

Sunday School Lesson

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have an instance in which God makes a covenant with his "elect," with the people he has chosen to walk with him through history. This covenant will be renewed in successive generations until and even after the Sinai covenant.

What the Scripture Says to Us

Think for a moment of the kind of faith it took for Abraham to act upon God's promises. Abraham was so sure of God's leading that he never wavered. Because of Abraham's,

willing obedience, he is still the person who best illustrates for us what we mean by a life of faith.

He accepted God's purpose for his life though he could not see the distant end. What would it require of us to enter into such a covenantal relationship with God? Dare we trust God enough to follow where he leads us?

The Covenantal Relationship

God still speaks to men and women who keep open the channels of communication between themselves and God. What is he trying to say to us

about the conditions in our city? Is it possible that he wants to enter into a covenant with us to further the meaning and practice of brotherhood in our city streets, in business transactions, in all personal relationships? Do we hear? How do we respond? If we listen carefully, God may help us find new patterns and new media for expressing his will.

Do you see God at work in the events and happenings of your life and nation?

None of us would deny that God made a "new covenant" with his people ("the new Is-

rael" — that is, the Christian church) in his action in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But often we seem to forget that Christians throughout the ages after New Testament times have also understood God to be making new covenants with them.

For example, John Winthrop — Christian gentleman and Puritan magistrate who later became governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony — spoke to the people who crossed the Atlantic with him. Those who had undertaken this voyage to New England, said Winthrop, had en-

tered into a covenant with God.

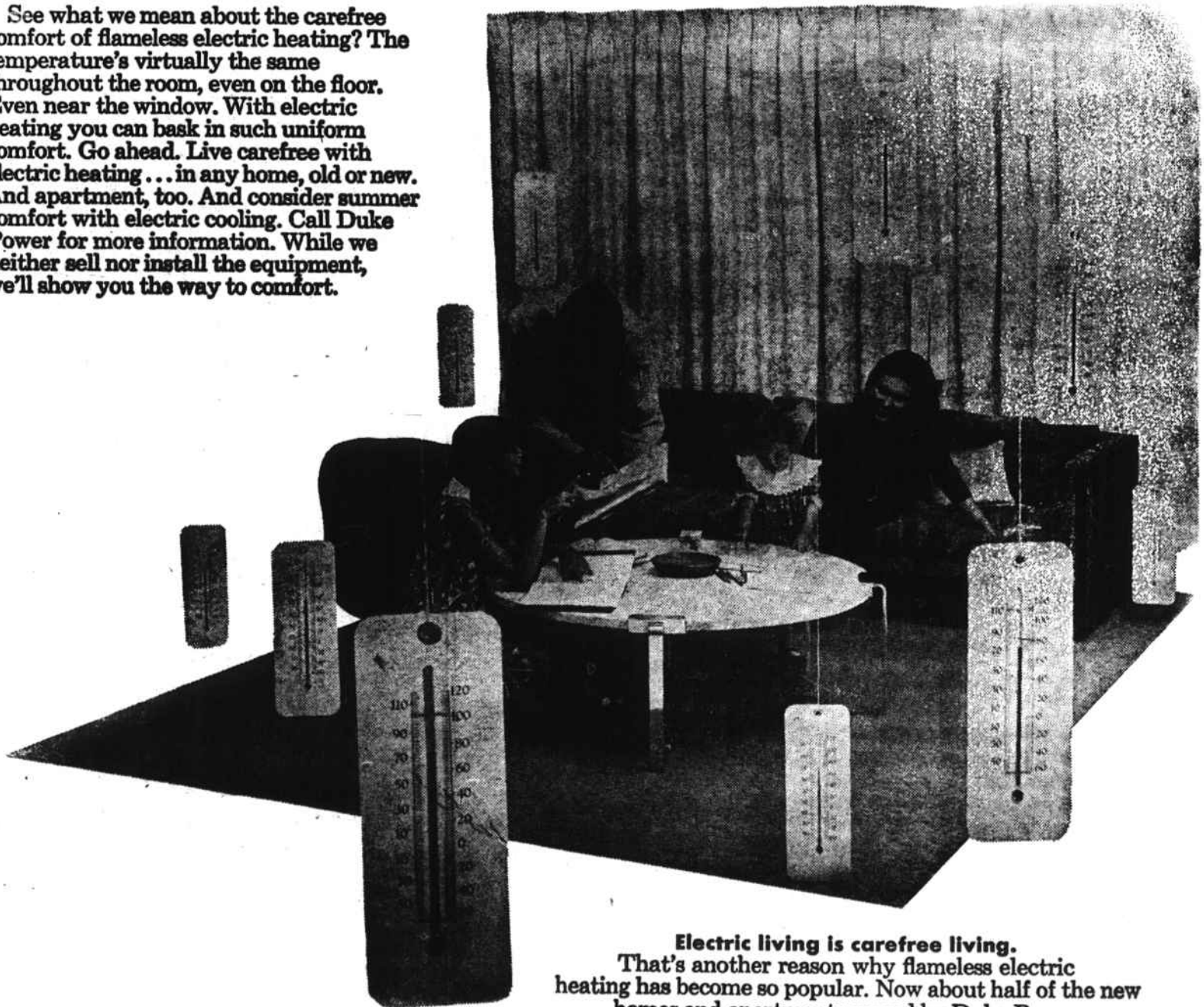
He said, "We have drawn up indentures with the Almighty, wherefore if we succeed and do not let ourselves get diverted into making money, He will reward us. Whereas if we fail, if we fall to embrace this present world and prosecute our carnal intentions, seeking great things for ourselves and our posterity, the Lord will surely break out in wrath against us and be revenged of such a perjured people and make us know the price of the breach of such a Covenant."

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