



THE OLD TESTAMENT STORY

Condensed & Simplified



By Marion D. Owens

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This series of lessons is designed to make the history of God's people in the Old Testament easy to understand and appreciate. They show how there is a connected story from Adam to Nehemiah. They are intended for use by students from junior high level to adult level. They are easy to teach and administer - requiring no special training.

These lessons are limited to the main stream of historical events. They do not explore details of the Law of Moses, the Poetic books, or the books of Prophecy. (Those are separate studies).

Recommendations for Use

These lessons are most effective in smaller groups. Recommended procedure:

1. Distribute sheet one. Read aloud in class. Invite student discussion.
2. Distribute study questions. Have students to work together (2-3 in a group) to fill in the answers, using information sheet.
3. Go over questions orally, going from student to student. (Be sure students' answers are uniform).
4. Distribute the next lesson sheet and repeat the procedure. Continue this pattern throughout the course, covering whatever amount of material that fits into your allotted time.
5. Frequently review the characters in order to help reinforce memory of the main characters.
6. It is recommended that future sheets not be distributed until the time for the class. (Previous sheets can be given to those who missed a session.)
7. VERY IMPORTANT: Have every student get a loose-leaf binder and keep all materials. URGE each person to use this material to teach others! (Punch holes in sheets for fitting into notebooks.)

PHASES OF OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY

In learning the history of God's people in the Old Testament, it is helpful to be aware of the different periods of historical development. Please take note of the following:

1. **CREATION** Period: Adam, Eve, and family. Population growth
2. **FLOOD**: Mankind becomes very sinful. Noah, Flood
3. **PATRIARCHS** (Fathers): Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. God selects one man (Abraham) to be father of a great nation of God's people.
4. **EGYPTIAN** Period: Jacob's family moves to Egypt. People become numerous. Enslaved and oppressed by Egyptians.
5. **WILDERNESS** Period: Moses leads people from Egypt toward Canaan (through Red Sea). Lasts 40 years due to people's rebelliousness.
6. **CONQUEST** Period: Joshua leads people during battles to take the land from the nations living in Canaan.
7. **JUDGES** Period: Series of 15 Judges rule the people
8. **UNITED KINGDOM**: Saul, David, and Solomon rule
9. **DIVIDED KINGDOM**: Kingdom splits after death of Solomon. 10 tribes (called Israel) are to the North and 2 tribes (called Judah) are on the South.
10. **CAPTIVITY**: Because of generations of idolatry God decides to punish the people by delivering them to invaders. Israel is taken into captivity by the Assyrians. Some years later the Babylonians conquer the South and take the people to Babylon.
11. **RESTORATION**: After 70 years the captives in Babylon begin the return to Jerusalem to begin the re-building of the temple, the walls, and the gates.

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Lesson 1

Gen. 1:1 - 5:27

The Old Testament begins with the book of Genesis, which is the book of beginnings. It tells how God created the heavens and the earth...in the Beginning. It tells of the order in which God created light, plants, and various kinds of animal life. It tells how God created man from dust on the sixth day of creation. And it tells how God created woman using a rib from the man's side.

The first man and woman were called Adam and Eve. God placed them in a beautiful garden, called the Garden of Eden. They were told to take care of the garden. They were allowed to eat of any of the trees - except one. God warned them NOT to eat of a certain tree, called the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. They were to suffer if they disobeyed.

Also, in the garden was Satan, who was in the form of a snake. Satan is the enemy of God and has always tried to get people to disobey God - which he does until this day! Satan tried to get Eve to eat from the forbidden tree, telling her that it would not do any harm. It would just make her smarter! He talked Eve into eating from the tree. She gave some fruit to Adam, and he also ate - disobeying God.

This was the first SIN. Sin is disobeying God. It always brings punishment. And it brought punishment to Adam and Eve. They were driven out of the garden and not allowed to come back. From then on life was much harder. The man had to work hard to make a living. The woman would also have pain and suffering.

This was the beginning of the human race. Adam and Eve had children. Three of their sons were CAIN, ABEL, and SETH. Cain became the first murderer. He killed Abel because of jealousy - as God liked Abel's sacrifice better than Cain's.

Genesis records a number of generations after Adam. One very good man named ENOCH was taken to heaven without dying because he was so pleasing to God. Enoch's son METHUSELAH lived to age 969!

Lesson 1 Questions

1. _____, the 1st O.T. book, tells of the _____ and _____ being created.
2. Man was created from _____ on the _____ day of creation. A _____ was used to create the first woman.
3. The first man and woman, named _____ and _____ were put in a place called the _____ of _____.
4. Adam and Eve were told NOT to eat of what tree? _____
5. Satan was in the form of a _____.
6. He tempted Eve to do what? _____. _____ also ate.
7. SIN is _____. Because of their sin Adam and Eve were driven from the _____.
8. Out of the garden man had to _____ hard. _____ would have more pain and suffering.
9. _____, _____ and _____ were 3 sons of Adam.
10. _____ was the first murderer. He killed _____ because of _____.
11. A very good man named _____ was taken to heaven without dying.
12. Who lived to age 969? _____

Lesson 2

Gen. 5:28 - 11:32

When God created man, he wanted people to be obedient to him. He wanted to bless the people and do all kinds of good things for them. But as time went by, people became more and more sinful - that is, they did NOT obey God. Finally, God decided to destroy the sinful people and start over again. He found one faithful obedient man named NOAH. He told Noah to build a very large boat (called an ARK). God planned to bring a huge flood on the earth and destroy all the wicked people. Animals would drown too, so God brought all kinds of animals to Noah to put in the ark.

After a long time, Noah, with his 3 sons HAM, SHEM, and JAPHETH, finished the ark. Noah and his wife, along with his sons and their wives, went into the ark. They took enough food for themselves and the animals. Then the rains started. The earth was flooded and all living things died.

After a few months the water all went down. Finally, the ark was on dry land. The ark was opened, and the people and the animals went outside to begin their lives all over again.

After many hundreds of years, people scattered to many places. Again, they seemed to pay no attention to God. So, God decided to choose one faithful man and from him raise up a people of his own. He chose ABRAM who lived in a place called UR. His wife's name was SARAI. He told Abram to leave his country and go to a land that God would show him. So, Abram took his wife, his father TERAH, his nephew LOT, along with many livestock and servants, and traveled hundreds of miles to what became known as the land of CANAAN.

God made some special promises to Abram. (1) He would make his name great; (2) He would have many descendants; (3) All nations would be blessed through his descendants; and (4) the land would be owned by his descendants. Later, Abram's name was changed to ABRAHAM and SARAI became SARAH.

On the way to Canaan Abram stopped for a time at a place called HARAN. There his elderly father, TERAH, died. Then Abram went on to Canaan.

Lesson 2 Questions

1. God wanted people to be _____ to him. He wanted to _____ them.
2. Finally, God decided to _____ the sinful people by a great _____.
3. A faithful man named _____ was to build a boat called an _____.
4. Noah's sons were _____, _____, and _____.
5. On the earth there was a _____ and all living things _____.
6. How many people were on the ark? _____
7. Because people were not obedient to God, He chose a man _____ to start a people of his own.
8. Abram, along with his wife _____ and nephew _____ left _____ and moved to a land that God would show him.
9. Abram stayed in _____ until _____, his father, died.
10. Abram would move to a new place called _____.
11. God promised Abram that he would make his name _____, that he would have many _____, that all _____ would be _____ through his descendants, and that the _____ would be owned by his descendants.
12. Abram's name was changed to _____; Sarai became _____.

Lesson 3

Gen. 12:1 - 20:19

Abram had many flocks and herds when he got to Canaan, as did his nephew, Lot. But there was not enough grazing land for all their animals, so Abram and Lot separated. Lot was given the choice of where to go. Lot chose to go to the well-watered plain near the wicked city of Sodom, while Abram remained in Canaan.

One of the promises to Abram was that he would have many descendants. But he was an old man already and his wife, Sarai, had never had children. So, Sarai told Abram to take a slave girl named Hagar to be his wife (men often had more than one wife in those days). HAGAR had a son named ISHMAEL. Abram was 86 years old when Ishmael was born.

About 13 years later, when Abram was 99, God appeared to him again. He changed his name to ABRAHAM. Sarai's name was changed to SARAH. God made more promises to Abraham. He promised that Sarah would give birth to a son - even though she was very old.

Some time later, 3 men who were really angels came to visit Abraham. They told him that Sarah would have a son. Sarah overheard the conversation and laughed because she was sure she was too old to have a child. The angels scolded her for laughing - because nothing is impossible for God.

The city of Sodom where Lot lived was a VERY wicked city. The city was so bad that God decided to destroy it. When Abraham learned of God's plans he tried to talk God into sparing the city. But Abraham could not find any good people in the city except for Lot and his family.

Two angels were sent to get Lot's family out before God destroyed the city by sending down burning sulfur. Lot, his wife, and his 2 daughters were told to hurry away. They were told NOT to look back on the burning cities of SODOM and GOMORRAH. BUT...Lot's wife disobeyed and looked back. She was punished by being turned to salt. (This helps us to understand how important it is to OBEY GOD).

Lesson 3 Questions

1. Abraham and his nephew, _____, had many _____ and _____.
2. Abraham and Lot separated because there was not enough _____.
3. Lot chose to go live near the wicked city of _____.
4. Sarai told Abram to marry a _____ girl named _____ so as to have a son (as Sarai had never had _____).
5. Hagar's son was named _____ (Abram was _____ years old).
6. When Abram was age _____ when God changed his name to _____. Sarai's name was changed to _____.
7. God promised Abraham that Sarah would _____.
8. Why was Sarah scolded? _____
9. God decided to destroy _____ because it was a very _____ city.
10. Abraham could not find any good people in Sodom except _____.
11. Two _____ were sent to get Lot's family out of Sodom.
12. What was Lot's family told NOT to do? _____
13. Who looked back? _____ What happened? _____
14. The example of Lot's wife should teach us what? _____

Lesson 4

Gen. 21:1 - 25:34

As promised by the angels, Sarah had a son whom she named ISAAC. Abraham was 100 years old. After a while family problems developed. There was conflict between ISAAC and his half-brother ISHMAEL, and also between SARAH and HAGAR. Finally, HAGAR and ISHMAEL went away to live in another place.

Throughout the Bible much is said about the faith of Abraham. He trusted God completely. But sometimes God puts people through a test to see if they really trust God. God did that with Abraham. Abraham was told to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. That meant that he would have to kill Isaac, and then burn his body on an altar.

Abraham did not argue with God. He traveled 3 days to get to the place of sacrifice. Abraham tied Isaac, and as he raised the knife to kill his son an angel called out and stopped him. "Do not lay a hand on the boy", the angel said. Abraham showed a great faith that God would make things right - and God did!! This is another example of Abraham's faith.

When Abraham was very old, he sent a trusted servant back to the place where Abraham's relatives lived in order to find a wife for Isaac. The servant prayed to God for help. He found a beautiful young woman named REBEKAH and brought her back to be Isaac's wife. Abraham finally died at age 175.

Isaac had twin sons, Esau and Jacob. Esau was a hairy man and loved the outdoors, including hunting. Jacob stayed indoors more. In those days it was the custom for the oldest son to have what was called the BIRTHRIGHT. That meant that the oldest son was given more property and more privileges than younger children. As the oldest son, ESAU was entitled to the birthright. But Jacob, with the help of his mother, tricked Esau into giving up his birthright. One day Esau came in from the fields very hungry. He asked Jacob for some food he had prepared, but Jacob said No - unless Esau gave Jacob his birthright. Esau should have refused - but he agreed to give up his birthright in exchange for some food. The next lesson will discuss how this turned out.

Lesson 4 Questions

1. Sarah had a son named _____ when Abraham was _____ years old.
2. Because of a conflict between Isaac and Ishmael, what did Hagar and Ishmael do?

3. As a test of faith, Abraham was told to do what? _____
4. How did Abraham demonstrate his faith?

5. What did the angel say to Abraham?

6. Abraham sent a trusted servant back to _____ to find a _____ for Isaac.
7. The servant found a wife - with whose help? _____
8. _____ was brought back to be Isaac's wife.
9. Abraham died at what age? _____
10. _____ and _____ were twin sons of Isaac.
11. _____ was hairy and loved the _____. _____ stayed indoors more.
12. The oldest son was to have the _____, meaning that he got more property and other blessings than the younger son.
13. Jacob tricked Esau into giving up his _____. But Esau gave it up too easily because he was very _____.

Lesson 5

Gen. 25:34 - 27:46

The story of Jacob and Esau is an important part of the Old Testament. Esau, the oldest son, was supposed to get a special set of blessings called the BIRTHRIGHT. But he traded his birthright to Jacob for some food. Isaac, the father, did not know about this. As Isaac was blind and near death, he decided it was time to give Esau the special blessings that went to the oldest son.

But then some very big deceptions took place. Isaac told Esau to go hunt for some wild game and then prepare some tasty food that Isaac liked. Rebekah, his wife, overheard the conversation and realized that she would have to act quickly in order to get the birthright blessings to Jacob - her favorite son. She hurriedly prepared the kind of food that Isaac liked. She had Jacob to put on some of Esau's clothes that had the smell of the field. Since Esau was very hairy, she put some goatskins on Jacob's hands and on his neck.

Jacob took the food to Isaac. Isaac could not see, but he thought the voice was the voice of Jacob. He asked if it really was Esau. Jacob said that he was Esau. He asked to touch the person he was talking to. He felt the hairy hands that were like Esau's. He asked again if it really was Esau - and Jacob lied, saying he was Esau. So Isaac began to bless him. Somehow God gave Isaac the power to foretell things in the future. Jacob would be very prosperous. His brother would serve him. Other nations would serve him.

Shortly after Isaac finished blessing Jacob, Esau walked in with the tasty food he had prepared. Isaac was shocked when he realized that he had been deceived. Esau cried out bitterly. But Isaac had to tell Esau that he could not change what he had done. Esau would serve Jacob - but would break away from Jacob in time.

Clearly Esau was very angry at Jacob. He decided to kill him as soon as his father was dead. When Rebekah heard this, she hurried to send Jacob away to her family in HARAN, where her brother LABAN lived. She pretended to Isaac that it was to get a wife for Jacob from her family, and not a local Hittite woman.

Lesson 5 Questions

1. ESAU, oldest son of Isaac, was supposed to have what was called the _____, but he traded it to _____ in exchange for _____.
2. _____ did not know about the change in the birthright.
3. Because Isaac was _____ and near _____ he decided it was time to give the birthright to Esau.
4. Isaac told Esau to hunt for _____ and prepare _____.
5. _____ hurriedly prepared food and sent _____ to get the blessing from Isaac.
6. What are 2 things Rebekah did to try to fool Isaac?

7. What lie did Jacob tell? _____
8. What were 2 birthright blessings which Isaac gave to Jacob?

9. What shocked Isaac? _____
10. Why was Esau so angry? _____
11. Esau planned to do what? _____
12. Why did Rebekah send Jacob away? _____
13. Rebekah sent Jacob to _____ where her brother _____ lived.
14. Rebekah told Isaac that Jacob was leaving in order to get a _____.

Lesson 6

Gen. 28:1 - 30:24

It is important to understand that it was God's plan to have his own special people - descendants of the faithful man, ABRAHAM. As noted in earlier lessons, God made great promises to Abraham. God made the same promises to Isaac, Abraham's son. The same promise would be made to JACOB, Abraham's grandson.

Jacob had to travel a long distance to HARAN where his mother's relatives lived. He stopped for the night at a place called BETHEL. God appeared to him in a dream and made the same promise to him that he had made to Abraham and Isaac. Arriving in HARAN, Jacob met LABAN, Rebekah's brother, where he was greeted warmly.

Jacob went to work for Laban. The only wages he asked for was to marry RACHEL, the daughter of Laban. She was beautiful and Jacob was deeply in love with her. Laban said that Jacob must work for him for 7 years in order to marry Rachel. Jacob loved Rachel so much that he agreed to work 7 years for her.

But there was a problem. Rachel had an older sister named LEAH, who was not as pretty as Rachel. When it came time for Jacob to marry Rachel, Laban tricked him. In those days women often wore veils so that it was hard to tell who the person was. Laban managed to arrange for Jacob to marry LEAH instead of Rachel. The next morning Jacob realized that he had been tricked.

