

Upon the earth 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 men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking them for fear and for looking to the things coming men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the fear and failing them for fear and for looking them for fear and failing them for fear and failing them for fear and for looking them for fear and failing them

THIS JOURNAL AND ITS SACRED MISSION

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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 linear 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 th

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.

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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.—I 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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Terms to the Lord's Poor: All Bible students who, by reason of old age or other infirmity or adversity, are unable to pay for this journal, will be supplied free if they send a postal card each May stating their case and requesting such provision. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our list continually and in touch with the Berean studies.

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HYMNS FOR DECEMBER 7 **16** 203 **23** 173 **30** 153 Sunday 2 42 9 **3** 202 **10** 219 **17** 154 **24** 141 31 181 Monday 82 11 188 **18** 185 **25** 16 Tuesday **5** 58 **12** 324 **19** 320 **26** 285 Wednesday 6 222 13 212 20 246 27 196 Thursday **7** 308 **14** 291 **21** .59 28 157 Friday Saturday 1 214 8 4 15 143 22 229

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The friends will please take notice of the change in the address of the Society's Canadian office. The Society now has a permament office at 38-40 Irwin Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. All communications concerning the Canadian work should be addressed there.

CONVENTION AT BOSTON

A three-day convention will be held in Boston, Mass., November 9, 10, 11. For further particulars address the Secretary, Alexander Ogston, 48 Wyllis Ave., Everett, Mass.

CONVENTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED BY BROTHER RUTHERFORD

Boston, Mass., Nov. 11-

Alexander Ogston, 48 Wyllis Ave., Everett, Mass.

Montreal, Que, Nov. 18
Leonard Kent, 297 Ninth Ave., Rosemount, Montreal.
Mansfield, Ohio, Nov. 25—
U. G. Hostetler, care of Colonial Printing Co., Mansfield, O.
Baltimore, Md., Dec. 2—
Chas. H. Anderson, 119 S. Calvert St., Baltimore, Md.

PRAYER-MEETING TEXTS FOR DECEMBER

December 5: "Ye, . . . as living stones, are built up a spiritual house."—1 Peter 2:5.

December 12: "To be spiritually minded is life."—Romans 8:6.

December 19: "It is raised a spiritual body."—1 Corinthians 15:44.

December 26: "The Lord is that Spirit." "We shall be like him."

-2 Corinthians 3:17; 1 John 3:2.

I.B.S.A. BEREAN BIBLE STUDIES

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THE AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

Vol. XLIV November 1, 1923 No. 21

CONVENTIONS

"Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations."-Isaiah 45: 20.

THOSE who are now the true followers of Christ Jesus were at one time of the world. They have escaped this world and its corrupting influences by and through the merit of Christ Jesus our Lord. (2 Peter 1:4) They have been translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. (Colossians 1:13) Having been adopted into the house of sons they have received the spirit of sonship. (Romans 8:15) They have been commissioned as ambassadors for Christ to bear the message of reconciliation to the world. (2 Corinthians 5:19,20) They have been commissioned to declare the day of God's vengeance upon the present evil world and to bear the message of peace and salvation to the peoples of earth and to tell those of nominal Zion that the Lord has begun his reign,-Isaiah 61:1,2;52:7.

As members of the body of Christ these are members of his heavenly army, which under the leadership of their great Captain, Christ Jesus, now goes forth to judge and to make war. (Revelation 19:11-14: Psalm 149:5-9) Happy is their lot. Blessed among the creatures of God, they are engaged in the greatest campaign of all the ages. They are witnessing the old world crumbling into the dust; and continuing faithful to the end of their earthly journey they shall, with their Captain, participate in the establishment of the new world. Love is the motive that prompts all their actions, and as members of his house they are devoted to each other and to the Head of the house. They are commanded to admonish one another in this day as they press on in the campaign, saying, "Let not thine hand be slack." (Zephaniah 3:16) The Lord has put a sweet song into their mouths; and in harmonious cadences they sing: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." And they are commanded to "say among the nations that the Lord reigneth; the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously."—Psalm 96:10.

The prophet Isaiah seems to be speaking to this class of feet members of Christ, saying to them, "Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations. . . . Tell ye [to the peoples of Christendom] . . . Look unto me, and be ye saved, all

the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." In addition to fulfilling the terms of this great commission the members of the body are to build each other up on their most holy faith. (Jude 20) They are to encourage and exhort one another to faithfulness as the end of the journey approaches.—Hebrews 10:25.

Having, therefore, this commission and exhortation from the Lord, the consecrated Bible Students ever and anon assemble themselves together in convention. And so it has been recently. Remembering those who are by force of circumstances compelled to remain behind with the stuff, and knowing their heart's desire to share in the feast spread by the Lord for his people, The Watch Tower makes this brief report of a series of conventions recently held:

TORONTO

July 27-29, inclusive, a convention of the Bible Students was held at Toronto, Canada. The large t attendance of the consecrated was about 1,200. Brother C. J. Woodworth acted as chairman of the convention, which was addressed by Brothers Macmillan, Copeland, and a number of others. Sixty-seven brethren symbolized their consecration at this convention. On Sunday morning there was a consecration service of the children, conducted by Brother Rutherford, a large number being presented by their parents to the Lord in consecration. It is particularly happy that at this time, when the kingdom is being established, the consecrated are earnestly looking after the welfare of their children, presenting them to the Lord and beseeching him to give them heavenly wisdom in the education and guidance of their little ones. The parents owe an obligation to the children naturally, but especially do they owe an obligation to them now to instruct them in things pertaining to the kingdom. No greater heritage could be left a child by the parent than a knowledge of the divine plan to enable the child readily to receive the message of the King, and to go rapidly upon and over the highway of holiness.

In the afternoon Brother Rutherford addressed the convention upon the subject of loyalty to the Lord and to his cause. The hearts of all those present were drawn near together; and they fully realized and appreciated

the fact that they had escaped from the world, that they were separate and apart from earth's organization, that their citizenship is in heaven, and that they enjoyed the blessed privileges of being the ambassadors of the King, and the great privileges of proving their fidelity and loyalty to him.

In harmony with the commission granted to the church the friends had advertised a public meeting to be held at Pantages' Theatre in the evening, to be addressed by the President of the Society. This theatre has a seating capacity of 4,400 and long before the hour for opening the service the house was packed out, the doors locked and hundreds turned away. The audience gave rapt attention and showed a great interest in the subject discussed, namely, "Satan's Empire Falling-Millions Now Living Will Never Die." It was an opportunity to tell the people, and it was told to them, that Jehovah is God, that Christ is King and that the hope and salvation of the world must come through Messiah's kingdom now at hand. A great number of books were taken by the people. This concluded the convention; and the friends returned to their homes, happy and conscious of the fact that this had been a blessed season of fellowship together. Many were heard to say, and doubtless all said in their hearts: "It was good to be here."

WINNIPEG

The Winnipeg Convention of the Bible Students was held from August 3-5, inclusive. Brother C. A. Wise, was chairman of the convention. This convention was also addressed by Brothers Graham, Hersee, Salter, and others. Space here will not permit giving a synopsis of the discourses of the brethren; but without exception they were helpful, instructive, and encouraging. The testimony meetings showed how greatly the Lord's little ones assembled together are appreciating their privileges of service. One day was given over to service; and a large number engaged in activity, with splendid results. This also afforded an opportunity to invite others to the public meeting. Brother Rutherford arrived in Winnipeg on Sunday morning. After meeting the elders of the Winnipeg ecclesia and enjoying with them some sweet lellowship, he conducted a consecration service for the thildren, at which many parents presented their children anto the Lord. Without doubt these little ones, who can understand, will long remember the day when their parents presented them to the Lord. Sweet is the thought that this will be one of the treasure places in their memory chamber when their parents are forever with the Lord. The Lord has promised that when the report of the people is written up all shall know who were born in Zion; and these children will know whether or not their parents are in the heavenly phase of the kingdom. Calling to mind the fact that their fathers and mothers presented them to the Lord as children, will be a great blessing to them throughout the entire Millennial age. It is scarcely possible for the parents to realize what this consecration service may mean to their little ones.

