

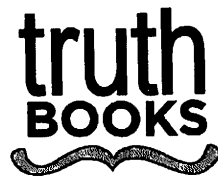
History and Geography of the Bible Story



BOB & SANDRA WALDRON

**The History and Geography
of the Bible Story**
A Study Manual

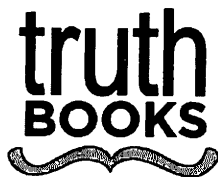
by
Bob and Sandra Waldron



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Acknowledgments

Most worthwhile projects are the result of the efforts of many people. This book is no exception.

My sincere thanks go to Valla Ree Roberts whose questions prompted this study. I also thank the host of friends who have used the material in its various stages. Thank you for your helpful criticisms and suggestions.

A special word of thanks goes to Joan McCarty whose collaboration and study have been of great value, and to Ferrell Jenkins who has helped tremendously on the final polishing of the book.

Dedicated To:

My Parents

Mr. and Mrs. Irven Lee

who instilled a love for
the Bible story
in my heart from infancy.

Foreword

It has been my pleasure to read *The History And Geography Of The Bible Story* in manuscript form. Bob and Sandra Waldron are to be commended for making available this book for Bible students. I am happy to recommend it for individual and class study.

There is no way for the modern student to remove absolutely the cultural and geographical gap which exists between Bible times and our own times. The most common mistake is to read the Bible and relate it to our own familiar customs unless we are aware of the vast gap. It seems to me that the message of salvation which is contained within the pages of the Bible can be understood by anyone who gives adequate attention to it; cultural, geographical, and historical references which serve as the background of the message of salvation may not be quite so easy.

A visit to the lands of the Bible will help to bridge the geographical gap which exists. But even the land has changed to some degree; this was true within the various Biblical periods. A mountain might be thickly forested at one time, but not so at another. The cultural and historical situations of Bible times can never completely be duplicated. Most Christians, however, will not even have an opportunity to visit the Bible lands. It is still important for each student of the Bible to gain information about the history and geography of the Bible. In fact, this should be done before one makes a visit. This book will help in dealing with these areas.

The Waldrons have demonstrated an ability to take difficult material and make it both understandable and usable. This book can do several things for the user: (1) it will provide a complete survey of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation; (2) it will give one a good summary of the history of the nations involved in sacred history; (3) it will acquaint one with the geography of the Bible lands. The good maps add tremendously to the quality and usefulness of the book. I urge the reader, with Bible in hand, to utilize this good book to the fullest possible extent.

Ferrell Jenkins,
Bible Professor, Florida College

May 24, 1983
Temple Terrace, FL 33617

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INTRODUCTION

Man, An Intelligent Being

This book is a study of Bible geography. It is also a study of Bible history, for it is history which makes geography meaningful. A mountain with no man on it or near it is merely a high point on the earth's surface. A river with no man to cross it or to drink from it is just a stream of water running across the earth. But when men move in, that mountain or that river becomes a *home* where people live and die, where people love and hate, where people survive or fail. Thus it is not the mountains or rivers that make man important, but man who makes the mountains and rivers important. At the same time, we must be aware of the tremendous influence that climate, terrain, and other geographical factors have had on men.

Many times Christians seem afraid to study man's origin because they are afraid they may find something that will destroy the Bible and their faith. The very fact man is the only creature who studies his environment and history points to that spark of deity which was planted in him by God. Just remember to distinguish between theory and fact when comparing what men say with the Bible. *Facts* always agree. *Theories* do not. As we enter this study, let me set forth the approach we will take in the study of the early history of man.

Man was created an intelligent being with the same nature and needs we have today, not some animal that evolved over eons of time. The Bible presents a miraculous beginning of the earth and of life. The first human being was brought into existence by means of a miracle. Immediately, he could converse with God. He could think, because one of his first tasks was to name the animals. He could feel lonely, thus showing emotions. He needed a home and was given the Garden of Eden.

God gave man the first skills he needed to meet his needs. Adam knew how to work because he was given the task of "dressing and keeping" the huge Garden (Gen. 2:15). Adam and Eve "learned" to wear clothes when they sinned and felt guilt for the first time (Gen. 3:7-21). The first family knew how to build fires because Cain and Abel burned sacrifices to God (Gen. 4:3-4). Cain knew how to "till the ground," and brought of his produce to offer to God. Abel domesticated animals (Gen. 4:2). Very soon, a descendant of Cain is mentioned who knew how to play a musical instrument, not a "necessity," but rather a cultural art (Gen. 4:19-22). Early man could count, tell time, and keep records of his history (see Gen. 5). That does not sound like the half-man culture presented on our television screens, does it?

The Bible states these facts, and a study of early history confirms them. We are going to study civilizations in existence long before Abraham's day that already had complex written languages, methods of mathematical calculations we still use, beautiful cities, and many other things that clearly show intelligence.

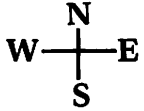
But what about the cave dwellers? It is true wide variations in lifestyles can be found as we retrace history. That is still true today. Our world includes the technical society of the United States and the primitive cultures of the tribes hidden away in the Amazon jungles. Sometimes we erroneously equate technology with intelligence. Man has always sought for ways to make his life easier. Methods of meeting human needs have varied widely in every generation that has lived, but each man has been seeking to supply his necessities for food, shelter, and clothing whether he was living in a cave or in a skyscraper.

There is one necessity man has that is sometimes overlooked. Adam and Eve were given a law to obey in their service to God. They broke their simple law and discovered the results were terrible (Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-24). Throughout all the years since then, man has had to learn his total dependence on God's blessings. The entire Old Testament is a demonstration that man's efforts to save himself by himself were fruitless. The Bible is one connected story of how God brought about the redemption of wicked man so we may stand redeemed before Him in spite of the fact we are less than perfect. Our primary emphasis in this study will be to watch the development of God's promises with their fulfillments and the places where these developments took place.

The Bible is the only source in the world of the knowledge of the true God. If I choose not to believe the Bible record about the creation of the earth and of life, how can I choose to believe anything else it says? It stands or falls as a unit.

General Rules for a Map Study

Bible maps are read the same way all other maps are read. Before we go further in our study, let us remind ourselves of some basic rules for understanding maps.



1. **Directions** — North, south, east, and west are always the same on any map unless otherwise specified. If you have trouble remembering the directions, label each map as you come to it.

2. **Contents** — A map can show details of a very small area or it can show the main features of a very large area. For example:

A *city map* shows each street, and we could locate the exact block where each student lives. A *county map* would still show our city, plus several additional miles. It would still show most of the roads and highways, but few streets within the town. Instead of our town covering the whole page, it might show up as no more than an inch square. A *state map* may be drawn on a page smaller than the city map, yet it covers many more miles. A state map might well show most of the highways and roads, but now our town is no bigger than a dot. On a map of the whole *United States*, even my state is small. It is just one state among 50 states. Unless my town is one of the largest in my state, it will not even be named.

3. **How can I tell what a map shows?**

Look for the *title* on the map itself. This rule is so simple we sometimes overlook it, just as we may throw away the instructions on a new item at home until we discover we cannot put it together by ourselves.

All Bible maps are labeled. One may say "Palestine: New Testament Times." We know to use it to find the places Jesus visited, but we would need a different map of Palestine to find the location of the Cave of Machpelah that Abraham bought for a burial place.

Look for *distinctive landmarks* to identify maps. Let us come back to the maps mentioned above. Even if neither my town, my county, nor my state is listed by name on a United States map, I can find the approximate location of my home if I know the landmarks. For example, I live in the southeastern part of the nation. The southern tip of my state (Alabama) touches the Gulf of Mexico. My town is in the northern one-third of my state. Now I am close enough for my purposes.

The *Dead Sea* in the land of Palestine is a good landmark to look for on Bible maps. Learn to spot it quickly. Then you can get a perspective of what that particular map includes and where the territory is in relation to Palestine.

4. **Scale of miles** — Learn to read a map's scale of miles. This scale will tell us immediately whether the map covers a small area or a large one. It will show the distance from one place to another. All things on that particular map will be drawn to that particular scale, so we can tell at a glance the comparative size of things. Notice it is no trouble at all to see that the Mediterranean Sea is much larger than the Dead Sea. Practice reading the scale of miles on the maps in this book.

5. **Physical features; Political features** —

Maps show where seas, rivers, mountains, and other permanent landmarks are found. These are called *physical features*. These must be accurate before a map can be of any value to us.

Maps show more than physical features, however. Any place on the globe has by now been owned by many different people. Before we can relate a map to any given period of history, we must know the political boundaries at that moment of time. We might call these the *political features*. Changes in these features is one of the main reasons why a variety of maps is necessary to tell the whole Bible story.

Difficulties in Understanding Maps

Most of us tend to use maps very little. We know how to get to neighboring towns, but may have no idea how the area looks on a map. Unfortunately, too many of us decided geography was boring while we were still in elementary school. Perhaps it will help when we remember we are talking about someone's *home*.

Bible maps tend to be especially confusing because the places mentioned are on the other side of the world from us. We have had no personal experience with the places. Find the Mediterranean Sea on a globe. Put your finger there and then another finger on your state in the United States. It is a long way to the Mediterranean, isn't it?

The Bible story begins over 6,000 years ago. Even the most recent Biblical events happened some 1900 years ago. In addition to distance, time plays a part in making the places in the Bible seem remote to us. We have had no personal experience with the places or the events.

The Bible covers so many years it allowed time for many nations to rise and fall. Thus the political history changed many times. Therefore the maps changed, causing more confusion unless we take time to learn the stories involved.

If Bible Maps Are Confusing, Why Study Them?

Too often, we forget these people of the Bible were as *real human beings* as we are, living in *real places* where they too got hot or cold; where they too knew rainy and dry seasons; where they too climbed mountains or crossed rivers. Let us look at that globe again and see that they lived in the same world with us, not some imaginary realm different from ours.

Our children learn, "Once upon a time there were three bears . . ." On another day they learn, "Once upon a time there was a man named Abraham . . ." Which is real? Children need their imaginations challenged by just-for-fun stories. The Bible stories need to be told in an equally fascinating way as the others, but in addition, the Bible stories need to include the assurance that these characters really lived. A map helps tremendously in building such a faith. This book is too hard for young children to study, but the material can be adapted and incorporated into whatever period of Bible history is under consideration. Little children can learn to draw and to love the map of Palestine.

No person today, nor in any day past, has lived and died in a vacuum. Each one is affected by his climate, by the lay of his land, by the political situation of his own state, and by the political situations of the major governments in his period of history.

The more we learn, the more we see the humanity of the Bible characters with their strengths and weaknesses. The more we understand *why* they did or did not obey God, the more easily we can apply the lessons to our own lives. The study of Bible geography has done more to enhance my own personal insight into the Bible story than any other single study I have made.

Another reason for studying maps is that this is one more way we may be impressed with the accuracy of the Bible. Accuracy in geographical details does not prove the inspiration of the Bible. Any man could write accurately of an area if he knew the area well and tried carefully. Yet let us look at the other side of the coin. What if we found mistakes in the geography of the Bible? How could we be sure the plan of salvation was not a mistake? The more archaeologists learn about the lands, the more they are impressed with the Bible's accuracy.

The story of the Bible tells us why we are alive and what our destiny will be. *Anything that helps us understand it more thoroughly is of vital importance.*

How to Use this Book

No workbook can include all the information needed to be taught on a subject. There are many good atlases on the market that will help the teacher or student broaden his understanding of Bible geography. Look in the bibliography for a list of reference books we have used. An effort has been made however, to include enough basic information in this book to lay a thorough foundation so the student will need only his Bible as a necessary textbook to accompany this one.

A great effort has been made to turn the student's attention directly to the Bible story. The places studied are important to us only as we see how they affected the development of the scheme of redemption. So study geographical notes freely, look up additional details of interest, but pay particular attention to the Bible story. Read the passages involved in each lesson and learn the Bible history. Of course, this particular study emphasizes the history itself rather than the details of the Law or the principles of the Epistles.

Faith is a necessary ingredient in a study of this kind. So many Bible atlases and other reference books try to destroy one's faith in the miracles and in the Omnipotent God. Please do not let any work of man destroy your faith in the word of God. Any time there is a conflict, remember the Bible comes straight from the hand of God. "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar . . ." (Rom. 3:4).

The lessons in this book do not all cover the same number of chapters in the Bible. The material was first divided into the periods of Bible history with the appropriate maps. Then it was subdivided to make it into lessons covering approximately the material that can be covered in one class period. Some periods of Bible history have many more chapters in the Biblical text than other periods though there may be fewer years covered. The facts included here are a mere outline of the Bible story and of world history. You will want to fill it out with more details. Let me warn you, however, it is very easy to bog down in so many details you will fail to see the overall historical developments. This course is designed as a survey course and will be much more valuable if it is used that way. Later detailed studies will be enhanced by the insights gained in this survey.

Colored pencils work best for filling out the maps in the book. Places can be labeled after a region is colored if pencils are used. Neither crayons nor felt-tip pens can be written over easily.

When you reach the chapters that correlate the Bible story with the maps, you will notice many blanks are left for the reader to fill in. Naturally, this breaks the flow of reading, but this book is designed to be a *workbook*, a tool for learning. Each blank is the name of a *place* or of a particular *nationality* of people. Read the chapter first to get an overview of the history involved, then go back and use your Bible to fill in each blank left and find the place on your map.

Be sure you fill out your blank map according to the instructions given. Again, the blank maps are learning tools. A fact is much more deeply impressed in our memories if we have had to search it out and write it down than if we merely look at the work someone else has done. Be sure you number your maps according to the instructions, because we will often refer to one by number for comparisons.

All the names in the Bible come to us from ancient languages. It is difficult to convey sounds from one language

to another. Therefore, you will see names spelled different ways. Even if the spelling is the same, the diacritical markings for pronouncing the name may vary from one authority to another. In cases where there are multiple spellings, we have tried to choose one and use it consistently in the book. Do not be surprised to see variations in the spelling, even within the Biblical text.

Authorities also differ on the exact height of mountains, depths of seas, or size of countries. Such variations occur because of differences in exact measuring points or other such factors. Each figure used in the book is to help us compare the Bible lands with features we are acquainted with. Variations in these figures have nothing to do with our soul's salvation.

Do not let a map study frighten you. The map instructions go one step at a time. There is a colored study map for each map you will be called on to fill in. Each place assigned should be shown on your study map. Every passage needed to fill in the blanks in the text will be in the same sentence with the blank.

By the time you finish your study, you will have built your own reference book that can be valuable to you in all future studies of Bible history.

Worksheet

Try this as a self-test.

Do not look up your answers until you have finished answering as best you can. The same worksheet is repeated at the end of the book. Be conscious of the events and see if your grade improves by the end of the study.

Put the following events in correct chronological order:

(The earliest event is #1)

- _____ Plagues in Egypt
- _____ Babylonian captivity
- _____ Giving of the law of Moses
- _____ Conquest of Canaan
- _____ Creation
- _____ Judges
- _____ Birth of Jesus
- _____ Divided Kingdom
- _____ Tower of Babel
- _____ Establishment of the church
- _____ Promises to Abraham
- _____ The return from captivity
- _____ Flood
- _____ United Kingdom
- _____ Years of Biblical silence
- _____ Wandering in the wilderness
- _____ Destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans
- _____ Paul's preaching journeys
- _____ Roman persecution of the church
- _____ Assyrian captivity
- _____ Paul in prison in Rome

Brief Look At All Bible Lands

Palestine

The story of the Bible centers around the small land of Palestine. Other nations are mentioned only as they, in turn, come in contact with this land. Therefore, let us study this country first.

Names for the Land

It is called by several names. The earliest inhabitants the Bible tells about were tribes descended from Noah through his son Ham through his son Canaan (Gen. 10:6, 15-20). Therefore it is called the land of *Canaan*. This is the earliest name applied to the land, and it is used frequently throughout the Old Testament.

This is the land God promised to give to Abraham's descendants (Gen. 12:7; 15:18-21). Hence it is called the *Promised Land*.

It is called the *Land of Israel* because Abraham's descendants did indeed inherit the land. Abraham's grandson, Jacob, was renamed Israel by God Himself (Gen. 32:24-32). His descendants were called Israelites, and it was they who actually took possession of the land.

The small country is often referred to as *Palestine*. Yet this name came to be used after Bible days. The name with this spelling is not found in the American Standard Version of the Bible. The King James Version has "Palestina" in Exodus 15:14 and Isaiah 14:29, 31. In Joel 3:4, it is spelled "Palestine." In all these passages, the tiny country of Philistia on the southern coastal plain is the one under consideration.

The Roman government controlled the land in the days of Christ and following. There was constant conflict because the Jews hated the Roman domination. The Roman armies came again and again. In A.D. 70, Jerusalem was captured, and the temple was destroyed. Finally, a century after Jesus died (A.D. 135), another revolt broke out. This time the Romans set out to destroy all Jewish influence in the land. Many, many Jews were killed. The rest were banished from Jerusalem. The city was rebuilt on totally Roman lines, and it was counted as a capital offense for a Jew to be seen in sight of the city. The name of the country was changed to Syria Palaestina. Ever since, it has been known primarily as Palestine.

All of these names will be used interchangeably throughout our study. We need to be so familiar with all the names we feel no confusion when any one of them is used.

Names for God's People in the Land

God's people living in the land were also called by various names. The earliest name was *Hebrew* meaning a "stranger" or "foreigner." It was applied to Abraham because he came from Ur and lived as a foreigner among his Canaanite neighbors (Gen. 14:13). Egyptians called his descendants Hebrews while they dwelt in Egypt. By New Testament days, the word is used to contrast one who held to the old Jewish laws and traditions with those who had accepted the Greek way of life (Phil. 3:5). A Jew who used the word in this way would be intending it as a compliment.

The name *Israelite* or *Children of Israel* literally meant a descendant of Israel (or Jacob). This is the name used most often in the Old Testament. It was preferred by the Jews because the name itself declared one to be a descendant of Abraham and therefore an heir of the promises made to him.

The term *Jew* is not used until very late in Old Testament history (2 Kings 16:6). It was first applied to those living in the southern kingdom of Judah. Since Judah was the last of the divided kingdom to go into captivity, the term came to refer to any Israelite in captivity. Then it was applied to the few who returned to their homeland, and finally, to Israelites scattered everywhere. It is, of course, the term most widely applied to individuals of this ethnic group today.

These terms will also be used interchangeably in our study because we need to be thoroughly familiar with each name.

A Tiny Country

Palestine is a pocket-sized country. If we could turn it on its side so that the north-south line of Palestine lay across the east-west line of Alabama, the whole country would fit between the Alabama-Tennessee line and Birmingham. Or, to express it another way, Palestine is a little less than one-fourth the size of the state of Alabama. It has a territory of about 12,000 square miles while Alabama has 51,609 square miles. When we realize the Israelites rarely controlled all that area, we begin to grasp how tiny the country really was. (Look in an encyclopedia and compare Palestine to the state where you live.)

The city of Dan was usually considered the most northerly point of Israelite territory in Biblical days. It was only 150 miles from there to Beersheba, the most southerly town. The width of the country varies. It is only 30 miles from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan Valley in the north. In the south, the width increases. It is about 55 miles from Gaza to the Dead Sea. Palestine also includes some of the tableland east of the Jordan, making the total figures of 11,000 to 12,000 square miles of territory quoted by authorities. (The exact figures vary because different points are counted as the boundaries.) The term *Canaan* applied only to the west side of the Jordan. Forty of our states are larger than the total area. All but three are larger than the most important part of the land west of the Jordan.

Living in a nation as huge as ours, we marvel at a country so tiny. Yet let us keep the size in perspective. There was plenty of land to divide among the families of the twelve tribes. We have stated Palestine was one-fourth the size of Alabama. The northern one-fourth of Alabama is divided into 16 large counties.

Good means of transportation and communication make large nations feasible and convenient today. All nations tended to be smaller in the day when a camel was their rapid transit system. Today, if there were a nice Interstate Highway across the length of Palestine, we could drive it in three hours at the speed limit. In Abraham's day, a good camel might make it in a little less than two days! A caravan of camels would need perhaps five days. Herdsmen such as Abraham and Jacob would need at least two weeks.

An Important Country

If it were not for the story of the Bible, we would never have heard of this small nation of Hebrews. Their pottery, their art, and their technical skills were primitive and insignificant in comparison to some of the other ancient peoples (including the Canaanites). Yet they had a code of law that has *never* been matched by any other people before or since. Their literature in the Old Testament is of a higher quality than that of any of their neighbors. In fact, our calendar is built around one man who was born, who lived, and who died within the confines of this tiny place.

No other people have affected total world history so much. How could such facts be explained if we were to say there is no God or that the Bible is an uninspired record of myths??

Though very small, the country is strategically located. It lies between the Mediterranean Sea and the Arabian Desert, and forms a fertile land bridge between the two great continents of Asia and Africa. From the earliest days, the trade routes between major civilizations passed through the land. As centuries rolled by, and nations rose and fell, Palestine was frequently a buffer state between opposing powers.

If we compared the Bible lands to a four leaf clover — with Egypt as one leaf, Mesopotamia another, Arabia as another, and Asia Minor as the fourth leaf, Palestine would be the point where the four leaves joined.

It was no accident God selected this land as the Promised Land for His chosen people. The knowledge of Jehovah could be kept alive in the world as other nations came into contact with the Israelites. Also, it was easy for God to use the foreign nations to punish Israel when they turned from Him to idols.

Look on Map #2 to see the location of Palestine in relation to her neighbors.

A Land of Variety

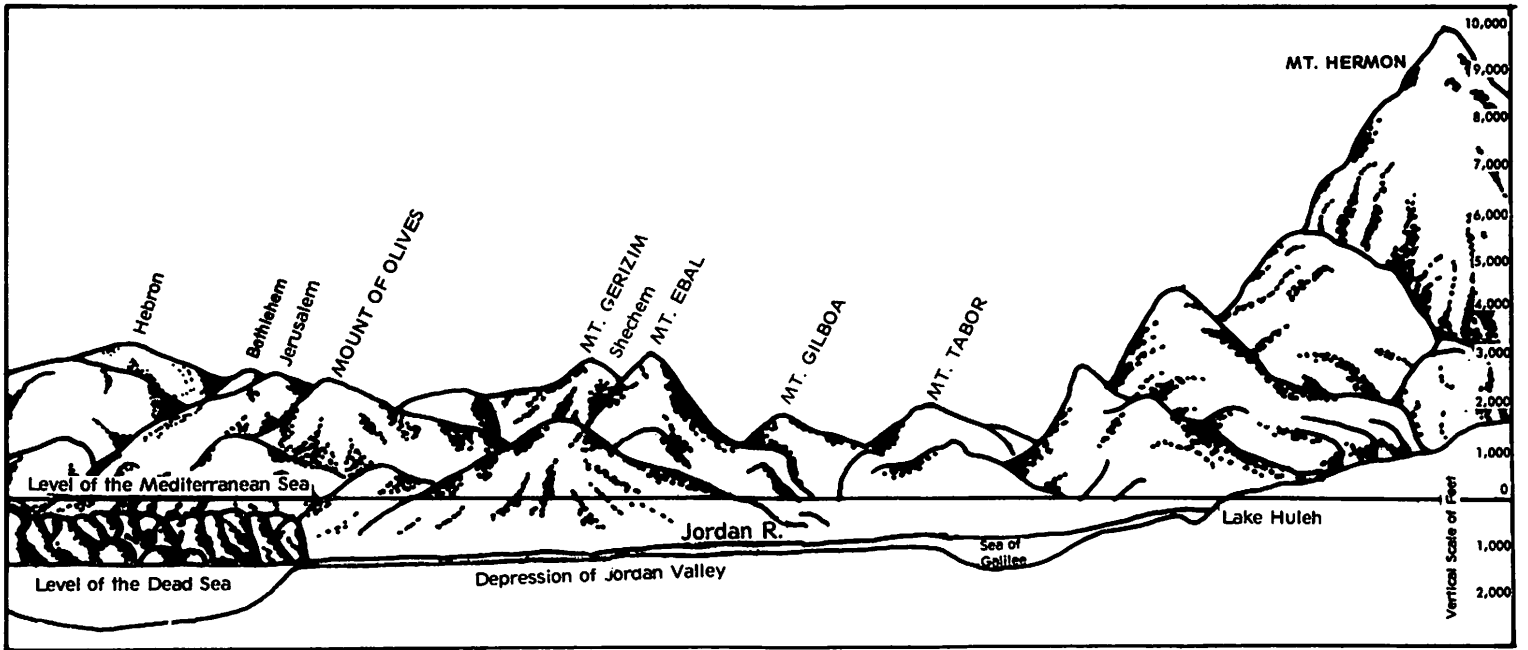
Canaan is a land of infinite variety — especially amazing because it is crowded into such a small area.

The climate of the land varies widely. The average annual temperature at Joppa on the seacoast is a mild 67°. Jerusalem is on the crest of the Judean hill country, but its average annual temperature is still a mild 63°. Then the land plunges to the depths of the Jordan Valley and the temperature at Jericho, only 15 miles east of Jerusalem, reaches 110° in the summer. The heat is enervating and the growth in the valley is tropical. Immediately across the valley, the bank rises sharply to form the Trans-Jordan Plateau where the average temperature is mild like Jerusalem and where snow may fall in the winter (see 2 Sam. 23:20).

The same contrasts in climate can be seen from north to south. Mt. Hermon is snow covered the year round. Yet it is only 120 miles from there to the oppressive heat at the mouth of the Dead Sea.

The prevailing winds across the land come from the Mediterranean Sea and bring moisture filled clouds and cooling breezes. Occasionally, however, the winds shift and a hot Sirocco wind blows in from the east. The Sirocco is excessively dry, hot, and violent — straight off the Arabian Desert. It is considered the chief climatic curse of the land (see Ezek. 17:10; Jer. 18:17).

The variety in terrain is as great. The peaks of Lebanon just north of Palestine reach 10,200 feet above sea level. East of the Lebanons, the peaks of Mt. Hermon reach 9,232 feet. From there the valley plunges south to the shores of the Dead Sea — 1,292 feet *below* sea level. That is a drop of over 10,000 feet in only 120 miles. The following illustration shows the comparative heights of well-known peaks of the land and the depth of the Jordan Valley.



Lesson 3

The Geography of Palestine — Part I

If we viewed Palestine from high in the air, we could easily distinguish the prominent geographical features of the land. There are distinct parallel zones running north and south. The Mediterranean Sea forms the western boundary. A relatively flat, fertile coastal plain lies along the Sea. Then there is a long range of mountains that forms the western hill country. Immediately beyond the hill country is the majestic cleft of the Jordan Valley. East of the valley is the eroded edge of a high tableland. Then, about 25 miles from the Jordan, the plateau rises again to form the steppe of the great Arabian Desert.

Now let us look at each zone in more detail.

Map #1— Palestine: Physical Features

We are ready for our first map. Label it Palestine: Physical Features.

Number it Map #1.

Label the directions — north, south, east, and west.

Use the scale of miles and measure distances. Become very familiar with the way this map looks.

This first map will not emphasize who owned the land, but rather the permanent physical features.

Color the map and label its features as each point is discussed in the text.

Mediterranean Sea

This large inland sea was the only ocean known to the Israelites, so it was usually called simply *the sea* or *the great sea*. The Romans named it from the Latin terms *medius* meaning middle and *terra* meaning earth, thus "middle of the earth," "center of the world." It was, indeed, the center of the Roman empire.

The Canaanite shoreline is an interesting example of the impact of geography upon the history and destiny of nations. The southeastern shoreline of the Mediterranean is smooth and regular all the way from the last eastern port of Egypt to Mt. Carmel. Therefore, there was no decent harbor in all of southern Palestine. Joppa and Dor were sometimes used as fair weather harbors, but they were hardly deserving on the name "port" (see Jonah 1:3).

The Philistines who inhabited the southern portion of the coastal plain are thought to have come to Palestine from the sea, perhaps from Crete. After settling into their new home, they literally turned their backs on the Mediterranean. Gaza, the southern-most of the great Philistine cities, was the greatest trading center of ancient Palestine, yet it was located three miles inland.

In contrast, north of Mt. Carmel was the plain of Accho and then the narrow plain of Phoenicia. The Phoenicians' plain was too narrow, and their mountains too rugged, to encourage an agricultural lifestyle. Therefore, they turned their attention to the sea and used the excellent harbors at Tyre and Sidon. They became the foremost mariners of ancient times. It would be difficult to over-estimate their cultural influence over the Mediterranean world as they sailed from port to port.

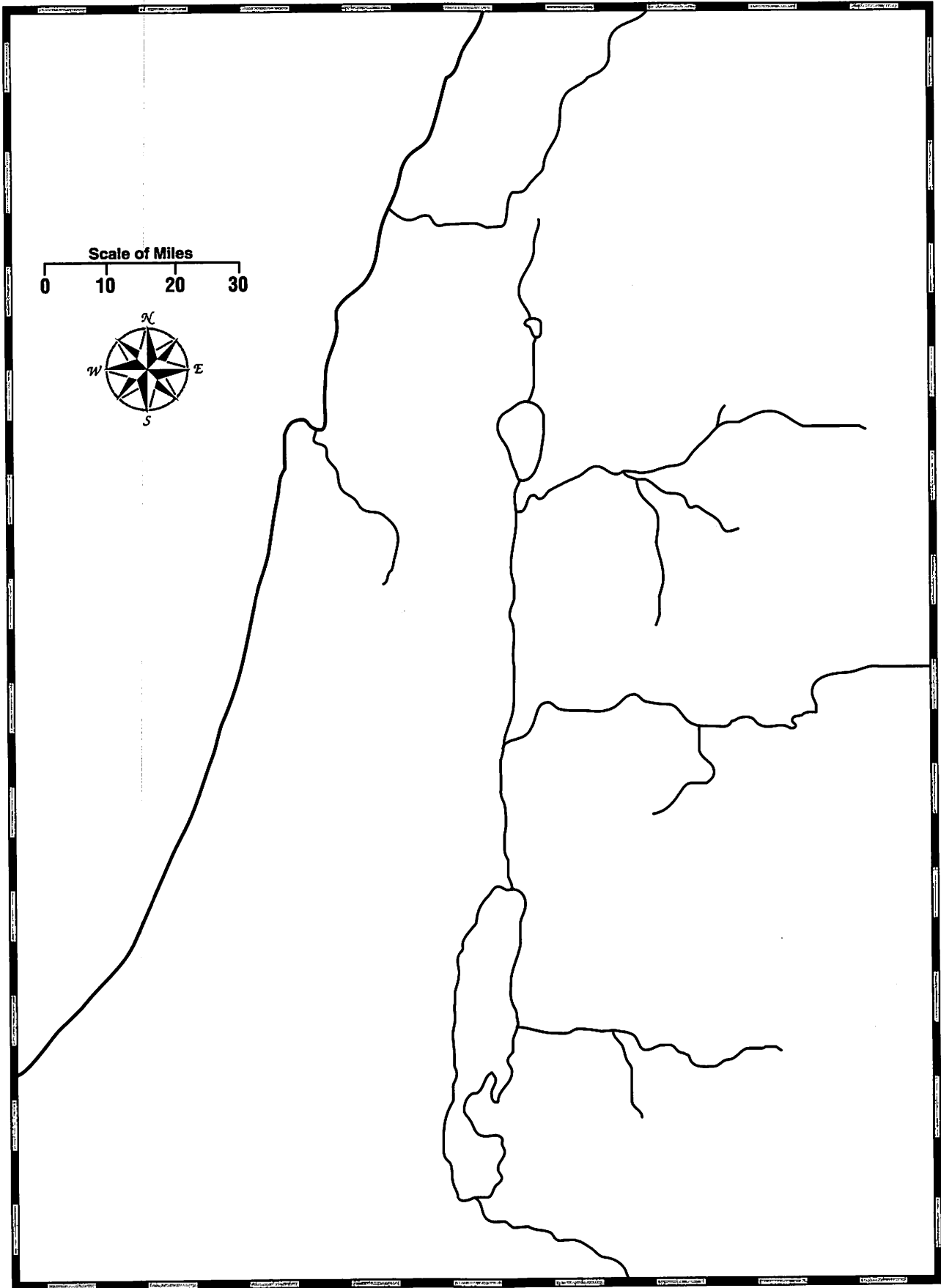
The Mediterranean Sea plays a much more prominent role in the Bible story by New Testament days. Palestine was by then under the control of the Romans whose capital lay across the Mediterranean in Italy. During the centuries, harbors such as Joppa and Dor were enlarged. Between 25-13 B.C., Herod the Great enlarged a city on the coast called Strato's Tower and built a very expensive artificial harbor. He named the city Caesarea in honor of Augustus Caesar. It became the military headquarters for the Roman legions in Palestine and the port was in regular use. It is not surprising therefore, that we find Paul and other New Testament characters frequently traveling by ship and landing at Caesarea.

Label the Mediterranean Sea on your map and color it blue. Be sure you label it on each map from here on because a portion of it will show on each map we use.

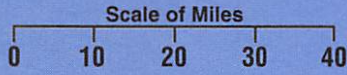
The Coastal Plain

The coastal plain varies in width from about 6 miles in the north to about 25 miles in the south. Rather than table-flat, it is an area of rolling hills of 200-300 feet in height. The entire plain is well-watered and fertile. Water percolates down through the central highlands and comes out in lagoons, springs, and streams running across to the sea. It was intensively cultivated, even on the narrow plain of Phoenicia.

The only interruption in the plain is Mt. Carmel that juts out into the sea. Its foot reaches to within 200 yards of the Mediterranean. It is as if, in the formation of the land, one spur of the hill country was turned sideways and lies northwest-southeast rather than north-south as the others do.

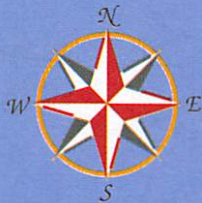


PALESTINE PHYSICAL FEATURES



Mediterranean Sea

- I. Coastal Plain
- II. Hill Country
- III. Jordan Valley
- IV. Trans-jordan Plateau



Map by permission of S. Scott Richardson • Russellville, AL

From Mt. Carmel, a valley runs southeastward across the land from Accho to the Jordan River. This rich plain was called Jezreel in the Old Testament and later Esdraelon by the Greeks (Esdraelon is the Greek word for the Hebrew Jezreel, "God sows"). The Valley of Jezreel and the coastal plain formed the garden spot of the land.

Historically, the coastal plain was divided into three portions. We have already mentioned the narrow plain of Phoenicia north of Mt. Carmel. Sometimes the Phoenicians controlled all the plain north of Carmel. If Israel were strong enough, the Phoenician territory ended with a white limestone bluff called the Ladder of Tyre that lies east and west across the plain about 16 miles north of Mt. Carmel.

The Plain of Sharon is 45 miles long between Carmel and the city of Joppa. The plain is between 8 and 12 miles wide. It was very fertile and so well-watered it was actually marshy in some areas. Crocodiles were found in some spots. Canaanites lived in Sharon after they were driven out of the hill country. This section of the plain played only a minor role in the Bible story.

As we have already noted, the Philistines held control of the southern plain. It was about 40 miles from Joppa to Gaza. The plain is from 12 to 25 miles wide here.

The busiest trade route in the land ran through the coastal plain, called the Way of the Sea or the Way of the Philistines. It came from Egypt around the curve of the Mediterranean through the Philistine plain. Then it turned eastward and went through a pass in the spur of Carmel into the valley of Jezreel. The city of Megiddo was a fortress city that guarded this important pass. There was another road that lay directly along the shoreline, but it was impossible to defend if enemy troops were stationed on the slopes of Mt. Carmel. Therefore, innumerable caravans and armies passed through Megiddo and the coastal plain. The nation who controlled Megiddo controlled the highway to Egypt, to Phoenicia, to Asia Minor, and to Mesopotamia.

Label the Coastal Plain, Mt. Carmel, the Valley of Jezreel, and Megiddo. Label the sections of the plain Phoenicia, Sharon, and Philistia. Draw and label the coastal trade route. Color the plain and valley light green.

The Hill Country

The hill country west of the Jordan was the Israelite stronghold. Moses described the blessings to be found in the rolling hills in Deuteronomy 8:7 and 11:10-11. The people had come from Egypt where they had to irrigate their crops. In Canaan, they would find springs of water bubbling from the hills.

On one occasion, the Syrians decided Israel's God was a "god of the hills." To their dismay, they found Israel's God could win on the plains also (1 Kings 20:23, 28).

When Joshua led the Israelite army into the land, they found the Canaanites well established in all the plains. God would have delivered all the cities into Israel's hands if they had had the faith to complete the task set before them. But they found the more undeveloped hill country easier to take and to hold, and it became their home. (See Judg. 1:19; Josh. 16:10; 17:12-18.)

There is a range of mountains that begins on the northern shores of the Mediterranean and runs south through Syria, Palestine, and on into the Sinaitic Peninsula. North of Palestine, the range divides to form two parallel ranges with the rift of the Jordan Valley between them. The range nearest the sea is called Lebanon and the range to the east is called the Anti-Lebanons. The very high peaks of Lebanon (over 10,000 feet above sea level) north of the Leontes River and Mt. Hermon just opposite in the Anti-Lebanon range were considered the northern boundary of Palestine during most of Bible history.

The Leontes River runs through a 2,000 foot gorge between Lebanon and the hills of Galilee and forms an almost impassable barrier between Phoenicia and Israel. The city of Dan was located across the valley from the Lebanon at the foot of Mt. Hermon.

When the Jews wanted cedars from Mt. Lebanon to build their temple, it was much easier to take the logs across the plain and float them down the Mediterranean to Joppa than to cross the Leontes River and take them across the hills and valleys to Jerusalem (see 1 Kings 5:8-9).

The 50 mile section from the Leontes River to the Valley of Jezreel is usually called Galilee. The hills of upper Galilee are, in reality, foothills of Lebanon. All upper Galilee tends to be high and relatively rugged, averaging 2,000 feet above sea level. Some peaks reach nearly 4,000 feet.

Upper Galilee is rarely mentioned in the Old Testament. King Hiram of Phoenicia considered he had received a bad bargain when he was given twenty cities in Galilee as partial pay for his help in Solomon's building projects. He named the region Cabul or "good for nothing" (1 Kings 9:11-13). It was a Canaanite stronghold during the early years of Israelite history with a strong fortress city at Hazor. It was the first region to be attacked and taken by any enemy from Mesopotamia. Yet, by New Testament days, it was a busy, prosperous region. Galilee was the scene of some of Jesus' greatest work.

Lower Galilee is much lower, averaging 700 feet above sea level. None of its peaks exceed 1,850 feet. The hills are rounded and there are broad, rich plains. It is 28 miles from Accho east to the Sea of Galilee.

The Valley of Jezreel lies in the southern portion of Galilee. Technically, it is not one continuous valley, but rather a series of valleys and plains that open together. The Bay of Accho along the seacoast opens into the broad rich plain called Jezreel or Esdraelon. This plain is roughly 15 by 20 miles in size. Several passes open into it from all sides making access to it easy and making it one of the most important sections of the land commercially and militarily. The western portion of the plain is drained by the Kishon River that empties into the sea just north of Mt. Carmel. The river is usually lazy and almost non-existent in the summer, but it could be swollen and rapid after the winter rains. Many important events took place in the region. Jesus grew up just across the ridge from Esdraelon in Nazareth.

The Plain of Esdraelon slopes off into a deeper valley about 15 miles west of the Jordan River. This portion of the valley still retains the ancient name of Jezreel from the city located on its western edge. Marauding tribes from the East often crossed the Jordan at some ford and followed the Jordan Valley north to enter the land through the Valley of Jezreel. This was the scene of Gideon's battle with the Midianites.

Label the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountains, the Leontes River, Galilee, the Kishon River, and Accho. Write Esdraelon in parenthesis under Jezreel on your map.

The hills rise quickly again on the southern edge of Jezreel to resume the central hill country. Some peaks are high and fairly rugged, but they are separated by broad, spacious valleys. The highest peaks are a little over 3,000 feet — not as high as those in upper Galilee. This central portion of mountains was usually called the hill country of Ephraim in the Old Testament and Samaria in the New.

Three of the best known peaks of the area are Mt. Gilboa on the edge of the Jezreel Valley, and Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim on either side of Shechem. It was at Shechem where God first promised to give the land to Abraham's descendants (Gen. 12:6-7). It was here where Joshua and his army set up a monument and staked their claim to the land (Josh. 8:30-35). It was an appropriate spot for God to choose because one can get an excellent view of the land from the peaks of the mountains. The Mediterranean can be seen 25 miles to the west. To the east is the abrupt plunge to the Jordan River and then the wall beyond of the tableland of Gilead. To the north are the rich fields of Jezreel ("God's sowing"). And to the south, the hill country continues. The main pass on the north-south road was located here and, at the eastern edge of the pass, roads ran in all directions in the land.

The hill country of Judah was a 50 miles stretch of land averaging about 2,000 feet above sea level. None of its peaks are as lofty as those in Samaria or Galilee. There are high points around Jerusalem and still higher ones just north of Hebron. The valleys are shallow and the mountains domelike.

The western side of the Judean hill country slopes away gradually into the foothills and elevated valleys of the Shephelah and then to the coastal plain. The Shephelah has low, chalky hills separated by broad, pleasant valleys. It was fertile and well-watered. These broken foothills helped form a defense line between the Israelites and any enemy moving along the coastal plain so such fortress cities at Lachish, Debir, Libnah, and Beth-shemesh are mentioned frequently in the Bible story.

There is an abrupt drop on the eastern side of the Judean hills. Bethlehem stands c.3800 feet above the Dead Sea only 14 air miles away. From the Mount of Olives to the Dead Sea, the land falls from 2,680 feet *above* sea level to 1,292 feet *below* sea level. In less than 20 miles the land plunges from a mountain ridge to the deepest point on land found on the earth. The slopes are extremely rugged — a wild, barren wasteland. It is called the Wilderness of Judah. It was here David hid in caves when Saul was trying to kill him (1 Sam. 24:1ff). It was likely here where Jesus was tempted by the Devil (Matt. 4:1).

There is an interesting climatic explanation for this dry wilderness. Moisture from the Mediterranean fills the clouds which are driven eastward toward the land mass of Palestine. As the air rises, it is cooled and compacted and rain falls in the hill country. When, however the air passes over the crest of the hills, the bottom literally drops out. The air expands rapidly as it descends into the Jordan Valley. Expanding air sucks up moisture rather than releasing it. The Wilderness of Judea is just over the crest of the hills. Therefore, it almost never receives rain, and the rate of evaporation at the Dead Sea is extraordinary.

South of Hebron the hills gradually descend to the rolling hills of the Negeb (called "the south" in the King James Version). The name is usually applied to the semi-desert region between Beer-sheba and Kadesh-barnea. It was fertile enough immediately after the winter rains but as dry and parched as a desert in the summer.

Abraham found good water in some wells he dug on the southern edge of the arable land. Naturally water is of prime importance in a dry region, so the town of Beersheba grew up around the wells. It is usually listed as the southern point of Israelite territory. Sometimes Israel controlled the Negeb politically, but it was more for control of the minerals in the region than as a home for the people.

The Negeb forms a buffer zone between Canaan and the true desert of the Sinaitic Peninsula.

A trade route ran along the spine of the western hill country, continued through the Negeb, and on to Egypt. It was called the Way of Shur. This route would have been busy with Israelites, but it was rarely used by caravans traveling great distances.

Color the hill country yellow. Label the best known peaks up and down the ridge — Mt. Tabor, Mt. Gilboa, Mt. Ebal, Mt. Gerizim, and the Mount of Olives. Label the cities of Dan, Shechem, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, and Beersheba. Label the Negeb. Label the wadi called the River of Egypt and note it as the southern boundary of Canaan along the coastline. Do not confuse it with the much larger Nile River of Egypt.

Lesson 4

The Geography of Palestine — Part II

The Jordan Valley

Continue using Map #1 for this lesson. Label each new section as the text describes it.

The Jordan River was almost useless to the ancient inhabitants of Palestine. For the most part, it could not be used for irrigation, and no one could use it for travel. The valley is truly unique for in it is found the deepest spot on land — the Dead Sea, 1,292 feet below sea level. The Jordan is part of the Great Rift Valley that begins on the northeastern shores of the Mediterranean and extends down the Jordan, through the Arabah to the Gulf of Aqaba. The entire Red Sea is a part of it. The same Rift continues deep into eastern Africa to Mozambique. The total trench is 4,000 miles long. The Greeks named the region immediately north of Palestine "Coele-Syria" or "hollow Syria" because of the hollow between the mountains. The Jordan Valley itself is called "El Ghor" today.

Described geologically, the Rift is a valley in which the bottom fell out. It is situated along parallel fault lines. The whole section caved in and the Jordan Valley was born.

The Jordan Valley is very narrow, ranging from 2 to 15 miles wide with towering cliffs on either side. There is lush tropical growth, almost jungle like, in the valley. The Bible mentions occasional encounters with lions and other beasts that lived there (1 Kings 13:23-25; Jer. 49:19).

Water percolates down through the porous rock of Mt. Hermon to issue forth in one of the largest springs in the world. This main source joins 3 other streams flowing from the base of the mountain to form the Jordan river. According to McGarvey, the valley appears to be "dead level" as the river flows south.

About 12 miles from its central source, the Jordan flowed into Lake Huleh. This ancient lake was about 4½ miles long and 3½ miles wide. The land immediately around it was low and swampy. The lake has since been drained, and the land is intensively cultivated. This lake appears very few times in the Bible story.

The Jordan flows fairly smoothly for about a mile and a half after leaving Lake Huleh. Then it begins a torturous descent. It is about 11 miles from Huleh to the Sea of Galilee as the crow flies. In that distance, the Jordan will drop 900 feet, over 80 feet per mile! Most of that drop occurs in about 8 miles. In order to do so, the river winds and twists between high banks, rushing from cliff to cliff, sometimes nearly doubling back on itself. Even kayak travel would be too dangerous on such a river.

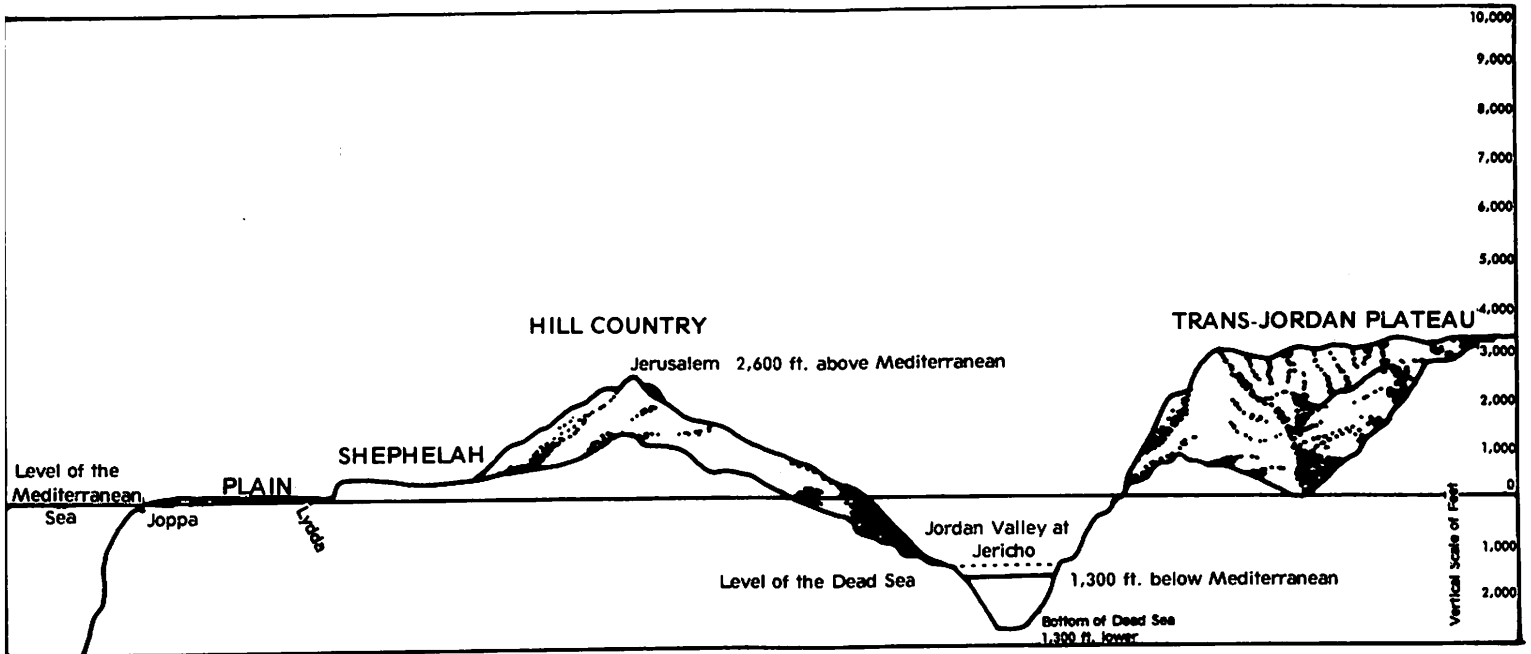
The Jordan is 696 feet *below* sea level by the time it reaches the Sea of Galilee. The sea itself reaches a depth of 165 feet. This is the world's lowest fresh water lake. It is about 12½ miles long and 7½ miles wide. There is a beautiful plain (Gennesaret) on the northwest shore of Galilee where year-round crops of fruit, grain, and vegetables grow. Hills come down to the shores almost the rest of the way around the lake and winds rush down to cause sudden storms. The hills on the east rise sharply to form a high plateau. Therefore, communication with the people on the eastern bank was difficult. The Sea of Galilee was linked almost entirely with life on the western shore. The sea is called Chinnereth in the Old Testament; and Galilee, Tiberias, and the Lake of Gennesaret in the New. Jesus spent many, many hours teaching the people of Capernaum, Chorazin, and other cities near the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

Though the Jordan leaves the Sea of Galilee at a sedate pace, it must descend another 600 feet in 65 miles to reach the level of the Dead Sea. From this point south, it winds and twists with calm stretches interspersed with patches of foaming rapids. It takes 200 miles of wandering river to cover the 80 miles of land from its principal source at the base of Mt. Hermon to the mouth of the Dead Sea.

The river bed proper varies in width from 80 to 180 feet with an average depth of 5 to 12 feet. At places, and at certain seasons of the year, it can be waded with no difficulty. There are a number of fords along the river, the best known ones being just below the Jabbok River and at Jericho.

The valley is 14 miles wide at Jericho. There are three distinct banks that can be seen at this point. First, the upper bank that forms the first slope of the great valley. Next comes the lower, or middle banks between which is found the luxuriant vegetation, and then the true banks of the river's bed. It was usually a fording point at Jericho, yet during the flood season from March to the first of May, the river could be 12 feet deep with a swift current. It was flood season when the waters stopped for the Israelites to cross on dry land (Josh. 3:15-16).

At last the Jordan flows into the Dead Sea which is 48 miles long with a maximum width of 10 miles. Its surface is already the deepest point on land, and then its waters reach down another 1300 feet. If the mountains were suddenly flattened out, the Mediterranean would rush across the land to fill the ravine.



The Jordan flows into the Dead Sea from the north. The Arnon River flows into it from the east. The Zered flows in from the south. Perhaps 6½ million tons of water move into the Salt Sea each day. Yet *nothing* flows out of it! The evaporation rate is so great a haze generally hovers above its clear waters. The water left is 25% solid substance — five times saltier than the oceans. Fish swept into it from the Jordan, soon die and are washed up on its shores. Although it is called the Salt Sea in the Bible, the name Dead Sea is very appropriate. It played only a minor role in the lives of the Israelites because of its oppressive heat in summer, its unnatural saltiness, and the forbidding heights on the shores on either side.

South of the Dead Sea there is a trough-like valley that gradually rises in elevation as it continues southward 110 miles to Ezion-geber at the tip of the Gulf of Aqaba. The name Arabah is sometimes used to refer to the entire Jordan valley and sometimes more specifically to the valley south of the Dead Sea. It is a barren, rugged valley with deep-cut wadis on each side.

Label: Jordan River
 Lake Huleh
 Sea of Galilee
 Dead Sea

Label the tributary rivers: Yarmuk River
 Jabbok River
 Arnon River
 Zered River.

Label the Arabah south of the Dead Sea.
Color the whole valley a dark green.

Trans-Jordan Plateau

Immediately across the Jordan valley, there is another range of mountains, an extension of the Anti-Lebanons we noted in our last lesson. The plateau of Moab, immediately east of the Dead Sea, forms a wall 3,000 feet high. The mountains on this east side are higher than those on the west, but they tend to form a high tableland with fewer sharp peaks.

Moses viewed the Promised Land from one of the peaks on this side, Mt. Nebo (Deut. 34). It is located just northeast of the Dead Sea. Notice he was able to see a broad panorama of Canaan from this God-chosen spot because he was higher than the mountains across the Jordan.

The eastern plateau was known for its excellent grazing land. Because of this attraction, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and one-half the tribe of Manasseh asked for it as their inheritance. This portion of the land was not included in the original promise to Abraham (Gen. 15:18), because Moses was distressed at first when the two and one-half tribes asked for it (Num. 32). Throughout Israelite history, they succeeded in holding all or little of the territory depending on their political strength at the moment.

The plateau was divided into four sections. North of the Yarmuk River was a territory called Bashan. It was rarely under Israelite control. It came under Syrian domination early in Israel's history.

The middle section south of the Yarmuk to about even with the northern tip of the Dead Sea is often referred to as Gilead. Sometimes the name is used more specifically for the land between the Yarmuk and Jabbok (compare Deut. 2:36; 3:13 with Josh. 22:9). This central section of the plateau was Israel's stronghold on the east side of the Jordan.

The Moabites held firm control of the section between the Arnon River and the Zered. Sometimes they were strong enough to hold all the land east of the Dead Sea.

South of the Zered lay the rugged hill country of Seir that belonged to the Edomites throughout most of Old Testament history. It was dry with barren hills, yet with valleys hidden away through narrow passes. The Edomites, and later, the Nabateans who gained control of the area, became quite skilled at finding and holding the scarce water that was available.

Still another trade route followed the eastern plateau from deep in southern Arabia to Mesopotamia. It was called the King's Highway. Whoever controlled it could collect taxes from the many caravans plying their trade along the way. Many battles were fought through the years for control of the King's Highway.

The fertile land reaches only 20-25 miles east of the Jordan before the still higher plateau of the Arabian Desert begins. We will discuss the desert in more detail later.

The Ammonites lived east of Gilead along the edge of the Desert. It is easy to see why they fought Israel so often. Their land was arid while the fields of Gilead were green.

Label the sections of the Trans-Jordan Plateau:

Bashan

Gilead

Moab

Edom

Color the plateau yellow.

Label the Arabian Desert on the eastern edge of your map.

Identify Ammon's land between Gilead and the edge of the Desert.

Review of the Description of Palestine (Lessons 2-4)

Identify the mountains: (Label the mountains on your review map.)

- _____ 1. Snow-covered the year around.
- _____ 2. Famed for its cedars.
- _____ 3. Juts out into the Mediterranean.
- _____ 4. Lies immediately east of the city of Jerusalem.
- _____ 5. Twin mountains on either side of Shechem.
- _____
- _____ 6. The range of mountains west of the Jordan.
- _____ 7. The range of mountains east of the Jordan.
- _____ 8. The Jordan began at its base.
- _____ 9. Moses died here.

Names for the people and land:

- _____ 1. This name comes to us from the Romans.
- _____ 2. Land so called because God promised it to Abraham.
- _____ 3. Land so called because Abraham's descendants did inherit the land.
- _____ 4. Name means "stranger" or "foreigner."
- _____ 5. People from the southern kingdom of Judah were first called by this name.
- _____ 6. Descendants of Jacob.
- _____ 7. Land so called because a particular branch of Ham's descendants settled there.
- _____ 8. The name we call these people today.

Identify the bodies of water: (Label the rivers on your review map.)

- _____ 1. The main river of the land.
- _____ 2. Empties into the Dead Sea from the east.
- _____ 3. Flows into the Dead Sea from the south.
- _____ 4. Drains the western portion of the Valley of Jezreel.
- _____ 5. The world's lowest fresh water lake.
- _____ 6. Called the Great Sea in the Bible.
- _____ 7. This lake has been drained.
- _____ 8. The lowest point on land found on the earth.
- _____ 9. Name means the "middle of the earth."
- _____ 10. The wadi that formed Israel's southern boundary on the coastline.
- _____ 11. Bible name for the Dead Sea.
- _____ 12. The river between Mt. Lebanon and the hills of Galilee.

Nations: (Label the nations on your review map.)

- _____ 1. The people who controlled the land between the Arnon and Zered Rivers.
- _____ 2. They controlled the southern coastal plain.
- _____ 3. They turned to sea trade very early because their coastal plain was very narrow.
- _____ 4. They lived on the edge of the Desert.
- _____ 5. Mt. Seir was their stronghold.
- _____ 6. They claimed Bashan very early in Israel's history.

Distances:

- _____ 1. From Dan to Beersheba.
- _____ 2. From the peaks of Mt. Hermon to the Dead Sea.
- _____ 3. Total length of the Great Rift Valley.
- _____ 4. The width of Canaan in the north.
- _____ 5. The width of Canaan at the southern end of the Dead Sea.
- _____ 6. The distance from Jerusalem to Jericho.
- _____ 7. The length of the Jordan River bed.
- _____ 8. The distance from the Jordan River to the edge of the Arabian Desert.
- _____ 9. From Joppa to Gaza.
- _____ 10. From the Leontes River to the Valley of Jezreel.

Cities: (Label the cities on your review map.)

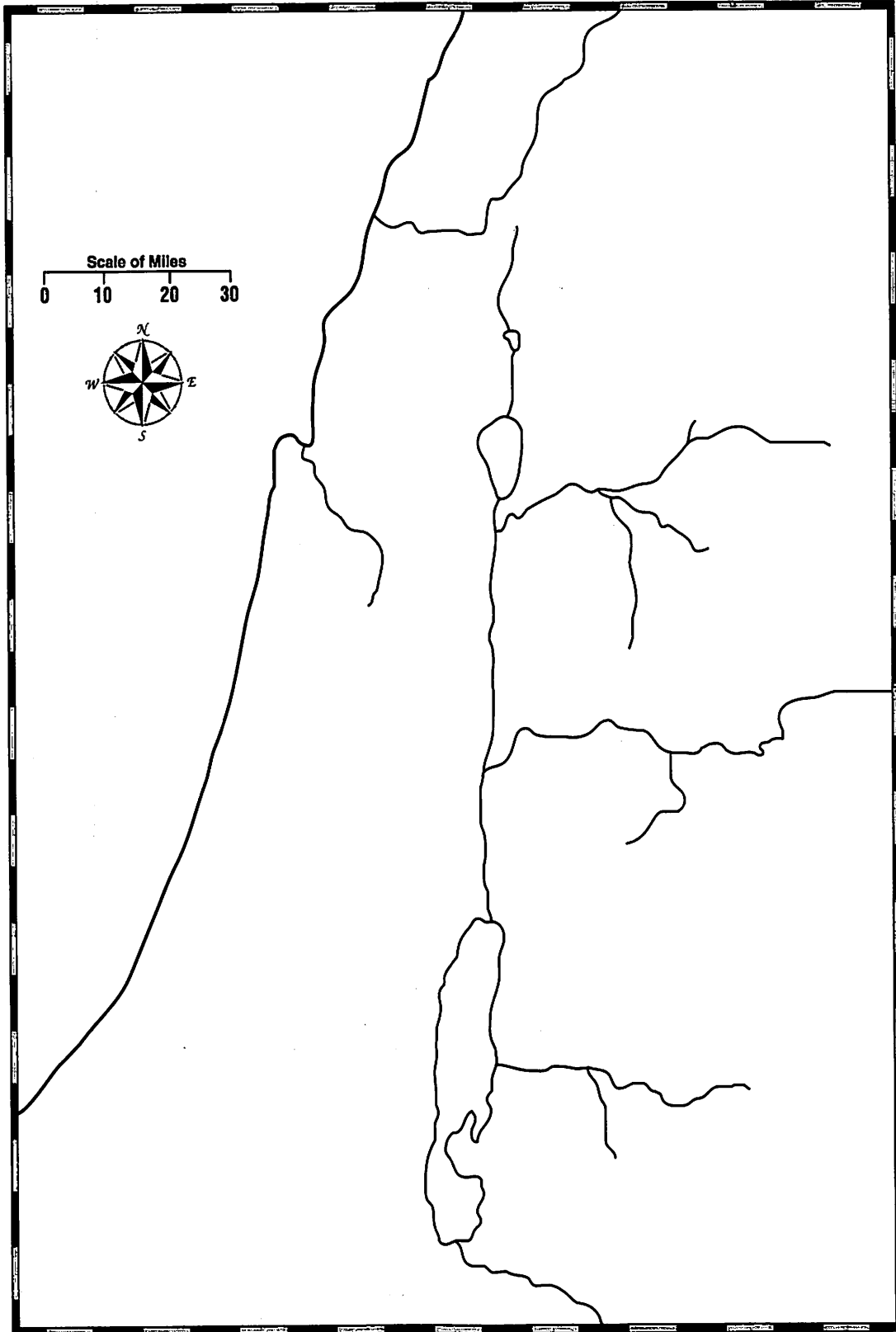
- _____ 1. The most northern city in Israel's usual control.
- _____ 2. The best natural harbors in the land.
- _____ 3. Herod built an artificial harbor here.
- _____ 4. A city in the Negeb, built around wells Abraham dug.
- _____ 5. The city guarding the pass through the spur of Carmel.
- _____ 6. A great trading center of the Philistines.

Identify: (Label the regions on your review map.)

- _____ 1. Name the 4 parallel zones between the Mediterranean Sea and the Arabian Desert.

- _____ 2. The dry, rugged valley south of the Dead Sea.
- _____ 3. The Hebrew name of a valley that means "God's Sowing."
- _____ 4. The Greek name for the same valley.
- _____ 5. The central portion of the coastal plain.
- _____ 6. The very dry, rugged area south of Canaan.
- _____ 7. The hot, dry east wind.
- _____ 8. The very rugged slopes on the west side of the Dead Sea.
- _____ 9. The name for the Jordan Valley today.
- _____ 10. The low, rolling hills between the coastal plain and the hill country of Judah.

- _____11. The trade route along the coastal plain.
- _____12. The trade route running along the peaks of the mountain ridge on the west side of the Jordan.
- _____13. The trade route along the Trans-Jordan Plateau.



Lesson 6

Old Testament Lands

We have already stated that no person or nation exists alone. Let us imagine Palestine as the center of a wheel and the other countries that touched it as the spokes of that wheel.

Map #2 — Bible Lands

Label and number your map.

Label the directions. Note this map is drawn so that the north-south line lies across the narrow side of your page.

Find Palestine and draw a dotted line around it so you can find it quickly each time you look at your map.

Compare the scale of miles on Maps #1 and 2.

Note the location of the large bodies of water and color them blue.

Label each place on your map as you study it.

Mesopotamia

Rivers provide easy access to water for man and animal, so it is not surprising the earliest signs of civilization have been found in a broad valley between two very long rivers. The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers both rise out of the highlands of what is now Turkey and flow southeastward into the Persian Gulf. Their sources are less than 100 miles apart.

The Tigris is a swift, turbulent river 1,150 miles long. The ancient city of Nineveh was one of the most important cities built on its banks.

The Euphrates meanders its way along nearly 1,700 miles from its source to the gulf. Though it is a much calmer river normally, it can cause great damage. There is widespread evidence that there were numerous times when it changed course suddenly and devastated some city built on its edge. The Old Testament often calls the Euphrates the "Great River" or simply "the River." (See. Gen. 15:18; Josh. 1:4; 1 Kings 4:21.)

A description of the Garden of Eden includes the names of these two rivers, the Hiddekel (Tigris) and the Euphrates. Two additional rivers are named, the Pison and the Gihon. Their location has never been found (Gen. 2:8-14).

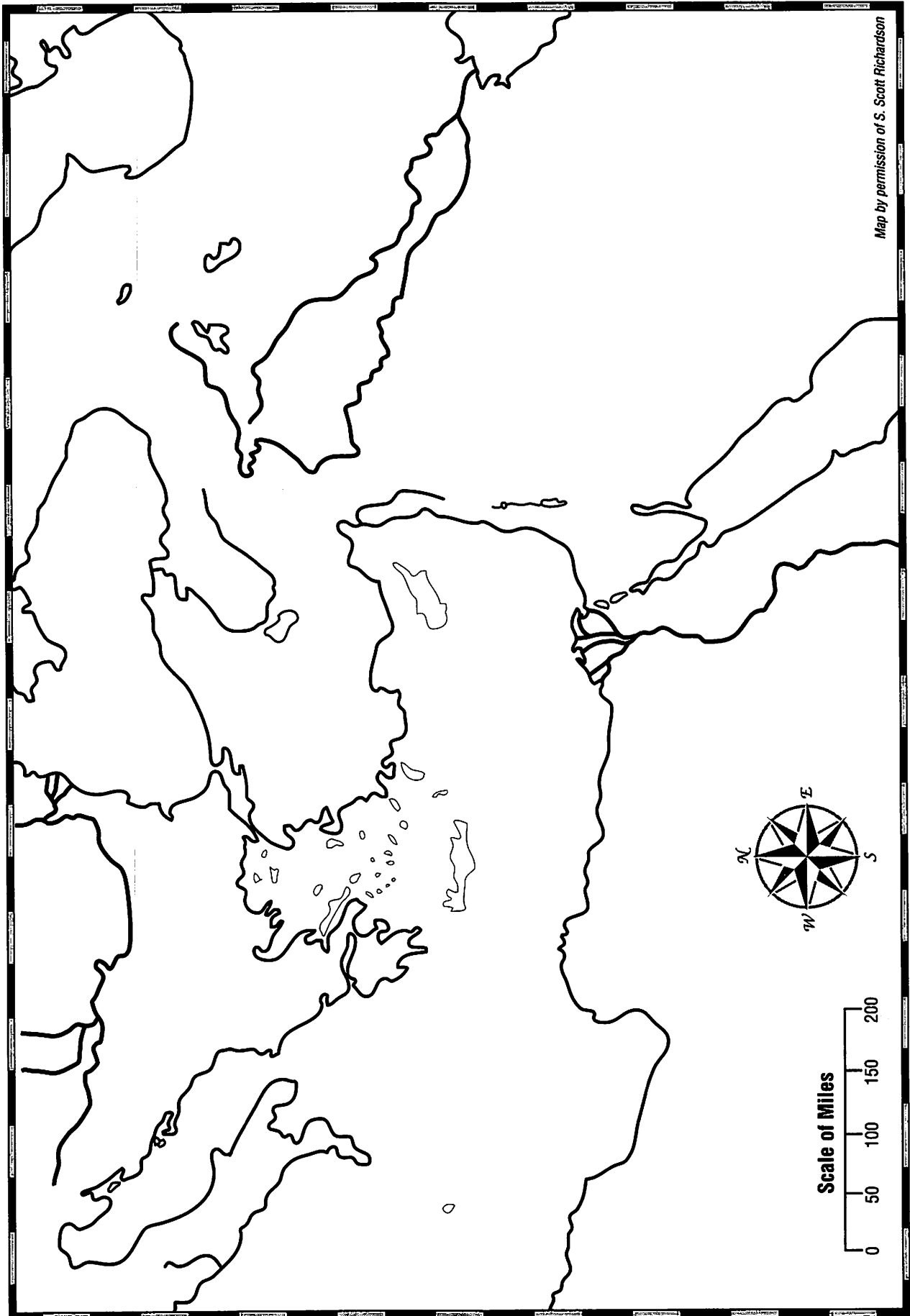
The broad valley between the rivers is called Aram-Naharaim or "Aram of the two rivers" in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Our English translations usually use an equivalent Greek term Mesopotamia, "between the rivers." This term first came into widespread use during the years of Biblical silence between Malachi and Matthew when the Greek-Syrian kingdom held control of the region. Therefore, most of the English translations in common use say Cushan-rishathaim of Judges 3:8-10 was "king of Mesopotamia." If you read the same passage in a modern speech Bible (such as the New International Version), he will be described as "king of Aram-Naharaim." Both terms apply to the valley between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.

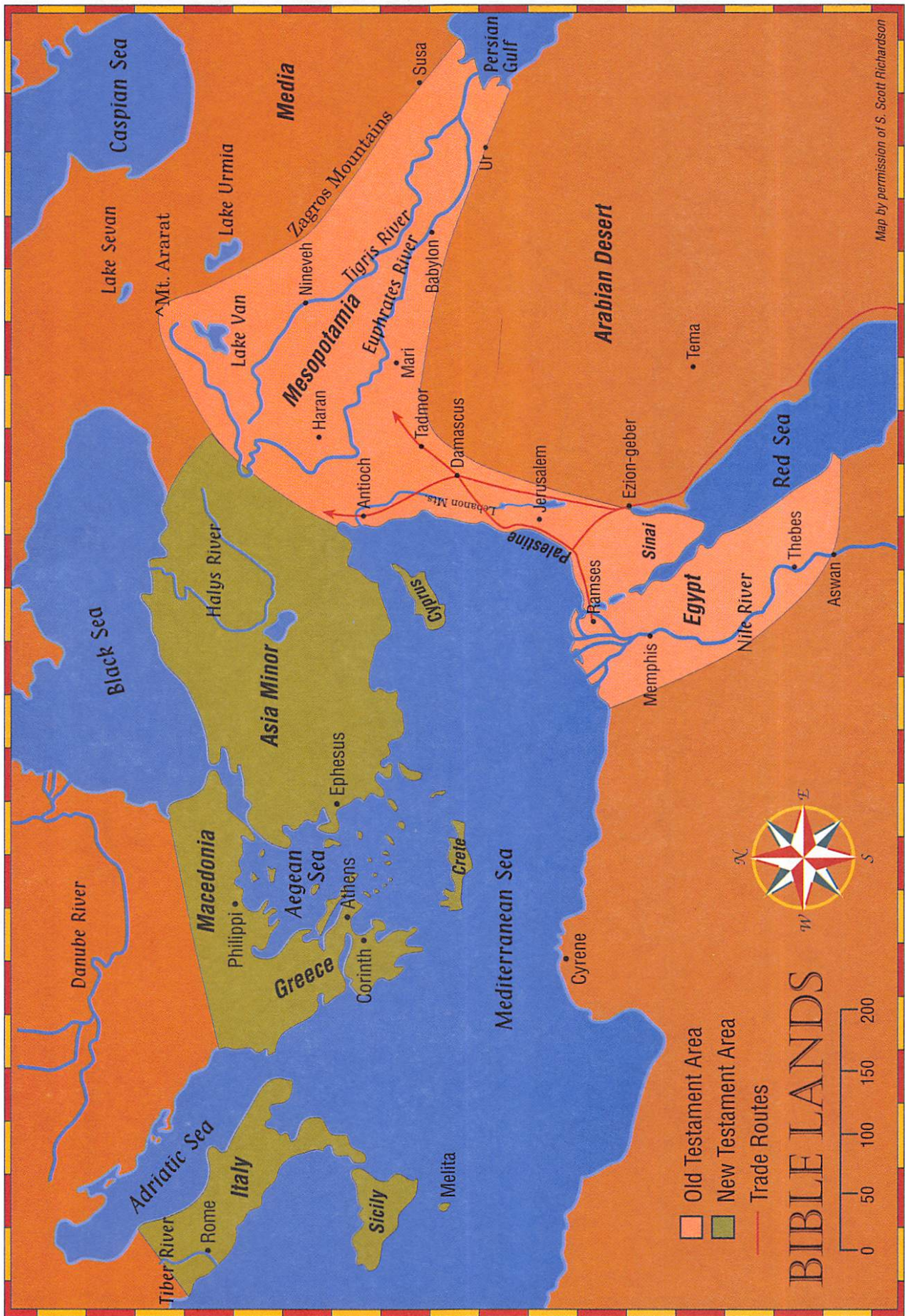
We will use the word Mesopotamia to refer to the entire area reaching from the Persian Gulf in the south to the Ararat Mountains in the north. Remember, it is a *geographic* term rather than a *political* term. In other words, there was never a nation of people called "Mesopotamians" who conquered another people. Instead, it is a region where many nations rose and fell through the years. The very early Akkadians and Sumerians were from Mesopotamia. Later, the great Assyrian and Babylonian empires originated there.

Sometimes the term Aram is joined with another word to specify a particular location. For example, Jacob found his wives in Paddan-Aram in northern Mesopotamia near the city of Haran (Gen. 28:2). Aram seems to have meant "height" originally and was doubtless used as a geographic term for the high tableland that reaches from the Lebanon Mountains near the Mediterranean Sea to the upper Tigris and Euphrates rivers. This tableland was also home for the descendants of Aram, the son of Shem, a son of Noah. The Hebrews also came through Shem and were, therefore, closely related to the Arameans.

Label the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Label the valley between the rivers Mesopotamia. Label the mountains of Lebanon. Label the tableland between the Lebanons and the Tigris River Aram.

Villages dotted Mesopotamia and Aram from the dawn of civilization. As the years passed, villages grew into cities able to conquer and control their neighbors. City-states arose with their own king, able to hold more or less territory depending on their strength. Cities began to build massive walls of dried mud bricks to protect themselves from enemies. Remarkably advanced degrees of technology developed. Very early irrigation systems were used. The wheel was invented. The people used metals to make their tools. Mathematical systems were begun that we still use. (For example, we still divide a circle into 360 degrees as the Sumerians did.)





Perhaps most important for history, the first form of writing was begun. Cuneiform (pronounced ku-na-i-form) writing began as a type of picture writing and developed into a system whereby sounds and syllables were depicted with wedged-shaped characters. Vast libraries of cuneiform writing have been found in the ruins of ancient cities. Some of the documents date as early as 3,000 B.C. — approximately 1,000 years before Abraham.

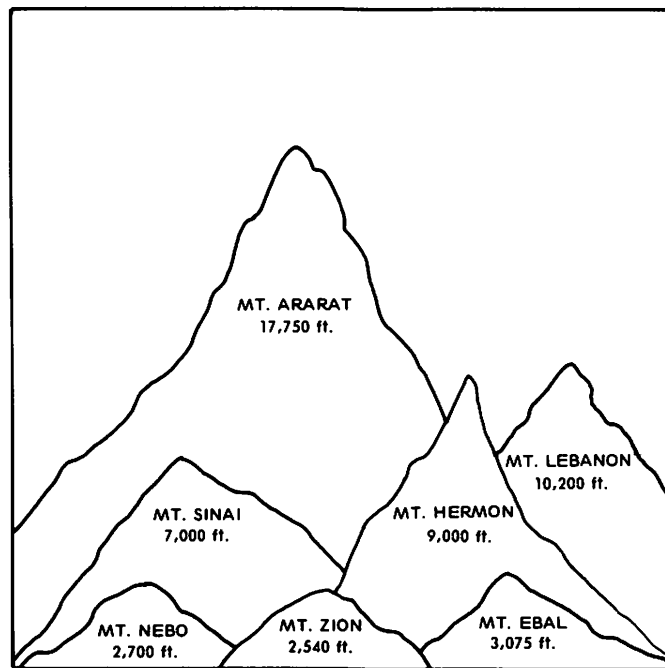
The empires of Mesopotamia and the city-states of Aram came into frequent contact with God's people living in the little land of Canaan. The Aramaic city-states of Haran, Damascus, Zobah, and others are mentioned often in the Bible. On rare occasions, the Israelites and Arameans joined forces to fight some common enemy (see 2 Kings 15-16). More often, they fought over border lines. The city-state of Damascus called Syria was one of Israel's sorest enemies during the days of Ahab and the years immediately following. Very interesting recent discoveries have been made in the Aramean city of Ebla.

The Aramean tribes developed an early alphabet making their language less cumbersome than the cuneiform writing of southern Mesopotamia. Gradually, Aramaic became the official language of the great Mesopotamian empires. The Hebrew language of the Jews and the Aramaic language had many similarities. As the years passed, and the Jews were taken into captivity by the Assyrians and Babylonians, they began using Aramaic regularly. Hebrew remained their official language for their scriptures, but Aramaic was the common language in their daily lives. Almost certainly Aramaic was the language Jesus and His disciples used most often as they walked the hills and valleys of Palestine.

A range of mountains runs approximately parallel to the Tigris River. The range is called the Zagros Mountains and the peaks average about 9,000 feet high, comparable to Mt. Hermon in Palestine. There were passes through the mountains, and there was trade between the peoples living on either side of them. Descendants of Noah's son Japheth, known as the Medes, developed a civilization east of the Zagros. They do not play a part in the Bible story until very late in Old Testament history when they joined the Persians to form the great Medo-Persian empire.

The Ararat Mountains are a high, rugged range north of Mesopotamia about midway between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. They are very high, very rugged mountains — mostly formed of lava. The peaks reach 20,000 feet above sea level, comparable to the most rugged of the Rockies of our own country. No one knows the exact spot where Noah stepped out of the ark, although tradition marks a particular twin-peaked mountain. Since the mountains are so rugged, they are virtually uninhabited now as they were in Biblical days. They formed a natural barrier to travel between the peoples living on either side of the range. Therefore, the descendants of Japheth who settled north of the mountains play no role in the Bible story.

Label the Zagros and Ararat Mountains. Label Media.



Arabian Desert

The huge Arabian Desert lies immediately southwest of the Euphrates River. It covers almost 1,000,000 square miles. It is actually an extension of the Sahara Desert which goes across northern Africa and is interrupted by the Nile River and the Red Sea which we will study next.

In Bible days, Arabia was viewed as a mysterious, fabled place — a storehouse of spices and other valuables. The Arabian people who touched the Bible story most closely were nomadic tribesmen and traders, some of them quite wealthy. The wandering tribes made their living by way of the trade routes that began deep in southern Arabia and made their way to the rich civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor. The gums from Arabia's frankincense and myrrh trees were especially prized as perfume and incense.

Much of Arabia is still a mystery to us today. Of course, huge oil fields have been found there, and Saudi Arabia strongly affects the economy of our modern world. Recently, in Saudi Arabia, there has been an awakening of interest in archaeology and in the pre-Islamic history of the area. Perhaps these studies will answer some of the questions about the role of the area in ancient history.

The desert is not one vast sand dune as one might imagine. It is a high tableland with enough rainfall in the interior and south for a considerable population. Modern archaeologists have found evidence that even the portion of south-central Arabia now called "the empty quarter" once supported major cities. The central and northern sections are barren steppes that can support only nomadic, pastoral Bedouin.