When Jacob complained, Laban explained that it was their custom for the older sister to marry before the younger one. He could have Rachel IF he worked another 7 years! So, Jacob worked another 7 years for Rachel. (Think about it: Jacob had deceived his father - -and now he is getting paid back by being deceived himself!)

Jacob's family grew through the years. Altogether he had 12 sons and one daughter named Dinah. Leah had 6 sons, Rachel had 2 sons, Joseph and Benjamin. Two servant girls, ZILPAH and BILHAH also bore sons to Jacob. Jacob's sons were REUBEN, SIMEON, LEVI, JUDAH, ZEBULUN, ISSACHAR, DAN, GAD, ASHER, NAPHTALI, JOSEPH, and BENJAMIN.

Lesson 6 Questions

1. God's special people were the descendants of _____.
2. God made great _____.
3. Jacob traveled to where his _____ lived.
4. God appeared to Jacob in a dream at a place called _____.
5. Jacob worked for _____, the brother of _____.
6. For wages, Jacob asked to marry _____.
7. Jacob was willing to work _____ years in order to marry _____.
8. Laban tricked Jacob so that he married _____, Rachel's older sister.
9. What was Laban's explanation?

10. To marry Rachel, Jacob had to _____.
11. Name Jacob's 12 sons and his 1 daughter:

_____ Daughter: _____
12. Who were the 4 mothers of Jacob's sons?

13. _____ and _____ were sons of Rachel.
14. _____ had 6 sons.

Lesson 7

Gen. 30:25 - 37:11

Through the years Jacob's father-in-law, LABAN continued to treat him badly. However, God blessed Jacob and he became rich with large flocks and herds, along with other animals. Jacob wanted to return to his home country, but he was afraid that Laban would try to stop him. While Laban was away for a few days Jacob took all his family and possessions, including animals, and headed back to his home country.

When Laban got home and learned that Jacob had left, he hurried after him. When he caught up with Jacob there was an angry argument. But finally they separated in peace, and Jacob continued his trip back to where his family lived. But Jacob had another thing to worry about. What would Esau do? Was he still angry and want to kill Jacob?

Jacob sent a message to Esau, hoping to be accepted. But messengers brought word that Esau was coming toward them with 400 men! Jacob was really worried. He prayed to God, asking Him to save him from Esau. He sent ahead gifts of hundreds of animals, hoping to win Esau's favor. He divided his people into 2 groups, with his family at the back. Maybe they could escape if Esau attacked.

Finally they met. Esau ran to greet Jacob and gave him a big hug. They kissed each other and cried. Esau was not angry at all! It was a really happy reunion. God had blessed Esau with wealth also. Jacob lived in the land of Canaan.

Jacob's favorite son was Joseph, son of Rachel. The other brothers hated Joseph when they saw how their father treated him better than he did the others. Jacob made a coat of many colors which he gave to Joseph. Joseph told his brothers about a dream which he had. In the dream they were all in the field tying bundles of wheat. Joseph's bundle stood up and the bundles of the other brothers bowed down to his bundle. This made the brothers hate Joseph even more.

Joseph told his father about another dream that he had. In that dream the sun, moon, and 11 stars bowed down to him. Jacob scolded Joseph as it seemed to mean that his family would bow down to him.

Lesson 7 Questions

1. How did Laban treat Jacob? _____
2. God blessed Jacob with large _____ and _____.
3. Jacob wanted to return to _____ but was afraid of _____.
4. When Laban learned that Jacob had left, he did what?

5. When Laban caught Jacob there was an _____ _____.
6. Laban and Jacob finally separated in _____.
7. Jacob was worried about _____.
8. Word came that Esau was coming with _____ men.
9. Jacob divided his people into _____ _____.
10. What did Esau do when he reached Jacob?

11. Jacob lived in the land of _____.
12. _____ was Jacob's favorite son.
13. Why did Joseph's brothers hate him?

14. Jacob made what for Joseph? _____
15. Joseph had a dream in which his brothers' bundles of wheat did what?

16. Joseph also dreamed that _____ bowed down to him.

Lesson 8

Gen. 37:12 - 40:23

One day Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers who were grazing their flocks some distance away. When the brothers saw Joseph coming they decided to kill him since they hated him so much. But one brother, REUBEN, talked them out of killing Joseph. Instead, they put him in a deep pit - a dry well. Reuben's plan was to take him back to their father.

While Reuben was away some Midianite traders came by with their camels carrying items to sell in Egypt. The brothers decided to sell Joseph to the Midianites as a slave. Reuben was alarmed when he returned and found out that Joseph was gone. The brothers killed a goat and dipped Joseph's coat in the goat's blood. They took the coat to Jacob, saying that they found it. Jacob was sure that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. Jacob was terribly sad. He cried and grieved for a long time. His family tried to comfort him, but Jacob said that he would grieve until he died. Joseph was 17.

The Midianites took Joseph to Egypt where he was sold as a slave to a man named POTIPHAR, who was an officer of the King of Egypt. Potiphar saw that God was with Joseph and that he was successful in everything that he did. So Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his house and everything he owned.

But a problem arose. Potiphar's wife saw that Joseph was very handsome. She urged him to sleep with her, but Joseph refused. Finally she became angry and told Potiphar that Joseph had tried to attack her. Potiphar was very angry and had Joseph put in prison.

But even in prison God continued to bless Joseph. The prison warden liked Joseph and put him in charge of all the other prisoners. In the prison were the king's baker and the one who served him wine. The king had become angry with them and threw them in prison. Both of the men had dreams. God gave Joseph the power to interpret dreams. The dream of the one who served wine meant that in 3 days he would get his old job back. The baker's dream meant that in 3 days he would have his head cut off. It all happened as Joseph said. Joseph asked the man who served wine to remember him to the King as he had not done anything wrong... but the man forgot!

Lesson 8 Questions

1. Jacob sent Joseph to check on _____
2. The brothers decided to _____ but _____ talked them out of it.
3. Joseph was _____ by his brothers to _____.
4. What did the brothers do with Joseph's coat?

5. Jacob was sure that Joseph had been _____
6. What was Joseph's age? _____
7. Joseph was sold as a _____ to _____ an officer of the _____.
8. Because Joseph was so _____, Potiphar put him in charge of _____.
9. What person tried to tempt Joseph to sleep with her? _____
10. What happened to Joseph when he was falsely accused?

11. Because of God's blessing the _____ liked Joseph and put him in charge of _____.
12. _____ and _____ were 2 persons in prison whose dreams were interpreted by Joseph.
13. Which of the men was beheaded? _____
14. The man who served wine to the king forgot what?

Lesson 9

Gen. 41:1 - 43:14

Two years passed after Joseph interpreted the dreams in prison. Then the king had 2 dreams. Seven healthy cows came out of the river and were eaten by 7 very skinny cows. In the second dream 7 healthy heads of grain were eaten by 7 very thin and sickly heads of grain. None of the king's magicians or wise men could interpret the dreams. Just then, the man who served wine to the king suddenly remembered Joseph who had interpreted his dream. He told the king and Joseph was brought from the prison.

The king told Joseph his dreams. Joseph said that the 2 dreams had the same meaning. There would be 7 years of very good crops and plenty of food, but after that there would be 7 years of famine, that is, there would be no crops, (probably because of no rain). Joseph suggested that the king choose a wise man to build storehouses and save up grain for the first 7 years so as to have enough food for the 7 years of famine. The king decided that Joseph would be the best man to do that job. So, Joseph became the most powerful man in Egypt, next to the king. He traveled over Egypt building storehouses and saving up the extra grain. Joseph married and had 2 sons, MANASSEH and EPHRAIM.

After 7 years of abundant crops came 7 years of no crops. People came to Joseph to buy grain. The famine was also in the land where Joseph's family lived. When they heard that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob sent 10 sons (not Benjamin) to Egypt to buy grain. When Joseph saw the men he recognized them, but they did not know him (Joseph was now 39 years old and had not seen his brothers since he was 17). Joseph treated the brothers harshly. He pretended that they were spies. He asked about their family - and learned that his father was still alive. The men were put in prison for 3 days and then released. They were told that they could not buy more grain unless they brought their youngest brother back with them next time. One of the brothers, Simeon, was kept in prison.

When the brothers got home they realized that each one of them had in their bags the money that they had paid for the grain. They were very afraid, not knowing what that meant. After some time they had eaten all the grain and needed to go back to Egypt to buy more. But Jacob was not willing to let Benjamin, his youngest son, go, afraid that he would lose this son just as he had lost Joseph. But the brothers would not go without Benjamin.

Lesson 9 Questions

1. The king dreamed about 7 _____ and 7 _____.
2. Who told the king about Joseph? _____
3. The king's dreams meant that there would be 7 years of _____ and 7 years of _____.
4. Joseph advised the king to select a _____ to build _____.
5. _____ was chosen to be the most _____ man in Egypt except for _____.
6. Joseph traveled all over _____ building _____ to store up _____.
7. Joseph had 2 sons, _____ and _____.
8. The famine was in the land where _____ lived.
9. Jacob sent _____ to Egypt to _____.
10. Did Joseph recognize his brothers? _____ Did they recognize him? _____
11. Joseph was now what age? _____
12. Joseph accused his brothers of being _____.
13. The brothers were put in _____ for _____ days.
14. The brothers would not be allowed to buy more grain unless they brought _____ to Egypt with them.
15. _____ was kept in prison.
16. Jacob did not want _____ to go to Egypt, but the brothers would not go without him.

Lesson 10

Gen. 43:11 - 45:28

Jacob realized that his sons would not go back to Egypt unless Benjamin went with them. Finally, with great sadness, he finally agreed to let Benjamin go. They men took double money, along with gifts of some of the best foods in their land.

When Joseph saw his brothers, along with Benjamin, he was very touched—very emotional. He had a special meal prepared for them in his house. When the brothers learned that they would be eating in the governor's house, they were very afraid, not knowing what that meant. When Joseph met Benjamin, he was so emotional that he had to hurry to another room and cry. Then he washed his face and came back out.

As the men prepared to go home, Joseph had a servant to place his drinking cup in Benjamin's bag of grain. Joseph was setting a trap. Before the men had gone far, the servant caught up with them. He asked them why they had stolen Joseph's cup. The men were shocked and strongly denied stealing the cup. They said that if the cup was found in one of their bags that person must die and the others would become slaves.

The servant searched through all the men's bags, with Benjamin's being the last bag searched - and there was the cup! The men were terrified! They went back to Joseph. Judah pleaded for Benjamin. They would all become Joseph's slaves...but please let Benjamin go. He explained how his father would die if he lost Benjamin.

Joseph could not control himself any longer. He had everyone but the brothers to leave the room. He cried loudly as he told his brothers that he was Joseph. The brothers were so afraid and shocked that they could not say anything. Joseph said that it was God who had caused him to be sent to Egypt in order to save his family from starvation. He told the brothers to go home and tell his father that he was alive. Joseph wanted the whole family to move to Egypt. The king heard about Joseph's brothers and invited the whole family to move Egypt, promising them the best land in the country. They took wagons back with them in order to move all their possessions.

Lesson 10 Questions

1. The brothers took _____, _____, and _____ as they returned to Egypt.
2. Joseph became emotional when he saw _____.
3. Joseph had a special _____ prepared for his brothers.
4. Joseph _____ when he met Benjamin.
5. Joseph had his _____ placed in _____'s grain bag.
6. The brothers were shocked when the cup was found in _____'s grain bag.
7. _____ pleaded for Benjamin, saying that _____ would die if Benjamin was lost.
8. Joseph cried _____ and told his brothers who he was.
9. How did the brothers respond? _____
10. Joseph said that _____ caused him to be sent to Egypt in order to save _____ from _____.
11. _____ were sent from Egypt to _____ their possessions.

Lesson 11
Gen. 45:26 - 50:26

Jacob could not believe that Joseph was still alive. He had been gone for 22 years. But when he saw the wagons from Egypt he finally believed it. He was very excited that he would get to see his son! He left for Egypt with all his family and all his possessions. There were 70 people in all.

Jacob was assigned to live a place called GOSHEN. Joseph was there to greet his father. They were excited to see each other as they hugged and cried. Joseph took Jacob to meet the Pharaoh. The king asked Jacob how old he was. He was 130. Joseph provided his family with all they needed to get settled in Goshen.

As the famine continued the people spent all their money for food. Then they exchanged their livestock and even their land for grain. Finally all the land in Egypt belonged to Pharaoh.

Jacob lived 17 years in Egypt. Before he died he called in the 2 sons of Joseph, MANASSEH and EPHRAIM to give them special blessings. He called in his sons and foretold various things that would happen to them in their future lives. Just before he died Jacob told his sons to bury him back in Canaan where his family had been buried—in the Cave of MACHPELAH.

The Egyptians embalmed Jacob. After a period of mourning (70 days) Joseph and a large group of Egyptian officials traveled to Canaan to bury Jacob.

Joseph's brothers were worried that after their father had died Joseph might try to punish them for what they had done to him years earlier. But Joseph spoke kindly to them and assured them that he would provide for them and their families.

Joseph lived to the age of 110. Before he died he had his brothers swear not to leave his bones in Egypt, but to take them back to Canaan. (He was embalmed and placed in a coffin, but it was many years before his bones were returned to Canaan.)

This is the end of the Book of Genesis.

Lesson 11 Questions

1. Jacob had not seen Joseph for _____ years.
2. When Jacob saw the _____ from Egypt he believed that Joseph was alive.
3. There were _____ people in Jacob's group that went to Egypt.
4. Jacob's family went to a place in Egypt called _____.
5. Jacob went to meet _____ who asked Jacob's age, which was ____.
6. In time the Egyptians spent all their _____ for food.
7. After a while the Egyptians exchanged their _____ and _____ for grain.
8. Jacob lived _____ years in Egypt.
9. Jacob blessed _____ and _____, 2 sons of Joseph.
10. Jacob told his _____ things that would happen in their futures.
11. Jacob told his sons to bury him in the land of _____ in the Cave of _____.
12. There were how many days of mourning for Jacob? _____
13. What worried Joseph's brothers?

14. Joseph died at age _____. He had his brothers swear to do what?

Lesson 12
Exod. 1:1 - 2:15

EXODUS

Hundreds of years passed between the end of the book of Genesis and the book of Exodus. All those who lived in Joseph's times had long been forgotten. Jacob's family - the ISRAELITES - had grown very rapidly. They had become so numerous that the Egyptian king was worried. If an enemy attacked, the Israelites might join the enemy and the Egyptians could be defeated.

So, the king decided to make the Israelites slaves. They were made to work very hard and were treated harshly. Their lives were miserable. But they kept growing in number. The king ordered the midwives (women who help women who are having babies) to kill all baby boys born to Israelite women. But the midwives feared God and did not kill the baby boys.

Then Pharaoh ordered that all Israelite baby boys must be thrown into the Nile River. The baby girls could live. One couple hid their newborn son for 3 months. Then they made a basket which was waterproof. They put the baby in the basket and hid it among the tall plants at the edge of the River. The older sister, MIRIAM, stood at a distance to keep an eye on the child.

One day Pharaoh's daughter went down to the river to bathe. She saw the basket and sent one of her slave girls to go and get it. She saw the baby, which was crying. She felt sorry for the baby. Thinking fast, Miriam asked, "Shall I get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" Pharaoh's daughter did not know that Miriam got her own mother (and the baby's mother) to nurse the baby until he would be old enough to send to Pharaoh's house. Pharaoh's daughter named the baby MOSES, saying, "I drew him out of the water".

Even though Moses grew up in the house of the king, he knew that he was one of the Hebrews (which is what the Israelites were called). He didn't like it when the Egyptians mistreated his people. One day he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew. He was so angry that he killed the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand. He thought he had not been seen, but he had. Word finally got to the king who tried to kill Moses.

Lesson 12 Questions

1. _____ of years passed between the end of Genesis and the beginning of the book of Exodus.
2. Jacob's family was referred to as the _____.
3. The Egyptian king was worried because the Israelites had become so _____.
4. The king made the Israelites become _____.
5. The Israelites were treated _____.
6. The king ordered the midwives to _____.
7. Newborn Israelite boys were to be thrown into _____.
8. One couple put their baby into a _____ which was placed at the edge of the _____.
9. The older sister whose name was _____ kept watch.
10. The baby was found by _____.
11. _____ was hired to be the nurse for the baby.
12. Pharaoh's daughter named the baby _____.
13. Moses knew that he was one of the _____.
14. Moses killed an _____ because he was _____ a Hebrew.
15. _____ learned what Moses had done.

