Genesis 42:7-24

Although Joseph recognised his brothers, they did not of course, recognise him. He looked to them like an Egyptian ruler. He decided to put them to the test for he wondered if they had changed over the years or if they were still as heartless as ever.

So Joseph spoke roughly to them and asked them where they came from. When they answered that they had come from Canaan to buy food, he accused them of being spies. They had not thought they would be spoken to so harshly and told the man that they were ten brothers, sons of one man in Canaan; their youngest brother was at home with their father and “one is not” (v. 13). Again Joseph accused them of being spies. One of them must stay behind in Egypt and the others go back and fetch their youngest brother.

As they anxiously talked among themselves of what the ruler had said they must do, they did not realise, of course, that Joseph could understand their words. It distressed him and he turned away so that they could not see his tears. Then he bound Simeon and sent them back to Canaan with their sacks of food. He loved his brothers still, but it was not yet the right time to show them who he was. It was their turn now to suffer a little for what they had done.

THE SONS OF JACOB IN TROUBLE: Genesis 42:25-38

So the nine brothers returned to their father, Jacob. No doubt they spoke on the way about how harsh the ruler of Egypt had been. They would have felt anxious for Simeon and fearful of what such news would do to Jacob.

They stopped on the way home at an inn and as one of them opened his sack to get food for his ass, he found the money he had paid for the food back in the sack. Now they were quite afraid, wondering what would become of Simeon after all.

When at last they got home, they told the whole story to Jacob.

“Bring your youngest brother unto me,” the man had said, “then shall I know that ye are no spies so will I deliver you your brother (i.e. Simeon)”. Then, as each one of them emptied their sacks of food, they were astonished to find every man’s bundle of money back in his sack and “they were afraid” (v. 35).

But Jacob would not let Benjamin go. “Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away My son shall not go down with you” (vv. 36,38).

So the famine continued in the land and Jacob and his family were kept alive by the food they had brought back from Egypt.

LESSON FOR US

How different Joseph was from his brethren. He could see the hand of God working in his life and patiently waited for God to bring to pass the things he had shown him in his dreams. His wisdom was known to all and everyone who knew him, honoured him. Though he suffered many things, he was not afraid, but trusted in God always. Let us, in our daily life, serve God faithfully as he did, always remembering the promises He has made in His Word, because He will surely bring them to pass.

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

1. How much longer did Joseph stay in prison before the butler remembered him?
- *2. How many years of plenty and how many years of famine came upon Egypt?
- *3. Whom did Jacob send down into Egypt for food?
- *4. What did Joseph’s brothers do when they came before the “ruler of Egypt”?
5. What did Joseph accuse the brothers of?
- *6. Who had to stay behind in Egypt?
7. Who did Joseph say must come down to Egypt?
8. What did the brothers find in their sacks?

Detailed Answers

- *1. Tell the story of Pharaoh’s two dreams and what did they mean?
2. Tell how Pharaoh made Joseph ruler in Egypt.

14. THE FAMILY OF ISRAEL IN EGYPT

“God sent me before you to save your lives by a great deliverance.”

Aim

To show how God worked through Joseph in Egypt to save the children of Israel, Jacob's family.

Joseph had sent his brothers away with food in their sacks, but he was testing them too. He secretly returned their money into their sacks, kept Simeon bound in prison and demanded to see Benjamin. Jacob would not let Benjamin go, but at last the food ran out and they must return to Egypt again. The story ends happily when Joseph reveals himself to his brothers and his old father Jacob comes down to him in Egypt.

Genesis 43 to 50

JOSEPH'S BROTHERS COME TO EGYPT A SECOND TIME: Genesis 43 & 44

It was Judah who finally persuaded Jacob to let Benjamin go with them, promising to bring him safely home again. They took a present for the ruler and double money in their sacks and Jacob prayed: “God Almighty give you mercy before this man” (Gen. 43:14).

⁴⁴₁₋₁₃ When they arrived they were sent to Joseph's house, where a feast was prepared for them. Joseph seated them in order of age around the table and they were amazed. He also gave Benjamin five times as much as the others and they enjoyed their feast with him. Later, with their corn-sacks full, they started for home, with Simeon too, who had been restored to them and Benjamin safe as well. However, they did not get far before an Egyptian messenger caught up to them and accused them of stealing his master's silver cup. The brothers denied this at once. If anyone had the silver cup he should die. But when a search was made the cup was found in Benjamin's sack! They hastily returned to Egypt where they pleaded for mercy and Judah asked to be punished instead of Benjamin, for he had promised his father that he would bring Benjamin safely home.

JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS IN JOYFUL REUNION: Genesis 45

The time had now come for Joseph to tell his brothers who he was. So he sent all the servants from the room and wept aloud and said, “I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?” (v. 3). They were greatly afraid, remembering all that they had done to him, but he told them not to worry: “Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to save your lives by a great deliverance” (vv. 5,7). He told them to return to Canaan and bring Jacob his father back to Egypt, as well as all their families, cattle and belongings. He would give them part of Egypt, called the land of Goshen, to dwell in and care for them until the famine was over. He loaded them with gifts of clothes, corn, bread and meat, and wagons to bring their families to Egypt. So the brothers hurried home to their father with the amazing news — “Joseph is yet alive and he is governor over all the land of Egypt” (v. 26).

Jacob could scarcely believe them, but when he heard their story and saw the wagons, he was filled with joy. Thankfully, he received his sons, and prepared to depart into the land of plenty to be with Joseph in Egypt: “It is enough, Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die” (Gen. 45:28).

JOSEPH GOES TO MEET JACOB: Genesis 46:28-30

On his way to Egypt, Jacob paused at Beer-sheba and there offered sacrifices to God in thankfulness for His goodness. God spake in a vision to Jacob at night: “I am God, the God of thy fathers: fear not to go down to Egypt, for I will there make of thee a great nation” (Gen. 46:3-4). Then Jacob rose up and went on to Egypt with his sons and their families.

Joseph rode in his chariot to the land of Goshen, where a joyful meeting between father and son took place (v. 29). Joseph welcomed his family into Egypt, and Jacob, who had thought he would never see his favourite son again, was happy at last. He truly felt God’s goodness, for his prayer was answered. He showed his feelings in these words: “Let me now die, for I have seen thy face and know that thou art alive” (Gen. 46:30).

THE HEBREWS SETTLE IN THE LAND OF GOSHEN — SEPARATED FROM EGYPTIANS: Genesis 47:1-10

Joseph presented five of his brothers to Pharaoh, instructing them to tell him that they were shepherds and to ask if they could dwell in the land of Goshen. This land was good grazing country and separated from the rest of Egypt.

Pharaoh agreed and even put them in charge of his own cattle. The land of Goshen was on the east side of the Nile, and was hemmed in by hills on every side. So the Israelites were kept separate from the Egyptians — a lesson which we must learn, to keep separate from the world and not learn its ways. Joseph introduced Jacob, his father, to Pharaoh and Jacob blessed Pharaoh and told him of his life in Canaan and that he was 130 years old.

JACOB DIES: Genesis 47:28-31

Seventeen years passed by. Jacob was now 147 years old and the time had come for him to die. He called Joseph to him and made him promise not to bury him in Egypt, but to carry him out of Egypt and bury him in the burying-place of Abraham and Isaac, in the land of Canaan.

After Jacob had blessed all his sons he died and Joseph kept his promise and buried his father back in the land of Canaan.

THE DEATH OF JOSEPH: Genesis 50:23-26

Joseph continued to live in Egypt until his children's children were born. Just before his death, he gave a last message to the people of Israel, reminding them that God would bring them out of Egypt to the land of Canaan again. "God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob" (Gen. 50:24). When they did return, he made them promise to take with them his bones for burial. Joseph was 110 years old when he died.

LESSON FOR US

Although Joseph lived in Egypt, he never lost sight of "the hope of Israel". He knew that the day would come when they would leave Egypt behind — so he showed his faith in asking for the removal of his bones when they left Egypt. Like Joseph, we also must never forget that our

future lies with the Kingdom of God, and we must not become involved in the world about us, but be ready to leave it all behind when the Lord Jesus comes. We must show the same faith as Joseph, **fully** believing that all that God has promised He **will** do.

Note too, that although the land of Canaan was promised to Jacob, he died in Egypt without receiving his inheritance. This shows that the promises have not yet been fulfilled. Jacob must be raised from the dead so that the promises can be fulfilled. This was the hope of the fathers (Acts 26:6).

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

Once again, these events we have considered are typical of events relating to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, when he will make himself known to his brethren and rule over the earth.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. His brethren knew him not (Gen. 42:8). | The Jews will not know who Jesus is when he returns (Zech. 13:6). |
| 2. Joseph makes himself known to his brethren (Gen. 45:1). | Jesus will reveal himself to the Jews (Zech. 12:10). |
| 3. They were troubled at his presence (Gen. 45:3). | They shall mourn for him (Zech. 12:10). |
| 4. Joseph pointed out that God sent him to save their lives (Gen. 45:7). | Jesus will bring salvation and turn Israel to God (Rom. 11:26; Matt. 1:21). |
| 5. Joseph ruled and controlled the wealth of the world (Gen. 47:14). | Jesus will control the wealth of the Gentiles (Isa. 60:11-12). |
| 6. Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh (Gen. 47:20). | Jesus shall reign to the ends of the earth (Psa. 72). |

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

1. Who promised to look after Benjamin?
2. How did Joseph seat his brothers at the table?
3. How much more did Joseph give Benjamin?
4. Whose sack was the silver cup found in?
5. What did Joseph say when he made himself known to his brethren?
6. Was Joseph angry with his brothers?
7. Where did the family of Jacob go to live?
8. Where was Jacob buried when he died?
9. What was Joseph's last message about his bones?

Detailed Answers

1. Joseph was a rich and important man in Egypt.
 - (a) What happened on his brother's second journey to buy corn?
 - (b) Why did Joseph forgive his brothers?
2. Joseph sent his brothers to fetch their father and their families and bring them back to Egypt.
 - (a) Where did the children of Israel settle in Egypt?
 - (b) Why was this a suitable place?
 - (c) What lesson can we learn from this?
3. 'What was Joseph's last message to his people just before he died?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

4. We have already seen that Joseph is a type of Christ (see Lesson 12). Show how the events of this story point forward to the second coming of Christ. (List as many points as you can).



15. MOSES: BORN TO DELIVER ISRAEL

"She called his name Moses, because I drew him out of the water."

Aim

To show how God prepared Moses to deliver His chosen people out of Egypt.

Gen 50:24

Joseph had said that the children of Israel would leave Egypt and go back to Canaan, but the years rolled by and nothing happened. For 150 years or more Joseph's coffin remained in Goshen until the people became so used to it that they forgot his message and teaching. They prospered (v. 7) and from a family of 70 grew into a great nation.

