

BIBLE LESSON SUNDAY SCHOOL WORKBOOK

ANCIENT AND MODERN NECROMANCY, alias Mesmerism and Hypnotism, Denounced

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Prepared by Peggy Koehler for CSDirectory.com

Designed for those in Junior High and beyond

These lessons are merely suggestions or aids when teaching a class. I always begin my class by asking the students if they have anything they want to discuss; healings, challenges, etc. I always get to SS early enough to talk to the kids before the bell goes off— this gives me the opportunity to hone in on what's going on in their lives, at home, school, etc. Sometimes we start talking about a question they have asked and I never get to question number one on my prepared lesson – which is fine with me; because we never want to forget it's their SS class. I want them to do most of the talking, ask questions of each other, etc. I usually ask what their goals are – name 5 or more things they want to learn in SS. I also stress that SS is a picnic and everyone has to bring something. You can't expect one person (the teacher) to supply all the food. Right?

In other words, no matter how many big words we use it all boils down to this: **GOD IS THE ONLY POWER! Yea God!** This lesson brings out the nothingness of evil of every name and/or bogus characteristic and the *allness* of God good. Have fun bursting error's balloons with the Sword of Spirit. Anything that God didn't make is reduced to its common denominator "0." "BE GLAD, GIVE THANKS, REJOICE" that our Father, Mother God is OMNIPOTENT and we are His beloved children.

1. If you add 0 x's 8, what do you get? If you add 0 x's 100, what do you get? If you add 0 x's 5000, what do you get? 0 x's anything is always _____.
2. If ever you feel frightened – just remember what Paul says in Romans 8:31: "*If God be for us, who can be against us?*" (Responsive Reading)
3. It might be a good idea to have your students look up the definitions of Necromancy, Mesmerism and Hypnotism. That way they can understand that the law of Good, God denounces their meaning and false existence. The serpent/error wears lots of disguises, but underneath all of them is nothing and no one.
4. This lesson introduces a very special Biblical character named Nehemiah. At the beginning of Nehemiah's memoir, we find him at the court of the Persian King. He was a favorite of the King and was quite wealthy in his own right. He was not a priest or rabbi but was, in today's vernacular, a government worker in the employ of a foreign king. He became a building contractor called in to repair and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Ezra (mentioned in the previous book) was a coworker. However Ezra was a scholar and teacher working with the Bible whereas his friend worked with stones and mortar. The work both these men did was equally important.

Nehemiah's Story – The son of Hacaliah:

Act I

Nehemiah: Scene 1 – The palace in Shushan. Hanani, one of my brothers had just arrived from Judah for a visit. Good Morning, Hanani, welcome to the palace. Tell me, how are the conditions among the Jews in Jerusalem?

Hanani: Not good at all, brother. The exiled survivors are in bad shape. Conditions are awful and on top of that the wall of Jerusalem has collapsed and the city gates have been burnt to the ground. No one is safe as we have no walls or fortification to keep out our enemies.

When Nehemiah heard this awful news, he cried for his people. He mourned for days, fasting and praying to God. It's interesting to note that before Nehemiah did anything – he prayed. He had to get his thought in line with the Father before he could help his people. He needed spiritual guidance on how to solve this enormous problem. At one time I heard a practitioner mention how important it is that we first get ourselves right with God before we can help others. She likened it to flying. The stewardesses announce that if oxygen masks are ever needed, the first thing you do is put it on yourself before you place it on your child. In other words, we need to pray daily for ourselves before we can help others.

Nehemiah: Dear God, tell me what to do; how to help my people? Please hear my prayer, you who are omnipotent and omnipresent. I know that I and the children of Israel have sinned against you; have broken your commandments, but you redeemed us. In your great love and mercy you forgave us and brought us back home. Tell me what to do. Your people have come back to worship you as Moses commanded and you said if we did this you would forgive our mistakes against you. Please make me successful when I go before the king requesting a leave of absence to rebuild the walls in Jerusalem. (Nehemiah was cupbearer to the king which was a very important position).

Scene 2: The month of Nisan, the 20th year of Artaxerses, the king. The hour for serving the wine. Nehemiah gave the king his wine. He had always been happy when serving his boss, but this time he was very sad. Because this was a banquet, it was important that he wear a happy face. No one should ever appear sad before the king. This was the first time the king saw his servant unhappy.