Throughout the years of history, successive waves of Semitic people have poured out of Arabia into the fertile lands of Mesopotamia, Aram, and Canaan. About 2,000 B.C., Amorites came from the desert and established city-states from Egypt to Babylon. Some 20,000 clay tablets have been recovered from the Amorite city of Mari from about this date. The Chaldeans of Babylon came from the section of the desert just northwest of the Persian Gulf. About 500 B.C., a people called Nabateans moved into Edom, just south of the Dead Sea. They were a strong, resourceful people who still held sway over much of northern Arabia in Jesus' day. Then, in about the 7th century after Christ, the Islamic people poured out of Arabia in all directions. They forced captured cities to accept their religion on the threat of the death. Thus, the "Arabs" still play the most prominent role in the politics of the area today.

There are huge lava beds immediately east and northeast of the land of Canaan, larger than Canaan itself. Therefore, the kings of Palestine could never expand to the east. Caravans of merchants chose to travel around the desert rather than across it. The little land of Canaan lay directly in the path of all trade from southwest Arabia to Mesopotamia or to the kingdoms on the northern shores of the Mediterranean. In the same way, caravans from Egypt followed the shoreline of the sea and traveled north through Canaan rather than going due east to Mesopotamia.

Several places in Arabia are mentioned in the Bible such as Dedan, Tema, Ophir, Sheba, and others. Most of the time, however, it was considered a place to be avoided.

Label Arabia. Look on Map #4 to see the lava beds near Canaan. Note the trade routes.

Egypt

Now let us go west and look at the site of another ancient civilization. About the time the Sumerians were flourishing in Mesopotamia, an early Egyptian kingdom emerged. Archaeologists have found inscriptions written in Egyptian hieroglyphics dating from about the same time as the earliest cuneiform writings. It, too, was a pictographic style of writing but there does not seem to be any direct connection between the two. In contrast to the cuneiform writing that changed from pictographic to syllabic writing, the hieroglyphic style stayed basically the same for 3,000 years. The Egyptians developed two other styles of script they used as their history progressed, but they continued to use hieroglyphs on their monuments.

Ancient Egypt consisted entirely of the narrow Nile River valley and the delta it forms before it flows into the Mediterranean. The land might be said to resemble a lotus flower with a long, narrow stem and a fan-shaped bud at the top. On either side of the valley there is only desert. In fact, in an area of over 6,000,000 square miles across the top of Africa, the Nile Valley is the only point of watered, fertile land to be found.

Egypt has been called the "gift of the Nile." Even today, 99% of the people live on 4% of the land, the area that can be irrigated by the Nile. The valley is very narrow, ranging in width from 1 to 24 miles. As the river approaches the coast, it spreads out into a delta 115 miles wide at its widest point and about 125 miles long. The delta was watered by seven main branches of the Nile in ancient days plus numerous smaller waterways and irrigation canals. Today there are only two main branches of the river. It is 600 miles from the First Cataract of the Nile at Aswan to the coast of the Mediterranean.

Very early in their history, the Egyptians established a strong, efficient central government consisting of the valley called Upper Egypt and the delta called Lower Egypt. The whole kingdom comprised about 13,000 square miles of cultivable land. By way of comparison, Palestine has an area of about 12,000 square miles, and Alabama has more than 51,000. Yet Egypt was empress of that part of the world for many years.

The Nile is the longest river in the world. It is 4,100 miles from its remote source in equatorial Africa to the Mediterranean coast. It is one of the few rivers in the world that flows northward. The prevailing winds from the sea made travel on the river very easy. If one wanted to sail south, he put up his sails and let the prevailing winds carry him. If he wanted to go north, he put his sails down and let the current of the river carry the boat.

There is no rainfall at all in Upper Egypt. There are about 8 inches per year in the delta. Again by comparison, Alabama has about 50 inches per year. The almost complete lack of rainfall meant the welfare of the people was totally dependent on the flooding of the Nile. The volume of water in the river is 16 times greater during the flood season of August and September than it is in the driest month of April. The Nile is a very regular, dependable river but there were some years when the floods were not as great as usual and great famines would occur.

The early Egyptians never found the sources of the river nor the cause of its floods. Since they were completely dependent upon the Nile for its life-giving water, it is small wonder they decided it was their god. The plague of water to blood was a direct blow to this god. The plague of thunder and hail would have been doubly startling to a land of rare rains.

The delta was remarkably fertile, and the civilization was prosperous, with highly developed skills. The Egyptians the first to build monumental stone structures. Their pyramids still stand as stark testimony to the high intelligence of early mankind. They were built long before God called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees. The Egyptians were the first to set up a calendar of 365 days. They had 12 months of 30 days with 5 feast days at the end of their year. They were unmatched in the ancient world in their medical skill. They could perform delicate operations.

Notice there is a great sea to the north and deserts on either side. The inaccessability of Egypt helps explain how its civilization could develop as untouched and unchanged as it did through the years. Its government was united instead of being made up of warring city-states like Mesopotamia. Therefore, there were no walled cities nor standing armies in Egypt. They were able to turn their building skills in other directions.

To date, archaeologists have not been able to find any evidence of the Israelites' sojourn in Egypt. Yet, after Israel became a separate nation in Canaan, every fact known about Egypt from the Bible is substantiated by history. Perhaps the fact there are no Egyptian records of the plagues actually substantiates the Biblical account. No people so proud would have wanted to record their humiliation at the hands of a hated group of shepherd slaves and would have taken pains to see that all evidence of such an occurrence were fully erased.

Label the Nile River and Egypt.

The Wilderness of Sinai

A large body of water lies southeast of Egypt. It is the Red Sea which empties into the Indian Ocean 1,500 miles south of Egypt. It has two arms at the northern end: the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Aqaba. This upper portion of the Red Sea is the only part that plays a role in the Bible story. You might recognize the name Suez because the Suez Canal joins the Red Sea to the Mediterranean and is an important link in our modern waterways. Of course, it was not in existence in Bible days.

The Gulf of Suez is 200 miles long and the Gulf of Aqaba is 100 miles long. Between the two arms, there is a triangular-shaped peninsula called the Wilderness of Sinai. This is where the Israelites wandered during the forty years after they left Egypt.

"Wilderness" certainly describes the area. The Biblical word, wilderness, refers to any sort of rugged, uncultivated, mostly uninhabited area. Sinai is a high tableland with rugged, bare hills and very few springs of water. There were certain oases where water and pasture could be found, but certainly no company of people as large as the Israelites could have survived there without the help of God.

Label the Wilderness of Sinai.

Fertile Crescent

The fertile land extending from the Persian Gulf through Mesopotamia and curving south through Palestine has been called the Fertile Crescent. Some authorities include Egypt in the Fertile Crescent, though it is separated from the rest by the barren Sinaitic peninsula. The entire Old Testament history takes place in this half-circle of land (including Egypt).

The whole Fertile Crescent is equal to about 1/3 of the land area of the continental United States. If we could lay its east-west line across the north-south line of the United States, it would fit easily between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mississippi River. It is approximately 1,000 miles from Egypt due east to the northern tip of the Persian Gulf. It is also about 1,000 miles from Egypt to the mountains of Ararat. But note these points on your map. Most of the land between Egypt and the Persian Gulf is desert. This helps us see how small the land is in our day of rapid communication and travel. It would have seemed much larger in their day.

Color the Fertile Crescent light green. Include the land west of the Zagros Mountains, north to the Ararat Mountains, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Egypt. Avoid the Arabian Desert. Color the Sinaitic Peninsula, not because it is fertile, but because it is part of the Bible story.

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Now your map should show all the lands needed for a study of the Old Testament. There were many other people in existence and many other nations, but they did not come into direct contact with God's people during these centuries.

Lesson 7

New Testament Lands

The Old Testament scarcely mentions the lands on the northern shores of the Mediterranean Sea though there were people living there earlier than there were Israelites in Canaan. For example, there was a very early Hittite kingdom north of the Halys River in northern Asia Minor. They traded freely with the people of the Fertile Crescent. Abraham bought a cave in which to bury his wife from a Hittite who happened to be living in Canaan (Gen. 23). Yet the nation of the Hittites never came into direct conflict with the Israelites, so the Bible does not take time to tell us any details about them.

There was a highly developed civilization on the island later called Crete, but the Bible does not deal with the people until a group of them invaded southern Palestine and became one of the Israelites' sorest enemies, the Philistines.

Label the Halys River and the island of Crete on Map #2.

The emphasis shifts by New Testament times from Egypt and Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean world. Palestine was no longer under the control of the mighty powers of the Fertile Crescent. The Old Testament closes with the tiny country of Judah under the control of the Persians who had their capital east of the Tigris River. During the period between Malachi and Matthew, the Persians were defeated by the Greeks in the edge of Europe.

The Greek army, under the leadership of Alexander the Great, swept across all these lands we have been studying laying claim to all in its path. Alexander conquered all the way to the Indus River on the edge of India, far off our maps to the east. Alexander himself soon died and his empire was divided between his generals. Alexander and his generals were all convinced the Greek philosophy was the greatest the world had seen, and they determined to spread their culture throughout the conquered territory, sometimes by force. Therefore, the Greek language, their customs, and their culture spread from Greece in the edge of Europe to the border of India. The Greek influence remained the strongest cultural force in the lands for the next several centuries. Many of our own philosophies can be traced back to the thinking of the Greeks.

Label Greece.

Rome was rising to power also during the years of Biblical silence. At first they conquered territory to the north and west of the area shown on our maps of Bible lands. Their territory reached to the Atlantic Ocean to include what is now Spain. Gradually, they turned their attention to the east and began laying claim to the provinces lining the Mediterranean Sea. Palestine itself fell to Rome in 63 B.C. Of course, this was the empire in power in the days of Christ's personal ministry and during the early days of the church.

Rome considered Palestine a strategic border state because of its location. Rome wanted control of the entire Mediterranean Sea. They succeeded in gaining all the shores during the years immediately preceding the birth of Christ, but Palestine was a constant trouble spot. An Arabian tribe called Nabateans controlled the desert immediately south and east of Palestine. They had not yet been conquered by Rome in Jesus' day. A people called Parthians had gained control of Mesopotamia and old Persia and had established an empire Rome never managed to defeat.

The Jews resented the Roman control of their land and were constantly looking for ways to overthrow it. Rome, meanwhile, was constantly looking for ways to strengthen her hold because she needed Palestine to complete her control of the Sea and as a buffer zone against the enemy peoples on her border. Thus, the groundwork was laid for bitter conflicts.

Label Rome.

When the Bible speaks of Asia, it is referring to a Roman province on the northern shores of the Mediterranean Sea in what is known as Asia Minor today. Rome had divided the peninsula into nine provinces for easy governing. The cities located in the region were busy, prosperous places in New Testament days. The book of Acts follows Paul as he takes the gospel around the northern shores of the Mediterranean into the peninsula of Asia Minor. From there he crossed the Aegean Sea into Europe and preached in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia. He was taken as prisoner to Rome itself. Though he was a prisoner because of his faith in Christ, he did not stop preaching to all in his reach.

The islands of Cyprus, Crete, Melita, and Patmos all play a part on the New Testament story. Paul hoped to go to Spain (off our maps to the west) to preach. We have no way of knowing for sure if he were able to take the trip after his first imprisonment at Rome.

Jews were scattered all over the lands shown on our maps by New Testament days. Paul or one of the other men could go into almost any city and find a synagogue of Jews meeting to worship on the Sabbath Day. They already knew the Old Testament scriptures and should have been prepared for the story of Christ. Unfortunately, more often than not, the Jews turned away in unbelief while the Gentiles stayed to listen to the good news.

Label Asia Minor and Cyprus. Now color all the places you have labeled for the New Testament story orange. Of course, Palestine played a prominent role in both periods.

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Now your Map #2 should show the entire area directly touched by the characters of the Bible story. We will look at each area more closely as we come to it in the study of the history. These are the places where the Bible characters lived, so it is their geography that helped shape the lives of such men as Abraham, David, Paul, and others.

Our study from this point on will watch as God unfolds His scheme of redemption for all mankind.

Worksheet

Review of all Bible Lands (Lessons 6 and 7)

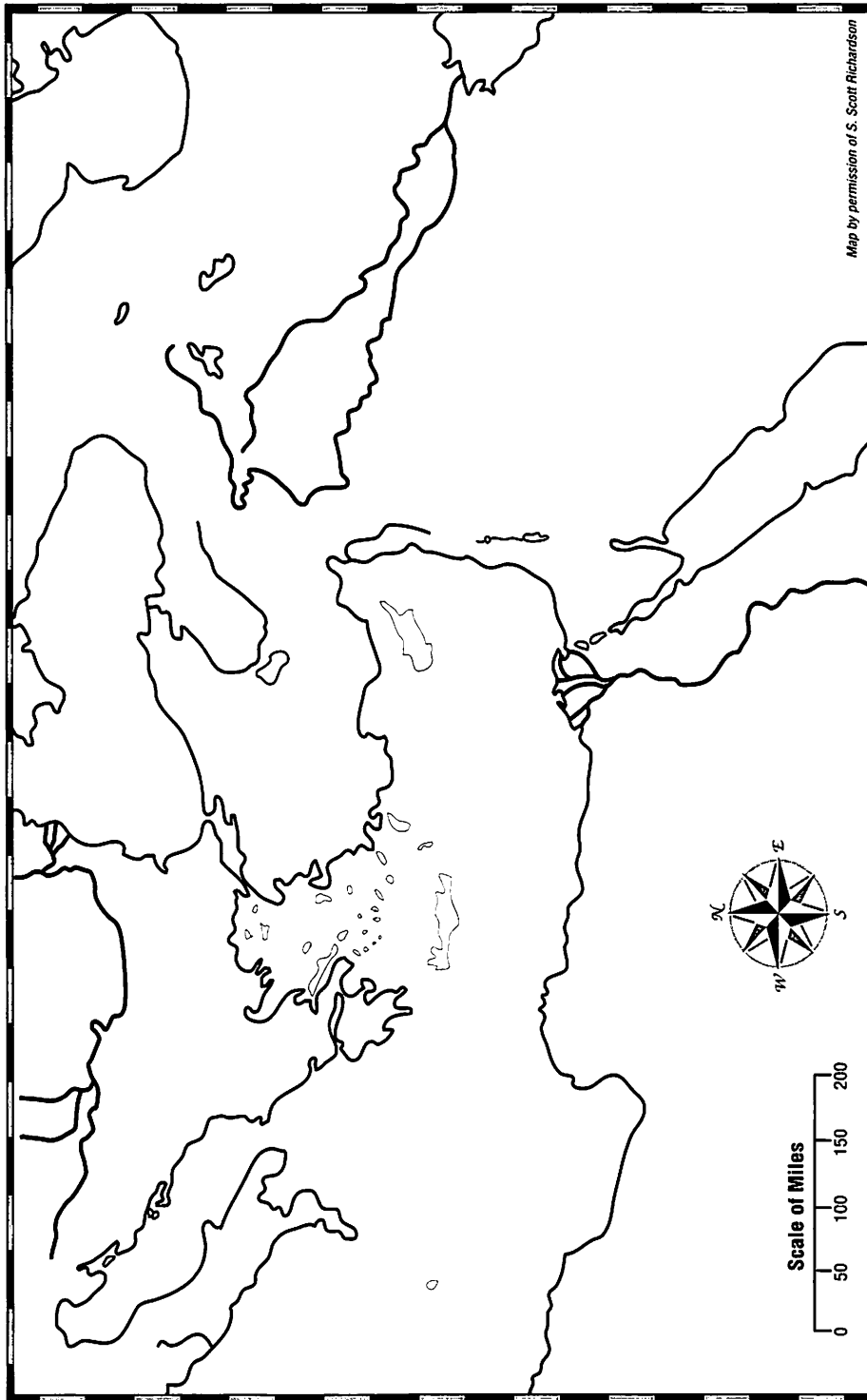
Label each of these places on the review map. Try to do your work on the map *from memory*.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Mesopotamia | 8. Aram | 16. Gulf of Aqaba |
| 2. Mt. Ararat | 9. Egypt | 17. Rome |
| 3. Tigris River | 10. Nile River | 18. Cyprus |
| 4. Persian Gulf | 11. Red Sea | 19. Asia Minor |
| 5. Fertile Crescent | 12. Wilderness of Sinai | 20. Mediterranean Sea |
| 6. Euphrates River | 13. Gulf of Suez | 21. Crete |
| 7. Arabia | 14. Hittite Kingdom | 22. Sumer |
| | 15. Greece | |

The names listed above may be used more than once or not at all. Write the number of the name in the appropriate blank below.

- _____ 1. An early nation in Asia Minor.
- _____ 2. Israelites wandered here after they left Egypt.
- _____ 3. The entire history of the Old Testament takes place here.
- _____ 4. The ark rested here.
- _____ 5. Location of Sumer, Babylon, and probably the Garden of Eden.
- _____ 6. Tigris and Euphrates empty into it.
- _____ 7. Longest river in the world.
- _____ 8. Empire in power during Christ's ministry.
- _____ 9. Home of the descendents of Aram, son of Shem, son of Noah.
- _____ 10. Region on the northern shores of the Mediterranean Sea.
- _____ 11. Region where hieroglyphics originated.
- _____ 12. Largest body of water in Bible lands.
- _____ 13. Home of many nomadic tribesman and traders.
- _____ 14. Mesopotamia is the land between these two rivers.
- _____ 15.
- _____ 16. Empire led by Alexander the Great.
- _____ 17. The two arms of the Red Sea.
- _____ 18.
- _____ 19. Place where cuneiform writing began.
- _____ 20. The Mediterranean island nearest Palestine.

- _____ 21. The original home of the Philistines.
- _____ 22. Another name for Aram-Naharaim.
- _____ 23. Empties into the Indian Ocean.
- _____ 24. The "gift of the Nile."
- _____ 25. Often referred to in the Old Testament as the "great river."



Dating Bible Events

Genesis 5 says Adam was 130 years old when his son Seth was born. Seth was 105 when his son Enos was born . . . If we take the figures of the ten generations listed plus Noah's age when the Flood began (Gen. 7:11), we will have a total of 1,656 years. This figure would indicate it was exactly 1,656 years from Creation until God closed the door of the ark and began the Flood.

Chapter 11 names ten generations from Noah to Abraham. These figures total 390 years. Abraham was 75 years old when he left Haran (Gen. 12:4). That would indicate it was 465 years from the Flood to the time Abraham left Haran on his way to the land of Canaan. Abraham's call would then be exactly 2,121 years after Creation.

Isaac was born 25 years later when his father Abraham was 100 years old (Gen. 12:4; 21:5). And so on.

If we continue through the whole Bible, noticing each occurrence of a date, we will come out with a system of dating for all Bible events. This method would place the Creation approximately 4,000 B.C. During the 1600's (A.D.), the Archbishop Ussher of Armagh worked out this system in detail, using the Biblical references plus the historical facts at his disposal. His dating began to be included in the study helps of English Bibles in the year 1701. You may own a Bible today that gives dates in the margins. If so, they may be the figures worked out by Ussher over 300 years ago, or they may have been updated by more recent discoveries. Three hundred years seems a long time ago to us, but remember, Ussher himself lived 1600 years after the most recent Biblical event. Remember, *neither his dating nor any other marginal note is inspired!*

The archaeological discoveries since Ussher's day have been astounding. Today his dating is not considered accurate. For example, Ussher dates the Flood at 2,349 B.C. Yet the city of Ur was established *after* the Flood, and it was a thriving City 3,500 years before Christ! This period of 3,500 years cannot extend before the Flood because archaeology has shown that, though there were major floods on the Euphrates River, the occupation of Ur was not interrupted by such a cataclysmic event as a world-wide flood.

The counting of time is a relative thing. Our whole lives today rotate around our clocks and our calendar. Nearly our whole world uses the same calendar for marking time. We assume it has always been so, but that is unrealistic. In the first place, our time is counted from the birth of Christ. What about all the time before He was born? Only the Jews knew to expect a Messiah. Even they had no idea precisely *when* He would come. So they certainly could not reckon their time that way.

Each early civilization had its own system of marking time: the Sumerians, the Egyptians, the Israelites, the Greeks, the Romans (just to name a few). The Romans dated their years in terms of how long it had been since the city of Rome was built. The Greeks' system was based on a four year cycle counted from one Olympic game to the next. The Israelites' new year marked the month they left Egypt (Exod. 12:2).

All calendars have been built basically around the solar year, the length of time it takes for the earth to go around the sun one time. All peoples could calculate this by the cycle of the seasons. Months have been reckoned by the cycle of the moon. But some calendars had ten months. Others had twelve short months. Some were remarkably accurate — others far from it. An early Roman calendar had ten months beginning in March. It seems to have *ignored* 60 days in winter! Sometimes a Roman emperor added a month to his year on a mere whim. At other times, wise men would realize their calendar was incorrect because the seasons were no longer coming at the right time. So the ruler might declare that a certain number of days be added or subtracted to make up the difference. For example, Julius Caesar added 90 days to the year that would be 46 B.C. in our reckoning in an effort to correct the Roman calendar.

The Egyptians began their new year the day the bright star Sirius reappeared in their sky. It was about the same time the water began returning in the Nile River. They began their year with a celebration followed by the planting of their new crops. It was a remarkably accurate calendar, but it did not include the extra day that comes every four years in our calendar. The Egyptian scientists knew the day was needed, and their ruler Ptolemy III issued an edict for the extra day to be added but the people refused. Two hundred years later, Julius Caesar came along, revised the calendar, and included the extra day (the Julian Calendar). His calendar was not kept accurately for some years. Both Ptolemy III and Julius Caesar lived during the years of Biblical silence between Malachi and Matthew.

Gradually, the Julian Calendar came to be accepted, and our ancestors kept it until 1582 A.D. when Pope Gregory XIII dropped 10 days from his calendar because it was running too fast, based on the figures in Caesar's day. Now, an extra day is added every four years except the century-years that cannot be divided by 400. The scientists tell us it is still 26 seconds too fast each year — but it will take 3,000 years for it to run ahead a whole

day. England and her American colonies accepted the "Gregorian" calendar in 1752. That set the English calendar back 11 whole days. Thus September had only 19 days that year. The peasants did not understand why it had happened, and there were riots in the streets because they thought the king had robbed them of 11 days' pay!

Russia accepted the Gregorian calendar in 1919; Greece in 1923; Turkey in 1928; and China in 1929. The Moslem portion of the world still uses a calendar based on the date of Mohammed's flight to Medina in 622 A.D.

All of this illustrates that the matter of dating all historical events since the Creation, including the Biblical events, would be difficult even if we had a copy of every calendar before us. It would be a major task to learn to read them, much less harmonize them. The problem of dating early events is not limited to the scriptures. The same difficulties arise in the study of the Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians, or any other early people. Even an event as recent as George Washington's birthday may be given as February 11, 1732 (Old Style) or February 22, 1732 (New Style) because the calendar changed during his lifetime.

To confuse the issue further, the ancient people tended to say, "In the third year of the king," this event happened. But wait, Ancient Historian, I do not know which king nor when he lived! Or, the prophet Amos says he wrote his book two years before the earthquake (Amos 1:1). That was fine for Amos' day, but which earthquake? That earthquake was not of world-wide magnitude, so calendars are not dated from the event.

Let us take another example. All rulers of Egypt took the title of Pharaoh when they came to the throne. Thus it was a Pharaoh who exalted Joseph. It was Pharaoh who oppressed Joseph's descendants. Moses grew up in the palace of a Pharaoh. That Pharaoh died, and another Pharaoh came to the throne. That one opposed the Israelites' leaving his land. But, Moses, which Pharaoh was it in each of these instances? There were at least 30 Egyptian dynasties during the course of Bible history, and each dynasty included several individual kings. The personal name of even one of them would help in dating the Exodus. Perhaps we could look in Egyptian records. Their land is so dry there is a vast amount of material still in existence telling of their history. But they chose not to record their humiliation at the hand of slaves! There we are at a standstill again!

The archaeologists have made many discoveries through the years. The city of Ur has been found, though it was destroyed thousands of years ago. The city of Haran has been found. Hebron still exists. Abraham lived in each of these places, so it should not be hard to date his life, should it? Wrong. These cities existed for centuries. We are giving the archaeologist an enormous task when we ask him to pinpoint an exact year when one certain nomadic tribesman camped along the road from lower Mesopotamia to Canaan. You see, these were well-traveled roads even that long ago.

Does all this help you understand the complexity of the matter? It is not the exact date that is important, but rather the *event* that helped shape the story of the Bible. Biblical writers did not stress the chronology of events the way our modern minds might like. They might group the stories of battles a king fought although the battles themselves took place over a reign of maybe 50 years.

Am I saying we cannot trust the Bible when it mentions years, months, or weeks? Am I saying Methuselah may have lived 969 months or half-years instead of full years as we understand them (Gen. 5:25-27)? No. We have already stated that even the earliest calendars were based on the solar years. The Jews' week was seven days long (see Exod. 16:26). Their month was approximately the same length as ours. When God promised to feed the whole company of Israelites quail for a month, He was promising to send enough to last approximately 30 days as our month would be (Num. 11:19-20).

This is not where the dating problems arise. Rather, *how long ago was the year which is under consideration?* When did the event happen? Often, there is no way to know for sure. Our emphasis in this study will be on the *order* of the events, not the precise *year* it occurred.

Am I saying do not study the chronology you find in some book? No. Not at all. I find the subject fascinating. I am saying do not rest your faith on some date you find in some Bible atlas. Another atlas, just as well-documented, may offer excellent arguments for a different date, maybe a difference of two or three hundred years.

Naturally, the nearer the event is to us, the easier it is to date. Therefore, it is the period of time before and including the exodus from Egypt that is so disputed. After the Israelites became a nation, established in their own land, references are made to them in historical records of other peoples.

The more one believes the Bible itself, the more the dates harmonize with Bible facts. If you find an atlas that makes all kinds of remarks to undermine your faith in the miracles, do not be surprised to find the author's dating of history at wide variance with the Biblical account.

There is one crucial thing to watch for in the chronology. Modernists try to manipulate the dates of the prophets in order to rob them of their inspiration. For example, some try to say the last chapters of Isaiah were written by some unknown author during or after the captivity because Isaiah names the king who allowed the Jews to go home, and no man could have known that information over 200 years before it happened. Or, that the last half of Daniel was written during the years after Malachi because his descriptions of the struggles between Syria and

Egypt are too detailed to be prophecy. Similarly, efforts have been made to date the writing of the gospel narratives into the second century after Christ to allow time for traditions and legends to be developed and crystallized. To modernists, that is all the gospels really contain. The Bible came directly from the hand of God and "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21). Do not be afraid to use Bible helps, but read them discerningly because you will give answer to God for the things you believe.

At this point in my study, I am convinced the generations listed in Genesis 5 and 11 are given to show the lineage of Christ, not to provide a basis for an exact chronology. Let me give an example to prove the point.

Compare the list of generations in Matthew 1 with a chart of the kings of Judah. Christ was of the royal blood line of the house of David. That means the kings of Judah were in His lineage. Yet Matthew 1 skips the names of Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah, and Jehoiakim. Why? The writer was proving Jesus was of the royal line of David, therefore of the correct ancestry to be the Messiah, but he did not feel it necessary to include every generation to prove his point. Therefore, Genesis 5 tells us Noah came through Adam's son Seth rather than Cain, Abel, or some unnamed son. Genesis 11 tells us Abraham came through Noah's son Shem. Matthew 1 tells us Jesus came through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and David — thus fulfilling the promises of the Old Testament. The writers were not concerned with the years involved.

We are giving nothing to the evolutionist when we grant time has gone on some few thousand years longer than we first realized. He needs millions or even billions of years for his theories to work. I am convinced those people living before the Flood were normal, intelligent human beings. I just think we do not know the names of many of them.

There are similar problems in the New Testament. One difficulty is easily diagnosed. Often there is a four-year variation in dates given by different authorities for the same event. The establishment of the church may be given as A.D. 29 or A.D. 33. The conversion of Saul will be given as A.D. 31 or A.D. 35. This problem is caused by the research of one man who lived 500 years after Christ.

Dionysius Exiguus devised a system of chronology based on the birth of Jesus as the turning point of time. In his system, time before Christ is designated B.C. (Before Christ). Time since Christ is A.D. (Anno Domini, or Year of Our Lord). The idea was superb. Dionysius, however, erred in his calculations with regard to Herod's death and the birth of Jesus. It is evident from the gospel account that Christ was born *before* the death of Herod the Great by perhaps as much as two years (Matt. 2:16). Yet, from several lines of historical evidence, Herod died in 4 B.C. according to Dionysius' system. This discrepancy is in the calculations of Dionysius and has nothing to do with the integrity of the Bible itself.

Therefore, instead of Jesus being born the first day of A.D. 1, and dying in A.D. 33, He was born in 4-6 B.C. and died in c.A.D. 29. The church was established a few weeks later in c.A.D. 29, and Paul was converted in c.A.D. 31. It depends on whether the person is trying to be precise historically when he gives one of these dates, or is trying to give an approximate time based on the age Jesus was at that point, as to which date he uses.

There are reliable records in existence for the chronology of Roman rulers during the first century. Names such as Augustus Caesar, Tiberius, and Claudius appear in the New Testament along with lesser rulers such as the Agrippas, Gallio, Felix, Festus, and others. They serve as hitching posts to which we can tie the New Testament events. The main advantage in dating the epistles and other books is to be able to put them into their original setting to see the problems the people were facing at that moment so that we may more easily apply the principles to our own problems. Of course, the lessons taught are timeless.

Below is a chart showing the approximate time line of Biblical events harmonized as well as I know how with known historical facts. Mine is certainly not original. Realize this chart is no more infallible than any other chart you may see. On the other hand, realize that the beautiful chart you may see in some expensively bound book is no more certain than mine.

Look back to this time line frequently as you study the periods of Bible history.

Time Line of Early Events

Bible Events	Dates Before Christ	World Events
Creation	?	
First sin	?	
First peoples	?	
Flood	?	
Tower of Babel	?	
	3500-2500	Early Sumerians Early Egyptians Canaanites in Canaan Conflicts between Sumer and Akkad Egyptian pyramids built, nation flourishing
	2000	Amorites, Horites, Hittites, Egyptians, etc., trading freely with Mesopotamia.
Abraham leaves Ur (date very uncertain)	2000-1900	12th dynasty of Egypt
	1720	Hyksos invaders gain control of Egypt. Introduced horses and chariots.
Joseph rose to power in Egypt	c.1700	Hammurabi of Babylon in power. His code of law has been found.
Israelite slavery begins	1570-1550	Hyksos rulers driven out of Egypt. New dynasty oppressed all Semitic people living in the Nile delta.
Exodus from Egypt. Date widely disputed. See Gen. 15:13, 14; Exod. 12:40-41; 1 Kings 6:1; Gal. 3:16-17. Good arguments made for both dates. Earlier date fits Bible passages best.	Two dates given: 1441 1290	
Conquest of Canaan	1400 or 1250 (see above)	
Period of Judges Time figured to include Moses through Samuel. See Acts 13:19-20.	1441-1020 or 1290-1020	Assyria strong for a time, but did not directly touch Palestine. Weakened again for some years.
Saul, the first king	1040?-1000	
David	1000-961	
Solomon	961-922	Assyria rising to power again
Kingdom of Israel divides	922	
Jehu of Israel pays tribute to Assyria	825	
	753	City of Rome founded
Fall of Samaria to Assyria Assyria invades Judah, they pay tribute	721	
	701	
	612	Fall of Assyria. Babylon gains control of empire. Nebuchadnezzar leads, first as general, then as king.
Nebuchadnezzar takes first captives from Jerusalem (Jehoiakim's day)	606	
More captives taken (Jehoiachin's day)	597	
Fall of Jerusalem to Babylon	586	
Babylonian Captivity	606-536	
	539	Fall of Babylon. Persia gains control of empire.
	538	A Persian edict allowing all displaced people to return to their homelands.
Jews return under Zerubbabel to rebuild temple	536	

Bible Events	Date Before Christ	World Events
Temple completed	516	
Esther saves her people in Persia	500-475	
Ezra helps restore faithful worship	460-450?	
Nehemiah rebuilds walls of Jerusalem	c.445	
Malachi, the last prophet	445-432	
	336-323	Alexander the Great defeats Persians. Grecian empire divided into three main parts.
	300	Rome rapidly growing in power. Conquering toward north and west first.
Jews caught in power struggle between Syria and Egypt	c.300-100	
	280	Old Testament translated into Greek
Jews revolt against Syria under Judas Maccabee	167-161	
	100	Rome growing as threat to Syria and Palestine
Jerusalem falls to Rome	63	
Herod the Great rules as King of Palestine	40-4	
	27	Augustus Caesar begins his rule (27 B.C.-A.D. 14)
Birth of Christ	4-6 B.C.	
Time called A.D. after this point		
	14	Tiberius begins his reign (14-37)
Church established	c.29	
Jews persecute Christians		
Stephen stoned		
Conversion of Saul of Tarsus	31	
Conversion of Cornelius	37	Caligula becomes emperor (37-41)
	39	Herod Agrippa I appointed king of Judea and Samaria
	41	Herod Antipas banished to Lyons, Gaul
	44	Claudius succeeds Caligula (41-54)
Persecution by Agrippa I. James beheaded Peter imprisoned		Agrippa I dies
Paul's first preaching journey Apostolic council in Jerusalem	c.49-50	
	51	Antonius Felix appointed Procurator
	52	Claudius banished all Jews from Rome.
Second missionary journey 1 & 2 Thessalonians written	c.52-54	
	54	Nero becomes emperor (54-68)
Third missionary journey Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Romans written	c.54-58	
Paul brings gift to Jerusalem. Imprisoned 2 years in Caesarea. Luke probably wrote most of Acts at this time.	c.58-60	
Paul appears before Festus, Appeals to Caesar. Journey to Rome	60	Porcius Festus Procurator of Judea
Paul a prisoner in Rome 2 yrs. Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon written	c.61-63	
Death of James the brother of Jesus Epistle of James dated from 44-62	62	Death of Festus before death of James

Bible Events	Dates Before Christ	World Events
Paul released from prison 1 Timothy, Titus written	c.63 64	Great fire in Rome First Roman persecution of church
Epistle to the Hebrews 1 Peter, Jude, 2 Peter written Matthew, Mark, Luke written	c.60-70	
Second imprisonment of Paul 2 Timothy written Paul and Peter killed in Rome	c.65-67 66 68 69	Beginning of great war between Roman and Jews Death of Nero. Galba, Otho, Vitellius emperors in same year. Vespasian becomes sole emperor (69-79)
Destruction of Jerusalem	70 79	Eruption of Vesuvius. Destruction of Pompeii
Gospel of John, His three epistles written	c.80-90 81	Domitian begins his rule (81-96)
Severe Roman persecution of Christians John writes Revelation from Patmos	96 98	Nerva succeeds Domitian (96-98) Trajan becomes emperor
Death of John the apostle	c.98-100	

Worksheet

1. What event of all history marks the turning point of the calendar we use today?
2. As it gets longer *since* the birth of Christ, do the numbers for the years get larger or smaller?
3. What year is it now? What does this figure mean in relation to the birth of Christ?
4. Do the numbers for the years get larger or smaller the farther we go *before* the birth of Christ?
5. What does B.C. mean?
What does A.D. mean?
6. What do we mean when we say an event happened in 721 B.C.?
7. Which date is earlier: 1900 B.C. or 63 B.C.?
8. Find the dates for these events on your chart:

David's reign as king	
Fall of Samaria to Assyria	
Fall of Jerusalem to Babylon	
First return from captivity	
Last prophet of the Old Testament	
The church established	
Romans started persecuting Christians	

BIBLE HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY CORRELATED

The Book of Beginnings*Genesis 1-11**(Passages are in Genesis unless otherwise specified.)*

Now that we have looked briefly at all Bible lands, let us go back to the book of Genesis and fit the Bible story to the lands we have studied. Remember each event happened *somewhere*. Also remember, no place is important in and of itself. Rather the place gains its importance because of the events that happened there. Yet, the people in turn were affected by the geographical setting in which they lived.

This lesson is a summary of the first 11 chapters of Genesis. From this point on in our study, there will be blanks left throughout the text for the student to fill in the name of the place under consideration. It is handled in this way to help the learning experience to be its most effective. Read the chapter first to get an overview of the history described; then use your Bible to fill in the blanks. Try to locate each place as you come to it in the study and label it on your map. All passages given in this chapter are found in Genesis unless otherwise specified.

Map #3 — The Ancient World

Label and number your map. Label the directions.

Notice your map covers much less territory than the colored map because we have zeroed in on the particular portion that directly touches the Bible story. Compare your map to the colored map until you can see exactly what portion your map covers.

Locate the main bodies of water and color them blue:

Mediterranean Sea Caspian Sea

Persian Gulf Red Sea

Black Sea

Label each place as you come to it in the text.

The Story Begins

God gave man his first home. The Garden of Eden must have been beautiful with its trees of all kinds. There were no thorns to mar its beauty. It must have been large because four rivers ran through it: the _____, the _____, the _____, and the _____ (2:10-14). There are no longer rivers named the Pison or Gihon. The Hiddekel is better known by the name it had after the Flood, the Tigris. We cannot pinpoint the location of the Garden of Eden beyond saying it must have been in Mesopotamia.

Label the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Write Garden of Eden in the valley between them with a question mark after it to show its exact site is uncertain.

Adam and Eve sinned and were driven from the Garden. Their son Cain killed his brother and was driven away from his family. He dwelt in the land of _____ (4:16), east of Eden. (Location unknown.)

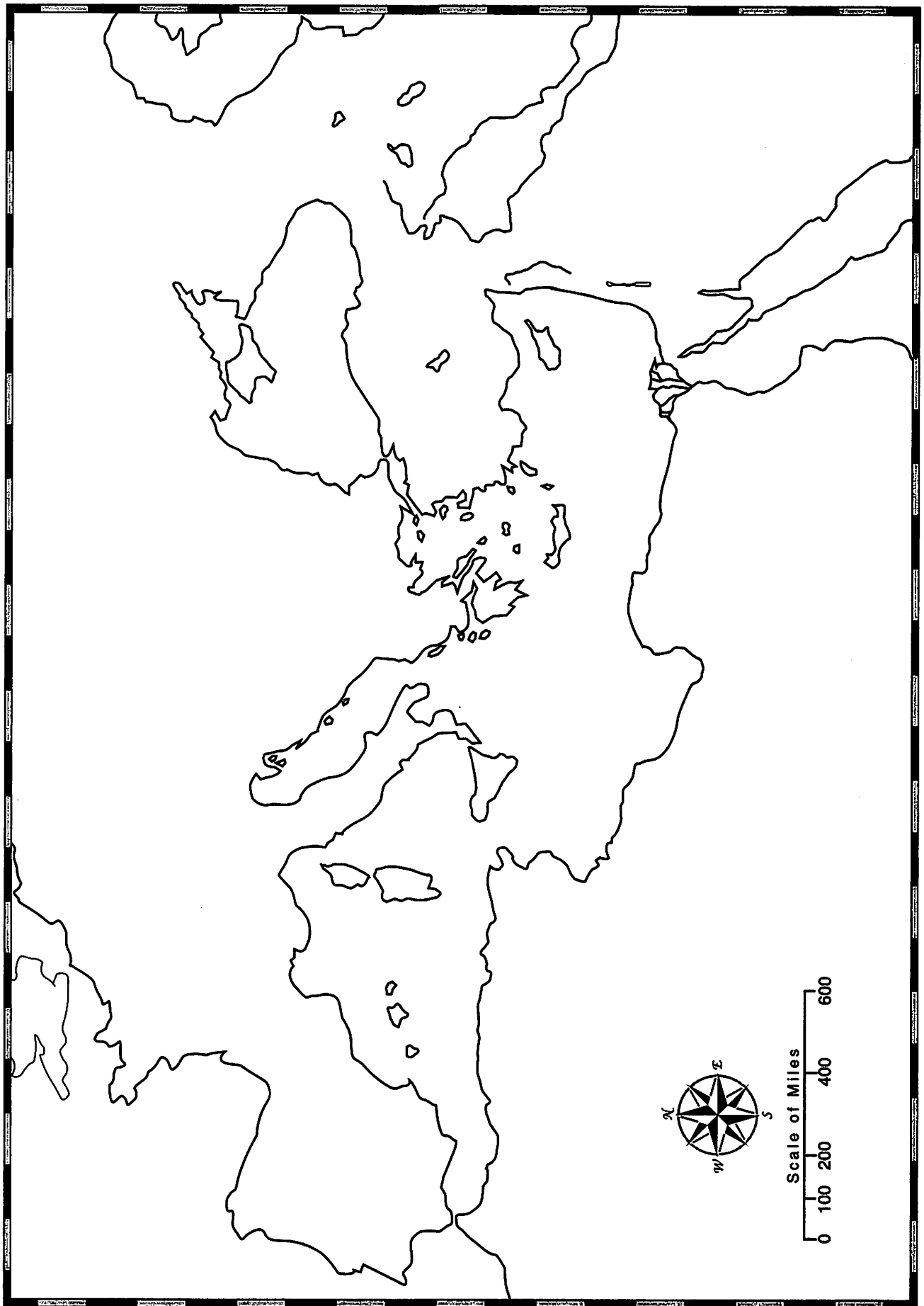
The population grew and people went their separate ways. The Bible tells us almost nothing about this early period. The Flood wiped out all traces of life, so even archaeologists have been unable to uncover information from the era. Many years passed in the first five chapters of Genesis.

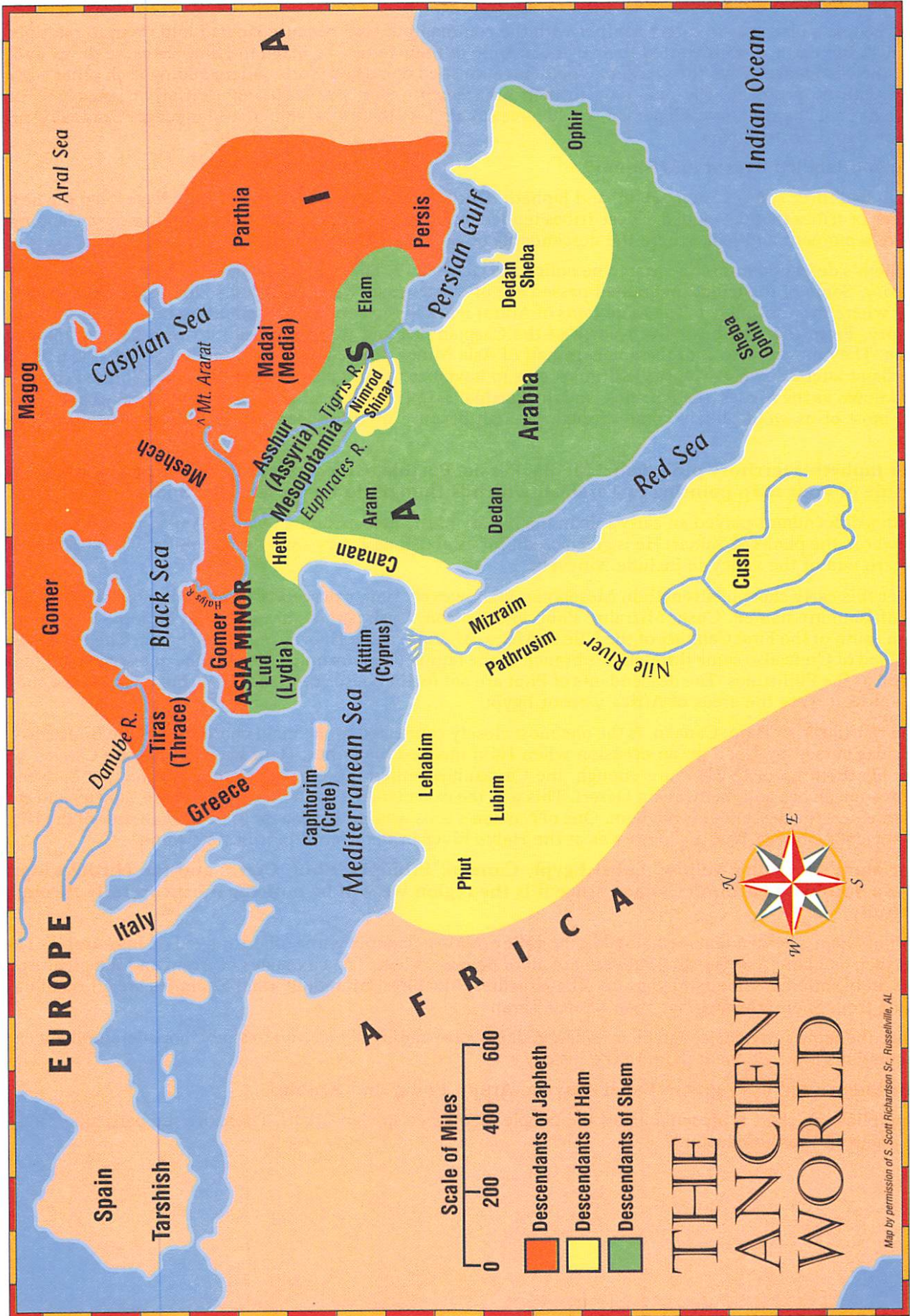
Mankind became so wicked God was grieved He had made man and He decided to send a flood to destroy the world. God found Noah, however, upright in all his activities and showed His mercy to him by offering him and his family a way of escape. The flood came, and the waters rose 15 cubits above the tops of the mountains. The only life spared was inside the ark Noah had built. The ark floated 150 days before resting on the _____ of _____ (8:4).

God remembered Noah and his family and sent a strong wind to dry up the waters from the face of the earth. Noah came out of the ark a year and ten days after he had entered it.

The mountains of Ararat are high and rugged, so the people moved down the slopes. Naturally, the rich valley between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers was the most inviting land in sight.

Time passed, and people multiplied again. They continued moving down the valley until they came to a plain they called _____ (11:2). Here they decided to build a city including a huge tower. They hoped the tower would keep them from scattering over the face of the whole world.





The people's plan was in direct conflict with the command of God because He had told them to multiply and replenish the earth. God thwarted their plans in spite of their refusal to listen to Him. He came down and confused their language. Thus the workers would have finished one day's work understanding each other's conversation with no problem. The next day, to their amazement, each was speaking a different language! Human nature has not changed, so each person would have sought for others who shared his language. Gradually, groups separated and drifted apart.

Have you labeled Ararat and Shinar?

Noah had three sons — Shem, Ham, and Japheth. During these early years, they would have been the heads of families or tribes that developed. These tribes tended to move in different directions with some overlapping. Let us take a moment and look where the descendants of each son settled.

Japheth's descendants are the first to be noticed in Genesis 10. These were the people most remote from the Bible story. Some of the tribes mentioned passed out of existence or were absorbed so long ago scholars can only guess where they once lived. The mountains of Ararat marked the approximate southern boundaries of Japheth's territory. From there, tribes moved north of the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea into what is now the edge of Russia. They moved west into the northern half of Asia Minor, into Greece, Italy, and on to what is now Spain. The island later known as Cyprus (Kittim) seems to have been theirs also. To the east, they formed the peoples later known as the Medes, the Persians, and the Parthians. If it were possible to trace our ancestry back to Noah's sons, most of us would likely come through Japheth because the European tribes developed from his descendants.

Color Japheth's territory pink. Label Media, Persia, Parthia, Greece, Cyprus, and draw an arrow on the left side of your map pointing to Tarshish which is thought to be present-day Spain.

Ham's descendants played an early role in the history of the Mesopotamian valley. A man named Nimrod rose to power in the plains of Shinar. He is given credit for establishing a very early empire in Babylon reaching to the northern end of the valley to include Nineveh.

After this early show of strength in Mesopotamia, however, Ham's descendants moved to the southwest. Four sons of Ham are named: Cush, Mizraim, Phut, and Canaan. Cush is thought to refer to Ethiopia which was the region south of the First Cataract of the Nile in Africa. Mizraim is the Hebrew name for Egypt. The inhabitants of the island of Crete also came through this branch of the family (Caphthorim). These are the ones who later invaded Canaan as the Philistines. The descendants of Phut are not further described, and we do not know where they settled unless it were the areas of Africa west of Egypt.

The fourth son of Ham, Canaan, is the one most closely connected to the main characters in the Bible story. Canaan was cursed by Noah on an occasion when Ham mocked his father. Ham was told his son Canaan would serve his brethren (9:18-27). Sure enough, the Canaanites settled the fertile strip of land that lay between the Mediterranean Sea and the Arabian Desert. This was the exact land God later took away from Canaan and gave to the Israelites, the descendants of Shem. One of Canaan's sons was Heth, thought to be the ancestor of the Hittites. The ancient center of Hittite power was at the Halys River in the central part of Asia Minor.

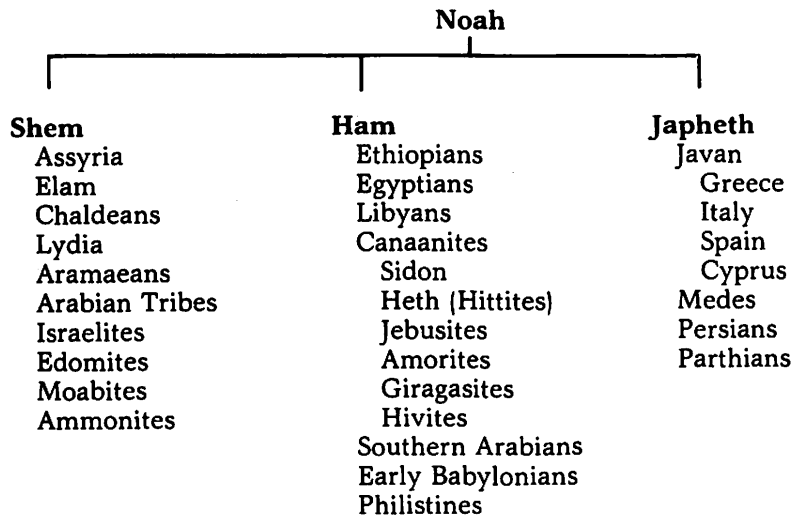
Color Ham's territory yellow. Label Egypt, Canaan, Ethiopia, Phut, Crete, and the Hittite kingdom. Draw a dotted line around Canaan since it is the region we will be noticing most carefully throughout our study.

Part of Shem's descendants remained in the valley of Mesopotamia while others moved on into Arabia. The nations such as Elam, Assyria, and Babylon are all of Semitic origin. The city-states of Aram and the great Arabian tribes all fit into this same family group. The Israelites, Moabites, Ammonites and Edomites are all small nations coming from Shem, through one man named Terah.

Since the Bible story deals with Shem's descendants most closely, let us wait to study more details about each of these nations until we meet them in the history.

Color Shem's territory green. Label Assyria, Aram, Elam, and Arabia.

The following chart is a partial list of the people mentioned in Genesis 10. These are the particular ones who play a part in the Bible history.



Time passed and the population was no longer divided according to which son of Noah was the ancestor. Rather, distinct nations arose which fought against their neighbors and took their territories. Each city-state took and held its territory by military strength as all nations have done since.

As we look back on the early history of nations, the terms Hamitic (descendants of Ham) and Semitic (descendants of Shem) take on new connotations. As we have already stated, the descendants of Japheth moved in directions away from their brethren. They established their own distinct culture and language patterns. Most of Ham's descendants moved into Africa and developed their distinct culture with languages fitting into a broad Hamitic style.

Notice, however, there was a mixing of peoples in the portion of land between the Zagros Mountains east of the Tigris River reaching west to the Mediterranean Sea, and including the Arabian Desert. As one tribe subdued another, and as they lived fairly close together, they absorbed many of the same cultural and language patterns. Therefore, this diverse group of people whose languages were related, are called Semitic in contrast to the Hamitic people of Africa.

Therefore, in Bible atlases, you will see Canaanites listed as Semitic although Genesis 10 distinctly lists them as descendants of Ham. Or, in another reference book, you may see the Hebrews listed as Canaanite though they are definitely descendants of Shem. Remember each of these terms refers to common patterns in their languages and life style rather than blood lines.

Let us have faith enough in the providence of God to believe God fulfilled His promises. The particular descendants of Ham that God intended to be cursed *were* cursed. God was not confused by which language they spoke. We will use the term "Semitic" to refer to peoples of the Mesopotamia-Arabian-Canaanite region as the atlases do. Yet we will in no way be trying to undermine the predictions of God.

Lesson 10

Promises To Abraham

Genesis 11:27-25:10

(Passages in Genesis unless otherwise specified.)

There were many, many people in existence by 2,000 B.C. Nations had already risen and fallen. The pyramids of Egypt had already been built. In fact, Egypt was already being ruled by its twelfth dynasty by that date. Take a new map and look at the conditions of the world in the days of the Patriarchs.

Map #4 — World of the Patriarchs
Label and number your map. Label the directions.
Color the seas.

Label the following:

Sumer	Canaan	Ararat Mts.
Elam	Mari	Hittite Kingdom
Akkad	Nineveh	Aram
Babylonia	Arabian Desert	Zagros Mts.
Egypt		

Find each new place as you study it in the text.

Compare your Maps #3 and #4. Now compare Maps #2 and #4. Do you see that Map #4 has enlarged the section you colored green on Map #2?

During all the years since Creation, God had dealt with all men in the same way. He blessed the righteous and showed His disfavor to the wicked. Finally, a day came when He chose to separate one man through whom to fulfill His purpose. He called a man named Abram, later called Abraham, and told him to leave his family and to go to a new land.

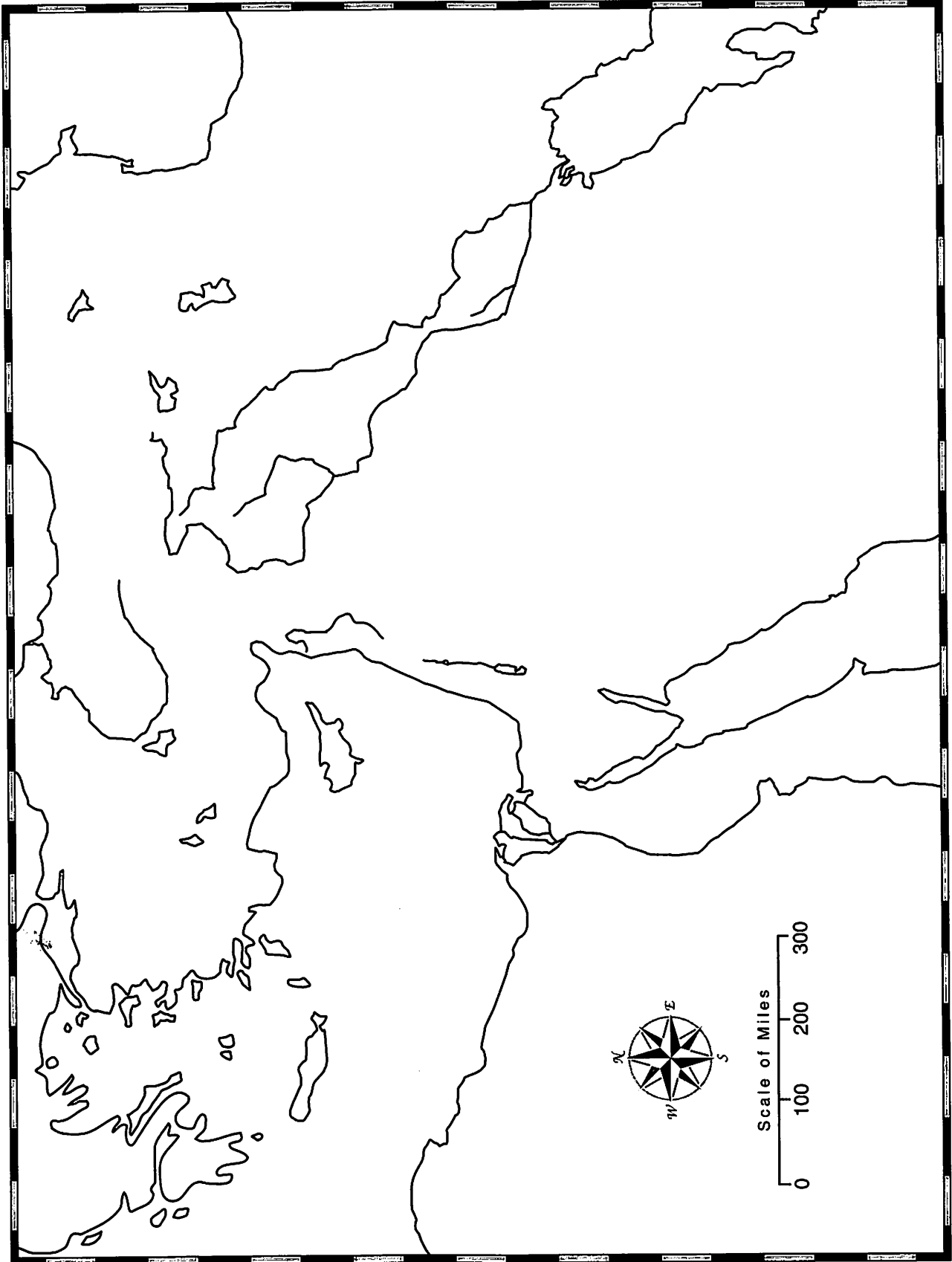
At this time, Abraham was living in _____ of the _____ (11:31), one of the city-states of Sumer. Ur is a good example of an early city. Large scale excavations have been made there. It is now evident it was one of the largest, most progressive cities of the ancient world. Some scholars estimate its population as high as a quarter of a million. It had an elaborate system of writing, advanced means of mathematical calculations, religious records, refined specimens of art, a school system, and many other things man finds necessary for civilization. Abraham likely attended school and was taught to read, write, and to have a trade. It might seem strange to us to leave the comforts of a city to take up a nomadic life as he did. Read Hebrews 11:8-10 to find an explanation for his actions.

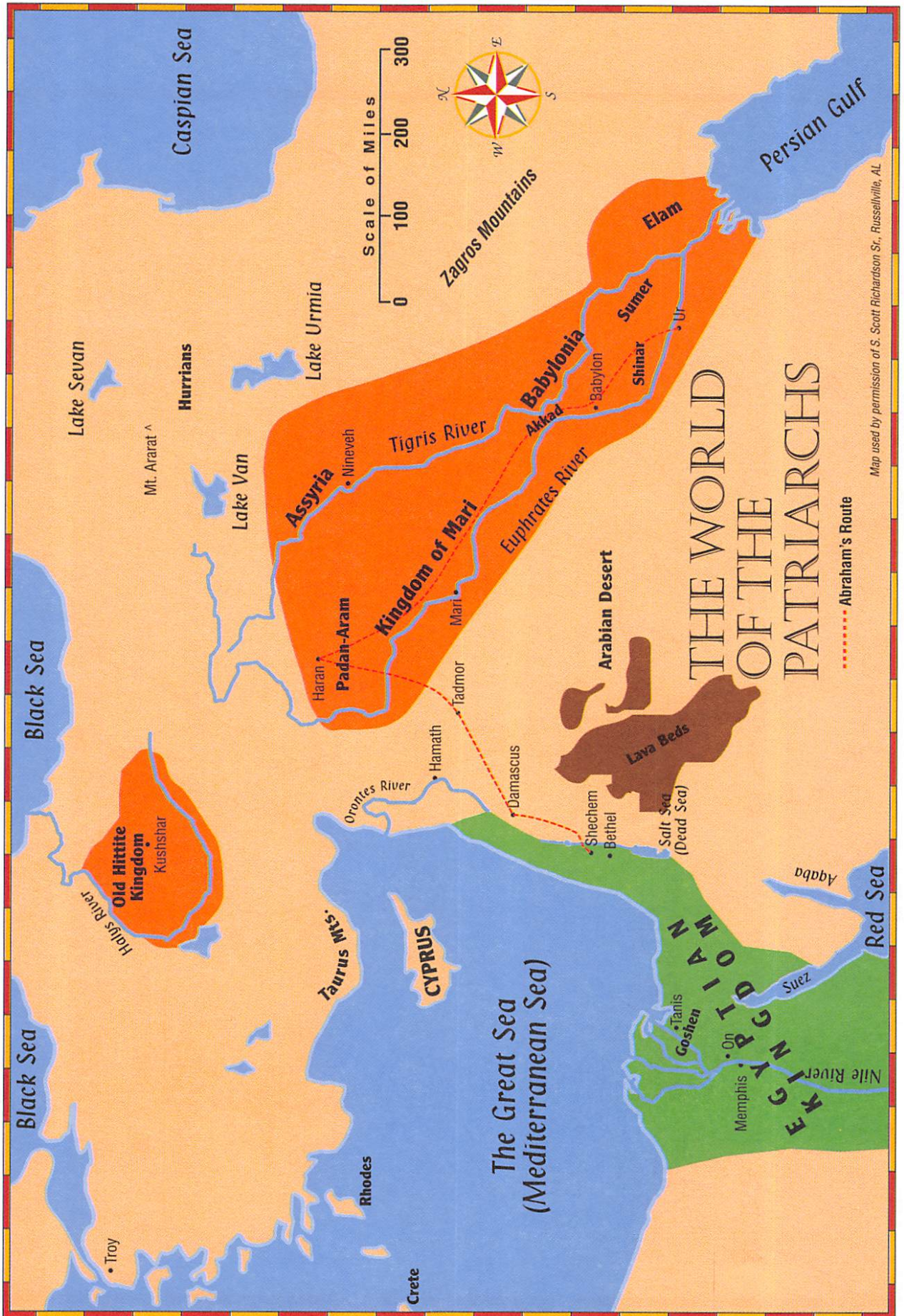
It was about 1900 or 2000 years before Christ was born when God told Abraham to leave his home to "go to a land I will show you." He and his immediate family left Ur without question and traveled approximately 600 miles northwest until they reached the city of _____ (11:31). This was an important trading post of its day in the area called Paddan-Aram. Abraham's brother, Nahor, settled there permanently. At God's command, Abraham left Haran and traveled on to the little land of _____ (12:5), approximately 400 miles.

The Bible does not tell us the exact route Abraham took as he made his journey from Haran to Canaan. Almost certainly he followed the trade routes of his day, leading from Haran south to Tadmor and southwest to Damascus. From Damascus, he had at least three choices. He could have followed one trail that skirted the base of Mt. Hermon and crossed the Jordan River north of Lake Huleh, near the river's source. A second route crossed the Jordan about six miles north of the Sea of Galilee. This was perhaps the most heavily traveled route. It joined the first route west of the river and made its way across Canaan and down the coastal plain to Egypt, the Way of the Sea.

Abraham's third choice was to travel down the King's Highway on the eastern side of the Jordan and take any one of the lesser routes across the river at some fording point. This is the route that seems most logical, because his first camping place in the land was _____ (12:6), in the center of the land. Therefore, our map shows his probable route moving south from Damascus until he reached the Jabbok River and then turning almost due west and crossing the Jordan near the point where the Jabbok enters the river. From the Jordan, he moved up the Wadi-Farah to Shechem.

God promised to make a great nation of Abraham's descendants. He also said that all nations of the earth would be blessed through One who would come from that nation (Gen. 12:1-3; see also Gal. 3:16). Now, at _____ (12:6-7), God promised to give the land of Canaan to that nation. Abraham himself never owned an inch of the land except for the cave he bought in which to bury his wife Sarah, yet his faith never wavered in God's ability to keep His promises (15:6). *The entire remaining portion of the Bible is the story of the fulfillment of these three promises: the nation, the land, and the One who would bless all nations.*





The land was inhabited at that time by a group of tribes collectively called the Canaanites or the Amorites (see 10:6, 15-19). They worshipped the gods of fertility called Baal, with his female counterpart called Ashtaroth among other names. God told Abraham He would someday drive out the Amorites, but that their "iniquity was not yet full" (15:16).

Abraham's wealth consisted largely of cattle and sheep. Since the land was sparsely settled, he could move from one area to another as grass became scarce. After some time at Shechem, he moved about 20 miles down the central range of mountains and pitched his tent between _____ on the west and _____ on the east (12:8). Gradually, he moved farther south until he was camped on the edge of the _____ (12:9). The KJV calls it "the south," but our map of the physical features tells us what this semi-desert south country was called.

A famine arose in the land, and Abraham took his company to _____ (12:10), approximately 200 miles. He and Sarah were traveling as brother and sister because he feared someone might kill him in order to have her (see 12:10-20; 20:1-18). Pharaoh ordered Abraham to leave his land when he learned of the deceit.

Abraham returned to _____ (13:3) in the central highlands.

Draw a dotted line around the land of Canaan. Draw a red line tracing Abraham's journey from Ur to Haran, to Canaan, on to Egypt, and back to Canaan.

We have already filled in two maps in our study of Bible history and geography correlated, but they only carried us through Genesis 12. The rest of the book of Genesis continues the stories of Abraham in the land of Canaan, followed by the stories of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. The map of the World of the Patriarchs (#4) includes the territory of Canaan, but it is very small drawn to that scale. We need a bigger map to show details.

Map #5 — Canaan, In the Days of the Patriarchs
Label and number your map. Label the directions.
Label and color the Mediterranean Sea.
Label the places we have already studied:
Shechem
Bethel
Negeb
Label each new place as you come to it in the text.

Abraham's nephew Lot had been traveling with him since they left Haran. By now both men were very wealthy, and their servants began quarreling over water and grass rights. They were living at _____ (13:3) when Abraham told Lot to look in all directions and choose the direction he wanted to move. Abraham would go another way. Lot chose the well watered _____ of the _____ (13:10). Unfortunately, he found more than fertile grass. The extremely wicked cities of _____ and _____ (13:10-13) were located in the plain, and we soon find Lot living inside Sodom.

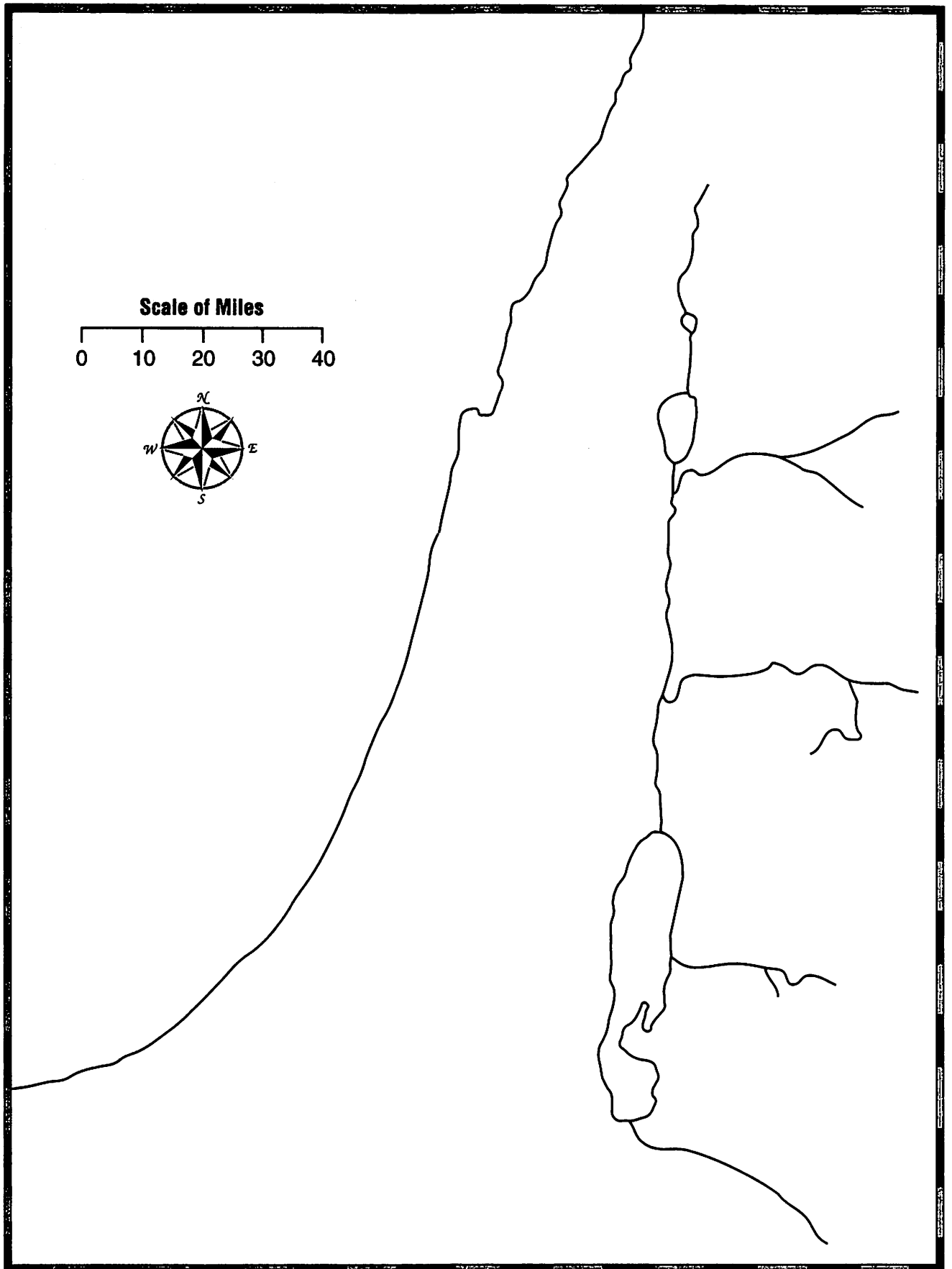
Abraham moved farther south in the land after Lot left. He dwelt at a place called the Oaks of _____ (13:18). Mamre was a man, seemingly another wealthy tribesman like Abraham. Mamre, Aner, Eschol, and Abraham are said to be confederates (14:13). This location illustrates the conditions to be found in the land at this time. Though there were some cities in existence with walls, a great portion of the land was sparsely populated. Here Abraham is, dwelling in tents, on a plain named for one of the men living there. Gradually, a village grew up near them. Mamre will not appear on most maps. Rather, it is shown by the name of the town that grew up on the spot — _____ (13:18). Moses, the historian, makes sure we understand that Mamre and Hebron are the same.

Put Oaks of Mamre on your map with Hebron in parenthesis.

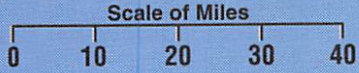
Egypt held nominal control over Canaan at this particular point in history, but, in reality, they played very little role in the daily lives of the people of the land. Each city of any size had its own king who controlled local affairs. So long as he paid taxes to Egypt, the Pharaoh was usually satisfied. There is archaeological evidence there was some unrest in the land. Cities were attacked and burned occasionally. Possibly there were occasional attacks from Egypt if a city failed to respond as the Pharaoh thought it should; or there were invasions of tribes from the desert seeking more land; or rivalries between the city-states themselves. Most of the time, however, Abraham lived in peace and was allowed to move up and down the land as he chose.

On one occasion, four kings from Mesopotamia oppressed the cities of the plain near the Dead Sea (14:1). Remember, there were major trade routes that passed through the land so there were frequent conflicts through the years over their control. The cities of the plain rebelled, and a battle took place in the _____ of _____ (14:8) at the southern end of the Dead Sea. The kings of Mesopotamia were victorious, and they took the people of _____ and _____ (14:11) captive. Abraham and his confederates pursued the army to _____ and chased them to _____ north of _____ (14:14-15).

On which map would you find Shinar and Elam? _____ Be sure they are labeled. Which cities of the plain have we already located?



CANAAN IN THE DAYS OF THE PATRIARCHS



The Great Sea



The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are thought to be located beneath the shallow waters at the south end of the Dead Sea. This area was called the Vale of Siddim.

Map by permission of S. Scott Richardson • Russellville, AL

Melchizedek, king of _____ (14:17-18) and priest of the Most High God came out to meet Abraham as he returned from battle. Melchizedek blessed Abraham, and Abraham showed him respect by giving him a "tenth of all." The same city was later called "U-ru-salem," literally "a city of Salem" or "a city of peace." The name comes down to us as Jerusalem, destined to become the best-known city of the Jews.

God made His promises to Abraham in the form of a covenant in Genesis 15. He said He would give Abraham's descendants all the land from the _____ of _____ to the _____ river (15:18).

Does Map #5 show the Euphrates?

Abraham had no son at this point. At Sarah's suggestion, he took her handmaiden Hagar as his concubine. Hagar was from _____ (16:1). Jealousy arose between the women and Hagar ran away. She traveled down the road to _____ (16:7), almost certainly intending to return to Egypt. God appeared to her and told her to go back. She named the place _____ (16:14), the "well of the Living One who sees."

God told Abraham He would bless the son Ishmael who was born, but that he was not the promised son through whom the promises would be fulfilled. The rite of circumcision was given as a sign of the covenant between Abraham and God. He and all his male descendants were to be circumcised as a sign that each was heir to the promises concerning the nation and the land. The promise was enlarged on that occasion to say Abraham would be the father of "many nations" and his name was changed from Abram to Abraham.

Abraham was still living by the _____ of _____ (18:1) when three angels visited him. They appeared as travelers, and Abraham treated them with hospitality. After they ate, the three started on their way toward _____ (18:16). One of the three, "the Lord," told Abraham they had come to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham pled for the cities and the Lord promised to spare them if ten righteous people could be found.

The other two angels continued on to Sodom and spent the night in Lot's house. The sin of the city was great. Not even Lot's sons-in-law could be persuaded to listen to the warnings of doom. Lot, and his two daughters fled to the nearby village of _____ (19:22) which was spared for their sakes. Then, as the sun was rising, God rained down fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah. No trace has ever been found of the cities. It is thought they may have been at the southern tip of the Dead Sea and are now covered with water. The land at the southern end of the Dead Sea is so barren now no one would choose it as a good place for cattle. Notice the writer takes pains to say the area was fertile before the calamity came from God (13:10-13). Zoar has been located, and Sodom was near it (19:20-22).

Lot and his two daughters went into the mountains east of the Dead Sea. There the daughters committed incest with their father, and each had a son by him. One son became the father of the _____ and the other the father of the _____ (19:37-38). From this time on, we will find the tribes of the Moabites and the Ammonites living on this eastern plateau.

Abraham moved into the south again, this time to the city of _____ (20:1). Once again Abraham hid the fact Sarah was his wife, and Abimelech the king took her for his own. God intervened, and Abimelech rebuked them both for their deceit. He allowed Abraham to remain anywhere he chose in his territory, however.

The promised child Isaac was finally born and Sarah rejoiced. As the child grew, Sarah became afraid Ishmael might share in the inheritance rightfully belonging to Isaac. She demanded Ishmael and Hagar be sent away. Ishmael was 14 years old when Isaac was born, and this was some time later, so he was no longer a helpless child. God told Abraham to do as Sarah had requested, so Hagar and her son left.

Human nature helps us understand Hagar's reaction as she goes into the barren Negeb. Water is gone. They have been sent away from the home they have known for years. The future looks bleak. "My son will die." God reassured her by giving her water miraculously. Ishmael grew to a man in the desert of _____ and his mother found a wife for him from _____ (21:20-21). His descendants became one of the wandering tribes of the desert who earned their living via the caravan routes (see 25:12-18).

Meanwhile, Abraham moved several miles east of Gerar. His company was quite large by now, and his wealth made him a powerful man. Notice he had been able to take 318 of his own men when he rescued the people of Sodom (14:14). Abimelech of Gerar came to make a treaty of peace with him. They sealed a covenant between them, and Abraham named the place _____ (21:31), meaning "the well of the covenant." The wells located here were on the southern edge of the arable land. The very dry Negeb lay just to the south. It is not surprising, therefore, that a village grew up around the wells. Many years later, Beersheba marked the southern boundary of Israel.

Time passed and God gave Abraham the greatest test of his faith. God told him to take his son Isaac to the region of _____ (22:2) and offer him as a sacrifice. Abraham arose without question and traveled north to the specified place. The angel of the Lord stopped Abraham as he raised his knife ready to kill Isaac. ". . . Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me" (22:12). The exact location of Mt. Moriah is uncertain. Jewish tradition identifies it as the mount where the temple was built many years later (see II Chron. 3:1).

Abraham returned to _____ (22:19) after offering Isaac. But more time passed, and we find him living in _____ (23:2) when the next story occurs. Sarah died. Abraham bought a field containing a cave called _____ from a man named Ephron who was a _____ (23:17-19). As the story progresses, we learn that Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Leah, and Jacob were all buried in this same cave with Sarah.

Look on Map #4 to find Ephron's original home.

Isaac was a mature man by the time his mother died. It was time for Abraham to arrange a marriage for him. He did not want Isaac to marry one of the wicked daughters of the _____ (24:3). Therefore, he sent his servant back to the home of his brother Nahor in the region of Mesopotamia. Isaac's cousin Rebekah was persuaded to return with the servant. They found Isaac living at _____ (24:62).

Which map do we need to find the city of Haran where Nahor's family lived?

At some point in the history, Abraham had six other sons by a concubine named Keturah. Abraham gave them gifts before he died and sent them away to the land of the east. Their descendants joined forces with the Ishmaelites, and they became very wealthy merchants on the caravan routes. The names Midianites and Ishmaelites are used interchangeably on different occasions (see 37:25, 28, 36; Judg. 6:3; 8:24).

Lesson 11

Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph

Genesis 25:11-50:26

(Passages in Genesis unless otherwise specified.)

Isaac was still living at _____ (25:11) when his father died. A famine arose and he moved west to _____ (26:1). God told him not to move to _____ (26:2). God said He would bless Isaac and would fulfill all His promises to Abraham through him. He would make Isaac's descendants a great nation. They would receive the land of Canaan for their inheritance. And, all nations of the earth would be blessed through his seed.

Continue using Map #5 for this lesson.

Isaac was very wealthy. He planted crops in Gerar and reaped abundantly. Gradually the men of the city grew jealous of him. Rather than fight, Isaac moved on quietly until he found a place where he might dwell in peace. He named the place _____ (26:22) which means "a broad place" or "room."

Abimelech feared lest there be enmity between his people and this wealthy tribesman, so he came to make a treaty of peace with him. It happens Isaac's men had been cleaning out some wells his father had dug some years earlier. These were the same wells where Abraham had made a similar covenant with Abimelech, thus the name of _____ (26:33) was established.

Isaac had twin sons named Esau and Jacob. Esau was a hunter while Jacob cared for the flocks, herds, and other possessions at home. Esau married women of the land who were a grief to Isaac and Rebekah. The New Testament describes Esau as a "profane" man, meaning he did not put proper emphasis on important matters (Heb. 12:16). On one occasion, he sold his birthright to Jacob for a serving of pottage. In that day, the right of the firstborn gave him the major portion of his father's property and made him the head of the family or tribe.

Jacob deceived his brother and his blind father and received the blessing of prosperity usually passed from the father to the eldest son. Esau was so angry he threatened to kill Jacob. Rebekah helped Jacob escape by sending him to _____ (28:2) to the home of her brother Laban.

Jacob left from _____ (28:10) headed toward Haran. The first night he slept near a village named _____ (28:19). God appeared to him in a dream and repeated the promises He had made to Abraham and then to Isaac. The next morning Jacob renamed the place _____ (28:19), meaning "the house of God." You already have Bethel marked on your map because we have visited the area often already in our story. This is another case where the historian chose to use the better known name for the place to identify it even before the name was actually given.

