

History Stories for Children

THIRD EDITION



John W. Wayland

C H R I S T I A N L I B E R T Y P R E S S
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Third Edition

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Preface

The pedagogical value of the story has always been recognized but is now being utilized more fully, perhaps, than ever before. At the same time, the need for a suitable variety of story materials and story forms is growing apace. This is especially true in the child's field of history. The need for real history stories, simple enough for little children, is keenly felt every day by teachers in the schools and by parents in the homes.

To meet this need, in some measure, the stories in this little book have been prepared. They are intended primarily for the use of the teacher and the parent in oral instruction, but they may also be read in due time by the child himself. Accordingly, the writer has aimed to adapt them to the uses contemplated, not only in subject matter but also in diction, style, and length.

The subjects have been chosen mainly from the history of our own country, but a few Old World stories have been included. The characters are few and distinct: they are women as well as men, girls as well as boys. Industrial and social conditions are portrayed along with those hitherto more conventional.

Easy references to geography and literature are incorporated; and, as far as possible, simple yet attractive titles have been applied.

A studious effort has been made to simplify and unify these stories by leaving out those details and circumstances that would only distract the child, and to make them vital and vivid by enlarging such details as serve the main purpose. The morals are not pointed, as a rule, but they are obvious enough in most cases, it is believed, to be seen.

One of the secrets of interest in teaching children is to be found in seizing the time and the occasion. Therefore, a large number of these little stories have been especially adapted for use in connection with the various holidays and anniversaries that fall within the school year, and may be used in an order following the annual calendar rather than in the order in which they appear in the book.

John W. Wayland, Ph.D.

Taken from the original 1919 Edition

Foreword

Christian Liberty Press is proud to offer a third edition of *History Stories for Children*, which is largely based on Dr. John W. Wayland's classic *History Stories for Primary Grades*. We share Dr. Wayland's interest in providing students with sound history lessons through stories that are both interesting and morally uplifting. We have included most of Dr. Wayland's original stories, along with some other selections.

In republishing Dr. Wayland's stories, we have sought to maintain the flavor of his original work. We have, however, made modest revisions to the text to remove obvious anachronisms that would be unknown to today's young readers and to update the stories when necessary. In order to help parents and teachers evaluate their students' reading comprehension, we have also added a number of questions to each of the stories in the book. We have also included vocabulary word definitions at the conclusion of selected stories to aid students with unfamiliar terms.

Also, we offer a separate teacher's manual that includes answers to all of the comprehension questions in the book and notes to the teacher for most of the selections. We have built upon Dr. Wayland's original supplementary notes that were initially included in the book. As Dr. Wayland put it in the preface to his original work: "These are intended to supply additional information at convenient places and to embody certain specific suggestions, in an effort to provide practical guidance." We have expanded and updated the notes, putting them in the teacher's manual, so as not to distract students as they read the stories.

History Stories for Children can have a variety of uses. It mostly will be used as an enjoyable reader for children. Yet, the stories will provide the instructor with a wide variety of occasions to branch off into other areas of study. The teacher's notes will provide some direction in building on such opportunities, but be alert for additional possibilities. In addition, we offer extension activities in our *Student Exercises* booklet for you to expand on some of these ideas. We also encourage you to use the stories in this book in connection with various holidays and important dates throughout the year.

It is our prayer that Almighty God would bless all those who read this storybook.

*The Staff of Christian Liberty Press
Arlington Heights, Illinois*

Unit 1

From the Bible

The Boy Who Dreamed

Once there was a boy named Joseph who was always dreaming. He dreamed that he saw a sheaf of wheat standing up straight, and that he then saw eleven other sheaves standing around it and bowing down to it. He dreamed that he saw the sun and the moon and the stars all bowing down to him.

