

The Sunday School Times

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Lesson for June 25 in this issue

Lesson 13.—Jonah Learns God's Missionary Purpose. *Jonah.*

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In Perfect Peace

By Rachel E. Crocker
Isaiah 26:3

MY HEART'S at rest in Him; He gives now
Sweet peace and confidence, though all around
I see a world upset, in pain and woe—
Wars rage, and chaos reigns, and fears abound.
He speaks, "My dear one, put your trust in Me,
And I will keep the one in perfect peace
Whose mind is stayed on Me, not earthly cares.
I'll give you quiet rest, that ne'er can cease."

I'll trust Him, then, through all the changing years,
For all He promises, He'll surely do.
And so my heart's at rest, let come what may—
I know He loves and cares for me—for you!

"But God . . ."

What glowing hope that little phrase, "But God . . ." brings into life! When it appears in Scripture, it is like an open door from a dark room into the sunlight, like the turning point in a critical illness, like a sudden break in the clouds or the lifting of fog, like the first

breath of wind on a dead, calm sea, or a blazed trail picked up again in a forest. In a cheering, heart-warming message given this spring at THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES Monday prayer meeting, Mr. Gerald Gregson, now of the Scripture Union in Canada, but formerly chief of chaplains of the Royal Canadian Air Force, referred briefly to that phrase and recommended further study of it. He spoke of how it had often helped him. It marks the transition from spiritual death to eternal life, from utter helplessness to abounding strength in Christ, from being "under the circumstances" to being above them. "My flesh and my heart faileth," said David, "but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever" (Psa. 73:26). What Christian worker does not know the overwhelming feeling of that first complaint? Yet it is the privilege of every servant of the Lord to know the uplift of looking away to Him. See how that arresting thought marks out sharp changes in Scripture: we were without strength and ungodly, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8); we were dead in trespasses and sins, dominated by the world and the Prince of the power of the air and the lust of our flesh, "But God, who is rich in mercy

. . . quickened us together with Christ" (Eph. 2:2-5); we had no hope and were without God, "But now in Christ Jesus ye . . . are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (v. 13); our flesh would naturally produce a hideous crop of works, "But the fruit of the Spirit is . . ." (Gal. 5:22). Scripture shows us plainly, and we learn by hard experience, that we are not capable of serving the Lord, "But our sufficiency is of God" (2 Cor. 3:5); most Christian workers cannot save much "for a rainy day"—"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19). Joseph's brethren had no good intentions toward him, but he trusted God through all his trials and as he looked back he said, "So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God" (Gen. 45:8). In the storm on the lake the disciples were almost in despair, "But straightway Jesus spake unto them . . ." (Matt. 14:27), and soon all was well. Even the great Apostle Paul was troubled about certain details of his travels, but twice he said, "But I trust in the Lord" (Phil. 2:19, 24). We ought never to confront the trials of life, or wrestle with its problems, or make important decisions without remembering the mercy, love, wisdom, and power that lie hidden in that little phrase, "But God. . ."

Higher Criticism in Sunday School

An editorial by Oswald T. Allis, Ph.D., commenting on two letters published on the next page.

THE writers of the "Open Letters" have called attention to the most ominous as it is perhaps also the most obvious sign of the times in the very important field of Christian Education. It is the boldness and positiveness with which the destructive "conclusions" of the Higher Criticism are

being presented in the Sunday school literature of many of our Protestant denominations today. It is not, of course, that these views are new and surprising. On the contrary, there has been no fundamental change in the "critical" interpretation of the Bible in more than half a century. Already at the turn of the century, the basic conclusions of the critics regarding the Old Testament (the late date and composite authorship of the Pentateuch, few if any of the Psalms Davidic, two or more Isaiahs, Chronicles late and unreliable, Daniel a Maccabean apocalypse [pseudo-prophecy], Jonah and Esther "stories" with little or no historical basis) were being very confidently asserted, as were the claims that the

Comfort for Dark Days

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor. 2:12).

