Sunday School Lesson

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Yahweh's designation of Cyrus as his "anointed" one was primarily for the sake of Israel. Besides Yahweh there was no God. Marduk was a meaningless name. Yahweh — not Marduk gave strength to Cyrus, that men might know that Yahweh was the one ultimately responsible for all things.

Cyrus' appearance as Yahweh's instrument brought such a change in the world situation

glowing picture of faithfulness from the old corrupt way of life (salvation) raining from heaven and thrusting up from the depths of the earth.

Yahweh's reply to those who might be scandalized by his use of a pagan king to accomplish his will was blunt and to the point: "Who are you to question me?" He could use anyone he chose to build his cities and set his exiles free.

The nations would come to that Second Isaiah painted a only through Israel was God it as well.

known to men. They would not (righteousness) and deliverance become Israelites, but they would worship the God of Israel. God had hidden himself from the nations, but he had spoken through Israel so that all nations might come to him. In him alone were found faithfulness and strength.

The weakness of the idols was shown by their failure to perceive what was happening in the coming of Cyrus. From Yahweh, however, came forth the word that not only proclaimed what the Israelites and admit that was happening but accomplished

Even those Israelites who not only by violence but by inshare in his triumph, acknowl- is violence. edging that his works were works of faithfulness, after all.

WHAT THE SCRIPTURE SAYS TO US

A few years ago Frank Laubach wrote a book titled The World Is Learning Compassion. Yet anyone who reads a newspaper or watches television has good reason to question the optimism of such a judgment. The world continues to be plagued

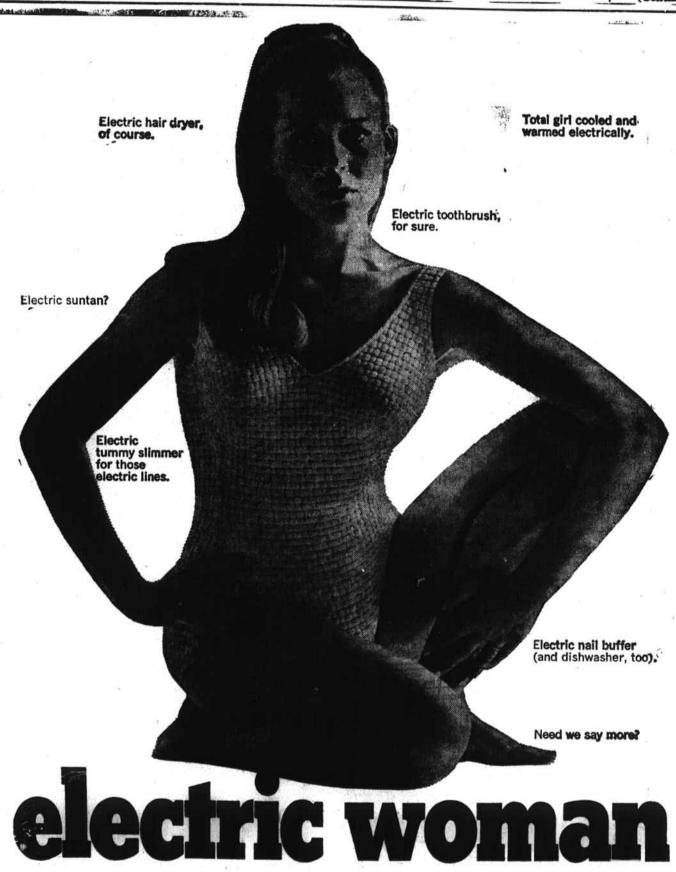
were angry with Yahweh over difference as well. In fact, there the Exile would be made probably is more indifference ashamed. They would come and to the needs of people than there

Has God Abandoned Us?

Are we to imply from this fact that the words spoken by the unknown prophet of the Exile were true in his day but that God no longer works for his people's good? Many persons do believe that God does not deal with us today as he did with men "in Bible times."

Biblical faith, however, turns

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