



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.

W.B.E.T.S.

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 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 "partakers 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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YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: UNITED STATES, \$1.00; CANADA AND MISCELLANEOUS FOREIGN, \$1.50; GREAT BRITAIN, AUSTRALASIA, AND SOUTH AFRICA, 7s. American remittances should be made by Express or Postal Money Orders, or by Bank Draft. Canadian, British, South African, and Australasian remittances should be made to *branch offices only*. Remittances from scattered foreign territory may be made to the Brooklyn office, but by *International Postal Money Orders only*. (*Foreign translations of this journal appear in several languages.*)

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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.

Notice to Subscribers: We do not, as a rule, send a card of acknowledgment for a renewal or for a new subscription. A renewal blank (carrying notice of expiration) will be sent with the journal one month before the subscription expires. Change of address, when requested, may be expected to appear on address label within one month.

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COMFORT FOR THE JEWS

With the end of 1925 it seems, according to the Lord's Word, due time for the message of comfort to be delivered to the Jews. (Isaiah 40:1) It would be expected that the Lord would use the consecrated for this purpose. His Word clearly places this obligation upon the church. (Isaiah 40:9) The SOCIETY is now issuing a book of one hundred and twenty-eight pages, entitled **COMFORT FOR THE JEWS**, which discusses the question of the Jews' long warfare, the return of the Jews to Palestine, and what further must

be done before they are fully restored. It contains much that will be beneficial to the Christian as well as to Jews. All consecrated Christians should be encouraged to read it. Retail price, bound in cloth 50c, paper cover 25c.

WORLD-WIDE WITNESS, FEBRUARY 21

A world-wide witness has been arranged for Sunday, February 21st, at which time the classes everywhere have been urged to put forth effort to make a public proclamation of the message: "PALESTINE FOR THE JEW. WHY?"

We trust that every elder who possesses ability to give a public address has prepared a lecture on this timely subject, that we may go forth on the day appointed and give a simultaneous witness of the prophetic and visible evidences of the incoming kingdom of Messiah, pointing to his loving provision both for Israel and for all humankind.

IMPROVED MAILING SYSTEM

A new addressing and mailing system has been recently installed at the Brooklyn office. Subscriptions for THE WATCH TOWER, both new and renewal, will be entered as heretofore, a card of acknowledgement being sent only when requested.

Special attention is called to the fact that hereafter, instead of the expiration date being shown on the wrapper label for each issue, a renewal blank (carrying also a notice of expiration) will be sent with the journal one month before the subscription expires. Prompt return of this blank with your renewal order will insure the subscription being continued in force without interruption.

MEMORIAL

The New York congregation will celebrate the Memorial at Metropolitan Auditorium, Manhattan, at eight p. m., Saturday, March 27th. This hall is in the Metropolitan Annex, Madison Ave. and 24th St. Visiting friends will please take notice. All consecrated believers in the ransom sacrifice, who are striving to walk in the Master's footsteps, are invited to come.

The WATCH TOWER

AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

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OBEDIENCE LEADS TO LIFE

"For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light: and reproofs of instruction are the way of life."

—Proverbs 6: 23.

JEHOVAH has provided rules of action which, if followed faithfully, lead to life everlasting. All of Jehovah's creatures are created perfect. (Deuteronomy 32: 4) Every perfect intelligent creature possesses the right to life as long as that creature is obedient to God's commandments. The plan of God discloses that he grants everlasting life to his creatures only after they have proven loyal and faithful under the test.

² Every perfect creature must be a free moral agent. The creature must have the liberty to exercise his power for good or evil as he may choose. In no other way could he be tested and proven. God could have made all of his creatures so that they could not do evil; but had he done so that would have prevented them from exercising freely their attributes, and God would thereby preclude himself from testing and proving his creatures.

³ The heart represents the seat of affection or motive. It is that faculty of the being which induces action. If impurity enters the heart impurity of action is almost certain to follow. Hence it is written: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."—Proverbs 4: 23.

⁴ Love is one of the divine attributes. Love is the perfect expression of unselfishness. Selfishness, the very antithesis of love, begins in the secret intent of the heart. Selfishness expels love. With love gone out the heart becomes malicious. The creature possessing a malicious heart is one who is extremely selfish, having no regard for duty or obligations to others and fatally bent on accomplishing his purposes regardless of great wrong that may result to others.

⁵ The glory and beauty of the heavenly creatures, the perfection of man and his happy home, with the power and authority to fill the earth with his kind, furnished the opportunity for exercising selfishness or love. The test came, and some of the mighty creatures of God fell under the test. The joy of heaven and earth was turned into great woe.

⁶ The tragedy of Eden has never known a parallel. In fact all other crimes and tragedies may be traced to that one in Eden. Its enormity is enhanced by reason of the intelligence and greatness of the perpe-

trator of the crime, by reason of his confidential relationship to the Eternal Creator. That terrible crime blighted the hopes of men and angels, filled the earth with woe and caused the very heavens to weep. It started the wheels of evil and has caused them to roll on down through the corridors of the ages, spreading war, murder, disease, pestilence and famine, and crushing out the life-blood of countless millions. So powerful, deceptive and cunning has been that arch criminal that the sensibilities of mankind have been stunned and benumbed, and the people for centuries have been kept in ignorance of the cause and its far-reaching effect. But now it seems certain that the time has come for God to pull back the curtain and let man have a better view and understanding of the terrible criminal and his crime, that men may flee from the influence of the wicked one and find refuge in the arms of the Savior of the world.

⁷ Jehovah was Adam's benefactor and friend. He had created man, given him a wife, provided him with a beautiful home, made him monarch of all he surveyed, clothed him with power to subdue the earth, and to fill it with a perfect race of people, and rule it. Naturally Adam would love God. In addition to that he was so created that he would instinctively worship the One who was his friend and provider.

⁸ The will of God is his law. When that will is expressed toward man it is the law of God by which man is to be governed. A refusal to obey God's law makes the creature a disloyal subject. Without law there could be no way of testing man's loyalty. There must be a rule of action, commanding that which is right and prohibiting that which is wrong. God provided a law for man. It was in connection with the food of Adam that God expressed his will or commandment. No evil effects would of course result merely from the food, because all the food was perfect; but the evil result would be from the act of disobedience to God's law. The loss of life to man meant the loss of everything. God could not permit an unlawful creature to possess eternal life. He provided man's food and in connection therewith said: "And the Lord God commanded the

man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Genesis 2:16, 17.

* It was in keeping with God's loving provision for man to appoint an overseer or helper or protector, one who should aid man in avoiding the doing of that which was wrong and which would bring upon him the penalty for the violation of God's law. It was the bright shining one, Lucifer, whom God selected and placed in Eden as overlord or protector of man. Concerning him and his appointment to this responsible office God said: "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so." (Ezekiel 28:14) "Anointed" means that Lucifer, the cherub, was clothed with power and authority in the name of God to do certain things, and in this instance he was clothed with power and authority as overlord in the "garden of God" to look after the interests of man and keep him in the right way. "Cherub" means an officer or deputy to whom is delegated certain powers and duties. The word "covereth" means to screen with power and authority to act as an overseer for man; to screen, to shield and protect him from taking the wrongful course of violating God's law. It was Lucifer's solemn duty, both to man and to God, to direct and influence man to go in the right way that he might thereby honor God and prolong his life on the earth.