Pastoral Epistles are not Pauline and that the Fourth Gospel is not by the Apostle John and not historically trustworthy. These teachings were gradually finding their way into the colleges, universities, and theological seminaries of this country, being highly commended as representing the "best [European, notably German] scholarship." The critics were confident that their views would prevail; and they did not hesitate to make their acceptance the test and hallmark of true scholarship. "All scholars are agreed" was their confident and constant assertion.

But there was a serious drawback, which made this confident boasting seem somewhat premature, to say the least. About twenty-five years ago a professor in Manchester, England, writing in the *British Weekly* asserted that as far as England was concerned, "the battle is over." All of the best scholarship was, he declared, on the side of the critics. But in saying this he made a rather damaging and humiliating confession. "We are afraid it is no exaggeration to say that probably five-sixths of the Old Testament teaching given in the Sunday schools of this country [England] last Sunday was based on the presuppositions of fifty or a hundred years ago"; that is, was what we are accustomed to call Biblical or conservative instead of critical. Quite recently another English scholar (Canon Richardson), who is equally confident that the conclusions of the critics are "truth as assured as anything can be in the sphere of literary research," felt obliged to confess and deplore the fact that "there still remains a problem of distribution: large masses of the population unfortunately know nothing at all about the Bible and how it was written, and the door is still open to all kinds of superstition and misuse," which is equivalent to saying that the conclusions of the critics and their method of studying the Bible are still very far from being generally accepted by the rank and file of Christians.

This fact, and we hope and believe that it is a fact, will explain and account for the vigorous effort which is now being made to use the Sunday schools and other educational channels of the Protestant churches to indoctrinate the children of the church and their parents with the conclusions of the critics. In doing this the critics are simply following the most up-to-date technique. Lenin and Mussolini, Hitler and Stalin, all made the discovery that the secret of successful propaganda is to control the education of the children. The critics have simply taken a leaf out of their book. In many or most of the leading denominations of Protestantism, they have secured control of all the channels of education; and they are using them in a way which has long been a characteristic of their technique: to present only one side of the question, to ignore those who differ from them, to make asser-

tions instead of offering proof, to insist that they alone are truly scientific and imbued with the truly modern spirit. And, sad to say, the Sunday school lessons are just the field for such dogmatic, one-sided treatment of matters that are of importance both to faith and life. A teacher is supposed to teach; a pupil is supposed to learn. If the teacher is biased and misrepresents or distorts the facts, the pupil is in no position to contradict him. If he were, the role of teacher and pupil would be reversed. And the younger the child, the more likely is he to accept the statements of the teacher without question and to receive impressions which will go with him throughout life.

The article, referred to in one of the letters, which appeared in the *Adult Teacher* of the Methodist Church for July, 1949, is simply one of many examples of this method of presenting the critical view of the Bible. It states the all too familiar conclusions of the critics, but with very little evidence to support them. Thus we are told, "For example, it was generally accepted that Moses wrote the entire Pentateuch." This view "was" held, but it is now quite out-of-date. For, "instead of being the work of one author, we now know that the Pentateuch is a compilation from various sources that were written from time to time during the long course of Israel's history in Palestine after the time of Moses." The reader will note the confident "we now know." There is no if, perhaps, possibly, probably, about it. The critics "now know" and have long been insisting that they know.

So let us take as a single example—for we cannot go into details—one of the confident assertions of the critics. Since the seventies of the last century they have asserted that Leviticus forms the greater part of the latest of the legal codes (P) in the Pentateuch. They regard this code as exilic or post-exilic. Glance through it; and what do you find? About thirty-five times this impressive phrase occurs, "the Lord spake unto Moses, saying." Of the twenty-seven chapters of the book, nineteen be-

gin in this way. We are also told that these laws were given at Sinai (e.g. 26:46; 27:34). Now if these statements are true, this book must be "Mosaic" in the sense that this entire legislation was given to Israel through Moses. Otherwise we must conclude that this formula is used to claim for these laws an authority to which they have no right. The words "the Lord spake unto Moses" will then mean little more than the "once upon a time" with which the nursery tale so often begins. Yet the critic does not hesitate to say, "We now know" that these laws were written "in Palestine" and "after the time of Moses."