Lesson 13
Exod. 2:15 - 5:21

Moses had to get out of Egypt in order to escape being killed by Pharaoh. The king heard that Moses had killed an Egyptian and was very angry. Moses fled to the land of MIDIAN. There he met a man named REUEL, also called JETHRO. Moses was 40 years old. Moses worked for Reuel, and also married one of his daughters, ZIPPORAH. They had a son named GERSHOM. Moses was in Midian for 40 years.

Meanwhile the Israelites were suffering greatly by the way the Egyptians were treating them. They cried out to God for help - and God heard them.

Moses was tending the flocks near MT. HOREB when he saw a bush burning - but did not burn up. As he went to check it out, he heard a voice saying, "Moses!, Moses!" "Here am I," said Moses. It was God calling him. God told Moses that he had heard the cries of the Israelites and that he would deliver them from Egypt to go to a land "flowing with milk and honey". It would be the land of CANAAN. Then God told Moses that he was sending him to Pharaoh to get him to let the Israelites go.

Moses was really worried that he could not do the job, but God assured him that he would be with him and that he could be successful. However, Pharaoh would be hard to convince. Several plagues would have to come on the Egyptians before the Israelites would be allowed to leave.

Moses still did not want to go to Pharaoh. He said that he did not speak well. God sent AARON, Moses' brother to go with him. Aaron was a good speaker. God promised to help them say the right things. So Moses left for Egypt. God sent Aaron to meet him on the way. Together they went to the elders of the Israelites to tell them of the Lord's plan to deliver them. They were all very pleased.

When Moses and Aaron went to ask Pharaoh to let the Israelites go, he became very angry and told his overseers to treat the Israelite slaves even more harshly. Their work load was increased. They were beaten when they did make their assigned quota of bricks. The Israelites were angry at Moses and Aaron for making life harder for them.

Lesson 13 Questions

1. Moses fled so as not to be _____ by _____.
2. Moses went to the land of _____ where he worked for a man named _____, also called _____.
3. Moses married _____, Reuel's daughter. _____ was the son born to them.
4. Moses went to the land of _____ when he was _____ years old. He was there for _____ years.
5. The suffering Israelites cried out to _____ for help.
6. Near Mt. _____ Moses saw a _____ burning which did not _____.
7. At the bush who called out to Moses? _____
8. God was to deliver the _____ to a place flowing with _____ and _____. It was the land of _____.
9. God sent Moses to _____ to get the Israelites free.
10. Moses was afraid he could not _____
11. Several _____ would come upon Egypt before the Israelites would be set free.
12. Moses said that he did not _____ well, so _____, his brother would go with him.
13. Moses and Aaron told the _____ of _____ about God's plan.
14. When Moses and Aaron asked Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave, he became very _____ and told the overseers to treat slaves more _____.
15. The Israelites were beaten if they did not meet their _____.
16. Why were the people angry at Moses and Aaron? _____

Lesson 14

Exod. 5:22 - 12:36

When the Pharaoh became angry at Moses and Aaron and ordered more harsh treatment of the Israelite slaves, the people were angry at Moses and Aaron. Moses took the matter to God. God assured Moses that he would indeed deliver the people from Egyptian bondage. Moses told this to the elders, but they were too discouraged to listen.

Moses did miracles before Pharaoh to prove that God was with him. His staff was turned into a snake. Moses caused the water in the Nile River to turn into blood, but Pharaoh's heart was hard and he would not let the Israelites go.

After this God sent a series of plagues on the Egyptians. There were plagues of frogs, gnats, flies, disease of livestock, hail, boils, darkness, and locusts. God hardened Pharaoh's heart in order to show his power to both the Egyptians and the Israelites. God decided to send one more plague, after which the Egyptians WOULD let the Israelites leave. On a certain day God would kill the first born son in every family, and even among the livestock. The Israelites were given detailed instructions for how to prepare for this. They were to prepare a special meal. It was to include the meat of a lamb. Blood from the lamb was to be spread on the top and sides of the door frames. God would not kill the first born in the homes where there was blood on the door frames.

God ordered that every year the Israelites were to celebrate their being "passed over" when all the Egyptian first born were killed. Part of the meal included eating bread in which there was no yeast. This feast is called the PASSOVER FEAST - and is still observed to this day. (It is also called the Feast of Unleavened Bread). God gave the people a number of restrictions concerning Passover in the future.

The first born were killed at midnight. There was weeping and wailing throughout Egypt. That same night Pharaoh called for Moses and told him to have the Israelites to hurry and leave the country. Moses told the Israelites to ask their Egyptian neighbors for silver, gold, cloth and other things. The Egyptians gave freely as they wanted the Israelites gone before more people died.

Lesson 14 Questions

1. Pharaoh was angry at Moses and Aaron and ordered more _____ on the Israelite slaves.
2. God assured Moses that he would _____ the people from bondage.
3. Moses did _____ to show Pharaoh that God was with him. Moses' staff became a _____. The Nile River turned to _____.
4. Pharaoh's heart was _____, so God sent _____ on the Egyptians.
5. Name 6 plagues _____
6. The final plague was the death of the _____.
7. The Israelites were to prepare a special _____, including _____ meat.
8. The Israelites were to spread _____ on their _____.
9. This was the beginning of a special feast called the _____, which is still observed today.
10. The first born were killed at what time? _____
11. There was _____ and _____ throughout Egypt.
12. Pharaoh called Moses and said for the Israelites to _____ and _____ the country.
13. Moses told the Israelites to ask their Egyptian neighbors for such things as _____.
14. Why did the Egyptians give freely to the Israelites?

Lesson 15

Exod. 12:37 - 20:21

The Israelites started the journey to Canaan. They took the bones of Joseph with them - just as he had requested. God led the way by providing a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. But as the people reached the Red Sea - Pharaoh changed his mind! He went after them in order to bring them back and have them as slaves again. He took hundreds of chariots to force the people to return.

When the Israelites saw the Egyptians coming toward them they were terrified and complained to Moses. God told Moses to raise his staff over the waters of the Sea. The waters parted and the people were able to walk over on dry land. The Lord's angel went behind the people. He caused a dark cloud to stop the Egyptians until the Israelites had all crossed the sea. Then the Egyptians went into the sea in pursuit. But God confused the Egyptians. He jammed the wheels of their chariots so that they could hardly move them. God told Moses to stretch his hand over the sea. When he did, the walls of waters suddenly crashed down on the Egyptian army and they were all killed. When the Israelites saw God's power, they feared him and put their trust in him - at least for the time being.

The Israelites moved through the desert wilderness as they traveled in the direction of Canaan. It was a difficult time for Moses. The Israelites were often complaining and rebellious. They even threatened to go back to Egypt. God provided a special food called MANNA which had to be gathered from the ground each morning. On a couple of occasions God provided water from a rock. Sometimes there were battles with other nations in the region, including the AMALEKITES.

A very important thing happened when the people reached MT. SINAI. The people were told to prepare themselves for God to appear to them on the mountain. The people were very frightened when there was thunder, lightning, trumpet sounds, and very thick smoke. Moses was called up on the mountain to meet with God, but everyone was warned to stay away. God gave a series of laws for the people to obey, including the TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Lesson 15 Questions

1. As the Israelites started to leave Egypt they took the bones of _____.
2. God led the Israelites by a pillar of _____ by day and a pillar of _____ by night.
3. Why were the Israelites terrified? _____
4. The Israelites crossed the _____ on dry land after Moses raised his _____ over the waters.
5. The Lord's angel used a _____ to stop the Egyptians until the Israelites were safely across.
6. God _____ the _____ of the Egyptians' chariots.
7. When Moses _____ his _____ over the Red Sea, the waters _____ and killed _____.
8. The Israelites often _____ and _____ as they traveled in the wilderness.
9. The Israelites threatened to _____ to _____.
10. God provided food called _____ which was gathered from the _____ every _____.
11. God provided water from a _____.
12. The Israelites fought the _____.
13. At Mt. _____ the Israelites were told to prepare for _____ to appear to them.
14. The people were frightened when there was _____, _____, _____, and _____ on the mountain.
15. Who went to meet God on the mountain? _____
16. God gave laws to the people, including the _____.

Lesson 16

Exod. 20:1 - 32:35

When Moses was on Mt. Sinai God gave him the TEN COMMANDMENTS, written on TABLES OF STONE. But there were many other commands and instructions given to the people through Moses. The people were to build a TABERNACLE, which was a very special portable tent structure. It was to have 2 main parts: the HOLY PLACE and the MOST HOLY PLACE. There was also to be a set of PRIESTS. Aaron was to be the HIGH PRIEST. There were to be a number of lower priests. All the priests were to be from the tribe of LEVI. (All the people were divided into 12 family groups called TRIBES. Each tribe was named for the son of Jacob through which that family was descended.)

God gave many instructions to the priests. The priests were in charge of the many sacrifices which the people were required to make. The HIGH PRIEST was to go into the Most Holy Place only once each year, taking blood from one of the sacrificed animals. Other priests went into the Holy Place daily to carry out their duties there.

It has been mentioned that the people were often disobedient and rebellious. One of the worst things took place while Moses was on Mt. Sinai for a long period of time. The people made a golden CALF and actually began to worship it! When Moses came down from the mountain he was very angry. He threw the tables of stone to the ground and broke them (but God gave him a new set later.)

The TABERNACLE was mentioned above. God gave instructions for various furnishings to be in the tabernacle. The most important thing in the tabernacle was the ARK OF THE COVENANT. This was like a big box with special carvings on it. Rings were attached to each corner. When the tabernacle was moved from place to place the priests were to put long poles through the rings. The people were NOT to touch the ark itself, but to carry it with the poles. The Ark of the Covenant was to stay in the MOST HOLY PLACE. As mentioned, only the HIGH priest was to go into the Most Holy Place....and only once each year. The regular priests went into the Holy Place daily to perform certain duties there.

The Lord became very angry with the people when they made a golden calf and began to worship it. He was ready to destroy all the people for their continued rebelliousness and disobedience.

Lesson 16 Questions

1. On Mount _____ God gave the _____ to _____. They were written on _____ of _____.
2. The people were to build a _____ which was a portable _____ structure.
3. The 2 main parts of the tabernacle were the _____ Place and the _____ Place.
4. Who was the High Priest? _____
5. All priests were from what tribe? _____
6. There were _____ tribes, all named for the sons of _____.
7. The priests were in charge of many _____.
8. The _____ went into the _____ once each year taking _____.
9. Other priests carried out duties in the _____. How often? _____
10. While Moses was on Mt Sinai the rebellious Israelites made a _____ and began to _____ it.
11. Moses was so angry at the people that he threw what to the ground, breaking them? _____
12. The most important item in the tabernacle was the _____ of the _____. It was a big box with _____ attached to each corner. _____ were put in the rings to carry the ark.
13. The ark of the covenant was to stay in the _____.
14. How did God feel about the golden calf?

Lesson 17

Exod. 32:30 - Num. 14:45

When Moses realized that God was thinking of destroying all the Israelites (because they worshipped the golden calf), he pleaded with God not to kill them. God listened to Moses, but the people were punished with a plague.

The book of EXODUS tells many things about the tabernacle and all its furnishings. It also tells many rules for the worship in the tabernacle, as well as all the kinds of sacrifices commanded by the Lord. The instructions continue in the book of LEVITICUS, along with many other laws.

After some time God told the people to move from Mt. Sinai to the promised land (CANAAN). As they moved closer, God told Moses to send 12 men (1 from each tribe) to explore the land of Canaan. They were to bring back a report telling all kinds of things concerning what the land was like. They were gone for forty days. They came back with the report that the land was wonderful - "flowing with milk and honey".

However, ten of the men reported that the people in Canaan were much too strong for the Israelites to defeat. (This was despite the fact that God had PROMISED that he would give the land to the Israelites!) Only CALEB and JOSHUA urged the people to enter Canaan - because GOD would be with them.

But the people believed the ten who were afraid to go into Canaan. The people became very angry at Moses and Aaron. They threatened to choose a leader and go back to Egypt. Moses and Aaron were very upset and sad that the people were again rebelling against God. God was also very angry with the people and once again threatened to destroy all the Israelites. Again, Moses persuaded God not to destroy the people.

But God decided to punish the people. He declared that the people must wander in the desert for 40 years - one year for each day the spies were in the land of Canaan. Except for JOSHUA and CALEB, every person 20 YEARS and older would die in the desert.

But then, to add to their rebellion, the people decided to attack after all - despite what God had said. But they were badly defeated.

Lesson 17 Questions

1. Moses pleaded with God not to kill the _____ (because they had worshipped the _____)
2. The books of _____ and _____ tell of many rules and laws about _____ and the kinds of _____ the people were to make.
3. As the people moved toward _____ Moses sent _____ to explore the land.
4. The spies were gone to Canaan for _____ days. They reported that the land was “flowing with _____ and _____”.
5. How many spies thought that Canaan was too strong for the Israelites? _____. Only _____ and _____ urged the Israelites to enter Canaan. (This was because _____ had promised to give the land to the Israelites).
6. The people believed the _____ rather than God. They threatened to go back to _____.
7. God was angry at the unbelieving people and threatened to _____ them, but _____ asked God to spare the people.
8. God punished the people. They would have to _____ in the _____ for _____ years. (All people over _____ years of age would die in the dese - except for _____ and _____).
9. The people then changed their minds and decided to attack. What happened?

Lesson 18

Num. 14:46 - Josh. 2:24

During the 40 years in the desert the Israelites had many adventures, including battles with the different groups of people who lived in the area. But they also kept complaining against Moses and Aaron (which really was complaining against God). These words are from Numbers 21:5: "They spoke against God and against Moses and said, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the Wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!'"

The Lord was angry with the people. He sent poisonous snakes which bit many people and they died. The people told Moses that they had sinned and asked him to pray to God to take away the snakes. God had Moses to make a bronze snake and put it on a pole. A person who was bitten could look at the snake on the pole and live.

At the end of 40 years in the wilderness it was time for the Israelites to enter the land of Canaan. Moses died before they left the wilderness. God allowed him to see the Promised land from the top of MT. NEBO. Then he died and was buried by God himself in a secret place. The Lord chose JOSHUA to be the new leader, replacing Moses.

The book of JOSHUA records the instructions of God to Joshua as he began to serve as leader. He made promises to Joshua to give him successes as he invaded the land of Canaan. God told him to be BOLD and COURAGEOUS. The people who lived in Canaan were very wicked. They worshiped all kinds of IDOLS and false gods - NOT the true God. The Israelites were told to drive these wicked people out of the land.

Once again spies were sent into the land. 2 men were sent to the city of JERICHO. They stayed in the house of a woman named RAHAB. But the King of Jericho learned about the spies and sent men to the house of Rahab to arrest the spies. But Rahab hid the spies under some piles of flax on her roof. She told the officers that the spies had already left, so they went to look elsewhere.

The spies told Rahab that the city would be destroyed and all the people killed. But she and her family would be spared if she helped them escape.

Lesson 18 Questions

1. During the 40 years in the desert the Israelites had _____ with different people. They often complained against _____ and _____.
2. The Lord was _____ with the complaining people. He sent poisonous _____ which people so that they _____.
3. The people prayed to God to take away the _____. God had Moses to put a large bronze _____ on a _____. Those who _____ on it could live.
4. Before the Israelites entered Canaan, _____ died, but God let him see the land from Mt. _____. _____ buried Moses.
5. _____ became the new leader. God made _____ to him. He was told to be _____ and _____.
6. The people in Canaan were very wicked as they did not worship the true _____. Instead they worshipped all kinds of _____.

Lesson 19

Josh. 2:17 - 23:16

In order to spare her family from death, Rahab helped the Israelite spies to escape from Jericho. The spies told her to hang a scarlet cord from her window when Jericho was attacked. When the invaders would see the cord, they would know to save the lives of those in the house. So Rahab helped the spies to escape by lowering a rope from her window on the city wall. The spies hid for a while and then returned to Joshua.

When the spies returned to the camp it was time for the Israelites to go into Canaan. Joshua prepared the people to cross the Jordan River. The priests led the way carrying the Ark of the Covenant. When the feet of the priests entered the Jordan River the water stopped flowing and piled up so the people could cross on dry land. Twelve stones were taken from the bed of the river. They were set up as a memorial for the people to be reminded in the future of how the Lord had delivered them. As soon as all the people were safely across, the priests stepped out of the river and the water started to flow again.

