

The **MYSTERY** of
HISTORY



Volume II
The Early Church
and the Middle Ages
Linda Lacour Hobar

THE MYSTERY OF HISTORY

VOLUME II

THE EARLY CHURCH AND THE MIDDLE AGES

By Linda Lacour Hobar

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CONTENTS

Preface	xiii
Letter to the Students	xiv
Letter to the Teacher	xvii
A Classical Approach to Education	xxv
Memory Cards	xxvii
Wall of Fame Timeline Suggestions	xxx
The X File: Tips on Grading	xxxvii
Grade Record	xli

SEMESTER I THE EARLY CHURCH ♦ 1

QUARTER 1 — The Fire Ignites: c. A.D. 29 to 476 3

Around the World ♦ 3

WEEK 1 / Pretest	7
Lesson 1: PENTECOST and the First Followers of Jesus	8
(c. A.D. 29 and following)*	
Activities	10
Lesson 2: “Saul, Who Also Is Called Paul” (c. A.D. 31)	11
Activities	13
Lesson 3: Paul’s Missionary Journeys (c. A.D. 46–66)	14
Activities	18
Review 1: Lessons 1–3	19
Week 1: Exercise	21
WEEK 2 / Pretest	22
Lesson 4: Nero (A.D. 37–68)	23
Activities	26
Lesson 5: Martyrs of the Early Church (c. A.D. 64–257)	27
Activities	30
Lesson 6: Josephus (A.D. 66)	31
Activities	33
Review 2: Lessons 4–6	35
Week 2: Quiz	36
WEEK 3 / Pretest	38
Lesson 7: Masada (A.D. 66–73)	39
Activities	41
Lesson 8: The Dead Sea Scrolls (c. 100 B.C.–c. A.D. 75)	42
Activities	44

**All lesson titles in bold caps and dates in bold are key events and dates to memorize. There are 12 keys items in this volume.*

Lesson 9: The Buried City of Pompeii (A.D. 79)	45
Activities	47
Review 3: Lessons 7–9	49
Week 3: Exercise	50
WEEK 4 / Pretest	52
Lesson 10: Bar-Kokhba (A.D. 135)	53
Activities	56
Lesson 11: The Apostles' Creed (c. A.D. 150)	57
Activities	59
Lesson 12: St. Valentine (A.D. 269)	59
Activities	61
Review 4: Lessons 10–12	62
Week 4: Quiz	63
WEEK 5 / Pretest	64
Lesson 13: Diocletian Divides the Roman Empire (A.D. 284–305)	65
Activities	66
Lesson 14: Constantine I and the EDICT OF MILAN (313)*	67
Activities	69
Lesson 15: The Golden Age of India (c. 320–500)	71
Activities	74
Review 5: Lessons 13–15	76
Week 5: Exercise	78
WEEK 6 / Pretest	79
Lesson 16: The Maya (c. 350–900)	80
Activities	82
Lesson 17: St. Augustine of Hippo (354–430)	83
Activities	85
Lesson 18: The Holy Bible and the Vulgate by Jerome (382–405)	86
Activity	88
Review 6: Lessons 16–18	90
Week 6: Quiz	92
WEEK 7 / Pretest	93
Lesson 19: St. Patrick, Missionary to Ireland (c. 389–461)	94
Activities	96
Lesson 20: Attila the Hun (434–453)	96
Activities	98
Lesson 21: FALL OF THE WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE (476)*	98
Activities	101
Review 7: Lessons 19–21	103
WORKSHEET 1: Lessons 1–21	105

**All lesson titles in bold caps and dates in bold are key events and dates to memorize. There are 12 keys items in this volume.*

Around the World ♦ 113

WEEK 8 / Pretest	117
Lesson 22: Daily Life in the Dark Ages (c. 500–1000)	118
Activities	122
Lesson 23: King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table (503)	123
Activities	127
Lesson 24: Justinian I and Theodora, Rulers of the Byzantine Empire (527-565)	128
Activities	131
Review 8: Lessons 22–24	132
Week 8: Exercise	133
WEEK 9 / Pretest	135
Lesson 25: Columba, Missionary to Scotland (c. 563)	136
Activities	137
Lesson 26: Early Japan and Prince Shotoku (573)	139
Activities	141
Lesson 27: Gregory the Great (590)	143
Activities	146
Review 9: Lessons 25–27	148
Week 9: Quiz	152
WEEK 10 / Pretest	154
Lesson 28: The Sui and Tang Dynasties of China (589, 618)	155
Activities	158
Lesson 29: Mohammed and the BIRTH OF ISLAM (622)*	160
Activities	165
Lesson 30: The Spread of Islam (632)	166
Activities	170
Review 10: Lessons 28–30	172
Week 10: Exercise	174
WEEK 11 / Pretest	175
Lesson 31: Wu Zetian, the Empress of China (690)	176
Activities	178
Lesson 32: The Epic of Beowulf (Early 700s)	179
Activities	181
Lesson 33: Al-Andalus: “The Ornament of the World in Medieval Spain (711)	182
Activities	187
Review 11: Lessons 31–33	189
Week 11: Quiz	191

*All lesson titles in bold caps and dates in bold are key events and dates to memorize. There are 12 keys items in this volume.

WEEK 12 / Pretest	193
Lesson 34: St. Boniface, Apostle to Germany (718)	194
Activities	196
Lesson 35: The Iconoclast Controversy (726)	197
Activities	200
Lesson 36: Charles “Martel” and the BATTLE OF TOURS (732)*	201
Activities	202
Review 12: Lessons 34–36	204
Week 12: Activities	205
WEEK 13 / Pretest	206
Lesson 37: Charlemagne (768)	207
Activities	210
Lesson 38: The Thousand and One Nights: Tales from Arabia (786)	211
Activities	213
Lesson 39: INVASION OF THE VIKINGS (793)*	214
Activities	217
Review 13: Lessons 37–39	218
Week 13: Quiz	220
WEEK 14 / Pretest	221
Lesson 40: The Vikings: Their Families, Their Homes, and Their Faith (c. 800–1100)	222
Activities	225
Lesson 41: Methodius and Cyril, Missionaries to the Slavs (863)	226
Activities	227
Lesson 42: Alfred the Great, King of England (871)	228
Activities	231
Review 7: Lessons 40–42	234
WORKSHEET 2: Lessons 22–42	235
SEMESTER I TEST: Lessons 1-42	242

SEMESTER II
THE MIDDLE AGES ♦ 247

QUARTER 3 — The Fire Grows: 874 to 1192 **249**

Around the World ♦ 249

WEEK 15 / Pretest	253
Lesson 43: Lydveldid Island (Iceland) (874)	254
Activities	256

*All lesson titles in bold caps and dates in bold are key events and dates to memorize. There are 12 keys items in this volume.

Lesson 44: The Maori of New Zealand (900)	257
Activities	261
Lesson 45: The Great Zimbabwe of Africa (c. 900)	262
Activities	265
Review 15: Lessons 43–45	266
Week 15: Exercise	268
WEEK 16 / Pretest	269
Lesson 46: “Good King Wenceslas” (929)	270
Activities	272
Lesson 47: Otto I and the Holy Roman Empire (936)	273
Activities	275
Lesson 48: Vladimer I of Russia (c. 956)	275
Activities	277
Review 16: Lessons 46–48	279
Week 16: Quiz	280
WEEK 17 / Pretest	281
Lesson 49: The Song Dynasty of China (960)	282
Activities	285
Lesson 50: St. Simon and the Coptic Orthodox Church (979)	286
Activities	289
Lesson 51: Eric the Red and the Settlement of Greenland (985)	290
Activities	293
Review 17: Lessons 49–51	295
Week 17: Exercise	297
WEEK 18 / Pretest	299
Lesson 52: LEIF ERICSSON DISCOVERS AMERICA (c. 1003)*	300
Activities	302
Lesson 53: Macbeth, King of Scotland (1040)	303
Activities	305
Lesson 54: El Cid, a Spanish Hero (1040)	305
Activities	307
Review 18: Lessons 52–54	309
Week 18: Quiz	311
WEEK 19 / Pretest	313
Lesson 55: William the Conqueror and the BATTLE OF HASTINGS (1066)*	314
Activities	317
Lesson 56: Pope Gregory VII, Henry IV, and the Investiture Controversy (1076)	318
Activities	322

**All lesson titles in bold caps and dates in bold are key events and dates to memorize. There are 12 keys items in this volume.*

Lesson 57: THE EARLY CRUSADES (1096)*	323
Activities	325
Review 19: Lessons 55–57	327
Week 19: Exercise	329
WEEK 20 / Pretest	332
Lesson 58: The Petrobrusians and the Waldensians (1100s)	333
Activities	335
Lesson 59: Eleanor of Aquitaine, the Queen of Two Nations (1154)	335
Activities	339
Lesson 60: The Jews of the Middle Ages (c. 12th Century)	340
Activities	344
Review 20: Lessons 58–60	346
Week 20: Quiz	347
WEEK 21 / Pretest	340
Lesson 61: Richard the Lionhearted, Saladin, and the Third Crusade (1192)	350
Activities	352
Lesson 62: The Classic Tale of Robin Hood (Unknown)	353
Activities	356
Lesson 63: The Shoguns and Samurai of Japan (1192)	356
Activities	359
Review 21: Lessons 61–63	361
WORKSHEET 3: Lessons 43–63	362

QUARTER 4 — The Fire Shines: 1210 to 1456 **369**

Around the World ♦ 369

WEEK 22 / Pretest	373
Lesson 64: St. Francis of Assisi, St. Clara, and St. Dominic (1210, 1212, 1216)	374
Activities	379
Lesson 65: The Children’s Crusade (1212)	380
Activities	382
Lesson 66: King John and the Magna Carta (1215)	383
Activities	385
Review 20: Lessons 64–66	386
Week 22: Exercise	387
WEEK 23 / Pretest	390
Lesson 67: Frederick II, “The Amazement of the World” (1229)	391
Activities	394

**All lesson titles in bold caps and dates in bold are key events and dates to memorize. There are 12 keys items in this volume.*

Lesson 68: St. Thomas Aquinas, Philosopher of the Middle Ages (1252)	395
Activities	398
Lesson 69: Roger Bacon, Scientist of the Middle Ages (1253)	399
Activities	401
Review 23: Lessons 67–69	403
Week 23: Quiz	405
WEEK 24/ Pretest	408
Lesson 70: The Great Khans and the Mongol Invasion of China (1260)	409
Activities	411
Lesson 71: MARCO POLO TRAVELS EAST (1271)*	412
Activities	415
Lesson 72: Sir William Wallace and Robert Bruce, Bravehearts of Scotland (1298, 1314)	416
Activities	418
Review 24: Lessons 70–72	419
Week 24: Exercise	420
WEEK 25/ Pretest	425
Lesson 73: Dante Alighieri, Poet of the Middle Ages (1318)	426
Activities	428
Lesson 74: The Aztecs (The Mexica) (1325)	429
Activities	433
Lesson 75: The Hundred Years' War (1337–1453)	434
Activities	436
Review 25: Lessons 73–75	437
Week 25: Quiz	438
WEEK 26/ Pretest	441
Lesson 76: The Black Death of Europe (1348)	442
Activities	444
Lesson 77: The Ming Dynasty of China and the Forbidden City (1368–1644)	445
Activities	448
Lesson 78: JOHN WYCLIFFE, “MORNING STAR OF THE REFORMATION (1377)*	449
Activities	452
Review 26: Lessons 76–78	454
Week 26: Exercise	455
WEEK 27/ Pretest	456
Lesson 79: Geoffrey Chaucer and <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> (1387)	457
Activities	460
Lesson 80: John Huss (1415)	462
Activities	466

*All lesson titles in bold caps and dates in bold are key events and dates to memorize. There are 12 keys items in this volume.

Lesson 81: The Life and DEATH OF JOAN OF ARC (1431)*	466
Activities	470
Review 27: Lessons 79–81	472
Week 27: Quiz	474
WEEK 28/ Pretest	476
Lesson 82: The Inkas of South America (1438)	477
Activities	481
Lesson 83: The Ottoman Turks Take Constantinople (1453)	482
Activities	485
Lesson 84: Johannes Gutenberg Invents the Printing Press (1456)	486
Activities	488
Review 28: Lessons 82–84	490
WORKSHEET 4: Lessons 64-84	491
SEMESTER II TEST: Lesson 43-84	497
Outline Maps	503
Appendix	561
Section A: “Would You Like to Belong to God’s Family?”	563
Section B: Activity Supplement	565
Section C: Supplemental Books and Resources	624
Section D: Materials Lists	643
Section E: Bibliography	667
Section F: Pretest Answer Key	671
Section G: Answer Key	680

**All lesson titles in bold caps and dates in bold are key events and dates to memorize. There are 12 keys items in this volume.*

PREFACE

This is the place in this book where I am allowed to say, “please excuse this or that.” Bear with me through these important disclaimers.

First, I apologize for the great length of time it took me to complete this volume. I never dreamed it would take me three times as long as it did to write Volume I. But, for the integrity of the material, I believe it was necessary. A good deal of my time was spent on research. Based on input from Volume I, I sought to improve and lengthen the weekly lessons. One positive result of the long wait for Volume II is that a healthy demand was created for this book, for which I’m grateful.

Second, for the sake of easier reading, I frequently use the terms *man* or *mankind* (and sometimes *his* or *him*) to refer to male and female alike. This in no way diminishes the beautiful, unique, God-given design for the genders.

Third, all Scripture used in this text is quoted from the New King James Version of the Bible.

Fourth, it is my suggestion that families and individuals consider for themselves the appropriateness of each book or film listed on the Supplemental Resource List. Though I have entrusted the compilation of this list to a knowledgeable, conservative book enthusiast, opinions may vary on the suitability of the materials. Please use your own discretion in your selections and view the reading list as a guide to expanding your knowledge base of history.

Fifth, it would be negligent of me not to mention that though I’ve tried to make this a true history of the world there is inevitably some bias toward the history of Western Civilization. The history of the Western world has had more impact on my own heritage and more than likely the heritage of most of my readers. This is in no way meant to reflect an opinion of superiority of my heritage, my race, or my culture.

Sixth, without apology, this book is written from a Christian worldview due to my personal faith in Jesus Christ. I entered into a personal relationship with Him at 17 and remain one of His followers. I have tried to carefully handle the discussion of other faiths with dignity and respect without compromising my own beliefs.

Finally, it is likely that as time moves forward, mistakes in this book will be found. I apologize ahead of time for them. What I present here is, to the best of my knowledge, historically accurate and biblically-based information. Invariably, archaeologists will unearth keys to the past and force us to retell the stories of old. I ask for your patience with the publishing process as we update, improve, correct, and append future printings of this curriculum.

LETTER TO THE TEACHER

My dear friends,

Welcome to the *The Mystery of History, Volume II*. For many of you, this will be a familiar journey. I'm referring to those of you who have already been through Volume I. For you, I hope this is an anticipated *return* to a story—a story that began with Creation and followed with the miraculous coming of Jesus Christ. Volume II essentially continues where Volume I left off. The theme of the book is the same, but the time period is different. In fact, many aspects of Volume II are exactly the same as Volume I. But you will want to read through the rest of this letter to learn of a few changes and improvements.

If you are new to *The Mystery of History*, then first I welcome you. I am delighted you will join us in the study of the Early Church and the Middle Ages as found in Volume II. You will want to finish reading through this letter to understand why I wrote this curriculum and why things are laid out as they are. Overall, I think you will find this curriculum to be user-friendly, informative, inspiring, and even a little fun. At least that is my intent.

But more than that, my prayer for all is that in studying *The Mystery of History*, each will come to more deeply appreciate the role of God throughout the ages. I hope that each of us, in our own way, would marvel at His Creation, be humbled by His plan of redemption, and be inspired by His faithful followers. I believe God seeks to reveal Himself to us and to invite us into His very presence so that He might not be a mystery at all.

I. Why I Wrote This Curriculum

There are many reasons why I wrote *The Mystery of History*—the main reason being that I felt the Lord call me to do it when He seemed to whisper the title of the book in my ear. That was over three years ago. But let me give you this background to the story.

After homeschooling my children for many years, I made the observation that there seemed to exist two kinds of learning—short term and long term. It appeared to me that my children could easily accumulate volumes of long-term information in certain subjects like math and language. They seemed to retain this information because of repetition and review. On top of that, they would build on what they had already learned to expand their knowledge even further.

As for the short term, it appeared to me that my children and I could learn just about any general piece of information in science, social studies, or history given the right materials to work from. For example, in one or two afternoons we could learn the parts of a flower, cloud formations, or the story of Cleopatra. We could read about inventions, the human cell, or the American Revolution. But I couldn't say that we always *remembered* these kinds of things. Our base of knowledge in these kinds of broad subjects was often disjointed and spread out. I often found myself discouraged over this situation at the end of a week or the close of a unit. It led me to question the benefit of spending so many of our hours “learning” things that seemed to sit only for a little while in our short-term memory banks.

In my questioning of our method of education, I found myself really asking something far bigger—and that was the question, “Why?” Why are we doing this? (Of course, we all might ask that on a bad day!) But I wondered even more, why learn anything at all? Why do we even exist? Now, maybe you haven't felt the need to answer these particular questions when it comes to homeschooling. But for me it was necessary to find more meaning and purpose behind it all. Though I enjoyed learning and teaching, and believed it could glorify God, I needed a bigger picture than that.

After much pondering, an answer came for me in this thought—I concluded that one of the only reasons why we are here on earth is **to know God and to make Him known**. We are designed for

relationship. With that being the case, then the *story* of God and man was really worth my extra attention! And I wanted this incredible story to be far more than the short-term accumulation of scattered dates and events. I wanted the living story of God and man to be one of our "long-term" core subjects.

That leads me to the study of world history and the Bible. I think one of the easier ways to "know God better and to make Him known" is to first *know* the stories of Him found in history and the Bible from the beginning to the end! That to me *is* history. I believe history is the story of God revealing Himself to mankind and that He did it most perfectly through the person of Jesus Christ. For that reason, I call this course *The Mystery of History*, believing that the "mystery" is the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is what I hope your children and mine will remember for a lifetime. That is why I write!

As an additional note, you will find that I have at times chosen difficult topics to write about in Volume II. That is in part because there are so many difficult things that happened in the Middle Ages! There were persecutions, revolts, natural disasters, and the Crusades. There were murders, rebellions, wars, and plagues. Though morbid, these stories are part of history. They are the result of relationship—both good and bad—between God, man, and nature. My hope is that the emotion provoked by reading them will pierce the soul and make history more real. If the sad stories don't move your students, then perhaps the inspiring ones will. There are plenty of impressive stories of heroes, saints, and great leaders in this volume, too.

II. The Curriculum Layout

With all these thoughts in mind, please consider now the layout of the curriculum. Remember that there is a reason behind every aspect of it. It is designed to make history more than a short-term project of memorizing dates and events. Though memorization may be part of this curriculum, it is not the core of it. This is an *experiential* curriculum designed to tap into the five senses through activities, research, and cumulative review. It is written to be remembered for a lifetime—not every detail of the book, but the central theme. Though there is purpose behind the design, I hope you experience the freedom to adapt these materials to meet the needs of your own family or classroom.

Step #1—Quarter Summaries ("Around the World")

There are four quarters to this book. At the beginning of each quarter you will find a page titled "Around the World." This is an introduction to the time period and an overview of lessons to come. There are no quiz or test questions taken from this bonus material. These summaries are designed to simply give a big picture to the fascinating world we live in.

Step #2—Pretests ("What Do You Know?")

Students (and teachers alike if they wish) will begin each week by taking a Pretest titled "What Do You Know?" This eight-question pretest introduces students and teachers to people, places, and events that they may or may not have ever heard of before. Though some questions can be answered with pure logic, I would not expect most students or teachers to actually *know* the answers since this volume covers a vast spectrum of world history. My intent is not to discourage students with what they don't know, but rather to stir their curiosity for what they will know! The answers to the questions will be revealed to them throughout the week as they delve into the material. Though I do suggest that the pretests be graded, I do not recommend keeping scores that would count toward a grade in the course. (It would be unfair in my mind to be tested over material not yet learned!) Most of the pretests are simple enough to answer out loud, which is good for the pencil-weary student.

Step #3—Lessons

Most of the lessons in *The Mystery of History* are real-life biographies. I feel that history is far more interesting when seen as the story of men and women who have helped shape the world through both

their good and their bad character. The story of God revealing Himself to mankind is woven throughout. Though you will find in Volume II that much emphasis is placed on the nations of Europe through the Middle Ages, I have tried to make it a true world history course and include cultures from all over the world at significant stages of their development. You will also find that there are fewer lessons in this book (only 84) than there were in Volume I (108). But these lessons are **longer!** I made Volume II lessons longer at the request of many families who felt they would rather have “more” than “less” material to draw from. For the sake of those students who might find them a bit too long, I have provided natural breaks in the lessons with the inclusion of **subtitles**. These subtitles will also be helpful when skimming a lesson for information.

Another change in the lessons is the appearance of **key words in bold print**. I felt it might benefit students searching for major names, places, or items in a lesson if they were in bold. Some may choose to make a separate vocabulary list from these words, though I do not give a particular instruction to do so.