We have cited this one example because it makes the great issue between the Bible and the critics so unmistakably plain. The reason the Christian Church, following the tradition of the

(Continued on page 516)

Notes on Open Letters

Modernism in Sunday School Literature

I have been a subscriber and admirer of your very fine paper for a number of years. Recently the enclosed article, which was clipped from the *Adult Teacher* for July, 1949, and issued by the Methodist Publishing House, came to my attention. The article itself, of course, is self-explanatory. However, I am quite certain that many of the statements contained therein are not at all in harmony with the conclusions of conservative, fundamental Biblical scholarship. Therefore, I would like to suggest that you have one of the members of your staff prepare an article for THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES in which he would analyze the statements contained in this article and point out the discrepancies and errors according to the fundamental point of view. It is just this type of article which will mislead many good folks, and I believe that it would be quite constructive to point out wherein such modern Biblical scholarship is misleading.—A Maryland reader.

I have just been reading, as I always do with great profit, Mr. Gordon's notes on religious affairs, and it occurs to me that you and he might be interested in the following or some part of it.

I was in Mississippi during the past spring and summer and while there was invited to teach for a Sunday or two at a time classes in the First Methodist Church in the town where we were staying. Some apology was made to me for the quarterly that was handed me the first time I went over to teach, and I took it home and began to read from page one. I don't suppose that I have to tell you I was horrified at what I found—not only little or no recommendation of Christ as Saviour, but everywhere extreme Modernism. . . .

One Sunday after I had talked about these things to the women's class, a member got up and said that during the previous week she had called on an aged Methodist in Birmingham who was, like many others, much upset

(Continued on page 503)

Coming Next Week

THOSE who are engaged in Jewish evangelization say that, as never before, Jews are open to the Gospel. Next week's SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES will carry the gripping story of "Twenty-two Years of Witnessing to San Francisco Jews," by Elsie Fraser. It tells of the work of the Friends of Israel Missionary and Relief Society.

The first of two installments of one of those remarkable biographical sketches by Ernest Gordon will also be published next week under the title, "Ruben Sailless, Evangelist and Teacher."

Saving Children Through the Christian Day School

(Continued from page 499)

tutes, and seminaries. It aims to introduce qualified teachers with evangelical convictions to Christian institutions. During the last few months it has placed upwards of twenty teachers—a service that is rendered without profit to the organization. A satisfied "customer" writes: "I am enclosing a gift, mainly in appreciation for having been used by the Lord to lead me to this lovely school where His name is so definitely honored. May the Lord bless you." He enclosed twenty dollars.

Fortunately, there is no shortage of Christian teachers. Right now the N.A.C.S. has on file a waiting list of over fifty teachers wanting placements. But the Association does have problems; it has housing and textbook problems. Until textbooks can be furnished that are written from the Christian viewpoint, the best that can be done is to use books that most nearly present the subject matter from Christian ideals.

Mr. Fakkema estimates that from 80 to 90 per cent of the schools recently organized meet in churches. Since it is well to begin operating in existing quarters, the housing problem is sometimes postponed. However, there are a number of school groups that would like to start schools but cannot afford it. There are at least fifty schools that would need building loans if they were to start building now. To meet this challenge,

Why Not Have a Class Paper?

It may meet a need in your class, too

By ELISE FRASER

THE lament of the Sunday school teacher is that she has her class for only thirty minutes each week. She strives to give them something that will carry over into the week to come and will bear fruit in the days ahead.

I have found a class paper a valuable ally in this connection. Having a class of junior high girls, I found that there were many events in the church and on the outside that I wanted to bring to their attention. If I simply told them, many would forget. But if these things were down in writing, they would remember.

I had an idea to get the paper out once a month or every two weeks, but there was such a clamor for it, and such disappointment when it didn't appear, that I found myself with the job of getting it out every week. But the results more than repay the effort.