Write Luz in parenthesis under the name Bethel. Which map do we need to find Haran?

Jacob worked 20 years for his uncle Laban. He left Canaan with only his staff in his hand. He returned with four wives, eleven sons, one daughter, and a host of servants, flocks, herds, and possessions. The years with Laban were difficult years, however. He left without telling Laban he was leaving lest Laban prevent it. Laban was angry and pursued him. He caught up with him on the plateau east of the Jordan River. God had spoken to him the night before and forbidden his harming Jacob. After an angry exchange of words, they made a covenant of peace between them and set up a heap of stones as a witness. Jacob named the region _____ (31:47) which means "a heap of witness." From this point on in Biblical history, the central portion of the eastern highland is called Gilead.

Esau had been angry enough to kill his brother when Jacob had last seen him. Jacob wondered about his brother's attitude now. Would he still be angry? Jacob was worried.

As Jacob continued his journey toward the Jordan River after Laban left, the angels of God met him. Jacob called the place the "camp of God" or _____ (32:2). The exact location of Mahanaim has not been discovered. It is evident it was on the eastern side of the Jordan somewhere north of the Jabbok River, but no one is sure how far north it was.

Esau had moved south of the Dead Sea into a rugged region called the hill country of _____ (32:3) while his brother was away. His other name was Edom and from this time forward we will find the Edomites living in this region.

Esau came to meet Jacob with 400 of his men. Jacob was very afraid in spite of God's assurances He would be with him. The night before the brothers met, an angel wrestled with Jacob. The next morning he named the place _____ (32:30) because he said he had seen the face of God and had lived. Jacob's name was changed to Israel, and his descendants were called Israelites.

Esau was no longer angry and the brothers parted in peace. Esau went back to his home in Seir, and Jacob continued his slow way toward the Jordan. He settled for a time near the ford of the river and built shelters for himself and his cattle. He named the place "shelters" or _____ (33:17).

Later he and his company moved across the Jordan, and he bought a portion of land near the village of _____ (33:18-19). Trouble arose. Jacob's daughter Dinah was mistreated by a young man named Shechem. In revenge, two of Jacob's sons destroyed the men of the village. Jacob rebuked his sons for their cruelty and moved his family farther south to _____ (35:1) where he had seen the Lord many years earlier.

Jacob continued his slow journey south. This time tragedy struck as they traveled. His favorite wife Rachel died as she gave birth to her second child, Jacob's twelfth son. She named him Ben-Oni "son of my sorrow" as she lay dying. His father changed his name to Benjamin "son of my right hand" or, as we would say, "my right-hand man." Rachel was buried there by the wayside near _____ (35:19) and Jacob set up a pillar to mark the spot. A town named Bethlehem later arose there.

Jacob finally joined his father Isaac at Hebron. The text gives another name to the village at this point, _____ (35:27). We have already noted the name Mamre. Therefore, the plain was first named for a wealthy tribesman who settled there. A village grew up near him and the name was changed in honor of another man living there. Kiriath-Arba means "the city of Arba." The city was still called by this name when the Israelites entered the land of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua. At that time, the city was in the control of a family of giants called the Anakim, the greatest of whom had been named Arba (see Josh. 14:15). Many events of Bible history took place in or around the city of Hebron.

Jacob's favorite child was next to the youngest of his twelve sons. There were several reasons for his father's love. In the first place, Joseph was the oldest son of Jacob's beloved wife Rachel. Then, Joseph was a much more righteous young man than his older brothers. Unfortunately, however, Jacob showed his partiality too plainly, and jealousy arose among the brothers.

Jacob was still living at Hebron when the story of Joseph begins. Instead of moving to new pasture lands as his fathers before him had done, Jacob sent his ten older sons north to graze the flocks. After a time, Jacob sent Joseph to see how his brothers fared. Joseph expected to find them near _____ (37:12), but they had gone on to _____ (37:17). The brothers saw him approaching and talked of killing him. Reuben persuaded them to put him into a pit instead, intending to rescue him later and send him on his way. The men saw a caravan approaching as they ate their lunch. At Judah's suggestion, they drew Joseph from the pit and sold him to the band of Ishmaelite-Midianite merchants on their way to _____ (37:28). The brothers went home and lied to their father about their actions, and the merchants sold Joseph as a slave to a man named Potiphar.

Thirteen years passed with Joseph first slave and then prisoner. During all those years he kept his faith in Jehovah, and God blessed him accordingly. One night the Pharaoh of Egypt dreamed dreams, and Joseph was brought in to interpret them. He warned of a coming famine so severe life would be endangered if food were not stored up during the years of plenty that would precede the famine. Joseph was made ruler of Egypt second only to the Pharaoh. Seven years passed. Abundant food was stored. The years of famine began, and the Egyptians turned to Joseph for help.

Egypt was not the only land affected by the famine. Peoples from other lands learned there was grain in Egypt. One day, Joseph looked up to see his own brothers who had once sold him as a slave now bowing before him asking to buy food. At first he treated them sternly to see what kind of men these were now. He put them through a series of tests, and each time they proved they were much better men than they had been 22 years earlier. Joseph finally told them who he was and asked them to bring his father and all their families into Egypt.

Jacob was overjoyed when he heard the news and was finally convinced his lost son Joseph was truly alive. He and his company started the 200 mile journey from Canaan to Egypt. He stopped at _____ (46:1) and offered sacrifices to God. God spoke to him and assured him it was the right decision to move:

... Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: . . . (46:3-4).

Joseph spoke to the Pharaoh in behalf of his family and they were given a choice section of the Nile Delta called _____ (47:6). Here, Jacob lived and prospered for seventeen years before his death.

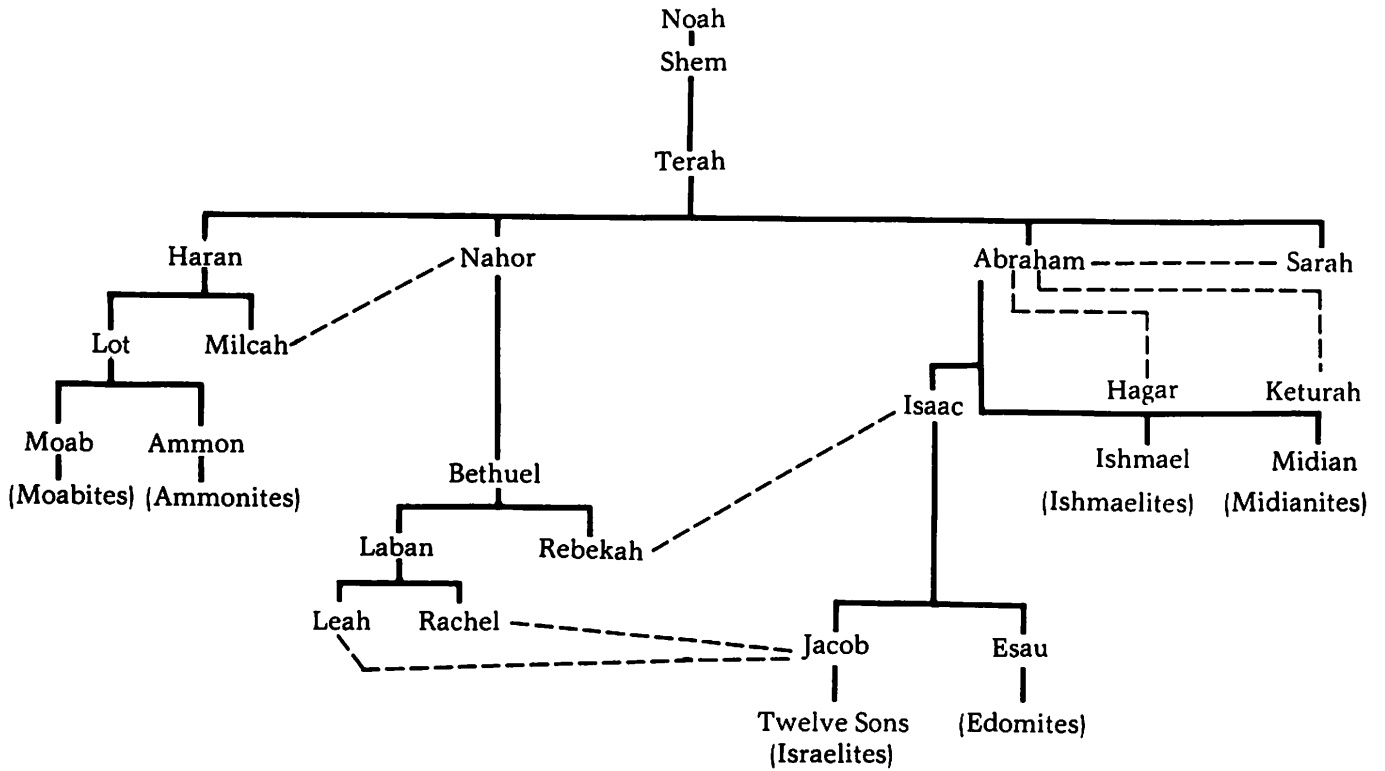
Can Goshen be shown on Map #5? Label it on Map #4.

Joseph was no longer ruler of Egypt when his father died, but he was still an honored man. He received permission to carry his father's body back to bury it in the _____ of _____ (50:13). A great company of Egyptian officials accompanied the family on their sad journey.

Joseph lived 66 years after the famine ended and his period of rulership was over. Hopefully, Joseph's own last years were peaceful enough. But times were changing in the land of Egypt. The Israelites no longer had direct contact with the ruler of Egypt by the time Joseph died. They could not ask permission to take him home to Ca-

naan to bury him with pomp. Joseph died with a promise to his brethren that God had not forgotten them. He said the day would come when God would lead them up out of the land of Egypt, and he asked that his bones be taken with them when they left. Joseph's body was embalmed and placed in a coffin waiting for the day of deliverance from Egypt.

Abraham's Family Tree



Review of The Book of Genesis

Lessons 9-11
(Passages in Genesis unless otherwise specified.)

Put these events in chronological order:
(the earliest one is #1)

- _____ Joseph sold by his brothers
- _____ Call of Abraham
- _____ Creation
- _____ Jacob deceived Isaac
- _____ Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed
- _____ Flood
- _____ First sin
- _____ Tower of Babel
- _____ Promises were made to Abraham
- _____ Cain killed his brother
- _____ Isaac was born

Answer briefly:

1. What did God give Adam to meet each of his following needs:
 - A home (2:8-15) _____
 - A companion (2:18-25) _____
 - Food (1:30; 2:16) _____
 - Clothing (3:21) _____
 - When did Adam and Eve feel the need for clothes? (3:1-7)
 - A law (2:16-17) _____
 - What were the results when Adam and Eve broke their law? (3:1-24)
2. Why did God send a Flood? Who survived it? (Gen. 6-9)
 What food was added to their diet after the Flood? (9:2-3)
 What promise did God make to Noah? (9:11-17)
3. Tell briefly where the descendants of each son of Noah settled. (Gen. 10)
4. What happened at the Tower of Babel that caused the people to scatter over the face of the earth? (11:1-9)
5. What three promises to Abraham form the thesis of the entire Bible story? (12:1-7)
6. Why did Abraham go to Egypt? What sin did he commit there? (12:10-20)
7. Why did Jacob go to Haran? (27:41-45)

8. Name Jacob's twelve sons. (29:31-30:25; 35:16-20)
9. How did Isaac get his wife? (24:1-67)
10. How did Jacob get his wives? (29:14-30:10)
11. Why did Joseph say he was in Egypt? (45:5, 7, 8)
12. Why did Jacob and his family go to Egypt? (45:6, 9-11)

Who was the husband of each of the following women:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Keturah (25:1) | _____ |
| Rachel (29:28) | _____ |
| Eve (2:18-25) | _____ |
| Rebekah (24:67) | _____ |
| Sarah (11:29) | _____ |
| Milcah (11:29) | _____ |
| Bilhah (30:4) | _____ |
| Hagar (16:3) | _____ |
| Leah (29:21-23) | _____ |
| Zilpah (30:9) | _____ |

Who was the father of each of these nations:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Canaanites (10:6, 15-19) | _____ |
| Edomites (Gen. 36) | _____ |
| Midianites (25:1-6; 37:28) | _____ |
| Israelites (32:28, 32) | _____ |
| Moabites (19:36-38) | _____ |
| Ammonites (19:36-38) | _____ |
| Ishmaelites (37:25;
25:12-18) | _____ |

Who was the mother and father of each of these sons:

Son	Mother	Father
Abel (4:2)	_____	_____
Shem (6:10)	not given	_____
Jacob (25:21-26)	_____	_____
Ishmael (16:15)	_____	_____
Joseph (30:22-24)	_____	_____
Isaac (21:2-3)	_____	_____
Esau (25:21-25)	_____	_____
Midian (25:1-2)	_____	_____
Reuben (29:32)	_____	_____
Naphtali (30:7-8)	_____	_____

The Covenant People Of God

Exodus 1:1 — Numbers 10:10
(Passages in Exodus unless otherwise specified)

Human curiosity makes us wish we knew exactly what was happening in Egypt at this point in history. We have already stated that Moses does not record the personal name of a single Pharaoh during this whole period of early Bible history, making it impossible to pinpoint the exact dates for the events. However, there are some fascinating facts of Egyptian history that we need to include at this point in our story.

The Egyptians kept very detailed records of their activities; and their land is so dry the records have been remarkably well preserved. The earliest records found date from about 3,000 B.C. They continue through the years until, suddenly, about 1750 B.C., the records stop, to begin again about 200 years later.

Josephus, the Jewish historian who lived during the first century after Christ (37/38 to c.95 A.D.), quotes from an Egyptian historian named Manetho:

There was a king of ours whose name was Timaus. Under him it came to pass, I know not how, that God was opposed to us, and there came in most surprising manner, men of ignoble birth out of the East, who were bold enough to make an expedition into our country, and with ease subdue it by force, yet without our hazarding a battle with them. So, when they had those that governed us under their power, they burned down our cities, demolished the temples of the gods, and treated the people most barbarously . . . At length they made one of their number king, whose name was Salatis. He also lived at Memphis, and put both Upper and Lower Egypt under tribute, and left garrisons at all strategic places. (Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1, 14.)

Josephus was trying to tie this description of Egyptian invaders to the moving of the Israelites into the land of Egypt. That conclusion does not fit the Biblical record at all, because Jacob did not enter as any sort of conqueror. But modern archaeologists have proven Egypt was indeed invaded by Semitic people (see note in Lesson 9) about 1750 B.C. No one knows their exact origin. Josephus continues his quoting of Manetho to give them the name of HYCSOS (or Hyksos) meaning Shepherd-Kings according to the Egyptian language (Hyc--king; Sos--shepherd). Manetho goes on to say it is thought they were Arabians.

Perhaps the Hyksos were of the same race as the Amorites who came from the Arabian Desert and invaded Aram, Northern Mesopotamia, and Canaan about 2,000 B.C. Gradually, they moved south in Mesopotamia and established a kingdom centered around Babylon under the mighty king Hammurabi (1728-1686 B.C.). The Hyksos rulers date from about the same period as Hammurabi's Babylon (1750-1550 B.C.). They used the same basic type of weapons, chariots, and other tools.

The Pharaoh who exalted Joseph obviously had flocks and herds of his own because he asked that Joseph's brethren be put in charge of them (Gen. 47:6). He was especially considerate of these shepherds from Canaan and gave them a fertile region particularly valuable as pastureland. Yet the text is specific in saying that ". . . every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians" (Gen. 46:34).

Thus, to summarize, it seems Joseph rose to power under a dynasty more favorably inclined toward people from Canaan than the usual Egyptian kings would have been. These Hyksos invaders took many of the Egyptian customs as their own in order to appease the Egyptian anger — for example, the use of the Egyptian title of Pharaoh for their ruler. But they kept their own particular trades (shepherds) and their own products such as the horse-drawn chariots and the Asiatic bow. It seems from archaeology that many Asiatic people moved into the Nile Delta during this period.

The native Egyptians bitterly resented these foreigners who ruled their land. An Egyptian prince named Sekenenre seems to have been the first to resist. His mummy shows five major skull wounds, so he must have met an untimely death. His son Ahmose (1580 B.C.) succeeded in putting the Hyksos out of the land. The next several years were spent trying to hunt the remaining Hyksos out of the cities and destroying them.

The proud Egyptians kept the new products their enemies had introduced, but they sought to destroy all historical records of their humiliation. They seem to have destroyed all written records in existence (at least none have been found to date). They went so far as to chisel the Hyksos names out of monuments. It is only within modern times that the archaeologists have begun to piece together the puzzle of the history of the Hyksos.

It is, therefore, no wonder the native Egyptian dynasties hated the Semitic people living in their delta. They were not Hyksos, but they too were "foreigners." At some point, we do not know the exact date, a Pharaoh decided to use these foreigners for the welfare of the State. Probably, the Hebrews were not the only people forced to work in building whatever the whim of the Pharaoh dictated.

It was part of God's providence that His people were in the land of Egypt during these years of development. He had told Abraham:

Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. (Gen. 15:13-14)

The inhabitants of Canaan would have been glad to mingle with these wealthy tribesmen. Abimelech of Gerar made a covenant of peace with both Abraham and Isaac (Gen. 21:22-32; 26:26-33). The men of Shechem were willing to accept the rite of circumcision in return for permission to intermarry with Jacob's family and to live as one people (Gen. 34). All of Jacob's sons (except Joseph) seem to have married Canaanite women (see Gen. 38). This was not God's will.

The Egyptians, on the other hand, held themselves aloof from all foreigners. Joseph was made ruler of the land next to Pharaoh himself and the people turned to him in the time of famine, but he had to eat at a separate table because it was an "abomination" for an Egyptian to eat with a Hebrew (Gen. 43:32).

If Jacob's family had stayed in Canaan, they might have been absorbed into the tribes of the land. By going to Egypt, they were set apart and forced to develop as a separate, distinct race.

Map #6 — The Exodus and the Conquest

Label and number your map. Label the directions.

It would be possible to use a map of the whole Ancient World to find Goshen, but let us use a new map showing the area in more detail. Compare it to Maps #3 and 4.

Label the following places:

Mediterranean Sea

Gulf of Suez

Egypt

Dead Sea

Gulf of Aqaba

Wilderness of Sinai

Nile River

Red Sea

Goshen

Draw a dotted line around Canaan.

Color the seas blue.

Label each place as you come to it in the text.

The book of Exodus opens with the Hebrews under severe bondage. _____ and _____ (1:11) are named as treasure cities they were forced to build. God had not forgotten His people, however, because they were multiplying at an enormous rate.

Pharaoh was afraid of their growing population so he ordered all baby boys thrown into the Nile river. There is no way to know how many babies died. One lived, however. Pharaoh's daughter went down to the river to bathe and found a Hebrew baby in the edge of the water where his mother had hidden him. She named him Moses which means "drawn from the water" and adopted him as her own. The child grew up in the palace of the king and was given opportunities no slave would have had (Exod. 1, 2; see also Acts 7:22).

Moses knew who he was in relation to the slaves. He was 40 years old when he went out to "visit" his people, seemingly intending to make their burdens lighter, or perhaps to rescue them (Acts 7:23). He found an Egyptian mistreating an Israelite. Moses killed him and buried him in the sand. The deed became known, and Moses was forced to flee for his life.

He went into the wilderness of Sinai and traveled south until he came to a well in the land of _____ (2:15). This particular spot in the wilderness must have been an oasis because this tribe of Midianites seemingly lived there permanently. Moses remained and worked as a shepherd around the foot of Mt. Sinai (or Horeb) for the next 40 years. Most maps usually show the Midianites living east of the Gulf of Aqaba, but that does not seem to fit the story here. Perhaps this particular branch of the tribe had broken away from the main company.

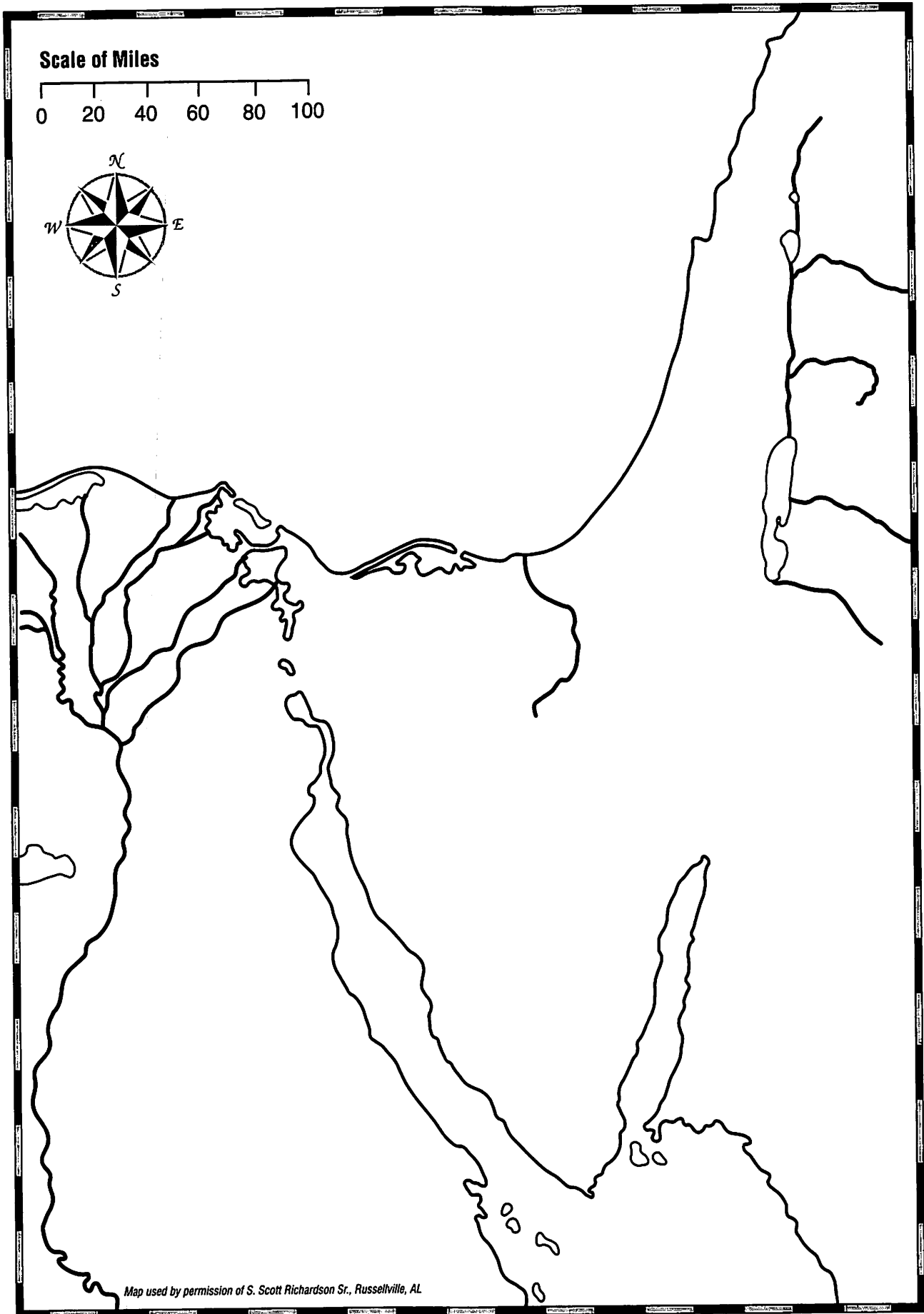
Finally, a day came when God appeared to Moses to send him back to Egypt to bring the Israelites out of the land. Though reluctant at first, Moses went to do God's bidding.

Pharaoh refused to let his slaves leave, just as God had predicted to Moses. God used the stubbornness of Pharaoh as an occasion to magnify His own power. He sent ten severe plagues to punish the Egyptians for their cruel treatment of His people and to convince Pharaoh to let His people go (Exod. 3-12).

After the tenth plague, the slaves were ordered out of the land. They assembled at and left from the city of _____ (12:37), one of the treasure cities they had been forced to build. The Egyptians were so glad to see the Israelites go they gave them gold, silver, raiment, and whatever else the slaves asked for (12:35-36).

The first two camping places were at _____ (12:37) and at _____ (13:20) in the "edge of the wilderness." God was directing them with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. They were taking Joseph's bones with them as their fathers had promised before his death.

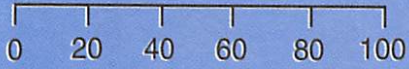
The Israelites are on their way to inherit the land of Canaan in fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. But first, God has some important lessons to teach them. This is a vast company (603,550 soldiers plus women,



Map used by permission of S. Scott Richardson Sr., Russellville, AL

THE EXODUS

Scale of Miles



Map used by permission of S. Scott Richardson Sr., Russellville, AL

children, and cattle) of slaves, totally unprepared to be conquering soldiers. Their "soldiers" are merely men in the right age bracket for war, but they are untrained and untried.

The shortest route from Egypt to Canaan is along the shoreline of the Mediterranean Sea. But there was a busy trade route there called the Way of the Sea (or Philistines). Another fairly easy route to Canaan lay a little farther south called the Way of Shur. If God had led the people by either of these routes, they would have met conflict almost immediately. Therefore, God turned them southward. He wanted time to teach them to depend on Him for their every need, to give them a law, and to mold them into a nation.

Word was carried to Pharaoh that the Israelites were lost. "They can't even find their way out of the land." Pharaoh sent his army, and the Israelites were terrified! Here they were with the Red Sea directly in front of them and Pharaoh's army behind them. Of course, you remember God caused the sea to divide and they crossed on dry land (Exod. 14).

A question arises: Where did they cross? No one knows for sure. The camping place is described as "before _____, between _____ and the _____, over against _____" (14:2). Unfortunately, none of those spots can be definitely identified. We do know they crossed somewhere at the northern tip of the left arm of the Red Sea (Gulf of _____) because they crossed into the Wilderness of Sinai rather than into the great Arabian Desert as it would have been if they had crossed the main body of water now known as the Red Sea. The original word translated "Red Sea" in our Bibles literally means "Sea of Reeds." We certainly do not mean to take away from the miracle. They crossed a body of water wide enough and deep enough to drown Pharaoh's army, but not necessarily a body of water great enough to accommodate ocean-going vessels. Our map marks one of the possible spots, and the one I believe most nearly fits the Biblical account. Do not be surprised to see that other maps differ.

God led the people southward along the coast. In some places they would find water. In other places, they would have been destitute without God's help. Skeptics say the Bible must be in error because such a large company could not have survived in the barren Sinai. True believers in a Supreme God do not find it difficult to believe His omnipotent hand was guiding His people and providing for their needs.

We do not know the exact location of most of the camping places named. Remember, it is a hard task for archaeologists to find *cities* from that long ago. Think what a task it would be to find a camping place they used a few nights or weeks. Our map follows the traditional route usually shown.

After their miraculous deliverance from the Red Sea and the Egyptians, the people traveled three days through the _____ of _____ (15:22) without water. Perhaps you can imagine their delight when they arrived at _____ (15:23) and found water. Then, can you imagine their disappointment when they discovered the water was bitter and could not be used? They complained. God told Moses to cut a tree to put into the water to make it good. Their next stopping place, _____ (15:27), was a natural oasis with 12 wells of water and 70 palm trees.

Notice the people were traveling relatively near water, the Gulf of Suez, yet they were thirsty. Why? The Red Sea and its two arms are salty like the oceans. In fact, their waters are unusually salty because evaporation is rapid in the arid climate.

The Israelites traveled on until they had been out of Egypt a full month. If they had gone to Canaan along the shortest route, they would have had time to be there. Instead, here they are, headed in the opposite direction, camped in the _____ of _____ (16:1), and their food has given out! They complained. They wished they had stayed in Egypt. Moses tells them later that God deliberately let them get thirsty and hungry so they could learn their dependence on Him. He was teaching them He would provide their fleshly necessities if they would first obey Him.

And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. (Deut. 8:2-5)

God began feeding the people with manna in the Wilderness of Sin. He continued it until they were actually in the land of Canaan and had eaten their first food from the land (Exod. 16; Josh. 5:10-11).

God not only fed them and gave them water, He fought their battles for them. The Amalekites attacked them at _____ (17:1, 8). Moses held his rod over his head while God gave the Israelites victory.

The people arrived at Mt. _____ (19:1-2) "in the third month." Here, God offered the people a covenant. He reminded them of the plagues they had seen in Egypt and of His care for the multitude thus far in the wilderness. He said that though the whole world is His, they could be His special, treasured possession out of all nations — if they would obey Him fully and keep His covenant. The Israelites wanted the blessings, and they were quick to respond, "We will do *everything* the Lord has said" (19:1-9).

The covenant was offered in Exodus 19. Then, chapters 20-23 give a summary of the law God intended. Again, the people responded, "Everything the Lord has said we will do . . . We will do everything the Lord has said; we

will obey." Therefore, the covenant was sealed and confirmed with blood from animal sacrifices (Exod. 24).

Moses went into the mount to receive the rest of the law, and the people grew restless. Less than six weeks after their vow of obedience to God, they were building a golden calf to worship and were engaged in idolatrous revelry. God was so angry He was ready to destroy the whole multitude. Moses pled with God to forgive them and to renew the broken covenant. God heard Moses' plea and promised to continue the covenant so long as the people would serve Him to the best of their ability and offer designated sacrifices for their sins when they fell short (Exod. 32-34). Throughout the rest of the Old Testament, it is plain to see how God blessed His people when they were serving Him and how He punished them when they turned away from their vows of allegiance.

While they were still at Mt. Sinai, God completed the law for them. He organized them into a nation with specific rules to follow. Even the exact details of their marching order were given. They built a movable building called the tabernacle in which to worship God. And they organized their worship in obedience to God's instructions.

The first promise to Abraham has been fulfilled. His descendants are a separate, distinct nation.

There are many peaks in this peninsula of Sinai, and it is uncertain which one was the spot where God spoke to the Israelites. Our map shows the traditional one. The names Mt. Horeb and Mt. Sinai seem to have been used interchangeably.

Mark all the camping places thus far and draw a line to mark their route from Rameses to Mt. Sinai.

Waiting For A Generation To Die

Numbers 10:11 — Joshua 5:12

(Passages in Numbers unless otherwise specified)

Barely over one year after they left Egypt, the Israelites started on their way to Canaan (10:11-12). The time had come for God to fulfill His promise to give them the land. The route northward led them through some of the roughest terrain they had yet found. Moses described it as "that great and terrible wilderness" (Deut. 1:19). The hills and mountains are high, naked granite cliffs with no tree, no bush, no blade of grass in sight. The passes between the ridges are nearly as bare, with small clumps of trees around rare water holes.

They were barely underway on their journey when the people started complaining. God heard and sent fire into the camp. Those on the outer fringes of the camp were consumed. They named the place _____, or "burning" (11:3).

Continue using Map #6 for this lesson.

Only a few miles farther along, the complaints began again. They were tired of the manna! Oh, if only they had some of the fish, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic from Egypt. God was displeased with the people. He sent them quail to appease their appetite, enough for the whole company to have for a month. But, He sent a plague along with the quail. Many died. They named the place the "graves of those that lusted," _____ (11:34).

The next camping place was at _____ (11:35). There, Moses' own brother and sister complained against his authority. God Himself spoke out in defense of His servant Moses.

Finally, the Israelites arrived in the _____ of _____ (12:16) at a spot called Kadesh-barnea. They were less than 50 miles south of the Promised Land. Moses sent 12 spies into Canaan. They came back with beautiful fruit and glowing reports about the richness of the land. But they also reported they had seen many walled cities inhabited by strong men, some of them giants. Ten of the spies, and all the multitude, decided it was too hard a task for them to take the land. The other two spies, along with Moses and Aaron, cried out for faith in God's promises. The people were ready to stone them to death.

Remember, in our earlier description of Egypt (Lesson 6), we noted that Egypt had a united government very early in their history. They did not build walls around their cities. The walled cities of Canaan, therefore, looked formidable to these ex-slaves from Egypt. They were forgetting God's promise that He would care for them and would give them the land in spite of all obstacles. Human nature helps us *understand* some of their fears, but it does not *excuse* their lack of faith.

God was so angry He was ready to destroy them all. Moses pled for them, and God forgave them — again! However, He declared that no soldier would live to receive the land he had just rejected. Their punishment would be that they would have to stay in the wilderness until that whole generation of soldiers died, a year for every day the spies had been gone (Num. 13, 14).

Draw a line to mark their route from Mt. Sinai to Kadesh-barnea.

The people were distressed when they realized how angry God was with them. They changed their minds and rushed forward to attack the first village. Moses warned them they would fail. The inhabitants of the village rushed out and thoroughly defeated the Israelites, driving them back to Kadesh. God meant what He said.

Draw an arrow to mark this futile attempt to take the land.

For 38 years the Israelites stayed in the region of Kadesh-barnea, waiting for a generation to die (see Deut. 1:46; 2:14). We know almost nothing about the period, except that the people continued to murmur and complain against God. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron. The earth itself opened and swallowed the three men and their families. Fire came out from the altar and burned 250 princes who joined the protest. As if that were not enough, the multitude murmured because God punished the wicked men. God was so angry He determined to destroy the entire group, as He had started to do on other occasions. The plague started, and people began dying. Aaron took a censer of incense and ran in between the living and the dead to make atonement for the people. Fourteen thousand, seven hundred died that day in the plague. The people sinned so many times. It was only through God's mercy that any were left alive (Num. 16-17).

During these years of forced wandering, the Israelites would camp at one place until water and grass gave out. Then they would move a few miles away until that spot was no longer satisfactory. There is no way to know how far they traveled, nor in what directions. The one way they did not go was toward Canaan.

Moses and Aaron sinned also. Water was gone again. God had been caring for His people for many years by now, and they should have had faith in His providence. Instead, they complained. Moses was angry, and he did not give glory to God. God told him to speak to a rock and water would come forth. Moses struck the rock and said, "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?" Water came and the multitude drank. God rebuked Moses and Aaron. He told them neither of them would be allowed to enter the Promised Land. This event happened in the _____ of _____ in _____ (20:1).

Make a loop in the line you have been drawing to indicate their wandering in the area of the Wilderness of Paran.

Numbers 33 names all the camping places where the Israelites stopped on their journey from Egypt to the Jordan River. You will notice there are several names we have not included on our map because there are no stories in the record about these places. Numbers 33:1-36 summarizes the history we have been studying from the moment they left Egypt in Exodus 12:37 until the 38 years of wandering are ended at Kadesh in Numbers 20:13.

By Numbers 20:22-29, it was the first day of the fifth month of the fortieth year since they left Egypt (see Num. 33:38). Let us go back and summarize the years so we can see how the time is figured.

It was barely more than one year from the time they left Egypt until they had the tabernacle finished and were ready to leave Mt. Sinai. The last thing they did at Sinai was to keep the Passover Feast as the first anniversary of the last plague in Egypt (Num. 9:1-13; 10:11-13). Then they traveled north to Kadesh and refused to enter the land (Num. 11-14). Now, the 40 years of waiting are nearly over (Num. 14:33-34; 33:38).

At last the day came when God gave the signal that it was time to march again. This time God chose to take them into the land by a different route. Moses sent messengers to the king of _____ (20:14) and asked permission to pass through his land. He promised they would stay on the King's Highway and would pay for anything used or damaged. It was a reasonable request because this was a major trade route of the area and should have been available for use. The king refused and brought his army out against them. The Israelites were no longer afraid to fight, but these Edomites were related to them (Israelites — Jacob; Edomites — _____). God said they could not have Edom's land (Deut. 2:1-8).

The Israelites must find another route. They had moved forward to _____ (20:22) while they were waiting for the message from Edom. Aaron died there. A Canaanite king came out against them and took some captives. The Israelite soldiers retaliated and utterly destroyed the cities involved. They named the place _____ (21:3).

The route the Israelites followed from Mt. Hor to the plains of Moab is one of the very difficult questions to answer in Bible geography. Skeptics take the position the Bible is only a collection of legends anyway and there were probably several groups of Israelites crossing the Sinai at different times and, therefore, following different routes. That cannot be the answer to the Christian. As we have said all along, we do not know the exact location of most of the camping places. The area was sparsely settled, and then God was deliberately leading His people away from the more populated areas (Exod. 13:17). Therefore, most of the camping places were not well known oases. Study the passages involved and try to come to your own conclusions concerning their route. Rather than dealing with all the disputed questions here, our map shows the path I think most nearly fits the record. Even if we never settle all questions on the point, we can have firm faith that God's hand was guiding them, and He was providing their necessities. (See Num. 20:14-22:1; 33:1-49; Deut. 1:1-3:11.)

The Edomites controlled the territory south-southeast of the Dead Sea all the way to the tip of the Gulf of Aqaba. Their stronghold was Mt. Seir, and their northern boundary was the Zered River. The entire region was dry and rugged with mountains and narrow valleys. Since the Israelites have been refused permission to travel the King's Highway which would have been their easiest route through Edom, any route they choose will be difficult.

Label and color Edom's territory.

At some point in their travels, the Israelites stopped at Ezion-geber at the tip of the Gulf of Aqaba (likely on their way from Mt. Sinai to Kadesh — Num. 33:35). This was an important spot because of its strategic location. It was a seaport for all trade south on the Red Sea. Land routes also converged there. The King's Highway came from deep in the Arabian Desert, hugging the shores of the Red Sea. At Ezion-geber, the road branched with one route cutting across the Sinaitic Peninsula to Egypt and the other continuing north through Edom, on up the Trans-Jordan plateau to Damascus. Still another road went due north from Ezion-geber up the arid, barren Arabah 110 miles to the Dead Sea. Of the three routes, this third one was by far the most difficult and least used.

Seemingly, Israel's original plan was to travel south from Kadesh, probably by way of a fairly frequently traveled route, to Ezion-geber. Then, they planned to take the King's Highway north to the eastern side of the Jordan. This would have been some farther, but much more easily followed.

When this plan failed, they seem to have turned due east descending into the Arabah by way of deep, narrow

wadis. In view of their history, is it surprising they complained again? This time God sent poisonous serpents into the camp (21:4-9).

The camping places named after Mt. Hor are _____, _____, _____, _____ "on the border of Moab" (33:41-43). Unfortunately, none of these places have been identified. Our map shows them moving north along the road from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea until they came to the valley of the Zered. Here, they turned eastward. On all the way through the Arabah, they were inside Edom's jurisdiction, but not on the easy route they had wanted (Deut. 2:8).

When they crossed the Zered River, they were on the edge of the land belonging to the Moabites. They, too, were relatives (through _____) and God said they could not have their land (Deut. 2:9). Israel moved north on Moab's outer fringes and crossed the Arnon River.

Label and color Moab. Label the Zered and Arnon rivers.

Sihon of the _____ (21:21) controlled the territory between the Arnon River and the Jabbok River. He objected to the Israelites' passing through his land and brought an army out against them. The Amorites were part of the wicked people God had determined to destroy. Moses led the Israelites to victory against Sihon and his forces. When the battle was over, Israel controlled all the land and the cities between the two rivers. They moved forward and camped in the plains of Moab near Abel-shittim, overlooking the Jordan River.

Moses sent spies north through the plateau and began taking other cities. Og of _____ (21:33) came out against them and was defeated also. Now Israel controlled all the land from the _____ to _____ (Deut. 3:8). There was a region between Sihon and Og's territories called Gilead. It had probably served as a buffer zone between the two and had not been under the control of any one strong king. Men from the tribe of Manasseh completed the task of subduing the region (32:39-40). Now, all forces north of the Arnon were subdued.

Label and color the territories belonging to Sihon and Og. Label Gilead and color it. Label the Jabbok River and Mt. Hermon. Continue your line to the Plains of Moab.

One other people must be mentioned. Sihon had already driven the Ammonites out of the fertile land into the edge of the desert. They were descendants of Lot also, and God forbade the Israelites' disturbing them (Deut. 2:16-19). The Ammonites proved to be a constant thorn in the flesh to the tribes east of the Jordan, because they were perpetually trying to take the fertile lands. They did not fight Israel at this point in history, however.

Label and color Ammon's territory.

Balak, king of _____ (22:2-3), was afraid to attack the Israelites so he tried another plan to harm them. He sent for a prophet named Balaam to come and curse them for him. Balaam came, but God kept him from saying anything negative against His people. Balaam advised Balak, however, to tempt Israel to sin, and God Himself would curse them (see Rev. 2:14; Num. 31:16). Balak sent Moabite and Midianite women into the Israelite camp and enticed the men to sin in the sacred fornication that was part of the Baal worship. God demanded the guilty ones be put to death. Twenty-four thousand Israelites fell on that occasion. God sent the army to fight the Midianites and the Moabites as vengeance for the harm they had caused. Israel won the battle, but God still did not let them take Moab's land. The Midianites were a wandering people and did not have a portion of land for Israel to take (22:1-25:18; 31:1-54).

After the trouble with Moab, God instructed Moses to count all the men of war of this new generation. There were a total of 601,730 —

But among these there was not a man of whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. For the Lord had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. (Num. 26:64-65).

God had kept His threat!

The entire book of Deuteronomy is made up of speeches Moses made on the plains of Moab. It was the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year when the speeches began. The time had come for Moses to die. He knew these people, and he feared for their future. He reminded them of their history and urged them to be faithful to God. If they would serve God faithfully, then God would bless them on every hand. They would be secure in their land. If not, then they could be sure God's punishments would follow. If they continued in unfaithfulness, the day would come when an enemy would come from afar and take them away into captivity. The land would become so barren it would be a proverb to all who passed by. It is a beautiful book as we are allowed a glimpse into the heart of this great man as he dreads the future for his people. Indeed, the book lets us see into God's own heart as He tells Moses the people will yet fail after all the warnings they have been given. God told Moses to write the words of the prophecy and lay it up as a witness that they were warned (Deut. 31:15-29).

God told Moses to go to the top of _____ (Deut. 34:1). There Moses could see a panorama of the promised land — the land he could not enter because of his own sin. There Moses died and was buried by the hand of God.

Joshua led the people across the Jordan on dry land even though it was flood season. Immediately, God demanded an act of faith on the part of the people. Here they are, in the new land, in the midst of their enemies — and God tells them to circumcise all the males that had been born in the wilderness. The people obeyed and named the place _____ (Josh. 5:9) because they had "rolled away the reproach of Egypt."

They crossed the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month (Josh. 4:19). Then they circumcised the males. And on the fourteenth day of the month, they observed the Passover Feast to remember the night they left Egypt, exactly 40 years earlier (Josh. 5:10-11).

Mark the probable spot where they crossed the Jordan. Label Gilgal. Be sure your line is complete from Rameses to Gilgal.

Review Of The Exodus And The Wandering In The Wilderness

Lessons 13-14

Fact questions:

1. Why did the Israelites go to Egypt to live? (Gen. 45-47)

2. Why could they not leave any time they chose? (Exod. 1)

3. Name the 10 plagues that brought about their release. (Exod. 7-12)

4. It is only about 200 miles from Egypt to Canaan. Why did it take the Israelites 40 years to make the journey? (Num. 13-14)

5. Which promise to Abraham has been fulfilled by the end of this section of Bible history? (Gen. 12:1-7)

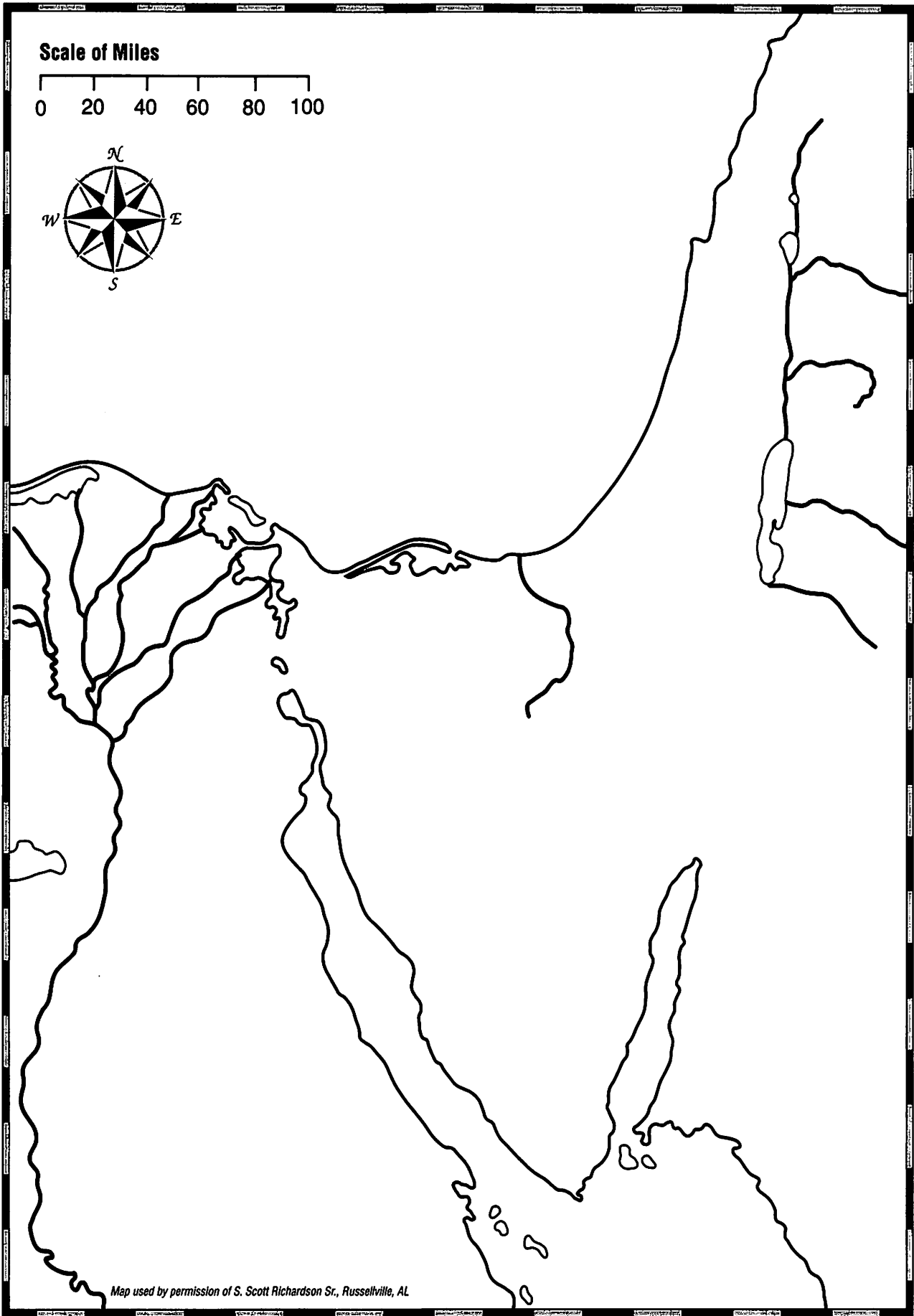
6. What was the covenant between God and the Israelites? (Exod. 19:3-8)

7. How did the Israelites know where to camp and how long to stay there? (Exod. 13:21; Num. 10:33-36)

The books of Exodus through Deuteronomy give the entire Law of Moses as well as the story of their journey from Egypt to Canaan. Below you will find the names of all the places on their route that we have stories about plus the passages for the time they were there. They cover the entire 40 years and are in correct chronological order. Match the place names to the events given on the next page. Some names will be used more than once, some may not be used at all.

Label each of the following places on the review map. Draw a line showing the route the Israelites follow. Label your map from memory.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Rameses — Exod. 12:37 | 11. Taberah — Num. 11:1-3 |
| 2. Succoth — 12:37 | 12. Kibroth-hattavah — Num. 11:4-35 |
| 3. Etham — 13:20 | 13. Hazeroth — Num. 11:35-12:16 |
| 4. Red Sea — 14:2-15:21 | 14. Wilderness of Paran (Kadesh-barnea) — Num. 12:16-20:22 |
| 5. Wilderness of Shur — 15:22 | 15. Hormah — Num. 14:45 |
| 6. Marah — 15:23-26 | 16. Mt. Hor — Num. 20:22-21:3 |
| 7. Elim — 15:27 | 17. Journey through Edom's edge — Num. 21:4-20 |
| 8. Wilderness of Sin — 16:1-36 | 18. Plains of Moab — Num. 21:20 - Josh. 3:1 |
| 9. Rephidim — 17:1-18:27 | 19. Crossing the Jordan — Josh. 3:1-4:18 |
| 10. Mt. Sinai — Exod. 19:1-Num. 10:12 | 20. Gilgal — Josh. 4:19-5:12 |



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Where did these events take place?

- _____ 1. God spoke directly to the people. (Exod. 20)
- _____ 2. Joshua led the people through a river on dry land. (Josh. 3, 4)
- _____ 3. Pharaoh's army drowned. (Exod. 14)
- _____ 4. The people built a golden calf to worship (Exod. 32)
- _____ 5. Moses went into the mountain for 40 days. (Exod. 24:15-18)
- _____ 6. Moses put a tree into water to make it sweet. (Exod. 15:23-25)
- _____ 7. The earth swallowed Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. (Num. 12:16; 16:1-50) (Exact location not given, but it was in the area where they stayed 38 years.)
- _____ 8. Aaron died. (Num. 20:22-29)
- _____ 9. Moses held his rod over his head while the Israelites fought a battle. (Exod. 17:8-16)
- _____ 10. The manna began. (Exod. 16)
- _____ 11. The manna ended. (Josh. 5:10-12)
- _____ 12. There were 70 palm trees and 12 springs of water. (Exod. 15:27)
- _____ 13. They built a tabernacle. (Exod. 24:15-25:9)
- _____ 14. Fiery serpents bit the people. (Num. 21:4-9)
- _____ 15. Miriam and Aaron complained against Moses. (Num. 11:35-12:15)
- _____ 16. Spies were sent into Canaan. (Num. 13:1-16)
- _____ 17. God sent quail for a month. (Num. 11:4-34)
- _____ 18. Their starting point from Egypt. (Exod. 12:37)
- _____ 19. Went 3 days without water. (Exod. 15:22)
- _____ 20. Fire broke out in the camp. (Num. 11:1-3)
- _____ 21. Balaam tried to curse the people. (Num. 22:1-24:25)
- _____ 22. The men born in the wilderness were circumcised. (Josh. 5:1-9)
- _____ 23. The first Canaanite cities destroyed. (Num. 21:1-3)
- _____ 24. Moses struck a rock in obedience to God's command. (Exod. 17:1-7)
- _____ 25. Moses sinned. (Num. 20)
- _____ 26. Moses gave a series of speeches warning the people to be faithful to God. (Deut. 1:1)
- _____ 27. They were told they would have to wander 40 years. (Num. 13, 14)
- _____ 28. They made a covenant with God. (Exod. 19)
- _____ 29. They counted the soldiers — the first time. (Num. 1-4)
- _____ 30. They counted the new generation (Num. 26)
- _____ 31. Moses died. (Deut. 34)

Lesson 16

The Conquest of Canaan

Joshua 1-12

(Passages in Joshua unless otherwise specified)

Now after the death of Moses . . . the Lord spake unto Joshua . . . saying,

Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them . . . observe to do all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest . . . be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. (Josh. 1:1-9)

Moses listed seven "nations" or tribes the Israelites would find living in the land of Canaan — the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites (Deut. 7:1; Exod. 3:17). In addition to these, there was also a tribe of giants called the Anakim, Rephaim, Emim, or Zamzummim depending on where they lived in the land (Deut. 2:10, 11, 20). We have already taken passing notice of these names in earlier lessons, but let us stop and look more closely at them before we watch the Israelites conquer the land.

All of these tribes were descendants of Ham through his son Canaan (see Gen. 10:15-19). Since they did not move on into Africa with the rest of Ham's descendants, they lived closely associated with the descendants of Shem in the Fertile Crescent and Arabia. Therefore, their language patterns and life style fall into the broad Asiatic, Semitic category of the whole area.

The name Canaanite is used most frequently in a collective sense to include all these tribes. Thus, the land itself was named Canaan as the home of the Canaanite tribes. It must also have been used to apply to one particular branch of the family since Moses lists the name as one of the distinct "nations" they would find (Deut. 7:1).

The Amorites were the largest and strongest of the tribes. They moved out of the desert in the era immediately before God's first call to Abraham (c.2000 B.C.). They swarmed over Aram, Mesopotamia, Canaan, and even Egypt making their influence felt everywhere they went. We have already mentioned the Amorites in our note about the Hyksos kings of Egypt (Lesson 13). If the Hyksos kings were Amorite as is supposed, then Amorites were ruling in Egypt and Babylon at the same time. Their power over the whole area had waned by Joshua's day, but they still held sway over much of Canaan. The name is often used collectively to include all the tribes (see Gen. 15:16). The Israelites conquered two groups of Amorites on the eastern side of the Jordan before Moses died (Sihon and Og).

Joshua 1:4 describes the land reaching from the Euphrates River to Mt. Lebanon to the desert as "all the land of the Hittites." The Hittites were descendants of Canaan through his son Heth. They established an early kingdom along the Halys River in what was later called Asia Minor (see Map #4). Though they were separated from the Fertile Crescent by distance and mountains, they had close contact with the people through commerce and raids southward. Egypt held control over the city-states of Canaan during the days of the Patriarchs, but they considered the Hittites a constant threat on their northern edge. Groups of Hittites migrated throughout the region. Abraham bought the cave of Machpelah from a Hittite living in Hebron (Gen. 23:3-16). Now Joshua's army will find them firmly entrenched in the central hill country.

The other tribes listed — Hivites, Girgashites, Perizzites, and Jebusites — were smaller and less powerful. The Jebusite stronghold was the city of Jerusalem (Jebus). They proved to be particularly difficult for the Israelites to dislodge.

Giants were in the land before Abraham's day (see Gen. 14:5; 15:20). The spies of Moses' day were terrified when they saw them (Num. 13:26-33). Moses told the Israelites God would help them drive all giants from their inheritance because He had already helped the Moabites and the Ammonites drive out those living in their lands (Deut. 2:9-23). The Israelites killed Og and took his territory, though he was so large he had a bedstead of iron 13 feet long and 6 feet wide (Deut. 3:11).

The giants are called the "sons of Anak" and the descendants of Arba "a great man among the Anakims" (Num. 13:33; Josh. 14:15; 21:11). No additional information is known of their ancestry. Possibly, they were of the same bloodline as the other Canaanite tribes. Some have thought they may have predated the Canaanites in the land. Though their stature made them frightening, their number must have been small because their influence does not seem to have been wide-spread by Joshua's day. The Israelites had no trouble subduing the tribe. A small rem-

nant of them found refuge in the cities of Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod on the Philistine plain. Goliath, who fought David, was from Gath (1 Sam. 17:4). He was nine and a half feet tall.

The Conquest

Joshua sent spies across the Jordan to the city of _____ (2:1) while the Israelites were still camped in the plains of Moab. It was evident God was indeed preparing to keep His promises. The spies learned the people of Jericho were terrified. "Your terror is fallen upon us . . . all inhabitants of the land faint because of you . . . our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you . . ." (2:9-11). The Israelites were able to move forward, confident of success.

Continue using Map #6 for this lesson.

The exact location of Gilgal, Israel's first camp, is not known. It was probably about halfway between the river and the city of Jericho.

Jericho was the logical city to attack first. It was one of the oldest cities in the world. It lay about 5 miles west of the Jordan and about 7 miles north of the Dead Sea. The trade routes from the east crossed the Jordan at this point and then branched out in three directions into the hill country of Canaan. One road turned south toward Hebron, another went west to Jerusalem, and the third turned north to Bethel and Shechem. Therefore, Jericho lay directly in the path between Israel's camp at Gilgal and the central portion of the land they were to take.

God gave this first city into their hands miraculously. They marched around the city 7 days and the walls fell flat. Each soldier could walk straight before him to destroy the inhabitants. The fortress part of the city covered about 7 acres.

The entire city with all the spoils was burned as a "firstfruits" sacrifice to God. They had already taken all the Trans-Jordan plateau from the Arnon River to Mount Hermon, but that portion was not part of the original promise to Abraham. Jericho was the first city in Canaan proper to fall to the Hebrews.

A village was soon rebuilt on or near the site of Jericho — called the "city of palm trees" in Judges 3:13. But the walls remained in ruins until Ahab's day. Joshua placed a curse on the city that was fulfilled when a man named Hiel rebuilt the walls. Hiel's oldest son died as he began the task, and his youngest son died as he finished (Josh. 6:26; 1 Kings 16:34).

Joshua sent his spies about 13 miles northwest along the steep road toward Bethel. They came back and reported it would be easy to take the village of _____ (7:2-3). A small company of soldiers set out. To their horror, they were driven back, and 36 of their men died. Joshua cried unto the Lord. There was sin in the camp, and God was demonstrating He was keeping another of His promises — "I will be with you if you will obey My commandment." Achan was stoned for his sin, and the people prepared for battle again. This time, they had no trouble defeating Ai nor the neighboring city of _____ (8:17). They burned the city of Ai and left it a permanent heap.

Now that Jericho, Ai, and Bethel were destroyed, the Israelites were able to move freely into the central hill country. They made their way to the twin peaks of _____ and _____ (8:33) on either side of the town of Shechem. Here they read their law and inscribed a copy of it on stone, staking their claim to the territory. (Where was Abraham camped when God first promised to give the land to his descendants? _____ Gen. 12:6-7.)

The people up and down the land were afraid of these newcomers and began trying to think of ways to defeat them. Men from the nearby city of _____ (9:3) came and deceived the Israelites into making a treaty of peace with them. They pretended to be from a far country, and Joshua did not seek God's advice. Even after Joshua discovered how near they lived, he kept his promise to spare their lives. However, he made them slaves from that day forward.

Meanwhile, Adoni-Zedek, king of _____ (10:1), was becoming more and more alarmed over Israel's victories. He was especially alarmed when he learned Gibeon had made peace with them, because Gibeon was the most important of four Hivite cities. Adoni-Zedek sent for help from the kings of _____, _____, _____, and _____ (10:3-5).

The five Amorite kings attacked _____ (10:4) intending to force them to join their alliance against Israel. Instead, Gibeon sent for help from Joshua. The Israelites marched all night and made a surprise attack on the armies. God gave them a decisive victory. Soon the Amorites were fleeing toward _____, all the way to _____ and _____ (10:10). As they fled, God sent a hailstorm that killed more of the enemy than the soldiers had succeeded in killing. Furthermore, the sun stopped, and the day was prolonged so Joshua could kill the men before they could get back inside their walled cities. This was in the _____ of _____ (10:12).

While Joshua had the advantage, he pushed through all the major cities of the south. He moved from Makedah, where he killed all five Amorite kings, to _____ (10:29), and on to _____ (10:31). The king of _____ (10:33) came to help Lachish, but he and his city were destroyed also. Next, the army moved on to _____ (10:34), to _____ (10:36), and to _____ (10:38).

So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, . . . he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed . . . from Kadesh-barnea even unto Gaza, . . . even unto Gibeon . . . because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel. (10:40-42)

Mark this southern campaign with arrows. Our map would be too crowded to list cities.

Some time was passing during these early campaigns. After each victory, the Israelites returned to their camp at _____ (10:43).

Next, the kings of the north formed a coalition. They were led by Jabin king of _____ (11:1). He gathered a huge army from the entire northern third of the land. Seemingly, all the Canaanite tribes from the foothills of Mt. Hermon clear across to the city of Dor south of Mt. Carmel were involved. The army assembled at the _____ of _____ (11:5) to plan their strategy against Israel. Early scholars identified the Waters of Merom as Lake Huleh, but it is now more generally thought to have been located on a plain southwest of Hazor about halfway between Lake Huleh and the Sea of Galilee (or Chinneroth as it is called in this passage — 11:2).

Joshua did not wait for the northern confederacy to attack. Instead, at God's encouragement, he made a surprise attack and thoroughly defeated the assembled host. The people fled north in three directions — toward _____, _____, and _____ (11:8).

Joshua turned aside and took the city of _____ (11:10). The Israelites killed the inhabitants and burned the city. This was a major conquest because Hazor must have been the largest city in the land. The walled portion of most Canaanite cities was quite small. Houses would be built very close together inside the fortress, and the people would farm the lands outside the walls. Hazor, on the other hand, had walls around 200 acres.

After the victory in the north, there was no king or coalition of kings left to fight Israel.

Indicate the northern campaign with arrows. Label Hazor.

The Land Promise Fulfilled

Joshua 13-24

(Passages in Joshua unless otherwise specified)

Joshua 12 is a summary of all the cities Israel had conquered to this point. It includes all the territory on both sides of the Jordan. There was still much land to be taken, but there was no strong king left. God told Joshua to go ahead and divide the land among the tribes and that He would help each tribe finish the task of clearing its possession.

Chapters 13-19 describe the border lines of the tribal territories in detail. It is easy to determine the general location of each tribe, but determining exact border lines is the hardest question of all Bible geography. Any two maps you look at will vary on the question unless they were drawn by the same individual. Some of the difficulty arises in understanding exactly what is meant by some of the Hebrew expressions used in the descriptions. Another problem is that some of the towns listed are called by the names used at that time though the name might be changed later. Many of the cities have not been located. Furthermore, they did not survey land carefully as we do today. Rather than sending surveyors throughout the land and dividing it into a precise number of acres for each tribe, the tribes asked for particular cities in particular sections of the country. Thus, there was overlapping of borders. Still another problem arose because they did not know how large the land was at first. Judah asked for his territory first, and was granted too large a portion. Also, in the north, the fertile plain of Jezreel was the rich plum each tribe wanted. Therefore, the tribes of Issachar, Zebulun, Manasseh, and Asher all had some cities in the valley.

The easiest way out of the dilemma of determining exact border lines is to place the name of the tribe in the approximate portion it received, and leave the lines undrawn. In spite of the problems, however, we have chosen to draw lines and color each portion so that it will be easy to tell at a glance where each tribe lived. We have studied the passages carefully, and have used the maps at our disposal to determine the most accurate divisions we can. Please feel free to study the passages yourself and come to your own conclusions. Remember, our faith does not rest on the exact location of some border, but rather on the fact that God kept His promise to give this land to Abraham's descendants.

Map #7 — The Tribal Territories of Israel
Label and Number your map.

Label and color:

Dead Sea

Mediterranean Sea

Sea of Chinnereth

Jordan River

Zered River

Arnon River

Jabbok River

Yarmuk River

Label and color each tribe's territory.

Label — but do not color — the neighboring kingdoms of:

Maob

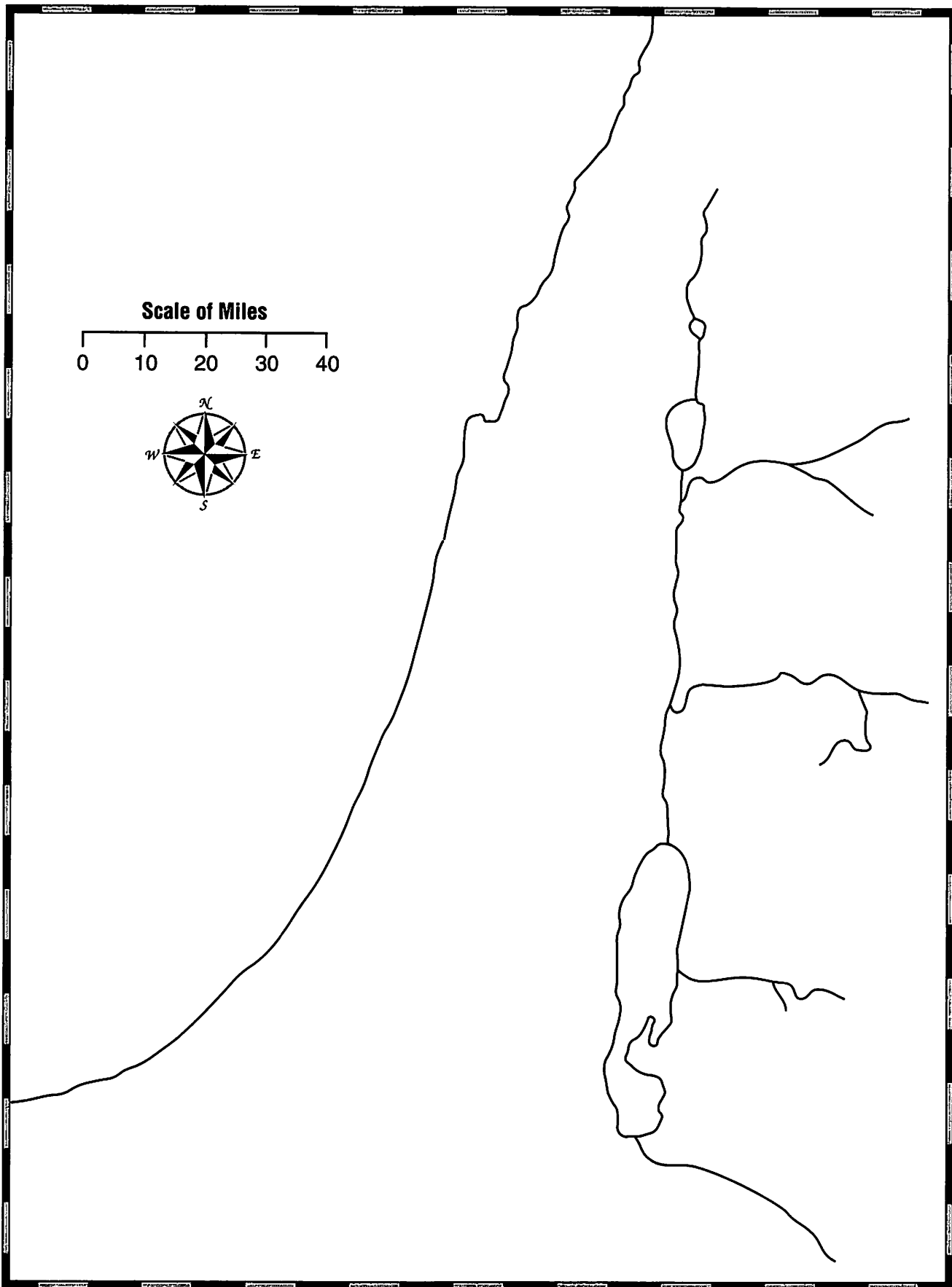
Ammon

Edom

The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh asked for the territory east of the Jordan before Moses died. At first, Moses was distressed because he thought they were afraid to take the land of Canaan. The soldiers assured him they would help their brethren conquer all of Canaan before returning to their own inheritance. Reuben was given the southern portion nearest the territory of Moab, from the Arnon River to about even with the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Gad was given the next section, approximately the northern half of the territory taken from King Sihon. Manasseh received some land south of the Yarmuk River and all the territory of Bashan which they had taken from King Og (see Num. 32).

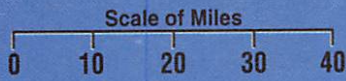
_____ (14:6) was the first tribe to ask for territory west of the Jordan. They were given all the land from a line approximately even with the northern end of the Dead Sea across to the Great Sea and south to the Negeb. The city of _____ (14:13) was given specifically to Caleb in return for his faithfulness many years earlier when he was one of the two faithful spies at Kadesh-barnea.

Ephraim and the remaining half of the tribe of Manasseh asked for the central portion of the land. Their two portions reached Bethel in the south to the Plain of Jezreel in the north. Ephraim's cities were in the southern portion of their allotment and Manasseh's in the north.



CANAAN

TRIBAL TERRITORIES OF ISRAEL



Mediterranean Sea



Map by permission of S. Scott Richardson • Russellville, AL

Determining the exact border line between Ephraim and Manasseh is one of the disputed questions from the period. We are not taking time to discuss all such questions, but let us take this one as an example.

Joshua 16:5-8 describes the borders of Ephraim. The eastern border is described as curving "... eastward unto _____, and passed by it on the east to _____; And it went down from _____ to _____, and to _____, and came to _____, and went out at _____" (16:6-7). Note the location of these cities on your map. Do you see that Ataroth and Naarath are still a little distance (2½-5 miles) from the Jordan? Who owned the river valley here? If Ephraim's territory ended with Ataroth and Naarath, then perhaps Manasseh's territory dipped down to control the river valley to Jericho. Some maps are drawn thus. At first thought, we would assume the river valley was a prize each would want. But, this is one more example of how a look at the geographic features helps us understand a passage. The hill country east of Bethel drops off very rapidly toward the river. Therefore, there were very steep, rugged bluffs east of Ataroth and Naarath. They were the last villages on the edge of the bluffs and were listed as boundary cities. Remember in our description of the Jordan River in Lesson 4 we noted that the river could not be used for either navigation or irrigation. There was a fording point at Adam in Manasseh's territory, and another at Jericho on Ephraim's southern border, but the river banks between these points were a barrier rather than a help. In practical terms, therefore, neither Ephraim nor Manasseh wanted the spot. For our purposes, we have included the bluffs to the Jordan in Ephraim's territory. This seems less confusing than to color it as part of Manasseh's territory, implying it was a spot to be desired.

The other tribes were slow about asking for territory. Joshua chided them and urged them to send men to explore the remaining land and divide it into seven portions. Then, lots were cast to see which portion would fall to each remaining tribe.

The men reported Judah's portion was too large, and it fell Simeon's lot to share the territory. Most of the cities listed for Simeon lay in the southern part of Judah's land, but do not make a dividing line between Judah and Simeon on your map.

The tribes of Dan and Benjamin were given territory between the tribes of Ephraim and Judah. Asher was given the narrow coastal plain of the north. Naphtali received the lot lying farthest north along the banks of the upper Jordan. Zebulun and Issachar each received a healthy portion of the Jezreel Plain and of the hills and valleys of lower Galilee.

Notice Levi is not shown as having a specific territory on the map. God selected that tribe to be His special ministers in the tabernacle worship. The priests were Levites in the specific family of Aaron. The other Levities helped in other aspects of the tabernacle work. One of their duties was to teach the law to all the people. After each tribe was given its portion, they were instructed to give cities out of their borders to the Levites. They were given 48 cities scattered throughout the land. Six of these 48 were designated as cities of refuge where one might flee in case of an accidental killing. These cities were located so as to be within a day's journey from any point in the land.

Locate and label all six cities of refuge on your map — Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron, Bezer, Ramoth-gilead, and Golan — 20:7-9. Make a note on your map that Levi received 48 cities.

If we count the special tribe of Levi, there are a total of 13 tribes. How did that happen? Jacob had only 12 sons. Turn back to Genesis 48 for the answer (see also 1 Chron. 5:1-2). Jacob's oldest son, Reuben, sinned; and Jacob chose to give the birthright to Joseph, the oldest son of his favorite wife Rachel. Therefore, instead of naming Joseph as one of the tribes, his two sons each inherited equally with the sons of Jacob, Joseph's double portion.

Study this map carefully. This is the land as *God intended it to be*. There were still Canaanites living within each tribe's land, but God has already promised to help His people finish driving them out.

Joshua called the people together before he died and urged them to be faithful. He affirmed that God had given them *all* the land He had promised.

And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein . . . There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass. (21:43-45)

Two of the promises to Abraham are fulfilled by the end of the book of Joshua. His descendants are a distinct, separate nation. They are living in a land of their own — the land of Canaan. The Jews do not need to inherit the land today to fulfill the promise to Abraham. That promise was made and kept well over a thousand years before Christ was born.

The only promise to Abraham not yet fulfilled by this point in our history, is the one concerning the One who would come to bless all nations. God still had many lessons for all mankind to learn before the time would be right for the sending of His Son.

Review Of The Book Of Joshua

(Lessons 16-17)

Answer briefly:

1. Name the Canaanite tribes who lived in the land of Canaan. (Deut. 7:1)

2. Name Jacob's sons.
(Gen. 35:22-26)

Name the tribes of Israel.
(see map)

- 3. What are the differences in the two lists?
- 4. Why was Levi not given a specific territory among the tribes? (Num. 18:6-7; Josh. 21:1-3)
- 5. Why does Joseph's name not appear on the map of the tribes? (Josh. 16:1-4; Gen. 48:1-5)
- 6. Reuben was Jacob's oldest son. Why did he not receive the double portion? (Gen. 35:22; 1 Chron. 5:1-2)
- 7. How did the Gibeonites trick the Israelites into making a treaty with them? (Josh. 9) Was it God's will? (Deut 7:1-6)
- 8. In what order were the sections of the land taken?
_____ north _____ central _____ south
- 9. Why was Moses distressed when the tribes of Reuben and Gad asked for their inheritance? (Num. 32)
- 10. What was special about the cities of refuge? (Josh. 20)
- 11. Where was the tabernacle set up? (Josh. 18:1)
- 12. Where were Joseph's bones buried? (Josh. 24:32)

Study your map for the following answers:

1. Which tribes did the King's Highway run through?

2. Which tribes had a portion of the Valley of Jezreel?

3. Which tribe received land on both sides of the Jordan?

4. Which tribes would be the first to feel an attack from:
 - _____ Moab or Ammon
 - _____ Southern coastal plain
 - _____ Mesopotamia
 - _____ Egypt
 - _____ Edom

Put the following events into correct chronological order:
(The earliest is #1)

- _____ Promises to Abraham
- _____ Flood
- _____ Egyptian bondage
- _____ Creation
- _____ Crossing the Red Sea
- _____ Division of the land
- _____ God made a covenant with the people
- _____ Joseph is sold by his brothers
- _____ Tower of Babel
- _____ Years of wandering in the wilderness
- _____ Jacob's family move to Egypt
- _____ Plagues of Egypt
- _____ Conquest of Canaan
- _____ Crossing the Jordan
- _____ 12 spies sent into Canaan

Which two promises to Abraham have been fulfilled by the end of the book of Joshua? Which one was still waiting? (Gen. 12:1-7; Josh. 21:43-45)

The Early Judges

Judges 1:1-10:5

(Passages in Judges unless otherwise specified)

For the first time the Israelites had a homeland. Each tribe had its own territory. Each family within each tribe soon had its own plot of ground to farm or use however it chose. This was a great day in their history.

The story does not end here, however. This was a good generation of people in many ways. They had seen many of the miracles that occurred during the wandering in the wilderness. They crossed the Jordan on dry land with Joshua. These were not the ones who had murmured and rebelled against God, because all of those died in the wilderness. They had served as courageous soldiers under the leadership of Joshua. I believe they intended to serve God all their lives, but humanity fails!

Moses told them:

When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee . . . thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: Neither shalt thou make marriages with them . . . for they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly . . . Moreover the Lord thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed. Thou shalt not be affrighted at them: . . . And the Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee *by little and little*: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee. But the Lord thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed . . . (Deut. 7)

The first part of that commandment was carried out in Joshua's day (Josh. 11:15). They entered the land and conquered every army that opposed them. But it was the remaining "*little and little*" that caused them to stumble.

Joshua called the people together before his death and warned them of the dire consequences if they failed to finish the task before them:

Ye have seen all that the Lord your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the Lord your God is he that hath fought for you. Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes . . . And the Lord your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the Lord your God hath promised unto you. Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses . . . that ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you . . . Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations . . . and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you: know for a certainty that the Lord your God *will no more drive out any of these nations* from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you. (Josh. 23)

If the Israelites had listened to the warnings, and had destroyed the rest of the Canaanites, their entire remaining history might have been different.

Instead, time passed, and very few additional Canaanites were destroyed. The various tribes felt distressed that there were still Canaanites within their borders. The tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim complained to Joshua about those within their territories. He told them to join forces and destroy the enemies, but they did not (Josh. 17:12-18). The tribes of Judah and Simeon did join forces and made some raids. They were quite successful, but they stopped before attacking the most powerful cities (Judg. 1:1-20).

The typical Israelite family, no doubt, felt some distress over the remaining Canaanites, but the family itself was comfortable on its own farm. Months and then years passed with very few efforts to destroy the Canaanite neighbors with their idols. Gradually, Israelite families made friends with Canaanite families nearby. The Israelites first tolerated their neighbors' idolatrous worship of Baal and then began experimenting with the idols themselves.

Gradually, all battles stopped. God was angry with the people because they had not obeyed Him. The day came when He told them He would no longer help drive out the remaining people. They would be left to prove Israel to see if they would be faithful in spite of the idolatrous worship of their surrounding neighbors (Judg. 2:20-23). Israel failed the test innumerable times as the years went by.

For the next long period of history, the Israelites lived in their tribal territories with no central government in the land. God was their king. If they served God faithfully, all was well. If they turned to the idols of the Canaanites, God would allow an enemy to oppress them. When they cried to God for help, He would raise a judge or deliverer to fight against the enemy. Over and over the cycle went.

Map #8 — Israel, In the Days of the Judges

Label and number your map.

Color the tribal territories to match Map #7.

Let us leave Map #7 as it is so it may be used later for comparisons.

Label each place as you come to it in the text.

The first oppression of this period came from outside the borders of Canaan. Cushan-rishathaim ("doubly wicked Cushan") from _____ (3:8) oppressed Israel for eight years. Naturally, the kingdoms of Mesopotamia would be concerned over who owned the little land because their trade routes passed through there. God helped Othniel throw off the oppression. We are told no details of the battle involved.

Draw an arrow to show the direction of an attack coming from Mesopotamia.

The _____, _____, and the _____ (3:12-13) joined forces to oppress Israel for 18 years. We have noticed Moab's location between the Zered and Arnon Rivers on each of the last two maps. The Ammonites were still living on the edge of the desert northeast of Moab. The Amalekites were a nomadic tribe. No one knows their origin. We first met them in Exodus 17 when they attacked Israel at Rephidim in the southern part of the Sinaitic peninsula. Now here they are on the eastern side of the Jordan joining in an oppression of the Israelites.

The combined forces succeeded in crossing the Jordan and taking the city of _____ (Jericho, 3:13). Ehud killed Eglon king of _____ (3:15), and fled to _____ (3:26) in the hill country of _____ (3:27). He sounded a trumpet and the Children of Israel rallied round him. They took the _____ of the _____ (3:28) and killed the _____ (3:28-29) who were trying to return home. Israel was victorious and the land had rest for 80 years.

Label the territories belonging to Moab and Ammon. Show the Amalekites living along the edge of the desert on the eastern side of your map. Draw an arrow to show the combined forces attacking Jericho.

Gradually, the Canaanites remaining in the land gained enough strength to fight the Israelites again. It seems they gained control of the rich valley of Jezreel, thus dividing the northern tribes from those in the south. The Canaanites were led by Jabin king of _____ (4:2) with Sisera his chief captain from _____ (4:2). This oppression lasted 20 years.

There was a prophetess named Deborah judging Israel at the time. She lived between _____ and _____ in mount _____ (4:5). She sent for Barak out of _____ (4:6) and told him to gather 10,000 men from the tribes of _____ and _____ to meet the Canaanites in battle at _____ (4:6). Barak did not have enough faith to go alone, so he was told the honor would go to a woman. Barak's army won a decisive victory. The Canaanites fled toward _____ (4:16) and their captain fled the opposite direction toward Kedesh. He came to the home of Heber the _____ (4:11, 17), expecting to find peace. Instead, Heber's wife Jael nailed him to the floor.

