

FROM WHERE WE STAND

Who Makes Poor Corn Yields

When you consider that one acre in Mississippi produced over 300 bushels of corn one year and has yielded nearly 300 bushels on several occasions; and when you consider that one farmer in Lancaster county grew 170 bushels per acre last year and several others had yields of nearly 150 bushels per acre; and when you consider that the average yield per acre is only about 50 bushels nationally and somewhere near 70 bushels in Lancaster County, you begin to realize there must be some pretty poor yields of corn somewhere.

Of course the national average takes into consideration some of the arid areas where failures and near failures from drought are quite common. For this reason the average for the entire country might be expected to be quite low, but in Lancaster County where failures, that is complete failures, of a crop due to weather are practically unheard of, there must be other reasons for an average of only about 70 bushels.

Most of us are interested in growing the best yields possible on our acres, but sometimes we aren't willing to do those things needed to get top yields.

Experience of Lancaster County farmers as well as research scientists have shown time and again that soil tests are one of the least expensive tools the crop grower can use, yet many farmers do not take advantage of the service. At any rate, it will be difficult to have a soil test completed in time for corn planting this year.

But if no soil test has been taken, there are still several practices which can be counted on to add bushels to the corn yield.

Unless you have a corn planter which is working properly, you can not hope to have a uniform stand of corn. In addition to proper operation, the corn planter should be designed to place the starter fertilizer below and to the side of the seed. Tests have shown that fertilizers placed above, below or in contact with the seed often do as much harm as good.

Many farmers are finding they get better results by plowing down a large portion (up to 75 per cent) of the commercial fertilizer they intend to apply to the corn crop.

Higher plant populations are finding acceptance among more progressive farmers. Ears on individual stalks will be smaller, but bushels of small ears weigh as much as bushels of large ears.

Soil tests at the Pennsylvania State University have shown that one of the most limiting factors in Lancaster County soils is organic matter. The very intensive cultivation of our farms in the Garden Spot helps burn out the humus and make the organic matter content lower. Herbicide sprays have helped to cut down the number of cul-

tivations needed to control weeds. Now several farmers in the county are trying minimum tillage (Plow-plant or wheel-track planting) programs with even less stirring of the soil with its subsequent drying of the soil and burning out of the humus.

Most of these suggestions can be put into effect with little or no extra outlay of cash, but it seems that new ideas catch on slowly, even with progressive farmers such as farm in Lancaster County.

At least that's how it looks from where we stand.

Clean-Up Week

We add our voice to the chorus of voices urging observance of State Clean-up Week.

If we tried to observe all the special weeks which have been set aside by one or another of the special interest groups, we would accomplish nothing at all except the observance of special weeks. This one week, however, we believe has real merit because it grinds no one's personal axe, but benefits all who participate in its observance.

Clean-up week is completely appropriate at this time of year. Farms and homes are emerging from the debris which collected through a long winter. Grasses and shrubs are beginning to show signs of life and soon many of the ravages of the winter season will be covered up by nature's workers.

Before some of the debris is out of sight under foilage, we suggest farmers take time to pick up and throw away trash which has accumulated.

We are thinking particularly of some of the hay fields we have seen this spring. There seems to be an unusually large number of bottles and cans along roadsides, and we feel that a trip along the edge of any hay field bordering on a road to pick up any such trash before crops make large amounts of growth will save time later on. It will still be a good idea to police the area just before harvest time to prevent machinery damage from such foreign materials, but the winter-accumulated trash will be easier to see now than later on.

We realize this is a busy time of year, but it is no busier than harvest time will be. During this wet season when field work has to be postponed for another day, a few hours of cleaning up around the barn, house and through the fields will often pay higher wages than a farmer's best crops.

At least that's how it looks from where we stand.

"The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." —Song of Solomon 2:12



THIS WEEK

—In Washington

With Clinton Davidson

Thanks Mr. Farmer

Secretary of Agriculture serves to be more widely reported than it was by most before the House Agriculture Committee recently on the farm cost price squeeze de-

Rural Rhythms

APRIL

By Carol Dean Huber

All pink and green young April stands
Inside the door of spring,
The warming sun around her head;
The birds an anthem sing.

With raindrop tears she sets the stage
With flowers all in bloom;
Then steps aside to usher in
Her sisters, May and June.

Mr. Freeman has repeatedly emphasized that a correct understanding of farm problems must precede any sound solution of those problems. He believes that when all the facts are understood farmers will receive praise rather than abuse from consumers.

"The average citizen has a distorted image of agriculture and the farmer," Mr. Freeman said. "He does not understand agriculture's contribution to his own welfare and standard of living.

"He recognizes, in short, neither agriculture's success nor its distress. Until this un-

derstanding gap is closed, farmers will be unable to make their full contribution to national prosperity, national security and world peace."