In the afternoon Brother Rutherford addressed the convention on the privileges of serving the King and his kingdom and of faithfully representing his interests on earth. There were 1,105 of the consecrated present, all of whom gave testimony by their smiling countenances that they were rejoicing in the Lord.

The Winnipeg ecclesia had put forth an unusual effort to advertise the public meeting, which was held in the largest auditorium in the city, used as a public skatingrink. Without doubt it was attended by the greatest number that ever attended a religious meeting in Canada. A special sounding-board had been erected that made it possible for all the people to hear. The Winnipeg papers next morning announced that 10,000 were present; but we believe a conservative estimate would be a little less than 7,000. The people showed great interest in the fact that Satan's empire, which has so long oppressed mankind, is falling; and that there is a better day just ahead. Blessed is the privilege of the Lord's people assembling together and calling together the public to tell them that Jehovah is God, that Christ is King, that the kingdom has begun and that its blessings are at the door.

On Tuesday, August 7, a one-day convention was held at Moose Jaw; and on Wednesday, the 8th, a one-day convention at Regina. These conventions were addressed only by Brother Rutherford. The public meeting at each place was well attended; and splendid interest was manifested by those who came, notwithstanding the opposition that had been put forth by the clergy to keep people away.

SASKATOON

A three-days' convention was held at Saskatoon, August 8-10, inclusive. About 400 of the consecrated attended. It was a blessed season of fellowship together. Brother Johnson, Service Director, Columbus, O., attended this, as well as the Winnipeg convention and others mentioned herein, and assisted in the organization of the drives and the sale of the books. Many friends engaged for the first time in the service, greatly to their own joy. This convention was addressed by Brothers Wise, Hersee, Salter, Graham, and others.

Brother Rutherford addressed the convention in the afternoon of the 9th, and the public in the evening. The attendance numbered 1,400. At the conclusion of the public discourse an Episcopalian clergyman attempted to interfere and discredit what was said. But the audience almost unanimously put him to silence, thus indicating that the people are becoming somewhat tired of the nominal clergymen, who do not tell them the truth and who wish to interfere with their hearing the truth from others. Many of the Lord's dear saints traveled a long distance to this convention, coming across the prairies, at great sacrifice to themselves. It was a happy assembly, however, and all went away rejoicing.

EDMONTON

The same brethren who had addressed the conventions at Winnipeg and Saskatoon, attended and addressed the convention at Edmonton, August 10-12, inclusive. About 300 friends attended this convention, which was presided over by Brothers Wise and Williams. As at the other conventions the brethren had arranged for a special service day; and a large number who attended the convention went out in active field work, greatly to their own joy and upbuilding in the Lord. More and more they appreciate the privilege of telling the people concerning the King and his kingdom and of placing in their hands the food which the Lord has provided upon his table for those who love him and desire to know about him.

Brother Rutherford addressed the convention in the afternoon on Saturday, on the "Christian's Obligations unto the Lord." The friends were deeply impressed concerning their privileges and obligations, and many remarked that they felt strengthened to go forth again with renewed energy in the Lord's service. The public meeting was attended by about 1,400; they listened to the proofs concerning the fall of Satan's Empire and that millions now living will never die.

Without doubt the consecrated of Canada have never before been in such a happy, healthy spiritual state. They are zealous, united in heart and in action, cagerly pressing forward to serve the King and his kingdom.

Vancouver had no convention because of the convention that was to be held at Tacoma; nevertheless Vancouver arranged for one meeting addressed by Brother Rutherford, which was attended by about 550. The friends enjoyed a brief season of sweet fellowship together.

TACOMA

Without doubt the greatest convention of the consecrated that has ever been held in the Northwest was that held at Tacoma, Washington, August 14-19, inclusive. Brother Pickering presided over the convention, which was addressed also by Brothers Van Amburgh, Wise, Riemer, Herr, Baker, Salter, Horth, Nash, and others. The largest attendance of the consecrated was approximately 2,000. The entire six days were given over to discourses, praise, prayer and testimony meetings, except one day, Friday the 17th, which was devoted to service. A large number of the friends went with their automobiles to the country and canvassed the people, placing a great number of books with them. The report at the testimony meetings following the service day showed how greatly the friends who were engaged in this work were blessed.

A baptismal service was conducted during the convention, and forty-eight brethren symbolized their consecration. Brother Rutherford addressed the convention Friday evening on "Loyalty to the Lord and His Cause," and on Saturday afternoon on the subject of "The Virgins." A consecration service was conducted for the

children also on Saturday. On Sunday morning a question meeting was conducted by Brother Rutherford, in which much interest was manifested in the questions propounded and answered. This was indeed a happy convention, and it seems impossible to have a better one this side the vail. Everyone was rejoicing, having special joy in the fact that they are privileged to have some part in telling the peoples of earth that the King is present and his reign begun.

For the public meeting the Tacoma Stadium had been taken. At an expense of \$800 an electrical voice-amplfier had been installed by the Bell Telephone Compan. This enabled every person within a radius of a mile of the speaker to hear clearly everything that was said. The friends of the Northwest made an extraordina. v effort to advertise this public meeting. Announcement was made in seventy-eight different newspapers, including most of the newspapers in Washington state, many in Oregon, and Idaho, and some in British Columbia. The railroads granted special rates for the occasion. while street-cars issued passes to the people at a greatly reduced fare. In the ordinary course of events it would not be expected that a town so small in population as Tacoma should have such a large attendance at a religious meeting; but this was the exception. The meeting was held at 7:30 p. m., and long before the hour great streams of people were pouring into the Stadium. When Brother Rutherford began to address the audience fully 20,000 people were present in the Stadium.

The United States war fleet of twelve vessels, carrying 5,500 men, had anchored in the harbor on the previous Friday, and within a short distance of the Stadium. In testing the loud speaker on Saturday, the fleet was asked to signify whether or not they could hear the speaker; and they signaled that they could hear distinctly. On Sunday evening the audience in the Stadium was augmented by the men and officers of the fleet, and in addition to this great numbers were on the hillside and on the porches of their homes. Everyone within a mile could hear distinctly. It was estimated, therefore, that between twenty-five and thirty thousand heard the lecture.

Mayor Faucette presided. He is a man of eighty years of age; and when he learned that the President of the Society was to be present in Tacoma again he signified his desire to preside at the meeting and to welcome the people, as well as the speaker. A number of prominent lawyers and judges of the courts from Seattle and Tacoma attended, and had seats on the platform. The audience listened with rapt attention for one hour and a half to the subject: "All Nations Marching to Armageddon—but Millions Now Living Will Never Die."

It was a wonderfully impressive meeting. The consecrated brethren who attended this convention rejoiced specially in the fact that they had been permitted to have a part in telling the people concerning Jehovah and the Lord Jesus, the King of kings, and that his kingdom is present. The press showed a kindly interest in report-

ing the discourse; and within less than an hour after the meeting closed on Sunday night news-boys were scurrying through the streets, crying, "Full report of Judge Rutherford's lecture." The weather had been ideal up until the time of the lecture; within thirty minutes after it was concluded a heavy rain began to fall. The Lord seemed to hold back the showers until this outdoor meeting was concluded, thus manifesting his favor upon it.

