



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, for the powers of the heavens 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. 24:38; Mark 13:29; Luke 21:25-31.

## THIS JOURNAL AND ITS SACRED MISSION

**T**HIS journal is published by the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY for the purpose of aiding the people to understand the divine plan. It provides systematic Bible study in which all its readers may regularly engage. It gives announcement of the visits made to Bible classes by traveling speakers, announces conventions, and gives the reports thereof. The International Sunday School lessons are treated in harmony with the Scriptures.

It adheres strictly to the Bible as God's revealed Word of Truth. It stands firmly upon the great ransom sacrifice as the fundamental doctrine by which all doctrines are measured. It is free from parties, sects, and creeds of men. It does not assume a dogmatic attitude, but confidently invites a careful examination of its utterances in the light of the infallible Word of God. It does not indulge in controversies, and its columns are not open to personalities.

### TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

**THAT JEHOVAH** is the only true God, the Maker of heaven and earth, and is from everlasting to everlasting; that the Logos was the beginning of his creation; that the Logos became a man; that he is now the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, clothed with all power in heaven and earth.

**THAT GOD** created the earth for man, created perfect man for the earth and placed him upon it; that man willfully disobeyed God's law and was sentenced to death; that by reason of Adam's wrongful act all men are born sinners and without the right to life.

**THAT JESUS** was made a human being in order that he might become the Redeemer of man; that he gave his life a sacrifice for man and thereby produced the ransom price; that Jesus the divine arose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and presented the value of his human sacrifice as the redemptive price for man.

**THAT** for many centuries God, through Christ, has been

selecting from amongst men the members of his church, which constitutes the body of Christ; that the mission of the church is to follow in the footsteps of her Lord Christ Jesus, grow in his likeness, give testimony to the name and plan of Jehovah God, and ultimately be glorified with Christ Jesus in his heavenly kingdom; that Christ, Head and body, constitutes the "seed of Abraham" through which all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

**THAT THE WORLD HAS ENDED;** that the Lord Jesus has returned and is now present; that Jehovah has placed Christ Jesus upon his throne and now commands all nations and peoples to hear and obey him.

**THAT THE HOPE** of the peoples of earth is restoration to human perfection during the reign of Christ; that the reign of Christ will afford opportunity to every man to have a fair trial for life and those who obey will live on earth for ever in a state of happiness.

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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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### BETHEL SPECIAL TRAIN TO TORONTO

The Bethel Special train will leave Pennsylvania Station, New York, at 6:05 p. m., Sunday, July 17th, arriving at destination Monday morning about 8:30 o'clock, in time for breakfast in Toronto. Returning this train will leave Toronto at 9:30 a. m., on Wednesday, July 27th, arriving Niagara Falls about noon; leaves Niagara Falls at 11:30 p. m., and arrives at Pennsylvania Station, New York, at 11:35 a. m., Thursday the 28th. Note: TIME SHOWN IS DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME.

A special car will be run from Atlanta, Ga., to Toronto. Friends living in that vicinity may address C. R. Thomas, 441-2 East Hunter St., Atlanta, Ga., for information in re this car.

Special train from Chicago, via Grand Trunk Railroad,

will leave Chicago 6:00 a. m., Standard Time (7:00 a. m., Chicago Time), July 17th, arriving in Toronto early that evening. Later trains can be taken if desired. Write A. L. Seely for information regarding this train, addressing him at 7642 Normal Avenue., Chicago, Ill.

### WORLD-WIDE WITNESS

We strongly advocate that every class on Sunday, August 28th, and Sunday, September 4th, suspend all meetings, and let these be general field days for every member of the class to go out in the active service from door to door, and close the day with a testimony meeting at 7:00 o'clock. This will afford an opportunity for everyone to preach the gospel.