¹⁰ God had also clothed Lucifer with the power of death. (Hebrews 2:14) It was therefore a part of the official duty of Lucifer to put to death the man if he violated God's law. For this reason Lucifer occupied a confidential or fiduciary relationship toward God and man. There was committed into his hands the sacred trust of keeping God's newly begun government on earth in a pure and proper condition. To betray that trust in order that he might overturn God's appointed means of government in Eden would be an act of treason. The perpetration of the crime of treason under such conditions would cover the perpetrator with perfidy and make him a nefarious, despicable creature and the blackest of all criminals. Clothed with the most honorable position in the universe aside from that of the Logos, even different from the Logos because placed as overlord and protector of a domain, the betrayal of that trust by Lucifer is so terrible that it could not be properly stated in human phrase. The beauty, the purity and innocence of the perfect man and perfect woman, in an environment far more beautiful than any human eye has ever seen since, emphasize the depravity of the heart that could commit the terrible crime herein-after described.

¹¹ Being one of the "sons of the morning" who witnessed the creation of man and his perfect home, and being appointed to the position of trust and confidence as man's overlord, Lucifer of course knew that God had empowered man to produce his own species and that in

due time the earth would be filled with a perfect race of people. He knew that man was so created that he must worship his benefactor. He knew that he must destroy in the mind of man the thought that God was his benefactor if he would gain man's worship for himself. Lucifer became ambitious to control the human race and to receive the worship to which God was justly entitled. Lucifer was impressed with his own beauty and importance and power, and forgot that he owed an obligation to his Creator. Selfishness entered his heart. His motive was wrong and his heart became malignant. He was moved to take action concerning Adam, and his motive was wicked. Concerning this evil purpose the prophet records of Lucifer: "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the Most High." (Isaiah 14:13, 14) The Scriptures clearly show that Lucifer's process of reasoning was like this:

¹² "I am overlord of man in Eden. I have the power to put man to death, and even though man violates God's law I will not exercise that power. I will induce man to believe that God is not his friend and benefactor but that he in truth and in fact is deceiving man. Furthermore, God will not be able to put man to death and at the same time maintain his own consistency, because he has declared that that tree in the midst of Eden is the tree of life and to eat of that tree means that one will live for ever. I will take man to that tree and direct him to eat and then he will not die but will live for ever. But before I do that I will first induce him to believe that God is keeping him in ignorance and withholding from him the things that he is justly entitled to receive. Adam loves his wife. I will first induce Eve to do my bidding, and then through her I will be able to control Adam. I will so throw the circumstances around Adam that he will also eat of the forbidden tree of knowledge, and then I will refuse to put them to death. Then I will immediately take them to the tree of life and have them eat of that fruit, then they will live for ever and not die. By this means I will win them over to me and I will keep them alive for ever. I will defy God; and while he has a realm of angels and other creatures of heaven that worship him I will be like the Most High and will be worshiped even as God is worshiped."

¹³ The Scriptures show that thus did Lucifer plan a rebellion. It was a cunning scheme that Lucifer thus devised; he thought that it was a wise scheme. Evidently God knew about it all the time, from its inception; but he did not interfere until Lucifer had gone to the point of committing the overt act of overreaching man and inducing him to sin. Concerning this God said: "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness."

(Ezekiel 28:17) This selfish meditation in the heart of Lucifer was the beginning of iniquity in him. Up to that time he was perfect, because of him God says: "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." (Ezekiel 28:15) The imperfection of Lucifer dates from that moment. That was the beginning of rebellion. That selfish meditation in his heart led to the terrible crime of treason and all the baneful effects that have followed since.

THE CRIME

¹⁴ Having carefully planned his crime Lucifer proceeds to carry it out. To do so he resorts to fraud, deception and lying. When the Logos was on the earth he stated that Lucifer "is a liar and the father of it" (John 8:44), showing that Lucifer uttered the first lie ever told. That lie is: "There is no death"; and the emissaries of the evil one have been telling that lie to the people ever since.

¹⁵ Lucifer employed the serpent to carry out his scheme, because the serpent was more subtle than any other beast of the field which the Lord God had made. Lucifer therefore spoke through the serpent and said: "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."—Genesis 3:1-6.

¹⁶ God had given his word that this tree produced a fruit that would increase the knowledge of those who ate it. The result was that when Adam and Eve did eat this forbidden fruit their knowledge was increased in harmony with God's announced law. They were conscious of the fact now that they had done wrong; because they hid themselves amongst the trees in the garden from the presence of the Lord. He brought them before him. They entered a plea of guilty, confessing that they had done wrong, and thereupon God entered against them the following judgment, to wit: "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth

to thee: and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."—Genesis 3:16-19.

¹⁷ The Scriptures mention three classes of fruit-bearing trees in the garden of Eden, to wit: (a) Every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; (b) the tree of life in the midst of the garden; and (c) the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:9) God told Adam that he might eat of all the trees that were good for him. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Genesis 2:15-17.

¹⁸ There is no evidence that Adam knew anything about the tree of life that was in the midst of Eden. On the contrary he must have been ignorant of it, because there was no specific command given to him concerning it. Lucifer as the officer in charge, being clothed with the power of death and entrusted with the high office of overlord of man, would of course know all about the tree of life. The fact that God gave Adam command about other trees in the garden and said nothing about the tree of life is evidence that man knew nothing about this tree. The eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil doubtless would open the way so that Adam would shortly know about the tree of life. But now comes the proof showing conclusively that Adam had no opportunity to eat of the tree of life and therefore must not have known about it until immediately before his expulsion from Eden.

¹⁹ God summoned the guilty parties before him, and upon a full hearing of the facts pronounced judgment against the woman and against the man and against the serpent which Satan had employed to deceive Eve. The final judgment against Lucifer or Satan is set forth in the prophecy of Ezekiel, and it provides that in due time he is to be destroyed and never shall be again. Immediately following the pronouncement of the judgment against man God addressed some one, then and there present; and it seems almost certain that he was speaking to the Logos, his true and trusted Son. We read: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." (Genesis 3:22) Mark the words of Jehovah here recorded: "Man is become as one of us to know good and evil."

²⁰ Knowing that the situation was critical seemingly God acted immediately, before man had an opportunity to get to that food and eat of it, and before Lucifer even had time to inform man of the location of the tree of life. The words addressed to the Logos were

cut short; the sentence seemingly stops in the middle without being finished, to wit: "And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:—" Note the record; God did not speak another word, but he acted immediately. His action is recorded in the next verse, which reads: "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."—Genesis 3:23, 24.

²¹ It was doubtless God's purpose at some time to permit man to partake of the tree of life and live for ever, and had Adam proven faithful under the test that would have been his reward. Lucifer therefore caused him to fail in the test, caused him to fail to get life, and caused him to bring upon himself and all of his progeny the great sorrow and distress that has afflicted humankind through the centuries.

²² Lucifer had now manifested his unfaithfulness and treachery, and doubtless he intended to act as quickly as possible and to lead man to the tree of life and let him eat of that fruit. He knew that God had given his word that the fruit of that tree was a fruit of life, and that if man should eat of it he would live and not die. Lucifer therefore reasoned that he would be able to prove to Adam and Eve that God was purposely deceiving them and keeping them in ignorance and keeping them away from the opportunity for life, but that now he, Lucifer, was telling them the truth and had brought them great blessing; hence that he was entitled to be worshiped by them and by all of their offspring.

