SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON QUARTERLY

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WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

SENIOR DIVISION, No. 269, THIRD QUARTER, 1962

AID TO MORE EFFICIENT SABBATH SCHOOLS

Primary Treasure

An attractive paper containing the Sabbath school lesson and stories for children up to ten years of age.

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THE BLESSING OF DAILY STUDY

"The beauty and riches of the word have a transforming influence on mind and character."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 132.

"There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigor to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. If God's word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose rarely seen in these times."—*Steps to Christ,* page 90.

My Daily Lesson Study Pledge

As one who greatly desires to improve his knowledge of the Scriptures, I pledge myself to the careful and prayerful study of some portion of my Sabbath school lesson each day of the week.

Name .....

LESSON TITLES FOR THE QUARTER

1. Eve, "The Mother of All Living"
2. Sarah and Hagar
3. Rebekah, Wife From a Far Country
4. Rachel and Leah
5. Miriam the Prophetess
6. Rahab; Deborah
7. Ruth the Moabitess
8. Hannah; Rizpah
9. "That Woman Jezebel"
10. Esther, the Persian Queen
11. Mary, the Mother of Jesus
12. Martha and Mary
13. Women of the Early Church

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Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly

WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

General Introduction

"Woman should fill the position which God originally designed for her, as her husband's equal. The world needs mothers who are mothers not merely in name but in every sense of the word. We may safely say that the distinctive duties of woman are more sacred, more holy, than those of man. Let woman realize the sacredness of her work and in the strength and fear of God take up her life mission. Let her educate her children for usefulness in this world and for a home in the better world. . . .

"The king upon his throne has no higher work than has the mother. The mother is queen of her household. She has in her power the molding of her children's characters, that they may be fitted for the higher, immortal life. An angel could not ask for a higher mission; for in doing this work she is doing service for God. Let her only realize the high character of her task, and it will inspire her with courage. Let her realize the worth of her work and put on the whole armor of God, that she may resist the temptation to conform to the world's standard. Her work is for time and for eternity."—*The Adventist Home,* pages 231, 232. Here is good counsel for every mother today.

Lesson 1, for July 7, 1962

Eve, "The Mother of All Living"

MEMORY VERSE: "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." Gen. 2:18.

STUDY HELPS: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pages 44-62 (chapters 2, 3); "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General Introduction and survey of the lesson.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-3.	☐
Monday: Questions 4-7.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 8-11.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 12-14; begin reading Study Helps.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading Study Helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Creation of Eve

1. A helpmate. Gen. 2:18-20.
2. Created from a rib. Gen. 2:21, 22.

II. The First Marriage and the Ideal Home

3. Words of welcome. Gen. 2:23.
4. The bonds of love. Eph. 5:28.
5. The sacredness of marriage. Matt. 19:3-6.
6. The Eden home. Gen. 2:15.

III. The Temptation and Fall

7. The single restriction. Gen. 2:16, 17.
8. The voice of the tempter. Gen. 3:1.
9. Talking with the serpent. Gen. 3:2-6.
10. The tragic results. Gen. 3:7.
11. Self-justification. Gen. 3:12, 13.

IV. The First Prophecy of Scripture

12. A ray of hope. Gen. 3:15.
13. The lot of Eve. Gen. 3:16.
14. Eve's children—her hope of promise fulfilled. Gen. 4:1, 2; 5:3, 4.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"As Adam came forth from the hand of his Creator, he was of noble height, and of beautiful symmetry. He was more than twice as tall as men now living upon the earth and was well proportioned. His features were perfect and beautiful. His complexion was neither white, nor sallow, but ruddy, glowing with the rich tint of health. Eve was not quite as tall as Adam. Her head reached a little above his shoulders. She, too, was noble—perfect in symmetry, and very beautiful."—*Spirit of Prophecy,* page 25 (1870 ed.).

"Our first parents, though created innocent and holy, were not placed beyond the possibility of wrongdoing. God made them free moral agents, capable of appreciating the wisdom and benevolence of His character and the justice of His requirements, and with full liberty to yield or to withhold obedience. They were to enjoy communion with God and with holy angels; but before they could be rendered eternally secure, their loyalty must be tested."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 48.

The Creation of Eve

1. After God had created everything else, what did He say was still needful for man? Gen. 2:18-20.

NOTE.—A "help meet for him," or a helpmate; that is, someone fit or suitable; a counterpart or companion. Each was to be suited to the other's needs.

"Man was not made to dwell in solitude; he was to be a social being. Without companionship the beautiful scenes and delightful employments of Eden would have failed to yield perfect happiness. Even communion with angels could not have satisfied his desire for sympathy and companionship. There was none of the same nature to love and to be loved."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 46.

2. What did the Creator then proceed to do? Gen. 2:21, 22.

NOTE.—Skeptics may ridicule this story, yet it is simple, beautiful, and full of meaning. "Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him. A part of man, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, she was his second self, showing the close union and the affectionate attachment that should exist in this relation."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 46.

The First Marriage and the Ideal Home

3. What did Adam say when God presented his companion to him? Gen. 2:23.

NOTE.—"In joyful astonishment, his [Adam's] eye now rested with the intense thrill of first love. Instinctively, or as the result of divine instruction, he recognized in her part of his own being. He was henceforth to love her as his own body, for in loving her he loves himself."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Gen. 2:23.

4. In what words does Paul indicate this close marital relationship? Eph. 5:28.

5. How did Christ stress the sacredness of the marriage covenant? Matt. 19:3-6.

NOTE.—"These words express the deepest physical and spiritual unity of man and woman, and hold up monogamy before the world as the form of marriage ordained by God."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Gen. 2:24.

6. What ideal home was provided for our first parents? Gen. 2:15.

NOTE.—"Everything that God had made was the perfection of beauty, and nothing seemed wanting that could contribute to the happiness of the holy pair; yet the Creator gave them still another token of His love, by preparing a garden especially for their home. In this garden were trees of every variety, many of them laden with fragrant and delicious fruit. . . . It was the work of Adam and Eve to train the branches of the vine to form bowers, thus making for themselves a dwelling from living trees covered with foliage and fruit. There were fragrant flowers of every hue in rich profusion."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* pages 46, 47.

The Temptation and Fall

7. What single restriction was placed upon the dwellers in Eden? Gen. 2:16, 17.

NOTE.—"Our first parents were not left without a warning of the danger that threatened them. Heavenly messengers opened to them the history of Satan's fall and his plots for their destruction."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 52.

8. On one occasion, what voice did Eve hear? Gen. 3:1.

NOTE.—The expression, "Yea, hath God said?" was a subtle and malicious insinuation of doubt.

9. After conversing with the serpent, how did Eve regard the tree, and what did she do? Gen. 3:2-6.

NOTE.—In this brief contact with Eve, Satan, the "accuser of the brethren," charged God with falsehood, envy, and a lack of love and wisdom. The expression translated, "Ye shall be as gods," may be rendered correctly, "Ye shall be as God." This reveals the blasphemous nature of Satan's charge and the appalling nature of his deception.

The appearance of the tree fascinated Eve. It appealed to her taste, to her eye, and to her desire for wisdom. In part, the temptation of Eve was similar to that which Christ faced in the wilderness; but where she failed, He overcame.

10. As a result of disobedience, what immediately occurred? Gen. 3:7.

NOTE.—"The love and peace which had been theirs was gone, and in its place they felt a sense of sin, a dread of the future, a nakedness of soul. The robe of light which had enshrouded them, now disappeared, and to supply its place they endeavored to fashion for themselves a covering; for they could not, while unclothed, meet the eye of God and holy angels."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 57.

11. What reply did Adam give, then Eve, when questioned by God? Gen. 3:12, 13.

NOTE.—"When the Lord inquired concerning their sin, Adam replied, laying the guilt partly upon God and partly upon his companion. . . . The woman put the blame upon the serpent. . . . Why did You make the serpent? Why did You suffer him to come into Eden? These were the questions implied in her excuse for her sin, thus charging God with the responsibility of their fall. The spirit of self-justification originated in the father of lies, and has been exhibited by all the sons and daughters of Adam. Confessions of this order are not inspired by the divine Spirit, and will not be acceptable to God. True repentance will lead a man to bear his guilt himself, and acknowledge it without deception or hypocrisy."—*Steps to Christ,* page 40.

The First Prophecy of Scripture

12. Before passing sentence upon the man and woman, what words did God speak to the serpent that gave hope and promise to Eve and her husband? Gen. 3:15.

NOTE.—From that day to this there has been conflict between Satan and his followers, and Christ and His people. Fiercely and without interruption the conflict has raged; but on Calvary's cross our Saviour triumphed. Satan's death knell was sounded, and, according to this prophecy, he will at length be destroyed.

13. Because of her sin, what was imposed upon Eve? Gen. 3:16.

NOTE.—"Eve had been perfectly happy by her husband's side in her Eden home; but, like restless modern Eves, she was flattered with the hope of entering a higher sphere than that which God had assigned her. In attempting to rise above her original position, she fell far below it. A similar result will be reached by all who are unwilling to take up cheerfully their life duties in accordance with God's plan. . . . In their desire for a higher sphere, many have sacrificed true womanly dignity and nobility of character."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 59.

14. Following the expulsion from Eden, what is recorded of Eve? Gen. 4:1, 2; 5:3, 4.

NOTE.—*"I have gotten a man from the Lord.* The Hebrew reads literally, 'I have gotten a man, the Lord.' When Eve held her first-born in her arms she apparently remembered the divine promise of ch. 3:15, and entertaining the hope that he was to be the promised Deliverer, named him *Qayin,* 'gotten' (DA 31). Forlorn hope! Her eager longing for the speedy fulfillment of the gospel promise was doomed to meet the most heartbreaking disappointment. Little did she realize that this very child would become the world's first murderer." —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Gen. 4:1.

Aside from these brief references, nothing is known concerning the life of the mother of our race after her expulsion from Eden, but we can learn from her tragic mistakes.

"To Eve it seemed a small thing to disobey God by tasting the fruit of the forbidden tree, and to tempt her husband also to transgress; but their sin opened the floodgates of woe upon the world. Who can know, in the moment of temptation, the terrible consequences that will result from one wrong step?"—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 61.

Thoughts for Meditation

Any raiment of my own righteousness will afford me no protection. Only the garment of Christ's righteousness, woven in the loom of heaven, will suffice in that day when I stand before the great Judge.

"The Sabbath school is a missionary field, and very much more of the missionary spirit should be manifested in this important work."—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work,* page 10.

Sarah and Hagar

MEMORY VERSE: "Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised." Heb. 11:11.

STUDY HELPS: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pages 130, 138, 145-147, 370-373; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

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Sabbath afternoon: General Introduction and survey of the lesson.	☐
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Tuesday: Questions 7-10.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 11-14.	☐
Thursday: Read Study Helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. From Ur of the Chaldees

1. To Haran in Mesopotamia. Gen. 11:26-32.
2. Onward to Canaan. Gen. 12:4, 5.
3. The inspiring promise. Gen. 12:1-3; Heb. 11:8.

II. In Canaan and Egypt

4. Famine in the land. Gen. 12:10.
5. Disguising the truth. Gen. 12:11-13.
6. Perilous results. Gen. 12:14-20.

III. Sarah and Her Maid

7. A human proposal. Gen. 15:2, 3.
8. Another subterfuge. Gen. 16:1, 2.
9. Discord in the home. Gen. 16:5, 6.
10. Hagar in the wilderness. Gen. 16: 7-13.

IV. The Promise and Fulfillment

11. The covenant reaffirmed. Gen. 17: 15-17, 19.
12. The gift of the promised son. Gen. 21:1, 6, 7.
13. Hagar and Ishmael banished. Gen. 21:8-14.

V. The Two Covenants

14. An allegory. Gal. 4:22-31.

THE LESSON

Introduction

Because of their corruption and violence multitudes of the depraved antediluvians perished in the great Flood. But people forget so soon; and many years later, when Abraham and Sarah lived in Ur of the Chaldees, the society was definitely pagan. Idolatry and polygamy were prevalent; yet faith in God was not totally extinct, and Abraham was chosen as "the inheritor of this holy trust." To fulfill the divine purpose he was called to forsake country and kindred and to journey to a distant land. Sarah, his faithful wife (1 Peter 3:5, 6), accompanied him on this great adventure for God.

From Ur of the Chaldees

1. From the land of their nativity, to what place did Abraham, Sarah, and their company journey? Gen. 11: 26-32.

NOTE.—This was a pilgrimage of some 800 miles. Here in Haran they remained for some years, during which time their riches, flocks, and herds greatly increased. Also, "during their stay in Haran, both Abraham and Sarah had led others to the worship and service of the true God. These attached themselves to the patriarch's household, and accompanied him to the land of promise."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 127.

2. After the death of Terah, what was Abraham bidden to do? Gen. 12: 4, 5.

NOTE.—"From his father's grave the divine Voice bade him [Abraham] go forward. His brother Nahor with his household clung to their home and their idols. Besides Sarah, the wife of Abraham, only Lot, the son of Haran long since dead, chose to share the patriarch's pilgrim life. Yet it was a large company that set out from Mesopotamia. Abraham already possessed extensive flocks and herds, the riches of the East, and he was surrounded by a numerous body of servants and retainers. He was departing from the land of his fathers, never to return, and he took with him all that he had, 'their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran.' "—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 127.

3. What divine promises inspired them to continue on this hazardous journey? Gen. 12:1-3; Heb. 11:8.

In Canaan and Egypt

4. After the family reached Canaan what scourge came upon the land, and what did the family do? Gen. 12:10.

5. On entering Egypt what misgivings troubled Abraham and Sarah, and how did they reveal distrust in God's keeping power? Gen. 12:11-13.