This convention and public assembly, we believe, has made a great impression on the people in the Northwest concerning the Lord's kingdom now at hand.

A special car from Tacoma carried Brother Rutherford and party to Los Angeles, a stop of one day being made at Oakland, where a convention was held of the Bay Cities' classes addressed by many of the brethren who were aboard the train making the journey for Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES

The convention held at Los Angeles for eight days, August 18-26, inclusive, it was suggested, is an epochmaking one. Approximately 2,500 consecrated attended. Brother Sexton was chairman, Brother Pollock assistant chairman. The convention was addressed by Brothers Sexton, Pollock, Taliaferro, Howlett, Seklemian, Mc-Pherson, Anderson, Van Amburgh, Stark, Wise, Nash, Horth, Salter, Riemer, and others. One day of this convention was given over specially to service; and a great number of the friends engaged in the canvassing for the books, with splendid results. Space will not permit us to give a detailed statement of the many interesting experiences had by those who participated in the work.

Thursday afternoon Brother Rutherford addressed the convention on the subject of the "Wise and Foolish Virgins," emphasizing the fact that the distinguishing point between the two is this: The wise virgins enter fully into the joy of the Lord, while the foolish virgins do not possess that joy. We do not here attempt to set forth even the substance of this discourse; for it appeared in The Watch Tower of October 1st. Saturday afternoon Brother Rutherford addressed the Convention on the parable of the "Sheep and Goats", a full report of which appeared in the October 15th Watch Tower.

It seemed appropriate that this convention of the consecrated, as witnesses for the Lord, should give a clear expression of the proper attitude of a Christian at this time and aid, if possible, our brethren in Babylon to see their privileges of withdrawing and taking a firm and positive stand on behalf of the Lord. At the conclusion of Brother Rutherford's discourse he read and moved the adoption of a resolution expressing these views. The motion being seconded and the resolution discussed, it was practically unanimously adopted, a standing vote being taken. Everyone in the great audience stood, except two persons, one of these being a nominal preacher, who had evidently come in for the purpose of hearing what he could, who kept his seat and perspired pro-

fusely. The other was a secret service man, who was present taking notes and who of course was not interested in expressing his views of the resolution. The time seems to be appropriate to sound the alarm to the peoples of the earth who love the Lord and his Word, admonishing them to separate themselves from those who pretend to represent the Lord but who at the same time repudiate his Word. The resolution adopted is as follows:

RESOLUTION

We, the International Bible Students in general convention assembled, again declare our absolute faith in and allegiance to Jehovah God our Father and to his beloved Son, Christ Jesus, our Redeemer and King, and our absolute confidence in the Bible as God's inspired Word of Truth given to man for his guidance and instruction in righteousness.

As followers of our Lord who are diligently striving to be his true and faithful witnesses, we deem it our privilege and duty to call the attention of all peace and order loving peoples of all the nations to the deplorable conditions now existing in the world and to point them to Messiah's kingdom as the only remedy for national and individual ills.

We hold and declare that Jesus Christ organized his church in purity to represent him upon earth; that selfish and ambitious men, loving earthly honor and glory more than the approval of God, have brought in false doctrines destructive of faith in God and his Word; and that as a result there now exist in the various denominational churches two general classes, to wit:

First: Those who pretend to be Christians, but do not believe in the Bible as God's inspired Word of Truth, who repudiate the doctrines of the fall of man and his redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ, which class is made up of apostate clergymen and "the principal of their flocks," who are worldly men of strong financial and political influence, which class exercises the controlling influence and power in the denominational organizations; and

SECOND: That great multitude of peoples who claim to be Christians and who hold and believe the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, namely: That the Bible is the Word of God written under inspiration of the holy spirit; that the Lord Jesus came into the world to redeem man from sin and death; that he gave his life a ransom for mankind; that he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven and will come again and set up his kingdom, as he promised.

The class first above-mentioned are lovers of self, covetous, boasters, unthankful, unholy, fierce, despisers of those who strive to be good, heady, high-minded, having a form of godliness but denying the power therof, and who slander, misrepresent and persecute those who faithfully try to represent our Lord. (2 Timothy 3:1-5; Matthew 24:9; Mark 13:9) While claiming to be representatives of our Lord, they misrepresent him in this, to wit:

- (1) They have forsaken the Word of God, denied the fall of man and denied the Lord Jesus, by whose blood man must be redeemed.—Jude 4.
- (2) They have used the name Christian and the Christian religion as a cloak to hide their unrighteousness and to enable them to deceive the people, and have committed spiritual fornication by uniting church with political and financial power.—Jeremiah 2:21-24; Revelation 18:3.
- (3) While posing as the representatives of the Prince of Peace, they have prepared war, openly advised, encouraged, and advocated the same, and by appealing to the patriotism

of the people have induced them to engage in war; they have wrongfully preached the men into the trenches, caused them to fight and die, have filled the land with a host of widows and orphans, and thereby increased the sorrow and suffering of mankind.—Romans 13:9; Matthew 26:52; Hebrews 12:14; Galatians 6:10; Luke 3:14.

- (4) They have with selfish design invaded the schools, colleges, seminaries and universities with their God-dishonoring doctrines of higher criticism and evolution, have led the people into gross error and destroyed the faith of multitudes in the inspired Word of God.—Jeremiah 12:10,12;13:13,14;5:25,30;8:11;9:8,9.
- (5) They have spurned the true teachings of Jesus and the apostles, have scattered the flock of God, have produced a famine in the land for the hearing of the Word of the Lord, and have caused the hungry and thirsty to starve for spiritual food.—Amos 8:11; Psalm 107:4,5; Ezekiel 34:4-6.
- (6) They have hated the light and the bearers of the light (Matthew 5:14), refused to give meat to the hungry and drink to the thirsty Christian, turned away the stranger, failed to minister to the sick, persecuted and caused to be imprisoned honest and faithful Christians, resorted to deeds of violence against peaceable and order loving Christians, and "on their skirts is found the blood of the souls of poor innocents."—Jeremiah 2:34; Matthew 25:42,43.
- (7) They have wilfully repudiated and rejected the teachings of Jesus and the apostles concerning the Lord's second coming and the establishment of God's kingdom on earth for the blessing of the people, and have substituted therefor a man-made, Satan-directed League of Nations which they hail as the savior of mankind and as "the political expression of God's kingdom on earth," thus blaspheming his name and cause. They have taken counsel together against the Lord and his kingdom, which counsel Jehovah declares shall not stand.—Psalm 2:1-12; Isaiah 8:9, 10.

Furthermore, we hold and declare that of those described in the second class there is a multitude of the peace and order loving ones in the denominational churches, both Catholic and Protestant, who have held and yet hold to their faith, who have been kind and considerate with and respected the faith of their fellows regardless of creed or denomination, have fed the hungry and given drink to the thirsty, have taken in the stranger, clothed the naked, visited the sick and ministered to those wrongfully imprisoned, all in the name of our Lord; that these have hope in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ and its attendant blessings; and that for such the Lord has declared his love.—Matthew 25:34-40.

We point to the fact that God through his Word has declared his vengeance against all unrighteousness and particularly against the present evil order (Isaiah 34:1-4,8) that the Lord Jesus is now invisibly present judging the nations of earth; that the end of the world has come and the dashing to pieces of Satan's empire is in progress (Matthew 24:7-14); that all who willingly ally themselves with Satan and his organization shall suffer terrible punishment; that those espousing the righteous cause of the Lord and serving him shall pass through the trouble and receive boundless blessings (Zephaniah 2:2,3; Zechariah 13:8,9; Psalm 41:1,2); that the line of demarcation between the two classes of Christendom is clearly drawn, and that the time has come for the separation of those who prefer evil from those who love righteousness and desire the Lord's kingdom.

