

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

GOD COMFORTS HIS PEOPLE

International Sunday School Lesson for November 6, 1949

Memory Selection: "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."—Isaiah 41: 10.

Lesson Text: Isaiah 40: 27-31; 41: 10-13; 61: 1-3.

In studying the lesson for this week, it would be well to understand the historical background. The section of the Book of Isaiah which begins with chapter 40 reflects a situation quite different from that in which Isaiah, the son of Amoz did his work. Jerusalem is in ruins, the Israel to whom the prophet speaks is in exile in Babylonia. Isaiah remained in that part of Jerusalem which remained unconquered although threatened by Assyrian armies. Certainly, in a time such as this, the children of Israel needed words of encouragement and comfort from God through the lips of his servant.

The prophet of the exile knew that if we could bring comfort to his people, he could open for them new sources of strength. He declared, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength," (40:13). "I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee," (41:10). Once Israel could feel a sense of power, then hope would be restored in her. Defeat can be turned into victory, loss into gain. The prophet's message is "to give the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," (61:3).

Since new strength means comfort only when it is linked to a definite program of action, the prophet was bringing true comfort and renewed strength to Israel when he challenged her to use her strength in a great mission for which an opportunity was soon to be opened to her. "Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah"—that is the task. "Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the uneven places shall be made level, and the rough places a plain"—that is the opening of the way, the clear vision of opportunity.

The prophet knew that his people needed a clear consciousness of the real goal in life, a personal appreciation of it, if strength is to be the source of that deep and happy satisfaction, that peace of mind which make up real and enduring comfort. The Israelites knew—in theory—that this was a glorious task of the most terrible importance, but they had no challenging realization of it to stir their hearts and give them a personal sense of a divine mission. What they need and what the prophet sought to give them was a new self respect, a new appreciation of the value of the lives they were living and the divine mission, which was theirs as a nation. He is calling upon them to make the creeds they professed to believe real principles of thought and action in their everyday lives.

There is no doubt but that our own country, our beloved America, needs much the same message today. There are many evidences of general unhappiness, discontent and maladjustment in our nation. While there is a form of material prosperity, higher than ever before in the history of our country, our people, as a whole, are lacking the spiritual balance to make them the happiest people on the face of the globe.

Management and labor are continually at war with one another, corruption and graft are evident in the seats of government and the homes of the nation are literally seething with discontent. Juvenile delinquency, the appalling number of broken bones and the rising number of chronic alcoholics among women, as well as men, are not signs of happiness.

How long will it take our people to realize that material prosperity is not all that matters? Spiritual prosperity, evidenced in the lives of professing Christians, must go hand in hand with material progress. We need to come to the realization that life is not a low thing. Every record of heroic living, of unselfish devotion to high causes, of noble action in pursuit of great ideals, shows how grand a thing life is. There is a higher center for it than this world and that higher center is God. All true, all loving. To leave him out is to lose the great source of courage, the great standard and the power to see it in the face of danger.