NOTE.—"During his stay in Egypt, Abraham gave evidence that he was not free from human weakness and imperfection. In concealing the fact that Sarah was his wife, he betrayed a distrust of the divine care, a lack of that lofty faith and courage so often and nobly exemplified in his life. . . . He reasoned that he was not guilty of falsehood in representing Sarah as his sister, for she was the daughter of his father, though not of his mother. But this concealment of the real relation between them was deception. No deviation from strict integrity can meet God's approval."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 130.

6. What dire results followed this evasion of the real truth? Gen. 12: 14-20.

NOTE.—"Through Abraham's lack of faith, Sarah was placed in great peril. The king of Egypt, being informed of her beauty, caused her to be taken to his palace, intending to make her his wife. But the Lord, in His great mercy, protected Sarah by sending judgments upon the royal household. By this means the monarch learned the truth in the matter, and, indignant at the deception practiced upon him, he reproved Abraham and restored to him his wife."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 130.

In humiliation they were expelled from the country.

Sarah and Her Maid

7. As time passed and Sarah had no son, to what distrust of the divine promise did Abraham give expression? Gen. 15:2, 3.

NOTE.—It was proposed that their trusted servant Eliezer should be adopted as son and heir. But God gave the assurance that the heir would be Abraham's own son.

8. After a further period of waiting, what plan did Sarah recommend? Gen. 16:1, 2.

NOTE.—"Thinking it impossible that a child should be given her in her old age, Sarah suggested, as a plan by which the divine purpose might be fulfilled, that one of her handmaidens should be taken by Abraham as a secondary wife. Polygamy had become so widespread that it had ceased to be regarded as a sin, but it was no less a violation of the law of God, and was fatal to the sacredness and peace of the family relation. Abraham's marriage with Hagar resulted in evil, not only to his own household, but to future generations." —*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 145.

9. After Abraham's marriage to Hagar, what troubles soon arose in the home, and what did Hagar do? Gen. 16:5, 6.

10. What experience came to Hagar in the wilderness? Gen. 16:7-13.

NOTE.—"In the way to Shur." Hagar had evidently traveled several days on the way to her native Egypt (see Gen. 25:18; 1 Sam. 15:7); now she was to return and submit meekly to her mistress. At the birth of Ishmael, Abraham was eighty-six years of age and Sarah was ten years younger. During the next thirteen years they evidently continued under the illusion that Ishmael was the promised heir. See Gen. 17:1, 18.

The Promise and Fulfillment

11. When Sarah was about ninety years of age, what promise was repeated? Gen. 17:15-17, 19.

NOTE.—"In token of the fulfillment of this covenant, his name, heretofore called Abram, was changed to Abraham, which signifies, 'father of a great multitude.' Sarai's name became Sarah—'princess;' for, said the divine Voice, 'she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.' "—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* pages 137, 138.

12. At the birth of Isaac, what expression of joy came from the lips of Sarah? Gen. 21:1, 6, 7.

13. On the occasion when Isaac was weaned, what incident disturbed the peace of the family? with what result? Gen. 21:8-14.

NOTE.—Although Ishmael became an exile from his parental home, the promise of God was nevertheless fulfilled (Gen. 16:10), and his descendants, the Ishmaelites, were a numerous people. Large numbers of Arabs of today regard Ishmael as their great ancestor. As for Sarah, she lived until Isaac was thirty-seven years of age, and was buried in the cave of Machpelah. See Gen. 23:1, 19.

The Two Covenants

14. In what way is the story of Sarah, Hagar (or Agar), and their sons employed to illustrate the two covenants? Gal. 4:22-31.

NOTE.—Ishmael, son of the bondwoman, was born "after the flesh." He came as the result of human devisings and attempts to fulfill the promise of God. He was a living testimony to "works" without faith, a symbol of the old covenant.

For nearly twenty-five years Sarah and her husband had been anxious and questioning concerning the covenant promise; but at length faith triumphed; they believed God and He counted it to them for righteousness. At last, when the fulfillment appeared humanly impossible, there came the miracle birth; and Isaac was preeminently the son of faith and the gift God. He was born of the freewoman, and represented the new covenant.

Thoughts for Meditation

Am I living under the old covenant or the new?

Have I "cast out the bondwoman and her son"?

Do I run ahead of God's providences and follow my own human devisings?

Sarah as well as Abraham led the members of her household to the worship of the living God. Do I do as well in my home? See *Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 144.

Rebekah, Wife From a Far Country

MEMORY VERSE: "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." Prov. 31:10-12.

STUDY HELPS: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pages 171-182; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

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Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Instructions to Eliezer

1. Abraham's deep concern. Gen. 24:1-3.
2. A pledge required. Gen. 24:4-9.

II. The Mission to Mesopotamia

3. Eliezer's prayer. Gen. 24:10-14.
4. The remarkable answer. Gen. 24:15-21.
5. Visit in Rebekah's home. Gen. 24:22-56.
6. "I will go." Gen. 24:57-60.

III. Home Life of Rebekah and Isaac

7. The happy meeting. Gen. 24:62-67.
8. The birth of twins. Gen. 25:20, 24.
9. Unwise favoritism. Gen. 25:27, 28.
10. Sadness to the parents. Gen. 26:34, 35; 27:46.

IV. Deception and Its Bitter Consequences

11. A divine forecast. Gen. 25:21-23.
12. Isaac's determination. Gen. 27:1-4.
13. A resort to stratagem. Gen. 27:6-10.
14. The bitter harvest. Gen. 27:41-45.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The longest chapter in the book of Genesis is devoted entirely and in minute detail to the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah. Here is a charming and beautiful story. In the narrative of the bridal mission, the 450-mile trip by camel caravan to Padan-aram, the chivalrous reception accorded to Eliezer, and the romantic meeting of the two young people on the return, all present a lively picture of Oriental manners and customs in that primitive patriarchal age.

"For the first time since the sinless loves of Eden were blasted, it shows us wedlock receiving a fresh consecration. . . . Within the shelter of God's covenant love grows pure again. . . . The wooing of Rebekah and her betrothal to Isaac are the earliest in a happy series of Bible passages devoted to the elevation of the marriage bond."—Butler, *The Bible Work,* vol. 1, pp. 406, 407.

Instructions to Eliezer

1. As Abraham was growing old, what special burden rested upon his heart? Gen. 24:1-3.

NOTE.—"The inhabitants of Canaan were given to idolatry, and God had forbidden intermarriage between His people and them, knowing that such marriages would lead to apostasy. . . . In the mind of Abraham the choice of a wife for his son was a matter of grave importance; he was anxious to have him marry one who would not lead him from God."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 171.

2. What specific instructions were given to Eliezer, and what oath or pledge did Abraham require? Gen. 24:4-9.

NOTE.—"Abraham committed the important matter to 'his eldest servant,' a man of piety, experience, and sound judgment, who had rendered him long and faithful service."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 172. "Isaac, trusting to his father's wisdom and affection, was satisfied to commit the matter to him, believing also that God Himself would direct in the choice made." —*Ibid.,* p. 171.

The Mission to Mesopotamia

3. As he was approaching the city of Nahor, also known as Haran, what prayer did Eliezer offer? Gen. 24: 10-14.

4. In what remarkable way was this prayer answered? Gen. 24:15-21.

NOTE.—"Hardly was the prayer uttered before the answer was given. Among the women who were gathered at the well, the courteous manners of one attracted his attention. As she came from the well, the stranger went to meet her, asking for some water from the pitcher upon her shoulder. The request received a kindly answer, with an offer to draw water for the camels also, a service which it was customary even for the daughters of princes to perform for their fathers' flocks and herds. Thus the desired sign was given. The maiden 'was very fair to look upon,' and her ready courtesy gave evidence of a kind heart and an active, energetic nature. Thus far the divine hand had been with him. After acknowledging her kindness by rich gifts, the messenger asked her parentage, and on learning that she was the daughter of Bethuel, Abraham's nephew, he 'bowed down his head, and worshiped the Lord.' " —*Patriarchs and Prophets,* pages 172, 173.

5. Relate the various incidents in the visit of Eliezer to the family of Bethuel. Gen. 24:22-56.

6. What was Rebekah's response to the proposal of marriage, and what parting blessing was given her? Gen. 24:57-60.

Home Life of Rebekah and Isaac

7. Describe Rebekah's meeting with Isaac. Gen. 24:62-67.

NOTE.—"The result of that marriage, as presented in the Scriptures, is a tender and beautiful picture of domestic happiness. . . .

"What a contrast between the course of Isaac and that pursued by the youth of our time, even among professed Christians! Young people too often feel that the bestowal of their affections is a matter in which self alone should be consulted—a matter that neither God nor their parents should in any wise control. . . . Many have thus wrecked their happiness in this life and their hope of the life to come.

"If there is any subject which should be carefully considered and in which the counsel of older and more experienced persons should be sought, it is the subject of mar-

riage; if ever the Bible was needed as a counselor, if ever divine guidance should be sought in prayer, it is before taking a step that binds persons together for life." —*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 175.

8. After Rebekah and Isaac had waited for twenty years, how were their hopes for a family realized? Gen. 25:20, 24.

NOTE.—Like Abraham and Sarah, they were to understand that children of promise are not simply born in the natural order, but are in a special sense the gift of God.

9. How are the two sons described, and what is said of the attitude of their parents? Gen. 25:27, 28.

NOTE.—The unwise favoritism displayed in this once happy home was most unfortunate. It brought division and enmity between the brothers; and for many centuries there was bitter hostility between the Israelites and the posterity of Esau, known as the Edomites.

10. What acts on the part of Esau brought grief and sadness to his parents? Gen. 26:34, 35; 27:46.

NOTE.—"Those who would find true happiness must have the blessing of Heaven upon all that they possess and all that they do. It is disobedience to God that fills so many hearts and homes with misery. My sister, unless you would have a home where the shadows are never lifted, do not unite yourself with one who is an enemy of God."—*The Adventist Home,* page 67.

Deception and Its Bitter Consequences

11. Prior to the birth of her two sons, what had the Lord revealed to Rebekah? Gen. 25:21-23.

12. In spite of this divine forecast concerning Jacob and Esau, what did Isaac plan to do? Gen. 27:1-4.

NOTE.—"Years passed on, until Isaac, old and blind, and expecting soon to die, determined no longer to delay the bestowal of the blessing upon his elder son. But knowing the opposition of Rebekah and Jacob, he decided to perform the solemn ceremony in secret."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 179.

This blessing included the birthright privileges as head of the family, priest of the household, and inheritor of the father's wealth.

13. When Rebekah overheard Isaac's secret conversation with Esau, what did she instruct Jacob to do? Gen. 27:6-10.

NOTE.—"Rebekah divined his purpose. She was confident that it was contrary to what God had revealed as His will. Isaac was in danger of incurring the divine displeasure and of debarring his younger son from the position to which God had called him. She had in vain tried the effect of reasoning with Isaac, and she determined to resort to stratagem."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 180.

14. Because of the deception practiced upon the aged Isaac, how was the family chastened? Gen. 27:41-45.

NOTE.—"Rebekah bitterly repented the wrong counsel she had given her son; it was the means of separating him from her, and she never saw his face again. From the hour when he received the birthright, Jacob was weighed down with self-condemnation. He had sinned against his father, his brother, his own soul, and against God. In one short hour he had made work for a lifelong repentance."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 180.

Isaac and Esau were also thwarted in their plans and bitterly grieved. See Gen. 27:33-35.

Thoughts for Meditation

May Christians rightly assume that "the end justifies the means," or that they may do evil that good may come?

If Christian husbands or wives act independently, not sharing their secrets or desires with each other, what grave perils are in store?

"There is a sacred circle around every family which should be preserved. No other one has any right in that sacred circle. The husband and wife should be all to each other. The wife should have no secrets to keep from her husband and let others know, and the husband should have no secrets to keep from his wife to relate to others."—*The Adventist Home,* page 177.

Would the courtesy and kindness of my public conduct distinguish me in a group of strangers, as did Rebekah's at the well when unknowingly observed by Eliezer? (*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 172.)

Lesson 4, for July 28, 1962

Rachel and Leah

MEMORY VERSE: "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her." Gen. 29:20.

STUDY HELPS: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pages 188-190, 206; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General Introduction and survey of the lesson.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-4.	☐
Monday: Questions 5-9.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 10-12.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 13, 14; begin reading Study Helps.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading Study Helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Jacob and Rachel Meet

1. At the well near Haran. Gen. 29:1-6.
2. The cousins meet. Gen. 29:9-12.
3. Laban's cordial greeting. Gen. 29:13-15.
4. An agreement reached. Gen. 29:16-19.

II. The Years in Padan-aram

5. Seven years of happy toil. Gen. 29:20.
6. A cruel deception. Gen. 29:21-23.
7. A compromise reached. Gen. 29:25-28.
8. Discord in the home life. Gen. 30:1.
9. Human mistakes overruled. Gen. 30:20, 21.

III. The Flight to Canaan

10. The sudden departure. Gen. 31:1-7, 17-20.
11. Search for the stolen gods. Gen. 31:26-35.
12. The household cleansed from idols. Gen. 35:2-4.

IV. Death Claims Loved Ones

13. Deborah and Rachel die. Gen. 35:8, 16-20.
14. In fond memory. Gen. 48:7; 49:31; Jer. 31:15, 16; Matt. 2:17, 18.

Introduction

Acting on Rebekah's proposal, Jacob conspired to impersonate Esau before his aged father Isaac, and obtained the paternal blessing and birthright. Threatened with death by his infuriated brother, Jacob followed the counsel of his parents, and as an exile from home, made the long, 450-mile journey northward to his mother's ancestral home at Haran, near Padan-aram. About ninety-seven years had elapsed since Eliezer made the same trip to secure Rebekah as a wife for Isaac.

Jacob and Rachel Meet

1. As Jacob neared his destination, whom did he see and what conversation ensued? Gen. 29:1-6.

2. Describe the meeting of Jacob and Rachel. Gen. 29:9-12.

NOTE.—Then, as now, the well in Middle Eastern countries was frequently a meeting place for shepherds and travelers. Also, a young woman, even among rich and prosperous families, often serves as shepherdess of her father's flock. At this well near Haran the cousins met for the first time in their lives, and it appeared to be love at first sight.