He told one of his dreams to his father. His father Jacob thought it was all very foolish and told him not to be dreaming so much. When he told his dreams to his brothers, they became angry. You see, there were eleven of them, and when



Joseph told about the eleven sheaves, his brothers thought he was dreaming about them. They were the kind of brothers who often become jealous of other family members. Their jealousy became even worse after their father gave Joseph a special coat of many colors.

One day Joseph's brothers did a very wicked thing. They sold him to some strangers and told their father Jacob that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. The strangers were merchants, and they carried Joseph into a country called Egypt. In that country, Joseph was kept many, many years. All this time Joseph's father thought he was dead.

At first, Joseph had a hard time in Egypt. He was a slave and was sometimes mistreated. Once he was put into prison and kept there for more than two years. During his time in prison, Joseph explained the dreams of other inmates. Joseph continued to receive the ability from God to understand dreams even while in prison.

Later Joseph became a great man after he explained two troubling dreams to the **Pharaoh** of Egypt. Pharaoh saw in his first dream seven fat cows and then seven skinny cows that ate the fat cows. In the second dream, he saw seven fat ears of grain followed by seven thin ears of grain that swallowed the fat ears. The Pharaoh and his advisors had no idea what these dreams meant. When Pharaoh was told about Joseph's ability to explain dreams, he ordered Joseph to be brought to him from the prison. Pharaoh wanted Joseph to tell him the meaning of his dreams.

God revealed to Joseph the meaning of Pharaoh's dreams. Egypt would have seven good years of crops and then seven bad years. Joseph also told Pharaoh that he should prepare for the bad years by saving food from the good years. Pharaoh thought that Joseph had a good idea and put him in charge of preparing for the bad years. He also gave Joseph a wife and a fine place to live in his palace.

After Joseph had become a great man in Egypt, his brothers at home began to have a hard time. Their crops did not grow, and their cattle did not thrive. They had very little to eat. One year, there was a **famine**; the next year, there was another famine; and so on for seven years.

Now in Egypt there was plenty to eat, in spite of the hard times. Joseph had managed things so well that the people in Egypt had enough to eat and some to spare. In fact, the

Egyptians sold a great deal of food to the people of other countries.

And now, what do you think? Joseph's brothers went to Egypt to buy food! They had to buy it from Joseph, for he had charge of the king's storehouse.

Joseph had changed so much that his brothers did not know him; but he knew them. He could have put them in jail, but he did not do it. He sold them food; and, after a long time, he told them who he was. They were very surprised and were terribly frightened, but Joseph did not hurt them. He believed in doing good in turn for doing something bad. Joseph understood that while his brothers meant to do evil, God meant it all for good, to save the lives of many during the famine.

After this, Joseph's father and all his brothers went to live in Egypt. Joseph and Pharaoh picked out for them good farmland and rich pastures near a very large river called the Nile. If it had not been for Joseph, there is no telling what would have become of his father, brothers, and the rest of their families. The boy who was a great dreamer turned out to be a kind and godly man who was a great leader.

Now, in closing this story, let me tell you a secret about Joseph's dreams and his ability to explain dreams. Joseph kept his eyes open and could see what ought to be done. He sought God's will on things; then he went to work to do things. This is the reason his dreams and explanations always counted for so much. As the Holy Bible says in Isaiah 26:3, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You."

Vocabulary Words

sheaf: a bundle in which cereal plants, as wheat, rye, etc., are tied together (plural: **sheaves**)

inmates: people who are in prison

Pharaoh: the king of ancient Egypt

famine: a time when people do not have enough food to eat; food becomes hard to find

Comprehension Questions

1. What were Joseph's two dreams?
2. What did Joseph's brothers do to him?
3. What did Pharaoh's dreams mean?
4. Why did Joseph help his family?

Extension Activity

Research: Do you know where to find Egypt on a map of the world? Many stories of the Bible take place in or near Egypt and around the Nile River. Use an encyclopedia, Internet, or other source to find Africa and the country of Egypt (in the northeastern corner of the continent).

