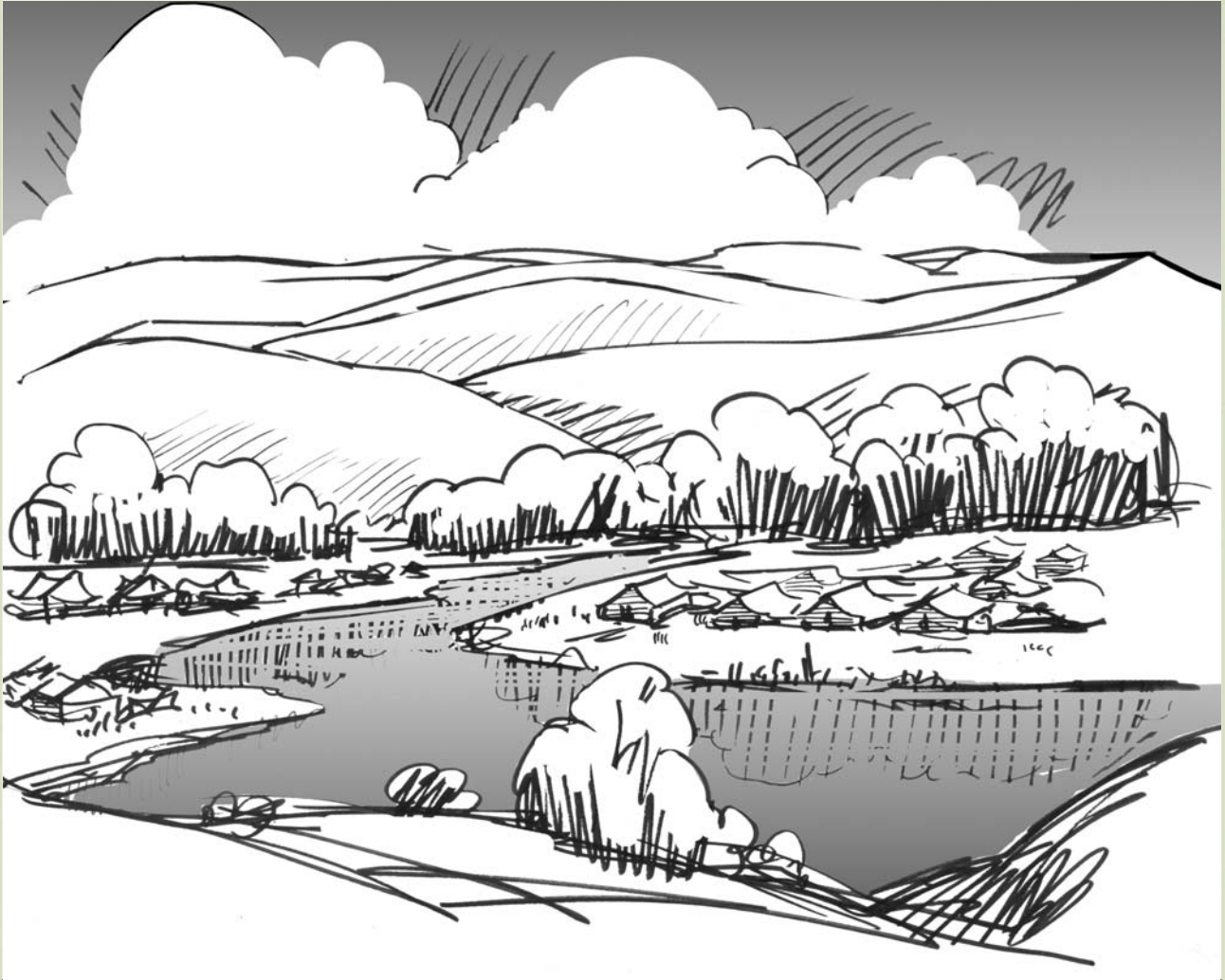
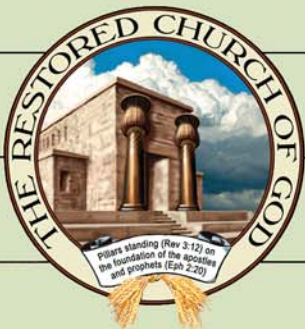


THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD

CHILDREN'S BIBLE LESSONS



Israel Enters the Promised Land



LEVEL 3
LESSON 8

Israel Enters the Promised Land

In the last Lesson, we learned about Israel rebelling against God. The people groaned and complained over and over again. They did not like the living conditions or the food in the wilderness. They also did not like having Moses rule over them.

Do you remember what happened when Korah led a rebellion against Moses? In the end, 14,700 people died for their sin of rebellion.

Fiery Serpents

Soon after Korah's rebellion, Israel began their march into the Promised Land. Along the way, they encountered many inhabitants who wanted to fight. Their first battle was with the Canaanites. God did as He said He would. He helped the Israelites utterly destroy the

Canaanites and their cities. But Israel became discouraged and spoke against God and Moses, just like they did many times in the last Lesson.

"Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?" they said. "There is no bread or water!"

God again punished the Israelites for rebellion by sending fiery serpents among them. Many people died.



The Israelites soon realized what they had done—they had sinned against God once again! They asked Moses to pray that God take away the serpents. Moses did so. God told him to build a brass serpent and have the people look upon it when they are bitten. If they did, they would live.

Balak Sends Messengers

After winning several more battles, the children of Israel pitched their tents in the plains of Moab, near Jericho. The Moabites were afraid. They had heard about the battles that Israel won. Balak, king of the Moabites, called for the elders of his people. He told them to take money to the prophet Balaam, and tell him, “A strong people have come from the land of Egypt. They are a strong and mighty people. Please come and help me by cursing them. I know that whomever you bless is blessed, and whomever you curse is cursed.”

The messengers told the king’s words to Balaam. The false prophet told the messengers to lodge with him for the night. Turn to Numbers 22:12 and write down what God said to Balaam.

The next morning, Balaam told the elders of Moab that God refused to allow him to curse Israel. So the elders returned home and told Balak the news. The king was upset. He decided to send people who were of higher rank to tempt Balaam with even greater riches.

The new messengers said to Balaam, “Please come with us. The king will honor you greatly and will do whatever you say. Please come and curse Israel for us.” The thought of great wealth caused Balaam to inquire of God on the matter once again. So Balaam told the men to stay overnight.

That night, God said to Balaam, “If the men come to you in the morning, go with them. But you must only speak the words that I tell you.”

A Donkey Speaks!

The next morning, Balaam saddled his donkey and went with the men of Moab. While Balaam’s donkey was walking on the path toward Moab, it suddenly turned off into a field. Balaam became so angry, he hit the donkey. He could not see what his donkey had seen—an angel of God standing in the path holding a sword!

The path then wandered between two vineyard walls. Again, the donkey



saw an angel standing in the way. The donkey pushed itself up against the wall and crushed Balaam's foot. So Balaam struck the donkey in anger again.

Farther down the trail, the donkey encountered the angel standing in a tight space. This time, there was no place for it to go. It became so scared that it fell to the ground. Balaam was furious! He hit the donkey for a third time.

All of a sudden, God performed a miracle: The donkey was able to speak! It said to Balaam, "Why have you hit me three times? What have I done to you?"

Can you imagine a donkey talking? Balaam replied, "I hit you because you abused me. And you made me look like a fool in front of my servants and the other men. If I had a sword right now, I would kill you!"

Balaam was so filled with rage that he did not stop and consider that a miracle was taking place.

"Am I not your favorite donkey—the only one you have ridden since I became yours? I have been faithful to you all this time. I have never treated you as harshly as you have just treated me." Balaam agreed with the donkey and was sorry.