Then a new king arose "who knew not Joseph" (v. 8). From being treated as friends, the Israelites became treated as enemies. The new Pharaoh was afraid that the Israelites would join with another nation to conquer Egypt. So he put them to slavery (v. 10). They suffered many things but God blessed them and they continued to multiply, and Pharaoh became even more afraid of them. So he commanded that all the Hebrew baby boys were to be destroyed at birth (v. 22).

Exodus 1:1-14,22; 2; Acts 7:18-29

THE BIRTH OF MOSES: Exodus 2:1-9

There lived in Egypt at this time a faithful couple of the tribe of Levi named Amram and his wife Jochebed. They had two children, Aaron and Miriam. Then another son was born who "was exceeding fair" (Acts 7:20). They were determined to save this child from the hands of wicked Pharaoh, and in faith, ignored the king's decree (Heb. 11:23). God was with them and they succeeded in hiding him safely for three months.

When it was no longer possible to hide the baby, his mother prepared an ark of bulrushes (papyrus reeds plastered with pitch). She left the baby in the ark by the water's edge and Miriam was nearby to watch and report what happened. The daughter of Pharaoh, coming to the river to wash, saw the ark among the bulrushes. When it was brought to her she opened it and looked with wonder at the beautiful baby (Exodus 2:6). Moses began to cry and the tears of the baby no doubt touched the heart of the princess. She realised that it must be one of the Hebrews' children and just then Miriam came forward and offered to find a nurse. She hurried home to fetch Jochebed and brought the child's mother to Pharaoh's daughter. "And Pharaoh's

daughter said unto her, Take this child away and nurse it for me and I will give thee thy wages” (v. 9). So Jochebed took back her baby son and cared for him, and was paid by Pharaoh’s daughter for doing so. How thankful Jochebed would have been, not only to have her son alive, but given back to her, if only for a few years.

So the faithful parents were rewarded by God. They are mentioned by the apostle Paul in Hebrews 11 among the great examples of faith

“By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king’s commandment” (Heb. 11:23).

THE EARLY LIFE OF MOSES: Exodus 2:10

With heartfelt thanks for God’s loving care, Jochebed took her baby to nurse and care for him and as soon as he could understand, she began to teach him of the God of the Hebrews, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to whom great and wonderful promises had been made.

The child grew and when the time was right he was taken to Pharaoh’s daughter and became known as her son. She called him Moses, which means ‘drawn out’. From the Egyptian court, he learned the ways of a prince and the wisdom of the nation of Egypt. He became mighty in word and deed (Acts 7:22) and became a leader of men. However, Moses did not forget the early training and teaching of his mother and father and so never followed the wickedness of Egypt (Heb. 11:24-27).

MOSES VISITS HIS OWN PEOPLE: Exodus 2:11-14

When Moses was 40 years old he left the court of Pharaoh and went out to visit his brethren the children of Israel. It was God who moved Moses to go and see the hardship of his brethren, and when one day he saw an Egyptian ill-treating an Israelite, he killed the Egyptian and buried him in the sand. The next day when he went out he found two Hebrews fighting together. He spoke to the wrong-doer, but he turned to Moses and said, “Who made thee a prince and judge over us? Intendest thou to kill me, as thou killest the Egyptian?” (v. 14). Apparently Moses had not hidden the death of the Egyptian as well as he thought. The news spread rapidly. Moses was afraid and fled. When Pharaoh

heard it he sought to kill Moses, but Moses had escaped into the land of Midian.

MOSES IN MIDIAN: Exodus 2:15-21

At a well in Midian, Moses showed kindness to the seven daughters of the priest of Midian. He was received into their home and later married Zipporah, one of these seven daughters. Moses' life now became very different from what it had been before. The busy life of Pharaoh's court was exchanged for that of a shepherd. It was a life of loneliness and hardship, but one which taught him to lean upon God. He learned to care for the needs of his sheep, young and old, and to protect them even as God protected him.

In quietness he would think upon the things his parents had taught him as a child and he would also remember the suffering of his people in Egypt. These forty years were a very necessary part of the training of Moses, as God was watching over this man and preparing him for a very special work. As he now learned to care for the sheep and lead them so he was soon to lead the nation of Israel out of Egypt.

LESSON FOR US

We see in this lesson how the training in the early years of the life of Moses was able to keep him apart from the evil ways of the court of Pharaoh. In Proverbs 22:6 we are told: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

The world around us is like Egypt. The hearts of people are filled with wickedness; they worship the things they see around them and do not know the true God. Moses could have had great honour in the court of Pharaoh and lived in luxury all his life, but he chose to give those things up. He always remembered the wonderful promises of greater rewards than these — of life everlasting in the Kingdom of God.

Let us follow the example of Moses and fill our minds with the Word of God. Then we, like him, will gladly give up the pleasures of the world and prepare ourselves for the coming Kingdom of God.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

The Scriptures show us how the hand of God was working in the life of Moses. From the manner in which he was saved from death as a baby, given back into the care of his own God-fearing Hebrew family, and educated in the court of Pharaoh to be a leader of men, we see

God preparing him for the work He had chosen for him to do.

Stephen in Acts 7:25, speaking through inspiration concerning these incidents, says: "He (Moses) supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them." No doubt his mother had taught him Joseph's words: "God will surely visit you and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware unto Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (Gen. 50:24). At forty years of age he thought he was ready to be their leader and deliver them from slavery. But the people were not yet ready to accept him and God knew that Moses himself had much more to learn before he was ready to do the great work of deliverance. Forty more years of preparation were needed. God knew that the life of a shepherd was the best training Moses could have. In this way Moses was like the Lord Jesus Christ, the "Good Shepherd" (John 10:11), who cares for his sheep and delivers them from the bondage (slavery) of sin and death (see Heb. 2:14-15).

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

1. Why did Pharaoh make the Hebrew people slaves?
2. What terrible command did Pharaoh make?
3. What were the names of the mother and father of Moses?
4. What was the name of Moses' sister?
5. What does the name Moses mean?
6. Who took Moses to be her son?
- * 7. How old was Moses when he fled from Egypt?
- * 8. Why did Moses flee from Egypt?
9. What did he do in Midian?
10. How long did he live in Midian?

Detailed Answers

- * 1. Tell the story of how Moses was saved when all other Hebrew baby boys were killed.
2. Tell what Moses did when he was forty years old.
3. How did Moses' life in Midian help prepare him to be a leader of God's people?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

4. Tell the story of Moses from the time of his birth until he left Egypt, when he was forty years old.
5. Can you tell some of the things that Moses was trained to do which would help him when God called him to be a Deliverer to Israel?



16. MOSES AT THE BURNING BUSH

"I will send thee unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt."

Aim

To show how God made known to Moses His great Name and purpose with Israel.

We learnt from our last lesson that Moses fled from Egypt to Midian, where he married one of the daughters of Jethro and spent forty years as a shepherd looking after the sheep. As this was very rugged and rocky country, it would be very difficult finding enough food and water for his sheep, so he would have had to wander long distances searching for grass. He would have spent a lot of time on his own calling to mind God's purpose with His people and thinking deeply about God, whom he worshipped.

Exodus 3; 4:1-15

THE BURNING BUSH: Exodus 3:1-6

Moses had brought his sheep to a mountain called 'Horeb', and while he sat watching the sheep, a most wonderful thing happened. He saw a bush which blazed with fire and yet was not burned up by the flames. It remained green and fresh and did not seem any different although it still burned. This certainly was a strange thing to see, and Moses went closer to see why the bush was not consumed.

But as he drew near, an angel appeared to him from the midst of the burning bush and called him by name, saying "Moses, Moses, draw not hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (v. 5). Imagine the wonder that would be in Moses' heart! Why should an angel of the living God appear to him? He hid his face, because he was afraid to look upon the angel. God, however, had a very special work for Moses to do. You will remember how he had been trained in Egypt to be a leader of men. Now, God was going to use Moses to lead His own people, the nation of Israel, out of Egypt.

THE ANGEL APPEARS IN THE BUSH: Exodus 3:7-12

The angel continued, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (v. 6). Now God would never leave His



throne in the heavens to come to speak to man, for “no man hath seen God at any time” (John 1:18). When God does speak to man, He does so through His angels, and this is what happened here (see Acts 7:30).

The angel went on to tell Moses about the wonderful plan of God to free His people from slavery in Egypt. Moses, He said, must return to Egypt and demand of Pharaoh that he let Israel go.

Forty years earlier Moses had tried to deliver the Hebrews from Egypt in his own way. Now he felt the task was too great for him. The years between had been well spent. He was now eighty years old and a much wiser man, having had time to consider his own smallness compared with the greatness of God. “Moses said to God, Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?” (v. 11). He had learned to be truly humble. But God, Who knows the heart, encouraged him by saying: “Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee” (v. 12). The burning bush before his eyes, out of which the angel spoke to him, was a sure sign to Moses that God would be with him. He would lead the people out to this very mountain to serve their God.

THE NAME AND PURPOSE OF GOD MADE KNOWN: Exodus 3:13-15

Moses then asked what the name of God was. In our days a name is little more than a label or a title. In ancient times, it was different. Names then had meanings and often showed the work or character of the person named. Remember how God changed the name Abram (‘Lofty Father’) to Abraham (‘Father of a great multitude’), so that His purpose might be made known through his name. In the same way Jacob’s name was changed to Israel (‘Prince with God’), to show what God had planned for him and his descendants in the future.

It is the same with God’s name YAHWEH. It is a Hebrew word with a great and wonderful meaning, in which we are told God’s purpose with this earth and man upon it. (Wherever we read LORD in capital letters in our Bibles, it is really the Hebrew name of God, YAHWEH).

FURTHER INSTRUCTION FOR MOSES: Exodus 3:16-22

Yahweh, the God of Israel, having revealed to Moses His great Name, told him to return to Egypt. He must gather together the elders of Israel and tell them of the wonderful deliverance to come, and then

go before Pharaoh and demand that he let Israel go, so that the people might worship in the wilderness (v. 18). At the same time, God told Moses: “the King of Egypt will not let you go and I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go” (vv. 19,20).

GOD GIVES MOSES WONDERFUL SIGNS: Exodus 4:1-9

Even though God had promised to be with Moses, he still was not confident to face the king alone. We remember how Moses had fled in fear from Egypt. When Moses said that they would not believe him and that he was a poor speaker, God said “I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say”. Aaron, his brother, was also appointed to go with him and help him speak to Pharaoh and tell him what Yahweh their God had said.

To help Moses show the people of Israel that God had sent him, he was given three signs:

1. The rod that became a serpent.
2. The hand that turned leprous and was healed.
3. The water that was turned to blood.

When Moses returned to Egypt he called the elders of Israel to him and told them of the plan of Yahweh, their God. When they saw the signs that God had given him, they realised that God was indeed with him (vv. 27-31).