GO TO SOME CHURCH NEXT SUNDAY

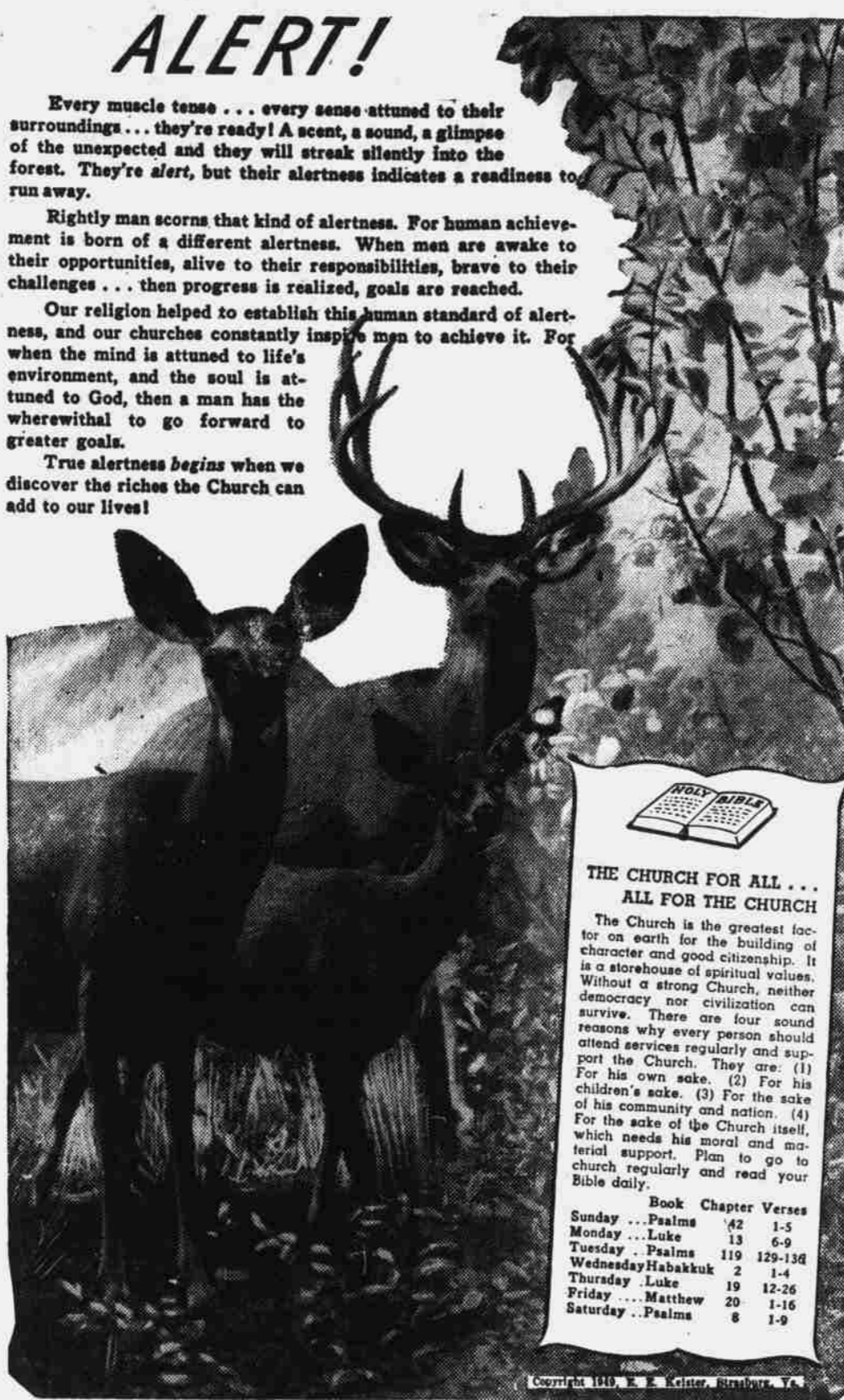
ALERT!

Every muscle tense . . . every sense attuned to their surroundings . . . they're ready! A scent, a sound, a glimpse of the unexpected and they will streak silently into the forest. They're alert, but their alertness indicates a readiness to run away.

Rightly man scorns that kind of alertness. For human achievement is born of a different alertness. When men are awake to their opportunities, alive to their responsibilities, brave to their challenges . . . then progress is realized, goals are reached.

Our religion helped to establish this human standard of alertness, and our churches constantly inspire men to achieve it. For when the mind is attuned to life's environment, and the soul is attuned to God, then a man has the wherewithal to go forward to greater goals.

True alertness begins when we discover the riches the Church can add to our lives!



THE CHURCH FOR ALL . . . ALL FOR THE CHURCH

The Church is the greatest factor on earth for the building of character and good citizenship. It is a storehouse of spiritual values. Without a strong Church, neither democracy nor civilization can survive. There are four sound reasons why every person should attend services regularly and support the Church. They are: (1) For his own sake. (2) For his children's sake. (3) For the sake of his community and nation. (4) For the sake of the Church itself, which needs his moral and material support. Plan to go to church regularly and read your Bible daily.

