

THE FUTURE OUTLOOK

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THE FUTURE OUTLOOK

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THE OPENING OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Many teachers are glad to begin teaching today simply because they have just returned from their summer vacations, summer schools which are required by their school administrators to improve their methods of teaching. Quite a few teachers were lucky because they already had their master's degree and did not have to go to summer school.

The sad part is some had to go to the hospitals for minor operations and physical check-ups.

The young June brides of 1969 will be unable to obtain their contracts due to pregnancy. Many of the school administrators do not admit young mothers to teach after the birth of a child for a period of six months to one year. However, if the teacher is good and cooperative while she is on the job, the principals and administrators make provisions to accept her back within a six months period or less.

Many young women avoid marriage because they do not want to become pregnant and be out of work for several seasons.

When the mother gives birth to the first born child, good wishes should welcome the child as they did when the couple married.

This type of coronation is practiced in England more, and many other foreign countries. We should do likewise here. Our first indebtedness to the new born child is to offer him or her to God by taking them to church and having them baptized by the Ministers of the Gospel.

If more of the young Christian educators and PTA members would follow in these footsteps with their children it would curtail many of the juvenile delinquent problems.

The teachers as well as the parents are disturbed over the little teenaged girls being put out of school every month or season from pregnancy.

The teachers will have to follow up with the family traits while the mother is somewhat disturbed by her daughter being put out of school while the boy may remain in school.

We cannot over emphasize some of the items published in our last editorial. We attempted to advise the parents of some of the most important things for making preparations for back to school. Laying aside a few dollars to invest in clothing, books and laboratory fees. Above all, have the child examined by a family doctor.

Parents should see to their children getting to school properly dressed with a well planned breakfast. They should see that their children have a hot balanced meal in the cafeteria along with their classmates.

The Parent-Teacher Association should start to function before the classroom teachers in working closely in accord with the school administration. The parents should have some separate objective of the school functioning of its own since the parents are tax-paying citizens, that is to see that our children's teachers have proper facilities to work with.

Our PTA's should give the schools more thorough consideration than ever before, in other words, we might just as well say we enter the school program with our children which will be a separate one, and the duty of the PTA's should be to study all phases of the law which work in conjunction with the law of the county, state, and federal law of the United States.

May we parents, be resourceful and work with the teachers to improve the standards of our children.

Every weekend from Saturday to Monday, parents cannot get a good weekend rest for listening to the sirens of the ambulances and police cars carrying some broken up teenager to the hospital from a car accident. Who is responsible? Every parent should know where his child is going with the family automobile.

May we hope that our teachers think more of some of these problems and others not named than thinking about the monthly checks to pay the back bills.

This Week's Sunday School Lesson**COMPROMISING WITH EVIL
Beginning Where You Are**

Some people feel we live in a simple kind of environment. For them things are either right or wrong, and no one ought to have difficulty distinguishing between them.

But many of us realize that we daily face degrees of goodness, shades of morality, and judgments that are mixed. We must often choose the lesser evil or the greater good. We find ourselves accepting or acting on half-truths because feelings and thoughts, actions and events, appearances and realities, are mixtures of truth and error.

In the world in which we live, it is either hard or impossible to make choices that are beyond question or decisions that are not risky. Therefore we act in the hope that if we try sincerely to do right and choose correctly, our decisions will bring more of benefit than harm to ourselves and others.

The Vietnam debate in our country has surely not been a clear-cut issue. Intelligent, sincere men have taken opposing sides on what should be national policy in Vietnam and similar situations.

Our biblical religion commands us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned, welcome strangers, give to those who beg. Can we do all this? Is it either wise or right for us unquestioningly to welcome strangers into our homes, to give to beggars who are always begging, to visit prisoners who are repeated offenders?

The conflict between biblical faith and culture is everywhere, but it is most acutely felt in communist lands where the church still struggles to do right both with and in spite of its atheistic environment. A young church member who seeks a college education in most communist lands must first evidence allegiance to communist rule and principles. Can a youth be true to his Lord and attend college under such circumstances? Is it Christ's will that a youth deny himself an education by which he could better serve men?

We suffer many tragedies in our lives because we have made wrong choices or taken wrong directions. But we are not always able to determine exactly what is the right choice and which is the best direction.

