

THE LESSON GRADED

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of Bible Classes

Bring out how that the Lesson grows out of the last. It tells of the new start which the race had with Noah. Discuss briefly the lessons of the flood, that God presides in the world and that men must obey Him, or they will inevitably be punished.

Have the class glance at the account in ch. 8 : 20-22 of Noah's altar building and his offering to Jehovah. The extent of the offering (v. 20), and Jehovah's delight in it (v. 21) should be noted. Bring out the essentials of true worship as gratitude, personal devotion and obedience to the will of God. In discussing the specific Lesson topic, the unprinted vs. 1-7 of ch. 9 should be included. The following outline may be followed in the discussion :

1. *The distinctive elements of the covenant with Noah.* Let these be elicited by questioning, as : (a) The established order of nature was confirmed and made permanent, vs. 11, 15 (compare ch. 8 : 22). The heirship of the world was given to Noah and his seed, v. 2. (b) The relation of man to the lower creation (see ch. 1 : 29) is confirmed and modified, vs. 3, 4. (c) In the new order man is given self-government, vs. 5, 6. Take up the question of capital punishment, showing that murder strikes at God. (d) The earth is secured against another flood, ch. 8 : 21 ; 9 : 11. Bring out the meaning of the bow as a sign of the new covenant. Dwell upon this close union of nature and man in the purpose of God, and the use Jesus made of nature to unfold spiritual truth.

2. *The lessons for the present day.* (1) The infinite condescension of the covenant-keeping God, in assuring the sinner of His constant oversight and love. (2) The faithfulness of God, as witnessed by the uniformity of nature. (3) The privileges of the covenant wait upon human co-operation. Man must do his part, if he is to expect the divine blessing.

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

Ask for the meaning of the word "covenant" (see Lesson Explained) and illustrate

by references to every day contracts. It will not be difficult to lead the class to see that in this Lesson, emphasis is to be laid upon the divine promise. The Lesson may be treated as follows :

1. *The Occasion of the Covenant.* Bring out, by a series of questions, the events in Noah's experience since we left him last Sunday in the ark floating over a drowned world :—how God remembered him (ch. 8 : 1) ; how when he found himself again on solid ground he built an altar (ch. 8 : 20) ; how lovingly God comforted him, ch. 8 : 21, 22. Notwithstanding all that God had done for Noah and his household, they seemed to be afraid of another flood. Call attention to the fact, that we know very little of what their experience was in the ark during the flood ; but we infer from the earnest way in which God in this Lesson seeks to remove all fear from their hearts of another catastrophe of this kind, that they must have suffered severely. Illustrate by a reference to some terrible shipwreck like that of the Titanic,—how much those who were rescued suffered in witnessing their fellows go down to death!

2. *The Nature of the Covenant,* ch. 9 : 8-11. What was this divine promise ? Note that this covenant embraced the whole human race and the entire brute creation. Never again would the whole world be drowned because of sin. Whole villages might be swept away by a flood of waters, and multitudes might go down in a terrible shipwreck, but never again would there be a universal destruction of human beings. What a comforting promise this must have been to that little group of fearful souls who had just passed through so terrible an ordeal ! Refer to God's blessed covenant of grace, which embraces every precious soul that is willing to be saved.

3. *The Sign of the Covenant,* vs. 12-17. Question the class about the rainbow, "this gracious thing made up of tears and light," how it is formed, and teach the scholars to see in it a beautiful reminder of God's love, a revelation that there is a God who cares for us, who is not willing that we should perish.

May Christ be :

"The rainbow to the storms of life,