The King: What's the matter with you, my friend? Why the sad face? Are you sick or depressed? Talk to me.

Nehemiah: “Long live your majesty!” You're right – I am sad and you would be to if you were in my shoes. The city where all my family is buried is in ruins and the gates which are supposed to keep out our enemies have been burned to the ground.

The King: Gee, I'm really sorry to hear that but what do you want me to do?

Nehemiah: (Praying under his breath to God, his heavenly Father). If it pleases you, Your Majesty, and you care about me, then send me to the city of my birth so that I can rebuild it and save my people from further harm.

The King: (His wife was sitting next to him listening to the pleas of Nehemiah. Even in those days, wives tended to be very influential.) If I let you go how long will you be gone and when will you be back?

Nehemiah: Thanks boss king. I promise to return as soon as the work is completed. (The king agreed to Nehemiah's request).

First, Nehemiah thanked God for answering his prayers. Then he went directly to Jerusalem and was there 3 days incognito. He didn't want anyone to know he was in town until he had time to inspect the damage. None of the local officials in the city knew why he was there or what he had planned to do. He needed to develop a plan of action first on how to repair the walls and gates. After his inspection he gave his report to the Jews, priests, nobles, town fathers, and everyone else who would be working on the job.

Nehemiah: Face it, fellows, we're in a bad way. Jerusalem is a wreck; its gates are burned up. Come join me and let's all of us rise up and build the wall of Jerusalem. We can't live with this disgrace any longer. Just so you know – God is supporting me and I also have the blessing of the king.

The Workers: Lead on, Nehemiah. We're all with you and are happy to help you. Let's get started. (So they rolled up their sleeves, grabbed their tools and were ready for this good work).

Here comes skepticism, hatred, and jealousy in the guise of Sanballat, the Horonite; Tobiah, the Ammonite servant of King Artaxerxes, and Geshem, the Arab.

Sandy, Toby & Geshy: (laughing loudly). Ha, Ha, Nehemiah, what do you think you're doing? Do you think you can go against the king? You're in big trouble pal. No one is going to help you.

Nehemiah: (answering their false charges). The God of Heaven will make sure we succeed. We are doing His good work. You guys and your serpent-type thinking have no business here. We're the servants of God of good and the king gave me permission to visit my birthplace. You three troublemakers keep your nose out of my business. You can't come here and tell us what to do. Jerusalem is not your concern so get lost!

Nehemiah's memoir is all about good overcoming evil. Watch how in every case when these 3 snakes (Sandy, Toby and Geshy) try to interfere with the work of our God-directed heroes, they are exposed and defeated. They come up with all kinds of schemes, including scams and lies to get Nehemiah and his crew off the wall – to come down to their level of thinking – to give up the work of righteousness. Keep reading to find out who are the winners and who are the losers.

Act II

Nehemiah is forced to arm the workers that are building the wall.

Sandy: (Furious). What are these miserable Jews doing? Do they really think they can rebuild the wall in such a short time? Toby agreed with him and said: "Why, if a fox climbed that wall they are renovating, it would fall to pieces under his weight.

These men were so angry that they put their heads together and decided to fight against Jerusalem and create as much trouble as possible.

Nehemiah: (Praying). Oh dear God, please listen to my prayers. Everyone seems to hate us. Please help us finish building so our enemies can't attack us. Only You can protect the work we are doing. I'm going to put round-the-clock guards in place to protect us against these malicious attacks from our adversaries.

Soon the lies were going around in Judah. People were telling others that the wall would never be finished because: (The Message).

"The builders are pooped.
The rubbish is piling up.
The builders are in over their heads.
They'll never be able to build this wall."

Talk about negative advertising. The Jews began believing what they were hearing and also started to doubt if they could finish the job. They told Nehemiah that they were afraid they would be killed. "They have us surrounded and are planning to attack us." they said.