Then look for the Nile River. Where does it begin? (Hint: The headwaters of the Nile is Africa's largest lake.) Into what body of water does the end of the Nile River flow?

Charles the Great

Today I am going to tell you about a king whose name was Charles the Great. What do you think this great king called himself? He called himself David. This was because he often read in the Bible about King David and thought that King David was a great man.



In many ways, Charles the Great was like King David. He was a brave soldier; he liked to study books; he loved music; and he was anxious to build schools and churches.

King Charles was tall and strong. He could ride a horse all day and was fond of hunting. He could speak and read well, but he never learned to write well.

Why do you think King Charles never learned to write well? It was not because he was lazy or did not try. He tried hard. He would put a pencil and a tablet under his pillow at night, and if he could not sleep he would sit up in bed and practice writing. He tried as hard as he could to learn how to write.

The trouble was that he had not begun when he was a boy. He had not begun to write until he was a grown man. By that time his fingers were hard and stiff. By that time, they fit around the thick handle of a sword much better than they did around the slender staff of a pen.

One Christmas day, King Charles was in a large church in the great city of Rome. As he was kneeling down praying, the **pope** came up and surprised Charles by putting a splendid crown on his head.

Charles was a king before that time and had a king's crown; but after the day when the pope gave him another crown, he was called emperor as well as king.

As I have already told you, Charles the Great was anxious to build schools and churches. A number of the schools in his kingdom were in churches, and the pastors of the churches were the teachers.

Charles had a great school in his palace. For this school he obtained the best teachers he could find. He went to many places looking for good teachers, and whenever he found one that was very good he invited him to his palace.

In King Charles's palace school, there were grown-up men as well as boys. He also included his own daughters in the palace school. The king himself spent time studying with some of the teachers.

One day King Charles found out that the rich boys in his school were not studying as well as the poor boys, and he decided to give the lazy fellows a lesson himself.

He told the poor boys to sit on the right-hand side of the room. They were the sheep. He made the rich boys sit on the left-hand side of the room. They were the goats.

Then he praised the poor boys for their good work and declared that he was pleased with them; but he gave the rich boys a severe scolding. He finished by saying to them, "If you want any more favors from me, you will have to go to work and get your lessons."

Do you think that was a pretty good thing for a king to say to a lot of lazy boys?

Vocabulary Word

pope: the head of the Roman Catholic Church, sometimes called the bishop of Rome

Comprehension Questions

1. What name did King Charles like to be called?
2. What did Charles the Great want to build?
3. Why did King Charles have a hard time learning to write?
4. Which group of boys were considered lazy? Why were they considered lazy?

Extension Activity

Read and Learn: Read Matthew 25:31–46 and learn the parable of the sheep and the goats. A *parable* is a story that will teach you a moral or religious lesson. Think about what you learn from this story. Write your thoughts in a few sentences on a separate sheet of paper.

The Star-Spangled Banner



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One morning, just at nine o'clock, a teacher and his class entered a large building in Washington, D.C. They had gone to the capital of the United States to study history.

They had visited Mt. Vernon, the old home of George Washington, and Arlington, the old home of Robert E. Lee. They had gone through the great Capitol building and the beautiful Library of Congress. They had heard the United States Marine Band give a concert on the White House lawn. Now they were going into the National Museum of

American History. This was the large building they entered at nine o'clock that morning—as soon as the doors opened.

They found the museum the most interesting place of all, perhaps. They saw old letters that had been written by famous men; old pistols and swords that had belonged to famous soldiers; old jackets and coats that had been worn in times past; old pieces of machinery that had been wonders in their day. For example, they saw a little old railway engine that was used on one of the first railroads in this country.

All of a sudden, one of the girls called the teacher, and soon the whole class was gathered close around a large glass case. In the case was a big old flag. The colors were not bright anymore, but it was still easy to see what was red, what was white, and what was blue.

“Those stripes are a foot wide,” said Walter.

“Yes,” replied Janet, “and the stars are as big as my hat.”