We, therefore, in the spirit of love sound the warning to all such peace and order loving and God-fearing ones who are associated with the denominational churches, and point them to the fact that they can have no part in nor fellowship with that class of pretending Christians who repudiate the Word of God and deny the Lord Jesus Christ and his

kingdom; and we call upon them to heed the Word of God and separate themselves from the unclean thing (2 Corinthians 6:17), to withdraw themselves from the unrighteous ecclesiastical systems designated by the Lord as "Babylon", and to "come out from her, lest they be partakers of her sins and receive of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4); and

We appeal to all such to recognize Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords, and that his kingdom now at hand is the hope and salvation of the peoples; and that they individually and collectively declare themselves on the side of the Lord and in sympathy with his cause, and be ready to receive the blessings of God's kingdom which he has prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

* * *

This resolution will be used as volunteer matter for this year, and will be issued shortly and sent to the classes in such numbers as each ecclesia can well and judiciously distribute. The purpose is, and will be, to give a wide witness of the truth through this resolution and we believe the friends everywhere will take hold of the work zealously.

PUBLIC LECTURE

For several weeks the friends of Los Angeles had put forth a strenuous effort to advertise the public meeting to be addressed by Brother Rutherford at the Coliseum. Banners were placed upon more than two hundred street-cars; and approximately two hundred automobiles belonging to the friends had banners on them for several days in advance. Streamers were stretched across the streets; billboards appeared throughout the city; 500,000 handcards were distributed; in addition to this, the press was freely used, as many as fifty-five newspapers making announcements of this meeting. Because no other hall had been adequate on previous occasions to accommodate the people who came to hear when Brother Rutherford lectured at Los Angeles, the recently completed Coliseum was engaged, with a seating capacity of 75,000. It was not expected that this immense building would be filled, of course; but it was expected that a large number would attend.

The street-car companies had been advised and had promised to furnish extra cars to transport the people to the Coliseum, which is some four miles from the center of the city. The meeting began at three o'clock. The Manager of the Coliseum drove through the city a little before three o'clock, and reported that there were more than ten thousand people in the streets clamoring for street-car accommodations, who were unable to get to the Coliseum at all. On every side of the Coliseum for many blocks automobiles were parked; and shortly before three o'clock there were by actual count 29,000 people in the Coliseum, with streams pouring in from every side. When the speaker began to address the audience, over 30,000 people were inside of the building; and it was estimated that from three to five thousand people were in their cars on the outside of the Coliseum.

The electrical voice-amplifier recently installed for President Harding was used by the speaker. This amplified the voice so well that every person in the great Coliseum, and those on the outside, could hear distinctly every word. The public address was preceded by a musical program, which was well received by the audience. For upwards of one hour and a half this great multitude listened with rapt attention to the discourse by the speaker on the subject, "All Nations Marching to Armageddon, but Millions Now Living Will Never Die."

Ever and anon the speaker's remarks were punctuated by a tremendous applause that rose from every part of the Coliseum, the great audience thus indicating its approval of the telling points made. So clearly was the voice transmitted over this amplifier that no one had difficulty in hearing; but the demonstration by the audience manifested that it took fully thirty seconds for the voice to travel from the speaker's stand to those farthest away in the Coliseum. Without doubt this was the greatest religious meeting ever held on the Pacific Coast, if not the greatest ever held in America. The interest was unusual. At the conclusion the speaker asked all the audience to indicate their respect for the Lord by silently standing while a prayer was offered. It was remarkable to see upwards of thirty thousands people standing in silence, and thus indicating their respect for the Lord and for his cause. Then they in a quiet and orderly manner withdrew, many of them carrying the books with them.

A total sale of books at this meeting and the drives was 6,563, notwithstanding that Los Angeles and vicinlty have been well canvassed.

In addition to this audience of over 30,000 people who heard direct, a microphone on the platform connected with a broadcasting station, broadcasted the lecture, which was heard by people in many other states as well as on ships at sea. It is difficult to estimate the size of the audience, including those who heard over the radio. Wonderful are the manifestations of the Lord's blessing upon the effort at this time in the closing days of the old order and the coming in of the new, to give witness to his kingdom. Blessed is the privilege of those who are permitted to assemble and tell out to the people that

Jehovah is God, that his King has been set upon his throne and reigns, and that millions of people on earth, obeying righteousness, shall live and never die. Surely there never has been a time in which God's people enjoyed such privileges of witnessing for the Lord and his blessed arrangement; and this, together with the fact that the King is here, should fill every consecrated heart with joy. Truly can everyone say: "How can I keep from singing!"

This convention and public assembly will go down in history as one of the happy occasions along the journey, in which God's people were permitted to give testimony in his behalf. Some of those present who, not emotionally inclined, viewed this great multitude listening to the truth, wept for joy. It was a happy time; yea, indeed a blessed time. All who were there who participated either directly or indirectly, gave testimony to the joy in their own hearts.

In no uncertain terms the speaker pointed out the combine of the commercial, political, and ecclesiastical powers of the earth for the purpose of controlling the people. It was to be expected, therefore, that the press owned by big business would try to minimize the meeting; and even so it was. The Los Angeles Examiner, owned by Mr. Hearst, gave a very reasonable report next morning; and the Los Angeles Record, which is owned and edited by men of liberal views, gave a splendid report. But the other press of the city, owned and controlled by big business, had received their instructions from higherups that no report was to be made. Notwithstanding the fact that this was the greatest religious assembly ever held on the Pacific Coast, it was treated by them almost with silence. The consecrated have reason to rejoice in this. We do not expect those who are arrayed against the Lord and his Anointed to receive with enthusiasm the kingdom or the announcement of the kingdom. May each one of the King's own take courage and press on, rejoicing in the fact that we are privileged to represent the King; that he who is for us is more powerful than all that can be against us; and that notwithstanding all efforts to retard his kingdom it is majestically marching on to certain and eternal victory.

"MIGHTY TO SAVE"

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, Garments all dripping and crimsoned with gore? Who is this that travels in power, Tempests about him and fire before?

"Who comes here with legions of angels, Cohorts of light, through the cloud-ridden sky? Who, this One, before whom the nations Tremble and falter, and weaken and die? "Hark! The rumbling thunder of armies, Cherub and seraph are urging them on. See! They clash! The light against darkness, Clearing the way for the kingdom to come.

"Lo! He comes whose right is to rule.

See! He stoops to rescue his own.

Look! He takes the 'rod' in his fury,

Hurls the usurper adown from the throne.

"Sing, ye heavens, with jubilant gladness; Earth, submit, to your Monarch's good will; Roar, O sea! Break, ye waves, in your madness. Listen, my soul, for his 'Peace, be still!'"

PRAYER-MEETING TEXT COMMENTS

TEXT FOR DECEMBER 5

"Ye, . . . as living stones, are built up a spiritual house."—1 Peter 2: 5, R. V.

ERE is another beautiful figure of speech. It pictures the Christ as a wonderful building, the handiwork of Jehovah God. The chief cornerstone of that marvelous spiritual structure is his beloved Son, Christ Jesus. There are 144,000 smaller stones, to be erected into the spiritual house. In the beginning these lesser stones were rough, and did not correspond to the chief cornerstone. The Lord graciously and lovingly provided for the chiseling, polishing, and preparation of the lesser stones, which when prepared will be noiselessly erected into the glorious building of which Solomon's temple was a type. That marvelous spiritual structure when completed will be the meeting place between God and man. It is God's organization and is spoken of as Zion, which God hath chosen for his habitation.'

