

Beautiful Stories for Children

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PREFACE

We encourage teachers to use *Beautiful Stories for Children* with students in the primary grades, especially beginning with the second grade. This particular reader is designed to improve the reading skills and comprehension of those students.

To be able to read is to have the foundation for all subsequent education. The child whose literacy training is deficient may become frustrated and desperate, which may lead to problems in other areas of life.

As we look at the readers of days gone by we find that the biblical standard was followed. Such readers featured the finest British and American authors who emphasized God, morality, the wonders of creation, and respect for one's country. *Beautiful Stories for Children* seeks to follow this pattern of the past.

Most lessons begin with a list of vocabulary words, which the teacher should go over with the student. Once the child learns their pronunciations and meanings, the student may begin reading the story or poem that follows.

It is our prayer that this book will give children the joy that is to be associated with "good reading," and that the knowledge imparted will help "make wise the simple" (Psalm 19:7).

Michael J. McHugh
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LESSON 1

scholar—pupil; learner

teacher—one who teaches; instructor

through—to the end

mean—stand for

study—use one's mind to learn

correctly—right; as it should be

difficult—hard; not easy

marks—periods (.), commas (,), semi-colons (;),
hyphens (-), em dashes (—)

pauses—stops; rests

The Good Scholars

Emma: Teacher, may Charles and I each have a new book? We have read this book through three times.

Teacher: Do you think you can spell all the words in that book, and tell me what they mean?

Emma: I think we can spell them all correctly; but I do not know if we can tell you what they all mean.

Teacher: Well, Emma, please spell the word “guilt,” and tell me what it means.

Emma: G-u-i-l-t—guilt; it means “shame.”

Teacher: Charles, please spell “neat.”

Charles: N-e-a-t—neat; it means “in order.”

Teacher: Very well. Emma, you may spell “catch.”

Emma: C-a-t-c-h—catch; “to take hold of.”

Teacher: Charles, you may spell “climb.”

Charles: C-l-i-m-b—climb; “to go up.”

Teacher: Very well done. You shall each have a new book. But you will have to study, because you will find that some words are difficult in this book.

Emma: Thank you, Teacher. When we get through this book, we will try to spell them all and tell you what they mean.

Teacher: Yes; but you will have to learn how to say each word correctly. You will also need to learn how marks and pauses are used.

Charles: Emma, I think we can learn them, too, if we study hard.

Teacher: I am sure you will both do your best for God's glory.



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LESSON 2

hunt—look for; search
caught—trapped; seized
started—began; set out
quarrel—fight; dispute
wished—desired
struggle—contest; strife
blame—find fault with
sorry—grieved
cruel—unfeeling
wicked—sinful

The Boys and the Bird's Nest

Two boys, who were brothers, went into the woods one day to hunt for a bird's nest. After looking for some time, they found one on a low branch of a tree, with a bird on the nest.

One boy crept up behind the tree and caught the bird before it could fly from the nest. The other boy took the nest, which had four blue eggs in it. Then they both started for home.

While they were on their way, the boys began to quarrel about the bird; for they both wished to have it. During the struggle, the bird flew away, and the boys stepped on the nest and broke the bird's eggs. The boys then began to argue and blame each other for the loss of the bird and its nest of eggs.

When the boys returned home, their mother asked them to tell her what they had been doing and why they were arguing. The boys told her how they had taken the bird with its nest of eggs and how they had began to quarrel.

Their mother said, "My sons, I am sorry that you have been so cruel and wicked. It is cruel to rob a bird of its nest, and it is wicked for brothers to quarrel."

Both of these boys failed to remember that the Bible directs us to be slow to anger. The Book of Proverbs tells us that, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (Proverbs 16:32)



LESSON 3

watches—looks at

except—leaving out

gently—kindly; lovingly

rough—harsh; not smooth

chase—run after

lively—active; full of life

awake—not asleep

rolled—tumbled

pulled—drew

stitches—links of yarn

nibbling—biting with small, gentle bites

fierce—cruel; terrible

ready—prepared

Sarah and Her Kittens

Sarah has a cat that has four little kittens. One is white, another is reddish-brown, and two are gray.