### BETHEL HYMNS FOR AUGUST

Sunday		7	289	14	292	21	266	28	317	
Monday	1	157	8	87	15	225	22	310	29	330
Tuesday	2	314	9	Ap. C	16	140	23	313	30	93
Wednesday	3	219	10	1	17	177	24	272	31	154
Thursday	4	251	11	280	18	178	25	269		
Friday	5	200	12	152	19	72	26	40		
Saturday	6	176	13	49	20	30	27	171		

## I.B.S.A. BEREAN BIBLE STUDIES

By Means of "The Watch Tower"

"The New Creation"

"Ministry of The New Creation"

Z April 15, 1927

Z May 1, 1927

Week of Aug. 7 . . . ¶ 1-24

Week of Aug. 21 . . . ¶ 1-23

Week of Aug. 14 . . . ¶ 25-48

Week of Aug. 28 . . . ¶ 24-46

# The WATCH TOWER

## AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

Vol. XLVIII

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### THE OVERCOMERS

*"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.*

**T**HIS text is included in the revelation which God gave to Jesus Christ to show unto his servants that which must shortly come to pass. For this reason overcomers are limited to the anointed servant class. All who are begotten and anointed by the holy spirit become members of the servant class. Whether all these remain as members of that servant class is another thing. The Scriptures show that many do not remain of that class, because of unfaithfulness. Those who are overcomers must finish their earthly course faithfully serving God.

<sup>2</sup> An overcomer is one who engages in a conflict or contest, subdues his enemy and gains the victory. That victory must be complete. There is no Scriptural authority for one to expect or even hope to quietly enter the back door of the kingdom of heaven. No battle can be fought nor can any victory be won by anyone who is slothful, fearful or indifferent. There are no "exceeding great and precious promises" to the inactive or compromising ones. On the contrary it is written: "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1: 10, 11) Those whom the Lord admits into his holy presence as members of the bride class must be such as gain a decided victory; and the time will come when all shall know who these are.

#### WHAT TO BE OVERCOME

<sup>3</sup> The Servant of Jehovah is composed of Christ Jesus the Head, and his church, who are members of his body. The battle of the overcomers must be fought while the members of The Christ are on the earth and in course of development. In order that we may determine what is to be overcome we must have in mind what Christ overcame. Concerning him it is written that he "was in all points tempted [put to the test] like as we are, yet without sin". (Hebrews 4: 15) Although perfect and without blemish or fault, and having no sin, yet the enemy put Jesus to a great test or conflict, and Jesus gained the victory. The above text

is proof that the body members must engage in a similar conflict and gain the victory in order to be with the Lord. The fight of the body members who are overcomers must be with the same enemy and upon the same general points as those with which Jesus contended. Seeing that his body members are by nature sinners it is manifest that none of these could overcome in his own strength, but he must gain the victory by and through the strength received through the Head, Christ Jesus.

<sup>4</sup> Many who have made a consecration to do the will of God have been induced to believe that by the 'development of a character' pleasing to the Lord they could gain the kingdom as overcomers. How absolutely unfounded in the Scriptures is such a conclusion! This has been one of the subtle tricks of the adversary to ensnare the consecrated. The generally accepted definition of character is moral quality, chastity, virtue, and honesty in dealing with fellow creatures. If a man is moral, chaste and honest it is properly said that he is a good character, because man is a character. He must be either a good or a bad character. Surely every one must admit that the man Jesus was a good character. He was perfect, holy, harmless, and without sin. He was therefore good. Notwithstanding his perfection he was put to a test; and the Scriptures show that his body members are put to a like test and that as he overcame they must overcome, because this is the condition precedent to sitting with him on his throne.

<sup>5</sup> What was it against which Jesus fought? What was necessary for him to overcome? When he was about to take his departure from the earth he called his disciples together and to the faithful eleven he gave advice and instruction. He told them how that they would be cast out of the synagogues and would be ill-treated, and how they would have much sorrow. He told them that if during these experiences of sorrow they were faithful, the holy spirit would comfort them; and then for their aid he said to them: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome

the world." (John 16:33) It is therefore certain that it was the world that Jesus had to fight against and to overcome, and it likewise follows that it is the world against which the members of the body of Christ must war and gain the victory if they would enter the kingdom.