Step #4—Activities

After every lesson you will find a section of optional activities. You will see that they are broken into three age levels to accommodate the abilities of all the children in your family or classroom. I have tried to remain consistent with the level of difficulty for each group, but there is room to improvise here.

“Younger Student” activities generally use the five senses to help them “experience” history and better retain it. “Middle Student” activities are a mixture of hands-on work and research, as I would hope to stretch their minds beyond their senses. “Older Student” activities are primarily research oriented. It is for the sake of higher learning that I would expect them to be digging deeper through application, analysis, and synthesis. For more information on the levels of higher learning in education, I suggest researching *Bloom’s Taxonomy*. I have kept Bloom’s theories in mind in creating the activities that accompany each lesson.

With all of that, I have two very important things to add here: First, there are many activities to choose from—more than in Volume I. I would never expect a student or family to do them all! My own family did not. But I am offering *more* choices in this volume so that families or classrooms can make *better* choices based on the resources available to them. On some days, the *wisest* choice may be to not attempt an activity at all in light of other demands or priorities!

Second, there will be many times that Middle or Older Students may prefer Younger Student activities because they better match their learning style or they just appear to be more fun. And there may be Younger Students very open to Older Student topics because they sound interesting. I say this hoping that you will feel the freedom to choose the activities that genuinely interest your students, no matter the age level. Also, for the sake of streamlining *your* energy, it would be very appropriate for an entire family or class to choose only *one* activity, regardless of age level. The best advice I could give here is to choose only those activities that will help maintain the precious joy for learning.

Step #5—Memory Cards

In the last Activity section for each week, I remind students to make their Memory Cards. These are fact cards made by the students on 3-by-5-inch ruled index cards. I recommend that the student or teacher create one card per lesson. Write the lesson title on the blank side of the card. On the ruled side, summarize the main points of the lesson in a few sentences or phrases. Include the timeline date of the lesson underneath the summary.

Younger Students may not have the writing skills to make these cards yet, but they could be involved in the process by narrating to the teacher. Middle Students could participate in writing the cards themselves through dictation, copying, or formulating their own thoughts. Older Students should utilize this valuable tool for the practice of summarizing important facts.

Though some families may choose to have every student make a set of Memory Cards, it is only necessary that there be one complete set per family to use as flashcards.

For storage purposes, I highly recommend keeping your cards in the “Oxford Index Card Binder.” (item No. 73501). The binder is an excellent tool for making these into handy flashcards. There is more information on these cards and how to make them in the section titled “Memory Cards.”

Step #6—Reviews (“Take Another Look!”)

At the end of each week, or however long it takes to complete three lessons, there is a Review section titled “Take Another Look!” This section offers guidelines for timeline and mapping work that corresponds to the material from that week. Though some families may prefer to do a little timeline and mapping work with *each* lesson, it might be easiest to pull out the necessary items for timeline and mapping work only once a week, on review day. Furthermore, delaying timeline and mapping work until a later day in the week naturally brings back information previously learned, making it a true “review.”

“Wall of Fame.” As in Volume I, the Review section contains instructions each week for creating your own paper timeline figures using simple household items to bring them to life. I recommend placing the figures on a wall, on a pattern-cutting board (sewing board), or in a notebook. There are many great variations to building a meaningful and attractive timeline. Generally speaking, I think the younger the student, the larger the timeline should be to give a visual of when things happened in history.

For those needing something a little easier, I have added a **new feature** to Volume II. In every Wall of Fame section, I make reference to beautifully illustrated timeline figures that are *already* drawn for you. These figures are part of a timeline packet called *History Through the Ages—Resurrection to Revolution* (copyright 2003). Created by Amy Pak of Homeschooling in the Woods, this packet contains hundreds of lovely hand-sketched figures that can be cut, colored, or photocopied to add to any timeline. (Note: The original, copyright 2002 version of *History Through the Ages* is not complete for use with *The Mystery of History, Volume II*.) There is more information and photos on how to make a foldable, portable, and attractive timeline in the section titled, “Wall of Fame Timeline Suggestions.”

“SomeWHERE in Time.” Also as in Volume I, the Review section contains mapping projects for each week to correspond to the lessons. Generally speaking, the mapping projects are listed on each review from simplest to hardest. As with the activities, choose only the appropriate mapping projects for your students, considering their skill and interest levels. It will be helpful to have available a globe, a historical atlas, and a modern atlas. The publisher has made every effort to make sure that the assignments can be completed using commonly found atlases such as the following:

Rand McNally *Answer Atlas* (ISBN: 0-528-83872-5)

Rand McNally *Historical Atlas of the World* (ISBN: 528-83969-1)

The Student Bible Atlas by Tim Dowley (ISBN: 0-8066-2038-2)

These atlases, as well as the timeline figures, are available through Bright Ideas Press.

For your convenience, the specially designed outline maps are located toward the back of the book, just before the Appendix. Many of the maps will be used several times, so you will want to photocopy them in the quantities recommended on the opening page of the Outline Maps section at the back of the book. As a **new feature** in this volume, a **mapping answer key** is available when appropriate and is included, in sequence, in the Outline Map section.

Step #7—Exercises (“What Did You Miss?”)

At the end of each week you will find either an exercise or a quiz. (I explain the quizzes in the next section.) The exercises are titled “What Did You Miss?” Using simple, fun formats and some occasional games, the exercises prompt students to recall material already learned or to think about it more deeply.

Students are encouraged to use their textbooks, Memory Cards, and timelines to help them complete the exercises.

The exercises are cumulative in nature, meaning that they ask questions about content from the very beginning of the book! Almost every question is presented in chronological order so that students see the events in history in the same order in which they happened. I hope you can appreciate this unique feature of *The Mystery of History*. Very few history programs provide cumulative review, which in my opinion helps move the material from short-term to long-term storage. I suggest that grades be kept on the exercises to encourage students to take them seriously.

Step #8—Quizzes (“What Did You Learn?”)

Every other week in the book concludes with a quiz titled “What Did You Learn?” Like the exercises, the quizzes are cumulative in nature. That means they ask questions from the entire book. And like the exercises, these questions are most often presented in chronological order so the student consistently sees history in the order in which it happened. I don’t believe in giving tests for the sake of “busy work,” nor do I believe that tests or quizzes can always reflect true learning. However, I do think these simple cumulative quizzes will help students remember the important things they’ve learned.

Unlike the exercises, I would not recommend that Middle and Older Students be allowed to use their textbooks, Memory Cards, or timelines to answer the quiz questions. Though the quizzes are not overly difficult, they will require study and preparation—and that’s a good time to pull out the Memory Cards!

As for Younger Students, or those with learning disabilities, I suggest that you determine the age at which they are ready for the challenge of a quiz. Teacher assistance, oral test-taking, or group work might be a suitable way for these students to get the review of the quiz without the stress of it.

You will notice that both the exercises and the quizzes grow in length throughout the book, but they are not particularly any more difficult. The extra length is necessary to accommodate the growing amount of information covered.

Step #9—Quarterly Worksheets (“Put It All Together”)

By the end of each quarter, the students will have learned a lot! To help them “Put It All Together,” students are asked to complete a worksheet at the end of each seven-week quarter. As with the exercises, students are encouraged to use their textbooks, Memory Cards, and timelines to help them answer the questions. The worksheets are similar to the exercises and quizzes in format but are longer and cover only the content of one quarter.

Step #10—Semester Tests

At the end of each semester, the students are given a long test. The test covers only the material from that semester (which is two quarters). As with the quizzes, Middle and Older Students should not be allowed the use of their textbooks, Memory Cards, or timelines. Younger Students, or those with special needs, will require assistance but can still benefit from the review experience.

Step #11—Student Notebooks

Though families or classrooms might share *The Mystery of History* textbook, I recommend that each student compile his or her own Student Notebook. This notebook should contain eight dividers—one for each of the seven continents and one for a Miscellaneous/Exercise/Quiz section. This notebook will grow over time or can be continued from the first volume. As students complete an activity or map, they can file their work behind the proper continent divider.

Subsequent dividers for the names of individual countries can be made out of simple notebook paper as the countries arise in their study. For example, in an activity from a lesson on China, I may

instruct students to file their work under “Asia: China.” The continent name is always written first, followed by the name of the country.

Step #12—“Supplemental Books and Resources”

For families who desire more, there is Section C in the Appendix, “Supplemental Books and Resources.” Please bear in mind that these are merely suggested books, movies, and other resources that could *enhance* your study of the Early Church and the Middle Ages through spice and variety—but they are not necessary to complete this course. Many will choose additional resources because of a particular fascination with a topic or merely to overlap general reading with history. Besides that, there can be great joy in reading “living books” through good historical fiction.

Though there are almost endless books, movies, and other resources available, the ones in the list were chosen based on their excellence as well as availability. Many of the books and movies are common in homeschool circles, which will ease your hunt in finding them at your local homeschool conventions or through catalogs or the Internet.

I strongly suggest that you as the parent or teacher have the final word on the suitability of *any* additional resource suggested. Though all books and movies have been carefully selected from a conservative angle, families inevitably vary in their standards, and each should be responsible for making their own final choices. When caution is due on a resource that I am familiar with, a note has been made of that for you. Forgive me ahead of time if any that you find offensive have slipped by me. Feel free to let me know of them for future editions.

III. Suggested Schedules and Adaptations

Younger Students

For those whose oldest students are still in the kindergarten to 2nd grade stage, I would consider choosing two to three lessons a week to read and doing one to three corresponding activities. (The curriculum would last more than one year at this pace.) Some children with shorter attention spans may prefer one small bit of work a day. That could mean reading the lesson one day and doing the corresponding activity the next day. I would not necessarily suggest that younger students take pretests or complete all the exercises or the quizzes unless they are particularly inclined to sit-down work. The questions of the pretests, exercises, or quizzes could be skipped altogether or presented orally instead and kept “fun.” Memory Cards could be made by the teacher and pulled out for games or drills.

Timeline figures could be made for favorite figures in history but not for all. Maps could be done on an “as-interested” basis. Many of the geography skills involve only “finger mapping,” where a student finds a spot on a globe or map with his finger but is not required to transfer this information to paper. These exercises would be very appropriate for children to learn about the basic makeup of their world without stressing them out over more paperwork.

To summarize, here might be a typical week for a family with the oldest child being the age of kindergarten up to 2nd grade.

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri
Oral Pretest; Lesson 1	Activity 1	Lesson 2	Activity 2	Timeline

A variation to this format could be:

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri
Lesson 1; Activity 1	No history	Lesson 2; Activity 2	No history	Mapping

Or:

Read Lesson 1	Read Lesson 2	Read Lesson 3	Do one activity from Lesson 1, 2, <i>or</i> 3	Oral quiz
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Middle and Older Students

For the family who has the oldest child in 3rd–8th grades, a schedule might be as follows:

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Pretest; Read Lesson 1; Activity 1	Read Lesson 2; Activity 2	Read Lesson 3; Memory Cards	Review; Exercise or Quiz	OFF

The activities may be skipped sometimes as in the example above on Wednesday. The other activities are chosen based on what is best for the 3rd–8th grader as well as any younger siblings. If the activities are simple, a family may have two children doing a fun, hands-on project and two working on more challenging research—whatever accommodates the family as a whole.

Another sample week (that fits what we most often preferred) would look like the one below. My children are older and have longer attention spans. Therefore, it is a better use of our time to do a lot of history on one day rather than a little every day. Besides, my kids love science and don't want to share those days with history!

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Pretest; Read Lesson 1–2 Activity 1 <i>or</i> 2	Science day, no history	Read Lesson 3; Activity 3; Make Memory Cards	Science day, no history	Review; Exercise or Quiz

For those who may have **high schoolers**, this material could serve as a **framework** for further research and study on their part. Some of the “Older Student” activities are perfectly suitable for the high schooler.

Keep in mind that high school students traditionally receive one year of world history and one year of American history. This is what colleges would expect to see on a high school transcript. Economics and government are generally taught together to comprise the senior year of high school. That would total three years of history in high school.

I opt instead for teaching history in four years. I would teach what I call “World History and Geography” in two years (9th and 10th grades) and what I call “American and Modern History” in 11th. The senior year can still be reserved for economics and government. My reasoning for two years of world history rather than one is simply that I believe it is too vast a subject to teach adequately in one year! And I have not found any colleges that are unhappy to find more world history on a transcript.

Though all volumes of *The Mystery of History* are not yet available, for future reference, a high schooler might spread out his or her studies to look like this:

Volumes 1–3	9th and 10th grade
Volumes 4–5	11th grade

IV. Final Thoughts

As a summary to the features you just read about, let me point this out: Ideally, if students *were* able to go through the steps in this curriculum as laid out, it would give them approximately 13 “experiences” with each new lesson in history. That should be plenty to help students grasp the importance of a new person, place, or event. They won’t necessarily retain every detail of the story in long-term memory, but they should have a good handle on the significance of it.

In reality, there will be some busy weeks where many of these features might have to be skipped. Nonetheless, even incorporating a *few* of these features, will give students far more experience with history than the three-step approach found in traditional textbooks (which generally include a reading assignment, a review, and a test.).

As an example of the students’ learning experience in this curriculum, consider with me the life of Augustine. He was a rather important figure in church history, but his is not exactly a household name. Follow along with me to get a feel for what learning about Augustine looks like in *The Mystery of History*.

- **First**, students read of him in an *Around the World* page. It is a very general introduction, but it is a chance to hear his name for perhaps the first time.
- **Second**, students learn three facts about Augustine through the taking and grading of a pretest. These facts include the name of his autobiography (*Confessions*); the location of his home (Hippo, Africa); and the meaning of the word “rhetoric,” which was his area of giftedness.
- **Third**, students read (or have read to them) an entire lesson about the life and ministry of Augustine, learning of his doubts about Christianity, his conversion, and his great ministry and legacy as a church father.
- **Fourth**, students have an opportunity to do an experiential activity related to the lesson. The Younger Student records a praise song because Augustine was influenced by the singing of children when he came to Christ. The Middle Student researches a man who was representative of an erroneous view of pleasing God that was common during Augustine’s era—representative because he spent 37 years on top of a stone pillar to prove his piety. The Older Student discusses “mentoring” because Augustine had a mentor in his life and/or reads some of the original works of Augustine.
- **Fifth**, students make a Memory Card on Augustine, recording important facts about his life.
- **Sixth**, in the Review section, students make or cut out a timeline figure of Augustine and place it on a wall or in a notebook alongside his contemporaries, who were the Maya of Mexico, Jerome, and the legendary St. Patrick.
- **Seventh**, students do some mapping work in the Review section to become acquainted with Northern Africa, Augustine’s home when it was part of the Roman Empire.
- **Eighth**, students see Augustine again on a cumulative quiz at the end of the week, which asks one simple question about him. They continue to see his name on other quizzes throughout the year.
- **Ninth**, students see Augustine periodically on alternating exercises in weeks when there is no quiz.
- **Tenth**, Augustine appears on a lengthy worksheet.
- **Eleventh**, he is on a semester test.
- **Twelfth**, each student files his activity and/or mapping exercise on Augustine in his Student Notebook, which hopefully will be proudly displayed as a scrapbook of accomplishments.
- **Thirteenth**, as a final option, students can explore any of the supplemental books or resources suggested in the back of the text that pertain to the extraordinary life of St. Augustine.

If experiential learning is what you are looking for, you have found it in *The Mystery of History*! May the Lord bless you in your efforts to teach and in the adventure of learning.

DAILY LIFE IN THE DARK AGES

LESSON 22

As you may have noticed by now, I like to teach history through the lives of famous people. But sometimes it's interesting to take a look at *ordinary* people and *ordinary* lives. Though their names may never be written down in a history book, these people are part of history, too. Today we will focus on what common life was like in the **Dark Ages** of Europe—sometimes called the **Early Middle Ages** and encompassing approximately the years **500–1000**. Whatever you call the time period, it certainly wasn't an easy time to live.

Homes

Ordinary homes were nothing like the lofty, beautiful castles that we associate with the Middle Ages. Nor were they very comfortable. Ordinary homes were dark, damp, drafty, and made of wood. House fires broke out easily from these conditions because a fire was almost always lit for cooking, heating, and keeping flies away. Furniture was made of hard wood, mattresses were of prickly straw, and blankets were made of scratchy wool. And to make matters worse, most homes were used for stables, too, or had stables attached nearby. That means the smell was awful! Cows, sheep, chickens, and even rats—everyone shared the same roof if you didn't have much money!

Toilets were practically unheard of in poorer homes. People used buckets to collect their waste or just relieved themselves outdoors. Some nicer homes had restrooms in which the toilet was a seat built over a hole that allowed waste to fall below into another room. Though using a restroom like that was a little more convenient than going outdoors, the lower room had to be shoveled out regularly—a most unpleasant chore!

Food

The diet of an average person in the Dark Ages was rather bland and boring. A family would eat the same kinds of foods over and over. Bread was the main staple served morning, noon, and night. Bread was so important that if a baker sold moldy bread or if it weighed less than advertised, the baker was dragged through the city streets as punishment for his crime. Villagers would shout and throw things at him!

Dinner might have been a soupy stew made with beans, vegetables, and bones. It was seasoned with garlic, peppers, and herbs. Wealthier people had meat, cheese, and eggs from time to time, but these were scarce for the common man. For drinking, milk and cold water were not very safe. It was better for people to drink a weak type of ale or beer. The ale contained alcohol that prevented the growth of germs.

For special occasions, pies were very popular. The most creative kind was cleverly baked with live birds in it. When served,



As in the Dark Ages, fresh bread from a bakery is very important to Europeans.

the birds would fly away unharmed. It is probably from this unusual custom that we have the nursery song “four-and-twenty blackbirds baked in a pie . . .”

Schools

The opportunity to receive an education in Europe depended greatly on what kind of family you were born into and whether you were a girl or a boy. Girls from poor families would learn the skills of farming, cooking, storing food, and cleaning. They would learn most of this at home from their parents, especially from their mothers.

Girls from wealthy homes would learn skills for taking care of a large household. This might include having a tutor to teach them math calculations and reading so they could help buy things for a large estate. They would also be trained in entertaining, dancing, singing, and sewing. Some wealthy girls were fortunate enough to learn to ride horses just for fun.

Peasant boys learned how to farm, as well as how to fight, from their dads, uncles, or brothers. For the poor, formal school in a classroom was rare. Merchants’ sons, however, might attend school in a village to learn reading and math for running a small business. Noblemen’s sons would probably receive better schooling through private tutors at home. (It was probably a form of “homeschooling”!)

Work

About 80 percent of the population in Europe during the Dark Ages consisted of poor peasant farmers. The **serfs** were the lowest of these peasants. They were practically slaves in that they worked long, hard hours for a lord, a duke, or a count without receiving any pay at all! However, they did receive food, clothing, a house, and protection in exchange for their labor. If they were able to escape from their lord for a year and one day, they were considered free! Of course, escape was not an easy thing to do in a small community. Practically everyone knew everyone else, making it difficult to get away.

Just above the serfs were the **villeins**. They were freer than the serfs and controlled a small plot of land to farm. But they didn’t own it. Villeins were expected to pay their landowners with food they grew themselves or animals they raised. It was terribly difficult to ever rise out of being a poor farmer. In fact, today’s term *villain*, which means a scoundrel or person of poor manners, stems from this unfortunate class of people who were not widely respected.

Some commoners who populated the towns were a bit more fortunate. Rather than toiling endless hours in the fields, they became **merchants** or **craftsmen**. It was common in the towns for a merchant to rent a two-story dwelling from the nearest lord. The merchant and his family could live upstairs and work downstairs. (These cozy shops and homes are still a common sight in Europe today.) Since most people couldn’t read or write, the merchant would hang a picture sign over the door of his shop to lure customers in. Walking through the town one might see a picture sign of bread for the baker, shoes for the cobbler, a coat for the tailor, and more.

As towns grew, so did the number of merchants and craftsmen. To protect themselves from being taken advantage of, these townspeople created **guilds**. A guild was a group of people who practiced the same trade—like that of being a silversmith, for example. But to become a part of a guild was a long ordeal. At about 7 years of age, a boy was trained as an **apprentice** to a **master** merchant or craftsman. An apprentice wasn’t paid for his work but was given food and lodging. If the apprentice was good and learned his skill well, he could be promoted to a **journeyman**. Fortunately, a journeyman was paid for his work! If approved by the guild, a journeyman could eventually open his own shop to sell his goods. If he was especially successful, he could then become a master of his trade. And the cycle went on and on. Though conditions were often difficult, this system provided incentive for people to work hard and take pride in their goods and crafts.

Healthcare

Healthcare was definitely questionable during the Dark Ages in Europe. Doctors had some unusual ideas for making people well. It was believed at one time that a doctor could drill holes into someone's head to help relieve the symptoms of mental illness! And procedures like that were often done without any anesthetics (the special chemicals that keep us from feeling pain during surgery). How awful!

It was also believed that if a doctor could remove “bad” blood from a patient, he could heal them of disease. Doctors would use leeches, a blood-sucking worm, to literally suck blood from patients. Or, the doctor would make cuts on the patient (called “bloodletting”) to drain them of “bad” blood.



