

TEACHING
THE TEACHER

A FIRST BOOK IN TEACHER TRAINING



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TEACHING THE TEACHER

A First Book in Teacher Training

Section I

The Development of the Church in
Old Testament Times

By James Oscar Boyd, Ph. D., D.D.

Section II

The Life of Christ and the Development
of the Church in Apostolic Times and
in Post Apostolic Times

By John Gresham Machen, D.D.

Section III

An Introduction to the Study
of the Mind

By Walter Scott Athearn

Section IV

The Church as a Teaching
Institution

By Harold McA. Robinson, D.D.

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Introduction

A recent book intimates that there are three kinds of Sunday-school teachers. Some are so poor that they must be forgiven by those who had the disadvantage of having Christianity interpreted through their words and spirit. Some are so colorless, so neutral, so neither poor nor rich, that they are forgotten by those who in years of youth had no Christian impression made upon them by their responsible teachers. Some are so good and wise that they are forever remembered with that honor which is partly love and partly reverence. Such teachers of Christianity have an imperishable memory.

It is to help those who aspire to play their part in fulfilling the Great Commission, and thereby to achieve that imperishable memory, that this teacher-training textbook has been prepared.

The book specializes on the history of God's redeeming grace. It reviews Old Testament history, disclosing the stream of God's redeeming purposes flowing down through the older times. It reviews New Testament history, disclosing the broadening and deepening of that purpose for us men and for mankind in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and his Church. It reviews the history of that Church in the world. It introduces the student to the study of the human spirit, made in the likeness of God. It discusses the organization of the Church in order to carry out the Great Commission, particularly among the children and youth whose minds and hearts and consciences God has designed for that spiritual development which we call religious education.

The book goes from the press with the hope, that, under God, it may help many to be never-to-be-forgotten teachers of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, and to leave an imperishable memorial of themselves in the lives of others, brought to a personal and living faith in Jesus Christ and to the dedication of trained and obedient lives to his service among men.

HAROLD MCA. ROBINSON.

SECTION I

**The Development of the Church in Old
Testament Times**

By James Oscar Boyd, Ph.D., D.D.

LESSON I

Before Abraham

Genesis, Chapters 1 to 11

That part of the globe which comes within the view of the Old Testament is mostly the region, about fifteen hundred miles square, lying in the southwestern part of Asia, the southeastern part of Europe, and the northeastern part of Africa. This is where the three continents of the Eastern Hemisphere come together. Roughly speaking it includes Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, Arabia, and Egypt, with a fringe of other lands and islands stretching beyond them.

The heart of all this territory is that little strip of land, lying between the desert on the east and the Mediterranean Sea on the west, known as Syria and Palestine. It is some four hundred miles in length and varies from fifty to one hundred miles in width. It has been well called "the bridge of the world," for like a bridge it joins the largest continent, Asia, to the next largest, Africa. And as Palestine binds the lands together, so the famous Suez Canal at its southern end now binds the seas together. To-day, therefore, as in all the past, this spot is the crossroads of the nations.

Palestine has long been called the "Holy Land," because it is the scene of most of the Bible story. Yet it would be a mistake to suppose that that Bible story is limited to Palestine. The book of Genesis does not introduce the reader to Canaan (as it calls Palestine) until he has reached its twelfth chapter. There is a sense in which the history of God's people begins with Abraham, and it was Abraham who went at God's bidding into the land of Canaan. The story of Abraham will be taken up in the second lesson; but the Bible puts before the life of Abraham all the familiar story that lies in the first eleven chapters of Genesis and that forms the background for the figures of Abraham and his descendants.

The location of this background is the basin of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. These two streams are mentioned in Gen. 2 : 14 (the Tigris under the form "Hiddekel") as the third and fourth "heads"

of the "river that went out of Eden to water the garden" in which our first parents dwelt. The region is at the southern end of what is now called Mesopotamia. At the northern end of this river basin towers the superb mountain known as Mount Ararat. But the "mountains of Ararat," mentioned in Gen. 8 : 4 as the place where Noah's ark rested when the waters of the Flood had subsided, are no particular peak, but are the highlands of Kurdistan, which in ancient times were called Urartu (Ararat). Between Kurdistan on the north and the Persian Gulf on the south, the highlands of Persia on the east and the great Syrian Desert on the west, occurred the earliest drama of human history.

That drama was a tragedy. It became a tragedy because of man's sin. The wonderful poem of creation in Gen., ch. 1, has for the refrain of its six stanzas, "God saw that it was good." Best of all was man, the last and highest of God's works—man, made in "his own image," after his likeness. On the sixth "day," when God made man, God said of his work, "Behold, it was very good." More than that: through the kindness of God man is put in a "garden," and is ordered to "dress it and to keep it." Ch. 2 : 15. Adam sees his superiority to the rest of the animal kingdom, over which he is given "dominion." He is thus prepared to appreciate the woman as a helpmeet for him, so that the unit of society may ever mean for him one man and one woman with their children. Adam is also warned against sin as having disobedience for its root and death as its result.

All this prepares us to understand the temptation, the miserable fall of the woman and the man, their terror, shame, and punishment. Ch. 3. And we are not surprised to see the unfolding of sin in the life of their descendants, beginning with Cain's murder of Abel, and growing until God sweeps all away in a universal deluge. Chs. 4, 6.

God's tender love for his foolish, rebellious creatures "will not let them go." At the gates of the garden from which their sin has forever banished them, God already declares his purpose to "bruise" the head of that serpent, Rom. 16 : 20, who had brought "sin into the world and death by sin," Gen. 3 : 15. Through the "seed of the woman"—a "Son of man" of some future day—sinful man can escape the death he has brought upon himself. And from Seth, the child "appointed instead of" murdered Abel, a line of men descends, who believe this promise of God. Ch. 5. In Enoch we find them "walking with God," v. 24, in a fellowship that seemed lost when paradise was

lost. In Lamech we find them hoping with each new generation that God's curse will be at length removed. V. 29. And in Noah we find them obedient to a positive command of God, ch. 6 : 22, as Adam had been disobedient.

In the Flood, Noah and his family of eight were the only persons to survive. When they had come from the ark after the Flood, God gave them the promise that he would not again wipe out "all flesh." Ch. 9 : 11. But after it appeared that God's judgments had not made them fear him, God was just as angry with Noah's descendants as he had been with the men before the Flood. Pride led them to build a tower to be a rallying point for their worship of self. But God showed them that men cannot long work together with a sinful purpose as their common object; he broke up their unity in sin by confusing their speech, ch. 11, and scattering them over the earth, ch. 10. This second disappointment found its brighter side in the line of men descended from Noah through Shem, ch. 11 : 10, who also cherished God's promises. And the last stroke of the writer's pen in these earliest chapters of the Bible introduces the reader to the family of Terah in that line of Shem, and thus prepares the way for a closer acquaintance with Terah's son, Abraham, "the friend of God."

QUESTIONS ON LESSON I

1. About how large is the world of the Old Testament, and where does it lie?
2. What special importance has Palestine because of its position?
3. How much of the story in Genesis is told before we are carried to Palestine?
4. Locate on a map the scene of those earliest events in human history.
5. Show how the first two chapters of Genesis prepare for the tragedy of sin and death that follows.
6. How does the brighter side of hope and faith appear from Adam to Noah?
7. What effect did the Flood have on men's sin and their faith in God?
8. Trace the descent of the man God chose to become "the father of the faithful."

LESSON II

The Patriarchs

Genesis, Chapters 12 to 50

God's purpose to save and bless all mankind was to be carried out in a wonderful way. He selected and "called" one man to become the head and ancestor of a single nation. And in this man and the nation descended from him, God purposed to bless the whole world.

Abraham was that man, and Israel was that nation. God made known his purpose in what the Bible calls the Promise, Gal. 3 : 17, the Blessing, v. 14, or the Covenant, v. 17. Its terms are given many times over in the book of Genesis, but the essence of it lies already in the first word of God to Abraham, Gen. 12 : 3, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

To believe this promise was a work of faith. It was against all appearances and all probability. Yet this was just where the religious value of that promise lay for Abraham and for his children after him—in faith. They had to believe something on the basis solely of their confidence in the One who had promised it. Or rather, they had to believe in that Person, the personal Jehovah, their God. They must absolutely trust him. To do so, they must "know him." And that they might know him, he must reveal himself to them. That is why we read all through Genesis of God's "appearing" or "speaking" to this or the other patriarch. However he accomplished it, God was always trying thus to make them better acquainted with himself; for such knowledge was to be the basis of their faith. Upon faith in him depended their faith in his word, and upon faith in his word depended their power to keep alive in the world that true religion which was destined for all men and which we to-day share. Abraham's God is our God.

Not Abraham's great wealth in servants, Gen. 14 : 14, and in flocks and herds, ch. 13 : 2, 6, but the promise of God to bless, constituted the true "birthright" in Abraham's family. Ishmael, the child of doubt, missed it; and Isaac, the child of faith, obtained it. Gal. 4 : 23. Esau "despised" it, because he was "a profane [irreligious] person," Heb. 12 : 16, and Jacob schemed to obtain it by purchase, Gen. 25 : 31, and by fraud, ch. 27 : 19. Jacob bequeathed it to his sons, ch. 49, and

Moses delivered it in memorable poetic form to the nation to retain and rehearse forever. Deut., ch. 32.

When Abraham, the son of Terah, entered Canaan with Sarah his wife and Lot his nephew and their great company of servants and followers, he was obeying the command of his God. He no sooner enters it than God gives him a promise that binds up this land with him and his descendants. Gen. 13 : 14-17. Yet we must not suppose that Abraham settled down in this Promised Land in the way that the Pilgrim Fathers settled in the Old Colony. Although Canaan is promised to the "seed" of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as a possession, they did not themselves obtain a foothold in it. Apart from the field of the cave Machpelah, at Hebron in the south, Gen., ch. 23, and a "shoulder" (*shechem*) or fragment of land near Shechem ("Jacob's Well"), in the center of Canaan, the patriarchs did not acquire a foot of the soil of what was to become "the Holy Land." Abraham wandered about, even going down to Egypt and back. Isaac was sometimes at Hebron and sometimes at Beer-sheba on the extreme southern verge of the land. Jacob spent much of his manhood in Mesopotamia, and of his old age in Egypt. For after divine Providence in a remarkable manner had transplanted one of Jacob's sons, Joseph, into new soil, Gen., ch. 37, his father and his brothers were drawn after him, with the way for their long Egyptian residence providentially prepared for them, Gen. 50 : 20.

Side by side with the growth of a nation out of an individual we find God's choice of the direction which that growth should take. Not all, even of Abraham's family, were to become part of the future people of God. So Lot, Abraham's nephew, separates from him, and thereafter he and his descendants, the Ammonites and the Moabites, go their own way. As between Abraham's sons, Ishmael is cast out, and Isaac, Sarah's son, is selected. And between Isaac's two sons, Esau and Jacob, the choice falls on Jacob. All twelve of Jacob's sons are included in the purpose of God, and for this reason the nation is called after Jacob, though usually under his name "Israel," which God gave him after his experience of wrestling with "the angel of the Lord" at the river Jabbok. Gen. 32 : 22. Those sons of his are to become the heads of the future nation of the "twelve tribes", Acts 26 : 7.

