

Sunday School Lesson

Bob Walters, Pastor
Black Mountain
Methodist Church

GOD AND THE NATIONS

Scripture Lesson Zephaniah 3: 1-5, 14-20.

For several weeks we have considered "God in the Life of a Nation" as illustrated by the ancient kingdom of Judah. We come to a summary with a consideration of God as a judge of nations. How does God judge a nation?

The prophet Zephaniah was taken with the idea that there was within the warp and woof of the universe an unseen law of right and wrong. He strongly felt that so long as a nation conformed to this unseen moral law, all would be well. Every nation, including his own, faced the inevitable judgment of God in the light of this law.

Judah was on the verge of utter collapse. "Everything nailed down was coming loose." This was due, in part, to warring political parties feuding over the diminishing power of the nation. One group often called the "puritans" wanted to purify the current worship from the pagan elements that had infiltrated the country. The other faction, the "antipuritans" wanted to follow a less offensive policy and compromise with the Baal worshippers.

Not waiting to see which party was in the majority, Zephaniah, at the age of 26, declared himself as supporting the strict observance of Jehovah worship. This prophet of God saw his nation filled with evils, which he believed contrary to the will of God. The book attributed to him is filled with denunciations of these evils. The controlling presupposition of his entire book is the certainty of catastrophe for an unrighteous nation. "I will utterly sweep away everything from the face of the earth," says the Lord. Zephaniah saw the approaching dangers but he believed God would save the righteous remnant.

There is a general feeling today that the nations of the earth are in great jeopardy. Most of us agree with this in the light of our limited knowledge of the current situations. This perilous world situation has prompted the leaders in national defense to hold mass evacuation drills. They envision the possibility that eight million would be dead after such attacks and seven million others wounded. At a time when hostile nations have the power to destroy civilization, it causes us to wonder if time is not running out for us all. This trend of thought extends outside the pulpit. The sociologist, historian, editor, diplomat, scientist, and the military are all saying about the same thing: that time has all but run out on us; that our present way of dealing with one another is the road to utter destruction; that only new spiritual foundations for our life can deliver us.

If all these men are right, then our condition may closely parallel that of Judah's during the time of Zephaniah. The people of his day were concerned with things of life. His was a secular society. God had become a little boring, therefore. He had been politely put aside. The people were not at all hostile to God but they did not seem to think He mattered. It was a question of what was supreme in the Hebrew life: God and his righteousness or things of self-sufficiency they bring.

As we ponder this problem it seems that this section of the Bible was written for us, doesn't it? For the evil of our time is basically the same as in Zephaniah's time — the entering of life on things. As I sit meditating on this lesson, the question comes to me: How many of my parishioners put God and His righteousness first in life? Then I ask: How many are more impressed by outward power, bigness, speed, business and financial successes?

This emphasis on things has infected all aspects of life. Our churches and schools boast of size and numbers. They preach a gospel of success which means an evaluation by the dollar mark. I was amazed recently when a leader of our church said, "fellows when we writing your own record and promotions rest upon two points: numbers received into the church and the amount of money you raise." This tends to show by what standard we operate even within the Christian church. I recall that our blessed Lord had but twelve men and no money. Yet, those men changed the course of history. The Baal gods were soil gods—gods of production of things). Our Baals have dressed out in the latest fashions, but do they have a new character? Jesus, when asked about the goal in life replied: "Thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment." Things are not bad in themselves. It is when things are ends in themselves. National Salvation.

The sure sign of hope is in the knowledge mentioned by Zephaniah that the Lord of all nations is merciful. Sin brings inevitable punishment, but the sinner can be born to new life. A saving rem-



nant can deliver a nation from destruction. God was once asked if ten righteous people could be found would he spare the city? His answer was, Yes! We pray that during these days of crises that He may see enough righteousness within our nation that it may be spared from an atomic and hydrogen destruction.

There is one sign of hope upon the horizon; that is the loss of our feeling of self-sufficiency. Some of our pride and boasting has ceased. There are signs that people are thinking soberly and seriously and turning toward God. Some who have worshipped at the shrines of things, science and big government are finally coming to the Christian mourner's bench. The best way to begin this spiritual awakening is within our local churches. You can be a vital part in returning this nation to God.

So many people of this sophisticated generation have given up the idea of hell-fire and damnation. The peoples of Europe and Korea are less prone to do so. If one Hydrogen bomb falls upon a large city in America it will relieve us of this sophisticated complex. Hell will be a reality.

We pray that man's grave necessity will in some way be God's opportunity. His purpose is always to save rather than to destroy; to give life rather than crush it. We need to keep our minds and hearts open for the coming and guidance of His spirit.



