

The Intelligencer.

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Rev. J. McLeod.]

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SAINT JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, JULY 16, 1880.

[EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.]

WHOLE No. 1381.

THOMAS LOGAN,
Fredericton,

New Spring Stock
—OF—
DRY GOODS,

English, American and Canadian Goods

Dress Goods,

SILKS AND RIBBONS,
Laces, Gloves, Hosiery, Prints, Cottons,
Flannels.

CARPETINGS,

Floor Oil Cloths,

WINDOW POLES

Gilt Cornices.
LACE CURTAINS

CURTAIN NETS.

Parks' Cotton Warps

THOMAS LOGAN,

OPPOSITE NORMAL SCHOOL.

Fredericton, May 7, 1880.

BARNES & CO.,

STEAM

JOB PRINTERS,

BOOKSELLERS,

Blank Book Manufacturers,

Blank Books

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SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON.—July 25.

BY PROF. J. A. HOWE.

THE COVENANT WITH NOAH.

Genesis 9: 1-19.

GOLDEN TEXT: I do not make a covenant with me and the earth.

Notes and Hints.

"Noah." Son of Lamech. The name means "rest."

"He was saved from the flood because he was a just man, a perfect in his generations."

"His sons." Shem, Ham, Japheth. God often rewards good men by blessing their children.

"I establish my covenant." God now ratifies his covenant and makes it formally binding on himself.

The language implies that he had before assured Noah that he would do what he now pledges himself to do.

"Every living creature." God speaks as if he had made the lower animals a pledge of preservation.

"Neither shall all flesh be cut off." The covenant makes two special agreements: the first, not to destroy all flesh by a flood; and the second, not to have a flood.

"This is the token." The sign and seal of the covenant.

"I do set my bow in the cloud." The rainbow is meant.

Rainbows, in the nature of things, must always have existed.

The sun, shining on the falling rain, has its rays broken up by a prism.

The true reading here is, "I do appoint my bow in the cloud."

This shows that the bow was there prior to the appointment.

"It shall be for a token of a covenant." It shall appear in the clouds always as a sign and surety of these words: "neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth."

"When I bring a cloud over the earth." God causes the cloud to overcast the sky; but he does it by the law which he has made.

It is not the less his work because it is done by means of law.

"The bow shall be seen." It was eminently appropriate to select the bow, formed out of the very element that destroyed the earth, as a memorial of the passing away of the flood forever.

"I will remember my covenant." God here speaks after the manner of men.

The rainbow, regarded as a reminder that there should no more be a flood, has on us the effect to make us believe what God has said.

When we are reminded of God's covenant we may be sure that God has not forgotten it.

"And I will look upon it that I may remember." From such passages as these, gross misapprehensions of God are sometimes derived.

This passage, taken literally, teaches that God has a memory that fails him, that he gives pledges which, without artificial helps, are forgotten, and so sets up reminders for himself.

The real truth, however, is that God speaks after the manner of men, without being after the manner of men.

The rainbow is looked on and the covenant remembered by God, as it were; in reality, we look the rainbow and see that, as sure as it spans the heavens, God will remember and do what he has said.

"The sons of Noah were * * * Shem and Ham and Japheth." Shem means "renown," "fame"; Ham means "heat," "sun-burned"; Japheth means "enlargement." "The father of Canaan." This God calls the ancestor of the people whom the Israelites, at a later period, drove out of Palestine.

"Of them was the whole earth overspread." That the origin of the race can be traced to a single pair is the testimony of modern philology.

Men have studied out the root forms of the various languages and found that there are three great varieties; the Jemite, Turanian and Aryan.

And these three, if not traced to one, are by scholars thought to be derived from one. Africa was settled by the descendants of Ham, Asia by the descendants of Shem, and Europe by the descendants of Japheth.

This general truthfulness of this book, written fifteen hundred years before Christ, is confirmed by the investigations of modern scholarship.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. God loves to enter into agreements with men to do good.

2. God covenants to bless parents by blessing their children; but not to the exclusion of personal responsibility. Canaan was made a "servant of servants" for his sins.

3. The tokens of God's covenants are designed to remind us, rather than God, of his promise. Hence the sight of the rainbow should quicken our faith.

4. The truth of the brotherhood of man is the foundation of the duty to preach the gospel to all men alike.

DORMANT RELIGIOUS POWER.

There is in every Christian congregation, and every Christian country, a large amount of dormant religious power, ineffective for the production of immediate results, simply because it is dormant.

This power exists in the form of beliefs unattended to and almost unconsciously held; of convictions unpracticed; of the sense of sin and of duty choked and suppressed; of sensibility unimpressed; not impressed; of fears whose voice is so feeble as scarcely to be heard; of vague inquiries and suggestions that fit in and out of the mind, leaving almost no trace behind; and of facilities and opportunities that come and go, unnoticed, unused, and unimproved. These elements, though dormant, are the elements of a revival. They simply slumber in the soul. They are there, and under proper circumstances, may be called into intense activity and utilized for the most important results. Yet they do not seem to be there. The power with which they are charged, and which naturally belongs to them, is not felt. Though not wholly dead, it is too nearly dead to be a living and active power.