3. After his cordial greeting, what proposal did Laban make to Jacob? Gen. 29:13-15.

4. What was Jacob's reply, and what agreement was reached? Gen. 29:16-19.

The Years in Padan-aram

5. What brief statement depicts the seven-year period of service? Gen. 29:20.

NOTE.—"Jacob gave evidence of his devoted affection for Rachel, not alone by his willingness to serve seven years for her, but even more by the spirit in which he worked for his avaricious uncle. Many as were the days that must pass before Rachel should become his bride, they were rendered happy by his love for her. The words used by Moses to express the depth of Jacob's love breathe pure affection and tender devotion.—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Gen. 29:20.

6. At the close of this term of service what cruel deception was practiced upon Jacob? Gen. 29:21-23.

7. How did Jacob react to this grevious imposition, and how was the difficulty adjusted? Gen. 29: 25-28.

NOTE.—Jacob was now reaping what he had sown. The supplanter and deceiver is himself the victim of faithless intrigue. However, Laban's covetous scheme partially appeased Jacob, and at the close of the seven-day wedding feast, Rachel became his wife.

"Polygamy had become so widespread that it had ceased to be regarded as a sin, but it was no less a violation of the law of God, and was fatal to the sacredness and peace of the family relation."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 145.

8. As a result of this dual marriage, what difficulties arose in the home life? Gen. 30:1.

NOTE.—Leah considered that she was hated. See Gen. 29:31, 33. "The fact that Leah herself was a party to the cheat, caused Jacob to feel that he could not love her. His indignant rebuke to Laban was met with the offer of Rachel for another seven years' service. But the father insisted that Leah should not be discarded, since this would bring disgrace upon the family. Jacob was thus placed in a most

painful and trying position; he finally decided to retain Leah and marry Rachel. Rachel was ever the one best loved; but his preference for her excited envy and jealousy, and his life was embittered by the rivalry between the sister-wives."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* pages 189, 190.

9. How many children were born to Leah? Gen. 30:20, 21.

NOTE.—The psalmist declares: "The wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain." Ps. 76:10. The divine purpose cannot be thwarted, and in His providence God overrules the mistakes of men to His glory. Leah appears to have been a worshiper of the true God and a good mother. One of her sons, Judah, became the leader among the twelve brothers; and on the occasion of Jacob's dying benediction to his sons, the crowning blessing of the birthright was bestowed upon Judah. Along the kingly line of his posterity were David, Solomon, and the "Lion of the tribe of Judah"—Jesus Christ.

The Flight to Canaan

10. After twenty years of service to Laban, what did Jacob and his family proceed to do? Gen. 31:1-7, 17-20.

11. When Laban pursued and overtook the wayfarers, what incident occurred? Gen. 31:26-35.

NOTE.—These gods, or teraphim, were small images, or household gods, and whether regarded as mere relics or real objects of worship, they are denounced in Scripture as "an abomination." In concealing her theft by subtlety, Rachel simulated the crafty ways of both father and husband.

12. Following an eventful journey to Canaan, what instruction did Jacob give to his household, and with what result? Gen. 35:2-4.

NOTE.—"He [Jacob] determined that before going to this sacred spot his household should be freed from the defilement of idolatry. . . .

"As he reviewed the wonderful dealings of God with him, his own heart was softened, his children also were touched by a subduing power; he had taken the most effectual way to prepare them to join in the worship of God when they should arrive at Bethel."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 205.

Undoubtedly these strange gods included the teraphim that Rachel had taken from her father. The co-operation of the household in this reform is commendable. Even the jewelry was discarded.

Death Claims Loved Ones

13. Soon after entering Canaan, what two funerals occurred? Gen. 35:8, 16-20.

NOTE.—Deborah, who had been a beloved nurse in the family of Rebekah and her children for over 125 years, passed away, and was buried with expressions of extreme sorrow. Rachel also, while giving birth to Benjamin, died along the journey between Bethel and Bethlehem. This brought crushing sorrow to Jacob. For her he had toiled fourteen years. His love for her was deep and abiding, and to perpetuate her memory Jacob erected over her grave a stone pillar that remained as a famous landmark for several centuries. See 1 Sam. 10:2.

14. What further references to Rachel and Leah are found in Scripture? Gen. 48:7; 49:31; Jer. 31:15, 16; Matt. 2:17, 18.

NOTE.—Near the close of his life, as Jacob was bestowing farewell blessings upon his sons, he tenderly mentioned Rachel and Leah. A thousand years later it appears that the town of Ramah, near the tomb of Rachel, was the site of a prison

camp for Jewish exiles on their way to Babylonian captivity. Here many were killed and others brutally treated; hence "Rachel is represented as witnessing the distress experienced by her descendants and as weeping bitterly for her children. Matthew, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, applied this passage to Herod's massacre of the children of Bethlehem."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Jer. 31:15.

The beautiful promise to Rachel in Jer. 31:16 has also afforded blessed comfort and assurance to unnumbered mothers in Israel whose children have been ruthlessly snatched from their breasts. "They shall come again from the land of the enemy."

Thoughts for Meditation

Am I contributing my full share to a happy Christian home? Here is the divine prescription: Eph. 5:2, 21.

Before Rachel and the family went to Bethel, they put away their idols and Jacob buried them. How may I know that I have surrendered every idol?

Lesson 5, for August 4, 1962

Miriam the Prophetess

MEMORY VERSE: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." Ps. 107:1, 2.

STUDY HELPS: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pages 243, 288, 382-385; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General Introduction and survey of the lesson.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1, 2.	☐
Monday: Questions 3, 4; begin reading from Study Helps.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 5-10.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 11, 12; read further from Study Helps.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading Study Helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Watcher on the Riverbank

1. Alert and on guard. Ex. 2:1-4.
2. Conversation with Pharaoh's daughter. Ex. 2:5-9.

II. Poet, Musician, Prophetess

3. Associated with Moses and Aaron. Micah 6:4.
4. A musician and singer. Ex. 15:20, 21.

III. Her Criticism and Its Penalty

5. Finding fault with Moses. Num. 12:1.
6. A further complaint. Num. 12:2.
7. The divine rebuke. Num. 12:4-9.
8. Smitten with leprosy. Num. 12:10-12.
9. The virus of envy. Prov. 14:30; 27:4.
10. Reaping the harvest. Rom. 1:29-32; Gal. 5:19-21.

IV. Her Restoration

11. Prayer and healing. Num. 12:13-15.
12. The death of Miriam. Num. 20:1.

Introduction

The circumstances of Israel's sojourn in Egypt are well known. Located in the fertile section of Goshen, Jacob's descendants prospered and multiplied while the Egyptians became jealous and apprehensive. The friendly Hyksos had been driven out, and the new dynasty, kings who "knew not Joseph," subjected the Israelites to abject slavery, treating them with extreme cruelty. Under these circumstances Amram and Jochebed of the tribe of Levi were blessed with the gift of three children—Miriam, Aaron, and Moses.

The Watcher on the Riverbank

1. In connection with what incident is Miriam first mentioned in Scripture? Ex. 2:1-4.

NOTE.—Aaron was three years old when Moses was born, and Miriam must have been several years older.

Moses' mother did not dare to remain near the ark to guard it, "lest the child's life and her own should be forfeited; but his sister, Miriam, lingered near, apparently indifferent, but anxiously watching to see what would become of her little brother." —*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 243.

2. When Pharaoh's daughter found little Moses in the ark, what tactful inquiry did Miriam make, and with what result? Ex. 2:5-9.

NOTE.—"The faith and resourcefulness of a loving mother and the tact and skill of a prudent sister were crowned with success. Not only was Moses' life saved but he was, as well, returned to his own cradle and to the bosom of his own mother."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Ex. 2:8.

Reliable evidence points to the belief by archaeologists that the "Pharaoh's daughter" here mentioned later became Queen Hatshepsut, the most remarkable woman sovereign of ancient Egypt, also the patron and protector of the youthful Moses.

Poet, Musician, Prophetess

3. In the emancipation of Israel from Egypt, what three individuals had a prominent part? Micah 6:4.

NOTE.—For approximately eighty years nothing is known concerning the activities of Miriam; but when the hour arrived for God to liberate His people from bondage, she and her brother Aaron were given positions of "high honor and leadership in Israel. Both were endowed with the prophetic gift," and both were "divinely associated with Moses in the deliverance of the Hebrews."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 382.

4. When the Israelites were safe from Pharaoh's army on the victory shore of the Red Sea, in what expressions of joy did Miriam lead all the women? Ex. 15:20, 21.

NOTE.—In this moment of triumph Miriam appears as an inspired and talented director of music. "Miriam, with her chorus of women, sang in response to the male chorus, probably at the termination of each stanza of the song (after vs. 5, 10, 18). The words of Miriam's refrain, 'Sing ye to the lord,' etc., were also the opening words of Moses' song of victory (v. 1)."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Ex. 15:21.

Her Criticism and Its Penalty

5. Not long after leaving Mount Sinai, what criticism did Miriam and Aaron voice against Moses? Num. 12:1.

NOTE.—"Yielding to the spirit of dissatisfaction, Miriam found cause of complaint in events that God had especially overruled. The marriage of Moses had been displeasing to her. That he should choose a woman of another nation, instead of

taking a wife from among the Hebrews, was an offense to her family and national pride. Zipporah was treated with ill-disguised contempt.

"Though called a 'Cushite woman' (Numbers 12:1, R.V.), the wife of Moses was a Midianite, and thus a descendant of Abraham. In personal appearance she differed from the Hebrews in being of a somewhat darker complexion. Though not an Israelite, Zipporah was a worshiper of the true God."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 383.

6. What other complaint did they make against their brother? Num. 12:2.

NOTE.—"In the appointment of the seventy elders Miriam and Aaron had not been consulted, and their jealousy was excited against Moses. At the time of Jethro's visit, while the Israelites were on the way to Sinai, the ready acceptance by Moses of the counsel of his father-in-law had aroused in Aaron and Miriam a fear that his influence with the great leader exceeded theirs. In the organization of the council of elders they felt that their position and authority had been ignored. . . .

"Smarting under the supposed neglect shown to herself and Aaron, she regarded the wife of Moses as the cause, concluding that her influence had prevented him from taking them into his counsels as formerly." —*Patriarchs and Prophets,* pages 382-384.

7. How did the Lord regard this spirit of criticism? Num. 12:4-9.

NOTE.—"God had chosen Moses, and had put His Spirit upon him; and Miriam and Aaron, by their murmurings, were guilty of disloyalty, not only to their appointed leader, but to God Himself. The seditious whisperers were summoned to the tabernacle, and brought face to face with Moses."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* pages 384, 385.

8. What fateful occurrences indicated the divine disfavor? Num. 12: 10-12.

NOTE.—"The cloud disappeared from the tabernacle in token of God's displeasure, and Miriam was smitten. She 'became leprous, white as snow.' Aaron was spared, but he was severely rebuked in Miriam's punishment. Now, their pride humbled in the dust, Aaron confessed their sin, and entreated that his sister might not be left to perish by that loathsome and deadly scourge."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 385.

9. What does Solomon say concerning the grave sin of envy (or jealousy)? Prov. 14:30; 27:4.

10. In what category of gross sins does envy occur, and what retribution is in store for those who cherish this evil? Rom. 1:29-32; Gal. 5:19-21.

Her Restoration

11. What prayer for healing did Moses offer? What salutary punishment was required? Num. 12:13-15.

NOTE.—In the outcry against Moses, it is evident that Miriam had been the principal offender. According to the Mosaic code, a person suffering from leprosy, or recovering from that malady, must go into isolation. In compliance with this, Miriam, a victim not only of physical leprosy but also of the leprosy of sin (envy), must be placed in quarantine. "Not until she was banished from the encampment did the symbol of God's favor again rest upon the tabernacle."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 385.

12. What brief record of Miriam's death is given in Scripture? Num. 20:1.

NOTE.—Following Miriam's grievous sin she lived thirty-eight years, and died at an age of some 132 years. This occurred about four months before Aaron's death and eleven months before Moses died. Follow-

ing the death of the two brothers there were official periods of mourning, but none is recorded for Miriam. Could it be that this was omitted because the sin of envy had marred this otherwise beautiful and dedicated life?

Thoughts for Meditation

When tempted to criticize another, what should I remember? There is a Scriptural plan for dealing with wrongs among the membership of the church. See Matt. 18: 15-17. Again, Satan is denounced as the accuser of the brethren, and those who continue to follow his sinister example are often led down the perilous trail to apostasy.

How may I overcome every temptation to envy, jealousy, and unkind criticism? Yield to Him who has promised to bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Let this mind be in you, and think on the pure, the true, and the beautiful. 2 Cor. 10:5; Phil. 2:5; 4:8.

Lesson 6, for August 11, 1962

Rahab; Deborah

MEMORY VERSE: "Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves. Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes; I, even I, will sing unto the Lord; I will sing praise to the Lord God of Israel." Judges 5:2, 3.

STUDY HELPS: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pages 483, 491-493, 545; "Prophets and Kings," page 369; "Christ's Object Lessons," page 301; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General Introduction and survey of the lesson.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-5.	☐
Monday: Questions 6-8.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 9-11.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 12-14.	☐
Thursday: Read Study Helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Rahab Protects the Spies

1. In the home on the wall. Joshua 2:1.
2. The king's attempt to take the spies. Joshua 2:2, 3.
3. Rahab's strategy. Joshua 2:4-6.
4. Her remarkable confession of faith. Joshua 2:8-11.
5. The mutual pledge. Joshua 2:12-18.

II. Rahab Honored and Rewarded

6. Rescued from the doomed city. Joshua 6:22, 23.
7. Welcomed and esteemed. Joshua 6:25; Ruth 4:21, 22; Matt. 1:5.
8. Her faith commended. Heb. 11:31; James 2:25.