As a condition precedent to being placed in this completed temple, each stone must be made in the likeness of the chief cornerstone; and this is accomplished by the process of transformation through the holy spirit. This transformation requires the coöperation of each member with the Lord, and also requires each one to be earnestly active and energetic, obedient, faithful and loyal. It requires a joyful performance of duty and obligation as laid upon one by the Lord as his representative and ambassador. To such the service of the Lord is a joy and a strength.

In proportion as each one has the spirit of the Master and appreciates his privilege, he puts forth an effort to serve the Lord and coöperate with him in announcing the kingdom, which will be the expression of God's will amongst men, restoring man to his condition of perfection and filling the earth with a happy, glorious race.

TEXT FOR DECEMBER 12

"To be spiritually minded is life and peace."— Romans 8:6.

HE new creature in Christ has had the promise of life everlasting upon the divine plane. Only the spirit-begotten anointed ones can have such a hope. The transformation of the new creature into the likeness of the Lord Jesus is a gradual process. The mind is the field of action; hence there is where the

transformation must take place. To be spiritually minded means to have a mind that can discern spiritual things. Such is an impossibility with the natural man. (1 Corinthians 2:14) At the time when one is begotten and anointed with the holy spirit, he begins to have an insight into spiritual things. The promise set before him then is life upon condition that he continue to be spiritually minded; that is to say, that he continue to have his mind occupied in searching out the precious things of God's Word and in striving to conform his life to the principles of righteousness announced by that Word.

That which is opposed to spiritual mindedness is the carnal mind. The latter means to have the mind occupied with things pertaining to the flesh, things that are selfish. For the new creature to follow in this course means spiritual sickness, and to continue therein leads to death. If the new creature would grow more and more into the likeness of our Lord, the Head of the new creation, that creature must occupy his mind with things that pertain to the kingdom of God, and must fashion his daily life in harmony with the righteous rules of God's kingdom. The business of the new creature is therefore the King's business. He must be concerned with the things that pertain to the Lord's kingdom. He will, therefore, occupy his mind by diligently considering how he may better qualify himself to represent the Lord, and will earnestly strive to faithfully represent the Lord both in word and in action. It therefore follows that such creature must be active in the Lord's service as opportunity is afforded, and that such service must be prompted by love out of a pure heart and be joyfully performed.

Love and joy are fruits of the spirit which develop in one who is spiritually minded and who continues faithfully in that course. The promise to him is sure and the reward is certain. Both the promise and the reward of glory held before him is an incentive to spiritual mindedness. The more the mind is centered upon the Lord and his kingdom the more rapid is the growth of the new creature. The mind thus centered upon the Lord reflects the Lord's image, so that others may see that such a one is walking with Jesus and learning of him. Spiritual mindedness, then, becomes a habit; and the growth of the new creature is steady and healthy. This growth in the Lord's due time reaches maturity; and then the Lord is pleased to grant unto such creature the great reward of life everlasting upon the divine plane. Precious is the promise! Wonderful is the reward!

"Thou must be true thyself,
If thou the truth wouldst teach;
Thy soul must overflow, if thou
Another's soul wouldst reach!
It needs the overflow of heart
To give the lips full speech.

"Think truly, and thy thoughts
Shall the world's famine feed;
Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed."

THE POWER OF THE EARLY CHURCH

——December 2——Acts 2:1—8:1—

EE CIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT—ONLY ONE PENTECOST NEEDED—DECEIVED BY "TONGUES" AND MIRACULOUS "GIFTS"—EARLYCHURCH ACTIVITY MANIFESTED NOW.

"Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."-Acts 2: 21.

THE day of Pentecost was the greatest single day in the history of the church. From one point of view it may be said to be the day on which the church was born; for it was the day on which the faithful followers of Jesus received together his great gift to the church, the gift of the holy spirit, which he himself had said was of more importance to them than his own human presence. By it the disciples were united in more than the common bond of similar experiences and hope. They were made one body, members of the body of Christ, and thus they became one in Christ Jesus. (John 17:21) The holy spirit, which Jesus had received of the Father for them (Acts 2:33), had many phases of service. The one mentioned particularly in today's lesson is that of power, certainly not the least of the phases of the life with which the disciples were then cariched.

²The latest hours of the Master's life had demonstrated how weak the disciples were when brought face to face with human authorities and, from a human point of view, how very unfitted they were for the work that was before them. But the gift of the holy spirit also demonstrated the power of that spirit to make weak men strong and fearful men courageous. Before, when danger threatened they had fled, each his own way. Now, we see them bound in a holy bond of faithful and courageous service to God, to their Lord, to each other, in the service for which they realized they had been called.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

³We inquire: What is the gift of this spirit which came upon the church at Pentecost, and which so changed the apostles? Clearly it was not merely courage, nor enthusiasm, nor that the apostles were quickened with a new desire to be busy with something, or to get something done; nor was it simply enlightenment, as if they then understood something which hitherto had been dark to them. All these qualities are included in the gift of the spirit; but neither any one nor all of them together is the spirit. The holy spirit is the power of God which quickens, enlightens, and guides the church; it is the life itself of which all the aforementioned are the qualities. The gift of the holy spirit, then, is superhuman, and was a clear addition to the apostles; it was something which the natural man could not attain unto under any circumstances whatever.

*Many a man has entered into urgent religious service or into foreign missionary work, who has been impelled by motives and by a spirit which have never been above the human plane. We venture to say that a large proportion of the work done by those who are highly honored in Christendom for their pioneer work as foreign missionaries has not been wrought under the power of the spirit of God so much as in and by the desires of a good and kindly nature with which has been combined a spirit of adventure. Consecration to a service, however ardently and devotedly that service may be followed up, does not prove quickening of the holy spirit, or that such a one has that which the apostles received at Pentecost.

⁵What Pentecost meant most of all to those who received its manifestation and its blessings was the significance that they were now of the anointed class. The first work of the holy spirit is the begetting to a new nature; it is, as it were, the seed of life which at last brings forth a new creation. Henceforth those who received it were new creatures in Christ Jesus. This is something very different from the

enduing of a company of men with extra or even extraordinary power for service.

6It seems very fitting that the gift of the holy spirit should come to the church on the day of Pentecost; for this day, the fiftieth after the offering of the wave sheaf of ears [heads] of corn [wheat], was that upon which two loaves, made of the newly harvested wheat were waved upon the high priest's hands before Jehovah. (Leviticus 23:15-17) The loaves were baked with leaven, which made the offering unusual; for leaven was a symbol of sin, and must not be associated with the offerings of the people. (Leviticus 23:6, 17) The wave offering at Passover on the sixteenth day of the first month of the newly ripened grain represented the resurrection of our Lord, the first of the ingatherings of Jehovah's harvest gathered out from the dead. The offering fifty days later of the two loaves baked with leaven represented the church presented to Jehovah, in the individual members of which was the leaven of corrupt human nature, although they were acceptable to Jehovah because they were accepted in his Son. The two loaves also indicate the fact that ultimately there are two classes disclosed in this one offering, one less faithful in their sacrificing and covenant than they might have been.

ONLY ONE PENTECOST NEEDED

'It is sometimes claimed that there have been many Pentecosts in the history of the church. Special seasons of religious revival or excitement are called Pentecosts; and there are some who continually urge that Christians should now seek another great revival, while some suppose this should be the regular experience of the church. All this reveals ignorance of the plan of God. There could be only one Pentecost or one occasion of the gift of the holy spirit to the church; but there were two occasions when the gift was manifested. Three and one-half years after Pentecost Peter was sent to Cæsarea; and while he was addressing the assembled little company at the house of Cornelius, the holy spirit fell on them, said Peter, "as on us at the beginning."—Acts 11: 15.