Book	Chapter	Verses
Sunday . . . Psalms	42	1-5
Monday . . . Luke	13	6-9
Tuesday . . . Psalms	119	129-136
Wednesday . . . Habakkuk	2	1-4
Thursday . . . Luke	19	12-26
Friday . . . Matthew	20	1-16
Saturday . . . Psalms	8	1-9

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Perquimans Church Services

HERTFORD BAPTIST CHURCH
C. W. Duling, Pastor
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Evening Worship, 8 o'clock.
Mid-week Services, Wednesday at 8 P. M.

BETHLEHEM CHURCH OF CHRIST
Harold C. Turner, Pastor
Church services at 3:00 P. M.
Christian Union, 7:30 P. M.

BURGESS BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. J. R. Byerly, Pastor
Church services first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.
Sunday School at 10:00 A. M.
Church service 7:45 P. M. second and fourth Sundays.

PERQUIMANS CHARGE CHURCHES
E. B. Edwards, Pastor
First Sunday:
New Hope Church, 11:00 A. M.
Oak Grove Church, 3:00 P. M.
Second Sunday
Winfall Church, 11:00 A. M.
Cedar Grove Church, 10 A. M.
Woodland Church, 7:30 P. M.
Third Sunday
Oak Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.
New Hope Church, 7:30 P. M.
Fourth Sunday
Cedar Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.
Woodland Church, 10 A. M.
Winfall Church, 7:30 P. M.
Fifth Sunday
Woodland Church, 11:00 A. M.
Prayer Meeting each Wednesday at Winfall Church at 7:30 P. M.

WHITEVILLE GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. J. W. Davis, Supply Pastor
Sunday School, 11 A. M. every Sunday except third Sunday.
Church services every third Sunday at 3 P. M.

UP RIVER FRIENDS CHURCH
Elizabeth White, Pastor
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.
Church Services, 11 A. M.
Christian Endeavor, 6:30 P. M.

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. E. G. Willis, Pastor
Sunday School, 10 A. M.
Preaching first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.
Preaching second and fourth Sunday evening at 7:30.

PINEY WOODS FRIENDS CHURCH
Carl J. Yow, Pastor
Sunday School, 10 A. M.
Morning worship—11:00 A. M.
Youth Fellowship, 6:30 P. M.

WOODVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH
G. M. Singletery, Pastor
Sunday School, 10:30 A. M. on first and third Sundays and 2:00 P. M. on second and fourth Sundays.
Church services, 3:00 P. M. on second and fourth Sundays.

HERTFORD METHODIST CHURCH
D. L. Fouts, Pastor
Church School, 9:45 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Youth Fellowship, 6:45 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 P. M.
Mid-week Fellowship, Wednesday at 7:30 P. M.

BAGLEY SWAMP PILGRIM
Coy S. Saunders, Pastor
Sunday School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Young People's Meeting, 6:30 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 o'clock.
Mid-week Services, Thursday at 7:30 P. M.

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
E. T. Jilson, Rector
Holy Communion, 9:00 A. M.
Every Sunday except first Sunday at 9:00 A. M.
Church School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Prayer and Sermon, 11:00 o'clock.
Holy Communion first Sunday at 11 A. M.

BEREA CHURCH OF CHRIST
Walker Perry, Pastor
Bible School 10:30 A. M., except first Sunday, at 10 A. M.
Morning worship on first Sunday at 11 A. M.
Evening worship first Sunday at 7 P. M.

CHAPPELL HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
A. H. Outlaw, Pastor
Sunday School, 2 P. M. every first Sunday.
Church Service 3 P. M. every first Sunday.
Sunday School at 11 A. M. every second, third and fourth Sunday.

Go To Church Your Church Any Church But Go