III. Deborah, Prophetess and Judge

9. The call for liberation. Judges 4:4-7.
10. Onward to the battlefield. Judges 4:8-10.
11. The victory. Judges 4:14-16, 23.

IV. The Song of Victory

12. Praise to the Lord. Judges 5:1-3.
13. The failure of Meroz. Judges 5:23.
14. The reward of loyalty. Judges 5:31.

Introduction

For forty long years the Israelites wandered about in "that great and terrible wilderness" of the Sinai Peninsula. A new generation with new leaders were about to cross over Jordan into the Promised Land; and the two spies sent by Joshua to investigate the fortifications of Jericho, won Rahab and her family from paganism to the worship of the living God.

A century and a half after Israel's settlement in Canaan and following periods of apostasy in Israel and oppression by neighboring kingdoms, Deborah the prophetess became judge over the chosen people. During the years in which the judges ruled in Israel she appears to have been the only woman who was elevated to that office.

Rahab Protects the Spies

1. As Joshua was about to lead Israel to the conquest of Canaan, to what city did he send spies, and where did they lodge? Joshua 2:1.

2. When the king of Jericho heard that spies had entered his city, what did he seek to do? Joshua 2:2, 3.

3. How did Rahab protect the spies? Joshua 2:4-6.

NOTE.—It must be remembered that Rahab lived in a corrupt pagan society, and that among the "abominations of the heathen," such things as lying and immorality were not regarded as great sins. To save the lives of her guests she told a series of falsehoods.

"Rahab was faced with what seemed to her a choice between a greater and a lesser evil: to share in the responsibility of the death of two men whom she believed to be messengers of God, or to tell a lie and save them. To a Christian a lie can never be justified, but to a person like Rahab light comes but gradually."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Joshua 2:4.

4. What confession of faith did Rahab express? Joshua 2:8-11.

NOTE.—"In wicked Jericho the testimony of a heathen woman was, 'The Lord your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.' . . . The knowledge of Jehovah that had thus come to her, proved her salvation. By faith 'Rahab perished not with them that believed not.' . . . And her conversion was not an isolated case of God's mercy toward idolaters who acknowledged His divine authority."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 369. Observe these expressions, "Our hearts did melt," and "I know." While the inhabitants of Jericho were trembling in terror, Rahab believed, and passed from fear to faith.

5. What request did Rahab make, and what mutual pledge was given? Joshua 2:12-18.

Rahab Honored and Rewarded

6. When Jericho was overthrown, what became of Rahab and her household? Joshua 6:22, 23.

NOTE.—Rahab had saved the lives of the spies; now they approach the house on the wall with a "scarlet threat in the window," and the occupants are saved. Before the fated city is destroyed this brave woman and her family are conducted to a place of safety "without the camp of Israel." There they would be purified and purged from their pagan customs and beliefs, and instructed in the worship and service of the true God.

7. After being welcomed into the house of Israel, how was Rahab honored? Joshua 6:25; Ruth 4:21, 22; Matt. 1:5.

NOTE.—Since the Scriptures make no mention of a husband, it is inferred that at the time of Jericho's capture Rahab had none. From the above texts it is evident that after her adoption by the chosen people she married Salmon, a prince of Judah, and thus became the mother of Boaz and a favored ancestor of David, Solomon, and Jesus Christ. Truly, God "raises up the poor from the dust; He lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor." 1 Sam. 2:8, R.S.V. Even so Rahab is taken from the mire of an idolatrous society, transplanted into the family of God, and made the mother of a blessed and royal posterity. Nor was He who stooped to take man's fallen nature ashamed of His ancestry.

8. In what language do New Testament writers commend the faith and courage of Rahab? Heb. 11:31; James 2:25.

Deborah, Prophetess and Judge

9. After a period of apostasy in Israel and oppression by a Canaanite king, what steps did the prophetess Deborah take to liberate her people? Judges 4:4-7.

10. How did Barak respond to the call, and what did Deborah do to support the campaign? Judges 4:8-10.

NOTE.—"Deborah's presence would serve to make clear that the undertaking was of God. . . . It is to the credit of Barak that he followed prophetic guidance in the dangerous undertaking. It is also worthy of note that Deborah did not draw back from the course she had prescribed for others. As for Barak, he preferred the humbler role of one who was executing the command that had come from the Lord. He voluntarily retired behind the authority of a woman whom God had animated and inspired."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Judges 4:8.

11. When the opportune moment arrived, what command did Deborah give to the captain of Israel's army, and with what result? Judges 4:14-16, 23.

NOTE.—On the slope of Mount Tabor, Barak's little army awaited the advance of Sisera and his host. "Deborah, with the enthusiasm of a patriot and the inspiration of a prophetess, looked and prayed to heaven for the signal to attack. At length her eye saw it, and she cried: 'Up, for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand!' "—Butler, *The Bible Work,* vol. 3, p. 186.

The Song of Victory

12. When the battle was won, how did Deborah and Barak commemorate Israel's victory? Judges 5:1-3.

NOTE.—This song, including the entire chapter of thirty-one verses, is considered "one of the greatest martial poems ever written." While God is given full praise for the glorious triumph, His heroes in the conflict are also eulogized. The poem especially commends the valiant soldiers of Zebulun and Naphtali as "a people that jeoparded their lives unto the death." It gives eloquent praise to Jael, the wife of Heber, for her fearless deed in executing the captain of the Canaanite army and thus fulfilling the divine promise, "I will deliver him into thine hand." Judges 5:18; 4:7, 9.

13. In contrast to the grave and patriotic spirit of others, what did the people of Meroz fail to do, and what curse was pronounced upon them? Judges 5:23.

NOTE.—To be neutral in a time of crisis is treason. "Many of our people are lukewarm. They occupy the position of Meroz, neither for nor against, neither cold nor hot. They hear the words of Christ, but do them not. If they remain in this state,

He will reject them with abhorrence. Many of those who have had great light, great opportunities, and every spiritual advantage praise Christ and the world with the same breath. They bow themselves before God and mammon. They make merry with the children of the world, and yet claim to be blessed with the children of God. They wish to have Christ as their Saviour, but will not bear the cross and wear His yoke." —*Testimonies,* vol. 5, pp. 76, 77.

14. With what words does Deborah's song of triumph close? Judges 5:31.

NOTE.—This radiant picture of those who love and serve God is further enhanced by the prophet Daniel as he declared that the wise would "shine as the brightness of the firmament," and "as the stars forever and ever." Likewise the Master Himself employed the same figure, saying: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Dan. 12:3; Matt. 13:43.

Thoughts for Meditation

The experience of Rahab "teaches three great lessons: (1) Great sin is no bar to repentance. (2) Many who before their conversion led wicked lives may thereafter distinguish themselves as heroes of faith. (3) A reputation once established may cling to a person long after repentance has erased sin from his life."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Joshua 2:1.

From the story of Deborah we learn the vital truth that *human weakness may be replaced by divine strength.* The promise is sure: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee." Isa. 41:10.

Lesson 7, for August 18, 1962

Ruth the Moabitess

MEMORY VERSE: "And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Ruth 1:16.

STUDY HELP: "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General Introduction and survey of the lesson.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-4.	☐
Monday: Questions 5-8.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 9-11.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 12-14.	☐
Thursday: Read Study Help.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. On the Way to Bethlehem

1. Departure from Moab. Ruth 1:6, 7.
2. "For your sakes." Ruth 1:8-13.
3. Orpah returns to Moab. Ruth 1:14.
4. Ruth's memorable decision. Ruth 1:15-17.

II. The Gleaner

5. The welcome at Bethlehem. Ruth 1:19-22.
6. In the harvest field. Ruth 2:2, 3.
7. Spiritually minded Boaz. Ruth 2:1, 4.
8. Ruth receives special favors. Ruth 2:5-16.

III. The Friendly Kinsman

9. A fruitful day of toil. Ruth 2:17-23.
10. Naomi's suggestion. Ruth 3:1-4.
11. The assuring reply. Ruth 3:10-13.

IV. The Happy Marriage

12. Boaz becomes the "redeemer." Ruth 4:1-9.
13. Congratulations of the townspeople. Ruth 4:10-12.
14. Faith rewarded. Ruth 4:13-17, 21, 22.

THE LESSON

Introduction

In the days of the judges and during a time of severe famine, Elimelech and his wife Naomi, of the tribe of Judah, forsook their home country, departed from Bethlehem, and sought refuge in the land of Moab, located east of the Dead Sea. Their two sons accompanied them and married two young women of that country, Orpah and Ruth. Tragedy struck the family, however, and within ten years Elimelech and the two young men died, leaving the three widows. The story of Naomi's return to Bethlehem accompanied by her daughter-in-law, Ruth, is one of the most heart-warming in the Bible.

In this unique story we have an intimate glimpse into the family life of Israel with its adversities and sorrows, its charms and delights, and its portrayal of true affection at its best. "Human kindness, filial piety, affectionate constancy, uncomplaining toil, true chastity, sweet patience, strong faith, noble generosity, simple piety—are all here, and they are all observed by God, and are shown to be pleasing to Him, who rewards them in due time."—Butler, *The Bible Work,* vol. 3, p. 195.

On the Way to Bethlehem

1. When Naomi heard that Judah was again prosperous, what did she and her daughters-in-law do? Ruth 1:6, 7.

2. Along the journey, what conversation took place among the three women? Ruth 1:8-13.

NOTE.—Observe the phrase, "for your sakes." Naomi appears as an ideal mother-in-law. "It was unselfish love for her daughters-in-law that prompted Naomi to urge each of them to return to her parents' home. Oriental custom bound them to her, but she refused to press her claim to their service. She would not compel them to begin life anew in a strange land, but left them free to marry again and to set up their own homes."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Ruth 1:8.

3. How did the young widows react to Naomi's persuasion? Ruth 1:14.

4. As Naomi continued her unselfish plea, what was Ruth's memorable reply? Ruth 1:15-17.

NOTE.—"Ruth's answer is the keynote of the whole book. It is not merely that Ruth's love for her mother-in-law leads her to cleave to Naomi. Ruth has discovered that it is Naomi's faith that makes her a wonderful woman."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Ruth 1:16. In the words of another, "The cord that drew her (Ruth) was twisted of two strands, her love to Naomi and her love of Naomi's God."

Ruth the Gleaner

5. On the arrival of Naomi and Ruth at Bethlehem, how were they received by the townspeople? Ruth 1:19-22.

6. Soon after reaching Bethlehem, what did Ruth propose to do? Where did she go? Ruth 2:2, 3.

NOTE.—It was springtime in Judea, for barley harvest occurred during the months of March and April. At such times farmers were bidden to leave the gleanings "for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow." Deut. 24:19. Knowing of this privilege accorded to the needy, Ruth volunteers to act her part as a faithful, frugal daughter. As a stranger, she knows not where to go, but is guided by a divine hand to the field belonging to Boaz.

Many years later, in this same field, or nearby, Ruth's great-grandson, David the shepherd boy and harpist, guarded his father's flocks; while more than a thousand years later, other shepherds "keeping watch over their flocks by night" heard the angel announcement: "Unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11.

7. Who was Boaz, and how did he treat his workmen? Ruth 2:1, 4.

NOTE.—According to the record it appears that Boaz was the son of Salmon and Rahab. If this is the correct understanding, Ruth became Rahab's daughter-in-law. See Ruth 4:21.

8. When Boaz learned the identity of Ruth, what special favors did he extend to her? Ruth 2:5-16.

NOTE.—The words of Boaz to Ruth, "the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust" (verse 12), carry with them rare significance. Ruth had but recently embraced the religion of Jehovah, and this statement was intended to strengthen her new-found faith. A like figure of speech, "under His wings," was a favorite with Ruth's descendant, David (Ps. 17:8; 36:7; 91:4), and was also employed by Christ (Matt. 23:37).

The Friendly Kinsman

9. At the close of the first day of gleaning, what conversation took place between Ruth and Naomi? Ruth 2:17-23.

NOTE.—As a result of her toil Ruth was able to carry home "about an ephah of barley," or about thirty pounds. See *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Ruth 2:17.

10. Since Boaz had shown such a friendly interest in Ruth, what suggestion did Naomi make? Ruth 3:1-4.

NOTE.—In the Revised Standard Version, verse 1 is translated: "My daughter, should I not seek a home for you?" "Naomi felt it her duty to do what she could to provide a home for the daughter-in-law who had so loyally followed her, and accordingly explained to Ruth her right, according to Jewish custom, to call upon Boaz to perform the duties of a near kinsman. If Boaz agrees to marry her, Ruth will not only have a home of her own but will also be able to perpetuate the name and preserve the heritage of her deceased husband."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Ruth 3:1.

11. When Ruth presented this proposal to Boaz, what was his reply? Ruth 3:10-13.

NOTE.—"A kinsman nearer than I." Property was naturally bequeathed from father to son, but in case of death or adversity the estate might be lost to the family. In such circumstance the nearest of kin had the legal right to redeem it and seek to preserve the family title of inheritance.

The Happy Marriage

12. On the next morning when the two kinsmen met, how was the problem settled? Ruth 4:1-9.

NOTE.—Boaz desired that the transaction should be entirely legal, so the elders or city councilors were called to witness and confirm the procedure. In this case Naomi had specified that the purchaser of the property should also become the husband of Ruth, thus hoping for a grandson who would be the heir to the family estate.

13. How did the townspeople regard this marriage, and when a son was born what words of congratulation were expressed? Ruth 4:10-12.

14. In what wonderful way was the blessing of the people upon Ruth fulfilled? Ruth 4:13-17, 21, 22.

NOTE.—The grand climax of the story is reached. Ruth the Moabitess marries a kinsman, a progenitor of the illustrious family line that gave to the world David, Solomon, and the Lord Jesus Christ. The word translated "kinsman" is from the same Hebrew root as the word that is translated in the Old Testament "redeemer." Accordingly, various Bible writers employed the figure of Christ as the "Near Kinsman" or Redeemer who would deliver man from sin and death. See Job 19:25; Ps. 19:14; Isa. 54:5. Truly our hearts rejoice in gratitude to our "Elder Brother," our "Nearest Kinsman," our Redeemer, who has ransomed us from the power of Satan to become "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ."