Even while Lot, Ishmael, and Esau are thus being cut off, the greatest care is taken to keep the descent of the future nation pure to the blood of Terah's house. Those three men all married alien wives:

Lot probably a woman of Sodom, Ishmael an Egyptian, and Esau two Hittite women. The mother of Isaac was Sarah, the mother of Jacob was Rebekah, and the mothers of eight of the twelve sons of Jacob were Leah and Rachel; and all these women belonged to that same house of Terah to which their husbands belonged. Indeed, much of Genesis is taken up with the explanation of how Isaac and Jacob were kept from intermarrying with the peoples among whom they lived.

The last quarter of the book, which is occupied with the story of Joseph and his brethren, is designed to link these "fathers" and their God with the God and people of Moses. The same Jehovah who had once shown his power over Pharaoh for the protection of Abraham and Sarah, and who was later to show his power over another Pharaoh "who knew not Joseph," showed his power also over the Pharaoh of Joseph's day, in exalting Joseph from the dungeon to the post of highest honor and authority in Egypt, and in delivering Jacob and his whole family from death through Joseph's interposition. What their long residence in Egypt meant for God's people will be seen in another lesson.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON II

1. In what promise does God reveal to Abraham his plan to bless the world?
2. How was Abraham brought to believe in God's promise? What difference did it make whether he and his descendants believed it or not?
3. Did the patriarchs see that part of the promise fulfilled which gave them possession of "the Holy Land"? Read carefully Gen. 15 : 13-16 and Heb. 11 : 9, 10, 14-16.
4. Make a "family tree" in the usual way, showing those descendants of Terah who play any large part in the book of Genesis. Under-score in it the names of those men who were in the direct line of "the Promise."
5. How were Isaac and Jacob kept from marrying outside their own family?
6. Explain Joseph's words, "Ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." Gen. 50 : 20.

LESSON III

Egyptian Bondage and Deliverance**Exodus, Chapter 1**

God says through his prophet Hosea, Hos. 11 : 1, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." See also Matt. 2 : 15. There was a loving, divine purpose in the Egyptian residence of God's people. What was it? What did this period mean in the career of Israel?

Most obviously, it meant growth. From the "seventy souls," Ex. 1 : 5, that went down into Egypt with Jacob, there sprang up there a populous folk, large enough to take its place alongside the other nations of the world of that day. Observe the nature of the land where this growth took place. Egypt was a settled country, where the twelve developing tribes could be united geographically and socially in a way impossible in a country like Palestine. However oppressed they were, they nevertheless were secluded from the dangers of raids from without and of civil strife within—just such dangers as later almost wrecked the substantial edifice slowly erected by this period of growth in Egypt.

Egypt meant also for Israel a time of waiting. All this growth was not accomplished in a short time. It lasted four hundred and thirty years. Ex. 12 : 40, 41. Through this long period, which seems like a dark tunnel between the brightness of the patriarchs' times and that of Moses' day, there was nothing for God's people to do but to wait. They were the heirs of God's promise, but they must wait for the fulfillment of that promise in God's own time, wait for a leader raised up by God, wait for the hour of national destiny to strike. As Hosea, ch. 11 : 1 expresses it, this "child" must wait for his Father's "call." The Egyptian period left an indelible impression on the mind of Israel. It formed the gray background on which God could lay the colors of his great deliverance. It is because God knew and planned this that he so often introduces himself to his people, when he speaks to them, as "Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

In the third place, this Egyptian period meant for Israel a time of chastisement. The oppression to which the descendants of Jacob were exposed, when "there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not

Joseph," Ex. 1 : 8, was so severe, prolonged, and hopeless, v. 14, that it has become proverbial and typical. Since every male child was to be put to death, v. 22, it is clear that the purpose of the Egyptians was nothing less than complete extermination. "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth": if that be true, then the children of Israel derived good from the school of discipline in which they grew up. True, as we read their later story, we feel that no people could be more fickle. Yet there is no other nation with which to compare Israel. And it is very probable that no other nation would have been serious-minded enough even to receive and grasp the divine revelation and leading of Moses' and Joshua's time. God, who had "seen the affliction of his people," who had "heard their cry" and sent Moses to them to organize their deliverance, wrote forever on this nation's soul the message of salvation in a historical record. At the start of their national life there stood the story, which they could never deny or forget, and which told them of God's power and grace.

Exodus, Chapters 5 to 15

All this lay in Israel's experience in Egypt. The next lesson will tell of the character and work of the man whom God chose to be leader. The means by which Moses succeeded in the seemingly impossible task of marching a great horde of slaves out from their masters' country, was the impression of God's power on the minds of Pharaoh and his people. It was a continued, combined, and cumulative impression. Of course it could not be made without the use of supernatural means. We must not, therefore, be surprised to find the story in Exodus bristling with miracles. To be sure, the "plagues" can be shown to be largely natural to that land where they occurred. And the supreme event of the deliverance, the passage of Israel through the Red Sea on dry ground, was due, according to the narrative itself, to a persistent wind, Ex. 14 : 21, such as often lays bare the shallows of a bay, only to release the waters again when its force is spent.

Nevertheless, it is not possible to remove the "hand of God" from the account by thus pointing out some of the means God used to accomplish his special purposes. It was at the time, in the way, and in the order, in which Moses announced to Pharaoh the arrival of the plagues, that they actually appeared. This was what had its ultimate effect on the king's stubborn will. And when Israel was told to "go forward," with the waters right before them, and when the Egyptians

were saying, "They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in," Ex. 14 : 3—it was just at that juncture that the east wind did its work at God's command; when Israel was over safely, it went down. Such things do not "happen." It made a profound impression on Israel, on Egypt, and on all the nations of that day; all united in accepting it as the work of Israel's God. Ex. 15 : 11, 14–16; Josh. 2 : 10.

The important point for the nation was to know, when Moses and Aaron came to them in the name of God, that it was their fathers' God who had sent them. On account of this need, which both the people and their leaders felt, God proclaimed his divine name, Jehovah (more precisely, *Yahweh*, probably meaning "He is," Ex. 3 : 14, 15), to Moses, and bade him pronounce the same to Israel, to assure them that he was "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," and thus what Moses came now to do for them was just what had been promised to those fathers long before. The passover night was the fulfillment of God's good word to Abraham. Ex. 13 : 10, 11. How that word went on and on toward more and more complete fulfillment will be the subject of the succeeding lessons.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON III

1. What advantages had Egypt over Palestine as the place for Israel to grow from a family into a nation?
2. What value was there for Israel in a negative time of waiting at the beginning of its history?
3. Compare the effect on Israel with the effect on a man, of passing through a time of difficulty while developing.
4. Name the ten "plagues of Egypt" in their order. How far can they be called "natural"?
5. If the east wind drove back the Red Sea, what did God have to do with Israel's escape from the Egyptian army?
6. Why should we not be surprised to find many miracles grouped at this stage of Bible history?
7. How did God identify himself in the minds of the people with the God of their fathers? What was his personal name?

LESSON IV

Moses as Leader and Lawgiver**Exodus, Chapters 2 to 4**

One of the things Israel had to wait for through those centuries in Egypt was a leader. When the time came God raised up such a leader for his people in Moses.

The story of how Moses' life was preserved in infancy, and of how he came to be brought up at the court of Pharaoh with all its advantages for culture, is one of the most fascinating tales of childhood. Ex. 2 : 1-10. But not many who know this familiar tale could go on with the biography of the man of forty who fled from Pharaoh's vengeance. Moses found by personal contact with his "brethren," the children of Israel, that they were not yet ready for common action, and would not easily acknowledge his right to lead them. After killing an Egyptian slave driver there was nothing for Moses to do but to flee. Vs. 11-15.

He spent the second forty years of his life, Acts 7 : 23, 30; Ex. 7 : 7, in the deserts about the eastern arm of the Red Sea—the region known to the Hebrews as Midian. There he married the daughter of the Midianite priest Reuel. (Jethro was probably Reuel's title, meaning "his excellency.") While herding his sheep in the mountains called Horeb (Sinai), Moses received at the burning bush that personal revelation of the God of his fathers, which lay at the base of all his future labors for God and his people. Ex. 3 : 1 to 4 : 17. It was a commission to lead Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land promised to their fathers.

Though very humble as to his fitness for such leadership, Moses was assured of Jehovah's presence and help. He was equipped with extraordinary powers for convincing the proud Pharaoh that his demands were God's demands; and he was given the aid of his brother Aaron, who had a readiness of speech which Moses at this time seems to have lacked.

Exodus, Chapters 16 to 24

How the two brothers achieved the seemingly impossible task of winning out of Egypt, and of uniting a spiritless and unorganized mass of slaves upon a desperate enterprise, is the narrative that fills the early chapters of Exodus. But with Israel safe across the Red

Sea, Moses' leadership had only begun. He instituted an organization of the people for relieving himself of his heavy duties as judge. He determined the line of march, and sustained the spirits of the fighting men in their struggle against the tribes of the desert who challenged Israel's passage.

But, above all, Moses became the "mediator" of the "covenant," Heb. 9 : 19-21, between the Hebrews and Jehovah their God at Mount Sinai. On the basis of the Ten Commandments, Ex. 20 : 2-17; Deut. 5 : 6-21, that guide to God's nature and will which formed the Hebrew constitution, the people agreed to worship and obey Jehovah alone, and Jehovah promised to be their God, fulfilling to them his promises made to their fathers. By solemn sacrifices, according to the custom of the time, when the symbolism of altar and priesthood was well understood, this covenant was sealed.

Exodus, Chapter 25 to Numbers, Chapter 36

After long seclusion on the mount alone with God, Moses ordered the erection of a house of worship. It had to be portable, so as to accompany them in their wanderings and express visibly, wherever set up, the religious unity of the twelve tribes. Aaron and his sons were consecrated to be the official priesthood of this new shrine and were clothed and instructed accordingly. Minute details regulated all sacrifices, and similar minute instructions enabled the priests to decide questions of ceremonial cleanness and uncleanness in matters of food and health.

All these laws and regulations, mainly recorded in Leviticus, were given through Moses, either alone or in association with his brother. It is not surprising to learn that there were those who challenged this exclusive leadership in every department of the national life. We read of a willful disregard of divine orders even in the family of Aaron, with immediate fatal results. Lev. 10 : 1-7. Like punishment overtook those members of the tribe of Levi who showed jealousy of the house of Aaron, and those elements in other tribes that claimed rights equal or superior to those of Moses. Num., chs. 16, 17. It would be strange, indeed, if God, who had vindicated his servant Moses against Pharaoh, should let his own authority as represented by Moses be challenged within the camp of Israel. He punished to save.

