



ROCK OF AGES
Other foundation can
no man lay
A RANSOM FOR ALL

"Watchman, What of the Night?
The Morning Cometh, and a Night also!"—Isaiah

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"I will stand upon my watch and will set my foot
upon the Tower, and will watch to see what He will
say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them
that oppose me."—Habakkuk 2: 1.

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Upon the earth's distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming upon the earth (society); for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism) shall be shaken. . . . When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.—Matt. 24:33; Mark 13:29; Luke 21:25-31.

THIS JOURNAL AND ITS SACRED MISSION

THIS journal is one of the prime factors or instruments in the system of Bible instruction, or "Seminary Extension", now being presented in all parts of the civilized world by the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY, chartered A. D. 1884, "For the Promotion of Christian Knowledge". It not only serves as a class room where Bible students may meet in the study of the divine Word but also as a channel of communication through which they may be reached with announcements of the Society's conventions and of the coming of its traveling representatives, styled "Pilgrims", and refreshed with reports of its conventions.

Our "Berean Lessons" are topical rehearsals or reviews of our Society's published STUDIES most entertainingly arranged, and very helpful to all who would merit the only honorary degree which the Society accords, viz., *Verbi Dei Minister* (V. D. M.), which translated into English is *Minister of God's Word*. Our treatment of the International Sunday School Lessons is specially for the older Bible students and teachers. By some this feature is considered indispensable.

This journal stands firmly for the defense of the only true foundation of the Christian's hope now being so generally repudiated—redemption through the precious blood of "the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom [a corresponding price, a substitute] for all". (1 Peter 1:19; 1 Timothy 2:6) Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Peter 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its further mission is to "make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which . . . has been hid in God, . . . to the intent that now might be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God"—"which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed".—Ephesians 3:5-9, 10.

It stands free from all parties, sects and creeds of men, while it seeks more and more to bring its every utterance into fullest subjection to the will of God in Christ, as expressed in the holy Scriptures. It is thus free to declare boldly whatsoever the Lord hath spoken—according to the divine wisdom granted unto us to understand his utterances. Its attitude is not dogmatic, but confident; for we know whereof we affirm, treading with implicit faith upon the sure promises of God. It is held as a trust, to be used only in his service; hence our decisions relative to what may and what may not appear in its columns must be according to our judgment of his good pleasure, the teaching of his Word, for the upbuilding of his people in grace and knowledge. And we not only invite but urge our readers to prove all its utterances by the infallible Word to which reference is constantly made to facilitate such testing.

TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

That the church is "the temple of the living God", peculiarly "his workmanship"; that its construction has been in progress throughout the gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the Chief Corner Stone of his temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come "to all people", and they find access to him.—1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; Ephesians 2:20-22; Genesis 28:14; Galatians 3:29.

That meantime the chiseling, shaping, and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these "living stones", "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection; and the temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Revelation 15:5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world", "in due time".—Hebrews 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Timothy 2:5, 6.

That the hope of the church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be 'partaker of the divine nature,' and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:4.

That the present mission of the church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be kings and priests in the next age.—Ephesians 4:12; Matthew 24:14; Revelation 1:6; 20:6.

That the hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial kingdom, the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church, when all the wilfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isaiah 35.

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CONVENTION

The colored friends of the International Bible Students Association will have their general convention in New York city August 31 to September 3, inclusive. At this meeting will be Brother Banks, the manager of the Colored Department, and other able brethren, besides Brother R. H. Barber, of the Editorial Committee of THE WATCH TOWER. For further information address communications to Mr. A. Benta, 234 West 63rd St., New York, N. Y.

YOUR VACATION

Many of the consecrated brethren in order to earn the necessities of this life are employed in offices, shops, etc., and a certain period is granted each year for vacation or holidays. The vacation season is near. These vacation periods are usually from two to three weeks. Some of the friends thus situated have signified their desire to spend their vacation period in the colporteur work and have asked if this can be arranged. It can be arranged, and we think it is a splendid idea. We believe many of the friends will wish to do likewise when they find there is a special inducement and opportunity. For this reason the SOCIETY is offering such opportunity and inducement and all who desire to spend their vacation in the colporteur work may arrange to do so. Territory suitable to your convenience may be assigned and the books will be sent to you at a special price, provided you signify that you are spending your vacation in this manner.

The fact is that a real vacation consists in a change of environment and of work. No one really wants to be idle, and this is particularly true of the consecrated. The colporteur work will furnish a real recreation from office work and at the same time will enable each to pay expenses. We believe that many of the friends are glad to avail themselves of this opportunity. If you are one, please write to the SOCIETY at 18 Concord Street, Brooklyn, stating that you wish to spend your vacation in the colporteur work and ask to be registered in the SOCIETY's list of special colporteurs for that season. State the time of your vacation and what territory you would prefer. The SOCIETY will be glad to cooperate with you. Besides furnishing a really joyful recreation, it will be a splendid opportunity to advertise the King and the kingdom. We believe all such will be both physically and spiritually refreshed and will go back to their respective posts of duty better equipped to perform their secular labors.

If you contemplate taking advantage of this offer, write quickly, stating where you wish your books shipped, so that we can have them there ready for you when your vacation begins.

CONVENTIONS

A convention at Tacoma, Washington, for six days will begin August 14, ending August 19. A nine-day convention, beginning August 18 and ending August 26, will be held at Los Angeles. A special train will be run from Chicago. Round trip fare, \$104.00. Add to this sleeper and all meals on train for the entire trip, \$114.00 more. Full details will be published in the next issue of THE WATCH TOWER. Address all communications to Frank T. Horth, 418 Second Avenue, Clinton, Iowa.

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AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

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A CLEAR VISION OF CHRONOLOGY

IF FULL understanding of all the details of chronology had been necessary to victory in the race for the high calling, it would have been supplied all down through the Gospel age. After the apostles fell asleep chronology was little noticed until about "the time of the end." As the time drew near for the setting up of the kingdom, God began to arouse some of his servants to the time-features of his plan, that the church might not be in darkness, as stated by the Apostle.—1 Thessalonians 5:1-8.

²We have often noticed travelers who paid little attention to their time-tables until nearing their destination; then they began to scan the schedules closely to see whether their trains were on time. Their knowledge, or lack of it, would not affect the arrival of the train, but would have considerable to do with their preparations. So with God's consecrated people as they near their destination.

³Aside from the Bible record the history of the human race in its infancy is very uncertain. Family history passed from father to son by word of mouth for centuries. The rising generations were more or less migratory; and, as families became more numerous and daily affairs were more pressing, it was easy to lose interest in the past and to throw about it the halo of tradition. Occasionally kings desired to have their exploits recorded that future generations might know of their greatness; thus records of the reigning families were kept, and stored in the palaces of the kings. Wars were frequent; and the victor usually cared little or nothing for the history of the vanquished, and if it were preserved, it might be altered that the importance of the victor should appear the greater. This continued more or less until about 600 to 800 years before Christ. Then secular history began to come more into vogue, but was not very popular or reliable.

⁴The record of the Jews is a notable exception. God provided them with a complete connected history from the creation of the first man to their exodus from Egypt. This, together with their own carefully kept records to protect the line of succession of their priesthood and kings, continues until their return from the Babylonian captivity, 3592 A. M. At that date secular history becomes reliable, and from then on Jewish history is disconnected. This of itself is remarkable.

⁵The problem of the historians has been to connect properly the historical events during and prior to the Babylonian captivity. The history of the Jews runs parallel with that of the Babylonians for nearly ninety years, and they touch at many points. The Bible records of this period make frequent mention of Babylonian kings, and incidentally throw considerable light upon that nation. It is for this reason that historians generally endeavor to carry the chronological line through the Babylonian and Jewish records. One date of connection is very generally agreed upon; but, not properly reading some of the Jewish prophecies and the records of their fulfilment, by endeavoring to

connect up other dates chronologers differ considerably. They generally miss the correct dates by about eighteen or nineteen years.

⁶There need be no difficulty, however, if the Bible records are followed carefully. That all may easily see that we have been correct in the dates given in the *SCRIPTURE STUDIES* and *THE WATCH TOWER*, we herewith present an outline chart, showing the harmony of the references in the Scripture, and giving explanations of apparent difficulties. By it may be located the time when many of the prophetic visions were given, especially those in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

⁷Those who have relied too much upon secular history have become confused, and begin to entertain doubts about the Bible record, which is the only "sure foundation" for God's people.

⁸Chronology itself is not a vital doctrine, necessary to salvation; but it is closely related to the doctrines, and gives great aid to a proper understanding of God's Word at this time. Let all who are interested give it a careful study.

⁹The points of difference by historians lie chiefly between the dates of 536 B. C. and 630 B. C. The connected Bible history ends with the return of the Jews under Zerubbabel at the close of the seventy years of "desolation of the land," usually termed the seventy years of captivity. This was 3592 years from the creation of Adam, and was "the first year of Cyrus king of Persia." This "first year of Cyrus" is very generally accepted as 536 B. C.

¹⁰All admit that if the last year of the seventy was 536 B. C. the first year must have been 606 B. C. With what event in Jewish history did the seventy years begin? It should be noted that the chronological line, as recorded in the Bible, is given by faithful, holy men, chosen by God as his special servants; and that therefore it is reliable; wicked, faithless men and heathen nations are referred to only incidentally, as they come in contact with God's people.

¹¹That all may compare some of the "conclusions" of secular historians we quote from "McClintock & Strong's Cyclopaedia": "Nebuchadnezzar pressed forward and had reached Egypt, when news of his father's death recalled him; and hastily returning to Babylon, he was fortunate enough to find himself, without any struggle, acknowledged king, B. C. 604." The list of Babylonian kings is given as follows:

Nabopolassar	625 to 604 B. C.	21 years
Nebuchadnezzar, his son.....	604 to 561 B. C.	43 years
Illoarudamus, his son		
(Evil-Merodach)	561 to 559 B. C.	2 years
Nerigassolassar	559 to 555 B. C.	4 years
Nabonadius (jointly with his son Belshazzar)	555 to 538 B. C.	17 years

¹²This reaches down to 538 B. C., when Darius and Cyrus, at the head of the Medes and Persians, took Babylon; when

the second world empire arose. Two years later Cyrus became sole ruler, 536 B. C.

¹²The above list states that Nebuchadnezzar did not become king until 604 B. C. The united testimony of 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel is that Nebuchadnezzar was king of Babylon when the seventy-year period of Jewish captivity began. This is acknowledged to be 606 B. C. To bridge this difficulty, it is "assumed" that he reigned jointly "with his father" for two years. From the statement in Jeremiah 25:1-3 that "the fourth year of Jehoiakim . . . was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon," it is further "assumed" that the fourth year of Jehoiakim must therefore be the first year of the captivity, and therefore 606 B. C. That being "settled," all other dates are made to harmonize therewith. They "conclude" that Nebuchadnezzar was considered as king, though reigning with his father from 606 to 604 B. C. This shows the method of arriving at the dates given in the margin of some of the Oxford Bibles, which follow the chronology of Bishop Usher. Note marginal references opposite Jeremiah 25:1 and 11. This throws the reckoning off at least eighteen years. See marginal reference opposite 2 Chronicles 36:19. There is no need of following this further.