LESSON FOR US

When Moses went closer to the burning bush, he was told: “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” Moses had to learn that he could only come near to God with the greatest respect. God must be served as He has shown us, with humble hearts, realising how great He is.

It is a wonderful privilege to hear the voice of God. Moses heard it from the burning bush and there he spoke to God. We can hear God speaking to us every day when we open our Bible and carefully read its message. In this way we can learn to know Him and find out what He wants us to do.

Only let us never forget that He is God and not man (Hos. 11:9). So our Bible reading, our Sunday School lessons, our hymn singing and prayers must all be done with great respect and honour, for He is a holy God.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

In Numbers 14:21 God told Moses: "As truly as I live all the earth shall be filled with My glory". God had made everything "very good" in the beginning, but man, through sin, spoiled all that and during the last 6,000 years wicked men have continued to pollute this earth which God has made. Once, God destroyed it with a flood, but He has promised never to do that again. Instead He is going to fill it with His glory. This has always been God's purpose. So He must first have upon it immortal people in harmony with Him and then He will bless the earth for ever.

When God told Moses that His Name was **Yahweh**, He was, in one word, explaining this great purpose with the earth. The name **Yahweh** means "He Who will be". It means that **He, God, will be manifest, or seen, in people who are faithful and obedient.** God called Israel out of Egypt to be His special people for this purpose, but we will learn in later lessons how they failed to love and obey Him. The Lord Jesus Christ alone, of all God's children, has been perfectly obedient to his Father. He thought and acted like God, so that he was able to say, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). God has given him immortality and glory.

Although Israel failed, God's purpose has not failed. There were many faithful men and women of old who tried all their lives to please God. They will be among those who will have immortality and glory in the Kingdom of God. Even today, through the Lord Jesus Christ, God is calling out of the world "a people for His Name" (Acts 15:14). Those of us who read His Word daily and obey that call will be given the same reward when Christ returns. Then God will indeed be seen in a great multitude of immortal saints and the whole earth shall at last be filled with His glory.

What a wonderful promise is contained in the name of God! Let us try hard each day to learn His ways that we may be counted among that glorious multitude in the age soon to come.

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

1. What was Moses doing near Mt. Horeb?
- * 2. What strange sight did Moses see on Mt. Horeb?

3. As Moses came near the bush, what did the voice say to Moses?
4. What did the angel tell Moses God wished him to do?
- * 5. What did the angel say was the wonderful Name of God?
- * 6. Who was to go with Moses to help him speak?
7. What is God's great promise to those who show in their lives that they belong to God?

Detailed Answers

After Moses fled from Egypt, he came to Midian.

1. Tell what happened one day while Moses kept sheep on the mountain of Horeb.
- * 2. What was the message the angel of God delivered to Moses at the burning bush?
3. What signs did God give to Moses to show the children of Israel in Egypt that the One True God had sent him to free them from being slaves?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

4. What was God's Name which Moses was instructed to give to the children of Israel and what does it mean?
5. What has God declared to be His purpose with this earth?
6. If we are to become true sons of God and bear His glorious nature and Name, how must we live now?

17. GOD SENDS PLAGUES ON EGYPT

“The Egyptians shall know that I am Yahweh, when I stretch forth Mine hand upon Egypt.”

Aim

To show how God used His great power to save His chosen people, thus showing that He is the only true and living God.

Moses had been absent from the court of Pharaoh for forty years, and at the age of 80 years, he returned to demand that Pharaoh let the Israelites go free. With Aaron, his brother, they had gathered together the elders of Israel and shown them by word and sign, that they truly were from God. The people believed, and they were very excited to think that soon they would be free.

Egypt was a great and powerful nation, but their gods were nothing at all — gods of wood and stone, utterly without power! There is only one true God and He was going to make them know His power and feel His great and terrible anger.

So Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, Who had seen how cruelly the Egyptians had treated His people, would bring them out of Egypt, “with great judgments” (Exodus 6:6).

Exodus 5 to 10; Acts 7:36; Psalm 78:43-52

MOSES AND AARON BEFORE PHARAOH: Exodus 5 and 6

The time had now come for Moses and Aaron to speak God’s Word to Pharaoh: “Thus saith Yahweh, let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness”. Pharaoh was surprised at this bold request. “Who is Yahweh,” he said, “that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not Yahweh, neither will I let Israel go” (Exodus 5:1-2).

It was right, he did not yet know the God of Israel, but before long, he most certainly would, and all Egypt too. Moses and Aaron were angrily dismissed and the Egyptians put heavier burdens on the Israelites. Now they had to make the same number of bricks each day as they had before but instead of having the straw provided for them they had to go out and gather it themselves. It seemed now to the Israelites that since Moses had interfered, things were much worse than before and they blamed him. But God spoke to Moses to encourage him (Exodus 6:1-9) and Moses and Aaron went again to Pharaoh (Exodus 7:10-13).

The rod was thrown down before him and his wise men and his magicians and it became a serpent. The magicians, who were skilled in trickery, did the same each man's rod becoming a serpent, but Aaron's rod swallowed up all the other rods. In spite of this, Pharaoh's heart was hardened, as God knew it would be. The time had arrived for Yahweh to show His greater power to the Egyptians and Moses was commanded to appear before Pharaoh the following morning.

THE PLAGUES: Exodus 7 to 10

There were in fact ten great and dreadful plagues that God brought upon Egypt. We will mention nine of them here. The tenth and most terrible disaster happened on the night God brought Israel out of Egypt. We will read of that in the next lesson.

1) **Water into blood** (Exodus 7:14-25). Moses again said to Pharaoh: "Yahweh, God of the Hebrews, hath sent me unto thee saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness, and behold hitherto thou wouldest not hear." Moses then turned the water of the River Nile into blood so that the fish died and there was a terrible smell. Even the ponds and every pool of water became blood. The magicians copied what Moses did, causing some of the wells to look like red blood; so once again Pharaoh refused to listen to Moses.

2) **Frogs** (Exodus 8:1-15). Moses and Aaron came again with the same request, "Let my people go". When Pharaoh ignored God's words, Aaron stretched forth his rod over the streams and rivers and caused frogs to come upon the land of Egypt. They swarmed into their homes and were everywhere, in their beds, in their ovens and their kneading troughs. The magicians again copied what had been done — but they could not make the frogs go away. So Pharaoh sent for Moses and told him to ask Yahweh to send the frogs away and "I will let the people go" (v. 8). When the frogs died the following day, Pharaoh changed his mind again and "hardened his heart" (v. 15).

3) **Swarms of Lice** (Exodus 8:16-19). This terrible plague came upon Egypt after Moses had instructed Aaron to lift his rod and smite "the dust of the earth". When he did so, it became lice. The magicians could not copy this miracle, and the lice crawled over every man and beast. The magicians cried out, "This is the finger of God" (v. 19). They could not pretend any longer. Their tricks were no match for God's power; but Pharaoh "hearkened not unto them (i.e. Moses and Aaron) as Yahweh had said" (v. 19).

So God had sent three terrible plagues upon all Egypt, upon Egyptians and Israelites alike. Never before had Israel seen the power of God and they too had to learn of His greatness and believe.

After these three plagues, however, the time had come for all to see that God put a difference between Israel and Egypt. So Moses said that on the next day God would send flies to plague all Egypt **except** the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel dwelt.

4) **Flies** (Exodus 8:20-32). A great swarm of flies filled the land of Egypt. Flies were in their houses and crawled upon the people and swarmed all over the ground. How the people hated them! Pharaoh seemed at last to repent. He called for Moses and said, "Go ye, sacrifice to your God **in the land**". Moses reminded him that God had said they must leave Egypt. So Pharaoh said, "I will let you go only ye shall not go very far away" (v. 28). So Moses asked God to remove the flies and it was done. Immediately Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let the people go.

5) **Murrain on Animals** (Exodus 9:1-7). This was a disease which could be passed from one animal to another. Animals had difficulty in breathing and usually died. (See footnote p. 265 "Story of Bible" Vol. 1). The cattle belonging to Israel in the land of Goshen did not suffer this terrible disease — such was God's care for His chosen people and their possessions. Pharaoh sent messengers to Goshen to find out and there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. "And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened and he did not let the people go" (v. 7).

6) **Boils on Man and Beast** (Exodus 9:8-12). Moses next instructed Aaron to take of the ashes of the furnace and sprinkle them towards heaven in the sight of Pharaoh. The ashes became dust, and as it fell, it caused boils to break out on every man and beast. Even the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the plague of boils. Still Pharaoh's heart was hardened and "he hearkened not unto them" (v. 12).

7) **A Storm of Hail** (Exodus 9:18-35). Moses was commanded to stand before Pharaoh and tell him that on the next day a great hail storm would come and destroy every man and beast found in the open field. Some of the Egyptians had learned by this time to fear Israel's God and they commanded their servants to stay inside. When Moses stretched forth the rod, God sent thunder and hail and lightning and it destroyed men, animals, crops and trees. But there was no hail in

Goshen. Pharaoh called Moses and said, “I have sinned intreat Yahweh (for it is enough) and I will let you go” (vv. 27-28). But as soon as Pharaoh saw that the hail ceased, “the heart of Pharaoh was hardened” (v. 35), and he would not let the people go.

8) **Locusts** (Exodus 10:1-20). Once again Moses came before Pharaoh and told him that Yahweh would send yet another plague if he remained stubborn and deceitful. Pharaoh told Moses and Aaron that the men could go and worship their God in the wilderness, but the children must remain. Moses was definite; all must go, both young and old, and if not, the land would be covered with locusts which would eat what was left of the green crops and trees. Pharaoh was angry and drove them out. Then Moses stretched forth his rod and an east wind brought the locusts, which ate all that the hail had left standing. Pharaoh hastily sent for Moses. “I have sinned against Yahweh your God,” he said, “forgive therefore, I pray thee, my sin and intreat Yahweh your God that He may take away from me this death only” (vv. 16-17). God removed the locusts with a strong west wind and all the locusts were swept into the Red Sea. Yet again, Pharaoh’s heart was hardened and he would not let the people go.

9) **Complete Darkness** (Exodus 10:21-29). God told Moses to stretch out his hand toward heaven so that darkness would come over the land of Egypt, darkness so thick that the people of Egypt could not see one another; “even a darkness which may be felt” (v. 21). In the land of Goshen, however, the Israelites had light. “Go ye,” said Pharaoh, “serve Yahweh; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed” (v. 24). Moses said, “Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not a hoof be left behind” (v. 26). Pharaoh was angry and drove Moses out from before him, saying he would see his face no more; to which Moses replied, “Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more” (v. 29).

So God brought these great and dreadful plagues upon Egypt to show His power over the gods of Egypt — “and that My Name may be declared throughout all the earth” (Exod. 9:16). There was still worse to come, for Pharaoh had by no means repented. What happened later, made all the surrounding nations fear Yahweh and tremble. (See Josh. 2:9-11).