Just as God took up the Sabbath and circumcision, old customs of the preceding era, into the law of Israel, so also he spoke to this people through an elaborate system of feasts and pilgrimages, which bound

up their whole year with the worship of God. Indeed, the principle of the seventh part of time as sacred was extended to the seventh year, and even to the fiftieth year (the year following the seventh seven), for beneficent social and economic uses. Lev., ch. 25.

When at length the nation, thus organized and equipped, set forth from Sinai, Num. 10 : 11, they required a leadership of a different kind—military leadership and practical statesmanship. They found both in Moses. He it was who led them through all the long wanderings in the peninsula of Sinai, bearing their murmurings and meeting their recurrent difficulties with a patience that seems almost divine, save for that one lapse which was to cost him and Aaron their entrance into the Promised Land. Num. 20 : 10-12.

At the border of the land, from the top of Pisgah in the long mountain wall of Moab, Moses at last looked down into that deep gorge of the Jordan Valley at his feet, which separated him from the hills of Canaan. Beyond this river and the Dead Sea, into which it empties, lay the land long ago promised to the seed of Abraham. Moses had been permitted to lead the people to its very gateway; but it remained for another, his younger helper, Joshua, to lead them through the gate into the house of rest.

The Book of Deuteronomy

But before he surrendered his power to another and his life to his Maker, the aged Moses rehearsed in the ears of Israel the great principles of God's law. He pleaded earnestly with them to accept it from the heart, to adapt it to the changed conditions of their new settled life with its new temptations, and to hand it down as their most precious heritage to their children after them. This is the purpose and substance of the book of Deuteronomy, which gets its name from the fact that it is a "second lawgiving." It is the Law of Sinai repeated, but in oratorical form, charged with the feeling and spirit of that "man of God," whose name is forever linked with the Law and with the God who gave it to mankind.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON IV

1. How did Moses' forty years in Egypt and his forty years in Midian help to prepare him for leadership?
2. What was the constitution of the new Hebrew State established at Sinai? How was it ratified?

3. How was the tabernacle suited to the religious needs of Israel during Moses' lifetime?
4. Show how the Law of Moses takes up the old principle of the Sabbath and applies it to the life of Israel.
5. Where did Moses' leadership end, and what was his last service to the nation?

LESSON V

The Conquest and Settlement of Canaan

The Book of Joshua

On the death of Aaron his son, Eleazar, succeeded him as high priest. But when Moses died, it was not a son who succeeded him in the political and moral leadership of Israel, for that position was not hereditary. Joshua, a man of Ephraim, was divinely designated for this work. He was fitted for the difficult undertaking by military experience, Ex. 17 : 9-14, by personal acquaintance with Canaan, Num. 13 : 8, 16; 14 : 6, 30, 38, and by long and intimate association with Moses, Ex. 33 : 11; Num. 11 : 28; Deut. 34 : 9; Josh. 1 : 1. The book of Joshua, which records his career, divides naturally into two parts, first, the conquest, chs. 1 to 12, and second, the settlement, chs. 13 to 22. Two further chapters, chs. 23, 24, contain Joshua's valedictory address.

Before Moses' death two and a half tribes had already received their assignment of territory on the east of the Jordan, out of lands conquered from the Amorite kings, Sihon and Og. But the fighting men of these tribes agreed to accompany the other tribes and share their struggle till all had obtained an inheritance. So when the great host passed over the Jordan, not far from where it empties into the Dead Sea, the men of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh crossed with the rest. Jehovah, who at the Red Sea a generation earlier had struck terror into the hearts of all nations by his wonderful interposition to save Israel and destroy its enemies, repeated here his saving help, by stemming the swift current of the Jordan River, till all had passed over dry shod to the western side.

Once over, they found themselves face to face with Jericho, a city which commanded the passes into the mountain country beyond. Spies previously despatched to learn the weakness of Jericho had reported the panic of its inhabitants and so prepared the Hebrews to

believe God's word, when through Joshua he announced a bloodless victory here at the beginning of their conquest. Without a blow struck Jericho fell, and all its inhabitants were "devoted," at Jehovah's strict command. Even their wealth was to be "devoted," that is, the cattle slain and the goods added to the treasury of the sanctuary. Only Rahab, who had saved the spies, and her family were excepted. One man, Achan, disobeyed the ban on private spoils. His covetousness and deception, revealed by Israel's defeat in the expedition against Ai which followed the fall of Jericho, and detected by the use of the sacred lot, was punished by the execution of all who were privy to the crime.

Better success attended the second attempt to take Ai. With these two cities reduced, Jericho at the bottom and Ai at the top of the valley leading up from the Jordan floor to the central highland, Joshua was in a position to attack anywhere without fear of being outflanked. Middle, south, and north was the order commended by military considerations. Accordingly those cities which, because in the middle of the land, felt themselves the most immediately threatened, took the first steps to avert the menace. A group of five towns lying just north of Jerusalem, with Gibeon at their head, succeeded by a ruse in getting a treaty of peace from Joshua. The Gibeonites deceived Joshua by representing themselves as having come from a great distance to seek an alliance. Joshua's pride was flattered and he fell a victim to the trick. The consequences were serious, for these Canaanites, though reduced to vassalage, remained as aliens in the heart of the land, and cut off the southern from the northern tribes of Israel.

A confederacy of the chief cities in the region south of Gibeon, headed by the king of Jerusalem, determined to strike the first blow. But their campaign against the Gibeonites, now the allies of Israel, ended in a quick advance by Joshua and his complete subjugation of all these cities, the humiliation and death of their kings, and the "devotion" of the inhabitants who fell into his hands.

A similar campaign followed in the north, with the city of Hazor at the head of the Canaanite forces. At the "waters of Merom," a small lake a few miles north of the Sea of Galilee, a surprise attack by Joshua deprived his enemies of their advantage in horsemen and chariots on the level ground they had selected for battle, and resulted in the utter rout of the Canaanites and the general slaughter of every soul that did not escape by flight from the "devoted" towns.

Thus from Mount Hermon on the north to the wilderness of the wandering on the south, the whole land had been swept over and reduced to impotence by the Hebrew invader. It was time to apportion it now to the several tribes. This was accomplished under the direction of Joshua and Eleazar. Judah and Joseph, the two strongest tribes, were assigned, the one to the south and the other to the north of the main mountain mass. Levi's inheritance was to be "the Lord," that is, the religious tithes, and his dwelling was to be "among his brethren," that is, in designated towns throughout all the land. A commission of three representatives from each of the seven other western tribes divided the rest of the conquered territory into seven fairly equal parts. These then were assigned to the seven tribes by lot at the tabernacle at Shiloh. As for the eastern tribes, when they returned to their homes across the Jordan, they built an altar at the ford, as a permanent "witness" to the unity of all the sons of Jacob, however the deep gorge of the Jordan might cut them off from one another.

At Shechem, where Abraham built his first altar in Canaan, Joshua had renewed the covenant between the people and their God as soon as he had secured control of Mount Ephraim, the middle highlands. He had not only read the Law of Moses to all the people here, but also inscribed it on stones for the sake of permanence and publicity. And now, when the conquest was complete and Joshua was nearing his end, he reassembled the people at the same spot, to remind them there of that solemn covenant, and to leave with them his final charge of fidelity to their God and his one central sanctuary.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON V

1. How was Joshua specially fitted to succeed Moses as leader of Israel?
2. Which tribes received their inheritance east of the Jordan? How did these show their sense of the unity of all Israel (*a*) at the beginning, and (*b*) at the close of the conquest?
3. What justification can be urged for the stern measures which Israel took with the Canaanites and their possessions?
4. What was the plan of Joshua's campaign, and what relation did the capture of Jericho and Ai bear to it?
5. How did the men of Gibeon deceive Joshua, and why? What lasting damage was caused by his treaty with them?
6. Locate on a map the inheritance of each of the tribes.

LESSON VI

The Period of the Judges**The Books of Judges and Ruth**

In Egypt, Israel had grown from a family into a folk. In the wilderness the folk had become a nation. In the conquest the nation had gotten its home. But in the period of the Judges which followed the conquest this steady advance seemed interrupted. What do we find at this time?

We find a loose confederacy of tribes, aware of their common origin, yet too jealous of local names and rights to combine for a common end, too selfish to help one another until the danger of one has become a tragedy for all.

The nature of the land the Hebrews had occupied helped this divisive tendency. The great gash of the Jordan Valley, its bed two or three thousand feet below the mountain country on either side, cut off the eastern minority from the western majority. In the west a plain separated the foothills of the central range from the seashore. This plain not only contained enemies like the Philistines whom only a united Israel could have conquered, but also quickly altered the type of its Hebrew settlers. Right across the mountain belt from the sea to the Jordan stretched an almost unbroken plain (Esdraelon), varying from sea level to the lower level of the Jordan. This cut off the mountaineers to the north (Galilee) from those to the south (Ephraim). And a glance at any physical map will show how even in the mountain country deep, lateral valleys reach up from either side so far toward the center that communication from north to south is only by a series of violent grades, save along that narrow ridge in the middle where runs the highroad between Hebron, Jerusalem, Shechem, and Jezreel.

Under these conditions only some strong positive force could prevent the disintegration of the Hebrew nation. Such a force the religion of Jehovah was intended to be, and would have been, if the people had remained faithful to it. It had one high priest, descendant of Aaron, and associated therefore with all the memories of Moses and Sinai. It had a single sanctuary, the seat of Ark and oracle, the center of pilgrimage three times a year. It had one law for all Hebrews, a law far superior to the codes of all other nations, and revealing the nature and will of a single moral and spiritual deity. All this provided

the focus for a mighty nation, with a pure "theocracy," that is, a government by God himself. But the people did not remain faithful. They fell away in this time of the Judges.

The Book of Judges, which tells the story of this period, records a long list of names, each one connected with some particular enemy of Israel, some tribe or group of tribes delivered, and some definite term of years during which the deliverer "judged" the people. On this list the most conspicuous names are those of Deborah and of Gideon in the north, of Jephthah east of the Jordan (Gilead), and of Samson in the south. Most of the other judges are little more than names to us. Deborah stands out, not only because she was a woman, but also for her wonderful "song" preserved in the fifth chapter, celebrating Barak's victory over the Canaanites near Mount Carmel. Gideon is memorable for his strategems and his persistence, and for his near approach to a real kingship, which was offered to him and his house after his victory, but which he declined, saying, "Jehovah shall rule over you." Ch. 8 : 23. His son Abimelech was actually termed king in and around the city of Shechem for a few years, but perished miserably for his sins. Ch. 9 : 6, 56. Jephthah's career was mainly concerned with the region east of the Jordan, but his admirable "apology" for Israel showed his sense of Hebrew solidarity. Samson's picturesque story, with its petty loves and hates, its riddles and its practical jokes, ended in a sacrificial death which in part redeems its meanness. But neither Samson nor any of his predecessors accomplished anything permanent.