Balaam desperately wanted to curse Israel to receive a great reward from the king, but he was unable to do so. God actually forced Balaam to *bless* Israel four different times! Balak was greatly displeased. He told Balaam that he missed an opportunity to receive large amounts of silver and gold.

Test Your Memory:

- 1) With whom did Israel fight first?_____
- 2) Why did God send fiery serpents among the Israelites?_____

- 3) What did King Balak tell the Moabite elders to do?_____

- 4) Why did Balaam's donkey wander off into a field?_____

- 5) How many times did Balaam hit his donkey?_____

Then God caused Balaam to see the angel with the sword in his hand. Balaam bowed his head and fell to the ground in front of this powerful being. The angel said, "Why have you struck your donkey three times? Your donkey moved out of the way to avoid me. If he had not done so, I would have killed you with my sword. Your way is perverse before God."

"I have sinned," admitted Balaam. "I will return home."

"No. You must continue on your journey. But you will speak to King Balak only what I tell you to speak."

When Balaam finally arrived, he told the king that he could speak the words that God put into his mouth.

Balaam Devises a Plan

Balaam really wanted to receive the great riches that were promised to him

if he cursed Israel. This desire led him to plot an evil scheme.

Balaam knew that as long as Israel obeyed God, they would be blessed by Him. But if Israel sinned, they would be cursed by God. So Balaam devised a plan to cause the Israelite men to commit fornication with the pagan women of Moab and Midian. “This will surely cause God to curse Israel,” he said. “Then I will be rich.”

Soon, the children of Israel were committing fornication with and even marrying the Moabite women. This sin led to further sins, such as worshipping idols and eating meat sacrificed to false gods.

God became furious with Israel. He sent a plague to destroy those who were guilty of sinning with the Moabites.

Just like Balaam, many people today are led into doing evil—and harming others—due to the desire to obtain money. Lusting after material possessions and wealth can result in much trouble. Turn to I Timothy 6:10 and write down what the apostle Paul wrote about money. _____

Dividing the Land

Before the children of Israel could enter the Promised Land, another census of the people had to be taken. The last one had occurred more than 38 years earlier. This census found that 601,730 Israelite men were able to go to war. Turn to Lesson Seven and see if this is more or less than the last census.

God informed the Israelites of the boundaries that the tribes would receive once they got to the Promised Land. Most of the tribes were to settle on the western side of the Jordan River. But the tribes of Reuben, Gad and one-half of Manasseh were to settle on the eastern side. If you remember from a previous Lesson, the tribe of Levi would not receive an inheritance in the land since their inheritance is the priesthood. God told the other tribes to set aside cities for the Levites to dwell in.

Through Moses, God commanded the Israelites to drive out all the inhabitants of the land, else they would become a snare to the Israelites and lead them into idolatry. The people were to destroy all the molded images and all the places of false-god worship.

God reminded Israel to continue observing the weekly and annual



Always remember, obedience to God results in blessings. And disobedience automatically results in cursings.

Joshua Becomes Leader

“Bring Joshua near to you and lay your hands upon him,” said God to Moses. “He is to be the leader of Israel once you die. Give your authority to him, and tell the children of Israel that they are to be obedient to him.”

Sabbaths. These days of rest were signs that the Israelites were God’s chosen people. Such days point to the true God. God knew that if they forgot about His Sabbaths, the children of Israel would begin to commit idolatry and worship false gods.

Moses announced in great detail what would happen if Israel obeyed God—and what would happen if they disobeyed Him. (Ask your parents to help you write down some of the various blessing and cursings.) Moses also said to the people, “I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19).

God reminded Moses that he would not be able to enter the Promised Land due to his disobedience at Kadesh. Moses was only going to view it from atop Mt. Nebo. So Moses climbed the mountain and saw the beautiful green valleys and rolling hills all around him. Then he died, just as God had said. All of Israel mourned for him 30 days. They missed him dearly. Moses was a great leader.

