

# Connecting with History

A GUIDE TO SALVATION HISTORY  
OLD TESTAMENT AND ANCIENT CULTURES

## Companion Reader

Volume 1

Connecting with History  
A Guide to Salvation History Old Testament and Ancient Cultures  
Companion Reader  
Volume 1

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# Introduction

For many years, I have been collecting short stories and articles written for children with the idea of publishing anthologies to accompany each volume of the *Connecting with History* program. It has been a project that was constantly put on the backburner because of other, more pressing projects that needed to be accomplished. I am thrilled to finally be able to offer this first book in a series of Companion Readers .

This Companion Reader is a bridge between a textbook and living books. It contains simple articles about cultures, places and events from history in more depth than is found in most textbooks, stories to illustrate themes contained in the *Connecting with History* units, and short historical stories written in a friendly, conversational style about real people and events.

Each chapter of this book corresponds to a unit in *Connecting with History, Volume One*. To make them more easily incorporated into your history studies, most of the stories are organized to correspond with the Volume One Daily Lesson Plans. Some topics include multiple selections to appeal to a variety of age levels. Don't feel that you have to assign every story in the book. You may want to assign particular readings to your child; on the other hand, you might not want to assign the stories at all, but let children read and enjoy the stories during their leisure time.

Most of the selections are written for independent reading at the elementary (Grammar stage) level, although older students will enjoy and benefit from them, as well. Many of the stories lend themselves to being read aloud to Beginner level students. You are the judge of what will appeal to your particular child.

The stories have been selected from classic books, most written before 1923. Many of the stories have been edited to update the language and spelling to make them easier to read for modern children. Some stories have been abridged as well. Most quotes from the Bible have been changed to the New American translation.

Above all, the purpose of this book is to make history come to life: to make it interesting, relevant to a child's daily life, and enjoyable. Approach it, not as a textbook, but as part of the fascination of learning about different places and times in which very real people lived.

Thank you to Mary Jo Loboda for all of her hard work in formatting, proofreading, and editing this volume. Many thanks also to Margot Davidson for her constant support, encouragement and mentoring.

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# Unit Five: Conquests and Judges

THEME: STRENGTH THROUGH WEAKNESS

FROM THE CATECHISM IN EXAMPLES

*By Rev. D. Chisholm*

## HUMILITY AS UNDERSTOOD BY THE SAINTS

St. Augustine spoke of humility in this way: “Humility is the foundation of all other virtues; there is no virtue more powerful than this one for obtaining God’s choicest favors.”

It was this virtue of humility that the youthful St. Aloysius endeavored to gain with all the eagerness of his soul. Every day he prayed with fervor to the holy angels to obtain it for him by their intercession, since it had been for them the cause of their victory on the day of trial, and of their present glory and happiness in the Kingdom of Heaven.

St. Thomas of Villanova often said these words: “Humility is the mother of many virtues: of it are born obedience, the fear of God, patience, modesty, and peace.”

St. Jane Frances de Chantal had so great a love for humility that she watched with the greatest attention never to allow to pass by any opportunity of practicing that virtue. Writing to St. Francis de Sales on one occasion, she used these words: “O my dearest Father, I beg of you, for the love of God, to help me to humble myself daily more and more!”

St. Francis de Paul continually taught humility. “The most powerful weapon for overcoming Satan is humility,” he said.

St. Teresa could not understand why priests used to speak so frequently on the necessity of being humble. “Is it not quite evident,” she used to say, “that no one can attribute to himself any good he may do? For without the help of God what good could anyone perform? How can people be so proud as to think of any little good they may have done, since they are so full of every kind of evil dispositions, and since they have committed so many sins against God? Even if I should desire to draw to myself vanity from any good I may have performed solely by the help of God, how in justice could I do it?”

St. Dominic had the custom of casting himself on his knees before the gate of any town in which he went to preach, to beg of Our Lord not to visit the people with any affliction on account of his sins.

St. Philip Neri advised all those whom he directed in Confession to say to themselves, when they had fallen into any fault: “Had I only been humble, I never would have committed this sin.”