God had promised the land of Canaan to the Israelites, but they would have to drive out the wicked people who lived in the land. That would mean that many battles would have to be fought. Indeed the next few years would bring much warfare. But Joshua would have God's blessing in giving success to his people.

The first battle was the battle of Jericho. The city was protected by a high wall. But God had a plan - a very unusual plan! The people were told to march around the city of Jericho once daily for 6 days. On the 7th day they were to march around the city 7 times. Then the priests were to blow their trumpets. When they did this the walls of the city fell down. The army rushed into the city and killed those living there.

But one family escaped. Rahab had hidden the spies and, as promised, she and her family were brought out safely. She continued to live with the Israelites.

In the following years many kings were defeated. The land was divided among the tribes of Israel. After a long time, the people had rest from their enemies. Joshua was getting old and it was time for others to lead. He gave a very important farewell message, which will be discussed in the next lesson.

Lesson 19 Questions

1. Rahab was to hang a _____ from her window when Jericho was attacked so her house would not be attacked.
2. To get to Canaan, the people were to cross the _____ River. The _____ were to lead the way, carrying the _____ of the _____.
3. When the _____ of the _____ entered the River the water stopped _____ . People crossed on _____ .
4. What happened when the priests stepped out of the water?
_____ .
5. In order to drive out the Canaanites many _____ would have to be fought, but _____ would bless the Israelites.
6. The first battle was at the city of _____. The people were to march around the city _____ daily for _____ days, and then on the 7th day march around the city _____ times.
7. On the 7th day the priests were to _____ their _____ and the walls of the city _____ .
8. The army rushed into Jericho and killed all who were there - except _____ .
9. Rahab continued to _____
10. After many years many _____ were defeated and the land was divided among the _____ of _____. Before Joshua died he gave a very important _____ .

Lesson 20

Josh. 23:1 - Judg. 6:35

In the book of JOSHUA, chapter 23, we read Joshua's Farewell Message to the people. It was basically a very important warning. If the people would serve the Lord, he would give them great blessings - but if they LEFT the Lord and started worshipping the idols and false gods of the people of Canaan - God would surely PUNISH them severely. Joshua died at age 110.

After the death of Joshua, the Israelites were led by a series of JUDGES - 15 altogether. Several of these Judges have interesting stories. Joshua had warned the people to be faithful to God and NOT to worship the false gods of the other nations living around them. But sadly, before long the Israelites began to worship the idols of the other nations.

Time after time the Israelites forsook God and worshipped idols. Each time God punished the Israelites by allowing their enemies to defeat them, rule over them, and make life very hard for them. After a while the people would repent and call out to God for help. Each time God would have pity on them and raise up a Judge who would lead the people in victory over their enemies. Each time the people would serve God for a while - and then turn right back to false gods. This happened 15 TIMES in the Book of Judges!

Following are the stories of some of the most important Judges:

DEBORAH (Judges 4-5:31)

Deborah was the only woman Judge. Because of their idolatry the Israelites were oppressed by JABIN, King of Canaan. Deborah told BARAK to gather an army of 10,000 men. God would give them victory over SISERA, Commander of Jabin's army. With God's help, BARAK defeated Sisera's army. (Sisera was killed by a woman).

GIDEON (Judges 6:1-8:35)

Once again, the Israelites left God and he allowed the Midianites to conquer them. They were very harsh and made life miserable for the people.

(Continued in next lesson)

Lesson 20 Questions

1. _____ gave a _____ message—which included a warning to the Israelites.
2. If the people would serve God they would have great _____, but they would be punished if they worshipped _____ and _____.
3. Joshua died at age _____. Later a series of 15 _____ ruled the Israelites.
4. Before long the Israelites began to _____ the _____ of other nations.
5. God punished the Israelites by allowing their _____ to _____ them.
6. The enemies made life very _____ for the Israelites. The people would _____ each time and call out to _____ for _____.
7. How many times did the people go back and forth from idols to God? _____
8. _____ was the only woman Judge. The Israelites were oppressed by _____, King of _____. Deborah told _____ to raise an army of _____, who defeated _____, commander of Jabin's army. (The commander was killed by a _____.)

Lesson 21

Judg. 6:1 - 7:19

Gideon (continued)

Suffering greatly, the people called out to God for help. God sent a prophet to remind the people that they were suffering because they had forgotten God and worshipped the gods of the nations around them.

An angel appeared to a young man named Gideon and told him that he was to lead his people in victory against the Midianites. Gideon could not believe this and asked for a sign that it was really a message from God. The angel caused a fire to flame up from a rock and burn a sacrifice that Gideon had prepared.

That night Gideon tore down his father's altar to the god Baal. The next day the people of the town were angry and wanted Gideon killed, but Gideon's father disagreed, and Gideon was not harmed.

When the Midianites, Amalekites, and others gathered to attack the Israelites Gideon put out a call for men to come and fight. But wanting to be sure that God was with him, he asked God for a sign. He put some fleece on the ground, asking God to make the fleece wet with dew and to leave dry ground around it. The next morning the ground was dry, but Gideon squeezed water out of the fleece.

Wanting to double-check, Gideon asked God to reverse the process - make the fleece dry and the ground wet. The next morning the ground was wet, and the fleece was dry.

Next God gave a wonderful sign to Gideon and the people. God wanted everyone to realize that the upcoming victory was through God's actions and not through the military men. God told Gideon that any men who were afraid should go home. Twenty-two thousand left - leaving ten thousand. God said that was too many. Gideon was to have the men go to water and drink. Gideon was to keep only those who lapped water like a dog from their cupped hands - a total of 300.

During the night Gideon's men crept up close to the enemy camp.

Lesson 22

Judg. 7:17 - 13:7

Gideon (continued)

At a given signal, they blew trumpets and all carried torches as they yelled, “For the Lord and for Gideon”. The sleeping enemy panicked, running away and killing each other. There followed a great victory for Gideon’s forces (see Judges 7).

Gideon proved to be a good leader of Israel. During his lifetime the land had peace for forty years.

JEPHTHAH. As usual, the Israelites went back to worshipping idols. Some time later the Lord, in anger, sent the Philistines and Ammonites to oppress the Israelites. And, as usual, the Israelites cried out to God for help. They got rid of their idols and went back to serving God.

There was a mighty warrior names Jephthah. Because his mother was a prostitute his brothers drove him away. But, desperate for a military leader the Israelites begged Jephthah to lead their army. If successful he would be appointed as leader of the nation.

Before going into battle Jephthah made a strange - and dangerous - vow to the Lord. If the Lord gave him victory over the Ammonites, he would offer as a sacrifice whatever came out of his door to greet him when he returned home. He had a great victory. When he got home he was first greeted by his daughter, his only child. She insisted that he must keep his vow to the Lord. She asked for 2 months to grieve, which Jephthah granted. It appears that Jephthah then killed his daughter - a very strange story.

SAMSON. Several years later God raised up another Judge to deliver the people from the Philistines, who had oppressed the Israelites for many years. An angel appeared to the barren wife of a man named Manoah telling her that she would have a son who would grow up to lead Israel in defeating the Philistines. She was to raise him as a Nazarite, meaning, among other things, that he was never to have his hair cut. She was not to drink any fermented liquid during her pregnancy.

Lessons 21 & 22 Questions

1. The Israelites were suffering because they _____ the _____ of the nations around them
2. An _____ appeared to _____. He was to lead a victory against the _____.
3. Gideon received a sign when a _____ up from a _____ and burned the _____.
4. The people of the town wanted to kill Gideon because he tore down his father's _____ to the god _____.
5. God gave Gideon a sign involving _____ placed on the ground.
6. God wanted to show that the victory would be through _____ and not _____ men
7. _____ men were finally chosen (how many?). They were the ones who drank water like a _____ from their _____ hands.
8. Victory came as the men surprised the enemy, yelling "_____ and for _____" with trumpets blowing.
9. Later, as the _____ and the _____ oppressed Israel because of idolatry, a warrior named _____ was called on to lead the army against the oppressors.
10. Jephthah made a rash _____, promising that if God gave him victory he would offer as sacrifice the first thing out of his door to greet him upon his return. Tragically, that turned out to be his _____.
11. An angel appeared to the wife of _____, telling her that she would have a son who would grow up to lead Israel in defeating the _____. He was to be raised as a _____, meaning that he was never to have his _____. She was to drink no _____ during her pregnancy.

Lesson 23

Judg. 13:8 - 15:17

Samson (continued)

When Samson grew up the Spirit of the Lord worked in him, giving him super-human strength. But he did not act wisely. He fell for a Philistine woman whom he wanted to marry, much to the distress of his parents.

On one of the trips to see the woman Samson was confronted by a lion, which he killed with his bare hands. On a later trip he noticed that bees had left honey in the carcass of the lion. He took some of the honey and ate it.

Thirty companions were chosen for Samson as they prepared for a 7-day wedding feast. Samson gave the men a riddle. If they could solve it in 7 days he would give each of them a set of garments. If they could not solve it they were each to give Samson a set of garments. The riddle was: "Out of the eater, something to eat; Out of the strong something sweet".

Unable to solve the riddle, the men went to Samson's wife, demanding that she get the answer from Samson, but Samson would not tell her. The men threatened to kill her and her family if she did not get the answer. After crying every day she finally wore Samson down and he told her it was about getting honey from the lion's carcass. She told the men and they told Samson the answer to the riddle. Samson was very angry. He went to Ashkelon where he killed 30 men and brought their clothing to the 30 companions. Samson returned home and later Samson's wife married one of his companions.

Later Samson went to see his wife, unaware that she had re-married. In anger at what had happened, Samson caught 300 foxes, tied torches to their tails, and turned them loose in the Philistines' fields of standing grain, destroying grain, vineyards, and olive groves. When the Philistines learned that Samson's actions were caused by his wife's family, they killed the woman and her father by burning them.

But then Samson responded by attacking and killing a large number of Philistines. As the Philistines gathered to attack Judah, the Israelites agreed to tie up Samson and deliver him to the Philistines. Samson agreed to this, but as the Philistines approached to seize him, he burst the ropes, grabbed a donkey's jawbone, and killed a thousand Philistines.

Lesson 24

Judg. 16:1 - Ruth 1:22

Samson (continued)

Samson fell in love with another Philistine woman named Delilah. The Philistines, anxious to get revenge on Samson, offered money to Delilah in order to learn the secret of Samson's strength. Samson kept giving false stories to her - each of which she tried, only to learn that she had been tricked.

Finally, after constant nagging, Samson made the mistake of telling her that the secret of his strength was his uncut hair. While Samson was asleep Delilah cut his hair and called in the Philistines who seized him, overcame him, and gouged out his eyes. He was bound and made to grind grain in the prison.

But Samson's greatest victory was yet to come. The Philistines decided to have a great celebration about their capture of Samson. A great crowd gathered in the temple of their god, Dagon, including about 3,000 on the roof. They brought Samson in to entertain them. But what they did not realize was that as Samson's hair grew back out his strength returned.

Samson asked the servant who led him to place him between the 2 great pillars that supported the temple. Then he prayed to God to give him strength to once more get revenge on the Philistines. He pushed on the pillars with all his strength, causing the building to collapse, killing thousands of people...including himself. His family came and got his body and buried it. He had led Israel for 20 years.

RUTH. One of the best-loved stories in the Old Testament took place during the period of the Judges. That is the story of Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi. Because of a famine, a man named Elimelech and his wife Naomi went to the country of Moab. Their 2 sons, Mahlon and Killion, married 2 Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth.

Within about ten years, all 3 men died. Naomi, heartbroken, decided to return to her home country, but she urged her daughters-in-law to remain in Moab. Orpah stayed, but Ruth refused to leave Naomi. In an urgent plea she begged Naomi to let her go with her....and Naomi agreed.

Naomi was greeted by old friends when she returned to Bethlehem.

Lesson 23 & 24 Questions

1. Samson had great strength, but he did not act _____.
2. Samson wanted to marry a _____ woman, but this displeased his _____.
3. Samson killed a _____ with his hands, later finding _____ in the carcass.
4. Samson had 30 _____ to whom he presented a _____ which was about _____ in a _____.
5. Threatened by the _____, Samson's wife cried until he told her the _____ to the _____.
6. Angry that his wife had married another man, Samson used _____ to burn the Philistines' fields of grain.
7. The Philistines burned the _____ and her _____.
8. Samson killed _____ Philistines with the _____ of a donkey.
9. The Philistines offered money to _____ to get the secret to Samson's _____. After constant _____, Samson told her.
10. The Philistines blinded Samson and made him _____ _____ in the _____.
11. There was a great celebration in the temple of _____. _____ was brought out to entertain the crowd.
12. Samson had regained his strength as his _____ _____.
13. Pushing on the _____, Samson caused the temple to _____, killing thousands, including _____.
14. _____ and his wife _____ moved to _____ because of a famine.
15. Their 2 sons, _____ and _____, married 2 Moabite women, _____ and _____.
16. Naomi decided to return home because _____.
17. _____ stayed in Moab, but _____ went with Naomi.

Lesson 25

Ruth 2:1 - I Sam. 1:16

Ruth (continued)

Ruth asked to go to work in the fields during the grain harvest. She worked in a field owned by a man named Boaz, a kinsman of Elimelech. Boaz noticed Ruth. Learning who she was, he treated her with special kindness. When Naomi learned where Ruth had worked, she was very pleased, knowing that Ruth would be safe.

According to the customs of the time, Boaz was a “guardian-redeemer”, meaning that he had some obligation to care for Ruth as a kinsman. He also might be able to buy the land that had belonged to Elimelech. Naomi told Ruth to go to the threshing floor where Boaz would be sleeping and to lie under the cover at his feet once Boaz was asleep. When Boaz discovered her there, she said, “Spread the cover of your garment over me since you are a guardian-redeemer of our family”. This seems to be a request for Boaz to marry Ruth.

Boaz was pleased at what Ruth said, having recognized that she was a woman of noble character. But there was one man more closely related to Naomi than was Boaz. Boaz went to the city gate where the village elders met and told the relative of the chance to “redeem” (or acquire) the land belonging to Naomi. He said that he would redeem it, but then Boaz told him that he would also have to marry Ruth as part of the transaction. But the relative declined, unwilling to marry Ruth. This cleared the way for Boaz. He announced to the elders that he would acquire the property and also marry Ruth, which he did. They had a son named Obed, who would become the grandfather of David.

SAMUEL. One of the last - and most important - of the Judges of Israel was a man named Samuel. He has a very interesting story. His mother, Hannah, was one of 2 wives of a man named Elkanah. Hannah, who was barren, wanted a son very badly. To make things worse, Peninnah, the other wife, kept giving Hannah a hard time, making life more miserable for her. On one of the annual trips to Shiloh, a place of worship and sacrifice, the priest, Eli, saw Hannah moving her lips but not speaking aloud. Eli scolded Hannah, thinking she was drunk. Hannah explained that she was not drunk but was praying.

Lesson 26

I Sam. 1:9 - 11:15

Samuel (continued)

She had promised God that if he gave her a son she would give him to the Lord. No razor would ever cut his hair (part of the Nazarite vow).

When Eli learned what she was doing he said, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him". In time Hannah had a son whom she named Samuel. She kept the child until he was weaned and then she presented him to the priest, Eli, to be raised and trained in service to God. Each year she made a little coat to take to Samuel. Afterwards Hannah had 3 sons and 2 daughters.

Eli the priest had 2 sons named Hophni and Phineas. They were very wicked, but Eli did not restrain them - and this displeased the Lord. One night, God called Samuel - who thought it was Eli calling. After 3 calls Eli realized it was the Lord and told Samuel to ask the Lord to speak to him. God told Samuel of the punishment coming to Eli and his sons. They would die and God would raise up a new priest.

Some time later the Philistines fought Israel. Hophni and Phineas took the ark of the covenant to the battle, thinking that might help Israel. But the ark was captured and Hophni and Phineas were killed. By this time Eli was 98 years old, blind, and very heavy. When he got word that his sons were dead and that the ark had been captured he fell off his chair and broke his neck.

(The story of the ark and the Philistines is very interesting. All kinds of things went wrong, including their god, Dagon, falling off his pedestal when the ark was placed in his temple. The people of Ashdod were afflicted with tumors. See I Samuel 5. Later Ekron was afflicted when the ark was moved there, including an infestation of rats. In desperation the Philistines put the ark on a cart pulled by 2 cows and pointed it toward Beth Shemesh in Israel's territory, where it arrived safely.)

Samuel led Israel for many years, persuading the people to abandon false gods and to serve the Lord. They were successful against the invading Philistines.