Best In The World

"U. S. agriculture has achieved a success unparalleled anywhere in the world or at any time in history. Many persons thoughtlessly blame

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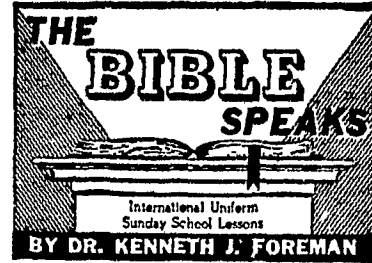
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Sunday School Lessons
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Bible Material: Job 4:1-9; 8:1-10;
11:1-20, 21, 37:14-24
Devotional Reading: Psalm 119:33-40

Empty Nothings

Lesson for April 23, 1961

IF YOU have never read the book of Job in the Revised Standard Version, you have not been able to appreciate all the truth and power there is in this tremendous book. Much is known about the Hebrew language today



that was not known three hundred years ago when the King James translation was made. For instance, the old translation of Job 21:34 reads: "How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing there remaineth falsehood?" The better recent translation gives the meaning more forcefully: "How then will you comfort me with empty nothings? There is nothing left of your answers but falsehood." It is some of these "empty nothings" that we must now look into.

"You Can Pray Your Way Out Of Trouble"

In the story of Job, three of his friends came to visit him when he was in pain and destitute, sitting on a pile of ashes. Why had this good man suffered so much? What could he do now to get over his troubles? Bildad (8:5-6) had a suggestion that was doubtless meant well. You can pray your way out, that was Bildad's idea. Seek God, make supplication to the Almighty, and if you are pure and upright he will rouse himself to do something fine for you. Job knew that was not going to work. He had prayed, he had been (on God's own testimony, 1:8) a blameless and upright man. He was better than anybody; God said there was not another man like him in the world. If the praying of a good man were a sort of disaster-insurance, no praying man would ever be in trouble. Job knew, better than Bildad did, the limits of prayer.

It is all too easy, when we see friends in trouble, to hint that maybe they ought to pray more. Suppose they have been praying all they can?

"You Can Repent Your Way Out Of Trouble"

Zophar, another of Job's friends has a somewhat different suggestion. Quit your meanness, repent, put away iniquity and wickedness, set your heart right, and then you will be secure. God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves. (That is the general drift of his remarks in 11:13-20 and elsewhere.) Indeed, all three of the curious friends of Job had more the same idea. The logic was good, only the facts did not fit the logic. Sin produces suffering, they said. The more sin, the more suffering. Therefore Job, who suffers sorely, must be an outrageous sinner. What he needs to do is to repent, to pray, and his troubles will vanish. This again is "empty nothing" as Job put it. We all know good people whose troubles have been more numerous and crushing than ever came to some of their neighbors who were not nearly so good.

Job got the impression after another speech by Zophar that his friends knew that sin and suffering do not always match, but they suggested that the sins and virtues of a father are visited on his children. The children of the sinner reap the reward of his goodness; the children of the sinner pay for their father's wrongdoing. Job inquires, with why is it that he sees this happen. Job is not satisfied with this delayed-action justice. "The wicked man is spared in the day of calamity," he says, and he feels in his bones there is something wrong here.

Job Says NO

Job says a loud and distressing NO to his friends' suggestion. They are not real answers. They are wrong because they don't fit the facts and they don't admit the real problem Job is as sure as they are that God runs this world. That he could have made it different, that God is both powerful and good. So how can these things be? Why does God allow a man whose goodness God fully recognizes—to suffer in the many ways Job has endured? What the story of Job has to say about this, the theme of the Bible study next week.

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Now Is The Time . . .

BY MAX SMITH



MAX SMITH

TO REMOVE MULCH ON STRAWBERRIES—About half of the mulch over the row of strawberries should be removed by this time; this will enable the plants to be exposed and to properly develop. Some of the mulch should be left between the plants to help control weeds, conserve moisture, and prevent the berries from coming directly in contact with the soil. They will be cleaner at harvest time. Between the rows most of the mulch may be

TO VENTILATE STEER BARN—Feeders that keep the cattle confined should be alert to good ventilation as the days and nights get warmer. The gains of some steers are reduced because of hot, stuffy barns. Windows should be opened or removed and doors kept open at all times possible, the cattle will do better if permitted to run in and out free choice.

TO SHEER SHEEP—Local shepherds are urged to shear their animals before hot weather arrives; there is little to be gained by permitting the flock to carry their fleeces until the month of May. In many cases the animals will begin to lose their wool and will gain weight and produce more milk if clipped during April. The fleeces should be tied with paper twine and with the flesh side out. Store in a clean dry place until sold.

TO EVALUATE THE FEED-GRAIN PROGRAM—Local growers are urged to study the proposed program and become familiar with the exact situation on their own farms. This will differ from farm to farm and may have an attractive financial arrangement for many local farms. The important thing to learn everything possible about the program for your farm and then make the decision whether or not to sign up.

TO PLAN HAY-MAKING METHODS—Each year more and more livestock producers are recognizing the great value of high quality hay; this is not an easy task and local producers are urged to plan ahead as to what methods will be employed this year to help take the weather risk out of hay making. Hay conditioners, mow finishers with fan and heat units are all methods that have been used successfully. To depend upon field curing alone is a bit risky when we consider the great investment represented.