The characteristic feature of a revival consists in the fact that this latent power is quickened into the activities of a wakeful and living force. The mind that was thoughtless becomes thoughtful. The heart that was cold and indifferent is heated with unusual fire. The tongue that was frivolous in its utterance becomes sedate and grave. Carelessness gives place to anxiety. The deserted prayer-meeting is thronged by interested listeners. Lips are unsealed, and speak with a fervor hitherto unknown. The preacher's heart, touched with a quickening impulse, glows like a furnace, and his eyes beam and flash with heavenly fire, as he talks to men about the great things of time and eternity. He preaches as if he felt it and meant it. Prayer spreads its wings and flies to the throne. Sinners tremble and ask what they must do to be saved. The people are stirred. Their thoughts are stirred and their hearts are stirred. Those who are Christians and those who are not are stirred. Men are converted by tens, fifties, hundreds, and sometimes by thousands.

And this is a revival. The people call it such. It is not a political or mercantile revival, but distinctively religious in its character. It is a season of unusual excitement on this one subject, and consists largely in a simple awakening of old thoughts. It does not so much give new faiths and new ideas as it brings out the latent

power of old faiths and old ideas. Men wake up from a deep sleep, and vividly realize what was before unthought. They impress each other, and propagate and perpetuate this condition by a natural, as well as by a spiritual law. All forms of mental excitement are contagious, and this is just as true of religious fervors as it is of other fervors. Any man is more likely to be thoughtful and solemn in a prayer-meeting or when listening to a pungent and powerful sermon than in a dancing party or a grog-shop. Christians recognize and by the Bible are taught to recognize the presence and influence of the Holy Spirit in every genuine revival; yet the facts in the history of the Church most abundantly show this influence is likely to be felt as an effective power just in proportion as the human means are naturally adapted to impress religion upon the thoughts and hearts of men. If it be true that God is sovereign in the bestowment of saving grace, then it is equally true, as Dr. Lyman Beecher once quaintly said, that it is a law of the divine sovereignty that "a man should be able to chop wood with a sharp axe than he can with a dull one." Religion is a system of means in which human agency, as well as the divine, is concerned; and the general law of the system is that the best means, the best conditions on man's part, are those which God most favors. Plain and pungent preaching is always better than dull and stupid preaching. It is a grave mistake to assume that God pays no attention to natural laws in the conversion and salvation of sinners, and that men are just as likely to be saved in one set of circumstances as in another.

The Tabernacle Church of Brooklyn, under the pastoral care of Dr. Talmage, has been for the last two months still is furnishing an illustration of these remarks. A series of evening meetings was commenced in that church some two months ago. The Rev. Mr. Harrison, a young man of intense religious ardor, was invited to assist the pastor in conducting them. His mode of doing things is somewhat peculiar and might in some respects expose him to criticism. Yet he has a way of stirring up men's minds, and leading them, in view of what they already know, to think that they cannot go on in sin and flee to Christ for salvation. Such, in connection with the powerful appeals of the pastor, has in a most remarkable degree been the result in the Tabernacle Church. About one hundred and fifty persons, from the child of twelve to the veteran of more than four score years, have already professed their conversion to the faith of the Gospel in connection with this great revival. They have felt its power. The whole church has felt its power. We speak what we know, from frequent personal presence and participation in the hallowed scene.

And still the work goes on, seemingly accelerated by its own momentum. Why should not such a work continue to go on? Why should the work cease? Salvation is the one prime necessity. The duty of turning men to righteousness is the one great duty of the Church. The business of preaching is not to be dropped by Christians always in order, and should be the business of all seasons and all times. When Christians are doing their best for this purpose, they are only doing what they should always do. The truth is always the same, and the wants of men always the same. The most zealous Christian that ever breathed is no better than the most indolent ought to be. The intensest flame of the most powerful revival does not burn too brightly for any season. Why should not it burn all the while? Why should not the Church at all times be at its highest level of persuasive and converting power? What necessity is there for the various periods of dormancy and spiritual inertia, other than that which Christians themselves create?—Independent.

THE MINISTERS WIFE.

We were about getting a new minister—a difficult matter, as all can testify who have tried. He had preached for us a Sabbath or two. He was earnest—that was unquestioned; had a consistent life for his record, and that was a great point; he was a good thinker, and a fearless advocate of what he believed, and he was poor; he was not quite so famous as some wished, and his bearing was not sufficiently marked and dignified, some people said.

Yet as often as anything disparaging was remarked, somebody immediately added, "But his wife is lovely." We thought he was not so well as we were to settle over us, but the man himself. Every possible objection was overlooked, however, because the wife was so beyond comparison.