Modern barbershops still bear the red, white, and sometimes blue striped emblem of the barber pole that originated in the Middle Ages.

It may be of interest to know that barbers, men who cut hair, were also used in the business of bloodletting—probably because they owned instruments sharp enough for cutting. In fact, the traditional barber pole, a white pole with red stripes around it (and sometimes blue), was designed as a symbol of bloodletting. The white stripe was symbolic of bandages and the red stripe, of blood.

As you can tell, some medical practices of the Early Middle Age were brutal. But, on the positive side, there was also a wide use of herbs and other natural remedies to help the sick.

Church

Last, I think you should know just how important the church became to the everyday life of those living in the Dark Ages. The Medieval Church became the foundation of civilization in mainland Europe!¹ The lives of both the rich and the poor were touched by it. The church was responsible for teaching faith, baptizing children, performing weddings, and burying the dead.

As we learned in the last quarter, the church had once been *persecuted* in Europe under the Roman Empire. Under persecution, Christians met secretly in homes to worship. But after Constantine I granted Christians the freedom to worship in public, they began to build churches as places to worship. By the fifth century, one could find a small **parish church** in nearly every medieval village in Europe. Most started as extensions of private homes and then grew. The first church buildings were patterned after a Roman structure called a **basilica**. These long rectangular buildings with high-domed ceilings were once used as Roman courtrooms or meeting halls. They were perfect for the gathering and worship of small congregations.

The **parish priest** lived near the church in a home only a little better than the cottage of a serf. As the only priest in the village, he was expected to do far more than preach on Sundays. The parish priest kept an eye on everyone's moral behavior, took care of the sick, and even arranged town games. Though some priests slipped into bad behavior themselves, most



Small stone churches like this one adorn the countryside of Germany.

1. *Mainland Europe* refers here to regions of Europe not including England. At this time in history, the churches in England were operating individually under the Celts. They were not centralized like the churches of Europe until the late 500s.

were well loved and respected by their townspeople for their devoted service.

Above the parish priest was the **bishop**. A bishop usually lived in a larger town and managed a **diocese**, which consisted of several small nearby parishes. As a landowner under the nearest lord or duke, a bishop had a lot of authority in his community. He took on what used to be the role of a Roman governor. So, besides overseeing the business of his church and surrounding parishes, the bishop was busy with civil matters. He helped settle court cases between neighbors and bickering husbands and wives, as well as give direction in military affairs. Unlike the parish priests, the bishop lived in nice quarters. And his church building was more like a small cathedral.

On the next level of the church, the **archbishop** ruled over a group of bishops in what was called a **province**. The archbishop lived in the big city, so to speak, and carried a great amount of authority—both in the church and in the community. And with his high position came even more spectacular cathedrals to oversee. In time, these cathedrals grew to be great works of **Gothic architecture**, like Notre Dame in France for example. These massive Gothic cathedrals are an incredible testimony to the genius of mankind.

In the fifth century, **Emperor Valentinian III** decided that all the archbishops should be in obedience to one head bishop. And since Rome was still the largest city in Europe, the bishop of Rome naturally became the one to take that position. (Besides that, Peter, who *some* would consider the first bishop, was martyred in Rome after serving in Jerusalem and Antioch.) From that point on, the bishop of Rome was called the **pope**. It means “papa.” The pope



The famous Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, France, was started in 1163. It is one of the greatest examples of early Gothic architecture ever built.



St. Peter's Church, located in Vatican City within Rome, is the largest church in the world and the home church of the pope today.

obtained a great amount of authority in the Middle Ages and grew to have the most extravagant cathedral in Europe. We will talk more about the pope in lessons to come. You will learn that, over time, there was disagreement about this structure of the church. Many Christians disagreed about the role of the pope as well as about many other things.

In closing, I remind you that far more important than the *structure* of the church in the Dark Ages was the *purpose* of it. According to the Bible, it is the Lord's plan that “*the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church.*” (Eph. 3:10) So, though daily life in the Dark Ages was dark and sometimes difficult, there was light and hope for those who followed the wisdom of God.

ACTIVITIES FOR LESSON 22

ALL STUDENTS

1. Research the following Web site for numerous games and activities related to the Middle Ages: www.esc20.k12.tx.us/etprojects/formats/webquests/summer99/northside/middleages/default.htm
2. Experience a bland peasant diet. For dinner, eat only vegetable stew and bread for three nights in a row! How did it make you feel? Consider the luxury of experiencing variety in your diet.
3. If you are part of a co-op or larger class, consider hosting a Merchant/Craftsman Trade and Barter Day. Suggestions for such an event are located in the Activity Supplement in the Appendix. It will require extensive preparation but can be a lot of fun as well as educational.

22A—Younger Students

Make a barber pole.

Materials: An empty paper-towel roll, a plain sheet of paper, red marker or wide red tape, clear tape

Tape a blank piece of white paper onto an empty paper-towel roll. Try to keep it smooth. Using a red marker, draw a wide line all the way down and around the tube like a candy cane. (It might be easiest if the teacher sketches the place to color with a pencil first.) Or, adhere a piece of wide red tape down and around the pole instead. When the tube is complete, tape it vertically to a wall the way a barber's pole would hang. Use it when you play doctor!



22B—Middle Students

A variety of things were used in medieval days for keeping time. Sundials, hourglasses, bell towers, and candles were used to track time. Make your own “hour” candle.

Materials: Tape measure or ruler, a slender 8- or 9-inch candle (approximately ½ inch in diameter), candleholder, matches, timer, pencil

Adult Supervision Needed

1. Using a tape measure or ruler, measure the exact length of your candle. Write down this measurement (Measurement A).
2. Place the candle in a sturdy candleholder.
3. Light the candle (**with an adult**) and write down the time on the clock. Set a timer for exactly one hour.
4. When one hour has passed, blow out the candle. When the wick has cooled, again measure the length of your candle. Write down this figure (Measurement B).
5. Subtract the second measurement from the first measurement (A minus B). This will tell you how long it took your candle to burn in exactly one hour. We'll call the difference “Measurement C.”
6. Now, take the figure that you calculated (C) and use it to mark off your candle in hours. For example, if your candle burned down 1 inch in an hour, then you are going to take your candle, lay it next to a ruler, and make a mark with a pencil for every inch left on your candle.

7. How many hours will your candle burn? Can you think of pros and cons to counting hours this way?

Take a picture of your hour candle and file it in your Student Notebook under “Miscellaneous.”

22C—Older Students

1. **BOYS:** Young merchants in the Middle Ages were expected to learn business skills at home or school. Do you know how to balance a checkbook or savings account? Practice this important skill.
2. **GIRLS:** Young girls of the nobility were expected to know how to entertain guests. Obtain an etiquette book and look up the section on proper table settings. Practice on your own family for dinner one night this week. Take a photo of your place setting and file it in your Student Notebook under “Miscellaneous.”
3. Using a Bible concordance, look up the term *church*. Evaluate its many meanings: It can refer to God’s redeemed people as a whole as well as to a particular group of believers in a specific location. Find examples in your Bible.

503

KING ARTHUR AND THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE

LESSON 23

Have you ever wished you could go back in time? I have. And if I did, I’d want to go back to the enchanting castle of **Camelot**, the legendary home of **King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table**. Adventure, romance, drama, and mystery! It’s all there in the tales of King Arthur. However, historians are perplexed about King Arthur. Some say he was only a magical myth—a figment of literary imagination. Others say he had to be real because so much legend exists around his name and the adventures of his knights. Real or not, the stories of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table give us a great glimpse of life in the Early Middle Ages.

In order to understand who King Arthur might have been, I need to take you back to early **England**. A long, long time ago, about 600 years before Christ, there was a group of people called the **Celts** (keltz). They lived in Europe and were known for being artistic, brave, and good ironmakers. As they scattered across Europe, some crossed the sea to settle the rock-edged island of England. The Celts never had their own written language, so not much is known of their early history.

About 550 years later, just 50 years before Christ was born, the Romans invaded England under **Julius Caesar**. When the Romans met the Celts in England, they called them “Brythons,” meaning, “tattooed men.” Apparently the Celts were fond of tattoos. It is from this Roman term that **Britain** later got its name.



Arthur became a legendary hero in England for his fight against the Saxons and the magical tales that surrounded his court.

The **Romans** remained a major ruling power over England for about 300 years. That's a long time! In this time the Romans lived mostly in peace among the Celts and contributed a lot to their way of life. The Romans built great roads, bathhouses, and homes with central heating and glass windows. In the second century, one Roman emperor by the name of **Hadrian** went so far as to build a great wall in northern England to protect it from the Scottish. In a way, the Romans seemed to “guard” the native Celts and actually help them to flourish.

But as you know from our last lesson, the Western Roman Empire began to collapse in the late 400s. When this happened, it caused real problems for the Celts. As Romans fled the country, other tribes invaded and the Celts had no way of protecting themselves. In particular, it was the **Angles**, the **Saxons**, and the **Jutes** that invaded England from other parts of Europe. I mentioned these groups to you in a past lesson about the fall of the Roman Empire. The Saxons were particularly brutal in their takeover of the island. They once killed 1,200 Celtic pastors who were meeting for prayer!



Roman Emperor Hadrian built “Hadrian’s Wall” across Britain to protect it from Scottish tribes in the north.

Arthur, the Celtic King

This finally brings us to **King Arthur**. Most historians believe he was a **Celtic king** or war chief who lived in England just about the time that the Romans left and the Saxons invaded. Now think about that for a minute. With the great power of Rome leaving and the ruthless Saxons invading, this could have been a difficult time to be a king. But not so for Arthur! Like a storybook coming to life, he rose to defend his beloved homeland. At least, that's what many believe. In doing so, he became a legend. It is no wonder that many fabulous tales exist about him in English literature.

So what exactly are the great tales surrounding King Arthur? I will try to summarize them in case you've never read them (but I hope someday you do). First, according to legend, Arthur is said to have become a king in a most unusual way. A story circulated that no one could remove the sword **Excalibur** from a crevice in a large stone except the man who would be the next king of England. Many men of great strength had tried and failed.

As the legend goes, one day Arthur—who was just a teen at the time—passed by the sword in the stone. As a young squire, he was supposed to be going home to fetch a sword for a knight. But rather than run all the way home, he decided to save himself the trip and grab the one he saw. With just a tug or two, the sword gave way and glistened in his hands! He hardly knew what to think. Arthur was immediately

surrounded by the townspeople and declared the king. “Long live the king!” the crowd chanted. And so Arthur became the greatest, most courageous, most noble king that England ever had! (According to legend, of course. An image of a sword in a stone had been a long-time icon for the Roman cavalry, which probably had something to do with the story!)

In becoming king, Arthur had much to learn. Most of his wisdom he attributed to a magician named **Merlin**, who was his childhood teacher. In story form, Merlin was said to be a magical wizard who could change people into animals. Though that part of the



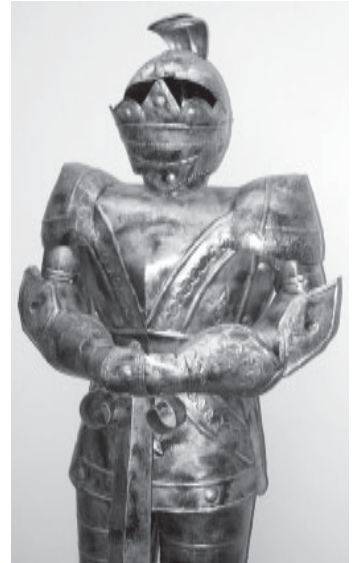
This unusual medieval castle in Italy is “round” like King Arthur’s table!

story is pure fiction, it stirs the imagination. Like a wise teacher or a mentor, Merlin supposedly guided Arthur through all his years as king.

According to numerous tales, one of the wisest things Merlin ever did was to help Arthur make what is called the **Round Table**. It was exactly what its name implied—a huge table that was completely round. Why? Because it gave the knights of the castle a place to sit without arguing over who would be seated next to the king! It was this type of diplomacy or fairness that made Arthur so famous. In all the stories that surround him, he was just, brave, wise, and extremely loyal to his knights.

So what do kings and knights do to keep a kingdom? Mainly, they fight to protect it. Some of the fights were against “dragons,” according to countless tales of Arthur. I speculate that some of these tales may be true if smaller species of dinosaurs were still troubling the region! Others would suggest that “dragons” were symbolic of people who were enemies. Either way, most of the fighting would certainly have been against the invading Saxons. Arthur supposedly fought 12 battles against the Saxons, the last one being the **Battle of Mount Badon** in **503**. He was almost always victorious. It is from these victories that there exists some evidence of a true war hero named Arthur, the **Dux Bellorum**, which means “Lord of the Battles.” Many believe that this Arthur, though never a king, was the sole inspiration for all the folklore that followed.

One writer claims that Arthur single-handedly fought 900 of his enemies at one time. He was known for wearing a gold-crested helmet shaped like a dragon and leading his army on a white horse. Arthur’s inspiration was said to be from an image of the Virgin Mary etched on his armor. Religious zeal was common among the knights. Though not all were genuine believers, they swore an oath to uphold Christ and keep down the heathen.



Though we think of all knights as wearing full armor, it was not until the late 1400s that plate armor completely covered a knight’s body for protection.

The Holy Grail

Because of their zeal, one of the more interesting pursuits of the knights was their “quest to find the **Holy Grail**.” Let me explain. In Matthew 27:58–60, the Bible says that **Joseph of Arimathea** asked Pilate for Jesus’ body and that he placed it in his own tomb for burial. According to the Bible, this is a fact. But tradition adds that Joseph of Arimathea somehow acquired the cup that **Jesus** used at the Last Supper with his disciples. With that cup, Joseph is said to have collected some of Jesus’ blood while He hung on the cross. No one knows for sure if there is any truth in this tradition. It is true, however, that Joseph later traveled to England. And if he had the holy cup, he probably took it with him. It was believed that the cup of Jesus’ blood had healing powers. Thus it was called the “Holy” Grail. (Grail is an old English term for cup.)

As a believer and an eyewitness to the life of Christ, Joseph of Arimathea naturally shared the Gospel with the people he found in England. A church was started there as a result. Now, whether or not Joseph had the special cup that Jesus drank from is speculation. If he did, the Holy Grail managed to disappear for hundreds of years!

However, according to legend, there was a nun who believed she received a vision of the Holy Grail. She shared this vision with the knights of King Arthur’s Round Table. Believing the Holy Grail held special powers, the knights made it their mission to find it. This started what became known as “the

quest for the Holy Grail.”² Supposedly, whoever found it would receive eternal life! Interestingly, the Irish legend of Dagda has a similar storyline.

I hope you understand the difference between the story of the quest for the Holy Grail and the real blood that Jesus shed on the cross for our sins. These aren’t the same things. Though many of the knights were Christians, they set their sights on the wrong thing for eternal life. Finding a sacred cup or Holy Grail is not a means for getting into heaven. The Bible says, “*If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*”

(Rom. 10:9) Faith in Christ is our means for salvation.

Nonetheless, countless stories, dramas, songs, and poems have been dedicated to the search for the Holy Grail. In literature, three of Arthur’s knights—**Sir Galahad**, **Sir Percivale**, and **Sir Bors**—supposedly find the Holy Grail! But it seems to just be a story.

Guinevere and Lancelot

The other stories of Arthur involve more personal tragedies in his life. His beautiful wife, **Queen Guinevere**, fell in love with one of his best knights, **Sir Lancelot**. Though both Guinevere and Lancelot loved Arthur, they sinfully loved one another, too. When caught betraying the king, Guinevere was sentenced to burn at the stake! But as only a knight in shining armor could do, Lancelot rescued the queen from her fiery execution.

In the end, Guinevere and Lancelot repented of their immorality, and the remorseful queen left Lancelot to live among the nuns. Despite their repentance, there were steep consequences for the couple’s sinful actions. The knights wanted war against Lancelot, thus shattering Arthur’s dreams for a peaceful kingdom. He had worked so hard to “civilize” his men through a fair legal system. He never wanted them to shed blood out of revenge. Now, the ever loyal and just King Arthur was left torn between love for his queen and love for his kingdom. He couldn’t have them both. Many tearful plays and movies have been made about this dramatic story.

To add to Arthur’s broken heart, his only son **Mordred** tried to take over his kingdom. Arthur was forced to fight against his son—and in the end, Mordred was killed in battle. Arthur was supposedly wounded and carried away to the **Isle of Avalon** for healing. Myths say that he never died and will return one day to rule over England again. (Of course, that is just a myth.)

As you can imagine, it’s difficult at times to discern between fact and fiction in fanciful stories like these. As time goes by, it is as if Arthur is recreated and stories of him retold to fit the timeless need we have for a hero. But with such devotion to Arthur, many of the legends of him are exaggerated, if real at all. Who knows for sure the origin and reality of the tales of Merlin, dragons, the Holy Grail, or the round table? But more than likely, there was a real Celtic war chief named Arthur who successfully fought against invading Saxon tribes. And I suspect he was a noble character. That seems to be what Arthur is *most* noted for, and that to me is a legend worth remembering!



The chapel of a medieval castle would contain stained-glass windows wide enough to let light in but narrow enough to keep enemies out.

2. David Day, *King Arthur*. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1999; p. 127.

ACTIVITIES FOR LESSON 23

23A—Younger Students

1. Dress in “shining armor” for lunch or dinner at a Round Table. To create armor, I suggest wrapping sheets of foil over your clothing on your arms, legs, and torso. Secure with rubber bands, string, or silver duct tape. A bike or football helmet may serve as a headpiece. Use tape to decorate the helmet with streamers “sprouting” from the top. Take a photo and file it under “Europe: England” in your Student Notebook.
2. Have your teacher hide a cup or goblet in your house. Go on a “quest” to find it!
3. Research the look of an English castle from the Early Middle Ages. Obtain black-and-white pictures of real castles from the Internet or photocopy them from your favorite picture book. Color your pictures. Place them in your Student Notebook under “Europe: England.”
4. Listen to Celtic music. One suggestion would be music by Christian artists using Celtic tones (e.g., Michael Card, Ceili Rain).

23B—Middle and Older Students

1. There is so much great literature about King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Read any of the modern translations from the library to learn of the tales of Sir Lancelot, Sir Percivale, and Sir Gawain. Most stories are based on *Le Morte D’Arthur*, compiled by Sir Thomas Malory.
2. Research the steps to becoming a knight. On a sheet of paper folded twice (vertically or horizontally), create space for writing three paragraphs. Write one paragraph on the duties of a **page**, one on the duties of a **squire**, and one on becoming a **knight**. Mount your paper on three-ring paper to insert it into your Student Notebook under “Europe: England.”
3. Research another great Celtic king named **Vercingetorix**. In 52 B.C. he fought the Romans but was forced to surrender!

23C—Older Students

1. Choose to read at least one of the following pieces of literature, if not several.
 - a. Read *The Seafarer*, an Anglo-Saxon poem describing the life of the men who sailed the seas to invade England.
 - b. Read Alfred, Lord Tennyson’s “Holy Grail,” a poem in *Idylls of the King*.
 - c. Read Tennyson’s “The Lady of Shalott,” based on the tale of Lady Astolat who loved Lancelot but could not win his affection. She died of a broken heart.
 - d. Read *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court*, a novel by Mark Twain.
2. With parental permission, view the 1967 musical *Camelot* (rated G), starring Richard Harris as King Arthur. Though the movie appears to glamorize the unfaithfulness of Guinevere and Lancelot, it concludes with the devastation brought by immorality. An all-time personal favorite!

JUSTINIAN I AND THEODORA, RULERS OF THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

LESSON 24

Before I can tell you about an interesting couple that ruled the Byzantine Empire, you must first know what the **Byzantine** was. The name is a little confusing, so we'll start there.

The Byzantine Empire was the name given to the **Eastern Roman Empire**. Now you may be wondering where the Eastern Roman Empire came from since we recently studied the fall of the *Western* Roman Empire. Well, as you may recall, the Roman Empire was first divided into the east and the west under **Diocletian** in A.D. 284 (Lesson 13). Then it was put back together as *one* empire under **Constantine the Great** in 324 (Lesson 14). Constantine is the one who moved the capital of Rome to the ancient city of **Byzantium** and renamed it **Constantinople**.

Well after Constantine died, the Roman Empire split *again* in 395. This time, the Eastern Roman Empire acquired the name of the "Byzantine Empire" because of the ancient city of Byzantium. So there—that explains the name given to the Byzantine Empire. Did you follow all of that? I hope so. Of course the Western Roman Empire did collapse in 476 from all kinds of problems and invasions. But, there were thousands of Romans who remained in the Eastern Roman Empire, or the Byzantine. Unlike the Western Roman Empire, the Byzantine was strong and healthy, and it remained so for centuries to come.

Now, with that bit of geography behind us, let's look at **Justinian I** and **Theodora**. These are the names of a Byzantine king and queen who ruled the empire for almost 40 years, from **527-565**. Because of their backgrounds, both were fortunate to *ever* have become royalty.

Justinian I

Justinian was born of a peasant family with hardly a thought for one day becoming a king. But Justinian's uncle happened to be one of the Western Roman Emperors before that empire collapsed. He had no sons to replace him. So, as a youth, Justinian was taken to the emperor's court to be trained as a ruler. With Rome falling apart, Justinian's future was uncertain. But the way things worked out, he was moved east and declared Emperor of the *Eastern* Roman Empire, or the Byzantine.