The paper is simple, just a single sheet, with lots of white space and no wordiness. Short, pithy quotations, brief, easy-to-read poetry, single Bible verses,

the N.A.C.S. has in mind a revolving fund of \$25,000 or more to help hard-pressed schools to get started. This money would be lent out on a five-year basis without interest.

Besides teaching all the three "R's," Christian schools furnish the children with a godly environment. Beginning the day with a one-half-hour devotional period consisting of Bible, prayer, singing, and discussion, they start the child off in a spiritual frame of mind. The child feels that God and the Lord Jesus Christ are a part of things.

This zealous director of the N.A.C.S. feels that our children are the most neglected mission field. He says that it is unfair to the children to give them only one half hour in the Sunday school a week, and approximately thirty hours a week in the public school to "indoctrinate them in a way of life which, by Supreme Court ruling, must exclude all Gospel teaching."

From his vantage point as a Christian leader and observer, Dr. Marston gives us this picture: "Through a state educational program which rejects revelation we have been bleeding off the morals of the nation, urging democracy toward suicide. God grant that many Christian communities will promptly establish enough Christian schools to provide a stabilizing nucleus of Christian citizens for the coming crisis of American democracy. The Christian school is the foremost venture on the frontier of educational advance."

VILLA PARK, ILL.

and short announcements are used. One regular feature of the page is "The Roll of Honor." In this I list the names of those who were in Sunday school the previous Sunday. The girls love this feature, as they like to see their names in print.

The verses used are inspirational or explanatory of a bit of Scripture. I make it a point, too, always to include a salvation verse or something pointed in this connection. The paper can be used to meet any spiritual need that the teacher observes from week to week. Announcements of worth-while Christian radio programs, youth meetings, and church news that involves youth, may be briefly given.

For source material for the paper, I use the Bible, youth chorus books, hymnbooks, books of Christian poetry, Christian periodicals, Sunday school papers, Christian organization publicity, such as Radio Kids Bible Club, Youth for Christ,

and the like, and my own church calendar.

I type the paper, using heavy carbon which makes five copies at a time. If a mimeograph or hectograph is available that would simplify the task. I make fifteen to twenty copies each week, which means typing it three or four times. Ordinarily with typing and research, the task takes about two hours each week. The first issue of the paper was done on yellow bond paper. The next week the girls wanted "the little yellow sheet," so I continue to do it on yellow bond.

The heading of the paper includes the name of the paper, the church, the volume number, and the date. Since my class is the only junior high girls' class, I call the paper "Junior High News." This isn't a very brilliant title, but the girls like it and it is functional.

The paper is useful as a mailing piece to absentees, and when a brief note is enclosed it is the next best thing to a visit from the teacher.

Many of the girls in the class are from non-Christian homes. When some of them told me that their parents look for the paper and enjoy it as much as they do, I decided that a class paper was well worth the time and effort.

BERKELEY, CALIF.

Modernism in Sunday School Literature

(Continued from second page)

over the things transpiring in her denomination. This woman, who had spent her life as a zealous and evangelistic Methodist, wrote to thirteen Methodist bishops in the South calling attention to the quarterly in particular and urging them to take a stand against it. She was completely ignored by nine of the thirteen, though she had written a personal letter. Of the four who responded, two made light of the situation and two acknowledged it was bad, but they could do nothing about it.

I myself was reared a Methodist, but I did not dream that in the years since I withdrew from that church it had become so decadent religiously. The tragedy is that Southern Methodists do not know what is happening—what is being foisted off on them mostly by Northern writers.—An Illinois reader.

Dr. Oswald T. Allis comments on these two letters in the editorial in this issue. Two fine books that give an abundance of scholarly evidence in defense of the Book of Daniel and the Pentateuch are "The Prophecy of Daniel," by Prof. Edward J. Young of Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia (Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids 3, Mich., \$5); and "The Five Books of Moses," by Dr. Oswald T. Allis (Presbyterian & Reformed Pub. Co., 525 Locust St., Philadelphia 6; \$3.75). These books may be ordered through the Times Book Service, 1721 Spring Garden St., Philadelphia 30.