The Kenites were descendants of Hobab, Moses' brother-in-law. He visited the Israelites as they were preparing to leave Mt. Sinai and Moses invited him to accompany Israel as their guide (Num. 10:29-32). The same people were also called Midianites in various passages (Exod. 2:15-22; 18:1; Num. 10:29). When the land was divided among the tribes, the Kenites settled southwest of the Dead Sea near the Wilderness of Judah (Judg. 1:16). Heber the Kenite left the others at some point and moved north to Kedesh in Naphtali's territory. He had made at least outward peace with Jabin king of Hazor, because Sisera expected to find safety at his home (Judg. 4:11, 17). Saul later warned the Kenites to move to a place of safety before he fought the Amalekites near their home (1 Sam. 15:6).

Label the Kenites' home territory in Judah. Note the location of Kedesh in Naphtali.

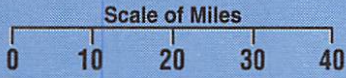
The battle between Barak and Jabin ended the large scale resistance from the Canaanites. Never again were they a military threat to the Israelites. Yet, ironically, they had more to do with Israel's downfall than any other people because of the constant temptation the Israelites felt to worship their corrupt gods.

Label the city of Hazor, the Valley of Jezreel, and Mt. Tabor. Draw an arrow from Hazor to Mt. Tabor to indicate the battle. Why did Barak choose his army from these particular tribes?

The people grew wicked again. This time the _____ and the _____ (6:3), with other "children of the east," joined forces to harass the Israelites. The Midianites were another nomadic people from the desert. They, too, roamed far to the south. All of these nomadic tribes made their living by caravan trade up and down the trade routes. In this particular story, they came up the King's Highway, crossed the Jordan at the ford near the Jabbok, and stole the crops from the tribes in the central portion of the land. This happened 7 years in a row, until the Israelites were forced to hide their harvests in caves, or where ever they could. The oppression was felt as far southwest as _____ (6:4).

This time God worked through Gideon who lived in _____ (6:11) and was of the tribe of _____ (6:15). The Midianites had camped in the _____ of _____ (6:33). Gideon called his army from the tribes of

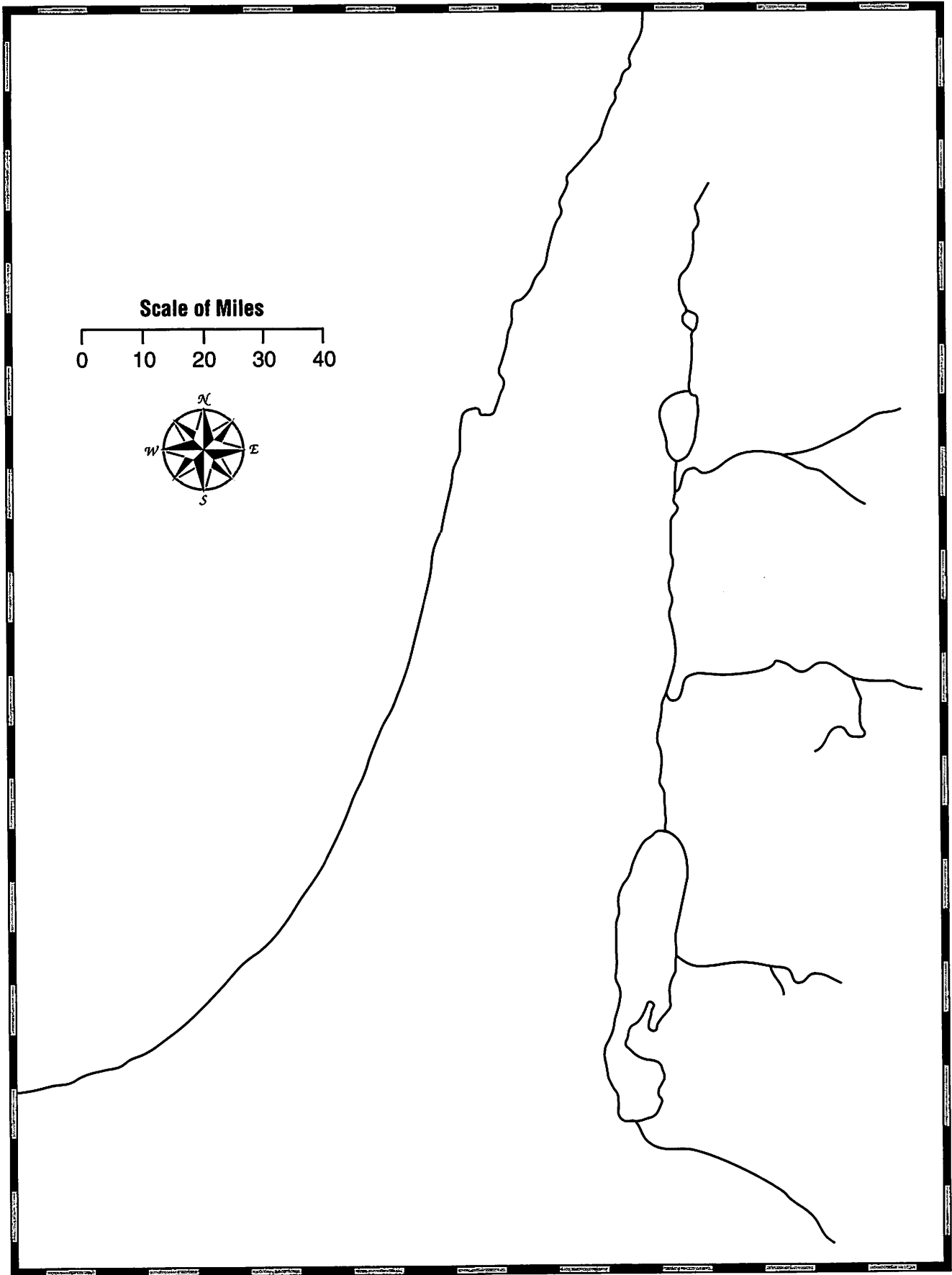
CANAAN IN THE DAYS OF THE JUDGES



Mediterranean Sea



Map by permission of S. Scott Richardson • Russellville, AL



_____, _____, _____, and _____ (6:35). God wanted all Israel to realize their total dependence on Him so He sent all but 300 of Gideon's men home. They made a surprise attack on the enemy in the middle of the night. The Midianites were terrified, and they fled down the valley to the Jordan and turned south to the ford of the Jabbok.

Meanwhile, men from _____, _____, and _____ (7:23) had rejoined Gideon and were pursuing the enemy. Gideon sent word for the men of _____ (7:24) to take the fords of the Jordan to stop the Midianites there. Gideon continued his pursuit across the river, passing the cities of _____ (8:5) and _____ (8:8). He caught up with the remaining Midianite forces east of _____ and _____ (8:11).

Gideon and his men were able to gather great wealth from the spoils. This lets us know these nomadic tribes could be quite wealthy.

Add the Midianites as another tribe on the edge of the desert. Draw an arrow to show the way the combined forces of the Amalekites and Midianites entered the Valley of Jezreel. Locate the places mentioned in the battle and the escape.

Judges 9 tells the story of Abimelech. Though we usually name him as one of the judges, he was not a deliverer of any kind. He was a wicked son of Gideon who set himself up as king over the city of _____ (9:1). Trouble arose, and he and the city succeeded in destroying each other.

There were also lesser judges about whom we know almost nothing. We are told a man named Tola "arose to defend Israel." He was of the tribe of _____ and he dwelt in _____ in mount _____ (10:1). The only information given is that he judged Israel for 20 years. After him, a man named Jair judged Israel 22 years. He and his sons judged 30 cities in a portion of _____ (10:4). The region around the cities was called _____ (10:4) in his memory.

Later, there was a man named Ibzan of _____ (12:8) who judged Israel for 7 years. After him, Elon of the tribe of _____ (12:11-12) judged for 10 years. Abdon, from _____ (12:15) judged for 8 years. The text says he was buried in _____ in the land of _____, in the mount of the _____ (12:15).

There is no enemy mentioned in connection with any of the lesser judges. Likely they served during periods of peace when their duties involved handling local affairs and advising the people.

The book of Judges is a summary of many years. In addition to the battles, there were long periods of peace. Notice 3:30, 5:31, and 8:28: "And the land had rest fourscore years . . . And the land had rest forty years . . . And the country was in quietness forty years . . ."

Also notice that the oppressions and battles did not affect the entire country. The Moabites of Ehud's day did not touch the northern tribes. The Canaanites of Barak's day did not touch the southern tribes. Therefore, there were times of trouble in the north while there was peace in the south, or the other way around.

Lesson 20

The Later Judges

Judges 10:6-1 — I Samuel 7:17
(Passages in Judges unless otherwise specified)

Judges 10 tells of a new wave of oppression because the Israelites became wicked again. They began worshipping the gods of _____, of _____, of _____, of _____, and of the _____ (10:6).

Trouble arose this time from two entirely different sources. The Ammonites attacked the tribes on the eastern side of the Jordan, and the Philistines attacked the southern tribes on the west. The writer of the book tells the story of the battle with the Ammonites first, but the events in Jephthah's story and in Samson's story probably overlapped in time. Possibly Samuel was growing up during these same years, and the battle told in 1 Samuel 4 likely took place very soon after Samson's death.

For 18 years the Ammonites oppressed the Israelites living in _____ (10:8). Sometimes the word Gilead is used to refer only to the territory between the Jabbok and Yarmuk rivers. In this story, it is used in a broader sense to include all the land between the Dead Sea and the Yarmuk river. Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh who lived on this east side of the Jordan were involved in this oppression. The Ammonites had even crossed the Jordan to fight against the tribes of _____, _____, and _____ (10:9).

The men of Gilead met at _____ (10:17) to plan their strategy against Ammon. They called for a man named Jephthah who was living in the land of _____ (11:5), a fertile Syrian district lying in what had once been called Bashan. They agreed to make him their ruler in return for his help in the battle.

The Ammonites were trying to claim Gilead as their own. Jephthah wrote a letter refuting Ammon's claim. Israel took this territory from Sihon the Amorite, not the Ammonites. The resulting battle drove the Ammonites back for a time, but it did not convince them of Israel's right to the land. Naturally, the semi-desert condition of Ammon's own land made the fertile fields of Gilead look inviting.

Draw an arrow to show Ammon's oppression of Gilead. (Continue using Map #8).

A very troublesome enemy moved in on the southern coastal plain sometime early in the period of the Judges. The Bible mentions a people called Philistines as early as Abraham's day (Gen. 20; 26:1). God did not lead His people by way of the shortest route from Egypt because they would have been forced to pass through "the way of the land of the Philistines . . ." God did not want the people to face war that quickly after leaving Egypt (Exod. 13:17). Moses made a brief reference to the "Caphtorims" from Caphtor in Deuteronomy 2:23. Yet he did not name them in the list of "nations" the Israelites could expect to find in the land.

The Philistines came from the island of Crete (Caphtor) in the Mediterranean (see Gen. 10:14). They had a highly developed culture there until they were invaded and scattered in all directions. A colony of Philistine warriors tried to invade Egypt during the early period of the judges of Israel. They were repulsed by strong Egyptian forces, and they moved around the curve of the sea and settled on the coastal plain of Canaan where there were already small groups of Philistines living.

If the Israelites had been serving God faithfully, they could have defeated the Philistines quickly, and sent them on their way. It was a difficult day for Israel, however, and the Philistines were able to establish a strong base. For the next several years, they were in constant conflict with the Israelites as they tried to take more and more of the southern portion of Canaan. They brought with them the knowledge of iron smelting which neither the Canaanites nor the Israelites had, so that gave them a decided advantage in their weaponry.

Shamgar is the first Israelite named who fought the Philistines. We are merely told he killed 600 Philistines with an ox goad (3:31). Samson, Eli, Samuel, Saul, and David were all involved in struggles with these enemies.

Samson was of the tribe of _____ from the village of _____ (13:2). God gave him miraculous strength to "begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines" (13:5). The story of Samson is unusual because he never led an army of any kind. All his conflicts with the Philistines were personal conflicts. Yet, he killed many of the enemy during his lifetime.

The first trouble arose over a Philistine woman at _____ (14:1). The Philistines guessed Samson's riddle and he killed 30 men from the Philistine stronghold of _____ (14:19) to pay his wager. Later he burned the standing grain of the Philistines plus their vineyards and olive groves. Samson withdrew to the rock of _____ (15:8) in the territory of Judah. The men of _____ (15:9-13) were afraid of the wrath of the Philistines and turned Samson over to their army. He picked up a bone lying nearby and killed a thousand Philistines.

Another time he took the gates of the city of _____ (16:1) across to the hill before _____ (16:3). (What is the terrain of the country like between Gaza and Hebron? Look back to Map #1.)

Samson met his downfall in the _____ of _____ (16:4). The Philistines learned the secret of his strength through the guile of Delilah. They put out his eyes and forced him to slavery. They were mocking him in the house of their god Dagon in _____ (16:21) when God allowed him to have one last measure of his strength. He bowed himself on the pillars of the temple and killed more in his death than he had in the rest of his life.

It is no wonder God was allowing His people to be oppressed at this time. In addition to the idolatrous worship mentioned earlier, we learn from 1 Samuel 2:12-17 that the priests of God who were serving at the tabernacle at _____ (1 Sam. 1:3; 2:14) were some of the most wicked men in the land.

The Philistine army gathered in _____ (1 Sam. 4:1) to fight the Israelites soon after Samson's last victory. God was not with His people. Israel was thoroughly defeated, and the ark of the covenant was stolen.

A fascinating story follows that shows how God could take care of His ark even though it was in the hands of an enemy. The Philistines took the ark first to _____ (1 Sam. 5:1), then to _____ (5:8), and on to _____ (5:10). A plague struck at each place. Finally, the Philistines sent the ark back to _____ (6:12) in Judah. The people there sent it on to _____ (6:21) where it stayed until the days of David.

Label the territory of the Philistines. Draw arrows to show their struggles to take the southern portion of the land.

The period of the Judges is described as a time when there was no central government, and "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 21:25). There was rivalry between the tribes. Ephraim felt insulted if they were not called to each battle [see 8:1-3; 12:1-6]. The men of Benjamin refused to punish some wicked men for a crime they committed, and the other tribes nearly destroyed the whole tribe of Benjamin in revenge (Judg. 19-21).

The tribe of Dan felt crowded in their allotted territory. They failed to take all their allotted land from the Canaanites. Then the Philistines fought for their southern portion. Finally, most of the tribe moved north and took the city of _____ (18:29) near the source of the Jordan River. They renamed the city _____ (18:29) in honor of the father of their tribe.

Label and color Dan's new territory.

Yet during this period of oppression, battle, and unrest, there were righteous people moving quietly about the affairs of life. The Bible includes a beautiful story of Ruth that fits into this period of history. Ruth was a maiden from _____ (Ruth 1:4) who came to _____ (1:19) with her mother-in-law Naomi. She married Boaz and had a son named Obed, who had a son named Jesse, who had a son named David, who had a descendant named Jesus. This Moabite maiden was, therefore, one of the ancestors of Christ.

Lesson 21

Review of The Book of Judges

(Lessons 19-20)

Fill in the following chart. Some of the stories do not give all the facts requested. If not given, write "not given" in the appropriate blank. Why would God sometimes fight Israel's battles and at other times allow an enemy to oppress them severely? (see Judg. 4:1-2; 6:1; 6:7-10; 10:6-16)

Judge	Enemy(s)	Years of Oppression	Tribes Affected	Where was the battle?	Years Judged	Years of Peace	Interesting fact in the story
Othniel 3:7-11							
Ehud 3:12-30							
Shamgar 3:31							
Deborah 4:1-5:31							
Gideon 6:1-8:35							
Abimelech 9:1-57							
Tola 10:1-2							
Jair 10:3-5							
Jephthah 10:6-12:7							
Ibzan 12:8-10							
Elon 12:11-12							
Abdon 12:13-15							
Samson 13:1-16:31							
Eli 1 Sam. 1:1-4:22							
Samuel 1 Sam. 1:1-25:1							

Saul, The First King

1 Samuel 8-31; 1 Chronicles 10
(Passages in 1 Samuel unless otherwise specified)

Samuel, the fifteenth judge, was a very good man. His mother vowed to dedicate him to God even before his birth. He grew up around the tabernacle at _____ (1:24) working closely with Eli the priest. He became the leader of Israel after their disastrous battle with the _____ (4:1) when the ark of the covenant was stolen. He urged the people:

... If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. (7:3)

The people listened to Samuel's plea, put away their idols, and gathered at _____ (7:5-6) to fast and pray for forgiveness. The Philistines heard they had assembled and brought an army to attack. God was with His people this time, however. The battle began at _____ and Israel pursued the Philistines to _____ (7:11).

So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. (7:13)

The next few years were therefore peaceful. Israel even regained the cities of the Shephelah that the Philistines had taken. Samuel was able to make a peaceful circuit each year from _____ to _____ to _____ and back home to _____ (7:16-17) as he judged Israel.

Time passed. Samuel made his sons judges in _____ (8:2), but they were not righteous men like their father. The people grew restless with their style of living. They had a king — God. They had a law that gave the details of how they were to live — the law of Moses. Though they were outwardly serving God, they did not have the individual determination to keep the law faithfully, and there was no central government to enforce the law (see Judg. 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25).

There were no open battles after Samuel's early days, but the enemies were not asleep. The Moabites gradually enlarged their borders and took over Reuben's land. The Ammonites continued to eye the rich fields of Gilead jealously. The Philistines held firm control over all the southern coastal plain, crowding Judah, Simeon, and Dan. Gradually they wormed their way farther and farther inland until they succeeded in establishing garrisons at Geba and Michmash, putting them astride the hill country in the territory of Benjamin. Even the nomadic Amalekites moved in on Judah's southern border and established a semi-permanent homeland.

The Canaanites had been pushed out of most of the hill country, but they controlled all the coastal plain north of Philistia. The Canaanite tribe of Jebusites still held the city of Jerusalem. A great portion of the valley of Jezreel was back in Canaanite hands.

Notice on your map for this period that one section is labeled Canaanite and another section Phoenician. In reality, they were one people. There are excellent harbors north of Mt. Carmel. The people living in the area turned to sea trade very early in their history. Being a maritime people, the Phoenicians became highly skilled in ship-building, in the sailing of ships, and in various aspects of commerce. Their products came to be highly prized in the whole Mediterranean world. Their name, "Phoenicia," was probably given them because of a particular purple dye they used and sold. Their influence over the world of their day could hardly be over-estimated. They are given credit for inventing one of the first alphabets. The Bible tells us they sailed as far as Tarshish (present-day Spain) on the Mediterranean and to Ophir in Africa by way of the Red Sea (1 Kings 9:26-28; 10:11, 22). Legends tell us they went much farther. Tyre and Sidon were their two strongest cities. From this point on, we will label the Phoenician territory on each map. This is the last map in which we will include a distinct section for the Canaanites because they were gradually absorbed, or at least tolerated in the Israelite population.

We need to notice one other people before we move ahead with our history. Look back to Map #2. We labeled the northern portion of the Fertile Crescent, Aram. In this whole area, from northern Mesopotamia westward to the sea, there were several independent city-states collectively known as Arameans or Syrians. Throughout their history, there were times the city-states opposed each other. More often, they stood together in opposition to an outside force. Notice Map #6. When the Israelites came out of the wilderness, the Amorite king Og held the territory north of the Yarmuk River toward Mt. Hermon. It was called Bashan then. The Israelites defeated Og and took his land. It was subsequently given to the half of the tribe of Manasseh that came through Machir. In reality, it seems the people of Manasseh never actually moved into the area. They found plenty of acreage in their portion of Gilead to meet their immediate needs and did not push farther north. The Syrian states were quick to see the

void and stepped in to fill it. They will soon prove to be a sore threat to the Israelites as we continue following their history.

Map #9 — Israel, In the Days of Saul
Label and number your map.

Label the territories of
Phoenicians Moab
Canaanites Ammon
Philistines Syrian States
Amalekites

Label the cities of:
Tyre
Sidon
Jerusalem

Color the territory the Israelites were actually occupying.

Compare Map #9 with Map #7.

Label the cities mentioned as you study them in your text.

Was it God's fault the land was in distress? Had His system of rule failed? The Israelites thought so. They decided they needed a king to go out before them and lead them in battle. They failed to face the reality that their own lack of faith and superficial obedience to God was at the root of their trouble.

Therefore, one day the people gathered at _____ (8:4) to ask Samuel to appoint a king. Samuel was distressed, but God told him to grant their request. God told Samuel the people were not rejecting him as their judge; rather, they were rejecting God as their *King*. At God's instructions, Samuel anointed Saul of the tribe of _____ (9:1-2) as "captain over God's people."

Saul was a very humble man at first. He was unsure of his own worthiness to be king, and he seems to have been unsure about his proper duties as king since he had no predecessor to imitate. He was plowing when news came that trouble had arisen in the land.

The _____ had attacked the city of _____ (11:1). Saul rallied to the need and called an army from all the coast of Israel. The Ammonites were thoroughly defeated and the city rescued. The people had also been unsure of Saul's capabilities, but now they rejoiced in their victory and their new king, confident that he could lead them to victory over all enemies.

Saul kept 3,000 valiant men of Israel and sent the rest home. This is the first time in all Israelite history that we see a standing army. Saul took 2,000 of the men with him and moved toward _____ (13:2) in Mt. Bethel. His son Jonathan had the other 1,000 with him in Saul's hometown of _____ (13:2). Jonathan took his men and attacked the Philistine garrison at _____ (13:3). The Philistines were angered and brought their army en masse to _____ (13:5).

Saul called all the soldiers of Israel to battle. They came, but the Philistines were a much more formidable foe than the Ammonites had been. The Philistines had iron swords and spears while the Israelites had only their older weapons such as the bow or sling. Israel was afraid. The men began deserting Saul, hiding in caves, thickets, and even crossing the Jordan to the land of _____ and _____ (13:7).

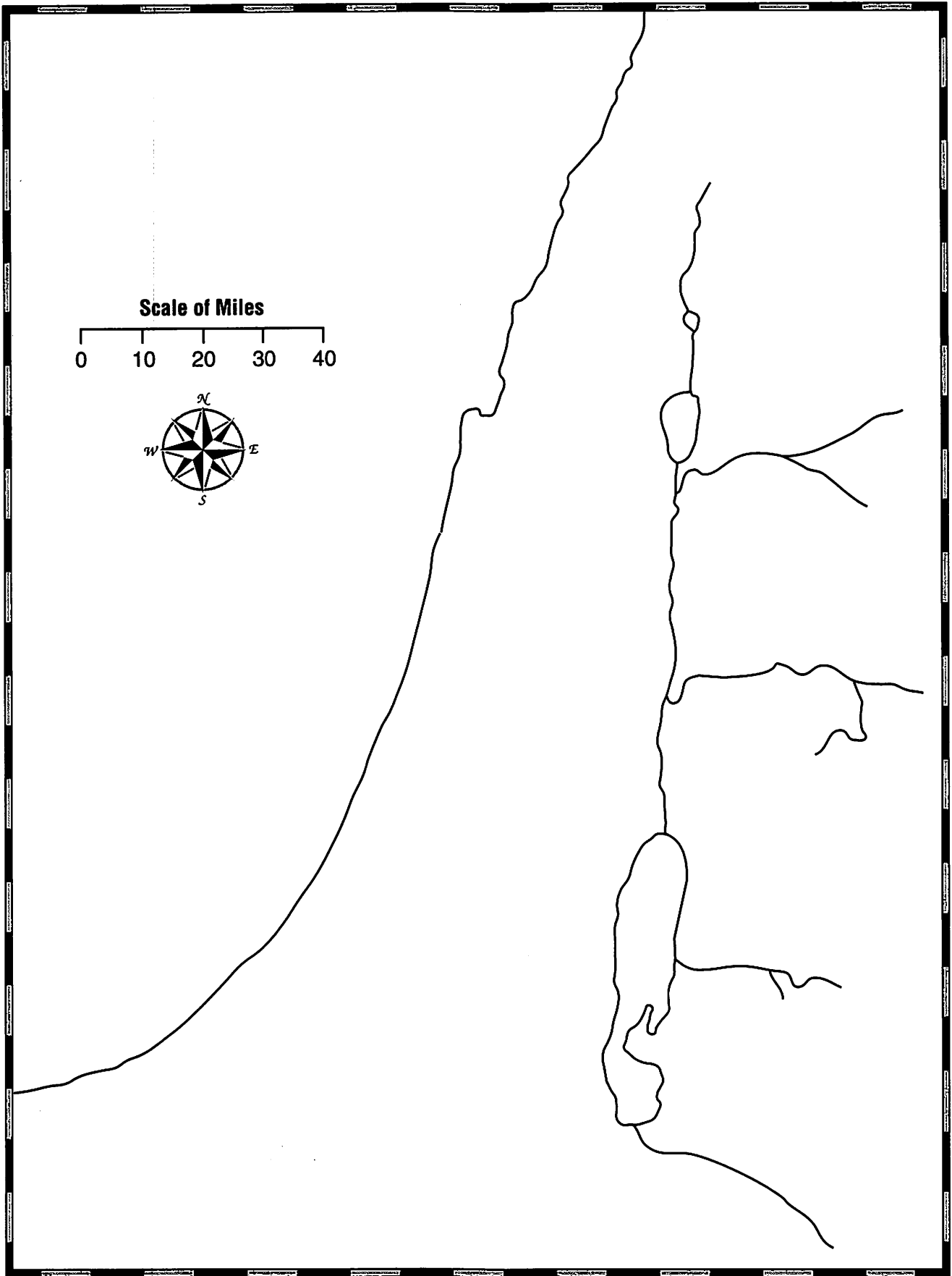
Obviously Saul himself did not have enough faith to inspire courage on the part of his followers. Time came for a sacrifice to be offered, and Samuel the priest had not arrived. Saul went ahead and offered the sacrifice, seemingly thinking the sacrifice itself was of more importance than true obedience to God. Samuel rebuked Saul for his actions and warned that his dynasty would not be established in Israel.

Fortunately for Israel, Jonathan had more faith than his father. He and his armor bearer attacked an outpost of the Philistines and created chaos in the Philistine camp. Soon Saul and the 600 men still with him joined in battle with the now disorganized Philistines. The Hebrews in hiding rallied to the cause and were soon chasing the enemy toward _____ (14:31).

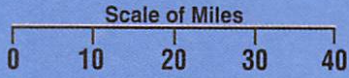
These two decisive victories were only the first in a series of successful battles Saul fought. The text says Saul "fought against all his enemies on every side . . . and whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them." 1 Samuel 14:47-48 names the ones defeated: _____, the children of _____, _____, the kings of _____, the _____, and the _____. In all these cases, Saul was not trying to take their land as his, but rather trying to push them back from Israel's territory.

Zobah was a large Syrian city-state northwest of Damascus. Label Zobah and Edom. Note the location of each enemy defeated.

God was with Saul during his early years as king, but as the years passed, Saul continued to demonstrate he was



ISRAEL IN THE DAYS OF KING SAUL



Mediterranean Sea



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not the kind of man God needed to lead Israel. For example, God sent Saul to take vengeance on the _____ (15:1). The time had come for God to destroy the Amalekites as He had promised in Moses' day (Exod. 17:14), and Saul was to be His agent. God told Saul to kill everything alive — people and animals. Saul took his army and was very successful in the battle, but he did not obey God's commandment. He spared the king and the best of the animals. He demonstrated he obeyed God only so long as his own desires fit God's laws. This was the final blow to Saul's kingdom. God sent him word through Samuel that his sons would never reign on his throne. His kingdom was rejected, and from that day forward, his kingdom was in distress.

God sent Samuel on a secret mission to the little town of _____ (16:1) to anoint a young man David to be the next king. David had great faith, and God was with him.

The Philistines came again in battle. This time they were encamped between _____ and _____ (17:1) in the Shephelah. Saul took his army and encamped in the valley of _____ (17:2). Both armies were in strong positions and it was a stalemate. As was often done in such situations, the Philistines set forth one individual to champion their cause and challenged Israel to send one man out to fight him. There was only one problem — the Philistine champion was 9½ feet tall! Neither Saul nor any of his soldiers had the courage to meet him. You remember the story of how David came to visit the camp. Faith in God gave him the courage to kill the giant and bring about Israel's victory.

David quickly rose to prominence in Saul's kingdom. He played music to soothe the now-ailing king. He became fast friends with Jonathan. He was soon leading successful raids against the Philistines. He even married Saul's daughter Michal after paying a dowry of 200 Philistine foreskins.

Saul admired David at first, but then began to be jealous of him and to fear him. Saul knew his own kingdom was doomed, but he hated to see one take his place. Three times he tried to kill David by throwing his javelin at him while he was playing music before him. It became evident David would have to flee for his life.

David fled first to Samuel in _____ (19:18), but Saul soon came after him. Jonathan tried to intercede for David, but to no avail. David fled to _____ (21:1), and Ahimelech the priest gave him shewbread to eat and Goliath's sword as a weapon. By now David was afraid to stay in the land of Israel, so he went to the Philistine city of _____ (21:10). The Philistines recognized him and David's life was again in grave danger. He feigned insanity before Achish the king and was released. This time he hid in the cave of _____ (22:1) near the valley of Elah where he had killed Goliath. Gradually, men began learning where he was, and sympathizers began joining him. Soon he had 400 men with him. Gradually the number increased to 600. He feared for the safety of his parents so he took them to the land of _____ (22:3) and asked the king to protect them.

Meanwhile, Saul destroyed the people of the priestly city of _____ (22:19) because one of their number had helped David. Abiathar the priest fled and joined David.

David heard the Philistines had attacked the city of _____ (23:1), so he took his men and defended the city. God warned him he was not safe inside the city, so he went out into the hills and strongholds of the wilderness of _____ (23:14). By now Saul was pursuing David with 3,000 chosen men. On one occasion Saul's men were on one side of a mountain and David's on the other side. Another time, in the caves around _____ (24:1), Saul came into the very cave where David was hiding. David's men urged him to kill Saul, but David refused to touch "God's anointed."

Finally, David chose to go back to the land of the Philistines. By now they had learned David was no longer in favor with the Israelites, so King Achish of _____ (27:2) welcomed him. He gave David a city called _____ (27:6) on the southern edge of the land. Achish thought David had renounced his Israelite ties and was loyal to the Philistines. In reality, David undermined the Philistine hold on southern Judah and strengthened his own control by making raids on enemy cities of the south.

The Philistines had been taking advantage of the weak king of Israel. They were pressing their fight farther and farther inland. They took an army up the coastal plain through Canaanite territory, turned east in the plain of Jezreel, and laid claim to the whole area. Note how far this is from their usual boundary. The Israelites met them in battle at _____ (31:1). Israel was completely defeated. Saul and three of his sons were killed and their bodies were nailed to the wall of the city of _____ (31:10). That night men from the city of _____ (31:11) slipped through the enemy lines, took down the bodies, and gave them an honorable burial. (What reason did the men of Jabesh-gilead have for feeling especially kind toward Saul? 11:1-11.)

The little land of Israel was in sore distress. People from the cities near the scene of the battle forsook their homes and fled. The Philistines came and dwelt in the cities.

The land of Palestine covers about 12,000 square miles. Saul controlled no more than 6,000 square miles when he died. Now his last battle with the Philistines left the land divided with the Philistines in firm control. The people still lived basically in their old tribal territories (though sharply reduced in size from their original inheritance), but the central government had become the stronger force in their lives. Now the kingdom itself was in dire circumstances.

Lesson 23

A Man After God's Own Heart

2 Samuel 1:1—1 Kings 2:11; 1 Chronicles 10-29
(Passages in 2 Samuel unless otherwise specified)

The New Testament describes David as a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). He was not perfect by any means. There were times he sinned grievously. But he was a man of great faith. He tried to rule the land as God would have it ruled. God blessed him and his kingdom greatly. David learned a very important lesson: If God had demanded perfection in a man before he could be blessed, then all men would have been cursed. He learned it is the *forgiven* man who can stand blessed before God (see Psa. 32:1, 2; Rom. 4:6-8).

The stories of David are fascinating. God must have considered him a character we needed to know about because there are more chapters of the Bible devoted to his story, or Psalms written by him, than any other man. We first meet him in 1 Samuel 16 when Samuel anointed him king. 1 Kings 2 tells of his death. Approximately half of the Psalms were written by him. Our lives are enriched as we see his strong faith in God, his capacity for love of those things good, and his deep grief over sins he committed as portrayed in the Psalms.

One son of Saul, Ish-bosheth, was left after the battle with the Philistines on Mt. Gilboa. Abner, Saul's chief captain, set Ish-bosheth up as king in _____ (2:8). He claimed to be king over _____, the _____, _____, _____, and all _____ (2:9), but it was an empty boast. The very fact he had to be proclaimed king in Mahanahim in Gilead indicates there was disarray in Israel after the Philistine victory.

Meanwhile, David's own tribe of Judah had turned to him and made him king in _____ (2:1-4). Naturally, this made for a power struggle in the land.

At the end of two years, one of David's men named Joab murdered Abner. Then, Ish-bosheth was murdered by two of his own servants. Now the way was clear for David to become king over the whole country.

The city of _____ was still in the hands of the _____ (5:6). Many years earlier Joshua succeeded in killing the king of Jerusalem but he did not manage to get into the fortress city (see Josh. 10:22-27; 15:63; Judg. 1:21). The Jebusites still felt secure and chided David by saying their blind and lame could keep his army out. David's men entered the city by way of the "water course." Joab was made chief captain as a result of his help in the battle (1 Chron. 11:4-8).

David strengthened the city of Jerusalem and made it his own. He moved the ark of the covenant into the city from Kirjath-jearim, or _____ of Judah as it is called here, where it had been since the days of Samuel (1 Chron. 13:6; see 1 Sam. 6:21-7:2). King Hiram of _____ (5:11) sent supplies for David to build himself a palace in Jerusalem.

Taking the city of Jerusalem was a wise move politically on David's part. He had chosen a city that had never been in Israel's hands, thus neutral from any distinct tribe. It was centrally located, with roads leading in all directions. The fortress was on top of a mountain, and thus, easily defended. With the ark of the covenant there, it would be the religious center of the land as well as the political center.

The Philistines did not approve of the growing strength of Israel. Almost immediately, they attacked in the _____ of _____ (5:18), a fertile plain about halfway between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. As was his custom, David asked God's advice on how to attack. God gave David decisive victories over and over, until the Philistines were driven back into a narrow strip along the seacoast. They never became subject to David, but he had broken their power. They were no longer a threat to his kingdom. In fact, throughout the rest of Israelite history, there were frequent border conflicts with the Philistines, but they were never again a powerful force.

David turned to his neighbors on every side and began defeating them. He lined up the soldiers of _____ (8:2), killed two-thirds of them and made the country pay him tribute. He put garrisons throughout _____ (8:14) and made the people his subjects. He took _____ (8:3), and took control to the _____ River (8:3). The _____ of _____ (8:5) tried to help the king of Zobah and were defeated also. They, too, paid David tribute. King Toi of _____ (8:9) congratulated David on his victories and sent voluntary gifts of silver, gold, and bronze. The _____ hired Syrian (Aramean) soldiers from _____, _____, _____, and _____ (10:6) to fight against David. He defeated their whole army. The Syrians regrouped and hired help from "beyond the _____" (10:16) — the Euphrates. Still, they could not win. "So the Syrians feared to help the children of Ammon anymore" (10:19). David took the capital city of the Ammonites, _____ (12:26),

and proclaimed himself king of the Ammonites. Thus, ". . . The Lord gave David victory everywhere he went" (8:6). Notice, David was not merely pushing the enemies off Israel's borders. He was making the neighboring peoples subject to him.

Map #10 — The Empire of David and Solomon

Label and number your map.

Notice this map covers much more land than the usual map of Palestine.

Draw a dotted line around the usual area shown.

Now show David's victories. Label:

Philistines (not subject, but subdued)

Phoenicians (not subject, but friendly)

Hamath (not subject, but friendly)

Color each of these nations a different color.

Label the peoples subject to David:

Edom Zobah

Moab Ammon

Damascus

Color all the land David controlled.

David wanted to build a temple for Jehovah in Jerusalem. At first, Nathan the prophet approved of the idea, but God sent him back to David to tell him God did not approve. God said, "I have never asked for a permanent dwelling place. Why should I have one now? David, I took you from the sheepcote to make you ruler of My people and I have been with you in all you have undertaken. Furthermore, I will set up your house after you to rule over My people. But, David, you have shed much blood. Your son after you will be a man of peace, and I will let him build Me a house. If your sons sin, I will punish them, but I will not take away My mercy from them as I did to the house of Saul. Your kingdom and your throne will be established forever" (2 Sam. 7:4-17; 1 Chron. 22:6-10; paraphrased). Even now, Jesus is said to be ruling on "David's throne" (Acts 2:30-33; see also Luke 1:32-33). David spent the rest of his life gathering riches to be used for the temple of the Lord.

A tragic thing happened while David's men were besieging the city of _____ (11:1). David was usually at the head of his forces, but this time he sent them ahead and tarried in Jerusalem. He saw a woman named Bathsheba and committed fornication with her, though she was the wife of one of his most loyal men. She was with child as a result, and David sought to cover his sin. He had her husband Uriah put in the forefront of the battle so he would be killed, and then took Bathsheba as his wife.

Nathan rebuked David for his sin. He said the child of fornication would die. The sword would never depart from David's house from that day forward. Trouble would arise from within his own family. His wives would be lain with openly as a disgrace to him. Thus, his sin marked a sad day for David himself and for all Israel. See Psalms 51 for a glimpse of the grief David felt over his sin.

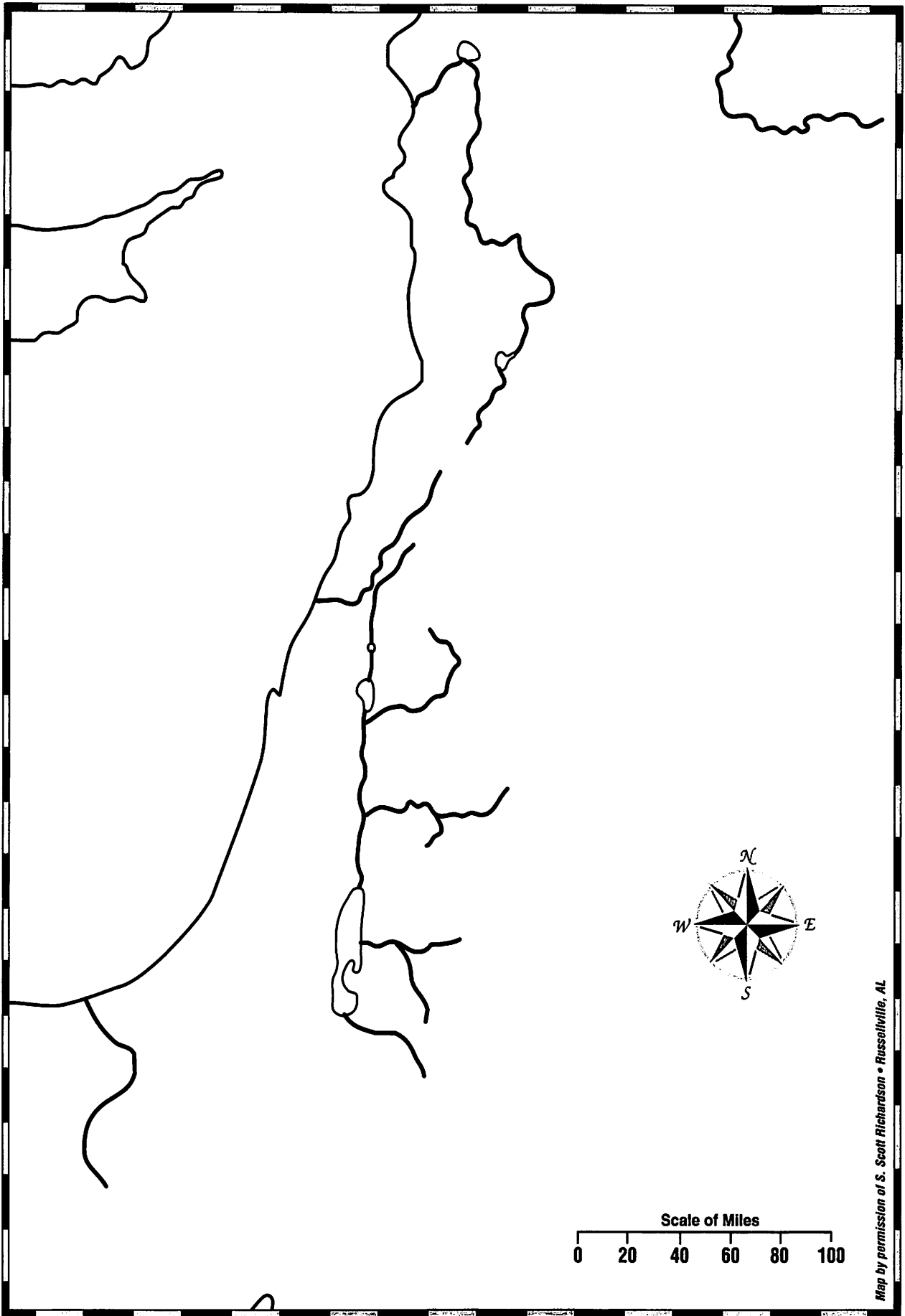
Some time passed, and David's oldest son Amnon raped his half-sister Tamar. David was grieved, but how could he punish his son for a sin no worse than his own? Another son Absalom killed Amnon and fled for his life. Years passed before he and his father were reconciled.

Absalom was heir to the throne, but he did not want to wait until his father's death. He began to win the hearts of the people by flattery and shrewd political maneuvers. He watched his chance until he thought his following was strong enough, then he declared himself king in _____ (15:10).

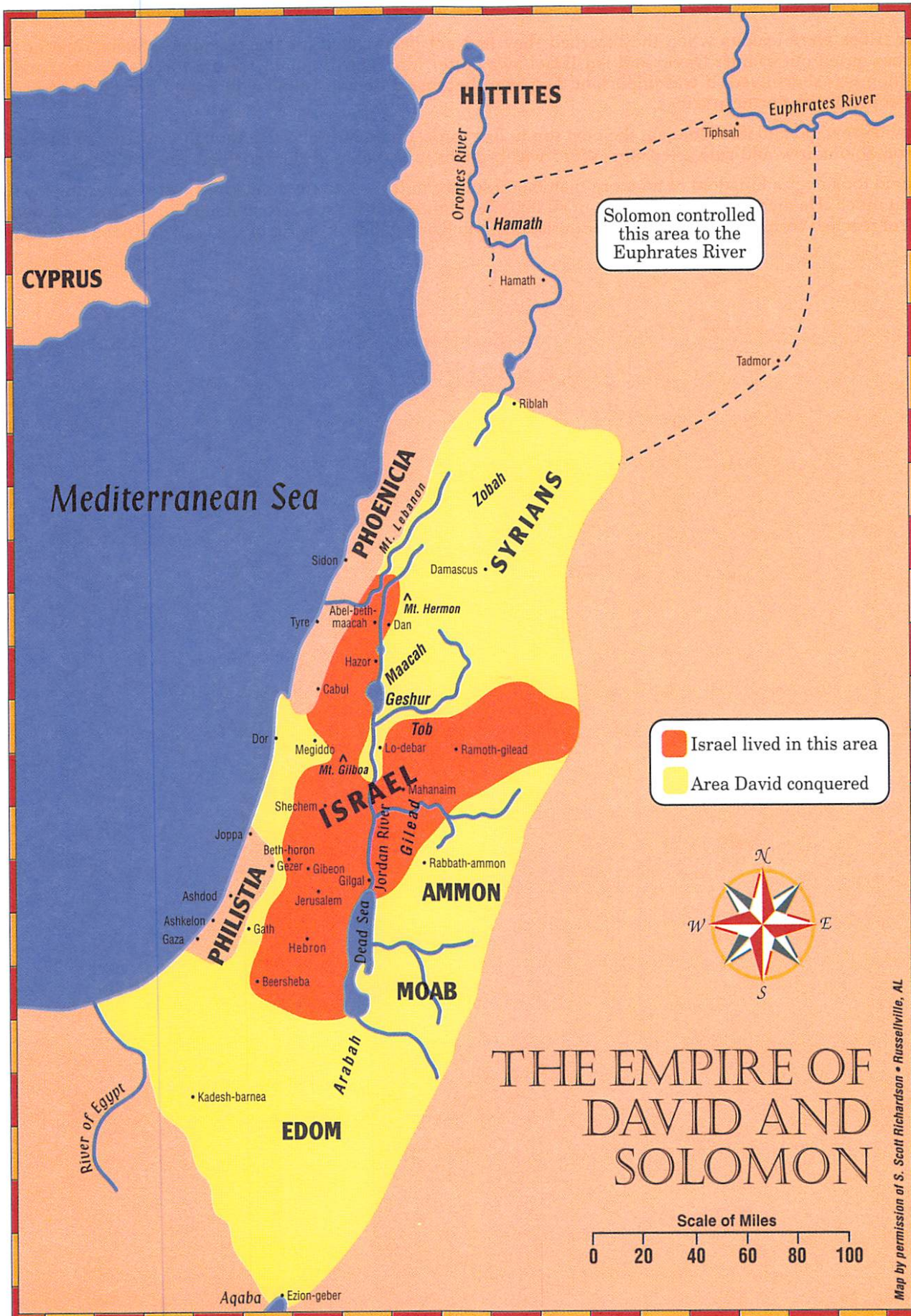
David did not want to be caught inside the city of Jerusalem with no chance to gather forces, so he left as soon as he heard the news of Absalom's rebellion. It is one of the saddest scenes in the entire Bible to watch David and his most loyal men leaving Jerusalem, fleeing from his own son. He and his company crossed the brook _____ (15:23), just outside the city wall and made their way up the mount of _____ (15:30), weeping as they went. Their plan was to spend the first night in the Jordan Valley near the ford. Hushai, an advisor David had sent back to serve as spy, sent a message for them to hurry across the river and get to a safe place lest Absalom follow them immediately. David followed the advice, and, by morning, all of his men were across the Jordan (17:16, 22). They hurried on to the city of _____ (17:24) in Gilead. Loyal men came to his aid with food and supplies. An army began gathering to oppose Absalom.

The resulting battle took place in the _____ of _____ (18:6). Usually, when we speak of anything connected with Ephraim, it is located west of the Jordan. This may be an exception to the rule because Absalom's forces had crossed the Jordan also, and were camped in the land of _____ (17:24, 26). It is possible the battle began on the east side of the Jordan and moved across the river as Absalom's troops fell back before David's men. Absalom's army was defeated and the soldiers fled for their lives. Absalom himself was killed also.

The tribe of _____ assembled at _____ (19:15) to bring David back with pomp. The



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other tribes were jealous when they learned they had not been called for the ceremony. Sheba, one of their number, cried out against David and led Israel away after him. David quickly sent a force after him, and the rebellion was short-lived. It was important, however, because it demonstrated a dormant unrest in the hearts of the people of the northern tribes.

David grew old and ill. Adonijah, the next son in line, proclaimed himself king, though his father had specified his son Solomon would rule after him. Word was brought to David, and the rebellion was put down.

David took over a kingdom of no more than 6,000 square miles — and the Philistines were contesting his right to that much. He died leaving a kingdom of 60,000 square miles for his son Solomon to rule. Solomon's economic control reached from the Euphrates River in the north to Ezion-geber at the tip of the Gulf of Aqaba in the south.

The Empire Of Solomon

1 Kings 1-11; 2 Chronicles 1-9
(Passages in 1 Kings unless otherwise specified)

Solomon was a man of peace as God had predicted. He strengthened his hold on the various neighbors his father had defeated by marrying women from important families. He even made peace with _____ (3:1) and married Pharaoh's daughter. He strengthened the treaty of peace his father had begun with King Hiram of _____ (5:1) and arranged for men and supplies to be used for building the temple. His land was at peace and "Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from _____ even to _____ all the days of Solomon" (4:25).

God appeared to Solomon very early in his reign (at _____ — 3:4). He told Solomon to ask for whatever he wished. Solomon replied.

... O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people. . . Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? (3:7-9)

God was pleased with Solomon's request and granted him wisdom beyond any man before or since. In addition, He promised him riches and honor above all of his day. He added that *if he obeyed God faithfully*, he would be granted long life also. This last promise was the only one he failed to receive, because he failed to meet the condition for it.

Solomon started building the temple in the fourth year of his reign. He began in the second month, 480 years after they came out of Egypt (6:1). It was about 960 years before the birth of Christ. Turn back and look on your chart of the Time Line in Lesson 8.

Solomon raised a levy of 30,000 men out of all Israel. Ten thousand of them would spend a month working in the mountains of _____ (5:14) with King Hiram's men. Then they would return home while the other two sets of 10,000 took their turn. In addition, Solomon had 70,000 that "bore burdens" and 80,000 "hewers in the mountains." There were 3,300 overseers (5:13-18). Solomon made slaves of the Canaanites still living in the land and forced them to help on the temple plus all his later projects (9:20-22). It took an enormous amount of food to feed the men on duty, so he divided his land into twelve sections with an officer in charge of each. Each section was to provide the food necessary for one month out of the year (4:7-19, 22-23, 27-28). Notice the twelve sections were not based on ancestral tribal lines.

It took the Israelites over 7 years to build their temple (6:37-38). It was a beautiful structure. It would be almost impossible to assess the value of the structure and its furnishings in today's values. Silver, gold, brass, cedar, and marble were the materials used. All the people gathered for the dedication ceremony. They were delighted with their temple and with their king (8:65-66).

Solomon offered a beautiful prayer to God at the dedication of the temple. He said,

Lord, we know you cannot literally dwell in this house we have built, because heaven itself cannot contain Thee. Yet, may Your eyes be open toward this temple day and night. Please hear the supplications any person makes toward this place. If a man sins against a neighbor, hear his plea, judge his case, and forgive. If we sin and are oppressed by an enemy hear our prayer and forgive . . . If the day comes we should be taken captive by an enemy, and one turn back to Thee and pray toward this city and this temple, hear his prayer and forgive . . . (8:23-53, summarized and paraphrased.)

God answered the prayer by appearing to Solomon a second time. He promised to be with Solomon personally, and to keep His promise to establish his family as the ruling family *if Solomon and his sons would serve Him faithfully*. If not, then God declared He would cut off Israel from the land and reject the temple where He had put His name.

Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people: And at this house, which is high, everyone that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and to this house? And they shall answer, Because they forsook the Lord their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath the Lord brought them all this evil (9:7-9).

We could wish the story of Solomon ended at this point. He would be remembered by the blessings God gave him. But, the story continues.

God gave him great wisdom — the ability to accumulate facts and to draw conclusions. Solomon had asked for

it to know how to govern his people, and an early story is told to illustrate his ability to hear difficult problems and make wise judgments (3:16-28). Yet he seems to have used his ability largely to amass knowledge of plant life, of animal life, of proverbs, and of songs. People came from far and wide to hear him answer difficult questions (4:29-34; 10:1-3).

He used his organizing ability to build more and more projects. After the 7 years' work on the temple, he spent 13 years building himself an elaborate palace in Jerusalem. He strengthened the walls of Jerusalem and built fortress towers (millo). He built fortress cities at Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer (9:15); plus Beth-horon, Baalath, and Tadmor (9:17-18). These were in addition to various store-cities up and down the land. He had cities for his horses, his horsemen, and his chariots.

God promised him wealth, and he gathered a fortune it would be hard for us to comprehend. He had sailors sailing with King Hiram of Phoenicia. The ships brought back immense wealth from Arabia, Africa, and all the Mediterranean world. Surrounding nations paid him tribute. People brought vast gifts to see and hear his wisdom. The caravans on the trade routes paid a high tribute for the privilege of using the roads all the way from Ezion-geber to the Euphrates. His eating vessels were all of gold. We could continue the list of valuable possessions.

The people of the land shared in the wealth of the kingdom. Silver was as common in Jerusalem as stones. It was so plentiful it was considered of no value. The people worked hard and willingly on their beautiful temple. Then, the work continued in order to build the palace. It, too, was a national monument they could rejoice in to some degree. But the work continued, and continued . . .

The Queen of _____ (10:1) marvelled at the beauty of Solomon's kingdom and she declared, "How happy your men must be!" She was not entirely correct. Solomon did not make any of his own people slaves, but every Israelite gradually became one of Solomon's workmen — a government official, an overseer of his workmen, a laborer in Lebanon or the rock quarries, a horseman, a charioteer, a sailor away from home for three years, or a cook. Even if it were your turn to be at home, it was necessary to provide an enormous amount of food from your fields to provide the quota for your assigned section to feed Solomon's household for one month. The people grew weary of his projects.

The exact location of Sheba is unknown. Some legends say it was Ethiopia. Others say somewhere in southern Arabia. Perhaps future research will answer the question definitely.

It seems Solomon sought to amass women the way he did gold. Some of his marriages were for political reasons, but the text states he "loved many strange women." He married women from _____ (daughter of Pharaoh), _____, _____, _____, and _____ (11:1). These proved to be the final downfall of his kingdom. He built high places in Jerusalem to the various gods his wives worshipped. He even went so far as to worship there with his wives.

God appeared to him one last time,

... Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, ... I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake. but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen (11:11-13)

The empire began to crumble. Hadad the _____ (11:14) had grown up in _____ (11:17) where his family fled when David defeated Edom. Now he saw his chance to return and claim his country. Meanwhile, a man named Rezon gathered men and set up a city-state in _____ (11:24). Ahijah the prophet tore his garment into 12 pieces and gave 10 of them to one of Solomon's overseers named Jeroboam. Ahijah promised Jeroboam he would rule over 10 tribes of Israel. Solomon heard of it and Jeroboam had to flee to _____ (11:40) to save his life. Notice, the Pharaoh of Egypt has changed also. The earlier one made a treaty of peace with Solomon sealed by a marriage. But years have passed and a man named Shishak has come to the Egyptian throne. Shishak helped Hadad of Edom re-establish his power. He allows Jeroboam, Solomon's rival, to stay in his land.

Samuel warned the Israelites what a king would be like when they first asked for one:

... He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and *the Lord will not hear you in that day*" (1 Sam. 8:11-18).

Even earlier, Moses warned them of how their kings should conduct themselves. Read Deuteronomy 17:14-20 and analyze how many of the warnings Solomon disregarded and broke.

A stranger observing the kingdom said, "How happy!" But, the bubble was about to burst.

Review Of The United Kingdom

(Lessons 22-24)

Fact questions:

1. Who was the judge at the time the people asked for a king? (1 Sam. 8:1-2)
2. Why did the people say they wanted a king? (1 Sam. 8:4-5, 19-20)
3. Summarize the warnings Samuel gave as to what a king would be like. (1 Sam. 8:11-18)
4. What two events in Saul's life demonstrated his unworthiness to be the kind of king God wanted? (1 Sam. 13:8-14; 15:1-35)
5. Why did Saul want to kill David? (see 1 Sam. 18:1ff; 20:30-31)
6. What did David want to build? (2 Sam. 7:1-3)
Why was he not allowed to do so? (1 Chron. 22:6-10)
7. Summarize the promise God made to David. (2 Sam. 7:4-17)
8. What grievous event marked a turning point in David's life? (2 Sam. 11)
9. What did Solomon ask God for? What did God give him? (1 Kings 3:5-15)
10. Summarize Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple. (1 Kings 8)
Summarize God's answer to Solomon's prayer. (1 Kings 9:2-9)
11. Why did God tell Solomon his kingdom would be divided? Why was it not done in Solomon's day? (1 Kings 11:9-13)
12. Saul was from the tribe of _____ (1 Sam. 9:1-2)
David was from the tribe of _____ (1 Chron. 2:3, 15)

Who is described as:

- _____ 1. A man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22).
- _____ 2. One who "loved many strange women" (1 Kings 11:1).
- _____ 3. Head and shoulders taller than the people (1 Sam. 10:23).
- _____ 4. David called him "the Lord's anointed" (1 Sam. 24:5-6).
- _____ 5. "From the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him" (2 Sam. 14:25).
- _____ 6. Anointed to be "captain of God's inheritance" (1 Sam. 10:1).
- _____ 7. Wiser than any man before or since (1 Kings 3:12).

Neighboring peoples:

1. Tyre was the chief city of the _____ (see map).
2. David took the city of Jerusalem from the _____ (2 Sam. 5:6-7).
3. Hadad the _____ returned from _____ to re-establish his own country (1 Kings 11:14-22).
4. Rezon established a city-state in _____ (1 Kings 11:23-25).
5. God sent Saul to destroy the _____ (1 Sam. 15)
6. The _____ were afraid to help the _____ anymore (2 Sam. 10:19).
7. Israel's worst enemy in Saul's day was the _____ (1 Sam. 14:52).

8. Solomon married the daughter of the king of _____ (1 Kings 3:1).
9. David took his parents to _____ for their safety (1 Sam. 22:3-4).
10. The queen of _____ came to see and hear Solomon's wisdom and wealth (1 Kings 10).

Important Places:

- _____ 1. The first city Saul defended. (1 Sam. 11)
- _____ 2. The home port for Solomon's navy that sailed on the Red Sea. (1 Kings 9:26)
- _____ 3. A second navy of Solomon's sailed from here every 3 years. (1 Kings 10:22)
- _____ 4. Place where Saul died. (1 Sam. 31)
- _____ 5. Saul's capital. (1 Sam. 10:26)
- _____ 6. David's first capital. (2 Sam. 2:3-4, 11)
- _____ 7. David's second capital. (2 Sam. 5:5)
- _____ 8. Place where David pretended insanity. (1 Sam. 21:10)
- _____ 9. The people of Solomon's day were at peace "from _____
- _____ 10. to _____" (1 Kings 4:25).
- _____ 11. David's headquarters while he was fleeing from Absalom. (2 Sam. 17:24, 27)
- _____ 12. The place where the people asked for a king. (1 Sam. 8:4)
- _____ 13. David built a stronghold in this cave while he was fleeing from Saul. (1 Sam. 22:1ff)
- _____ 14. David's hometown. (1 Sam. 16)
- _____ 15. King Achish gave David this city. (1 Sam. 27:6)
- _____ 16. Solomon used cedars from here for building the temple. (1 Kings 5:6)

Important People:

- _____ 1. David's chief captain. (2 Sam. 8:16; 1 Chron. 11:6)
- _____ 2. Saul's chief captain. (1 Sam. 14:50)
- _____ 3. The person who called Samuel from the dead. (1 Sam. 28:7ff)
- _____ 4. The giant David killed. (1 Sam. 17)
- _____ 5. David's best friend during his early years. (1 Sam. 18:1)
- _____ 6. Saul's daughter who became David's wife. (1 Sam. 18:20-27)
- _____ 7. The son of Saul who reigned for a time. (2 Sam. 2:8-10)
- _____ 8. David's sons who led rebellions against their father. (1 Sam. 15-18)
- _____ 9. (1 Kings 1:5-53)
- _____ 10. The one David committed adultery with. (2 Sam. 11)
- _____ 11. The prophet David consulted about building the temple. (2 Sam. 7:2ff)
- _____ 12. King of Tyre. (1 Kings 5:1)

An Overview Of The Divided Kingdom

1 Kings 12—2 Kings 25; 2 Chronicles 10-36

Solomon's death marks the close of Israel's glory. Never again did they have or deserve God's blessings as He had given them in the days of David and Solomon.

The day came to anoint Solomon's son Rehoboam king. The people gathered at _____ (1 Kings 12:1) and asked him to lighten their burdens. He refused to do so and boasted how hard he would be, "My little finger will be thicker than my father's loins . . ." His kingdom fell apart!

The ten northern tribes made Jeroboam king, as the prophet Ahijah had predicted. They kept the name of Israel. Only Judah and Benjamin were left under Rehoboam. The capital city of Jerusalem lay on the border between these two tribes. Rehoboam was of the tribe of Judah. So they took the name of Judah for their kingdom and kept control of the temple, the palace, and the whole capital city.

Jealousy between the tribes was not new. The tribe of _____ (Judg. 7:24-8:3; 12:1-6) showed resentment when they were not given pre-eminence in the days of Gideon and Jephthah. The tribe of _____ (Judg. 19-20) chose to fight rather than submit to the demands of the other tribes and nearly brought about tribal suicide. The northern tribes were jealous when David returned after the rebellion of Absalom, and they had not been called to the event (2 Sam. 19-20). Solomon may have taxed the northern tribes more heavily than Judah. Judah was not included in one of the sections assigned to feed the king's household for a month (1 Kings 4:7-9). Now the jealousies have brought about two, tiny kingdoms.

If the kingdoms had remained faithful to God. He would have blessed both little kingdoms. Jeroboam was told his dynasty could be established on the throne as David's was if he would be faithful (1 Kings 11:30-39). That is not the way it worked out, however.

Jeroboam was afraid for his subjects to go back to _____ (1 Kings 12:27) lest he lose his control over his kingdom. So he built golden calves and placed them at _____ and _____ (12:29). He inaugurated a whole new system of worship, though he claimed to be still worshipping Jehovah. In his effort to establish a firm hold on his kingdom, he did the very thing that would insure its downfall. Jeroboam's son was murdered, and his family was wiped out.

Judah in the south still worshipped God at the temple in Jerusalem. Yet, so often it was only a ritual of worship with some idol set up across town. The moral and religious decay of the period is heartbreaking to see.

Gradually, the Levites who served around the temple moved south. Other faithful people moved south until the two little kingdoms were nearer the same in population than the figures, ten tribes and two tribes, indicate.

For about 200 years, the divided kingdom continued. It was one of the darkest periods of all Old Testament history. Part of the time Israel and Judah warred against each other. Part of the time the neighboring kingdoms such as Moab and Edom would be tributaries. At other times, they would rebel, and there would be more fighting. Out of a total of 39 kings in the two kingdoms, 13 of them were murdered by their own people. Two were killed in battles. Five more were taken prisoners by enemy kings. A very sad period!

The Israelites kept detailed historical records of their kings that we no longer have (see 1 Kings 15:7, 23, 31). Instead, we have their religious history. Try reading 1 and 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles with a red pen in your hand. Underline each time the text says a king prospered because he served God or that a king suffered because he turned his back on God. You might be surprised at how often such phrases occur. The welfare of the kings and of their kingdoms was directly related to their service to Jehovah.

In the southern kingdom, the kings were all direct descendants of David through the royal line of Solomon and Rehoboam. This was in fulfillment of the promise made to David in 2 Samuel 7:12. If the king were wicked, God allowed an enemy to attack, but His providence saw to it there was an heir to the throne left. The people of Judah turned their backs on God so many times during these years. Nevertheless, they did have some good kings who would lead the people back to God for a time.

Meanwhile, the northern kingdom went from bad to worse. As we have already stated, Jeroboam set up his gods with a new system of worship. There was never a good king in Israel. They either worshipped Jeroboam's golden calves, or they did still worse and worshipped Baal, the god of their Canaanite neighbors. The ruling family in Israel changed 9 times. Some man would murder the king, destroy his family, and proclaim himself king. God sent prophet after prophet to warn of destruction, but they were ignored.

The neighboring people had resented Solomon's control over them and over the trade routes. They were quick to throw off Israel's control when the kingdom divided. Moab, Edom, Ammon, and Syria all rebelled. Egypt soon attacked. The Syrian city-state of Damascus became a particularly sore threat during these years of decay in Israel and Judah.

Notice the trade routes we have mentioned so many times in our study. Israel still held a portion of the Trans-Jordan plateau, and, therefore, could tax the caravans on a portion of the King's Highway. Also, the route by way of the coastal plain entered Israel's territory north of the Sea of Galilee, crossed over to the pass at Megiddo, and turned south down the plain.

In contrast, Judah was land-locked. The main routes avoided the more difficult roads through the hill country. The Dead Sea was a natural barrier on the east, and the Philistines still held a firm hold on the southern coastal plain. Sometimes, Judah controlled part of Edom and held access to the riches of Ezion-geber, but more often either Egypt or Edom took that prize away.

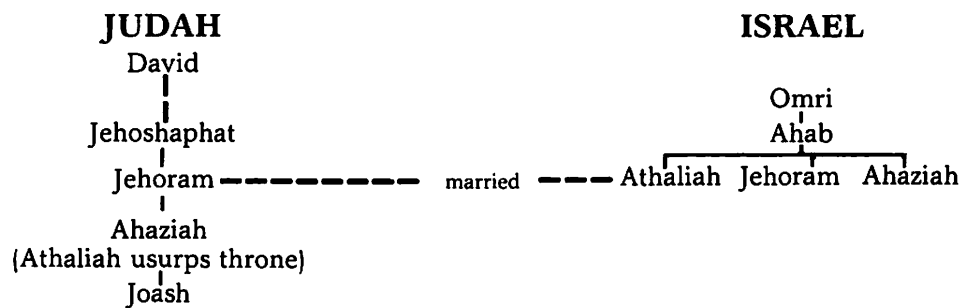
Therefore, Israel tended to be the more prosperous nation with more contact with other peoples. The prosperity was a mixed blessing however. They tended to be at ease and to forget their need for Jehovah. Also, any foreign power who wanted to control the trade routes came into direct conflict with Israel.

Space does not permit our going into the details of the period. It is a difficult period of Bible history to study because there were so many people involved and so many events told, it tends to be confusing. The stories are fascinating, however, so your faith will be increased if you let the period become a solid part of your overall Bible knowledge. The next three lessons form a chart of the kings with an outline of the history of the period. Study the lessons carefully.

God sent inspired preachers or prophets to His people throughout their history. These were men who sought to encourage the people to serve God faithfully and to point out the error of their actions. As the years passed, the people became more and more wicked, and refused to listen. The prophets began writing their messages as proof that God had given warning of His punishments to come. The names of many prophets are given on the chart in the next lessons. The ones who left written records of their messages are underlined.

The chart of the kings includes all the kings of both kingdoms. The next five lessons will overlap with this one as we watch each kingdom crumble and fall.

Notice on your chart that the period of time immediately after Ahab's death is particularly confusing to study (see Lesson 27). The kings are blood related through this period because Jehosaphat's son married Ahab's daughter. Kings Ahaziah and Jehoram of Israel overlap with Kings Jehoram and Ahaziah of Judah. Perhaps the following chart of family relations will help keep them straight.



Answer these questions from the family chart above:

1. What relation was Jehoram of Judah to:
 - Ahab _____
 - Ahaziah of Israel _____
 - Jehoram of Israel _____
 - Ahaziah of Judah _____
2. What relation was Athaliah to:
 - Ahab _____
 - Jehoram of Israel _____
 - Jehoram of Judah _____
 - Ahaziah of Judah _____
 - Joash of Judah _____

Chart Of The Kings — Part 1

This lesson, plus the two following ones, form a chart analyzing the divided kingdom. We have tried to include most of the passages that deal with each king, but the references are not all inclusive. For example, specific kings are mentioned in some of the prophets. We have included part of the passages from the prophets in order to make particular points, but no effort has been made to correlate all such passages with the historical accounts. Neither have we included all the stories about the kings. It is an *outline* of the period.

Notice there are a few dates in the first column. These are given in order to help you sense the passing of time.

If a king is called by more than one name or if his name appears in the text by more than one spelling, then one name is listed as usual with the additional ones in parenthesis.

The only enemy kings included on our chart are those playing a direct role in the Bible story. There are a very few historical notes, not recorded in the Bible, that are included on the chart to shed further light on the story.

Stories involving both kingdoms are shown across both columns of the kings.

All the kings of Judah (except Athaliah who usurped the throne for 6 years) were of the line of David. The dynasty changed 9 times in Israel, however. The chart indicates a change of dynasty by asterisks in the column.

There are many prophets mentioned during this period of history. The names of some of them are not given. Notice there is an occasional mention of "sons of the prophets." This term applied to schools or guilds of prophets. Samuel is the first one mentioned as having these "schools" (1 Sam. 10:5-10; 19:20-23). During the divided kingdom, Elisha seemingly dealt with the "sons of the prophets" regularly. In his time, there were comparatively large groups living together in Bethel, Jericho, Gilgal, and perhaps other places (2 Kings 2:3, 5, 7, 15; 4:38-40; 6:1-7; 9:1). Gradually, wicked kings began gathering their own companies of false prophets who were willing to say whatever the king wanted to hear (1 Kings 22:5ff). Our chart includes the prophets of God who had direct contact with the kings or played a prominent role in the Bible story. The names of those who left a written record of their message are underlined.

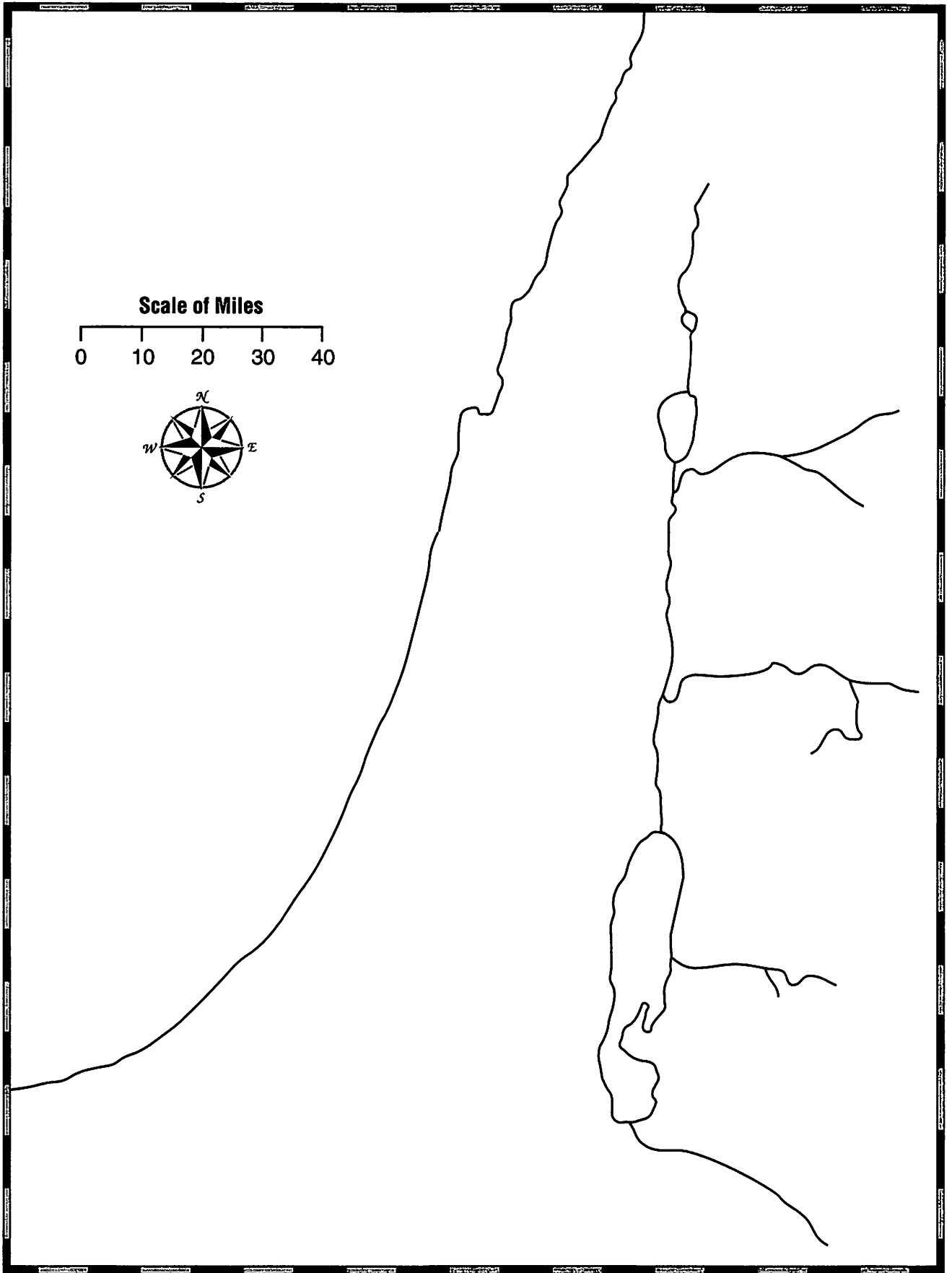
We will use a total of 5 maps for the period covered by the chart of the Kings. The maps will show the kingdoms at their strongest and at their weakest points plus the boundaries of their worst enemies.

Map #11 — The Divided Kingdom: In the Days of Rehoboam and Jeroboam

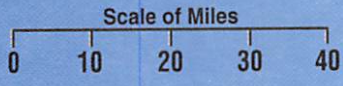
Label and number your map. Color Israel and Judah different colors.

Include Moab as part of Israel's territory; Edom as part of Judah's territory. Realize they did not control these neighbors all the time, but this will help us see which kingdom held control when it had the strength to do so.

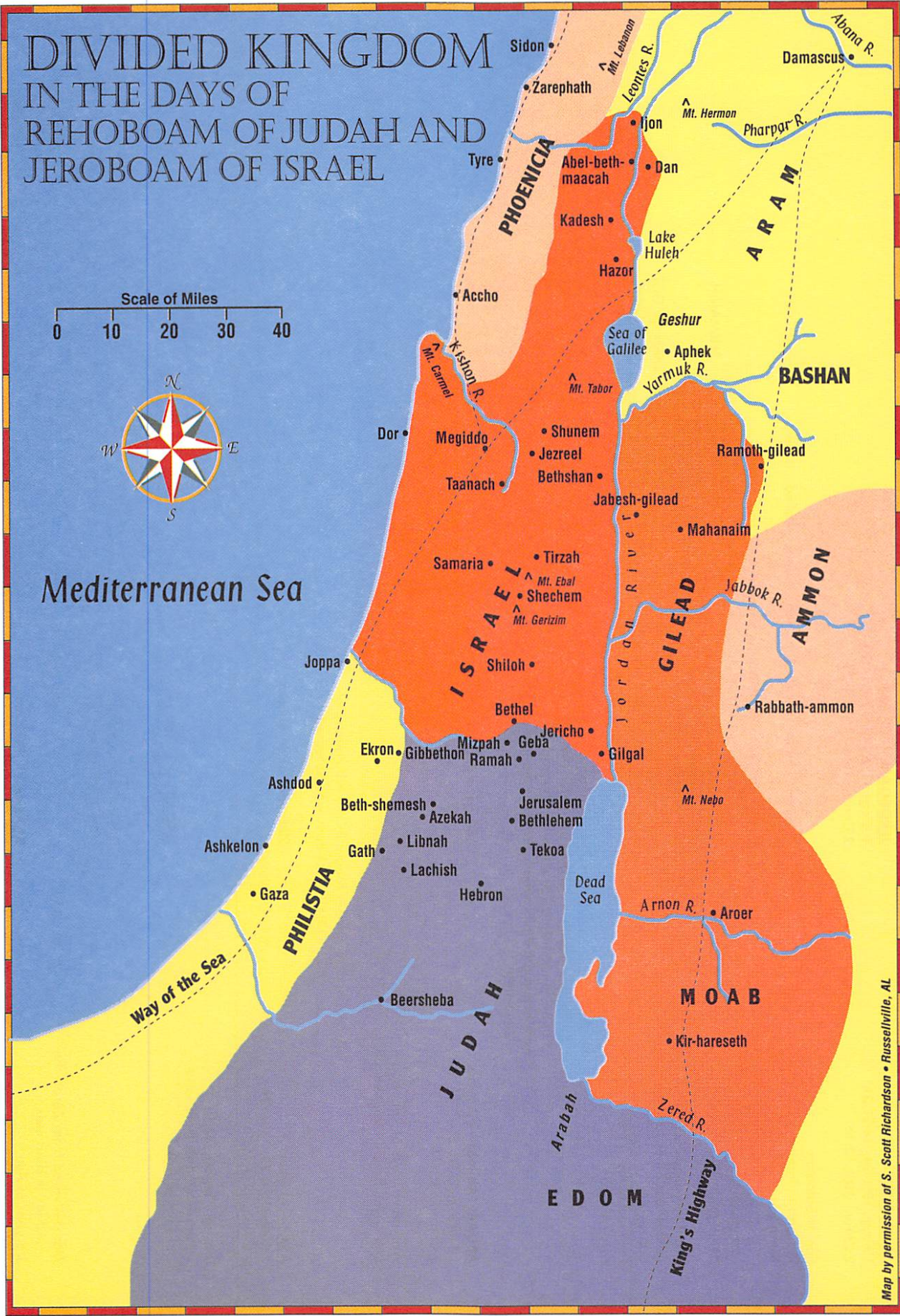
Compare this map to map #10 which shows Israel at the peak of her strength. Label each city or region mentioned as you come to it in the chart.



DIVIDED KINGDOM IN THE DAYS OF REHOBOAM OF JUDAH AND JEROBOAM OF ISRAEL



Mediterranean Sea



Map by permission of S. Scott Richardson • Russellville, AL

DATES	KINGS OF JUDAH	KINGS OF ISRAEL	PROPHETS	ENEMY KINGS
925	<p>REHOBOAM — 17 years 1 Kings 12:1-24; 14:21-31 2 Chron. 10:1-12:16</p> <p>Son of Solomon Refused to lighten people's burdens. Ten tribes rebel. Only _____ and _____ remained loyal. (1 K. 12:21) Forbidden to fight Israel. Returned to his capital at _____ (1 K. 12:21).</p> <p>Faithful to God for 3 years. Levites and other faithful Israelites join his kingdom. Fortified border cities. Forsook God.</p>	<p>JEROBOAM — 22 years 1 Kings 11:26-40; 12:1-14:20 2 Chron. 10:1-17; 13:1-20</p> <p>Assumes kingship of the ten tribes, called Israel. God promises to establish his house if he is faithful. Set up golden calves at _____ and _____ (1 K. 12:29). New priesthood, new feast days. Destruction of shrine at _____ (1 K. 13:1) predicted. _____ becomes capital of Israel. (1 K. 14:17).</p>	<p>AHIJAH</p> <p>SHEMAIAH</p> <p>MAN OF GOD from Judah</p>	<p>SHISHAK of Egypt A Libyan Pharaoh</p>
	<p>ABIJAM (Abijah) — 3 years 1 Kings 14:31-15:8 2 Chron. 13:1-14:1</p> <p>Walked in ways of Rehoboam. Still worshipped in the temple.</p> <p>Abijam and Jeroboam fought in the hill country of _____ (2 Ch. 13:4). Jeroboam was defeated.</p> <p>20th year of Jeroboam.</p>	<p>18th year of Jeroboam</p> <p>Shishak of _____ (1 K. 14:25) attacked both Israel and Judah. His Egyptian records have been found listing 150 cities he attacked. Rehoboam gave him wealth from the temple to spare Jerusalem.</p>		
	<p>ASA — 41 years 1 Kings 15:8-25; 16:8, 29 2 Chron. 14:2-16:14</p> <p>Did right before God. Put away idols from land. 2nd year of Asa</p>	<p>NADAB — 2 years 1 Kings 15:25-31</p> <p>Did evil as his father. Slain by Baasha.</p>	<p>AZARIAH</p>	
	<p>Was delivered from Zerah the _____ (2 Ch. 14:9) and his million men. 3rd year of Asa</p> <p>Years of peace because of Asa's faithfulness. Many from Israel moved to Judah.</p>	<p>-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-</p> <p>BAASHA — 24 years 1 Kings 15:16-16:7 2 Chron. 16:1-6</p>		<p>ZERAH the Ethiopian — Probably a commander of an Egyptian Army</p>

Destroyed all of Jeroboam's family.