LESSON FOR US

In this story we learn two important lessons —

- (a) the need to humble ourselves before God, and
- (b) the need to separate from the world.

In Proverbs 6:17 we are told that God hates “a proud look and a lying tongue”. This was Pharaoh. Israel had to humble themselves and trust in God to deliver them. So must we believe in the true God, and obey His Commandments. If we do that, he has promised to save us even out of death. First, we must separate ourselves from the way of life of those around us and live a life of faith and obedience. For God is going to punish this wicked world just as He punished the Egyptians long ago. So we wait for the Lord Jesus Christ to return to judge the nations and to save us by His great power.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

God’s own character, as He has revealed it to us in the Scriptures, shows Him to be just and merciful. He is a merciful God to those who have separated themselves unto Him, but terrible to those who hate Him. (See Exod. 34:6-7). God’s great judgments came upon Egypt, but His mercy was shown to the Hebrews. Some Egyptians, however, saw and believed. For them God provided a way of escape, for example, during the hail, and some even joined themselves to Israel and came out of Egypt. It is the same today. “He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved” (Mark 16:16). The great deliverer is the Lord Jesus Christ. Only by baptism into his name can we be saved. God has warned the world of the judgments He is going to bring upon the nations. He will only show mercy to those who hear and believe His Word.

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- * 1. Why did Moses and Aaron go to see Pharaoh?
- 2. How was Aaron’s rod shown to be more powerful than the rods of the magicians?
- 3. Why did God send the plagues upon Egypt?
- 4. Why did the Hebrews also feel the first three plagues?
- 5. During the plague of hail, how did some of the Egyptians show their belief in God’s Word?
- * 6. What sort of man was Pharaoh?

Detailed Answers

1. Moses and Aaron asked Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go into the wilderness to serve their God.
 - (a) Why did God want to take His people out of Egypt?
 - (b) What happened in the court when Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and Aaron cast down his rod?
- * 2. Tell what you know of the plagues that God sent upon the land of Egypt.
3. What lessons do we learn from the plagues in Egypt?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

4. What do we learn about the character of God as the plagues were sent upon the nation of Egypt?
5. Did God provide a way of escape to the Egyptians during the plague of hail? — By what means? How is that a lesson for us?



18. ISRAEL KEEPS THE PASSOVER AND CROSSES THE RED SEA

“He smote all the firstborn in Egypt.... but made His own people to go forth like sheep.”

Aim

To show how God delivered His people out of Egypt, but destroyed all the firstborn of Egypt.

“Israel is My son, even My firstborn.” These were God’s words which Moses was commanded to speak to Pharaoh: and to these were added others more threatening: “And if thou refuse to let him go, behold I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn” (Exod. 4:22,23). The greatness of Yahweh, the God of Moses was seen as, one by one, the so-called gods of the Egyptians were defeated in nine plagues. But Pharaoh would not do as God said. His heart was still hard, and he declared he would see Moses’ face no more. Soon, however, he was to feel the hand of Yahweh in a more terrible way in the last plague. He had probably forgotten Moses’ words but he was about to lose his firstborn son, heir to the throne of Egypt. When that happened, Pharaoh would command Israel to leave (Exod. 11:1).

Exodus 12:1-14,29-39; 13:17-22; 14

PREPARATION FOR THE PASSOVER: Exodus 12:1-14

The time for Israel’s deliverance from Egypt was at hand and the Hebrews were given important detailed instructions to obey.

1) They were to demand, as the word “borrow” means, jewels of silver and gold as well as clothing and whatever they would need for a journey. The Egyptians willingly gave to them anything they asked, for they were anxious to see the Hebrews go. In this way the Israelites received some small payment for their many years of slavery (vv. 35-36)*

2) The month Abib was to be the first month of Israel’s new year, because they were to start a completely new way of life (Exodus 12:2). On the tenth day of this month, each household had to choose a lamb without spot or blemish. It was penned up separately until the fourteenth day when it was to be killed in the evening, or, as the Hebrew means “between the two evenings” (i.e. between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.) (vv. 2-6).

3) Not a bone of the lamb was to be broken (v. 46).

4) Its blood was to be caught in a basin and sprinkled upon the



upper lintel and the two side-posts with a bunch of hyssop (v. (v.22))

5) The lamb or kid was then to be roasted with fire, whole (v. 8)

6) When the evening came, which was the beginning of the fifteenth day of Abib, the whole family had to remain within the blood-sprinkled house (v. 7).

7) With shoes on their feet and staff in their hand, as if ready to depart at any moment, they were to eat the lamb in haste, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs (vv. 8,11).

8) None of the lamb's flesh was to be left until morning. Whatever was not eaten had to be burned with fire (v. 10).

The keeping of this feast in **all** its details was to be the means of salvation from death, for on this night the angel of God was to pass throughout all the land of Egypt to kill the firstborn of every house on which the blood was not sprinkled. Some of the Egyptians received shelter in the blood-sprinkled house when the angel of death passed over, but the feast was only to be eaten by the Israelites (Exod. 12:43). Passover was the name given to this important feast and God commanded that it be kept in the same way every year as a memorial, or reminder, of His deliverance of Israel (Exod. 12:14).

THE GREAT PASSOVER NIGHT: Exodus 12:29-39

One last time Moses entered the palace of Pharaoh, to tell him and his servants God's final warning about the last fearful plague that yet would come upon Egypt (see Exodus 11:4-8). This night would be a night of terror, in which all the firstborn of Egypt would die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh to the firstborn of every servant or prisoner, and even the firstborn among cattle. Only in Israel none would be hurt, that Pharaoh might know "that Yahweh doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel" (Exodus 11:7).

At midnight the angel went forth at God's command and a great cry went up throughout all the land of Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead. Pharaoh and all his servants called for Moses in the night and said, "Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel: and go serve Yahweh as ye have said" (Exod. 12:31). The Egyptians urgently pressed them to leave for they were afraid, that they would **all** die. So Pharaoh learned that Yahweh the God of Israel **was the only true God** (see Exod. 5:2).

ISRAEL'S DEPARTURE FROM EGYPT: Exodus 13:17-19

The Israelites needed no urging. In haste they gathered their few possessions and left. A great multitude of people numbering 600,000 men, besides women and children, with their herds and flocks, began their journey toward the Promised Land. Some Egyptians who had learned to fear the God of Israel went with them, for they knew now that the God of Israel was the only true God.

Moses had one more special duty to perform. Joseph had made his brethren promise many years before, that his bones would be taken up out of Egypt when God delivered them. Moses now gave command for this to be done. Truly God had kept His promise, even as Joseph had said (Exod. 13:19). (See Lesson 14).

THE GUIDING CLOUD: Exodus 13:20-22; 14:1-10 *

The angel of God went before the great company of people in a cloud to show them the way. By night the cloud was full of fire, which lighted their path and by day, it went in front of them as a cloud which also protected them from the heat of the sun. (Follow their journey on a Bible map). They camped first at Succoth, where they rested and made shelters from the branches of trees. Their next stop was in Etham, which was on the edge of the wilderness, then down 24 kilometres to Pi-Hahiroth. This was a desolate place hemmed in by mountains. It was at this place that they learned that Pharaoh and 600 chosen chariots, all the chariots of Egypt, were just behind them.

ISRAEL CROSSES THE RED SEA: Exodus 14:1-31

Terrified the Israelites turned upon Moses. "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" (v. 11). There was no place to flee, they were completely cut off from escape. Pharaoh was behind, mountains lay to both sides and the great Red Sea was before them.

But God knew what was happening. He was testing them to make them learn to trust in Him. Moses said unto the people, "Fear not, stand still and see the salvation of Yahweh Yahweh shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace" (Exod. 14:13-14). Then the pillar of cloud moved behind Israel making it as dark as night to the Egyptians, but Israel still had light. While Moses stretched out his rod over the sea, God caused a strong east wind to come up that night that blew across the waters of the Red Sea, dividing it and making a dry pathway to the

other side. The people of God were able to cross safely to the other side “and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left” (v. 22). When the Egyptians tried to follow, angels of God removed the wheels off their chariots! Israel was now safe on the far side and God told Moses to stretch forth his rod once again. As he did so, God made the waters return upon the Egyptians who were now in the midst of the sea and they were all drowned. In this last act upon Egypt all its power was broken and Israel was victorious. Moses and Miriam and all the people sang of the wonderful victory God had wrought that day and praised God for all His goodness.

LESSON FOR US

“Yahweh shall fight for you and ye shall hold your peace.” These words of Moses show us a very important lesson. **God** saves. It is for us to believe and obey.

We see how **God** provided Moses as a deliverer; how **God** gave Israel a way of salvation as the angel of death passed over; and we see how **God** opened up the Red Sea, both to save Israel and to destroy Egypt. “By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land” (Heb. 11:29).

God wants us to learn in our daily lives to trust in Him, just as Israel had to learn that lesson.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

Israel crossed from Egypt, through the Red Sea, to a new life on the opposite shore, as they headed for the Promised Land. This crossing of the Red Sea, Paul calls a kind of baptism. “All our fathers were under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (1 Cor. 10:1-2).

Just as baptism is “burial in water” (Instructor No. 62), so Israel were “buried” or hidden from view under the cloud and by the wall of water on either side. Egypt represented their old way of life, when they did not serve God correctly and walked in ignorance of His laws. When Moses, their deliverer, came to them, they learned to believe him and look to him as the one who could lead them to freedom. They saw God’s mighty power revealed in the plagues and trusted in Him. So they crossed the Red Sea “in faith” (Heb. 11:29).

This story is like baptism. When a person believes God and trusts in Him, he is baptised and puts off his old way of life. Just as Israel began a new life on the other side of the sea, so a baptised person “walks in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4). He is “in Christ” and must work worthy of the name of Christ which he bears.

Every Israelite had to partake of the passover lamb in Egypt, before he could go free. Christ is our “passover lamb” (1 Cor. 5:7). The only way we can partake of him is by baptism into his name.

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

1. What was the terrible tenth plague to come upon Egypt?
2. What were the Israelites to ask the Egyptians to give them?
3. In what month was the Passover held?
4. What was to be done with the blood of the Passover lamb?
5. Where had the lamb to be eaten?
6. What happened at midnight on the Passover night?
7. What did Pharaoh learn about Yahweh?
8. What did Moses say to the people when they thought they would all be killed by Pharaoh?
9. Who was Israel's saviour?

Detailed Answers

- *1. Tell all you can of the instructions given to the people of Israel so that they would be saved when the angel of death passed over.
- *2. How did God finally destroy Pharaoh and save the Israelites from his wicked hand?
3. How did God guide the nation of Israel on their journey when they left Egypt?
4. Tell what you know of the crossing of the Red Sea.

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

5. What did the apostle Paul say the crossing of the Red Sea was likened to?

19. GOD CARES FOR HIS PEOPLE IN THE WILDERNESS

“He guided them in the wilderness like a flock.”