When it came to learning, Justinian was a very disciplined young man. He loved to study. Without eating or sleeping, Justinian would sometimes read for hours into the night and still rise early to conduct



Justinian I and his wife, Theodora, were two of the most prestigious of all Byzantine rulers for contributing strong laws and great luxury to the empire.

business. His interests were in law, poetry, architecture, theology, philosophy, and music—all great things for a king to know.

Justinian was even disciplined in what he ate. Unlike most kings, who could indulge on almost anything they wanted, Justinian's diet was mainly that of a vegetarian. He also fasted for periods of time throughout his life. That means he would choose not to eat at all in order to dedicate himself to prayer and meditation.

Though Justinian was certainly to be admired for his self-discipline, not everyone respected him as a king. His critics accused him of being “wishy-washy” on political matters. That means he would sometimes say one thing but do another. And he seldom if ever went to the battlefield, which made him appear weak and cowardly.

Theodora



This modern-day bear trainer in the famous Russian Circus reminds us that some things haven't changed much from the Middle Ages.

Probably one of Justinian's greatest strengths turned out to be his wife, Theodora. She was a good queen and very involved in the running of the empire. It is amazing though that she ever became a queen. Theodora was born on the island of **Cyprus** as the daughter of a bear trainer in a circus. After years of unsettled circus life, she went into acting. Unfortunately, she also led a rather lewd and immoral life as a young woman. Though she wasn't married, Theodora gave birth to a child. In time, however, Theodora settled down. She made a meager but respectable living spinning wool in the city of Constantinople.

As fate would have it, Justinian somehow met the poor, hardworking Theodora. Though she was an unlikely candidate for queen, he fell in love with her. Like a fairy tale come true, there is no doubt that Theodora's beauty and charm changed the course of her life. The historian **Procopius** said this of Theodora when describing a statue of her, “It is beautiful, but still inferior to the beauty of the Empress; for to express her loveliness in words, or to portray it as a statue, would be altogether impossible for a mere human being.”³ I

think you might get the picture. Theodora must have been gorgeous, which helped her to catch the eye of the king. The story is a bit like that of Cinderella.

The Nika Riot

Theodora was not only a beauty—she was apparently brave and smart as well. Early in Justinian's reign, a riot broke out in Constantinople in 532. Theodora helped to settle it. It seems there was fighting in the streets between the “Blues” and the “Greens.” Those were the names of groups that developed from people dressing in the color of their favorite jockeys. (Jockeys were horse racers, and yes, there were riots over sporting events even way back then!)

The rioting got so bad that fires broke out; a famous church named **Saint Sophia** was destroyed; and the emperor's palace was attacked! People ran through the streets yelling “Nika!” which meant “Victory!” So the incident has been remembered as the **Nika riot**.

Well, it was in Justinian's feeble character to hide in the palace and try to escape the rioting crowds. Remember that he wasn't the kind of king that spent time on the battlefield. It was the more courageous

3. Will Durant, *The Age of Faith*. Vol. IV of *The Story of Civilization*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950; p. 106.

Theodora who persuaded Justinian to remain in Constantinople and take control of the situation. Justinian listened to her advice and put his best general, **Belisarius**, on the job. To gain back the city, Belisarius had 30,000 people killed in a public arena! It was a terrible massacre that ended the rioting.

With the Nika riot behind them, Justinian and Theodora proceeded to rule the Byzantine Empire with great confidence. They started with repairing buildings damaged from the riots. Justinian poured himself into making Constantinople one of the most spectacular cities in the world.

Of most significance, Justinian claimed that he would rebuild the cathedral of Saint Sophia to be even more glorious than Solomon's Temple. He just about did it, too! Saint Sophia is one of the greatest works of **Byzantine architecture** ever constructed. With walls of marble, numerous mosaics, and precious stones placed in the decor, the cathedral rises toward the sky in the shape of a cross. It is covered by huge, majestic domes measuring 185 feet high and 100 feet in diameter! When the cathedral was completed on December 26, 587, Justinian walked to the pulpit of the magnificent structure and said, "Glory be to God who has thought me worthy to accomplish so great a work! O Solomon! I have vanquished you!"⁴ Though full of pride, he knew he had done a great thing.

Both Justinian and Theodora loved the wealth and splendor of being king and queen—maybe because they grew up with so little. They were well known for dressing extravagantly with pearls, jewels, crowns, and robes. Justinian enjoyed the ceremony of entering and exiting events with a great show. He went so far as to require his guests to kiss the hem of his long purple robe or to kiss his toes!



From the influence of Justinian and Theodora, Byzantine architecture is still prevalent in Eastern Europe.

The Justinian Code

Despite being showy, Justinian proved to be a capable leader. He is best remembered for updating a code of laws. These laws bear his name and are called the **Justinian Code**. They were basically an updated version of earlier Roman laws. Some of the laws were good ones that helped people, such as slaves and women, to have better legal rights. Theodora had a lot to do with the recognition and education of women. Many of the laws reflected Justinian's own belief in Christianity. For example, it became law that judges were to swear an oath of honesty on a Bible before every trial. We see a similar procedure in courtrooms today.

However, the penalties for breaking some of the laws were harsh and over time were ignored for being extreme. For example, adultery was punishable by death, as was homosexuality, sorcery, and desertion from the army. A particularly cruel penalty was that of bodily mutilation. People could lose a nose, hand, tongue, or their eyes for certain crimes!

As you can see, the Justinian Code was strict and conservative. But Justinian was wise when he wrote that a ruler should "be armed with law as well as glorified with arms [weapons], that there may be good government in times both of war and of peace."⁵ (Word in brackets is mine.) In other words, Justinian saw that a *civilized* government was as valuable as a *strong* army. In a time of much fighting and feudalism in Europe, this concept made the Byzantine Empire a special place and provided much stability for its citizens.

4. Ibid., p. 130.

5. Will Durant, *The Age of Faith*. Vol. IV of *The Story of Civilization*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950; p. 111.

Well, now you know about the lives of two more famous people, Justinian I and Theodora. Though an unlikely pair for king and queen, they greatly shaped the Byzantine Empire with their style, their beliefs, and their laws. The solid foundation they laid probably helped the Byzantine Empire remain intact for centuries to come.

ACTIVITIES FOR LESSON 24

ALL STUDENTS

Make your Memory Cards for Lessons 22–24.

24A—Younger Students

1. Theodora grew up in a circus. Her father was a bear trainer. Using stuffed bears, put on your own mini-circus for friends or your family. To make it more lifelike, research just what kinds of things trained bears can do! Take a picture of your event and file it in your Student Notebook under “Asia: Turkey (the Byzantine Empire).”
2. Dress up as a king or queen. Use robes, jewels, and crowns. Make a list of laws, or codes, for your kingdom.

24B—Middle Students

1. **GIRLS:** Give a dramatization. In the Activity Supplement, you will find a translation of the speech that Theodora gave to Justinian to persuade him to resist the Nika riot. Practice reading this as a persuasive speech. Videotape yourself!
2. Research the cathedral of Saint Sophia in Istanbul (also called “Hagia Sophia”) to find the answers to these questions. (Be careful—there are many cathedrals named Saint Sophia.) What is so unique about this structure? What does the name Hagia Sophia stand for? What other religious group owned it for some time? What is it used for today? Photocopy a picture of it and file it in your Student Notebook under “Asia: Turkey (the Byzantine Empire).”

24C—Middle and Older Students

1. *Creative writing project for girls:* Pretend you are Theodora. Create a page of her diary on the day before she married the king. Imagine her change of status from that of one who spun wool to that of queen! Make your diary page appear aged following directions from Activity 7A or 11B. File your page under “Asia: Turkey (the Byzantine Empire)” in your Student Notebook.
2. *Creative project for boys:* Pretend to be a sports announcer. On a tape recorder, report on the rioting between the “Blues” and the “Greens.” Use your imagination to add to the story as needed!
3. Search for a copy of the Justinian Code. Read a few selections and compare these to laws in your community today. Do you consider some of them to be harsh? Discuss the benefit and the drawback of strict laws. In comparison, what is the benefit and drawback to laws that are not strict enough? Photocopy or print the code and add it to your Student Notebook under “Asia: Turkey (the Byzantine Empire).”

COLUMBA, MISSIONARY TO SCOTLAND

LESSON 25

Have you ever known the Lord to take something bad and use it for good? I think you will agree with me that this is exactly what happened in the case of **Columba**. Columba—a fiery Irishman—had a hot temper that sometimes got him into trouble. And that’s a bad thing. But the Lord used it to inspire him to take the Gospel of Christ to **Scotland**. And that’s a good thing!

Columba was born of a Christian family in **Ireland** in 521. Being a good student and a strong Christian, Columba went to schools called **monasteries** that had been set up by Christian monks. He was such a good scholar that in time Columba set up several of his own monasteries across Ireland.

Even though Columba’s name meant “dove,” he didn’t always behave like one. One time Columba had a terrible dispute with a local chieftain in Ireland. This dispute led to a gruesome battle in which 3,000 men were killed! Columba was devastated at what had taken place. As a man of God, he was truly sorry for what *he* felt he had caused. Though he knew God was capable of forgiving him, Columba wanted to make up for the tragedy. He resolved to convert as many men to Christ as had died in battle. That means he hoped for at least 3,000 souls to come to know Jesus! He also vowed *never* to return to Ireland so that he might not cause such trouble there again.

Columba decided on Scotland as the place where he would fulfill his mission and spend the rest of his life. He made a beautiful choice, too. Scotland is lush, green, and mountainous. Though the skies are often heavy with rain and clouds, ocean winds blow them away to reveal crystal blue lakes and fields of purple flowers underneath. Glens and valleys cut through the mountainous highlands of the north, and sea lochs carve narrow bays along the rocky coasts. In keeping with their customs, the Scottish are the ones still known today for wearing kilts (which look like plaid skirts) and playing the bagpipes.

Columba didn’t have to travel far to get to Scotland. Only a small channel of water separates Scotland from Ireland. As part of Great Britain, Scotland is actually on the same island as the countries of England and Wales.



The term “monastery” comes from the Greek word “monos,” which means “alone.” Early monks spent a lot of time alone studying and copying the Bible. (Pictured is a monastery in Etal, Germany.)

Columba Sails to Scotland

It was **563** when Columba left the coast of Ireland for good with 12 of his friends. They sailed in what the Irish call a **currach**, which is a hide-covered sea vessel. They landed on **Iona**, a tiny island off the western coast of Scotland.

These dedicated men immediately set up homes and a church in Iona. Their hope was to befriend a neighboring tribe that they referred to as the **Picts**. The name of the Picts came from the Romans. It meant the “painted people” because, quite simply, they liked to paint their bodies!

Painted or not, the Picts had a reputation for being fierce. Other Scots living in the land feared them and hoped that Columba and his men would convert them to Christianity and bring peace to the land. However, the Pict's chief leader, a daunting man named **Brude**, wanted nothing to do with Columba, his men—or their faith. He bolted his village gates to keep them out.

A story has been handed down which says that Columba made a sign of the cross on the locked gates—and they flew wide open in a miraculous display of God's power! Though it wasn't the parting of the Red Sea, it was enough to get the attention of a tough guy like Brude. With a change of heart, he listened intently to the men and their message. Within years, Brude—and nearly the entire community of Picts—became followers of Christ.

Columba kept his commitment to try to save souls in Scotland. As he had done in his homeland of Ireland, Columba set up monasteries for teaching and serving the Scottish. His greatest influence was through serving as the abbot of a large monastery in Iona. Iona was so changed that this tiny island became a significant center for learning and evangelism. The Scottish monastery became a model for other monasteries across the continent of Europe. So fine was the reputation of Iona that over time 46 Scottish kings wanted to be buried there, as was Columba.

One of the most important services of the monasteries was to preserve the writing of books. At a time when many people were illiterate (which means they couldn't read or write), monasterial monks were busy copying books—particularly the Bible. Because the printing press had not yet been invented, books could only be copied by hand. It was very tedious work. But the monks made a beautiful and valuable art of it, using brilliant colors and **illuminated letters**. (An illuminated letter is usually the first one on a page and stands out from the rest by size and elaborate decoration. These letters are truly beautiful.)

Through years of dedication and the writing of some of his own books, Columba was eventually responsible for sending out many preachers and missionaries into the world. Though Scotland was a small country, it became an influential one. The Christians of Scotland became serious about sharing the good news of Christ with the world.

Perhaps through his Christian influence, Columba did live up to the meaning of his name. Despite his bad temper, he was like a “dove” bringing a message of peace to the world. By the end of his life, Columba had influenced *at least* 3,000 people for the kingdom of God, which was his inspiration for going to Scotland in the first place.



With deep devotion to God, Columba did much to spread the Gospel of Christ to Scotland.

ACTIVITIES FOR LESSON 25

ALL STUDENTS

Turn to the Activity Supplement in the Appendix for a beautiful sample of an illuminated letter. Photocopy and color as you desire. File it in your Student Notebook under “Europe: Scotland.”

25A—Younger Students

1. Have you ever heard bagpipe music? Look for a recording on the Internet or at your local library. The bagpipe is considered the national instrument of Scotland. You might also look in an encyclopedia for information on bagpipes. Photocopy or print a picture of bagpipes and file it under “Europe: Scotland” in your Student Notebook.
2. Decorate yourself like the Picts.

Materials: Nontoxic body paints. (An alternative would be to add food coloring to hand or body lotion. Use caution with red, as it is difficult to remove!)

With teacher approval, decorate yourself with body paint. (Make sure it is nontoxic and designed for use on your body.) Make interesting patterns on your arms and legs. Take your picture and file it under “Europe: Scotland” in your Student Notebook.

3. To appreciate the dedicated work of the monks, copy a verse of the Bible by hand. I have been told that if a child were to begin copying the Bible at age 5 or 6, it could be completed by the time he or she graduated from high school. It would also create a meaningful record of growth in penmanship over the years that would hopefully correspond to the student’s spiritual development. Consider beginning this tremendous undertaking of copying the entire Bible or the New Testament.

25B—Middle Students

Play “Toss the Caber.”

Materials: Heavy-duty gloves, one medium-sized log, tape measure

As a test of strength, the Scottish hold an athletic event called “Toss the Caber.” In this event, men pick up a wooden beam about the size of a telephone pole and toss it as far as they can. Some beams weigh as much as 180 pounds and are thrown about 80 feet!

For your event, draw a line in an open place such as your backyard or a playground. Using gloves, have each contestant or class member take a turn standing on the line and tossing a medium-sized log underhand as far as he or she can. (Play this carefully!) Mark the landing place of each player’s log and record the winner’s distance in feet or meters.

If you want to really stay in character with the Scottish, do this wearing something resembling a plaid kilt! Take a photo and file it under “Europe: Scotland” in your Student Notebook.

25C—Older Students

1. Calculate your handwriting speed.

Materials: A Bible, paper, pen, clock, calculator

How many hours might it take you to copy the Bible by hand? A few hundred? A few thousand? Find an approximation using this calculation. In minutes, time how long it takes you to copy one column of one page of the Bible. Take this number and multiply it by two. This new number tells you how long it will take you to copy one full page of the Bible, assuming you write at the same pace. Take that number (still in minutes) and multiply it by the number of pages in your Bible. Now, divide that number by 60 to calculate the number of hours it would take you to copy the entire Bible by hand.

The tedious work of the monks is to be greatly admired! File your sample under “Europe: Scotland.” Title it “Scottish Monks Help Preserve the Bible.”

2. Research the **Book of Kells**. Handwritten by the monks of Iona, it is one of the most beautiful, handwritten copies of the Bible ever preserved. It is



The Book of Kells is known for its beautiful-artistic detail and interlaced designs.

kept today in the library of Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. Print a copy of it and file it in your Student Notebook under “Europe: Scotland.”

3. Research the **Lindisfarne Gospels**. Like the Book of Kells, this too is a well-preserved handwritten copy of Scripture. Its writing was inspired by a missionary from Iona who took the Gospel to Ireland! Consider the ripple effect of the life work of Columba. Obtain a picture of the Lindisfarne Gospels and note the Celtic style of it. File a copy of it in your Student Notebook under “Europe: Ireland.”

573

EARLY JAPAN AND PRINCE SHOTOKU

LESSON 26

If you had to choose, where would you rather live—by the mountains or the ocean? I think both are beautiful! Well, if you lived in Japan, you could enjoy the mountains *and* the ocean at the same time because every city in Japan is within 100 miles of the coast. And about 70 percent of Japan is made up of mountains! In fact, **Mount Fuji**, one of the most picturesque mountains in the world, is nestled in the islands of Japan. Today we’ll look at this beautiful country and its early history.

Japan is actually an **archipelago**, which is a fancy name for a chain of islands. The islands of Japan are located in the Pacific Ocean just off the eastern coast of China. Look at them now on a map or globe. What you’ll see is that there are four main islands that make up Japan. They are named **Hokkaido** (huh KI do), **Honshu** (HON shoo), **Kyushu** (KYOO shoo), and **Shikoku** (shi KO koo). But what you can’t see very easily on a map or globe is that there are actually 4,223 tiny islands that make up Japan! (Only 600 of them are inhabited, that is, have people living on them.)

According to mythological legend, a brother and a sister in the heavens were commanded by their elders to create Japan. From a bridge in heaven they drew a jeweled sword out of the ocean and every droplet of water that fell from the sword became an island. The Japanese call these sacred islands **Nippon** (nee pone), meaning “source of the sun.” We call them *Japan* because it is a shortened version of the name **Cipango** (si PAHNG go). That’s the name the explorer **Marco Polo** used for the islands. (We’ll learn more about him later.)

The first inhabitants of Japan didn’t look at all like “modern” Japanese people—nor do they now. These early island dwellers, who still live in northwest Japan, are the **Ainu** (I noo) people. The Ainu are short, stout people with white skin, circular eyes, thick noses, and lots of hair. In comparison, the modern Japanese person is taller and thinner with almond-shaped eyes, a slender nose, and very little body hair. So what happened? Well, one theory suggests that sometime in the early history of the world, people from China and Korea migrated to Japan, pushing the Ainu people to one corner of the country. Since



At 12,388 feet, Mount Fuji stands as the highest and most awe-inspiring peak in Japan. Thousands of Japanese climb to the top of the mountain, which holds an inactive volcano crater.

then, the Chinese, Korean, and Indonesian races have blended to make up the Japanese people we know today.

There is not much documented history of early Japan. But it seems that one of the first emperors was named **Jimmu Tenno** and lived about 600 years before Christ. According to Japanese myth, Tenno was a descendant of a sun goddess. Although there was an emperor in existence that long ago, most of Japan was ruled by scattered clan leaders who often fought against one another. That is, until about the year 400. At that time, the **Yamato clan** gained some control over all the other clans. Ever since then, the imperial rulers of Japan have claimed to be descendants of the Yamato clan—even still today.

Shinto

The earliest religion of Japan is called **Shinto**. It means “way of the gods.” Shinto is one of the oldest religions of the world. It holds that **Kami** is the sacred energy behind everything, be it the gods, nature, or the emperor. Followers offer gifts to appease the forces of nature and countless numbers of spirits. Shinto has no formal doctrine, no fancy rituals, no priests, and no teachings of heaven or hell. It is not so much a set of beliefs as a way of life.

Though Shinto has no doctrine to believe in, it does require *complete* loyalty to Japan and its emperor. This makes Shinto like no other religion. No other country in the world has adopted Shinto because it claims that Japan *alone* was created a sacred place and that the Japanese *alone* are sacred people! Nothing has ever proved the patriotic teachings of Shinto more than the World War II **kamikaze pilots** who died for their emperor and country. (A kamikaze pilot is one who kills himself by flying his plane into the enemy.)

As admirable as it is to die for one’s country, Shinto fails to address the real spiritual needs of the Japanese people. By believing in the superiority of the Japanese, it would appear they have no need for salvation from sin.

However, the Bible says, “*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*” (Rom. 3:23)

The word *all* in this passage means even the

people of Japan. The good news is that the Bible also says, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*” (John 3:16) The word *world* in this passage refers to everyone in the world, including the Japanese people—for whom God offers eternal life through Christ.

Now you may be wondering if the Shinto religion still exists in Japan. To some degree it does. There are still many public and private temples where the Japanese worship in Shinto style. However, there was born a prince in **573** who brought a new religion as well as many other ideas into Japan. The prince’s name was **Shotoku Taishi** and the new religion was **Buddhism**.

Prince Shotoku

Shotoku spread his belief in Buddhism all across Japan by supporting Buddhist monasteries and building Buddhist temples. His exposure to



Prince Shotoku is considered the “founder of Japanese civilization” for writing a constitution for Japan.



Apart from the knowledge of Jesus Christ, many are still drawn to worship at Buddhist temples.