WALRUS

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molluscs on which the walrus feeds for the most part. A single tusk of a male walrus may be over 3 feet long and weigh to 9 pounds. The tusk of the female walrus is more slender and bowed.

In the Atlantic, walrus are found in Arctic seas south to Labrador. In the Pacific area, they are found from Bering Sea south of the Pribilof Islands being more abundant on the Siberian side than on the Alaskan shore. There is an annual migration with courtship and mating taking place on the northern migration about a month after the young are born. In the Atlantic group, the young are born from the middle of April to late May; in the Pacific, in May or June. Mating takes place about 11 months before the young are born. A newborn calf is gray, about 4 feet long and no teeth show externally. By August a young walrus may weigh to 120 pounds. The mother's milk she swallows and dives. They may nurse for 2 years by which time they have grown tusks which are to 4 inches long and adequate for food getting.

A bull walrus may measure to 12 feet long and may weigh to 3,000 pounds. The female is about 2/3 the size of the male. The animals are practically hairless and tailless. The five toes on the forward flippers bear flat nails and the nose is blunt and provided with coarse bristles. Two hind toes bear both flat nails and pointed nails.

Walrus may feed in water to 300 feet deep almost standing on their heads when doing so. The stomach can hold only about 1 gallon of food. The animals may be found in great herds and may be great noise makers. They have many louse parasites and are preyed upon by killer whales, bears and of course by man. From a walrus carcass, an Eskimo gets valuable oil for light, flesh for food, bones and hide for equipment, intestines for window glass and tusks for sale and trade. So important are the animals for survival to Eskimos that it would seem that white men should in no way interfere with their economy except to provide protection where needed. The herds in Hudson Bay and to some extent in Siberia seem to be holding up reasonably well. The National Wildlife Federation is interested in protecting these animals reasonably just as it is interested in similar rational treatment for other forms of wildlife. —E. Laurence Palmer.

—Farmers lose about \$13 billion a year to plant diseases.



MRS. WRIGHT REVIEWS BOOK FOR T & T CLUB

The Tea and Topic club held its regular monthly business meeting Monday night, June 13, at the home of Mrs. A. P. Perley III. Mrs. Roy Taylor, president, presided during the business meeting.

Mrs. Don Wright, program chairman, was the speaker for the evening. She reviewed "Tea and Sympathy", a modern drama by Robert Anderson. A social hour followed and refreshments served by the hostess to Mrs. B. G. Byron, Mrs. S. S. Cooley, Mrs. J. L. Holman, Jr., Mrs. Otty Leeman, Mrs. Richard Oulahan, Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. A. F. Tyson, Jr., Mrs. Max Woodcock, and Mrs. Wright.

TRY THE CLASSIFIEDS!

MRS. DUNGLINSON GIVES TALK FOR CHURCH CIRCLE

Circle No. 3 of the Black Mountain Presbyterian church met June 6 at 8 p.m. in the fellowship room of the church. Mrs. Marion God-

frey and Mrs. Vernon Johnson were co-hostesses. Mrs. C. C. Myers, chairman, had charge of the business meeting.

Mrs. Joseph Dunglinson gave the devotional. Her topic was "The Struggle of the Soul". Following the meeting a social hour was enjoyed by Mrs. Dan Espey, Mrs. Marion Godfrey, Mrs. Vernon Johnson, Mrs. Wm. Klein, Mrs. T. V. Lusk, Mrs. C. C. Myers, Mrs. A. M. McCoy, Mrs. John O'Connor, Mrs. Ralph Reed, Mrs. J. A. Robson, Mrs. Joseph Scannel, Mrs. C. D. Thomas, Mrs. Frank Wade, Mrs. Leon Williams, Mrs. Wiley spend the summer with their Norwood, Miss Josephine Wood-grandparents. Mrs. Campbell will return to Tusculumbia Monday. Miss Sara Mosely.

HERE ON VISIT

Mrs. Betty Campbell and children Tommy, Billie and Sandra Kay of Tusculumbia, Ala., are visiting Mrs. Campbell's parents, the Rev. and Mrs. Farrel E. Sparks of Oakland drive. Mrs. Campbell also visited relatives and friends in Johnson City and Elizabethton, Tenn. Billie and Sandra will spend the summer with their Norwood, Miss Josephine Wood-grandparents. Mrs. Campbell will return to Tusculumbia Monday.

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NOTICE

ing this day qualified as administrator c.t.a. of the estate of BERT CAMPBELL ANDERSON, late of the City of Orlando, State of Florida, this notice is to notify all persons having claims against said estate to present them, duly verified, to the undersigned on or before this 16th day of June, 1955, or else this notice will be in bar of recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment.

NOTICE

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