Aim

To show how God cared for His people in the wilderness.

On the other side of the Red Sea the Israelites were still led by the cloud and journeyed into the Wilderness of Shur. In front of them now were miles and miles of long, rolling sandhills. For three days they crossed this desolate country finding no water anywhere, until at last they came to Marah.

Exodus 15:22-27; 16; 17

MAP. i. 256-257.
(BIBLE)

THE WATERS AT MARAH: Exodus 15:23-26 AND ELIM: Exodus 15:27

After a long, hot journey the great crowd of Israelites came to Marah. Here at last was water — but to their great disappointment the only water they found was bitter * — not fit to use. The people complained to Moses: “What shall we drink?” — as if Moses could find suitable water for them! But as with all his problems, Moses prayed to God for help.

God told him to throw a certain tree into the water and the bitter waters would be made sweet (v. 25). God had not forsaken them. He would always provide for their needs, but they had many lessons to learn and He was testing them. If they listened carefully to His words, which Moses always passed onto them, and obeyed His commandments, He would not bring any of the diseases upon them, which came upon the Egyptians. As He had healed the bitter waters at Marah, so He would care for them as long as they trusted in Him.

From Marah they journeyed to Elim. Here was plenty of water and shade — twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees — and “they encamped by the waters” (v. 27).

GOD GIVES HIS PEOPLE FOOD IN THE WILDERNESS: Exodus 16:1-36

Once again the mighty gathering of Hebrew people moved on and camped by the Red Sea (Num. 33:10). This was many kilometres south of the place where they had crossed and no doubt they remem-

bered that across the water lay Egypt and they could not go back. It was four weeks since their exodus (coming out) from Egypt. God had provided for all their needs, but the way had not been easy and they murmured and complained. They turned on Moses and Aaron, saying, “Ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger” (v. 3). They were hungry and could only think of Egypt as the place where “we did eat bread to the full” (v. 3). They forgot the slavery and the cruelty of their Egyptian masters; they forgot why God had brought them out and the Promised Land ahead.

God heard their complaining and told Moses; “Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you” (v. 4). Once again God would use His great power and put an end to their murmuring by a wonderful miracle.

They would have flesh to eat that night (v. 12) and in the morning they would have bread. “And it came to pass that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp, and in the morning the dew lay round about the host” (v. 13). After the dew had been drawn up from the ground they found “manna”. This was a small round flake, “and it was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey” (v. 31). When they saw it, they said “manna?” which means “what is this?” (v. 15). And that is what they named it. Here was the bread God had promised them. The Israelites were given special instructions as to how to gather this food: it had to be gathered only as God commanded.

They were told to gather it every day “every man according to his eating” (v. 18). If they gathered more than enough for one day it went bad over night and “it bred worms and stank” (v.20).

BUT — On the sixth day they were to gather enough for two days, so that they might rest on the seventh day, which was the sabbath. It would keep for those two days.

This manna was given to Israel every day for the whole of the forty years that they were in the wilderness (v. 35). God never forgot to provide them with food.

GOD GIVES WATER FROM THE ROCK: Exodus 17:1-7

Again the children of Israel moved camp and came to Rephidim and “there was no water for the people to drink” (v. 1). Afraid they might die, they once more complained to Moses. What a difficult task this was for Moses, with all his training, to lead this great multitude of people. “Moses cried unto Yahweh, What shall I do unto this people? They be

almost ready to stone me” (v. 4). God told Moses to take his rod and go with the leaders of Israel to a rock in Horeb, and smite the rock with his rod. As he struck the rock, water flowed out of the rock like a river! Here was plenty of water for a thirsty multitude. God had performed yet another miracle before their eyes. With such a powerful God to care for them, what did they need to worry about such daily provisions.

THE AMALEKITES ATTACK THE ISRAELITES IN REPHIDIM: Exodus 17:8-16

A new kind of danger now threatened Israel as they journeyed. Bands of Amalekites suddenly attacked them from behind, “even all that were feeble behind thee when thou wast faint and weary” (Deut. 25:18). This was a cowardly thing to do. It seemed that the unprepared Israelites would be defeated.

Moses appointed a faithful young man named Joshua as commander and told him, “choose us out men and go out, fight with Amalek” (v. 9). The battle raged fiercely in the valley while Moses, Aaron and Hur watched from the hill above. “And it came to pass when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed and when he let down his hands Amalek prevailed” (v. 11). So it was that whenever Moses held high his hands **in prayer** the Israelites were successful. When Moses’ hands grew tired and heavy, Aaron and Hur held them up while Moses sat upon a stone to rest.

There he stayed till the end of the day, when Israel at last won the battle against the powerful army of Amalek (vv. 11-14). Thus God showed His mighty power and His care for those who trust in Him. “Blessed is the nation whose God is Yahweh, and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance” (Psa. 33:12-16).

The battle over, the people returned to camp and there Moses built an altar. It was to remind Israel of this battle. God told Moses to write the whole story down in a book, because God was determined that Israel would remember that the Amalekites were enemies for ever. The prayers of Moses were very powerful on that day, and God will always answer the prayers of faithful men and women in time of trouble.

LESSON FOR US

God blesses those who put their trust in Him. This does not mean that God will give us all we **want**, but we learn from this lesson that He will give us all we **need**. He gave Israel food, water and protection for

forty years. What more could they ask, when ahead of them was the Promised Land as well! Even their clothes and shoes did not wear out and their feet did not swell, though they walked many, many miles. Moses later reminded them of all these things just before he died.

Most people in this world today die because they do not have enough food, clothing or shelter. God has always provided for our needs **and** has given us the promise of eternal life in His Kingdom as well. Let us never complain, but be thankful always and trust in God to provide.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

God did not make things easy for the children of Israel in the wilderness. This would be like spoiling them. He wanted them to prove themselves worthy of all that He had in store for them, so that they would appreciate all His goodness and love. Moses reminded them of all these things just before he died. “God led thee all these forty years in the wilderness to humble thee and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or not” (Deut. 8:2). God let them get hungry, so that they would really be grateful for the manna; He let them get thirsty so that they would appreciate the miracle of the healed waters and the water out of the rock; He let the Amalekites attack, so that they would learn that God gives the victory when we pray for help.

In all of this, the lesson was: “that He might make thee know that **men doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of Yahweh**” (Deut. 8:3). The Lord Jesus Christ, when he was tempted in the wilderness for forty days, quoted these words to the one who tempted him when he was hungry. He had spent all his life learning this lesson. His mind was filled with the Word of God and that is how he overcame sin. In the same way, we must read the Word of God every day and think upon its lessons. It will make us “wise unto salvation” (2 Tim. 3:15). We will know how to choose good and refuse the evil. So our characters will grow to be like the character of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is called “the bread of life”, because “he that cometh to me shall never hunger and he that believeth on me shall never thirst” (John 6:35). It is only through him, that we shall have eternal life.

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- *1. What was wrong with the water at Marah?
2. What was Moses told he must do to make the water fit to drink?
3. What food did God provide for the multitude when they grumbled near the Red Sea?
4. What does the word “manna” mean?
5. How were the people given water at Rephidim?
- *6. What evil nation attacked the Israelites at Rephidim?
7. What did Moses do while the battle raged at Rephidim?
- *8. Who was the faithful young man appointed by Moses to lead Israel against the Amalekites?

Detailed Answers

- *1. Tell how God provided manna and the special instructions He gave for gathering it.
2. How did God provide food and water, for the great company of Israelites in the wilderness and what do we learn from this lesson?
3. Describe how the nation of Israel gained a victory over the Amalekites at Rephidim and what we learn from this lesson.

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

4. Why did God allow His people to become very hungry and thirsty before He gave them food and water?
5. Who is the true bread of life?
6. Jesus, like Israel, suffered great hunger in the wilderness. How was Jesus' attitude different from that of the people of Israel?

20. ISRAEL AT MT. SINAI

“Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai and gavest them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments.”

Aim

To show how God gave His laws and commandments to Israel, His chosen people.

God had delivered Israel from Egypt, and led them for three months through the wilderness, until they came at last to Mt. Sinai, as He had earlier promised Moses (Exod. 3:12).

You will remember that the Israelites had been slaves in Egypt and most probably had little or no understanding of God and how He wanted them to live. It was necessary that this chosen people should know God's way, for God said, “Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation” (Exod. 19:6). In order that Israel could be fit subjects of God's Kingdom they must know right from wrong. So it was necessary to give them laws to show them God's ways so that they might obey them and please Him. These laws also pointed out to them how wrong it was to sin against their God.

Exodus 19 and 20

ISRAEL AT MT. SINAI: Exodus 19:1-15

When the people came to Sinai, they pitched camp and Moses went up into the mountain to speak with the angel of God. Moses was told why God had led the Hebrew people through such difficult journeyings and what His purpose was with them. The wonderful message of their future now became clear when God said, “Now therefore if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar (i.e. a special) treasure unto me, above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (vv. 5,6).

Moses came down to the people and gave them this wonderful promise to which they replied, “All that Yahweh hath spoken we will do”. Then God told Moses that He would meet with all the people in three days' time. They must wash themselves and be prepared for this great and awe-inspiring occasion. Barriers were set up around the mountain because God said the place was holy. They were warned not to touch it or they would die. “There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall be surely stoned whether it be beast or man” (v. 13).

THE WORD OF GOD — THE TEN COMMANDMENTS: Exodus 19:16-25; 20

On the third day, there were “thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that were in the camp trembled” (v. 16). Moses brought all the people to the foot of the mountain and then God came down and covered the top of it with fire and smoke and the whole of the mountain trembled greatly. Imagine the wonder that filled the people, watching in silence. Here they were in the very presence of Yahweh, although they could not see Him. The voice of the trumpet sounded long and grew louder and louder.

Moses alone went up into the mountain and there God gave him instructions, which he took back to the people. Then from out of the midst of the fire and cloud, the people heard the voice of God, clear and terrifying (Deut. 4:11-13), proclaiming the ten commandments.

- (1) Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.
- (2) Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
- (3) Thou shalt not take the Name of Yahweh thy God in vain.
- (4) Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
- (5) Honour thy father and mother.
- (6) Thou shalt not kill.
- (7) Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- (8) Thou shalt not steal.
- (9) Thou shalt not bear false witness.
- (10) Thou shalt not covet.

When God had finished speaking, the thundering and lightning and sound of the trumpet continued and the people were terrified. They said to Moses, “Speak **thou** with us and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die” (Exod. 20:19).

So Moses went back up into the mountain, where God gave him further laws, which he later recited to the people. All these laws and commandments would help them learn to be a special people to their God. They would learn how to treat each other and how to deal with the nations among whom they were to live. God also promised to send an angel before them to lead them safely to the Promised Land, but He warned them, “Beware of him for My Name is in him” (Exod. 23:21).