## UNIT FIVE: CONQUESTS AND JUDGES

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

*By Charlotte Yonge*

### ISRAEL IN CANAAN

*“But God being compassionate forgave their sin;  
he did not utterly destroy them.”*

—Psalm 78:38

Joshua led the tribes through the divided waters of the Jordan, and received strength and skill to scatter the heathen before them, conquer the cities, and settle them in their inheritance.

The Land of Canaan was very unlike Egypt, with its flat soil, dry climate, and single river. It was a narrow strip, enclosed between the Mediterranean Sea and the river Jordan, which runs due south down a steep wooded cleft into the Dead Sea, the lowest water in the world, in a sort of pit of its own, with barren desolation all round it, so as to keep in memory the ruin of the cities of the plain. In the north, rise the high mountains of Libanus, a spur from which goes the whole length of the land, and forms two slopes, whence the rivers flow, either westward into the Great Sea, or eastward into the Jordan. Many of these hills are too dry and stony to be cultivated; but the slopes of some have fine grassy pastures, and the soil of the valleys is exceedingly rich, bearing figs, vines, olive trees, and corn in plenty, wherever it is properly tilled. With such hills, rivers, valleys, and pastures, it was truly a good land, and when God's blessing was on it, it was the fairest spot where man could live. When the Israelites entered it, every hill was crowned by a strongly-walled and fortified town, the abode of some little king of one of the seven Canaanite nations who were given into their hands to be utterly destroyed. Though they were commanded to make a complete end of all the people in each place they took, they were forbidden to seize more than they could till, lest the empty ruins should serve as a harbor for wild beasts; but they had their several lots marked out where they might spread when their numbers should need room. As Jacob had promised to Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh had the richest portion, nearly in the middle, and Shiloh, where the Tabernacle was set up, was in their territory; Judah and Benjamin were in a very wild rocky part to the southwards, between the two seas, with only Simeon

## UNIT FIVE: CONQUESTS AND JUDGES

### **RUTH, THE GLEANER**

*By Amy Steedman*

Along the hot, dusty road that led from the country of Moab to the fair land of Judah three women were walking with bowed heads and weary, halting steps. Their sorrowful, heavy eyes took no pleasure in the summer beauty of the harvest fields, the shimmering silver of the olive trees, and the rich promise of the vineyards, which bordered their way. The whole world looked sad to them, seen through a mist of tears.

There behind them, in the land of Moab, each of these women had left green graves, which held all they loved best. Naomi, the eldest, was perhaps the most desolate. Her thoughts went back to the time when she was as young and fair as the two daughters-in-law who walked at her side—when with her husband and her two boys she had trod that very road, seeking a home in a strange country to escape the famine, which threatened them in her own land. Now she was returning to her native town of Bethlehem, a childless, lonely widow.

The younger women, who were the wives of those two dead sons, were very sorrowful too, but for them there might yet be happiness in the world. They still had near and dear relatives and many friends in Moab, which was their native land. They had come far enough now, and it was time for them to return.

“Turn again, my daughters,” said Naomi, “and go your way.” Their homes lay behind, and she must journey on alone to the little hill town which she had not seen for so many long years. They had kindly come so far to see her on her way, but they must come no farther.

So the little party halted, and one of the young women, weeping bitterly, kissed her mother-in-law and turned to go back. But the other one, whose name was Ruth, clung to Naomi, and would not leave her.

In vain the elder woman urged her to return, and pointed out that Orpah had gone, that home and friends and happiness awaited her there, while in front was only poverty and loneliness. Ruth only clung the closer as she sobbed out her tender, loving words.

“Entreat me not to leave thee,” she said, “or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.”

The tender words brought comfort to the heart of Naomi, as soft rain brings refreshment to the hard, dry earth. After all, she was not quite alone; she still had someone to love and care for. So together they journeyed on again, and at last came to the winding road which led up to the town of Bethlehem, nestling like a white bird upon the long ridge of hills.