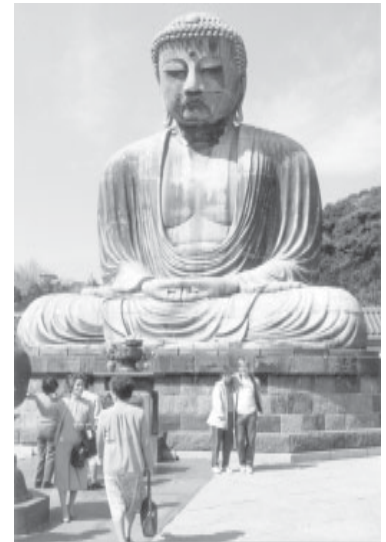
Buddhism probably came from China. As Shotoku promoted Buddhism, many Japanese kept their Shinto beliefs but added Buddha's teachings to them. Because Buddhism is considered a religion of great compassion, Shotoku was considered a great humanitarian by his people and was widely respected.

Prince Shotoku not only introduced Buddhism to Japan, but he also wrote history, painted pictures, and oversaw the building of the **Horiuji Temple**, one of the greatest masterpieces of early Japan. Even more significant is that Shotoku wrote a *constitution* for Japan. With it he started the idea of there being a central government in place. (This idea also came from China.) For all these new ideas, Prince Shotoku has been named the “**founder of Japanese civilization.**” When he died, the Japanese grieved deeply over him.

Even after his death, Shotoku continued to influence Japan. A Great Reform called the **Taika** took place in the government in 621 as a result of what Shotoku had started. Through the Taika, the emperor became the owner of *all* the land of Japan, and taxes were paid directly to him. This kind of imperial rule lasted for centuries. And by 747 there was evidence that the Japanese would continue to embrace the practice of Buddhism that Shotoku started as they built a huge monument to Buddha called the **Daibutsu** (die BOOT sue) in the city of Nara. The Daibutsu stands 53 feet tall and contains over a million pounds of metal. (The little finger of the statue is about the size of a man!)

Of course, like Shinto, the teachings of Buddhism and the building of great shrines fail to address the real spiritual needs of the Japanese. Buddhism may provide moral teachings for the Japanese, but it does not introduce them to the Savior. Jesus said of Himself, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*” (John 14:6)

Well, as I said in the beginning, Japan is a beautiful place and its history is interesting. As you can tell, Japan has been greatly influenced by its religions and its leaders. We will come back to the development of Japan in the third quarter when we learn about the **samurai**. I think you'll find them intriguing!



As pictured here, the Japanese built another Daibutsu, or “Big Buddha,” in the city of Kamakura in 1252. At 31 feet high, the statue towers over tourists much like the one in Nara.

ACTIVITIES FOR LESSON 26

ALL STUDENTS

Sushi, a Japanese rice and fish dish, has become increasingly popular in the United States. Rice and fish are the main staples of a Japanese diet. Try sushi at a Japanese restaurant in your area or look to make your own by visiting this Japanese *Cookbook for Kids* site on the Internet:

<http://web-jpn.org/kidsweb/cook.html>

Then click on “Sushi” for a variety of recipes. Check out the other links as well!

(The “home” site for this cookbook is Web Japan. Its Web site is:

<http://web-jpn.org>

Click on “Kids Web Japan” and click on “Cookbook for Kids” to access the cookbook. There are also many additional Japan-oriented links for children. As always, **adult supervision** is advised!)

26A—Younger Students

1. Research Mount Fuji on the Internet, at the library, or in an encyclopedia. Find out how tall it is and what island it is on. Write these two facts down on paper. Photocopy a picture of Mount Fuji and glue it to your page of facts. Place this paper in your Student Notebook under “Asia: Japan.”
2. Using picture books from the library, look for examples of traditional Japanese clothing. Photocopy your favorites in black and white. Cut them out, color them, and glue them on paper. Place these colorful samples in your Student Notebook under “Asia: Japan.”

26B—Middle Students

1. Japan has a history of many terrible earthquakes. One dates as far back as 599. Other significant dates include the years 1703 (32,000 died in Tokyo), 1885 (thousands died), and 1923 (100,000 died in Tokyo and 37,000 in Yokohama). I read that some children in Kamakura still went to school the next day using broken plaster for pencils and broken tiles for slates! Research what causes earthquakes and why some countries are more prone to them than others. Write one to three paragraphs on paper. Photocopy pictures of earthquake devastation and add these to your report. File this in your Student Notebook under “Asia: Japan.”
2. Research kamikaze pilots. Though we’re jumping ahead in history here, the role of kamikaze pilots was significant in the bombing of Pearl Harbor in World War II. Search out the estimated number of pilots who gave their lives in this manner based on their religious beliefs. File your conclusions in your Student Notebook under “Asia: Japan.”

26C—Older Students

As we did with the religions studied in Volume I of *The Mystery of History*, research and compare Shintoism to Christianity. (If you have not previously done this for Buddhism, then include it also in your comparison.) I highly recommend the resource, *Handbook of Today’s Religions* by Josh McDowell and Don Stewart. (Answers are provided in the Activity Supplement.)

1. The founder of the religion and date of origination.
2. The source of authority (written works of the religion, visions, prophecy).
3. The doctrine of God (believing there is one God or many gods).
4. The doctrine of Jesus Christ (believing Jesus was God in the flesh or just a prophet).
5. Their belief in sin.
6. The doctrine of salvation. (On what basis is sin forgiven or accounted for?)
7. The doctrine of things to come. (Is there a belief in life after death or in a coming judgment of the world?)
8. What draws people to this religion (lifestyle, ritual, heritage, etc.)?

GREGORY THE GREAT

LESSON 27

Have you ever heard of the **pope**? I mentioned him briefly in Lesson 22 when discussing the importance of the church in the Dark Ages. Depending on your religious background, you may or may not know much about him. For those of you who don't, I'm going to explain who the pope is because the man we're studying today, **Gregory I**, was a pope in the Early Middle Ages. He was a very good one, too, which is why most people remember him as **Gregory the Great**.

The story of the pope goes way back to the Early Church. Members of the present-day **Roman Catholic Church** believe that Jesus started the position of the pope when he said these words to **Peter**:

“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” (Matt. 16:18–19)

From this passage, the Roman Catholic Church believes it is the one true church started by Jesus through Peter. That would make Peter the first “pope” of the Roman Catholic Church, though he wasn't called that during his lifetime. The word *pope* in Latin simply means “papa” or “father.” Like a father is the head of a family, so the pope is considered by Roman Catholics as the “visible head” of the Roman Catholic Church, and Christ is considered the “invisible head.”

However, there are many Christians who interpret the Bible differently than Roman Catholics do and who don't believe in the position and authority of the pope. They would say that Peter only considered himself an “elder” of the church, as stated in 1 Peter 5:1–4. In that passage, too, Peter says he is an example to the flock, not a lord. We will be learning more about that in another volume when we cover the **Reformation**. That's the time in history when lots of people tried to “reform,” or change, the teachings of the church in regard to the pope and other matters. These reformers became known as **Protestants** for protesting against the church. You may want to discuss with your teacher now whether your family is Protestant, Roman Catholic, or some other faith.

The tradition of the Roman Catholic Church has remained strong and powerful for over 2,000 years. According to them there has been a pope ever since Peter lived. Not once has the chain been broken. (Although there were times when more than one man claimed to be pope, but that's another story!) This kind of long tradition naturally brings with it great power.

As I mentioned in Lesson 22, the first men who followed Peter as leaders of the church called themselves **bishops**. It wasn't until the fifth century, after the fall of the Western Roman Empire, that the word *pope* was used instead. It was used to designate the head of all the other bishops, or the bishop of Rome. You will also hear the terms *pontiff* and *papacy* to describe the pope and his ruling system.



Pope, pontiff, and papacy are all terms used to describe the pope and his ruling system.

Somewhere along the way, the men who were chosen to be pope began to change their names. On becoming pope, they would rename themselves after a saint or a former pope whom they admired. That explains why so many of the popes' names are the same. For example, Gregory was the name of 16 different popes. The name became popular because the very first Gregory was truly a great man, as his name implies. Let's examine his life now and learn how he developed such a good reputation.

Gregory the Great

Gregory was born of a wealthy family. He inherited a lot of money from his parents as well as a palace of his own. At age 33 he became the mayor of Rome. But after one term, Gregory learned that he disliked politics a great deal. The evil things he saw around him convinced him that the world was soon coming to an end. Though he was wrong about the world ending then, he was right about how hard life was around him. It was, of course, the period called the Dark Ages when people were still struggling to survive after the fall of the Roman Empire.

Being a man of great compassion for the poor and having concern for the lost, Gregory did a most incredible thing. He turned his luxurious palace home into the **Monastery of St. Andrew** and took the lowly vows of a **monk**. Now think about that for a minute. If you were rich and owned a mansion, would you want to give it away to serve your community and live like the poor? Not many people would. It was this kind of charitable gesture that characterized the rest of Gregory's life and caused others to admire him.

One of Gregory's greatest passions was to travel and share the Gospel of Christ. In other words, he wanted to be a missionary. However, Gregory was so valuable to the church in Rome that he was never given permission to leave. Gregory said later that some of the happiest days of his life were those he spent serving as a monk in Rome. He was glad that he had stayed there after all.

As the years went by, Gregory grew in wisdom. When **Pope Pelagius II** died in **590**, Gregory was naturally the most likely monk to fill the empty position. But, you know what? He didn't want to be pope! At age 50, Gregory cherished his life as a monk. If he were to accept the position of pope, he would inherit great duty, tremendous power, and even wealth. Becoming a pope in those days was practically like becoming a king. Gregory greatly struggled with the idea of this.

To solve the dilemma, Gregory decided to take the position of pope but *only* under the condition that he would keep the simple lifestyle of a monk. That meant that he would continue to dress in plain robes, live in simple quarters, and eat basic foods. Gregory fulfilled all of this. As an example, he lived mostly on raw fruits and vegetables and fasted for long periods of time. To deal with the wealth of the Western Church, Gregory gave most of it to the poor.

Though Gregory chose to live a simple life, the legacy he left as a pope was hardly simple at all. Gregory I, as I will now refer to him, was a brilliant leader. He made tremendous decisions and advancements for the Western Church. His authority was well established and respected throughout the Christian world.

Gregory I even got back into politics to some degree. He did so because the **Lombards** were invading Rome. Gregory I turned to the Byzantine Empire for help but was refused. So, Gregory I used rent money from the church to support an army that fought the Lombards. For this, Gregory I gained great respect as a *civil* leader as well as a religious leader.



Gregory had great compassion for the poor, the sick, and the lost. Though he became a powerful pope, Gregory kept the simple lifestyle of a monk until his death.

Even with this great power, Gregory the Great's heart remained pure to his passion for the lost. There is a story about him that goes like this: While passing through the market in Rome one day, Gregory I saw a group of slaves being unloaded from England. He was struck by their light-colored hair, blue eyes, and fair skin. Gregory asked if these beautiful people knew anything of Christianity. He was told no, and that these people were **Angles** from a pagan land. With compassion, Gregory said of them that they looked like "angels," not Angles. And though he could not leave Rome to preach the Gospel to them, he sent **Augustine of Canterbury** to do the job.

Augustine of Canterbury and other Benedictine monks invested their lives in converting many Angles, Saxons, and Jutes in England to Christianity. Gregory I also sent missionaries to Sicily, Sardinia, and Lombardy. Seven monasteries were founded as a result of Gregory the Great's concern for the gospel. In every situation, he gave priority to the poor and the oppressed. He also made sure that, whenever possible, the church paid to free prisoners of war.

Gregory I was so dedicated to the poor in Rome that the destitute of the city received a month's portion of food, clothing, and money. If people were too sick to get their food, it was delivered to them. And, Gregory I personally wrote hundreds of letters of encouragement to those who were in great need of counsel or healing. He was considered to be a true pastor to his people, a caring shepherd to his flock. He was so humble that he called himself *servus servorum Dei*, which is Latin for "the servant of the servants of God."¹



In great humility, Pope Gregory referred to himself as "the servant of the servants of God."



Though born in Italy, Augustine of Canterbury has been called the "Apostle to the English" for sharing Christ with thousands of Saxon people.

To keep his legacy of servanthood alive, Gregory I wrote training manuals for other bishops to learn from. He wrote, "Every preacher should give forth a sound [he should provide a model] more by his deeds than by his words, and rather by good living imprint footsteps for men to follow than by speaking show them the way to walk."²

Gregory I wrote lots of other books, too. He was very intrigued by the supernatural activity of angels and demons and wrote a lot about them. These writings greatly influenced the theology of the Western Church and the use of holy relics in worship. He wrote also of the life of Job, a character in the Old Testament

who suffered much hardship in life. The famous **Gregorian chant**, a special kind of soothing music, is

1. Will Durant, *The Age of Faith*. Vol. IV of *The Story of Civilization*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950; p. 521.
2. James A. Corrick, *World History Series: The Early Middle Ages*. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1995; p. 35.

named after Gregory I although he probably didn't create it. (Monks were known for spending hours in prayer and meditation. Chanting and singing were part of the worship process.)

While Gregory the Great's spiritual influence grew over the years, his physical strength slipped away. As Gregory I grew older, his body became more and more fragile. His last years on earth were spent in much pain and physical weakness. In 599 he wrote, "I have rarely been able to leave my bed. I am tormented with gout and painful anxieties that . . . every day I look for the relief of death."³ In 604 he died peacefully, as was his desire.

As you can tell by now, Gregory I is one of those men who rightfully have been remembered as "great." As one of the most outstanding popes of medieval times, Gregory I demonstrated a true servant's heart. It is no wonder that many popes who followed him would choose the name of Gregory.

ACTIVITIES FOR LESSON 27

ALL STUDENTS

1. **Make your Memory Cards for Lessons 25–27.**
2. Sing the hymn, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross." Though Isaac Watts is credited with writing the hymn, it is based on a Gregorian chant. (If you don't know the words or music, go to www.cyberhymnal.org and search on the title.)

27A—Younger Students

1. Dress like a monk. (Sort of!)

Materials: Large brown paper bag for lawn and garden waste (use a self-standing large paper bag, 16 by 12 by 35 inches; see Photo 1), a 2- to 3-foot cord or piece of rope, pencil, scissors

Place the large bag over your head and body with any lettering on the back side. (Please note this will only work with a very large paper bag. Never place a plastic bag over your head!) With your teacher's help, determine the approximate location of your arms and head. Use a pencil to mark this from the outside. (See Photo 2.) Remove the bag from your head. Use the scissors to cut a hole for each arm and for your head. Place the bag back over your head, inserting your head and arms through the holes. Tie a cord or rope around your waist. (See Photo 3.)

Though obviously monks did not and still do not wear paper bags as clothes, consider the *simplicity* of what you have on. What spiritual, emotional, and financial benefits are there to simplifying one's life? (Discuss what *spiritual*, *emotional*, and *financial* mean.) Take a photo and file it under "Europe: Italy" in your Student Notebook.



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3

3. Will Durant, *The Age of Faith*. Vol. IV of *The Story of Civilization*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950; p. 524.

2. Have your teacher find the sound of a Gregorian chant. (I recommend using a computerized encyclopedia with CD-ROM capabilities or the library.) Listen to the soothing sounds and discuss with your teacher how it makes you feel. Why do you think the monks used this kind of music for meditation and worship? Talk about modern praise music used in worship. Do you have a favorite praise song?

(*Note to Teacher:* My historical editor recommends a CD by Spanish monks appropriately titled *Chant*.)

27B—Middle Students

Gregory I wore plain brown robes like those of a monk even after becoming pope. To appreciate this, consider what he could have worn as pope.

The pope usually wears a white robe with an ornamental clasp made of precious jewels. Around his waist he wears a *pallium*, which is a woolen band embroidered with crosses. His shoes are red with an embroidered cross on each. The pope has a golden cross necklace that is said to have part of the true Cross in it. He also wears a ring called the *fisherman's ring* because Peter had been a fisherman. The pope often wears a small cloth on his head like a beanie. In processions, he might wear a large cone-shaped triple crown called a *tiara*.

Photocopy pictures you find of the pope in an encyclopedia or reference book (or print them from the Internet). Then try to find a picture of a monk from the Middle Ages. Glue these photos on the same page. Title your page “Gregory I, the Pope Who Dressed Like a Monk.” File it under “Europe: Italy” in your Student Notebook.

27C—Older Students

1. Research the present home of the pope, which is the Vatican Palace in the Vatican City. (The Vatican City is an independent state within the city of Rome.) Research the most famous painted ceiling in the world, the Sistine Chapel, located at the palace. Photocopy or print it from the Internet. Place it in your Student Notebook under “Europe: Italy.” Title it “The Home of the Pope.”
2. Investigate the Ruthwell cross. It was carved in the eighth century as a creative means to tell the Gospel. In what similarly creative way can you share the Gospel? Present your ideas to your class or family using modern imagery, artwork, or symbolism.

THE SUI AND TANG DYNASTIES OF CHINA

LESSON 28

Zhongguo. That is what the early Chinese called the land of China. It means *Middle Kingdom* because the Chinese believed that their country was in the *middle*, or the very *center*, of the civilized world. If you studied Volume I of *The Mystery of History*, then hopefully you learned many things like this about **China**. But for this volume, it is our first look at this enormous country. We'll begin to learn today at least a few things that were going on in faraway China while Europe was struggling through the Dark Ages.

The last we looked at China in Volume I it was being ruled by the **Han dynasty**. A **dynasty** is a powerful group or family that rules a country for a long period of time—perhaps even for hundreds of years. In her history, China has been officially ruled by 11 different dynasties. The first five, which bring us up to the time period of this lesson, were the **Xia** (shee a), the **Shang**, the **Zhou** (joh or joe), the **Qin** (chin), and the **Han** (hahn) dynasties.

The Han dynasty lasted a very long time—from about 200 years *before* Jesus lived to about 200 years *after* He lived. That would be about 400 years altogether. Because of this long reign, most of the one billion residents of China today are descendants of the Han people. When the Han dynasty did collapse in A.D. 221, there wasn't another family strong enough to keep the country united. Instead, the states of China fought and struggled against each other for 370 years. That's a long time to struggle without a leader.

The Sui Dnasty

But finally there arose a man capable of bringing China back together. His name was **Yang Chien**. In **589** he started the **Sui dynasty**. Yang Chien bravely took the throne of northern China; then he crossed the Yangtze River and conquered southern China, too. To understand how important that was, you might want to look at China this way—just as the Roman Empire was once split between the east and the west, China was divided between the north and the south. So, it was a remarkable accomplishment by Yang Chien to bring the two regions together.

Yang Chien did at least two really smart things to help make the country more stable. He lowered the taxes that were way too high, and he allowed men to serve in the army for shorter periods of time. In that way men could keep more of their income and spend more time with their families. It produced a healthier nation.

To further add to the health of China, the next Sui emperor—named **Yang Do**—oversaw the building of the **Grand Canal**. It is the largest man-made waterway in the world! It took over a *million* people to build it. The canal connected over 1,200 miles of small rivers across China, from the city of **Hangchow** in the south to **Peking** in the north. It is pretty incredible still today.



In 589 Yang Chien started the Sui dynasty and united northern and southern China.



Barges and boats of all shapes and sizes carry goods and people through thousands of miles of canals and waterways in China.

Unfortunately, though, Yang Do had another idea that wasn't so smart. He expected people to pay their taxes *10* years ahead of time so that he could build nice parks and palaces with their money! Needless to say, this idea didn't go over very well. The people of China rebelled and had him killed. By 618, the Sui dynasty fell apart, leaving China in chaos once again.

The Tang Dynasty and T'ai Tsung

However, there was one Chinese official under the Sui dynasty who was glad for the chaos. He saw it as an opportunity to rise to power and lead China back to its greatness. His name was **Li Yuan**. In **618**, with the Sui dynasty crumbling, Li

Yuan started what is called the **Tang dynasty**. Unlike the short-lived Sui dynasty, the Tang family kept its rule for about 300 years and ushered in what historians would call the **Golden Age of China**.

One of the more interesting rulers of the Tang dynasty was Li Yuan's son. His name was **T'ai Tsung** (627–650). Like most kings, T'ai Tsung started his reign trying to conquer surrounding nations through battles and bloodshed. But unlike most kings, he grew tired of war. In the same way that **King Asoka** (a SHO ka) of India (Volume I) left the battlefield to study the peaceful teachings of **Buddha**, T'ai Tsung also left the battlefield to seek a more peaceful way of life. He found it in the teachings of **Confucius**.

T'ai Tsung read and reread the volumes of Confucius. Finding them incredibly valuable, he had them republished. The humble teachings of Confucius were a powerful influence on him. Though he was a king, T'ai Tsung followed Confucius in living modestly, ruling fairly, and turning down many of the luxuries that were available to him.

As an example of his fairness, T'ai Tsung did something remarkable during his reign. He was told that he needed to make tougher sentences for criminals. But, he came up with another idea. He said, "If I diminish expenses, lighten the taxes, employ only honest officials, so that the people have clothing enough, this will do more to abolish robbery than the employment of the severest punishments."¹

To test out his new idea for reform, T'ai Tsung took 290 men who were condemned to die and asked them to go into the work fields and do their work without any supervision—if by their word they promised to return. That means they were trusted to not escape though not a single guard was placed to watch them. Do you want to guess what happened? At the end of the day, every one of the men came back to the prison—as they had



Started by Li Yuan in 618, the Tang dynasty ushered in "the Golden Age" of China through magnificent art, invention, and trade.