²³ Had Adam eaten of that fruit of the tree of life immediately he could not have been put to death by Jehovah himself, because God cannot be inconsistent. God had given his word that this is a tree of life; and to permit man to eat of it and then put him to death would make void his word, which is impossible for God to do. (Psalm 138:2; Isaiah 46:11; 55:11) Therefore in order that God might keep his word inviolate and enforce his judgment against Adam, he immediately expelled Adam from Eden and set a powerful officer on guard with a flaming sword turning in every direction, to keep man out of Eden and away from the tree of life.

²⁴ Why did not God destroy Lucifer at that time? Other scriptures show that it was and is the purpose of God that all of his intelligent creatures shall observe and learn the evil effects of sin, and that Lucifer and his sin will serve as a means of testing other creatures. In due time every intelligent creature of God will have an opportunity, under full and fair conditions, to follow the course of Lucifer and take the consequences, or to follow the righteous commands of God and receive

the reward of being permitted to partake of the tree of life and live for ever.

²⁵ Why did not God kill man at that time? Other scriptures show that man at that time had not exercised his powers to beget children. No children had been born. Furthermore, the Scriptures show that it has been and is the purpose of God to permit all men to profit by the experience of Adam. Hence he permitted Adam to continue on earth 930 years, during which time he begat and brought forth his children. Now he has permitted a sufficient length of time to elapse for the birth of a sufficient number of descendants to populate the earth in due time. All of these have suffered from the baneful effects of sin and in due time all shall come to a knowledge of the truth, that they may know the reason why they have suffered. Then they shall have an opportunity of abiding in sin and suffer eternal destruction or of following the righteous commands of God and live. Otherwise stated, God's purpose is to teach the entire human race by experience.

²⁶ Adam was sentenced to death. This sentence was enforced against him by compelling him to eat of the fruits of the unfinished part of the earth. This gradually resulted in his death. Within that period of 930 years his children were brought forth. While these were not formally sentenced to death they were all born sinners. The imperfect Adam, undergoing the death sentence, could not beget perfect children. Hence it is written by the psalmist: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psalm 51:5) To the same effect is the apostle's statement in Romans 5:12: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Thus is seen the terrible and far-reaching effects of this rebellion in Eden. It has brought all the suffering and sorrow, sickness and death, wars, famines and pestilence to which humankind have been heir during the past six thousand years. The very first son that Adam had was a murderer, and Lucifer the Devil induced him to commit the murder. Therefore Lucifer was a party to the crime. Lucifer is guilty of every murder that has ever been committed on earth.

²⁷ No longer did God permit his creature Lucifer to go by the name which signified a bright, shining one. His name was changed from Lucifer, and thereafter he was known by four names, to wit: Satan, which means adversary or opponent; Devil, which means slanderer; Serpent, which means deceiver; and Dragon, which means devourer. He has been defiant and arrogant, and has opposed God ever since the time of Eden. He has slandered God's holy name and brought reproach upon him and upon everyone who sought to do the Lord's will. He has used every possible means to deceive the people and to turn their minds away from God. He has sought to devour or destroy everyone that has faithfully tried to obey God's holy will. He has

had many emissaries on earth who have paraded themselves in the name and as the representatives of the Lord. Amongst these were the clergy of Jesus' time, and to them and of them he said: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it."—John 8:44.

²⁸ The rebellion did not stop with that of Lucifer and man. In heaven there was a host of angels, many of whom afterwards rebelled. The children of Adam increased. The women were beautiful in form and fair to look upon. The angels saw that men and women cohabited and that children resulted. It was the will of God that the angels should remain on the spirit plane and that they should not leave their estate or life on the spirit plane and mingle with human beings and cohabit with women. But many of these angels, misled and seduced by Satan the Devil, joined in the rebellion against God, as it is written: "And it came to pass . . . that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. . . . There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."—Genesis 6:1, 2, 4, 5.

²⁹ In due time these rebellious ones who kept not their first estate were imprisoned. (Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4) Many other angels of heaven joined Satan in his rebellion, and for centuries they have been serving with him and following his wicked course of reproaching God and greatly oppressing men. The Scriptures declare that in God's due time all these wicked angels that joined the rebellion with Satan shall be destroyed.—Daniel 10:13; Ephesians 6:12; 1 Kings 22:22.

³⁰ What terrible havoc this rebellion wrought! The great, beautiful and wonderful Lucifer, now degraded and covered with perfidy, becomes the very embodiment of wickedness. Many of the pure and holy angels of heaven, once enjoying the smile of the great Jehovah God and the fellowship with the faithful Logos, turned to wickedness and now find themselves in prison ultimately to be destroyed. Adam, once pure, holy, perfect, strong and vigorous, was driven from the perfect Eden into the unfinished earth; and his offspring have ever since been compelled to earn their bread in the sweat of their face and to suffer disease and sickness, and in sorrow to finally go down to the grave. Above all, man was deprived of sweet communion with the mighty eternal God. All of these centuries man has been in bondage to sin and death, groaning and travailing under his

burdens, desiring, begging and praying that some time and in some way he might be delivered.

³¹ Early God began the operation of his marvelous plan for the deliverance of man and for his restoration. Exercising his power in exact harmony with justice, wisdom and love God has been working out his great plan to this end. Now the time has come for the peoples of the earth to begin to get a clearer vision of God's great plan of salvation and to learn how and when God will bring about man's complete deliverance.

³² Now is given unto the faithful few on earth to declare to the people that Jehovah is the only true God, that Jesus Christ is the King of kings, that he has been seated upon his holy throne and has begun his reign, and that now everyone will be required to take his stand on the side of the Lord or on the side of the Devil. God says to his anointed on earth: "Ye are my witnesses"; and these are the ones who must be witnesses.—Isaiah 43:10, 12.

³³ What now as Christians have we, by the grace of God, learned concerning his righteous plan and the opposition thereto by the enemy? We have learned that God has given his word that he will produce a seed of righteousness, and we know that that word will be fulfilled. We have learned that the seed will be taken from those who have faith, illustrated by the faith of Abraham; that those who compose the seed must be put to the most severe test and under the test must prove faithful and loyal to God because of their loving devotion to him; that thus being proven under the most adverse conditions this seed shall be given the divine nature; that in due time these the Lord will give to eat of the tree of life; that God in his due time will establish a government or nation for the benefit of man; that the seed of promise shall be the officials who shall perform the functions of that government of peace and righteousness and carry out God's purposes; that under this government all the families of the earth will be given a full and fair opportunity to prove loyalty and faithfulness to God; and that the faithful ones shall ultimately eat of the tree of life and live for ever.—Revelation 22:2.

³⁴ We have also learned that no one will be granted life everlasting on any plane without first proving loyal and faithful under the test; and that since the anointed ones, the Christ, will be granted the divine nature, the highest element of life, it follows that each one of these must undergo the most searching test and prove loyal and faithful under that test. It is also manifest that Satan and his organization are permitted to buffet the members of the seed of promise that they may prove faithful under the most adverse conditions.