Thoughts for Meditation

Shall we not adorn the religion of Christ, making it so lovely, so attractive, that even the pagan heart will exclaim, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God"?

If the Jews of Christ's day had learned the lesson from the book of Ruth, would they have been so rigidly exclusive? Do I require a new appreciation of the worth of every soul for whom Christ died? Am I a respecter of persons?

Lesson 8, for August 25, 1962

Hannah; Rizpah

MEMORY VERSE: "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Ps. 34:18.

STUDY HELPS: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pages 569-574; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General Introduction and survey of the lesson.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-4.	☐
Monday: Questions 5, 6; begin reading Study Helps.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 7-11.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 12-14.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading Study Helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Hannah, a Woman of Piety

1. An unhappy home. 1 Sam. 1:1-6.
2. Hannah's grief. 1 Sam. 1:7-9.
3. A prayer and a vow. 1 Sam. 1:10, 11.
4. Conversation with Eli. 1 Sam. 1:12-18.

II. Answered Prayer

5. The reward of faith. 1 Sam. 1:19, 20.
6. The song of gratitude. 1 Sam. 2:1-10.

III. Hannah and Samuel

7. Her sacred trust. 1 Sam. 1:21-23.
8. Dedicated to the Lord. 1 Sam. 1:24-28.
9. The high priest's benediction. 1 Sam. 2:20, 21.
10. The annual visit and gift. 1 Sam. 2:18, 19.
11. The youthful priest. 1 Sam. 3:18-20.

IV. Rizpah's Undying Love

12. A great sorrow. 2 Sam. 21:8, 9.
13. The lonely vigil. 2 Sam. 21:10.
14. An honored burial. 2 Sam. 21:11-14.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The events recorded in the first part of this lesson occurred during the latter part of Israel's rule by judges, believed to be somewhat prior to 1100 B.C.

"Elkanah, a Levite of Mount Ephraim, was a man of wealth and influence, and one who loved and feared the Lord. His wife, Hannah, was a woman of fervent piety. Gentle and unassuming, her character was marked with deep earnestness and a lofty faith.

"The blessing so earnestly sought by every Hebrew was denied this godly pair; their home was not gladdened by the voice of childhood; and the desire to perpetuate his name led the husband—as it had led many others—to contract a second marriage. But this step, prompted by a lack of faith in God, did not bring happiness." *Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 569.

Hannah, a Woman of Piety

1. What conditions prevailed in Elkanah's home, and how did this affect Hannah? 1 Sam. 1:1-6.

NOTE.—"Sons and daughters were added to the household; but the joy and beauty of God's sacred institution had been marred and the peace of the family was broken. Peninnah, the new wife, was jealous and narrow-minded, and she bore herself with pride and insolence. To Hannah, hope seemed crushed and life a weary burden; yet she met the trial with uncomplaining meekness."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 569.

God has in store a blessing even for the afflicted soul who earnestly seeks Him.

2. When the family went to Shiloh to attend the hallowed feasts, what trouble developed? 1 Sam. 1:7-9.

NOTE.—The tabernacle at Shiloh was only about twelve miles distant from Elkanah's home, and he appears to have been a regular attendant at the annual gatherings. Yet even at these sacred services the domestic troubles seem to have been aggravated. As Elkanah appeared somewhat partial to Hannah, "the second wife, fired with jealousy, claimed the precedence as one highly favored of God, and taunted Hannah with her childless state as evidence of the Lord's displeasure. This was repeated from year to year, until Hannah could endure it no longer. Unable to hide her grief, she wept without restraint, and withdrew from the feast."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* pages 569, 570.

3. As Hannah wept and prayed, what vow did she make? 1 Sam. 1:10, 11.

NOTE.—In this solemn pledge, known as the Nazarite vow, Hannah would dedicate her child from birth to be wholly the Lord's. As a token of this consecration, no razor should "come upon his head."

4. While Hannah was praying in the temple, who spoke to her, and what conversation ensued? 1 Sam. 1:12-18.

Answered Prayer

5. How was Hannah's faith rewarded? 1 Sam. 1:19, 20.

NOTE.—"Hannah's prayer was granted; she received the gift for which she had so earnestly entreated. As she looked upon the child, she called him Samuel—'asked of God.' "—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 570.

6. In what song of praise did Hannah express her gratitude? 1 Sam. 2:1-10.

NOTE.—"The grief of earlier days is now turned to exaltation in the Lord. The prayer of yearning has given place to the praise of divine strength. Her lips, once closed in silent endurance, are now opened to extol God's almighty power. . . . She finds inspiration for song far beyond the range of her own experience, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit looks forward to the joy of the redeemed as they stand on the sea of glass with a 'new song' on their lips. . . .

"Victory takes the place of defeat, and in the fullness of joy the soul is formed in the image of Christ."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on 1 Sam. 2:7, 8.

Hannah and Samuel

7. Following the birth of Samuel, to what task did Hannah especially devote her time and energies? 1 Sam. 1:21-23.

NOTE.—Recognizing her little babe as a heavenly gift, Hannah "sought to have him trained for God from his earliest infancy. She ministered to his physical needs with much care and prayer, directing his thoughts toward the Lord of hosts from the very earliest age. That she might the more perfectly fulfill her trust, she did not visit Shiloh till after he was weaned. How far-reaching is the influence of a mother in Israel!"—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on 1 Sam. 1:22.

8. When the child was weaned, to whom did Hannah present him? 1 Sam. 1:24-28.

NOTE.—The time when Samuel was weaned is not known. In accord with Hebrew custom he may have been from three to five years of age. During those precious years what a priceless privilege was accorded to Hannah!

"There are opportunities of inestimable worth, interests infinitely precious, committed to every mother. The humble round of duties which women have come to regard as a wearisome task should be looked upon as a grand and noble work. It is the mother's privilege to bless the world by her influence, and in doing this she will bring joy to her own heart. She may make straight paths for the feet of her children, through sunshine and shadow, to the glorious heights above."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 572.

9. What blessing did Eli, the high priest, pronounce upon the happy husband and wife? 1 Sam. 2:20, 21.

10. Although separated from her son during most of each year, how did Hannah reveal her continued devotion and love? 1 Sam. 2:18, 19.

NOTE.—"When separated from her child, the faithful mother's solicitude did not cease. Every day he was the subject of her prayers. Every year she made, with her own hands, a robe of service for him; and as she went up with her husband to worship at Shiloh, she gave the child this reminder of her love. Every fiber of the little garment had been woven with a prayer that he might be pure, noble, and true."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 572.

11. How was Hannah's consecrated life and teaching reflected in the character of her son? 1 Sam. 3:18-20.

NOTE.—"Young as he was when brought to minister in the tabernacle, Samuel had even then duties to perform in the service of God, according to his capacity. These were at first very humble, and not always pleasant; but they were performed to the

best of his ability, and with a willing heart. His religion was carried into every duty of life. He regarded himself as God's servant, and his work as God's work. His efforts were accepted, because they were prompted by love to God and a sincere desire to do His will. It was thus that Samuel became a co-worker with the Lord of heaven and earth. And God fitted him to accomplish a great work for Israel."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* pages 573, 574.

Rizpah's Undying Love

12. Who was Rizpah, and what grievous sorrow did she experience? 2 Sam. 21:8, 9.

NOTE.—Rizpah, one of the "lowly folk of the Great Book," had been a secondary wife of King Saul. Tragedy after tragedy had befallen her relatives and friends, and now supposedly to atone for the heartless cruelty of her deceased husband toward the Gibeonites, her two beloved sons, together with five grandsons of Saul, were hanged in Gibeah, not far from the former king's royal palace.

13. When this occurred, what did Rizpah do? 2 Sam. 21:10.

NOTE.—To leave persons unburied indicated that they were held in ignominy. While others despised her sons as criminals, Rizpah demonstrated her motherly love by remaining at the place of execution until they were honorably buried. She could not do what she would like to do, so she did what she could do by protecting their bodies.

On the top of the rock, Rizpah spread her mourning garment of sackcloth; and there for five months, from April to October, this devoted mother kept her lonely vigil. With no tent for a shelter from the scorching summer sun, or the chilling dews of night, she guarded those lifeless bodies from the vultures by day and the wild beasts that prowled by night. Almost beyond the power of tongue to tell was the tender, loving endurance of this mother in Israel.

14. When King David heard of this rare example of mother love, what did he do? 2 Sam. 21:11-14.

NOTE.—This was not a case of extreme and unremitting sorrow, but rather intense maternal love that led Rizpah to seek the safety and honor of the dead.

As the heart of David was stirred to pity and admiration, he ordered an honorable burial. And God, looking down from above to behold a mother's undying love and sacrifice, caused this incident to be recorded in His Book as a memorial to her.

Thoughts for Meditation

In this lesson two remarkable mothers are presented—one for her faith, piety, and influence upon her son Samuel; the other for her heroism, constancy, and exhaustless love for her ill-fated sons.

Beyond any human affection, we are reminded of another "love" that is without parallel—of a love that "is infinite and a tender pity surpassing a mother's yearning sympathy for her wayward child."—*Steps to Christ,* page 15.

Rizpah's mourning for her dead is not to be taken as an example for the Christian to follow in face of death. The apostle Paul instructed the church at Thessalonica concerning "them which are asleep," that they "sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." 1 Thess. 4:13. Ellen G. White, commenting on this text, says:

"Now they rejoiced in the knowledge that their believing friends would be raised from the grave to live forever in the kingdom of God. The darkness that had enshrouded the resting place of the dead was dispelled. A new splendor crowned the Christian faith, and they saw a new glory in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

" 'Even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him,' Paul wrote. Many interpret this passage to mean that the sleeping ones will be brought with Christ from heaven; but Paul meant that as Christ was raised from the dead, so God will call the sleeping saints from their graves and take them with Him to heaven. Precious consolation! glorious hope! not only to the church of Thessalonica, but to all Christians wherever they may be."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 259.

"That Woman Jezebel"

MEMORY VERSE: "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." 1 Kings 18:21.

STUDY HELPS: "Prophets and Kings," pages 114-116, 123-126, 159, 160, 204-207, 215, 216; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

Check Here

Sabbath afternoon: General Introduction and survey of the lesson. ☐
Sunday: Questions 1-3. ☐
Monday: Questions 4-7. ☐
Tuesday: Questions 8-10; begin reading Study Helps. ☐
Wednesday: Questions 11-13. ☐
Thursday: Finish reading Study Helps. ☐
Friday: Review entire lesson. ☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Baal Worship Introduced

1. Ahab marries a pagan wife. 1 Kings 16:29-31.
2. Altars for Baal and Astarte. 1 Kings 16:32, 33.
3. Extreme religious bigotry. 1 Kings 21:25, 26; 18:4.

II. The Message of Elijah

4. Penalty for disobedience. 1 Kings 17:1.
5. Elijah's appeal. 1 Kings 18:21.
6. Fate of the false prophets. 1 Kings 18:39, 40.
7. Jezebel's fury. 1 Kings 19:2.

III. A Heartless Queen

8. Naboth's vineyard coveted. 1 Kings 21:5-7.
9. Vicious strategy. 1 Kings 21:8-14.
10. Elijah's alarming prophecy. 1 Kings 21:17-19, 23, 24.

IV. Jezebel's Death and Influence

11. Predictions appallingly fulfilled. 1 Kings 22:34, 37, 38; 2 Kings 9:30, 33-36.
12. The queen's posterity. 1 Kings 22:40; 2 Kings 1:2-4, 17; 8:16-18; 11:1.
13. Jezebel in prophecy. Rev. 2:18-20.

THE LESSON

Introduction

Following the illustrious reigns of David and Solomon, ten tribes, located in the north and east sections of Palestine, revolted and established a rival government which was henceforth known as the kingdom of Israel. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with their capital at Jerusalem, comprised the kingdom of Judah. In the northern kingdom idolatry became prevalent, and after some fifty-seven hectic years of strife and turmoil, Ahab, the seventh king of that nation, came to the throne.

Baal Worship Introduced

1. Among the first recorded acts of Ahab's reign, what evil alliance was formed? 1 Kings 16:29-31.

NOTE.—With the evident thought of strengthening his position on the throne of Israel, Ahab married Jezebel, daughter of the priest-king of Sidon. This act was in direct violation of the express instruction of God. See Ex. 34:16.

2. Mention the further steps taken in apostasy. 1 Kings 16:32, 33.

NOTE.—The chief national god of the Canaanites was Baal, whose spirit was variously supposed to animate holy trees, springs, mountaintops, vegetation, the cattle, the sun, etc.

This degrading worship sometimes included the burning of children in fire, and other heartless and abominable rites. Baal was the male deity, while the "grove" represented the goddess Astarte, or Ashtoreth. All such worship was in bold and open transgression of the first and second commandments.

3. In her fanatical zeal for paganism, what extreme measures did Jezebel influence her husband to employ? 1 Kings 21:25, 26; 18:4.

NOTE.—Jezebel's boundless zeal for Baal was worthy of a better cause. While she put to death the prophets of God, she imported and maintained 850 pagan missionaries to convert the people to idolatry. See 1 Kings 18:19.

"Not only did Ahab introduce Baal worship at the capital city, but under the leadership of Jezebel he erected heathen altars in many 'high places,' where in the shelter of surrounding groves the priests and others connected with this seductive form of idolatry exerted their baleful influence, until well-nigh all Israel were following after Baal."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 114.

The Message of Elijah

4. Appearing abruptly before King Ahab, what startling forecast did Elijah make? 1 Kings 17:1.

5. After three years of famine, when Elijah met the multitudes on Mount Carmel, what challenging message did he give? 1 Kings 18:21.