He came and brought with him one whom we were eager to see and know, one of the sunniest, gentlest, yet strongest and most useful women I have ever been my blessing to know and love. She was not beautiful, but her face had such a kindling interest for one and all that you could not forget its expression.

She entered heartily into his work. They were heartily united. She never showed no partiality. No one of us ever felt that she looked one above another. She kept her secrets locked in her own heart, and never betrayed a trust.

No one ever heard her speak ill of another. She was approachable to everybody, yet we paid her reverence both for her kindness and for the cause we loved her. Men and women received alike equal favor at her hands. We looked to her as a leader, while she was in reality a companion. We expected her home and husband would be her first care, and so they were.

She was interested in everything—cultured enough to talk with the learned, and not above the poorest and most ignorant of her flock. She never showed irritability. If she had temper she controlled herself by prayer. She was her husband's best adviser.

Not everything went right with the minister. He was able but not always wise; sometimes hasty, sometimes domineering; it seemed; occasionally saying things better left unsaid, occasionally too frivolous, and now and then too austere. Some said he liked the rich better than the poor, the cultured better than the unlettered. Some said he was overambitious, that he was not always unconscious of himself. Others, that he lacked magnanimity in pecuniary affairs and in the little things of every-day life. But they liked his preaching, and always added, "he has such a lovely wife."

She heard all differences, and really kept the church unit by her kindness and Christian love. A wife less sympathetic, or less capable, would have completely altered the aspect of affairs.

A little child came into the minister's home, and the young wife went out of it. I never saw a church so crushed, more weaned, and more every one in some unexplained way, to meet her, perchance, and feel again her cordial welcome. The pastor, too, began to realize, as never before, how she had brightened and sustained him. The people cared for the motherless child, because it was her babe. A blessed revival followed, and her death was the spiritual life of a great number. The little failings of the minister were forgotten, in the noble work he did to win souls, and yet they were not fully satisfied, and the pastor was changed.

Our pulpit since then has been filled with

able and eloquent men, who have had pleasant wives, and our church has prospered; but our hearts have hungered often for that lovely woman who came to us such a power in her life. We have said to each other often in all these years, "Does not it, indeed, make a difference what kind of a wife the minister has?" Ah, vastly more than he thinks, when he chooses her as his companion, and vastly more than the people imagine, when he chooses among them to be their leader and guide.—Congregationalist.

CHARGING GOD FOOLISHLY.

BY DAVID J. DE CAMP.

Many are the charges that have been and still are being laid, on God of Prodigence, which do not belong there. How often do we hear the expression, "The will of the Lord be done," when his will had nothing to do with the case.

God has wisely given us certain general, natural, and physical laws, which, as intelligent creatures, we ought to know, that if we disobey them or infringe on them, the least we must pay the penalty in proportion as we abuse them. It is as much our duty faithfully to seek to understand and obey the will of God where we are physically, as well as spiritually, concerned. If we but open our ears to God's voice in nature, and place ourselves in the most attentive listening attitude, much of our grief and many of the untimely deaths that throw such dark shadows over human lives would be averted.

How often have pain, disease, and death been the stern penalties indicated upon mankind through the violation of the laws of nature. And how often God has been charged as the cause of this suffering. A gentleman states that going to church one cold, bleak Sunday, he noticed a lady with a little girl wearing thin stockings, fancy slippers, and a short dress. A day or two after the child had an attack of the croup. She died, taking away, as it were, the light and joy of the household, and the parents and friends spoke of the "mysterious bereavement." But what was there mysterious about it? It was the swift, sure retribution for a violation of a natural law. To think that they could be so careless, occurring every day and each retribution is constantly bringing misery and distress to many once happy homes, while parents and friends continue to say, "How mysterious are the ways of Providence!"

How foolish to close our eyes to the causes of these calamities, and say, "It is God's will!" Better a thousand times be told that our own imprudence and neglect have brought these ills upon us, and seek to remedy them, than to go on charging them up to God. We can not, as reasonable beings, afford to ignore the divine intimation. When, then, do we meet a new house, then shall make a battle for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thy house, if you may fall from thence." We need to often pray David's prayer: "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins."

We must not expect in ordinary cases that God will continue the law of our wickedness, that if we leap into the fire, it will not burn us; or into the water, it will not drown us; and by the same reason the providence of God is not concerned to preserve us when we destroy ourselves by intemperance and lust.

God does not work miracles to deliver men from evil, but to take their own wickedness away from them. While it is true that by our prudence and industry must concern with divine providence. God has given us reason, judgment, and common sense, and expects us to use these faculties to the best of our ability, and when we make mistakes, and bring calamity upon our heads through a misuse of them, we should not charge it up to him. While it is true that he permits adverse circumstances to come upon us, it does not follow that he causes them to arise.

Did we blame ourselves more for the causes of our unhappiness, and lay less to God's will, we would reap more benefit and profit by our charges up to him. While it is true that he permits adverse circumstances to come upon us, it does not follow that he causes them to arise.

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