³⁵ Many have been called to this high position. Throughout the Gospel Age many have made a consecration, been justified and begotten to the divine nature, which of itself constitutes the call. By the Devil and his organization these have been put to the test. **A**

few have proven loyal and faithful and have been approved by the Lord, as indicated by their being granted robes. (Revelation 6:10, 11) The mass, however, have been on the other side. The Devil has placed his subtle temptation before the church. Many leaders fell to his blandishments. They became a part of the Devil's organization, supporting the evil systems of this world, of which Satan is the god. The result at this end of the age is that the so-called Christian church is no longer pure, and that there is a great multitude of so-called followers of Christ who are in fact a part of the Devil's organization and serving him. These have had their minds turned away from God and are used to turn the minds of the people generally away from God. Comparatively few of those who consecrated have been chosen, and these are pictured as being clothed with garments of salvation and brought under the robe of righteousness. (Isaiah 61:10) Now the final test is on. Who will prove faithful? Mark that it is the faithful who shall stand victorious with the Lord at the end of the great fight.—Revelation 17:14.

³⁶ Now we have a clearer vision concerning Zion; we understand that it is a name given to God's organization, by and through which he brings into existence the kingdom or government of righteousness which he long ago promised. (Isaiah 9:6, 7; 28:16) Of course Satan the enemy, that old Dragon, has known of the purpose of God for this kingdom. Following his custom he stood before, or in advance of, the Lord and tried to establish a kingdom on earth in the name of the Lord, and had his emissaries declare that God's kingdom had come to the earth. When he saw the new nation or government of righteousness about to be born his desire and endeavor was to destroy that kingdom, which is pictured by the "man child". But the man child, which is the Messianic kingdom or government, was caught up to the throne of God, in that it is God's kingdom, his government, and the authority proceeds from his throne. Satan cannot do violence to that kingdom or government now. It will carry out God's purposes. (Revelation 12:5) The "woman", which is God's organization, gave birth to the government or kingdom, and also gives birth to the individual members who make up that kingdom or government. (Isaiah 66:7, 8) We understand therefore that after the kingdom or government is born and begins to function there are yet some anointed ones on earth who will be born of Zion and will become a part of that kingdom. These are known as "the remnant".—Revelation 12:17.

³⁷ Having some vision now of the wickedness and maliciousness of Satan the Dragon, we may know that he will use every possible means at his command to destroy the remaining members of the seed this side the veil. The Lord has forewarned these that they might be forearmed. The strength of each one is in the Lord. They have been permitted to see what is the joy of the Lord Jesus when he comes to take his power to reign and

reigns. These have been invited by the Lord to enter into his joy and they realize and appreciate the fact that the joy of the Lord is their strength.

³⁸ It seems clear that had Adam proved loyal and faithful to God, then in the course of time God would have permitted him not only to know about but to eat of the tree of life. He failed. God has provided redemption for him and his offspring.

³⁹ The perfect man Jesus possessed life and the right to life. Being wholly obedient to God's command, even to the point of laying down his life in sacrifice, God not only granted him everlasting life but granted him the divine nature, which is a nature like unto Jehovah. He also granted unto him immortality, which means that he can never die; and hath clothed him with the power to give life to others. During his reign the Lord will grant life to all the obedient ones of the human family. These, at the end of the Millennial Age, will be put to the final test; the faithful will be granted life everlasting. Those who now consecrate themselves to the Lord may become justified through the merit of Christ; and then proving faithful under the test, being fully obedient to the commands of the Lord, are led in the light, and ultimately may be granted life everlasting, immortality, becoming partakers of the divine nature.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

On what terms does God grant everlasting life to his creatures? ¶ 1, 2.

What is meant by keeping "the heart"? What is a malicious heart? What facts emphasize the enormity of the tragedy of Eden? ¶ 3-6.

Is it natural for man to worship God? How may God's law be defined, and what is its purpose? Concerning what was God's will first expressed to man? ¶ 7, 8.

Why did God appoint for mankind "the anointed cherub that covereth"? Who was he, and what does this title mean? Why does St. Paul declare that Satan "hath the power of death"? ¶ 9, 10.

How and why did Satan seek worship from humanity? How did he doubtless reason respecting man's transgression and the divine penalty? ¶ 11, 12, 22.

What was the beginning of Lucifer's iniquity? How did he become "the father of lies"? What did he induce our first parents to do, and what was the divine judgment? ¶ 13-16.

How many kinds of trees of Eden are mentioned in the Scriptures? Is it probable that Adam knew about "the tree of life" long before his expulsion from Eden? ¶ 17-20.

Could God consistently have put man to death had he allowed him to eat of the tree of life? ¶ 21, 23.

Why did not Jehovah destroy Lucifer as soon as he sinned? Why did the Lord allow Adam to live for centuries after his transgression? ¶ 24-26.

By what names is Lucifer now known, and why? ¶ 27, 30. Who besides man joined in Lucifer's rebellion? What was the result? ¶ 28, 29.

What is God's plan of salvation, and what should be our constant endeavor? ¶ 31-33.

How are Christians put to the test? ¶ 34, 35.

What is Zion? What is "the man child" that is born to her? Who are her other children? (Isaiah 66:7, 8) Why is the Dragon especially wroth with "the remnant" class? ¶ 36, 37.

Will all mankind eventually eat of the tree of life? ¶ 38, 39.

JESUS DIES AND RISES FROM THE DEAD

—MARCH 21—JOHN 19: 23-30; 20: 19, 20—

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again."—John 10: 17.

THE title of the lesson for today, as arranged by the International Sunday School committee, calls for remark. Considered only as a statement of historical facts concerning Jesus no comment is necessary. But the purport of the second part is to imply that Jesus *raised himself* from the tomb; whereas the Bible never states it thus, but always that God raised him from the dead.

² A few hours after Jesus had eaten the passover with his disciples, he was seized by a mob of soldiers and a rabble of men whilst in the garden of Gethsemane, to which he had retired to enter into supplication with his Father. As the overshadowing darkness of his last hours grew on him he would have been glad if it had been possible for his Father to find another way whereby the divine will could be done without its being necessary for his Son to die the shameful death of one apparently cast away from God. But more than life itself he wanted his Father's will to be done.

³ It was a sacrifice complete and perfect. Had it been in any way less than perfect and complete it would have failed to accomplish the purpose of God in the redemption of mankind. He who was the corresponding price as a ransom must be perfect, as Adam was before he wilfully sinned. (Hebrews 9: 14; 1 Timothy 2: 6) Jesus' perfection of manhood and his delight in doing his Father's will made him acceptable to God.—Hebrews 10: 7.

⁴ After a mockery of a trial first by his own people, to whom he had come specially as a minister of God, and then by Pilate, who represented the power of Rome and therefore of the outside world, Jesus was led as a lamb to the slaughter. Had he been left in the hands of his own people, the Jews, he would have been stoned. But that would not have met all that was necessary; for it must be that he should die as one accursed.—Galatians 3: 13.

⁵ He was crucified at nine o'clock in the morning, after a night of much mental suffering and then of the scourging and buffeting by the cruel Roman soldiers. He lived for six hours and at three o'clock died, committing his spirit to his Father's care. He of whom it was said he was the light of men (John 1: 4), and who had said of himself that he was the life (John 11: 25), was now dead. It seemed as if Satan had conquered him who said that he was the resurrection and the life.

