



Pearl-Maiden: A Tale of the Fall of Jerusalem

by Henry Rider Haggard



High School Study Guide Kylie Wilcox

Illuminations Year Two

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~ Weeks 1 and 2 ~

Supplies

- *Pearl-Maiden: A Tale of the Fall of Jerusalem* by Henry Rider Haggard
- Roman Republic Map
- Colored pencils or markers for map work
- GO Z-2 (required)
- GO E-4 or GO E-6 (optional or make your own)
- GO D-1 (optional or make your own)
- GO C-1 or GO C-2 (optional or make your own)

Introduction

Pearl-Maiden was written by Henry Rider Haggard, who was a Victorian adventure novelist best known for his creation of the character Allan Quatermain, who first appeared in the novel *King Solomon's Mines*. Haggard loved to write stories set in what were then, for the Western world and especially the British Empire, the romantically wild lands of Africa and the Middle East. *Pearl-Maiden* is set primarily in the Holy Land during the days of the Roman Empire under the Emperors Claudius, Nero, and Vespasian.

The main character is Miriam, a young Christian woman of Jewish descent, whose life is, from its very beginning, beset with persecution for both her faith and her heritage. Through Miriam's eyes, we see the last, bloody days of the nation of Israel and the almost apocalyptic destruction of Jerusalem. We also see her steadfastness to her faith in the most difficult of situations and how it is ultimately rewarded.

Something to remember as you read *Pearl-Maiden* is that even though it describes some real historical events and people, it is a work of fiction. Use what you read to help “color in” your understanding of history, but don't rely on all Haggard says as fact. A good contemporary historical account would be *The Wars of the Jews or History of the Destruction of Jerusalem* by Flavius Josephus, a Jewish historian and statesman. Check with your parents or instructors about other good sources if you would like to learn more about the fall of Jerusalem.

Note to Parents and Students

There are instances and references to extra-biblical prophecy throughout this book. Many modern Christians today disagree on how long true prophecy continued after the apostolic period. Please remember that this book is a work of fiction, and the prophecies contained in it (especially the one referenced by Nehushta that

no Christian should die during the destruction of Jerusalem) may be and probably are works of the author's imagination and not to be taken as spiritually authoritative. Also, Haggard alludes to (and slightly alters) the prophecies of Jesus in Matthew 24 as applicable to the last days of Jerusalem. This is a well-known but not universally accepted application of these prophecies that this study guide will neither defend nor attack. Students, please speak to your parents or spiritual leaders with any questions about this application.

- Also, there is a great deal of implied and outright negativity in this book toward Jews, both ethnically and religiously. Remember as you read that Christianity is not the opposite of Judaism, but the fulfillment of it. Consider what Haggard highlights as the best parts of Christianity and the cult of the Essenes, and the worst parts of Judaism, and compare that to what you believe. This topic will be available as an essay question for your final project. Again, speak to your parents or spiritual leaders with any questions you have on this issue.

Daily Assignments

- **Character Profiles**

Record all the named characters who appear in the book, along with the chapter in which they first appear. For the main characters (Miriam, Nehushta, Ithiel, Caleb, Marcus, and Benoni), add race, occupation, religious/political background, personality (a few phrases/adjectives), goals, history, and central idea as each is introduced. Additionally, for these main characters, keep a "description log" of any changes to personality, goals, and central idea each time they appear, chapter by chapter. You may make your own form or use GO E-4 or GO E-6 (which will need a little tweaking).

- **Timeline**

Keep track of the events of the story in terms of how old Miriam is — for example, the year in which she is born should be year 0 (zero). When you get to the part of the story when the Temple is destroyed (A. D. 70), note how old she is and go back to your timeline to write the "real-time" years next to the years of Miriam's life. You may make your own timeline or use GO D-1.

- **Vocabulary**

Because this novel was written in the Victorian era by an Englishman, there will be many vocabulary words to learn. Some of them may be archaic or words referencing Roman times and customs that have different meanings now. If there is any confusion about what definition to use, consult your instructor. If there are words you don't know that are not included in the list for each day, look up as many as you have time to do. There will be an opportunity on Day 4 of Week 2 to catch up with any unknown words you came across, but you might find it easier and less time-consuming to keep a good dictionary by your side as you read.