6. When the people witnessed the signal display of divine power at Elijah's altar, what did they declare? and what fate overtook the prophets of Baal? 1 Kings 18:39, 40.

7. When Jezebel learned that the false teachers had been slain, what message did she send to Elijah? 1 Kings 19:2.

NOTE.—"As Ahab told the queen of the slaying of the idolatrous prophets, Jezebel, hardened and impenitent, became infuriated. She refused to recognize in the events on Carmel the overruling providence of God, and, still defiant, she boldly declared that Elijah should die."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 159.

However, the prophet Elijah escaped her vengeance, and a few years later was translated without tasting death.

A Heartless Queen

8. When Naboth refused to sell his vineyard to the king, what was Jezebel's reaction? 1 Kings 21:5-7.

9. By what means did Jezebel accomplish her wicked purpose? 1 Kings 21:8-14.

NOTE.—The ready compliance of the city elders and nobles to execute this foul plot indicates the low moral standard to which rulers and people had fallen. Even Naboth's sons were put to death with him, so that there would be no living descendant to claim the property. See 2 Kings 9:26. Such brutality is not only characteristic of pagan despotism, but also of those governments, ancient or modern, which defy and repudiate God.

10. As Ahab went to take possession of the vineyard, what dire prophecy did Elijah convey to him? 1 Kings 21:17-19, 23, 24.

NOTE.—"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. 6:7. "Jezebel thought she had everything perfectly arranged, but she had not reckoned with God. The Lord in heaven saw all that was taking place. The terrible crime of Ahab could not be allowed to go unrebuked."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on 1 Kings 21:17.

Jezebel's Death and Influence

11. In what manner were these predictions fulfilled? 1 Kings 22:34, 37, 38; 2 Kings 9:30, 33-36.

NOTE.—"Having had word of the death of the two kings, her son and grandson, she well knew that her turn was next. She must prepare for her last moment on earth. And what a preparation this evil woman made! . . .

"She was defiant and unrepentant to the last. She decked herself in all her ornaments and put on her most stately attire. But her outward adorning was to avail her nothing, either before Jehu or before the judgment bar of God."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on 2 Kings 9:30.

12. What is recorded concerning Jezebel's son and daughter? 1 Kings 22:40; 2 Kings 1:2-4, 17; 8:16-18; 11:1.

NOTE.—When Jezebel's son, Ahaziah, received an injury, he called for help to the god of Ekron, because of which sin he died after a lingering illness. His son, the grandson of Jezebel, following a rather brief, wicked reign was killed by Jehu, and his body was thrown into the field of Naboth to avenge fittingly the innocent blood shed by his grandparents.

Jezebel's daughter, Athaliah, married Jehoram, king of Judah, and introduced the worship of Baal into that kingdom. The king followed his wife into idolatry, and after an inglorious reign died unmourned. See 2 Chron. 21:18-20. The son of Jehoram and Athaliah was killed after reigning but one year. Then Athaliah, the fiendish daughter of ruthless Jezebel, killed her own grandsons and stepgrandsons in order that she might rule as queen. Seven years later her own subjects rose against her and put an end to her vicious career. See 2 Kings 11:1, 16, 20. Thus ingloriously perished the descendants of infamous Queen Jezebel.

13. In the prophecy of the seven churches, what reference is made to Jezebel? Rev 2:18-20.

NOTE.—These words describe the church of Christ during the long period of papal triumph and persecution. The expression "that woman Jezebel" is here used in a figurative sense, as the church of the apostasy that introduced error.

Thoughts for Meditation

This tragic narrative, although so painful to relate, was nevertheless recorded aforetime for our admonition that it may emphasize the fearful harvest of apostasy.

"Never should God's people venture upon forbidden ground. Marriage between believers and unbelievers is forbidden by God."—*Messages to Young People,* page 436.

"Unless you would have a home where the shadows are never lifted, do not unite yourself with one who is an enemy of God." *Ibid.,* page 440.

Concerning those who venture on this fateful experiment, these words are spoken:

"When it is too late, they find that they have made a mistake, and have imperiled their happiness in this life and the salvation of their souls."—*Ibid.,* page 459.

Esther, the Persian Queen

MEMORY VERSE: "For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Esther 4:14.

STUDY HELPS: "Prophets and Kings," pages 598-606; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General Introduction and survey of the lesson.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-4.	☐
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Wednesday: Questions 12-14.	☐
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Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Esther Becomes Queen

1. The search for a new queen. Esther 2:1-4.
2. Esther enters the palace. Esther 2:5-7.
3. The coronation. Esther 2:16-18.
4. Esther's regard for Mordecai. Esther 2:20.

II. Haman's Plot

5. Mordecai and Haman. Esther 3:1-4.
6. The plot and the king's reaction. Esther 3:5-11.
7. Effect upon the Jews. Esther 4:1-3.

III. Facing the Crisis

8. Mordecai's message to Esther. Esther 4:13, 14.
9. Esther accepts the challenge. Esther 4:15-17.
10. The first banquet. Esther 5:1-8.
11. The sleepless night and events of the following day. Esther 6:1-14.

IV. The Miraculous Deliverance

12. The second banquet and Haman's fall. Esther 7:1-10.
13. A superseding decree. Esther 8:1-14.
14. Deliverance and rejoicing. Esther 8:16, 17; 9:17, 26-28.

THE LESSON

Introduction

Because of national apostasy God used Nebuchadnezzar to punish His rebellious people. Jerusalem was captured, the magnificent temple was destroyed, and multitudes of the Jews were carried into Babylonian captivity. With the overthrow of Babylon by the Medo-Persians, kings Cyrus and Darius issued decrees granting the Jews permission to return to their homeland; but the number of exiles who availed themselves of this oportunity was disappointingly small. More than fifty years elapsed, and as the narrative of the book of Esther opens, Mordecai, a Benjamite, is a trusty employee at the Persian court in Shushan.

Esther Becomes Queen

1. When Queen Vashti was deposed from her royal throne, what method was used to select a new queen? Esther 2:1-4.

NOTE.—King Ahasuerus of the book of Esther was the son of Darius the Great, and is known in secular history as Xerxes.

2. Among the other maidens brought to the court, what Jewish girl was presented? Esther 2:5-7.

NOTE.—Hadassah (meaning "myrtle") was an orphan girl who was adopted and reared by her cousin Mordecai. Her name Esther (probably from a Persian word meaning "star") was doubtless given her at the time she was presented at the royal palace.

3. How did the king receive and honor Esther? Esther 2:16-18.

NOTE.—On the occasion of Esther's coronation, the king "made a release to the provinces," remitting to them the usual levy of tribute. Also according to the Persian custom, Esther would receive as her personal allowance one tenth of all fines collected by the king.

4. Even though elevated to become queen of the realm, how did Esther still regard Mordecai? Esther 2:20.

NOTE.—This cordial relationship between Esther and her foster father is an eloquent tribute to the happy, congenial home life Mordecai had provided for his adopted daughter. In this delightful environment Esther had developed beauty of character as well as beauty of appearance. "Happy the home where parental authority is balanced with respect for the individuality of its youth, where parental control is exercised with the objective of developing self-control. Like Esther, such youth leave home with well-balanced personalities and disciplined characters."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Esther 2:20.

Haman's Plot

5. After Haman had been advanced to the position of prime minister, what attitude did Mordecai pursue? Esther 3:1-4.

NOTE.—"Through Haman, . . . Satan worked at this time to counterwork the purposes of God. Haman cherished bitter malice against Mordecai, a Jew. Mordecai had done Haman no harm, but had simply refused to show him worshipful reverence."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 600.

6. What wicked plot did Haman conceive, and what was the king's reaction to it? Esther 3:5-11.

NOTE.—To secure the king's assent to this diabolical scheme, Haman offered to pay ten thousand talents of silver, or about $6,350,000, into the government treasury; but the king appears to have refused the bribe. "Little did the king realize the far-reaching results that would have accompanied the complete carrying out of this decree. Satan himself, the hidden instigator of the scheme, was trying to rid the earth of those who preserved the knowledge of the true God."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 600, 601.

7. When this edict was published in Shushan and throughout the empire, what demonstration took place among the Jews? Esther 4:1-3.

Facing the Crisis

8. After Esther and her cousin had communicated with each other concerning this crisis, what message did Mordecai send to the queen? Esther 4:13, 14.

NOTE.—"Mordecai perceived the outworking of Divine Providence. Perhaps no more dramatic challenge to courage, loyalty, and self-sacrifice ever confronted a representative of the kingdom of heaven. But the challenge to us today is no less imperative and no less real."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Esther 4:14.

9. Facing this dramatic moment with heaven-born courage, how did Esther reply? Esther 4:15-17.

NOTE.—"The crisis that Esther faced demanded quick, earnest action; but both she and Mordecai realized that unless God should work mightily in their behalf, their own efforts would be unavailing. So Esther took time for communion with God, the source of her strength."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 601.

10. How did Esther approach the king, and what invitation did she extend? Esther 5:1-8.

NOTE.—In all this Esther displays marvelous courage, tact, and resourcefulness. Instead of immediately approaching the king with her great request, she does not divulge the purpose of her coming. Once before she had warned the king of a plot against his life (Esther 2:21-23); now he must realize that it was a vital life-and-death matter, else she would not have risked her life by coming uninvited into the royal presence.

11. Tell briefly of the king's sleepless night, and of the events of the following day. Esther 6:1-14.

NOTE.—While the book of Esther makes no mention of God, it nevertheless portrays those marvelous divine providences that reveal an omnipotent overruling Hand in the affairs of men.

The Miraculous Deliverance

12. Describe the second banquet and the fateful outcome to Haman. Esther 7:1-10.

NOTE.—For two days Esther had held the king in suspense regarding her request, while preparing him for the real shock. Now he presses the question for the third time. At last her lips are unsealed, and from this timid, retiring young woman there flashes forth her impassioned denunciation of Haman's monstrous plot. She declares, "We are sold," and uses the very words of the infamous decree—"destroy," "kill," and "perish"—with telling effect.

The gallows "fifty cubits high" (about eighty-six feet) that Haman had prepared for Mordecai, is now used for his own execution. All the people of Shushan could thus witness his inglorious end.

13. To what position was Mordecai then promoted, and what decree was issued? Esther 8:1-14.

NOTE.—The purpose of this decree was to countermand the former edict of extermination. It did not delegate authority to the Jews to destroy their enemies, but simply to stand in their own defense.

"On the day appointed for their destruction, 'the Jews gathered themselves together in their cities: . . . and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people.' Angels that excel in strength had been commissioned by God to protect His people while they 'stood for their lives.' "—*Prophets and Kings,* page 602.

14. What was the effect of this proclamation? Esther 8:16, 17; 9:17, 26-28.

NOTE.—The thirteenth day of the twelfth month, that was to witness the complete annihilation of the Jews, was turned to a day of deliverance and gladness. Haman had cast lots, or "Pur," to determine the auspicious day for the wholesale destruction; so the Jews adopted the word "Purim" for the day of their great celebration, and this feast is still observed by Jews throughout the world.

Thoughts for Meditation

"The trying experiences that came to God's people in the days of Esther were not peculiar to that age alone. . . . The decree

that will finally go forth against the remnant people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews. Today the enemies of the true church see in the little company keeping the Sabbath commandment, a Mordecai at the gate. The reverence of God's people for His law is a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling on His Sabbath. . . . On this battlefield will be fought the last great conflict in the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Today, as in the days of Esther and Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 605, 606.

Do I realize that as one of God's remnant people, I have "come to the kingdom for such a time as this"?

"The words of Mordecai to Esther may apply to the men and youth of today."—*Testimonies,* vol. 5, p. 321.

Lesson 11, for September 15, 1962

Mary, the Mother of Jesus

MEMORY VERSE: "And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." Luke 1:46-48.

STUDY HELPS: "The Desire of Ages," pages 44, 50-58, 80-83, 144-147, 751, 752 (Christian Home Library ed., pp. 23, 27-34, 54-58, 119-122, 741, 742); "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General Introduction and survey of the lesson.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-4.	☐
Monday: Questions 5-8; begin reading Study Helps.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 9, 10; read further from Study Helps.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 11-13.	☐
Thursday: Questions 14, 15; finish reading Study Helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Blessed Among Women

1. Gabriel's message. Luke 1:28-33.
2. The humble response. Luke 1:38.
3. Mary's song of praise. Luke 1:46-54.
4. Joseph's dream. Matt. 1:18-24.

II. To Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and Egypt

5. The decree of Augustus Caesar. Luke 2:1-5.
6. The birth of Jesus. Luke 2:6-16; Matt. 1:25.
7. Presentation at the temple. Luke 2:22-24.
8. Two notable testimonies. Luke 2:25-38.
9. The flight to Egypt. Matt. 2:13-15.
10. The return to Nazareth. Matt. 2:19-23.

III. At the Passover and the Wedding Feast

11. A time of anxiety. Luke 2:41-45.
12. Mary's gentle rebuke. Luke 2:46-51.
13. The marriage at Cana. John 2:1-5.

IV. Calvary and the Upper Room

14. Standing near the cross. John 19:25-27.
15. At the memorable prayer meeting. Acts 1:14.

Introduction

"Providence had directed the movements of nations, and the tide of human impulse and influence, until the world was ripe for the coming of the Deliverer. The nations were united under one government. One language was widely spoken, and was everywhere recognized as the language of literature. . . . At this time the systems of heathenism were losing their hold upon the people. Men were weary of pageant and fable."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 32.

Oppression and corruption were well-nigh universal. Society was at its lowest ebb. "Sin had become a science, and vice was consecrated as a part of religion."

Then "the fullness of time was come," the times foretold by holy prophets of old, and Gabriel, the same mighty angel who had appeared to Daniel centuries before, visited a virtuous young woman in the obscure little town of Nazareth to inform her that she was to be highly favored above every other woman on the face of the earth.