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in the place of God, and we are, in so doing, guilty of idolatry just as truly as if we were to fall down and worship an image of stone or clay or wood.

PHILADELPHIA.

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Higher Criticism in Sunday School

(Continued from second page)

Jewish Church and the teachings of the New Testament, has believed that Leviticus is Mosaic is simply because of the claims that it makes for itself, and the claims that the rest of the Bible makes for it. The reason the critics have found it so difficult to get their theories and conclusions across to the Bible-believing Christian lies in the obvious fact that their theories regarding the Bible contradict flatly the plain statements of the Bible itself. An illustration of this is furnished us by "The Westminster Study Edition of the Holy Bible,"¹ which is a recent addition to the New Curriculum material prepared under the authority of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. Again and again the footnotes, which are "critical," take definite issue with the statements of the Biblical text which they are supposed to explain to the reader.

It is important to observe in this connection that these radical claims are not based to any considerable extent on discoveries that have been made in recent years regarding the text of the Bible. The author of the article we have quoted states regarding the Old Testament, "There is really only one form of Hebrew-Aramaic text, the so-called Masoretic text." This is the text from which the Authorized Version was translated, and the critics admit that it is substantially the same as the one used by Christ and the apostles. It is true that we know more about the languages cognate to Hebrew than was known a century ago. But when the statement is made, "In the time of Moses, the Hebrew language was not yet in use by the Israelites," the writer is making an assertion that he cannot establish by evidence. Regarding the New Testament text, the author tells us that "the Greek texts underlying the more recent translations differ in more than 5,000 places from the King James text," the implication being that the Authorized Version is thus proved to be very faulty and inaccurate. Yet one of the members of the Committee which prepared the "Revised Standard Version" of 1946, Dr. F. C. Grant, a scholar of repute in critical circles, has this to say, "Still in 1946, as in 1881 and in 1901, no doctrine of the Christian faith has been affected by the revision, for the simple reason that, out of thousands of variant readings in the manuscripts none has turned up thus far

¹ Reviewed by Dr. Allis in The Sunday School Times for October 16, 1948.

that requires a revision of Christian doctrine." The radical conclusions of the critics are not justified by or based on the very valuable results of objective textual criticism, which has done so much to establish the true text of the Bible.

The irrefutable indictment of the higher criticism is to be found in the simple fact that its "conclusions" cannot be made to square with the express statements of the Bible itself. The critics have been endeavoring for a century and more to force the Bible to say what it obviously does not say, and to force Bible readers to believe that it is to be understood to mean the very opposite of what it plainly says. They may seem to be winning victories on every front. But they are fighting a losing battle just the same. If, as most of them profess to believe, the Bible is the Word of God, the time will certainly come when their distorted and destructive treatment of it will be relegated to the limbo of exploded theories. The Bible speaks a language that they cannot understand. From cover to cover it speaks in terms of redemptive supernaturalism. Their aim for many years has been to make it speak the language of a more or less thinly disguised naturalistic evolution. To make oil and water mix were a far simpler proposition!

The Christian who knows and loves the Bible need have no fear for the Bible. The Bible has passed through fires as hot as any which the crucible of the critics has been able to produce; and it has come through unscathed and without the smell of fire upon it. It will do so again. What we have to fear is that a whole generation of the childhood and youth of our land will grow up sedulously indoctrinated with the false idea that the Bible is not to be trusted; that the Bible does not mean what it says and say what it means; that where the critics and the Bible differ, the critics are to be believed and the Bible disbelieved. Such a situation is destructive of sound and robust Christian faith; it tends to destroy all confidence in the Bible and to land us in abysmal skepticism. The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit. Those who have a mutilated and expurgated Bible have only a dented or broken sword with which to meet the attacks of the Adversary. The adversaries of Protestantism today are numerous and they are aggressive. Communism, Romanism, Judaism are three of the greatest. But her worst enemies are those within her own ranks who undermine her faith in the Bible as the inspired and infallible Word of God, which is the very heart and core of Protestantism. The "large masses of the population" will not read the Bible, if they are taught to disbelieve what it says. They will not obey it, if they are taught to question its authority. It would be absurd to expect this of them. Finally, there is the practical ques-