When Moses had finished reciting all these commandments, the

people readily agreed to obey. "All that Yahweh hath said, we will do, and be obedient" (Exod. 24:7). They made a covenant or solemn promise to be God's special people. From Sinai they were to go forward as the nation of Israel to inherit the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

LESSON FOR US

The greatest of all lessons is clearly seen in the ten commandments. If put into practice in our lives day by day they can help us to become true sons and daughters of God. We must learn to think of God first in all things, and to love our neighbour as ourselves. To love God, the Lord Jesus Christ said, with all our heart and mind and strength, is the first and greatest of all the commandments. "The second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." See the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 22:37-40.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

The purpose of God in giving Israel His law, was to teach them the way they should go, for His law was intended to be obeyed. It was to teach Israel right from wrong, and to remind them that they were a holy or separate people and were never to forget their God. So the law of God brought Him to mind in every way, in the home, in their education and in their daily work.

When we look at the ten commandments, we see that they are divided into two groups of five. The first four relate to the way Israel was to worship God; the fifth concerns family life; and the remaining five show the care they had to take in treating their neighbours.

Although today we are not bound to keep the Law of Moses, we must still obey these commandments, for the Lord Jesus Christ teaches us to do so. (See Lesson For Us). For example, nine of the ten commandments are repeated in the New Testament, and the fourth commandment (regarding the Sabbath), is to be obeyed in its true sense for we must not please ourselves but delight in doing God's will every day (Isa. 58:13-14).

The Law of Moses has been put away but God is still calling out of all nations men and women of faith. Those who accept the Truth in the appointed way, by belief and baptism into Jesus Christ, are accounted

as “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people”, as Israel was under Moses (1 Pet. 2:9; cp. Exod. 19:5-6).

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- *1. What was the name of the mountain where God gave Israel His great Law?
- *2. What kind of people did God want the nation of Israel to be?
3. How were the people to prepare themselves before the meeting with God?
4. Why did Moses order a barrier to be placed around the mountain?
5. Did the people hear the ten commandments spoken by God?
6. What did the people answer after Moses recited God’s laws to them?
7. What did Jesus say was the first and greatest commandment?
8. What did he say was the second like unto it?

Detailed Answers

- *1. Tell what you know about the ten commandments.
2. What did the Lord Jesus Christ say were the two greatest commandments?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

3. What was God’s purpose in giving His Law to Israel?
4. How can we keep the ten commandments today?



21. THE GOLDEN CALF

“They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.”

Aim

To show that those who disobey God’s Law must be punished.

God had brought the people of Israel out of Egypt to Mount Sinai. He had called them to be a “holy” nation to Himself (Deut. 28:9-10) and had given them commandments which taught that God must have first place in their lives. The people willingly agreed to obey (Ex. 24:7). It was not long, however, before they forgot their promise and broke the first two commandments.

Exodus Chapter 32

MOSES IN THE MOUNT FOR FORTY DAYS:

Exodus 24:12-18

Altogether, Moses went up into Mount Sinai seven times. Even before God announced the ten commandments, Moses had gone up and returned from Mount Sinai three times. Afterwards, he went up another four times to worship, and hear God’s laws proclaimed. On the fifth time he went up to the top of the mountain and received the two tables of stone on which were the ten commandments written by “the finger of God” and was given the plans for building the Tabernacle. Leaving Aaron and Hur in charge of the camp (v14), and taking Joshua with him, at least part of the way (v13), he ascended the mountain and he remained there for forty days and forty nights.

While Moses was away, the people grew tired of waiting for him and rebelled against their God.

THE PEOPLE MAKE AN IDOL AND WORSHIP IT:

Exodus 32(1-6)

The people began to think that Moses would never return. It was nearly six weeks since they had seen him go up into the cloud-covered mountain. They began once more to think about Egypt and remember the things they had done there. How foolish they were to think such thoughts, when only a few weeks earlier they had promised to love God only and keep all His commandments. They came to Aaron and said, “Make us gods which shall go before us”

(v1). How tragic that they had forgotten so soon that Yahweh, the only true God, had shown His great power against the Egyptians and proved that their gods were useless.

They gathered up their golden earrings and brought them to Aaron, who put them all in the fire and melted them down and — “there came out this calf!” (v24). The people were very satisfied with a god they could see, but they had broken the first commandment: “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me” (Ex. 20:3). They had also broken the second commandment: “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image” (Ex. 20:4).

Aaron proclaimed a feast and they rose up early the next morning and offered sacrifices “and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play” (v6).

MOSES RETURNS TO THE CAMP: Exodus 32:7-35

God looked down from heaven and saw what the people were doing. He was very angry and told Moses to go down quickly and He would destroy this wicked people, and make a new nation out of Moses. Desperately Moses pleaded for Israel, and God heard him and agreed not to do as He had threatened. So Moses went down carrying the two precious tables of God’s ten commandments. Faithful Joshua was still waiting for him, and together they continued down the mountain. As they neared the Camp, they could hear the noise of shouting. Joshua became fearful for Israel’s safety. He thought that they must have been attacked by enemies. But Moses knew that it was not the noise of war — it was the noise of singing and dancing.

Imagine their amazement and anger when they saw before their eyes such a scene of wickedness. In great anger Moses threw down the tables of stone before the people and broke them to pieces.

Moses then faced Aaron, who had been left to care for the people. Aaron blamed the people, but God was angry with everyone who took part in the wickedness. Finally, because wrong doing must be stopped, Moses left the people and stood in the gate of the camp and called out: “Who is on Yahweh’s side?” (v26).

Quickly, the tribe of Levi answered his call. At Moses’ command they took their swords and destroyed 3,000 of the wicked people who had turned away from God. The golden calf was burned by fire

7-10
10-14
14-24
25-35

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and ground into powder, and then thrown into the water and the people were made to drink it. As well as those who died by the sword, many of the people died from a plague sent by God as punishment. It was a tragic loss for Israel, but contained a great lesson.

LESSON FOR US

A promise given must be kept. The children of Israel had promised to love and serve God alone. They did not keep this promise, and were punished.

We must learn to keep the promises we make, no matter how small, whether at home or at school. Keeping promises is a good habit to get into when we are young, for when we grow older, there is a solemn promise to God that He wants us to keep, that we will love and serve Him all the days of our lives.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

Consider the wonderful character of Moses shown in this lesson. He had been trained by God as a shepherd for forty years and now he was showing the qualities of a true shepherd, who is prepared to "give his life for his sheep." God said He would destroy this rebellious people in a moment, and raise up a faithful nation from Moses. But Moses pleaded strongly for their forgiveness. He was willing to have his name blotted out from the Book of Life if only God would forgive them (Ex. 32:32). God showed him, however that the one who sins must be punished, as in Col. 3:23-25: "He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of persons".

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

1. Whom did Moses leave in charge of the people when he went up to the top of the mountain?
2. Whom did Moses take with him into the mountain?
3. How long was Moses in the mountain?
4. What had Moses gone into the mountain to receive?
5. What did the people do when Moses was away in the mountain?

6. What two commandments did the people break when Moses was away in the mountain?
7. What did Moses do in anger, when he saw the wickedness of the people?
8. What do we learn from this lesson?

Detailed Answers

The people grew tired of waiting for Moses to return from Mt. Sinai.

- ✱1. Tell the story of the golden calf.
- ✱2. How did God punish the people for their wickedness?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

3. How is the greatness of the man Moses seen when he pleads for Israel's forgiveness?
4. How did the Levites show their willingness to serve God?



22. THE TABERNACLE — GOD’S MEETING PLACE WITH ISRAEL

“Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.”

Aim

To learn about the Tabernacle which God commanded Moses to build as His dwelling-place in Israel.

The children of Israel camped in their tents at the foot of Mount Sinai and there they spent many months preparing the materials and furniture for a beautiful Tabernacle. Moses had been shown a pattern of it and given the plans by God when he went up into the mountain. God instructed him to make it exactly as He had shown. “According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the Tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it” (Ex. 25:9). It was a sanctuary, or holy place, where God would meet with Israel and they would come to worship Him there.

Exodus 25:1-9; 26; 35; 36:8-19

MATERIALS USED FOR THE TABERNACLE: Exodus ^{READ.} 25:1-9

A building such as this required a great deal of material. The people were asked to bring the following items listed in Ex. 35:5-9:

- * Gold, silver, brass
- * Blue, purple and scarlet
- * Goat’s hair, rams’ skins dyed red and badgers’ skins
- * Shittim wood
- * Oil for the light, and spices
- * Precious stones
- * Fine twined linen for curtains

God told Moses, “of every man that bringeth it **willingly with his heart** ye shall take My offering” (v2). The people were so enthusiastic about the work that there was “much more than enough” (Ex. 36:5) and God was very pleased. God had been very careful to make Moses understand that the whole Tabernacle must be made **exactly** as he had been shown. Skilled craftsmen and women were needed who were clever enough and wise enough to follow God’s instructions.

God chose two men and gave them special wisdom so that they might see that all the work was done in the best possible way. They were Bezaleel and Aholiab (Ex. 35:30,34). All the women who were

willing, made curtains, coverings for the building and the beautiful clothes, which were the holy garments for Aaron the High Priest, and his sons. Some of the men made tools, and God “filled them with wisdom of heart to work all manner of work” (Ex. 35:35).

THE PLAN OF THE BUILDING: Exodus 26 *PATTERN* *VERSES*

The Tabernacle, or dwelling place, had four walls made of boards of shittim wood covered with gold. A beautifully embroidered curtain was draped over it to make the ceiling. Then over the top of the whole building were coverings of animals' skins. It was 30 cubits long, 10 cubits wide and 10 cubits high. (Note: a cubit is about 50cms. So the whole building measured about 15m by 5m.) The entrance to the Tabernacle was at the eastern end, through a curtain of fine linen, embroidered with blue, purple and scarlet. There were two rooms, the **Holy Place** and the **Most Holy Place**, divided from each other by another curtain, called the vail. The Holy Place was 20 cubits long and 10 cubits wide. It was twice the size of the Most Holy Place, which measured 10 cubits by 10 cubits. (As it was also 10 cubits high, it was a perfect cube.)

Surrounding the dwelling-place itself was an area measuring 100 cubits long and 50 cubits wide. this was enclosed by curtains made from fine white linen fixed to wooden pillars set in sockets of brass. The entrance in this surrounding wall was also at the eastern end, and was made of linen, beautifully embroidered with blue, purple and scarlet.

THE POSITION OF THE TABERNACLE IN THE CAMP:

Numbers 1:49-54; 2

When all was finished, the Tabernacle was placed in the very centre of the camp of Israel. At all times God was to be in the midst of His people. A large area was left around the Tabernacle where the people of Israel could be called together to hear the words of God.