¹⁴We now note the clearness of the Scriptural records. Jeremiah 25:1 reads: "The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the *fourth* year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the *first* year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon." Nothing in that verse intimates where Nebuchadnezzar was at the time Jeremiah had this word from the Lord. The Prophet simply gave the date when he received it, the twenty-third year of his prophecy (v. 3), by referring to two kings, one of Judah and one of Babylon. In verses 9 to 12 he prophesies that God WILL BRING Nebuchadnezzar against the land, and that the children of Israel WILL BE TAKEN to Babylon for a period of seventy years, during which time there would be a complete desolation of the land. This was fulfilled nineteen years later, commencing in 606 B. C. The captivity recorded in 2 Kings 24:8-16 took place when Jehoiachin had begun his reign (vs. 6, 8) in 617 B. C., at which time the land was *not* made desolate (v. 14). These two events should not be confused.

¹⁵God knew that his children today, at this testing time, when all manner of deceptions would abound to "deceive if possible the very elect," would need a "thus saith the Lord" as a sure foundation. He therefore overruled that his servants the prophets should include in their writings all the information necessary to form a complete connected line from Adam to the time when secular history became reliable.

¹⁶Those who follow the evidence herewith presented will see the accuracy and simplicity of the record. We give many citations, also quotations from corroborative records in harmony therewith. The latter are not necessary, for the Bible record is complete in itself; but these additional testimonies often include interesting details not found elsewhere.

¹⁷God told Daniel that he did not purpose that "the wicked" should understand. His information was only for the "wise," those willing to look to God. These wise ones are willing to begin at the beginning with confidence that God will supply his own with all that is needed; for the "fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

¹⁸God's servants of old wrote at different times and under greatly varying circumstances: therefore we should not expect to find all the data assembled in one place, but "here a little, there a little." Occasionally references were made to events with which many at the time of the writing were familiar, and details were not necessary. As time passed, the details would become obscured; and only the slight

references found in the records remained. Again, if God had designed that the wicked should not understand, we can see another reason for scattering the links, to be readily found when really needed.

¹⁹No attempt is here made to enter into details of days or months of the beginning or ending of the reigns of the various kings. Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin each reigned three months, but in the Bible records these are absorbed in the reigns of predecessor or successor. This is proved by the overlapping periods mentioned in other Scripture references, as will appear later.

EXPLANATION OF THE CHART

²⁰The spaces between the light vertical lines represent one year each. It begins with the thirteenth year of Josiah, 646 B. C., as that was the year in which Jeremiah began his work as a prophet; and Jeremiah figured prominently during much of the period under discussion. It closes with the third year of Cyrus, the date of Daniel's last recorded vision. Bible references to dates following that year are not directly connected with preceding events, hence cannot be used. The lower line of figures represent dates known as Before Christ, usually written with B. C. and read from right to left, because reading backward from the date of Christ's birth. The small letters above this line refer to notes which are given in this explanation. They are placed at the dates in which the events referred to in the references or quotations took place. Space is too limited to write them all down on the chart. By reference to the citations, notes and quotations it will be readily seen which dates synchronize and thus form a harmonious whole.

²¹There is but one event connected with and located in both Jewish and secular history that can be definitely dated in each. This is the "first year of Cyrus king of Persia." The Bible date is 3592 A. M., and the secular date is 536 B. C. This fact should not be overlooked, and was evidently arranged by Jehovah that the man of God might be fully convinced. More connections are not necessary.

²²All dates prior to 536 B. C. should be built upon the Bible record. Secular history is no standard by which to correct supposed errors in the Bible. Starting, therefore, with "the first year of Cyrus" as 536 B. C., we see the seventy years of "desolation of the land" must have begun seventy years prior, or 606 B. C. With what event in Jewish history did the land become desolate? Leviticus 26:34, 35 reads: "Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, AND ye be in your enemies' land [note that the two conditions must synchronize—the inhabitants would be captives and the land desolate]; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth DESOLATE it shall rest; BECAUSE it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it." This was a prophecy. Jeremiah 25:11, 12 reads: "And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass when seventy years are accomplished—." Here the length of time is given, as also in Jeremiah 29:10. 2 Chronicles 36:19-21 explains further. After describing the complete destruction of the temple, the city of Jerusalem and the captivity of all the people this record says: "To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years." Surely this is simple enough. The land must be desolate for seventy years to keep her sabbaths; at the same time the people of Israel must be captives in an enemy's land.

²³Jeremiah 52:12-15 states that these conditions commenced in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, and not

in his first year. 2 Kings 25:2-8 definitely connects the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar with the eleventh year of Zedekiah. The overthrow of Jerusalem in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, and the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, must be the event which marked the beginning of the seventy years' desolation, or 606 B. C. From this it is easy to figure the date of any of the kings. Zedekiah had reigned eleven years. His reign must have begun eleven years prior to 606 B. C., or 617 B. C. Jehoiakim reigned for eleven years; thus his reign began 628 B. C. Josiah reigned thirty-one years, beginning 659 B. C.; and so on as far back as one cares to go. Jehoiachin was dethroned, and many of the Jews were taken captive in 617; but as long as there were people in the land and the city of Jerusalem was inhabited and the sacrifices at the temple continued, the land could not be said to be "without an inhabitant," and keeping her sabbaths.

²⁴There are some passages of Scripture which at casual reading seem to be out of exact harmony; but a little investigation clears the apparent discrepancy. Jeremiah 52:28, 29 mentions some events as taking place in the *seventh* and *eighth* years of Nebuchadnezzar; whereas 2 Kings 24:12 and Jeremiah 52:12 mention the *eighth* and *nineteenth* years as the dates for the same events. Any careful reader can easily see that the last seven verses of Jeremiah must have been added by some later writer. (Note Jeremiah's own statement in 32:1.) Ezra is usually credited with this addendum, as he is also credited with the compiling of the records of the Chronicles. Ezra was born and reared in Babylon, but did not return to Jerusalem until the seventh year of Artaxerxes, some sixty-nine years after 536 B. C. (Ezra 7:7, 8) Being an educated scribe, he might easily have adopted one of the Assyrian dates. Babylon belonged to Assyria at that time. The following quotation from "The Assyrian Canon," by George Smith, will be interesting here:

²⁵"Among the Assyrians the regnal years of the kings were not reckoned from the day of accession, but from the Assyrian's New Year's day either before or after the day of accession. There does not appear to have been any fixed rule as to which New Year's day should be chosen; but from a number of known cases, it appears to have been the general practice to count the regnal years from the New Year's day next after the accession, and to call the period between the accession day and the first New Year's day, 'The beginning of the reign'; while the year from the New Year's day was called 'The first year'; and the following ones were numbered successively from it. Nevertheless, in the dates of several Assyrian and Babylonian sovereigns, there are cases of the year of accession being considered as the first year, thus giving *two* reckonings for the reigns of the following monarchs: Shalmaneser, Tiglath Pileser, Sargon, Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar."

CITATIONS AND QUOTATIONS

- a Thirteenth year of Josiah, and beginning of B. C. 646 Jeremiah's work as a prophet.—Jer. 1:2; 25:3.
- b a. Eighteenth year of Josiah, and the year of B. C. 641 the great passover of Josiah.—2 Kings 22:3; 2 Chronicles 34:8; 35:1-19.
- b. Probable date of Ezekiel's birth.—Ezekiel 1:1, 2.
- c Estimated date of Daniel's birth. Jerome, one of B. C. 629 the early church writers (340-430 A. D.), states that Daniel was probably about twelve years of age when taken to Babylon. It is evident from Daniel 1:3 that he was one of the nobility who were taken captive in 617 B. C., when Nebuchadnezzar carried many of the princes and chief men to Babylon.—Jeremiah 24:1; 27:20; 29:2; 2 Kings 24:14.

d a. Death of King Josiah.—2 Kings 23:29, 30; 2 B. C. 628 Chronicles 35:20-24.

b. Jehoahaz reigns three months.—2 Kings 23:31; 2 Chronicles 36:1-4.

c. Jehoiakim begins his eleven-year reign.—2 Kings 23:34-36; 2 Chronicles 36:5-8.

d. The date of the death of Josiah, which is the same as the first year of Jehoiakim, is an important date. It is also connected with Egyptian history, which in turn is connected with Babylonian history, which closely touches Jewish history; and incidentally it refers to a number of dates, and these latter definitely locate the beginning of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. We therefore include a number of quotations with the Scripture references.

e. Pharaoh-Necho was king of Egypt, and also of Syria, a country lying to the northeast of Palestine. (This should not be confounded with Assyria, which lay further to the east along the Euphrates river, and of which Babylon was at that time the capital.) Pharaoh decided to enlarge his domain by overrunning parts of Assyria. He left Egypt with a large army, following the Mediterranean coast line past Palestine, en route to Carchemish, a city on the banks of the Euphrates about 600 miles from Egypt and 500 miles north from Babylon. On his way thither King Josiah attempted to hinder him at Megiddo and was killed. (2 Kings 23:29; 2 Chronicles 35:20-24) It appears that Pharaoh proceeded to Carchemish, stationed a strong garrison there, and returned to Egypt, without attempting to invade Assyria at that time. On his way back, about three months later (2 Kings 23:29-34; 2 Chronicles 36:1-3) he deposed Jehoahaz, whom the Jews had chosen as king in place of Josiah, and placed Jehoiakim on the throne at Jerusalem, taking Jehoahaz as prisoner to Egypt.

f. The following quotation is from "Smith's Bible Dictionary," under the heading of Carchemish:

g. "Carchemish is not, as has generally been supposed, the classical Circesium. It lay much higher up the Euphrates. . . . It seems to have commanded the ordinary passage of the Euphrates. . . . and thus in the contentions between Egypt and Assyria its possession was of primary consequence. Carchemish appears to have been taken by Pharaoh-Necho shortly after the battle of Megiddo, and retaken by Nebuchadnezzar after a battle three years later."

h. As Josiah was slain in 628 B. C., three years later would be 625 B. C.

i. Note also the following from "Smith's Bible Dictionary," under the heading of Pharaoh-Necho:

j. "At the commencement of his reign he made war against the king of Assyria, and, being encountered on the way by Josiah, defeated and slew the king of Judah at Megiddo. . . . Necho seems to have soon returned to Egypt; perhaps he was on his way thither when he deposed Jehoahaz. The army was probably posted at Carchemish, and was there defeated by Nebuchadnezzar in the fourth year of Necho [this is evidently intended for the fourth year of Jehoiakim], that king [Necho] not being, as it seems, then at its head. This battle led to the loss of all Asiatic dominions of Egypt." This was in 625 B. C., or the beginning of 624.

k. Jeremiah 46:2 reads: "Against Egypt, against the army of Pharaoh-Necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah king of Judah."

a. Fourth year of Jehoiakim.—Jeremiah 25:1; B. C. 624 36:1; 45:1; 46:2.

b. First year of Nebuchadnezzar.—Jeremiah 25:1.

c. Jeremiah writes his prophecy of 36:1-8.

d. Notice that Jeremiah 25:1-3 connects the *first* year of Nebuchadnezzar with the *fourth* year of Jehoiakim, and

also covers the entire period from the *thirteenth* year of Josiah to this *twenty-third* year of Jeremiah's office as prophet. This bridges over the three months' reign of Jehoahaz and shows that it was not counted in the reckonings of years.

e. It was during this year, seven years before any captives had been taken to Babylon, that Jeremiah first states the length of time as seventy years that would come as a punishment for their evil ways. Jeremiah 25:11 reads:

f. "And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."