Baasha fortified _____ (1 K. 15:17) to keep his subjects from joining Asa's kingdom. Asa hired help from Ben-hadad of _____ (1 K. 15:18) against Baasha.

Hanani reproved Asa. Asa cast him into prison.

HANANI
JEHU, son of
Hanani

26th year of Asa

ELAH — 2 years
1 Kings 16:8-14

Jehu foretold destruction of Baasha's family.

Slain by Zimri, an army officer, as he was "drinking himself drunk."

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

27th year of Asa

ZIMRI — 1 week
1 Kings 16:10-20

Killed all of Baasha's family. Attacked by Omri at _____ (1 K. 16:17). Burned the palace over himself.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

38th year of Asa

OMRI — 12 years
1 Kings 16:16-28

Overcame his rival, Tibni. Bought hill from Shemer, built capital city of _____ (1 K. 16:24).

Note: Little said of Omri in the Bible, but he was powerful politically. For next 100 years, Israel is referred to as "house of Omri" in Assyrian records.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

38th year of Asa

AHAB — 22 years
1 Kings 16:28-22:40
2 Chron. 18:1-34

Wicked above all kings before him. Married Jezebel, daughter of Eth-Baal, king of _____ (1 K. 16:31).
Note: Marriage strengthened alliance between Israel and Phoenicia.
Baal worship became the official religion of Israel.

Asa became diseased in his feet; did not seek God's help.

JEHOSHAPHAT — 25 years

4th year of Ahab

DATES cont.	KINGS OF JUDAH, continued	KINGS OF ISRAEL, continued	PROPHETS continued	ENEMY KINGS continued
1 Kings 15:24; 22:2-33, 41-50; 2 Kings 3:1 2 Chron. 17:1-21:1	Very good king. Appointed teachers to teach law to people of Judah. Received tribute from _____ and _____ (2 Ch. 17:11).	_____ rebuilt (1 K. 16:34). Fulfilled Joshua's prophecy (Josh. 6:26).	ELIJAH, the Tishbite from _____ (1 K. 17:1).	
875		Israel punished by a 3-year drought. Elijah sustained at home of a widow in _____ (1 K. 17:9). Elijah and the prophets of Baal had a contest on _____ (1 K. 18:19). Elijah fled from Jezebel to _____, and on to _____ (1 K. 19:3, 8). Elijah anoints Elisha.	ELISHA	BEN-HADAD, of Syria
		Syrians besiege _____ (1 K. 20:1) and are defeated. They attack again at _____ (20:26) and are defeated. Ahab was rebuked for sparing Ben-hadad's life.	A "SON OF PROPHETS	Assyrian records tell of a battle at Karkar on the Orontes River with Ahab and Ben-hadad part of the opposing coalition.
	Jehoshaphat and Ahab joined forces to try to recover _____ (1 K. 22:3-4) from the Syrians. This was a city of refuge in Gad.	Ahab took Naboth's vineyard in _____ treacherously (1 K. 21:1).		
	Jehoshaphat rebuked for his alliance with Ahab. The countries of _____, _____, and _____ rebel against Judah (2 Ch. 20:1, 22). 17th year of Jehoshaphat	Micaiah prophesies Ahab's death. Ahab slain in battle.	MICAIAH	
		AHAZIAH — 2 years 1 Kings 22:48-53; 2 Kings 1:1-18 2 Chron. 20:35-37	HANANI	
		Worshipped Baal and Jeroboam's golden calves. _____ rebelled against Israel (2 K. 1:1).		MESHA OF Moab — His stele, the "Moabite Stone" has been found Tells of his victories in both Israel and Judah.
	Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah join forces to have a navy at _____ (2 Ch. 20:35-37). Jehoshaphat is reproved. Effort fails.	Mortally wounded in a fall; asked help from Baalzebub, god of _____ (2 K. 1:2), a Philistine city.	ELIEZER, son of Dodavahu	
	18th year of Jehoshaphat	JEHOHAM (Joram) — 12 years 2 Kings 3:1-9:29	ELIJAH is translated.	
	Son of Ahab, brother of Ahaziah. Wicked, but not like Ahab.		Several stories told of miracles of ELISHA. He lived a long time, and his activities span	
	Jehoshaphat joins forces with Jehoram to subdue _____ (2 K. 3:7). The king of _____ (2 K. 3:8, 9)			

joined them, probably because subject to Judah at this time. Elisha prophesied Lord's deliverance for Jehoshaphat's sake.

JEHORAM (Joram) — 8 years
2 Kings 8:16-24
2 Chron. 21:1-20

5th year of Jehoram

Numerous conflicts with Syria. _____ (2 K. 6:24) besieged until people nearly starving, then spared by Divine intervention.

Very wicked. Killed all his brothers. Married Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel.

_____ revolts against Judah (2 Ch. 21:8-10). Judah attacked by the _____ and the _____ "that were near the _____" (2 Ch. 21:16-17). They took all he had except Jehoahaz (Ahaziah) and Athaliah.

Note: The line of David's descent grew perilously thin, consisting of one person for each of three generations.

AHAZIAH (Jehoahaz, Azariah) — 1 year
2 Kings 8:24-9:29
2 Chron. 22:1-9

12th year of Jehoram

Jehoram wounded in battle with Syrians at _____ (2 K. 8:28).

Wicked.

Ahaziah goes to visit Jehoram in _____ (2 K. 8:29) where he is recovering from wounds.

Jehu is anointed king in _____ (2 K. 9:1), hurries to _____ (2 K. 9:16) where he kills both kings.

-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-

the reigns of several kings. Stories grouped here.

OBADIAH probably prophesies now against _____ (Obad. 1, 10-14)

BEN-HADAD of Syria smothered by HAZAEL.

HAZAEL of Syria fights Israel.

A "SON OF THE PROPHETS" sent by Elisha

Lesson 28

Chart Of The Kings — Part II

DATES cont.	KINGS OF JUDAH, continued	KINGS OF ISRAEL, continued	PROPHETS continued	ENEMY KINGS continued
<p>ATHALIAH — 6 years 2 Kings 11:1-20 2 Chronicles 22:10-23:21</p> <p>Daughter of Ahab, wife of Jehoram, mother of Ahaziah of Judah. Killed all her grandchildren except Joash who was hidden from her by Jehoiada the high priest. Very wicked. Worshipped Baal.</p>	<p>JEHU — 28 years 2 Kings 9:1-10:36; 12:1 2 Chronicles 22:7-9 See 1 Kings 19:15-18</p> <p>Ruthlessly killed Jezebel; fulfilled prophecy of Elijah (1 K. 21:23). Killed all of Ahab's family, relatives, officials. Killed Baal worshippers.</p> <p>Jehu was promised his sons to the 4th generation would rule in Israel.</p>	<p>HAZAEI of Syria, Israel's arch-enemy</p> <p>Jehu paid tribute to SHALMANESER III of Assyria according to Assyrian records.</p>		
<p>Jehoiada proclaimed Joash king when he was 7 years old. Athaliah is executed.</p> <p>JOASH (Jehoash) — 40 years 2 Kings 11:1-12:21 2 Chronicles 22:10-24:27</p> <p>Under Jehoiada: Baal temple destroyed. Temple of the Lord repaired.</p> <p>23rd year of Joash</p> <p>Jehoiada dies, is buried with the kings. Joash abandons the worship at the temple. Turned to idols. Is rebuked by Zechariah, son of Jehoiada. Joash has Zechariah killed.</p> <p>Hazael attacked the city of _____ and set his face toward _____ (2 K. 12:17). Joash took treasures from the temple to pay off Hazael.</p>	<p>Had the opportunity to turn Israel back to Jehovah. Turned to Jeroboam's golden calves instead. God was angry. Israel began losing much territory. Hazael took all the land east of the _____, all the land of _____ from Aroer by the valley of the _____ all the way to _____ (2 K. 10:32-33).</p> <p>JEHOAHAZ — 17 years 2 Kings 13:1-9, 22-25</p> <p>Wicked. Worshipped Jeroboam's golden calves. Israel brought very low. Under the power of Hazael of Syria. Jehoahaz's army reduced to a token force.</p> <p>Jehoahaz prayed to God for help; God promised to send Israel a "savior".</p>	<p>JOEL, probably active. Locust swarm, a cry for repentance toward God.</p> <p>ZECHARIAH, son of Jehoiada</p>		<p>HAZAEI attacks Judah.</p>

Map #12 — The Divided Kingdom: In The Days of Jehoahaz of Israel

Label and number your map.

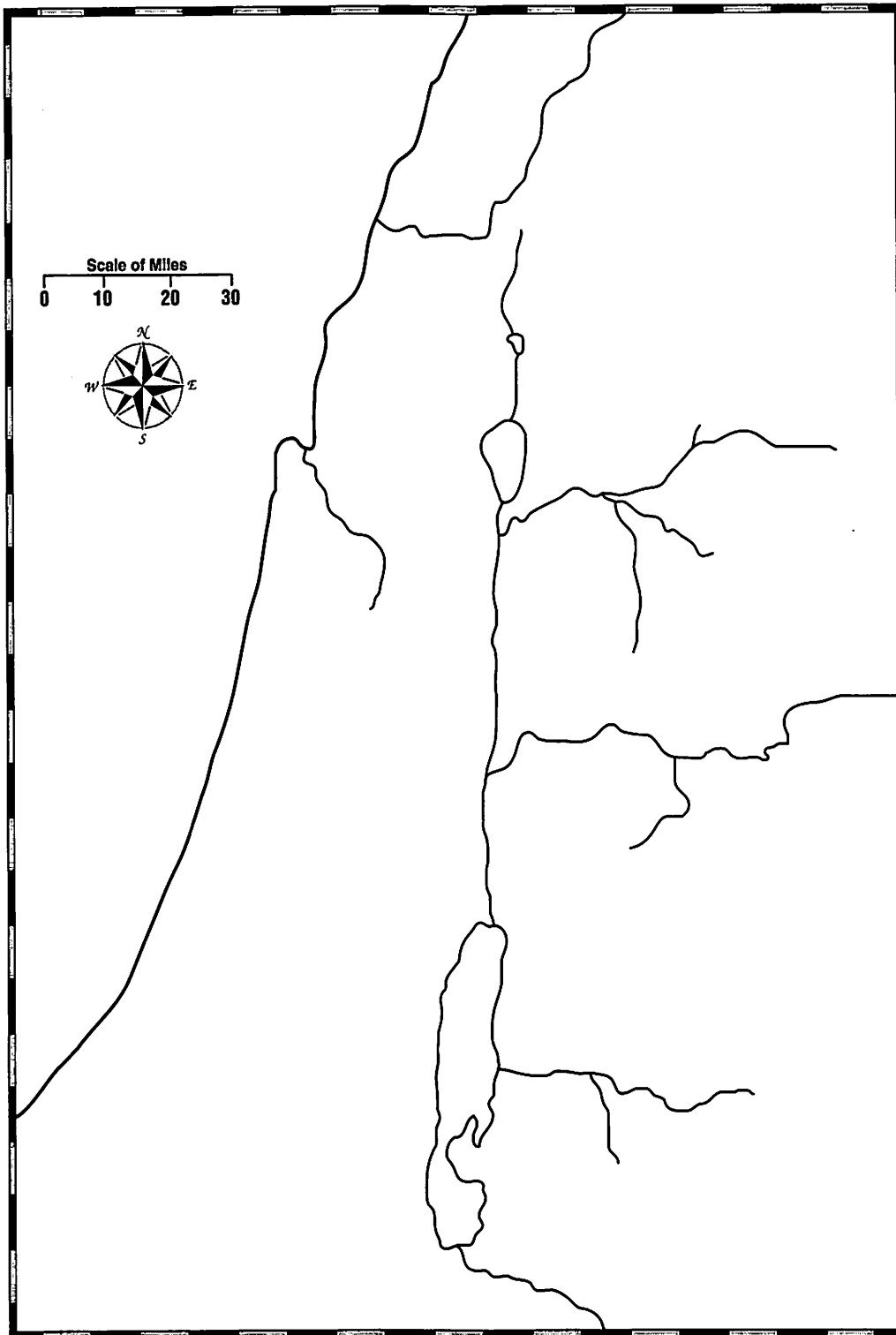
Label Syria. Draw arrows to show their devastation of Israel.

Draw the territory remaining to Jehoahaz.

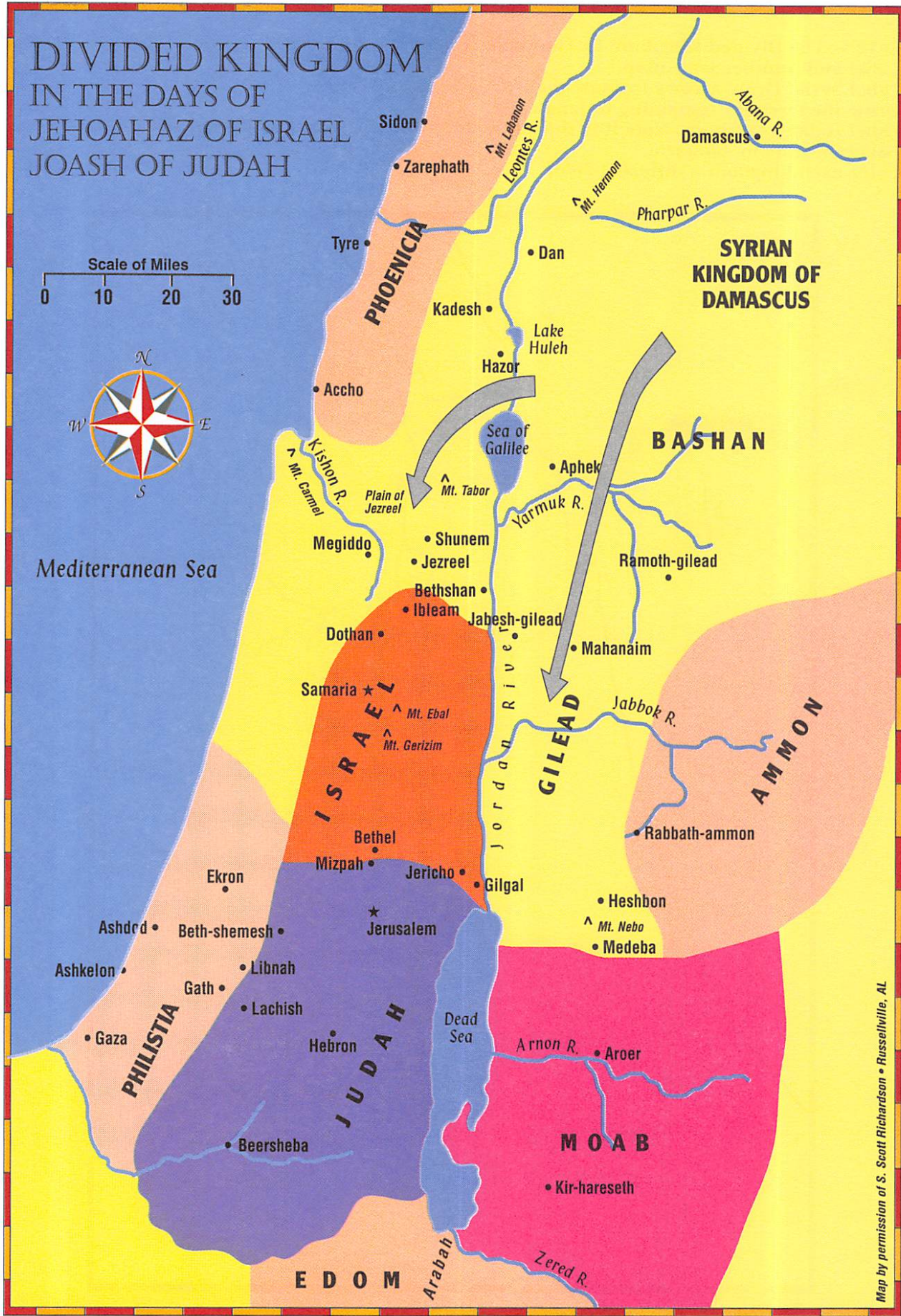
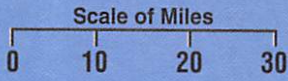
Label Judah's territory. Note it is sharply reduced in size from its original size.

Label: Jerusalem, Samaria

Color each kingdom a different color.



DIVIDED KINGDOM IN THE DAYS OF JEHOAHAZ OF ISRAEL JOASH OF JUDAH



Map by permission of S. Scott Richardson • Russellville, AL

DATES cont.	KINGS OF JUDAH, continued	KINGS OF ISRAEL, continued	PROPHETS continued	ENEMY KINGS continued
<p><u>JOASH, continued</u> 37th year of Joash</p>	<p>Killed by his officials. Buried in Jerusalem, but not in the tombs of the kings.</p>	<p><u>JEHOASH (Joash)</u> — 16 years 2 Kings 13:10-14:22</p>	<p>ELISHA dies.</p>	<p>HAZAEEL dies, his son BEN-HADAD made king of Syria.</p>
<p>800</p>	<p><u>AMAZIAH</u> — 29 years 2 Kings 14:1-22 2 Chronicles 25:1-28</p> <p>As good as Joash at first, but became more wicked. Subdued Edom. Captured _____ (2 K. 14:7).</p>	<p>2nd year of Jehoash. Defeated Ben-hadad 3 times. Regained cities that had been taken by Hazael.</p>	<p>ELISHA dies.</p>	<p>HAZAEEL dies, his son BEN-HADAD made king of Syria.</p>
<p>15th year of Amaziah</p>	<p>Amaziah fought against Jehoash at _____ (2 K. 14:11). Amaziah grievously defeated.</p>	<p><u>JEROBOAM, II</u> — 41 years 2 Kings 14:23-29</p>	<p><u>JONAH</u> sent to _____ of Assyria. (Jonah 1:2)</p>	<p>Assyria in a period of weakness</p>
<p>Amaziah killed in a conspiracy by his own people.</p>	<p>Jehovah delivers Israel. Jeroboam restores Israel's border from the entrance to _____ to the sea of the _____ (Dead Sea) - (2 K. 14:25).</p>	<p>People and king continued in full-fledged apostasy from God.</p>	<p><u>JONAH</u> sent to _____ of Assyria. (Jonah 1:2)</p>	<p>Assyria in a period of weakness</p>
<p><u>UZZIAH (Azariah)</u> — 52 years 2 Kings 14:21-22; 15:1-7 2 Chronicles 26:1-25</p>	<p>Good king under influence of Zechariah the prophet. Warred against the _____, broke the walls of _____, and _____ (2 Ch. 26:6). In addition, God helped him against the _____ who dwelt in _____, and the _____ (another Arabian tribe)-(2 Ch. 26:7); and the _____ brought him gifts.</p>	<p>27th year of Jeroboam II</p>	<p>ZECHARIAH in Judah</p>	<p><u>AMOS</u> denounced the wickedness of rich Israel</p>
<p>775</p>	<p>Uzziah fortified Jerusalem and built an exceeding strong army.</p>	<p>Jeroboam recovered _____ and _____ (2 K. 14:28).</p>	<p><u>HOSEA</u> — grieved over the spiritual adultery of Israel.</p>	<p><u>HOSEA</u> — grieved over the spiritual adultery of Israel.</p>

Map #13 – The Divided Kingdom: In The Days of Jeroboam II and Uzziah

Label and number your map.

Label the neighboring countries:

Phoenicia	Edom
Syria	Moab
Philistia	Ammon

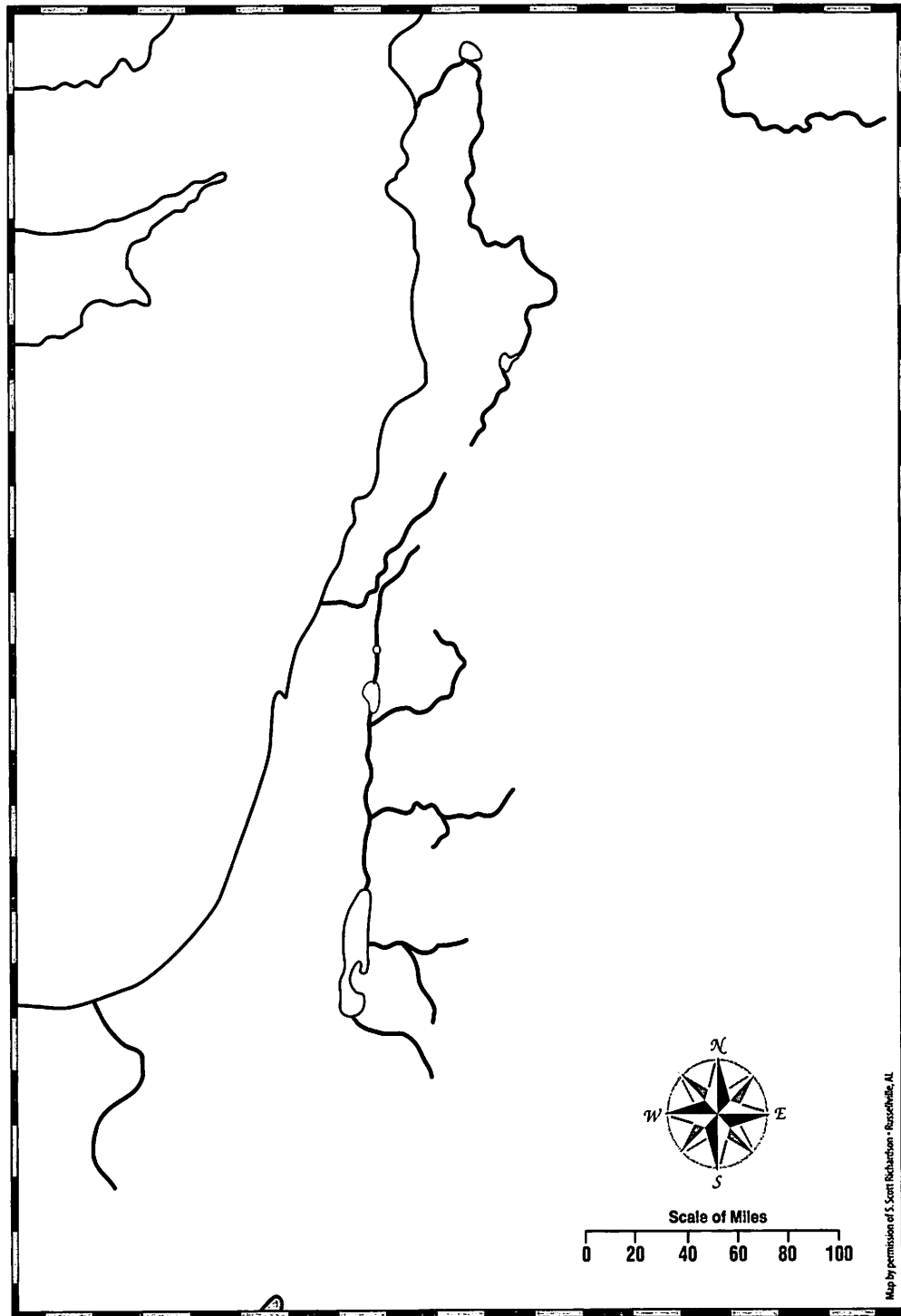
Label the places Jeroboam II recovered and those Uzziah subdued.

Color the territories Israel and Judah now claim.

Label: Jerusalem, Samaria

Compare Map #13 with Map #12. God had sent a "savior."

Compare Map #13 to Map #10.



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DATES cont.	KINGS OF JUDAH, continued	KINGS OF ISRAEL, continued	PROPHETS continued	ENEMY KINGS continued
	UZZIAH, continued	JEROBOAM, II, continued		
	Time of prosperity. People gave lip-service to God (Isa. 1:11-15).		ISAIAH , advisor to the kings of Judah	
	38th year of Uzziah	ZECHARIAH — 6 months 2 Kings 15:8-12		
		Wicked. Golden calves. 4th descendant of Jehu to reign. Fulfilled prophecy (2 K. 10:30)		
		Killed by Shallum.		
		-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-		
	39th year of Uzziah	SHALLUM — 1 month 2 Kings 15:13-15		
		Slain by Menahem.		
		-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-		
	39th year of Uzziah	MENAHEM — 10 years 2 Kings 15:14-22		
		Very cruel. Fought _____ and _____ (2 K. 15:16) because they "opened not to him."		
	Uzziah tried to offer incense in the temple. Was stricken with leprosy. Jotham made co-regent with his father.	Israel was invaded by Pul, king of Assyria. Forced to pay an enormous tribute.		PUL of Assyria took title of TIGLATH-PILESER III
750	50th year of Uzziah	PEKAHIAH — 2 years 2 Kings 15:23-26		
		Slain by Pekah, his captain.		
		-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-		
	52nd year of Uzziah	PEKAH — 20 years 2 Kings 15:25-31; 16:1-5 2 Chronicles 28:5-15		
		Very wicked. Worshipped golden calves. 2nd year of Pekah		
	JOTHAM — 16 years 2 Kings 15:5, 32-38		MICAH , the	

2 Chronicles 26:21; 27:1-9

Did that which was right in God's sight. People were corrupt.

Subjugated the _____ (2 Ch. 27:5).

Pekah and Rezin began trying to force Judah to join their alliance.

AHAZ — 16 years

2 Kings 16:1-20

2 Chronicles 28:1-27

Isaiah 7

Terribly wicked king; worshipped Baal; burned his children in the fire to Molech.

_____ (2 K. 16:5) attacked by Pekah and Rezin; They could not take the city, but many killed and captives taken from Judah. Syria took _____ (Ezion-geber) and forced all Jews out (2 K. 16:6).

Judah also invaded by _____ and the _____ (2 Ch. 28:17, 18).

Ahaz sent to the king of Assyria for help.

Tiglath-pileser came against _____ (2 K. 16:9)

Took the city, killed Rezin.

Made Ahaz his tributary.

Ahaz began worshipping the gods of _____

(2 K. 16:10). Put his altar in the temple

court. Shut the doors of the temple.

12th year of Ahaz

HEZEKIAH — 29 years

2 Kings 18:1-20:21

2 Chronicles 28:27-32:33

Isaiah 36-39

Destroyed idols; trusted the Lord; cleansed the temple; restored the daily sacrifices; made a tremendous effort to renew the spiritual life of Judah.

A great Passover feast kept with many from _____, and _____ attending (2 Ch. 30:11).

Rebelled against Assyria. Made an alliance with Rezin of Syria for their mutual protection from Assyria.

REZIN of Syria

prophet to the down-trodden in Judah

HOSEA, ISAIAH, and MICAH continuing their work.

ODED

Oded the prophet rebuked Pekah for taking captives.

They took the captives back to _____

and released them (2 Ch. 28:15).

Tiglath-pileser of Assyria took _____,

_____ and _____; all of _____

and _____, all the land of _____ (2 K. 15:29).

Pekah slain by Hoshea.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

HOSHEA — 9 years

2 Kings 15:30; 17:1-18:1; 18:9-12

Wicked, but not as bad as the kings before him.

3rd year of Hoshea

Hoshea became tributary to the king of Assyria.

Hoshea made an alliance with So, king of _____ (2 K. 17:4); rebelled against Shalmaneser king of _____ (2 K. 17:4).

City of _____ besieged by Assyrians (2 K. 17:5, 6).

The city fell; captives taken to _____, and placed in _____ and _____ by the river _____, and in the cities of the _____ (2 K. 17:6).

SO of Egypt

SHALMANESER V of Assyria

besieged Samaria

Siege finished by SARGON II

DATES cont.	KINGS OF JUDAH, continued	KINGS OF ISRAEL, continued	PROPHETS continued	ENEMY KINGS continued
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Only poorest left.

Foreigners brought in from _____, _____, and _____ (2 K. 17:24) to fill the vacuum in Samaria. They mixed with the poor left in the land; became known as "Samaritans."

721 6th year of Hezekiah

ISRAEL IS FINISHED

-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-

Lesson 29

Chart Of The Kings — Part III

DATES cont.	KINGS OF JUDAH, continued	PROPHETS continued	ENEMY KINGS continued
	<p>HEZEKIAH, continued 2 Kings 18:1-20:21 2 Chronicles 28:27-32:33 Isaiah 36-39</p> <p>In Hezekiah's 14th year, Sennacherib of Assyria came up against all the fenced cities of _____, and took them (2 K. 18:13). Sennacherib was camped with his army at _____ (Isa. 36:2) while he sent Assyrian officials to threaten _____ (Isa. 36:2). Hezekiah prayed for help; and God struck the Assyrian host with a plague.</p>	<p>ISAIAH, HOSEA, and MICAH still continuing their work.</p>	<p>SENNACHERIB of Assyria</p>
700	<p>Hezekiah became very ill; was first told he would die; then his life was extended 15 years.</p> <p>Emissaries from _____ (2 K. 20:12) came to visit Hezekiah. He showed them all the treasures of Jerusalem. Isaiah rebuked Hezekiah; predicted the treasures would someday be taken to _____ (2 K. 20:17).</p>		<p>MERODACH-BALADAN of Babylon</p>
675	<p>MANASSEH — 55 years 2 Kings 21:1-18 2 Chronicles 32:33-33:20</p> <p>Exceedingly wicked. Built altars and set up image of Asherah in the house of God. Burned his sons in the fire; dealt in witchcraft and related matters. Filled Jerusalem with innocent blood.</p>		<p>SENNACHERIB killed by his own sons in his land.</p>
650	<p>Mannasseh tips the scales away from God's mercy and toward the need for judgment. Worse than the _____ (2 K. 21:11) who were cast out before the Israelites in Joshua's day. God said He would judge Judah by the same standard He used with Ahab and _____ (2 K. 21:13).</p> <p>Mannasseh was taken captive by the king of _____ and was put in prison in _____ (2 Ch. 33:11). He repented; prayed to God; and was allowed to come back to _____ (2 Ch. 33:13).</p> <p>He spent the rest of his life trying to undo some of his own evil.</p>		
	<p>AMON — 2 years 2 Kings 21:18-26 2 Chronicles 33:21-25</p>		

DATES cont.	KINGS OF JUDAH, continued	PROPHETS continued	ENEMY KINGS continued
Wicked like Manasseh; but did not repent.			
Killed by his own servants			
<u>JOSIAH</u> — 31 years 2 Kings 21:26-23:30 2 Chronicles 33:25-35:27	Possibly the best king Judah ever had, but Judah's destruction still decreed because of Manasseh's sins. Purged idols from _____ and _____ (2 Ch. 34:3). He even went on to the cities of _____, _____, and _____ (2 Ch. 34:6).	HULDAH the prophetess	
	Later, he gave orders for the temple to be repaired. The workmen found a copy of the Law of Moses. Josiah was dismayed at the message. Huldah the prophetess said the destruction of Judah was inevitable; but postponed for Josiah's sake.		
	Josiah assembled his people; read the law publicly; renewed the covenant with God.	<u>ZEPHANIAH</u> — world judgment	
625	He began a new campaign to destroy idolatry. He defiled _____ in the valley of the sons of _____ (2 K. 23:10) to stop the worship of Molech. He destroyed the high places in _____ (2 K. 23:13) that Solomon had built for his heathen wives. He destroyed the shrine to the golden calf at _____ (2 K. 23:15), fulfilling the prophecy of 1 Kings 13:1-3.	<u>NAHUM</u> — Rejoice, Nineveh will fall.	Nineveh falls to Babylonians and Medes (612 B.C.)
	He and his subjects observed the greatest Passover since Samuel's day.	<u>HABAKKUK</u> — "How long, O Lord, will you allow the wicked to go unpunished?"	PHARAOH-NECHO of Egypt
	Slain in battle with Pharaoh-Necho at _____ (2 K. 23:29).		
	<u>JEOAHAZ (Shallum)</u> — 3 months 2 Kings 23:31-34 2 Chronicles 36:1-3 Jer. 22:10-12	<u>JEREMIAH</u> — the prophet to cry "Give up" — "Too late to avoid judgment"	
	A son of Josiah. Made king by the people. Very wicked.		
	Taken as prisoner to _____ (2 K. 23:34) where he died. Pharaoh-Necho demanded tribute from the land.		
	<u>JEOIAKIM (Eliakim)</u> — 11 years 2 Kings 23:34-24:6 2 Chronicles 36:4-8 Jeremiah 22:18-19; 36:1-32		
	Another son of Josiah. Made king by Pharaoh-Necho. Exceedingly wicked.		
	Nebuchadnezzar of _____ (2 K. 24:1) made Judah his tributary. Jehoiakim was loyal 3 years, then rebelled.	JEREMIAH'S work continuing.	NEBUCHADNEZZAR of Babylon

606 Bands of _____, and _____, and _____ came up against Judah (2 K. 24:2).
Nebuchadnezzar besieged _____ (Dan. 1:1), took captives and treasures from the
city. Daniel was included in this group.

Jeremiah predicts a 70 year captivity (Jer. 25:8-11).

Jehoiakim cut a scroll of God's word; threw it into the fire (Jer. 36:1-26).

Nebuchadnezzar came again. Jehoiakim was bound and then killed.
Egypt did not help in the battle because Nebuchadnezzar controlled all the land from the _____
of _____ on the southern edge of Canaan to the river _____ (2 K. 24:7).

Jehoiachin (Coniah) — 3 months

2 Kings 24:6-16; 25:27-30

2 Chronicles 36:8-10

Jeremiah 22:24-30; 52:31-34

Son of Jehoiakim. Wicked.

597 Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem. Jehoiachin and his officials surrendered and went out to
the king. He and 10,000 craftsmen of Judah were deported to Babylon. Ezekiel the prophet taken.

Reckoned by the Jews as the rightful heir to David's throne. In the lineage of Christ.
Finally, released from prison and allowed place of honor among captive kings in Babylon.

Zedekiah (Mattaniah) — 11 years

2 Kings 24:17-25:7

2 Chronicles 36:10-23

Jeremiah 34, 37, 52

Another son of Josiah; Made puppet king by Nebuchadnezzar. Very wicked.

Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon. Jerusalem was besieged.
Jeremiah warned, "Too late to avoid destruction."

Jerusalem fell; the walls were battered into rubble; the city was burned; the temple was destroyed.
All remaining treasures from the temple and city taken.

All remaining people except the very poorest taken captive.

Zedekiah's sons and officials killed before his eyes; then his eyes were put out and he was
taken as prisoner.

God had waited "till there was no remedy."

Gedaliah — 2 months

2 Kings 25:22-26

Jeremiah 40:1-44:30

Not of the royal blood line. Appointed as "puppet governor" over the remaining poor in the land.

He set up headquarters at _____ (2 K. 25:23).

DANIEL chosen
to serve in
court of the
kings of
Babylon

EZEKIEL, the
prophet to the
common Jew
in Babylonian
-captivity.

JEREMIAH'S work
continues in
Judah

DATES cent.	KINGS OF JUDAH, continued	PROPHETS continued	ENEMY KINGS continued
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Jews who had fled to _____, _____, _____, and other countries came back and harvested abundant crops (Jer. 40:11).

King of _____ hired Ishmael to murder Gedaliah (Jer. 40:14). Ishmael killed Gedaliah plus many others and then fled to _____ (Jer. 41:15).

The remaining Jews fled to _____ (Jer. 41:17; 2 K. 25:26), taking Jeremiah with them.

JUDAH IS FALLEN

BAALIS, king
of the Ammonites

The Fall Of Israel

1 Kings 12 — 2 Kings 17
Prophets: Jonah, Amos, Hosea

The kingdom of Israel was doomed to have trouble as soon as Jeroboam built his golden calves to worship instead of Jehovah. As each wicked king followed, the troubles multiplied. Follow your chart from Lessons 27 and 28 carefully as you study this lesson.

Syria was a serious problem to Israel as early as the days of Baasha when King Asa of Judah hired Ben-hadad of Syria to attack Israel's northern cities. The threat only grew as Israel became more wicked. Notice the passages shown on your chart concerning Ahab's frequent conflicts with Syria.

_____ (2 Kings 1:1) rebelled against Israel as soon as Ahab died. A stele belonging to King Mesha of Moab called the "Moabite Stone" has been found. It describes Moab's victories in both Israel and Judah. There were several battles through the years that followed, but Israel never regained more than temporary control.

Jehu had an opportunity to turn his people to God after he destroyed Ahab's family and the Baal worshippers, but he did not do so. He went back to the gods of Jeroboam. Therefore:

In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; From _____ eastward, all the land of _____, the _____, and the _____, and the _____, from Aroer, which is by the river _____, even _____ and _____. 2 Kings 10:32-33

Jehoahaz was as wicked as his father, and Israel continued to lose ground. Jehoahaz was left with an army consisting of only 50 horsemen, 10 chariots, and 10,000 foot soldiers. See Map #12. Israel was on the brink of total destruction from Syria, a country no larger than itself. Jehoahaz cried to Jehovah for help when he reached his lowest point. God was merciful — again — and promised to send His people a "savior" to deliver them from Syria.

Sure enough, Jehoahaz's son Jehoash had three decisive victories over Syria. Jeroboam II followed his footsteps and pushed Israel's borders all the way from "the entrance of _____" to the northern tip of the "sea of the _____" (Dead Sea) (2 Kings 14:25). Compare Israel's territory on Maps #12 and 13.

Judah had a good king named Uzziah at the same time Jeroboam II was reigning in Israel. God was with him and he fought successfully against the _____, the _____, and the _____ (2 Chron. 26:6-7). Even the _____ (26:8) paid him tribute. The two kings together controlled nearly as much as David had once held. Compare Map #13 with Map #10.

God's providence was at work or the little kingdoms could not have prospered. A huge dark cloud had been growing on the horizon for some years. Many nations rose and fell within the Bible era that do not come within the scope of our study because they did not touch the Israelites directly. The early history of Assyria is an example of such a nation. By this point in our Bible history, they had been in existence for many years. Their capital was at Nineveh in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley. Their strength would grow or wane depending on the forcefulness of each king. Assyria was at a low ebb of strength at this particular point of history or they would have challenged any sign of strength from Israel and Judah.

The very name of the Assyrians has come to be synonymous with cruelty and ruthlessness. Vast libraries have been found among the ruins of Nineveh. The kings kept very exact records, including such descriptions as: "I conquered the cities . . . I caused much slaughter, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned. I took their fighting men prisoners and impaled them on sharpened stakes in full view of their cities" (*Story of the Bible World* by Nelson Beecher Keyes, p. 76). Even after allowing for the boastfulness of a king, it seems they were indeed telling the truth about their cruelty.

They were the first to build an army able to conquer an extensive empire. Of course, the part of their conquests that interests us most is the area of Canaan. It is ironic that their interest in Syria and Palestine was merely an effort to remove everything in their path to Egypt. They did not succeed in subduing Egypt to the extent they wanted, but Egypt was forced to pay tribute.

Map #14 — The Assyrian Empire

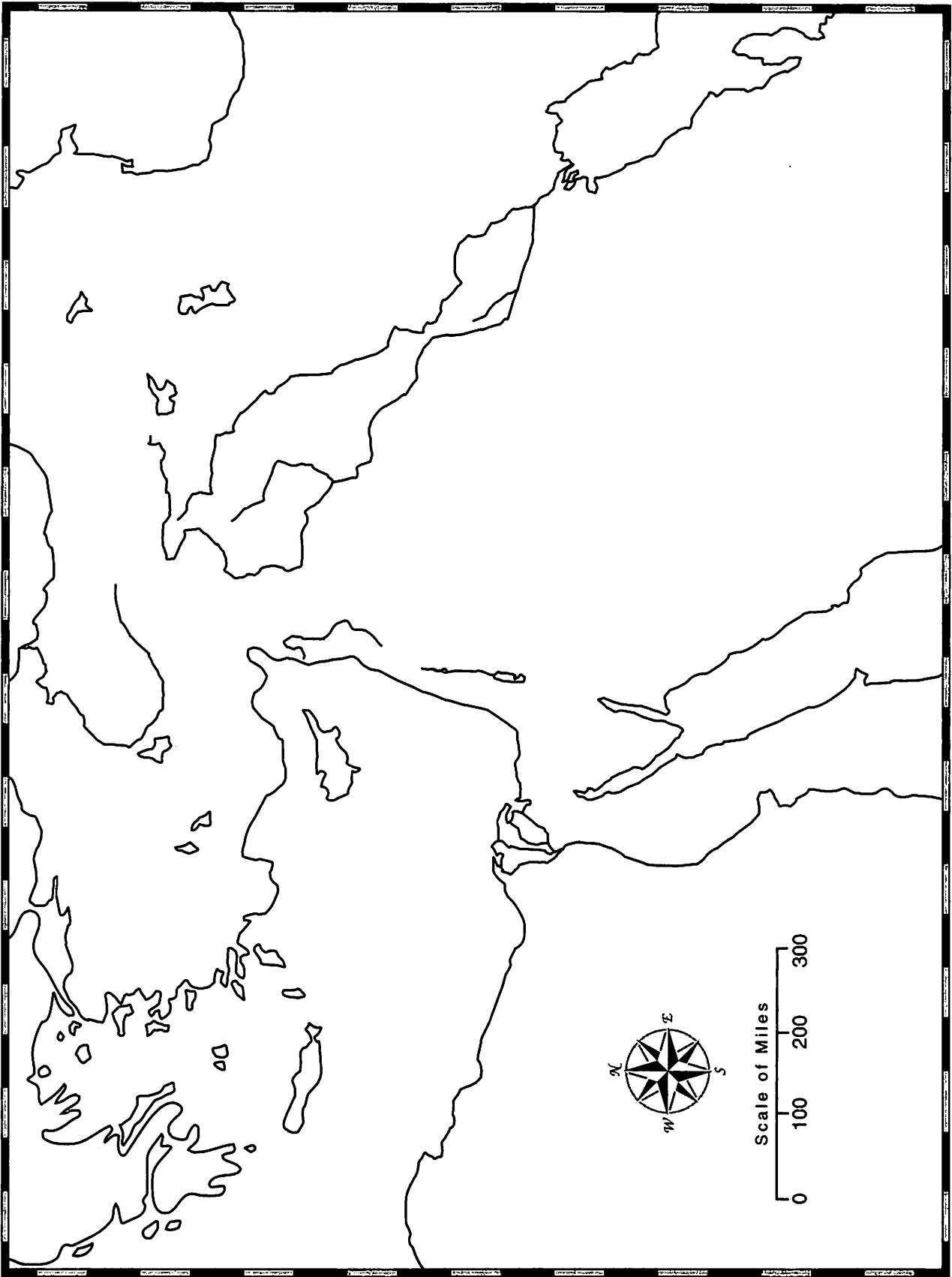
Notice we need a map of all Bible lands again.

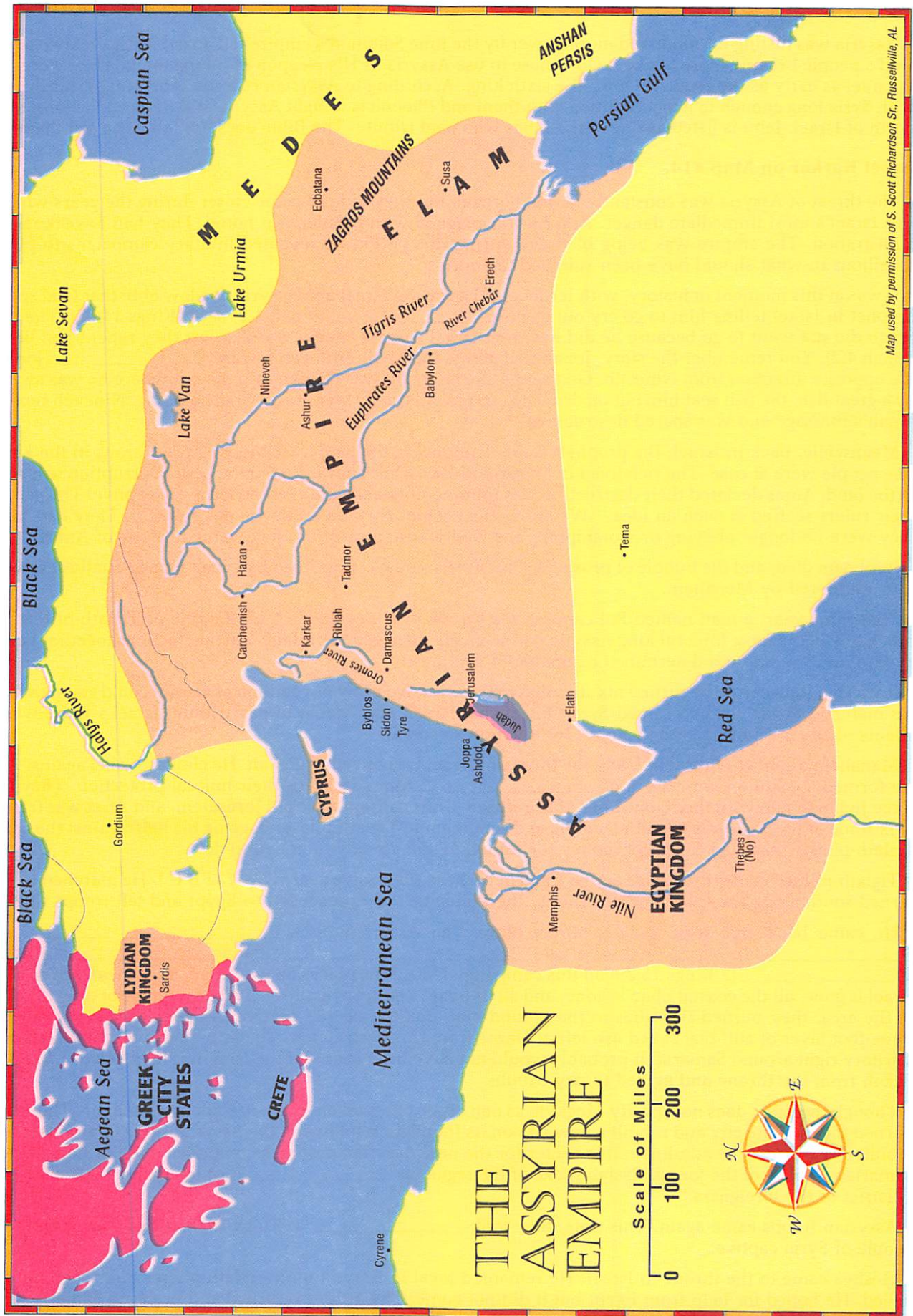
Label and color your map.

Color all bodies of water.

Draw a dotted line around Canaan.

Label: Tigris River, Euphrates River, Nineveh, Egypt





Map used by permission of S. Scott Richardson Sr., Russellville, AL

Assyria was lusting for more and more power by the time Solomon's empire fell apart. As the years passed, and God's people became more wicked, God chose to use Assyria as His weapon of punishment. They were a threat to Israel as early as the reign of Omri, the sixth king. According to Assyrian records, Ahab forgot his differences with Syria long enough to join a coalition with them and Phoenicia to fight Assyria at Karkar on the Orontes River north of Israel. Jehu is listed as one of the kings who paid tribute. The Bible does not tell us any of these stories.

Label Karkar on Map #14.

The threat of Assyria was constantly on the horizon, but they did not come closer during the years while Syria was Israel's most immediate danger. Assyria was plagued with problems at home. They had a weakness in administration. The empire was being bled dry during this period by repeated military campaigns to put down rebellions in what should have been subdued territories.

It was at this moment in history, with Jeroboam II strong in Israel and Assyria at a low ebb, that God spoke to a prophet in Israel telling him to go cry out against _____ (Jonah 1:2; see 2 Kings 14:25). The prophet Jonah did not want to go because he did not want Israel's worst enemy warned, lest they repent and be spared (Jonah 4:2). You remember the story. Jonah fled across the Mediterranean toward _____ (Jonah 1:3), the opposite direction from Nineveh. God sent a storm, Jonah was thrown into the sea where he was swallowed by a great fish, the fish spat him out on dry land, and Jonah finally went to do God's bidding. Nineveh repented at Jonah's message and was spared destruction.

Meanwhile, back in Israel, the prophets were denouncing the people. All looked prosperous in the kingdom. The people were at ease. The rich lived in houses of ivory while they afflicted the poor. Corruption was rampant in the land. Amos declared their destruction was imminent! Israel would be carried away captive! The people and their rulers scoffed at such an idea. "We are God's people. How could we be destroyed?" They had forgotten they were no longer obeying or worshipping the God whose protection they wanted. (Book of Amos.)

Jeroboam died, and the bubble of prosperity burst. His son was murdered by a man named Shallum who was in turn murdered by Menahem.

That same year, a man named Pul came to the throne of Nineveh. He took the title of Tiglath-pileser III and proved to be the most forceful king Assyria had seen. He managed to pull the warring factions together within his empire and set out on a determined campaign of conquest.

It was not long before he turned his attention to the west. No army or coalition of armies could stand in his path. He marched to the sea and forced Syria, Phoenicia, Israel, and Arabia to pay tribute. Israel's share was 1,000 talents of silver — a staggering amount for a nation so small.

Menahem's son was murdered, and the throne of Israel was seized by Pekah. He chose to rebel against Assyria. He formed a coalition with Rezin of _____ (2 Kings 16:5) for their mutual protection. They tried to force Judah to join with them, but King Ahaz refused. The coalition attacked Jerusalem, and Ahaz was frantic. He took some of the treasures from the temple and sent them to Tiglath-pileser begging his help against the coalition. Tiglath-pileser was glad to accept money for something he already intended to do.

Tiglath-pileser made three raids across Canaan in three successive years (734-732 B.C.). He marched to the sea, turned south along the shore and conquered the Philistines. He proceeded to Egypt and left troops there.

He came back and dealt Israel a direct blow. The Assyrians took _____, _____, _____, and _____, all the land of _____ (2 Kings 15:29) on this campaign. Notice the places on your map. That means all of northern Israel is gone, all the coastal plain is gone, and all of Israel's eastern territory. The Assyrians not only took control of the area, they burned the cities to the ground and took the people captive. Archaeologists tell us there is a three-foot layer of still-blackened ash left at Hazor from this destruction. The only portion left to Israel was the territory right around Samaria. It probably would not have been spared if the Israelites themselves had not taken Pekah from the throne and agreed to pay tribute.

Though the Bible does not specify Megiddo as one of the cities taken, there is evidence it fell too. The Assyrians burned the Israelite city and rebuilt a new city on its foundation following the Assyrian style of architecture. The rebuilt city became the administrative center for the new Assyrian province comprised of all of Canaan north of Samaria and west of the Jordan. Isaiah spoke of the region as "_____ of the nations" (Isa. 9:1), that is, "district of the foreigners."

Assyrian troops came again. This time, they took _____ (2 Kings 16:9), killed Rezin, and took the people of Syria captive.

Hoshea came to the throne in Israel. He remained loyal to Assyria until Tiglath-pileser died; then he, too, rebelled. He hoped for help from Egypt but it did not come. The armies returned and besieged Samaria. The city held out for three years before completely collapsing. Thus all Israel was in ashes (2 Kings 17). It was 721 years before Christ was born.

Shalmaneser was the name of the king who laid siege to Samaria. He died before the task was completed, and his place was taken by Sargon II. Isaiah mentions Sargon in Isaiah 20:1. His records telling of the fall of Samaria were found in the mid-1800's. "At the beginning of my rule, in the very first year I reigned . . . I set siege to and conquered Samaria . . . I carried away into captivity 27,290 persons who lived there; I took 50 fine chariots for my royal equipment" (*Story of the Bible World*, by Keyes, p. 81).

Tiglath-pileser had solved the administrative problems the empire had had earlier by removing all defeated people far from their homeland. This displacement tended to break down all sense of national resistance.

Thus, God's word came true. The kingdom of Israel had fallen, never to be rebuilt. The people were captive and scattered to the four corners of the empire. God's justice waited until His people had turned their backs entirely. Judgment was inevitable! Read 2 Kings 17:7-23 to see an inspired explanation for the fall of Israel. Now look on your chart of the kings. Israel is finished by the last of Lesson 28, but Judah continues in Lesson 29.

The Assyrians brought in other captive peoples to fill the vacuum in the new province of Samaria reaching from the Jordan to the sea. They intermarried with the very poor Israelites left in the land. They became the hated mixed race called the Samaritans that we find in the New Testament. The Assyrian ruler sent one of the Israelite priests back to instruct the new inhabitants in the ways of the "god of this land." The priest himself likely had a very tainted concept of God because Israel had not served God faithfully for generations. Then, the hearers mixed the concepts of Jehovah with their own idolatrous worship. It is no wonder Jesus later said to one of them, "Ye worship ye know not what . . ." (John 4:22; 2 Kings 17:24-41).

Mark the limits of Assyrian control at its widest extent. Color the area green.

Lesson 31

Judah's Last Days

2 Kings 18-25; 2 Chronicles 29-36

Prophets: Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Jeremiah

The kingdom of Judah felt the heavy hand of Assyria also. If their kings had all been as wicked as Ahaz who appealed to Tiglath-pileser for help, (see last lesson), Judah probably would have fallen soon after Israel. We are told the king of Assyria came to Ahaz, but gave him trouble rather than help (2 Chron. 28:20). Judah was also troubled by raids from the _____ and the _____ (2 Chron. 28:17, 18). Ahaz only became more and more wicked.

Study the chart of the kings for this lesson also (particularly lesson 29).

Fortunately, Ahaz's son Hezekiah was as righteous as his father had been wicked. He called the Levites and priests before him and said,

... Our fathers were unfaithful; they did evil in the eyes of the Lord our God and forsook Him . . . Therefore, the anger of the Lord has fallen on Judah and Jerusalem; He has made them an object of dread and horror and scorn . . . This is why our fathers have fallen by the sword and why our sons and daughters and our wives are in captivity. Now I intend to make a covenant with the Lord, the God of Israel, so that His fierce anger will turn away from us . . . (2 Chron. 29:3-11) NIV.

He did just that. He cleansed the temple, restored the worship, destroyed the idols in the land, and invited all the people to a Passover. He sent couriers throughout the land from _____ to _____ (2 Chron. 30:5) inviting all who were left from the Assyrian scourge to come to the feast. Many of the Israelites scorned the messengers, but there were some who listened. Some from _____, _____, _____, _____, and _____ came (2 Chron. 30:11, 18). There had not been a celebration like it since the days of David and Solomon.

Hezekiah's reforms were taking place in Judah during those last few years before Israel's final collapse. Samaria fell in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign.

By now, all the little countries of Palestine had either fallen completely to the Assyrians or were vassals paying an enormous tribute. Syria and Israel were gone. Tyre still stood, but most of Phoenicia was gone. A few Philistine cities still stood. Moab, Ammon, Edom, and Judah all continued with their own kings but were forced to pay tribute.

Map #15 — Judah, After the Fall of Israel

Label and number your map.

Draw in the tiny, sick kingdom of Judah. Label Jerusalem. Color the little kingdom.

Label: Tyre (the main Phoenician city left)

Ashdod and Gaza (the main Philistine cities left)

Label: Moab, Edom, Ammon (color each a separate color.)

Label the Assyrian provinces: Galilee, Dor, Samaria

Draw arrows from the south to indicate strong Egyptian influence.

Color the rest of the map light green (including Galilee, Dor, Samaria) to indicate Assyrian control.

Assyria was not ignoring these last countries. They made three separate raids in the area during the 20 years immediately following the fall of Samaria. They came the very next year (720 B.C.) to put down a revolt led by the king of Hamath. The revolt included those living in Damascus, Samaria, Gaza, and Egypt. The Assyrians swept down the coastal plain and put a quick stop to an Egyptian army that met them at Gaza.

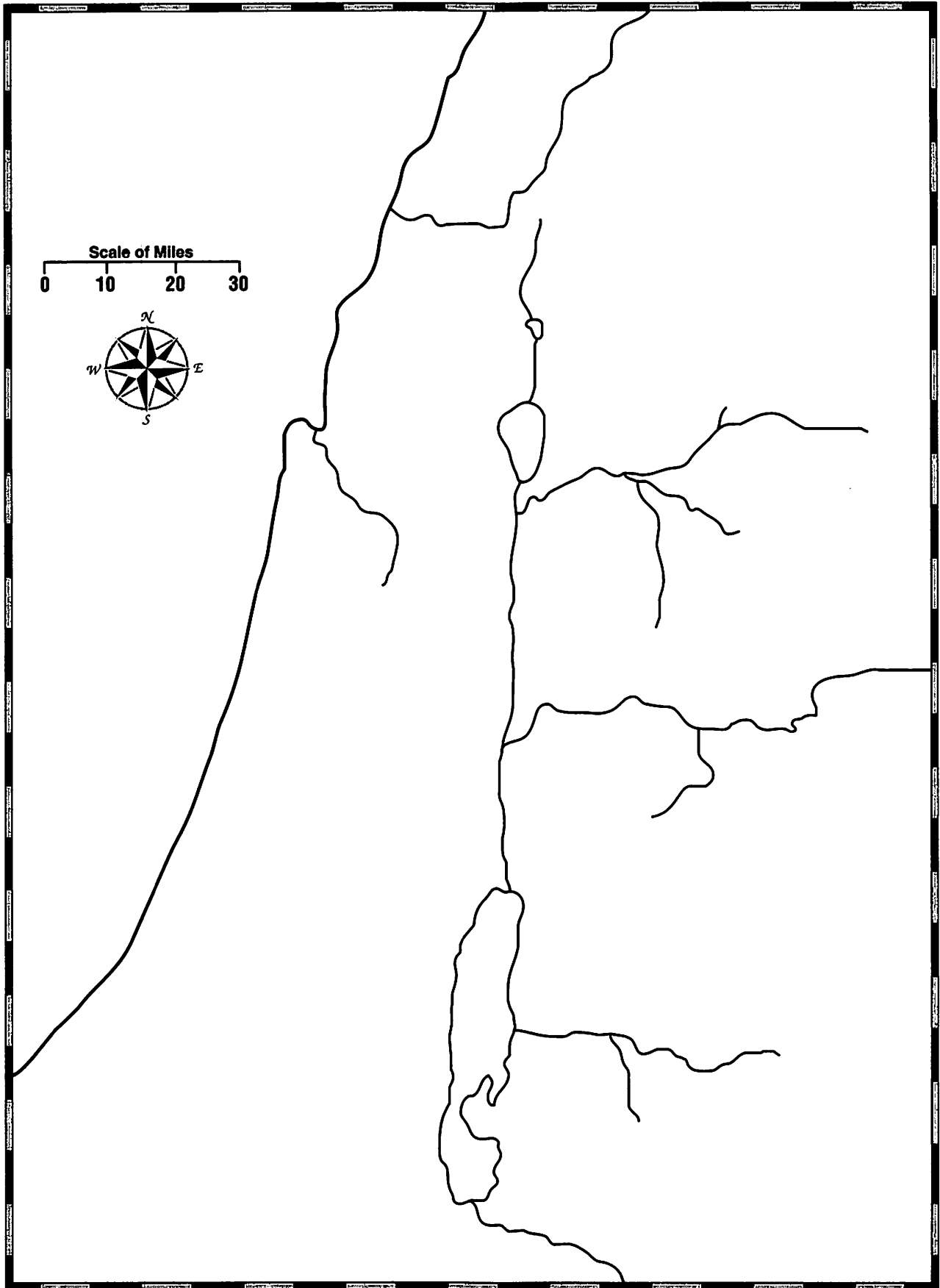
Ashdod and Egypt tried another coalition. Judah, Edom, and Moab seem to have given tentative support to the effort, but they withdrew quickly as the army approached. Ashdod and other neighboring towns fell under the scourge. The area was made a new province of Assyria, called Ashdod (see Isa. 20:1).

Label the Assyrian province of Ashdod.

King Sargon of Assyria was having trouble on the other end of his empire at this same time. Merodach-baladan, a Chaldean prince of Babylon, rebelled and set up an independent state in Babylon. From Assyrian records, it seems this particular struggle between Nineveh and Babylon lasted about 12 years before Babylon was subdued.

Label Babylon on Map #14.

Meanwhile, Egypt was reasserting its power. Egypt wanted a buffer state between herself and Assyria and, therefore, encouraged the little nations of Canaan to rebel. The prophet Isaiah strongly urged King Hezekiah not

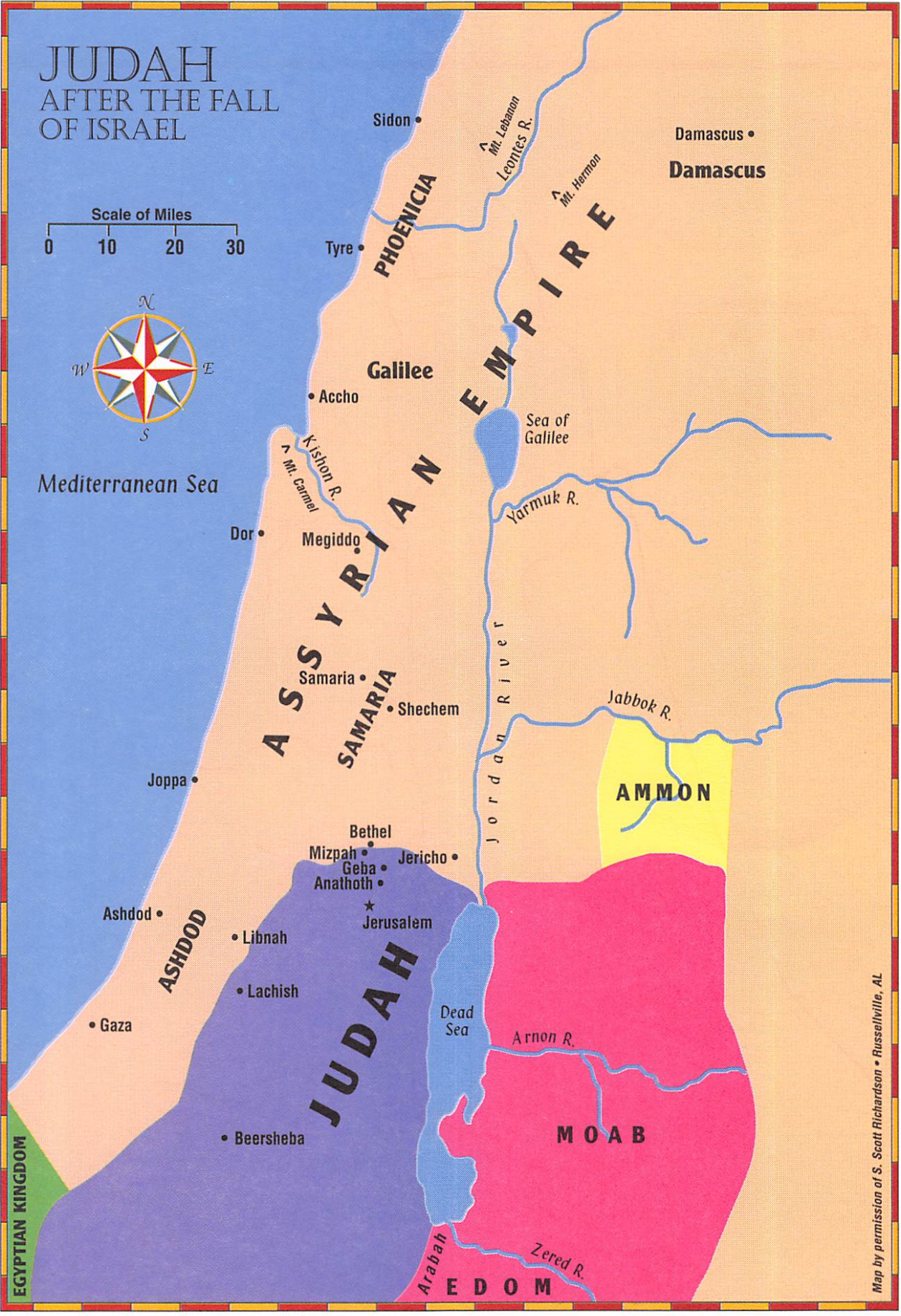


JUDAH AFTER THE FALL OF ISRAEL

Scale of Miles
0 10 20 30



Mediterranean Sea



Map by permission of S. Scott Richardson • Russellville, AL

to listen to Egypt, but there was a strong pro-Egyptian party in the land. Hezekiah withheld his tribute from Assyria and began making extensive fortifications throughout his territory. He dug a tunnel from the Gihon spring (2 Chron. 32:30) in the Kidron Valley and directed it into the Pool of Siloam inside the city in order to provide plenty of water to withstand a siege. The water still pours through the tunnel into the pool today.

In the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, the armies came en masse, this time under King Sennacherib. They destroyed the city of Tyre and then Joppa as they came down the coast. They met and defeated an Egyptian army that tried to stop them. Then, they laid siege to Judah's walled cities. One branch of the army swept northeast toward Bethel and took all the cities still standing in the area. They turned south and shut up Jerusalem "like a bird in a cage." Meanwhile, the other branch of the army devastated the countryside.

Hezekiah realized his danger and sent a huge tribute to the king camped at _____ (2 Kings 18:14). He had to strip the gold from the walls of the temple to find enough resources. That still did not appease Sennacherib. He sent officials to cry out to the men on the walls to surrender. Sennacherib sent insulting letters to say Jerusalem could not hope to stand. Both the speeches and the letters were insulting to the people and to God. Hezekiah carried the matter to Jehovah in prayer for His help. God answered with a promise,

He will not enter this city
or shoot an arrow here.
He will not come before it with shield
or build a siege ramp against it.

By the way he came he will return;
he will not enter this city,
declares the Lord.

I will defend this city and save it,
for my sake and for the sake of
David my servant!

(Isa. 37:33-35) NIV

As He had promised, God struck the Assyrian host with a plague. Sennacherib awoke one morning to find 185,000 of his soldiers dead. He withdrew from the land and did not return during his lifetime. Jerusalem was spared for another 100 years, but the toll had been high. Sennacherib's records boast of 46 walled cities and forts taken on the raid. Much of the land was in ashes.

Compare this Map #15 of tiny Judah and Map #7 which shows the land as God intended for His people to have. Why have they lost it? Has God broken His promise?

The Assyrian official who came to Jerusalem spoke to the people in Hebrew, the native language of the Israelites. The Israelite officials asked the Assyrians to speak in the Syrian or Aramaic language instead (2 Kings 18:26). We mentioned this language much earlier in our study. This was the language spoken by most of the people in northern Mesopotamia and Syria. Therefore, it was the native language of the Assyrians. Now all of this area we have been studying was either captive of or subject to the Assyrians. From this point on, the Aramaic language plays more and more part in the daily lives of the Israelites.

The name Jew began to be used about this time also. The first passage using the term is 2 Kings 16:6. There it refers to the people of Judah. Since that is the last kingdom left in the land, its use became more widespread as the years passed.

The righteous king Hezekiah was followed by his son Manasseh. He reigned for 55 years. He was the most wicked king Judah ever had. He must have revived worship to every idol Judah had ever served. He even built altars to all kinds of idols inside the temple grounds. He sacrificed his sons to Molech in the valley of the sons of _____ (2 Chron. 33:6), immediately south of the walls of Jerusalem. He practiced sorcery, witchcraft, and divination. He was cruel and unjust in all his dealings. The text says, he filled Jerusalem with the blood of innocent people. God declared he was worse than the Amorites that had been driven out of Canaan in Joshua's day. God's wrath was kindled. It was too late to appease it with sacrifices. He said He would wipe Jerusalem clean as if one were wiping a dish and setting it aside.

Manasseh remained loyal to Assyria. Two Assyrian kings, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, left records of his tribute payments. We are not told what provoked Assyria, but Manasseh was taken prisoner at some point. They put a hook in his nose, bound him with bronze shackles, and took him to _____ (2 Chron. 33:11). While he was in prison he turned his heart to seek Jehovah. God heard his prayer, and Manasseh was released and allowed to come back to his throne. He spent the last few years of his life trying to destroy the idols he had set up and to undo some of the evil he had done.

Manasseh's son Amon came to the throne. He was as wicked as his father had been, and unfortunately, he did not repent of his wickedness. He reigned only two years before he was killed by some of his own officials.

Judah likely would have fallen to Assyria during one of her raids if God's mercy had not intervened once more. Manasseh's grandson Josiah came to the throne when he was only 8 years old. While he was still a very young man, he determined to serve Jehovah. He destroyed the idols throughout the land. He gave orders that the temple

be cleansed. In so doing, the workers found an ancient copy of the law of Moses. The king was terrified when he heard it read. Huldah the prophetess told him the law was correct, and that God was as angry as the king feared. She said it was too late for the punishment to be averted, but that it would be postponed because of Josiah's faithfulness.

Try reading Deuteronomy 28 or Leviticus 26 and imagine how you would have felt if you had been in Josiah's position. Moses was instructed by God to write these things as a witness that the people were warned what would happen if they were unfaithful (Deut. 31:16-30).

Josiah renewed his efforts to clean up his land. He called the people together and led them in renewing their covenant with God. He defiled _____ in the valley of _____ (2 Kings 23:10) to stop the worship of Molech. He went to the altar at _____ (2 Kings 23:15) and destroyed the sanctuary that had been built by Jeroboam I for his golden calves. He burned the bones of the false priests on the altar, thus fulfilling the prophesy made by a man of God from Judah in 1 Kings 13:1-3. He destroyed the high places of the false gods that Solomon had built for his wives nearly 300 years earlier (2 Kings 23:13; see 1 Kings 11:4-8). He was the best king Judah ever had. Unfortunately, it was too late to turn his people back to God with more than a temporary zeal.

Meanwhile, Assyria was having troubles of her own. Egypt perpetually strove for independence. To the east, a people called the Medes were growing in strength. There were continuing rebellions from the city of Babylon. Arab tribes from the desert came in to plunder the lands of eastern Palestine and Syria. It became evident that the kings of Assyria could not hold the empire together much longer.

Ashurbanipal was the last strong king of Assyria. He was a mighty warrior as his predecessors had been, but he is remembered for another contribution he made to history. He collected a vast library of cuneiform literature. Excavators of Nineveh found his library during the nineteenth century. Much of what we know about the Assyrians, the Sumerians, the Babylonians, and all the other early peoples comes from this wealth of information.

The revolts continued. Finally, a Chaldean prince named Nabopolassar managed to gain independence for Babylon. He joined forces with the Medes, and they laid siege to the city of Nineveh. It fell after only three months, never to rise again (612 B.C.). Another decisive battle, at Carchemish, marked Assyria's final downfall.

Label the Medes' territory on Map #14.

Josiah was reigning in Judah during these last years of Assyria's struggles. All troops had to be pulled from the provinces to try to protect Nineveh, so Judah was free by default. Josiah was able to take at least nominal control of most of the land of Canaan. Archaeologists say the city of Megiddo came under his control and was restored as his administrative headquarters for control of the northern section of the land.

The little kingdom of Judah sighed with relief when Nineveh fell. The book of Nahum is a prophetic expression of exultation over the fall of the city. Unfortunately, Judah had heartaches ahead.

Egypt was also rejoicing over the fall of Assyria. But they saw an increasing danger in the rising Babylonians. It would be into Egypt's advantage if a weakened, but still existing, Assyrian remained between Egypt and Babylon. Assyrian troops continued to fall back after Nineveh fell. Pharaoh-Necho of Egypt decided to rush north along the Way of the Sea and help Assyria.

Josiah was not as far-sighted as Necho and he did not want Assyria helped. He took his army out and met Necho in battle at _____ (2 Chron. 35:22). Josiah was killed, and Necho rushed on to Haran, too late to save Assyria (609 B.C.). The final blow to Assyria came in 605 with a battle at Carchemish. Necho was defeated then also, defeating any hope of a weakened Assyria remaining or of establishing Egypt's claim to the area. Assyria was dead; and Egypt was impotent.

The Jews placed Josiah's son Jehoahaz on the throne in his father's stead. Only three months later, Necho deposed Jehoahaz and placed his brother Jehoiakim on the throne. Necho took Jehoahaz to Egypt as a prisoner and laid a heavy tribute on the land (2 Kings 23:31-34).

Meanwhile, Babylon and Media agreed to co-exist. Media laid claim to all the land north and east of Nineveh. Babylon claimed all of Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, Arabia, and Egypt. Let us leave Media for the moment, and follow the new Babylonian empire since it is the one to touch God's people next. Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had no difficulty enforcing his claim on any of the regions until he came to Egypt. There, as usual, the foe was formidable. Babylon was victorious, but severely weakened.

Trouble was mounting in Judah. Josiah's two sons, Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim, were both terribly wicked. The predicted destruction was at hand. Judah was only a pawn in the hands of enemy kings.

Jehoiakim accepted Babylon's rule when the armies first came, but he thought he saw his chance to rebel when he saw Babylon weakened by Egypt. We are told that _____, _____, _____, and _____ raiders (2 Kings 24:2) came against Judah, probably at Nebuchadnezzar's instigation.

Babylonian forces also came and took treasures from the temple of God and the best of the young men, par-

ticularly from the royal family and the nobility (Dan. 1:1-6; see 2 Kings 20:14-19). Daniel and his three friends were in this first group taken. This, the beginning of Judah's captivity, was in 606 B.C.

Jehoiakim rebelled again and Nebuchadnezzar came back. Jehoiakim was bound and then killed. Jehoiachin, his son, held out three months before surrendering to Babylon. The army went into the city and took away all the treasures from the temple and from the palace. They gathered all the officials of the land and all the craftsmen of the city, a total of 10,000 people. Only the poorest were left. Nebuchadnezzar set up Zedekiah, another son of Josiah, as a puppet king over the remnant.

Jeremiah was God's spokesman during these years. He found himself in the saddest position a prophet of God could be. It was his task to say, "Give in. Surrender. It is too late to avoid captivity." It sounded like treason to the people of Judah. The officials would not listen. Jehoiakim even took his pen knife and cut the scroll of God's message and burned it in the fire (Jer. 36:20-26). Jeremiah's life was in danger most of the time. He kept saying, ". . . surrender, and your lives will be spared . . . Give up, and you will have a city left to come back to." God would have lightened the punishment at each step of the way — if they had only listened. But they closed their ears and refused to hear! (see Jer. 26:1-3; 25:1-14; 27:6-14; 27:17-18).

Babylon came again in 586 B.C. Jerusalem was leveled. The gold was stripped from the walls of the temple. The huge bronze pillars in front of the temple were broken and carried away. The walls were broken down and the gates burned. The rest of the people were taken captives. Nothing was left but a heap of rubbish.

Nebuchadnezzar set up a man named Gedaliah as governor over the territory. The very poorest left in the land rallied around Gedaliah at _____ (2 Kings 25:23). Other Jews who had fled to _____, _____, and _____ (Jer. 40:11) heard the news and came back. God was with this tiny remaining group, and they reaped abundant harvests.

Perhaps the king of the _____ (Jer. 40:14) saw a chance to settle his old hatred for Judah. He hired a man named Ishmael to kill Gedaliah and all the officials with him. This was the final blow to the little group left. Jeremiah urged them to remain in the land, but they refused to take his advice, and fled to Egypt.

The land was left barren. Jerusalem was uninhabitable. Nebuchadnezzar's army had been thorough. Every walled city in Judah had been burned to the ground. The very poor people had been left and they could have reaped harvests from vineyards and fields they had never owned before. Yet, they too, have fled in terror.

All of God's people were in captivity — scattered from Egypt to the Persian Gulf. The land was to remain idle for the next 50 years.

The king of Babylon did not bring in foreigners to fill the land as the king of Assyria had done when Israel fell 135 years earlier. The cities were left a pile of ashes and the land was left empty. Jeremiah said it would remain desolate until the land had enjoyed the sabbaths the people had failed to keep (2 Chron. 36:21; see Lev. 25:1-12; 26:33-35).

Lesson 32

Review Of The Divided Kingdom

(Lessons 26-31)

Answer either ISRAEL or JUDAH:

- _____ 1. Samaria was the capital.
- _____ 2. Jerusalem was the capital.
- _____ 3. Had more of the tribes.
- _____ 4. Controlled Moab, at least part of the time.
- _____ 5. Controlled Edom, at least part of the time.
- _____ 6. Had a descendant of David on the throne.
- _____ 7. Became wicked faster.
- _____ 8. Had continual conflicts with Syria.
- _____ 9. Still worshipped Jehovah at the temple, at least outwardly.
- _____ 10. Did not have any good kings.
- _____ 11. Worshipped the golden calves Jeroboam set up.
- _____ 12. Would most likely be invaded first by an army from Mesopotamia.
- _____ 13. Would most likely be invaded first by an army from Egypt.
- _____ 14. Was carried into Assyrian captivity.
- _____ 15. Was carried into Babylonian captivity.

Name the kings from both kingdoms who were murdered by their own people.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Who killed himself to avoid being captured? _____

Name the first king of each new dynasty of Israel.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Which King?

- _____ 1. Set up golden calves for his people to worship? (1 Kings 12:25-33)
- _____ 2. Married Jezebel. (1 Kings 16:29-31)
- _____ 3. Killed all of Jeroboam's family. (1 Kings 15:27-30)
- _____ 4. Became king when he was only 8 years old. (2 Kings 22:1)

- _____ 5. Killed her grandchildren and usurped the throne. (2 Kings 11:1-3)
- _____ 6. Burned the palace over himself to keep from being captured. (1 Kings 16:18)
- _____ 7. Killed all of Ahab's family. (2 Kings 9:1ff, see vs. 7-10)
- _____ 8. Lost nearly all his territory to the Syrians. (2 Kings 13:1-9)
- _____ 9. Stricken with leprosy because he tried to offer incense in the temple. (2 Chron. 26:16-21)
- _____ 10. Had his life extended 15 years in answer to prayer. (2 Kings 20:1-11)
- _____ 11. Cut a scroll of God's word with his pen knife and burned it in the fire. (Jer. 36:20-26)
- _____ 12. Nebuchadnezzar burned the city of Jerusalem in his day. (2 Kings 25:1ff)
- _____ 13. Refused to lighten the tax and work burden his father had begun. (1 Kings 12:1-11)
- _____ 14. Was hidden by Jehoiada the priest until he was 7 years old. (2 Kings 11:1-4)
- _____ 15. A good king himself, but he made friends with wicked Ahab. (2 Chron. 18:1-3; 19:1-3)
- _____ 16. Hired Tiglath-pileser to attack Israel and Syria. (2 Kings 16:7-9)

Which Prophet?