Two words of caution belong to the study of this book and of these times. First, we must not suppose that one judge necessarily follows another in point of time because his story follows the other's story in the book. Judges 10 : 7 shows that oppressions of different sections of the land by different enemies might be taking place at the same time, and suggests that the figures assigned to each judge at the close of his story cannot safely be added together to find the total length of this period. And second, those figures themselves (nearly always forty or eighty) are to be taken as "round numbers," rather than as precise data such as we look for to-day to make out a table of chronology. In the same way the four hundred and eighty years of I Kings 6 : 1 is evidently intended as twelve times forty years, to represent the whole time from the Exodus to Solomon. For when we have subtracted from the beginning of it one forty-year term for the wanderings, and from

the end of it three forty-year terms for Eli, I Sam. 4 : 18, Saul, Acts 13 : 21, and David, I Kings 2 : 11, then we have left eight forty-year terms for the Judges. Eight times forty is three hundred and twenty. Those three hundred and twenty years would then correspond with the three hundred years mentioned by Jephthah in Judg. 11 : 26 as dividing Moses' days from his own. Under these circumstances we are wise to wait for further light from archæology before fixing the precise date of any one of these interesting persons.

There are three additions or appendices to the Book of Judges. The first of them, including chs. 17, 18, tells how the Danites came to live in the extreme north, and the origin of the idolatrous sanctuary at that city of Dan which was reckoned as the northern limit of Canaan—"from Dan to Beer-sheba." The second occupies the three remaining chapters of Judges, and records the civil war between Benjamin and the other tribes on account of "the sin of Gibeah," Hos. 10 : 9. And the third appendix is the story of Ruth the Moabitess which now makes a separate book in the Bible. Besides its inherent charm the story claims special notice because of the light it throws on that Bethlehem family which was soon to furnish the nation its great king, David.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON VI

1. What influences made for the loss of Hebrew unity as soon as Joshua's generation was dead?
2. What forces remained to bind the tribes together? Why did not these forces suffice?
3. How were the persons selected who ruled Israel in this period? Were they "judges" in the same sense as our judges to-day? What besides?
4. What three groups of tribes tended to draw together under common leaders? Tell the exploits of one distinguished judge belonging to each of these groups.
5. With what reserve should we use the figures in this book to construct a chronology of the period?
6. Point out the relation of the book of Ruth to the closing portion of the Book of Judges. What lends Ruth peculiar historical interest?

LESSON VII

Samuel and Saul: Prophecy and Monarchy**The First Book of Samuel**

Sometimes Eli and sometimes Samuel are called the last of the Judges. But neither of these was a judge in the same exclusive sense as Gideon or Samson. Eli was the high priest, but exercised the office of judge for his time. Samuel was a prophet, who also "judged Israel" in the interval between Eli's death and Saul's accession. Both men mark the time of transition between the period of the Judges and the monarchy. And the two names are most closely linked, for it was under Eli's instruction, at the sanctuary in Shiloh, that Samuel grew up.

The story of Hannah and her dedication of her little son to God as a "Nazirite," I Sam. 1 : 11; compare Num. 6 : 1-8, to dwell all his life at the house of God, I Sam. 1 : 28, has a peculiar charm for young and old. It gives a picture of personal piety in a rude age, and thus serves to correct our idea of the times. Beginning at a very early age, I Sam. 3 : 1 to 4 : 1, Samuel became the chosen and recognized mouthpiece of Israel's God.

That is the essential meaning of a prophet—one who speaks for God. Exodus 4 : 16 is instructive, for it shows that as Aaron was to be "a mouth" to Moses, while Moses was "as God" to Aaron, so the prophet was God's mouthpiece or spokesman. Of course a prophet was often a person who also spoke before—one, that is, who predicted what should come to pass. And the fact that his words were actually fulfilled became a proof of his divine commission, both in theory, Deut. 18 : 22, and in practice, Isa. 44 : 26. But the bulk of the prophets' messages were, like those of Samuel, addressed to their own time. They were preachers of righteousness, warners against sin, the nation's conscience, and the Lord's remembrancers.

It is the chief glory of Samuel that he was not only first in the long line of the Hebrew prophets—the most remarkable succession of men the world has ever seen—but also the founder of the prophetic order. By the prophetic order we mean the prophets as a group conscious of their solidarity, the identity of their principles and aim. Samuel gathered about his dominating personality those persons who were sympathetic with him in spirit, and who shared with him some of that

power of testimony which "the word of Jehovah" conferred. They seem to have lived together, I Sam. 19 : 20, in communities similar to those two centuries later under Elijah and Elisha. They used musical instruments in their devotions, which were public as well as private. Ch. 10 : 5. They were the center of patriotic zeal as well as of religious effort. In fact, the belief in Israel's God was so evidently the bond that bound Israel together, that for the common man patriotism and religion were in danger of being regarded as one and the same thing.

It is not surprising, therefore, that out of Samuel's time and from the forces which Samuel set in motion, there came two movements which changed the course of the nation's history: an outward movement for independence, and an inward movement for monarchy. A revival of religion could not fail to rouse the subjected Hebrews against their oppressors, the Philistines. The reverses they suffered in battle against their better armed and better led enemies put it into their minds to set up a king, "like all the nations."

Samuel, as the national leader, was God's agent in selecting, consecrating, and establishing the first king. He chose Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, a man of heroic proportions though of modest demeanor. Ch. 9 : 2, 21. His choice met the popular approval, at first with general and outward acquiescence, though with much inward reserve and individual revolt; but after his first successful campaign with universal loyalty. Ch. 10 : 27; 11 : 12-15.

That first military effort of the new monarch was against the Ammonites. But a greater test remained in the menace of the Philistines, whose garrisons at strategic points in the mountains of Israel served to keep the tribes in check. Under those circumstances Saul was cautious, for he had but a small force, inadequately armed, at his disposal. But the initiative, for which all Israel waited, was taken by Saul's son, Jonathan. Unknown to his father, Jonathan, accompanied only by his armor-bearer, but encouraged by an indication of God's will and by the enemy's slackness, ch. 14 : 12, attacked boldly a Philistine garrison that relied too much on the natural strength of its position. He began in this way a panic in the enemy's ranks, and soon drew after him in pursuit of them not only Saul's small army but multitudes of Hebrews who in their hiding places only waited such a signal to fall upon the hated oppressor. The victory of Michmash was overwhelming, the mountain country was cleared of the Phil-

istines, and an independent people began to enjoy the reign of their first king.

Unhappily Saul did not prove himself so well equipped for the kingship in character and disposition as in personal prowess. Jealousy, natural in a king whose claim to authority was so new and weak, was heightened in Saul by a malady that induced fits of sullenness and rage. His humility and modesty of other days gave place to envy, vanity, and cruelty. Even God's express commands through the same prophet on whose divine commission Saul's claim to the throne rested were not heeded, for Samuel had to rebuke him for disobedience and only refrained from publicly rejecting him at Saul's abject entreaty. Ch. 15 : 30.

Room was found in Saul's heart for jealousy of the popularity and success of David, ch. 18 : 8, the young man of Bethlehem in Judah whom at first he had loved and attached to his person, ch. 16 : 21. Jonathan, though heir to his father's throne and aware that David had been designated as Jehovah's choice for king, ch. 20 : 15, 31, had nothing but affection for David his friend. But Saul pursued David openly, after failing in repeated secret attempts to make away with him. And the close of Saul's life is marred by his vindictive pursuit of his rival, till death in battle with the Philistines at Mount Gilboa brought the first king of Israel to a miserable end and left the way open for David to become his successor.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON VII

1. Who shares with Samuel the leadership of Israel in the time of transition from the judges to the kings, and what relation did he bear to Samuel?
2. What was a prophet, what is meant by the prophetic order, and what is Samuel's particular service and distinction among the prophets?
3. What motive led to the popular demand for a king, and how did Samuel as God's representative regard this demand?
4. Sketch the character of Saul. What was his achievement for Israel? Wherein did he fail?
5. Compare Saul and Jonathan in ability and character.

LESSON VIII

David and Solomon: Psalms and Wisdom

**The Second Book of Samuel; I Kings, Chapters 1 to 11;
I Chronicles, Chapter 10 to II Chronicles, Chapter 9**

One of Saul's sons, Ish-bosheth, for a short time after the death of his father and brothers in battle, attempted to maintain his right to succeed Saul on the throne. But when Abner, his kinsman and the head of the army, turned to David, son of Jesse, who was already reigning at Hebron as king over Judah, all the tribes followed him. Both Ish-bosheth and Abner soon perished.

With his new dignity David promptly acquired a new capital, better suited than Hebron in location and strength to be the nation's center. He captured the fortress of Jebus, five miles north of Bethlehem, his old home, from its Canaanitish defenders, and enlarged, strengthened, and beautified it. Under its ancient name of Jerusalem he made it both the political and the religious capital of Israel.

The Ark of the Covenant, which in Eli's time had been captured by the Philistines, had been returned by them, and for many years had rested in a private house, was regarded as the very heart and symbol of the national religion. David therefore brought it first to Jerusalem, and instead of uniting with it its former housing, the old Mosaic tabernacle, he gave it a temporary home in a tent, intending to build a splendid temple when he should have peace. But war continued through the days of David, and at God's direction the erection of a temple, save for certain preparations, was left to Solomon, David's successor.

David was victorious in war. His success showed itself in the enlargement of Israel's boundaries, the complete subjection—for the time—of all alien elements in the land, and the alliance with Hiram, king of Tyre, with the great building operations which this alliance made possible. A royal palace formed the center of a court such as other sovereigns maintained, and David's court and even his family were exposed to the same corrupting influences as power, wealth, jealousy, and faction have everywhere introduced. Absalom, his favorite son, ill requited his father's love and trust by organizing a revolt against him. It failed, but not until it had driven the king, now an old man, into temporary exile and had let loose civil war upon the land.

Solomon, designated by David to succeed him, did not gain the throne without dispute, but the attempt of Adonijah, another son, to seize the throne failed in spite of powerful support. The forty-year reign of Solomon was the golden age of Hebrew history—the age to which all subsequent times looked back. Rapid growth of commerce, construction, art, and literature reflected the inward condition of peace and the outward ties with other lands of culture. But with art came idolatry; with construction came ostentation and oppression; with commerce came luxury. The splendor of Jerusalem, wherein Solomon “made silver . . . to be as stones, and cedars . . . as the sycomore-trees,” I Kings 10 : 27, contained in itself the seeds of dissolution.

However, there are two great types of literature which found their characteristic expression in the days of David and Solomon and are always associated with their names—the psalm with David, and the proverb (or, more broadly, “wisdom”) with Solomon. Kingdom, temple and palace have long since passed away, but the Psalter and the books of Wisdom are imperishable monuments of the united monarchy.

The Psalms

The Psalter is a collection of one hundred and fifty poems, of various length, meter, and style. As now arranged it is divided into five books, but there is evidence that earlier collections and arrangements preceded the present. Among the earliest productions, judged both by form and by matter, are those psalms which bear the superscription “of David,” though it would not be safe to assert that every such psalm came from David’s own pen or that none not so labeled is not of Davidic origin. Judged alike from the narrative in the book of Samuel, and from the traditions scattered in other books as early as Amos, ch. 6 : 5, and as late as Chronicles, I Chron. 15 : 16 to 16 : 43; ch. 25, David was both a skilled musician himself and an organizer of music for public worship. It is not surprising, therefore, to find a body of religious poems ascribed to him, which not only evidence his piety and good taste, but also, though individual in tone, are well-adapted to common use at the sanctuary.