g. This was also the date of the battle of Carchemish. Josephus makes the following statement, in "Antiquities," Book 10, Chapter 6:

h. "In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, one whose name was Nebuchadnezzar took the government over the Babylonians; who at the same time went up with a great army to the city of Carchemish which was at the Euphrates; upon a resolution that he had taken to fight with Necho king of Egypt, under whom all Syria then was. [We recall that Necho had left a large garrison there three years previously. No doubt this was a constant irritation to Babylon.] When Necho understood the intention of the king of Babylon, that this expedition was made against him, he did not despise the attempt; but made haste with a great band of men to the Euphrates, to defend himself from Nebuchadnezzar. And when they had joined battle he was beaten, and lost many thousands of his soldiers. So the king of Babylon passed over the Euphrates, and took all Syria as far as Pelusium, *excepting Judea*."

i. Pelusium is at the northeast corner of Egypt, and southwest of Judea. Josephus says that Nebuchadnezzar did not touch Jerusalem at this time, but passed it by. Nebuchadnezzar was not yet really "king of Babylon," but was acting as general of his father's army. It was at Pelusium that he heard of his father's death. The following from "McClintock & Strong's Cyclopedia" is to the point:

j. "A few years later, he was placed at the head of a Babylonian army, and sent by his father, who was now old and infirm, to chastise the insolence of Pharaoh-Necho, king of Egypt. This prince had recently invaded Syria, defeated Josiah, king of Judah, at Megiddo, and reduced the whole tract from Egypt to Carchemish on the upper Euphrates, which in the partition of the Assyrian territories on the destruction of Nineveh had been assigned to Babylon. Necho had held possession of these countries for about three years, when Nebuchadnezzar led an army against him, defeated him at Carchemish in a great battle, recovered Coele-Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine, took Jerusalem [Josephus says he PASSED BY JUDEA on this trip, and to that the Scriptures agree], pressed forward to Egypt, and was engaged in that country or upon its borders when intelligence arrived which recalled him hastily to Babylon. Nabopolassar, after reigning twenty-one years, had died, and the throne was vacant; or, as there is some reason to think, Nebuchadnezzar, since he appeared to be the 'king of Babylon' to the Jews, had really been associated with his father. In some alarm, however, about the succession, he hurried back to the capital, accompanied only by his light troops; and crossing the desert, probably by way of Tadmor, or Palmyra, reached Babylon before any disturbance had arisen and entered peaceably on his kingdom."

k. The above authority dates this as 604 B. C., but it is easily proved that the correct date must have been 624 B. C.

l. In the Scripture there is no mention of Nebuchadnezzar's taking Jerusalem prior to 617 B. C., when Jehoiakim surrendered the city and was himself slain and thrown over the walls. Josephus says a threat of Nebuchadnezzar so frightened Jehoiakim (in 620 B. C.) that he consented to pay tribute, and continued to do so for three years.

m. Note an interesting sidelight here. The Rechabites had been living in tents to the north of Judea. When Nebuchadnezzar followed Necho, taking over Syria and northern Palestine, the Rechabites would be in the line of march of the two armies. They became fearful and hurried to Jerusalem for safety. "But it came to pass, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go up to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians: so we dwell at Jerusalem." (Jeremiah 35:11) Jerusalem had not then been taken by Nebuchadnezzar, as is easily seen by verse 17, which tells of a punishment yet to come.

f Date of Jeremiah's prophecy of 36:1-8, which B. C. 623 Baruch read in the temple, and later before King Jehoiakim, who burned it.—Jeremiah 36:9-32.

g a. Jehoiakim begins to pay tribute to Nebuchadnezzar, and continues it for three years (until to 618 617 B. C.)—2 Kings 24:1; Daniel 1:1.

b. It is evident that Jehoiakim could not have become tributary to Nebuchadnezzar in the first year of Jehoiakim. Pharaoh-Necho still controlled Jerusalem to some extent, for he had set Jehoiakim upon his throne; and it was not until three years later that he was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. We quote again from Josephus, "Antiquities," Book 10, Chapter 6:

c. "But when Nebuchadnezzar had already reigned four years [therefore in his fifth year], which was the eighth year of Jehoiakim's government over the Hebrews [Note how this harmonizes with Jeremiah 25:1; if Jehoiakim's fourth year were Nebuchadnezzar's first year, Jehoiakim's eighth year would be Nebuchadnezzar's fifth year. See chart], the king of Babylon made an expedition with mighty forces against the Jews, and required tribute of Jehoiakim; threatening upon his refusal to make war against him. He was affrighted at this threatening, and bought his peace with money; and brought the tribute he was ordered *three years*. But on the third year [actually the eleventh year of Jehoiakim's reign], upon hearing that the king of Babylon made an expedition against the Egyptians, he did not bring his tribute; yet he was disappointed in his hope; for the Egyptians durst not fight at that time."

h a. Eleventh year of Jehoiakim. Jehoiakim refuses to continue to pay tribute to Nebuchadnezzar.—B. C. 617 2 Kings 24:1.

b. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and took it in the eighth year of his (Nebuchadnezzar's) reign. (2 Kings 24:11, 12) Carried many captives to Babylon, including all the princes.—Verse 14.

c. Death of Jehoiakim.—2 Chronicles 36:6; Jeremiah 22:18, 19; 36:30.

d. Jehoiachin (also called Jeconiah) appointed king by Nebuchadnezzar, three months later deposed by Nebuchadnezzar, and together with his mother, wives, and princes of the land, and much treasure and many vessels of the temple, taken to Babylon.—2 Kings 24:10-16.

e. Nebuchadnezzar appoints the uncle of Jehoiachin, Mattaniah (later known as Zedekiah), as king over Jerusalem.—2 Kings 24:17, 20.

f. The captives taken to Babylon at this time included all the princes and nobles of the land, among whom were Ezekiel and probably Daniel and his three companions.—Ezekiel 1:2; Daniel 1:1-3.

g. This must have been considered an important date, as all of Ezekiel's dates are based upon it.—Ezekiel 1:2; 40:1, etc.

h. Josephus in the same chapter before quoted says:

i. "A little time afterward, the king of Babylon made an expedition against Jehoiakim; who received him into the city, and this out of fear of the foregoing predictions of Jeremiah, as supposing he should suffer nothing that was terrible; because he neither shut the gates, nor fought against him. Yet when he was come into the city, he did not observe the covenants he had made; but he slew such as were in the flower of their age, and such as were of the greatest dignity; together with their king, Jehoiakim, whom he commanded to be thrown before the walls, without any burial [Compare Jeremiah 22:18,19], and made his son Jehoiachin king of the country, and of the city; he also took the principal persons in dignity for captives, three thousand in number, and led them away to Babylon, among whom was the prophet Ezekiel, who was then but young [though in his twenty-fifth year, Ezekiel 1:1,2]. And this was the end of King Jehoiakim, when he had lived thirty-six years and reigned eleven. But he was succeeded in the kingdom by Jehoiachin. . . . He reigned three months and ten days."

j. There is no Scriptural record of any prisoners or temple vessels being taken to Babylon prior to this date, 617 B. C. Daniel 1:1 (which refers to "the third year of Jehoiakim") could not refer to the third year after Jehoiakim began to reign, but rather to the third year of his vassalage, for it was then he refused to pay tribute; for Nebuchadnezzar was not king of Babylon at that time, as already shown. (See B. C. 624 i.; 606 c, d, e; 605 j.)

k. Josephus adds another interesting item, "Antiquities," Book 10, Chapter 7:

l. "After the king of Babylon had given the kingdom to Jehoiachin, he repented of what he had done; fearing lest he might excite a revolt, to revenge the death of his father. [A footnote adds that Nebuchadnezzar heard that Jehoiachin had already entered into a confederacy with the king of Egypt, as his successor (Zedekiah) did, and therefore sent an army against him, in the very beginning of his reign.] He therefore sent an army, and besieged Jehoiachin in Jerusalem. Because he was of a gentle and just disposition, he did not desire to see the city endangered on his account; but took his mother, and kindred, and delivered them to the commanders sent by the king of Babylon, and accepted of their oaths, that neither should they nor the city suffer any harm. This agreement, however, was not observed for a single year; for the king of Babylon gave orders to his generals to take all that were in the city captives; both the youth and the handicraft men, and bring them bound to him; their number was 10,832; as also Jehoiachin, and his mother and friends. And when these were brought to him, he kept them in custody, and appointed Jehoiachin's uncle, Zedekiah, to be king; and made him take an oath that he would certainly keep the kingdom for him, and make no innovation, nor have any league of friendship with the Egyptians [which oath Zedekiah broke and which the Prophet declared was the direct cause why God sent Nebuchadnezzar later to overthrow him.—Ezekiel 17:11-21]."

i a. Date of the false prophecy of Hananiah and B. C. 613 of Jeremiah's reply, as recorded in Jeremiah 28:1-17.

b. Also the year that Jeremiah wrote a letter to those captives already in Babylon who had been disturbed by Hananiah's false prophecy, that they should not expect to return for fully seventy years.—Jeremiah 29:1-32.

c. Jeremiah sent this letter by Seraiah, who doubtless accompanied Elasah and Gemariah, special messengers of King Zedekiah to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, in the fourth year of the reign of Zedekiah. Compare Jeremiah 29:1-3 with 51:59-63.

d. In this letter is the second prophecy of the seventy years, and this was seven years before the final overthrow of Jerusalem at the beginning of the seventy years of desolation in 606 B. C. Compare Jeremiah 29:10 with 51:59.

j a. The fifth year of the captivity of Ezekiel and B. C. 612 Jehoiachin.—Ezekiel 1:2.

b. The thirtieth year mentioned in Verse 1 doubtless refers to Ezekiel's age. This would make him twenty-five at the time of his captivity, and thirty at the time he saw the vision, the age at which a priest might enter upon the priestly work. In Verse 3 he claims to be a priest, and he could not enter the priesthood under thirty.

k Sixth year of his captivity, date of vision recorded in Ezekiel 8.

l Seventh year of his captivity. Ezekiel received the instructions recorded in chapter 20.

m a. Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon.—2 Chronicles 36:13.

b. Nebuchadnezzar begins the siege of Jerusalem, about November or December.—2 Kings 25:1; Jeremiah 39:1; 52:4; Ezekiel 24:1,2.

n a. Tenth year of Zedekiah, eighteenth year of B. C. 607 Nebuchadnezzar.—Jeremiah 32:1,2.

b. Tenth year of the captivity of Ezekiel, and date of the message from the Lord as recorded in Ezekiel 29.

o a. Eleventh year of Zedekiah, nineteenth year of B. C. 606 Nebuchadnezzar.—2 Kings 25:2,8; Jer. 52:5,12.

b. Jerusalem taken, and destroyed: the walls broken down; all the palaces destroyed: the temple burned—about July, after eighteen months' siege (See 608b).—2 Kings 25:4,9,10; 2 Chronicles 36:18,19; Psalms 74:6-8; 79:1-7; Jeremiah 52:13.

c. Beginning of the seventy years of "desolation" of the land; for the inhabitants were all removed, with the exception of a few who fled to Egypt some months later. There was nothing left in the land or the cities, "to fulfil the word of the Lord . . . until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths, . . . to fulfil threescore and ten [seventy] years."—2 Chronicles 36:21; Leviticus 26:33-35.

d. The remainder of the gold and silver vessels of the temple, and the brass pillars of the court were also taken to Babylon. Judea became a desert, without an inhabitant.—2 Chronicles 36:18; 2 Kings 25:13-17.