Nehemiah: Friends, listen to me – the only way we can counteract the hatred and evil doings imposed on us by our enemies is to turn to our God in prayer. Don't you see that their serpent lies have no power to hinder or stop the work of God? All of us must plant our hearts and minds on God. Here's what we are also going to do. I instructed my workers thus: "Each person and his helper are to stay inside Jerusalem. You will be guards by night and workmen by day." We are going to hold in one hand the tools needed for building the wall and in the other hand we will hold a weapon so that we are prepared for any attacks from the Samaritans. Brothers, sons, daughters, wives – all must be prepared to stand for Truth and not lose our courage or determination to finish the job we started. **"If God be for us, who can be against us?"** (Romans 8:31). The theme here is: WORK; WATCH, and PRAY!

Act III

The wall is finished. However, the gates were not up yet: Error tries one more time to get our good buddy, Nehemiah off that wall and drop down to the level of the slithering snakes. Whose voice are we listening to when confronted with snake charmers? Never forget that Mind is the only communicator. Don't let fear, ignorance and lies knock you off the wall.

Sandy, Toby & Geshy: Hey guys, can you believe Nehemiah and his team of workers have actually finished the wall – there are no more breaks in it. I have an idea, said Sandy. Let's send them a note and ask them to meet with us in the plain of Ono. When he comes down from the wall to meet us, then we'll attack and kill Nehemiah. Once *he's* out of the way, the people will never bother to finish building the gates. Great idea, Sandy, said Toby and Geshy. We'll teach these Jews not to rely on their God. Who do they think He is anyway?

Nehemiah: Hey, folks, I just received a message from our adversaries asking me to meet them in the plain of Ono. They're just pretending they want to talk to me, but I know they are scheming to hurt me and stop our work from being completed. Seymour, I want you to give them this message from me. Tell them – "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down off the wall. Why should I stop what I'm doing just to come and visit with you?"

Four times they sent Nehemiah the same communication and four times Nehemiah answered them back the same way. You'd think they finally get the message wouldn't you? Our 3 scheming snakes sent a final letter to Nehemiah, which of course was a total lie. It was designed to intermeditate and frighten him. Did it work?

Sandy, Toby, & Geshy: "Nehemiah, the word is out among all the nations and we know it to be true, that you and the Jews are planning to rebel. That's the real reason you're rebuilding the wall. You want to be the king. Right?"

Nehemiah: Guys that idea is full of holes and you know it. You've concocted this false suggestion just to get us to stop building the wall. I already have permission from the king to do this work. Get lost; your fabrications can't frighten me. If you think I'd ever give up the work that God has sent me to do, you'd better think again. I continued to pray to my Heavenly Father for strength to finish the job.

Finale: The wall was finished on the 25th day of Elul and was completed from start to finish in 52 days. Considering the tools they had to use at that time as well as the talking snakes they had to deal with – constantly handling animal magnetism in the form of hate, envy, falsehoods, scare tactics, etc., it only goes to prove without a doubt that "ONE WITH GOD IS A MAJORITY!" Even the enemy had

to agree that that “this work was wrought of our God.” (Nehemiah 6:16) The very last words written in the book of Nehemiah are: **“Remember me, O my God, for good.”**

Now comes the fun part – examining in detail the meaning of this inspiring story and how we can relate it to current events. For example; the so-called Mid-East crisis; the war in Iraq, and the problems with N. Korea and Iran. With reference to the Nehemiah story, it might be an idea to have your class read **THE MOTHER CHURCH** by Joseph Armstrong. I’d like to quote the following paragraph from this book in relation to the building of TMC – Page 94:

“The truth is, that as mortals learn something of the nature of evil and make efforts to overcome it, they are then met by its different forms, resisting the demands of good. Then evil shows its true nature by claiming to be something when it is really nothing. The building of this church was to be a triumph for divine Love, and every material means and human dependence must fail, for human sense must “stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.” That’s what Nehemiah did.