So Joshua took command of the congregation of Israel. God comforted him, saying, “Be strong and of good courage, for I am with you. All the people of the land shall be delivered into your hand. I will never leave you or forsake you. Be sure to always obey My laws, and you will enjoy great success.”

The same is true for you. As long as you obey Him, God will never leave or forsake you.

Crossing the Jordan River

The time had arrived for Israel to cross over the Jordan and take possession of the Promised Land. Turn to Joshua 1:11 and write down what Joshua said to the officers of the people. _____

News of this reached the city of Jericho. The people were exceedingly fearful of the Israelites. They knew that God was with them. There was nothing the people of Jericho could do to stop Israel from advancing.

Joshua sent two men to spy out the city. They entered the gate of Jericho and lodged at a woman's house. Her name was Rahab.

The king of Jericho learned that the two spies were staying at Rahab's home. But she hid the men on her roof, so they were not discovered.

Rahab did this because she knew that God had given the land to the



Israelites. Just before the two men fell asleep, she came to them and asked if she and her family could be spared from being killed when the city is destroyed. The two men told her that, if she told no one of what they were doing, she and her family would be spared. Rahab then helped the men escape the city.

Three days later, the spies returned to Joshua. They told him all that had happened. "Surely, God has delivered all the land into our hands!" Joshua said.

The next morning, the priests carried the Ark of the Covenant to the edge of the Jordan River. In order to get to Jericho, the children of Israel had to cross this mighty river. As soon as the priests entered the water,



it drained away to their left. And the water stopped flowing from upstream. The priests remained at the edge of the water until all the Israelites passed through. Once the priests reached the other side of the river, a loud sound of rushing water was heard. The river began to flow once again.

What an inspiring event!

The Fall of Jericho

As Joshua viewed the city of Jericho from a distance, God appeared as a man in front of him, carrying a sword. This was the Being who would later become Jesus Christ. He explained to Joshua exactly how the city of Jericho would be defeated.



The army of Israel assembled to receive instructions from Joshua. They then proceeded to Jericho. Behind the army were the priests, each carrying a ram's horn. Behind the priests were the Levites, who carried the Ark of the Covenant.

The army marched around the city once a day for six days straight. While marching, the priests blew the horns continuously. The inhabitants of

Jericho were puzzled by these actions. They had no idea what was going on.

On the seventh day, the army of Israel was instructed to circle the city seven times. After the seventh time, everyone stopped where they were. Then the priests blew their trumpets, and the people shouted at the top of their lungs. Turn to Joshua 6:20 and write down what happened. _____

What an incredible sight this must have been! The gigantic city walls came crashing down, and the Israelites captured Jericho. They killed all the people and livestock, just as God had commanded. However, they spared Rahab and her family.

Joshua continued to lead Israel in many battles throughout the Promised Land. God caused Israel to defeat their enemies and settle in the land. All of Israel was happy.

A Reminder to the People

Before Joshua died at the age of 110, he called the children of Israel together. He reminded them of all the great things that God had done for them. He said, “If you continue to obey God, He will continue to fight your battles for you and will bless you with wonderful things. Do not befriend any of the people of the land. If you do, they will lead you into idolatry and disobedi-

ence.” Turn to Joshua 23:13 and write down what would happen to Israel if they did not obey God._____

After Joshua died, Israel obeyed God for a little while. But they began to do what was right in their own eyes. They started to mix with the people of the land and worship false gods, even though God said not to do this. As a result, God punished Israel numerous times by allowing other nations to attack them.

Test Your Memory:

1) Why did Balaam plot an evil scheme?_____

2) Who became the leader of Israel after Moses died?_____

3) How many spies did Joshua send to Jericho?_____

4) Who appeared with a sword in front of Joshua?_____

5) Who carried the Ark of the Covenant across the Jordan River?_____