- _____ 1. Predicted a drought that lasted 3½ years. (1 Kings 17:1ff)
- _____ 2. Was sent to warn the people of a foreign capital. (Jonah 1:2)
- _____ 3. Predicted Josiah would destroy the shrine of the golden calf at Bethel. (Name not given.) (1 Kings 13:1-3)
- _____ 4. Told Jeroboam he would reign over 10 tribes. (1 Kings 11:29-39)
- _____ 5. Was taken to heaven without dying. (2 Kings 2:1-18)
- _____ 6. Was killed by the king his father had saved from death. (2 Chron. 24:17-22)
- _____ 7. Assured Hezekiah the Assyrians would not fight Jerusalem at that time. (2 Kings 19:20-34)
- _____ 8. Said, "Give up . . . Too late to avoid destruction . . ." (Jer. 25:8-11; 37:9-10)
- _____ 9. Made an axe head float. (2 Kings 6:1-7)
- _____ 10. Described the sin of Israel as spiritual adultery. (Hosea 1:2-3; 2:2ff)
- _____ 11. Predicted the fall of Nineveh, and rejoiced. (Nahum 1:1ff)
- _____ 12. Used a swarm of locust as a symbol of God's judgment. (Joel 1:4ff)

Which Foreign King?

- _____ of _____ 1. Became king by smothering his predecessor to death. (2 Kings 8:7-15)
- _____ of _____ 2. Awoke one morning to find 185,000 of his soldiers dead. (2 Kings 19:35-36)
- _____ of _____ 3. Destroyed the city of Jerusalem. (2 Kings 25:1ff)
- _____ of _____ 4. Killed Josiah in battle as he was passing through the land of Israel. (2 Kings 23:29-30)
- _____ of _____ 5. Hired men to kill Gedaliah. (Jer. 40:13-14)
- _____ of _____ 6. Took the first major group of captives from Israel. (2 Kings 15:29-30)
- _____ of _____ 7. The first foreign king to attack after the division of the kingdom. (1 Kings 14:25-28)
- _____ of _____ 8. Tried to force Ahaz of Judah to join a coalition against Assyria. (2 Kings 16:1-6)

Lesson 33

The Captivity

Daniel, Ezekiel

Why was Judah devastated? Were these not God's chosen people? Isn't this the great nation God promised to Abraham? Did God not give them the land of Canaan for an inheritance? Has He not fought their battles for them through the years? Why not this time? Has He forgotten them? Is He breaking His promises?

Oh yes, God did indeed make a promise to Abraham that He would make a great nation through his seed (Gen. 12:2). That promise was fulfilled in Moses' day and this is the nation we have studied ever since (Exod. 19-24). He also promised Abraham He would give the land of Canaan to that nation (Gen. 12:7). That promise was fulfilled in Joshua's day (Josh. 21:43-45). Furthermore, He promised to treat this nation in a special way above all other nations on earth. He offered them a special covenant relationship with Him no other nation was ever offered. Turn to Exodus 19:3-6 to see the covenant God offered Israel:

... You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation . . . (NIV).

The Israelites were delighted to accept God's covenant when it was offered because they wanted the blessings involved. But, do you notice there was a condition in the covenant? God said, *"If you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then . . . you will be mine."* The generation of Moses' day was sure they could keep God's commandments with no trouble, but they had built a golden calf to worship within six weeks of agreeing to worship no other gods (Exod. 19:8; 24:3, 7; 32:1-33:23). God forgave them on that occasion and let them continue in His grace.

As the years passed in the wilderness, the Israelites murmured many, many times. Moses warned them before his death that they would have God's blessings *only* if they remained faithful to Him.

The whole book of Deuteronomy sets forth the conditions under which they would be allowed to *keep* the land God was ready to give them at that time. If they would serve God faithfully, then they would be blessed on every hand. If not, they would be cursed on every hand. Read Deuteronomy 28 to see one of the most vivid descriptions of their destruction to be found in the entire Bible.

The choice was theirs — they could obey and have life and prosperity. Or they could disobey and face death and destruction. The permanent landmarks of the heavens and the earth were called as witnesses that Israel was warned and it was their choice (Deut. 30:15-20).

Moses died and the people went into the land and conquered every enemy that opposed them. Joshua warned them before his death that they would retain the land *only* if they were faithful (Josh. 23-24).

Now through all the intervening years, God has fought their battles for them when they were serving Him. When they were not faithful, He allowed an enemy to oppress them. Instead of learning the lessons as they should have, conditions only worsened in the land. The Lord sent prophet after prophet to warn of impending doom. The people would not listen, so the prophets wrote their messages as proof that God did warn. The time finally came when God's justice demanded that the wicked nation be punished. They made their choice to go their own way, and now the price must be paid.

The prophet Ezekiel was taken in the second group of captives when the craftsmen and other prominent people were taken. He lived in one of the Jewish colonies by the banks of the river _____ in Babylon (Ezek. 1:1). One day, the Spirit of the Lord came to him and lifted him up in a vision and took him back to the city of Jerusalem. God showed him all the corruption that was in the city. There was an idol by the gate of the city. He saw the elders of the city, the leaders, hiding in the dark and offering incense to idols. They were sure God could not see them. He saw the women of the city crying to false gods for help in their time of trouble. He saw men standing in the temple grounds with their backs toward the temple, bowing in worship to the sun god.

God said, "Son of man, do you see what they are doing — the utterly detestable things the house of Israel is doing here, things that will drive me far from my sanctuary?" (Ezek. 8:6). As Ezekiel watched, the Spirit of God arose from His place above the mercy seat in the Most Holy Place in the temple and withdrew to the threshold of the temple. As the vision continued, God sent a messenger throughout the city to mark all those who grieved over the sins of the city. Then, He sent others to destroy all the wicked who were not marked. Ezekiel cried out in distress, "Ah, Sovereign Lord! Are You going to destroy the entire remnant of Israel in this outpouring of your wrath on Jerusalem?" (9:8). God answered. "The sin of Israel and Judah is exceeding great and the destruction will be correspondingly great, but no one who is set apart as serving God will be harmed" (9:5, 6, 9). The vision

continued as Ezekiel watched the glory of God leave the threshold of the temple, and move outside Jerusalem to the mountain east of the city (11:23). The city and temple were no more than an empty husk so far as God was concerned. He had rejected them. (Ezekiel 8:1-11:25.)

This was exactly what God predicted when Solomon built the temple. He promised to hear all prayers offered toward the temple if they served Him faithfully. But . . .

. . . if you or your sons turn away from me and do not observe the commands and decrees I have given you . . . then I will cut off Israel from the land I have given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. Israel will then become a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples. And though this temple is now imposing, all who pass by will be appalled and will scoff and say, 'Why has the Lord done such a thing? . . . People will answer, 'Because they have forsaken the Lord their God . . .' (1 Kings 9:3-9). NIV

The time has come. God's plan is on schedule. God can no more lie about His promises of punishment than He can lie about His promises of blessing (Heb. 6:18; 2 Pet. 3:9).

But wait! There was another promise to Abraham. God said all nations would be blessed through One who would come through Abraham's seed (Gen. 12:3). There is to be another prophet raised like Moses (Deut. 18:15-22). There is to be a King to reign forever on David's throne (2 Sam. 7:11-16; Psa. 89:19-37; 132:11-12). In all the years between the promise to Abraham and the fall of Judah, there have been many, many prophecies and promises about this One to come. Has God forgotten all these promises? Is God so disgusted with His people He has decided to destroy them and start all over with a new race of people through whom to fulfill His promises?

No. That promise is on schedule also. God could fulfill His plan for the redemption of mankind whether Israel was faithful or not. If they had served Him faithfully, He would have blessed them greatly. They would never have found themselves merely pawns in a pagan society. As it was, they must be punished, but God has not forgotten them.

There was a major difference between the way God chastised His chosen people and the way He destroyed the pagan nations. For example, Assyria fell never to rise again. Their capital, Nineveh, was so thoroughly destroyed, its ruins were not found for centuries. In contrast, God's people were taken captive, their city was burned, but God did not forget them. He knew where every individual was, and He heard every prayer offered by a faithful Israelite though he were a thousand miles from his homeland (see Dan. 6).

The threats of captivity for God's people were followed by a promise of a return of a remnant. We have already noted Moses' warning in Deuteronomy 28. Now look at chapter 30 of the same book. Moses says, "God will remember you and will bring you back to your homeland even if you are scattered to the most distant land under heaven."

Ezekiel's vision included the promise that the faithful would be spared and allowed to return home (Ezek. 9:6; 11:13, 16-21).

The prophet Amos declared God's eyes were on the sinful kingdom of Israel. It would be destroyed completely, but the whole house of Jacob would not be lost. God said He would shake the nation of Israel as if in a sieve, but not a kernel (righteous individual) would be lost (Amos 9:8-10).

Jeremiah made a similar prophecy about the kingdom of Judah. There would never again be a king of the royal line reigning in Jerusalem. Yet, a few verses later, he declared God would raise up a Righteous Branch to David who would be a King to judge righteously. His name would be "The Lord our Righteousness" (Jer. 22:28-23:6).

Jeremiah even specified the length of time the kingdom of Judah would be in captivity. It would be 70 years from the time the first ones were taken until a remnant would return (Jer. 29:10).

Let us summarize the points in the prophecies: The people have been wicked. God demands they be chastised. There will never again be an independent nation of Israelites with a king of the line of David. Yet, God still loves His people. His promise of a Redeemer has not been fulfilled. Therefore, God will allow a group to return in exactly 70 years after the first captives were taken from Jerusalem. Through this remnant, God will finish His plan to bless all nations. This One will be a descendant of David and will reign in heaven forever.

It is now our task in this study to see how God's providence worked in the kingdoms of men to bring about His purpose.

-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-

No vast libraries have been found in the Babylonian ruins. The kings either did not keep detailed records the way the Assyrians had, or the records are still buried in the rubble time has left. We, therefore, do not know many details about their empire.

We do know Nebuchadnezzar was a powerful general and he succeeded in subduing most of the territory the Assyrians had taken centuries to conquer. Only Egypt was too strong for him to take.

Map #16 — The Babylonian Empire

Label and number your map.

Draw in the territory Babylon controlled. Color it orange.

Color all bodies of water.

Draw a dotted line around Canaan. Notice, none of God's people are living there now.

Label and color the Egyptian kingdom.

Nebuchadnezzar was the most illustrious king of the empire. He was an able administrator and builder. He made Babylon the chief city of the world. It covered an area of about 200 square miles on both sides of the Euphrates River. It was beautiful with broad streets laid out, intersecting at right angles. Three imposing walls surrounded the city. At least part of the walls were wide enough for chariots to pass on top of them. The "Hanging Gardens" Nebuchadnezzar built for his Median wife became one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. (See Dan. 4:28-30.)

The Babylonians could be cruel as most conquering people of their day were. We have already seen how they utterly destroyed Jerusalem. It seems from the ruins of Judah that many walled cities fell at the same time. King Zedekiah was captured and taken before Nebuchadnezzar. There, before his eyes, his sons and the Jewish officials were killed. Then Zedekiah's eyes were put out and he was led away prisoner (2 Kings 25:4-7; Jer. 39:1-7).

Yet, it seems the Babylonians did not glory in cruelty the way the Assyrians had. They tended to leave all people exactly where they found them so long as they accepted Babylonian rule. A submissive city was left standing with only tribute to pay. The tribes of Israel already in exile from the days of the Assyrians remained so. The little kingdom of Judah was defeated and the people moved because they kept rebelling against the king.

Captive people were treated generously. Daniel and his companions were taken in the first group of captives, and they were trained to serve in the king's palace. They were given honored positions in the kingdom (see book of Daniel). Ezekiel had no direct contact with the king. He lived among the typical captives. There is evidence that the Jews were allowed to establish prosperous, comfortable colonies along an irrigation canal called the River Chebar that reached from the city of Babylon to Erech (see book of Ezekiel). Jeremiah wrote a letter to the captives telling them to build houses, plant gardens, allow their sons to marry, and to prosper (Jer. 29). Many Jews became quite rich during the period.

Label the River Chebar and Erech.

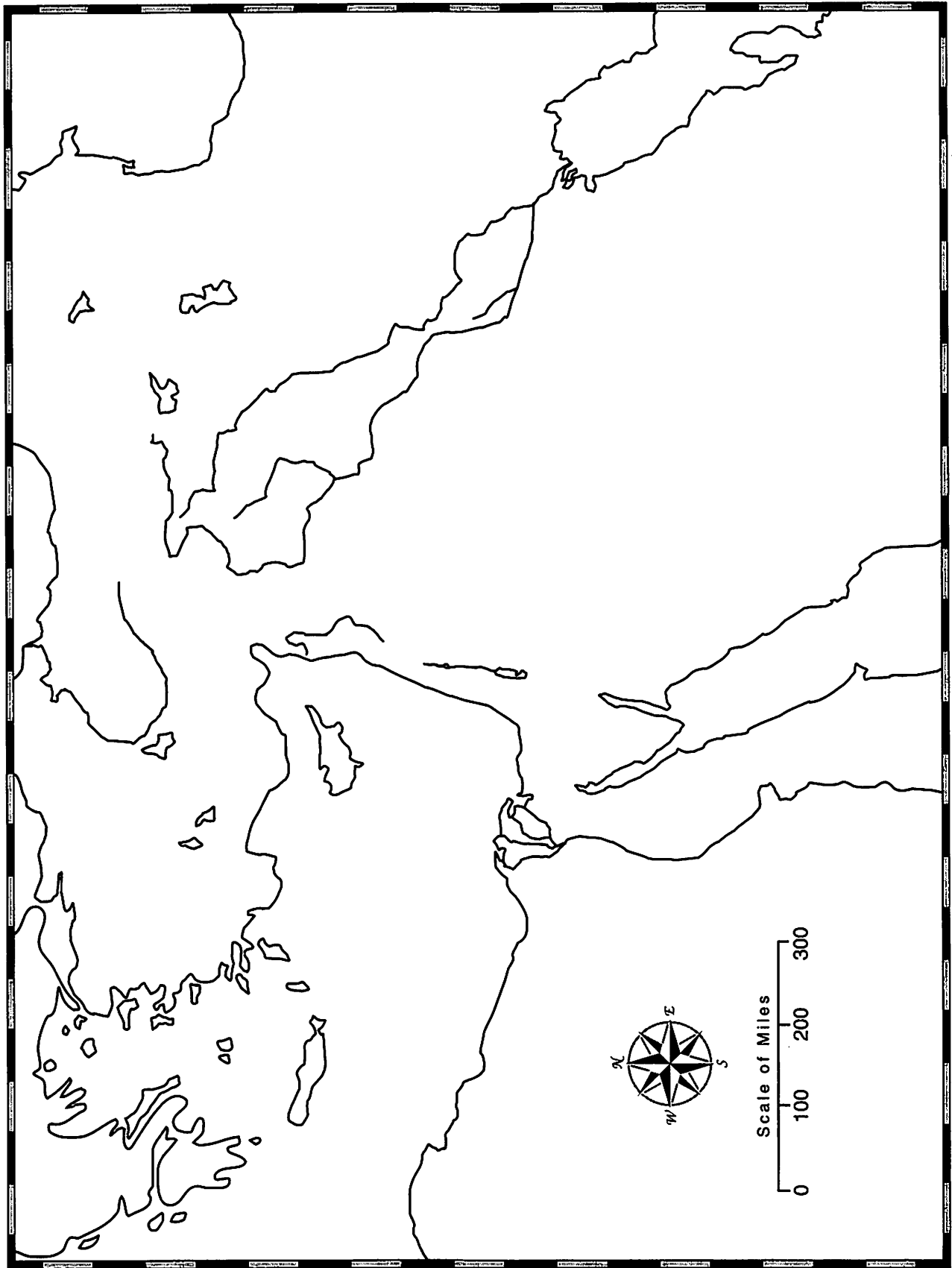
Still, the faithful Jew longed for the day he could return home. The warnings of the prophets had more meaning now than ever before. There was no doubt now that God would punish. Now they knew they must obey God's law if they wanted God's favor. The temple was destroyed, and there was no place for the sacrifices to be made so they began gathering on the Sabbath day to read and ponder their law and prophets. These assemblies were likely the beginning of their *synagogues* (a coming together). This was one institution that helped keep the Jews aware of their law and their distinct position before God.

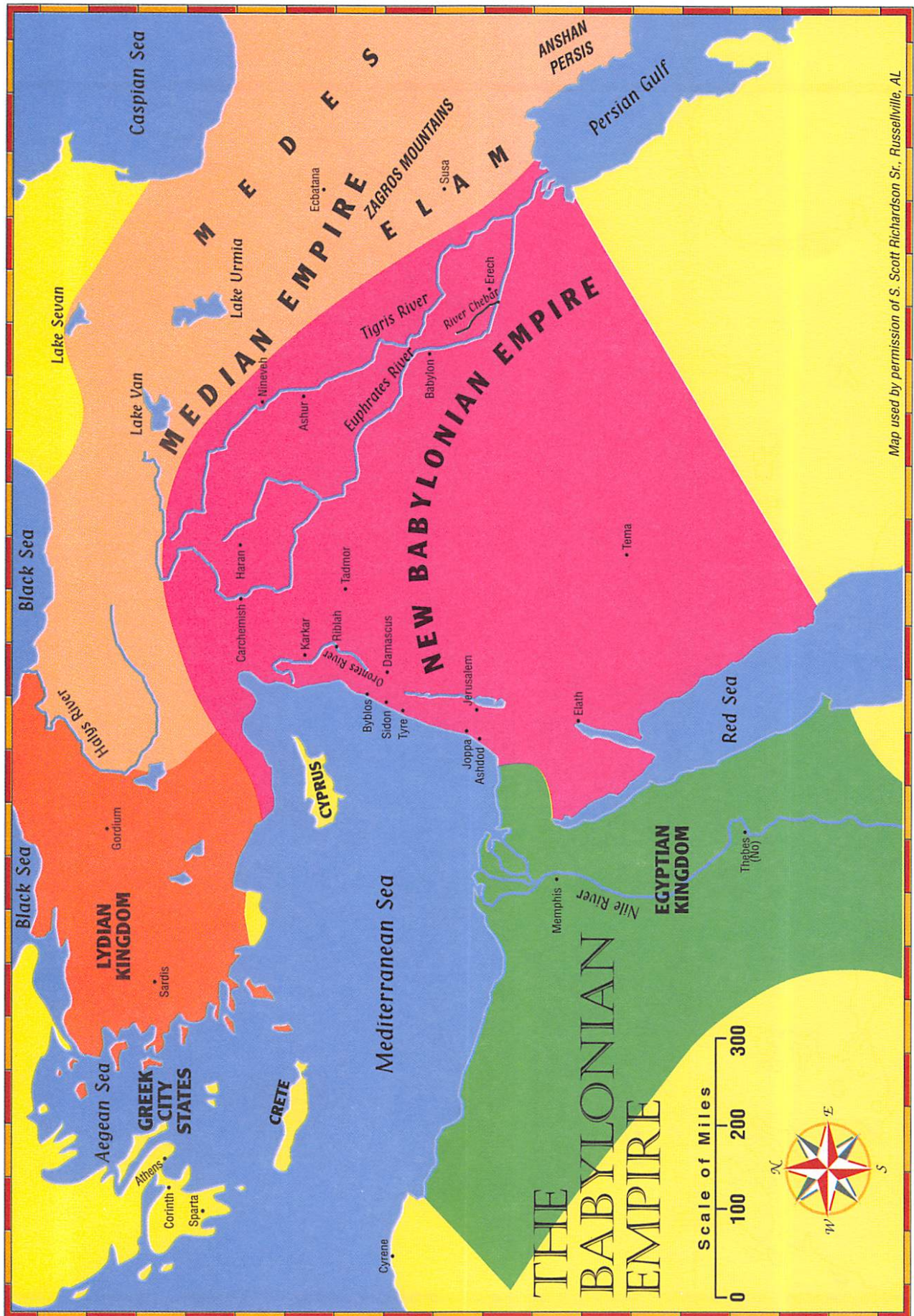
Nebuchadnezzar had a long, successful reign. There are some fascinating stories in the book of Daniel that show Nebuchadnezzar in direct confrontation with Jehovah. No other king had ever destroyed Jehovah's temple. It would have been easy for Nebuchadnezzar to decide he was greater than the "God of the Israelites." Instead, he learned again and again that "God rules in the kingdoms of men and sets up whomsoever He chooses" (Dan. 2:37-38, 47; 3:28-29; 4:17, 25-26, 32, 34-37). The mighty king was merely a tool in the hand of the Omnipotent God.

There were no strong successors to Nebuchadnezzar's throne. Four kings reigned in rapid succession in the 22 years following his death. Nabonidus was the last one on the throne. He seems to have had very little ability as a ruler. He was away from his capital most of the time in some study of antiquities. He built himself a new royal residence in the Arabian city of Tema and stayed there a great portion of the time. He had left his son Belshazzar in charge in Babylon on the night God's handwriting on the wall pronounced Babylon's doom (Dan. 5).

Label Tema in Arabia.

That very night the city was invaded, and it fell without a battle. The people of Babylon welcomed the invaders almost as if they were deliverers.





The Rise Of The Persians

Babylon was not the only empire on the world scene at this point in history. Do you remember that Babylon joined forces with a people called the Medes to fight against Assyria? In Lesson #31 we said Babylon and Media agreed to co-exist. Babylon laid claim to the Fertile Crescent which put them in touch with the Israelites who are our primary interest in this study. We have, therefore, been following the history of the Babylonian empire in Lessons 31 and 33. Media has been very busy also, and we need to turn our attention to them because they will be important to God's people next.

No written records have been found from the Medes, so scholars have had to piece together their early history from mentions made of them in the records of the Assyrians and others. They originated in the highlands south of the Caspian Sea and east of the Zagros Mountains. Look back to Map #4 to see these physical features.

Label Media on Map #16.

Assyria raided Media fairly early in their rise to power (c.886 B.C.). Notice on your chart of the kings that this date was during the reign of Baasha in Israel, about 165 years before Israel fell (Lesson 27). Media was forced to pay tribute and was under varying degrees of subjection from that time forward. When Israel fell to Assyria, the "cities of the Medes" are included in the list of places where the captives were sent (2 Kings 17:6; 18:11).

The Medes continued to grow in strength until they were a strong enough foe to play an important role in Assyria's downfall. That victory left the way open for rapid expansion to the north and northwest. They moved northwest to the Black Sea and west into Asia Minor until they touched the wealthy kingdom of Lydia. They also moved south and east to include Elam, Persia, and Parthia. By then, it had become a very large empire.

On Map #16, draw in and color the Median empire at its largest extent. Label and color the Kingdom of Lydia, making it a different color to either Babylon or Media. Label Elam, Persia, and Parthia as part of Media. Now compare the empires in existence at that time. Compare Map #16 to the Assyrian Empire shown on Map #14.

History never stands still. About the time Nebuchadnezzar died in Babylon (c. 562 B.C.), a new power was rising on the scene from a surprising source. A young man named Cyrus came to the throne in an obscure Persian province called Anshan (or Ansan) located east of the Persian Gulf. His mother was the daughter of Astyages who was ruling over Media.

Label Anshan on Map #16.

Cyrus' first ambitious move was to defeat Astyages in a major battle. He moved against the capital city of Ecbatana and conquered it in 550 B.C. He proclaimed himself ruler over the already vast Median empire. The Medes were given positions of honor, and many of their customs and laws were combined with those of Persia. Thus began the Medo-Persian Kingdom which was to become the largest empire the world had yet seen.

Map #17 — The Persian Empire

Let us take a new map and watch Cyrus' rise to power.

Notice your blank map does not include as much territory as the study map. We have zeroed in on the particular lands of the Bible.

Label: Persia, Anshan, Ecbatana

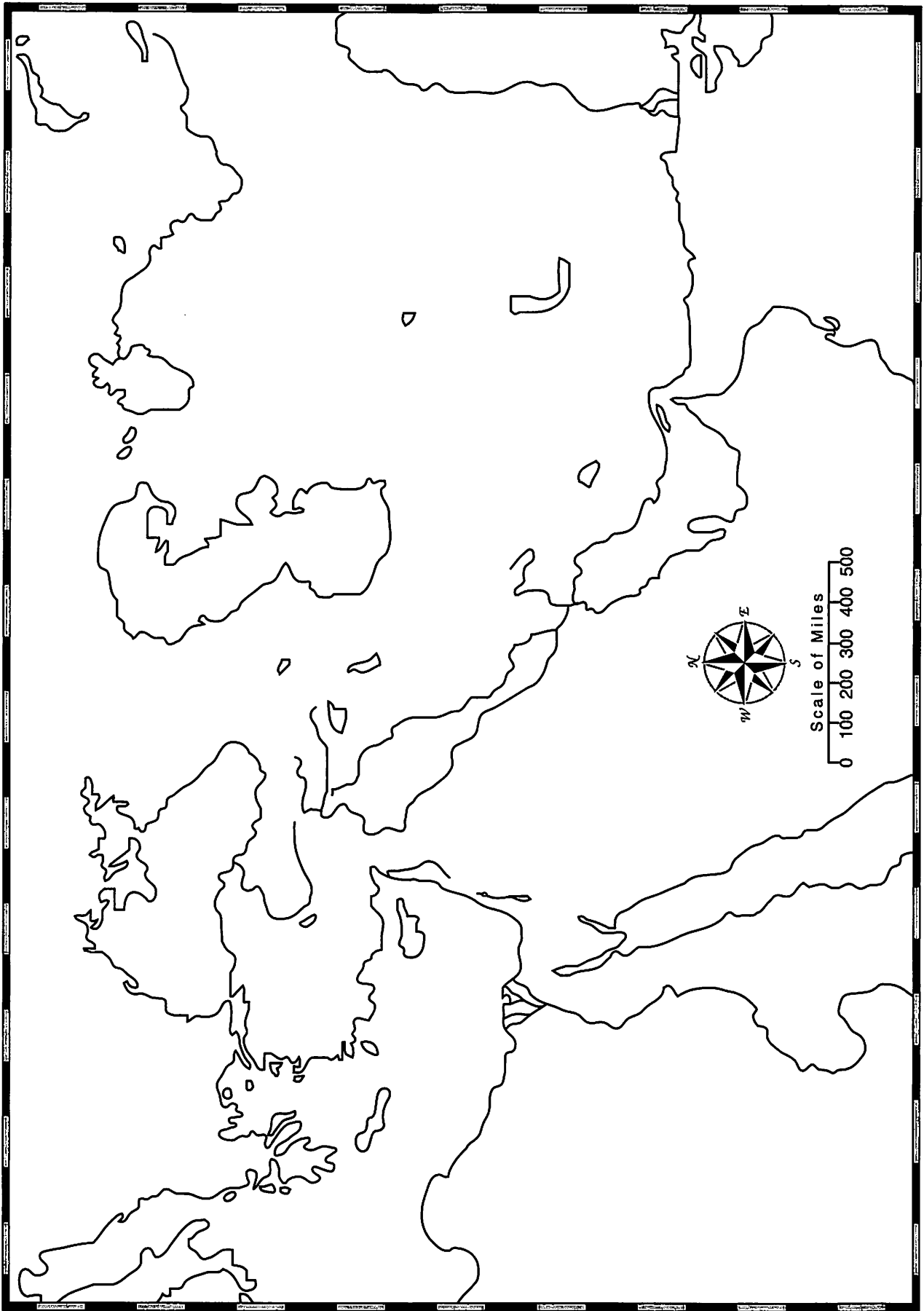
Label each new territory as it is conquered.

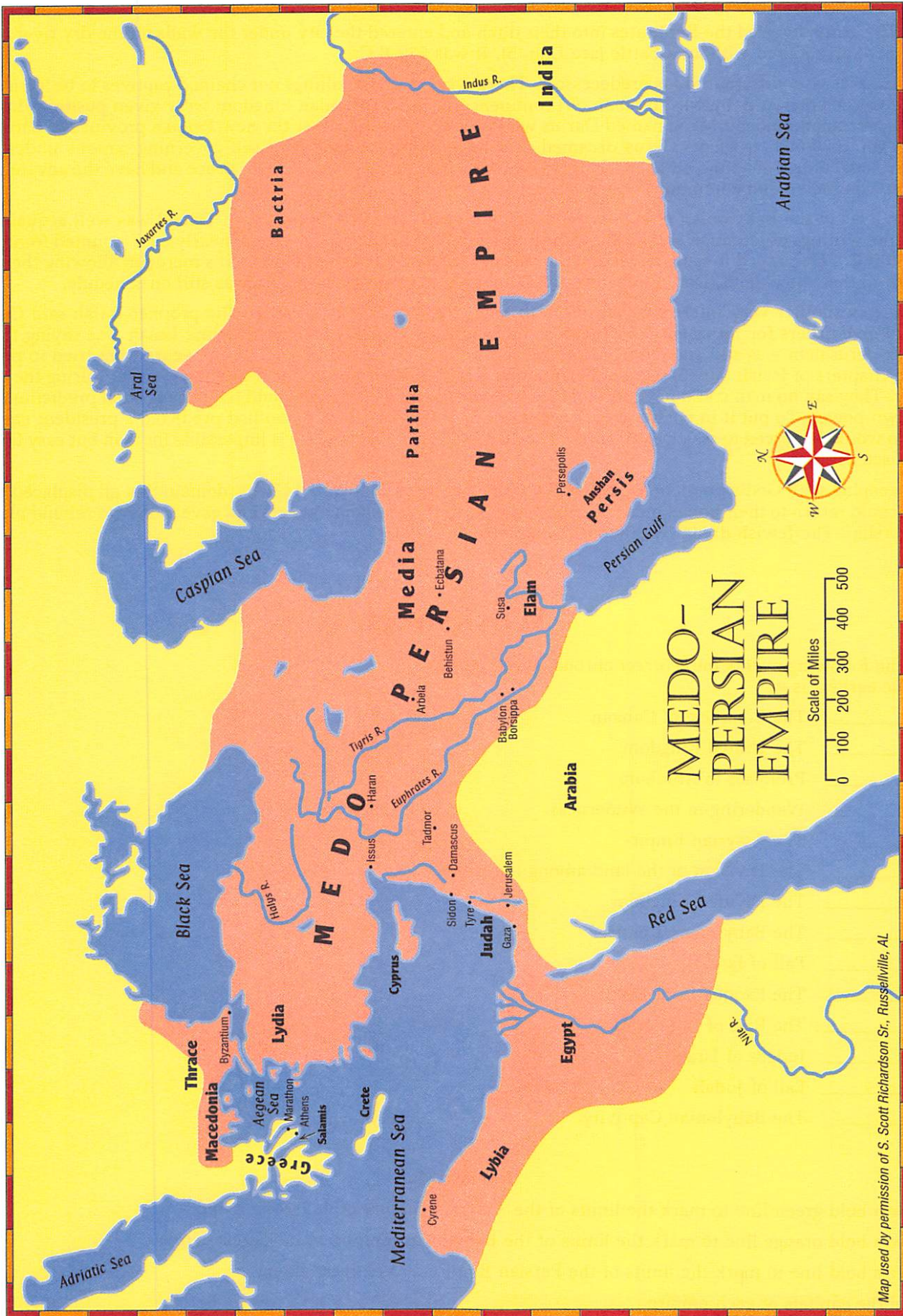
Cyrus turned his attention to Asia Minor to strengthen his claim to power there. He succeeded in defeating Croesus and his kingdom of Lydia. Now all of Asia Minor was included in his empire.

He moved next against the Babylonian empire itself and began eating away at its hold on northern Mesopotamia. Soon he was ready to attack the city of Babylon.

Meanwhile, as we noticed in our last lesson, Babylon was weakening rapidly during these years after Nebuchadnezzar's death, the exact years while Cyrus has been growing in power. Nabonidus of Babylon had angered his priests. He was lax in his rule over his people. He was away again on one of his many trips when Cyrus approached the city. Nabonidus seems to have welcomed Cyrus' early show of strength because he considered the Medes a serious threat to his kingdom. The Babylonians made some new fortifications on their walls, but they did very little more to prepare for battle.

Cyrus and his army dug a great ditch outside the walls of the city. The people inside must have scoffed as they watched. Belshazzar the prince and his officials were having a drunken feast on the night Cyrus put his ditch into





Map used by permission of S. Scott Richardson Sr., Russellville, AL

use. The army diverted the Euphrates into their ditch and entered the city under the walls on the dry river bed. The city surrendered without a battle (see Dan. 5). It was 539 B.C.

Cyrus was very different to his predecessors. There were no mass killings nor chained captives to be led away when Cyrus entered Babylon. The men of prominence in the Babylonian kingdom were given positions in the new government under a Mede named Darius who was set up as king over the new Persian province of Babylon (see Dan. 5:30-6:2). It seems Cyrus dreamed of a huge empire made up of self-governing nations under the benevolent control of a kind emperor. In this way, the whole empire could live at peace and have the advantages of free commerce and communication.

The Jews in the Babylonian empire were delighted when Cyrus came to power. Daniel was well acquainted with the writings of Jeremiah and he knew the predicted 70 years of captivity were nearly over (counted from 606 to 536 B.C.). He prayed to God confessing the sins of his people and asking for God's mercy in allowing them to return to their homeland (Dan. 9). God heard Daniel's prayer, and God's plan was still on schedule.

There is another very interesting prophecy to note. Nearly 200 years earlier, the prophet Isaiah said Cyrus would give orders for Jerusalem and Judah to be rebuilt (Isa. 44:26-45:4). At the time Isaiah was saying those words, Jerusalem was still standing and prospering. In fact, Bible critics through the years have tried to prove these chapters of Isaiah (40-66) were not written by Isaiah himself but by some unknown writer during the captivity. They say no man could have foretold such details. It is true no man could have made such predictions by his own power. To put it in perspective, it would be as if George Washington had predicted a president named Nixon would be forced to resign over a scandal called Watergate! Such a feat is impossible for man but easy for an Omniscient God!

In keeping with God's predictions, in 538 B.C., an edict went out over all Cyrus' domain that all displaced persons could return to their homelands. He returned idols to their original owners and gave money to rebuild places of worship. The Jewish dream was about to come true.

Worksheet

Put the following events into correct chronological order:

(The earliest is #1.)

- _____ The Conquest of Canaan
- _____ The United Kingdom
- _____ Promises to Abraham
- _____ Wandering in the Wilderness
- _____ The Assyrian Empire
- _____ The Division of the land among the tribes
- _____ The Divided Kingdom
- _____ The Babylonian Empire
- _____ Fall of Israel
- _____ The Exodus from Egypt
- _____ The Rise of the Persians
- _____ Judges of Israel
- _____ Fall of Judah
- _____ The Babylonian Captivity

Review Map

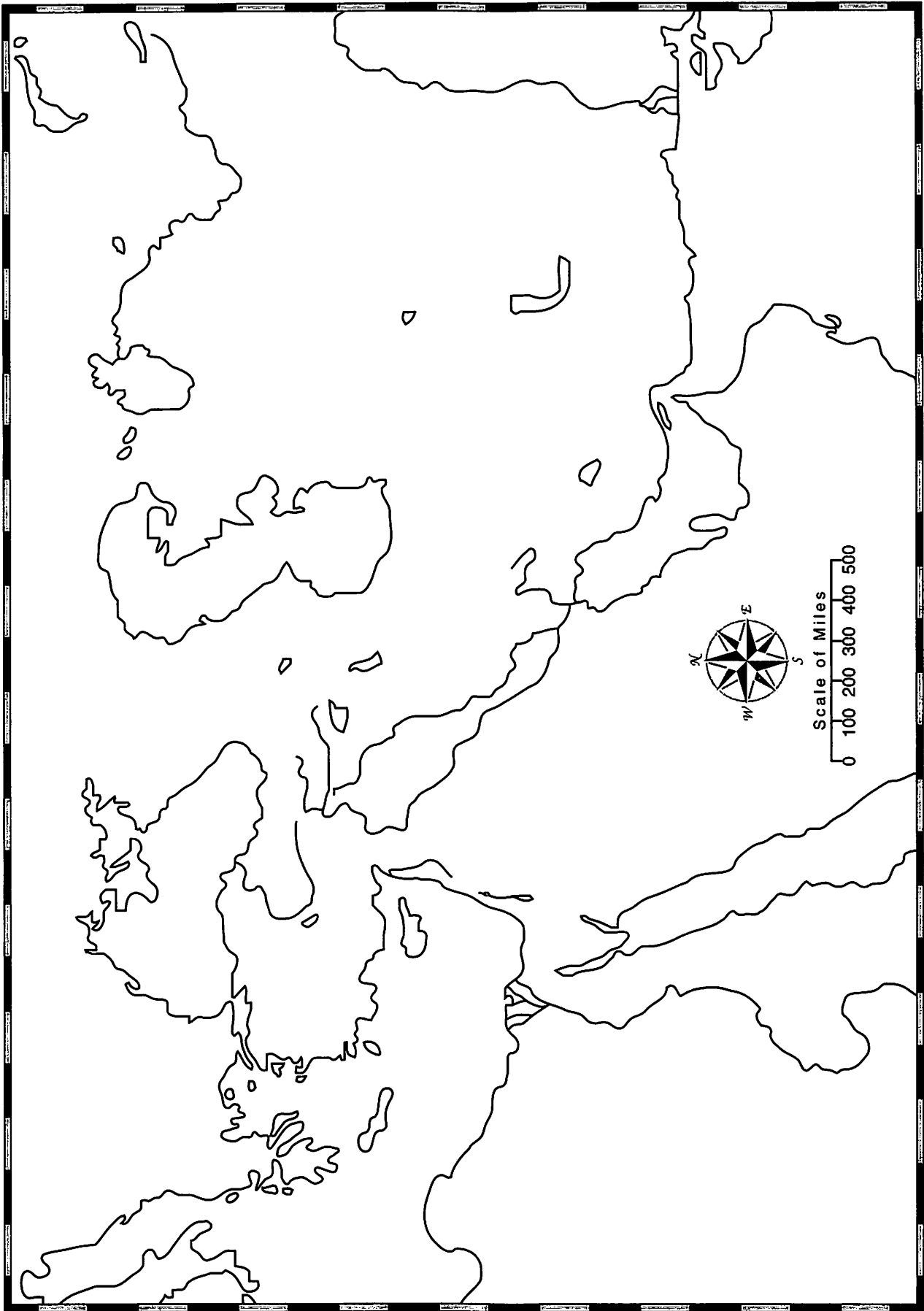
Draw a bold green line to mark the limits of the Assyrian Empire at its largest extent.

Draw a bold orange line to mark the limits of the Babylonian Empire at its largest extent.

Draw a bold line to mark the limits of the Persian Empire at its largest extent.

Label the capitals of each empire.

Now compare the similarities and differences between the empires.



Lesson 35

Jerusalem Is Rebuilt

Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

The permission to go home included all the tribes of the Israelites. We hear about the "Ten Lost Tribes of Israel." It has even been said they migrated to what is now North America. Such is far-fetched speculation and is definitely contrary to the facts. Israel was scattered throughout the Assyrian empire. Judah was scattered in Babylon. Compare Maps #14, 16, and 17 to see that Persia now controls all the territories once held by these earlier empires. Therefore, all twelve tribes were now subject to Cyrus no matter which town they were living in.

Many, many Israelites stayed right where they were. It had been nearly 200 years since the first captives were taken from Israel. Even the most recent ones had been there about 50 years. They had built homes, and many were content to stay. From this point on, it was their individual choice to stay or return to Canaan. We find Jews from various tribes mentioned in the New Testament. (See Luke 2:36 where Anna of the tribe of Asher is mentioned.)

Approximately 50,000 Jews gathered in Babylon to start home (Ezra 2:64-65). Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel of the royal lineage of David are both named as leaders of this first group. It is difficult to tell whether these were two names for the same man or two different men who worked closely together.

There were no "gods" to return to the Jews, but there were many valuable vessels that had been taken from the temple and the palace in Nebuchadnezzar's day. Five thousand, four hundred gold and silver vessels were, therefore, returned. Jews who chose to stay behind helped their brethren with gifts to make their trip easier (Ezra 1). It was a day of great joy when they started on their journey. The tasks ahead would not prove easy, however.

The people left in Palestine had profited from the Jews' absence. The Samaritans had grown in power and claimed the territory around the ruins of Jerusalem. The Ammonites had moved out of their near-desert territory into the fertile highlands of Gilead. Edom had moved out of the dry Negeb into land once belonging to Judah and had taken the city of Hebron as one of their strongholds. The nomadic tribes of the desert had moved nearer the fertile lands and had established a more settled way of life. From this point forward, the Arabs (a general term for all these tribes) exerted a stronger and stronger influence in the whole region.

Map #18 — Judah, The Return from Captivity

Label and number your map.

Label:

Moab	Dor
Ammon	Phoenicia
Gilead	Galilee
Bashan	Samaria
Aramaeans	Ashdod
Arabs	Edom

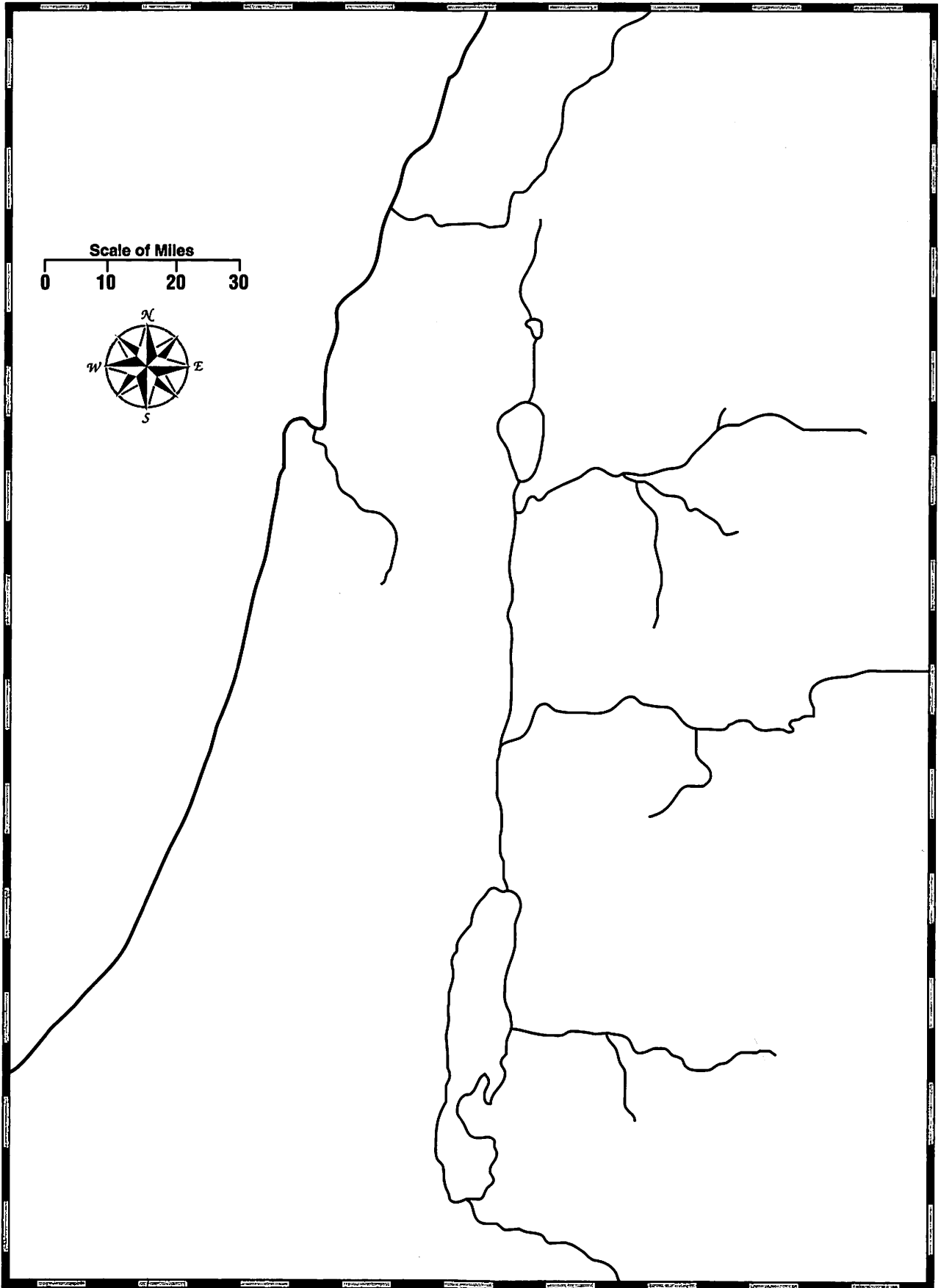
Remember, some of these names have developed through the years as various empires have controlled the area.

The Jews set to work on their temple as soon as they reached Jerusalem. They rebuilt the altar of burnt offering and started their regular sacrifices. The people gathered for a celebration when the foundations of the temple were laid. They praised God for His mercy, but there was grief that day also. Some were present who could remember the splendor of the temple Nebuchadnezzar had burned. It was obvious this one would never compare to it (Ezra 3).

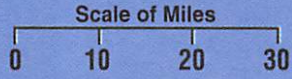
Almost immediately, the adversaries began trying to stop their work. They thought their chance had come when King Cyrus died. They wrote a letter to the new king Cambyses (called by the titles of Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes in the letter). The letter accused the Jews of treason. It asked the king to check the records to see if Jerusalem had not always been rebellious. ". . . If this city be builded again, and the walls thereof set up, by this means thou shalt have no portion on this side of the river." Cambyses checked, and indeed, Jerusalem had been rebellious. So, the work was ordered stopped. (Ezra 4.)

The Jews gave up. They had been given written permission to do the work, but they did not have enough faith to protest the order from Cambyses. Nothing more was accomplished for 16 years. The people found fields for themselves and eked out a living. Nothing prospered.

Meanwhile, Cambyses continued to push the borders of his empire outward. He succeeded in taking Egypt and



JUDAH RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY



Mediterranean Sea



Map by permission of S. Scott Richardson • Russellville, AL

ended the reign of the Pharaohs forever. He was trying to follow up his victories in Egypt when he learned of trouble at home. He started back to secure his hold on the kingdom, but died on the way.

Some confusion resulted in the kingdom, but a man named Darius the Great came to the throne and managed to hold the empire together. He felt the need for a much stronger hold over his territory than Cyrus had felt. He divided the empire into 20 satrapies with an officer over each one directly answerable to him. Each satrapy was subdivided into provinces with local rulers. It was an efficient, highly organized government with Persia as a centralized state with total power in the hands of the king.

Darius conquered new territories and soon held sway from the Indus Valley of India in the east to the Aegean Sea in the west. He controlled from the Jaxartes River in central Asia to Libya in North Africa. He even crossed the Aegean Sea and annexed the Grecian provinces of Thrace and Macedon. The province of Greece resisted successfully.

Our Maps #17 are not large enough to show all the Persian holdings. Put an arrow off your map to the east toward the Indus River. Label: Libya, Thrace, and Macedon and include them in the Persian empire. Label Greece just outside their control. Now color all the Persian empire red. Draw a dotted line around Canaan.

Darius was a wise administrator. He brought about many legal and fiscal reforms in the land to promote commerce. He built roads throughout his empire and established an efficient postal system. He built a canal connecting the Gulf of Suez to the Mediterranean Sea to serve the same purpose the Suez Canal serves today.

Little Judah was a tiny dependency in a vast empire of 2,000,000 square miles (The 48 contiguous states of the United States total a little more than 3,000,000 square miles.). The Jewish priests were allowed to settle local matters, but they were under the control of a Persian governor who ruled over the fifth satrapy which extended from northern Syria all the way to the border of Egypt. The satrapy was called Abar-nahara, that is, the land beyond the Euphrates.

Draw Judah into Map #18. Color the whole map red to show it was under Persian domination. Judah reached from barely north of Jerusalem to barely north of Hebron — about 25 miles. Label these two cities.

The prophets Haggai and Zechariah began to urge their people to resume work on the temple about the time Darius came to power. Haggai said.

This is what the Lord Almighty says: "These people say, The time has not yet come for the Lord's house to be built.

Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: 'Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin? . . . Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it . . . Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored . . . You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?' declares the Lord Almighty. 'Because of my house which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with his own house. Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops . . .' (Hag. 1:2-11) NIV

This was the encouragement the people needed. They set to work again. This time, the governor of Trans-Euphrates came to investigate. He listened to their explanation and wrote a letter of inquiry to the king. His letter told the story correctly: "These people are servants of the God of heaven and earth. They once had a great temple. But, they angered their God, and He allowed Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to destroy the temple and to deport the people. They say King Cyrus issued a decree for them to rebuild their temple. He returned vessels and gave necessary money. Is this true?" (Ezra 5, paraphrased.)

Darius checked the records and found the original decree from Cyrus in the palace of _____ in the province of _____ (Ezra 6:1-2). Therefore, he gave orders for the work to be finished and he forbade any opposition. Thus, the temple was finished 20 years after it was begun.

God did not forget His people wherever they were living. A new king named Xerxes (also called by the title Ahasuerus in the Bible) came to the throne. On one of his times in his winter palace of _____ (Esth. 1:2), he became angry with Vashti his queen. A Jewish maiden named Esther was selected to take her place. She risked her own life to spare her people from the annihilation planned by a wicked official named Haman. The king not only granted her request to foil the plot, he raised her uncle Mordecai to a highly responsible position in the kingdom. Jews throughout the empire were treated with greater respect due to Mordecai's influence. Jews still keep the Feast of Purim on the 14 and 15 of the month Adar (our February-March) to remember their deliverance from Haman's plot. (Book of Esther.)

Label Shushan — or Susa — on map #17.

More time passed and Artaxerxes came to the throne. He was the son of the Xerxes who married Esther. In his seventh year, he granted permission for a priest named Ezra to go to Jerusalem. Ezra's primary task was to inquire into the religious conditions in Judah and Jerusalem. Artaxerxes gave him letters of authority to the governors of Trans-Euphrates so that he might purchase whatever he needed for the religious welfare of his people. In

addition, he was given money from the king himself plus freewill offerings from Jews who remained behind. Nearly 2,000 people, a great portion of them priests and Levites, returned with him (Ezra 7-8).

Thirteen years later, we meet another man in the palace in _____ (Neh. 1:1). Nehemiah was cupbearer to King Artaxerxes, a most responsible position. He learned some distressing news from one who had just returned from _____ (Neh. 1:2). It had, by then, been a little more than 140 years since Jerusalem had been burned. It had been 90 years since Cyrus had given permission to go home. Obviously, it had been plenty long enough for the city to be prosperous again. Yet the city itself was still a charred pile of rubble. They had a temple, but nothing else. Nehemiah was deeply grieved. He asked for and received permission to rebuild the city walls. Authority and supplies were freely given (Neh. 1-2).

The Jews were delighted. They all pitched in to help and had the entire wall finished in a record 52 days. This was in spite of severe opposition from their enemies. Sanballat the _____ (Samaritan), Tobiah the _____, and Geshem the _____ (Neh. 2:19) spearheaded the opposition. Nehemiah and his people ignored their taunts and threats because they "had a mind to work."

But why did it take so long to rebuild their city? Why was the returned remnant not blessed? The prophets had foretold days of glory for the remnant (for example, Amos 9:11-15; Jer. 32:36-44).

We have already noticed Haggai's explanation. The people put their personal welfare ahead of their concern for God. Haggai died, and years passed before Ezra and Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem. Religious conditions were no better, however. The Jews had learned one important lesson from their captivity: never again would they worship idols! It seems they offered sacrifices regularly after the altar of burnt sacrifice was rebuilt (see Ezra 3:1-6; 8:35). Yet their observance of the law was haphazard.

Ezra and Nehemiah were each distressed over the conditions they found. One of the worst problems was that the people had intermarried with their pagan neighbors. Many of the children spoke the language of _____ (Neh. 13:24) or one of the other peoples and could not understand the native tongue of Judah. If such a practice had continued, the Jews would have lost all individuality as a people. God had strictly forbidden their intermarrying with other nations from the days of Moses. Ezra and Nehemiah demanded the foreign wives be put away.

Nehemiah found the Sabbath day being ignored. Merchants continued their business as if it were any other day of the week. The rich Jews were getting richer by charging high interest for loans to poor brethren. Eliashib, the priest, allowed Tobiah, one of the chief enemies, to live in one of the storerooms of the temple.

A prophet named Malachi denounced the people also. He said God wished someone would close the door of the temple. Oh yes, they were offering sacrifices. But it was likely to be some blind or crippled animal that was chosen to be offered. "What a weariness to serve God" was the attitude of the day (Mal. 1):

There was no question in Nehemiah's mind as to why they were not blessed. He honored God as a God of mercy as he reviewed their history and remembered all the many occasions God had spared them from total destruction when they had sinned. He said God had kept His promises, and he led the people in renewing their covenant with God (Neh. 9-10).

God's promises of prosperity have always been conditional. He would have been glad to open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing so great they would not have room to store it, if they had only been faithful (Mal. 3:10). The Jews of today cannot hope to return to Palestine on the basis of the promises made by the Old Testament prophets. Those promises were made and kept four and five hundred years before Christ was born. It was not God's fault He could not bless them as He might have, just as it was not His fault He could not bless them as He had wanted to throughout their history.

Perhaps the prayer Ezra offered when he first observed the conditions in Judah best sums up the situation of the day:

O my God, I am too ashamed and disgraced to lift up my face to you, my God, because our sins are higher than our heads, and our guilt has reached to the heavens. From the days of our forefathers until now, our guilt has been great. Because of our sins, we and our kings and our priests have been subjected to the sword and captivity, to pillage and humiliation at the hand of foreign kings, as it is today.

But now, for a brief moment, the Lord our God had been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in His sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage . . .

But now, O our God, what can we say after this? For we have disregarded the commands you gave through your servants the prophets . . . What has happened to us is a result of our evil deeds and our great guilt, and yet, our God, you have punished us less than our sins have deserved and have given us a remnant like this. Shall we again break your commands . . . Would you not be angry enough with us to destroy us, leaving us no remnant or survivor? O Lord, God of Israel, you are righteous! We are left this day as a remnant. Here we are before you in our guilt, though because of it not one of us can stand in your presence (Ezra 9:6-15 NIV).

Review Of The Old Testament Empires

(Lessons 30-35)

The names of some kings are listed below. Tell which empire each king ruled.

Assyria Babylon Persia

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| _____ 1. Cyrus (Ezra 1:1) | _____ 6. Sargon (Isa. 20:1) |
| _____ 2. Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 1:1) | _____ 7. Nabonidus |
| _____ 3. Tiglath-pileser (2 Kings 16:7) | _____ 8. Cambyses |
| _____ 4. Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:13) | _____ 9. Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:1) |
| _____ 5. Belshazzar (Dan. 5:30) | _____ 10. Xerxes |

During which empire did the following events take place?

Assyria Babylon Persia

- _____ 1. God killed 185,000 soldiers in one night. (2 Kings 19:35-37)
- _____ 2. Esther was made queen. (Esth. 1:1-3)
- _____ 3. Daniel served in the palace during these two empires. (Dan. 1:1; Dan. 5:30-6:8)
- _____ 4. Nehemiah served as cupbearer to one of the kings. (Neh. 1:1; 2:1)
- _____ 5. Sheshbazzar led a group back to rebuild the temple. (Ezra 1:1-8)
- _____ 6. Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. (Neh. 1:1; 2:1-5)
- _____ 7. Samaria fell. (2 Kings 17:6)
- _____ 8. Jerusalem was burned to the ground. (2 Kings 25:8-12)
- _____ 9. Nebuchadnezzar was the best known king of this empire. (Dan. 1:1)
- _____ 10. Jeremiah told his people to surrender. (Jer. 27:12-14)
- _____ 11. The kings uprooted all defeated people and moved them far from their homeland. (2 Kings 17:24)
- _____ 12. The kings usually left all people wherever they found them as long as they were loyal to him.
- _____ 13. The king gave all captive people permission to return to their homelands. (2 Chron. 36:22-23)
- _____ 14. This empire controlled the most territory.
- _____ 15. This empire lasted the shortest time.
- _____ 16. This empire was known for its cruelty.
- _____ 17. This empire had a rule that its laws could not be changed. (Dan. 6:8, 15)
- _____ 18. This empire took the people of Israel captive. (2 Kings 17)
- _____ 19. This empire took the people of Judah captive. (2 Kings 25)
- _____ 20. Mordecai was given a position of honor in this kingdom. (Esth. 8-10)

Answer briefly:

1. When did God fulfill His promise to Abraham to:
 - Make a great nation of his seed? (Exod. 19-24)
 - Give the land of Canaan to his seed? (Josh. 21:43-45)

2. What promise to Abraham was still not fulfilled by the days of the captivity? (Gen. 12:3; see Gal. 3:16)
3. How long was the captivity of Judah due to last according to Jeremiah? (Jer. 29:10; 25:11)
4. Which king would allow the Israelites to return and rebuild Jerusalem according to Isaiah? (Isa. 44:26-28; 45:13)
5. Did God keep His promise to allow a remnant of Jews to return to their homeland? When? (Ezra 1)
6. Did God bless the returned group as much as He had offered? Why? (see Ezra 9; Neh. 9-13; Mal. 1-4)

Put the following events into chronological order:

(The earliest one is #1)

- _____ Temple rebuilt
- _____ Exodus from Egypt
- _____ The United Kingdom
- _____ The Assyrian Captivity
- _____ Conquest of Canaan
- _____ Promises to Abraham
- _____ The Divided Kingdom
- _____ The Babylonian Captivity
- _____ Judges of Israel
- _____ Wandering in the Wilderness
- _____ The Return
- _____ Walls of Jerusalem rebuilt

Match the following names with the proper description below. Some names will not be used.

Nehemiah	Jonah	Nahum
Nebuchadnezzar	Cyrus	Sanballat
Ezra	Zerubbabel	Habakkuk
Haggai	Esther	Tobiah
Geshem	Ezekiel	Malachi

- _____ 1. The prophet who was sent to warn the Assyrians. (Jonah 1:1-2)
- _____ 2. Rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. (Neh. 2:1-20)
- _____ 3. The prophet who said God left the temple and Jerusalem. (Ezek. 8-11)
- _____ 4. The Jewish maiden who saved her people from annihilation. (Book of Esther)
- _____ 5. Rebuilt the temple (Ezra 3:8-13)
- _____ 6. His primary goal was to restore the worship. (Ezra 7)
- _____ 7. The prophet who urged the completion of the temple. (Hag. 1:1-2:23)
- _____ 8. The prophet who said, "Close the doors of the temple . . ." (Mal. 1:10)
- _____ 9. The prophet who rejoiced over the fall of Assyria. (Book of Nahum)
- _____ 10. Local enemies of the Jews who returned to Jerusalem. (Neh. 4:1-7; 6:1)
- _____ 11. The foreign king who had to learn "God rules in the kingdoms of men . . ." (Dan. 4:25-28).

World Affairs During The Years of Biblical Silence

God chose to draw a curtain across the history of His people after the work of Nehemiah, Ezra, and Malachi. The prophet Amos had predicted such a day: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord" (Amos 8:11). The time of famine had come.

God's plan was still on schedule. We have already seen He would have blessed the returned Jews much more than He did if they had been faithful, but they were negligent. God had already made all the necessary prophecies concerning the One to come. Now it was time to wait for the "fulness of time" to bring Christ into the world (Gal. 4:4). God had nothing else He needed to say during these years.

We, too, could draw a curtain across the period, but many changes take place during the 400 years between Malachi and Matthew. The Old Testament closes with Judah a poverty-stricken dependency under the control of Persia. The New Testament opens with Jerusalem a prosperous city in the midst of a prosperous region ruled by a Roman emperor. So far, our study of Bible history has not even touched a people called Romans. Where did they come from?

Furthermore, the religious conditions have undergone a major change by Jesus' day. Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi found the Jews very negligent in observing their laws. Yet, some 450 years later, Christ found religious sects who were so careful to keep the law they would go out and count the leaves on their mint plants so they could be sure to give a tenth to the Lord (Matt. 23:23). Nehemiah found them totally ignoring their Sabbath laws. In contrast, Jesus found the Pharisees so demanding in their observance of the day that they bitterly objected when He healed someone on the Sabbath (John 5). What brought about these changes?

The Bible does not tell us the answers. So, let us continue looking into secular history to find out. We will begin by looking at the changes that took place in world affairs.

The Persian empire remained in control for about a century after the Old Testament closes. As they continued to push their borders outward, it was inevitable they would meet a people they could not conquer. The Greeks proved to be this foe.

Cyrus, the first Persian king, longed to gain a foothold in Europe. It was not until the days of Darius the Great, the third king, that an actual invasion was attempted. Darius managed to take Thrace and Macedon, but the Greeks held out against him (490 B.C.).

Look back to Map #17.

Darius' son, Xerxes, tried again. He crossed the Hellespont, marched through Macedon, defeated the Spartans, and occupied the city of Athens (480 B.C.). The Greeks never forgave him for his invasion. Many fled before Xerxes and rallied their forces on the island of Salamis. There the tide of battle turned. Xerxes lost a third of his fleet of ships. His armies were decisively defeated twice more the same year at Plataea and Samos (479 B.C.).

Label the Hellespont, Athens, and Salamis on Map #17.

Greek opposition continued. Finally, all of Asia Minor west of the Halys River was granted freedom from Persian control, and Persia agreed not to enter the Aegean Sea (449 B.C.). Persia's dominance was weakening.

Label the Halys River. Find the Aegean Sea.

The struggles mentioned so far occurred before the Old Testament closed. Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi were doing their work in Judah about the time Persia lost control of western Asia Minor.

Five Persian kings reigned during the next century. None of them saw the glory the empire had once possessed. Egypt rebelled. The rest of Asia Minor rebelled. Kings were murdered.

Meanwhile, the Greeks were growing in strength. A man named Philip rose to power in Macedon in 359 B.C. During the next 20 years, he was able to unite the Greek states under his control. He was elected commander of the allied Grecian forces and set out to take vengeance on Persia.

Map #19 — The Grecian Empires

Let us take a new map and watch Greece rise to power.

Label: Thrace Athens
Macedon Salamis
The Hellespont Halys River

Label each new territory as it is conquered

Draw a dotted line around Palestine.

Philip appointed his son Alexander regent of Greece when he was only 16 years old. Alexander was, therefore, already an experienced ruler and general four years later when his father was assassinated.

Alexander took his father's army and continued toward Persia. The armies met at Issus, about 35 miles north of where Antioch of Syria would later be built. Darius III was so thoroughly defeated he fled for his life, leaving behind a harem of many wives (331 B.C.).

Alexander turned southward and took all these lands we have studied. Damascus, Gaza, Jerusalem, and other cities came under his control, some peacefully, some with battles. Even the island-fortress of Tyre fell before him. Egypt welcomed the Greeks as liberators from the hated Persians.

The armies pushed eastward to complete the conquest of all Persia. Alexander's campaigns carried him as far as the Indus River on the very border of India. Legends say he wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. That is, of course, an exaggeration of the truth. It might be more accurate to say he wept because his soldiers refused to go any farther.

Our maps do not show enough territory to the east to include the Indus River. Put an arrow on your map to the east to indicate his control.

He had returned as far as Babylon in 323 B.C. There he died of a fever at only 32 years of age. One of the greatest military geniuses of all time had played his scene in the drama of world history. Though his life was short, he left a mark on the page of history that has never been erased. For the first time in all the centuries, we have an empire with its source far removed from the Mesopotamian Valley. It is to be expected that major cultural changes would occur.

Alexander was educated by the famous Greek philosopher Aristotle. Alexander thought the Greek or "Hellenistic" culture was the greatest the world had ever seen, and he was determined to "share" it with all conquered people. In order to do so, he established model Greek cities as he conquered a region. Perhaps the city of Alexandria in Egypt was the most successful such city. It became a great center of the arts; scientific research institutes were built; museums were founded; and one of the greatest libraries of the world was established.

Of course, Alexander did not live long enough to carry out his dreams. His kingdom fell into the hands of his generals. Various men struggled for dominance in the next few years. Finally, two men managed to gain control over large sections. A third man, Antiochus Gonatas, held Macedon with Greece a semi-independent kingdom under his control. The territory of Palestine changed hands five times in the first 20 years after Alexander's death.

Selucus Nicator shaped an empire including Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria, Babylon, Media, and on to India. He founded the city of Antioch in Syria and made it his capital. Thus began the new Syrian empire which was to remain in power until 64 B.C. The "Seleucid" kings ruled over it.

Meanwhile, Ptolemy I was piecing together a kingdom in Egypt. He, too, founded a dynasty that was to last three centuries. His capital was Alexandria. Notice, Egyptian rulers are no longer called Pharaoh as they had been since the dawn of the civilization. It was this Ptolemaic empire which controlled Jerusalem and her neighbors for the next 100 years.

Each of Alexander's generals held Alexander's dream of a Greek society. Therefore, the Greek philosophy became the prevailing way of life.

Draw a line to include all of Alexander's conquests that your map includes.

Now draw lines to divide the Syrian, Egyptian, and Greek empires that formed. Color each empire a different color. Yet remember, they were all thoroughly Greek in their outlook.

Label: Antioch, Alexandria, Athens

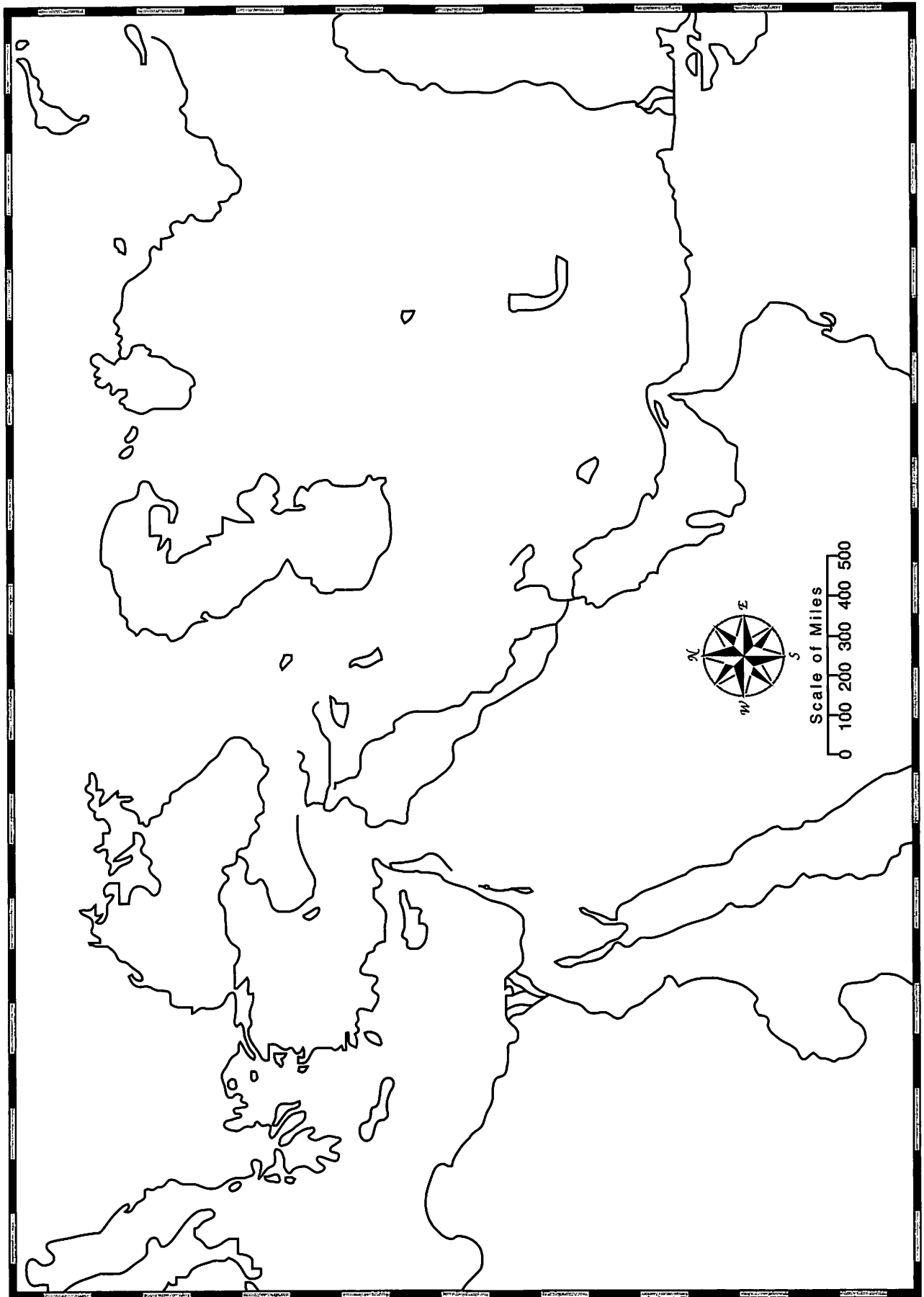
Be sure the various sections of the Syrian empire are labeled:

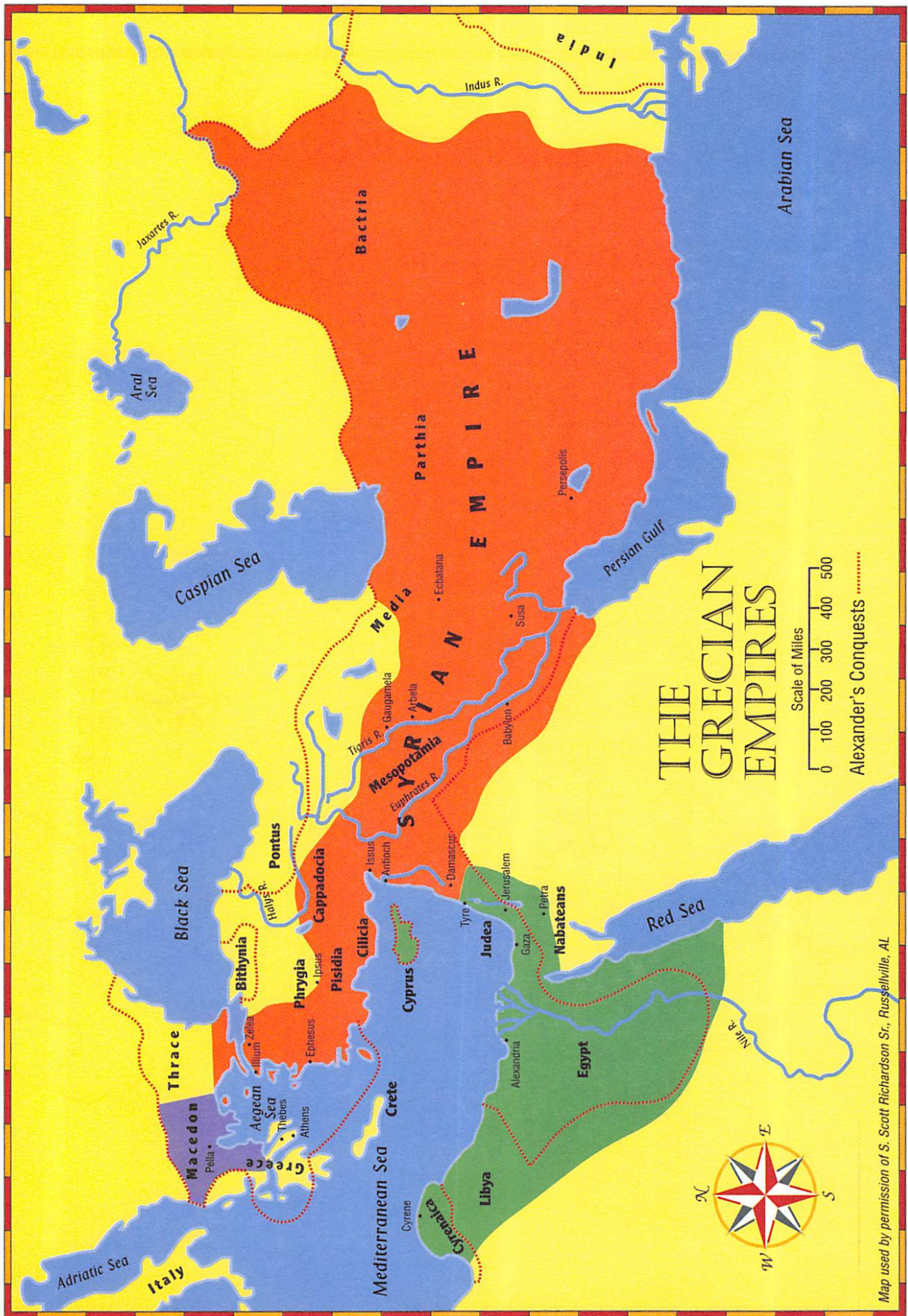
Thrace Babylon

Asia Minor Media

Syria

Circle Greece as the source of the culture.





God's People In A Grecian Society

World history is interesting, but this study is of Bible history. What was happening to God's people during these fourth and fifth centuries before Christ while the Greeks were rising to power? No one knows for sure. There are practically no records available from the period. Even the Jewish historical records leave the details vague.

It is safe to assume Jerusalem began to prosper financially after the walls were rebuilt in Nehemiah's day. He was responsible for having one family out of ten move into the newly fortified city to help its growth (Neh. 11:1-2). Lesson 35 pointed out that the Persians brought about many legal and fiscal reforms to promote commerce throughout the empire. Judah could, therefore, share in the general prosperity of the period.

Judging from the hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans of the New Testament, we can only assume their relations worsened during these years of Biblical silence. The people of Judah had never had much love for the Samaritans since the king of Assyria first transported them to Israel's old territory (2 Kings 17). The Samaritans did not help relations any when they tried every way possible to prevent the Jews from rebuilding their city of Jerusalem (Books of Ezra and Nehemiah). Thus a solid foundation was laid for a deep-seated enmity.

The Samaritans continued to live in the central portion of the land. They continued with their religion made up partly of laws of Jehovah mixed with their own ancestral pagan rites (see 2 Kings 17:24-41). They built a temple of their own on Mt. Gerizim after the Jews would not let them share in the temple at Jerusalem.

Label Mt. Gerizim on Map #18.

The Jews, meanwhile, gradually filled the southern portion of the land and began to move into the northern region where once the tribes of Zebulun, Naphtali, Issachar, and Asher lived. Busy commercial centers arose. The section has been called Galilee since the Assyrians conquered northern Israel and made it an Assyrian province (Lesson 30).

Language Changes

The language was undergoing some major changes during these years of Biblical silence. We have already mentioned the Aramaic language on different occasions. It was the predominant language in the Fertile Crescent from the days of the Assyrian empire.

In Lesson 35, we noted the Jewish men of Judah intermarried with their neighbors. Their children spoke a corruption of a language which likely included Aramaic plus the ancient tongue of their mother's people, with possibly a little Hebrew thrown in (Neh. 13:23-24). Nehemiah 8 tells of an occasion when the people gathered to hear Ezra read the law of Moses. Thirteen men are named who stood beside Ezra and "caused the people to understand the law" (Neh. 8:7-8). It is quite plausible to think that their task was to give an oral interpretation from the Hebrew text into the common Aramaic language of the day.

During these years of Biblical silence, another language became prominent. The Greek language was the official tongue of both the Syrian and Egyptian empires. Every educated person was able to read, write, and speak Greek fluently. Education was stressed during the era so the language spread much faster than it might have in earlier generations when few people could read and write.

New names began appearing in Palestine during this period since the Greek language was the predominant one. Judah was called Judaea by the Greeks. The Edomites became Idumeans. Old cities were captured, rebuilt, and renamed as one official after another fought for the area. For example, old Accho became Ptolemais; Bethshan became Scythopolis; and old Rabbah of the Ammonites became Philadelphia. The coastal plain was of particular value for free commerce across the Mediterranean so old ports such as Joppa and Dor were enlarged and made more useful.

Go back to Map #18 and write Judaea in parenthesis under Judah; and Idumaea under Edom.

The Jews who lived in Palestine tended to resist the Grecian influence as much as possible. They, therefore, continued speaking Aramaic in their daily lives as they had for many years. Yet Jews were scattered everywhere by this date. Many, many Jews migrated to Egypt during the years of Greek-Egyptian domination. In fact, Alexandria became one of the world centers for Judaism with perhaps a million Jews living there. All these Jews began to speak Greek more and more exclusively, and had trouble reading their Hebrew scriptures.

The Ptolemies of Egypt were very interested in collecting all ancient literature. It is said that Ptolemy II was fascinated when he learned of the Jews' ancient writings. He contacted the High Priest, and arrangements were

made to translate the scriptures into Greek. Legend says that 72 scholars gathered and translated the entire work in 72 days. That legend is probably false, but the work was called the Septuagint which means "seventy." The year was about 280 B.C.

The value of the Septuagint can hardly be over-stated. In the first place, it was a help to every Greek-speaking Jew wherever he was living. And, as stated earlier, any person who could read at all could read Greek.

Of equal importance, the Septuagint version made the sacred writings available to Gentiles. For the first time, the Gentiles could read of the mighty works of God. It is not surprising, therefore, that we find many proselytes and God-fearers in the days of the New Testament. A proselyte was a Gentile who accepted the complete law of Moses. A God-fearer accepted the God of the Jews but not all of the ceremonial rites of the law.

God obviously approved of the translation because Jesus and the apostles quoted from it regularly. Six out of every seven quotations in the Gospels and Acts are direct quotes from the Septuagint rather than from the original Hebrew.

Jewish Individuality

Many factors could have destroyed the individuality of the nation during these 400 years. Many neighbors, such as the Moabites, Ammonites, and Philistines were gradually absorbed into the general population. If the returned Jews had continued intermarrying with others, they too, would have been lost as a distinct people. This was not God's will because He was not finished with the nation. Ezra and Nehemiah succeeded in stressing the seriousness of the matter. Most Jews thereafter kept themselves separate from their neighbors no matter where they were living.

As we have indicated, Jews were scattered everywhere. Let us stop and look at some reasons why. It was over 700 years before Christ when the kingdom of Israel was removed from the land by the Assyrians. A century later, Judah was scattered by the Babylonians. Permission was granted for all Jews to go home in Cyrus' day, but most did not. Those who remained behind were scattered throughout Mesopotamia and Persia. Now, during the Egyptian control of Palestine, the Egyptians welcomed any who chose to migrate there. Later, the Syrians gained control, and more migrations occurred.

Some of the Jews accepted the Hellenistic life-style readily. Others resisted strongly. Even the Hellenistic Jew remembered he was one of God's chosen people. Those scattered farthest from home still observed the law of Moses, and looked for a Messiah. Travel was easier than it had ever been before, and there were pilgrimages to Jerusalem to observe feast days. The practice of meeting to worship on each Sabbath day continued during these years. By New Testament days, there was a synagogue in every city where there were enough Jews to build and use it. Ten Jewish men were required to have a synagogue.

