

=BOOKS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 40

Matthew

Objects to have:

The new Bible book sign: MATTHEW
Jesus the King

Chalk and chalkboard

A miniature crown, colored, to fit on top of drawn stick figures

Scotch tape

Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

(Repeat the names of the books of the Old Testament.) In Sunday school we have heard a little bit about every book of the Old Testament part of the Bible.

(Have a line drawn down your chalkboard, so that the left side is one-third the width of the board, leaving the right side two-thirds the width of the board. In the one-third space draw a simple line drawing of the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan River and the Dead Sea along with the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. While drawing all the bodies of water, tell the children that you are drawing a lake that is called the Sea of Galilee, a river that is called the Jordan River, another little sea called the Dead Sea and a lot of water that is called the Mediterranean Sea. It would be good if you had colored chalk to color the water with blue and the seashore with brown and green. On the two-thirds side of the board, shade in half of it for the Sea of Galilee, with a portion to the top or the north of it being shaded in with brown. Tell the children that you are drawing part of the Sea of Galilee bigger so that they can see it better, and that the part to the north of it, as you are shading it, is the seashore which leads to the city of Capernaum.

Telling the story:

(Draw a stick figure standing on the seashore of the city of Capernaum.) Let us say that this is Matthew. Matthew is the name of a man of whom we read in the Bible. Before he grew to be a man, he was like you. He had been a tiny baby, then an older boy. Matthew had not learned to love God. Matthew wanted to have his own way. We could say that Matthew wanted to be king of his own life. Because we are saying that Matthew wanted to be king of his own life, let's put this crown on Matthew's head. (Lightly tape the paper miniature crown to the top of the stick figure's head.)

Because Matthew wanted to be his own king, his own boss, he probably never shared anything with anybody else. When he was playing with his toys, he would not share with his friends. Whatever his friends had, Matthew wanted. Matthew no doubt was completely selfish. He always wanted to be first in line. He was never happy to see someone else be happy. As Matthew grew older, he wanted to do each day only that which he thought would make him happy. He probably never helped anyone else, nor did work for someone else. You see, he had not met Jesus; therefore, Jesus could not be King of his life. Matthew wanted to rule his own life. Matthew wanted to be his own king.

As Matthew got to be a man, he thought only about how he could get as much money as he could get for himself. One day Matthew learned that there was a chance to get a new job. The new job that he could get would be that of tax collector. Matthew wanted that job very badly. If Matthew were tax collector, he would sit in an office by the seashore of Capernaum. In that office he would collect money from people. The people from whom Matthew would collect money would be travelers who had come from other places to Capernaum. Travelers who came from other places had to pay money for taxes to get into Capernaum. If they were going to sell some jewelry or cloth or other things, they had to pay taxes. Matthew wanted to be the tax collector. He wanted to collect money

from other people. He was supposed to pay a certain amount of the money to the government. The rest of the money he could keep for himself. Matthew wanted as much as he could get for himself; he wanted his own way all the time. Matthew wanted the job of tax collector. Matthew was king of his life.

How glad Matthew was the day when he was told he could have the job of tax collector! He walked importantly into the tax collector's building and sat down at the desk where he could collect money from people. Taxes are needed to pay the president, the vice president, the firemen, the policemen, and so forth. Matthew, however, was a dishonest tax collector. He took more money than was needed for the taxes themselves, and he kept all the extra money for himself. Matthew was king of his own life!

One day Someone very important came into the place where Matthew was sitting. (Draw another stick figure next to Matthew.) Oh, there were the usual sailors and salesmen and just plain travelers who came to pay their taxes. I'm not talking about them; I'm talking about the most important Man Who has ever lived on earth. Jesus was that Man.

Jesus walked up to Matthew. Matthew looked up at Him. Jesus talked to Matthew. Matthew found out Who Jesus was—he learned that Jesus would be his Saviour from sin, and Matthew wanted that; he was tired of his sinful, unhappy life. Suddenly Matthew did not want to be king of his own life. Matthew saw how really unhappy he was. Wanting his own way and trying to get everything for himself never was going to make him happy. Matthew saw himself as a sinner as he talked with Jesus that day. Matthew was sorry for his sins.

Then Jesus said, "Matthew, come, follow Me." What? Leave this business where he could make a lot of money, have a beautiful home, and all the clothes that he wanted to wear? What? Leave this job of importance and follow Jesus? That is what Jesus was asking him to do.

Matthew did not wait a minute. He immediately obeyed Jesus. He left his business and went with Jesus. (Take the crown from the head of Matthew and place it on the head of Jesus while saying the following.) Matthew had decided not to be his own king. He made Jesus the King of his life.

Matthew ran to one friend and then he ran to another friend, and another and another. He said to each friend, "Come to my house. I'm giving a banquet. I want you to come eat with me. Be my guest." Matthew's friends came to his house. They sat down at the big table where there was delicious food—a banquet! At that banquet Matthew stood up to make a speech, "Friends, I hope you have enjoyed the meal which we have eaten together tonight. Now I have something very important to tell you. I want to tell you about Jesus. I met Jesus the other day while I was collecting taxes. Jesus has saved me from my sins. Now I know that the most important thing in life is to make Jesus my King. I will serve Jesus. I will do what He wants me to do."

That's exactly what Matthew did. From then on Matthew went about telling people about Jesus and how they, too, could be saved by trusting Him. Matthew traveled with Jesus. He watched as Jesus healed people. He listened as Jesus preached. He watched as Jesus was crucified; he saw Him after He had risen from the dead. Matthew watched Jesus go into Heaven again. Even after Jesus went back to Heaven, Matthew continued working for Jesus.

One day God the Holy Spirit told Matthew to write down some words. Matthew obeyed God again. He wrote down all the words the Holy Spirit told him to write.

These are the words which Matthew wrote. (Show the children the book of Matthew.) This is the very first book of the New Testament in the Bible. This book is named Matthew. What is the name of this book? Yes, the book of Matthew. In what part of the Bible is it found? Yes, in the New Testament. It is the first book in the New Testament.

We have learned all the names of the books of the Old Testament. Now today we have learned the name of the first book of the New Testament. It, too, is named after a man, the man named Matthew. Matthew made Jesus the King of his life. Matthew tells us in his book that Jesus ought to be our King, too. Someday Jesus will be King of the entire earth.

LEARN OUR BIBLE VERSE: Matthew 28:18, “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”