Lesson 25 & 26 Questions

1. Ruth worked in the _____ harvest for a man named _____, a kinsman of _____. He treated Ruth with _____.
2. Boaz was a “_____” of Ruth.
3. _____ told Ruth how to get a message to _____.
4. The other kinsman did not redeem the land as he did not wish to _____.
5. Boaz realized that Ruth was a woman of _____.
6. Boaz and Ruth had a son named _____, who became the grandfather of _____.
7. Samuel was the son of _____ and _____.
8. Hannah very much wanted a _____. _____, the priest, thought Hannah was _____ when he saw her _____ moving.
9. Really Hannah was doing what? _____
10. Hannah promised to give her son to _____ if God gave her one.
11. After the birth of Samuel, Hannah had _____ more children.
12. After Samuel was _____ he was sent to be raised by _____.
13. _____ and _____ were sons of Eli. They were very _____ and God was displeased because Eli did not _____ them.
14. One night _____ spoke to Samuel and told him of punishment coming to _____ and _____. They would _____.
15. When the _____ fought Israel, Eli’s sons took the _____ of the _____ into battle. But it was _____ and Eli’s sons were _____. Eli died when he _____.
16. When the ark was placed in the Philistine god _____, it fell off its _____.
17. The city of _____ (where the ark was) were afflicted with _____. In Ekron there was an infestation of _____ when the ark was moved there.
18. Finally the Philistines got rid of the ark by putting it on a _____ pulled by _____ and sent back to Israel’s territory.

Lesson 27

I Sam. 8:1 - 15:23

Samuel's Farewell speech is found in I Samuel 12. He reminded the people of God's deliverance through the years and urged the people to be faithful to God.

SAUL. As Samuel became old, he appointed his sons, Joel and Abijah, as leaders. But they were evil men and the people were unhappy with them. The elders asked Samuel to appoint a king for Israel. Samuel was very unhappy and prayed to God about it. The Lord said that the people were rejecting God - not Samuel. God told Samuel to tell the people all the bad things that would happen if they had a king. But the people did not listen and demanded a king.

The man chosen by God to be king was a man named Saul, handsome, and a head taller than anyone else. Saul was sent by his father to look for some lost donkeys. He went to Samuel for help. God told Samuel that Saul was to be king. After a feast where Saul was a guest, Samuel anointed Saul with a flask of olive oil and told him that God had chosen him to be the ruler. Samuel called the people together and presented Saul to them as the King.

Saul was soon tested. Nahash, the Ammonite King, besieged Jabesh Gilead and demanded, as a price for peace, that he be allowed to gouge out the right eye of everyone there. Hearing this, Saul was very angry. He gathered an army and won a great victory over the Ammonites.

Saul was 30 years of age when he became king. He ruled 42 years. But he did much that displeased the Lord. He disobeyed God by offering a sacrifice when he had been told to wait and let Samuel make the offering. Samuel told Saul that his kingdom would not endure, but that God would choose someone better.

Saul had battles against the Philistines. His son, Jonathan was a brave and effective warrior. Other soldiers loved him and protected him when Saul was going to kill him when he had eaten some honey as, unbeknownst to him, Saul had ordered the men to eat nothing until the battle was won.

In a battle against the Amalekites God told Saul to destroy all of them, including their animals. But Saul spared Agag, the King, along with choice sheep and cattle.

Lesson 28

1 Sam. 15:20 - 19:13

Samuel told Saul that because of his disobedience God had rejected him as king. Then Samuel killed Agag.

The Lord told Samuel that he had chosen a son of Jesse to be the next King. Seven sons of Jesse passed before Samuel...but not one of them was chosen by God. Then the youngest son was called in from the fields where he was tending sheep. He looked healthy and handsome. His name was David. The Lord told Samuel to anoint him as the successor of Saul. But he would not become king right away, even though the Spirit of the Lord was on him after that day.

The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and he became tormented by an evil spirit. It was thought that Saul would feel better if he could hear soothing music from a lyre. At a servant's suggestion David was called in as he could play well. (It appears that Saul was not aware that David had been chosen as his successor.) Saul liked David very much and kept him in his service. His playing brought relief when Saul was afflicted by the evil spirit.

GOLIATH. The Philistines gathered for war against Israel. They had a warrior named GOLIATH who was over 9 feet tall. Day after day he came forward, challenging Israel to send a man to fight him - but all the Israelites were terrified. Saul offered a big reward to any man who successfully fought Goliath.

Then one day Jesse sent David to the front line to take food to the commander - and to see how his brothers were doing. In a well-known story, David went up against Goliath with only a sling and 5 smooth stones. With the first stone he hit Goliath in the forehead. When David took Goliath's sword and cut off his head the Philistines fled in terror. The army of Israel chased them and won a great victory. Saul watched the confrontation and was greatly impressed.

A beautiful friendship developed between David and JONATHAN, Saul's son. David became so successful in military campaigns that people began to praise him more than they praised Saul. This made Saul very angry, even to the point of trying to kill David. David loved MICHAL, Saul's daughter, and Saul agreed for them to marry.

Jonathan knew that his father wanted to kill David. He did all that he could to protect David. Saul sent men to David's house to kill him.

Lesson 27 and 28 Questions

1. _____ and _____ were wicked sons of Samuel.
2. Samuel was unhappy when the people asked for a _____.
3. God said that the people had rejected _____.
4. God chose _____ to be the king. He was anointed by _____.
5. What was striking about Saul? _____
6. _____, the _____ king wanted to gouge out the _____ of those in Jabesh Gilead as the price for peace.
7. Saul won a _____ over the Ammonites.
8. Saul began his reign at age _____ and ruled _____ years.
9. Saul disobeyed by God by the _____ which he offered. He was told by _____ that his _____ would not endure.
10. Saul's son, _____, was a brave warrior, loved by _____.
11. God told Saul to destroy all the _____, but he spared _____, along with _____. Because of this Saul was told that God had _____ him as _____.
12. God told Samuel to choose a son of _____ as next king. It turned out to be the youngest son, _____.
13. Saul was tormented by an evil _____. He got some relief when _____ was called in to play the _____ for him.
14. The _____ gathered for war against _____, sending _____, a giant warrior to challenge Israel.
15. Jesse sent David to take _____ to the _____. He offered to fight Goliath using only a _____ and _____.
16. The Philistines _____ when David killed Goliath.
17. There was a great friendship between _____ and _____.
18. Saul became very angry when people praised _____ more than him.
19. Saul tried to _____ David.
20. David married _____, the daughter of _____.
21. _____ did all he could to protect David.
22. Saul sent men to _____ to kill him.

Lesson 29

1 Sam. 19:1 - 25:43

Michal helped David escape through a window. Jonathan tried to intercede with Saul, but Saul was determined to hunt David down and kill him. (It should be remembered that as Saul's son Jonathan was an heir to the throne, but he seemed to sense that David would be the next king - and yet he was loyal to David.)

In fleeing, David went to Nob to Ahimelech the Priest, asking for food for himself and his men. Ahimelech gave him bread, along with the sword that had belonged to Goliath. DOEG, the Edomite, one of Saul's men was present and saw what happened.

David next fled to ACHISH, King of Gath, but, fearing he might be harmed, he pretended to be insane. Next, he moved from place to place trying to elude Saul. In the meantime, Doeg told Saul about Ahimelech helping David. In anger Saul had Doeg to kill Ahimelech and 85 other religious leaders, plus the entire town of Nob, the home of the priests.

ABIATHAR, a son of Ahimelech, escaped and went to David with news of what had happened. Abiathar stayed with David, along with hundreds of others who had come to be with him. When the Philistines attacked Keilah, God told David to go rescue the city, which he did, inflicting heavy losses on the Philistines. When Saul went to Keilah to catch David he was not successful as David kept eluding him in the desert.

On one occasion Saul went into a cave, not knowing that David was hiding deeper in the cave. David was able to creep up and cut off part of Saul's robe. Later, when Saul was some distance away, David called out to him, showing him the piece of the robe. He wanted Saul to know that he could have killed him - but that he meant him no harm. Saul was touched, basically apologizing to David. He said that he knew David would become king. He asked David not to harm his family - and David agreed.

ABIGAIL. David sent some of his men to a wealthy man named NABAL to get some food supplies. Nabal was an evil man and refused to help. Some of Nabal's men talked to ABIGAIL, Nabal's wife, about what Nabal had done. (Earlier Nabal's men had been helped by David's men.)

Lesson 30

1 Sam. 25:1 - 30:31

Abigail quickly gathered a supply of food and sent it to David, who was angrily on his way to kill Nabal and all of his men. Abigail interceded with David who agreed not to attack. A few days later God struck Nabal dead. Shortly afterward David sent for Abigail to ask her to be his wife - which she did.

Saul's "apology" to David did not last long as he began chasing David again. David saw Saul asleep in his camp and, with Abishai, crept up while everyone was asleep. They took Saul's spear and water jug. Abishai wanted to kill Saul, but David would not allow it. As before, David went some distance and called back, reminding Saul that he could have killed him but that he had no desire to hurt him. Once again Saul expressed regret and promised not to try to hurt David again.

But David did not trust Saul. He decided to go and live among the Philistines. ACHISH, the Philistine King, assigned a town for David and his men to live in. He was there for a year and 4 months. As the Philistines prepared to go to war against Israel, Achish wanted David and his men to join him in battle, but his commanders did not trust David and insisted that he not join them in battle.

Saul was terrified when he saw the Philistine army. He inquired of God as to what he should do, but he got no answer as the Lord had deserted him. He asked where he could find a "medium" (one who could call up a dead person). He was told that there was one in Endor. Saul and 2 men went to see her. She was terrified as Saul had ordered that all mediums be put to death. But Saul promised not to harm her. He had her to call up Samuel (who had died some time earlier). Saul wanted Samuel to tell him what to do concerning the Philistines. Samuel scolded Saul for disturbing him and said that because of his disobedience the Lord had rejected him. Then he said that the Philistines would defeat Israel - and that Saul and his sons would be killed the next day.

When David got back to his house in Ziklag he found that the Amalekites had raided the city, carrying away all the people (including the families of David and his men) and livestock. The city had been burned. David's forces were able to catch up with the invaders, recovering the people and other possessions.

Lesson 29 and 30 Questions

1. _____ helped David escape from _____ through a _____.
2. David got food from _____ at _____ and also a _____.
3. _____ the _____ saw what happened at Nob.
4. David fled to _____, King of _____, but pretended to be _____ in order not to be harmed.
5. Saul had _____ to kill _____ plus _____ other leaders.
6. _____, a son of _____, escaped and told David of the murders.
7. God told David to rescue the city of _____ from Philistines.
8. Saul kept chasing David in the _____. In a cave David cut off part of Saul's robe to show that he meant no _____ to Saul.
9. Saul told David that he knew that he would _____.
10. An evil man named _____ refused to provide food for _____. His wife _____ provided food, preventing David from killing the man and his men.
11. David asked _____ to become his wife.
12. Again, David crept up to Saul and took his _____ and _____. David would not let _____ kill Saul.
13. Saul again expressed _____ and promised not to _____ David.
14. In order to escape from Saul, David went to live among the _____, being provided a place to live by _____ the King.
15. The _____ of Achish would not allow David to join them in battle against _____.
16. Saul was terrified when he saw the _____ army. He sought direction from _____, but got no answer.
17. Saul went to _____ to see a _____ who called up _____. Saul was told that he and _____ would _____ the next day. _____ would be defeated.
18. David chased the _____ who had raided Ziklag in his absence. He recovered the _____ and the _____ that had been taken.

Lesson 31

1 Sam. 31:1-2 & 6:27

As foretold by Samuel, the next day Saul's 3 sons, Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malik-shua were killed in battle. Saul, badly injured by archers, ordered his armor-bearer to kill him with his sword, as he did not want the Philistines to catch him alive, but the armor-bearer refused. Saul then fell on his own sword and died. David was heart-broken about the death of Saul and his friend Jonathan. He wrote a song of lament which he taught to the people of Judah.

David went to Hebron, where he was anointed as King over the tribe of Judah. But not everyone accepted David as King. ABNER, commander of Saul's army, took ISHBOSHETH, a son of Saul, and proclaimed him to be King over the other tribes of Israel. For some years there was fighting between the forces of David and those loyal to Saul's family (Ishbosheth). But Abner and Ishbosheth had a big dispute and Abner decided to join with David. He helped persuade the rest of the Israelites to join with David, abandoning Ishbosheth.

When Joab, David's commander, heard that Abner had changed sides he was very angry, accusing Abner of planning to deceive and work against David. (It is likely, however, that Joab was afraid that Abner might challenge him as leader of David's forces.) He was also angry at Abner because earlier Abner had killed Asahel, Joab's brother. Joab pretended to speak privately with Abner but killed him instead. David was very upset about the murder of Abner and made it clear to the people that he had nothing to do with it.

Two men, REKAB and BAANAH, seeing that David was gaining power, went into the house of Ishbosheth while he was resting in his bed. They killed him and took his head to David, thinking that he would be pleased. But David, angry at what the men had done, had them killed.

At first David was King over just one tribe, Judah. But then the leadership of the other tribes accepted him as King. David began his reign at age 30 and reigned for 40 years. He conquered Jerusalem and made it his capital. With God's blessings he became increasingly powerful. HIRAM, king of Tyre sent large supplies of cedar along with skilled workmen to help David build his palace. Once again, the Philistines attacked, and once again they were defeated. The ark of the covenant was brought to be in a tent in Jerusalem.

Lesson 32

2 Samuel 7:1-14:33

After his palace was built David wanted to build a temple in which the Ark of the Covenant could be housed. But the Lord told NATHAN the prophet that he wanted David's son (Solomon) to build the Lord's house. A number of enemy nations attacked Israel, but David defeated them all.

MEPHIBOSHETH. David asked if there was anyone left from Saul's family to whom he could show kindness. He was told that Jonathan had a son, Mephibosheth, who was lame in both feet as a result of a fall when he was 5 years old and his nurse hurriedly tried to move him. David sent for him and promised to restore to him the land that had belonged to Saul. He was to be allowed to eat at David's table like one of his sons.

BATHSHEBA. Perhaps the most shameful thing done by David occurred when his army was away, fighting the Ammonites. From his roof he saw a woman (Bathsheba, wife of URIAH) bathing. He sent for her, slept with her, and she became pregnant. Trying to hide his sin, he sent for Uriah to come from the battle and be with his wife. But Uriah, did not go to Bathsheba as he thought it was not fair since his fellow soldiers could not be home. In desperation David ordered his commander, Joab, to place Uriah in a spot where he was likely to be killed - -and that was what happened. After a period of mourning David took Bathsheba to be his wife.

The Lord was greatly displeased with David and sent the prophet NATHAN to rebuke him. God forgave David, but decreed that the young son born to Bathsheba must die. David fasted and begged for the child's life, but it did no good. Bathsheba later had another son whom she named SOLOMON. It is said that "The Lord loved him".

AMNON, TAMAR, ABSALOM. Amnon, one of David's sons, fell in love with his half-sister, Tamar, the sister of ABSALOM. He raped her, greatly angering Absalom, who plotted to kill Amnon - which he did 2 years later. To escape punishment, he fled to Geshur where he stayed 3 years. After a while Joab knew that David longed to see Absalom, so he arranged to get permission for Absalom to return - although David would not meet face to face with him. It was 2 more years before Absalom was allowed to see David.

Lesson 31 and 32 Questions

1. _____, _____, and _____ were killed in battle.
2. David's armor-bearer refused to _____ him, so Saul _____ on his _____.
3. At _____ David was anointed as King over _____.
4. _____, commander of Saul's army, proclaimed _____, son of _____ to be King over the other tribes.
5. After a while _____ became upset with Ishbosheth and joined up with _____.
6. _____, David's commander was upset and killed _____, perhaps through jealousy or fear of being challenged for leadership.
7. _____ was very upset about the murder of _____.
8. _____ and _____ were killed at David's orders because they had killed and beheaded _____.
9. David began his reign at age _____ and ruled for _____ years.
10. _____, King of _____, sent large supplies of _____ to help David build his _____.
11. David wanted to build a _____, but the prophet _____ said that _____ should build it.
12. David showed kindness to _____, the son of _____.
13. David slept with _____, wife of _____.. After she became pregnant David finally had _____ killed as arranged through _____. David was rebuked by the prophet _____.
14. As punishment for David, _____ died.
15. David and Bathsheba had another son named _____. _____ loved him.
16. _____, a son of David fell in love with his half-sister _____.
17. Tamar was the sister of _____, another son of David. He was determined to get vengeance when _____ raped _____.
18. After killing Amnon, Absalom escaped to _____ for _____ years.