Blessed Among Women

1. What extraordinary and startling message did Gabriel bring to Mary? Luke 1:28-33.

NOTE.—Although the parents of Mary are not mentioned, it is known that she was of the house and lineage of David. See Rom. 1:3; *The Desire of Ages,* page 44. Many believe that the genealogy as recorded in Luke 3 is that of Mary, while the one given in Matthew 1 traces the ancestry of Joseph.

2. After Mary had been informed concerning the miraculous conception, what was her humble response? Luke 1:38.

NOTE.—She feels altogether unworthy; yet if one of such lowly estate should be the recipient of so great a gift and honor, she will be meekly resigned to the will of God. What a remarkable instance of beautiful, simple, and childlike trust!

3. While Mary was visiting her relative, Elisabeth, in Judea, what song of praise did she sing? Luke 1:46-54.

NOTE.—"The gift of inspiration now seems to fall upon Mary, who speaks forth in calm and majestic strains. Every idea, even her very words, reflect what inspired men had written in times past. The song of Mary (vs. 46-55) is considered one of the most sublime hymns in all sacred literature, a lyric of exquisite beauty worthy of Mary's ancestor David."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Luke 1:46.

The two devoted women—Elisabeth, to become the mother of John the Baptist, and Mary, to be the mother of Jesus—evidently enjoyed blessed communion together during the three months' visit. See Luke 1:56.

4. At about this time, what rare experience came to Joseph? Matt. 1:18-24.

NOTE.—The marvelous prophecy of the virgin birth given more than seven centuries previously was about to be fulfilled.

To Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and Egypt

5. Relate the circumstances that brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem. Luke 2:1-5.

NOTE.—This imperial decree, together with the fact that at this time Cyrenius was governor of Syria, helps to establish the date of the visit to Bethlehem.

6. While Joseph and Mary were lodged in a stable at Bethlehem, what sublime and glorious events occurred? Luke 2:6-16; Matt. 1:25.

NOTE.—"By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God. As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey. It was Christ who from the bush on Mount Horeb spoke to Moses saying, 'I AM THAT I AM. . . . ' So when He came 'in the likeness of men,' He declared Himself the I AM. The Child of Bethlehem, the meek and lowly Saviour, is God 'manifest in the flesh.' 1 Timothy 3:16. And to us He says: 'I AM the Good Shepherd.' 'I AM the living Bread.' 'I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' . . . 'God with us' is the surety of our deliverance from sin, the assurance of our power to obey the law of heaven. . . .

"In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love."—*The Desire of Ages,* pages 24-26.

7. When the parents of Jesus visited the temple for the presentation of the Christ child, what act reveals their poverty? Luke 2:22-24.

NOTE.—"Joseph and Mary were poor; and when they came with their Child, the priests saw only a man and woman dressed as Galileans, and in the humblest garments. There was nothing in their appearance to attract attention, and they presented only the offering made by the poorer classes."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 52.

8. While the family was still in the temple, what two notable testimonies were given concerning Jesus? Luke 2:25-38.

NOTE.—"The spirit of prophecy was upon this man of God, and while Joseph and Mary stood by, wondering at his words, he blessed them. . . .

"Anna also, a prophetess, came in and confirmed Simeon's testimony concerning Christ. As Simeon spoke, her face lighted up with the glory of God, and she poured out her heartfelt thanks that she had been permitted to behold Christ the Lord."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 55.

9. Following the visit of the wise men, where were Joseph and Mary directed to seek refuge for Jesus? Matt. 2:13-15.

NOTE.—Of the wise man it is written: "Beneath the lowly guise of Jesus, they recognized the presence of Divinity. They gave their hearts to Him as their Saviour, and then poured out their gifts. . . .

"And through the gifts of the Magi from a heathen country, the Lord supplied the means for the journey into Egypt and the sojourn in a land of strangers."—*The Desire of Ages,* pages 63, 65.

10. After the death of Herod where did the family establish their home? Matt. 2:19-23.

At the Passover and the Wedding Feast

11. When Jesus was twelve years of age, where did He go with His parents, and what circumstances brought them great distress of mind? Luke 2:41-45.

12. When Mary found her Son, what conversation took place? Luke 2:46-51.

NOTE.—Again the statement is made that Mary "kept all these sayings in her heart." "While she believed that her child was to be Israel's Messiah, she did not comprehend His mission."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 82.

13. At the marriage feast in Cana, when the supply of wine was exhausted what appeal did Mary make to Jesus? What instruction did she give to the servants? John 2:1-5.

NOTE.—"It was to honor Mary's trust, and to strengthen the faith of His disciples, that the first miracle was performed."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 147.

The Scripture narrative reveals that Mary felt and shared a deep interest in the ministry of Christ; but her name is not again mentioned in any of the four Gospels.

Calvary and the Upper Room

14. As Christ was making His supreme sacrifice, who stood near the cross, and what provision did He make for His widowed mother? John 19:25-27.

NOTE.—"As the eyes of Jesus wandered over the multitude about Him, one figure arrested His attention. At the foot of the cross stood His mother, supported by the disciple John. She could not endure to remain away from her Son; and John, knowing that the end was near, had brought her again to the cross. . . . John understood Christ's words, and accepted the trust. He at once took Mary to his home, and from that hour cared for her tenderly. . . .

"The perfect example of Christ's filial love shines forth with undimmed luster from the mist of ages. For nearly thirty years Jesus by His daily toil had helped bear the burdens of the home. And now, even in His last agony, He remembers to provide for His sorrowing, widowed mother."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 752.

15. On what occasion is Mary last mentioned in Scripture? Acts 1:14.

NOTE.—In the Gospel story, the first reference to Mary was on that notable day of Gabriel's visit in old Nazareth; her last appearance in Scripture is while attending the memorable prayer meeting in the upper room that preceded the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

According to tradition, Mary spent her closing years in the home of John the beloved in Ephesus, but this lacks valid historical confirmation.

Thoughts for Meditation

"By one day's neglect they [Joseph and Mary] lost the Saviour; but it cost them three days of anxious search to find Him. So with us; by idle talk, evilspeaking, or neglect of prayer, we may in one day lose the Saviour's presence, and it may take many days of sorrowful search to find Him, and regain the peace that we have lost."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 83.

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Mary and Martha

MEMORY VERSE: "But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Luke 10:42.

STUDY HELPS: "The Desire of Ages," pages 524-533, 557-568, 788-793 (Christian Home Library ed., pp. 507-516, 539-551, 777-781); "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General Introduction and survey of the lesson.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-3.	☐
Monday: Questions 4-7.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 8-11; begin reading Study Helps.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 12-14; read further from Study Helps.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading Study Helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Early Contacts With Mary and Martha

1. Demons cast out. Luke 8:1, 2.
2. Christ visits Bethany. Luke 10:38-40.
3. The one thing needful. Luke 10:41, 42.

II. Sickness and Death of Lazarus

4. The sisters send for Jesus. John 11:1-3.
5. Jesus talks with Martha. John 11:20-27.
6. Jesus talks with Mary. John 11:32-35.
7. Believing Jews come to Mary. John 11:44, 45.

III. At the Feast of Simon the Pharisee

8. Mary's memorable act. John 12:1-3; Matt. 26:6, 7; Mark 14:3.
9. Disapproval of Judas and others. John 12:4-6; Matt. 26:8, 9.
10. Christ's commendation. Mark 14:6-9.
11. Simon's criticism—Jesus' reply. Luke 7:39-47.

IV. The Resurrection Morning

12. Mary at the sepulcher. Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1, 2; John 20:1, 2.
13. Jesus greets Mary. John 20:11-17.
14. Mary reports the good tidings. John 20:18.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"Among the most steadfast of Christ's disciples was Lazarus of Bethany. . . .

"At the home of Lazarus, Jesus had often found rest. The Saviour had no home of His own; He was dependent on the hospitality of His friends and disciples, and often, when weary, thirsting for human fellowship, He had been glad to escape to this peaceful household, away from the suspicion and jealousy of the angry Pharisees. Here He found a sincere welcome, and pure, holy friendship. Here he could speak with simplicity and perfect freedom."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 524.

Early Contacts With Mary and Martha

1. Under what circumstances does Mary Magdalene first appear in the Gospel story? Luke 8:1, 2.

NOTE.—"Mary had been looked upon as a great sinner, but Christ knew the circumstances that had shaped her life. He might have extinguished every spark of hope in her soul, but He did not. It was He who had lifted her from despair and ruin. Seven times she had heard His rebuke of the demons that controlled her heart and mind. She had heard His strong cries to the Father in her behalf. . . .

"When to human eyes her case appeared hopeless, Christ saw in Mary capabilities for good. He saw the better traits of her character."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 568.

Chapter 62 of *The Desire of Ages* identifies Mary Magdalene with Mary of Bethany. When Christ first met her, it appears that she was living for a time in northern Palestine. See *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* vol. 5, pp. 764, 765.

2. On the occasion of Christ's first visit to the home of Lazarus and his sisters, what protest did Martha make? Luke 10: 38-40.

NOTE.—"This was the time of Christ's first visit to Bethany. The Saviour and His disciples had just made the toilsome journey on foot from Jericho. Martha was anxious to provide for their comfort, and in her anxiety she forgot the courtesy due to her Guest."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 525.

3. What was Christ's kindly reply? Luke 10:41, 42.

NOTE.—"The 'one thing' that Martha needed was a calm, devotional spirit. . . . There is a wide field for the Marthas, with their zeal in active religious work. But let them first sit with Mary at the feet of Jesus."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 525.

Sickness and Death of Lazarus

4. When Lazarus became ill, what message did Martha and Mary send to Jesus? John 11:1-3.

5. When Christ arrived at Bethany, what conversation took place between Martha and her Saviour? John 11: 20-27.

6. With what words did Mary greet her Lord, and how did He express His deep sympathy? John 11:32-35.

NOTE.—"Lazarus had been much beloved. . . . 'Jesus wept.' . . .

"It was not only because of the scene before Him that Christ wept. . . . Looking down the years to come, He saw the suffering and sorrow, tears and death, that were to be the lot of men. His heart was pierced with the pain of the human family of all ages and in all lands. The woes of the sinful race were heavy upon His soul, and the fountain of His tears was broken up as He longed to relieve all their distress."—*The Desire of Ages,* pages 533, 534.

7. What effect did the resurrection of Lazarus have upon many of Mary's friends? John 11:44, 45.

NOTE.—The raising of Lazarus had a good effect upon many of Mary's friends who had come from Jerusalem to comfort her. They were convinced by Jesus' miracle and "believed on Him."

At the Feast of Simon the Pharisee

8. Who were present at Simon's feast, and what memorable act did Mary perform? John 12:1-3; Matt. 26:6, 7; Mark 14:3.

NOTE.—"In His mercy, Jesus had pardoned her [Mary's] sins, He had called forth her beloved brother from the grave, and Mary's heart was filled with gratitude. She had heard Jesus speak of His approaching death, and in her deep love and sorrow she had longed to show Him honor. At great personal sacrifice she had purchased an alabaster box of 'ointment of spikenard, very costly,' with which to anoint His body. But now many were declaring that He was about to be crowned king. Her grief was turned to joy, and she was eager to be first in honoring her Lord."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 559.

9. How did Judas and certain others regard this act? John 12:4-6; Matt. 26:8, 9.

10. With what words of approval did Christ commend Mary? Mark 14: 6-9.

NOTE.—"As far as the gospel extended, Mary's gift would shed its fragrance, and hearts would be blessed through her unstudied act. Kingdoms would rise and fall; the names of monarchs and conquerors would be forgotten; but this woman's deed would be immortalized upon the pages of sacred history. Until time should be no more, that broken alabaster box would tell the story of the abundant love of God for a fallen race."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 563.

11. What did Simon think about Mary's deed, and what was the Master's reply to his unspoken criticism? Luke 7:39-47.

NOTE.—Simon the leper, who had also been guilty of grave sins, had been healed by Jesus. See *The Desire of Ages,* page 566.

"Simon felt himself more righteous than Mary, and Jesus desired him to see how great his guilt really was. He would show him that his sin was greater than hers, as much greater as a debt of five hundred pence exceeds a debt of fifty pence.

"Simon now began to see himself in a new light. He saw how Mary was regarded by One who was more than a prophet. He saw that with keen prophetic eye Christ read her heart of love and devotion. Shame seized upon him, and he realized that he was in the presence of One superior to himself."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 567.

The Resurrection Morning

12. Early on the first day of the week following the crucifixion, who came to Christ's sepulcher, and what did Mary do? Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1, 2; John 20: 1, 2.

NOTE.—Only six days after Mary had anointed Jesus' feet, expecting that He would soon be crowned king, she stood with other women at the cross of the dying Saviour. See John 19:25. All hope was crushed; yet they would anoint the body of Him they supremely loved. "The women had not all come to the tomb from the same direction. Mary Magdalene was the first to reach the place; and upon seeing that the stone was removed, she hurried away to tell the disciples."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 788.

13. Returning to the tomb, what marvelous experience was granted to Mary? John 20:11-17.

14. After this interview with Jesus, what did Mary do? John 20:18.

NOTE.—"When Mary Magdalene told them she had seen the Lord, she repeated the call to the meeting in Galilee."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 793. This was the last recorded act in the life of Mary.

Thoughts for Meditation

Is it not most remarkable that a person who in her early life was so great a sinner should be the one to whom Christ first ap-

peared after His resurrection? Yet it was just like Jesus. He can forgive the darkest blot on a human life. He is able to save unto the uttermost.

Mary anointed the living Christ. The other women who prepared spices and ointment after His death were too late. While our loved ones are still with us, let us break our alabaster boxes of love. Let us "give them roses now."

Tape-recorded mission appeals for the Thirteenth Sabbath projects are available for offering promotion in the Sabbath school. Order through your Book and Bible House.

Lesson 13, for September 29, 1962

Women of the Early Church

MEMORY VERSE: "There was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did." Acts 9:36.

