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**SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON**

LESSON FEBRUARY 16.

THE CALL OF ABRAM

Gen. 12: 1-9

GOLDEN TEXT.

"I bless thee and make thy name great; and he thou a blessing."—Gen. 12: 2.

POINTED SUGGESTIONS.

By Rev. D. W. Snider.

In Adam and Noah we had studies of two successive covenant heads of the human race; in Abram there is presented the study of the head of a chosen race, God's purpose for the human family has not narrowed, but it has become delimited. In the call of Abram there is a lineal forecast of a Messianic Head for the race—and of the kingdom of God on earth.

What was it that held up the pilgrimage of Terah, Abram's father, and the family on the way to Canaan? Notice the statement in chapter 11: 31: "They went . . . to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Hara and dwelt there." Compare it with verse 5 in the lesson: "They went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and they came into the land of Canaan they came." Why did Terah and his family get stuck on their way? How does it come to pass that Abram and his party reach the place intended?

In the first place, Canaan was the object of desire, but diverting inclination or hedging circumstances held them back. In the latter case Canaan was only incidental to a progress which was made by Abram in obedience to a command from God to "get out . . . unto a land that I will show thee." He went out not knowing whither he went. When Canaan was reached the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, "Unto thy seed will I give this land."

"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

There is always the reasonable attached to or embedded in the cell of God. He never asks to be obeyed without offering sufficient inducements. They were offered in an unknown direction to Abram. But when he obeyed God by the sheer cast of faith upon his word Abram is given the very land for the possession of his seed about which he had dreamt in his father's tent because of the talk of its splendors and promise he daily heard from his father's lips or with which his own hopes had regaled his father. God's ways are the best ways.

The happiest results have also come to the race through men who have placed themselves at God's disposal. Such, of course, are the friends of God. Abram earned that distinction pre-eminently. Such, likewise, are the faithful. Abram, by reason of his relation to those who have attained like precious faith—a forerunner, a pioneer of faith—earned the title, "the father of the faithful."

He came to his distinction to the history of the race because he separated himself to this formative principle for the guidance of his life and the working out of his own destiny and of his destiny of those who should come after him, namely, belief of God, in an Invisible, Spiritual, Personal Supreme.

The motives of this life's activities, therefore, were not worldly. They were not centered in land speculations, nor example, military, or literary, or legislative. His ambition was for the building of a city, and his ambitions lay in the religious, the pious, the spiritual.

What an immense service to the world he became! The father not of Montheism only, not, better still, of Jehovahism. And Jehovah could so deal with him and those of the faith of Abraham that revelation has come and the hatred of idolatry and knowledge of the Christ and the supremacy of moral law.

But Abram reveals enough of human weakness and transgression, passes through a sufficient succession of losses, trials of life to hold anyone back from the supposition that what Abram did another could not have done. God choose him for his faith, but has faith been denied to any? Is it intended to you?

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

February 23.

ABRAM AND LOT.

Gen. 13: 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"The blessing of Jehovah, it maketh rich; and he added no sorrow therewith."—Prov. 10: 22.

POINTED SUGGESTIONS.

By Rev. D. W. Snider.

Men who have pledged themselves to obey God and to be content in His service and with the measure of prosperity it may be His will to grant them, make a sorry mess of it when, for some so-called prudential reasons or false ideas of self-protection, they descend to the deceptions, and tricks and crafty contrivances of the world. Abram looks a married and shrunken and disreputable figure in that role.

He took fright at his own picture in Egypt and broke away. Like the prodigal of whom Jesus speaks, he came to himself. And he did the best thing he could do, and for him the only right thing. He went straight back to Bethel . . . "unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first." And that is the only right thing for anyone to do and the safe thing; stay close to the altar of personal thanksgiving and surrender to God.

Abram had "made money" in Egypt. He became rich in cattle, etc. But like the riches of too many Christian men, it was unhalloved gain. It brought no blessing. It could give none. It was the source of trouble. What comfort had he in

It may be that disgust at his career with the gains of it may be credited as the father of, at least, a portion of the magnanimity which he later showed.

The opportunity came. Shameful bickerings and quarrels over the disposition of flocks and herds among contending herdmen and stewards presented it. And when the Canaanite and Peresite got talking about them it was time for Abram to act. Worldlings are quick to see and greedy to chuckle over the differences and disputings of Christian men.

There is a beautiful scene pictured to us at this point in the lesson, so far as Abram is concerned. His words are right words. His spirit is a right spirit. His whole character comes to princely elevation as he holds converse with his nephew as to the wisdom of a separation in pasture lands, rather than to let cattle separate the brotherly ties of kindred. Abram was not one to "lock horns" because the crowded cattle did. How like cattle men become when brute actions can symbolize mental determinations.

What is to be said about this man Lot? Reptiles, skunks, crawling things are studies in natural history and Lot is also a study in character.

Alas, that his kind are still alive. He is the father of the spongy, greedy opportunist and of the breed of the "get-rich-quick."

But it must be remembered before we are recalled to it that Lot was righteous above many. Down in Sodom there were those who were worse. Lot was, somehow, righteous enough to be vexed day by day with the unrighteousness with which he willingly placed and kept himself in contact. Funny? yes, if not so unworthy and contemptible. What a miserable soul, leading a joyless life, whose daily business gives him daily shame! Wee to the men who gamble in the stocks and markets and make rich out of the sweat and labor of their fellows, as those in Sodom do.