⁶ But the conquest was not what is seemed, nor what Satan hoped for. There could not be said to be any conquest, since the death of Jesus was wrought at a time appointed of the Father and for a certain purpose according to the divine plan. Thus Jesus died a victim of wickedness of the Jews, and of a careless indifference

of Rome; but he was not taken from his work. Though he was murdered, he died by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. (See Acts 2: 23) His death lies to the charge of the generation of his day; but he was God's sacrifice for sin, and the will of God was done in his death and exactly at the appointed time.

⁷ It must be noted that Jesus was not hindered in his work even by what happened through Judas. He kept the passover with his disciples undisturbed, and afterwards said all that he wished to say. He had previously said, "My hour has not yet come." Now it had come, but he had finished the work given him to do.

⁸ We may know for certain that Jesus had finished his work. He had fulfilled all the prophecies written concerning himself; there remained only the few which told of what should be done to him during his last hours, or which specially were to be fulfilled by him in his dying. The soldiers cast lots for his garments as he hung on the cross. He cried, "I thirst!" as had been foretold. He cried in his distress to God; and having finished everything written of him he commended his spirit to God.—Psalms 22: 1, 18; 69: 21; John 17: 4.

⁹ Satan is the one who has had the power of death. (Hebrews 2: 14) He has brought much suffering upon the human race by the bitterness of strife, perhaps by diseases; for he has ever sought to have the character of God misunderstood and misjudged by men. But he has been altogether unable to touch the Lord's people except by permission.

¹⁰ Jesus said, "I lay down my life . . . no man taketh it from me." (John 10: 17, 18) He might have avoided Jerusalem and thus have continued his life. Or being in Jerusalem he might have called upon God to keep him from the power of evil men. Also he might have resisted, as when in Gethsemane he caused the mob to fall back when he spoke. (Matthew 26: 53; John 18: 6) He knew that it was part of his work for his Father that he should die, and he knew the time had come when his offering of himself made at Jordan long ago should now be completed in sacrifice.

¹¹ That the death of Christ was a life offered as a sacrifice to make atonement for the sin of the human race is not accepted by the Modernist. He rejects the teaching of Paul and the other apostles, and of Jesus himself. This doctrine, he says, savors of Judaism; and he claims it to be not the teaching of Jesus but of the Apostle Paul who, he says, was a Jew who never got free from Judaism and who succeeded in fastening the doctrine of atonement on the teaching of Jesus. Instead of considering Paul as a great gift of God to the church the Modernist looks upon him as the one who led it astray. The truth is, these men do not want the truth of the ransom; they know well it is absolutely

fatal to their dogma of evolution; both cannot live in the church.

¹² But the teaching of the ransom does not depend upon Paul, though it was given to him to state it for the church and to show its philosophy. God had long shown his people that acceptance with him could be gained only by atonement for sin; and when Jesus came it was said of him that he was the Lamb of God which should take away the sin of the world. The only reasonable interpretation of that saying is that he was God's Lamb of sacrifice.—Isaiah 53:7.

¹³ Fundamentalists as well as Modernists err in respect to the atonement. Like the Modernist they are held fast by the creeds. Teaching that Jesus was God (who cannot die), also that as man he had an immortal soul and therefore could not die, their only basis for sin atonement is Jesus' obedience. But the basis of a ransom is a corresponding price; and in the case of mankind it must be a human life for a human life.—Hebrews 2:9.

¹⁴ The ransom consisted not in the fact of obedience as against disobedience, nor in an exhibition of loyalty under suffering, nor in an act of righteousness as against a sin. The value of the ransom was in the voluntarily sacrificed human life given as a ransom price to make sin atonement for the world. So the Scripture says, "He poured out his soul [his being] unto death." (Isaiah 53:12) It was the person of Jesus which died.

¹⁵ Jesus said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again." (John 10:17) If he died he had the promise of the Father that he should be delivered from death in and by a resurrection. In these words Jesus discloses the intimate relationship between himself and his Father. The Father loved the Son because he was willing to go into death in faith and trust in his Father's power to bring him back from the dead. Hitherto a few dead bodies had been revived, thus temporarily restoring the soul or being; but there had never been complete resurrection from the dead.

¹⁶ Death could not hurt the Son of God. Not that while dead he had the ability to break free from it, but because there was no reason in himself why he should die, and because as our golden text reminds us, there was an arrangement by the Father that if Jesus laid down his life he should take it again. He laid it down in sacrifice; but knowing the Father's purpose for him he by faith took it again. He died in the sure hope of a resurrection.

¹⁷ That Jesus did not expect to be raised as a man is clear; for he spoke of giving his flesh for the life of men; and the Scriptures show that his body, his human life, had been prepared for him for the purpose of making a sacrifice for sins. (Hebrews 10:5) Hence death to him was much more than expecting to have his lungs quickened after they had ceased functioning.

¹⁸ According to the Scriptures Jesus was raised from the dead on the third day, very early in the morning. During that day he was seen by many of the loved ones, and by the disciples as they met together at night. They all knew that their Lord was raised; but because he was changed none knew him till he disclosed himself to them. Nor apparently did he ever appear twice in the same form.—See Acts 1:3.

¹⁹ It should be noted that the New Testament consistently speaks of Jesus as being raised from the dead by his Father. This is, of course, in harmony with the fact that Jesus the person died—the Bible knows nothing of the dogma of the creeds that dead human beings are more alive than ever. There are only two passages in the New Testament which, even on the surface reading, could be made to lend any support to the teaching of orthodoxy that Jesus raised himself from the dead. But neither of these gives support to the dogma.

²⁰ One of these passages is when Jesus speaking, of the temple of his body, said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (John 2:19) But it should be noted that Jesus did not here refer to the actual bringing again of his physical body into life, but of himself as the temple of truth. His word was fulfilled when on the third day, being raised from the dead by the *glory of the Father* (Romans 6:4), he again began his ministry to his disciples, explaining the Scriptures, and proving that all things written of him in the Psalms and in the prophets had been fulfilled. (Luke 24:44) As a further fulfilment his body members are being raised up on this third thousand-year day since Calvary.

²¹ The other passage forms the golden text for today. Jesus said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again." This passage refers to Jesus during his lifetime when, laying down his life as a sacrifice, he by faith laid hold of that life which his Father had promised him at his right hand, as is shown in the prophecy which spoke of his resurrection. (Psalm 16:11) The resurrection of Jesus is God's assurance of a resurrection for all.—Acts 24:15; John 5:28, 29; Philippians 3:11, *Diaglott*.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

Did Jesus raise himself from death? Why did he apparently shrink from the ordeal of the cross? ¶ 1, 2.

Why was Jesus' sacrifice acceptable to God? Was it necessary that he be crucified? ¶ 3, 4.

Why was not his death a victory for Satan? ¶ 5-7.

Mention some of the prophecies which Jesus by his death fulfilled. Why does St. Paul declare that Satan has the power of death? Does he have power over all? ¶ 8-10.

How is the doctrine of atonement regarded by Modernists? By Fundamentalists? Of what does the ransom really consist? ¶ 11-14.

Did Jesus, in John 10:17, mean that while dead he could take up his life by his own power? ¶ 15, 16.

Did Jesus expect to be resurrected as a man? ¶ 17, 18.

