

Wonderful Wheat in answer to Prayer



The New Wheat as it Grows.



Where the Wheat Had its Origin.

THERE is one man in the United States, at least, who believes that prayers are answered. He also believes, and will offer to show you proof, that the age of miracles has not passed.

In answer to the prayers of many years, he says, he has been rewarded with wealth—nothing less remarkable than a mysterious kind of wheat which grows in poor ground and yields many times as much grain as the ordinary varieties.

K. B. Stoner, a farmer of Newcastle, Botetourt county, Virginia, grows a wheat which, declare government experts, yields two to three times as much as any variety grown in the country, which they acknowledge was propagated from a plant which came from an unknown source.

"A WHEAT from an unknown source," Mr. Stoner calls it "miracle wheat" and when you ask him whence it came he will look heavenward, and then tell you the following story: During the Civil War the farm owned by him was devastated, the buildings razed and he was left in an impoverished condition. Year after year he labored, and there was small return for his work. The land was poor, and it refused to give a profitable harvest. With implicit faith, Mr. Stoner began to pray.

He prayed that the Lord might show him a way to redeem his fortunes and retrieve himself. Besides, he had a wife, much younger than himself, and he knew that, in case he died, she would be unprotected. Then two children came, and the farmer prayed the more devoutly and intensely. Nearly four years ago, Mr. Stoner will tell you, the answer came to his prayers. While plowing the land, in the spring of 1904, he observed a little green, luxuriant plant in the field. His son, then 6 years of age, rushed before the plow,

and, with an exclamation of delight, fondled the green bit of grass. "Please, papa," he pleaded. "I want this little bit of grass. Please, papa." Mr. Stoner plowed about the stalk of grass, and forgot all about it. But the child regarded it with especial interest, and tended it carefully. One day, four or five weeks later, the boy ran into the kitchen, of the farmhouse weeping as if his heart were breaking. "It ain't grass at all!" he wailed. "It's weeds!"

The father, in a sympathetic mood, walked out into the field—and saw the stalk of grass had grown into a promising stalk of wheat. Well, he let it grow. And when the child lost interest, the father's interest increased. For it was certainly a singular stalk of wheat. It occupied a space of about twelve inches and—wonder! It produced a space of about twelve inches and—wonder! It produced 12 heads of grain. It seemed incredible. When Frenchman, in 1842, discovered a species of wheat in the Mediterranean country which produced four heads to the plant, people said he was crazy. But here was a plant with 12 heads! Naturally, Mr. Stoner carefully preserved the heads, and the next year sowed the seed, continuing to do this each year. For he realized he had discovered a phenomenal brand of grain. And each year his amazement increased. That first year after discovering the plant he got 5000 bushels. In 1906 he got sixteen bushels, and has now raised the crop of wheat, all carefully preserved for seed, to 200 bushels. What is most remarkable about the wheat is this: Whereas there is produced in the wheat sections of that country an average at the best of seventeen bushels to an acre, the average yield of the "miracle wheat" during the last three years has been fifty-six bushels to the acre. Whereas from eight to ten pecks of seed are required to plant an acre in Virginia, Mr. Stoner uses only two pecks, and in comparison to the yield of ordinary wheat in the neighborhood, which is eight bushels for each bushel of seed, Mr. Stoner gets about seventy-five bushels for one seed. The miracle wheat covers twelve. An ordinary stalk of wheat covers about four inches of space. The "miracle wheat" covers twelve. Last year the United States government officials became interested in the remarkable wheat and sent Assistant Agriculturist H. A. Miller to examine it. In his report he declared: "The wheat, which came from an unknown source, has been grown in the nursery every year since that time, and also has been grown under field conditions the last two years, giving excellent results. The yield has been from two to three times the yield of other varieties grown on the farm under the same condition of culture, except the rate of seeding, which was two pecks to the acre, while other varieties were sown at the rate of eight to ten pecks per acre, which is the common practice of farmers in the vicinity. "Milling tests have been made of this wheat, and its quality seems to be as good as, if not superior to, other varieties of winter wheat." The average height of the wheat, according to the report, is four feet four inches. It is said that the Russian government has secured an option on the wheat, and will buy a consignment of 80,000,000 bushels when that quantity shall have been raised. During the next year the seed will be distributed among farmers in Virginia and North Carolina, who will raise it, and preserve the seed, keeping the grain only for planting until fall, it is believed, 30,000 bushels will be produced. It is singular to note that this wheat was discovered near the spot where, many years before, Cyrus McCormick invented the wheat reaper.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

MAY 10. THE MISSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. John 15:26-16:24. Memorize verse 13. GOLDEN TEXT: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."—John 14:16.

EXPLANATIONS: I. Jesus Going, the Comforter Coming, 4:7. The disciples were filled with sorrow at the announcement of the departure of Jesus. The story of the world's hate still goes on (cf. vs. 1-3). The world, Jesus says, will excommunicate and kill the one who is true to him. How true this prophecy has proven to be in actual history, but Jesus prepared his disciples for the fiery trial by forewarning them of it, and he would prepare us for the persecutions we must surely meet if we are loyal to him, by forewarning us of them (2 Tim. 3:12). The disciples were filled with sorrow, so full were they that they did not even stop to ask, "Whither goest thou?" 11. When the Comforter is come, 7-15. Their sorrow was altogether needless. It was profitable for them for Jesus to go, for another Divine Friend was coming to take his place, a Friend who could be much nearer and more constantly nearer to them than Jesus could be during the days of his flesh. How clearly the personality of the Holy Spirit comes out in all this. Can we conceive of Jesus saying it was profitable for him to go if the One who was to come and take his place was not a Person but only an impersonal influence or power? The word translated "Comforter" means that and far more. It is the same word that is translated "advocate" in 1 John 2:1. But advocate does not give it in full force. It means one called to stand beside another, as constant helper, counsellor, guide, friend. Jesus, up to this time, had been a friend constantly at hand, but he was going and another Divine Friend was coming who would not only be with them, but dwell in them (ch. 14:16, 17). A Christian need never be lonely if he would only bear in mind that fact, that in him dwells the best of all companions, the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit. The Comforter has come. His first work is to show the world its error about sin, to show that the great, decisive damning sin is not to believe in the Son of God (cf. Acts 2:36, 37; John 3:18, 19) and that they are guilty of this sin.

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