#### WHAT IS THE WORLD?

<sup>6</sup> There has been a great misconception of what constitutes "the world". Many have thought that the things that are grossly evil and immoral in the sight of men are the things of the world. Others have thought that harmless amusements constitute the world. Since the Lord came to his temple there has been a clearer vision of what constitutes the world. In harmony with his promise there have been flashes of light illuminating the minds of the temple class. (Revelation 11:19) It is now clearly understood by the anointed that "the present evil world" is the Devil's organization. This is one of the 'wonders appearing in heaven'.—Revelation 12:3.

<sup>7</sup> At the time that Jesus was giving his last instruction to his disciples he referred to Satan as the "prince of this world". That meant that Satan was the world's chief ruler. The Apostle Paul wrote concerning Satan the Devil that he is "the god of this world". (2 Corinthians 4:4) Being the prince or god or chief ruler of this world, therefore it follows that the world must be Satan's organization. There is a visible and an invisible part of the world. Symbolically the invisible part is spoken of as "heaven", while the visible part is spoken of as "the earth". While it is true that Satan has now been cast out of heaven, to which he long had access, yet he is still invisible to human eyes; and the invisible part of his organization is made up of himself and the demons that work with him, who are also invisible. The visible part of his organization or earth is designated under the symbolic term "beast", because of its harsh disposition.

<sup>8</sup> When God pronounced the judgment upon man and Lucifer, he said: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Genesis 3:15) Since the seed of the woman is to bruise the head of the serpent, which is the Devil and his organized power, it follows that the seed of the woman is God's instrument; and therefore the woman symbolizes God's organization, which is sometimes called Zion. God is the Father or Lifegiver; and Zion is the mother, which gives birth to the government and to the individuals making up that government of righteousness.

<sup>9</sup> The Scriptures bear out the conclusion that the enemy Satan has counterfeited every part of the divine plan. This he has done to ridicule Jehovah and to turn the minds of the people away from him. Satan has a "seed", of which he is the father. There must also be a mother of that seed; and since the mother of the seed of promise or seed of righteousness is symbolized by a woman, we should expect to find a woman used as a symbol

of the Devil's wicked system. This we do find in the Scriptures. That woman is called "mystery, Babylon the great, or mother of harlots". (Revelation 17:5) It is that devilish and wicked organization, symbolized by the evil woman or great city, that has long ruled over the nations and kingdoms of the earth. "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."—Revelation 17:18.

<sup>10</sup> The city of Jerusalem is used as a symbol of God's organization. It is authoritatively stated that Jerusalem is the mother of all of the seed of promise. This mother is otherwise spoken of as Zion, which gives birth to the kingdom that rules the nations of the earth, symbolized by a man child. Babylon, the counterfeit, that great evil city, that 'mother of harlots and abominations', the Devil's organization, gives birth to the wicked government, both visible and invisible, which rules the kingdoms of the earth.

<sup>11</sup> As the term Zion is properly applied to God's organization as a whole and also to the members of the body of Christ individually, even so the name Babylon is properly applied to the Devil's organization as a whole and also to the members of the official family of that wicked organization. Since the chief purpose of all the members of Zion is to glorify God and worship God, even so the chief purpose of Babylon and the members thereof is to worship and glorify the Devil. For this reason some kind of religion is made paramount in every government of earth. Man is so constituted that he naturally worships something; and when he knows not God and does not worship him the Devil sees to it that he, the Devil, is the recipient of man's service and worship.

<sup>12</sup> The "beast", which is a visible part of the Devil's organization and symbolically called in the Scriptures "the earth", is composed of the commercial, political and religious elements which constitute the ruling factor or the instrument of power that rules the people. Is it true then that every man and woman on the earth who is not of God's organization is a part of the Devil's organization? No; because the people in general are ignorant of Satan's organization and submit to it because they know nothing better to do. There are those who have "the mark of the beast" in the *hand*, which means that they lend their power to the support of the wicked organization of Satan. There are those who have the mark of the beast in the *forehead*, which means that they mentally assent to the wicked system of Satan that controls mankind.