The psalms are poems. Their poetry is not simply one of substance, but also a poetry of form. Rime, our familiar device, is of course absent, but there is rhythm, although it is not measured in the same

strict way as in most of our poetry. The most striking and characteristic mark of Hebrew poetic form is the parallel structure: two companion lines serve together to complete a single thought, as the second either repeats, supplements, emphasizes, illustrates, or contrasts with the first.

Proverbs; Job; Ecclesiastes

Poetry is also a term to which the book of Proverbs and most of the other productions of "Wisdom" are entitled. While they are chiefly didactic (that is, intended for instruction) instead of lyric (emotional self-expression), nevertheless the Wisdom books are almost entirely written in rhythmic parallelism and contain much matter unsuited to ordinary prose expression. In the Revised Version the manner of printing shows to the English reader at a glance what parts are prose and what are poetry (compare, for example, Job, ch. 2 with Job, ch. 3), though it must be admitted that a hard and fast line cannot be drawn between them. Compare Eccl., ch. 7 with Proverbs.

"The wise," as a class of public teachers in the nation (see Jer. 18 : 18), associated their beginnings with King Solomon (Prov. 24 : 23; 25 : 1), whose wisdom is testified to in the book of Kings, as well as his speaking of "proverbs," that is, pithy sayings easy to remember and teach, mostly of moral import. I Kings 4 : 29-34. But the profoundest theme of wisdom was the moral government of God as seen in his works and ways. The mysteries with which all men, to-day as well as in ancient times, must grapple when they seek to harmonize their faith in a just and good God with such undeniable facts as prosperous sinners and suffering saints, led to the writing of such books as Job (the meaning of a good man's adversities) and Ecclesiastes (the vanity of all that mere experience and observation of life afford). In the case of these Wisdom books, as in that of the Psalms, the oldest name—that of the royal founder—is not to be taken as the exclusive author. Solomon, like David, made the beginnings; others collected, edited, developed, and completed.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON VIII

1. In what tribe and town did David first reign as king? How did he secure a new capital when he became king of all Israel? How and why did he make this the religious capital also?

2. What advantages and disadvantages did David's continual wars, and his imitation of other kings' courts, bring to him, his family, and his people?
3. What was David's part in the development of religious poetry? How does Hebrew poetry differ generally from English poetry in form? Name the books of the Old Testament written chiefly or wholly in poetry.
4. Who built the first Temple? Who were "the wise" in Israel, whom did they venerate as their royal patron, and what did they aim to accomplish by their writings?

LESSON IX

The Kingdom of Israel

I Kings, Chapter 12 to II Kings, Chapter 17

With the death of Solomon came the lasting division of the tribes into two kingdoms, a northern and a southern, known as the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah. Rehoboam on his accession announced a policy of repression and even oppression that alienated completely the loyalty of Ephraim and the other northern tribes, which were never attached to the house of David in the same way as the tribe of Judah was. Under a man of Ephraim, therefore, Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who in earlier years had challenged even Solomon's title, the ten tribes revolted from Rehoboam and established a separate state.

Rehoboam found himself too weak to prevent this secession, and he and his descendants of David's dynasty had to content themselves with the narrow boundaries of Judah. To be sure, in Jerusalem they possessed the authorized center of public worship for the whole nation. It was to offset this advantage that Jeroboam made Bethel, that spot associated in the minds of the people with the patriarchs themselves, his religious capital. And, influenced perhaps by the Egyptian example of steer worship (for he had long lived as a fugitive in Egypt in Solomon's reign), he made golden steers and placed them in the sanctuary at Bethel and in that at Dan in the extreme north. (See close of Lesson VI.) To these places and under these visible symbols of brute force, Jeroboam summoned his people to worship Jehovah. It was the old national religion but in the degraded form of an image worship forbidden by the Mosaic Commandments.

A throne thus built on mere expediency could not endure. Jeroboam's son was murdered after a two years' reign. Nor did this usurper succeed in holding the throne for his house any longer than Jeroboam's house had lasted. At length Omri, commander of the army, succeeded in founding a dynasty that furnished four kings. Ahab, son of Omri, who held the throne the longest of these four, is the king with whom we become best acquainted of all the northern monarchs. This is partly because of the relations between Ahab and Elijah the prophet. Ahab's name is also linked with that of his queen, the notorious Jezebel, a princess of Tyre, who introduced the worship of the Tyrian Baal into Israel and even persecuted all who adhered to the national religion.

This alliance with Tyre, and the marriage of Ahab's daughter to a prince of Judah, secured Israel on the north and the south, and left Ahab free to pursue his father's strong policy toward the peoples to the east, Moab and Syria. Upon Ahab's death in battle against Syria, Moab revolted, and the two sons of Ahab, in spite of help from the house of David in Jerusalem, were unable to stave off the ruin that threatened the house of Omri. Jehu, supported by the army in which he was a popular leader, seized the throne, with the usual assassination of all akin to the royal family. His inspiration to revolt had been due to Jehovah's prophets, and his program was the overthrow of Baal worship in favor of the old national religion. Though Jehu thoroughly destroyed the followers of Jezebel's foreign gods, he and his sons after him continued to foster the idolatrous shrines at Bethel and Dan, so that the verdict of the sacred writer upon them is unfavorable: they "departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, where-with he made Israel to sin."

Mesha, king of Moab, II Kings 3 : 4, lived long enough to see his oppressors, the kings of Omri's house, overthrown and the land of Israel reduced to great weakness. (See article "Moabite Stone" in any Bible dictionary.) Jehu's son, Jehoahaz, witnessed the deepest humiliation of Israel at the hands of Syria. But it was not many years after Mesha's boasting that affairs took a complete turn. Jehu's grandson, Jehoash, spurred by Elisha the prophet even on his deathbed, began the recovery which attained its zenith in the reign of Jeroboam II, fourth king of Jehu's line. Though little is told of this reign in the Book of Kings, it is clear that at no time since Solomon's reign had a king of Israel ruled over so large a territory. It was the last burst of glory before total extinction.

There is a history lying between the reigns of Jeroboam I, founder of the Northern Kingdom, and of Jeroboam II, its last prosperous monarch, which has scarcely been referred to in this brief sketch of its kings. It is the history of Jehovah's prophets.

Hosea; Amos; Jonah

Reference has already been made to the rise of the prophetic order as such, in the time of Samuel. (Lesson VII.) With each crisis in the affairs of the nation God raised up some notable messenger with a word from him to the people or to the ruler. But all along the fire of devotion to God and country was kept alive by humbler, unnamed men, who supplied a sound nucleus of believers even to this Northern Kingdom with its idolatrous shrines and its usurping princes. I Kings 18 : 4; 19 : 18.

The greatest names are those of Elijah and Elisha. The earlier struggle to keep Israel true to Jehovah focuses in these two men, one the worthy successor of the other. Their time marked perhaps the lowest ebb of true religion in all the history of God's Kingdom on earth. It is no wonder, therefore, that such stern, strong men were not only raised up to fight for the God of Moses and Samuel and David, but also endowed with exceptional powers, to work wonders and signs for the encouragement of the faithful and the confounding of idolators and sinners. Such was the purpose of their notable miracles.

Elijah and Elisha wrote nothing. But in their spirit rose up Hosea and Amos a century later—men who have left a record of their prophecies in the books that bear their names. Denunciation of sin, especially in the higher classes, announcement of impending punishment for that sin, and promise of a glorious, if distant, future of pardon, peace, and prosperity through God's grace and man's sincere repentance—these things form the substance of their eloquent messages. Hosea is noteworthy for his striking parable of a patient husband and a faithless wife to illustrate God's love and Israel's infidelity. Amos, himself a herdsman from Judah sent north to denounce a king and people not his own, is startling in the suddenness with which he turns the popular religious ideas against those who harbor them. See, for example, ch. 3 : 2, where Amos makes the unique relation between Jehovah and Israel the reason, not for Israel's safety from Jehovah's wrath, as the people thought, but for the absolute certainty of Israel's punishment for all its sins. These two prophets, the last of the Northern

Kingdom, had the melancholy duty of predicting the utter overthrow of what the first Jeroboam had set up in rebellion and sin two centuries before.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON IX

1. When, why, and under whose lead did the ten tribes break away from the house of David?
2. Outline the fortunes of the kings of Israel from Jeroboam I to Jeroboam II.
3. Who were the outstanding prophets in the Northern Kingdom, and what was the substance of their messages?

LESSON X

The Kingdom of Judah, to Hezekiah

I Kings, Chapter 12 to II Kings, Chapter 17; II Chronicles, Chapters 10 to 28; Obadiah; Joel; Micah; Isaiah (in part)

The revolt of Jeroboam and the ten northern tribes reduced the dominion ruled by Rehoboam, grandson of David, to narrow bounds. Before his disastrous reign was over, Judah was still further humiliated by an invasion under Shishak, a Pharaoh of the twenty-second dynasty of Egypt, who despoiled Jerusalem of the treasures which Solomon had amassed. After the death of Rehoboam and the short reign of his son, Abijam, Judah was ruled successively by Asa and Jehoshaphat, each succeeding his father peacefully and each reigning long and, on the whole, prosperously. Another invasion from the south which threatened to be as disastrous as that of Shishak, under "Zerah the Ethiopian" was repelled by Asa. Internal reforms, both religious and civil, were carried out by these vigorous rulers.

The natural rivalry and intermittent warfare between north and south, which had arisen through the division under Rehoboam, ceased for a time after Jehoshaphat entered into alliance with King Ahab and took Athaliah, Ahab's daughter, as wife for his son Joram. The kings of Samaria and Jerusalem made common cause against Syria and Moab, and a temporary success seemed to crown the new policy. But prophets of Jehovah repeatedly warned the king who sat on David's throne of the danger to the true religion from such an alliance with Baal worshipers.

It was not long before their warnings were justified by the facts. Athaliah, Joram's queen, was the daughter not only of Ahab but also of Jezebel and brought with her to Jerusalem the fierce spirit and heathen habits of her Tyrian mother. King Ahaziah her son lost his life through his close association with King Jehoram of Israel, his uncle, for Jehu made away with both kings at the same time, and with all the princes of Judah, kinsmen of Ahaziah, on whom he could lay his hands. The old tigress at Jerusalem, Athaliah, now turned upon her own flesh and blood, the children of Ahaziah, and murdered them all so as to secure the power for herself. One grandson alone, the infant Joash, escaped, saved by an aunt who hid him and his nurse from the cruel queen mother. Six years later this child was proclaimed king in the Temple courts by Jehoiada, the high priest. Athaliah was slain, and a new era began in Judah with the destruction of Baal worship and the repair of Jehovah's Temple.