e. Zedekiah's sons were slain before his eyes; and then his own eyes were put out and he was carried to Babylon, where he died, but never saw it. Thus a double prophecy was fulfilled. See Jeremiah 32:4,5; 34:3; Ezekiel 12:13.

f. Gedaliah appointed by Nebuchadnezzar as governor over the few hundreds left in the land. He was soon murdered; and the rest fled to Egypt, taking Jeremiah and Baruch with them.—Jeremiah 39:7 to 43:13.

g. The whole land of Palestine was not desolated, but that part usually known as Judea, comprising approximately that portion originally given to Judah and Benjamin. The Samaritans continued to live in their land during the entire seventy years. See later note.

h. Eleventh year of the captivity; date of Ezekiel's prophecy of chapter 31.

p a. Date of Ezekiel's prophecy as recorded in B. C. 605 chapters 32 and 33. See 37:1; 33:21.

b. Let us here consider a few scriptures which apparently contradict each other. 2 Kings 24:8 gives the age of Jehoiachin as eighteen years, and 2 Chronicles 36:9 gives it as eight. One is evidently an error by some copyist. (See note on page 53 of Volume II, SCRIPTURE STUDIES.) This is not very important and does not affect chronology

In the least. There are a few others which have bothered historians, though they do not affect the chronological chain either; for the entire period is otherwise covered. But they are interesting; and as some have been inclined to stumble over them we will notice them briefly.

c. Daniel 1:1 reads: "In the *third* year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it." In the margin of many of the Oxford Bibles the date of this is given as 607 B. C., and the seventy years captivity is supposed to have begun the next year, 606 B. C. (See reference opposite Verse 2) 2 Kings 24:1 is often quoted to support this calculation.

d. A careful reading of 2 Kings 24:1-4 will show that it does not state that Nebuchadnezzar "came up" to Jerusalem. The Hebrew word here rendered "came up" is rendered seventy-eight different ways in the King James version. It is the word *alah*. The Lord used bands of the Chaldees, and of the Syrians, of the Moabites, and of the children of Ammon to harass Jehoiakim, no doubt at the command of Nebuchadnezzar; for Jehoiakim paid tribute to Nebuchadnezzar for relief.

e. Jeremiah 25:1 informs us that the *fourth* year of Jehoiakim was the *first* year of Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah 46:2 corroborates that statement. All the connecting dates between Nebuchadnezzar and Jehoiakim and Zedekiah fall into line, as already shown. These all show that Nebuchadnezzar could not have taken Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim; for he did not defeat Pharaoh-Necho until the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Therefore some other explanation of the statement of Daniel 1:1 must be found. Possibly some copyist has made a mistake; and as it was not a connecting link in the chronological chain, God did not see fit to have it corrected, but left us sufficient evidence to cover the entire period without this. However, Daniel was writing from Babylon, and being high in official position, possibly even copying from the Babylonian records as to dates, might have referred to this as the third year of Jehoiakim as being under King Nebuchadnezzar, which we have found to be the case. This third year of vassalage was the eleventh year of his reign, and was the date that Daniel 1:2 was fulfilled.

f. Another text is Daniel 2:1, which reads: "And in the *second* year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar," etc., he had his wonderful dream together with some exciting experiences for the wise men of his realm, as related in the second chapter. Verse 1, if given its usual interpretation that this was actually the second year that Nebuchadnezzar had been king, will not harmonize with Daniel 1:5, 18. Notice the inconsistency.

g. Suppose the first year of Nebuchadnezzar to be the year that Daniel and his companions reached Babylon, and that Nebuchadnezzar immediately gave the instructions as recorded in Daniel 1:5. If the king had his dream in his *second* year, it must have occurred while Daniel and his companions were still at school. The latter part of the chapter says that Nebuchadnezzar was so impressed with the interpretation of the dream, and the evident favor of God with Daniel, that he "fell upon his face and worshiped Daniel. . . . Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon. Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king."

h. If all this occurred in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar, then Daniel and his companions must still have had a year to attend school before they had their examination as

told in Daniel 1:18. Does this look reasonable? Again, if Daniel were but twelve years of age when he went to Babylon, he would be but fourteen at this time. Would a king of Nebuchadnezzar's ability place a boy of fourteen over the affairs of the province of Babylon, and make him chief of all his wise men? Would the king fall down and worship a boy of fourteen? Even if Daniel were twenty years old when he went to Babylon, as some suppose, he would be but twenty-two, altogether too young for such a position.

i. We suggest the two following solutions, either of which would not be unreasonable, and would not be out of harmony with other scriptures:

j. A critical reading of Daniel 1:1-3 does not demand the conclusion that what follows must have followed immediately. It is simply a prelude or introduction. Then follows an account of what occurred some time after they reached Babylon: Nebuchadnezzar instructed Ashpenaz to select some of the well-born children, preferably from among the king's seed and princes, that they might be sent to school for three years. At the end of that time they were examined by the king himself, and found to be far above the average. No mention is made of any honor being bestowed upon them at that time. They drop out of sight for a while. In the meantime Nebuchadnezzar had taken and destroyed Jerusalem (606 B. C.) and brought many more captives to Babylon, and the remainder of the temple vessels. The treatment of these Hebrew captives by the heathen king of Babylon has been a subject of comment. They had many liberties, dwelt in communities by themselves, and were permitted to have laws of their own; their religious services were not interfered with particularly; and the men were often exempt from military service. Apparently there must have been some influence at court exerted on their behalf.

k. God could as easily arrange for that as he did for the children of Israel through Joseph over 1700 years before. Again he used a king by giving him a dream. The wise men of the kingdom were called upon to tell the dream and the interpretation. Because they could not, orders went forth that all the wise men should be slain. This must have caused great consternation and wide publicity; just the end desired by Jehovah. Daniel and his companions, recognized as wise men, were to be slain also (Daniel 1:20; 2:13). Because Daniel was used of God to reveal and interpret the dream, he was immediately honored by the king with high official position and would be able to exert a great influence for good on behalf of his brethren, the Hebrew captives, as would also Daniel's three companions, who held high positions in the kingdom. Any suggestion from Daniel would therefore be given careful consideration by the king. Thus did God honor his loyal servants, and protect his covenant people; and also manifest his supervision over the affairs of the world, and cause even the heathen kings to bow to him.

l. In what year did all this take place? This date is not necessary to establish chronological connection, for that is fully covered elsewhere; but it is interesting, and should be found in harmony with other scriptures. If 606 B. C. were the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, as we have already found, 605 B. C. would be his twentieth year. The book of Daniel is written partly in Hebrew, partly in Aramaic. The Aramaic in many respects closely resembles the Arabic. In the Arabic the cypher is but a dot, like our period. Thus ten would be written with the figure for one followed by a dot, twenty by two and the dot; as for example, 1. for 10 and 2. for 20. It would be very easy for a copyist to overlook the dot, especially if his original were somewhat worn. Not noticing the dot he would write it as for two instead of twenty.

m. However, the following appeals to us as the more reasonable: We note by the chart that the twentieth year of Nebuchadnezzar synchronizes with his second year as world monarch. As long as Jehovah had a representative on a throne, in the typical kings of Israel (1 Chronicles 29:23), Nebuchadnezzar could not technically be said to be absolute monarch, as stated in Daniel 2:37, 38. With the fall of Zedekiah, the last typical king, Nebuchadnezzar's rule would become absolute. The book of Daniel was doubtless written long after the occurrence of the events; and his mind would naturally associate the rule of Nebuchadnezzar with the time he became the world monarch, and the typical kingdom of God was no more. In this sense the expression, "the second year of the reign [*malekuth*, dominion, empire] of Nebuchadnezzar," would be altogether proper, and in no way contradict the record of Kings, Chronicles, and Jeremiah. Daniel would be at least twenty-four years of age, even if taken captive at the age of twelve. This would be young enough for one to occupy so high a position of honor and trust, especially if appointed by Jehovah, although through the king. Joseph was thirty years old, and so was David, when exalted. We would not be surprised to learn later that Daniel was also thirty years of age when exalted. It would seem more in harmony with God's general method.

n. Instances in modern history are in line:

o. William I of Germany became king of Prussia, the largest state of the German empire, in January, 1861. He became the emperor of Germany in January, 1871. Thus his *first year as emperor* would be his *eleventh year as king*. The expression, "The second year of the dominion of William I," would be correct, though it would be actually his twelfth year as king. The word used by Daniel, *malekuth*, has more the meaning of empire or dominion, and is rendered "reign" 21 times, and "kingdom" 49 times; whereas the word more generally translated "reign" is *malak*, meaning "to be a king," and is used 284 times. Daniel 2:1 would be more properly rendered: "In the second year of the empire of Nebuchadnezzar," etc.

p. A similar case is that of Victoria, queen of England. She became queen in 1837, but did not become empress until the year 1877. Her first year as empress would be her forty-first as queen.

q. Already acknowledged as a wise man before Nebuchadnezzar's second campaign against Jerusalem in 606 B. C., Daniel no doubt knew not only the king, but many prominent men of the kingdom and generals of the army. He must have known of the letter Jeremiah had written in 613 B. C. to those captives who had been taken to Babylon in 617 B. C. When Nebuchadnezzar started for Jerusalem what would be more reasonable than for Daniel to tell him of Jeremiah's prophecy that he would take the city? It requires no stretch of imagination to read between the lines how, therefore, Nebuchadnezzar would be much interested in a prophet who had foretold his victory, and who was also a friend of Daniel. What more reasonable than that he should give special orders that Jeremiah be found and well treated? Zedekiah had left Jeremiah in the court of the prison, and it was there that Nebuchadnezzar's generals found him. What more reasonable ground as a basis for the solicitude of the victorious king for a poor captive, as recorded in Jeremiah 39:11-14, and the explanation of the captain in 40:2-4?

q a. Date of Ezekiel's vision of the Temple, as B. C. 592 recorded in chapters 40 to 48.

b. Ezekiel connects the *twenty-fifth* year of his captivity with the *fourteenth* year of the city's destruction, thus showing the synchronization of the two dates, which

is in full harmony with all previous dates mentioned. This will be easily noticed by reference to the chart.—Ezek. 40:1.

r The latest date mentioned by Ezekiel. He foretells that Babylon shall have Egypt for wages for taking Tyre.—Ezekiel 29:17 to 30:26.

s a. The thirty-seventh year of the captivity of B. C. 580 Jehoiachin.—Jeremiah 52:31; 2 Kings 25:27-30.

b. From the above texts it is easily inferred that this was the first year of Evil-Merodach, son of Nebuchadnezzar, hence that Nebuchadnezzar had died that year or the year before. This would make the reign of Nebuchadnezzar about forty-four or forty-five years—625 to 580 or 581 B. C. (instead of from 606 B. C. to 563 B. C., as given by most historians).

t If Belshazzar reigned for seventeen years before B. C. 555 the fall of Babylon in 538, this would be the first year of Belshazzar, and also the date of Daniel's vision as recorded in Daniel 7. However, this date is not material to the chronological line.

u On the above basis this would be the third year B. C. 553 of Belshazzar, and the date of Daniel's vision as recorded in chapter 8.

v a. The last year of Belshazzar; the great feast, B. C. 538 the handwriting on the wall, and Daniel's interpretation.—Daniel 5.

b. The fall of Babylon to the Medes and Persians, under Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian, and the beginning of the second universal empire.

c. It was some time after the "first year of Darius," probably 537 B. C., that Daniel had the visit of the angel, as recorded in chapter 9.