tion, What are we to do about it? First of all it concerns our own personal faith. Will we believe and trust the Bible in spite of the critics, or will we believe the critics in spite of the Bible? The other question concerns our responsibility for others, especially the lambs of the flock. Every Bible-believing Christian should do all that he or she can to bring it about that the teaching in the Sunday schools of our respective churches and denominations will be in harmony with what the Bible teaches. Otherwise our elaborate and expensive programs for Christian education will be useless. They will be worse than useless. They will be positively harmful.

"God's Truth and Our Revival"

A TIMELY, Scriptural study of the subject of revival has recently been issued by the American Scripture Gift Mission. It is based on the well-known text, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14). The text is divided into seven parts, four of which show the steps to revival, and three the results of revival. Under each of the seven headings, taken from the verse itself, a number of appropriate Scripture passages are given with the references. In keeping with all the literature issued by the Scripture Gift Mission, the main body of the leaflet is made up entirely of direct quotations from Scripture, except for the sub-headings and a few words of explanation added here and there.

Already the leaflet, which is now in its third printing, has had a large circulation and is being used by pastors for distribution among their church members. Its aim is to promote prayer for revival and the heart-searching in Christian people which precedes and accompanies revival. It has been most carefully and prayerfully prepared by the executive secretary, William H. Richie, and several directors of the Mission. The eight-page leaflet, entitled "God's Truth and Our Revival," may be had at 50 cents for 100 copies from the American Scripture Gift Mission, 325 N. 13th St., Philadelphia 7.

Journeying With the 1950 Christian Fellowship Tour

EXPERIENCED travelers agree that the Inside Passage from Seattle to southeastern Alaska is one of the most beautiful waterways in the world. At every turn of your vessel, a new scenic delight meets the eye, until, long before the steamer turns homeward, you have exhausted every superlative in your vocabulary. At times the steamer will glide

across wide stretches of sapphire blue water, dotted with wooded islands, any one of which would be a vacation paradise. Then the ship threads its way through narrow channels between towering mountains, and on either side one may glimpse tumbling waterfalls, luxuriant vegetation, and often startled wild life, as the wash of the steamer sweeps the shore.

It is small wonder that SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES readers who have joined the Christian Fellowship parties in other years never tire of telling friends and loved ones of the unforgettable experiences they have enjoyed as they journeyed, with Christian fellow travelers, to America's "last frontier."

The itinerary for the 1950 Christian Fellowship Tour includes many attractive features. The party will leave Chicago on the night of Monday, July 3, via the Northern Pacific Railway. At Billings, Montana, comfortable motor coaches will carry the group over the magnificent new Red Lodge High Road, through the Montana Rockies into the Sunlight Basin Country, which has sometimes been called "The Shangri-la of Wyoming," a wild and beautiful primitive wilderness. Pullman coaches will again pick up the party at Cody, and the journey through the American Rockies will continue. After passing through Idaho and Washington, Seattle will be reached Friday morning, July 7.

While in Seattle, an overnight visit by motor coach to Paradise Inn high on one of the shoulders of Mt. Rainier will be a part of the program. Then

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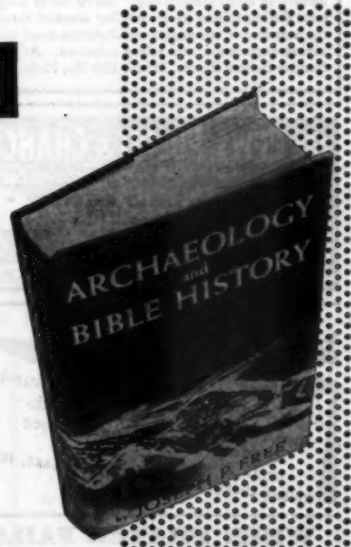
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