Joash was too weak to do more than buy off the king of Syria when his army threatened Jerusalem, and he himself met his death in a conspiracy. The same fate befell his son Amaziah, after a reign that promised well but was wrecked on the king's ambition to subdue the Northern Kingdom under him. Uzziah (or Azariah) succeeded to the throne, though for half of his long reign he and his kingdom seem to have been in a state of vassalage to Jeroboam II, the powerful ruler of Israel. The latter part of Uzziah's reign was more prosperous, in spite of the king's pitiable state—for he was stricken with leprosy and had to live apart. It was on this account that he associated his son Jotham with himself, and during the sixteen years of Jotham's reign—most of which was included within the long nominal reign of Uzziah—the Philistines, Ammonites, and Arabians were defeated in warfare, while considerable building both in and out of the capital helped to prepare the little kingdom for the troublous days just ahead.

The mighty kingdom of Assyria, with its capital at Nineveh on the Tigris River, was the force which God used to punish his faithless people. Lying beyond the kingdoms of Syria, Israel's nearest neighbors on the north, Assyria was not at first felt to be the menace which in the end it proved to be. Whenever Assyria was strong, Syria was weak, and the king in Samaria could breathe freely. But there came a day when a king of unusual power ascended the throne at Nineveh, Tiglath-pileser (or Pul, as he was also called, see II Kings 15 : 19, 29), and the fate of both Syria and Israel was sealed.

Ahaz, the son of Jotham who had just died, saw in this Assyrian the means of delivering Judah out of the hands of Pekah, king of Israel, and Rezin, king of Syria, who had joined forces to capture Jerusalem and put a king of their own on the throne of David. By a great present Ahaz bought the support of Tiglath-pileser, who sent an army to attack Judah's foes. Syria was devastated, the inhabitants were carried away captive from all the eastern and northern parts of Israel (Gilead and Galilee), Phœnicia and Philistia were overrun, and Ahaz, among other kings, went to Damascus in person to do homage to this irresistible conqueror.

In the Northern Kingdom, reduced now to little more than the central highlands of Ephraim and Manasseh, Hoshea, a protégé of the Assyrian king, reigned for a few years. But he and his foolish advisers, unable to read the signs of the times, looked to Egypt for help and revolted. This time the end had come. Shalmaneser, now on the Assyrian throne, came against Samaria, and after a siege lasting almost three years, took and destroyed it. The whole population was carried away, after the drastic policy of deportation practiced by Assyria, and an alien population was introduced to take their places. Thus ended the Northern Kingdom after lasting a little over two centuries. And thus began that strange mixed people, known as the Samaritans, who settled in the central part of the Holy Land.

The effect of Israel's doom upon the minds of the king and people of Judah may be imagined. From the pages of Micah and Isaiah, contemporary prophets in Judah, can be seen how God was speaking to Judah through the ruin of Israel. Ahaz's policy of relying on human help from Assyria instead of divine help from Jehovah was refuted by its outcome. With Syria and Samaria ruined, there lay nothing between Jerusalem and the Assyrian. And it is in Hezekiah's reign—the next after that of Ahaz—that the ruthless conqueror from Nineveh is found overrunning Judah itself. How king, prophet, and people met that crisis will begin the next lesson, for it belongs to the period when the Southern Kingdom is all that remained of the organized Hebrew nation in Palestine.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON X

1. What were the relations between the kingdoms of Judah and Israel in general?

2. Who altered these relations for a time? How? With what consequences for Judah's politics and religion?
3. Who was Joash, and how did he come to the throne?
4. What was the occasion of Judah's first intimate contact with Assyria? Discuss Ahaz's policy in the light of Isa. 7 : 1-9.
5. What were the stages in the downfall of the Northern Kingdom? What became of the conquered people, and who replaced them? See II Kings, ch. 17.

LESSON XI

Judah, from Hezekiah to the Exile

**II Kings, Chapters 18 to 25 ; II Chronicles, Chapters 29 to 36 ;
Isaiah (in part) ; Nahum ; Habakkuk ; Zephaniah ; Jeremiah ;
Lamentations ; Ezekiel, Chapters 1 to 32**

Although outwardly Judah appeared to be the same after the fall of the Northern Kingdom as before, it was not so. A very different situation confronted Hezekiah from that which had confronted his father Ahaz when he called on Assyria for help against Syria and Israel. Now there were no "buffer states" between Assyria's empire and little Judah. And it was only a score of years after Samaria fell when Jerusalem felt the full force of Assyria. Sennacherib, fourth in that remarkable list of the six kings¹ who made Nineveh mistress of Asia, sent an army to besiege Jerusalem, with a summons to Hezekiah to surrender his capital.

A different spirit ruled this king. Isaiah, the same great prophet who had counseled Ahaz to resist Pekah and Rezin but had failed to move him to faith in Jehovah, found now in Ahaz's son a vital faith in the God of Israel in this far sorer crisis. In reponse to that faith Isaiah was commissioned by God to assure king and people of a great deliverance. The case, to all human seeming, was hopeless. But the resources at God's disposal are boundless, and at one blow "the angel of Jehovah" reduced the proud Assyrian host to impotency and drove them away in retreat. II Kings 19 : 35. Scribes who record the achievements of ancient monarchs are not accustomed to betray any of the failures of their royal heroes. But between the lines of Sennach-

¹ Tiglath-pileser, 745-727 B. C.; Shalmaneser, 727-722; Sargon, 722-705; Sennacherib, 705-681; Esar-haddon, 680-668; Ashurbanipal, 668-626.

erib's records we can read confirmation of the Bible's report of some great catastrophe to Assyrian arms. Jehovah rewarded the faith of his people in him.

The seventh century before Christ, which began just after this event, witnessed both the rise of Assyria to its greatest height, and its sudden fall before the Chaldeans, a people from the Persian Gulf, who succeeded in mastering ancient Babylon and in winning for it a greater glory than it had ever known in former times. Even in Hezekiah's reign these Chaldeans, under their leader Merodach-baladan, were already challenging the supremacy of Nineveh, and in doing so were seeking allies in the west. When the king of Judah yielded to the dictates of pride and showed to these Chaldean ambassadors his treasures, Isaiah announced to him that the final ruin of Judah was to come in future days from this source, and not from Nineveh as might then have been anticipated.

Manasseh, Hezekiah's successor, was indeed taken as a captive to Babylon for a time, but the captor was a king of Assyria. II Chron. 33 : 11. Manasseh was thus punished for his great personal wickedness, for he is pictured as the worst of all the descendants of David, an idolator and a cruel persecutor. Yet his reign was long, and at its close he is said to have repented and turned to Jehovah. But this did not prevent his son Amon from following in his evil ways. A revolt of the people within two years removed Amon, however, and set his young son, Josiah, upon the throne. Josiah's reign is important for the history of Judah.

By putting together all that can be gleaned from Kings, Chronicles, and the prophets, it can be seen that Josiah gradually came more and more under the influence of the party in Judah that sought to purge the nation of its idolatry and bring it back, not merely to the comparatively pure worship and life of Hezekiah's and David's days, but to an ideal observance of the ancient Law of Moses. The climax in the progressive reformation in Judah was reached in Josiah's eighteenth year, 622 B.C., when the king and all the people entered into a "solemn league and covenant" to obey the Law of Moses both as a religious obligation and as a social program.

The Law book which was found while workmen were restoring the Temple passed through the hands of Hilkiyah, the high priest, who therefore committed himself, together with the priests, to this reform. And what the true prophets of Jehovah thought of it may be seen, for

example, from Jer., ch. 11, which tells that this prophetic leader preached in the streets of Jerusalem and through the cities of Judah, saying, "Hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them."

Josiah attempted to attach to Jerusalem all those elements in the territory of the former kingdom of Israel which were in sympathy with Jehovah's Law, and at Bethel itself he defiled the old idolatrous altar and slew its priests. In fact, it was on northern ground, at Megiddo, that Josiah met his tragic end and the new wave of patriotic enthusiasm was shattered, when, in battle against Pharaoh-necho and a great Egyptian army, the king of Judah was killed.

Josiah's four successors were weak and unworthy of David's line. After Jehoahaz, the son whom the people put on the throne to succeed Josiah, had been removed by Necho, Jehoiakim, another son, reigned for eleven years. He owed his throne to the Pharaoh and was at first tributary to him. But early in his reign came the first of many campaigns of the Chaldeans into Palestine, as Nebuchadnezzar, master of Asia, extended his power farther and farther south after crushing the Egyptians at Carchemish in 605 B.C. Jehoiakim had to bow to Nebuchadnezzar's yoke and seems to have lost his life in a fruitless attempt to shake it off. A great number of the leaders of Judah, nobles, priests, soldiers, and craftsmen, were deported, together with Jehoiachin, the young son of Jehoiakim, who had worn the crown but three months, 598 B.C.

For eleven years more, however, the remnant of Judah maintained a feeble state under Zedekiah, a third son of Josiah and the last of David's line to mount the throne. In spite of his solemn oath to the king of Babylon and in the face of the express warnings from Jehovah through his prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, this weak and faithless king revolted from Babylon, put his trust in the Egyptian army, and prepared to stand a siege. But Jerusalem's end had now come, as Samaria's had come before, and through a breach in the northern wall the Chaldean army entered; the king fled and was captured, blinded, and deported, and the whole city, including houses, walls, gates, and even the Temple—that famous Temple of Solomon which had stood nearly four centuries—was totally destroyed, 587 B.C. All that remained of the higher classes, together with the population of Jerusalem and the chief towns, were carried away to Babylonia, to begin that exile which had been threatened even in the Law, and predicted by many of the prophets, as the extreme penalty for disobedience and idolatry.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XI

1. How did the fall of Samaria affect the Kingdom of Judah?
2. How did Hezekiah meet the threats of Sennacherib? What was the outcome?
3. Which king carried through a reformation of religion? What was the basis of the covenant he imposed on Judah? How did he meet his end?
4. Describe the relations of the Chaldeans to Judah in the time of Hezekiah, of Jehoiakim, of Zedekiah?
5. When did Jerusalem fall? Did it fall unexpectedly and without warning?

LESSON XII

The Exile and the Restoration

Ezekiel, Chapters 33 to 48; Daniel; Ezra, Chapters 1, 2

When the northern tribes were carried away by Assyria they lost their identity in the mass of the nations. Only individuals from among them attached themselves to the organized nucleus of Judah. From that time the one tribe of Judah stood out so prominently as representative of the whole nation, that "Jew" (that is, man of Judah) has been equivalent to Hebrew. Paul says that he was of the tribe of Benjamin; the aged prophetess Anna is said to have been of the tribe of Asher, Luke 2 : 36, and all the priests were of course of the tribe of Levi; yet long before New Testament times all such Israelites were commonly referred to as "Jews."

Judah did not lose its identity among the nations when Jerusalem fell. The Jews who were not deported, among them the prophet Jeremiah, were put under the government of a certain Jewish noble, Gedaliah, who ruled the land from Mizpah as representative of the great king. Many fugitives returned to live under his sway when they found that it was beneficent. But Gedaliah was soon murdered by a prince of David's house, whom the king of Ammon had set on to do this mischief and then received and protected. The other Jewish leaders feared to remain within reach of the king of Babylon after this insult to him, and against the warnings of Jeremiah they all went down to Egypt. That removal ended all organized Jewish life in Palestine for nearly half a century.