The tents of the Levites were pitched on three sides of the Tabernacle, but facing eastward and in front of the curtained gateway were the tents of Moses and Aaron. Then the tents of all the people were pitched according to their tribes, always set out in the same order. The whole camp was arranged in a square with God in the midst and the cloud forming a covering from the heat of

the sun. When it was time to remove the camp, the cloud rose up and went before Israel and the nation moved off with the tribes in the order God had instructed (Ex. 40:34-38).

The tribe of Judah always led the nation followed by five more

In Numbers 10:14-28 we can read the order in which the tribes moved forward.

LESSON FOR US

We have seen how that God would only accept gifts for the Tabernacle from those who were willing. The apostle Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 9:7, “that the Lord loveth a cheerful giver”. Let us learn to give always in a good spirit, sharing whatever things we may have and giving our time and ability without grumbling. If we give as we are able, it does not matter how much or how little we give, but it must be our best and it must be given willingly.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

God chose special workmen to oversee the building of the Tabernacle. In addition, He required that “every wise hearted among you shall come and make all that Yahweh hath commanded” (Ex. 35:10,25-26). In these people, both men and women, He “put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary” (Ex. 36:1).

God has given us the Scriptures that we may learn to be workmen for Him (2 Tim. 3:15-17). The more we read His Word the better equipped we will be to serve Him. As the apostle Paul exhorted Timothy, so we can be encouraged by these words: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of God” (2 Tim. 2:15).

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- *1. Who gave Moses the plans for the Tabernacle?
2. Who were chosen and guided especially in the work?
3. What did the women do towards the work?
- *4. What kind of people gave material for the building of the Tabernacle?

- *5. What were the main divisions of the Tabernacle?
6. What colours were used in the Tabernacle?
7. What were the coverings of the Tabernacle made of?
- *8. Where was God's position in the camp of Israel?
9. How did the nation know when to remove their camp?
- *10. In what order did the tribes move off from their camp?

Detailed Answers

1. What was the reason for a Tabernacle being build for God?
2. What materials were used for the Tabernacle and who provided them?
3. Briefly describe the plan of the Tabernacle using a drawing and notes.

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

4. (a) What sort of people worked in the building of the Tabernacle?
(b) How did God prepare them for the work?
(c) How can we be prepared to be workmen in God's service?

MARCHING ORDER OF THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

JUDAH
ISSACHAR
ZEBULUN
LEVITES (*Gershon & Merari with Tabernacle*)
REUBEN
SIMEON
GAD
LEVITES (*Kohath with furniture, vessels and the Ark*)
EPHRAIM
MANASSEH
BENJAMIN
DAN
ASHER
NAPHTALI

23. THE FURNITURE OF THE TABERNACLE

“Look thou that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the Mount.”

Aim

A description of the furniture of the Tabernacle, its use and where it was placed.

In this lesson we will consider six important items of furniture, four inside the Tabernacle and two outside, within the walled enclosure known as the outer court, or court yard. The six items are:

- 4 (1) The Altar of Burnt Offering
- ✕ (2) The Laver
- ✕ (3) The Lampstand
- ✕ (4) The Table of Shewbread
- ✕ (5) The Altar of Incense, and
- € (6) The Ark of the Covenant

Exodus 37 and 38

A. THE FURNITURE IN THE COURTYARD

THE ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING: Exodus 38:1-7

In the eastern end of the court stood first an altar, called the Altar of Burnt Offering. It was made of shittim wood overlaid with brass. It had a brass network underneath so that the fire would burn more easily, and the top was finished with four horns coming out from the corners. The animal sacrifice was placed on the altar and tied to the horns. The fire under the altar was lit by God (Lev. 9:24), Who also commanded that “the fire shall ever be burning upon the altar continually; it shall never go out” (Lev. 6:13). A ramp of earth led up to the large square altar on the south side. There were also pots, basins, and shovels used in the sacrifice of the animals, and these too were made of brass.

THE LAVER: Exodus 30:18-21

Between the Altar of Burnt Offering and the door of the Tabernacle stood the Laver. It was a large basin made of brass in which the priests washed their hands and feet, when performing their duties, either in the courtyard or in the Holy Place. Washing in water was very important. God required His servants to be both clean in body and mind.

Washing with water cleans our skin, but it takes the Word of God to cleanse our hearts and minds (see John 15:3 and compare Eph. 5:26 and Psa. 119:9).

B. THE FURNITURE IN THE HOLY PLACE

There were three articles of furniture in this room, called the Holy Place.

THE LAMPSTAND: Exodus 37:17-24

Through the curtain-doorway of the Tabernacle on the left hand side of the room was the Lampstand made of pure gold. It had a centre stem and six branches, three on each side bending upwards making all seven lights on a level. The lamps were fed with olive oil supplied by all the children of Israel and they had to be filled night and morning (Exod. 27:20-21; Lev. 24:2). It was the only light in the dark room and gave light for the priest who entered each day to carry out his duties. Jesus said he was “the light of the world” and God wants us to be bright shining lights, glowing with the goodness that comes from one who loves the Lord (Matt. 5:14-16). The Word of God is the Light that guides us (Psa. 119:105).

THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD: Exodus 37:10-16

This was a wooden table overlaid with gold and decorated with a border or crown of gold. It stood on the right hand side of the room. Upon this table were placed twelve unleavened loaves. These loaves, called the “shewbread”, were arranged in two piles and above them were placed two small bowls full of frankincense. Each week the priests ate the shewbread. The frankincense was used upon the Altar of Incense, and new loaves and frankincense replaced them.

The twelve loaves represented the work of the twelve tribes of Israel. They had planted the grain, God had made it grow and when it was ripe they harvested it and made it into loaves. God had blessed their labours. He will bless us too if we work diligently in His service, trying hard to understand His Word and making an effort to live obedient lives.

THE GOLDEN ALTAR OF INCENSE: Exodus 37:25-28

At the end of the room called the Holy Place, and close to the dividing curtain or vail, stood the Golden Altar for burning incense. It was

much smaller than the altar in the courtyard. It was made of shittim wood covered with gold. It had four horns and was decorated around the top with a golden crown. The priests burned incense here morning and evening with the coals of fire brought in from the Altar of Burnt Offering. When the incense was placed upon the hot coals it gave off a sweet scent and God was pleased when the smoke went upwards with the beautiful perfume. The incense was burned twice daily and Luke 1:8-10 says it was a time of prayer. When we pray, our words reach to heaven like a sweet smelling odour to Yahweh (Psa. 141:2).

C. THE FURNITURE IN THE MOST HOLY PLACE

This room was a very special place with walls overlaid with gold. No one could see in here because the vail divided it from the Holy Place. It contained one glorious piece of furniture. It was here that God dwelt and His voice was heard. The High Priest was the only one allowed in the Most Holy Place and then only once every year on the Day of Atonement. Special preparations were made on this special day so that he could go in and speak with God.

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT: Exodus 37:1-9

This was a simple box made of shittim wood, overlaid with gold inside and out. It had a crown around the top and the lid of the box was made of pure gold with figures each end, called Cherubim, made of the same piece of gold. The lid of the box was called the Mercy Seat. The Cherubim above the Mercy Seat had wings and faces and their faces looked towards each other and down at the Mercy Seat. The wonderful Glory of God shone there, but it was only seen by the High Priest once a year when he took in some blood from the sacrifice and sprinkled it on the "Mercy Seat". God then spoke to him as a sign that the sins of the people were forgiven. The Mercy Seat was God's meeting-place with Israel (Exod. 25:21-22). God instructed Moses to place the following three things inside the Ark:

- (1) The tables of stone upon which the ten commandments were written.
- (2) A golden pot of manna which was preserved by God for many years, to remind them of God's care for them in the wilderness.
- (3) Aaron's rod that budded (Num. 17:10).

LESSON FOR US

In all the details of the Tabernacle and its furniture we see that God gave exact instructions for making them and how to use them. These had to be followed, so that Israel's worship might be acceptable to God. In the same way He has given clear instructions in His Word, how we must worship Him today. Let us read the Bible carefully so that we can learn His ways now, for Jesus said, "They that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

- *1. Name the two pieces of furniture in the outer court of the Tabernacle?
2. What were the horns of the altar used for?
3. What was the Laver used for?
- *4. What is it that cleanses our hearts and minds (Eph. 5: 26)?
- *5. Name the three pieces of furniture in the Holy Place.
- *6. Who supplied the oil for the Lampstand?
7. Who said, "I am the light of the world"?
8. How many loaves of shewbread were there?
9. Where did the Priest get the fire to burn the incense on the Incense Altar?
- *10. What was in the Most Holy Place?
- *11. What was the Mercy Seat?
12. What was the Ark of the Covenant made of?
13. What did worshippers do at the time of incense?
14. Where in the Tabernacle was the Glory of God revealed?

Detailed Answers

1. Tell what the Altar of Burnt Offering looked like and what it was used for.
2. Describe the 3 items of furniture in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle.
3. What did the Ark of the Covenant look like? What three things were inside it?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

4. (a) Describe the three items of furniture in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle.
(b) What lessons do we learn from these three things?
5. Name the six items of furniture in the courtyard, Holy Place and Most Holy and draw a plan to show where each was placed.



24. TEACHERS FOR ISRAEL

“They shall teach Jacob thy judgments and Israel thy law.”

Aim

To show how the Priests and the Levites taught Israel to live according to the Law of Moses.

The Tabernacle worship and its spiritual lessons were important but there was a great deal more in the Law of Moses. It was most important that everyone, children too, should be taught to know and understand the laws that controlled their everyday lives, including the solemn days God wanted them to observe for special reasons. To carry out this most important task of teaching the people, and to perform the duties of the Tabernacle, God specially selected one tribe.

Exodus 28:1-5; 29:38-46; Numbers 3:6-10

THE LEVITES — GOD’S TEACHERS NUMBERS 3:6-10

Originally there were twelve tribes of Israel, each tribe being descended from one of the twelve sons of Jacob. When Jacob called his sons together to bless them, his son Joseph received the blessing of double portion. This means that each of his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh received a full portion of inheritance in Israel; so from this time on there were thirteen tribes.

In the lesson about the golden calf, we saw that the Levites separated themselves from the wickedness of the people and joined themselves to God Who commanded them to punish those who sinned. The name “Levi” means “joined”, and this is what the tribe did by joining themselves unto God. They were men of principle, determined to uphold God’s ways and punish all who had sinned against God, even friends or relatives if need be (Deut. 33:8-10).

It is a true principle that God must come first in our lives, even above all other loved ones — as Jesus himself taught (Matt. 10:37). Because of this faithful attitude to their God, God chose the tribe of Levi as His special workers, to do the work of the Tabernacle and to teach Israel His ways. “I have given the Levites,” God said, “as a gift to Aaron and his sons, to do the service of the children of Israel” (Num. 8:19). When the Israelites travelled from place to place, it was the duty of the Levites to take down the Tabernacle. The priests carefully covered all the furniture, ready for the Levites to carry it on the journey. Then they set it up

again in a place shown to them by God. It was their task also to study the Law, so that they would know it very well and be able to teach it to others.