*Since the day of Pentecost no man has received God's blessings apart from that gift; there has always been a link, a teacher, a preacher, even as Peter was the link at Cæsarea. In the present day no man has received "present truth apart from the instrument that God used to give it to the church. It is proper, even necessary, to seek to enter into the fulness of the blessings given through Christ to the church. But none may seek another Pentecost or another outpouring of the spirit of God; for the spirit could be given once only. The nominal churches disclose their lack of spirituality in wanting another Pentecost, and even by talking publicly about it. But they demonstrate that it is not enlightenment they want, nor really that the name of God should be glorified; for they will not take the truth now given to the people of God to guide them in his counsels and thus to learn of the Lord. And there is no other channel by which the power and life of the spirit can be gained.

⁹While the noted leaders of religion are bemoaning their lack, faithful believers are receiving the blessings which come with God's gift of the spirit. These realize that it is no part of the Lord's purpose to have special seasons of outbursts of religious fervor or excitement, nor has it ever been so; and that these are in no way outpourings of the spirit of

God, but are rather to be looked at as deceptions. They also know that to be filled with the spirit does not mean filled with a received enthusiasm so much as with the purpose of a life wholly given to God and a determination to live out the life of full consecration.

DECEIVED BY "TONGUES" AND MIRACULOUS "GIFTS"

10It is thought by some that the outward manifestations of the holy spirit, such as the gift of tongues and an ability to work miracles, should always be found in followers of Jesus; and that the very apparent present inability of Christians to speak in tongues is as clear a manifestation of unfaithfulness as at Pentecost the ability was a proof of fidelity. Such generally expect also to have, when faithful, the other miraculous gifts of the spirit as were distributed to the early church. (1 Corinthians 12:28) Some have been badly misled under this delusion, and have fallen into the bonds of the devil, who has provided them with tongues, which sometimes have been discovered to be filthy expressions of a (to them) foreign language, while much of the noise made carries no human meaning. Much in the same way many who are associated with what is called evangelicalism seek for some "power" to come upon or into them. In the belief that the holy spirit is a person, they place themselves ready for demon obsession, and thus they lay themselves open to the snares of the devil; for they get something which carries them from common sense and often from propriety.

¹¹Paul distinctly shows that outward manifestations of a supernatural power were intended only for the infancy of the church, given with the double object of convincing outsiders that the disciples were in touch with the risen Jesus, as they claimed to be, and for the disciples themselves for their help and encouragement. But these things belong to the childhood of the true church, and were to pass with the necessary infantile period; then it would develop through exercise in the higher qualities of faith and hope and love in the written Word through the spirit .- Hebrews 5:13; 1 Corinthians 13:11-13.

12It is important to inquire: How much of the power of the holy spirit may the church look for at the present time? With the dangerous doctrine of the trinity out of the way. so that he who would be filled with the spirit does not seek to be obsessed or possessed by a "person" dwelling within him, there are no people who know so much about the spirit's power and its relation to the Father, to the Lord, and to the life of the church, as those Bible Students who by enemies of the truth are said to ignore the holy spirit altogether as a factor in the life of the church. The begetting to a new nature and the anointing for service are always clearly discerned; but the church should not lose the value of the Lord's words in the lesson: "Ye shall receive power." Though without doubt this means power to understand, it as truly means that there is heavenly help for the work of the Lord; and it is clear by the experiences of the brethren that the Lord's promise of special help for special times will be made good. See Mark 13: 11.

EARLY CHURCH ACTIVITY MANIFESTED NOW

18Those early days of the church were full of service for the Lord; and never were the apostles wanting in wit or desire to serve. They seemed quick to perceive and to take every opportunity. It was a very busy time, one indeed which seems to have its correspondency in the urgency of the present-day service for the Lord. Sometimes fears are expressed that the Lord's people may get so busily engaged in service as to forget to attend to their "spiritual" needs; but there need be no fear that those who are moved of the holy spirit will lack in spiritual development, and in any

case those who are opposed to the work of the Lord are not safe counselors. Had these heavenly wisdom they also would be busied in the harvest field, telling the good news of the kingdom. The outpouring of the spirit and the immediate results soon brought the disciples into conflict with the religious authorities, the Sanhedrin. The notable miracle wrought on the lame man, which stirred Jerusalem so much, compelled the Sanhedrin to take some action. They were faced with the fact, which could not be explained away; they were forced to confess that there was a power with these people that was beyond them.

14The apostles were commanded not to preach in the name of Jesus. Obedience to that mandate meant spiritual death; and Peter and John with the confidence of men who knew that they had a commission from God asked the Sanhedrin to judge whom they were likely to obey-God or them. (Acts 4: 19, 20) These experiences caused the church to go to the Lord in prayer to tell him of the situation and to ask for greater courage and confidence and boldness. And they were answered immediately. (Acts 4:31) The apostles continued to witness, and all the church was occupied along with them, and many miracles were wrought. (Acts 5:12) Again the Sanhedrin had the apostles before them; for they were afraid, and rather complainingly said that the apostles intended to bring the guilt of the blood of Jesus upon them. Again the noble band said that they must obey God, not the Sanhedrim; that he whom the Jews crucified was now exalted to be a Prince and a Savior; and that they were his witnesses, as was also the holy spirit which God had given to them that obey him. (Acts 5:31,32) The apostles were beaten, probably with rods; but in spirit they triumphed, and the beating gave them great joy. They saw that they were associated with their Master Jesus both by their enemies and by him; for they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.--Acts 5:41.

15The earliest days of the church seem to have a close correspondency with its last days. It is as if the ends of the church's life were welded together, the cycle being completed. Similar experiences are coming upon the last members of the church. The true followers of Jesus living in the spirit must in some measure come into conflict with the rulers of the present darkness; but whatever experiences come, they are certain to bring increased happiness and confidence, even as with the disciples of old.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

What may be said of Pentecost? What did it do for the disciples? What gift came to the church at Pentecost? ¶ 1. When were the disciples weak? How were they made strong? ¶ 2. How does the spirit operate? What is the specific gift of the holy spirit? ¶ 3. What kind of spirit has prompted nearly all foreign missionary activities? ¶ 4. What important fact was manifested to the disciples at Pentecost? What is the first work of the holy spirit, and what may this be called? ¶ 5. Why was it appropriate that the spirit should be given on Pentecost? What did the wave offering represent? What did the two loaves represent? ¶ 6. Is every religious revival a Pentecost? How many times have there been visible manifestations of the holy spirit? ¶ 7. Do people receive the truth independently of the spirit, or must there be a connection between Pentecost and the recipient of the spirit? Does this principle hold good in our day? ¶ 8. What blessings do faithful believers enjoy while many noted religious leaders bemoan their lack of spiritual perception? ¶ 9. Is refusal in our day to speak with tongues an evidence of unfaithfulness? Explain how the power to speak with tongues has misled many, and why it is a deception of the devil. ¶ 10. What were the outward manifestations of a supernatural power intended to do? What does Paul teach concerning this? ¶ 11. What advantages have the true disciples over the mere professor of religion? ¶ 12.

What advantages have the true disciples over the mere professor of religion? ¶12.

Was the early church a busy church? In what direction will the holy spirit lead the children of God, those who love God above selfish interests? ¶13.

Is it the duty of Christians to obey the commands or precepts of men? Why does God permit the world to treat his children unjustly? ¶14, 15.

THE OUTREACH OF THE EARLY CHURCH

"GIFTS" A SIGN IN THE EARLY CHUBCH-KEEPING CLOSE TO THE WORD OF GOD-FAVORED CITIES SINK INTO OBLIVION

Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

—Acts 1: 8. R. V.