<sup>13</sup> There are millions of people who, by reason of coercion and fear, are kept in subjection to the Devil's organization, but who could not properly be said to be willingly a part of that organization. There are persons who are members of God's organization now on earth and who have children that are not consecrated to the Lord; yet these children, as a rule, have no sympathy with the evil systems of the world controlled by

the Devil. Are these children a part of the Devil's organization? They are not, because they are no part of the official system; and yet they are under that system that rules the nations of the earth.

<sup>14</sup> The Devil's organization is therefore that official body, both visible and invisible, that exercises power over mankind, together with the visible and invisible creatures that support those who exercise the ruling power. And when Jesus said, "I have overcome the world," we must understand that he meant that he had completely gained the victory over Satan and his organization, and over the influence brought to bear upon him from and by that wicked organization. His words of encouragement to his disciples, and through them to all his followers, strongly support the conclusion that all who gain the kingdom of God must, through Christ, overcome the Devil and his organization and every part thereof.

#### THE TEST

<sup>15</sup> Shortly following the anointing of Jesus his test began. He went into the mountain, and for forty days he was there engaged in studying the divine plan. Being perfect in organism, and with his mind illuminated by the holy spirit, only a very limited time was required for him to have a clear understanding of the Scriptures. Without doubt he soon saw that the pictures which God had made, by using Israel, foreshadowed what he, Jesus, was to do in reality. God had sent his beloved Son to the earth to perform a special work in the name of Jehovah. The foundation of God's kingdom was now being laid.

<sup>16</sup> Previous to that time God had sent his servants, the prophets, to be his witnesses in the earth; and these had foretold the coming of the Messiah. Satan had falsely accused them, ill-treated them and caused them to be put to death. Now "the seed of promise" had come, he who was to be the King of God's kingdom. Satan knew these things, and his objective was to destroy Jesus. Following his customary way he resorted first to subtlety, flattery, fraud and deception, in attempting to induce Jesus to destroy himself. Failing in this, he resorted to murder.

<sup>17</sup> What was the real issue? Satan and his organization against God and his organization. It was a manifestation of enmity by Satan and his seed against Jehovah and the seed of promise. He who was to be the Head of God's organization had now come to begin a work on earth. God could not approve any creature or thing that would not be entirely loyal to him. Jesus had said: "Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God." He must now prove fully the truth of this statement, and God's way for him to prove it was to be put to the crucial test. If Jesus met the test and won the victory he would prove himself perfect. In order to meet that test he must suffer; and it is written that he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and was thereby made perfect.—Hebrews 5: 8, 9.

<sup>18</sup> Jesus was not "made perfect" as a man, but he proved his perfect, complete, loyal devotion to God. Satan knew that if he could induce Jesus to show the slightest disloyalty to God Jesus would thereby prove his unfitness for God's purposes and would destroy himself. Satan knew of God's promise to send a King upon whose shoulder should rest the kingdom. The contest, therefore, was the evil world and its god against Jehovah and his kingdom of righteousness. Since Jesus was now appointed to the position of King, all Satan's power was now pitted against him to bring about his destruction.

<sup>19</sup> The opportune time for the test was when Jesus had completed his long fast and was hungry and much in need of food. Satan approached Jesus and with words of flattery said, in substance, to him: 'You are the Son of God, and now you have been long without food and you need bread. There is nothing around here to eat. But, of course, with the power you possess as the Son of God you can make bread out of these stones. Do it and satisfy your needs.' On the face of it this statement or suggestion did not seem so bad; but it was a sly and wicked suggestion which, if followed, would have resulted in Jesus' destruction, for the reason that it was not the will of God to have him do that thing.

<sup>20</sup> Jesus had said: "Of mine own self I can do nothing. I came to do the will of my Father." Had he taken any other course it would have been fatal to him. It seems to be God's way to prove anyone who agrees to do God's will. To be loyal means to pursue the course marked out by the law of God. Disloyalty would be to take some other course than that prescribed by Jehovah, regardless of how innocent it might appear. Instead of Jesus' yielding to this seeming unimportant suggestion, he said to Satan: "It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." (Luke 4: 4) The flattery of the world to induce violation of God's law by self-gratification had failed.