w a. First year of Cyrus, king of Persia. Apparently B. C. 536 Darius had died, and Cyrus became sole monarch of the dual empire.

b. Close of the seventy years "desolation of the land."

c. Return of nearly 50,000 of the more zealous of the Jews to Jerusalem, with permission from Cyrus to rebuild the temple. (This should not be confounded with the permission given to Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of the city. That was given in 454 B. C., eighty-two years later.—Daniel 9:25.) The returning Jews found their land vacant, their houses unoccupied, and their cities still without inhabitant. They could move in immediately. The last of the Jews had left Judea about our July or August, 606 B. C. The returning Jews reached Judea about the fourth month, our July or August, 536 B. C. Thus the land had been desolate the full seventy years. By the seventh month they had been able to get their houses cleaned and sufficiently settled that they could assemble at the ruins of Jerusalem to hold the Day of Atonement sacrifices. Thus by October they "gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem [from the various cities where they had resettled]—to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses." See Leviticus 16:29 and Ezra 3:1-7. Jerusalem would be a heap of ruins, but it was sacred to every Jewish heart.

d. Another text has been somewhat of a puzzle to some. Jeremiah 52:30 mentions Nebuchadnezzar as taking some more Jews to Babylon in his twenty-third year. Where did he find any more Jews, if the land had been denuded in his nineteenth year? Note the following from Josephus, "Antiquities," Book 10, Chapter 9:

e. "Accordingly both the people, and Johanan, disobeyed

the counsel of God, which he gave by the prophet, and removed into Egypt, and carried Jeremiah and Baruch along with them. While they were there, God signified to the prophet that the king of Babylon was about making an expedition against the Egyptians; and commanded him to foretell to the people that Egypt should be taken, and that the king of Babylon should slay some of them and take others captive, and bring them to Babylon; which things came to pass accordingly. For on the fifth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, which was the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, he made an expedition against Coele-Syria; and when he had possessed himself of it, he made war against the Ammonites and the Moabites; and when he had brought all these nations under his subjection, he fell upon Egypt, in order to overthrow it. And he slew the king that then reigned, and set up another; and took those Jews that were captives, and led them away to Babylon. And such was the end of the nation of the Hebrews, it having gone twice beyond Euphrates. For the people of the ten tribes were carried out of Samaria by the Assyrians, in the days of King Hoshea. After which the people of the two tribes, that remained after Jerusalem was taken, were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon and Chaldea. Now as to Shalmaneser, he removed the Israelites out of their country, and placed therein the nation of the Cuthians; who had formerly belonged to the interior of Persia and Media; but were then called Samaritans, by taking the name of the country to which they were removed. But the king of Babylon, who brought out the two tribes, *placed no other nation in their country.* By which means all *Judea, and Jerusalem, and the Temple, continued to be a desert for 70 years.*"

x Rebuilding of the temple begun, though it was not completed for nearly fifteen years.—Ezra 3: 8; 6: 15.

y a. Third year of Cyrus.
b. Date of Daniel's last recorded vision (Daniel 10: 1) He was doubtless at least ninety-five years of age at this time. How much longer he lived we have no present means of knowing. Cyrus reigned for several years after, and we may feel certain that he would see that Daniel was well cared for.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

²⁶A little study of the chart, together with the Scripture citations and the quotations, will show how simple the whole matter is, when properly located. The date of references given in Jeremiah and Ezekiel may be quickly ascertained by looking at the chart, under the names of the various persons mentioned. Thus the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar is seen to be 617 B. C.; the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity is 612 B. C. Just find the person named, the year of his reign, prophecy or captivity; and follow the vertical line down to the lower line of dates. It would also be interesting to use a Bible atlas in connection with the study, and thus locate the various places mentioned.

²⁷We are not called upon to harmonize these with the tangled records of secular history. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Timothy 3: 16, 17.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

- Has a knowledge of chronology always been necessary to salvation? Why is it now being made plain? ¶ 1, 2, 8.
How were historical events usually recorded, up to about the year 600 B. C.? ¶ 3.
What exception is there, and where is that record found? ¶ 4.
What has been the problem of historians? What do they try to do now? Are they altogether reliable? ¶ 5.
How may all difficulty be avoided? ¶ 6, 7.
Between what dates do historians have the greatest difficulty? Why? ¶ 9, 10.
Who were the Babylonian kings from 625 to 538 B. C. according to "McClintock & Strong's Cyclopedia"? ¶ 11, 12.
Does the Bible agree with this in respect to Nebuchadnezzar's reign? ¶ 13.
When did Jeremiah utter his first prophecy of the seventy years' desolation of the land? When did it become effective? What other captivity is recorded? ¶ 14.
Did God evidently have the church in mind when these things were recorded? ¶ 15-19.
What period of time does the accompanying chart cover? ¶ 20.
What event is definitely located in both Jewish and secular history? ¶ 21.
Should secular history be resorted to for correcting supposed Bible errors? With what event in Jewish history did the land become desolate? ¶ 22.
What event took place in Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year, and in Zedekiah's eleventh year? ¶ 23.
How are Jeremiah 52: 28, 29 and 32: 1 harmonized with Jeremiah 52: 12 and 2 Kings 24: 12? ¶ 24, 25.

CITATIONS AND QUOTATIONS

- How is the year 646 B. C. marked? 641 B. C.? 629 B. C.? What events took place in 628 B. C.? ¶ 62 a, b, c.
When did Josiah die? Who succeeded him? ¶ 62 d.
Who was Pharaoh-Necho? Are Syria and Assyria the same? ¶ 62 e.
Carchemish was captured by whom? Three years later it was taken by whom? ¶ 62 f, g, h.
What other proof have we that this was in 625 B. C.? ¶ 62 i, j, k.
Name three items of interest for 624 B. C. ¶ 62 a, b, c.
What took place in the twenty-third year of Jeremiah's office? ¶ 62 d, e, f.
What does Josephus say about Carchemish? ¶ 62 g, h.
In what two important statements is "McClintock & Strong's Cyclopedia" in error? ¶ 62 i to m.
When did Jeremiah write his prophecy of chapter 36: 1-8? ¶ 62 j.
When did Jehoiakim begin to pay tribute to Nebuchadnezzar? In what year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign was it? ¶ 62 o, b, c.
When did Jehoiakim refuse to pay tribute to Nebuchadnezzar? ¶ 61 a, b.
Who succeeded Jehoiakim? Whom did Nebuchadnezzar appoint king of Judah? ¶ 61 d, e.
Who were taken captive to Babylon at this time? ¶ 61 f.
Is this an important date from Ezekiel's standpoint? ¶ 61 g.
What does Josephus say about the expedition against Jehoiakim? ¶ 61 h, i.
Are there any scriptures showing that prisoners or temple vessels were taken to Babylon prior to 617 B. C.? What is the evident meaning of Daniel 1: 1? ¶ 61 j.
What does Josephus record relative to this time? ¶ 61 k, l.
What are the items of interest taking place in 613 B. C.? ¶ 61 a, b, c.
When did Jeremiah give his second prophecy of the seventy years' desolation? ¶ 61 d.
The "thirtieth year" of Ezekiel 1: 1 refers to what? ¶ 61 e.
What are the notable events of 611, 610, 608 and 607 B. C.? ¶ 61 f.
When was Jerusalem destroyed? When did the seventy years of desolation commence? ¶ 60 a to g.
Does the eleventh year of the captivity synchronize with the first year of the desolation? ¶ 60 h.
When did Ezekiel write chapters 32 and 33 of his prophecy? ¶ 60 i.
How may we harmonize some apparently contradictory statements of Scripture? ¶ 60 j to q.
What year did Ezekiel write his vision of the Temple? ¶ 59 a.
Is it important to see that the twenty-fifth year of Ezekiel's captivity (when he was fifty years of age) is the fourteenth year of the desolation of the land of Judea? ¶ 59 b.
What are some of the transpiring events of 590, 580, 555, 553, and 538 B. C.? ¶ 59 c.
What is the date of the first year of Cyrus? The "desolation of the land" ended in what year? ¶ 53 a, b.
What did Cyrus now do? About what time in the year did the Jews reach Jerusalem? ¶ 36 e.
What light does Josephus throw on Jeremiah 52: 30? ¶ 53 d, e.
In what year did the Jews begin rebuilding the temple? ¶ 53 f.
In what year did Daniel write his last recorded vision? ¶ 53 g.
A little study of the chart will reveal what fact? ¶ 26.
Are we called upon to harmonize the tangled records of secular history? ¶ 27.

How beautiful the feet
Upon the mountains bringing
Good news—glad tidings sweet;
That publish wide salvation
To every tongue and nation!

How beautiful the feet
Upon the mountains springing,
In joy our King to greet;
O Zion! Thy God reigneth,
And Satan's kingdom waneth.

PRAYER-MEETING TEXT COMMENTS

TEXT FOR AUGUST 1

"The fruit of the spirit is . . . peace."—Galatians 5:22.

ONE of the titles given our Lord is the Prince of Peace. The body members must be transformed into his likeness. These must come to the point of possessing the peace of the Master. When Jesus was speaking to his disciples shortly before his departure he said: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27) Thus he defines the peace that the Christian must possess.

One has "peace with God" when his complete consecration to the Lord has been accepted and Jehovah has justified him freely. Then there is reconciliation between God and the one thus consecrating, which reconciliation is based upon the merit of Christ Jesus' blood. Begotten now as a new creature in Christ, he begins to develop the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding." (Philippians 4:7) This peace is one of the fruits of the spirit. None can possess it save those who are begotten of the holy spirit. The peace of God means a calm, restful condition of mind and heart resulting from full confidence in the Lord and his promises. A Christian necessarily must come in contact with the world and with imperfect brethren. He must of necessity be surrounded by trials and tribulations, strife and turmoil. But he who really loves God and confidently abides in the love of the Lord will not be disturbed by these outward trials. Nothing can shake his faith in the Lord, nothing can disturb his peace of mind and heart; for he is trusting in the Lord.

In proportion as one grows in the likeness of the Lord, in that same proportion will he possess the peace of God and increase in that peace to the point of absolute rest in him. Such peace of God results from the holy spirit operating upon the mind; but in order for the spirit thus to operate upon the mind the mind must be kept upon things pertaining to the Lord and his arrangement. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." (Isaiah 26:3) It is vitally essential, therefore, to the Christian that he keep in mind the exceeding great and precious promises given to him by the heavenly Father; and relying upon these, he develops a trust and confidence and rest in the Lord which bring to him great peace. With confidence he can know that, notwithstanding he is surrounded upon every side by enemies, he shall not be overwhelmed. "For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed."—Isaiah 50:7.

This fruit or grace of the spirit is the result of growing in the likeness of the Lord, putting on love. Hence the Apostle admonishes: "Above all . . . things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." (Colossians 3:14,15) Brethren

should see to it not only that they have the peace with God, but that they dwell together in peace and enjoy the peace of God, without which none shall see his face.—Hebrews 12:14.

TEXT FOR AUGUST 8

"The fruit of the spirit is . . . longsuffering and gentleness."—Galatians 5:22.