Searching The Scriptures

The Scripture for this lesson is Genesis 13:8-13; 18 and 19; 2 Peter 2:6-9. Selected verses are printed below.

Genesis 13:8-13

8 Then Abraham said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen; for we are kinsmen. 9 Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." 10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and saw that the Jordan valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zo'ar; this was before

the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomor'rah. 11 So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan valley, and Lot journeyed east; thus they separated from each other. 12 Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, while Lot dwelt among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom. 13 Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the Lord.

Genesis 18:20-22

20 Then the Lord said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomor'rah is great and their sin is very grave, 21 I will go down to see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry which has come to me; and if not, I will know."

22 So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom; but Abraham still stood before the Lord.

Genesis 19:24-29

24 Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomor'rah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; 25 and he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. 26 But Lot's wife behind him looked back, and she became a pillar of salt. 27 And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord; 28 and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomor'rah and toward all the land of the valley, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of a furnace.

29 So it was that, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt.

Memory Selection: Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. —Romans 12:2

Exploring The Questions

Abraham and his household, including his nephew Lot, prospered in the land of Canaan. Their economic success, however, posed problems. So the kinsmen from Haran separated, and Lot departed from Canaan's hills to settle in the lower Jordan valley.

The writer does not explain how Lot acquired so much independent wealth and his own servants. He does report that Lot, whose father was dead, had in the homeland come under the care of his uncle Abraham. Therefore, when Abraham departed from Haran, he took Lot along with him. Although Abraham never adopted Lot as his son, he always acted as if responsible for his welfare, and Lot enjoyed the benefits of his uncle's wealth.

One wonders why Abraham and Lot could not have continued together as neighbors simply by enlarging their common or adjacent grazing areas. Should not relatives who are living among strangers stick together for aid and protection? Was their separation essential to the divine plan?

Abraham gave Lot a choice of the land. He rightfully had

this privilege because he was older. Lot looked around to view the possibilities. He and his uncle were then at Bethel, from whose heights a large area of Palestine is visible. Unless Lot decided to travel a long distance, the best nearby region was the flat valley plain at the lower end of the Jordan River, nestled between the western hills of Canaan and the eastern heights of Moab and Ammon. Lot decided for it.

Can we blame Lot for choosing the more fertile and better developed area? There seemed to be much greater opportunity for a good life in the Jordan valley than in the rough hills of Canaan.

Lot picked Sodom to dwell in. It was the commercial and cultural center of the area. Why should Lot not have chosen Sodom? How was he to know of the destruction that lay in store for this city and her neighbors? According to the tradition, these places were extremely wicked. However, the biblical tradition also says that the Canaanites were immoral and ungodly.

What would have happened if Lot had chosen not the Jordan valley but the hills of Canaan? Could Abraham have dwelt safely in Sodom?

Lot went to dwell by Sodom and later in it. However, he did not become a Sodomite; he was a resident alien. If Lot is to be considered guilty of Sodom's wickedness, then it can only be guilt by association; and most of us participate in this kind of guilt, since no society or community is free from wrong. What was the price of living among the people of Sodom?

Finding Help**With Your Questions**

The biblical writers provide us a theology of history of the ancient Near Eastern world, but they do it indirectly through the stories of the important people of the times. Related in the Genesis chapters of this lesson is the history of Canaan, the Jordan valley, and the lands to the east. This history is personified through Abraham and Lot and the choices they made.

Just as God promised Abraham that nations would rise from him, so also we learn that his kinsman, Lot, was regarded by subsequent generations as the ancestor of two of Israel's neighbors, and sometimes enemies — the Moabites and Ammonites who dwelt east of the Jordan.

Lot chose to leave the hill country of Canaan and settle in the fertile, prosperous lower Jordan valley. Unfortunately for Lot, the glory of that area was about to end, while that of the rough hills of Canaan was just beginning. The irony of history is thus expressed by the choices of men who are joined with or set against the judgments and mercy of God.

Lot's Independence

Lot journeyed from his homeland of Haran to Canaan with his uncle. The story gives no evidence that the Lord called Lot to leave or that Lot was included in the covenant promises directly. We assume that

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