What two texts have been misinterpreted to mean that Jesus raised himself out of death? Explain these passages fully. ¶ 19-22.

REVIEW: THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

—MARCH 28—

"These are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye may have life in his name."—John 20: 31, R. V.

THE studies for the past quarter of a year have taken us through our Lord's ministry as recorded by the Apostle John, though only some of the more important items have come under review. It is evident that his mind was full of his Master's work; and that his memory, aided by the holy spirit according to Jesus' promise, brought back to remembrance the Lord's words and deeds.—John 16: 4.

² We need not suppose that John, who wrote his Gospel so much later than the others, did so to make an attempt to complete their unfinished works; rather we should understand that Matthew, Mark, and Luke, guided by the holy spirit, had each written all that was necessary from their respective points of view. It follows that John was guided by the holy spirit to give to the church those things which were then becoming necessary to its life, and which must serve for guidance as well as food for all those who, becoming true followers of Jesus, would come into the light of truth.

³ When St. John wrote there were already in the church evidences of the very mischievous teaching that Jesus was superhuman and a human manifestation of the deity. This was a perversion of the truth that Jesus came to manifest his Father, and was the beginning of the teaching that Jesus was really the same being as the Father but appearing amongst men in human form.

⁴ At the first the Pharisees and Sadducees, professedly the servants of God but disbelieving the revelation of God concerning Jesus, made out that Jesus was the son of Joseph. But later when there was so much evidence of his divine mission, and Jesus was manifested to so many as the Son of God with power (Romans 1: 4) Satan, aided by the trend of Grecian teaching and of all the heathen mysteries, succeeded in foisting on the people the idea that Jesus was God. Hence John wrote his Gospel that men might know the truth; namely, that Jesus was the Son of God, and that whoever believed in him would have life by him: "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John 20: 31) Yet in spite of this, ecclesiastics still persist in saying that John's Gospel was written to prove that Jesus was the divine being in human form, a perversion as definite as when at the first Satan said deliberately that God had not told the truth.—Genesis 3: 4.

⁵ John begins his story of Jesus' ministry by telling that the Logos, the Word, who was with the Father in the beginning, and who himself was a god, a mighty one, became flesh "and dwelt among us". (John 1: 14) It is only the necessity of error that causes the further

perversion of dogma which claims that John's "in the beginning" means eternal existence, which has no beginning. Nothing in all Scripture gives support to that thought. Its statements are that he was the firstborn of all creation.—Colossians 1: 15; Revelation 3: 14.

⁶ Jesus was born a true babe of Mary of Bethlehem, and was under her care and that of Joseph till manhood. He continued to live at Nazareth till the time came when he should enter into his service for God. John was associated with him from the first day of his ministry. He and Andrew went to Jesus on the day that John Baptist pointed his disciples to Jesus; and John, who was with him at the last hour, said: "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."—John 1: 14.

⁷ Once Jesus' ministry began it continued without break. Peter and Philip and Nathanael came quickly in touch with him; and they, with James, the brother of John, became disciples and ultimately apostles. This ready response to Jesus was, under divine providence, partly due to the faithful ministry of the Baptist. Among the people were some ready to receive the truth; but they needed to be prepared. Hence John Baptist was sent to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. (Luke 1: 17) It was the Baptist's pleasure to know Jesus first, and to point out that Jesus was the one sent of God, the Lamb of God who should take away the sin of the world.—John 1: 29.

⁸ The studies next brought our attention to Jesus and Nicodemus, and to the great truths which were told to that doubting and hesitating inquirer. It was to him by night on the silent hillside of Olivet that Jesus first clearly stated the wondrous love of God in giving his Son as a means whereby the world might be brought to him. Jesus repictured Israel in the wilderness bitten by fiery serpents because of their sin, and the brazen serpent which Moses set upon a pole, and said that he was thus to be treated and the world might look to him and live. Jesus foresaw his shameful death; but he was a glad sharer in his Father's plan because he too loved mankind, amongst whom for a time he had come to dwell.

⁹ After this John tells at length the incident of Jesus and the women at the well, and how Jesus told her that he had the water of life to give, such water as those who drank of it would know they had everlasting satisfaction. This, the first clear statement of this fact, was given, not to a multitude, not even to an inquiring Jew, but to a woman of Samaria who was not even a good woman. But Jesus, untrammelled by the limitations of Jewish prejudice and tradition, and who judged not according to the sight of the eyes (Isaiah 11: 3),

saw in the woman one to whom he could give these precious truths, and who would become a channel of blessing to others. To an extent the woman, and the others of Sychar with whom Jesus stayed for two days, drank then of "that life-giving stream" but their full joy could come only after Jesus himself had entered into his glory, and had sent the holy spirit.—Acts 8:14-17.

¹⁰ After this John tells of Jesus feeding 5000 men and women, and how in connection with the miracle Jesus said, "I am that bread of life." (John 6:48) That truth which he had to give if eaten would bring lasting life to the eater, not as with earthly food which merely refreshes and reinvigorates for a few hours. Jesus said that whoever came to him should not henceforth hunger, and he who believed him should never thirst again.

¹¹ The next study was the incident of Jesus healing a man blind from birth, the first miracle of its kind (John 9:1), and specially wrought to show another phase of Jesus' ministry, and evidently intended to set forth the purpose of God in respect to every disability of mankind. The miracle was wrought on a sabbath morning in Jerusalem, to the great vexation of the Pharisees and of this religious people. This wondrous miracle which ought to have raised the hopes of Israel to the highest pitch because at last God's power was amongst them, became to them a reason for questioning whether or not this miracle-worker was a good or bad man. The majority judged that he was bad because he did not conform to their ideas of how the sabbath should be kept.

¹² But the real reason was that Jesus ignored these ecclesiastics; and this was a cause of deep anger. They excommunicated both Jesus and the man who was the recipient of his goodness. Jesus said that this man's blindness was for the glory of God. His purpose in the miracle was to show that God intends to make everlasting good come out of the blindness and perversity of human nature since the day it came under the power of evil. (Genesis 3:17) It was on that occasion that Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." (John 9:5) His light has as yet reached only the few, but he is to enlighten all in that day when the knowledge of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ will be seen by all.—2 Corinthians 4:6; Habakkuk 2:14.

¹³ This miracle brought forth the parable of the Good Shepherd. Jesus showed himself in contrast with those who called themselves shepherds and said that they were thieves and robbers because they fed on the flock; also that some who posed as shepherds were only hirelings who cared only for their wages; that is, for the living which their occupation gave them. In contrast with these Jesus is the *Good Shepherd* who gives his life for the sheep; for the sheep needed to be ransomed from the power of the grave, and it was arranged between his Father and himself that he should lay down

his life for them. Jesus told these men who wanted his life that no man could take it from him. His sacrifice for his sheep's sake was purely voluntary, out of love and obedience to his Father and love for the sheep.

¹⁴ John now gives an account of the greatest of Jesus' miracles, the raising of Lazarus of Bethany from the dead. Of this death, as in the case of the man born blind, Jesus said that it was for the glory of God. This miracle or revivification was unique because the body of Lazarus was already corrupting when Jesus restored him to life; and never hitherto had there been such a miracle or restoration. The breaking down of the corruption was arrested, and health was given to the organs, and Lazarus came forth from the grave restored to his family as when smitten by the sickness.