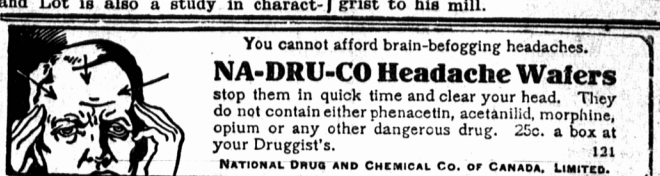
Lot deliberately pitched his tent toward Sodom. He had, for some reason, good or bad, hung on to Abram until he was rich. Perhaps he started right. But as one advantage after another was flung in his way by the great-minded Abram, he permitted himself gradually to sink to that low-minded condition which works and waits for the fortunate turn of opportunity, as though everything, sooner or later, must bring Christ to his mill.

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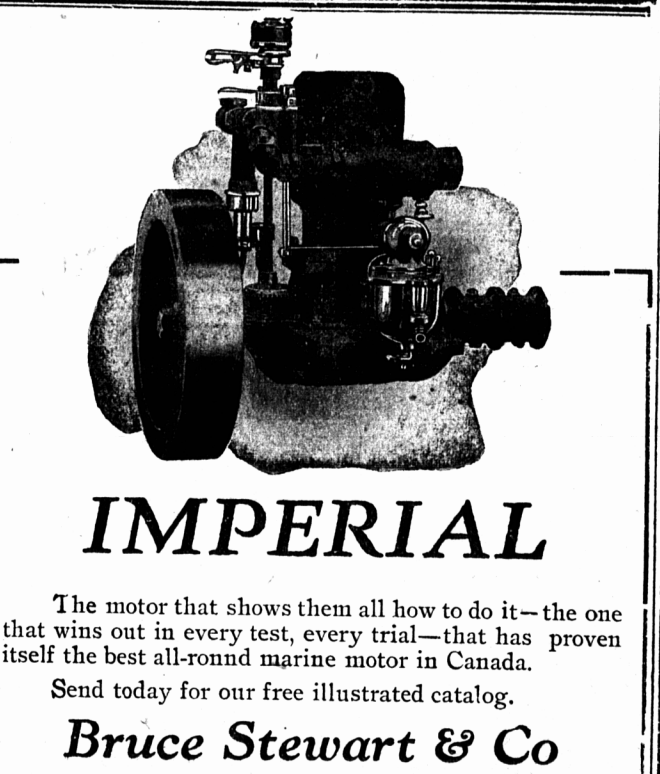
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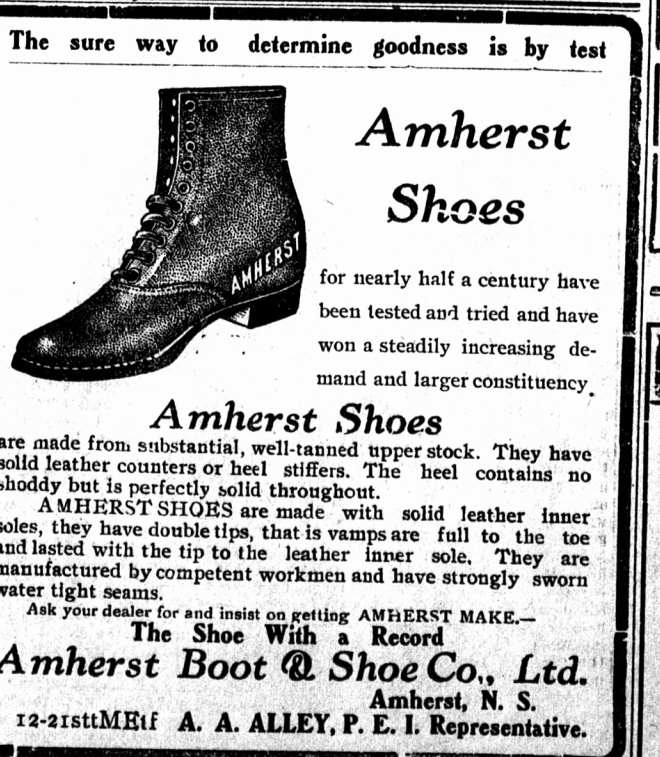
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ANY person who is the sole head of a family, or any male over 18 years old may homestead a quarter section of available Dominion land in Manitoba, Saskatchewan or Alberta. The applicant must appear in person at the Dominion Lands Agency or Subagency for the district. Entry by proxy may be made at any Agency, on certain conditions by father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister of intending homesteader.

Duties—Six months residence upon and cultivation of the land in each of three years. A homesteader may live within nine miles of his homestead on a farm of at least 80 acres solely owned and occupied by him or by his father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister.

In certain districts a homesteader in good standing may pre-empt a quarter section alongside his homestead. Price \$20.00 per acre.

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Unauthorized publication of this synopsis is prohibited.

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**MAIL CONTRACT**

SEALED TENDERS, addressed to the Postmaster General, will be received at Ottawa until noon, on Friday, the 14th March, 1913, for the conveyance of His Majesty's Mails, on a proposed Contract for four years, six times per week over Rural Mail Route No. 1 from Hunter River, Prince Edward Island, to commence at the Postmaster General's pleasure.

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