FRUITS of the spirit are not developed suddenly. They are not of a mushroom growth, but of a gradual development. Among the precious fruits of the spirit the Apostle names long-suffering and gentleness. Both of these are really the outgrowth of love, the fruit of the spirit. In analyzing love St. Paul says that it is long-suffering and kind. To be long-suffering means to be slow to anger, cheerfully enduring a wrong or injustice without complaining against it. Many Christians are misunderstood. In fact, being misunderstood is a part of the Christian's suffering. Being misunderstood often results in injustice being heaped upon one. Since the Lord has promised that all things shall work together for good to those who are called according to his purpose and who love him, it seems quite reasonable that many of these trials which bring suffering upon the brethren are for the very purpose of permitting such a one to develop the fruit of the spirit; namely, long-suffering, resulting in fortitude. Only love can prompt one to be long-suffering; hence only the spirit of the Lord can develop this trait of character.

Gentleness means a quiet and refined manner, the very opposite of harshness, a tenderness toward others, a peaceful attitude toward those with whom we come in contact. One in the world may have an outward manifestation of gentleness; but when the crucial test comes, the gentleness will disappear. True gentleness like unto Christ can be possessed and manifested only by those who have his spirit and who are permitting that spirit of love to dwell in them richly. This comes by filling the mind with the precious promises of the Lord and by striving to copy the character likeness of the Lord as manifested in his Word. It is love that prompts one to suffer an injustice and yet be kind to the wrong-doer. It requires suffering under such conditions to enable one to grow gentle. It would be absolutely impossible for one to develop and manifest the fruit of gentleness without some adversity; hence when adversity comes one should rejoice, because it leads to the development of this attribute of character.

The perfect quality of gentleness is manifested by Jehovah and his beloved Son Christ Jesus. After King David had been delivered out of the hand of his enemies, he extolled and magnified the Lord Jehovah and recounted the many goodnesses that God had bestowed upon him, and then added: "Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation; and thy gentleness hath multiplied me [made me great]." (2 Samuel 22:36) He who would be like the Lord must permit long-suffering to develop in him that kind and gentle disposition like unto his Head.

"The rich glow spreads. Great Fashioner divine,
Who sparest not, in thy far-seeing plan,
The blows that shape the character of man,
Or fire that makes him yield to touch of thine.
Strike on, then, if thou wilt! For thou alone
Canst rightly test the temper of our will,
Or tell how these base metals may fulfil
Thy purpose—making all our life thine own.

"Only we do beseech thee, let the pain
Of fiery ordeals through which we go
Shed all around us such a warmth and glow,
Such cheerful showers of sparks in golden rain,
That hard hearts may be melted, cold hearts fired,
And callous hearts be taught to feel and see
That discipline is more to be desired
Than all the ease that keeps us back from thee."

MARY MAGDALENE

—AUGUST 5—THE GOSPELS—

GRATITUDE FOR DEMON DELIVERANCE—ULTIMATE RELEASE FOR ALL FROM DEMONS—MARY'S WARM DEVOTION HONORED.

"Our soul hath waited for Jehovah: he is our help and our shield."—Psalm 33:20.

OUR study today is of Mary Magdalene, the most prominent of the band of women associated with our Lord's life and ministry. Evidently the name Mary was very common in the Israel of our Lord's day; there are at least five mentioned in the New Testament. There is some uncertainty as to the origin of the name Magdalene by which this notable woman, so faithful to the Lord, was distinguished from her sisters in service. Perhaps she was from Magdala of Galilee. With the exception of Judas who came from Judea, all the apostles and all the women who were associated with the Lord's ministry were from Galilee. Mary Magdalene is earliest introduced into the Gospels by Luke, when he relates his account of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. (Luke 8:2) When he mentions her name, he at once tells that Jesus had cast seven demons out of her—a significance in number which probably indicates a very bad case of demoniacal possession.

²Mary Magdalene's name has been much misused. Tradition has fixed her as the woman of the city, of Luke 7:37; and homes for penitent fallen women have long been and still are styled "Magdalene homes," and the women themselves are designated by Mary's name. There is no foundation for the assumption, however; and, if it really mattered, it would be true to say that Mary's name has in this respect been much hurt by the slander. We must not think of Mary as a sinful woman before the Lord delivered her, but as of a highly-strung temperament, one whose senses were much keener than ordinary. Lacking restraint she had fallen into a state of mental unbalance, and had been seized by some of the many demons who in our Lord's day roamed about seeking places wherein they might dwell.

³Those who have this temperament, which is found more frequently among women than men, are much more subject to attack by demons and more liable to be brought under their influence than are those of a duller mind. When spirit obsession is rife, as was the case at our Lord's first advent, and is now at the time of the second advent, all persons of highly-strung temperament are made the objective of demons, and are oftentimes their sport. Those of the Lord's people who are of such temperament should pay especial heed that they be not caught in this trap of the devil. A naturally sharp mind receives certain suggestions; and if there is lack of balance, that is, if there is not sufficient meditation as to their relative values, a measure of conceit is apt to obtain a foothold; and this, in turn, makes more room for the evil spirit to entrench itself in the mind. When once a person has allowed his mind to be held at the disposal of thoughts which may be suggested, it is very difficult to close it to demoniacal influence.

⁴Mary, quick-witted, sharp, and evidently with a good deal of natural energy, had given place to an evil spirit; and at last her mind had become the possession of at least seven of them. The unfortunate woman would be distracted by warring thoughts; for the demons would certainly not agree except in the fact of retaining possession of her mind. How Mary came in contact with Jesus we are not told. Perhaps it was a piteous appeal made to the Lord which brought her deliverance, or it may have been his pitying observation of her need. However it happened, after her deliverance she was ever his loving devoted follower, faithful to him in her life, and to him in his death.

GRATITUDE FOR DEMON DELIVERANCE

⁵The ministry of Jesus in Galilee is usually conceived as pictorial representation depicts it: Jesus, the Teacher, leading a company of twelve men about the cities and villages. But that is true only in part, as this record shows. When Luke first mentions Mary Magdalene it is to tell of her and some other women as accompanying Jesus and the apostles when he began his second tour in Galilee. Each of these women had been blessed of the Lord by being delivered from demoniacal influences, though all had not been so much under that dread power as Mary. They went with him out of gratitude for what he had done for them. Evidently some of them had a measure of wealth; for "they ministered to him of their substance." One was the wife of Herod's steward. They were ready to share the difficulties of such unusual service as well as its joys.

⁶This notable service is mentioned directly only by Luke, though Matthew and Mark refer to it. (Luke 8:2,3; Matthew 27:55,56; Mark 15:40,41) By this means were met many of the needs of Jesus and the disciples during that important and strenuous time. When Jesus sent out the apostles, and afterwards the seventy, two by two, they were told to make no provision for food; for, he said, "the laborer is worthy of his hire." But it was a very different matter for thirteen men to appear in a village than for two to do so. Two men might easily be hospitably entertained, but our Lord's company not so easily; and from all we know of him we would judge that he would be much more likely to provide for his own than expect the villagers to provide for him.

⁷We know that the company had a treasurer, Judas, who carried the bag, and who sometimes stole what was in it. (John 12:6) It was, then, of God's providence that these devout women thus ministered to Jesus and to the disciples that as far as possible their temporal needs could be met, and that the work of the Lord might go on without hindrance. God always did, and always will, provide for his ministry. Jesus never sought his sustenance from those to whom he ministered. He never took up a collection, either during the course of his ministry in a city or village, or when his mission was over. To whatever place he went he went to give.

⁸If the question be asked: Why did Jesus permit women who had been subject to demoniacal obsession to travel about with him, we answer that he accepted the service for its value; these women could and would give the best and quickest service for the needs of the apostles whom he took with him. It is the nervous temperament which does the most work in the world. That temperament acts quickest and most frequently, and is the most serviceable in the interests of the kingdom of heaven. God's true servants are never phlegmatic nor lethargic. Also, the Lord permitted the service for love's sake. He knew that those who sacrifice of their substance or time or ability are those who make most progress in the will of God. Happy are those who can combine these sacrifices. Also, our Lord accepted the service of these noble and self-sacrificing women, formerly troubled by evil spirits, for the same reason that he took Matthew the publican into the company of the apostles: He wanted to show his compassion and love for these who, like the publicans, had been under the power of sin, but

had been more directly under the control of Satan than they. He came to save his people from their sins, and to deliver them from the bondage of the devil.—Luke 13:16.

⁹Demoniacal power, particularly in evidence at the first advent, is without doubt one of the great factors in the present evil condition of humanity. There are those who deny that spirit obsession is a cause of lunacy; but there is abundant evidence to show that vast numbers of those who are unable to control themselves and are unfitted for freedom in human society are the subjects of demoniacal possession. But besides those who are subjects of demon power, there are many who appear to be partially so. Satan's purpose is to fight to retain possession of the mastery over human affairs, and part of his policy is to get full control of the human family. In this he is directly aided by those of the fallen angels who, though not absolutely under his control, ever seek to serve evil, and who with Satan are mutually pleased with evil to humanity and with all opposition to God. These do all they can to gain or to pervert the minds of men in order that the truths of God may find no lodgment there.

¹⁰The close association with Jesus which these women enjoyed in the fellowship which their service afforded proves that their deliverance from demoniacal bondage was complete. Many who have been in that bondage are tempted to believe that they cannot get real freedom. Their former evil controllers seek to return; and Satan uses these attempts to make believe the deliverance is not absolute, even as he tempts the Lord's people to believe that because they are *tempted* to old sins they have neither full justification nor full deliverance from the dominion of Satan. The power of the Lord is supreme over all that of the enemy, and he whom Christ makes free is free indeed.—John 8:36.

¹¹The Vow should be taken and kept; but probably direct service, where it can be undertaken, is one of the best means of keeping the mastery over the power of evil whether of Satan or of the demons. In the company of Jesus there is always safety.

¹²In permitting these women to give their loving service Jesus was not training women to be missionaries. They were with him to serve in the material things; but, without doubt, they helped his mission. It was not customary for women and men to go about together. Indeed, it is on record that the disciples were surprised when they saw Jesus conversing at the well with the woman of Samaria. (John 4:27) There was no familiarity. The women were modest, the men were earnest, and all were very busy in their Master's service. These were brave women, both enduring a measure of hardship, and certainly sharing in the contempt poured upon Jesus and the apostles by the leaders of Israel. It is almost certain that their good was evilly spoken of. Such ministry for the Lord could obtain only under the special circumstances. But there has been and is now amongst women devoted to the Lord much of similar service. To enable their husbands to give time and care to the Lord's work many noble women make great sacrifices of what might be properly considered their rights and claims upon their husbands for time and attention. The Lord is not unmindful of such service of love, and will surely reward it.

¹³Mary Magdalene and Jesus' mother and a few other faithful women were on Calvary when Jesus was crucified. For a time they stood afar off; then they came near till, at the end, they were close to the cross and could hear Jesus speak. (Matthew 27:55,56; John 19:25-27) When the body was buried, they watched where it was placed (Mark 15:47); and when the great stone was rolled into its place and Joseph had gone away, Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" stayed on, sitting over against the sepul-

chre. (Matthew 27:61) They were loath to leave even the body of their beloved Master.

¹⁴To Mary was given the great favor to be the first to see Jesus after his resurrection, the first to hear him speak or to speak to him, and the first to be charged with a message from him. On the morning after the sabbath she and the other women went very early to the tomb, before daylight had broken. They found the tomb empty, and Mary immediately ran to tell Peter and John. Later when the two apostles had gone away, the angels spoke to the women and bade them carry a message to the disciples. The other women went away, puzzled by what they saw and heard; but Mary lingered on. Perhaps she was not so ready to believe this strange message as she might have been, but her words and actions reveal a wonderful depth of love and devotion. She believed that her beloved Master was dead; yet the tomb was empty. Of that fact she had satisfied herself; for she had gone beyond the others and had peered into it. When the gardener, as she supposed, questioned her why she was weeping, she said: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." (John 20:13) She did not understand that it was her Lord to whom she spoke.