5. What’s the first thing Nehemiah did when he heard the bad news from his brother? Why? What’s the job description of a “cupbearer?”
6. Read Psalms in the Responsive Reading and check off the verses that relate to this story and explain their meaning.
7. The media is constantly bombarding us with evil tidings (Ps.112:7). What are you doing about it?
8. Why it is important to put God first in our lives and in the decisions we make? How do we do this?
9. Why did Mrs. Eddy call Divine Science the Comforter? (S&H Page 55).
10. On page 4: 12-23, Mrs. Eddy says: “The habitual struggle to be always good is _____.” What do you think she meant by that statement?
11. How do you pray when it sometimes appears that evil is as powerful and real as good?
12. Make a list of all the challenges that confronted Nehemiah and the Jews in rebuilding the wall? Are you dealing with challenges in your life regarding home, relationships, school, sickness, supply, etc.? How do you go about solving them?
13. Next make a list of how prayer and acknowledging the omnipotence of God solved these problems.
14. What exactly is “animal magnetism?” What is the purpose of a magnet? Does divine Love create good folks and bad? If not – who did?
15. Why did Knights wear armor? In S&H, page 571:15 – Mrs. Eddy has a marginal heading entitled “The armor of divinity.” What kind of armor is that? What’s it made of? Are you wearing it now?
16. Remember – no matter how bad evil seems to be – it is always NOTHING! Why?
17. Read the definition of “Jerusalem” on page 589. Pride, sensuality, envy, tyranny, and disobedience tore down the walls and gates in Jerusalem. What qualities built them back up? What is the spiritual definition of Jerusalem? Where is heaven? (Page 587).

18. How many laws did the Jews have to follow to be considered good Jews?

- a. 24
- b. 200
- c. 613
- d. 75

19. Jesus boiled it down to one word – what was it? And 2 commandments. What are they?

20. Do you trust God 100% to solve your problems? Yes? No? Why?

21. S19/Page 451:19-3. Although the marginal heading in this paragraph is “Obligations of teachers and is referring more to Christian Science class instruction – Mrs. Eddy has given us the guidelines for handling human will and all forms of animal magnetism. Every SS student should learn how to defend himself against “aggressive mental suggestion.” It’s one of the important *daily’s* in our church Manual.

22. What happens when we stand for Truth? Who or what destroys error? Mrs. Eddy says on Page 446: 24-25. “*Resisting evil, you overcome it and prove its nothingness.*”

23. Do you want to strip off the disguises of evil? If so, read Page 186:11-22. S23.

24. The last section of this week’s lesson is from Luke:9: 38-43. A man cries out to Jesus to heal his son:

Father: Teacher, please, please take a look at my son. He’s my only child and he’s subject to epileptic seizures. One minute he’s screaming, foaming at the mouth and in terrible convulsions. Sometimes he falls into the fireplace. When the convulsions are over, he’s black & blue. I asked your disciples to heal him but they couldn’t. Can you heal my child, Jesus?

Jesus: Oh faithless generation. You have no understanding of the allness and omnipotence of God. How many times do I have to teach you that His love heals everything? Bring your son to me, and I will heal him.

While he was coming, a seizure slammed the boy to the ground and threw him into convulsions one more time. Jesus rebuked the so-called demon and healed the child – who then ran into the arms of his grateful father. The crowd was amazed at God’s mighty power. What would you think if you were in the crowd that day? Would you want to find out more about how Jesus healed? Would you tell your friends and family what you had witnessed? Would you want to follow Christ Jesus and learn how to heal from him or would you just forget it and go home and watch TV?

We have the voice of Truth with us all the time. “The Bible and the Christian Science textbook are our only Preachers.” Obviously, Jesus didn’t change anything. Instead he saw God’s perfect child in the place of an epileptic child. Error of any kind can never hypnotize nor mesmerize us unless we consent to listen to a so-called talking snake. A lie, alias a false belief can never become a reality any more than a bad dream can become true. “JUST SAY NO!”

This lesson ends the way it began. Page 228:25-29 (S25). “There is no power apart from God.” Case closed!!!!

We have a new one scene, one act play. It’s produced, staged and directed by Christ featuring just one actor: The script is one sentence taken from our treasured playbook, Science & Health with Key to the Scriptures. It can be found on page 316:20-21. “*Christ presents the indestructible*

man,(manifestation) whom Spirit creates, constitutes, and governs.” That’s you and me and everyone.

Sunday School Humor: **Subject: “Did Noah Fish?”** The SS teacher asked little Johnny – “Do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the Ark?” “No way,” replied Johnny. “How could he with only two worms.”

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

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Web sites for Christian Science High School students:

TMCYouth.com <http://www.tmcyouth.com>

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