Lesson 33

2 Sam. 14:25 - 19:8

Absalom is described as being especially handsome - without blemish. He had a very heavy head of hair which he cut once a year. He began a conspiracy to overthrow David and make himself King. For 4 years he carefully won the hearts of the people, including many leaders. He went to Hebron where he arranged to have himself declared as King.

When David heard about this, surprisingly he did not fight back. Instead he hurriedly fled along with a number of his officials and supporters. AHITHOPHEL, one of David's advisors had joined Absalom. David asked HUSHAI, another trusted advisor, to stay behind and pretend to join Absalom, hopefully able to give advice that would help David.

As David was fleeing a man named SHIMEI loudly cursed him and threw rocks. Abishai wanted to kill him, but David would not allow it. Exhausted, David and his group stopped to rest. In the meantime, Hushai got a chance to contradict the advice of Ahithophel. Ahithophel advised Absalom to chase David immediately while he was tired and not ready for battle. But Hushai advised Absalom to wait and gather a big army to crush David (Hushai wanted to give David time to get farther away and to find a safe place.) When Absalom chose the advice of Hushai, Ahithophel, humiliated, committed suicide.

Two priests, ZADOK and ABIATHAR, were loyal to David and sent him secret messages. They urged him to hurry and get across the Jordan River to be safer. Thousands of soldiers came to support David. David's forces were divided into 3 groups as they prepared to battle Absalom's men. David ordered his men to be "gentle" with Absalom. David's men were successful and Absalom's men were forced to flee. As Absalom fled his mule went under a tree with thick branches. Absalom's long hair caught in the branches and his mule went out from under him, leaving Absalom hanging. One of David's men saw him and told Joab who, with some of his men killed Absalom and buried him in a pit - even though he knew he was violating David's orders. Joab blew his trumpet and stopped the chase as the men of Absalom fled.

David was extremely distressed at the death of Absalom, seeming to be more concerned about Absalom than about his men. Jacob scolded David and told him that he had better come out and encourage his men or he would lose them.

Lesson 34

2 Sam. 19:1 - 1 Kgs 5:18

After Joab's rebuke, David finally came out and greeted his men. There was an awkward period as David tried to re-establish his authority over those who had supported Absalom. A man named SHEBA led a rebellion against David, but he was defeated. The Philistines attacked yet again, but they were defeated. 2 Samuel 22 records a lengthy song of praise which David wrote in response to the victories which the Lord had granted to him.

ADONIJAH. As David was very old and in bad health his son, ADONIJAH, decided to make himself King. He gained the support of Joab and Abiathar the priest and others. But Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet along with several others did not support Adonijah. Nathan talked to Bathsheba and arranged for both of them to talk to David to get his confirmation that he wanted Solomon to succeed him. David ordered them to anoint Solomon as King and proclaim this to the people. He was to sit on David's throne.

As Adonijah and his supporters were celebrating they got word that David had made Solomon King. In alarm those with Adonijah scattered. Adonijah begged Solomon not to harm him - to which Solomon agreed - provided Adonijah proved himself to be a "worthy man".

As David neared death, he had some parting words for Solomon, mainly urging him to be faithful to the Lord, obeying all his commands. He also encouraged Solomon to take revenge on some of David's old enemies, including Joab and Shimei. (Solomon later had them put to death.)

Solomon's rule was steadily established. He married the daughter of Pharaoh, ruler of Egypt. He walked in the ways of the Lord. God told him to ask for whatever he wished. Solomon asked for a discerning heart in governing the people well, distinguishing between right and wrong. The Lord was pleased with Solomon's unselfish request and promised him much more, including wealth and honor. Solomon became famous, even in surrounding countries for his great wisdom. He wrote thousands of songs and proverbs.

Hiram, King of Tyre, helped Solomon just as he had helped David, by sending large quantities of cedar for building the temple. Many thousands of workers from both Israel and Lebanon worked on the construction.

Lesson 33 and 34 Questions

2 Sam. 19:1 - 1 Kgs 5:18

1. Absalom was especially _____ with a heavy _____ of _____. He conspired for years to make himself _____.
2. Hearing of what Absalom had done, David hurriedly _____.
3. _____, an advisor to David, joined Absalom, but _____, another trusted advisor remained loyal to David. He pretended to be loyal to Absalom, but he worked secretly to help _____.
4. _____ advised Absalom to hurriedly chase David, but _____ advised him to wait and build a big army. _____ committed suicide when his advice was not accepted.
5. _____ and _____ were 2 priests who secretly sent messages to _____ to hurry and cross the _____.
6. As the armies met, David ordered the men to be “_____” with Absalom. Fleeing, Absalom had his _____ get caught in a _____.
7. Violating his orders, Joab did what? _____
8. Joab felt that David was over-stressed at the _____ of _____.
9. Finally, David came out and _____ his men.
10. _____ led a rebellion against David, but was defeated.
11. As David neared death, his son _____ decided to make himself king, gaining the support of _____ and _____ the priest.
12. _____ the priest and the prophet _____ did not support Adonijah. _____ and _____ talked to David, who ordered that _____ be proclaimed King and sit on _____.
13. Getting word of Solomon’s appointment, the supporters of _____ scattered. He begged Solomon not to _____ him.
14. David gave _____ considerable advice, especially about being _____ to the _____. He also asked Solomon to take _____ on some of his old enemies.
15. Solomon married the daughter of _____. For some time walked he walked in the _____ of the _____.
16. When God asked Solomon to ask for what he wanted, he asked for a _____. God also gave him _____ and _____. He wrote many _____ and _____.
17. _____, King of _____, sent _____ to David.

Lesson 35

1 Kgs 6:7 - 12:17

Solomon sent large quantities of food to Hiram for the workers.

1 Kings 6 describes the details of the temple. It was very ornate, requiring 7 years to build. Solomon also built a palace for himself, requiring 13 years. In an elaborate ceremony Solomon had the ark of the Covenant brought into the temple. A vast assembly gathered to dedicate the temple. Later the Lord appeared to Solomon with a sobering message. If he followed God faithfully his throne would be established forever. However, if his descendants turned from God to serve other gods, the Lord would forsake his people and the temple would become a heap of rubble.

QUEEN OF SHEBA. One of those who visited Solomon was the Queen of Sheba (Ethiopia). She wanted to check out what she had heard about Solomon's wisdom and the splendor of his court. She was greatly impressed. She and Solomon exchanged extravagant gifts.

Sadly, even with all his wisdom and all the blessings from the Lord, Solomon acted very foolishly in going after false gods. He had 700 wives, many of whom were foreign and served other gods. They turned Solomon's heart to serve other gods also. The Lord told Solomon that he would tear the kingdom from him, except for one tribe which would remain for sake of David.

JEROBOAM. Various adversaries arose against Solomon. A man named Jeroboam was chosen to be leader of ten tribes (all but Judah and Benjamin). He was promised that he would lead a dynasty - IF he lived in obedience to God. Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but he fled to Egypt until Solomon died.

REHOBOAM. When Solomon died, his son Rehoboam became king. Jeroboam returned and, with many others, went to Rehoboam to ask him to lighten the heavy load of harsh labor which Solomon had imposed. The older leaders advised Rehoboam to give the people a favorable answer and gain their support. But some younger advisors urged Solomon to tell the people that he would make things even harder than his father had. Unfortunately, Rehoboam took the advice of the younger men. With that the ten tribes chose Jeroboam as their leader and refused to serve Rehoboam.

Lesson 36

1 Kgs 12:12 - 15:8

DIVIDED KINGDOM. There were 2 phases of the Kingdom of Israel: the United Kingdom (under Saul, David, and Solomon), and the Divided Kingdom, which began when the 10 tribes refused to follow Rehoboam and set up their own kingdom under Jeroboam. The 10 tribes, to the North, were called ISRAEL. The 2 tribes (Judah, Benjamin) to the South were called JUDAH. Early on, Rehoboam assembled a large army to fight the North, but the prophet told him NOT to attack.

Jeroboam was afraid that if his people went to Jerusalem to worship, they might be tempted to return to Rehoboam. So, he made 2 golden calves for the people to worship, appointing priests from all sorts of people (not just Levites). This disobedience to God led to Jeroboam's downfall. AHIJAH the prophet told Jeroboam's wife that disaster would befall his family. Jeroboam died after ruling 22 years. Nadab, his son succeeded him.

Under Rehoboam Israel did evil in God's sight, stirring up the Lord's anger. There was widespread worship of idols. SHISHAK, King of Egypt, attacked Jerusalem and carried off the treasures of the palace. Rehoboam died and was replaced by his son, ABIJAH. The Divided Kingdom period lasted many years. It was a dismal period with rampant idolatry. Below is a list of Kings for the 2 Kingdoms, Israel to the North and Judah to the South:

ISRAEL. Jeroboam Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, Joash, Jeroboam II, Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, Hoshea.

JUDAH: Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Azariah, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziam, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah.

The Kingdom of Israel lasted from about 911 B.C to about 721 B.C. before being taken into ASSYRIAN captivity. Judah lasted some time longer, until about 586 B.C. before being taken into BABYLONIAN captivity.

Lesson 35 and 36 Questions

1. _____ sent _____ to _____.
2. Solomon took _____ years to build the temple. The _____ was brought into the temple.
3. Solomon's throne was to be established forever if _____.
4. The _____ was greatly impressed when she visited Solomon.
5. Solomon acted very foolishly by going after _____. He had _____ wives, many of whom served _____. Solomon's _____ was turned to serve _____.
6. A man named _____ was an adversary who arose against Solomon. He was to lead _____ tribes, but fled to _____ when Solomon tried to _____.
7. When Solomon died his son _____ became King. The _____ men advised him to lighten the load on the people, but the _____ men advised the King to make things more harsh.
8. When Rehoboam promised to make things more harsh, the ten tribes separated and chose _____ as their leader
9. When the kingdom divided the Northern ten tribes were called _____ and the Southern 2 tribes were called _____.
10. Jereboam could have prospered, but he angered God by making 2 _____ for the people to worship. The prophet _____ sent word that _____ would befall his family.
11. Rehoboam also did evil, displeasing God. _____ attacked and carried off many _____ of the _____.
12. Rehoboam died and was succeeded by his son, _____.
13. How many kings are listed for Israel? _____. How many for Judah? _____
14. The people of Israel, because of their constant idolatry, were taken into _____ captivity. Later Judah went into _____ captivity.
15. How long did Judah last after Israel was taken captive? _____.

Lesson 37

1 Kgs 15:1 - 18:37

SELECTED KINGS. The books of 1st and 2nd Kings record the disappointing history of the Divided Kingdom. EVERY king of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. In Judah (South) there were a few kings who pleased God. These lessons will not discuss every king, but will highlight specific ones whose reigns were notable.

ASA. Asa, son of Abijah, was the first good king of Judah. He reigned 41 years. Like the other good kings, he was active in destroying idols and shrines to false gods. BAASHA, King of Israel, attacked him, but with the help of BEN-HADAD, Asa was successful.

AHAB. One of the worst kings of Israel was a man named Ahab. He married JEZEBEL, daughter of the King of the Sidonians, and a worshipper of Baal. Serving Baal also, Ahab did more to anger the Lord than any king before him.

ELIJAH. Elijah was a prophet of God who openly opposed Ahab (and Jezebel). Elijah told Ahab that there would not be dew nor rains for years - except at his word. The Lord sent Elijah away to Kerith Ravine where he drank from a brook and was fed by ravens. Later he went to Zarephath where God used a widow to feed him - as the Lord kept her flour and oil from running out. (Later Elijah repaid the widow by raising her son from the dead.)

Because of the drought the famine was severe, causing much despair. In the third year God told Elijah to go to Ahab. Obadiah, Palace Administrator (and devout servant of God who had hidden 100 prophets in caves to prevent Jezebel from killing them), was sent to look for grass and water to keep the animals alive. Elijah met Obadiah and told him to tell Ahab that he was there. Obadiah was afraid he would be in trouble if Elijah did not show up, but Elijah came.

MOUNT CARMEL. When Elijah met Ahab, he condemned him for leaving God and serving Baal. He called for a contest on Mount Carmel. He had 450 prophets of Baal to prepare an altar, cut a bull in pieces, and put it on the altar - but not set it on fire. They were to call on the name of their god to send fire to burn the sacrifice. (Take time to read the story in 1 Kings 18). The prophets prayed, shouted, danced, and cut themselves until blood flowed - as Elijah taunted them over and over. Mid-day passed, but no fire. This went on until evening. Then Elijah called the people to him. He built an altar and dug a trench around it.

Lesson 38

1 Kgs 18:36 - 22:40

Elijah cut up a bull and put it on the altar. He had water poured over it until the trench was full.

Then Elijah prayed to God to send fire. The fire burned the sacrifice, the wood, the stones - and even the water in the trench. The people fell prostrate and proclaimed, "The Lord - He is God!". Elijah then ordered that the prophets of Baal be put to death. He then told Ahab that heavy rain was coming.

JEZEBEL. When Jezebel heard what Elijah had done she vowed to kill him. Afraid, Elijah fled, traveling weeks to Mt. Horeb and stayed in a cave. But God called to him to go back, giving him specific assignments: (1) anoint HAZAEL as King of Aram, (2) anoint JEHU as King of Israel, and (3) anoint ELISHA to succeed him as prophet.

ELISHA. Elijah was one of the greatest prophets ever. Elisha was almost as prominent. Elisha was plowing with oxen when Elijah called him. He became Elijah's servant from that time forward.

Even though Ahab was evil, God helped him defeat a big army led by BEN-HADAD of Aram. But the Lord was angry at Ahab for letting Ben-Hadad go free.

In another incident, Ahab coveted the vineyard of a man named NABOTH as it was close to the palace and Ahab wanted it for a vegetable garden. But Naboth did not want to sell as it had been in the family for a long time. Ahab lay on his bed sulking about this. When Jezebel learned about the problem, she told Ahab that she would get the vineyard for him. She arranged for 2 scoundrels to testify that they had heard Naboth curse God and the King. Naboth was stoned to death. Ahab took the vineyard. The Lord sent Elijah to Ahab to tell him that the dogs would lick his blood at the same place where they had licked Naboth's blood. All of Ahab's descendants would be wiped out. Also, Jezebel would be devoured by dogs by the wall of Jezreel.

Some time later in a battle with Aram Ahab was struck by an arrow. As he was bleeding his chariot fled the scene. He died that evening. They washed the blood out of the chariot - and the dogs licked the blood - just as the prophet had said. (More about Jezebel later.)

Lesson 37 and 38 Questions

1. EVERY King of Israel did _____ in God's _____.
2. _____ was the first good King of Judah. He destroyed _____ and _____ to _____.
3. _____ was an evil King of Israel. He was married to _____, daughter of the King of _____. Both of these were worshippers of _____.
4. _____ was a prophet who opposed Ahab. He decreed that there would be no _____ for years. In fear Elijah fled to Kerith Ravine where he was fed by _____. He was later fed by a _____, (whose _____ he later brought back to _____).
5. When God sent Elijah back he met a good man named _____ who was told to tell _____ that Elijah was back.
6. Elijah arranged for a contest on Mt. _____ between God and _____ prophets of _____. The challenge was to cut up a _____, put it on an altar, and call upon one of the gods (Baal or the Lord) to send down _____ and burn the _____.
7. The prophets of Baal prayed for hours.....but there was no _____.
8. At evening Elijah called the _____. He built an _____, dug a _____, put the bull on the altar, and poured _____ over everything. When Elijah prayed _____ came and destroyed what? _____.
9. What happened to the prophets of Baal? _____
10. Elijah told Ahab that _____ was coming.
11. _____ vowed to kill _____, but he fled to Mt. _____ where he hid in a _____.
12. God told Elijah to go back. One assignment was to appoint _____ as his successor. He was appointed and became Elijah's _____.
13. _____ had _____ killed so that Ahab could get the man's _____ to use as a _____.
14. The Lord sent _____ to tell Ahab that the _____ would _____ his _____ and that _____ would be _____ by _____. Both things happened.