STUDY HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 70-76, 131, 132, 203, 243, 269, 270; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND RECORD

	Check Here
Sabbath afternoon: General Introduction and survey of the lesson.	☐
Sunday: Questions 1-3.	☐
Monday: Questions 4-6.	☐
Tuesday: Questions 7-9; begin reading from Study Helps.	☐
Wednesday: Questions 10-14.	☐
Thursday: Finish reading Study Helps.	☐
Friday: Review entire lesson.	☐

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Piety and Dishonesty

1. At the prayer meeting in the upper room. Acts 1:14.
2. A deceptive scheme. Acts 5:1, 2.
3. Swift retribution. Acts 5:3-10.

II. Christianity in Action

4. Death of a noted welfare worker. Acts 9:36, 37.
5. The church sends for Peter. Acts 9:38, 39.
6. Dorcas restored to life. Acts 9:40-42.

III. Women Who Ministered

7. Mary, the mother of John Mark. Acts 12:12.
8. The conversion of Lydia. Acts 16:11-14.
9. Entertaining the evangelists. Acts 16:15.

IV. Fellow Workers in Christ

10. Companions of like craft. Acts 18:1-3.
11. Journeying to Ephesus. Acts 18:18, 19.
12. Teaching the distinguished Apollos. Acts 18:24-26.
13. Priscilla and husband highly commended. Rom. 16:3, 4.
14. Cited for their piety and zeal. Rom. 16:1, 2; Phil. 4:3; 2 Tim. 1:5.

Introduction

With the birth of Christianity, womanhood was elevated to a new and hitherto unforeseen status. On some of His evangelistic tours Jesus was accompanied by women workers. As a result of His conversation with a woman at Jacob's well a religious awakening occurred in Samaria; and His visits at the home in Bethany have brought inspiration to unnumbered Marthas and Marys.

In the New Testament church there was Dorcas, noted for her tireless labors on behalf of the poor; Lydia, a businesswoman who helped to establish the first Christian church in Europe; Priscilla, a self-supporting worker who gave spiritual instruction to the mighty Apollos; Phebe, who was a pillar in the church at Cenchrea; and others designated by Paul as "those women who labored with me in the gospel." The record of these zealous souls enshrined in Holy Writ continues to radiate their influence for good and to inspire the noblest and best in Christian womanhood.

Piety and Dishonesty

1. Following the ascension of Christ, in what spiritual devotion did certain Christian women participate? Acts 1:14.

NOTE.—Included in this group were doubtless the women who ministered with Jesus, together with the wives of the disciples. Here Mary, the mother of Jesus, is mentioned in Scripture for the last time. It is also worthy of note that this gathering in the "upper room" was the celebrated prayer meeting that preceded Pentecost.

2. In the early days of Christianity what woman conspired with her husband to attempt to deceive the church leaders? Acts 5:1, 2.

NOTE.—"Ananias and Sapphira had made a pledge to give to the Lord the proceeds from the sale of certain property." Yet "they deliberately decided to sell their property and pretend to give all the proceeds into the general fund, but really to keep a large share for themselves. Thus they would secure their living from the common store and at the same time gain the high esteem of their brethren."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 72.

3. As a result of their falsehood and hypocrisy, what swift and terrible recompense did they receive? Acts 5: 3-10.

NOTE.—"Infinite Wisdom saw that this signal manifestation of the wrath of God was necessary to guard the young church from becoming demoralized. . . .

"The hearts of men become hardened through selfishness, and, like Ananias and Sapphira, they are tempted to withhold part of the price, while pretending to fulfill God's requirements. . . . They forget that God will one day demand a strict account of how His goods have been used, and that He will no more accept the pittance they hand into the treasury than He accepted the offering of Ananias and Sapphira."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* pages 73, 75.

Christianity in Action

4. What pious woman resided at Joppa, and how was her work interrupted? Acts 9:36, 37.

NOTE.—"Tabitha" is an Aramaic name, similar to the Hebrew. The Greek form is "Dorcas," both names signifying "gazelle" or "doe;" and the giving of the name in two languages may imply that there were both Hebrew and Greek (or Hellenic) members in the church at Joppa.

It is believed that the church at this place was raised up by Philip the evangelist; and since he was one of the original seven deacons of the church at Jerusalem, it would be natural for him to make wise provision for the poor and the widows. In that church Dorcas may have served as a reg-

ularly chosen deaconess. Compare Acts 6: 1-5; 8:40.

"She [Dorcas] was a worthy disciple of Jesus, and her life was filled with acts of kindness. She knew who needed comfortable clothing and who needed sympathy, and she freely ministered to the poor and the sorrowful. Her skillful fingers were more active than her tongue."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 131.

5. Realizing their great loss, what did the church at Joppa do, and how did Peter respond? Acts 9:38, 39.

NOTE.—Lydda was ten miles distant from Joppa; yet since custom required that there should be no long delay between death and burial, the church made urgent request for Peter to come immediately.

"In view of the life of service that Dorcas had lived, it is little wonder that they mourned, that warm teardrops fell upon the inanimate clay."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 132.

6. In what miraculous way did God honor Peter's prayer of faith? Acts 9:40-42.

NOTE.—"The brief description of Dorcas's restoration is extraordinarily vivid. There is the opening of the eyes, as after sleep; the unexpected sight of Peter, who was probably unknown to her; and the dramatic sitting up of one who had been dead."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Acts 9:40.

"Dorcas had been of great service to the church, and God saw fit to bring her back from the land of the enemy, that her skill and energy might still be a blessing to others, and also that by this manifestation of His power the cause of Christ might be strengthened."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 132.

Women Who Ministered

7. Whose hospitable home became a meeting place for the believers in Jerusalem? Acts 12:12.

NOTE.—Mary, the mother of John Mark, was a sister or cousin of Barnabas. See Col. 4:10; compare translations of K.J.V. and R.S.V. Like Barnabas, she apparently possessed some wealth, and her home was large enough to serve as a rendezvous for members of the early Christian church.

8. During Paul's first evangelistic effort in Europe, what devout woman was among the first converts to Christianity? Acts 16:11-14.

NOTE.—Of the group of worshipers by the riverside Lydia appears to have been a prominent member. The city of Thyatira in Asia Minor was famous for its dye works. Lydia as a prosperous businesswoman was a distributor of the purple cloth imported from that city. Others who may have been charter members of the church at Philippi are mentioned by Paul in Philippians 4:2, 3.

9. Following the baptism of Lydia and other members of her household, what urgent and generous invitation did she extend? Acts 16:15.

NOTE.—There were at least four members of the evangelistic group—Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke. Lydia's desire to entertain this entire company for an indefinite period indicates that she must have been a woman of some means. It also testifies eloquently of her love for Christ and the gospel.

Fellow Workers in Christ

10. Upon Paul's first visit to Corinth, what congenial companions did he find, and in what work did they all engage? Acts 18:1-3.

11. After a long successful gospel effort in Corinth, where did Paul go, and who accompanied him? Acts 18: 18, 19.

NOTE.—The fact that Priscilla's name is here mentioned before her husband's, as also in Romans 16:3 and 2 Timothy 4:19, doubtless indicates that she was a woman of culture and education, and qualified in soul-winning endeavor. These devoted, loyal, self-supporting workers are to be commended for their zeal for soulsaving. Their names always appear together, whether in tentmaking or in missionary activity.

12. When the distinguished Apollos visited Ephesus, what special privilege was accorded to Priscilla and Aquila? Acts 18:24-26.

NOTE.—"Through their teaching he obtained a clearer understanding of the Scriptures and became one of the ablest advocates of the Christian faith."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 270.

13. With what words of commendation did Paul later express his high appreciation for the labors of Priscilla and her husband? Rom. 16:3, 4.

NOTE.—Just when these faithful workers risked their lives for Paul is not known. It may have been during the attack of the Jews at Corinth, or during the uproar at Ephesus. See Acts 18:12-16; 19:29-40.

14. Among other women of the early church, mention some who were especially cited for their piety and zeal. Rom. 16:1, 2; Phil. 4:3; 2 Tim. 1:5.

Thoughts for Meditation

"In the case of Ananias and Sapphira, the sin of fraud against God was speedily punished. . . . But though it may not be attended by the visible manifestation of God's displeasure, it is no less heinous in His sight now than in the apostles' time." —*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 76.

"He who utters untruths sells his soul in a cheap market."—*Ibid.*

In resurrecting an outstanding welfare worker of New Testament times, God placed His supreme seal of approval upon this self-sacrificing ministry. Who can estimate the number of needles set in motion and the vast multitudes helped, because of the worthy example of tireless, loving, dedicated Dorcas!

The "unfeigned faith," without pretense or show, that molded the lives of grandmother Lois and mother Eunice, was reproduced, under God, in the sterling character of youthful Timothy. Fathers, mothers, and young people, God grant to us each that priceless gem of an unsullied faith! Her example is still being followed today.

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THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING

September 29, 1962

Central European Division

The articles in the *Missions Quarterly* this quarter present some of the tragic needs of our churches and believers in Germany. War not only took its toll in destroyed homes and church buildings, but it also brought much hardship and financial difficulties to our believers.

Since the war our believers have had to meet in attics, in out-of-the-way places, and often in crowded rooms in their own homes. Such conditions greatly hinder the advance of the message in Germany.

Very few church groups have sufficient and proper church facilities. Many meet in cold, dark, uninviting places. May our hearts go out in behalf of the needs of our fellow believers in this needy field. With proper help it can easily become a strong base and, as formerly, be able to send forth its young people to mission fields.

It is our privilege this quarter to help the leaders in that field to build churches, and especially to build a representative church in the city of Cologne on the Rhine River.

LESSONS FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER, 1962

Sabbath school members who have failed to receive a senior *Lesson Quarterly* for the fourth quarter of 1962 will be helped by the following outline in studying the first lesson. The title of the lessons for the quarter is "Prayer and Victorious Living." The title of the first lesson is "The Mighty Conqueror." The memory verse is 1 John 3:8. The texts to be studied are as follows:

Ques. 1. John 8:44.

Ques. 2. Isa. 14:12-14.

Ques. 3. Rev. 12:7-9; Luke 10:18; John 12:31.

Ques. 4. Rev. 12:9, 10.

Ques. 5. Mark 1:12, 13; Heb. 4:15.

Ques. 6. John 19:30.

Ques. 7. Matt. 28:5-7.

Ques. 8. 1 John 3:8; 2 Peter 3:11-13.

Ques. 9. Eph. 6:12, 13.

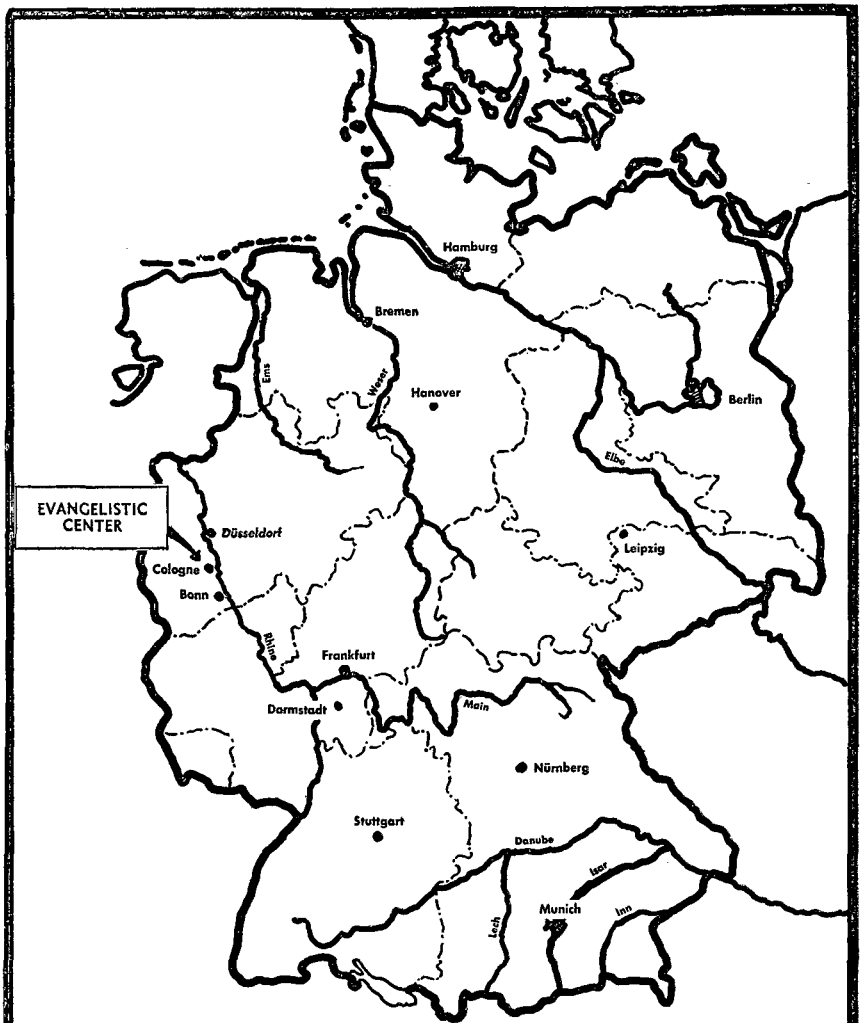
Ques. 10. 2 Cor. 2:11.

Ques. 11. 1 Peter 5:8.

Ques. 12. Rev. 12:17.

Ques. 13. Gen. 3:15.

Ques. 14. Rev. 20:9, 10; Matt. 25:41.



CENTRAL EUROPEAN DIVISION

Unions	Population	No. of Churches	Church Members	Sab. School Members
EAST GERMAN UNION CONF.	18,403,800	382	16,526	17,588
SOUTH GERMAN UNION CONF.	26,352,000	237	11,961	13,870
WEST GERMAN UNION CONF.	29,850,000	232	13,254	14,676
Division Totals	74,605,800	851	41,741	46,134