1. Will Durant, *Our Oriental Heritage*. Vol. I of *The Story of Civilization*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954; p. 702.

promised! T'ai Tsung was so delighted with the honor of the criminals that he freed all of them. After that, he declared that no king should ever give the death sentence to a criminal unless first the king had fasted for three days.

Though T'ai Tsung remained faithful to the teachings of Confucius all his life, he was very open to the philosophies of other religions. (If you studied Volume I, you may recall that Confucianism is not really a religion in and of itself, but rather a set of moral teachings.) So, T'ai Tsung welcomed **Christians**, **Buddhists**, and **Muslims** along with their ideas into his kingdom. In fact, one of the oldest mosques in the world is in China. (A mosque is a place of worship for Muslims. We'll learn who they are in our next lesson.)

As is probably evident, T'ai Tsung was a good king for keeping China stable. When he died, the whole country grieved for him. His reign helped pave the way for China to be on top of the world. The beautiful capital he built in **Ch'ang** (which is now the city of **Xi'an**) attracted great scholars, artists, scientists, poets, and musicians from all over the world. The city had its own banking system and well-laid-out streets. While Europe was groping through the Dark Ages, China was most definitely in her Golden Age.

I might add here that T'ai Tsung employed one of China's most amazing women to be one of his concubines. (A concubine is a romantic companion or mistress.) Her name was **Wu Zetian**. After T'ai Tsung's death, Wu Zetian managed to become the only female ruler that China ever had! But her story is so fascinating that I'm saving it for Lesson 31. You'll just have to wait.



Though now an industrial center, Xi'an was once considered the Rome of the East for its beauty, popularity, and importance during the days when it was T'ai Tsung's capital city of Ch'ang.

China was so advanced during the Tang dynasty that a historian named Murdoch said it was "the most progressive, and the best-governed, empire on the face of the globe."² What made China so brilliant? Many, many things made her the envy of the world. For one, the Chinese were comfortable. At least in their clothing they were. With all the silk that was available in China, even the common man's clothes were soft and luxurious. Besides that, the Chinese had learned to heat their homes with coal and gas. Warmth in the winter makes almost everyone feel more comfortable!

Furthermore, due to the success of trading things such as silk, corn, rice, and spices, wealth was abundant during the Tang dynasty. This allowed even ordinary families to spend a little money on recreation and entertainment. Some people had boats just for the pleasure of traveling up and down the endless riverways of China. For real amusement, the Chinese figured out how to use gunpowder to make **fireworks**! (Aren't we glad for that?) In fact, fireworks were added to the Chinese New Year during the Tang dynasty. During this fun festival, a giant man-made dragon is led through the streets with firecrackers popping because of the superstition that this will scare away evil spirits for the next year!

2. James Murdoch, *A History of Japan*, Vol. 1 (1925), p. 146. As quoted in Will Durant, *Our Oriental Heritage*. Vol. 1 of *The Story of Civilization*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954; p. 703.

While in Europe the common man at this time was drinking a weakened form of beer or ale, the Chinese peasants were enjoying fine **tea**. With fancy porcelain cups and plates, the Chinese were beginning to treat the serving of tea like a beautiful form of art. And it has remained so for centuries.

Additionally, creative poets, painters, jewelers, and inventors flourished in the big cities of China. Artists had enough resources to carve statues out of pure rubies. (Fine gems were so plentiful that sometimes even the dead were buried on expensive beds of pearls.) The famous Chinese artist named **Wu Tao-tze** painted over 400 frescoes during the Tang dynasty. Though most have since been destroyed, his works are said to have been comparable in their beauty to those of Michelangelo. And long before the Europeans, the Chinese built hydraulic bridges and refined the business of printing. They also began the important task of writing medical encyclopedias.

As you can tell, this really was a golden time for China. However, the Tang dynasty did reach its end in 906. Warring neighbors eventually weakened it. But, for the three hundred years that it ruled, it ruled very well. The Chinese can be proud of their strong heritage and of the era when they were the greatest empire in the world.

ACTIVITIES FOR LESSON 28

ALL STUDENTS

The Chinese Moon Festival dates back to the Tang dynasty or earlier. It takes place on the fifteenth day of the lunar month and is sometimes called the Mid-Autumn Festival. This festive occasion celebrates the harvest moon, or the largest and brightest full moon of the season. There are many versions of mythological legends behind the Moon Festival. Modern Chinese families still enjoy celebrating the Moon Festival by eating “moon cakes,” gazing at the moon, and joining in dragon and lion dances. Research the Internet at www.newton.mec.edu/Angier/DimSum/china__dim_sum__moon_festi.html to find out more about the Moon Festival and a recipe for moon cakes.

Note to Teacher: The lengths of the underlines vary in this Internet address, and it is important to make the lengths as follows: two underlines after “china”; one underline after “dim”; two after “sum”; and one after “moon.”

28A—Younger Students

1. Have a Chinese Tea Party.

Purchase a brand of Chinese tea from the grocery store. Sit on the floor for your tea-drinking ceremony. Use tiny teacups that do not have handles. Keep tea leaves loose in the teapot, instead of in a tea bag. If you only have tea bags available, tear them open and place the tea leaves in your pot. The Chinese do not add sugar, cream, or milk. And lastly, don't use metal spoons. Though there is much more to a Chinese tea party, following these few rules should make for a fairly authentic event. Take a picture of your tea time and place it in your Student Notebook under “Asia: China.”

2. Eat with chopsticks.

Follow two simple rules when using chopsticks: Never allow the sticks to touch your mouth, and do not allow the sticks to cross when laying them down on the table.

28B—Middle Students

For centuries, women were generally looked down on in China. They were most often treated as servants. Turn to the Activity Supplement in the Appendix to a song written about the sad state of being a woman in China. Read and discuss it with your teacher. How does it make you feel? How did Jesus treat women in the Bible? Find examples.

28C—Older Students

1. As further research to the activity listed in 28B, investigate and discuss the *modern* treatment of women in China. In particular, consider the issue of mandatory abortion imposed in some parts of China.
2. There are many religious cults in our world today. It may surprise you to know just how far back in history Christian cults developed. Research the Nestorians from Persia to discover what beliefs they had that would classify them as a Christian cult. They are one group that particularly got the attention of T'ai Tsung. He ordered that the Nestorian scriptures be translated to Chinese for him to read. In 635 he found the writings to be satisfactory and allowed them to be preached throughout his kingdom. A Nestorian monastery and church were started in China as a result. There still stands in China today a monument to the Nestorians dating back to 781. In light of this story, discuss with your teacher or class the significance of sound doctrine.
3. Research the sad love story of Emperor Ming Huang and the beautiful Yang Kwei-fei. Ming Huang was called the “Brilliant Emperor” of the Tang dynasty (713–756). Learn how the death of Yang Kwei-fei led to a rebellion.
4. If you are new to *The Mystery of History*, begin now a HANDWRITTEN running list of Chinese dynasties to be filed in your Student Notebook under “Asia: China.” (If you have previously done this activity in Volume I, then simply add to the list you already created. Your “Special Notes” may be different from mine.)

Your list should be set up like the one below. (I’m including the information from Volume I.) For future lists, I will provide only the dates and names of the dynasties. I will ask you, the student, to then provide the Special Notes by reviewing the lesson. Today I’ll give you “Hints” of what to include.

The Dynasties of China

<i>Date of Power</i>	<i>Years Ruling</i>	<i>Name of Dynasty</i>	<i>Special Notes</i>
c. 2000–1600 B.C.	c. 400 yrs.	Xia	Evidence of cities, bronze in use.
c. 1600–1066 B.C.	c. 534 yrs.	Shang	Developed writing, harvested silkworms.
c. 1122–256 B.C.	c. 866 yrs.	Zhou	Founded by King Wen, divided into Eastern and Western regions, large cities, farming, and iron abundant, Confucius lived.
221–206 B.C.	15 yrs.	Qin	The First Emperor of China, Shi Huang Ti, built the Great Wall and was buried with 7,600 terra-cotta soldiers.
202 B.C.–A.D. 220	422 yrs.	Han	Expanded under Emperor Wu Ti, horses imported, the “Silk Road” established, paper invented, Jesus Christ lived.

A.D. 589–A.D. 618	29 yrs.	Sui	(Hint: Consider including the founder’s name, the unification of the north and south, the Grand Canal.)
A.D. 618–A.D. 906	288 yrs.	Tang	(Hint: Don’t forget the Golden Age, T’ai Tsung, Empress Wu Zetian, and fireworks!)

MOHAMMED AND THE BIRTH OF ISLAM

LESSON 29

In our last lesson, I mentioned a group of people called **Muslims**. They are also called **Moslems** or followers of the **Islamic faith**. Today I’m going to introduce you to the man who started the Islamic religion. His name was **Mohammed** (sometimes spelled Muhammad). Because of the huge influence that Mohammed has had on the world, I believe he is a very significant man to study. And because so many problems in our world today stem from conflict *between* Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, I believe it is wise to *try* to understand Mohammed, the founder of Islam.

Mohammed was born about 570 in the hot, dry city of **Mecca** on the peninsula of **Arabia**. (We call it Saudi Arabia now.) A **peninsula** is a piece of land almost completely surrounded by water. Saudi Arabia happens to be the largest peninsula in the world. Though surrounded by water, at least one-third of it is a scorching desert. In fact, the word *Arab* means “arid,” or dry.

The city of Mecca where Mohammed was born was so hot that little could grow there. But Mecca grew large because it was a great stop for **traders**. It sits near the shore of the Red Sea where ships can easily come and go with their goods.

Mohammed was raised in a poor family by his uncle. His uncle was a tribal chief, better known as a **sheik**. Most families lived in tribes under the protection of a sheik since there was not a strong government in Arabia. Like most Arab boys, young Mohammed spent much of his youth tending sheep and camels and never learning to read or write. But one thing he liked was the chance to join caravans of traders who would pass through his city. He enjoyed hearing stories from far-off places. He was especially influenced by the Jewish and Christian traders who told him stories about there being just one God.

You see, in that time in Arabia, hundreds of gods were worshiped instead of just one. A black, square temple had been erected in the city of Mecca called the **Kaaba** where, in fact, 360 gods were worshiped! As seen in many cultures, the Arabs left offerings and goods at the Kaaba to seek the favor of the gods. Worshipers marched around the temple in crowded circles, chanting and praying. The most devoted would kiss a special black stone that was embedded in the wall of the Kaaba. The stone supposedly fell from heaven and was once white. (Some think it was a meteorite.) The Arabs believed that, over time, it was the sins of the people that made the stone turn black. This was the spiritual world that Mohammed was raised in.

When Mohammed was 20, he got a job helping a widow with her estate. Her name was **Khadijah**. She was about 15 years older than Mohammed. But in just a few years, they married. Despite their age difference, they were very happy together. They had three children of their own and adopted a son after their twin boys died.

Mohammed Claims to Have Visions

When Mohammed was 40 years old, he claimed to have some unusual things happen to him. He thought he was hearing an angel. At first he wondered if he was hearing things from the **jinn** or **jinni**. The jinn were believed to be both good and bad and something between an angel and a man (from where we get the notion of genies). But after some time, Mohammed believed he was receiving revelations about god from the **archangel Gabriel**.

This angel supposedly told Mohammed that there was only one god and that his name was **Allah**. **Allah-Taala** was the name already given to one of the gods worshiped at the Kaaba who was thought to be the ruler of the universe—but not very interested in man. So, the idea of “Allah” probably did not originate with Mohammed. But Mohammed was the first to claim that Allah³ was the “only” god.

Over the next several years, Mohammed continued to claim revelations from Gabriel. Mohammed himself never wrote down any of these revelations because he couldn’t read or write. But he said that he memorized the revelations by repeating them back to Gabriel word for word. It was after Mohammed’s death that his followers wrote down these revelations in what is called the **Koran**. The Koran (sometimes spelled Quran) is the Holy Book of Islam.



Mohammed, the founder of Islam, believed that he alone was the prophet for Allah as revealed by Gabriel, the archangel.



Mohammed’s father-in-law, Abu Bekr, was one of the first converts to Islam.

But I’m getting way ahead in the story here. The Koran wasn’t written until after Mohammed’s death.

Mohammed shared his early revelations with his family and friends. They immediately believed him. His first converts were his wife Khadijah, his cousin **Ali**, his servant **Zaid** (whom he later freed), and his friend named **Abu Bekr** (who was also his father-in-law). Abu Bekr convinced five of his friends to convert to the teachings of Mohammed. Together the six men became known as Mohammed’s “Companions,” who later helped establish the Islamic faith.

But the merchants and leaders of Mecca were not so easy to convert. They were hesitant to think that there was only one god because it threatened their business. You see they made a lot of money from visitors wanting to buy sacrifices for their numerous gods. For this and other reasons, Mohammed and his followers were very unwelcome in Mecca.

3. Though in English it is common to write *Allah* as a proper name for their god, this is inappropriate and appalling to Muslims. They feel that the use of this term for “god” creates the impression that Allah is *different* from the God of the Bible. They believe their god is the *same* as the God of the Bible, though Jews and Christians strongly disagree with this.

As more and more people began to follow Mohammed, the Arabian leaders got nervous, particularly those who were of the Quraish tribe. Because *their* way of thinking was being challenged, they soon became enemies to Mohammed. They offered to pay Mohammed to see a doctor if it would cure him of his madness! Mohammed refused. The Quraish desperately wanted to run Mohammed and his new converts out of town, but they couldn't do so without starting a war. So instead they tortured the poorer converts, who were slaves, by exposing them to the boiling desert sun. Mohammed's friend, Abu Bekr, bought the freedom of as many of the slaves as he could afford to prevent this kind of persecution.

Things grew worse for Mohammed and his followers. Many of them fled to nearby cities and were separated from their tribes and clans. To make matters even more difficult for Mohammed, both his wife and a good friend died in the same year. In his grief, Mohammed tried to move to a nearby village but was stoned and forced out. Mohammed returned to his home in Mecca and married *two* new wives.

During this chaotic time, Mohammed believed he received more and more revelations from Gabriel about Allah. He claimed, too, that one night he was taken from his sleep on a winged horse and flown to the city of **Jerusalem**. He believed he was somehow "transported" to the **Wailing Wall** of the Jews—the last wall that existed from the sacred Jewish temple. Mohammed claimed that on that same night he was returned to his bed in Mecca. From that experience, Mohammed considered Jerusalem a holy site for Muslims. This is a very important fact to know because Jews and Muslims are still in dispute over this sacred place today.

It was also during this time that Mohammed frequently visited a city named **Medina** (muh DEEN uh) to teach and preach his revelations. Unlike the dry, barren city of Mecca, Medina was green and lush. It was about 200 miles north of Mecca. Many Jews lived there. The merchants of Medina liked Mohammed and invited him to come and live there. Even the Jews in Medina thought Mohammed to be a decent man. They agreed with him that there was only "one god" and didn't think Mohammed would ever be a threat to the Jewish people. (They were, of course, quite mistaken about that!)

Though the offer from Medina was appealing, Mohammed put off the invitation to move there and stayed in Mecca for another two years. However, most of his followers did

move to Medina for safety. In time, the leaders in Mecca grew even more intolerant of Mohammed and his teachings. They plotted to murder him in the middle of the night. Somehow Mohammed learned of the plan and escaped. Instead of fleeing north where the Quraish expected to find him, Mohammed and his friend Abu Bekr headed south. They hid in caves until the way was clear to flee north to Medina.

Tradition tells the story that while hiding in a cave, Mohammed had a unique experience that helped save his life. Supposedly his enemies looked into a cave where he was hiding, but a spider had spun a web that covered the cave's entrance. Because the web was undisturbed, the Quraish didn't think Mohammed was there and they left. To this day, a spider is one of the sacred symbols of Islam.



The Wailing Wall (or Western Wall) is all that remains of the Jewish Temple. Though Muslims and Jews both consider the area sacred, the Jews have held control of the wall since 1967.

The Hegira

The dangerous trip that Mohammed made from Mecca to Medina in **622** has been called the **Hegira** (hee JI re), which means “flight.” For Mohammed it was a flight to safety. When Mohammed finally made it to Medina, he was welcomed like a hero by the leaders of the city and hundreds of his own people. The date of the Hegira is very important to Muslims. That was the official beginning of the new Islamic faith.

With a new religion coming to life and a group of people to lead, Mohammed became a very powerful man. He enjoyed his new position but for the most part remained a simple man. He was a hard worker and seldom used wealth on himself or his family. He gave most of his money to the poor. Toward his own people, Mohammed was said to be kind, generous, and compassionate. Mohammed had several wives by this time and split his time equally among them by sleeping at each of their different apartments (though there were occasional disputes and jealousies among them). While at his various homes, Mohammed helped with chores such as mending, sweeping, and the like. He also enjoyed children.

Despite his simple lifestyle, Mohammed was a cunning political leader. When it came to protecting his new movement, he was ruthless. For example, Mohammed saw to it that any caravans coming through Medina were attacked and robbed. The spoils went to feeding his people. He also found it necessary to fight against bands of citizens from Mecca who were still upset with him. When his followers in Medina asked him what their reward would be for fighting for him, Mohammed promised them **Paradise!** This is very important to know because Muslims are still willing to die for Mohammed’s cause with the belief that they will receive entry to Paradise.



The Hegira, which means “flight,” marks the date of Mohammed’s flight for safety from Mecca to Medina in 622.

The First Jihad

Though things were going well in Medina, Mohammed wanted to make peace with his home city of Mecca, from which he had been forced to flee. As attacks from Mecca continued, Mohammed built a trench around Medina to keep out his enemies. The strategy worked, and the Meccan army of 10,000 warriors left him alone. This led to the signing of a 10-year peace treaty between Mecca and Medina.

But Mohammed broke the treaty after only two years. He wanted so badly to have Mecca under his power that he marched through the city against the rules of the treaty. This was Mohammed’s first **jihad** (ji HAHD), or “holy war,” and it took place in 630. Surprisingly, there was no war at all. Mohammed stormed through Mecca with such control over his men and was so strong a leader, that most of the people of Mecca switched their loyalties to him that day! They either believed in his cause or were in complete fear of Mohammed. Regardless of why the people of Mecca submitted, they did so without a fight.

In bold triumph, Mohammed publicly declared at the Kaaba in Mecca that there was only one god and that his name was Allah. He forbade the worship of any other gods or idols. He did, however, permit people to continue the tradition of worshiping and kissing the black stone at the Kaaba. (Because of their own beliefs against idol worship, the Jews were very critical of Mohammed for allowing this type of

worship.) Mohammed also declared that from that point on Muslims should face Mecca when they prayed and that no unbeliever should ever set foot in the sacred city. These traditions are still followed today.

With Mohammed's strong declaration of beliefs at the Kaaba, the Jews in Medina grew worried. How could they allow this blasphemy against God? Mohammed at one time even claimed to be their awaited Messiah! This infuriated the Jews even more, and they soon became enemies to the Arab leader. When they were told to either convert to Islam or die, many Jews chose death! At least 600 Jewish men were killed by Mohammed and his army and buried in the marketplace of Medina. The surviving women and children were taken as slaves. Mohammed forced one of the more beautiful Jewish girls to become his mistress.

Mohammed As a Military Leader

Mohammed's last years were characterized by this type of brutal, **militant rule**. If someone wrote something bad about Mohammed, he had them executed. In the last 10 years of his life, Mohammed oversaw 65 military raids in Arabia and surrounding areas. Twenty-seven of these he led on his own. By his death, all of the Arabian Peninsula was Islamic. You see, Mohammed had become far more than a

religious leader to the Arabs. He was a powerful military leader. It was probably his abilities as a general that gave Islam its strength in such a short time. The loosely scattered Arab tribes seemed to need the leadership that Mohammed offered.

Interestingly, the people who admired Mohammed's power the most began to idolize him. They saved pieces of his hair, his spit, and the water that he washed with in the hope that these items would bring about **miracles**. But you know what? Mohammed never claimed to perform miracles. Neither did he try to predict the future. In fact, he claimed only to be a mortal, fallible "messenger." However, Mohammed did practice something that gave him supernatural status. That is, he offered Paradise to those who would die for Allah! We will discuss this and other details of Islam in the next lesson. In light of terrorism in the world today, it is very important to understand this belief.

By his late fifties, Mohammed began to show signs of his humanness. He suffered terribly from

bad fevers. He believed they were the result of eating poisoned meat. It has never been proven. Three days before he died, he sat in the mosque at Medina to listen to the teachings of his old friend, Abu Bekr. I wonder what he thought about the religion that he had started. It has been written of him that he wanted the Arab people to have a strong religion like the Jews and the Christians that he had known as a boy. He had been especially impressed with their Holy Scriptures. Of course he created his own scripture through the dictation of the Koran. It's just something to think about.

On June 7, 632, at the age of 62, Mohammed died at the side of his favorite wife. Mohammed died not only as the founder of the Islamic faith but also as the founder of a whole new way of life for many nations. Historians would agree that because of the widespread influence of Mohammed, his life was one of the most phenomenal of the Middle Ages.



Through holy war, or jihad, the Islamic faith spread to neighboring countries, extending its military might and belief system.