The term "Gentile" took on a new connotation during this period. Originally, it merely meant "a people" and was used to refer to any nation, including the Jews. As the Jews began to pride themselves more and more as God's chosen people, the word took on a hostile meaning. By New Testament days, the Jewish mind divided all the world's population into two groups — Jews and Gentiles! And, since practically all the people around the Jews were caught up in the Grecian culture, the term "Greek" was sometimes used in the same way to refer to anyone who was non-Jewish.

Religious Changes

The changes in the religious attitudes were as significant as any of the other changes of the period. Idolatry was the major threat to Jewish faithfulness through all the years from Moses to the captivity. God punished His people severely, and that particular lesson was never forgotten. After the captivity, the Jews abhorred any semblance of idolatry. Their houses might have intricate abstract carvings but never a representation of any plant or animal. Any loyal Jew would give his life rather than worship an idol.

It seems the Jews originally trusted the truth that Jehovah was their God. They seemed to think that whether they obeyed Him or not had nothing to do with His treatment of them — in spite of all the warnings from the prophets. They held to a one-sided covenant.

Ezra is given credit for awakening the determination to keep the details of the law. The original idea was good, but the pendulum swung too far. They decided the path to God's favor lay in perfect obedience. It was as if they thought God would be obligated to take care of them if they kept a certain number of prescribed laws. Neither idea was correct.

Gradually, teachers began to argue over how to keep each law exactly. Long, involved discussions were conducted. These discussions resulted in the development of the Haggadah and the Halachah (literally "fence"). The Haggadah consisted of expositions and legendary expansions of the historical and prophetic books of the Old Testament. The Halachah was a collection of rules which regulated conduct down to the smallest details. Later, these traditions, which were oral at this point in history, were organized and written in the Talmud and Midrach. These traditions were not inspired of God, but the Jews gradually came to give them greater honor than the scriptures themselves.

Attitudes such as mercy, justice, and honesty are hard to measure. On the other hand, it was easy to know whether one had circumcised his child, or had given a tenth of his income to God, or had kept the Sabbath day. Therefore, it was the various ceremonial rites that began to be stressed. It is fascinating to read some of the rules in the Mishnah. For example, the law said they were not to kindle fires on the Sabbath day (Exod. 35:1-3). So, the Jew would not open a door opposite a burning candle lest he make it burn brighter, thus "kindling a fire."

We do not have a record of the origin of any specific sect. We do know there was an early group called the "Hasidim" or the "pious ones." They were very strict in their observance of the law of Moses and very firm in their opposition to anything that might corrupt their Jewish system of religion. Seemingly, the Pharisees arose out of this group. The Pharisees were generally ordinary, middle-class Jews who strongly resisted the Greek influence. The name is thought to mean "the separated ones," but no one knows its origin. Although there were many who were Pharisees in their outlook, the fraternity itself numbered only about 6,000. The Pharisees had a great effect on the religion of the masses. Many of their ideas were an outgrowth of sincere efforts to serve God. The particular points they stressed most, however, were the ceremonial rites. The "traditions" of the fathers were held to be sacred. Therefore, their very strictness led them into the formalistic, legalistic extremes Jesus found among them. They considered any influence that might change their ancient Jewish customs a serious threat to their unique relationship with God.

In contrast to the Pharisees, a sect arose called the Sadducees. Again, their origin is unknown. The party was made up largely of priests and aristocrats (though it is a matter of record that many priests were also Pharisees — see John 1:19-24). The High Priest was given great political power during this era, so it is not surprising he and his associates were very conscious of the advantages of political compromise. The typical Sadducee was very wealthy. They believed in God and the Law, but they rejected most of the traditions and interpretations of the Pharisees. They doubted there was life after death. Supernatural beings such as angels seemed foolish to them. They wanted the Jewish way of life to continue, but they were willing to compromise for political advantages.

The Essenes objected to the Pharisees also, but they moved in the opposite direction from the Sadducees. The Sadducees considered the Pharisees too strict. The Essenes considered them dangerously liberal. They were so distressed over the conditions in Jerusalem they withdrew and established their own community at Qumran on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea. It is thought they collected or wrote the famous Dead Sea scrolls that have been found in caves near the north end of the Dead Sea. Jesus had very little (if any) contact with the Essenes because they tended to live apart from the general population. Their lifestyle was very austere and regimented.

The Zealots thought the Jewish state should be established at all cost. They were firmly convinced that God would come to their aid militarily and usher in a glorious Messianic kingdom in Jerusalem. Many revolts through the years started with the Zealots. Thus, this party was one of the many factors that led to the final destruction of Jerusalem.

The Jewish nation had been both a religious kingdom and a political one since its origin. The law of Moses told them how their king should rule, how they were to punish their criminals, and how they were to fight their battles as well as how they were to offer sacrifices in worship to God. Therefore, the different philosophies of the sects toward their law necessarily involved different philosophies toward their political situations as well. Therefore, conditions were ripe for frequent civil conflicts in the land by the time Christ was born.

These are only the major Jewish parties. There were others. All of them were looking for a Messiah. All of them wanted a glorious, independent kingdom which "all nations would flow unto" (Isa. 2:1-5). The only problem was that each one had his own idea of what this kingdom would be like, and how to make the dream come true.

Lesson 39

The Maccabean Revolt

World conditions never remain static. The years of Ptolemaic (Egypt) domination were relatively peaceful for the Jews. Though the Ptolemies were strongly Hellenistic themselves, they did not force others to live the same way.

Unfortunately, the Syrians thought Palestine should be theirs. There were numerous battles through the years until, finally, Syria defeated Egypt in 198 B.C., and Palestine changed hands again. It was not long before major problems arose. Remember, this is not the old Syria of the Old Testament, but a much more formidable foe, the Grecian-Syrian empire.

Antiochus IV came to the throne in 175 B.C. His kingdom was full of unrest. A new enemy was growing on the horizon — Rome. Syria had already had one disastrous confrontation with the Roman legions, and Rome was demanding a crippling tax from Syria. Antiochus decided he needed a strong unifying force to strengthen his kingdom against the Roman threat. He added the title "Epiphanes" to his name and declared himself to be the human manifestation of Zeus, the chief god of the Greeks. He set out to force every one of his subjects to accept the Greek way of life and to worship him as the Greek god.

The action brought him into direct conflict with the Jews. To submit to his demands would mean serious apostasy from Jehovah. Antiochus succeeded in forcing the Samaritans to renounce their religion, and then he headed toward Jerusalem. He set up a high priest favorable to the Hellenistic program. He defiled the altar of burnt offering at the temple by offering swine on it. He outlawed all Jewish ceremonies such as circumcision. He forbade the observance of the Sabbath day or of the feast days. He burned all the copies of the law he could find. And, he set up a cult to worship Zeus in the temple itself. Idols of Zeus were set up in all public places throughout Judea. All who would not obey the king's decrees and display allegiance to the idol were publicly whipped and then killed. It was 167 B.C.

It was a very aged priest named Mattathias Hasmonaeus, living in Modein west of Jerusalem, who first had the courage to withstand a Syrian official. When the king's officer came to Modein to enforce the royal edict to stamp out the Jewish religion, he made splendid offers to Mattathias if he would comply. The old man not only refused, he publicly declared his determination to live and die in the religion of his fathers. He killed the king's officer plus a Jew who had come forward to do the will of Antiochus.

He and his five sons (John, Simon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan) fled to the Gophna Hills, a heavily wooded area of ridges and valleys in territory that had once belonged to Ephraim. Faithful Jews from all over the land rallied around them. Mattathias, realizing his great age, appointed his son Simon as counsellor and father of the family and Judas as military leader. (The family of rulers is remembered in history as the Hasmonean Dynasty.)

Space will not permit a detailed description of the Maccabean campaigns, but we do need to mention a few of the feats which justified the name, "Maccabee" or "Hammer," that Judas was given.

Judas and his followers began waging guerrilla type warfare almost immediately. They mingled with local villagers during the day and attacked Syrian sympathizers or army outposts at night. Naturally, the local Jews approved of the Maccabean forces, so they kept Judas informed concerning all movement of the enemy. Over and over Judas ambushed some vastly superior force and scattered it.

On one occasion, the Syrian forces under two men named Nicanor and Gorgias, came with 20,000 footmen and 7,000 cavalry. Judas had only 3,000 men with him. Judas learned Gorgias had taken 6,000 men with him intending to circle around and make a surprise attack on the Jewish force. Judas immediately decided to make a surprise attack of his own upon the main camp. He rushed down upon the soldiers, and completely routed them. When Gorgias returned, baffled and tired, he was dismayed to find his camp in flames. Judas then attacked the demoralized force of Gorgias and was completely victorious.

Hopelessly outnumbered, Judas met and defeated the royal forces in a series of brilliant victories. His military talent and cunning were so extraordinary, his exploits filled the Seleucid troops with awe.

The next year after defeating the above-mentioned army, he defeated an even larger army at Beth-zur, about 16 miles southwest of Jerusalem. This paved the way for the re-taking of Jerusalem. In December of 164 B.C., Judas retook the city and the Temple Mount. He cleansed the sanctuary, and re-lit the lamps in the temple. The Jews have celebrated the moment ever since with a feast called the "Feast of Dedication" in the New Testament and Hanukkah today. Jesus Himself attended the feast as recorded in John 10:22-23.

The Syrians were having trouble in other parts of their empire at the same time. Rome was growing in power,

and the Syrian empire was beginning to crack in all directions. Various heirs of the Seleucid throne struggled for power each time a ruler would die or some rival saw a chance to gain control. Finally, Lysias, the new ruler of Syria, offered a compromise peace with the Jews of Jerusalem. He would grant them religious freedom if they would return the military stronghold on the Temple Mount to the Syrians.

Many Jews, especially the most devout ones, felt their goal had been reached and refused to take any more part in the rebellion. But, by now, Judas was determined to win complete political independence for Judea. The Hasidim we studied in our last lesson had been some of the staunchest supporters in the beginning of the revolution, but they were the first to pull out when the goals became political.

The story of Judas' death illustrates his valor and that of his men. With an army of 800 men, he fought off an army of thousands from morning until night. He and his men died surrounded by literally "heaps" of the enemy.

Judas was succeeded by his brother Jonathan who consolidated the power of the Maccabees by war as well as diplomacy. Jonathan served as political leader while Simon served as high priest. They widened the rebellion into a full-scale war, and not only gained independence, but led Judah to a considerable measure of glory. The Jews were delighted over the victory and proclaimed Simon Maccabaeus and his descendants high priests and ethnarchs "until a faithful prophet should arise."

Simon was succeeded by his son John Hyrcanus (135-105 B.C.) who proved to be a true son of the Maccabees. The Syrians once again overran Palestine, but John managed to oust them and regained Jewish independence.

During all this time, Rome was quietly encouraging the efforts of the Jews to gain independence because it was weakening the Syrian empire. If a Maccabean leader ran into particularly difficult circumstances, he sent envoys to Rome. They, in turn, sent encouragement and promises of help, though they did not take direct measures to help during this early period.

With the death of John Hyrcanus, the day of the great Maccabees was over. The decades that followed were marred by intrigue and bloody in-fighting as men and women of questionable motives struggled to gain power. The original intent of the revolt was commendable, but, unfortunately, the leaders were divided over how to have a strong country. The people of the land were sharply divided over the issues that arose. The religious sects we studied in the last lesson were fully developed by this time. The ruler would sometimes favor one sect and then the other — bringing about virtual civil war in the land.

Aristobulus, a son of John Hyrcanus, was the first to take the title of King. The strictest of the Jews objected because he was not of the lineage of David, and therefore had no right to claim the throne. Others saw the whole rebellion and independence as the beginning of a new day of glory for Israel. The land was full of unrest and ripe for the plucking by the time the Roman legions approached Palestine.

One noteworthy thing the Maccabean rulers accomplished was the complete subjugation of their ancient enemies. Samaria was conquered, and the temple on Mt. Gerizim was destroyed. The old Edomites, or Idumeans as the Greeks called them, were conquered and forced to accept the Jewish religion. This point becomes important later because the family of the Herods were Edomites who had become Jews in religion. Yet their "religion" was very shallow since they had become such to avoid death.

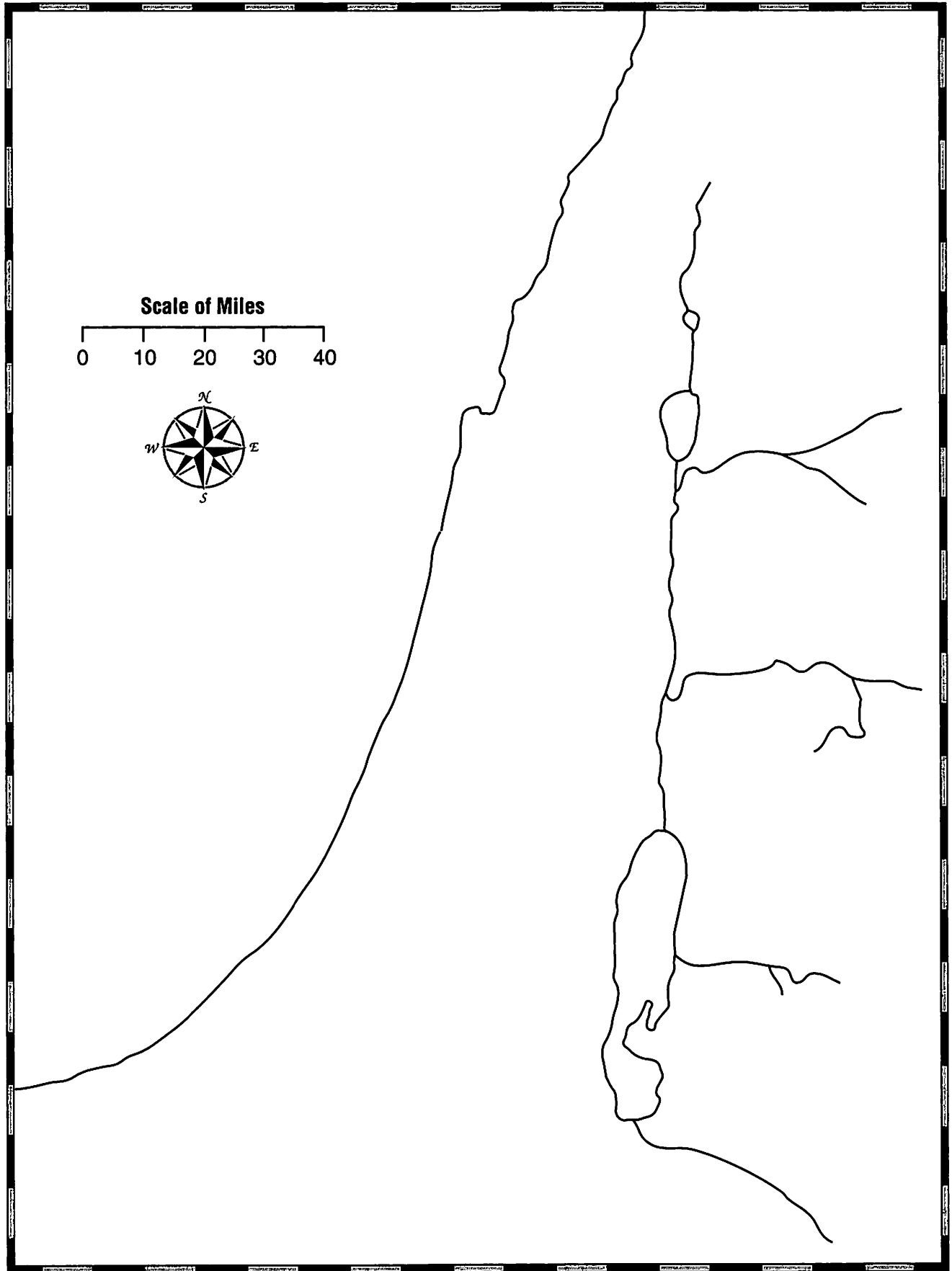
Map #20 — Palestine: The Maccabean Period

This study map shows the territory controlled by the Hasmonian dynasty at its largest.

Color yours to match the study map.

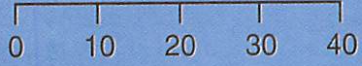
Label:

**Jerusalem
Modein
Gophna Hills
Beth-zur
Samaria
Mt. Gerizim
Idumean territory**



JUDEA THE MACCABEAN PERIOD

Scale of Miles



Mediterranean Sea



Map by permission of S. Scott Richardson, Russelville, Alabama

Lesson 40

The Time Draws Near

Approximately 600 years before Christ, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had a dream. He saw a great image with a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, and legs and feet of iron. As Nebuchadnezzar watched, a stone rolled down from a mountain, struck the image on the feet, and broke it into pieces. The parts of the image were blown away as chaff, and the stone grew into a great mountain which filled the earth.

Daniel interpreted the dream for the king. Nebuchadnezzar's own kingdom was represented by the head of gold. It would be followed by an inferior kingdom which would in turn be followed by still another kingdom. The third kingdom would give way to a fourth with the strength of iron. Daniel continued,

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. (Dan. 2:44)

Now let us come to the point in history where our last lesson closed. It is about 100 B.C. Let us see if Daniel's prophecy is coming true.

Look back to Lesson 30. The Assyrians were the first people strong enough to conquer a large empire, but that empire had already passed out of existence before Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image. Now look at Lesson 31. Babylon took Assyria's place under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar. In Lesson 34, we observed how Babylon fell to the Persian rulers. Persia fell to the Greeks in Lesson 37. How many empires does that make since Nebuchadnezzar's dream? Let us count them: (1) Babylon, (2) Medo-Persian, (3) Greece. A fourth one is already looming on the horizon by 100 B.C. — Rome with all its might. According to Daniel's interpretation, it is almost time for God's kingdom to be established. Every faithful Jew longed for that establishment. Unfortunately, the plan God had for His kingdom, and the concept the Jews held of the kingdom were totally different.

The Roman empire, like its predecessors, began with an insignificant city-state and gradually grew into a world power. Tradition says the city of Rome was founded by two brothers, Romulus and Remus, in 753 B.C. Look back to your chart of the kings in Lesson 28. Rome's founding took place during those last years of struggle before the northern kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians. Rome was still a small city far removed from Canaan. It played no part at all in the history of God's people for many centuries.

There was no single military genius among the Romans, such as Cyrus or Alexander, to spread its influence. Rather, the Romans were a self-governing people who gradually conquered their neighbors.

Rome first began moving out of Italy in 264 B.C. Her first major conflicts were with Carthage in northwestern Africa who was also trying to spread her boundaries. The two powers engaged in a life and death struggle until Carthage was defeated in 200 B.C. With that victory, Rome had pushed far to the west to control what is now Spain. Soon, Rome was the uncontested ruler of the western Mediterranean Sea.

Map #21 — The Roman Empire in the Days of Christ

Label and number your map. Draw a dotted line around Palestine.

Notice your map does not include as much territory as the study map. Compare Map #21 with Maps #17 and 19. They included more territory than our blank maps also, but there is a distinct difference between this one and the other two. What is it?

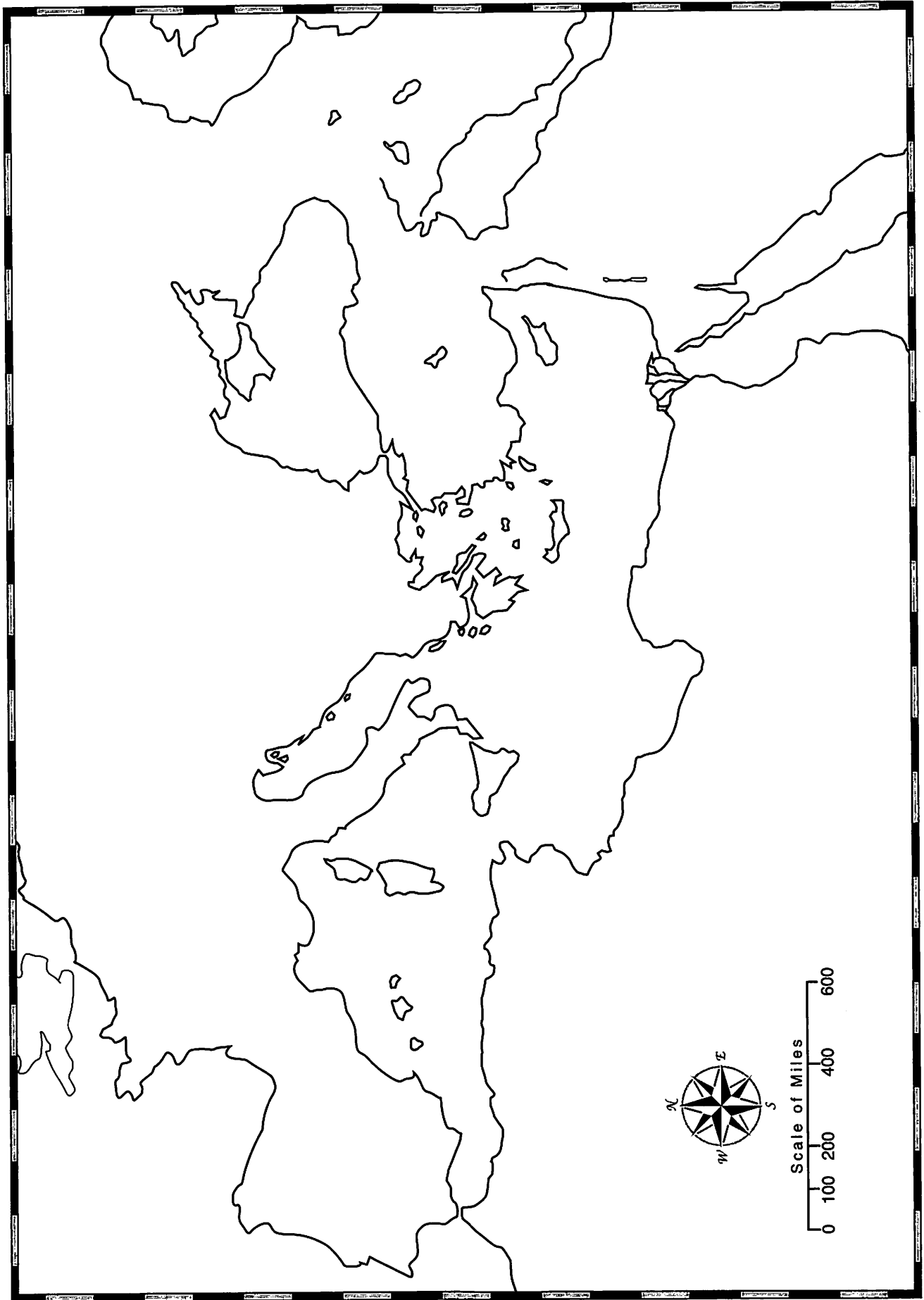
Label Italy and the city of Rome.

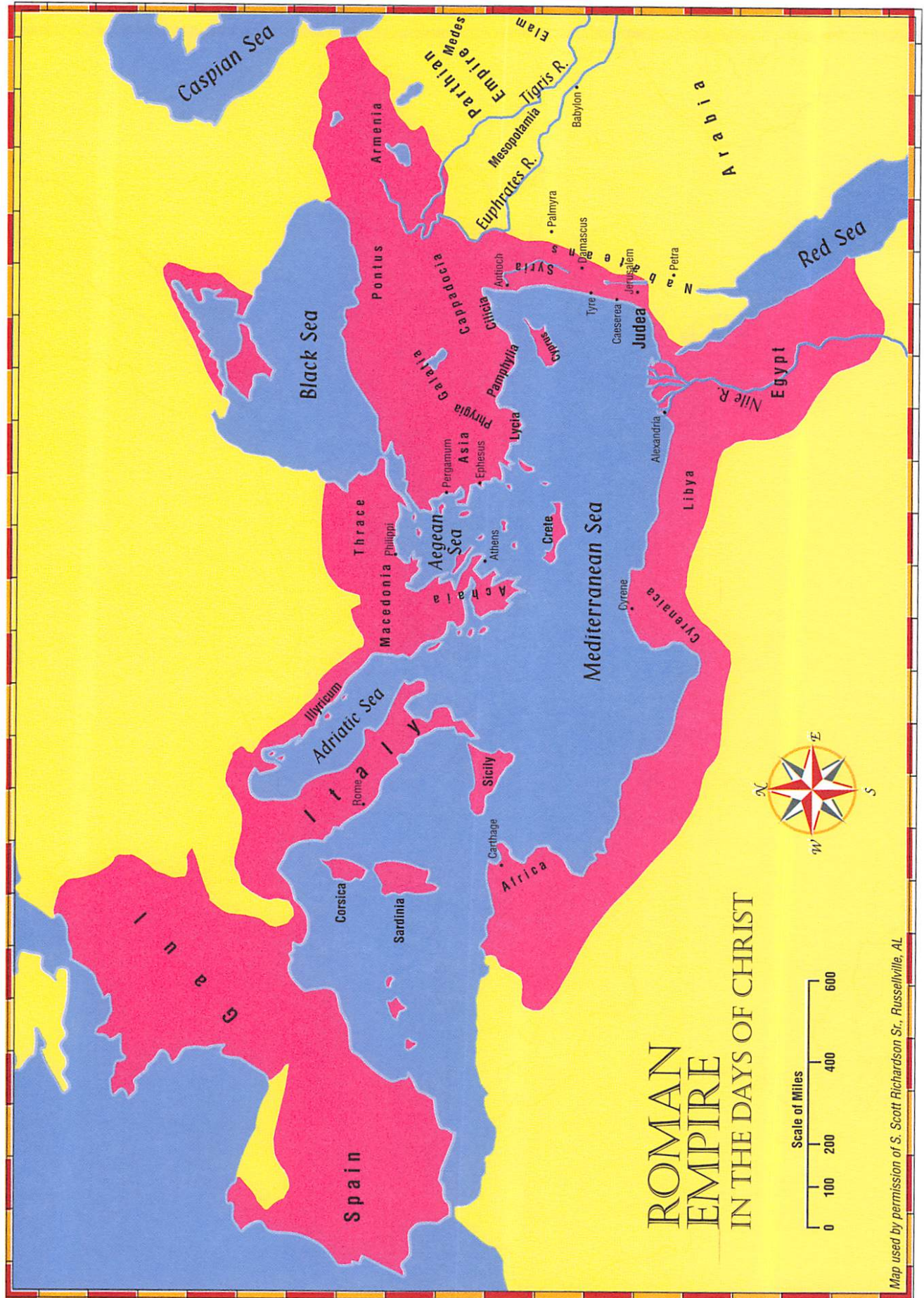
Your map does not include any of Rome's early conquests. Draw arrows to indicate Rome's western victories. Indicate Carthage was on the north-western shores of Africa, though off our map.

Label each new territory as it is conquered.

It was time for Rome to turn eastward. Rome defeated the king of Macedonia in 197 B.C. Antiochus III, the Seleucid ruler of Syria, was afraid of the growing giant, and he attacked the Roman army in Greece. This was the worst mistake he could have made because he was sorely defeated. The battle only demonstrated to the Romans how weak the Seleucid forces were. Rome demanded a crippling tax from Syria, and, indirectly, touched the Jews for the first time.

Antiochus IV inherited the Syrian throne in 175 B.C. His kingdom was debt-ridden because of the tax to Rome. Asia Minor was falling under Roman control. The Roman legions were drawing ever nearer. Therefore, Antiochus declared himself to be Zeus (Epiphanes) and set out to demand the complete submission of his subjects. This move brought him into direct conflict with the Jews who rebelled under the leadership of Judas the Maccabee as we saw in our last lesson.





Syria was harassed on every side. The Jews gained their independence. Rome moved nearer. Still another foe had arisen to the east. Parthia in old Persia had already formed a kingdom on the eastern edge of Syria's control in 248 B.C. By 129 B.C., the Partians had taken Persia and Mesopotamia away from the Seleucid kingdom of Syria. The Parthians and the Romans had many battles through the years that followed, but Rome never succeeded in conquering them.

Label the Parthian kingdom. Color it green.

Meanwhile, a large portion of Asia Minor was organized as a Roman province called Asia (129 B.C.). Bithynia was willed to Rome in 75 B.C. The rest of the states of Asia Minor became vassals to Rome. The remaining portion of the once powerful Syrian kingdom was annexed as the Roman province of Syria (64 B.C.).

Label the provinces. Look back to Map #19 and compare the province of Syria to the empire of Syria.

Pompey was the Roman general in charge of conquering the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. The Senate had granted him control of the Sea and 50 miles inland on all its shores. This was an effort to stop all piracy and to make Rome the empress of the Mediterranean. Notice on your map he is accomplishing his goal. The western shores of the Mediterranean had been in Rome's control for many years by this time. Now, all the northern shores are subdued. By taking Syria, Pompey has rounded the corner of the sea and has started down the eastern coastline. Palestine is next in line.

Conditions were far from peaceful in Palestine, as we indicated in our last lesson. The Maccabean Revolt that started with such promise had degenerated into a series of civil conflicts as rival heirs fought for the throne. Pompey first entered Jerusalem on the pretext of intervening in the conflict between two such heirs. He marched into the city, broke down a portion of the wall, and walked into the Holy of Holies of the temple. The Jews were horrified. They expected to see God smite him dead in his tracks. God did not punish him in that way, but it is interesting to note from history that Pompey's life was never successful again. Up until that point, he had had one victory after another. After this, it was a series of frustrating defeats until he was ordered killed in disgrace.

Label Jerusalem.

Pompey entered Jerusalem in 63 B.C. He made Hyrcanus high priest and put the other rival, Aristobulus, in prison. A man named Antipater began working as the power behind the high priest at this time. He was an Idumean (Edomite). We will mention him again in a moment.

Meanwhile, Pompey found himself in the midst of a civil conflict in Rome. Julius Caesar had been leading his Roman legions in the west while Pompey was gaining his victories in the east. It was to be expected that bitter rivalry would result. Pompey was defeated in 48 B.C., and he fled to Egypt. Ptolemy XII was afraid to help Pompey, and ordered him killed.

Julius Caesar followed Pompey to Egypt where he set out to bring Egypt under Roman domination. After a series of battles, he made the famous Cleopatra ruler of Egypt. She was an heir of the Ptolemies, and, therefore, had a rightful claim to the throne. Of course, now she was due to be subject to Rome.

Label Egypt.

An army from Syria helped Julius Caesar in his battles in Egypt. The Antipater mentioned above played a prominent role in the Syrian army. It seems he had a knack for being at the right place at the right moment. As a reward for his help, he was given Roman citizenship and personal immunity from taxes. In addition, he was named administrator of Judea. From this time forward, he and his family were held in great favor by the Romans.

Jerusalem received help from the Parthians and succeeded in throwing off Roman control for a brief time (40-37 B.C.). When the city was reconquered, Antipater's son Herod the Great was made king of the Jews. Thus, nominally, Judea was an independent kingdom under the suzerainty of Rome. Herod's kingdom included most of Palestine.

Draw a line around all the territory Rome controlled on your map of Bible Lands. Color all Roman territory red. Compare this map with Maps #14, 16, 17, and 19. Note the similarities and the differences in the territories controlled by each empire.

Julius Caesar was murdered in 44 B.C., and Cleopatra found herself in a power struggle between Mark Antony and Octavian. Antony and Cleopatra's forces were defeated in 31 B.C., and Egypt became a Roman province. Octavian was declared to be the first Roman emperor and was given the title of Augustus Caesar.

One day an old Jewish priest named Zacharias was quietly going about his business of offering incense in Jerusalem. Suddenly, the angel Gabriel stood on the right side of the altar. God was breaking His silence for the first time in over 400 years. The angel told Zacharias his wife would have a son to be named John. It would be John's task to be the forerunner of the Messiah, "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:5-25).

Six months later the same angel appeared to a young virgin living in an obscure village called _____ (Luke 1:26), located in northern Palestine. She was told she would have a son whose name would be called Jesus.

... And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Furthermore, this birth would be a most unusual one:

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God: (Luke 1:26-38.)

The angel told Mary her cousin Elizabeth was also expecting a child. Mary arose and went to the hill country of _____ (Luke 1:39). There she, Zacharias, and Elizabeth rejoiced together over the fulfillment of the promises of God (Luke 1:36-80).

Mary returned to Nazareth and married Joseph to whom she was betrothed. Together they waited for the birth of the Messiah (Matt. 1:18-25).

Meanwhile, far to the west, Augustus Caesar ordered a census of all his subjects for the purpose of determining a poll tax. The Jews were ordered to return to the home of their ancestors to be properly registered. Thus Joseph and Mary set out from Nazareth to go to _____ (Luke 2:4) because they were each of the lineage of David.

The trip must have been a difficult one because Mary was "great with child" (Luke 2:5). You remember the story. The time for delivery came, and the child was born in Bethlehem in fulfillment of the prophecy made by the prophet Micah over 700 years earlier (Mic. 5:2; Matt. 2:1-6).

God's providence works in wondrous ways. Here was an emperor who knew nothing about Jehovah. He had never heard of the prophet Micah nor of his prophecies. He never knew Jesus existed. Yet his decrees brought about the fulfillment of one of the many prophecies about the Messiah.

Angels appeared to shepherds that very night and sang of the glory that had come to Israel:

... Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.' (Luke 2:8-14).

Review of The Years of Biblical Silence

(Lessons 37-40)

Define the following words or expressions:

1. Septuagint:
2. God-fearer:
3. Proselyte:
4. Synagogue:
5. Hellenistic:
6. Gentile:
7. Maccabee:
8. Feast of Dedication:

Give an identifying characteristic of each of these religious sects:

1. Essenes:
2. Pharisees:
3. Zealots:
4. Sadducees:

Name the capital city of:

1. Egypt:
2. Syria:
3. Greece:

Name the rulers:

- _____ 1. The general who conquered from Greece to India.
- _____ 2. The king who called himself Zeus.
- _____ 3. The Egyptian Dynasty.
- _____ 4. The Syrian Dynasty.
- _____ 5. The Maccabean Dynasty.
- _____ 6. The Roman general who conquered Jerusalem.
- _____ 7. The first general of the Maccabean Revolt.
- _____ 8. The ruler Julius Caesar set up over Egypt.
- _____ 9. The king of Judea when Christ was born. (Luke 1:5)
- _____ 10. The emperor of Rome when Christ was born. (Luke 2:1)

Short answers:

1. What was the official language of the Grecian empires?
2. What was the daily language in the homes of Palestine?
3. What language were the Old Testament scriptures written in?

4. Why was there hatred between the Jews and Samaritans?
5. Who was the prophet who predicted a famine of hearing the Word of God?
6. What brought about the Maccabean Revolt?
7. What did the Greeks call Judah? Edom?
8. Who was the first Jew to publicly protest the Syrian order to worship Zeus?
9. Summarize the kind of battles the Maccabees fought against the Syrians.
10. Why was the Septuagint valuable?
11. What were some of the major lessons the Israelites learned from their captivity?
12. Which prophet foretold Christ would be born in Bethlehem?

Put the empires into correct chronological order:
(the earliest is #1)

- _____ Rome
- _____ Persia
- _____ Babylon
- _____ Greece
- _____ Assyria

Answer briefly:

1. Summarize Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image. (Dan. 2)

2. Summarize the interpretation.

3. Name the empires from the time of Nebuchadnezzar's dream until the birth of Christ.

4. Which one of the five empires is left out of Nebuchadnezzar's dream? Why was it not included?

Put the following events into correct chronological order:

- _____ Augustus Caesar ordered his subjects to be taxed.
- _____ Alexander the Great conquered to the Indus River
- _____ Birth of Christ
- _____ The Maccabean Revolt
- _____ Nebuchadnezzar had a dream of a great image
- _____ Rome conquered all the eastern Mediterranean shore
- _____ Herod the Great becomes king of Judea

The Herod Family

Wise men came from the _____ (Matt. 2:1) to worship the child born to be King of the Jews. They stopped in _____ (2:1) at the palace of Herod the Great. Herod called in scribes to see where the child was to be born. They were able to tell him it would be _____ in _____ (2:5) on the basis of the prophecy in Micah 5:2. Herod sent the men on their way with his pretended blessings. An angel warned the wise men to go home a different way because Herod intended to harm the child. Herod was furious when he realized they were not returning, and he ordered all the babies of _____ (2:16) slain, up to two years of age.

The wise men were probably astrologers from old Media. Label Media on Map #21.

This well-known story about Herod the Great fits with all other historical facts known about him. He was probably in his last sickness when the wise men came to him. There was no way a baby born anywhere could have touched Herod's own kingdom because he had very little time left. But Herod had become obsessed with the determination to establish his dynasty. The story of his life is strewn with the ghosts of people whom he suspected of treason or disloyalty.

One of his first acts after he became king was to order the death of 45 members of the Sanhedrin who had opposed him. Anytime he observed some official growing in popularity with the people, he would have that one killed. His own sons would bask in his favor for a time; then he would hear some rumor hinting at disloyalty, and that son would die. Within his own family, he killed two brothers-in-law, three sons, and his favorite wife — all because of rumors that were likely false. He killed the last man in the Hasmonean dynasty though the poor man was in his dotage. When Herod realized he was dying (some say of cancer), he imprisoned the chief Jewish men and ordered they be killed as soon as he died. In that way he could insure mourning in Judea at the time of his death even though it would not be for him. Fortunately, this last order was not carried out.

It is not surprising, therefore, he felt dismayed when news came that the long-awaited Jewish King of the House of David had been born.

The Jews hated Herod. He would have had a difficult time winning their favor even if he had been a benevolent ruler. He was not a Jew, but rather an Idumean. The Roman officials neither knew nor cared about ancient rivalries within the land. Herod professed to observe the law of Moses while his whole life was a mockery to all it taught. His cruelty and injustice made an already difficult situation an unbearable one for the Jews.

Several times the Jews complained to Rome about Herod's tyrannies. Once he was ordered to appear before Mark Antony for trial. Antony, however, needed Herod's allegiance so badly in his own struggle for supremacy he refused to hear the charges and released Herod scot-free.

It would be unfair to say the Herod family was totally bad for Palestine. Herod's father Antipater was a wise administrator in many ways. It was largely his influence which brought special privileges for the Jews that were not usually enjoyed by Rome's vassal nations.

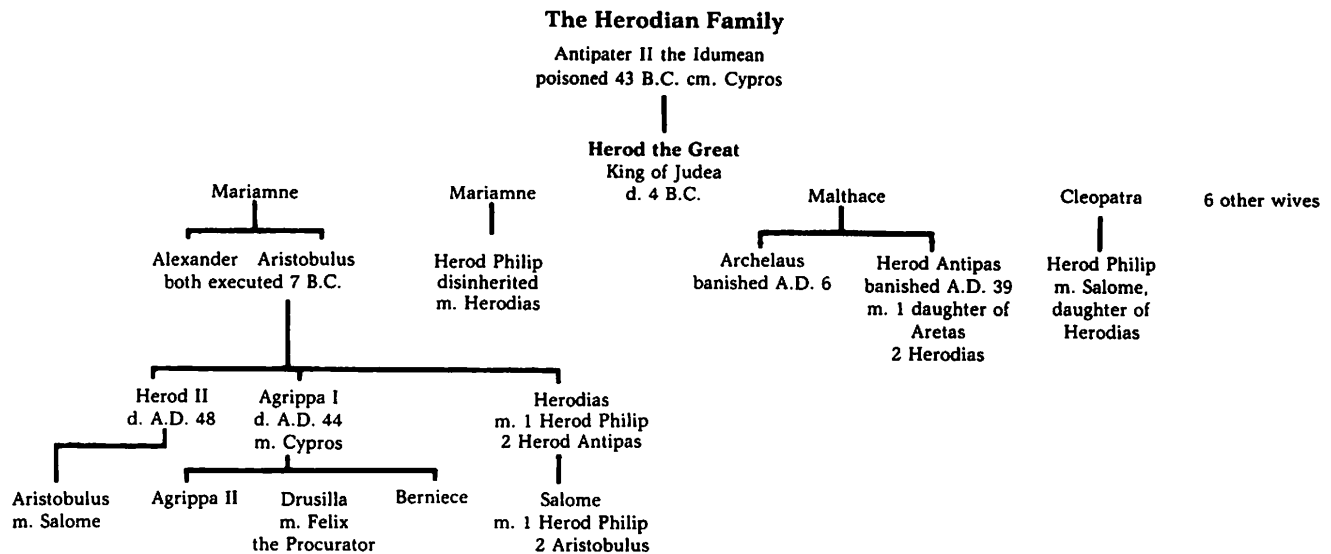
The Jews were granted complete religious liberty. The high priest was recognized as the religious head of all Jews wherever they were living. They were allowed to pay the temple tax the law of Moses required although Rome usually did not allow any tax except her own. Jews were allowed to observe their Sabbath day no matter where they were living, even if the Jew were a Roman soldier. Antipater had convinced the Romans this was the only way to prevent Maccabean type rebellions all over the empire.

Furthermore, the internal affairs of the country were practically controlled by the Jews themselves. Their highest tribunal court called the Sanhedrin was allowed to continue. This court was made up of seventy men of the Jewish aristocracy and was presided over by the high priest. It came into being sometime during the years of Greek domination.

Many cities were rebuilt or beautified by Herod. One of the most important ones was on the coastline about 20 miles south of Mt. Carmel at the site of Strato's Tower that had been built some years earlier. The new city was built around an artificial harbor and was named Caesarea, in honor of Augustus Caesar. This city, plus the other seaport cities that had been enlarged and improved through the years, gave the Jews ready access to sea trade.

Jerusalem itself was renovated. The wall Pompey had torn down was rebuilt. A fortress near the temple was rebuilt and renamed Antonia. Herod built a combination palace and fort for himself which he called the Upper Palace. In about 19 B.C., he started rebuilding the temple. It took about 84 years to complete the grand structure Herod planned. The resulting temple was far more beautiful than the building Zerubbabel was able to build in the days of the return from captivity.

Different members of the Herodian family are mentioned in the New Testament. Let us take a moment to see how they fit together. There are many members of the Herod family that are not included on this chart. We have included those who are mentioned in the New Testament with just enough of the others to show how they were related.



Herod the Great ruled over nearly all of Palestine. His will divided the land into three main parts. His son Archelaus was given Judea and Samaria. Antipas was given Galilee and Perea. A third son named Philip was given a non-Jewish portion northeast of the Sea of Galilee. Rome let the will stand except Archelaus was given the title of ethnarch rather than king as his father had intended.

Archelaus proved to be nearly as cruel a tyrant as his father (see Matt. 2:19-23). The Jews protested, and he was finally deposed about ten years after Herod's death. The southern portion of the land was annexed by Rome and made into the Roman province of Judea (6 A.D.). It was thereafter governed by a series of procurators. The Jews were unhappy over Roman control and were constantly looking for ways to revolt. Pontius Pilate was the fifth procurator to serve in Judea — making a total of 7 rulers in Judea in 33 years: Herod the Great, Archelaus, and 5 procurators. It was a period full of unrest.

Philip the tetrarch does not play a role in the Bible story. The only time he is mentioned is in Luke 3:1 when the writer is naming the various rulers to identify the exact time John the Baptist began his work. It is interesting to note that he married Salome the daughter of Herodias, the one whose dance brought about the death of John the Baptist (Matt. 14:1-12).

Reference is made to another Philip in Matthew 14:1-12 (see also Mark 6:14-29; Luke 3:19-20). He, too, was a son of Herod the Great, called Herod Philip. Instead of being given a portion of his father's kingdom, this Philip had been disinherited because of a hint of disloyalty. He was living in Rome with his wife Herodias (who was also his niece) and their daughter Salome. Herod Antipas visited them in Rome and took Herodias away with him. John the Baptist rebuked Antipas for taking her, and Herodias insisted he be beheaded.

Jesus grew up in Galilee under the rule of Herod Antipas. These were years of relative peace in Galilee because Antipas was not as cruel as his father or brother. Antipas was in Jerusalem on the day of Jesus' trial. Pilate sent Jesus to him when he learned Jesus was from Galilee (Luke 23:5-12).

Some years after Christ returned to Heaven, the Roman emperor Caligula made Herod Agrippa I ruler over most of the territory his grandfather had controlled. Agrippa was the son of one of the sons Herod the Great had killed and he was a brother to Herodias. This Herod persecuted the early church to win the favor of the Jews. He killed the apostle James and imprisoned Peter intending to kill him. We are told God smote him only a short time later as he was being proclaimed a god (Acts 12). Josephus corroborates the fact by saying he was seized by severe pains during a celebration at Caesarea and died five days later (A.D. 44).

The land was divided again upon Agrippa's death. The portion including Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Perea comprised the province of Judea. It was again ruled by procurators with headquarters in Caesarea. Agrippa II was

given the northeastern section once ruled by his great-uncle Philip. This Herod Agrippa II went to Caesarea to visit a new procurator named Festus. While he was there, he heard the case of the prisoner Paul who had appealed his case to Caesar. It is no wonder Paul described him as being "expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews" because Agrippa's family had known and outwardly observed the law of Moses for generations. (Acts 25:13ff)

We will have occasion to mention the various Herods again as we proceed with the Bible history.

Worksheet

Which Herod? (Some names are used more than once.)

- _____ 1. The first of the Herod family to have power in Palestine.
- _____ 2. Ordered John the Baptist killed.
- _____ 3. Killed the babies of Bethlehem.
- _____ 4. Jesus was tried before him.
- _____ 5. Killed James the apostle.
- _____ 6. Heard Paul's defense.
- _____ 7. Herodias was his wife first.
- _____ 8. Joseph took the child Jesus to Nazareth when he heard this man was reigning in Judea.
- _____ 9. Rebuilt the temple.
- _____ 10. Imprisoned Peter.
- _____ 11. Jesus grew up in his territory.
- _____ 12. Built Caesarea.

Answer briefly:

- 1. Of what nationality were the Herods?
- 2. What was their religion?
- 3. When did their nationality of people accept this religion?

Lesson 43

The Life of Christ

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

Map #22 — Palestine in the Days of Christ

Label and number your map.

Label:

Judea	Iturea
Samaria	Trachonitis
Galilee	Phoenicia
Perea	Idumea

Color each section a different color. It is more important in the New Testament story to be able to spot a particular section of the country than to know exactly who ruled each part.

Label:

Caesarea	Joppa
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Label each additional place as you come to it in the text.

It is not surprising the wise men expected to find the new King of the Jews in the city of Jerusalem. It was the cultural and religious center of the land. Jews from everywhere traveled to Jerusalem to keep the feast days. Attendance at Passover, Pentecost, and Atonement was required by the Law (Lev. 23; Deut. 16:16). In addition, the Jews kept the feast of Purim to commemorate their deliverance from the Persians in Esther's day (Esth. 9:20-28), and the Feast of Dedication to remember the entrance of Judas Maccabee into the city after the Syrian defilement. Those living farthest away did not make the long, difficult trip to each feast, but they made the pilgrimages as many times as possible during a life time.

The temple served as a rallying point for their religion and for all their Jewish customs. Rabbinical schools flourished all over the city. Wealthy, devout Jews sent their sons there to be educated (see Acts 22:3).

Jerusalem was the city that should have been most prepared for Jesus since this was the gathering place of the scribes and other learned men. Instead, it was the center of the most severe persecution. The learned men themselves put Him to death (Matt. 26:57).

Jesus went to the feast days regularly as any loyal Jew should do. Some of His most profound lessons were taught in the temple grounds. Most of the time, however, He chose the lesser towns and villages where the common people heard Him gladly.

Bethlehem was a little village about 5 miles south of Jerusalem. It was never a major city in Israelite history, but several well-known Biblical characters called it home. Ruth the Moabitess lived in Bethlehem with her mother-in-law Naomi (Book of Ruth). David tended his father's sheep on its hillsides (1 Sam. 16). Much earlier, Jacob buried his favorite wife, Rachel, there after she gave birth to Benjamin (Gen. 35:16-20).

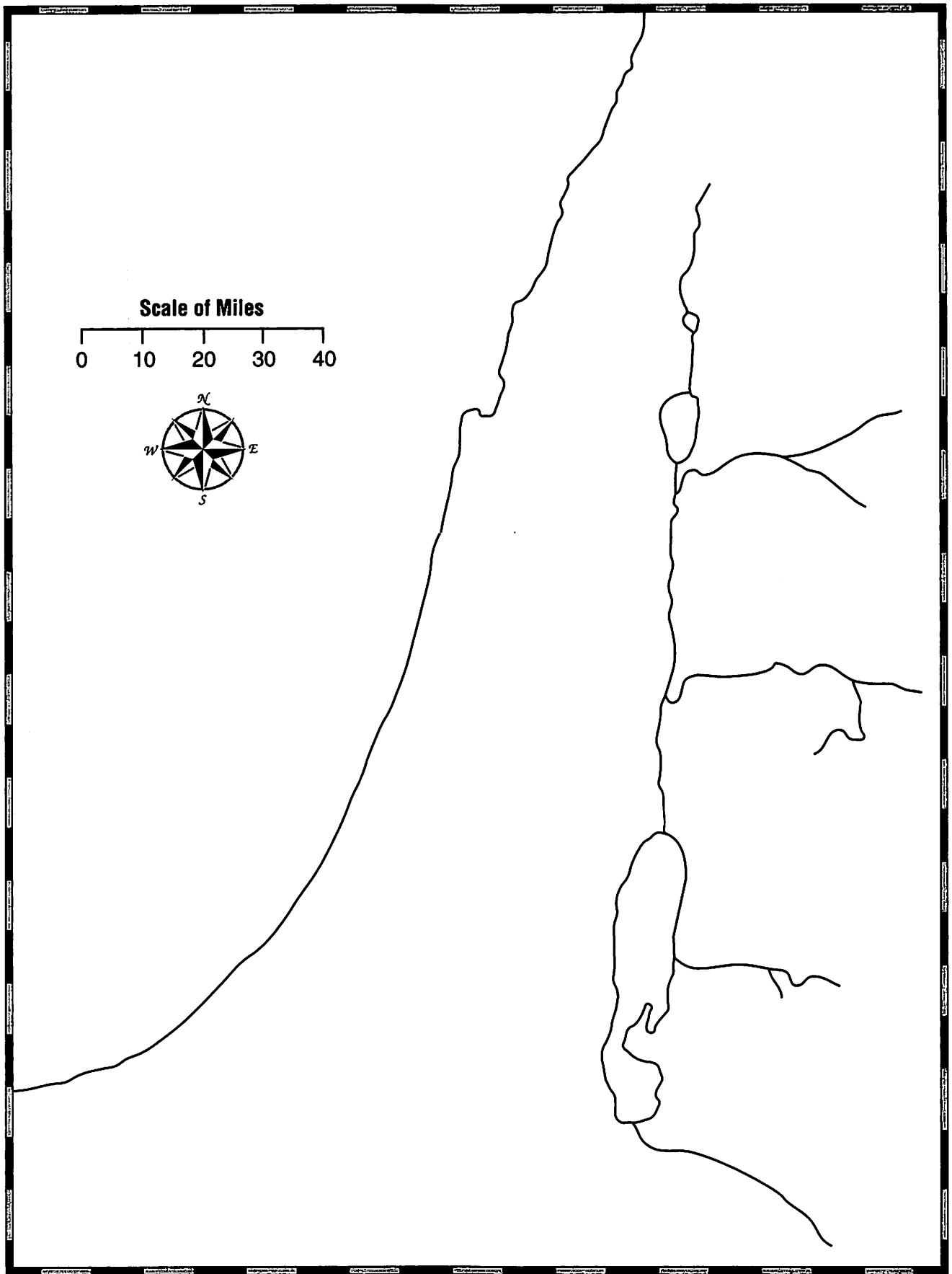
Joseph carried the young child and His mother to _____ (Matt. 2:14) to escape the wrath of King Herod. This was the only time Jesus traveled outside the borders of Palestine.

Put arrows on your map to indicate this trip.

Joseph returned to the land when he heard Herod was dead. He was afraid to stop in _____ (Matt. 2:22) because the cruel Archelaus had taken his father's place. He therefore took his family back to _____ (Matt. 2:23), his original home. This is the only claim to fame that Nazareth ever had. The city is not mentioned in the Old Testament, nor in the writings of the historian Josephus, nor in the Talmud. Nathaniel was skeptical that any good thing could come out of Nazareth (John 1:46).

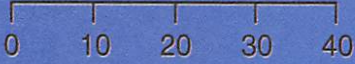
Nazareth was about 80 miles due north of Jerusalem in the province of Galilee, about halfway between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee. The Plain of Esdraelon lay just to the south. Thrilling Old Testament events occurred within easy walking distance of the village. The busy commercial centers of Galilee lay just a few miles to the east. Yet Nazareth itself lay nestled on a mountain slope in a sort of back-water.

We know almost nothing about Jesus' years in Nazareth. We can only assume He was taught in the local synagogue as most Jewish boys were taught. In addition, Joseph must have taught Him the carpenter's trade because some of the people who had known Him as a child called Him "the carpenter" (Mark 6:3). Jesus made no attempt to tell His neighbors who He was as He was growing up because the time for His mission had not yet come. Later, the people of Nazareth refused to believe He was the Messiah. It was hard for them to believe one of their own number could be so far above them (Matt. 13:53-58; Mark 6:1-6; Luke 4:16-30).



PALESTINE IN THE DAYS OF CHRIST

Scale of Miles



Mediterranean Sea



Map by permission of S. Scott Richardson, Russellville, Alabama

One day John began preaching "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2). The work of the forerunner had begun. This was the signal the Jews had been waiting for generations to hear. They came from _____, all _____, and all the region round about _____ (Matt. 3:5) to hear John's message and to be baptized.

The exact location where John did his baptizing is uncertain. Matthew says he began preaching in the _____ of _____ (3:1). Luke has already told us he and his parents lived in the _____ of _____ (1:39). John tells us it was in _____ beyond _____ (1:28). Therefore, it seems John did his work at the south-eastern end of the Jordan near where the river empties into the Dead Sea.

The Wilderness of Judea refers to the rugged area along the Dead Sea where the land plunges from the peaks of the central range of mountains to the shores of the Dead Sea. It was filled with deep ravines and caves (see Lesson 3). Jesus was probably led into this lonely region after He was baptized to be tempted (Luke 4:1-2). About a thousand years earlier, David hid among these same caves and hills to escape the wrath of King Saul (1 Sam. 24:1ff).

The largest portion of Jesus' work took place in the province of Galilee. The aristocratic Jews of Jerusalem tended to look down their noses at their brethren in Galilee because they did not spend their time in intellectual pursuits. Perhaps it was their humility that made the Galileans more willing to listen to Jesus. Eleven of the apostles were from Galilee. It is thought that Judas Iscariot was from southern Judea. Iscariot probably comes from "Ish Kerioth" which is Hebrew for "a man of Kerioth." Kerioth was almost certainly in the southern portion of Judah (see Josh. 15:25).

Prosperous commercial cities lined the Sea of Galilee. The Jews of the province were as intensely loyal to the law of Moses, but they did not hold themselves as aloof from the Gentiles as their Judean brethren did.

Jesus made _____ (Matt. 4:13) His headquarters in the early phase of His ministry. The city was on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee only 2½ miles southwest of where the Jordan enters the Sea. It was a checkpoint on two important trade routes from Damascus, one to Jerusalem and the other going by way of the coast to Egypt. Matthew was a tax collector probably collecting taxes on goods moving along the routes. A Roman garrison was also located there under the command of a centurion. The stories about Jesus would have spread rapidly from such a crossroads of traffic.

Multitudes thronged Jesus everywhere He went. Sick and maimed people were brought from miles around to be healed. His fame spread through all _____ (Matt. 4:24); and crowds came from _____, _____, _____, and from beyond _____ (4:25). On another occasion, a great multitude from _____ followed Him plus many from _____, _____, _____, from beyond _____, and even from _____ and _____ (Mark 3:7-8). Jesus had compassion on the crowds and healed all who came. At the same time, He was teaching them lessons they had never heard before. The multitudes marvelled.

Often Jesus was forced to withdraw from the crowds in order to rest, to pray, or to teach His closest disciples lessons the crowds were not yet ready for. Over and over the people would see where He had gone and would follow Him.

Many towns in Galilee play a part in the story of Jesus. Many of His mighty works were done in such cities as Cana, Nain, Bethsaida, and Chorazin. Notice Bethsaida is on the east side of the Sea of Galilee. It was likely near Bethsaida where Jesus fed the 5,000 (Matt. 14:13-21).

We have already noted that Samaritans lived in the central portion of the land. Most Jews hated them so badly they chose to cross the Jordan and walk around their territory. On more than one occasion, Jesus took His disciples straight through Samaria. John 4 tells a charming story of a conversation Jesus had with a Samaritan woman near the city of _____ (4:5), near old Shechem. She had come out of the city to draw water from a well that had been dug by Jacob. The well was already more than 1700 years old when Jesus sat down at its rim. The well still exists and travellers today can drink water from its depths.

Note there is a section on the map called Decapolis. The name comes from the Greek words meaning ten (deca) cities (polis). The Greeks had built ten model cities. The Romans had renewed the cities in hopes it would strengthen their hold over the land. Jesus seems to have avoided the Hellenistic cities, but He taught the Jews living in the area. People from the Decapolis were included in the throngs that followed Him. On at least one occasion, He did some healing and preaching in the area (Mark 7:31-37). On another occasion, Jesus healed a demoniac and sent the demons into swine nearby. The swine rushed down the bluff and drowned in the sea. The people of the city asked Jesus to leave. Almost certainly the owners of the swine were Gentiles because swine were unclean animals to the Jews. The healed man wanted to follow Jesus, but He sent him back to tell the story to all who would listen. We are told he spread the news throughout the _____ (Mark 5:20).

Once Jesus withdrew into the region of _____ and _____ (Matt. 15:21). Matthew says a "woman of _____" (15:22) came to Jesus to ask Him to heal her daughter. Mark calls her a _____, a _____ (Mark 7:26). Our study of geography helps us understand the terms. Tyre

and Sidon were the two main cities of Phoenicia. We have been marking this region on our maps since Saul's day. Do you remember that the Canaanites living on the narrow coastal plain turned to sea trade very early in their history and became famous sailors? (See Lesson 22.) Phoenicia had shared in all the changes in prosperity the land had undergone through the centuries. By Jesus' day, it had been many years since it had been an independent country. The Romans included it as part of the province of Syria. Thus, the woman was not a Jew, but a Gentile or Greek. She was of ancient Canaanite ancestry, living in Phoenicia, which was part of the province of Syria and of the Greek culture.

You already have a section of your map labeled Perea. This name does not appear in the Bible. It comes from a Greek word meaning "beyond." Thus Perea was the land "beyond" the Jordan. It included a narrow strip of the land that once belonged to the tribes of Reuben and Gad. It was usually called Gilead in the Old Testament. We have already noted John did his baptizing there. People came from there to hear Jesus. Jesus spent time preaching in the area (Mark 10:1ff). He withdrew into Perea for the last few weeks before His crucifixion (John 10:40-42). Politically, Perea was sometimes included with Galilee and at other times with Judea.

There is one more section on the map we must take time to notice, even though it is not mentioned in the Bible. That is the section belonging to the Nabateans. About the time the Old Testament closes, this Arabian tribe moved into the region that once belonged to Edom and Moab. Remember Edom had already moved into southern Judah. The Nabateans were a remarkable people. They made their capital city of Petra practically impregnable. The only entrance to the city was a footpath just wide enough for a man or a mule. The religious high places they carved out of the sandstone mountains can still be seen. They developed ways to store the available water and turned once arid fields into productive land.

The Nabateans were a formidable foe to the Greeks. Even Rome had not conquered them by the days of the New Testament. Their kingdom reached from the Mediterranean Sea south of Gaza, east of the Red Sea, north to the Euphrates, including Damascus. Part of the time they were Jewish allies. Nevertheless, the Nabatean king Aretas IV fought Herod Antipas after Antipas divorced the daughter of Aretas to take Herodias. The region was finally absorbed into the Roman province of Arabia in the years immediately following the close of the New Testament.

Jesus' last days before the crucifixion were spent in and around the city of _____ (Matt. 21:10). One of His last miracles took place in the village of _____ (John 12:1) where He raised Lazarus from the dead. Bethany was situated on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives about two miles southeast of Jerusalem. There was a footpath over the mountain from Jerusalem to Bethany.

The Mount of Olives lay directly to the east of Jerusalem. It was divided from the city by a deep ravine through which the brook Kidron flowed. It was 250 feet higher than the temple mount just across in front of it. Jesus and His disciples had an excellent view of the city and the temple as they sat on the slopes of the Mount of Olives while Jesus predicted the total destruction Jerusalem would soon face because of their rejection of the Messiah (Matt. 24).

The Garden of _____ (Mark 14:32) lay somewhere on the slopes of the _____ of _____ (Mark 14:26). Here Jesus prayed in the last hard hour before the mob came to take Him to His death. After His resurrection, Jesus walked across the peak as far as _____ (Luke 24:50) with His disciples while He gave them their commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel. Then, as they watched, Jesus was lifted from the earth and was hidden by the clouds.

The Geography of The Gospels

Take special note that *every event* in Jesus' life took place *somewhere*. Sometimes the exact location is not given, but more often it is. The following questions take you through the book of Matthew looking at most of the times a place is mentioned. Try taking another of the gospels after you finish these questions and analyze it the same way.

The stories of Jesus seem less remote when we realize He walked over hills and valleys and dealt with the same elements we have as He taught His great lessons and *resisted all temptations that came His way!*

Fill in the blanks:

(Passages are in Matthew)

1. Jesus was born in _____ of _____. (2:1)
2. Joseph took Him to _____ to escape from Herod. (2:19)
3. Jesus grew up in _____. (2:23)
4. John the Baptist began his preaching in the _____ of _____. (3:1)
5. Jesus came from _____ to the _____ to be baptized. (3:13)
6. The Spirit led Him into the _____ to be tempted of the devil. (4:1)
7. Jesus went into _____ when he heard John had been put in prison. (4:12)
8. Capernaum was in the borders of _____ and _____. (4:13)
9. Peter, Andrew, James, and John made their living fishing in the _____ of _____. (4:18-21)
10. Jesus' fame spread throughout all _____; and multitudes followed Him from _____, _____, _____, and from _____. (4:24-25)
11. Jesus commended the faith of a Roman centurion in _____. (8:5-13)
12. Jesus stopped storms on the _____ of _____. (8:23-27)
13. Jesus healed two demoniacs in the country of the _____ on the _____ side of the Sea of Galilee. (8:28)
14. Jesus sent the disciples to the "lost sheep of the house of _____" on their first preaching tour. (10:6)
15. He told them not to go in the way of the _____ nor in the cities of the _____. (10:5)
16. It will be better for _____ and _____ in the judgment than for the cities that rejected the disciples of Christ. (10:15)
17. "Woe unto thee, _____! woe unto thee, _____! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in _____ and _____, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." (11:21)
18. The scribes and Pharisees from _____ tried to entrap Jesus concerning their traditions. (15:1)
19. Jesus healed the daughter of a _____ woman in the borders of _____ and _____. (15:21-22)
20. Jesus and His disciples were in _____ when Peter declared his faith in the deity of Christ. (16:13) Note this was not the Caesarea on the seacoast.
21. Jesus began telling His disciples He must suffer and die in _____. (16:21)
22. Peter found money for the temple tax in the mouth of a fish at _____. (17:24)
23. "... When Jesus had finished these sayings, He departed from _____, and came into the coasts of _____ beyond _____." (19:1)

24. Jesus healed two blind men near _____ as He traveled toward _____ for that last period of His life. (20:17, 29-34)
25. Jesus rode a donkey from _____ near the _____ of _____ into the city of _____. (21:1)
26. ". . . This is Jesus the prophet of _____ of _____." (21:11)
27. Jesus spent the first night of that last week before His death in the village of _____. (21:17)
28. "O _____, _____, thou that killest the prophets . . ." (23:37)
29. Jesus and His disciples sat on the _____ of _____ as Jesus predicted the destruction of the temple. (24:3)
30. A woman anointed the feet of Jesus in _____. (26:6)
31. Jesus went out to the _____ of _____ to a place called _____ after He and His disciples ate the Passover together. (26:30, 36)
32. Jesus said He would meet with His disciples in _____ after His resurrection. (26:32)
33. Simon of _____ carried the cross for Jesus. (27:32)
34. Jesus was crucified on _____. (27:33)
35. Joseph of _____ buried Jesus. (27:57) This name seems to have been the Greek name for old Ramathaim-zophim where Samuel was born over 1,000 years earlier (1 Sam. 1:1).
36. The angels told the women at the tomb that Jesus was going before them into _____. (28:7)
37. The account of the great commission recorded in Matthew was given on a mountain in _____. (28:16-20)

The Kingdom of Heaven Is Established

Acts 1-12

(Passages in Acts unless otherwise specified)

... Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power (Mark 9:1).

Jesus made the above statement during His personal ministry on earth. This was the most specific statement of *time* that had yet been given concerning the establishment of His kingdom.

Daniel foretold God would set up the kingdom in the days of the Roman empire (Dan. 2:44). John the Baptist said it was "at hand" (Matt. 3:2). Jesus Himself promised to give the keys of the kingdom to Peter (Matt. 16:19). Jesus told Pilate He was born into the world to be a king (John 18:37).

Did Jesus succeed in His purpose? The Jews rejected Him as the Messiah and crucified Him. Did that mean He failed? No. Jesus said death, "the gates of Hades," would not keep Him from building His church or kingdom (the words are used to refer to the same institution) (Matt. 16:18-19).

Jesus came to earth to offer His life as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. God raised Him from the dead and exalted Him to His own right hand (Acts 2:30-33). Acts 1 tells of Jesus' ascension from the earth. While His disciples watched, He was lifted from the earth and was hidden from their sight by a cloud. Revelation 4-5 takes us behind the cloud and shows us the same scene from Heaven's viewpoint. It was the coronation of the Lamb who had been slain, now exalted to a position worthy of worship by all the hosts of Heaven and earth. Jesus did not fail; He became King! He told His disciples, "All power is given me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18).

Even Jesus' closest disciples did not understand the nature of His kingdom at first. All the Jews were expecting an earthly empire with headquarters in Jerusalem. The multitudes would have been glad to crown Jesus king for such a kingdom (John 6:15).

The apostles asked Jesus about the kingdom on their very last visit together. "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). He did not answer directly. He had taught them many lessons concerning the kingdom during the time He had been with them, but they had not fully understood. Jesus told them to go to _____ (1:4) to wait for the Holy Spirit to come upon them. It would be the Spirit who would guide them into all truth and bring all things Jesus had taught to their remembrance (John 16:13; 14:26).

Jesus ascended to heaven, and the apostles went back to Jerusalem to await further developments. Ten days later, they were together, and, suddenly, the sound of a rushing mighty wind filled the room. Tongues parting asunder like fire sat upon each one of them, and they could speak in languages they had never learned (2:1-4). The date was A.D. 29.

Suddenly, for the first time, they began to understand that the long-awaited kingdom would be different to all kingdoms that had preceded it. There would be no earthly palace with an earthly king leading soldiers to conquer new lands. Rather, it would be a kingdom that would cross all political boundaries and reach the hearts of people. The king would be in heaven at the right hand of God, and the subjects would be all who would willingly give their allegiance to Him regardless of their race or political background. Jesus had been preparing subjects for His kingdom when He preached such lessons as: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3).

Peter and the other apostles proclaimed the good news (gospel) that day in Jerusalem. Three thousand humble hearts responded and became subjects of the new kingdom (2:41). As the days passed, more and more joined the ranks. "The number of the men was about 5,000" (4:4). "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (5:14).

God, in His wisdom, chose a Jewish feast day to proclaim the gospel for the first time. It was the day of Pentecost, and Jews had come from "every nation under heaven" to observe the feast. Acts 2:9-11 names the places Jews and proselytes had come from. Label each place on your map.

Use Map #21. Label and underline each place.

Parthia	Phrygia
Media	Pamphylia
Elam	Egypt

Mesopotamia	Libya
Judea	Cyrene
Cappadocia	Rome
Pontus	Crete
Asia	Arabia

The members of the new kingdom of Christ (later called Christians) remained in Jerusalem after the feast was over. They had not come prepared to stay so long, so a financial crisis arose. The brethren shared their possessions with joy, and they all continued to learn more of the new law.

The leaders of the Jews grew restless. They had refused to listen to Jesus. They had rejected all the signs He had shown to prove He was the Messiah. They wanted no part of this new spiritual kingdom. So — they began to fight back.

Peter and John were the first to be arrested. The rulers threatened them and ordered them not to preach anymore. A short time later, all the apostles were arrested. The Sanhedrin met for the trial — and discovered God had released the men, and they were back in the temple grounds preaching. The rulers were furious. They wanted to kill the apostles, but one of their own number, Gamaliel, persuaded them not to act too hastily. The apostles were beaten and released with orders not to preach. They only prayed for courage and did not pause in their work.

The opposition was directed against the apostles first because they were the spokesmen. Gradually, others began speaking also. A man named Stephen began preaching in a synagogue where Grecian Jews from _____, _____, _____, and _____ met (6:9). They could not answer his arguments and, instead of accepting his message, they became so angry they stoned Stephen to death. Of course, this was mob action with no semblance of legality about it.

This act of violence against Stephen began a wave of persecution against all Christians. The Jewish persecutors went from house to house and dragged men and women to prison. Conditions were so bad, Christians were forced to flee Jerusalem for their lives.

It would appear the new kingdom was doomed to destruction so soon after it was established — but not so. "Therefore, they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (8:4). Instead of killing the church, the persecution scattered it to the four winds. Look back to the places you underlined on Map #21. Let us suppose each new Christian returned to his home and began telling his neighbors the story of Christ. The news would have spread from Media to Rome! That is exactly what happened.

A book large enough to tell the details of each man's work would be enormous. The inspired historian chose to tell about only a few to illustrate the type work taking place.

A man named Philip went northward from Jerusalem into the territory of _____ (8:5). The people listened willingly, and many were baptized. No doubt, Philip was reaping the harvest from the seed Jesus had sown when He preached to the Samaritans after talking to the woman at the well (John 4).

Label the city of Samaria on Map #22.

The Spirit told Philip to arise and go to the road that leads from _____ to _____ (8:26). There he met a eunuch returning to _____ (8:27) after a feast day in Jerusalem. Philip got into the chariot and told him about Jesus. The eunuch was baptized and went on his way rejoicing. Now the gospel could be spread into areas not included on our maps, far south of Egypt to Ethiopia. History tells us Ethiopia was, indeed, an early center for Christianity.

Draw arrows off your Map #21 to indicate the spread of the gospel to Ethiopia. Look on Map #22 to see the direction Philip went from Samaria to the road where he found the eunuch.

The Spirit caught Philip away from the eunuch, and he was found at _____ (8:40). He preached there and then moved north along the coastal plain preaching in all the villages until he came to _____ (8:40). There he stayed and worked for a number of years. Paul later visited him in Caesarea (21:8-9).

This is the first time to encounter the name "Azotus" in this study. It is not a new city, however. All through the Old Testament it was called Ashdod and was one of the chief cities of the Philistines, as was Gaza.

Be sure Gaza, Azotus, and Caesarea are labeled on Map #22.

Early Problems

The Jewish Christians had trouble understanding one particular lesson about this new kingdom. Peter quoted from the prophet Joel on the day of Pentecost. Joel said God would pour out His Spirit on *all flesh*. *All flesh* would certainly include more people than the Jews. The problem was that the Jews had been God's chosen people for 1500 years. Their law had given repeated warnings to keep themselves separate from all other peoples (Deut. 7:1-11). They had been severely rebuked when they tried inter-marrying with their neighbors after they returned

from captivity (Ezra 9-10; Neh. 13:23-29). Jesus Himself said He had come to the "lost sheep of the house of _____" (Matt. 15:24). The first preaching trip the apostles were sent on was to the house of _____. They were forbidden to go to the _____ or to the _____ (Matt. 10:5-6).

The later commission, the one we call the great commission, told the apostles to "Go into *all the world*, and preach the gospel to *every creature*" (Mark 16:15). Still, it is not surprising it was hard for the Jews to understand. This was one of the major problems throughout the first century. None of the early Christians attempted to preach to the Gentiles at first.

One day Peter was in the city of _____ (10:5). About noon, he went onto the housetop to pray. God sent a vision three times in succession. Each time a voice told him not to call something unclean that God had cleansed. While Peter marvelled about the vision, three men arrived from _____ (10:1) asking him to come preach to a Gentile named Cornelius. The Spirit told him to go without doubting. Peter took six Jewish brethren with him as witnesses. Peter had scarcely begun to speak when the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles present. This was God's way of signifying He intended for the Gentiles to be included in the kingdom. Peter and the Jerusalem church rejoiced when they realized, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (11:18).

Label Joppa on Map #22.

Gradually, others who had been scattered began preaching to Gentiles also. One of the first congregations made up of both Jews and Gentiles was in the city of Antioch of Syria.

Antioch had been the capital of the empire of Syria long before it became a Roman province. It was still one of the largest and most influential cities of the region. It was located on the Orontes River about 15 miles from the Mediterranean. The river was navigable all the way to the city, so Antioch became a great commercial center. Caravan roads from the east converged upon it. The Romans enlarged the city until it was the third largest in the empire, after Rome and Alexandria. It had a population of about 500,000. The congregation established there became quite strong. It was influential in spreading the gospel to regions all around.

Label Antioch of Syria on map #21.

Early Persecutions

The first persecutions against the church came directly from the Jewish religious leaders: the priests, the captain of the temple, the Sadducees, the elders, the scribes, the High Priest, and the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:1, 5, 6; 5:21). This was the same group who crucified Jesus. These leaders should have been the best prepared people on earth for the Messiah and His kingdom. They longed for a Messiah. They wanted the kingdom to be established. Why did they reject it?

Perhaps the best way to sum up the reasons for their rejection is to say Jesus did not fit their preconceived idea for a Messiah. We have already stated they wanted an earthly kingdom. All the Jews would have rallied behind such a king to rebel against Rome. Is it not ironic that they accused Him of being the exact kind of king they wanted when they took Him before Pilate? (Luke 23:1-3).

Perhaps there are some more subtle reasons for their rejection that were important also. Jesus was not educated in the schools of the rabbis. He came from an humble background and was a "nobody" to the proud Jewish officials. "By what authority do ye do these things?" (Matt. 21:23-27).

Furthermore, this "nobody" from Galilee attacked the very root of their long-standing traditions. "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your traditions? . . . But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:1-9).

The only kind of deliverer the self-righteous Jew could imagine was a deliverer from all political oppression. The typical Pharisee had spent his life trying to keep the law of Moses perfectly. He felt no need for deliverance from sin — yet he would tithe his mint leaves while he unjustly foreclosed on a mortgage on a widow's house (Matt. 23:14, 23). "We are Abraham's children; we are the chosen race of God; we do not need more!"

As God had known they would, the Jews became so angry they put Jesus to death. They — and Satan — thought they were victorious, but death could not hold Christ. God declared Him to be the Son of God by the resurrection (Rom. 1:4). The suffering Saviour had been foretold by the prophets (Isa. 53). The Jews succeeded in putting Him to death because it was His will. "Because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again . . ." (John 10:17-18). There would be no hope for our salvation if He had not offered Himself as the sacrifice for our sins.

Jesus often warned His disciples they would be persecuted (Matt. 10:16-42). On the last night before His crucifixion, He warned them again they would be hated by the world. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18ff).

Now the new kingdom is established. The message has been proclaimed. The Resurrected Jesus is proclaimed as King. Is it surprising the Jewish officials were horrified?

The Sadducees were the first to start persecuting. Their biggest complaint was the preaching of the resurrection. They did not believe *anyone* would be raised from the dead. Therefore, they certainly did not want to admit that the man they had murdered had been raised.

The rulers were afraid to be too forceful in their persecutions at first, because multitudes believed the message the men were preaching. Gradually, the persecutions spread. The mob that stoned Stephen was made up of ordinary Jews who were unwilling to accept Jesus as the Messiah (Acts 6:9ff). This uprising from a local synagogue gave the Sanhedrin the opening it had been wishing for. It could begin a full-scale persecution to try to wipe out the church. This is when the disciples fled from Jerusalem and went everywhere preaching (8:1-4).

The Jewish officials still were not happy. They learned the church had sprung up in other cities besides Jerusalem. Saul went to _____ (9:1-3) with letters of authority from the High Priest giving him permission to arrest all Christians he could find there. He was to bring them back to _____ (9:2) to face trial.

Acts 12 tells that Herod Agrippa I began persecuting also. Our first thought might be that this was the beginning of the Roman persecution, but let us look closely at the circumstances. Herod had just recently been given Judea as part of his kingdom. He was an avowed Pharisee with the typical preconceived notions about the king of the Jews. He acted out of a desire to please his new subjects and out of his own unbelief. He killed the apostle James. He saw the Jews were pleased, so he arrested Peter intending to kill him also. God intervened, and Peter escaped. Herod was dealing with local Jewish matters within a framework compatible with his own personal prejudices. The time was about A.D. 44, about 15 years after the church began.

As we proceed through the book of Acts, notice nearly all the persecutions will come from the Jews. When Gentiles did get involved in the struggles in Acts, it was over some local dispute. For example, Paul was put in prison in Philippi because the masters of a slave girl were angry with him (16:16-24). Another time, a man named Demetrius led a mob in Ephesus. His business was endangered because Paul was teaching his silver idols were not gods at all (19:23-41).

Paul and others were persecuted by the Jews who rejected Christ as the Messiah. Gradually, still another element entered the picture. Some Jews were willing to accept Jesus as the Christ, but they refused to accept the Gentiles as fellow-Christians. Some of Paul's severest battles were against the "Judaizing" teachers. These teachers were Jews who had become Christians. They demanded the Gentiles first become Jews (be circumcised) before they could become subjects of the kingdom. We will notice some of these struggles later as we watch Paul carry the gospel into the Mediterranean world.

In The Fulness Of Time

Paul declared God sent forth His Son in the "fulness of the time" (Gal. 4:4). I do not claim to know all the factors God saw as to why the time was ripe for the coming of Christ and His kingdom, but I think we can see some of them.

The Roman empire was a cosmopolitan empire. There had come to be a sharing of ideas and philosophies such as the ancient civilizations had never known. For example, the Egyptians of old developed a distinctive culture very different to the culture of the Assyrians of Mesopotamia. The countries carried on busy commercial relationships through the centuries, but they did not share cultural ideas. In that era, a person born in Palestine or anywhere else usually lived and died within a few miles of his birthplace with very little knowledge of any culture different to his own.

Naturally, this isolation began to break down when the Assyrians brought their armies in and scattered captive peoples in all directions. The Babylonians and Persians continued the process as they conquered more and more territories. The sharing of ideas happened automatically as people were forced to live together in new circumstances.