THE PRIESTS

From among the tribe of Levi, the family of Aaron was chosen to come closer to God. As priests, their work was more important, for only the priests were allowed inside the Tabernacle. So it was their responsibility to make sure that there was always oil in the Lampstand and to change the shewbread each week. Every morning and evening they had to offer the daily burnt offerings. They had to burn incense upon the Altar of Incense in the Holy Place on behalf of all Israel. It was the priests who kept the fire burning on the Altar of Burnt Offering and attended to all the people who came to the Tabernacle to offer sacrifices or offerings to God. The priests also were to teach the ways of God to Israel (Mal. 2:7).

THE HIGH PRIEST *EXODUS 28:1-5.*

The High Priest Aaron, was very special, for of all the people, he alone could go into the Most Holy Place and so come closest to God. There could be only one High Priest at a time, and his beautiful clothes were designed by God "for glory and for beauty" (Exod. 28:2). He wore white linen trousers and coat, and over these a blue linen coat and girdle. The blue coat was embroidered around the hem with pomegranates of blue, purple and scarlet. Between each pomegranate was to be placed a golden bell. All these beautiful colours were in the three curtains of the Tabernacle, and each colour taught a wonderful lesson. These garments were then covered by a short jacket made of linen, embroidered with the same colours, and it was held on the shoulders with a clasp made of precious stones.

On his chest was a square of linen in which were placed twelve of the most brilliant gems, each one bearing the name of a tribe of Israel. This was called the Breastplate. He wore a head-covering of linen with a plate of pure gold fastened to the front saying, "Holiness to Yahweh". What a glowing picture of colour and beauty Aaron looked in these lovely garments.

GOD'S CARE FOR THE LEVITES

When Israel became a settled people in the Promised Land, the Le-

vites, unlike the other twelve tribes, were given no part in the land on which to grow crops and settle to earn a living (Num. 18:20-23). God told them He would care for them, and every three years the other tribes had to pay them a tenth of all they earned. In turn, the Levites had to give a tenth of what they received to Aaron and his sons, the priests. “I am thy part and thy inheritance,” said God, and the Levites knew that all good things come from God. Although there were thirteen tribes, the tribe of Levi was always set apart and so the land is always spoken of as belonging to the twelve tribes.

LESSON FOR US

Ever since He placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, God has given people laws — things they must do, and things they must not do. He has also appointed people to help teach those rules. To the people of Israel, He gave the Levites, then the prophets, and lastly He gave His only begotten son Jesus Christ, who was greatest of all the teachers God provided (Heb. 1:1-2).

What the Lord Jesus Christ taught has been carefully written down in the Bible for us to learn. In His wonderful love and kindness, God has given us parents and teachers to instruct us from His Word. They are our helpers and will show us from the Bible what we should do. Let us therefore listen very carefully to the instruction we receive from them, that God might bless us with eternal life. “My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light” (Prov. 6:20-23).

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

The High Priest wore a golden plate upon the front of his bonnet which said “Holiness to Yahweh”. This was to teach him and all who saw him that his mind, which was behind the gold plate, should be thinking only of God’s holy ways. To do this, he needed to meditate continually upon the Word of God. The Lord Jesus Christ never sinned in all his life, because he thought only those thoughts which pleased God. He was holy to God in every thought and action. Believers today are to be holy too. Peter says, “Gird up the loins of your mind”, i.e.

make sure your mind is prepared for the coming of Christ and be holy in all your behaviour; because God has said, “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:13-16). God’s Word is able to sanctify us, i.e. make us clean and holy (John 17:17), and so we shall bring every thought into subjection to God’s will (see 2 Cor. 10:5).

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

1. What tribe did God give to Aaron to help in the work of teaching the people?
2. How did the Levites help with the Tabernacle?
3. Why were the Levites chosen as God’s special workers?
4. Whose family were chosen to be the priests in Israel?
5. What were some of the duties of the priests?
6. Who was chosen as the first High Priest?
7. What was written on the golden plate on the High Priest’s forehead?

Detailed Answers

- * 1. God chose one tribe to be teachers of His Law to Israel. How did God provide food for the Levites, who did not have land of their own?
- * 2. What was the work of the priests —
 - (a) in the Tabernacle
 - (b) in helping the people?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

3. Describe the beautiful clothes worn by the High Priest.
4. What was the lesson from the golden plate on the High Priest’s bonnet?

25. THE THREE FEASTS OF ISRAEL

“Thou shalt rejoice in every good thing that Yahweh thy God hath given thee.”

Aim

To show how Israel, when finally settled in the land of promise, were to worship God as a nation by keeping the Feasts set out in the Law given to Moses.

God wrote the ten commandments on two tables of stone, and also gave Moses many other laws to guide the people in their daily living: how they were to treat neighbours, how to plant and look after their crops when they reached the Promised Land and many other laws too. If the people obeyed the Law of God, they could look forward to a wonderful future. God would bless them with plentiful harvests, good health and safety from their enemies (Ex. 34:24).

There were also important rules for worship. One of these was that three times each year every man had to appear before God at the place He appointed (Deut. 16:16). These times were known as the ‘Feasts of Yahweh’. Although they were called ‘Feasts’, it was not intended that the people should spend all their time eating and making merry. They were times of solemn assembly, when, they gathered together and soberly thought on God’s Word and rejoiced together because of the hope they shared. They would look forward to the time when the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would be fulfilled and all the earth would be filled with God’s Glory (Num. 14:21).

Leviticus 23

THE FEAST OF PASSOVER: Leviticus 23:4-8

The feast of Passover was celebrated every year on the fourteenth day of the first month, the same day on which the Passover Lamb was first killed and eaten in Egypt. It was to be a memorial or reminder, to the children of Israel of the night the angel of God passed over and spared the Hebrew people, when the first-born men and beasts in Egyptian homes were destroyed. The blood of a lamb had been sprinkled on the door-posts and lintels of the Hebrew’s homes, and they were saved from God’s terrible judgements.

At the same time each year, every family in Israel was to kill a lamb, roast it, and eat it with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. The children would be taught how God had brought their fathers out of Egypt with a great deliverance. To celebrate this feast (and the other feasts), the people were to gather “in the place where I

have set my name'. This was in and around the Tabernacle, after Israel had settled in the land.

THE FEAST OF PENTECOST (OR WEEKS): Leviticus 23:9-22

The children of Israel were to count 7 weeks starting from the day after Passover feast. The next day, following the 7 weeks, (making fifty days in all) was celebrated as the 'Feast of Weeks'. In the New Testament it is called 'Pentecost' which means 'fiftieth' day.

This feast was a time of gladness and thanksgiving. It gave the people an opportunity together to praise God for His great blessings at harvest time. It was to teach them that **all** good things come from God and they should always thank Him, recognising from Whom all blessings come. The wheat crop would have been harvested by the time of this feast, but before the people could eat any of the grain themselves, they had first to offer to God. Some of the grain was made into flour for making two loaves or cakes which were offered to God. This was to teach the lesson that God must always come first. If we give to God the best, He will see that there is always plenty for us.

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES: Leviticus 23:24-44

The great Day of Atonement was on the tenth day of the seventh month and the Feast of Tabernacles took place on the fifteenth day of the same month. It was the end of the farming year when all the harvest was complete.

The grapes, olives and figs were all gathered in before the rain came. The word 'Tabernacle' or booth, as it is called, means 'a little shelter', just like the ones they made at Succoth (meaning 'booths'). See Lesson 18. At this time a great many sacrifices and offerings were made and no work was permitted to be done. On the first day they were to take "the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees and willows of the brook", and make booths for their families. They were to sit and speak of the time when God brought them out of Egypt and tell the story all over again, remembering that their fathers had lived in booths or huts when God first delivered them from Egypt. "Ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days" (v40).

SEE
ADD NOTES
"A TIME
OF RESTING"

LESSON FOR US

Many centuries after the giving of the Law of Moses, God had to send His prophet Malachi to tell the people of Israel how they had failed to keep God's Laws. They were still coming to the temple and offering sacrifices to God and keeping His feasts, but they were not giving to God their best, nor did they serve Him in love. They were giving sick and deformed animals in sacrifice instead of unblemished and God said "Ye have robbed me" (Mal. 3:9-10). The people thought it foolish to burn good animals in sacrifice. They were putting themselves first and giving God something they did not want anyway. But God said, if the people repented and brought their best to Him in love, He would pour out a blessing upon them, so that their storehouse would not be able to hold their harvests.

We must learn that we too can rob God if we fail to give Him our best. Jesus taught the same principles: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). God will see to it that all our daily needs are supplied, as long as we put Him first in our hearts and minds.

ADDITIONAL NOTES (11-12 years only)

When the children of Israel came into Canaan, they were to settle on the land as farmers. Their year would be spent in preparing the soil, planting and eventually harvesting. This of course would be a time of rejoicing for the reaping of the harvest is the fruit of one's work.

The feasts of Yahweh all had a particular place in this agricultural year for a special reason. God is like a farmer who plants good seed, (the good news of the Kingdom and the things about the name of Jesus Christ). He provided servants such as the prophets and apostles who cared for the growth of the plant (i.e. the Word in the hearts of people) until the time of harvest (when Jesus Christ returns to the earth) (Matt. 13:38-43).

This harvest will be of people, who in their life have loved God and obeyed Him, having always given Him their best. These people will be given a place in His glorious kingdom which shall last for a thousand years, at the end of which, God will again gather the last of His great harvest — the righteous mortal people who live during the Kingdom. When all are finally gathered, just as the last of the harvests of the Feast of Tabernacles were gathered in, there will be

a time of rejoicing such as never was before, for the purpose of God with creation will then be complete: “Truly as I live,” said God, “all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Yahweh” (Num. 14:21).

QUESTIONS — (9-12 years)

Short Answers

1. What sort of laws did God give to Moses beside the ten commandments?
2. What did God promise the people if they kept His law?
3. How many times a year were the males to come up to worship?
4. What were the names of the three most important feasts?
5. What important time in the history of Israel was to be remembered by keeping the Passover Feast?
6. What was the other name for the Feast of Weeks?
7. What lesson did the people learn at the Feast of Weeks?
8. What was the Feast of Tabernacles to remind the children of Israel of?
9. What did the people live in during the Feast of Tabernacles?

Detailed Answers

The Feasts of the Lord were gatherings of the people of Israel to give thanks to God.

- *1. Tell all you know about the Feast of Passover.
- *2. Tell what you know about the Feast of Tabernacles.
3. Why did Malachi the prophet say Israel had robbed God?

Additional Answers (11-12 years only)

4. What sort of harvests of the earth will God gather to His glory?
5. When will God’s final harvest take place?
6. For what purpose were the Feasts of the Lord given to Israel?