<sup>21</sup> Then Satan tried another scheme. Again he resorted to fraud and deception. The issue was, Shall Satan continue for ever to rule, or will God have a kingdom of righteousness on earth? Knowing this, Satan suddenly asked Jesus to visualize all the kingdoms of the world. That would include not only the nations of earth but also the invisible part of the world. Then he said to Jesus, in substance: 'You know that I am god of this world and that all these kingdoms are mine. God has sent you to be King, but in order for you to take possession you would have to oust me. Why should we enter into a contest? I will abdicate now and will give over to you all the kingdoms of the world; and I ask you only one thing in return, and that is that you worship me.'

<sup>22</sup> What would a weakling have done under similar conditions? He would have reasoned something like this: 'My ultimate purpose is to be King and to take over all the kingdoms of the world, and why should I have a combat with Satan when he is willing to give up

to me now? I will make peace with him and thus pursue the course of least resistance. I will take over the kingdoms now, and reform them. Of course, Satan should be considered as entitled to something for this concession; therefore I will give him some worship, and will worship God also.' But Jesus knew no compromise. He replied with vehemence to this assault of the enemy: "Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."—Luke 4: 8.

<sup>23</sup> Satan then attacked from another viewpoint. He said, in substance, to Jesus: 'You have no army, and you have no following of any consequence. You observe that these Pharisees, politicians and wealthy men have great power. If they were for you they could quickly turn the people to you. Or, if all the people should suddenly rise up and demand that you be made King, the Pharisees and the politicians and the big business men would quickly get in line. Now in order for you to convince them that you are the Son of God you must do something out of the ordinary. Go up on the temple and leap from the top thereof into the valley; and when they see that you have come off unhurt they will know that you are a god and not a man. You know that it is written in the Word of Jehovah that his angels will bear you up lest you dash your foot against a stone.'

<sup>24</sup> That was a plausible argument on the part of the Devil, and a man who was inclined to exalt himself would have readily fallen for it. Had Jesus yielded to this temptation he would have died. In response to the Devil he said: "It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." (Luke 4: 12) Again the Devil had failed and Jesus had won.

<sup>25</sup> Then the Devil went away and thought out some other scheme. He lined up the clergy and the politicians and the ultra-rich, and injected into their minds the belief that the man Jesus would advance to power and deprive these earthly great ones of all their power and influence unless they took some action to rid the earth of him. The Devil and his visible agents then concocted a wicked scheme to induce Jesus to say or to do something contrary to God's law. It would prove his disloyalty, and result in his death.—Luke 6: 7.

<sup>26</sup> When the Devil and his agents desire to take advantage of one who is striving to do right it is the custom to invite such an one to dine or otherwise partake of hospitality. This course is taken evidently upon the theory that if a man of great influence and power honors an ordinary person with an invitation to eat with him, the ordinary man will be so overwhelmed thereby that it will be easy for him to conclude that in return he must show some favor to his host. On more than one occasion some Pharisee made a dinner and invited Jesus to partake thereof, and then invited some of the Devil's leading agents to be present. (Luke 7: 36; 11: 37-54) On these occasions of dinner there would be present lawyers, politicians, Pharisees and other tools

of the Devil and his organization, all bent upon catching Jesus in something that he might say, that they might use it to cause him to be destroyed. Satan knew that anything that would induce Jesus to be disloyal to Jehovah would result in his destruction.

<sup>27</sup> On such occasions when Jesus was put to the test he did not bow to these instruments of the world, nor did he smile and fawn upon them; but he told them the plain truth, that they were instruments of the Devil, even while partaking of their food. He made them understand that he knew the motive back of their feigned hospitality. Jesus suffered at their hands, but he was always loyal to his Father. The Devil would see to it that one of these doctors of the law was conveniently at hand to entrap Jesus in his words. (Luke 10: 25) The purpose always was that some occasion might be found to cause the death of Jesus. (Matthew 12: 10; Mark 3: 2; Luke 11: 54; John 8: 6) For three and one-half years Jesus suffered at the hands of the Devil and his organization, but never wavered one jot or tittle.