“I wonder how large the whole flag is,” remarked Virginia.

“Here is a card that tells us,” answered Orena. “It is twenty-seven feet wide and thirty-two feet long.”

“It surely is a whopper!” exclaimed John. “It is almost big enough to cover the side of a barn.”

“At the Battle of North Point,” said the teacher, “this flag was big enough to be seen all over Baltimore.”

The boys and girls looked puzzled, so the teacher went on, “You remember that a few days ago in school we learned to sing our national anthem, ‘The Star-Spangled Banner.’ Last evening the band played it, and all the people stood up. This song, you know, was written by Francis Scott Key. We passed his house in Georgetown yesterday.

“It was during the War of 1812. The British ships were firing on **Baltimore**, and Key was a prisoner on one of the ships. Before the British ships could get to Baltimore, they had to pass Fort McHenry. However, that was not an easy thing to do, for in the fort were a lot of big cannons; and they blazed away at the British ships with all their might.

“The sun went down, but the fight went on. Then it began to grow dark. But the fight went on. At the last gleaming of twilight, Mr. Key looked toward Fort McHenry to see whether the American flag was still flying. It was still there. Clouds of battle smoke were in the way, but now and then he could see the broad stripes and bright stars streaming over the walls of the fort.

“It grew dark, but the fight went on. Mr. Key could not see the fort any longer, but whenever a rocket would shoot up and make a red glare in the sky, or a bomb would burst somewhere in the air, he knew that Fort McHenry was still holding out—that the flag of the fort was still flying.

“But late in the night the noise stopped. Why? Mr. Key did not know. He was afraid that the fort had surrendered—that the flag had been hauled down. He did not sleep much, you may be sure; he was too anxious to know which side had won the battle.

“Before daylight he was up, looking toward the land. Presently it grew lighter, and he could see a little. He could see a big blur on the shore. That, he knew, was the fort. After a while he could see the flagstaff, and he could see that there was a flag on it; but he could not tell yet which flag it was. He thought at first that it might be the British flag—that the British had captured Baltimore.

“All at once, the breeze blew the flag out, and the sun shone on it. It was not the British flag—it was the ‘Star-Spangled Banner’! It was still there! Fort McHenry had won; the city was safe.

“Mr. Key was worked up to such a pitch of joy that he took an old piece of paper, which he happened to have in his pocket, and wrote on it, right there and then, the words of our grand national song, ‘The Star-Spangled Banner.’

“That was over two hundred years ago, but this old flag here in the case before us is the flag that Mr. Key saw flying over Fort McHenry; and the song he wrote our people have been singing ever since.”

“Let us sing it now,” said one of the boys. The teacher agreed. The whole class stood close together before the faded old flag and sang:

O say! can you see by the dawn’s early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight’s last
gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the
perilous fight,
O’er the **ramparts** we watched, were so gallantly
streaming?
And the rocket’s red glare—the bombs bursting
in air—
Gave proof through the night that our flag was
still there;
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O’er the land of the free and the home of the
brave?

It was an unusual thing to sing that song in the National Museum without asking anybody's permission, but no one made any objection. To have stopped that song would have been too much like tearing down the flag.

Vocabulary Words

museum: place where important or interesting things are stored and displayed

Baltimore: a city in the state of Maryland

perilous: full of danger

rampart: a wall for protection

Comprehension Questions

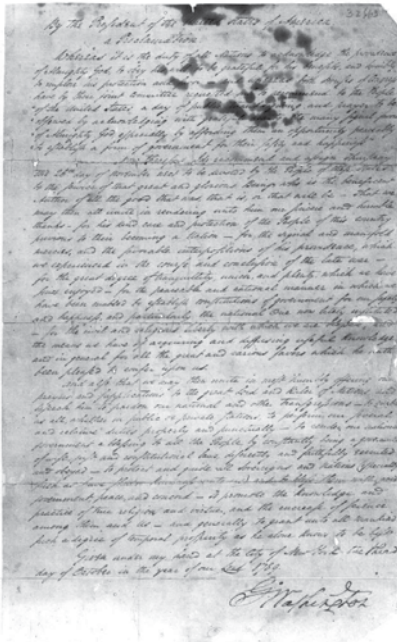
1. Who wrote the words to the “Star-Spangled Banner” anthem?
2. Why did he write these words?