UR study for today tells us of that spreading abroad of the witness concerning himself of which Jesus had spoken just previous to his ascension. After the blessing of Pentecost the brethren, who were mainly in Jerusalem, occupied themselves in prayer and fellowship and doctrine. In the first joy of their fellowship they endeavored to bring about a family relationship in which all the needy should have a fair share of the wealth of the richer brethren. But dissatisfaction arose, and some dissension followed. Then the church, guided by the apostles, set apart seven men to attend to what might be called the business side of the church's life and work, an action which freed the apostles for the direct preaching of the Word. In that company of seven good men were Stephen and Philip, both of whom were to be much used of the Lord. Stephen, a bright and shining light, comparatively quickly completed his work for the Lord. The persecution which arose on the death of that faithful witness caused the brethren to be scattered abroad; and as "they . . . went everywhere preaching the word" there was much increase in the number of those who believed .-- Acts 8:4.

²The dispersion or scattering of the brethren may be taken as an indication that their ideal of a family arrangement was not according to the will of God. The experience also reveals that the Lord did not undertake to keep the church from errors of judgment. Furthermore, it teaches the church that he uses experiences to fulfil his purposes; for the endeavor to adjust their circumstances caused Stephen and Philip, two of the seven deacons, to be brought into prominence. Here are lessons for the church in these days also. It may not expect to have forward instruction, as if it were a servant to be particularly directed as one without responsibility; but, following the guidance of the spirit, the church waits upon the Lord, and prays the prayer which seems specially written for it at this time: "Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies." -Psalm 27:11.

³Everywhere, everyday, according to its vow the church prays for the general interests of the harvest work, and particularly for the brethren in the watchtower, who are specially responsible; and in his own way God guides the work; for in that center the privileges and the opportunities of service are seen and arranged for. It does not seem out of place to remark that the Lord's work cannot be sectional or local. In its nature it must be one, and as world-wide in its operation as the members of the body are in location. A local or partial work cannot be the Lord's harvest, or witnessing work.—Isaiah 21:5, 8.

"GIFTS" A SIGN IN THE EARLY CHURCH

*Some of the brethren went down to the city of Samaria; for they had not the antipathy of the orthodox Jew towards the Samaritans. Interest was quickened; and Philip, who like Stephen was a whole-hearted lover of the Lord and a capable evangelist, went down; and the notable miracles convinced the people concerning Jesus. All the city was stirred, and very many believed and were baptized. Without doubt the seed which Jesus at the well of Sychar had sown in the heart of the woman of Samaria, and in the hearts of the others who then listened to him, was now grown, and was ready to be watered by the preaching of Philip.—John 4:5, 80-41.

5As Philip was not an apostle, and therefore had not the

privilege of conferring the gifts of the spirit, which in the early days were the outward sign of begettal of the spirit, Peter and John were sent from Jerusalem. On their arrival they prayed that the disciples might receive the holy spirit, and they laid hands on them, and the holy spirit came upon them. It is suggested by some that Philip lacked in faith and in earnestness of prayer, and that he might have gained for the Samaritans those gifts and blessings which came by means of Peter and John. But there is no evidence that these gifts of the spirit could be conferred by any save the apostles.

⁶In the early days of the church it pleased the Lord to have an outward manifestation of the spirit accompany the begettal and anointing of the spirit. (Acts 19:1-6; 1 Corinthians 12:7) Later, those outward signs gave place to the graces of the spirit, which in their development give the outward evidences of the indwelling spirit of Christ.

⁷Philip was now sent from the busy work in Samaria into the desert part between Jerusalem and Gaza. Watching for the reason why he was sent there, he was ready for any service. An Ethiopian eunuch, a man of authority, came in sight, traveling with his company; and Philip under the guidance of the spirit joined him. With commendable aptitude he entered into conversation with the Ethiopian, who at that moment was exercising his mind on the very things to make Philip's ministry quickly effective. Philip preached to him Jesus. A man of decision, as soon as water was seen the eunuch asked for immersion; and by the roadside he and Philip went down into the water, and he was baptized. "He went on his way rejoicing." (Acts 8:39) Philip was next heard of at Azotus, whence he went on to Cæsarea, preaching in all the cities.

8About the same time Peter went down from Jerusalem and had gotten as far as Joppa where, by the power of the Lord, and in answer to his prayer, Dorcas was raised to life. Peter tarried in Joppa many days with Simon, a tanner. in Cæsarea, where Philip now was, there was Cornelius the centurion, a devout man who feared God with all his house, and who was regular in his prayers to God. Guided by a vision he sent to Joppa to call for Peter; and as the servants of Cornelius were approaching Joppa, Peter also had a vision which prepared him to go to Cæsarea. (Acts 10:17) Until this time this loving, earnest, devoted, and quick-minded disciple had not yet discerned that the Gentiles were to be received into as close communion as God had given to the Jews who believed. But the vision enlightened him, and he gladly but wonderingly went with the messengers. While he was speaking to Cornelius and his household and telling them of his own enlightenment and preaching salvation by Jesus, the holy spirit came upon that little company in the same manner that it had come upon the church in the upper room. Peter then knew that the Gentiles were called to be fellowheirs and sharers in the covenant of grace.-Acts 10: 44: Colossians 1:27.

KEEPING CLOSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

⁹In the account of that early ministry, chiefly associated with Philip, there are seven different phrases used to describe the preaching. The scattered brethren 'preached the word'; Philip "preached Christ"; he preached "the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ"; "he preached the word of God"; "they [Peter and John] preached the word of the Lord"; "they preached the gospel"; and to

the eunuch Philip "preached unto him Jesus". (Acts 8:4,5, 12, 14, 25, 35) Whatever purpose the Lord had in causing these things to be written, it is certain that here is instruction for every evangelist. That which the Lord's people need is not theory respecting certain phases of truth not clearly made known to the church, nor exploitation of ideas, nor fanciful possible interpretations, but direct instructions from the Word of God concerning Jesus, and the Christ, and the good news of the kingdom; and it may safely be accepted that this account of Philip's successful work for the Lord is given not merely to relate the doings and the increase of the church, but for our guidance as to similar successful service. He serves God and his hearers best who keeps close to the Word of God.

10These passages in the Acts mark the various stages of the fulfilment of Jesus' words. (Acts 1:8) The message was first preached in Jerusalem and Judea (Acts 1:1 to 7:60), then in Samaria (to 8:40), and the Lord had now prepared the way into the wider field.—Acts 10:1.

¹¹Some of the brethren who settled in Jerusalem later settled in Antioch in Syria, and it pleased the Lord to gather there a company of earnest and able men. These devout men, interesting themselves in the work of the Lord, their circumstances and their sympathies helping themselves to the wider outlook over the Gentile world, fasted and prayed as they ministered to their brethren and the Lord honored and rewarded them. He directed that Barnabas and Paul, who were of their number, should be set apart for the work which he had in mind for them. (Acts 13:2) The church at Antioch, which was now second in importance, and which came to occupy a very prominent position in the life and work of the early church, rose to their privileges; and the two men were sent out on what was the first ordered missionary tour.

12Previous to this Paul had preached the gospel in his home country, Cilicia; but this definite instruction by the Lord, through the holy spirit and the church in Antioch, is the first of its kind for the establishment of churches. Hitherto the word had been proclaimed wherever possible by earnest men and women; but the diffusion of the truth had been by providences, or by the persecution which dispersed the brethren. It seems singular that this first missionary work should start from Antioch rather than from Jerusalem. The Lord certainly had a purpose in this. Perhaps he wished to show that this work was particularly under his care. But more probably it was because the apostles, untraveled, and busied with their labors, had not yet perceived that which had become plain to the leading brethren in Antioch.