It was the Greeks, however, who consciously set out to weld the world into a united people culturally. They actively taught — and indeed forced upon — the people the ideas of Hellenism. Of course, there were pockets of opposition to the spread of Hellenism. We have already noted that the Jews were especially obstinate, particularly in the details which conflicted with their religion. The Greeks held control for nearly 300 years, so there was plenty of time for the culture to spread and to be adopted on nearly every level. The Jews who resisted were a tiny minority within large kingdoms.

The Romans introduced their own ideas as they conquered the Mediterranean world. They were strong admirers of the Greeks, however, so they did not try to eradicate the Hellenistic outlook they found. Rather, their own individual characteristics were simply added to and absorbed into the habits of the empire as a whole.

Thus, the world of the first century was ready to listen to a new idea even though it had originated in the insignificant land of Palestine.

The Greek language was one of the most precise languages the world has ever seen. It is no accident it was the one universally taught in the days when the new covenant of God was revealed.

Latin was the native tongue of the Romans, but, again, they made no effort to force the empire to use it. Provinces throughout the Roman empire had their own native tongue or dialect, plus the knowledge of how to read and write Greek. The territory east of Syria was controlled by the Parthians in New Testament days, but it too had been part of the Grecian empire of Syria for many years. The people there knew Greek also.

The Spirit enabled the inspired preachers to speak the local languages wherever they went. Then, when they were ready to write some letter, they wrote it in Greek which could be read far and wide.

Travel was safe in the days of the Romans. Roads led in all directions. Piracy had been stopped on the sea. Roads once plagued by bands of thieves were now protected by the Roman legions. People no longer lived their lives in confined areas. Jews could travel more than a thousand miles for their pilgrimages to Jerusalem. A boy born in Tarsus in Asia Minor might be educated in Jerusalem. It would have been possible to start in Jerusalem and travel all the way around the Mediterranean Sea back to Jerusalem without leaving the Roman empire — thus no need for a passport. Therefore the gospel could spread from Spain (Rom. 15:24) to Babylon (1 Pet. 5:13) in a century long before our rapid means of transportation or communication.

Label Babylon on Map #21. Note Rome's control of the whole Mediterranean.

Paul's Early Work

Acts 9-14

(Passages in Acts unless otherwise specified)

So far we have scarcely mentioned the apostle Paul. Surely no study of Bible geography would be complete without a close look at his work. God selected Paul to be a chosen vessel to the Gentiles, so he played a prominent role in spreading the gospel in the first century. Let us go back and look at the places he visited.

Map #23 — Paul's First and Second Journeys

Label and number your map.

Compare this map with Map #21.

Draw a dotted line around Palestine.

Label the Roman provinces.

Label each place as you come to it in your text.

Paul was born in _____ of _____ (22:3). This was one more city along the ancient trade routes that we have mentioned so many times in our study. Tarsus lay between two very important mountain passes. Caravans from the east would pass through Antioch in Syria, then through the pass called the "Syrian Gates" into Cilicia. From there, they would continue through the "Cilician Gates" into the main part of Asia Minor. Therefore, Paul (or Saul) grew up mingling with people of widely varying backgrounds.

Paul was a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, and was fiercely loyal to the law of Moses. He was given a rabbinical education in the city of _____ (22:3). Likely, he was slated to be a highly respected Rabbi who would have eventually served on the Sanhedrin (Gal. 1:14).

As a rabbinical student, Paul's associates were the Jewish rulers. They, as a class, rejected Jesus as the Messiah. Paul shared their view. He played a prominent role in the first wave of persecution against the Christians. Those stoning Stephen laid their coats at Saul's feet. He actually *asked* permission to travel more than 150 miles northeastward to _____ (9:1-2) to punish the Christians there.

Christ appeared to Paul on his way to Damascus. It was obvious Jesus was indeed alive and in heaven. Therefore, all the message the apostles had been preaching must be true. If so, Paul had been fighting God! He later calls himself the chief of sinners as he remembered this period of his life (1 Tim. 1:12-16).

God sent a man named Ananias to tell Paul what he must do. The message included the fact God had chosen Paul as a special messenger to the Gentiles. Paul arose, was baptized, and spent the rest of his life fulfilling that charge.

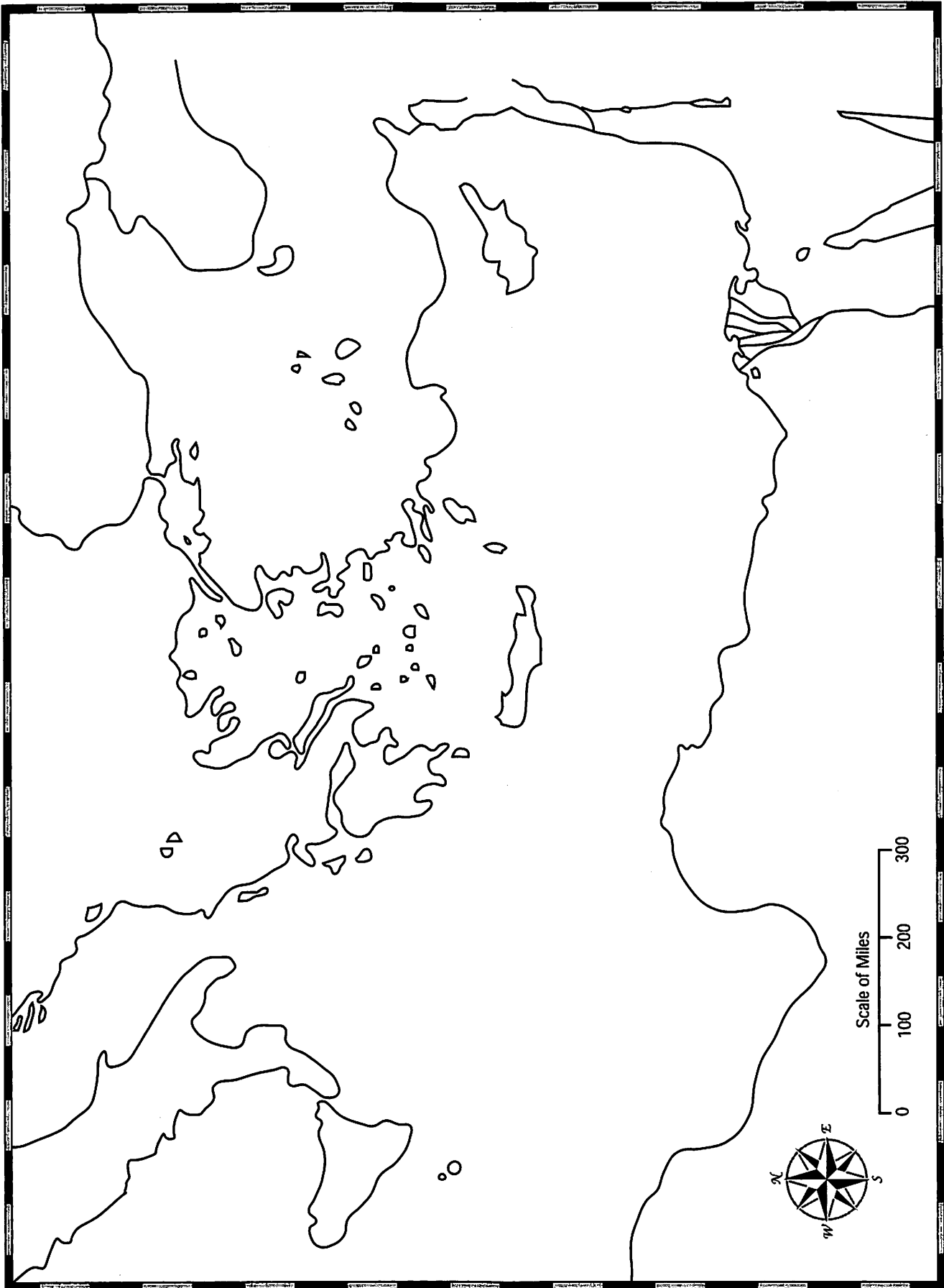
Damascus was the capital of the Old Testament country of Syria. Note that it was under the control of the Nabateans at this point in history. It is said to be the oldest continually occupied city in the world.

Before we continue further with Paul's work, let us look at one more detail of his personal life that was to prove valuable to him. He says he was born a Roman citizen (22:25-29). That means his father was a citizen before him. Citizenship could be obtained in different ways: as a reward for being a soldier, performing some other act of valor for the government, or by purchasing it for a great sum of money. Citizenship gave Paul some privileges the typical Roman subject did not have. He was not to be bound or punished without a trial. If some problem arose that the lower courts could not handle, the citizen had the right to appeal his case to the emperor himself. Furthermore, if he were ordered to be executed for a crime, he had to be killed in a humane way — not by crucifixion or in any of the other ways used for the sport of the Roman populace.

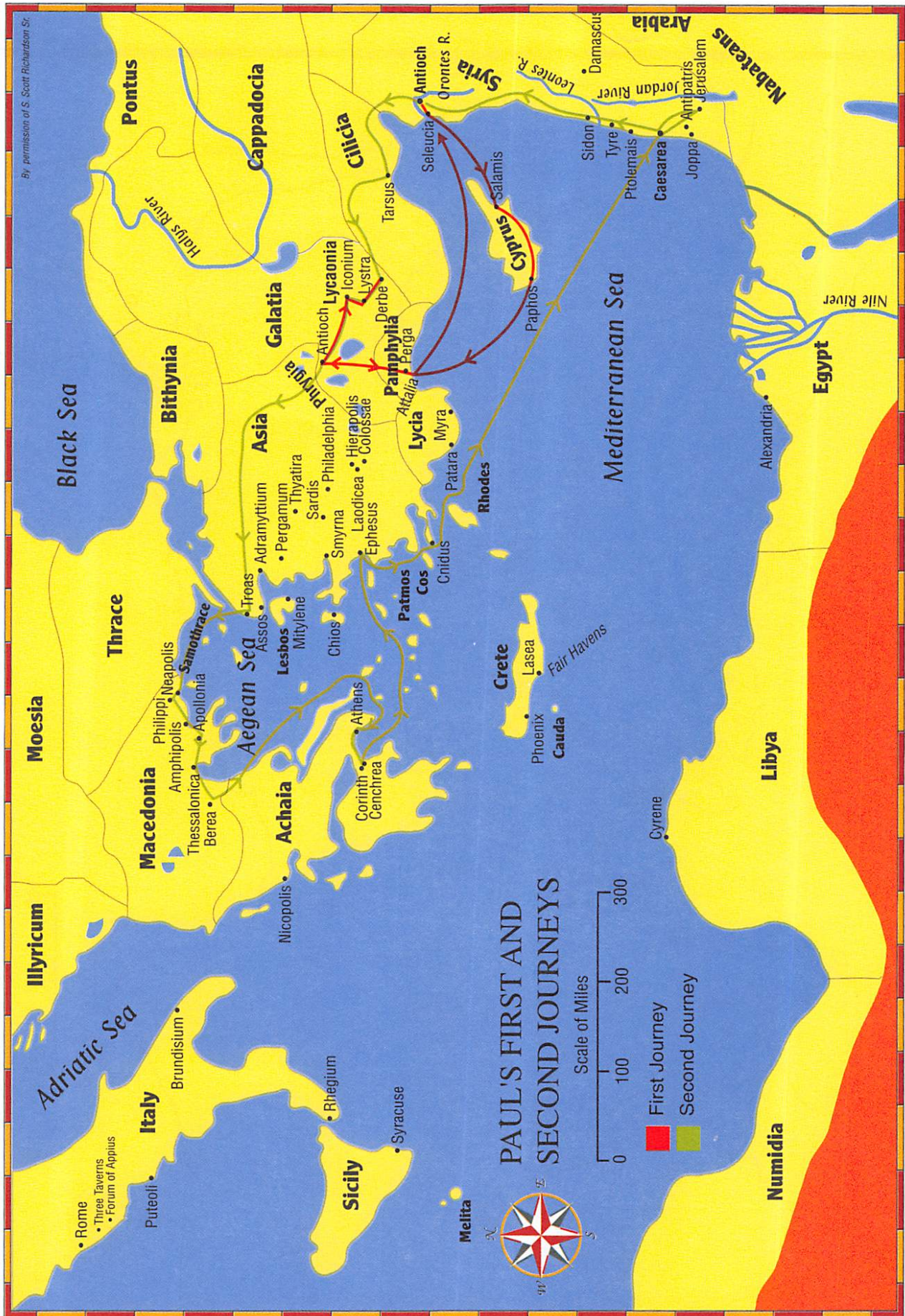
After Paul's baptism, he began preaching in the synagogues of _____ (9:19-20). When we add his personal account of these early years to the historian's account, we learn he withdrew into northern _____ for a time and then came back to _____ (Gal. 1:15-17) to continue preaching. The name Arabia, of course, refers to the whole Arabian Desert. We can only assume he withdrew into the region near Damascus since he was there immediately before and after his time in Arabia.

The Jews who were once Paul's allies in the persecution of Christians became very angry with him. Soon his life was in grave danger. The Jews even persuaded the governor of the city to help them arrest Paul. The brethren helped him escape by putting him over the wall of the city in a basket (9:23-25; 2 Cor. 11:32-33).

Paul returned to _____ (9:26) where he was also rejected. The disciples were afraid of him until a



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man named Barnabas brought him to the apostles and told his story. Soon the unbelieving Jews were plotting for his life. God told him to leave the city quickly for "I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." The brethren escorted him as far as _____ (9:30) and put him on a ship to _____ (9:30). For some time, he stayed and worked in the region of Cilicia (Acts 9:26-30; 22:15-21; Gal. 1:18-24).

Meanwhile, the church had been spreading. The church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas to _____ (11:22) to exhort the new congregation there. He went to _____ (11:25) to get Paul to help him in the work. For a year they worked with others in Antioch.

One day a group of men from _____ (11:27) came to visit Antioch. One was a man named Agabus, and he predicted there would be a dearth throughout the empire. The brethren in Antioch decided to send relief to their brethren in _____ (11:29) because they had borne the brunt of the original persecution, and were still in poor circumstances. They sent the gift by the hands of Barnabas and Paul. A young man named John Mark returned to Antioch with them (12:25).

Paul's First Preaching Journey **Acts 13:1-14:28**

After a time, the Holy Spirit instructed the church at Antioch to "separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (13:2). Thus began the first of what we usually call the Missionary Journeys.

Paul and Barnabas took the young man John Mark with them as their minister, and the three of them went down the Orontes River to the seaport of _____ (13:4). This was one of the most important harbors on the eastern end of the Mediterranean. From there they sailed to the island of _____ (13:4).

Theirs was not the first work to be done on Cyprus. Men who were scattered in the first persecution preached on Cyprus, but to Jews only (11:19). Now these three men moved from _____ (13:5) on one end of the island to _____ (13:6) on the other end (about 100 miles) preaching to all who would listen. Even Sergius Paulus, the procounsul of the island, listened to Paul and believed his message.

From Cyprus, the men sailed about 170 miles northwestward to the province of _____ (13:13) in Asia Minor. Pamphylia was a small province lying in a narrow strip between the Taurus Mountains and the sea. They passed by the seaport of Attalia and preached in the city of _____ (13:13-14), about 12 miles inland. John Mark decided not to follow Paul and Barnabas when they decided to go further inland. He went back to _____ (13:13) while the others went northward over the mountains to another Antioch, this one in _____ (13:14).

Paul and Barnabas went into the synagogue of the Jews, and Paul was invited to speak. We have a record of the profound lesson he taught. At first, many of the Jews were impressed with the message. The Gentiles were also. They asked permission to hear more about it the next week. Nearly the whole city assembled the next week to hear Paul speak. The Jews saw the multitude that had come together and were filled with jealousy. The Gentiles listened readily while the Jews sought to stir up trouble. They finally managed to expel the men from their city. This was the first severe persecution Paul and Barnabas encountered on this trip. Note it came from Jews.

Let us stop and look at some geographical information about the region of Asia Minor. The entire peninsula is about two-thirds the size of Texas. It was all under the control of Rome in the days of the New Testament. They had broken it down into nine provinces for efficient governing. Some of the new provinces were made up of several smaller districts that had previously existed. For example, the province of Asia was made up of Caria, Lydia, Mysia, and Phrygia. The province of Galatia was made up of Pisidia and Lycaonia. Sometimes the writers referred to an area by its Roman provincial name. At other times a more specific term would be used to pinpoint an exact location.

Antioch of Pisidia is an example of the latter. There were 16 Antiochs built by the Seleucid kings of Syria. Therefore, the double name of each Antioch had to be used to distinguish it from the others. This particular Antioch was in the Roman province of Galatia in the district known as Pisidia. To complicate matters further, it was located near a high plateau named Phrygia. Paul visited the congregations of "_____ and _____" (16:6; 18:23) on each of his journeys. Later he wrote a letter to the "Galatians." The term, Galatians, would include the cities of Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Phrygia would include the additional cities of Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colossae all mentioned in the epistles.

Label Pisidia, Lycaonia, and Phrygia.

After being driven out of Antioch, Paul and Barnabas traveled about 80 miles southeast to the city of _____ (13:51). Again many Jews and Gentiles believed their message and they were able to stay a "long time . . . speaking boldly in the Lord." But, again, unbelieving Jews stirred up trouble against them and caused the city to turn against them. The wicked men were intending to "use them despitefully and to stone them." Paul and Barnabas learned of the plot and fled to _____ (14:6-8), about 18 miles away.

The men of Lystra were amazed when Paul healed a crippled man. They decided the gods had come to visit,

and they brought sacrifices and garlands to worship them. Paul and Barnabas had trouble restraining the crowd. Very little time passed, however, before Jews arrived from _____ and _____ (14:19). These unbelieving Jews persuaded the people of Lystra that these were really wicked men. They stoned Paul and threw him outside the city as dead. While the disciples were gathered around grieving, Paul arose and went back into the city. The next day, he and Barnabas left Lystra to go to the city of _____ (14:20), about 30 miles to the southeast. The cities of Lystra and Derbe are called cities of _____ (14:6).

Notice on your map that the men have circled back until it would have been a fairly short trip to pass through the Cilician Gates back to Tarsus and on to Antioch in Syria. This was not the route they chose, however. They turned back to strengthen the little new congregations they had established and to ordain elders in every church, even though they had been mistreated so recently in those same cities. When they had preached in Perga, they went down to the seaport town of _____ (14:25) and caught a ship for _____ (14:26) rather than including Cyprus on the return trip.

Be sure you have labeled all the places Paul and Barnabas visited on the first journey. Draw a red line showing the route. Color the provinces *directly touched* by Paul on this journey.

Paul's Second Journey

Acts 15:1-18:22

1 and 2 Thessalonians

(Passages in Acts unless otherwise specified)

Trouble arose during the "long time" Paul and Barnabas remained at Antioch with the brethren after the first journey. Certain men came from _____ (15:1) saying it was necessary for the Gentiles to become Jews (be circumcised) before they could be Christians. Since Jerusalem was the site of the first congregation, and since most of the apostles were still there, the message of these men from Judea carried great weight. Paul and Barnabas were confident their work was in harmony with God's will, so they disputed with these Judaizing teachers.

The church at Antioch decided to send Paul, Barnabas, and certain other men to _____ (15:2) to settle the question. Paul took Titus, a Gentile Christian, with him as a test case (Gal. 2:1-3). As they passed through _____ and _____ (15:3), Paul and his company told the brethren they met how the Gentiles had been converted. All who heard the news rejoiced.

Label Phoenicia and Samaria on Map #23. Notice they are directly in the path between Antioch and Jerusalem.

The subject of the Gentiles and their right to salvation was thoroughly discussed in Jerusalem. Finally, the Holy Spirit guided the apostles and elders in writing a letter to all Gentile converts in _____ and _____ (15:23) stating that the Gentiles were not required to be circumcised nor to keep any other part of the Old Law. They expressed their approval of the work of Paul and Barnabas. Titus was not required to be circumcised, proving the statements delivered were true. The men at Jerusalem sent Judas and Silas back to _____ (15:22) with Paul and Barnabas to serve as witnesses. Now the subject of the circumcision of the Gentiles was officially settled. It was not settled on a practical level for many years, however, because each new congregation comprised of Jews and Gentiles had to learn each was accepted before God on equal terms. Paul had to deal with the same problem over and over through the years ahead as he helped congregations learn the whole counsel of God. The date of the discussion in Jerusalem seems to be about A.D. 49 or 50.

Draw a purple line to show Paul's trip to Jerusalem and back to Antioch.

The Second Preaching Journey

Acts 15:36-18:22

A short time later, Paul decided to visit the congregations he had helped establish. He and Barnabas differed sharply over whether to take John Mark with them again. Finally, it was decided Barnabas would take John Mark and go to the island of _____ (15:39) which was their original home (4:36). Incidentally, this same John Mark later wrote the gospel of Mark.

Paul took Silas with him and went into Asia Minor. This time he went by land. He passed through _____ and _____ (15:41), "confirming the churches." It is interesting to note there is never a specific mention of a congregation in Tarsus. Yet this passage indicates there were congregations in the province dating from the years Paul worked there before he went to Antioch in Syria.

When they came to _____ (16:1), Paul asked a young man named Timothy to join them in the work. Timothy was already "well reported of" by the brethren at _____ and _____ (16:2). It is quite possible Timothy saw Paul stoned on his first trip to Lystra. It must have taken courage on his part to join the work, but the Bible does not record any sign of hesitation.

Paul and the others continued through the regions of _____ and _____ (16:6). At each place, Paul gave the brethren the decrees from the apostles and elders at _____ (16:4) concerning the Gentiles and the Old Law.

Paul intended to stop and preach in _____ (16:6), but was urged forward by the Spirit. The company passed by _____, and thought of going north into _____ (16:7). Again, the Spirit objected. They proceeded west until they came to _____ (16:8) on the shores of the Aegean Sea. Troas was one of the most important harbors on the eastern shore of the Aegean, therefore another important link along the trade routes.

Continue using Map #23. Label Mysia. Find the provinces of Asia and Bithynia. Label Troas. Draw a green line from Antioch of Syria to Troas showing their route thus far.

Possibly, Paul stayed in Troas long enough to establish a congregation. It is more probable he found a group already meeting because he found Luke already there. Luke joined the company at this point. Luke is the author of the book of Acts. Notice he had been using third person pronouns until he tells of their leaving Troas. Then he begins using first person pronouns, indicating he joined the company.

One night Paul saw a vision of a man from _____ (16:9) saying, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." The men caught a ship and sailed directly across the Aegean Sea to _____, and on to _____ (16:11) in Macedonia. They did not tarry in the seaport, but rather, moved 10 miles inland to _____ (16:12), one of the most important cities of the district. This was the first time Paul had preached in Europe.

Macedonia was once the home of Philip and his famous son Alexander the Great. That means Paul and his company had moved into the heart of the Hellenistic influence in the empire. The city of Philippi had been made a Roman colony in commemoration of the victory of Augustus over Brutus in a battle fought near the city. As a colony, Philippi was considered an extension of Rome itself with certain privileges other cities did not enjoy.

Apparently, there were very few, if any, Jewish men in Philippi because Paul did not find a synagogue. Only ten Jewish men would have been sufficient for a synagogue to exist. It seems all the congregations on this Grecian peninsula were predominantly Gentile. Though Macedonia was a different province from Greece, it was thoroughly Greek in its culture.

Paul was able to establish a fine congregation in Philippi, beginning with a woman named Lydia from _____ (16:14). It seems the people there always held a special place in the apostle's heart.

As so often happened, persecution arose, and Paul had to leave the city. Luke stayed behind, presumably to strengthen the new group. Perhaps it was his good influence that helped the congregation reach the strength it attained.

Paul and his company traveled down the Egnatian Way until they came to _____, having passed through _____ and _____ (17:1). The Egnatian Way was a great military and commercial highway linking the Aegean Sea with the Adriatic Sea.

Label the Adriatic Sea between Greece and Italy. Have you labeled the Aegean Sea on your map?

Thessalonica was about 100 miles southwest of Philippi. It lay at the head of a gulf called the Thermaic Gulf and had an excellent harbor. From there, goods could be shipped both directions along the Egnatian Way. This was another major trade center.

Paul preached three weeks in the Jewish synagogue. Many believed, the greater number of them Gentiles. The unbelieving Jews succeeded in stirring up a mob and dragged some of the new converts before the rulers of the city. The brethren sent Paul and Silas away by night.

Their next stopping place was _____ (17:10), about 50 miles to the southwest. Here Paul found a group of Jews who were willing to give him an honest hearing and to search the scriptures to see if his message was true. Again, many believed, and a congregation was established.

It did not take long for the Jews of _____ (17:13) to learn where Paul was. They came hurrying down to try to destroy him. The brethren helped him escape. They took him to the coast as if he were going to leave by ship. Instead, he followed land until he came to _____ (17:15).

Timothy and Silas had been left behind at _____ (17:10, 14). Paul sent word for them to join him as soon as possible. Timothy soon joined Paul and was sent back to _____ (1 Thess. 3:1-2) to see about the little group there. We do not know whether Silas was delayed in Berea or if he were sent on some other mission. At any rate, Paul seems to have been alone almost the whole time he was in Athens.

There was a two mile road between Athens and its seaport. The idolatrous altars lining the roadway are mentioned by Greek writers. Perhaps these altars were the basis for Paul's description of the people as "too superstitious" or "very religious." They even had one altar inscribed "To The Unknown God," lest they had overlooked some deity.

The Greeks considered Athens their first and foremost center for culture and learning. Acts 17:21 gives an interesting description of the Athenians: "For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing." They invited Paul to tell them his "new doctrine," but scoffed in unbelief when he told of the resurrection of Christ. The historian tells that some believed, but there is never a later mention of a church in Athens. Paul may have been thinking of the Athenians when he later wrote, "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called . . ." (1 Cor. 1:26).

Paul, still alone, traveled about 40 miles west of Athens to the city of _____ (18:1), located on the narrow isthmus connecting the mainland of Greece to the Peloponnesus. Corinth was as given over to commercialism as Athens was to learning. In addition, the city was known for its moral corruption. The term "Corinthian" came to have the connotation of one totally dedicated to fulfilling the sensual desires of life.

Corinth was the capital of the Roman province of Achaia. Since it was located on the isthmus, all land traffic between north and south had to pass through the city. In addition, there was a harbor on each side of the city, so the city was a busy thoroughfare. Several attempts were made to dig a canal across the isthmus, but none was successful until 1893.

Are you as impressed as I am that Paul did the majority of his work in cities built on the crossroads of traffic? It seems to have been his intention to establish churches in strategic locations from which the truth could spread in all directions. It is evident from the epistles this is exactly what happened. (See 2 Cor. 1:1 — "all Achaia"; 1 Thess. 1:7-8; Acts 19:10.)

Paul says he first came to Corinth "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling" (1 Cor. 2:3). He stayed with a couple named Aquila and Priscilla who had recently come from _____ (18:2) because the emperor had ordered all _____ to leave _____ (18:2). Paul worked with them as a tent-maker. He taught regularly in the synagogues, but not with his usual zeal until Timothy and Silas joined him. Then he was "pressed in the spirit" and testified Jesus was the Christ. The Jews objected, and he turned from them to work with the Gentiles. He spent a year and a half in Corinth. The Jews tried to get Paul in trouble with Gallio, the Roman deputy, but Gallio refused to hear the case.

Timothy and Silas had come bringing a good report from the churches of _____ (18:5). There were some questions about the second coming of Christ that the brethren at Thessalonica did not understand. Paul, therefore, wrote them a letter that we call 1 Thessalonians. A second letter followed soon to explain further points that were still misunderstood, 2 Thessalonians.

Circle Thessalonica as a congregation which received letters from Paul.

Paul decided to visit _____ (18:21) again. Aquila and Priscilla accompanied him as far as _____ (18:19), about 250 miles across the Aegean Sea. The Jews in Ephesus wanted to hear more about his message, but Paul was in a hurry to reach Jerusalem in time for a feast day. He promised to return as soon as he could. He sailed across the Mediterranean to _____ (18:22), went on to Jerusalem and "saluted the church," and then on to _____ (18:22) where he spent some time before starting his third journey.

Now complete your green line showing the rest of Paul's route on this second journey — from Troas to Antioch. Color the additional provinces touched by Paul on this second journey.

Lesson 48

Paul's Third Journey

Acts 18:23-21:16

Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians
(Passages in Acts unless otherwise specified)

It seems Paul did not stay long in Antioch between his second and third journeys. He returned through the same regions he had visited on each of his other trips — _____ and _____ (18:23) — "strengthening all the disciples." He was always concerned about the welfare of congregations he had established. This time, instead of turning north to go to Troas as he had on his second journey, he moved due west to the city of Ephesus. He was returning in keeping with his promise to them.

Map #24 — Paul's Third Journey and Trip to Rome

The map becomes too crowded if we try to show all of Paul's work on one map. So let us use a new one for this later work. We will compare them closely as we go along. Label each place Paul visits on this third journey.

In view of the descriptions we have given of other cities Paul visited, it is not surprising to learn Ephesus was a major city. It was counted as one of the greatest cities of the eastern Mediterranean, along with Antioch of Syria and Alexandria of Egypt. It was the capital of the province of Asia and was a major trade center. A religious cult grew up in Ephesus around a goddess named Artemis or Diana as the Romans called her. The temple of Diana was considered one of the wonders of the ancient world. It was one of the largest buildings in existence at that time. The cult brought much trade to the city as tourists made their pilgrimages to the temple. It is no wonder Demetrius and other silversmiths were worried when they saw their flourishing business of selling talismans and souvenir goddesses threatened by Paul as he preached that Jehovah is the only God.

Paul spent three very successful years in Ephesus in spite of persecutions (see Acts 20:17-19; 2 Cor. 1:8-11). A very strong congregation was established. From this center, the truth spread throughout the province of _____ (19:10). Almost certainly the congregations later addressed in the book of Revelation were established at this time.

Look in Revelation 1-3. Label the seven churches of Asia on your map:

Ephesus	Sardis
Smyrna	Philadelphia
Pergamos	Laodicea
Thyatira	

Draw a red line showing Paul's route from Antioch to Ephesus.

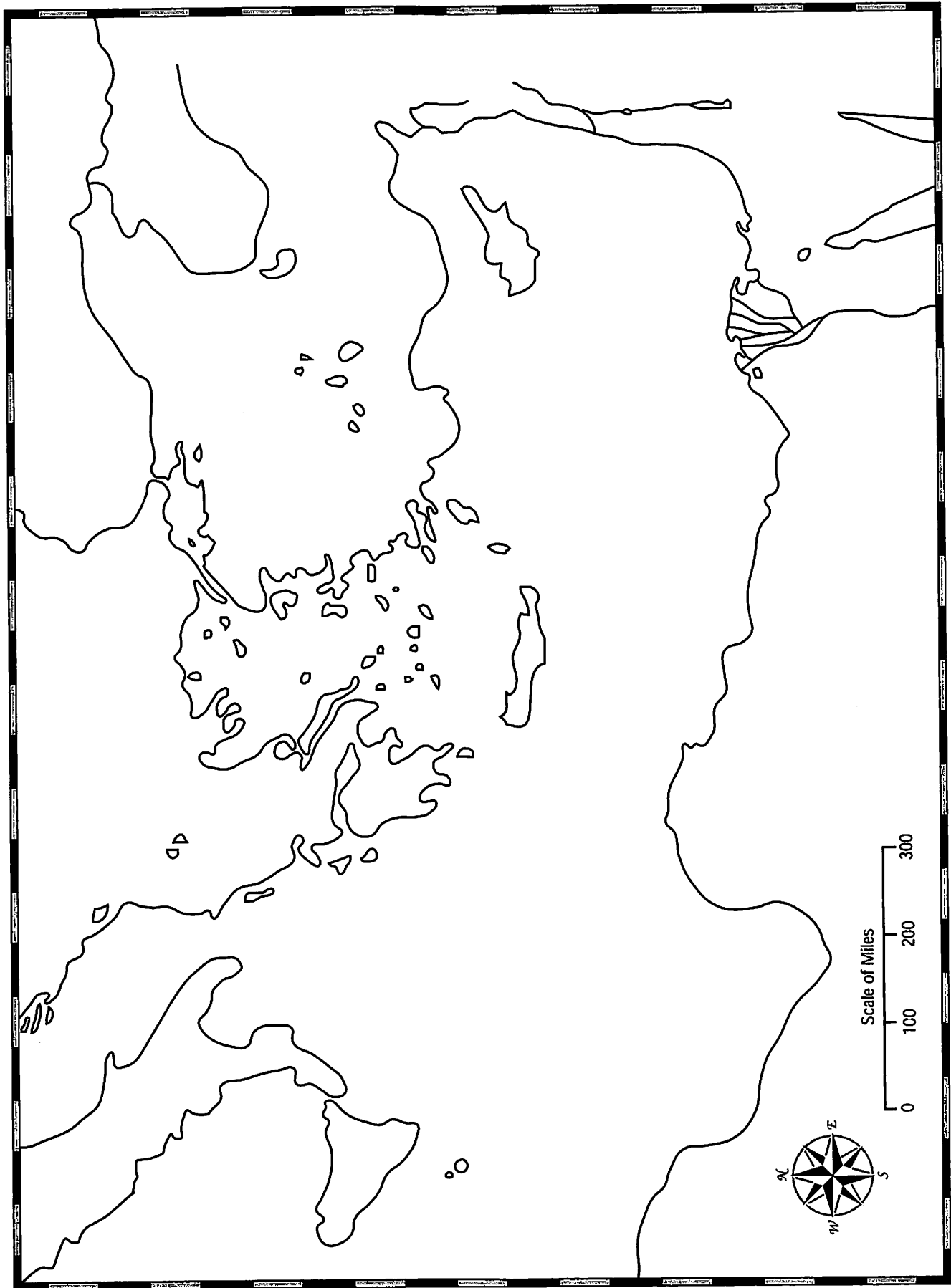
At some point during the three years Paul was at Ephesus, he learned of trouble in the congregations of Galatia. More Judaizing teachers had come, stirring up the question of the Gentiles again. Paul wrote them a letter, the book of Galatians, marveling they were "so soon removed" from the clear gospel Paul had preached to them. He urged them to hold to the truths of Christ and not try to go back to the old law (Gal. 1:2, 6).

Circle the cities of Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe as the recipients of the letter to the Galatians.

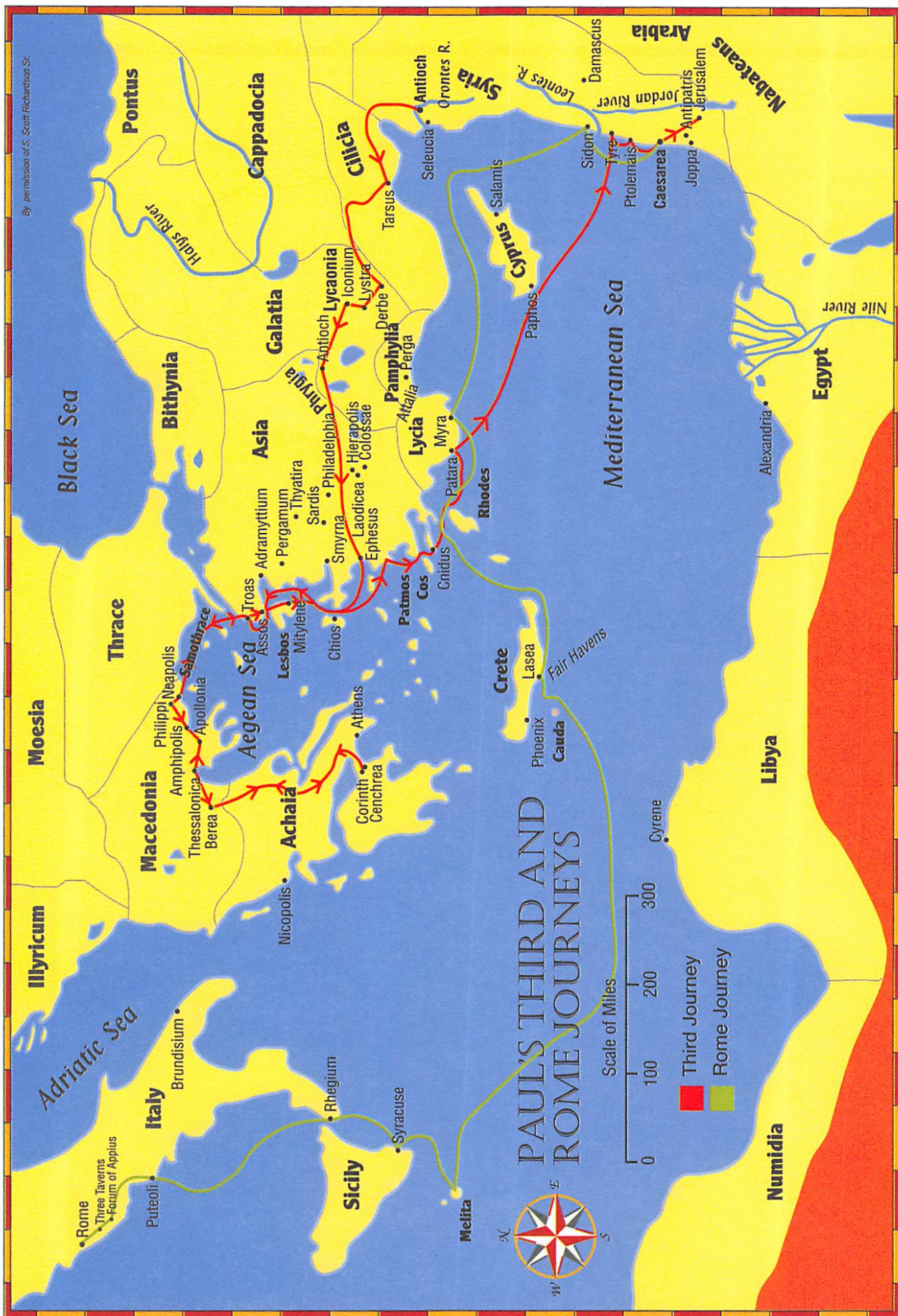
After some time, Paul decided to collect an offering from the predominantly Gentile congregations to take to the poverty-stricken Jewish brethren in Judea. He sent Timothy and Erastus ahead of him into _____ (19:22) to tell the congregations about the proposed gift. Someone was also sent to the churches of _____ (1 Cor. 16:1) for the same purpose, but we are not told who it was.

Meanwhile, Paul received news that the church at _____ (1 Cor. 1:2, 11) was having severe problems. He wrote the letter we call 1 Corinthians and sent it by the hands of Titus. Timothy was due to visit Corinth after a time in Macedonia, but Paul was worried about his reception if the problems were not solved first (see 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10-11).

Paul remained in _____ (1 Cor. 16:8) until Pentecost (late spring, A.D. 57). Then he traveled north to _____ (2 Cor. 2:12) where he hoped to find Titus bringing him news from Corinth. Unfortunately, Titus did not arrive at the expected time. Paul was so discouraged he could not use the door of opportunity open to him in Troas. He hurried across into _____ (2 Cor. 2:13) where he found Titus with good news about Corinth's reception of the first letter. Paul was delighted and wrote 2 Corinthians to solve the remaining matters of importance. Titus took this second letter also, with specific instructions to help the Corinthians have their bounty ready before Paul arrived. (See 2 Cor. 7:5-7, 13-16; 8; 9.)



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Circle Corinth as another city which received letters from Paul.

Paul continued on his way through Macedonia encouraging others and being encouraged by the brethren he found. The churches of Macedonia were unusually willing to participate in the proposed gift to Jerusalem. Paul declares they were willing to give beyond their ability (see 2 Cor. 8:1-5).

He arrived in Corinth as winter was beginning. During the three months he remained there, he wrote his most profound epistle, the one to the church at Rome. He had never been there, but he knew several in the church. Aquila and Priscilla had returned to Rome at some time because they are named among those greeted in the book. Paul told them he hoped to visit them as soon as he had completed his trip to _____. Then he hoped to go on to _____ after his visit with the Roman brethren (Rom. 15:23-26).

Label Rome and circle it as another church to receive a letter.

Continue your red line to show Paul's route from Ephesus to Corinth.

Early spring arrived, and it was time to leave for Jerusalem. Notice on your map that the logical route from Corinth to Jerusalem was by ship from the Corinthian seaport of Cenchrea directly to Caesarea. This was the route Paul intended to take until he learned the Jews were lying in wait, prepared to kill him. He changed his plans and returned through _____ (Acts 20:3).

Acts 20:4 names seven men who accompanied Paul on his trip to Jerusalem. They were messengers from each of the congregations involved in gathering the bounty for the poor saints. The writer begins using the first person pronoun again in verse 5, indicating Luke was part of the group also, probably as the representative from Philippi. The other men were from _____, _____, _____, and _____. Note each of these areas on your map.

At some point along the way, the Holy Spirit told Paul he would be bound in Jerusalem. A lesser man might have given up in his attempt to carry the bounty to the saints, but Paul continued undaunted.

He stopped for a few days in _____ (20:6) and then continued along the shoreline to _____ (20:17), about 36 miles from Ephesus. He sent for the elders from _____ (20:17) to join him there. He did not expect to see them again.

We are not going to take time to notice all the places the ship stopped on its way to Jerusalem because they did not stay long enough to preach at any of the places. Do notice, however, it is possible to determine the exact route the ship took by reading Acts 21:1-8. Brethren at _____ (21:3-4), _____ (21:7), and _____ (21:8) greeted the company and warned of trouble ahead for Paul.

Continue your red line to show the rest of this journey. Color the provinces visited on the third journey.

Compare this journey with the second one on Map #23. Did he visit any new provinces on this trip?

Paul's Years of Imprisonment

Acts 21:17-28:13

Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon

1 & 2 Timothy, Titus

(Passages in Acts unless otherwise specified)

The brethren in _____ (21:17) received Paul and his companions gladly. The elders heard his report concerning his work and rejoiced. They told Paul that even the believing Jews were uncertain of his teaching on the law of Moses. There were four men who had been defiled while under a Nazarite vow (see Num. 6:9-12). The elders suggested Paul be "at charges" for these men to show the Jews that, though he strongly opposed the Gentiles being required to keep the law, he did not object to the Jews doing so as a matter of social custom. Paul agreed and started the seven days of purification for the men. The time was almost accomplished when the predicted trouble arose. Some unbelieving Jews from _____ (21:27) recognized Paul and accused him of taking a Gentile into the temple grounds where only Jews were allowed to go. The Jerusalem Jews were already suspicious of Paul, so it did not take long to stir up a mob.

The mob grabbed him, and he would have been killed if the Roman military tribune had not intervened. Paul offered a defense on the steps of the castle as he was being led away. The next day he was carried before the Sanhedrin for a trial. It was obvious from the start the Jews were not going to give him a fair hearing. God spoke to Paul during the night after the trial and told him he would live to bear witness of God in _____ (23:11).

The chief captain determined to send Paul to the governor (procurator) in _____ (23:23) when it became obvious he could not be kept safely in Jerusalem. A total of 470 soldiers left Jerusalem in the middle of the night to escort Paul to Caesarea.

Felix was the governor at the time. He listened to the Jews' testimony against Paul. Felix had been in Judea long enough to have some knowledge about the church. He ordered Paul be kept safely but that he be treated kindly. His friends were allowed to visit at will. Felix listened to Paul often and trembled at his message. For two long years, however, he kept Paul a prisoner (A.D. 58 to 60). He hoped to be given a bribe for Paul's release (24:26).

Finally, Festus became the new governor of Judea. He went to _____ (25:1) to greet the Jewish officials and learned about the prisoner Paul. In an effort to please the Jews, Festus asked Paul to go to Jerusalem to stand trial. It was clear Paul could not hope to find justice at the hands of Festus, so according to his right as a Roman citizen, he appealed his case to Caesar.

Now Festus had a problem. He had a prisoner who must be sent to Caesar. It was too late to release him quietly because any citizen had the right to explain his case to the emperor. The problem was there were no logical charges against him!

After a time, Herod Agrippa II came to pay his respects to the new governor. Agrippa was a Jew by religion, so Festus decided he would have a better understanding of the Jews' charges against Paul. Once again Paul made his defense before a ruler (see Acts 9:15).

Luke and Aristarchus were with Paul on the ship as they left Caesarea in the fall of A.D. 60. The wind was contrary to them from the very start. Study Acts 27 to see the route the ship followed. They reached the island of Crete in early October according to our calendar. Every bit of the way had been slow and dangerous because of the winds.

Label Crete. Draw a green line to show their route from Caesarea to Crete.

Since the vessels of that day were sailing ships, all shipping normally stopped from early November until early March. The ship was anchored at the _____ (27:8) on the southern side of Crete. Paul urged the centurion and the master of the ship to remain there for the winter. It was still early in the season, and they thought they had time to travel to the other side of the island to a better harbor at _____ (27:12). One day, the wind was gentle, and they thought their chance had come. They had scarcely gone beyond their harbor when a storm hit. The ship was caught and driven by the wind. For two weeks they saw neither sun nor stars. The sailors and passengers had given up all hope of survival. God spoke to Paul and told him he would live to be brought before Caesar. In addition to his own life, the lives of all the rest on the ship would be spared also.

On the fourteenth night, the sailors discovered they were approaching land. They dropped anchor lest they be dashed to pieces on an unknown shore, and they all wished for daylight!

The ship had come to the little island of _____ (28:1) or Malta as it is called today. It is located nearly 60 miles south of the larger island of Sicily. Paul and the others spent the winter on the island. As might be expected, Paul took the opportunity to preach the gospel to the people he found.

Label Melita. Continue the green line from Crete to Melita.

A ship from _____ (28:11) had also wintered on the island, so Paul and his company were able to continue their trip on it in the early spring. The brethren at _____ (28:14-15) had heard Paul was coming, and they met him at _____ (28:15). Paul took courage when he saw the brethren.

Paul was kept in prison in Rome an additional two years before his case was heard. Again, he was treated kindly. He was allowed to live in his own hired house, and visitors were permitted to come and go as they chose.

Complete the journey to Rome with your green line.

Luke, the historian, closes the account at this point. We would enjoy knowing the details of the rest of Paul's life. The best we can do from this point forward is to piece together the details given in the later epistles.

Luke accompanied Paul on that last trip to Jerusalem (20:5). We know he was also with him on that dangerous voyage to Rome (27:1-2). Possibly he remained nearby during the two years Paul was in prison at Caesarea. If so, most of the book of Acts was likely written at that time.

Paul was in prison in Rome from the spring of A.D. 61 until A.D. 63. History tells us Nero was emperor of Rome from A.D. 54 to 68. Thus it was Nero who heard Paul's case.

Up until that time, the Roman government had not discovered Christianity was a new, separate religion from Judaism. If they had heard of it at all, they would have assumed it was another Jewish sect.

Paul was busy in Rome in spite of being a prisoner. He preached to all who came near, even those in important positions in Caesar's household (see Phil. 1:12-18; 4:22). At some point, a man named Epaphras visited Paul from the congregation at _____ (Col. 1:2-8). Paul wrote a letter in return and sent it by the hands of Tychicus and Onesimus. In addition, they also carried the book of Ephesians to the church at Ephesus. The lessons of the two books are companion lessons: Colossians stresses the Deity of Christ, the fulness of Deity. Ephesians stresses the church as the fulness of Christ.

Circle Ephesus and Colossae as places that received letters.

Onesimus is an interesting character himself. He was a runaway slave who had been put in prison. Paul met him, converted him, and sent him back to his master Philemon. Philemon was a personal friend of Paul's, a faithful Christian in the congregation at Colossae. Paul wrote the book of Philemon to him to ask him to receive Onesimus again as a servant — and as a brother in Christ as well (see Col. 4:7-18; book of Philemon).

Early in A.D. 63, Epaphroditus brought Paul a gift from the church at _____ (Phil. 1:1; 2:25). Paul sent a return letter expressing his appreciation for the gift and for all the people there. It was almost time for his trial before Nero. He hoped to be released soon and hoped he could visit Philippi again (see Phil. 2:23-24).

Circle Philippi as another city receiving a letter.

The Bible does not tell us anything about the trial. It does, however, seem that Paul was released for a time. We do not know any details about his work during the short time he was free. The only evidence we have comes from the epistles of 1 Timothy and Titus which were written at this time.

Timothy had been left in _____ to straighten out certain problems while Paul went on into _____ (1 Tim. 1:3). Titus had been left in _____ (Tit. 1:5) with instructions to ordain elders in every city. Thus it is evident Paul worked in Ephesus, Macedonia, and Crete during the period. Other places are mentioned in passing. He left a cloak at _____ (2 Tim. 4:13). He left a man named Trophimus sick at _____ (2 Tim. 4:20). He planned to winter at _____ (Tit. 3:12). He had told the Romans he hoped to go to _____ (Rom. 15:24) someday. We have no way to know for sure whether he was able to make the trip, but it is doubtful there was time after he was released from prison before trouble arose again.

In July A.D. 64, a large portion of the city of Rome burned to the ground. Nero blamed the Christians to turn suspicion away from himself. This was the first wave of Roman persecution against the church. Nero was a cruel, unscrupulous man who killed the Christians in his arenas as a form of sport.

Paul was arrested again. He wrote Timothy a second letter asking him to hurry and come to him (2 Tim. 4:9, 21). His Roman citizenship was valuable one more time — he was beheaded rather than facing the inhumane arena, or the cross. Paul faced death as a time to gain the crown awaiting him in heaven. Perhaps his own summation of his life would be a good way to close our look at this great man:

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

Lesson 50

Review Of The Book Of Acts

(Lessons 45-49)

(Passages are in Acts unless otherwise specified)

Tell *where* each of the following events took place:

- _____ 1. The apostles were told to wait here until the Holy Spirit came upon them. (1:4)
- _____ 2. The first gospel sermon was preached. (1:12; 2:1ff)
- _____ 3. Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead. (5:1ff)
- _____ 4. Stephen was stoned. (6:7ff)
- _____ 5. Philip converted Simon the sorcerer. (8:5-13)
- _____ 6. The home of the eunuch. (8:27)
- _____ 7. The Lord appeared to Paul (Saul) on his way to this city. (9:1-8)
- _____ 8. Paul was let down over the wall of a city in a basket. (9:22-25)
- _____ 9. Place where the brethren sent Paul to escape from the Jews of Jerusalem. (9:29-30)
- _____ 10. Peter raised Dorcas from the dead. (9:36-43)
- _____ 11. Peter saw a vision of a sheet filled with unclean animals. (10:5-17)
- _____ 12. Home of Cornelius. (10:1)
- _____ 13. Barnabas was sent here to exhort the brethren. (11:22-23)
- _____ 14. The disciples of Antioch sent relief to brethren here. (11:27-30)
- _____ 15. Peter was released from prison. (12:1-19)
- _____ 16. The Spirit said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them . . ." (13:1-2)
- _____ 17. Elymas was struck blind. (13:6-12)
- _____ 18. John Mark turned back. (13:13)
- _____ 19. Paul preached concerning the leaders God had provided for Israel, culminating in Jesus. (13:14ff)
- _____ 20. Paul and Barnabas were nearly worshipped. (14:8-18)
- _____ 21. Paul was stoned. (14:8, 19)
- _____ 22. Paul and Barnabas went for a conference on the subject of circumcision. (15:1-31)
- _____ 23. Each preaching journey started from this city. (13:1-3; 15:35-36; 18:22-23)
- _____ 24. Barnabas went to this island on his second trip. (15:36-39)
- _____ 25. Timothy's home. (16:1)
- _____ 26. Paul saw a vision of a man asking for help. (16:8-10)
- _____ 27. The man in the vision was from here.
- _____ 28. Lydia's hometown. (16:14)
- _____ 29. Paul sang in prison. (16:12, 25)
- _____ 30. The people here were described as "more noble" than others. (17:10-11)
- _____ 31. The people spent their time telling or hearing some new thing. (17:21)
- _____ 32. Paul preached on Mars Hill. (17:15-34)
- _____ 33. Paul worked as a tent maker. (18:1-3)
- _____ 34. Priscilla and Aquila had been forced to leave this city because the emperor had ordered all Jews to leave. (18:2)

- _____ 35. Apollos' home town. (18:24)
- _____ 36. Paul taught daily at the school of Tyrannus. (19:1, 9-10)
- _____ 37. The people burned their books of magic. (19:17-20)
- _____ 38. Demetrius stirred up a mob against Paul. (19:24ff)
- _____ 39. A man fell out of a window during a sermon. (20:6-12)
- _____ 40. Paul told the Ephesian elders goodbye. (20:17-38)
- _____ 41. Paul visited with Philip. (21:8-9)
- _____ 42. Paul was warned he would be bound when he arrived here. (21:10-14)
- _____ 43. Paul was accused of defiling the temple. (21:17, 27-31)
- _____ 44. Paul's hometown. (21:39)
- _____ 45. City where Paul was educated. (21:31; 22:3)
- _____ 46. Paul was taken here to protect him from the Jews of Jerusalem. (23:23ff)
- _____ 47. Paul preached before two governors and a king while he was in prison here. (23:33-26:32)
- _____ 48. Paul asked the captain of a ship to winter on this island. (27:7-12)
- _____ 49. Paul shook off a deadly snake. (28:1-6)
- _____ 50. Paul was in his own hired house, yet a prisoner. (28:16-31)

The book of Acts tells of 6 times Paul was in Jerusalem. Study the passages below and tell why he was there each time:

1. Acts 22:3 —
2. Acts 9:26-31 —
3. Acts 11:27-30 —
4. Acts 15:1-30 —
5. Acts 18:18-22 —
6. Acts 21:1ff (see 1 Cor. 16:1-3) —

Short answers:

1. Did God fulfill His promise to Abraham that One would come to bless all nations? When? (Acts 3:19-26; 13:32-33)
2. Did Daniel's prophecy in Daniel 2:44 come true? Analyze it and show its fulfillment.
3. Did Christ fail in what He came to do? Did He set up His kingdom? (Matt. 16:13-20; John 18:33-37; Acts 2:30-36; Rev. 4-5)

Lesson 51

The Close Of The First Century

No one denies the fact that Paul and his work has had a profound effect on Christians through the ages. His example of dedication to the spread of the gospel is one we would do well to follow. Furthermore, he wrote 13 of our New Testament books (14 if we count Hebrews as his). There are many details of the scheme of redemption we could not understand if his writings were suddenly lost.

Let us remind ourselves, however, that Paul was not the only one working in the first century. Let us turn from his life to see the conditions of the church in other areas.

The Bible does not tell us many details about the work of the apostles. All the apostles were included in the group who received the great commission from the Lord (Mark 16:14-20). They all received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and joined Peter in preaching to the multitude present (Acts 2:1-4). All the apostles were arrested for their preaching in Acts 5. They were beaten and told not to preach. All of them continued their work. The apostles remained in Jerusalem when the first wave of persecution swept the city (8:1)

That is the last we know about eight of the men. There is no reason to think they stopped working at this point, however. Paul's work was centered primarily in Asia Minor and the Grecian peninsula. There was plenty of room for others to scatter in other directions. Tradition tells us every apostle except John died a violent death because of his faith in Christ.

We do not know where Matthew preached, but at some point, he wrote the gospel that bears his name. The main emphasis of his book was to convince the Jews that Jesus fulfills every Old Testament prophecy about the Messiah.

The apostle James was the first of the twelve to be killed. He was killed by Herod Agrippa I in about A.D. 44. There were two James' listed among the twelve. This one was the brother of John and had been one of the three in the most intimate circle of Jesus' disciples (Acts 12:1-2).

The apostle Peter spent most of his life in and around the city of Jerusalem. Peter was given a special mission to the Jews just as Paul was given a special mission to the Gentiles (Gal. 2:7-9). Our first glance at the persecutions the Jews brought against Christians makes us think all work among the Jews failed. That is not true. Thousands of Jews accepted the message in the first few weeks and months the apostles preached (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7). The work continued to prosper through the years until Paul could be told by the Jerusalem brethren, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe . . ." (Acts 21:20).

About the time Paul was spending his two years in prison in Rome, Peter wrote a letter of encouragement to Jewish Christians that were scattered in _____, _____, _____, _____, and _____ which were provinces of Asia Minor (1 Pet. 1:1). We call the epistle 1 Peter. He sends them greetings from the church at _____ (5:13), indicating he was there at that time. Some have tried to say this was a symbolic reference to Rome rather than the literal city of Babylon. I see no reason to take the reference figuratively. The letter was written before the outbreak of Roman persecution, so there was no reason to hide his location. The city of Babylon itself had long since lost its splendor and beauty that had existed in Nebuchadnezzar's day in the Old Testament. In fact, the last time the city is mentioned in any historical records that have been found is dated about 10 B.C. Even if the city were in ruins by Peter's day, there was still a large colony of Jews living in the area. It is logical to assume Peter had gone to visit the congregations in the area. Perhaps he was giving them the same kind of encouragement and instructions that was included in his letter to those of Asia Minor.

Draw a large circle including the provinces addressed in Peter's letter. Put an appropriate arrow pointing off your map to show the direction to Babylon.

A very short time later, Nero outlawed Christianity, and a severe wave of persecution swept across the Mediterranean world. Peter wrote a second letter to all "them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:1). There is no place specified. It is a letter of encouragement to all Christians to be faithful no matter what trials come.

According to tradition, Peter died soon afterward as one of Nero's victims. We are told he was crucified. Jesus predicted Peter would die a violent death on one of their last visits together before Jesus' ascension (John 21:18-19).

Other men besides the apostles played important roles in spreading the gospel. We have already noted that those scattered in the first wave of persecution in Jerusalem went everywhere preaching the word. We do not

know their names, but we can be assured of their zealous work. Other men such as Barnabas, John Mark, Silas, Timothy, Titus, Luke, and others, accompanied Paul at various times. Two of these men left a legacy for us in the books they wrote. John Mark wrote the gospel of Mark. Luke wrote the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts.

Another James played a prominent role in the church at Jerusalem. He was not one of the apostles, but is identified as the "Lord's brother" (Gal. 1:19; see Matt. 13:55). He, too, wrote a letter to Jewish Christians scattered throughout the Mediterranean world (James 1:1). His letter was written a little earlier than Peter's first letter — estimates vary from A.D. 44 to 60. We cannot circle an exact place for this epistle because the twelve tribes were scattered all over the Bible lands.

We know very little about the man named Jude who wrote a short epistle about the time Peter wrote his second book. He identifies himself as "the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James" (Jude 1). His letter was written to all Christians and served the same purpose as 2 Peter, to encourage faithfulness even in the face of death.

No one knows for sure who wrote the book of Hebrews. It was addressed to Jewish Christians. Probably, it was written in Nero's time also. The Jewish Christian faced unique problems in that day. He had faced severe persecution from his own countrymen from the very beginning of the church. Those still living in Palestine were particularly hard hit. The little land was undergoing severe trials politically. Many in Palestine were becoming poverty-stricken. The Christians faced these problems first because of discriminations against them. This was why Paul collected the gift for them from the Gentile Christians. Now the Roman government outlawed Christianity and the Jewish Christians living in Rome were severely oppressed. The Romans had once ordered Jews out of their city merely because they were Jews. Now the Jewish Christian was part of a disliked race plus part of an illegal religion. There must have been a strong temptation to give up the new law and go back to the law of Moses where they could at least live comfortably. The book of Hebrews assured them the new law is better in every respect. It is worth holding onto.

The apostle John spent the early years of the church in Jerusalem working very closely with Peter and with James the Lord's brother. He survived the persecutions from the Jews, from Nero, and from others. According to the best information we have, it seems he left Jerusalem just shortly before the destruction of the city in A.D. 70. He made Ephesus his home and must have been a great help to all Christians living in Asia Minor.

John wrote the gospel of John in the last few years of the first century. He states his purpose for writing the book in this way:

And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name (John 20:30-31).

There are three short epistles that bear John's name. These were all written about A.D. 90 to combat false doctrines that had arisen. No place is specified in the letters.

The Fall of Jerusalem

There is one more subject that must be dealt with before we close our study of Bible history and geography. The Jews were God's chosen people from the days of Abraham. We have watched how God cared for them through difficult times; how He punished them for sin; and how He bore with them through all the centuries.

Finally the day came when God sent His beloved Son into the world in fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophecies. Christ was the embodiment of all the hopes and dreams God had ever given the Jews a right to expect — yet they rejected Him. Pilate could see their envy, and he tried to wash away any personal blame for the death of Christ. The Jews cried out, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matt. 27:24-25). From that day forward, God has never again given His help to the Jews. They were no longer His chosen people. They had given up all claim to His favor. From that day forward, God had a new chosen race, a new Israel made up of people from all over the world who would willingly serve Him. This new Israel would be Abraham's sons — not by virtue of physical birth, but by a voluntary choice to follow in the footsteps of Abraham's faith (see Rom. 4:11-12).

Our last look at the political situation in Palestine was a grim one. The Jews hated for the Romans to take control of their land. They disliked the Herod family who was in charge of local affairs. As the years passed, the resentments only grew. The sects that had started as religious groups became more and more violent in their opposing views as to what was best for their country. The church started, and that gave the Jews one more thing to fight over. The forty years between the beginning of the church and the fall of Jerusalem have been described as the bloodiest years of Israelite history.

Another element complicated the political situation. The emperors began calling themselves gods. This was not a severe problem at first because the emperors did not force the worship of themselves on others, but it was an ever-present sore spot. In about A.D. 40, trouble broke out in the Jewish colony in Alexandria. Some Greeks broke into a local synagogue and set up an altar to the Emperor Caligula. The Jews destroyed it, and word got back to the emperor. As a punishment, he ordered an image in his likeness be set up in the Most Holy Place in the temple in Jerusalem. Fortunately, Agrippa I (the same one who killed James the apostle) was able to get the order changed.

The Romans always considered Palestine a trouble spot. They changed their governing policies over and over to try to make it more workable. Nothing helped. Possibly Nero's persecution of Christians was partly tied to his hatred for the Jews because Christianity was still considered an extension of Judaism at that point.

One revolt after another broke out in the land until Nero sent his greatest general, Titus Flavius Vespasian, to subdue Palestine. It was A.D. 67. The armies subdued the areas of Galilee, Samaria, Perea, and Idumea. Vespasian was ready to besiege the city of Jerusalem when word came that Nero had died. Vespasian rushed back to Rome to gain the throne for himself. It was two years later when he sent his son Titus back to finish the task of destroying Jerusalem.

Meanwhile, the city was being plagued by civil riots. The sect of the Zealots had degenerated into a band of fanatic murderers. The Pharisees and Sadducees were at each other's throats.

The city was so weakened by internal strife, it took only a few weeks for Titus to get inside the two outer walls. The tower of Antonia held out long enough for the people inside to starve nearly to death. The last spot captured was the temple itself. The siege was finally completed on September 7, A.D. 70. It is said one million Jews died in this one campaign.

Titus gave orders for the city to be destroyed completely. Many of the remaining people were taken as slaves. Many others were taken to Rome to be killed in the amphitheaters for the sport of the Roman populace.

The Roman mind had trouble comprehending any people who would give their lives for their religion. They saw, however, that the Jewish resistance would not be stopped until the Jewish religion was destroyed. All laws and customs that made the Jews a separate people were ordered illegal. The temple tax the Jews had paid was now to be paid to support the temple of Jupiter in Rome. The temple of God was destroyed. The office of high priest was abolished. The Sanhedrin was disbanded. The genealogical records the Jews had guarded for centuries were destroyed.

It was a sad end of the once glorious kingdom of Israel, but Jesus predicted it (Matt. 24). The Jews considered Jerusalem their sacred city. Yet it had become no more than a city filled with wicked people so far as God was concerned. Do you remember the vision Ezekiel saw just before Jerusalem was destroyed by Babylon? (See Lesson 33.) God left the city of Jerusalem before it was destroyed because it was not fit for His presence to remain. In the same way, Jesus and His disciples left the city of Jerusalem during that last week before His death and went out to the Mount of Olives. There Jesus predicted the day would come when there would not be one stone left upon another.

Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, . . . Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate . . . And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down (Matt. 23:34-24:2).

But why? God had fulfilled the greatest promise He ever made to the Jews — and they rejected it. There was nothing else He had to offer them.

There is nothing left for the Jew today. There was no promise of a remnant to be returned this time. There will never be a resurrection of an earthly kingdom in Jerusalem. The promises dealing with the nation and land were made and kept in the long ago. The Jew today can have the same hope the Gentile has. He may submit his will to the rule of Christ and have his sins forgiven. That is the only promise left for all mankind, *but it is the greatest promise ever made.*

The Jews were no more wicked than any other earthly kingdom would have been. God demonstrated through 1500 years of dealing with the Israelites that no physical nation could be the kind of people God wanted. One became a part of the covenant people in that day by being born a Jew whether one chose to serve God or not. One becomes a subject of the new kingdom by a conscious, deliberate determination to serve Christ, the King in heaven.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

The Christians had a brief respite from persecution after Nero's death during the time of the battles against Jerusalem. Every Jewish Christian must have grieved over the fall of their city because of the memories it held, even though they realized its importance had passed. The Christians living inside the city believed the warnings of doom and got out before Titus brought his army. It is said no Christian died in the campaign.

The years that followed were difficult years for Jew and Christian alike. Christianity and Judaism were still linked together in the Roman mind, so any persecution against the Jew automatically made it hard on the Christian. Furthermore, the Christian was as opposed to emperor worship as the Jew was. Rome considered it an act of treason to refuse to honor the emperor with whatever rites he demanded. One after another began to be executed for treason.

The worst wave of persecution that had yet come broke out in the reign of Domitian (A.D. 81-96). He made the lot of the Jews unbearable. Some were reduced to begging to keep from starving. He set out to destroy Christianity. Many were killed. The apostle John was banished to the island of _____ (Rev. 1:9).

It was at this point when the Exalted Christ appeared to John and gave him the Revelation of what would come. The book is written in figurative language to hide its message from the persecuting forces of the day. There is one main lesson the book held for the harassed saints of that day and for all saints through the centuries since: *Christ is in control*. He and His saints will be victorious no matter what forces oppose Him or His kingdom. What a comforting thought!

Label the island of Patmos. Circle the seven churches of Asia that received the book of Revelation.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

This ends our study of Bible history and geography. From the moment John wrote the last words of Revelation until today, the history of the area has no more spiritual significance than the history of any other spot on earth.

The history of nations is a story of invasion and conquest. Israel played both the role of conqueror and the conquered. The Canaanites lived in Palestine before Israel did. God allowed the Israelites to conquer the Canaanites so they could have the land He had promised to Abraham.

Subsequently, God let Israel be conquered by the Assyrians and Babylonians. Ultimately, God rejected Israel as a nation and Rome completely dispossessed the Jews from the land.

Centuries went by in which the land was inhabited by Arabs. In the early part of this century, Jews moved into Palestine from all over the world. With money provided by wealthy Jews, they bought up land and forced the Arabs from fields they had lived on for generations. Later the Jews fought and took the rest of their present country. Money has poured into the land from religious people around the world who hoped this new kingdom of Israel was a forerunner of a kingdom of Christ on earth. But that hope is based on a misunderstanding of the kind of kingdom Christ came to establish.

The modern Jews in Israel hold their land by the same means as the United States holds its territory. We took our land from the inhabitants (Indians) who were here before us. We will hold it as long as we are strong enough to keep out an invader. The Israelis will hold their country as long as they are militarily strong enough to hold it. God will not intervene to help them.

The Israelites have no Biblical claim to the land today. If they appeal to history, the descendants of the Canaanites have a superior claim. If they say, "But God gave us our land," then, we must remember God cast them out of it also (see Deut. 4:26, 27; 28:63-65). All the promises made to Israel were kept in the long ago. They rejected the fulfillment of the last great promise, that of Christ. There are no more promises waiting for them.

You may look at a modern day map of Palestine to see the nations that now inhabit it. It would be fascinating to go walk over the same hills Abraham walked over or stand by the Sea of Galilee where Jesus stood. But remember, the land itself is no longer sacred. God's chosen people today live all over the world wherever Christians can be found.

Jesus will never sit on a throne in Jerusalem. He is reigning in Heaven right now on the throne of David, according to the eternal purpose of God. (See Acts 2:30-36; Eph. 3:10-11.)

The Jew has the same hope today that the Gentile has — the hope of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lesson 52

Review Of The Geography Study

To whom was each of these books written?

- _____ 1. Romans
- _____ 2. 1 and 2 Corinthians
- _____ 3. Galatians
- _____ 4. Ephesians
- _____ 5. Philippians
- _____ 6. Colossians
- _____ 7. 1 and 2 Thessalonians
- _____ 8. 1 and 2 Timothy
- _____ Where had Timothy been left? (1 Tim. 1:3)
- _____ 9. Titus
- _____ Where was Titus? (1:5)
- _____ 10. Philemon.
- _____ Where did he live? (see Col. 4:9)
- _____ Where was Paul when he wrote the book? (Philemon 1)
- _____ 11. Hebrews. Is a place specified?
- _____ 12. James
- _____ 13. 1 Peter
- _____ Where was Peter when he wrote the book? (see 1 Pet. 5:13)
- _____ 14. 2 Peter
- _____ 15. 1, 2, 3 John. Is a specific place named?
- _____ 16. Jude
- _____ 17. Revelation
- _____ Where was John when he wrote the book? (1:9)

Short answers:

1. Name the three promises to Abraham that we have followed all the way through the study.
2. Tell when each of the above promises was fulfilled.
3. What hope do the Jews have today? (Rom. 1:16)

The following is exactly like the worksheet that appeared at the end of the first lesson in the book. *Do not look up your answers* until you have finished answering as best you can. Compare your grade with the one at the first of the book. Is it easier now?

Put the following events into correct chronological order:
(The earliest is #1)

- _____ Plagues in Egypt
- _____ Babylonian captivity
- _____ Giving of the law of Moses
- _____ Conquest of Canaan

- _____ Creation
- _____ Judges
- _____ Birth of Jesus
- _____ Divided Kingdom
- _____ Tower of Babel
- _____ Establishment of the church
- _____ Promises to Abraham
- _____ The return from captivity
- _____ Flood
- _____ United Kingdom
- _____ Years of Biblical Silence
- _____ Wandering in the wilderness
- _____ Destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans
- _____ Paul's preaching journeys
- _____ Roman persecution of the church
- _____ Assyrian captivity
- _____ Paul in prison in Rome

Show the approximate location of the following places by *memory*:

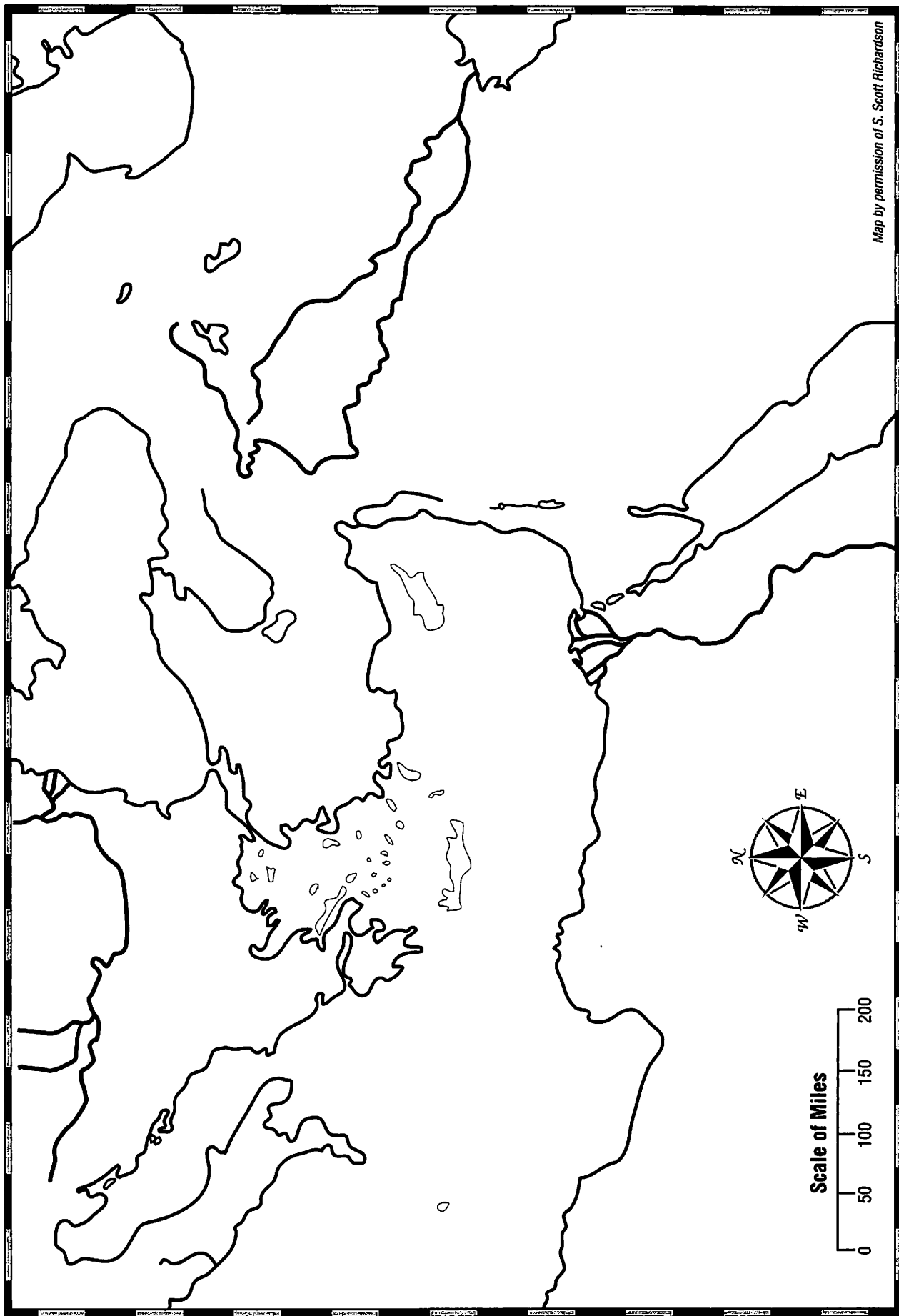
(Some of the places were important in the Old Testament, some in the New. This particular test is on their location, not a study of a particular period of history.)

Map #25: Bible Lands

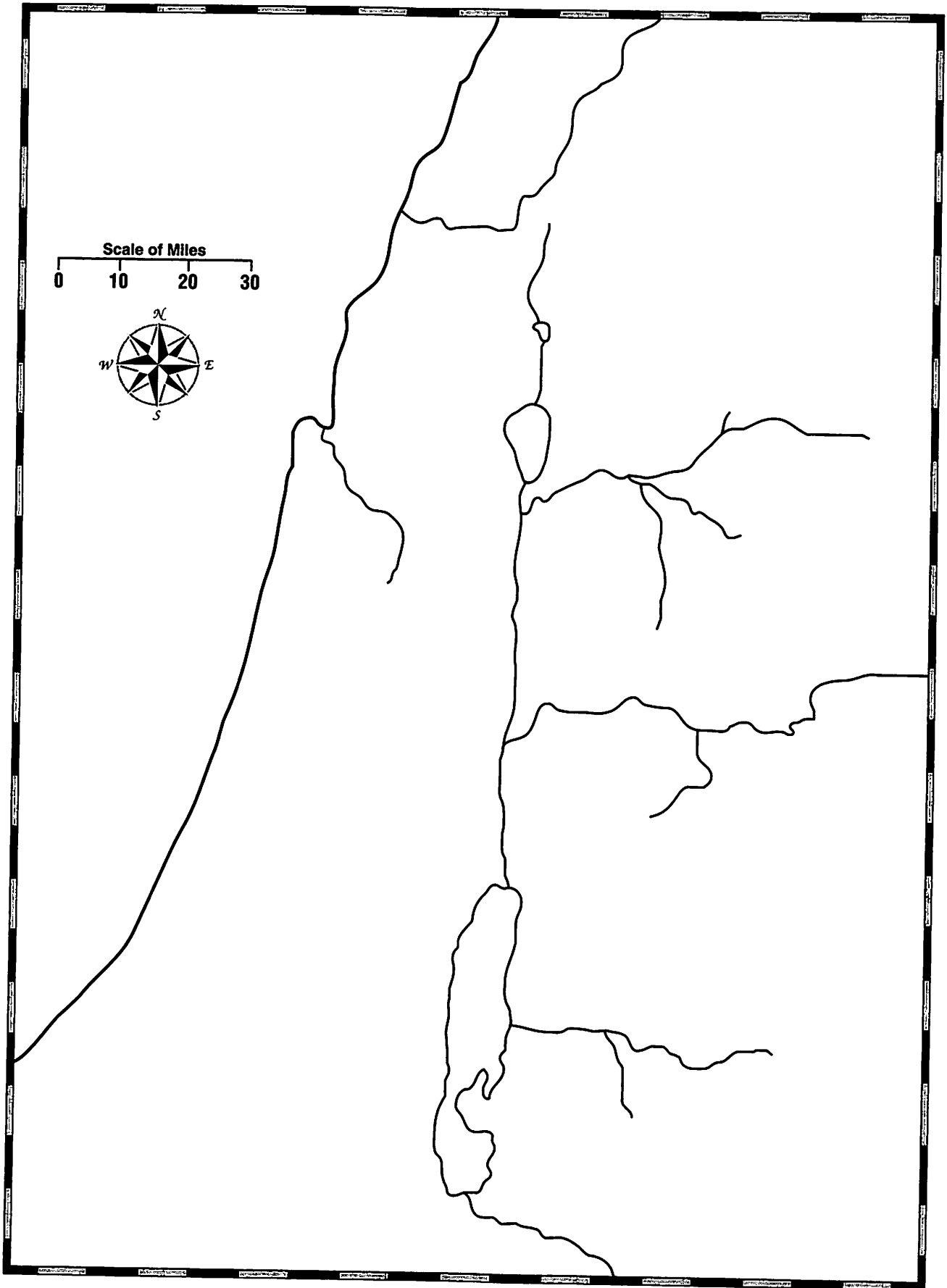
Cities	Bodies of Water	Regions	Mountains
Rome	Tigris River	Mesopotamia	Ararat
Nineveh	Euphrates River	Arabia	Lebanon
Babylon	Jordan River	Egypt	
Jerusalem	Nile River	Asia Minor	
Antioch of Syria	Dead Sea	Cyprus	
Ephesus	Red Sea	Crete	
Corinth	Gulf of Suez	Wilderness of Sinai	
Philippi	Gulf of Aqaba	Syria	
Alexandria			
Shushan			
Damascus			

Map #26: Palestine

Cities	Cities	Regions	Physical Features
Jerusalem	Joppa	Galilee	Valley of Jezreel
Samaria	Megiddo	Judea	Mt. Carmel
Gaza	Bethel	Edom (O.T.)	Mt. Lebanon
Bethlehem	Hebron	Ammon	Mt. Hermon
Dan	Beersheba	Moab	Dead Sea
Caesarea	Tyre	Philistia	Jordan River
Sidon	Nazareth	Phoenicia	Jabbok River
Capernaum	Damascus	Syria	Arnon River
		Gilead	Sea of Galilee



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