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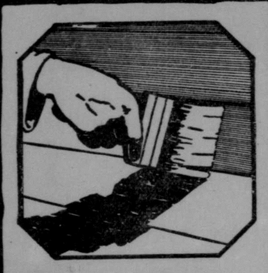
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IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL

Sunday School Lesson

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D.D., Dean of the Evening School, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)
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Lesson for May 2

GOD'S COVENANT WITH NOAH

LESSON TEXT—Genesis 8:20; 9:27.

GOLDEN TEXT—I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.—Gen. 9:13.

PRIMARY TOPIC—The Promise of the Rainbow.

JUNIOR TOPIC—God's Promise to Noah.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—The Story of Noah.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—God's Dealing With Noah.

In order to grasp the meaning of God's covenant with Noah, the whole story of the flood should be clearly in the mind of the teacher and the pupil.

I. The Cause of the Flood (6:1-8).

It was apostasy from God. The two types of men we saw in Cain and Abel (the one of proud self-will the other of humble faith), developed on diverging lines, but as they multiplied they came into contact and intermarried.

II. The Ark the Way of Salvation (6:14-7:24).

Although all flesh had corrupted its way before God, in His mercy provision was made for such as would avail themselves of it. Christ is the ark into which all who enter are eternally saved. As all outside of the ark perished, so all outside the redemption of Christ shall perish (Mark 16:16; II Thess. 1:8, 9; John 3:18, 19, 36; I Pet. 3:18-22).

Observe in connection with this judgment and provision of salvation:

1. The long-suffering God—He waited 120 years.

2. Noah, a preacher of righteousness (II Pet. 2:5).

God not only waited long, but through Noah sounded forth intelligent warnings.

3. God will not withhold His anger forever. At the appointed time the flood came and everything perished outside of the ark.

III. Beginning Life Upon a New World (Gen. 8:20).

This was a most solemn hour for Noah. With the fresh consciousness of God's hatred and judgment of sin, Noah faced the responsibility of giving shape to the life which was beginning upon the cleansed earth. He was to replenish the earth. Happily Noah began right, for he began with the act of worship.

IV. The Covenant With Noah (8:21; 9:27).

God was well pleased with Noah's act of devotion. Because of this He entered into a covenant with him embracing the following elements:

1. Assurance of the perpetuity of the race (8:21, cf. 9:8-17).

The bow was set in the cloud as a token or guarantee of this.

2. The security of the order of nature (8:22).

We know of the succession of the seasons and the ongoing of the system of nature only because of the guarantee of Him who controls them all.

3. Establishing the privileges and responsibilities of Noah and his descendants in their relation to the earth (9:1-4).

(1) The earth to be replenished (v. 1).

(2) Dominion restored. The dominion which was lost through the fall of man was now restored, but on the ground of fear.

(3) Animal food given.

Heretofore man subsisted on a vegetable diet (Gen. 1:29).

4. Human government established (9:4-6).

The sword of justice was placed in man's hands and man was to be ruled by man. This sword has never been removed (Rom. 13:1-7).

5. The destinies and interrelations of the three great branches of the race fixed (9:18-27).

(1) Cursed be Canaan (v. 25). The descendants of Ham were reduced to the lowest condition of servitude. This was partly fulfilled in the time of Joshua in their being partly exterminated and partly reduced to the lowest form of servitude, and also in the time of Solomon (Josh. 9:23; I Kings 9:20, 21), and it is still in the process of fulfillment in that for the most part Canaan's descendants are the world's servants.

(2) Blessed shall be Shem (v. 26).

This was fulfilled in making the Jewish race the repository of religious truth and ultimately in Christ the promised seed.

(3) Enlargement of Japheth (v. 27).

This was fulfilled in making him the progenitor of peoples and multitudes (10:5); also in the civilization which has been brought to the world through him.

Christ and the Resurrection

Let the science of historical investigation be rigorously applied to the resurrection of Jesus. Christianity will not fear the proof. For it has pleased God that this crowning seal put to His Son's life should be sustained and guarded by an amount of proof such as no other fact in ancient history can boast; so that no honest searcher for truth might be left in doubt that Jesus of Nazareth has been declared to be the Son of God with power.—J. Oswald Dykes.

THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPIC

By Rev. Charles E. Schaeffer, D. D.

May 2nd. The Ten Most Important Kinds of Work—How Make Them Christian? Ex. 20:9; 2 Thess. 3:6-13.

All work is honorable if it is done in the right spirit and with the proper purpose. That which makes a thing worth while is the motive that is lying behind it. If an angel were to sweep a room, instantly the task would glow with new meaning. Work is not a disgrace. It is a means of grace. The hardest work is to have no work to do. Work is health and wealth. Work is not a curse, it is a blessing. He is often happiest who has the most work to do. Let us not pray to have less work to do—but for strength equal to the tasks. It is difficult to single out ten of the most important kinds of work. Some work requires the use of the hands only. Some requires the use of the head only. But some requires the use of both head and hand. Each has its legitimate sphere and each requires the best ability the worker may possess. There must be no slipshod work in any realm of life. It must be honest, sincere, genuine. Each must work in his way, but all must be actuated by the truth and by the spirit of service.

