

THE BIBLE SPEAKS

International Uniform Sunday School Lessons
By DR. KENNETH J. FOREMAN

SCRIPTURE: Psalms 119:97-105; Luke 1:1-4; John 20:30-31; II Timothy 3:14-17.
DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalms 119: 137-144.

All-Time Best Seller

Lesson for October 3, 1948

IF ALL the Bibles sold in one year by one manufacturer, the American Bible Society, were piled on top of one another, flat—not end-wise—that pile of Bibles and testaments would be 26 miles high. In 1947 that firm put out the astonishing total of 9,310,439 Bibles, testaments or portions. During the first 125 years of the society's existence, 305,579,217 copies of Scripture were printed and sold by them; this would make one shelf 870 miles long.



Dr. Foreman

The Bible is the best selling book in the world. No other book is in its class.

Not to know the Bible is not to know the most widely read book in the world. The American Bible Society publishes it in only 167 languages, but parts of it have been translated into as many as 1,000 languages and dialects.

Many Authors

SUCH popularity must be deserved. There are many reasons why the Bible continues to be, year after year, the all-time best seller. But one of the reasons is its impressive variety. It is not one book, it is a library of books. Whatever your mood, whatever your need, there is a page in the Bible, somewhere, for you.

A Christian will try seriously to appreciate the whole Bible and not merely one or two parts of it. Yet there is such variety in it that invariably some persons are attracted by one feature of it while another feature makes stronger appeal to others.

Our studies these next three months will be in "The Literature of the Bible" and each week we shall be noticing a different feature. This week we give a thought to the tremendous variety of the Bible, along with its underlying unity.

Many Types

LOOKING through the Bible you find all varieties of literary types; you find poetry and prose; stories, essays, sermons, biographies, dramas; rhapsodies, love songs, funeral dirges and battle hymns.

Here are pages as prosaic as a telephone book and here are pages more exciting than any fiction. Here are simple, straightforward ideas that a child can understand as soon as he understands the words and here are mysteries so profound that the world's mightiest and boldest minds shrink back in awe.

The Bible is not like a piece of music played on one single instrument, like a tune on a piccolo; it is more like an immense symphony—the more often we listen to it, the more we hear in it.

Many Times

NO ONE knows exactly how long it took for the Bible to be written. Let us suppose that the earliest parts came from the pen (or stylus) of Moses, and the latest part from about 100 years after Christ (John and the Revelation). If Moses flourished around 1200 B. C., that would mean that the Bible was completed 13 centuries after it was begun.

In 13 centuries much can happen, and much did. There is hardly any circumstance or crisis, there is scarcely any time, however humdrum or thrilling, which does not have its match in the Bible. Its writers were inspired men; they knew God. But they also knew the times in which they lived, and thus can speak to ours.

One Theme

FOR all the vast variety of the Bible, there is in it a deep and lofty unity. It is bound together by its mighty purpose, which throbbed in the heart's blood of every man who wrote a line of it. That purpose is to make God real to man, and to bring man to God. The writers of the Bible may have had their lighter moments, but they did not write these pages then.

They wrote under the irresistible impulse, born of the Holy Spirit, to make plain to other men what God had revealed to them.

So as you come to the Bible, remember its purpose is not to make you admire or revere it as a book; its great purpose is to be transparent, a window through which you shall see God.

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Ground-Breaking for U.N. Headquarters

Excavation work in preparation for the construction of the permanent headquarters of the United Nations in New York City is now under way after a brief ground-breaking ceremony. Here a group of officials, including New York's Mayor William O'Dwyer and U.N. Assistant Secretary-General Benjamin Cohen, take part in the ceremony.

NOTICE

Property Owners in Taneytown are requested to keep their trees trimmed along streets, alleys and sidewalks, giving at least eight feet clearance.

This is in accordance with City Ordinance No. 178.

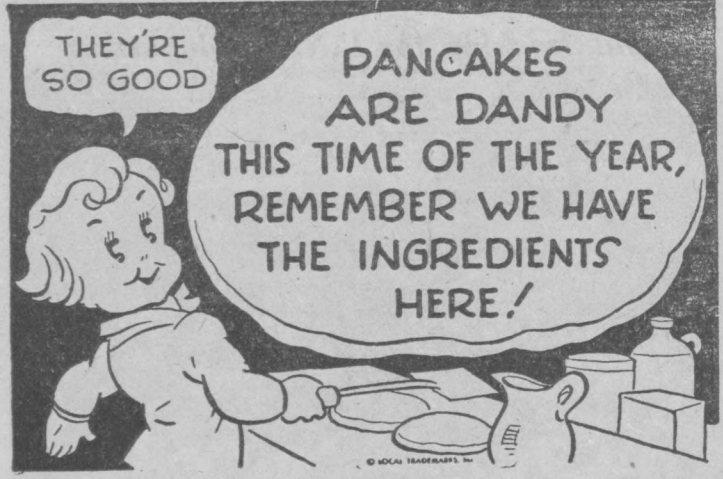
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