In Babylon, however, an event occurred long before that time had elapsed, which marked the political recognition of Judah's separate identity as a nation. That event was the release of Jehoiachin from prison by the new king of Babylon, Evil-merodach, successor of Nebuchadnezzar. Jehoiachin, it will be remembered, was the unfortunate prince of David's line who held the throne only three months after his father Jehoiakim's death and was then deported to Babylon in 598. From that time on, through all the remainder of Nebuchadnezzar's long reign, he had been imprisoned in Babylon. But now he was not only released, but given a pension from the royal treasury for the rest of his life and a standing superior to all the other captive princes in Babylon.

This was in 562, and many Jewish hearts must already have begun to beat with fresh hope, as the old loyalty to David's house flamed up, and the promises of a restoration recorded in the old Law and the Prophets were echoed by the prophet of the Exile, Ezekiel. This man, himself a priest by birth, had been carried to Babylon at the same time as Jehoiachin, and through all those years of doom had there preached to his countrymen, first to the portion exiled with him while Jerusalem still stood, but after 587 to the whole people united in a common catastrophe. His voice had even reached to Jerusalem, as he joined Jeremiah in reminding King Zedekiah of his oath to Nebuchadnezzar. With the elevation of Jehoiachin and the stirring of the national hopes, Ezekiel became the prophet of hope. He pictures the breath of Jehovah stirring to life the dry bones in the valley of death. Ezek., ch. 37. And he warns the optimistic people that only as God takes away from them their old stony heart and gives them a heart of flesh, and sprinkles clean water upon them to cleanse them from their pollution through idolatry, can they be fit to form the new community wherein God shall indeed reign. Ch. 36 : 25, 26. What such a community might outwardly and visibly resemble, Ezekiel pictures in a long, detailed, descriptive vision wherewith his book closes. Chs. 40 to 48.

Another outstanding Jew of the Exile was a man of an entirely different type. Daniel, a noble youth carried away from Judah to Babylon at the first clash of Nebuchadnezzar's armies with the Jews, 605 B.C., and brought up at the court, succeeded through interpreting a dream of the king in attracting his notice and winning his favor, much as Joseph had done in ancient Egypt. Dan., ch. 2. From his position of political

power, Daniel was able, doubtless, to minister to the interests of his brethren, the Jewish exiles. Possibly it is to him that Jehoiachin owed his astonishing reversal of fortune. At any rate Belshazzar, the last ruler of the Chaldean state, still maintained Daniel in power, in spite of the very solemn warning of ruin to that state which Daniel fearlessly pronounced. Ch. 5. When the Persians succeeded the Chaldeans as masters of Babylon, this Jewish statesman still held his high post, and retained it in spite of the bitter enmity of officials who used his Jewish faith as a handle against him. Ch. 6. In fact, there is no better way to understand the favor accorded the Jews by Cyrus, the Persian conqueror, and the edicts preserved in *Ezra* 1 : 2-4; 6 : 3-5, than by supposing that Daniel, who had the king's ear, brought to his attention the earlier prophecies of Jeremiah and of other spokesmen for Jehovah, God of the Jews.

Certainly, however the affair was managed, it turned out entirely to the Jews' liking. All who were willing to return to Palestine were permitted and encouraged to go. They were assisted by the gifts of their brethren who could not, or would not, leave Babylon. They bore back with them the old vessels for the service of the sanctuary which Nebuchadnezzar had carried off. And, best of all, they took with them royal authority to erect the Temple of Jehovah on its ancient site, at the expense of the king of Persia, that is, out of taxes and tribute he remitted. At their head went a prince of the old royal house, and a high priest who was grandson of that high priest whom Nebuchadnezzar had executed half a century before. Their number totaled forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, with enough slaves in addition to make the entire company number nearly fifty thousand.

Their purpose was threefold: to reoccupy the Holy Land, to rebuild Jerusalem, and to erect a temple where Solomon's Temple had stood. We should be likely to rate the importance of these three objects in the same order as that in which they have just been named. But not so the believing Jew. It was above all else the sacred house of his God that he wanted to see restored, so that the prescribed sacrifices of the Law might be resumed, the nation's sin might thus be atoned for, and God might once more visibly dwell among his people. All else was in order to this one great end. The origin of Judaism, which lies in the movements of this time, cannot be understood unless this supreme motive is clearly grasped. How Judaism developed under the new conditions will be the subject of the next lesson.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XII

1. What is meant by "a Jew"?
2. How did government of Hebrews by a Hebrew come to an end in Palestine for the first time since Saul's day?
3. What was the first political event to arouse the exiled Jews from their depression?
4. Compare Ezekiel and Daniel in their personality, position, and audience.
5. When Cyrus captured Babylon in 539, what did he do for the Jews, and how came he to do it?
6. How many Jews returned to Palestine under Cyrus, and what was their uppermost motive?

LESSON XIII

The Jewish State Under Persia

**Ezra, Chapters 3 to 10; Esther; Nehemiah; Haggai;
Zechariah; Malachi**

For two centuries Judea, like the rest of western Asia, was under the domination of the Persians, whose great royal names, Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes, Artaxerxes, are familiar to every student of history. The Old Testament spans one of those two centuries of Persian rule, 539-430, while for the other century, 430-332, we are dependent for the little we know about the Jews upon some documents recently discovered in Egypt, an occasional notice in classical historians, and the brief narrative of Josephus, the Jewish historian of the first Christian century.

Even in the century covered by the books of the Bible there are long stretches of silence separating periods that are fairly reported. First comes the time of Zerubbabel and Jeshua, the leaders, civil and religious, under whom the Jews returned and erected the Temple. This story carries us, though with a seventeen-year gap in its midst, from 538, the year after Cyrus took Babylon, to 515, the sixth year of Darius the Great, and is recorded in the first six chapters of the book of Ezra. To help us in understanding this time we have also the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, though the last six chapters of Zechariah belong to another age.

After the completion of the new Temple the curtain falls on Judea and, save for a single verse, Ezra 4 : 6, we hear no more of it for fifty-

seven years. However, the interesting story of Esther belongs in these years, for the Ahasuerus of the Bible is the Xerxes of Greek history—that vain, fickle, and voluptuous monarch who was beaten at Salamis and Plataea. The Jews must have been a part of the vast host with which he crossed from Asia to Europe. But the drama unfolded in the book of Esther was played far from Palestine, at Susa, the Persian capital.

With the seventh year of the next reign—that of Artaxerxes I—the curtain rises again on Judea, as we accompany thither the little band of Jews whom Ezra, the priestly “scribe,” brought back with him from Babylonia to Jerusalem. This account is found in the last four chapters of the book of Ezra, most of it in the form of personal reminiscences covering less than one year.

The curtain falls again abruptly at the end of Ezra’s memoirs, and rises as abruptly on Nehemiah’s memoirs at the beginning of the book which bears his name. But there is every reason to believe that the letters exchanged between the Samaritans and the Persian court, preserved in the fourth chapter of Ezra, belong to this interval of thirteen years between the two books of Ezra and Nehemiah. For this alone can explain two riddles: first, who are “the men that came up from thee unto Jerusalem,” Ezra 4 : 12, if they are not Ezra and his company, ch. 7? And second, what else could explain the desolate condition of Jerusalem and Nehemiah’s emotion on learning of it, Neh. 1 : 3, if not the mischief wrought by the Jews’ enemies when “they went in haste to Jerusalem,” armed with a royal injunction, and “made them to cease by force and power”? Ezra 4 : 23.

Some persons are inclined to date the prophet Malachi at just this time also, shortly before Nehemiah’s arrival. But it is probably better to place the ministry of this last of the Old Testament prophets at the end of Nehemiah’s administration. Nehemiah’s points of contact with Malachi are most numerous in his last chapter, ch. 13, in which he writes of his later visit to Jerusalem. Compare Neh. 13 : 6 with ch. 1 : 1.

In Cyrus’ reign the great Return was followed immediately by the erection of an altar and the resumption of sacrifice. Preparations for rebuilding the Temple, however, and even the laying of the corner stone, proved a vain beginning, as the Samaritans, jealous of the newcomers and angered by their own rebuff as fellow worshipers with the Jews, succeeded in hindering the prosecution of the work for many years. Ezra 3 : 1 to 4 : 5.

It was not until the second year of Darius' reign, 520, nearly two decades later, that the little community, spurred out of their selfishness and lethargy by Haggai and Zechariah, arose and completed the new Temple, in the face of local opposition but with royal support. Ch. 4 : 24 to 6 : 15.

Fifty-seven years later, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, 458, came Ezra with some fifteen hundred men, large treasures, and sweeping privileges confirmed by a royal edict, the text of which he has preserved in the seventh chapter of his book. He was given the king's support in introducing the Law of God as the law of the land, binding upon all its inhabitants, whom he was to teach its contents and punish for infractions of it. How Ezra used his exceptional powers in carrying out the reform he judged most needed—the dissolution of mixed marriages between Jew and Gentile forbidden by the Law—is told in detail in his own vivid language in chs. 9, 10. It helps us to understand Malachi's zeal in this same matter. Mal. 2 : 11. And the difficulty of this reform appears also from Nehemiah's memoirs, since the same abuse persisted twenty-five years after Ezra fought it. Neh. 13 : 23-27.

After the failure to fortify Jerusalem recorded in Ezra 4 : 8-23, Nehemiah, a Jew in high station and favor at Artaxerxes' court, obtained from his king a personal letter, appointing him governor of Judea for a limited time, with the special commission to rebuild the walls and gates of Jerusalem. The same bitter hostility which the Samaritans and other neighbors in Palestine throughout had shown toward the returned Jews, reached its climax in the efforts of Sanballat and others in public and private station to hinder Nehemiah's purpose. But with great energy and bravery, and with a personal appeal and example that swept all into the common stream of patriotic service, Nehemiah built the ruined walls and gates in fifty-two days, instituted social reforms, ch. 5, and imposed a covenant on all the people to obey the Law which Ezra read and expounded. Chs. 8 to 10. Elements in the little nation that joined with his enemies to discredit and even to assassinate him were banished or curbed. The origin of the peculiar sect of the Samaritan is connected with Nehemiah through his rigor in banishing a grandson of the high priest who had married Sanballat's daughter. This disloyalty of the priesthood is also one of Malachi's chief indictments against his nation, and the basis of his promise that a great reformer, an "Elijah," should arise to prepare the sinful people for the coming of their God.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XIII

1. How long after the Return was the Temple finished? Who hindered? Who helped?
2. What are the scene and the date of the book of Esther?
3. Compare the return of the Jews to Jerusalem under Ezra with that under Zerubbabel (*a*) in date, (*b*) in numbers, (*c*) in purpose and result.
4. Tell the story of Nehemiah: the occasion of his return, his enemies, his achievements. In what did Ezra help him?
5. Associate the ministry of the three prophets of this period after the Exile with the leaders and movements they respectively helped.