1. Field Work. We must put this at the head of the list. The farmers were the earliest laborers in the history of the human race. They are still the most important and most indispensable. We depend on them for our bread and the necessities of life. They are co-laborers with God. Those who can make two blades of grass grow where there was only one, who can bring bread out of the ground, are real creators. The tiller of the soil, the sower of the seed, the reaper of the harvest is God's true workman. The farmer is an immediate contact with nature. He moves amid living things. He is face to face with reality. He sees everywhere beauty, loveliness and power. These living realities enter his soul. What a great opportunity to draw near to God! The farmer should be a man of great faith, trust and hope. He depends upon sunshine and rain, cold and heat, Summer and Winter. The records show that fully 75 per cent of those who are agriculturists are religiously disposed. The farmer can cultivate his soul as well as his soil in his daily round.

2. House Work. Domestic work is frequently regarded as drudgery. It is however such only because we make it so. It is one of the noblest forms of work. To make a meal, sweep a room, to create a clean and cheerful atmosphere, to look after children, to provide a place of sunshine and warmth and love whither we delight to turn, is no small or trivial matter. The house workers too are laborers together with God. God has put mothers into homes to rear children and to provide shelter and to build a little heaven on earth. The daily round of duties may seem irksome and burdensome, but they are not without meaning and they fill a most important niche in the structure of human life. House-workers may find themselves, like Martha, cumbered with many things, but they may also be like Mary entertaining their Lord and sitting at His feet and choosing the good part that can never be taken from them.

3. Factory Work. The factory is a comparatively late institution in our social and industrial order. It belongs to the age of machinery, to steam and electricity and mechanical power. Factory workers are real producers. Millions of men and women work in shops and factories. Our social life is so organized today that the factory has become an absolute necessity. There was a time when everything was hand-made and when it was made at home, when one person was able to do many things. All that has changed. Factory workers now do only piece work. They make only a fraction of an article, perhaps only the head of a pin, and this they do by machine. Here appears one of the many problems which the factory presents. To make a small part of an article by machine requires no thought, no initiative, no self-expression. Consequently there is danger of arrested mental and physical development. There is danger of dwarfing one's powers and degenerating into a machine itself. Consequently there is the need for shorter hours, for leisure, for recreation and diversion. There are likewise moral problems which factory life precipitates. The environment, the associations, the monotony of the thing, all influence the life and character of the factory worker. Great improvements have been made in this line by social and welfare workers and by the owners of factories who have the good of their employees at heart as well as the production of goods.

4. Office work. Our highly organized commercial life has necessitated the modern office. Every little business now requires an office equipped with a competent force of secretaries and clerks and bookkeepers. The numerous office buildings, the skyscrapers in our large cities are housing hundreds of thousands of men and women who are engaged in this kind of work. They are obliged to bend over their books and ledgers or hammer their typewriters and adding machines, writing letters, making out accounts, filing papers, etc. Some of it is constructive, much of it is mechanical. The office worker lives in a world of figures and statistics which frequently are cold and lifeless and furnish little inspiration for life's real mission.

5. Store Work. This is a general term for all those who sell goods over the counter. It takes on a variety of aspects. It includes those who buy and sell merchandise of every description, those who bargain and trade. They think in terms of money and of profit and loss. They move in the realm of things. How tyrannical things are! How they fasten themselves on to us! How persistent they are! How they shout into our ears and flash upon our eyes and clamor for recognition! The whole realm of business needs to be Christianized. The merchant should be in business not primarily to make money, but to serve humanity. How few business men carry on their business with a view of serving their community rather than enriching themselves!

6. Transportation Work. Traffic in general enlists almost as many workers as trading and manufacturing. How many thousands are employed in all forms of transportation! There are those who run our trains, passenger and freight, our steamboats, our trolleys, our buses, our taxicabs, our delivery wagons, our aeroplanes! What privations many of these men have! What sacrifices they make! There are the directors of these transportation agencies, and the almost countless numbers who are constantly traveling. They are shuttling to and fro through the earth, flying through the air. Our modern transportation facilities have made us a people who are constantly on the go and have formed us into a great moving procession. We have taken to the road and are becoming a nation of vagabonds on the earth. We have become restless and have no where an abiding place. Consequently multitudes of people have no home life, they live in one or two rooms with no thought of permanency and no responsibilities. This is true with those who travel and those who are employed to make travel possible.

7. Recreational Work. This is no contradiction of terms. There are thousands who are employed in providing recreation for the people. To this class belong baseball players, basketball, football players, actors, movie stars,, and the whole retinue of attendants, producers, stagers, musicians, etc. Also all of those who furnish amusement of every description, those who provide summer resorts and other places where people find recreation. We are a pleasure loving people. Perhaps the stress and strain of our modern life necessitates some of this. Our complex life demands it, and there are multitudes who find employment in providing it. But pleasure and recreation can easily be carried to the extreme.

"For a cap and bell our lives we pay,
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking."

The real end of recreation may be missed and we may thereby become impoverished in body and soul, in person as well as in purse.

8, 9, 10. Professional Work. We group three great phases of work under this heading. Religious, Educational, and Social. We name them last, not because they are least, but because they form a class by themselves. To them belong the minister, the teacher, the lawyer, the doctor, the artist, the musician, the professional men who have spent years in preparation and who minister in higher realms of life. These too are real workers, though they do not always labor with their hands.

The noble army of workers the world over, what a vast multitude they are! What a variety of life they all represent! What realms of life they occupy! Much of the world's work remains unchristianized. Here lies the task of the Christian Church, to enter these areas of human endeavor and bring the Christian spirit to reign in all of them. The whole world of work must be captured for Christ, and this is a stupendous task. In many sections the working man has turned his back to the Church and lives his life apart from it.

"My Master was a worker,
With daily work to do,
And he who would be like Him,
Must be a worker too;
Then welcome honest labor
And honest labor's fare,
For where there is a worker
The Master's man is there."

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