¹⁵ It was at that time Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life." (John 11:25) It is evident therefore that the miracle was intended to show that God purposed by Jesus to overcome the power of death and to restore its victims. God's glory is to be manifested in the raising of the dead human family to life. See Acts 17:31; Numbers 14:21; Isaiah 25:8.

¹⁶ This miracle roused the hatred of Israel's leaders, and they gladly would have put Jesus to death. Despite this, and knowing that the coming passover would be the end of his earthly life, Jesus went to Jerusalem presenting himself riding upon an ass as the one who fulfilled the Scriptures written concerning the Messiah, and who properly received the acclamations of the people. The Pharisees began to scheme how they could destroy him. Day by day they met Jesus, and he disclosed their hallow pretensions and hypocrisies.

¹⁷ Exactly on time, as Jesus was keeping the passover with his disciples, the betrayer Judas went out to give him into the hands of the Pharisees. But Jesus continued his last words with his disciples undisturbed, until the hour came when he should be delivered into the hands of his enemies. The last few hours with his disciples, in which he gave them lessons in humility and guidance for their future conduct and welfare, were the most solemn of his life.

¹⁸ Then Jesus was led as a lamb to the slaughter, was crucified by the Romans on the clamorous call of the Jews, both leaders and people; and he died "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3:18), and that the world might be delivered from its distresses. But according to the Scriptures he was raised on the third day, and manifested himself to his disciples. By his resurrection he was demonstrated to be the Son of God with power.—Romans 1:4.

¹⁹ John states his reason for writing these things, but ecclesiastics prefer not to accept his word. He says, "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life through his name." (John 20:31) They say that John wrote to prove that Jesus was God himself.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

Since the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke were already written, why did St. John deem it necessary to write on the same general subject? What error did he seek to correct? ¶ 1-4.

How does John begin his narrative, and how have his words been perverted? ¶ 5.

When did John become a disciple of Jesus? Which disciple was with the Master in his last hour? What part did John the Baptist play in the inauguration of Jesus' ministry? ¶ 5-7.

What great truth did Jesus tell to Nicodemus? ¶ 8.

Relate the incident of Jesus and the woman at the well.

Also that of the feeding of the five thousand. ¶ 9, 10. Why did not the healing of the man born blind draw admiration from all? What was Jesus' purpose in giving the parable of the Good Shepherd? ¶ 11-13.

What was the Master's greatest miracle, and what was it intended to show? ¶ 14, 15.

Did Jesus then realize that his death was near? Relate the outstanding circumstances leading to the crucifixion. ¶ 16-18.

What does St. John say was his reason for writing his Gospel? Then why do ecclesiastics ignore and pervert it? ¶ 19.

JESUS APPEARS TO HIS DISCIPLES

—APRIL 4—JOHN 20:24-29; 21:15-17—

"Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

—John 20:29.

THE women who had followed Jesus to Calvary and waited there while he was on the cross, and who had sought to serve him at his hurried burial, were ready at the tomb on the first day of the week in order to continue the work of covering the body with spices, as was the custom, and thus to do their last possible service for their Master.

² To the surprise of the women they found that the stone which had been placed over the mouth of the tomb was rolled away. They were told by some, whom they discerned to be angels, that the Lord was risen; and they were bidden to go and tell this to the disciples. They went; and Peter and John ran to the tomb, but found only the empty sepulchre.

³ A little later as Mary Magdalene lingered in the garden, weeping, one whom she supposed to be the gardener asked her why she wept. She, presuming he knew, in turn asked him what had been done with the body of her Master. It was Jesus who had spoken to her; now as she was turned from him he spoke her name, Mary. The voice, the intonation, and the familiarity revealed the Lord. She called him Rabboni, or Master, a name which told of her acceptance of him.

⁴ She would have fallen at his feet to worship him and hold him in such affectionate embrace as was possible to her; but he bade her go to "my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God". (John 20:17) Obediently she went, to become the first bearer of the message of brotherhood as between her risen Jesus and his disciples, and of his forthcoming ascension.

⁵ Jesus next appeared to the other women as they were yet on their way to the disciples; he met them and made himself known to them. They were filled with joy; for their Lord was surely alive. But he was different; for even to these devoted women who had been with him he was not known until he manifested himself.

⁶ Later in the day Jesus appeared to Peter, but no record is given of what was said by either. During the

afternoon of that same day he joined himself to two of the disciples who were leaving Jerusalem for Emmaus, who appear to have waited during the earlier part of the day for any news of their Master. They had heard of the empty tomb and of what the women had said; but like the others they considered that these were but strange tales of excited women.—Luke 24:11.

⁷ The stranger, as they thought he was, began to ask them why they appeared sad; and they asked him if he had been in the city during the week-end and had not heard the strange things that had taken place. They told him of their faith in Jesus of Nazareth, and now of their disappointment in not seeing him that day. To their surprise their companion began to show from the Scriptures that all things that were written about Christ were being fulfilled in the things which were happening; and speaking plainly to them he said, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" —Luke 24:25, 26.

⁸ Their conversation continued throughout the eight miles of their journey; and when they reached Emmaus they desired the stranger to turn in with them and take some refreshment. This he did; but as the meal was served he took upon himself to give thanks and to bless the food. This act stirred their imagination; and as the stranger did and said that which only their Master had done, their eyes were opened and they saw that he was their Lord. But he vanished from sight, and they set out at once to return to Jerusalem to tell the others the glad news. Arriving there, they learned that the Lord had also appeared to Peter and to the other apostles, Thomas being absent.

⁹ We may ask, Why did not the Lord call first for the disciples so as to meet them and assure them of his resurrection? We may answer that very probably he had their safety in mind. Had he called for them he might have brought them into dangerous prominence. Also before he parted with them he had told them that

they should go into Galilee (Matthew 26:32), and they had not seen any urgency for obeying him. But at evening Jesus gave them his blessing.—John 20:22.

¹⁰ In all Jesus appeared eleven times to his loved ones after his resurrection: (1) Faithful loving Mary was given the witness of the resurrection; then (2) the women who had loved and served; then (3) Peter, now of a broken heart because he had denied his Lord; then (4) the two disciples, perhaps to show that all the disciples were the Lord's care; and (5) finally Jesus appeared to the company of apostles, Thomas being absent. Then after an interval of a week he (6) appeared to the eleven on the first day of the week, Thomas being present. Then during the following thirty-two days he appeared (7) to some of them on a mountain in Galilee; (8) to some on the lake shore; (9) to James; (10) to 500 brethren at once; (11) finally to the disciples when he took them as far as Bethany that they might be witnesses of his ascension. After this Paul says, "Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."—1 Corinthians 15:8.

¹¹ The witnesses of Jesus' resurrection were chosen; but even so, in no case did any see the Lord till he disclosed himself to them. Luke says that he showed himself "not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead". (Acts 10:41) It is clear that there was no purpose to make the resurrection known to all by Jesus showing himself to the people.

¹² Further proofs of the resurrection were to be and have been found in the power which came upon the disciples when the holy spirit was given, and for which Jesus bade his disciples wait. By these things men should know that they, his disciples, were still in communion with him. And when in course of events the fact of the resurrection will be made known to all the world it will not be because men have discovered it; the truth will be forced on their attention by the return in power of Jesus of Nazareth to establish the kingdom of God.—Revelation 1:7.