ACTIVITIES FOR LESSON 29

ALL STUDENTS

The birth of Islam (622) is a date to memorize.

29A—Younger Students

What do you know about desert life and camels? They are perfect animals for the Arabian Desert because they can go as long as 5 days without water in the summer and up to 25 days in the winter. A person will die without water in 7 to 10 days! Camels can provide milk, tender meat, and hide for clothing and tents. Even their waste products of dung and urine can be used for fuel and making an insecticide!

Pretend to be a camel today by getting on your hands and knees and allowing your teacher to tie a pillow on your back. Give “gentle” camel rides to your stuffed animals or younger brothers and sisters. Take a photo. File this under “Asia: Saudi Arabia” in your Student Notebook.

29B—Middle Students

Calculate the year according to the Muslim calendar. They consider July 16, 622 (the estimated date of Mohammed’s flight), as the start of year 1, and their calendar is 354 days. To convert from a Christian year to a Hegira year, subtract 622 from the Christian year. Then multiply that by 1.031. To convert from a Hegira year to a Christian year, divide the Hegira year by 1.031. Then add 622 to your number. Thus, A.D. 1900 is 1317 A.H. (after the Hegira). Using this formula, convert the present year of the A.D. calendar to the Muslim calendar and file your answer under “Asia: Saudi Arabia.” Check your work at the following Web site (and compare January 1 to December 31 of the same year):

www.islamicfinder.org/dateConversion.php?lang=english

29C—Older Students

1. Research the Kaaba. Look for answers to these questions. (Answers are also provided in the Pretest Answer Key in the Appendix.) File your answers in your Student Notebook under “Asia: Saudi Arabia.”
 - a. What are the dimensions of the Kaaba?
 - b. What is the name given to the Islamic pilgrim who goes to Mecca?
 - c. How many times does an Islamic pilgrim march around the Kaaba?
 - d. In what months do the pilgrims march?
 - e. How many times has the Kaaba been rebuilt?
 - f. Who built and rebuilt the Kaaba (according to the Muslims)?
 - g. You can find many pictures of the Kaaba on the Internet by going to www.google.com and clicking on “Images,” then typing in “Kaaba.”
2. Review the tragic collapse of the World Trade Center Towers in New York City on September 11, 2001. What was the message of the suicide pilots? What was the response of their families? Why were these men considered “martyrs” for their faith? How much influence on the world does Mohammed still have? Discuss these matters with your teacher, particularly the belief of gaining a place in Paradise by dying for Allah. Photocopy or clip newspaper and magazine articles depicting this tragedy. File them in your Student Notebook under “Asia: Saudi Arabia.”

THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

LESSON 30

As you learned in our last lesson, **Mohammed** changed the way of life for many nations with the founding of **Islam**. Before we get into just how Mohammed changed things, let's review the way of life in Arabia *before* Mohammed. Muslims would refer to this time as *al-Jabiliya*, meaning “**the Age of Ignorance.**”

Ancient Arabia was ruled by a mixture of Babylonians, Persians, Romans, and Jews. The peninsula has always been a center of trade because it sits between the three continents of Africa, Europe, and Asia. In ancient days, nearly five-sixths of Arabs were nomads called **Bedouins** (BED oo inz). A nomad is a person who travels from place to place for growing crops or raising animals.

The nomadic Bedouins and most Arabs are descendants of **Ishmael** from the Old Testament. Because Ishmael was the son of Abraham through Hagar, most Arabs consider themselves “Children of Abraham.” They are a proud people. In ancient times, they lived to fight the scorching desert and the threat of other tribesmen. With hours to spend around a campsite, the Bedouins became masters at telling stories of adventure and love.

In fact, elaborate storytelling was so important to the Arabs that month-long contests were held in honor of the composers. And nothing was prized more than the transformation of the Arabic language into beautiful works of poetry. Winning poems were written down in exquisite print for all to admire. The greatest of all the Arabic poems were inscribed on Egyptian silk in golden letters and hung on the walls of the **Kaaba**. (Remember, the Kaaba is the black square temple in Mecca considered the most sacred of temples by the Muslims.) The poems were called the **Muallqat**, or “Golden Songs.” Seven of them remain intact today.

Bedouin girls were sometimes married as young as 8 or 9 years of age! They were loved for their beauty and their ability to provide warrior sons to their husbands. But boys were so much more important to the Arabs that baby girls were sometimes buried alive and left to die! It was also common practice when a man died that his camel be put to death in case it was needed in the afterlife. The camel was tied to his owner's grave to suffer slow starvation.

But that was all before Mohammed. After his death in **632** and by the late 600s, the teachings of Mohammed were growing in their appeal to the nomads of Arabia. For one, he taught them to treat one another more fairly, especially servants and women (though not seen today). This created more equality between the classes. Mohammed promoted the idea of an honest brotherhood between all Arabs and the deep respect of one's parents.

He forbade his people to ever kill baby girls or force a camel to die with its master. Mohammed taught good hygiene and the protection of the weak and the sick. He also discouraged the drinking of alcohol. From all of this, Islam brought much stability to the warring tribesmen and women of the desert.



The beautiful and artistic language of Arabic is read from right to left.

The Duties and Beliefs of Islam

The name Islam actually means **“submission to God.”** People’s lives were changed as they “submitted” to the teachings of Mohammed, which he claimed were of Allah. In fact, the term *Muslim* means “submissive one.”

So what did people actually submit to? Well, Muslims would say they are “submitting to the will of Allah” by keeping at least these five duties. According to Josh McDowell and Don Stewart in *Handbook of Today’s Religions*,⁴ the duties are:

1. Praying five times a day
2. Reciting the creed, “There is no god but Allah, and Mohamed is his prophet,” at least 125,000 times in one’s lifetime
3. Giving to the poor
4. Fasting from sunrise to sundown in the holy month of Ramadan
5. Making at least one trip to Mecca (if able)

Furthermore, Muslims believe that there is either Paradise or a burning inferno waiting for each person after death. They believe their fate is determined by Allah and based entirely on how well they fulfilled their duties. Muslims may never really know if they have done enough to enter into Paradise, but it is their desire. In other words, a Muslim seems to have to *work* for his entrance into Paradise by being good and keeping the strict duties I mentioned above. It is no wonder then that some would hope to “earn” Paradise through being a martyr instead.

In contrast, Christianity teaches that no one by his or her own goodness can earn salvation, or Paradise. Romans 3:10 says, “*There is none righteous, no, not one.*” But Christians *also* believe that Jesus Christ’s death on the cross, His sacrifice, takes care of man’s sin—the very thing that makes us not worthy of heaven! Salvation then, or Paradise, is considered by Christians as a *gift* from God. Ephesians 2:8–9 explains it this way, “*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*” This belief greatly divides Christian thought from Islam.



The inside of a mosque contains no chairs or pews but rather, Persian-style rugs for worshipers to kneel on and pray.

As in most religions, there are different factions and groups within Islam who vary in their beliefs from one another. But, according to the authors of *Civilization Past and Present*,⁵ most Muslims would agree to the following list of beliefs:

1. There is no god but Allah.
2. There are angels that intercede for men.
3. The Koran is the last testament given by god.
4. There were several prophets of Allah including Noah, Moses, Abraham, Jesus, and Mohammed.
5. There is judgment for all mankind.
6. There are divine decrees to follow in this life as dictated by Mohammed in the Koran.

4. Josh McDowell and Don Stewart, *Handbook of Today’s Religions*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1996; p. 391.

5. T. Walter Walbank and Alastair M. Taylor, *Civilization Past and Present*. Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1949; p. 271.

The Koran

The **Koran**, Islam's holy book or book of "recitations," was first ordered to be written by Mohammed's good friend, **Abu Bekr**. It was recorded about a year after Mohammed's death. Other teachings of Mohammed were later written down, but to the Muslim, none are as sacred as the Koran. There are 114 chapters, or **suras**, in the Koran, which are arranged according to their length. The longest chapters are first. Each chapter is a separate message in itself and the principal speaker is supposedly Allah. As is common to the Arabic language, the writings are very poetic and use lots of imagery.



Most copies of the Koran are in Arabic because devout Muslims disapprove of seeing it in any other language than the original.

Interestingly, the Koran speaks of both Jews and Christians. According to Muslims, Jews and Christians would be considered "Peoples of the Book" since **Moses** and **Jesus** received books of revelation. **Buddha** is never mentioned. I will add here, however, that the teachings about Jesus in Islam are very different from Christianity. Muslims may say they "believe" in Jesus, but they don't mean it the way a Christian does. Their belief in Jesus is that He was a wise man and a prophet. They don't believe Jesus was the divine Son of God who died for the sins of the world and rose from the dead. Muslims don't look to Jesus as a Savior, nor do they understand Him to be a Redeemer.

I will also add about the Koran that, unlike the Bible, it contains no **prophecy** to validate it as truth.

In contrast, the Bible contains hundreds of predictions in both the Old and the New Testament that came true to prove it was the word of God! The Koran lacks this supernatural feature.

Furthermore, the Koran was dictated by Mohammed *alone* during a 22-year span of his life. It came together through one man, one language, one place, and one time period. No one else in history has ever backed up Mohammed's teachings with similar revelations. Mohammed boldly proclaimed to be the last true prophet and that his revelations were the *only* accurate ones.

In comparison, the Bible was written by over 40 different people from all walks of life, covering three continents and using three languages. The Bible was written over a 1,000-year span with every writer in agreement to the same teachings of God.

Mohammed believed that Allah was the same god as in the Bible even though his teachings about Allah do not fit with the Bible. To make sense of it, Mohammed taught that the Bible was distorted, not his teachings. Neither Jews nor Christians believe Allah to be the same god as the God of the Bible. This huge difference in beliefs has led to unbelievable strife between Islam and these other religions that still exists today!

Angels, Worship, and Islam Today

Of **angels**, Muslims believe that they exist to intervene for mankind. They also believe that 8 angels guard the throne of God and 19 angels guard Hell. Muslims also believe in the existence of **jinn** or **jinni**, which are thought to be spirits between angels and mankind. Some jinn are considered good, and some are believed to be wicked. The most powerful is thought to be the devil, called **shaitin** in the Koran from the Hebrew word *Satan*.

Christians believe, too, that angels are special beings created for ministering to God and man. But Satan, which means "adversary," is thought to be a fallen angel (not a jinni) whose mission is to oppose God and man. Demons are other fallen angels used by Satan to misguide and lure mankind from the truths of God.

A Muslim place of worship is called a **mosque**. At the first mosque built in Medina, Mohammed bowed three times before Allah as a symbol of his submission. This practice is still followed today. Though Mohammed is respected as a prophet and his behavior is modeled, he is not worshiped—but rather Allah. And in Islam there are no priests or pastors.



When Mohammed died in 632, there was the question of who would follow after him in leading the new religion and theocracy. A **theocracy** is a civil government ruled by religious leaders who believe they are representatives of god. For that reason, some Muslims thought the next leader should be a blood relative of Mohammed. Others thought the next leader should be voted in. Though Mohammed had 10 wives, he didn't have any sons who survived to take over his rule. He did have a daughter named **Fatima** who married his adopted son and cousin, **Ali**. Ali wanted to be the first **caliph**. (Caliph comes from the Arabic word *khalifa*, which simply means “successor.”)

Arched doorways, domed rooftops, and towering minarets are common features of a mosque, a Muslim house of worship. From high in a minaret (photo at right), a man known as a muezzin (“crier”) calls Muslims to prayer five times a day.

But, as it turned out, Abu Bekr, Mohammed's father-in-law and longtime friend, took the position of the first caliph. Unfortunately, the disagreement over leadership between Ali and Abu Bekr led to years of war and ultimately to a division between Muslims that still exists today.⁶ For a time, Ali also became caliph, but after five years he was assassinated.

Despite the turmoil over leadership, Islam spread like a wild fire to neighboring countries such as India and Egypt and to some nations in Europe. In 638 Muslims troops conquered the city of Jerusalem, causing all kinds of problems that still exist there. Today, Islam is primarily located in the Middle East, northern Africa, and parts of Europe and Asia. The names of some of these countries are Sudan, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Yemen, Iran, Nigeria, Tunisia, Egypt, and Tajikistan. Less than 1 percent of the Muslim population lives in America, though that figure is growing.

As you can imagine, it is difficult for me as a Christian to write about Islam because some Muslim groups in the world are persecuting Christians. That means they are killing people of my faith for not being of the Islamic faith. Militant Muslims are also responsible for killing thousands of Jews in Israel through suicide bombings and other forms of terror. Persecution is a sad truth and a very difficult matter to understand.

I don't believe it would be right to despise the Muslim *people* for persecution and acts of terrorism, but I believe we can despise the *deception* behind the acts as well as the acts themselves. I hope that by understanding the history of Islam, you will be better equipped to share God's love with Muslims as well as with others around the world.

6. Later descendants of Ali identified themselves as *Shiites* (SHEE iyts). They still hold to the belief that Ali was the rightful successor to Mohammed. Shiites presently make up about 10 percent of the Muslim population and are primarily located in Iran, where Shiism is the state religion of the Islamic Republic.

ACTIVITIES FOR LESSON 30

ALL STUDENTS

Make your Memory Cards for Lessons 28–30. Remember to highlight the birth of Islam (622) as a date to memorize.

Teachers and Parents

Please discern the spiritual maturity of your student(s) to determine suitable activities for them. My hope is that a well-grounded student would explore the claims of Islam for a greater appreciation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For those who may not be comfortable with this, the younger-student activities can be adapted to any age.

30A—Younger Students

1. Look in an encyclopedia at flags of the world. Look for flags with one star and a crescent moon next to each other. These two symbols together represent a country that is Islamic. The flags of Algeria and Libya are two examples. How many flags can you find with that symbolism? Does the flag of Saudi Arabia use these emblems?
2. Islamic art is known for being geometrical. It is also called “arabesque,” meaning “done in the Arab way.” Mohammed forbade the drawing of people in art for fear it would lead to idol worship. Find examples of Arabic art and try to create your own using straight lines and shapes about the same size. File your artwork in your Student Notebook under “Asia: Saudi Arabia.”

30B—Middle and Older Students

As was done when we studied the Shinto religion of Japan, answer the following doctrinal questions about Islam. Answers are given in the Activity Supplement, but see how far you can get on your own research from this lesson and the use of other reference books.

1. The founder of the religion and date of origination.
2. The source of authority (written works of the religion, visions, prophecy).
3. The doctrine of God (believing there is one God or many gods).
4. The doctrine of Jesus Christ (believing Jesus was God in the flesh or just a prophet).
5. Their belief in sin.
6. The doctrine of salvation. (On what basis is sin forgiven or accounted for?)
7. The doctrine of things to come. (Is there a belief in life after death or in a coming judgment of the world?)
8. What draws people to this religion (lifestyle, ritual, heritage, etc.)?

30C—Older Students

1. For a better understanding of Islam and the world that we live in today, research the two main divisions of the Islamic religion: the Sunnis (SUN eez) and the Shiites (SHEE iyts). Find the answers to the following questions and more. (Answers are also provided in the Pretest Answer Key.)
 - a. Which group comprises about 85 percent of Islam today?
 - b. Which group includes the subdivision of leadership under the Imamis (or Twelvers)?
 - c. Which group considers itself more “orthodox,” or true to the teachings of Mohammed?
 - d. Which group represents about 10 percent of Islam today?

- e. What does *sunnah* mean?
 - f. What does *shia* mean?
2. Obtain a map of the world that expresses where Christian persecution exists. (As a resource, I recommend *Voice of the Martyrs*, listed below.) A great amount of persecution occurs in Islamic countries. Pray for the leaders of these nations. Pray for the persecuted church under this oppression. The persecution of Christians is a very serious problem in our world, but it rarely receives the attention of the media. Look for examples of it in the news.

The Voice of the Martyrs
P.O. Box 443
Bartlesville, OK 74005-0443
Or call at 918-337-8015
Web site: www.persecution.com

A CLASSICAL APPROACH TO EDUCATION

I want to expand on the design of this curriculum in regard to the classical approach to education. For those of you not familiar with that philosophy, let me explain.

A classical education is one that is language-centered, which means that students will do great volumes of reading, listening, and writing to learn. Furthermore, a classical education observes three stages of training the mind. The three-stage process is called the *trivium* of learning. I will briefly describe each.

Stage one is referred to as the **grammar** stage. It would primarily describe children in the grades of kindergarten through third or fourth grade. The authors of the book *The Well-Trained Mind* consider these ages as those that are most **absorbent**. They believe it is not so much a time of self-discovery as it is the accumulation of new ideas, new words, new stories, and new facts. This can be a fun stage for a teacher. At the same time, the immaturity of this age range can create a battle for *how* this information is obtained!

Stage two is referred to as the **logic** stage because children of this age group are beginning to process information they've obtained and to **question** it. This group would include fourth and fifth graders through about eighth grade. The reason that students begin to ask more *why* questions at this stage is because their ability to think abstractly has been further developed. They should begin to process things more logically. Unfortunately, some children question authority at this stage as well!

The third stage of the trivium of learning is referred to as the **rhetoric** stage. These are students from ninth grade and up. By this stage, students should be *applying* information that has been learned. The challenge I have found at this last stage is in the interest level of the student. Ability does not always equate with desire!

Basically, the grammar student absorbs information, the logic student questions information, and the rhetoric student should be able to analyze or defend information. Of course, these stages are only generalities. Learning styles, personalities, and maturity can certainly affect the way any student learns.

I have considered the trivium of learning in the construction of this curriculum and have endeavored to incorporate it throughout. Here is how.

The **grammar stage**: I believe the *reading* of the lessons *is* the primary source of absorbing new information for these students. The activity is then designed to be fun and to reinforce what they have learned. This student may be interested in the activity for either the Younger Student or the Middle Student. The Memory Cards will be especially helpful in capturing the new information the student has learned.

The **logic stage**: Again, the reading of the lesson is the primary source of absorbing new information. However, these students will find that the Middle Student and Older Student activities force them to a more in-depth handling and processing of the information. Some activities are merely fun, whereas others are designed to be thought-provoking. The biweekly exercises and quizzes complement the handling of the material when the student is required to make lists, compare dates, and so forth. Memory Cards will be essential in summarizing and organizing what the student has learned.

The **rhetoric stage**: This begins for most students in high school, but I know there are some mature sixth through eighth graders who are ready to touch on this level of interpreting and applying information. Therefore, some of the Older Student activities were written with them in mind. Many of these activities are research-oriented or at least require further reading and writing. I wrote many of the activities for older students with the hope of developing a strong Christian worldview in a student. I especially want the older students to become masters at expressing thoughts.

MEMORY CARDS

I. Making the Cards

Ideally, students will make Memory Cards as a tool for reinforcing the material they have learned. The cards serve as a set of flashcards made personally by the student. The process of making the Memory Cards is in and of itself an exercise in summarizing the main points of a lesson. (Younger students whose hands tire of written work may be the exception.) By making your own cards, the cost for this course is kept down and students are given the challenge of organizing thoughts. In preparing for quizzes and tests, the cards can be used as quick study guides.

For this volume, you will need 84 3-by-5-inch ruled cards. White cards will be sufficient. For future reference, there will be 10 time periods to study in the five volumes of *The Mystery of History*, so you will need 10 colored markers to distinguish these eras from one another. These are the colors I will be using on my cards. Follow if possible because I may refer to the colors in future memory games.

• Volume I-A	Creation and Early Civilizations	dark green
• Volume I-B	The Classical World	red
• Volume II-A	The Early Church	light purple
• Volume II-B	The Middle Ages	gray
• Volume III-A	The Reformation and Renaissance	light green
• Volume III-B	The Growth of Empires	dark blue
• Volume IV-A	Revolution and Independence	dark pink
• Volume IV-B	Rising Nations	black
• Volume V-A	The World at War	orange
• Volume V-B	The Modern World	dark purple

Using a light purple marker, set up the cards for Volume II-A to look similar to these samples.

This is what my Younger Student wrote for Lesson 24. (To be realistic, I left in the typos.)

(Front, blank side)

(Back, lined side)

<p><i>Justinian I and Theodora Rulers of the Byzantine</i></p>	<p>Vol. II A 24</p> <p><i>They were both pore and grew up to be king and Queen. (They were lucky.) Theodora was brave smart so she helped Justinian Rule the empire. Justinian wrote a code of laws. he was religious and fasted a lot.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">527-565</p>
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This is what my “Middle/Older Student” wrote for Lesson 26. (I left his typo in also.)

<p style="text-align: center;">Early Japan and Prince Shotoku</p>	<p>Vol. II A 26</p> <p><i>Japan is an archipelago off the coast of China. The archipelago is actually made up of 4,223 islands, only 600 of these are lived on by humans. Prince Shotoku brought a new form of government. He also brought budism to Japan. Basically he brought together Japan.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">573</p>
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The front of the card is simply the name of the lesson as listed in the Table of Contents. For neatness, efficiency, and consistency, I chose to write the lesson titles on the cards well before they were needed. You may choose to do the same, especially if younger students are involved. The back of the card should contain the following four items:

1. The upper left corner should state the volume number and either an *A* or a *B*. An *A* refers to the first semester of study. A *B* refers to the second semester of study. Each volume will cover two time periods, or semesters, of study. This too might be done ahead of time by the teacher.
2. The upper right corner should state the number of the lesson as listed in the Table of Contents and on the lesson page itself. Teachers may opt to do this ahead of time as well.
3. The middle of the card allows ample space for a simple summary of the lesson. (I suggest pencil for this to allow for remedy of mistakes and because the marker will be too broad.) Younger children may choose to narrate their sentences to the teacher, copy sentences from the lesson, or create their own. Middle and older students should be able to put their own thought into the summary — perhaps with some prompting by the teacher. I encourage the use of the book as a reference.
4. The very bottom of the card should give the date from history of the lesson or its approximate time span. It’s probably a good idea to allow the student to copy this from the book for reinforcement.