Lesson 39

2 Kgs 2:1 - 5:27

The Lord decided to take Elijah to heaven in a whirlwind. Elijah asked Elisha what he could do for him. Elisha asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit. As they were walking along a chariot and horses of fire separated the 2 men. Elijah ascended in a whirlwind. After this Elisha did many great things, demonstrating God's power. 2 Kings 4 tells of his helping a poor widow, raising a young boy from the dead, and cleansing poisonous food.

NAAMAN. One of Elisha's most famous acts involved a man named NAAMAN, a commander in the army of Aram (Syria). He had leprosy. His wife had a slave girl who had been taken captive by one of the raids into Israel. She knew about Elisha and suggested to her mistress that there was a prophet in Israel who could heal Naaman's leprosy.

In a humorous bit of confusion, Naaman was sent to the King of Israel to be healed. Obviously, the King could not heal leprosy and was very upset, thinking the King of Aram was trying to pick a fight. Elisha heard about this and sent word for Naaman to come to him. Naaman had brought an abundance of lavish gifts to present to the prophet.

To Naaman's surprise, Elisha did not come out to meet him. He sent word to Naaman to go dip 7 times in the Jordan River, after which his leprosy would be healed. Naaman was very upset. He said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God and wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy". (It seems as if he had been watching some of the modern "faith healers!") He angrily started to leave, but some of his servants urged him to go ahead and do what Elisha had said to do. He did - and the leprosy was gone. In gratitude he tried to make a gift to Elisha, but the prophet would not accept anything.

There is a sad ending to the story. GEHAZI, Elisha's servant, greedy for the lavish gifts offered by Naaman, ran after him and lied, saying that some young prophets had to come to Elisha and that the prophet was asking for a talent of silver and 2 changes of clothing - which Naaman was pleased to give. When Gehazi returned to Elisha he was told that Elisha knew what he had done - and from that time forward Gehazi would have Naaman's leprosy.

Lesson 40

2 Kgs 6:1 - 11:3

(One important lesson from the story of Naaman: it is not unusual for God's commands to make little or no sense to people. God requires that people have faith to obey him, regardless of whether or not his commands seem reasonable. It made no sense that anything in the Jordan River could heal leprosy...and there was nothing there to do that. It was obedience to God. A similar situation exists regarding baptism. Ananias told Saul of Tarsus to be baptized and "wash away" his sins. What is there in water that can "wash away" sins? Nothing. It is obeying God that brings cleansing. Fortunately, Saul did not object. It is unfortunate that many people today reject biblical teaching concerning baptism, reasoning like Naaman, that it makes no sense.)

Elisha had asked for a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit. When one studies the life of Elisha he finds more examples of his power (actually God's power) being used than is true of the life of Elijah. In 2 Kings 6-7-8, he makes an ax-head float, blinds an army of Arameans, plus a number of other things.

JEHU. 2 Kings 9 records the anointing of Jehu as King of Israel. The prophet who anointed Jehu told him that God wanted him to destroy the house of Ahab (and Jezebel). After killing 2 kings, Jehu went to Jezreel. Jezebel put on eye make-up, did her hair, and went to an upstairs window as Jehu arrived. She looked out the window and said to Jehu, "Have you come in peace, you Zimri, you murderer of your master?"

Jehu looked up at the window and saw a couple of eunuchs standing with Jezebel. "Who is on my side? Who? Throw her down!". The men threw her out the window. Her blood splattered on the wall and the horses trampled her underfoot. Later, when Jehu told some men to go bury her they could find only her skull, her hands, and her feet. The dogs had devoured her - just as Elijah had foretold. Jehu tracked down all the sons of Ahab and had them killed. Jehu also killed all the servants of Baal, ending Baal worship in Israel.

ATHALIAH and JOASH. Another very wicked ruler was a woman named ATHALIAH. When she saw that her son, King Amaziah, was dead, she decided to seize the throne. She proceeded to kill all the sons of Amaziah, so as to leave no successors to the throne. She then took over as Queen.

Lesson 39 and 40 Questions

1. Elijah went to heaven in a _____. Elisha asked for a _____ of Elijah's _____. After this Elisha did _____ great things.
2. _____ was a Syrian Commander who had _____. His wife's _____ girl suggested that _____ could heal him.
3. Naaman first went to the _____ but _____ sent for him.
4. Naaman was upset when Elisha did not _____ out to meet him.
5. Naaman was told to _____ times in the _____.
6. Naaman's _____ talked him into dipping 7 times.
7. Elisha would not accept a _____ from Naaman.
8. _____ lied to _____ to get _____ and _____. Then Gehazi got Naaman's _____.
9. A good lesson from Naaman's story is that by _____ we should do whatever God requires, even if it does not seem _____.
10. Elisha asked for a _____ of Elijah's _____.
11. Elisha made an _____ float and blinded an _____.
12. The prophet anointed _____ as king of Israel. He was told to destroy the house of _____. He ordered that _____ be thrown out of a window, killing her. As the prophet foretold, what happened to her body?

13. Jehu tracked down and killed the _____ of _____.
14. Jehu killed the servants of _____.
15. _____ seized the throne when her son _____ died. She killed the sons of _____ so as to leave no _____ to the throne.

Lesson 41

2 Kgs 11:1 - 17:41

Athaliah thought she had killed all of her grandsons (Amaziah's sons). But Amaziah's sister managed to hide one son, named JOASH. Along with his nurse, Joash was hidden in the temple for 6 years. JEHOIADA the priest was aware of the situation. In the seventh year of Athaliah's reign he called a number of military leaders and showed them Joash, the King's son. They carefully arranged a plan to crown Joash as King. When he was appointed the people rejoiced loudly. When Athaliah heard the sound she rushed out shouting, "Treason! Treason!". The officers seized her and put her to death.

Joash was seven years of age when he began his reign and ruled for 40 years. He did right in God's sight. He was instructed by Jehoiada the Priest. Baal's temple was torn down. He did extensive repairs on the temple. Sadly, some of his officials conspired against him and assassinated him.

2 Kings 13 records the death of Elisha.

AMAZIAH. Amaziah, son of Joash, succeeded him as King. He also did right in God's sight. He executed the men who had killed his father. However, he was unsuccessful in a war with Jehoash, King of Israel. There was a conspiracy against him, and he fled to Lachish, but men hunted him down and killed him.

AZARIAH and JOTHAM. Another good king was Azariah, son of Amaziah (and grandson of Joash). He began to reign at age 16 and ruled for 52 years. He was afflicted with leprosy and lived in a separate house. When he died he was succeeded by his son JOTHAM, who also did right in God's eyes - except, like so many before him - he did not destroy the "high places", locations where idolatrous worship often took place.

HOSHEA. The Israelites, throughout their history, had a strong tendency to abandon their God and worship pagan idols. God's patience lasted a long time as he sent prophet after prophet to warn the people of God's punishment. The Northern Kingdom (Israel) was worst and was the first to feel God's wrath. Their last King was HOSHEA. During his reign SHALMANESER, King of Assyria, seized Hoshea and put him in prison. He invaded the entire land and deported the people to Assyria to be settled there. This ended the Northern Kingdom (722 B.C.).

Lesson 42

2 Kgs 18:1 - 23:3

HEZEKIAH. One of the best Kings of Judah was a man named HEZEKIAH. He destroyed the places where idols were being worshipped. He was King when the Assyrians took over the Northern Kingdom. He was a man whose goal was to please God.

SENNACHERIB replaced Shalmaneser as King of Assyria. He decided to attack Judah. He sent a large army to Jerusalem and sent threatening letters to Hezekiah, demanding that he surrender and making fun of Hezekiah's God. In great distress Hezekiah sent a message to the prophet ISAIAH, asking him to pray for Judah.

Isaiah sent a message to Hezekiah that the King of Assyria would return to his country to deal with a threat there. But Sennacherib sent a letter to Hezekiah saying that he would return and defeat him. Hezekiah went to the temple and spread the letter out before the Lord, asking for help. Isaiah sent a message saying that God had heard Hezekiah's prayer and would provide deliverance. That night the angel of the Lord put to death 185,000 soldiers in the Assyrian camp. Sennacherib went home. Later he was killed by 2 of his sons while he was worshipping his god, NISROK.

Hezekiah became deathly ill. The Lord sent Isaiah to tell him to put his house in order as he was about to die. Hezekiah wept bitterly and prayed to God, reminding him of how he had served him faithfully. Before Isaiah had left the grounds, the Lord sent him back to tell Hezekiah that God had heard his prayer and that his life would be extended by 15 years.

MANASSEH, Hezekiah's son succeeded him. He was one of the worst of the kings. His son AMON came next and he was also evil. He reigned only 2 years and was assassinated by some of his officials.

JOSIAH. Josiah was the last of the good kings. Son of the wicked AMON, he was 8 years old when he began his rule and he reigned for 31 years. An amazing thing happened during his reign. While workmen were making repairs on the temple, HILKIAH, the priest, found the Book of the Law. (Apparently it had been lost for a long time.) When the book was read to Josiah he realized how badly the people had violated God's laws. He had the book read to the people.

Lesson 41 and 42 Questions

1. _____ thought she had killed all of her _____, but she missed _____ who was hid in the _____.
2. _____, the Priest, protected Joash and arranged to have him crowned when he was age _____.
3. Athaliah cried _____, but she was _____.
4. Joash was instructed by _____. The temple of _____ was torn down and the _____ was repaired.
5. Some men _____ against Joash and _____ him. His son, _____, succeeded him. He was hunted down and _____.
6. _____, son of _____ began to reign at age _____ and reigned for _____ years. He had _____ and lived in a separate _____. His son _____ became King.
7. _____ was the last King of Israel (North). He was imprisoned by _____, King of Assyria, who deported the people to be settled in the country of _____.
8. _____ was King of Judah when _____ defeated the North.
9. _____ replaced Shalmaneser. He attacked Judah and demanded that _____ surrender. The King asked _____ to pray.
10. Sennacherib had to return home, but he sent a letter to _____, promising to _____ and _____ him.
11. Hezekiah showed the letter to _____ in the _____, asking for help. Isaiah said that God would provide _____.
12. That night the angel of the Lord killed _____ Assyrian soldiers.
13. _____ was killed by 2 of his _____.
14. God sent a message to Hezekiah that he was to _____. After seeing Hezekiah's prayers and pleas, he added _____ years to his life.
15. Hezekiah's son _____ succeeded him. He was one of the _____ of the Kings. His son _____ was also evil.
16. _____ was the last good King. During his reign the _____ _____ was found in the _____ by _____, the Priest. When Josiah heard it read he realized that the people had badly _____ God's _____. It was read to _____.

Lesson 43

Kgs 23:4 - 25:30, Esth. 1:1 - 1:18

When Josiah realized how badly the people had left God, he got busy destroying all remnants of idol worship, some of which were actually in the temple! The Passover was once again observed - the first time since before the time of the Judges! According to 2 Kings 23:25, "Neither before nor after Josiah was there a King like him who turned to the Lord as he did....".

Although Josiah pleased the Lord, God had already decided to punish Judah because of the sins of Manasseh and other Kings who promoted idolatry in the land. Josiah was killed in a battle with PHARAOH NECOH of Egypt. He was succeeded by his son, JEHOAHAZ. But NECHO imprisoned him and made his brother ELIAKIM, the King, changing his name to JEHOIAKIM. Jehoiakim was forced to pay NECHO a thousand talents of silver (about 3 ¼ tons) and a talent of gold (about 75 pounds).

NEBUCHADNEZZAR. Time was running out for Judah. Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, invaded the land. He made Jehoiakim his vassal. Jehoiakim died and his son JEHOIACHIN succeeded him. Under his short reign Nebuchadnezzar returned and laid siege to Jerusalem. The King and all the officials surrendered. Nebuchadnezzar took all the treasures from the temple and the palace. They were taken to Babylon. 10,000 people were taken to Babylon, leaving mainly the poorest people. Nebuchadnezzar made MATTANIAH, Jehoichin's uncle, King over those who were left. His name was changed to ZEDEKIAH.

Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. During the ninth year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar brought his army and basically destroyed Jerusalem - the walls, the palace, the temple, and all important buildings. Many officials were executed or taken to Babylon. Thus began 70 years of Babylonian Captivity.

ESTHER. Two books in the Old Testament have their setting in Babylon, ESTHER and DANIEL. Mordecai was one of the Jewish captives. He had raised his orphan cousin, HADASSEH, better known as ESTHER. She was very beautiful.

XERXES, the Babylonian King, gave a great celebration for his officials. It lasted 180 days. During a period of feasting and drinking XERXES wanted to show off his beautiful wife, VASHTI. He sent for her to come and show herself to the crowd - but she refused (for an unknown reason).

Lesson 44

Esth. 1:1 - 6:4

The King was very angry when Vashti refused to come and show off her beauty. The King was advised to depose the Queen and hold a national “beauty contest” from which a new Queen would be chosen. Many beautiful virgins were presented to the King. From among them all he chose Esther to be Queen.

God is never mentioned in the Book of Esther, but his influence is seen working throughout the book. In an unrelated incident, Mordecai overheard 2 men plotting to kill the King. He reported to the King’s officials and the men were caught and executed.

HAMAN. The King honored a man named HAMAN above the other officials. Orders were given for people to kneel before him whenever he passed by. But Mordecai refused to bow before him. Haman learned that Mordecai was a Jew. Angry, he plotted to kill not only Mordecai, but ALL the Jews. He got the King’s permission to kill all the Jews and sent orders to the provinces, setting a certain date for killing them.

Mordecai was very distressed when he heard of Haman’s plans. He sent word to Esther to plead with the King for the Jewish people (the King did not know that Esther was a Jew). Esther was worried as it was dangerous to go before the King without being invited to see him. But Mordecai warned her that she would not be spared if all the Jews were killed. Mordecai sent these words to her, “And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”

After much prayer and fasting, Esther approached the King. He held out his sceptre to her, meaning that he approved her presence. He asked what her request was. Esther had plans to present her request at just the right time and place. She invited the King to come to a banquet, at which time she would present her request. Haman was invited also.

In the meantime, Haman was enraged at Mordecai (but was in high spirits because he had been invited to the Queen’s banquet). Encouraged by his wife and friends, Haman decided to erect a very tall pole on which to impale Mordecai.

Again, God was working. That night the King could not sleep. He had servants to read to him from some of the royal records. When he heard of how Mordecai had saved his life, he asked what had been done to honor Mordecai.

Lesson 43 and 44 Questions

1. Hezekiah destroyed remnants of _____ and re-started observance of the _____. Josiah was killed in battle with _____.
2. NECHO imprisoned _____. Jehoiakim was forced to pay _____ pounds of _____ and also _____.
3. Judah was invaded by _____, King of _____.
4. Jehoiakim died and was succeeded by his son _____.
5. Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to _____. He took all the treasures from the _____ and the _____. _____ people were taken to _____. Nebuchadnezzar made _____ king and changed his name to _____. When he rebelled Nebuchadnezzar came back and destroyed what? _____
6. _____ and _____ are 2 Old Testament books set in Babylon. _____ was raised by her cousin, _____.
7. _____, Babylonian King, gave a celebration lasting _____ days. His wife, _____, refused to show off her beauty.
8. A “_____ contest” was held to find a new _____.
9. _____ heard 2 men plotting to _____.
10. A man named _____ was made a high official. People were supposed to _____ when he walked by, but _____ refused to do so. In anger Haman got permission to _____ all Jews.
11. _____ sent word to _____ to plead with the King.
12. The King did not know that Esther was a _____.
13. It was dangerous to go before the _____ uninvited.
14. What warning did Mordecai give to Esther? _____.
15. Esther invited the King to come to a _____. _____ was also invited.
16. Haman erected a tall _____ on which to _____ Mordecai.
17. The King could not _____ so he had royal _____ read to him. He learned of how _____ had saved his life.
18. The King asked how _____ had been _____.
19. Mordecai sent a message to Esther saying, “Who knows but that you have come to your _____ for such a _____ as this?”

Lesson 45

Esth. 6:1 - 10:3 & Dan. 1:1 - 2:49

The King learned that nothing had been done for Mordecai to honor him for saving the King's life. Just then Haman came in to get permission to impale Mordecai. Before he could make his request, the King asked him what should be done for the man the King wished to honor. Thinking that surely the King was referring to himself, Haman suggested a number of ideas: the man should wear a royal robe and ride on the King's horse, having one of the royal nobles to lead the horse through the streets proclaiming that this is a man whom the King wishes to honor. We can only wonder how Haman felt when the King told him to do these things for Mordecai! When Haman got home and told his wife and friends, they were sure that this meant Haman's downfall.