¹³ The true explanation as to God's apparent slowness in bringing salvation ecclesiastics refuse to accept. They will not see that there are two ages in which God makes known his plan of salvation; the one, the present age, between the two advents; the other to come, which is known as "the reign of Christ".—Matthew 13:16; Isaiah 52:10.

¹⁴ When Jesus and Thomas met and Jesus used Thomas' words of doubt (though, as Thomas knew, Jesus had not been told them) Thomas' doubts flew from him. With practical mind and loyal heart he saw that Jesus was all he claimed to be, and more than Thomas had fondly hoped; and, giving him the style and place which God had for him he said, "My Lord and my God."—John 20:28.

¹⁵ Because Thomas said this, ecclesiastics have claimed his words as proof of the absolute divinity of Jesus.

Had they not been hard pressed to find proofs for their dogma of the trinity they would not have used that argument. They ignore the saying of Jesus who as a brother, even after his resurrection, said, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father: to my God, and your God." (John 20:17) Thomas saw that Jesus was the one of whom the psalmist wrote, who was both Lord and God, yet was the servant of Jehovah.—Psalms 45:6; 110:1.

¹⁶ Of all the things written concerning the advent of Jesus Christ, and which have been held by church systems as things most necessary to be believed, nearly all are now rejected by the Modernist. Even those less extreme have given up belief in the miraculous birth of Jesus as something which cannot be held in the light of present day advancement in knowledge. The miracles are explained away or denied.

¹⁷ But all profess to hold the resurrection of Jesus as the one great fact which is unassailable; the great unmovable rock; the last trench, which can never be taken. And yet Christendom's rock is but a negative thing; it trusts in *the empty tomb*; the body of Jesus was not there. And indeed Christendom is trusting for its greatest fact to a negation; for it holds an entirely erroneous view of the resurrection of Christ, one which of necessity must fail it.

¹⁸ It starts with the perverse dogma of the person of Jesus, saying Jesus was God in the fullest sense. It claims as an essential of Christianity that it must be believed that Jesus and his Father are one being; it claims that when he said, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30), he meant so to be understood. This being so, it would have been impossible for Jesus to die. Beside this Christendom teaches as an essential of Christianity that man is immortal and cannot die.

¹⁹ Accordingly, from that point of view, Jesus being God by nature, incorruptible and immortal, and being man also endowed with immortality, could not die; it follows that they must say his death did not affect his being, and that he was as much alive as ever; and that if he was to experience a resurrection it could be only in the matter of his body, the coming together again of his spirit and his body. In turn they must hold that Jesus took his human body to heaven, and is forever limited by it, so that on his return to earth he must come in that human form and be visible to men.

²⁰ All this is contrary to Jesus' own words. Jesus always said he was the Son of God. The Scriptures show that he was born a true human child, and died a true man; that he was sent by his Father to die for man that a way of salvation might be opened for mankind. It is derogatory to God and to Jesus to say his resurrection was only the reunion of his "soul" and body, and that he took a human body to heaven. Holding a wholly wrong view of the resurrection of Jesus, ecclesiastics still teach that the corrupted human bodies are necessary to resurrection. They do not believe their own creeds in this, but they have no alternative.

²¹ The Apostle Paul says (1 Corinthians 15:38) that God, through Christ, will raise the dead, giving such a body as pleases him, to the church a spirit body, because their dwelling place is in heaven; to mankind a human body in the likeness of Adam before his fall and of Jesus as a perfect man, commensurate with *man's* home and earthly needs, for "the earth hath he given to the children of men".—Psalm 115:16.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

Why did the women come to Jesus' tomb on the morning of the third day? What did they see and hear? ¶ 1, 2. How did Jesus appear to Mary Magdalene, and what message did he give her? ¶ 3, 4.

To whom else did Jesus manifest himself that day? ¶ 5-8. Why did Jesus not call for all of his disciples as soon as he was raised? How many times did he appear to his disciples after his resurrection? Name the occurrences. ¶ 9, 10.

Why did Jesus not manifest himself to the people in general? Aside from his appearances to his disciples, what further proof do we have of his resurrection? ¶ 11, 12. Why has God apparently been so slow in bringing salvation to mankind? ¶ 13.

What words of Thomas have been grossly misapplied? Explain his statement. ¶ 14, 15.

How much of the recorded facts concerning Jesus' first advent do Modernists believe? What is Christendom's view of the Lord's resurrection? ¶ 16-19.

How is their erroneous view derogatory to both God and Jesus? What is the truth on this subject? ¶ 20, 21.

PRAYER-MEETING TEXT COMMENTS

TEXT FOR MARCH 3

"The city of the Lord."—Isaiah 60:14.

THE Prophet Isaiah identifies the servant as the elect of God, in whom he delights. This servant class is the Christ, Head and body. In fact Christ Jesus is the servant, and the body members are added thereto. He was despised and rejected by the Jews, particularly by the ecclesiastical element. He has been despised ever since by those whom Satan the enemy has been able to use. The same may be said of all faithful ones who have followed in Jesus' footsteps.

The Christ, Head and body, are called "the city of the Lord", because they constitute the official family of God's organization. At this time the Lord Jesus Christ has begun his reign. The nation of righteousness is born. The time draws near when the Jews, the descendants of those who persecuted the Lord, will be turning to the Lord. The nations and peoples of the earth will be seeking the Lord that they may find the way to life. All who get life must willingly be submissive to the Christ. This is in harmony with the statement of Revelation 3:9 to the effect: "Behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." Hence the prophet of God, addressing the servant class, now says: "The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel."—Isaiah 60:14.

Members of the church yet on earth occupy a unique and remarkably favorable position. These are specially commissioned to act as witnesses for Jehovah and to declare his name to the people. Faithfully performing this commission and duty to the end they shall become members of the blessed "city of God". This glorious prospect set before the Christians should now encourage them and be a great inducement to faithfulness, and these should with joy continue to sing: "Blessed be the Lord out of Zion."

TEXT FOR MARCH 10

"He shall be a priest upon his throne."—Zech. 6:13.

THE loyal son of Jehovah came to earth and became a man in obedience to his Father's will. He endured the contradiction of sinners especially for three and one-half years. He was subjected to the most ignominious death at the instance of those who claimed to be his Father's representatives. By the things which he suffered he learned obedience. He was thereby perfected. (Hebrews 5:8) To him Jehovah granted the greatest of all honors. To him is committed all power and authority in heaven and earth. He is the builder of the temple of God and is himself the chief corner stone. The glory and honor are his.

He has now taken his power as king and rules. Contrary to every arrangement of man he is a priest upon his throne. By this is meant that he rules as king and as priest of the Most High God, of which Melchizedek was a type: he is the active officer of the divine plan.

Some of his body members are already with him. Some are still in the flesh. It is now the privilege of the latter to be witnesses for Jehovah and to declare unto the world God's plan of salvation. With delight they do so. Therefore it is written concerning the Lord: "Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and he shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."—Zechariah 6:13.

The Lord Jesus makes the promise to his faithful followers: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Revelation 3:21.

The saints now are the most favored because they are witnesses of the incoming kingdom of God and have the prospect of the greatest favors in the near future when made members of the royal house of heaven. There is every reason why they should be declaring the praises of Jehovah.

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