You may keep your own notebook or use either GO C-1 or GO C-2 (especially if you are a visual learner). To make your job easier, I've defined some of the words in each day's reading that may be unfamiliar to you. Your task is to define the rest, in writing.

- **Mapping**

Pearl-Maiden is a historical novel — a novel with fictional characters living in a specific time and place in history. In order to understand the world of *Pearl-Maiden* better, you will be using the Roman Republic Map found at the end of this study guide. Using a set of colored pencils or markers, assign each major character their own color. On the map, highlight or circle with each character's color the

place they are from or the places that they visit. If a journey is described, circle each stop or destination, and to the best of your ability, trace a route the characters might have taken. There are many lesser towns mentioned in the book that are not assigned for you to map — as they might be difficult to find — however, if you do find them, go ahead and mark them.

- **Discussion Questions**

Each day will have one or two thought questions to help you search a little deeper into the novel.

- **Final Project**

Week 2-Day 5 is the last day of this study guide and has a few short assignments and a final project or paper to complete.

Reading Schedule

Week 1

Day 1: Chapters I–III

Day 2: Chapters IV–VI

Day 3: Chapters VII–IX

Day 4: Chapters X–XII

Day 5: Chapters XIII–XV

Week 2

Day 1: Chapters XVI–XVIII

Day 2: Chapters XIX–XXI

Day 3: Chapters XXII–XXIV

Day 4: Chapters XXV–XXIX

Day 5: GO Z-2 and Wrap-Up Project

Week 1 - Day 1

- Read Chapters I–III.
- Put the main events on your timeline. (Remember that this is Year 0. Miriam will be born in the next few days “book time.”)
- Add Rachel, Nehushta/Nou, Anna the prophetess, Rufus the jailer, the bishop, Herod Agrippa, and Amram the merchant to the character list.
- Start a detailed description log for Nehushta.
- Locate and mark on your Roman Republic Map the following places.
 - Caesarea
 - Tyre
 - Libya
 - Alexandria

Vocabulary

- cloisters (n)

- demagogue (n)
- apostate (n)
- itinerant (n)
- importunity (n)
- artifice (n)
- *corpus vile* (Latin): [an expendable subject for an experiment]
- facetious (adj)
- bestial (adj)
- extempore (adj)
- jocosity (n)
- maxim (n)

Discussion Generator

1. In Chapter I, Haggard uses the phrase “voluptuous time-server” in regard to Herod Agrippa’s attitude toward the religions of the Roman Empire. Look up the word “voluptuous” in a dictionary and try to find an older or archaic usage of the word or its root meaning in Latin. With this information in mind, what do you think this phrase means? What would be a good modern equivalent?

Week 1 - Day 2

- Read Chapters IV–VI.
- Put the main events on your timeline. (Remember, by the time we get to Chapter VI, we are in Year 17.)
- Write character descriptions and start detailed description logs for Miriam, Ithiel, and Caleb.
- Locate and mark on your map the Dead Sea and Jericho.

Vocabulary

- lee (nautical)
- gainsay (v)
- fickle (adj)
- cleft (n)
- succour (n)
- artful (adj)
- irrevocable (adj)
- covert (adj)
- vehement (adj)
- purvey (v)
- ascetic (n)

Discussion Generator

1. Consider this quote from the end of Chapter VI: "Like the majority of his own, and, indeed, of every generation, to the last day of his life, Caleb was unable to divine that mind is greater than matter, while spirit is greater than mind; and that in the end, by many slow advances and after many disasters seemingly irremediable, spirituality will conquer all." What do you think Haggard is saying here? Do you agree or disagree with his conclusion, and why?

Week 1 - Day 3

- Read Chapters VII–IX.
- Put the main events on your timeline. (Remember, by the time we get to Chapter IX, we are almost to Year 19. Do not worry about being precise about all of the events that take place in Year 18.)
- Write a character description and start a detailed description log for Marcus.
- Add Gessius Florus to the list of characters.
- Complete any assignments left unfinished from the past two days.