FAVORED CITIES SINK INTO OBLIVION

¹³The passages for today's study include all the recorded history of the early church up to the time when the gospel was first preached in Europe. Jerusalem would be the home

TRUTH BRINGS JOY

DEAR BRETHREN:

Greetings to the Household of Faith.

I want to thank the dear heavenly Father for the meat he has provided for us in these last days, and I want to thank him for the blessing he bestows upon Brother Rutherford for the HARP and its sweet music. It is a grand book and I have the self-quiz cards; they are a wonderful thing to me. So praise his dear name for the deep, still waters of truth. I did not know they were so deep till I began to read these dear books and your publications. I cannot tell the joy it brings to my soul, joy unspeakable. I will always praise his name for these dear brethren at Bethel, and I will remember them in my prayers.

Yours in the Master's service, MRS. MAY HOLLIS, Ark. of a large number of believers, and the church there would call for much care by the apostles. Nearly all of them probably, of whose labors we know almost nothing, were used to guide this large number; and their ability to speak with personal knowledge of what the Lord had said would be just that which was required by a people accustomed to be guided by the word of authority. Jerusalem became the earthly center of the church. Samaria, the hated city, had been greatly moved by the truth, and the coast cities had each its little company of disciples. But those cities where most of the mighty works of Jesus had been wrought, and out of which the disciples had come, are not heard of; they sank into oblivion.-Matthew 11:20-23.

¹⁴A period of about seventeen years is covered by our lesson. During that time the truth had spread to Antioch and Damascus, and into Cilicia and Cyprus and Galatia. But this early outreach and increase came about chiefly by the faithful brethren seizing opportunities of service such as are recorded in Acts 11:19, and by good men praying for the interests of the kingdom, as in Acts 13:1,2, and then by the appointed labors of Paul and Barnabas; for God would prove that increase is made "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit". (Zechariah 4:6) In those days the brethren were spread abroad with very few means of communication; whereas now the Lord is gathering his people together in order that they may give a united witness to the assembled nations.—Isaiah 43:9, 10.

¹⁵The outstanding feature of this study is that of faithfulness to opportunities of service by those who knew and loved the Lord. Let every follower of the Lord follow the good example.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

Did the early church undertake to establish community interests?
Did this cause dissatisfaction, and what was the result? What took place after the martyrdom of Scephen? § 1.
What did the scattering of the brethren indicate? Does the Lord keep the church from making mistakes or does be overrule all its. dicings? § 2.
How has the church today been drawn together into a oweness of heart and mind and action? § 3.
What did Philip accomplish at Samaria? What about the seed sown there by Jesus? § 4.
Why was it necessary for Peter and John to go to Samaria? Did Philip lack faith? § 5.
What superseded the outward manifestations of the spirit to the church's benefit? § 6.
What were Philip's experiences after leaving Samaria? § 7.
What are the circumstances in which Cornelius got into touch with Peter? § 8.
Name the seven phrases used to describe the early preaching. Who is it that serves the Lord best? § 9.
How was the message to be heralded as to its scope? § 10.
Name two prominent churches in the apostolic days. How were the brethren at Antioch honored? § 11, 12.
Does it seem likely that many Christians lived in Jerusalem, and that they had the services of the apostles not prominently known in the Scriptures for their activities, the history of the early church covering mere particularly the activities of the brethren who were spreading the gospel abroad? § 13.
How was the gospel made known then? How is it made known today? What is the difference and the similarity? § 14, 15.

THE LORD PROVIDES FOR HIS OWN

DEAR BRETHREN:

I cannot help expressing my appreciation at this time to the Lord for THE WATCH TOWER articles.

Every issue provides something which seems to me more and more appropriate as the time goes on, more especially since the beginning of this year. The general tone of them shows how the Lord would provide in advance against that which is soon coming to pass.

Doubt seems to be assailing some, but to my humble intelligence these articles are right to the point and are verily meat in due season.

May we all stand and acquit ourselves like men, is the prayer of one of the least of my Master's servants.

Your brother in Christ, A. J. BLISS, Calif.

BIBLES AND CIBLE STUDY HELPS

Retail prices have been revised on a number of our publications. There are special class rates given for quantity orders, carriage charges prepaid; these prices may be had on request. Colporteur rates may be had by colporteurs or prospective colporteurs on application to the Society's Service Department. Friends residing in foreign countries where branch offices are maintained will kindly place their orders with these branches. The Society's foreign offices are given below.

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LETTERS FROM AFIELD

SUPPOSED NEW LIGHT PROVED BAD LIGHT

DEAR BROTHER RUTHERFORD:

It is with humble heart that I write you these few lines to acquaint you with the particulars of a severe testing which I, by the Lord's grace, have survived.

About two in this ago I came in contact with a copy of Brother Robison's manuscript on Revelation. I read it eagerly, along with other articles, and felt at the time that it was new light. I read the theory of Mr. Knoch on universal reconciliation, which is practically universal salvation, and the theory that God is the author of evil, etc. etc. I was swept along by an irresistible desire for knowledge; and before I realized it, I was willing and ready to discard ninety-five percent of what Brother Russell had shown from the Scriptures to be the truth.

Had I stopped sooner and considered what Brother Russell had written on these very subjects in 1890 I would not have gone so far. After reading the December 1, 1922, Watch Tower, I saw clearly the Lord's ample provision for his little ones at all times, and that I was guilty of the sin of ingratitude. It lost for me my privilege of being a public speaker in the St. Louis Ecclesia, as well as Director of Service, in

the very midst of the battle between the beast and the Lamb. The love and prayers of the saints here prevailed exceedingly; and now I am learning the needful lessons, though painful the humbling may be.

I hope that by the Lord's grace I shall soon be restored to the service of the cause we love, in his own good time, however. To this end I ask an interest in your prayers, that I may be found faithful.

Your brother in Christ, WALTER H. WISSMAN, Mo.

BLESSEDNESS OF FELLOWSHIP

DEAR BRETHREN:

Hark! while I tell you how my whole being is dancing for joy. Our heavenly Father sent Brother Hemery to minister unto us, and oh, the blessedness of our fellowship in the truth!

Blest be the tie that binds us specially to all whose chief aim is to glorify God and comfort others, even as we ourselves have been comforted.—Matthew 5:2,4.

By his grace, I am now and forever your fellow member of the heavenly choir.—Psalm 150.

SISTER (MRS.) ELIZA LADD, Scotland.

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Woodstock, Ont. Nov. 16, 18 Elmvale, Ont. Nov. 29 Toronto, Ont. " 25 Collingwood, Ont. Nov. 30, Dec. 2 Barrie, Ont. " 26 Meaford, Ont. " 3 Orillia, Ont. " 27 Owen Sound, Ont. " 4, 5 Midland, Ont. " 28 Wiarton, Ont. " 6	Northcote, Minn. Nov. 13 Chicago, Ill. Nov. 20 Erskine, Minn. " 15 Ft. Wayne, Ind. " 21 Minneapolis, Minn. " 16 Mansfield, O. " 22 St. Paul, Minn. " 18 Greensburg, Pa. " 28 Milwaukee, Wis. " 19 Brooklyn, N. Y. " 25	
BROTHER J. H. HOEVELER	BROTHER J. B. WILLIAMS	
Clinton, Mo	Marigold, Sask. Nov. 13, 14 Weyburn, Sask. Nov. 25 Joeville, Sask. " 15 North Portal, Sask. " 26 Luella, Sask. " 16, 18 Oxbow, Sask. " 27 Harptree, Sask. " 19, 20 Medore, Man. " 28 Viceroy, Sask. " 21, 22 Souris, Man. " 29 Khedive, Sask. " 23 Treherne, Man. " 30	