Haman had to hurry to get to Esther's feast. When Esther finally made her request it was that the King spare the life of Esther and her people. Shocked, the King asked who had dared to do such a thing. She said that was Haman. The King had Haman impaled on the pole which he had prepared for Mordecai. The King elevated Mordecai to a very high position. He was placed over Haman's estate.

The Jews, who were supposed to be killed, were empowered to fight for themselves and were able to defeat those who tried to kill them. The 10 sons of Haman were killed. Mordecai was promoted to be the second most powerful man in the land.

DANIEL. The Babylonian King decided to give special treatment to some men from the royal family of the Israelites. They were to be trained in all manner of things that would prepare them for service to the King. They were to be exceptional in mind and body. Four of these men were: DANIEL (renamed BELTESHAZZAR), HANANIAH (renamed SHADRACH), MISHAEL (renamed MESHACH), and AZARIAH (renamed Abednego). The King wanted these men to be fed rich food, some of which was not lawful for Jewish boys to eat. They asked for only vegetables. The official in charge of them was afraid the men would not be healthy, but they talked him into a 10-day trial, after which they were healthiest of all.

God was with the young men. When the King tested them he found them to be ten times better than his magicians and enchanters. Working through Daniel God revealed the explanation of a dream by Nebuchadnezzar.

Lesson 46

Dan. 2:24 - 5:6

Nebuchadnezzar's dream was of a huge statue. As explained by Daniel, it represented 4 great kingdoms, including a 4th kingdom during which God would set up his great Kingdom.

In appreciation for his interpretation the King appointed Daniel to be over the province of Babylon. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were appointed to important positions.

Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold about 90 feet high and 9 feet wide. All important officials were to come to the dedication. As music sounded everyone was to fall down and worship the idol. Those who refused were to be thrown into a blazing furnace.

Some astrologers - no doubt in jealousy - complained to the King that some of the "Jews" (Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego) would not bow down to nor serve the King's image. Furious, the King warned the men, but they would not go against their God. The men were thrown into a super-heated furnace (so hot that it killed the men who threw them in), but they were not harmed. A fourth person (surely an angel) was seen in the fire with them.

Amazed, the King called the men out, praising them for being loyal to their God. The King decreed that anyone who spoke against the God of these men was to be severely punished. The men were promoted to high positions.

Daniel interpreted another dream of Nebuchadnezzar's. It meant that the King was to be driven from office and live among wild animals for years as a kind of discipline from the Lord, through which he was to learn to respect God more.

BELSHAZZAR. The son of Nebuchadnezzar was named BELSHAZZAR. He gave a banquet during which he ordered that gold and silver goblets brought from the temple in Jerusalem be used for drinking wine, while the people praised gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. This was a special defaming of items which had been dedicated to the Lord. (It was not a good idea). Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared, writing on the wall. The King was so scared that his knees were knocking.

Lesson 45 and 46 Questions

1. The King wanted to honor _____. Haman wanted to _____ Mordecai.
2. _____ was to lead Mordecai through the streets.
3. Esther asked the King to spare _____
4. _____ was promoted to high government position.
5. _____, _____, _____ and _____ were 4 young Jewish men who received special training at the King's order.
6. The young men refused to be fed _____.
7. _____ revealed the meaning of a dream by _____.
8. Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a huge _____ referred to 4 _____.
9. Daniel was placed over the province of _____.
10. Nebuchadnezzar built an image _____ feet high and _____ ft. wide.
11. Those who did not bow down to the image were to be thrown into a _____.
12. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not hurt by _____.
13. Another dream of Nebuchadnezzar meant that he would live among _____ so he would respect _____.
14. Nebuchadnezzar's son was _____. He gave a banquet using _____ from the _____ in _____ as he praised the gods of _____.
15. During Belshazzar's banquet, the _____ of a _____ appeared, writing on the _____.
16. Belshazzar's _____ were _____.

Lesson 47

Dan. 5:1 - 12:13, Ezra 1:1 - 1:11

None of the King's astrologers or magicians could interpret the meaning of the words written by fingers on the wall. They were MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN. Finally, someone remembered Daniel and he was called to interpret. Because of the evil deeds of Belshazzar and because he had not humbled himself before God his reign was about to end and the Kingdom was going to the Medes and Persians. That very night Belshazzar was killed and DARIUS the MEDE became ruler.

Darius made Daniel a top Administrator. Other officials were jealous of Daniel but they could find nothing to accuse him of. They thought of a way to get him in trouble involving his service to God, to whom he prayed 3 times daily. They persuaded the King to make a decree that for 30 days no one was to pray to any human or god except the King. Any violator was to be thrown into a den of lions.

The men managed to catch Daniel praying. They reported this to the King, who wanted to spare Daniel, but was reminded that no edict of the Medes and Persians could be changed. Daniel was placed in a den of lions. The King could not sleep that night and at dawn hurried to the lions' den. He called out to Daniel to see if his God had rescued him. The King learned that an angel had protected Daniel. The King was overjoyed. He ordered that the accusers of David, along with their families be thrown to the lions...who killed them immediately. The King gave orders for all of his subjects to fear and reverence the God of Daniel.

The latter part of the book of Daniel consists of a number of dreams and visions that were prophetic in nature. They were about many things to happen in the future, including the establishment of God's future Kingdom.

EZRA. The last 2 books in the biblical historical account of the Jewish people are EZRA and NEHEMIAH. As prophesied by Jeremiah, the Babylonian captivity was to last for 70 years (it was not exactly 70 years as different groups went to Babylon at different times, and different groups returned to Jerusalem at different times). The Lord moved the heart of Cyrus, King of Persia, to allow all who wanted to return to Jerusalem to do so and re-build the temple. Many of those who did not return made free will offerings to help those who did go. Cyrus brought out more than 5,000 articles which had been taken from the original temple so they could be used in the re-built temple.

Lesson 48

Ezra 2:1 - 7:28

Under Zerubbabel and other leaders, more than 42,000 people (plus slaves and singers) were in the first group to return. After the people had settled in their towns, they set about to build an altar for sacrifice and began to celebrate the Jewish festivals. They began to hire masons and carpenters, sending for cedar logs from Lebanon. When the foundation was laid there was a great celebration among the people.

A very serious problem developed, one that was to plague the Jews for a long time. During the years of captivity other people had settled in the land. They resented the Jews returning and re-establishing themselves. At first, they offered to help, but the Jewish leaders did not trust them and refused to let the outsiders have a part in the work. That began a whole series of activities designed to discourage the re-building process.

The enemies wrote a letter to the King complaining that the Jews were a rebellious people and that if they re-built the city, they would be a source of trouble for the King. The King replied, ordering that the re-building stop.

About 15 years later, under the direction of HAGGAI the Prophet and ZECHARIAH the Priest, the people went back to work to re-build the temple. Again, their enemies, led by the governor of the region, asked who had authorized the re-building. They were told that the work had been authorized by King Cyrus.

The enemies did not believe this and sent a letter to the King, Darius. They asked that a search be made of the records to see if Cyrus had given the order.

King Darius had a search made and found that Cyrus really had given the order. Then, in a great victory for the Jews, DARIUS ordered that not only was the work to be continued - but they were to be supported out of the royal treasury. There was to be a death penalty for anyone who defied the order. The temple was completed in the sixth year of Darius' reign. There was a great celebration among the people. The temple services were resumed. The Passover Feast was once again observed according to the Law of Moses.

It was about 60 years later when EZRA came to Jerusalem. King ARTAXERXES, King of Persia, provided a letter of strong support. The government of the region was to provide whatever support was needed - money and supplies.

Lesson 47 and 48 Questions

1. The words on the wall were _____, _____, _____, and _____. Only _____ could interpret them.
2. _____ was about to lose his kingdom to _____ the _____. Belshazzar was killed that very _____.
3. Other officials were _____ of Daniel. They had the King to issue a decree that for 30 days only _____ could be prayed to. This was because they wanted Daniel to be thrown to _____.
4. The _____ hurried to the lions' den and learned that an _____ had protected Daniel. The _____ of Daniel were thrown to the _____.
5. The people were ordered to _____ and _____ the God of Daniel.
6. Many prophetic _____ and _____ are in the book of Daniel, including God's _____.
7. The last 2 books in the Old Testament historical account are _____ and _____. _____ prophesied that the Babylonian captivity would last for _____ years. _____, King of _____ gave permission for people to return to _____ and re-build the _____, sending more than _____ articles from the old temple. Led by _____, more than _____ returned.
8. _____ were ordered and _____ and _____ were hired. A great _____ followed laying of the _____.
9. There were _____ who resented return of the Jews.
10. The enemies wrote to the King to have the _____ stop.
11. Under the leadership of _____ and _____ the re-building was resumed. They told the enemies that _____ had authorized the building. King _____ had the records checked.
12. When Darius learned that _____ had ordered the re-building, he ordered that the work continue, supported out of the _____, with a _____ penalty for those who defied.
13. The temple was completed in the _____ year of Darius' reign. A great _____ followed and _____ services were resumed.
14. _____ came to Jerusalem _____ years later.

Lesson 49

Ezra 7:1-10:15, Neh. 1:1 - 2:16

Ezra was to teach the people and to appoint magistrates and judges. He assembled a large number of people to go to Jerusalem with him. They made the trip safely. When they arrived they offered sacrifices to God.

Ezra was a teacher who cared very deeply about God's law and about the Jewish people remaining faithful to God. The leaders in Jerusalem told Ezra that the people had been violating God's law by intermarrying with the various nations around them. Ezra expressed his attitude toward this, "When I heard this I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard, and sat down appalled".

The people saw how upset Ezra was. He made a prayer of confession to God. As he was weeping others gathered around him and wept also. It was decided that those who had foreign wives were to give them up. Even some of the priests and Levites were guilty. Some had children. This ends the book of EZRA.

NEHEMIAH. Nehemiah came to Jerusalem about 444 B.C., 14 years after Ezra had arrived. Ezra was a priest and a teacher, but Nehemiah came as a civil governor. He came with authority from the King of Persia to re-build the walls of Jerusalem and fortify the city. Up until this time not much had been re-built except for the temple - which was far less impressive than the original temple.

Nehemiah had held a very responsible position as cupbearer to King ARTAXERXES. Some people from Jerusalem had brought him word that those in Jerusalem were in much trouble as the walls were torn down and the gates burned. Nehemiah mourned, fasted, and prayed for days. The King noticed how sad he looked and asked what was wrong. After a quick prayer Nehemiah explained the sad situation in the city of his ancestors. The King asked Nehemiah what he wanted. He asked to go to Jerusalem and re-build it. He asked to receive timbers for beams. The King granted his request. But there were people in Jerusalem who did not want the city re-built and Jewish power restored. SANBALLAT and TOBIAH were 2 of the main people who would oppose Nehemiah. GESHEM the Arab was also part of the opposition group.

When Nehemiah first arrived in Jerusalem, he did not reveal his purpose. He surveyed the ruins of the walls and gates, sometimes travelling at night.

Lesson 50

Neh. 2:11 - 8:8

After surveying the ruins of Jerusalem Nehemiah went to the Jewish leaders and explained that he wanted to re-build the walls and gates - and that the King was supporting him. The people agreed, and started re-building.

Soon Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem confronted Nehemiah, accusing him of rebelling against the King. He replied that the God of heaven would give him success. Different groups were given specific assignments in re-building the gates, including the Sheep gate, the Fish gate, the Jeshanah gate, the Valley gate, the Dung gate, the Water gate, the Horse gate, and the Inspection gate. Different groups were assigned to re-build specific sections of the wall.

The enemies continued their opposition, ridiculing at first and later threatening to come and fight to stop the work. Nehemiah assured his people that God was behind what they were doing. He had half the workers to carry weapons and be on guard while the other half worked.

Complaints came to Nehemiah that many of the poorer people were in debt and had mortgaged their property in order to work on the wall. Some of their own rich leaders were exploiting the poorer people. Nehemiah was angry and ordered the rich ones to stop charging interest. Nehemiah used his own money to feed a large number of people. Finally, the wall was finished - except that some of the gates were not yet set in place.

But the enemies were not through. Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem sent a message to Nehemiah asking him to meet with him in one of the villages. Sensing a scheme to harm him, Nehemiah refused - despite repeated requests. Then a letter was sent accusing Nehemiah of plotting to revolt against the King and make himself King of Judah. Nehemiah wrote back, "Nothing like what you are saying is happening. You are just making it up out of your head". Nehemiah refused to be intimidated. A man named SHEMAIAH was hired to urge Nehemiah to hide in the temple for his safety, but Nehemiah knew that he could not show any type of fear or concern for his personal safety.

All the people were called together in the city square to hear EZRA read from the book of the Law of Moses. Ezra stood on a high wooden platform and read to the people.

Lesson 51

Neh. 8:1 - 13:31

As Ezra read from the book of law to the people there were Levites among the people helping to explain what was being read. There was much sadness among the people as they realized how far they had wandered from the laws of God.

But Nehemiah told the people not to be grieving. They were to go eat and drink, selecting choice foods, and rejoice because they now understood what they had not known before. Learning about the law concerning living in shelters, they collected tree branches which they used to build shelters to live in (this had not been done since the days of Joshua).

The people came together, fasting and wearing sackcloth, to confess their sins. A lengthy prayer was offered, reviewing all the many sins which the people had committed through the years. They took an oath to obey God and keep all the Sabbaths, festivals, tithes, and other commands of God.

Most of the people lived outside of Jerusalem as the city had not been very well re-built. It was arranged that more of the people would move in and help re-populate the city. A great celebration was held in dedicating the completed wall. There were sacrifices and rejoicing that could be heard from far away.

Nehemiah went back to Babylon for a while. When he returned to Jerusalem, he learned that some things had gone wrong. Tobiah had been allowed to store some things in a large room in the temple. The Levites were not receiving their portions. People were selling in Jerusalem on the Sabbath, including people from Tyre. Nehemiah threw Tobiah out of the temple and insisted that the other matters be corrected. Merchants were forbidden to enter the city on the Sabbath.

Nehemiah also noted that some of the men had married foreign women and were raising children who could not even speak the language of the Jewish people. Nehemiah was so angry that he beat some of the men and pulled out their hair. It is difficult to find anyone in the Old Testament who was more dedicated, vigorous, and successful than Nehemiah in establishing respect for God and his laws.

Lesson 49, 50 and 51 Questions

1. Ezra was a _____ who cared deeply about _____.
2. Ezra was upset because the people had been _____ with the various _____ . He tore his _____ and _____.
3. Those who had _____ were to give them up.
4. Nehemiah came to Jerusalem as _____ with authority from King _____ to _____ the _____.
5. Nehemiah had been _____ to Artaxerxes. _____, _____, and _____ were 3 of the main enemies of Nehemiah.
6. Different groups were assigned to re-build several _____.
7. Because of threats, half the people carried _____ with them.
8. Because of exploitation Nehemiah made the rich stop _____.
9. Nehemiah used his own money to _____ many people.
10. Nehemiah refused to be intimidated and would not meet in one of the _____ nor hide in the _____. He was accused of wanting to start a _____ against the King.
11. The people were called together to hear _____ read from the book of the _____ of _____.
12. _____ among the people helped them to understand the words read by _____.
13. Nehemiah told the people to rejoice and not be _____ because they had learned things about God which they had not known before.
14. They learned about the law concerning living in _____.
15. The people fasted, wore _____ and _____ their sins.
16. After returning from a trip to _____, Nehemiah found that _____ was using a room in the _____, the Levites did not get their _____ and merchants were selling on the _____.
17. Nehemiah forbade the _____ to enter the city on the Sabbath.
18. Nehemiah was angry with those who had married _____ and had children who could not speak the _____ language. He _____ some men and pulled out _____.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marion Owens has been a Bible teacher for all of his adult life. A graduate of Harding University (B.A., M.A.) he is also a professional educator, having taught in public schools for fifty years. He has taught countless classes on the Old Testament, always seeking to clarify and simplify. Noting that while many people are familiar with certain well-known characters in the Old Testament, few have a good over-all understanding of how all the stories fit together in a continuous pattern.

Marion decided that it would be helpful to write a condensed and simplified narrative of the history of God's people in the Old Testament, frequently interspersed with review materials designed to reinforce the information in the narrated story. The material is designed to be used in a class setting, but can also be useful in individual or family study. It is simple enough to be used anywhere from the junior high level to adult groups. Hopefully, many will find it to be useful.

Marion resides in Lancaster, California, with his wife, Tommie.