Vocabulary

- neophyte (n)
- privy (adj)
- politic (adj)
- adroitly (adv)
- wroth (adj)
- hale (v)
- loth (adj)
- partisan (n)

Discussion Generator

1. In Chapter VIII, Miriam lies to protect Caleb. Do you think this was the right thing to do? If you were faced with the same situation, how easy would it be for you to do what is right?

Week 1 - Day 4

- Read Chapters X–XII.
- Put the main events on your timeline. (Two years pass between Chapters IX and X, so we are now approximately in Year 21.)
- Add Captain Gallus to the list of characters.
- Locate and mark on your map Brundisium, Melita, and Masada.
- Make sure that you mark the travels of our characters: Nehushta and Miriam have come to Tyre and Marcus describes his perilous journey to Rome in Chapter XII.

Vocabulary

- gallant (adj)
- scarped (adj): [describing a line of cliffs formed by the faulting or fracturing of the earth's crust]
- salaam (n): [a very low bow or obeisance, especially with the palm of the right hand placed on the forehead]
- suffering (v): [to tolerate or allow]
- wimple (n)
- sureties (n)
- wont (adj)
- whimsy (n)

Week 1 - Day 5

- Read Chapters XIII–XV.
- Put the main events on your timeline. (Two years have passed. It is now Year 23.)
- Make sure that you mark the travels of our characters. All our main characters are now in Jerusalem.

Vocabulary

- grandsire (n)
- emissary (n)
- engine (n) (archaic): [machines or instruments used in warfare, such as battering rams, catapults, or pieces of artillery]
- fosse (n): [any ditch, trench, or canal]
- impregnable (adj)
- coney (n): [a rabbit]
- taper (n)
- internecine (n): [to struggle within a nation, organization, or group]

Discussion Question

1. In Chapter XIII, the fugitives from Tyre see what looks like armies in the clouds. Many of the characters seem to agree that this is an omen against the enemies of God. Who are these enemies according to Benoni? According to Nehushta? According to Caleb?

Week 2 - Day 1

- Read Chapters XVI–XVIII.
- Put the main events on your timeline.
- The destruction of the Temple takes place in Chapter XVIII; thus, we learn that Year 23 of Miriam's life is A.D. 70. What year, then, was she born?

- Add Theophilus; Simeon of the Sanhedrin; Jesus, son of Annas; and Titus to your list of characters.

Vocabulary

- dais (n)
- revile (v)
- balista or ballista (n)
- mortify (v) (medical)
- sortie (n)

Discussion Generator

1. In Chapter XVIII, Miriam wonders why the Jews defending the Temple would rather die than surrender, and “in [her strange visions of the night] seemed to find an answer.” Reread the description of her vision in Chapter XVII. How do you think what she saw helped her to explain the attitude of the Jews?

Week 2 - Day 2

- Read Chapters XIX–XXI.
- Put the main events on your timeline.
- Add Samuel the Essene, Julia, Domitian, and Vespasian to your list of characters.
- Locate and mark on your map Rome, Crete, Cyprus, and Syracuse. Try to track the routes of Miriam and Gallus, Caleb, and Marcus and Nehushta.

Vocabulary

- oblivion (n)
- maledictions (n)
- boles (n)
- blear (v)
- boon (n)

Discussion Generators

1. The prophecy in Chapter XX comes from Deuteronomy 26:68. Read the entire chapter of Deuteronomy 26. Why do you think Haggard quotes this Bible passage?
2. The Latin phrase quoted in Chapter XX is from the Roman historian Tacitus, and translates to “where they make a desert, they call it peace.” What do you think that means in this context?

Week 2 - Day 3

- Read Chapters XXII–XXIV.
- Put the main events on your timeline. (Miriam has lived with Gallus and Julia for six months, so you may assume that it is now Year 24/A.D. 71.)
- Add Cyril; Simon, the son of Gioras; Stephanus; and Saturius to your list of characters.