¹⁵Though we are not told why our Lord first manifested himself to Mary, we may very readily and properly say that her favor came as a reward for her devotion. And her love for Jesus must have arisen out of love for God; for that is the source of all true love. We have already noted that the women who ministered to Jesus were privileged to that service not because they were called to it, but because their loving devotion caused them to offer it. Those have most of the joy of the Lord who are most ready and willing to serve, and whose heart's devotion is in their service. It is by readiness of heart that one most quickly perceives the privilege of service. There may be service for the Lord which has considerable amount of joy in the actual serving; but where this is done by a very willing mind and out of a loving heart, the joy is greatest, and the firstfruits of God's blessings are received.

¹⁶Jesus' first act of ministry after his resurrection was that of healing the broken heart of a devoted follower and wiping her tears of sorrow away, a beautiful symbol of the ministry of healing of him who is now exalted to be a Prince and a Savior.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

- Who was Mary Magdalene? For what was Galilee noted? ¶1.
- How has her name been much misused? Was she evidently a good woman? ¶2.
- What is the susceptibility of high-strung people? What should be their special lines of precaution? ¶3.
- How did Mary demonstrate her gratitude for Jesus' kindness to her? ¶4.
- Were there other women obsessed? How are they brought to our attention? ¶5.
- How were the needs of Jesus and his disciples evidently cared for? ¶6.
- In God's providence how did he provide? Was Jesus a Giver or a Receiver? ¶7.
- What are the advantages of a nervous temperament? Are those who are prompted by love for service the ones who make the best progress? ¶8.
- Are there evidences of demoniacal possession now, as at the first advent? ¶9.
- Is it possible to have complete freedom from demon possession now? How are the people of God discouraged by Satan and the demons? ¶10.
- What are three means which we have of safety from demon possession? ¶11.
- Did these women give evidence of having noble, self-sacrificing characters? Are there women devoted to the Lord in a similar way today? ¶12.
- Where was Mary Magdalene when Jesus was crucified? When he died? When buried? ¶13.
- Who was the first to see Jesus after his resurrection? What was the special favor bestowed upon Mary? ¶14.
- What is the probable reason that Jesus first manifested himself to Mary? Why did the women serve? What class have most of the joy of the Lord? ¶15.
- What was Jesus' first act of ministry after his resurrection? ¶16.

MARY AND MARTHA

—AUGUST 12—THE GOSPELS—

BOTH TRULY DEVOTED, BUT DIFFERENTLY MANIFESTED IT—LAZARUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD—LOVE AND AVARICE IN CONTRAST.

"Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken from her."—Luke 10:42.

THE position of Martha and Mary of Bethany among the great men and women of the New Testament is assured to them because they have so prominent a place in the picture of our Lord's life. Each of fine character, they were made great by God's great favor. Wherever the story of our Lord's life is known, the home in Bethany is always remembered in tender association with him. How the sisters and their brother Lazarus came into Jesus' life we may not know. It may have been that Lazarus had heard Jesus teaching in Jerusalem; or perhaps the sisters themselves had heard the Lord, and Martha had invited him to her house, which was about two miles out of Jerusalem. It is almost certain that Martha's hospitality was the immediate link. Both sisters were of those who waited for the hope of Israel, or Jesus could not have become their familiar friend.

²Jerusalem had no home for Jesus: for Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea were not bold enough to take him as their friend; nor is there any record of that city's ever providing rest or refreshment for the Son of God. Jesus on his visits to Jerusalem would sleep at night on the Mount of Olives (Luke 22:39), or perhaps sometimes at Bethany. We know of only three occasions when Jesus was in the home in Bethany. The first and perhaps best known is recorded by Luke (Ch. 10:38-42), when Martha invited Jesus, but through over-anxiety to serve spoke rebukingly to him. The other two occasions are recorded by John. (Chapters 11 to 12:8) But the first suggests an intimacy already existing; evidently Jesus was "at home" with the sisters and was not merely a guest.

³These glimpses into our Lord's life are very pleasing; for we know that there could be but few occasions when he could rest and feel at home as in the bosom of a loved family. And it would be a great pleasure to him to have the quiet fellowship which now and again the home in Bethany afforded. Though it was Martha's hospitality which gave Jesus this advantage, without doubt both Mary and Lazarus were as desirous of having him as she was. Each would have done what Martha did, because they all loved him. The family had its reward; for the story of Martha and Mary of Bethany, and of Lazarus their brother, is a part of human history, and has entered into the divine plan.

TRUE DEVOTION DIFFERENTLY MANIFESTED

⁴Without doubt the Lord used his friends for his ministry, as well as that he used them in it. Martha and Mary, so different in characteristics and temperament, are not brought into Luke's Gospel narrative to give interest, but for the instruction of the Lord's people, to show how to discriminate in the use of the ordinary things of life. Both women loved the Lord, but Martha with all her desire to serve did not so truly apprehend our Lord's desire as did Mary. The event proved that Mary, more meditative, served him more acceptably; for in a truer perception of the privilege of having the Lord she used the occasion so as to enable him to teach her and to impart something of his spirit. It was such Jesus sought. The service which Martha gave the Lord was more like that of the women who went with Jesus and the apostles to minister to them, while Mary's was more like that of the apostles—learning of him in order to carry on his work. Both phases of service are necessary. Jesus, always ready to serve what he had to

dispense, and Mary more ready to feed her mind than her body, needed someone to look after their material interests. Neither teacher nor disciple could continue unless each had food for the body.

⁵Martha's initial mistake was in making too much of the occasion to serve, and in encumbering herself with much preparation. It was through this that she forgot herself; she rebuked the Lord, and also told him what he should do about Mary. Thus she intruded upon his ministry; for they themselves received him as a messenger of Jehovah. She was concerned with her hospitality more than with trying to discover what the Lord would really wish to have. Hostesses are often tempted to act as Martha did. Happy are they who in their hospitality to the saints can combine in true proportion both giving and receiving. If it be suggested that Mary might have been more thoughtful for Martha, the reply must be that Jesus gave no indication that Mary had lacked; and he told Martha that Mary should not be deprived of her portion of the feast which he, their guest, was providing. It was more important that an earnest disciple should be instructed than that Martha's elaborate meal should be prepared and eaten.

⁶The second mention of the sisters is when they were in great distress because their brother, Lazarus, was unexpectedly stricken with sickness and death. (John 11:1-44) Immediately the seriousness of the sickness was discovered, the sisters sent a messenger to Jesus, then in Perea. It was an affectionate appeal which they sent: "Lord, . . . he whom thou lovest is sick." (John 11:3) Jesus did not at once respond. As if in explanation he said to his disciples: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." (John 11:4) After two days he said to the disciples: "Let us go into Judea again." They were doubtful about his going; for recently the people had attempted to stone him. But it was necessary that he should go. He said therefore: "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world" (John 11:9), as if he would tell them: "I must work while the daylight remains"; and, well knowing that no evil could befall him until his hour had come, he led his disciples to Bethany.

⁷Lazarus died four days before Jesus' arrival. The family was well known, and many of the Jews from Jerusalem were there to comfort the two sisters. Martha heard that Jesus was coming and went out to meet him. (John 11:30) Mary, apparently unaware of the Lord's approach, stayed in the house. On meeting Jesus Martha said: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (John 11:21), and added: "But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." (V. 22) Jesus said: "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha said that she knew he would rise in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus replied that the power of resurrection was in him; and though he did not plainly say so, he intimated that he could even then restore the corrupting body and give back her brother. Martha declared her faith that he was the Christ, the Son of God, but left him to tell Mary that the Master had come and was calling for her.

⁸Jesus was still where Martha had met him. Mary hurried to him, and falling at his feet, said as Martha had done: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." (V. 32) It was not reproach that they expressed,

but a realization of how different things would have been had he been present. Mary was weeping, and those who followed her were weeping; and Jesus groaned in spirit, and was troubled. Upon his enquiring where Lazarus was laid, they led him to the tomb. Jesus wept. Again groaning within himself he approached the grave. He commanded that the stone which covered it be taken away. Martha, now the hesitant, said: "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days." (V. 39) Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said: "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me." (V. 41) He spoke aloud to his Father, and thanked him for hearing him. Then, in that confidence he cried with a loud voice: "Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin." Jesus said: "Loose him, and let him go."—Verses 43, 44.

⁹This was the greatest miracle of Jesus' life. It was wrought as with the special coöperation of his Father; and clearly it was arranged, even as Jesus intimated when he said: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." (V. 4) On two previous occasions Jesus had resuscitated the dead. He had raised the young daughter of Jairus, and the young man of Nain. But a greater miracle was necessary. God foresaw that Satan would corrupt the truths of the gospel. He knew that a false church would proclaim that the resurrection of Jesus was the reunion of "soul" and body, for a short time separated. Hence this miracle, which as a revivification of a body, is greater than that of the supposed revivification of the body of Jesus. If resurrection is only reunion of the body and the soul, then in no way had Jesus the preëminence, nor was he the first to be raised from the dead. (Acts 26:23) The record of this miracle ought to have prevented acceptance of the creedal teaching concerning Jesus' resurrection. The Scriptures never declare a resurrection of the body, either of Jesus or of any other.

¹⁰This miracle therefore was for God's purposes, for his glory, and for the manifestation of the power of his Son, as well as for the guidance of the church. Upon whomsoever the choice would fall to be the subject of this greatest of all miracles in the ministry of Jesus, he and his family would of necessity be brought into much prominence. No outsider could be honored. The favor fell upon the one family that gave Jesus a home, and Martha and Mary and Lazarus were thus favored to suffer for the glory of God.

¹¹There are many instructive features in this wonderful story. It tells in symbol of the glorious deliverance from death of those who are therein bound, and who after the stone of the present kingdom of Satan's dominion is rolled away will, at the word of command, come forth to their loved ones, to be loosed into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (Romans 8:21) But one lesson stands out prominently—that not all suffering which comes upon the friends of Jesus is intended as chastisement, nor of necessity as trial out of which lessons are to be gained. Some sufferings are indeed for our perfecting; but some are for the benefit of others, and some are specially for God's purposes. God has the right to use his own for his glory; and this he does. Satan often brings the Lord's people into sharp temptation; for either in or after a sharp experience there is a sense of not having learned any special lesson by it. Let the Lord's people remember that this Bethany experience was not specially for lessons for Lazarus or for his sisters. It was for the glory of God. The chief lesson is that of trust in God. "Faith can firmly trust him, come what may."

¹²The third incident related of the home in Bethany is

when Jesus arrived there on his last visit to Jerusalem. He had come up with the throng that was making its way to the Passover feast; and he stayed in Bethany, and almost certainly at the Bethany home. Martha made a supper and also served. Lazarus sat at the table with Jesus. While supper was on, the account reads, "then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment." (John 12:3) This was an act of loving devotion, ever to be on record wherever the gospel of the kingdom is preached.