Extension Activity

Memorize: An *anthem* is a song of praise or loyalty. Where have you heard “The Star-Spangled Banner,” the United States’ national anthem, sung? Do you know the words by heart? If not, read the words again from the book and sing them to help you memorize our country’s national anthem.

How Thanksgiving Grew

The first governor who said, “Let us have a thanksgiving,” was William Bradford, at Plymouth. The first President who proclaimed a day of thanksgiving was George Washington, on October 3, 1789, in New York City.



George Washington's first Thanksgiving Day Proclamation from 1789

The custom of having a big Thanksgiving Day all over the country every year grew up gradually from having little thanksgiving days once in a while. You will learn how Thanksgiving Day grew.

The first governor to proclaim a thanksgiving was Governor Bradford, at Plymouth. The first thanksgiving at Plymouth was held in November 1621. In 1623 there was another thanksgiving at Plymouth because a good rain came when it was much needed.

At Salem, another town north of Plymouth, the people had a public thanksgiving in the summer of 1630 because some ships came and brought them food.

At Boston, in 1631, there was a thanksgiving in the month of February. A ship had come to Boston, bringing food and other supplies.

Plymouth, Salem, and Boston are all in Massachusetts. Massachusetts and five other states (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Connecticut) make up what we call New England. In many towns of New England it soon became the custom to have a public thanksgiving every year.

During the American War for Independence (1775–1783) Congress every year asked the people to observe a day of prayer and thanksgiving. Then, soon after the war ended, General Washington was chosen as the first President; and he was the first one to proclaim a day of thanksgiving, as I have said, in 1789.

President Washington named Thursday, November 26, 1789, as a day of national thanksgiving. He urged the people to thank God for His blessings, ask Him to pardon their sins, pray to Him for strength to do all their duties, private and public, and to ask Him to make our national government a blessing to all.

I suppose that Thanksgiving was still observed in the towns of New England every year, but the Presidents for a long time did not issue a Thanksgiving proclamation every year. At some places, a thanksgiving day was kept, whether the President said so or not; and at other places, there was no thanksgiving, even when the President requested it.

During the Civil War, President Lincoln issued two Thanksgiving proclamations, one in 1863 and another the next year. Since then, Presidents appointed a thanksgiving day each year, although the day was not observed every-

where. However, in 1941, Congress passed a law making Thanksgiving a national, legal holiday.

Now, therefore, we have a real national Thanksgiving. Congress appointed the fourth Thursday in November to be Thanksgiving Day.

In every part of the United States, the people have come to look forward to Thanksgiving, from year to year, as a day that we cannot give up. It has grown from small beginnings in little towns to a great day for all the land. At first, Thanksgiving Day was a New England holiday; now it is a national holiday.

Comprehension Questions

1. Who was the first governor to proclaim a day of thanksgiving?
2. Name two Presidents that made proclamations of thanksgiving.
3. What day did Congress appoint to be the legal Thanksgiving holiday?

Extension Activity

Write a letter: Thanksgiving grew from a local holiday to a national holiday, and our giving of thanks should grow, too. The Bible says to give thanks in everything. How many people can you think of to thank for something they have done for you or for others? Write them a letter, or a note, or send them a card of thanks to show you appreciate them.

Think of more than one person so your “thanks giving” will grow, too, just like the holiday of Thanksgiving has grown. The people you might think of are parents, grandparents, cousins, neighbors, pastors, teachers, people in the military, and your friends. And always we are to give thanks to God, so conclude your writing by saying a prayer of thanks to God.