Vocabulary

- girdle (n)
- lictors (n)
- fasces (n)
- *toga picta* (Latin): [embroidered toga]
- *tunica palmata* (Latin): [a tunic embroidered with palm leaves, a sign of victory]
- blazoned (v)
- plebeian (n)
- factor (n)
- *sestertia* (Latin): [*sestertium* was a monetary unit of ancient Rome, equal to 1000 *sesterces*; *sestertia* is the plural form]
- infeasible (adj)
- *mulier* (Latin): [“woman”]
- manumission (n)
- *inter amicos* (Latin): [“among friends”]

Discussion Generator

1. With your parent’s permission, go online to find an inflation calculator for Great Britain, and discover what 16,000 pounds in 1901 would be worth today. Then take that number and use a currency exchange calculator to find the amount in American dollars. How much does the author say Marcus spent to buy Miriam?

Week 2 - Day 4

- Read Chapters XXV–XXIX.
- Put the main events on your timeline.
- Locate and mark Alexandria on your map. Trace the journeys of the ship *Luna* and of Marcus and Cyril.

Vocabulary

- execrat (v)
- plaudits (n)
- homage (n)

- libation (n)
- knave (n)
- maudlin (adj)
- mooted (v)
- expiate (v)
- If you have been keeping your own list of vocabulary words (in addition to those listed here), look them up either today or tomorrow for your catch-up work.

Discussion Generators

1. Chapters XXVI and XXVII contain the account of what Caleb did because of his great love for Miriam. However, consider this quote from the beginning of Chapter XXVI: “Rather than such a thing should be, in that dark hour of his soul, [Caleb] would have seen [Miriam] cast to the foul Domitian, for Domitian, at least, she would have hated, whereas Marcus, he knew, she loved.” What do you think about Caleb's feelings towards Miriam? Is his love for her something worthy of admiration?
2. In literature, characters who change over the course of the story are called **dynamic** characters, while those who do not change are called **static** characters. Consider these words of Caleb from Chapter XXVIII, after he has promised to save Marcus and let Miriam go free, and Nehushta attempts to kill him as he leaves their apartment: “Now, as of old, there is little wisdom in that gray head of yours, Nehushta; nor can your hate suffer you to understand the intermingled good and evil of my heart.” What type of character is Caleb? Nehushta?

Week 2 - Day 5

- For your last day, finish any assignments you haven't completed.
- Fill in GO Z-2 and hand it in with your final project.

Final Project

- Pick **one** of the following projects. (For extra credit, do more than one.)
 - Write an essay comparing and contrasting Haggard's representation of the faiths of the Jews, the Essenes, and the Christians. What, if anything, does he find attractive in each faith? What does he dislike? How does this compare to your understanding? Especially consider the several times that the characters speak degradingly about the Jewish ritual of blood sacrifice as an atonement for sin, and the emphasis on the similarity between the “maxims” and clean living of the Essenes and the Christians. What is important about blood sacrifice to both Christianity and Judaism?
 - Discuss and give your opinion on the many times that various characters in the book contemplate or commit suicide in order to avoid a more painful death, capture, or shame. Is this ever acceptable? What do you think of the response of characters such as Rachel and Miriam to such situations? What is the difference between that type of death and the way that Caleb dies? Consider the advice of Bishop Cyril to Miriam in Chapter XXII and Marcus in Chapter XXIX.
 - Write a short story of your imaginings of an episode from Miriam's childhood or from her marriage to Marcus. If you want, illustrate it or put it into a comic book form.
 - Paint or draw a picture of one of the following.

- the common vision shared by the exiles from Tyre in Chapter XIII
- the vision which Miriam had in Chapter XVII
- the Herod's Temple. Attempt to model the head of a family member or friend in clay, or make a still-life model.
- Research and write a short report about a Christian martyr from the days of Claudius, Nero, or Vespasian. *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* is a good resource.
- One of the battles in the Jewish wars against the Romans took place during the time period of this book. The massacre at the fortress of Masada is an especially famous one. Research this battle and present either an oral report with visual aids or a PowerPoint presentation about Masada.
- Invite a few friends over to have an early Christian-style fellowship feast such as Miriam and Julia would have participated in in the catacombs. The early Christians would have served the Lord's Supper — which we are not suggesting you do — but you could make a meal or have friends bring food potluck. Spend time together praying, reading the Bible, discussing Bible passages or concepts, and singing hymns.