¹³Mary's alabaster box of ointment serves as a text for many a sermon on using present opportunities of service rather than waiting till a loved one has gone: for a flower to cheer in life is better than one on a grave as a token of fond remembrance. But here Mary's loving action cannot be set in contrast with Martha's service, as is frequently done; for Martha was pouring out her ointment in loving service attending to the needs of their guest. We must look elsewhere for the lesson. Jesus said: "She hath done this for my burial." He knew that a few days hence he would be killed, and would thus complete his work and his course. He graciously accepted Mary's offering as for his body in death—and thus gave her a part in the last possible service for him.

¹⁴May we not think that Mary already perceived that Jesus was approaching a crisis in his life? Perhaps her meditative mind discerned something of sadness in his manner. It is certain that Jesus had been showing a measure of aloofness; for on the road to Bethany he had walked apart from the disciples. (Luke 19:28) Mary desired to show her love her admiration, her sense of high appreciation; and so she took her precious little alabaster box and poured its fragrant ointment on him. Some of the disciples, probably led by Judas (for John specially mentions him), said that the action was wasteful and that the ointment could have been sold and the money given to the poor. Evidently some of them spoke to Mary of this, as if to say that her action was an intrusion as well as wasteful. But the Lord rebuked them. He said: "Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this."—John 12:7.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

Why are Martha and Mary among the great women of the Bible? What is the probable way they with their brother became acquainted with our Lord? ¶1.
What may be said to the shame of Jerusalem? Was Jesus always welcomed at Bethany? ¶2, 3.
Why are Martha and Mary brought into Luke's Gospel? What is the outshining characteristic of Mary's life? ¶4.
What was Martha's mistake? Are similar mistakes made today? Was Mary unmindful of Martha? What is the happy medium whereby both mind and body may be served? ¶5.
What was the occasion of the second mention of the Bethany family? Why were the disciples concerned about Jesus' returning? What did Jesus mean by saying, "Are there not twelve hours in a day?" ¶6.
What was the conversation between Jesus and Martha on his return? What is its meaning? ¶7.
Were the words of the sisters reproof to Jesus for not coming sooner? How was Jesus' sympathy shown? What was then done to the surprise of the mourning sisters and friends? ¶8.
What is the full import of this great miracle? Was the raising of Lazarus a resurrection or a resuscitation? Is a resurrection merely the reunion of "soul" and body? What should the record of this miracle have done, concerning the creeds? ¶9.
In what way was this miracle for the glory of God? Why was Lazarus the beneficiary? ¶10.
What does this narrative tell in a symbolical way? What is the outstanding lesson? ¶11.
What is the third mention of the Bethany family? What did Mary do? ¶12.
What lesson does Mary's alabaster box of ointment teach? Should the services of Mary and Martha be contrasted, as is usually done? ¶13.
Should we think that the fragrance of Mary's heart was greater and more precious than the ointment? What is the probable significance of: "Against the day of my burying hath she kept this"? ¶14, 13.

International Bible Students Association Classes

Lectures and Studies by Traveling Brethren

BROTHER T. E. BARKER

Otsego, Mich.	July 16	Battle Creek, Mich.	July 24
Marcellus, Mich.	" 17	Charlotte, Mich.	" 25
Niles, Mich.	" 18, 19	Lansing, Mich.	" 26
Three Rivers, Mich.	" 20	Sunfield, Mich.	" 27
Jackson, Mich.	" 22	Woodlawn, Mich.	" 28
Albion, Mich.	" 23	Grand Rapids, Mich.	" 29

BROTHER J. A. BOHNET

Dublin, Tex.	July 15	Cleburne, Tex.	July 23
Desdemona, Tex.	" 16	Egan, Tex.	" 24
Ranger, Tex.	" 17	Corsicana, Tex.	" 25
Eastland, Tex.	" 18	Teague, Tex.	" 26
Weatherford, Tex.	" 19, 20	Normangee, Tex.	" 27, 29
Fort Worth, Tex.	" 22	Waller, Tex.	" 28

BROTHER A. J. ESHLEMAN

Woonsocket, R. I.	July 18	North Duxbury, Mass.	July 25
Pawtucket, R. I.	" 19	Plymouth, Mass.	" 26
Attleboro, Mass.	" 20	Cotuit, Mass.	" 27
Taunton, Mass.	" 21	New Bedford, Mass.	" 28
Brockton, Mass.	" 22	Fall River, Mass.	" 30
Plympton, Mass.	" 24	Newport, R. I.	" 31

BROTHER A. M. GRAHAM

Assiniboia, Sask.	July 13-15	Harpree, Sask.	July 25, 26
Willows, Sask.	" 17	Khedive, Sask.	" 27, 29
Jozeville, Sask.	" 18, 19	Souris, Man.	" 31
Luella, Sask.	" 20, 22	Brandon, Man.	Aug. 1
Viceroy, Sask.	" 23, 24	Winnipeg, Man.	3-5

BROTHER M. L. HERR

Burlington, Wash.	July 12-17	Blaine, Wash.	July 23
Anacortes, Wash.	" 18	Vancouver, B. C.	" 24
Sedro Woolley, Wash.	" 19	Victoria, B. C.	" 25, 26
Bellingham, Wash.	" 18, 22	Seattle, Wash.	" 27
Everson, Wash.	" 19	Alvord Manor, Wash.	" 30
Lynden, Wash.	" 20	Port Townsend, Wash.	" 31

BROTHER W. M. HERSEE

Marigold, Sask.	July 16	Treherne, Man.	July 26, 27
Harpree, Sask.	" 18	Winnipeg, Man.	" 28
Khedive, Sask.	" 20	Ashern, Man.	" 30, 31
Brandon, Man.	" 22, 23	Camper, Man.	Aug. 1
Souris, Man.	" 24, 25	Winnipeg, Man.	" 3-5

BROTHER H. HOWLETT

Jamestown, N. Y.	July 12	Olean, N. Y.	July 18
Westfield, N. Y.	" 13	Franklinville, N. Y.	" 19
Clymer, N. Y.	" 14	Shinglehouse, Pa.	" 20, 22
Warren, Pa.	" 15	Bolivar, N. Y.	" 23
Onondaga, N. Y.	" 17	Allentown, N. Y.	" 24

BROTHER W. H. PICKERING

Kearney, Neb.	July 15	Cheyenne, Wyo.	July 24
Brady, Neb.	" 16	Laramie, Wyo.	" 25
North Platte, Neb.	" 17	Blackfoot, Ida.	" 27
Sidney, Neb.	" 18	Pocatella, Ida.	" 29
Alliance, Neb.	" 19	Twin Falls, Ida.	" 30
Casper, Wyo.	" 22	Buhl, Ida.	" 31

BROTHER G. R. POLLOCK

St. Johns, Kan.	July 16	Hardtner, Kan.	July 23
Hutchinson, Kan.	" 17	Alva, Okla.	" 24
Arlington, Kan.	" 18	Woodward, Okla.	" 25, 26
Pratt, Kan.	" 19	Shattuck, Okla.	" 27, 29
Cheney, Kan.	" 20	Roswell, N. M.	" 30
Wichita, Kan.	" 22	Barstow, Tex.	Aug. 1, 2

BROTHER B. M. RICE

Marquette, Mich.	July 16, 17	Kimberley, Minn.	July 26
Bruce's Crossing, Mich.	" 18	Altin, Minn.	" 27
Superior, Wis.	" 20, 22	Federal Dam, Minn.	" 29
Duluth, Minn.	" 22, 24	Boy River, Minn.	" 30
Two Harbors, Minn.	" 23	Barnum, Minn.	July 31, Aug. 1
Proctor, Minn.	" 25	Onamia, Minn.	" 2

BROTHER V. C. RICE

Watervliet, N. Y.	July 18	Greenwich, N. Y.	July 25
Troy, N. Y.	" 19	Port Edward, N. Y.	" 26
Mechanicsville, N. Y.	" 20	Glens Falls, N. Y.	" 27
Pownal, Vt.	" 21	Ticonderoga, N. Y.	" 29
Rutland, Vt.	" 23	Burlington, Vt.	" 30
Granville, N. Y.	" 24	Morrisville, Vt.	" 31

BROTHER C. ROBERTS

Auburn, Ind.	July 18	Erie, Pa.	July 25
Garrett, Ind.	" 19	Westfield, N. Y.	" 26
Tiffin, O.	" 21	Jamestown, N. Y.	" 27
Mansfield, O.	" 22	Buffalo, N. Y.	" 29
Sharon, Pa.	" 23	Tonawanda, N. Y.	" 30
Parrott, Pa.	" 24	Niagara Falls, N. Y.	" 31

BROTHER O. L. SULLIVAN

Power Point, O.	July 17	Fairmont, W. Va.	July 24
Seneca, O.	" 18	Clarksburg, W. Va.	" 25
Chester, W. Va.	" 19	Wallace, W. Va.	" 26
Bellairs, O.	" 20	Mohley, W. Va.	" 27
Wheeling, W. Va.	" 22	New Martinsville, W. Va.	" 29
Barton, W. Va.	" 23	Clarksburg, O.	" 30

BROTHER W. J. THORN

Luella, Sask.	July 17	Chaplin, Sask.	July 26, 27
Vantage, Sask.	" 18, 19	Moose Jaw, Sask.	" 29
Mazenod, Sask.	" 20, 22	Regina, Sask.	" 30, 31
Hodgeville, Sask.	" 23	Melville, Sask.	Aug. 1
Herbert, Sask.	" 24, 25	Yorkton, Sask.	" 3, 5

BROTHER T. H. THORNTON

Trenton, Ont.	July 20	Toronto, Ont.	July 27-29
Toronto, Ont.	" 21	Beamsville, Ont.	" 30
Oshawa, Ont.	" 23	St. Catharines, Ont.	" 31
Port Perry, Ont.	" 24	Niagara Falls, Ont.	Aug. 1, 2
Stouffville, Ont.	" 25	Hamilton, Ont.	" 3, 5

PRAYER-MEETING TEXTS FOR AUGUST

AUGUST 1:	"The fruit of the spirit is . . . peace."—Galatians 5: 22.
AUGUST 8:	"The fruit of the spirit is . . . long-suffering and gentleness."—Galatians 5: 22.
AUGUST 15:	"The fruit of the spirit is . . . goodness and faith."—Galatians 5: 22.
AUGUST 22:	"The fruit of the spirit is . . . meekness and temperance."—Galatians 5: 22.
AUGUST 29:	"Be renewed in the spirit of your mind."—Eph. 4: 23.

HYMNS FOR AUGUST

Sunday	5 235	12 290	19 253	26 60
Monday	6 57	13 216	20 55	27 38
Tuesday	7 327	14 81	21 32	28 280
Wednesday	1 305	8 189	15 201	22 332
Thursday	2 11	9 137	16 236	23 113
Friday	3 230	10 202	17 267	24 329
Saturday	4 88	11 266	18 297	25 25

CONVENTIONS

Preparations are being made on a large scale for a six-day convention at Tacoma, Washington, beginning August 14, and ending the evening of August 19 with a well-advertised public meeting in the Stadium. Immediately preceding this convention will be a series of conventions in Canada, beginning with Toronto, July 27-29; Winnipeg, August 3-5; Saskatoon, August 8-10; and Edmonton, August 10-12.

An eight-day convention will be held at Los Angeles, California, August 19 to 26, inclusive. Space will not permit us in this issue to give a detailed announcement, but in the next issue of THE WATCH TOWER we hope to give further details concerning these conventions.

It is contemplated that a special train will be run from Chicago, taking in practically all of these conventions and other local conventions on the way. We make the announcement now, that friends so desiring may arrange their vacations so as to avail themselves of these conventions.