II. Using the Cards

I recommend that a student (or siblings who share the job) make the cards at one time about every three lessons. I remind students about these cards on the activity page of every third lesson.

Families and groups should incorporate review of the cards in some systematic fashion. The cards could be pulled out, shuffled, and refiled. They could be brought out before quizzes to see what topics need to be studied. They might be used in games of trivia. Co-op classes could open with a quick review of random Memory Cards. Use your own imagination.

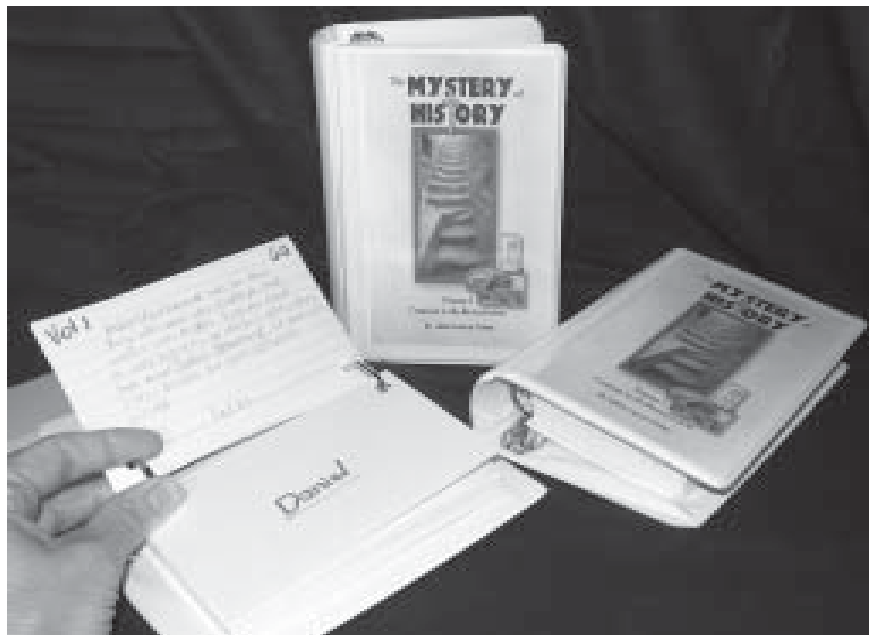
I do not necessarily expect every date and lesson to be memorized. Maybe some of you will choose to be that industrious. I prefer instead that a student be able to place a lesson in the proper time period. That is the reason for the emphasis on the specific marker color on the card. The colors will help the mind to visualize where a piece of information fits into history.

However, as in Volume I, there are 12 significant dates in Volume II that I recommend students memorize. I will make reference to them throughout the text.

III. Storing the Cards

I recommend two methods of storing your cards. First, the Oxford Company that makes the 3-by-5-inch cards also makes a small, two-ring binder for the cards. It is called the *Oxford Index Card Binder*. Office supply stores as well as some superstores carry them. (It appears to be item No. 73501.) I have observed in recent months that fewer stores carry this particular binder and that the company is now offering similar ones in various pastel colors. Though the new binders will suffice and are appealing in look, they do not have a clear view front pocket for placement of a *cover* as the original binder had. Whichever you may find, this binder could easily hold the cards for one volume. They serve to keep the cards very handy while that period of time is being studied, and the binders are cool gadgets to make school a little more exciting.

Second, after completing one volume, those cards could be filed in a standard 3-by-5-inch card file that holds approximately 600 cards. The binder would then be free for the next volume's cards. The card file could be used again and again over the years to review previously learned material.



WALL OF FAME TIMELINE SUGGESTIONS

Part of the review for each week consists of adding timeline figures to the Wall of Fame. Because I receive so many questions about timelines, I want to elaborate rather extensively on some suggestions for putting one together.

Understand first that there are many different methods for assembling attractive and functional timelines. I've seen them in notebooks, on walls, on butcher paper, wrapped around stairwells, and placed on pattern cutting boards (my personal favorite). I've even seen a timeline adorning a bathroom wall for friends and family to study while using the facilities! The important thing is to make a timeline for your family or classroom that will work for you *this* year with *this* volume based on your students' interests and the space you have available. Inevitably, students learning styles, interests, and abilities will change over the years as they mature (along with how much wall space you have!). It is reasonable to imagine that a large timeline on a wall or pattern cutting board might appeal to a visual learner or younger student now. But, this same student, or one who has a bent toward detail work, might prefer a notebook style timeline in the future when they are older. I suggest you adapt your methods of keeping a timeline *as you go* rather than stress out over choosing one that will work for the next 5 - 10 years.

I bring this up because I know from experience that some of you will stress out (as I have) over starting a timeline. I have the emails to prove it! I too have been trying to create a perfect system that will work for years to come. It is a worthy goal, but I'm not yet sure if it is attainable. I have 13 years of homeschool experience to draw from, but I don't have all the volumes written yet for *The Mystery of History*. So, bear with me, please, volume by volume, as I tweak, adapt, and modify suggestions for making a timeline. My favorite method for keeping a timeline on a pattern cutting board (sometimes referred to as a sewing board), may very well suit every volume of *The Mystery of History*, but I'm not guaranteeing it.

All of that aside, let's move on to two suggestions for making a foldable, portable, and attractive timeline for Volume II. Both of the plans presented here are on a pattern cutting board (though either plan could work as well on a wall.) When held vertically, it is the inside of the board that serves as the backdrop for the placement of time strips and figures. One plan, which I will call *Plan A*, follows my ideas for making your own decorative figures as described on each Take Another Look review page in this book. This plan might appeal to students who are artistically inclined, or who really favor hands-on work. There is a little bit of built-in fun as some figures require wrinkling, burning, tearing, and so forth.

The other plan, which I will refer to as *Plan B*, uses the beautifully illustrated figures by Amy Pak from *History Through the Ages*. For your convenience, I reference these figures as well on each Take Another Look review page in this book. This plan might appeal to children who like to color, families with older students, or those who just feel too busy to make their own. Regardless of whether you use Plan A or Plan B, I suggest you set up a pattern cutting board as follows. (I recommend families only attempt to make one timeline of this magnitude, though some students may be more industrious than others and choose to each make their own.)



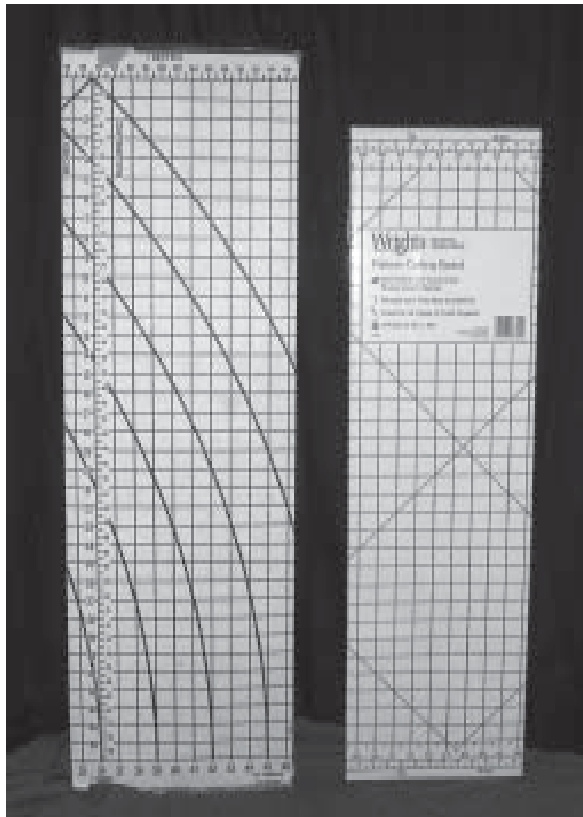
I. Set up of the timeline

In Volume I, I gave elaborate directions for setting up a pattern cutting board which included *dated* strips. Timeline figures were added to the strips throughout the course. Since then, I have learned some things. Predating the strips requires a lot of preliminary work. And I found that my strips were blank in some places and quite jumbled up in others since we have no control over who lived when. To remedy the situation, I experimented with making a timeline with strips that are *not* dated at all. Rather, each *figure* added to the timeline is dated. It was a simple adjustment, but one that proved to make a very neatly organized timeline. I also found ways to make a cardboard sewing board more attractive by covering it with decorative adhesive paper. I also found it easy to use packing tape or duct tape for the time strips rather than laminated poster board. Here are steps and materials to make these improvements should you so desire:

A. Materials needed:

- One foldable pattern cutting board

To my knowledge, two brands of these boards exist. The *Wright's* brand, available at most Hobby Lobby stores, is the smaller of the two at 36" x 60". The Dritz brand board, found at most Wal-Mart stores, is larger at 40" x 72". My directions will work for either, except the larger board will give you much more space to work with and will require more than one roll of adhesive paper for covering.



- One or two rolls of self-adhesive decorative covering, more commonly referred to as *Con-Tact* paper
Purchase one or two rolls, depending on which cutting board you are using. Choose a color or motif of your liking. (For Volume II, I chose a green marbled look of Con-Tact adhesive paper called Pompeii Green, which is product # 997800).
- One roll of colored packing tape or duct tape (1.88" x 20 yards)

I chose green duct tape for this volume to match the green marbled adhesive paper.

- One yard of piping or trimming cord or ribbon to make a closure for the board
I chose a white rope cord to match the white of the marbled adhesive paper.
- One foot of clear adhesive tape
I use this to secure the closure of the board.
- A yardstick
- Scissors
- A helper

B. Covering the board (It will take approximately 45 minutes to complete this preliminary task):

1. You will not want to begin this project without the extra hands of an older child or another adult to help you lay the adhesive paper. Otherwise, it will take you much longer to lay the adhesive paper without it crinkling. (I tried!)
2. Lay the pattern cutting board open on the floor. Unroll the adhesive paper, and measure a strip the width of your board (the short direction, not the long direction). Cut the strip, peel the backing off, and use your helper to lay the adhesive paper down. If it is crooked, or has folds, it will lift off for a second try. Repeat these steps for both the front and the back of the cutting board, overlapping each strip a few inches over the last. When you reach the ends of the board, it is easiest to stop the adhesive paper at the edge, rather than attempt to wrap it around the edges. The exposed edges of raw cardboard will not present a problem.



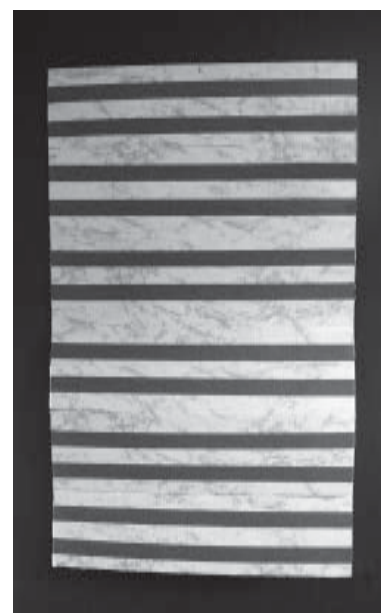
3. With both sides of the board covered, you will notice that the board is tight and hard to fold up. To correct this problem, use a sharp pair of scissors to score the outside of the cutting board in several places. By that I mean to run the scissors down a few outside creases to cut a slight gap in the adhesive paper. It will cause a small part of the board to be exposed, which is why I suggest doing this on the outside rather than the inside. It is the inside of the cutting board that will serve as the place for placing all the timeline figures.



4. Open the cutting board so that the inside is facing up. It is now time to mark the places for the tape strips.



- a. For the Wright's cutting board: use a yardstick and pencil to mark 2 inches, 4 inches, 6 inches, and 8 inches from the top of *each* panel on the edge of the cutting board. Make the marks evenly on both edges of the board. Unwind a length of duct tape or packing tape that will go across the width of the cutting board with a little length to spare. Carefully lay the tape strip down horizontally between the 2-inch mark and the 4-inch mark. The tape is fairly forgiving should you need to lift and reapply. Trim the excess. Repeat this step, laying down tape between the 6-inch mark and the 8-inch mark. You are laying two parallel strips on each panel. There will be 12 tape strips in all.



- b. For the Dritz cutting board: use a yardstick and pencil to mark 2 1/2 inches, 4 1/2 inches, 7 inches, and 9 inches from the top of each panel on the edge of the cutting board. (Remember, this board is larger and requires the strips to be spaced further apart.) Make these marks evenly on both edges of the board.

Unwind a length of duct tape or packing tape that will go across the cutting board with a little length to spare. Carefully lay the tape strip down between the 2 1/2 inch mark and the 4 1/2 inch mark. The tape is fairly forgiving should you need to lift and reapply. Trim the excess. Repeat this step laying down tape between the 7-inch mark and the 9-inch mark. You are laying two parallel strips on each panel. There will be 12 in all.

5. To make a cool closure for the board, fold it all the way shut and mark the center point of the back of the board. Find the middle of the length of one yard of cord. Use clear packing tape to adhere cord at its middle to the center point of the back of the board. This cord can be tied and untied by students when they get the board out to work on it.



6. Finally, I suggest that a title cover be attached to the outside of the board to identify its time period. It might read, “The Mystery of History, Volume II — The Early Church and the Middle Ages.”



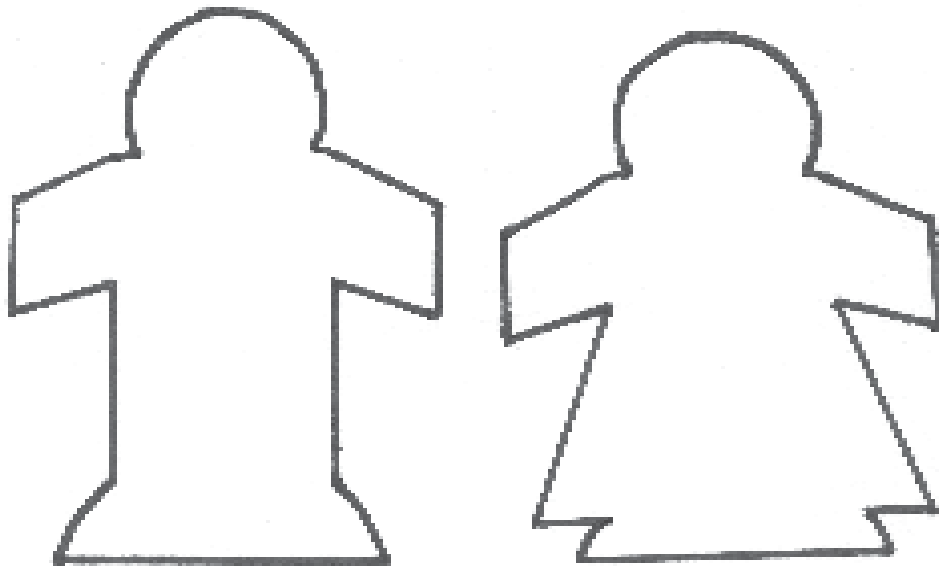
II. Preparing the figures

Now that your board is assembled, remember that you have two plans to choose from for adding figures to your timeline. You can make your own figures following my suggestions (Plan A) or use pre-drawn figures from *History Through the Ages* (Plan B). I have a few tips for each.

A. Plan A figures (making your own)

I find it easiest to make my own figures on white card stock paper using colorful markers to outline and decorate with. Blank 3-by-5-inch index cards will work for some figures, but are not large enough for all. In Volume I, I suggested the use of colored index cards to code various people groups such as the Egyptians, the Greeks, and so forth. But for Volume II, this will not be practical as the number of people groups being covered has expanded. On Take Another Look review pages, I give ideas for making and decorating your figures. Feel free to elaborate! Your children's interest level may dictate how many details you add. I have certainly helped my own children make several figures over the years to assist them in moving along in the process.

For the times that I request they make a person, I have provided a stencil of a man or a woman. I recommend that you photocopy these to make a pattern. It would be wise to trace the pattern ahead of time for students putting several on a page with ample space around each character. However, I would not cut the patterns out ahead of time because I often ask the students to add something to their character (like a harp, a book, or a crown). In those instances, it is far easier for students to draw these items around the pattern and *then* cut them out. Of course, not all the figures will be people. I also ask students to make boats, mountains, documents, maps, and so forth.



B. Plan B figures (using pre-drawn figures)

Rather than make your own figures, you may choose to use the ones pre-drawn from *History Through the Ages*. These figures, which are a separate purchase, can be photocopied onto colored paper to match the theme of the time period or used as is. Students can color and cut the figures prior to hanging them on the timeline. I copied the figures onto light green colored paper to match the green marbled adhesive paper. You can make this option as simple or as complicated as you want. Some students may want to even incorporate some of the creative ideas from Plan A into Plan B by decorating the pre-drawn figures with a few extras.



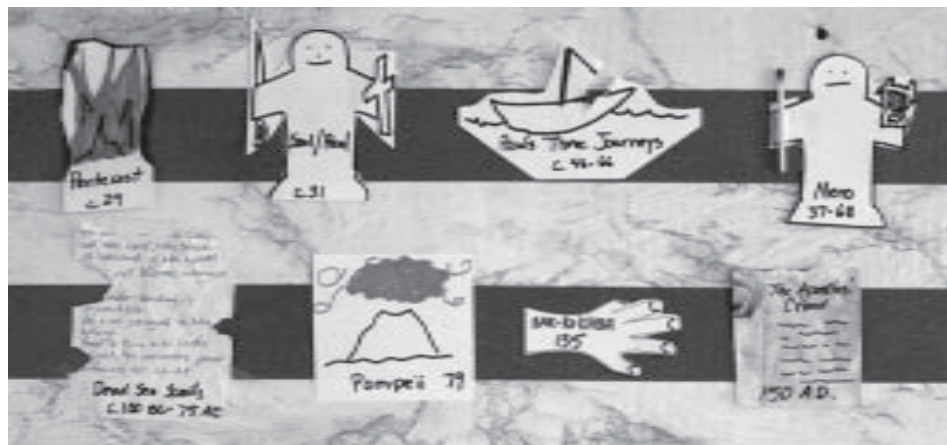
III. Attaching the figures

I found it most convenient to work on our timeline only once a week. Though some families prefer to make the timeline figures on the day that they study the corresponding lesson, I like to do the exercise later in the week as a means of reviewing and bringing characters back to mind from days earlier.

On review day we usually needed to create only three figures, one from each lesson of the week. If using *History Through the Ages* figures, occasionally there is more than one figure for each lesson. Either way, after creating a timeline figure, we would tape them on at the appropriate place on the pattern cutting board. The timeline strips for Volume I ran from the bottom up to help a student grasp that B.C. time is counted backward. I suggest that this timeline, and all future ones in A.D. time, run from the top down. Therefore, students would begin to place figures on the top line of the board, starting on the left.

If using Plan A, you will only need to place seven figures per time strip about two or three inches apart. This leaves plenty of space for making large figures or for adding figures that you come across in your other studies. The first figures placed on the board are from the lessons Pentecost, Saul/Paul, and Paul's Missionary

Journeys as listed in bold print on Take Another Look in Week 1, Review 1. You may want to turn there now to follow along with me. Students will make figures of a flame, a man, and a boat. From Review 2, students would add figures to represent Nero, Martyrs of the Early Church, and Josephus. To complete the first strip, students would later add a figure for Masada and then drop to the next line to add something for The Dead Sea Scrolls and The Buried City of Pompeii.



If using Plan B's pre-drawn figures from *History Through the Ages*, students will need to add about 10 figures per time strip placing them about two inches apart. The first figures on the board would be those titled *Day of Pentecost, Stephen, and Paul and Peter*. From Review 2, students would add the figures titled *Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Marcul Aurelius*. Dropping to the next time strip, students would continue to add figures titled *Tertullian, Josephus, and Titus*. From Review 3, students will add the figures titled *Masada, Dead Sea Scrolls, Pompeii*, and so forth.



Upon filling up one row, I suggest the next row of figures start from the left to right as well working your way all the way down to the bottom of the board. It is a great visual for students to chart their progress through the course of history by the growing number of figures on their timeline. As a final note, on the top center point of my timeline, I used a hole-punch to create a hole just large enough so that I can hang my timeline on a nail in the wall while we are using it. I highly recommend this if space allows. When not in use, you can fold your timeline, tie it off with the closure cord wrapped around it, and tuck it away behind a cabinet or under a sofa.



From time to time we made a game of searching for a character on the board or pointing blindly to a random character and asking the student to supply some information about him or her or it. Remember, your timeline may not turn out perfectly, but it is just one of many ways to observe and appreciate God's marvelous hand in history. I hope you enjoy it!