Sarah takes good care of them. Everyday she puts some milk in a dish and watches the kittens while they lap it up.

Her favorite kitten is a dark gray, except for a white patch around its right eye; so she calls it “Patch.” When Sarah picks it up lovingly, it begins to purr and lick her hand with its rough tongue. If she holds Patch still for a while, and gently passes her hand over its back, it will fold its paws, curl itself up, and go to sleep.

When Patch is awake, it is a lively little kitten and will play with pieces of paper or anything it finds on the floor. If Sarah ties a string to a ball of yarn, and then rolls it around on the floor, Patch will chase after it, as though it were a mouse.

One day Patch got into Sarah’s workbasket and rolled a ball of yarn and some spools of thread out on the floor. Then the playful kitten pulled the needles and stitches out of the scarf she was knitting. Sarah did not like what Patch did, but it made her laugh.

Patch is not old enough to hunt; but, when it hears a sound like nibbling or scratching, it will perk up its ears and look very fierce. If Sarah’s dog comes into the room, the kitten will arch up its back, and raise up its hair, as though it were very angry—getting ready to fight. God has surely made kittens a lot of fun and very interesting.



LESSON 4

near—close by

peep—sneak a look

called—named

broken—cracked; ruined

around—about

burst—broke forth

ruined—destroyed; broken

hatched—come out; been born

away—off

Mary and Her Bird's Nest

A bird came and built its nest in a bush, near the house where Mary lived. She would go and peep into the nest to look at the bird's little blue eggs; she called it her bird's nest.

One day her mother said, “Mary, you must not go and look at the bird’s nest again for three weeks.” Mary was a good girl and did as she was told. She did not go near the nest during that whole time.

After three weeks, her mother said, “Now, Mary, you may go and look at your bird’s nest.”

Mary ran out to the bush; but she saw nothing but broken shells all around the nest. She burst into tears, ran into the house, and said, “O mother, my little blue eggs are all ruined!”

“No, my child,” said her mother, “the baby birds have hatched and flown away! After all, little baby birds cannot live forever in tiny eggshells. The birds have left their nest so they can begin to enjoy the gift of life more fully.

“Some day you will grow up and fly away from the home of your youth, like these little birds. Lord willing, you will be ready to live a wonderful life.”



LESSON 5

gentle—mild; meek

allow—let happen

garden—rich spot of ground to raise fruit,
flowers, etc.

charge—care; trust

bellow—make a loud, hollow cry

seize—catch; grasp

likely—probably

collar—neck-band

reward—repay; give a prize

faithful—loyal; trustworthy

Matt and His Dog Shadow

I will now tell you a story about Matt and his dog Shadow. Shadow was a large, strong dog; yet it was so gentle that it would let Matt jump upon its back and ride.

Shadow was a good dog to have around the house, for it would not allow the pigs and hens to go into the garden.

When Matt and his sister Ellen went out into the fields, Shadow would always go with them, as though he had the entire charge of them.

One day, as Matt and Ellen were going through a field, an angry bull began to bellow and run at them. At first, the children did not see the bull until Shadow started to bark. Then Matt yelled, "Shadow, seize it!"

Right away Shadow sprang at the bull, grabbed it by the nose, and held the bull's nose tight. Matt and Ellen ran out of the field, and then Shadow let the bull go.

After that, Matt and Ellen ran to the house and told their father what Shadow had done. Their father replied, "It was a good thing that Shadow went with you; for, if your dog had not been there, most likely you would have been killed."

"Shadow is a good dog!" cried Matt and Ellen, both at the same time.

"Yes," said their father; "and I will buy a brass

collar, and you may put it around Shadow's neck as a reward for his faithful care over you."

"We are happy that you are going to reward Shadow," said Matt, "for he is faithful."