LESSON XIV

Israel's Religious Life

It has often been said that while civilization owes its art and letters to Greece and its law and order to Rome, it owes its religion and ethic^s to Palestine. This is true, within limits, provided we understand that what Israel contributed was not the product of its "native genius for religion," but was due to the persistent grace of its God, who took this "fewest of all peoples" and made of it the custodian of his revelation and the cradle of his redemption for the whole world. When, however, the Hebrew claimed preëminence through these two things, a saving God and a righteous Law, it was no idle boast. So Moses eloquently asks in Deuteronomy: "What great nation is there, that hath a god so nigh unto them, as Jehovah our God is whensoever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" Deut. 4 : 7, 8.

Religion as developed in Israel had two sides, an inward and an outward. On its inward side it consisted of a faith in Jehovah cherished in the hearts of the people, together with the sentiments of reverence and love, and the purposes of loyalty and consecration, which grew out of that faith. On its outward side religion consisted of certain objects and ceremonies, adapted to express by act and symbol the relation between God and his people.

But there is also another distinction often made in speaking of religion, the distinction between individual religion and national religion. Each member of the Hebrew nation held a personal relation to his God. The Law of God addressed him individually as it said to him, "Thou

shalt not." And, on a still higher level, Moses summed up that Law for him in these memorable words, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." Yet the entire body of Israel, as such, held a relation to God which his spokesmen are continually trying to illustrate and enrich by all sorts of figures. God is Israel's "Rock," "Possessor" or "Purchaser," "Redeemer," "Father"—until Isaiah can even say to the nation, "Thy Maker is thy husband," and Hosea and Ezekiel can portray God's dealings with Israel under the allegory of a marriage.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that all the inward religion was individual and all the outward religion national. There was provision in the ceremonial law, not only for sacrifices on a national scale, like those of the day of atonement, but also for each man to express outwardly his own penitence or devotion or gratitude or obligation to God by means of a personal sacrifice, publicly offered but privately planned and provided. And, on the other hand, the psalms and the prophets cannot be understood, unless we realize the general religious life of the nation that lies back of these highly individual forms of expression. That was why, when David thinking of himself could write, "The Lord is my shepherd," the whole people could take that sentence and the psalm it begins for use in public worship as the collective expression of Israel's trust in its God.

The great fact of sin is responsible for the perversion of the true relation between these different varieties of religious life. In theory, every symbolic object and action at tabernacle or Temple was merely the outward expression of an inward idea or feeling or resolve. Every smoking sacrifice on the altar was supposed to come from an offerer drawing near to God in the sincere belief "that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." Heb. 11 : 6. But in fact the offerer was in constant danger of looking upon all the gifts and victims he brought as so many bribes with which he might buy the favor of an offended God, or, worse still, might obtain an "indulgence" to do some evil deed he planned. This is what Jeremiah means when he cries, "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely . . . and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered; that ye may do all these abominations?" Jer. 7 : 9, 10.

If the private worshiper was in danger of abusing the worship of God in this way, how much more was the priest, the professional sacrificer and celebrant, in danger of looking upon all his duties as a kind

of authorized magic! "Do this external act, and that inward benefit will surely follow." "Offer this lamb, and cease to think about that black sin for which the lamb is the official price." Yes, even this: "Go and do it again, but don't forget to bring another lamb!" Is it any wonder that at length Malachi, after lashing the priests of his late day for their laziness, cynicism, and greed, cries out in Jehovah's name, "Oh that there were one among you that would shut the doors [of the Temple], that ye might not kindle fire on mine altar in vain!" Mal. 1 : 10.

All along the course of Hebrew history we find prophets and psalmists protesting against this sinful perversion of ceremonial religion. See for example I Sam. 15 : 22; Ps. 40 : 6-8; 50; Isa. 1 : 10-17; Micah 6 : 6-8.

And yet it would be a mistake to say that the prophet stood for pure and spiritual religion, and the priest for merely external, formal religion. Some of the greatest of the prophets, as Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, were priests. And how far the prophets could become professional declaimers and deceivers may be seen, for example, from Micah 3 : 5-8.

The Hebrew prophets, notably Amos and Hosea, are sometimes represented as the "inventors" of "ethical monotheism," that is, of religion as consisting in the worship of one God, who is the moral ideal of man and demands moral living in man. But in fact, that is precisely the basis of all genuine Old Testament religion, from the very beginning. See Heb., ch. 11. And, particularly, that is the basis of the entire Law, even of the ceremonial law. For that Law must not be judged by its sinful abuse, but by the principles of righteousness, holiness, repentance, and fellowship that underlie every article in the sanctuary, every sacrifice on the altar, every rite prescribed and observance commanded. At their best the priests were allies of the true prophets, and external religion as centering in the Temple was for the time a fitting expression of Israel's personal and national faith. If it had not been so, then such psalms as Psalms 24, 42, 65, 84, 122 could never have been written, preserved, and used.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XIV

1. What ground had Israel for "glorying"? See Rom. 9 : 4, 5.
2. Give illustrations to show that individual as well as national religion in Israel expressed itself externally, and that spiritual as

well as ceremonial religion belonged to both the nation and the individual.

3. What sinful abuse of sacrifice were the prophets constantly attacking? Did they thereby condemn Temple, altar, priesthood, and ceremonial law in themselves?
4. Were all the prophets spiritually minded, or all the priests merely "professional"? Give instances from history of alliances between prophets and priests.

LESSON XV

"The Coming One"

The Old Testament points forward. The whole impression it leaves upon us is that of an unfinished thing. Its history moves toward a goal outside of itself. Its religion is a religion of expectation. All its institutions are typical, that is, they represent more than themselves, because they belong to a larger order of things which appears imperfectly in them.

In the last lesson we saw how priest and prophet had their own place in Israel. But both priest and prophet also typified a perfect priesthood and a perfect prophecy, to be realized under ideal conditions which were never present in those times. When, for example, Aaron made atonement for the sins of the nation once each year, as provided in Lev., ch. 16, he had to present first the blood of the bullock which was the sin offering for himself, before he presented the blood of the goat which was the sin offering for the people. But ideally, in his position as mediator between God and the sinful people, he was a sinless man; the blood of the bullock and the pure, white garments he put on were supposed to indicate that he was sinless for the moment. Nothing could be clearer than that he typified a perfect high priest for God's people, who should be really a sinless man—one who needed no mechanism of altar, victim, and dress to make him pure from personal sin. See Heb., chs. 5 to 10, especially ch. 7 : 26-28.

Again Moses looks forward to the realization in the future of the ideal communication between God and his people typified in the prophet. "A prophet," says he, "Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee." "From the midst of thee, like unto me." Deut. 18 : 15-19. This ideal prophet will perfectly hear and perfectly transmit divine

truth to men. It was on the basis of this promise that many persons described our Lord as "the prophet," meaning thereby that perfect prophet promised by Moses. John 1 : 21, 25; 7 : 40.

But there was another institution of Old Testament times which more than prophet or priest was associated in the people's minds with the ideal future. This was kingship. God himself was theoretically King—sole King—of Israel. Isa. 33 : 22. But at the entreaty of his sinful and harassed people he instructed Samuel to "make them a king." And while Samuel warned them of the evils which the monarchy would bring with it because of the sinfulness of the men who should be king, he nevertheless set up a throne that by its very nature was unique. The king of Israel was in a peculiar sense the representative of Jehovah. He ruled for God. He was his own "anointed," set apart for the exercise of supreme authority over God's people on earth and entitled to their religious as well as patriotic devotion. See, for example, Psalms 21, 101.

After the failure of Saul to obey God's instructions, Samuel anointed, at God's dictation and against his own human judgment, David the son of Jesse. This man proved himself, not indeed sinless nor the ideal king, but a man after God's heart, Acts 13 : 22, because his dominant purpose was to do God's will. To David therefore was given the remarkable promise contained in II Sam., ch. 7. In a word, this promise was an irrevocable, eternal "covenant," granting sovereignty to David's "house"—that is, his posterity considered as a unit—over God's Kingdom on earth.

The story of how men came to understand better and better the vastness of this covenant, which Isaiah calls "the sure mercies of David," ch. 55 : 3, forms the subject of that special Old Testament study called "Messianic Prophecy." In the psalms and in the prophecies we are able to trace a growing faith, that by an ideal king of David's line Jehovah will finally work his long delayed will in and through Israel. This Person is commonly called "the Messiah," because "Messiah" means "Anointed." Its Greek equivalent is "the Christ." While other persons also were anointed with oil when they assumed office, kings were always so anointed and the idea belongs peculiarly to kingship. By the time our Lord appeared, no other side of the work which this ideal, promised, longed-for Coming One was to do, was so prominent as that of ruling for God as the King of Israel. For this reason Jesus of Nazareth is known to all who believe in his claims

as "the Christ," and such believers are thence called "Christians." This title of Christ connects Jesus with the line of David, to which he actually belonged by descent, and it also connects him with the promise to David, of which he was the heir and the fulfillment.

We have thus seen that "the Coming One," Luke 7 : 19; John 11 : 27, toward whom the eyes of Israel were directed, was to be prophet, priest, and king. In all these offices and the various duties they involved he was to be the one chosen from among the people—a man therefore, "servant of the servants of God." Yet this is not all. Alongside these promises there was a promise also that Jehovah himself would come to dwell among his people. The Holy of Holies, with its Ark of the Presence and its Mercy seat for revelation and atonement, was itself typical of an ideal presence of God among men. And through psalm and prophet we can trace this promise also. Now it is terrible with its threat to sinners, and now it is glorious with its hope for the oppressed. At length in Malachi we read in the clearest words, "The Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple." Mal. 3 : 1, 5. Preceded by his "messenger" to "prepare the way before him," Israel's divine Lord himself is to come for judgment and salvation. See also Ps. 96 : 13; 98 : 9.

It was not made so plain to the men of ancient Israel just how these two lines of promise were to be united, as it appears to us now in the light of later facts. But we, who worship Jesus of Nazareth not only as "Son of David according to the flesh," but as divine Lord from heaven, "in two distinct natures and one person for ever," can look back on those old prophecies of "men who spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." II Peter 1 : 21. We can see in them God's purpose to make this great Son of David a true "Immanuel," Isa. 7 : 14—a Person in whom God actually is "with us." God gave to him such names as "Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace," because he should really be all that these names imply. Isa. 9 : 6. For the Child who was born in little Bethlehem, the "city of David," was not merely one who should be "ruler in Israel," but also one "whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." Micah 5 : 2.

QUESTIONS ON LESSON XV

1. How did the priests and prophets in Israel point forward to an ideal Priest and Prophet?

2. What was the relation of Israel's king to Jehovah? In whose "house" was this office made eternal? In what Person has this promise been fulfilled?
3. How was the promise that God himself should be "the Coming One" consistent with the promise of a human Prophet, Priest, and King? Where is it indicated in the Old Testament that both promises might be fulfilled in one Person?