<sup>28</sup> Jesus was always loyal to God and thereby proved his perfection under test. For this reason he could say to his disciples, in substance: 'You will be hated of the world, because I have chosen you out of the world. If you were of the world, the world would love you; but now, instead, the world will seek your destruction. In the world you shall have tribulation, because the servant must suffer even as the Master has suffered. Do not be discouraged, however; I have overcome the world. Be of good cheer. You can overcome. I will be with you.' Jesus overcame the world, which is the Devil's organization, by reason of the fact that he followed the letter and spirit of God's law and never for one moment deviated therefrom. He was tempted and suffered, and won. The temptation and suffering of his followers must be of like kind; and they who overcome in like manner have the promise of being received into his kingdom, and shall sit with him on his throne.

#### AN ERRONEOUS VIEW

<sup>29</sup> It has been difficult for Christians to learn really and truly what is meant by overcoming. The great difficulty has been because of the subtle and fraudulent schemes of Satan the Devil. He has worked upon the selfish desires and ambitions of men, to overreach them. Many a person upon becoming a Christian has reasoned like this: 'Now I am a Christian and I must develop a character, and by this means overcome the world, the flesh, and the Devil; and when I have done this, God will take me into his kingdom.' Their course of action has proven that many did not understand and appreciate what is meant by "the world". Such have erroneously thought that overcoming "the world" means to desist from such things as wicked deeds and also from the various diversions that the people engage in to amuse and entertain themselves, such as baseball, football, dancing, etc. They have believed that yielding to "the



flesh" means indulging in immoral or lewd conduct. As to the Devil, they have concluded that Satan is nearby, inducing all he can to steal and to commit other wicked acts.

<sup>30</sup> Reasoning along this line the conclusion of many is that by resisting the world, the flesh and the Devil, as above defined, they will be ready for the kingdom. Reasoning along these lines such then say, in substance, to themselves: 'Now I must see to it that I appear in the presence of others garbed in clothes that will mark me as a Christian. I must smile sweetly at every one and really have the outward appearance of being a Christian. I must never say any word that would sound harsh upon the ears of others. I must see to it that I always shake hands in a gracious manner. I must never look at anything that appears to be an amusement, especially when any one sees me; if I should be seen looking at a baseball game my neighbors would think ill of me, and therefore my character would suffer. I must walk in a very sedate manner, and also see to it that I regularly attend the church.

<sup>41</sup> 'If I am called upon to speak before the congregation I must wear a long coat and black tie, and look very solemn; and when I ascend into the pulpit I must strike an attitude of devoutness by bowing my head in the presence of others, apparently praying in silence; and when I am called upon to pray aloud I must utter my words with great sanctimoniousness; I must always assume an attitude of heavy dignity. In fact I must come to the point in the development of my character where everybody who looks upon me will say, Behold a saint! What a wonderful man he is! Should I be invited to dine with the rich and influential I must be very careful to do as they do, and always address them by their honorable titles, and avoid speaking of the name of my Lord lest it should offend and I would appear ridiculous in their presence. Of course I am moral and honest and upright; and when I bring my character up to this high point of development where others can see what a wonderful character I am, I shall be ready for heaven. If I thus continue until I die, then the people assembling at my funeral will say, Here lies a man of great character and a true saint.'

<sup>32</sup> How many professed Christians have fallen into this very trap of Satan, and have become so impressed with their own wonderful 'character development' that they forget entirely the necessity of trusting in the Lord! Many such have induced themselves to believe that because they are professing to believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and are developing what they call 'a character', they thereby are overcoming the world, the flesh, and the Devil; while the fact is, at that very time such are a part of the world and are supporters of the Devil's organization. Satan has turned the minds of millions into the channel of supposed 'character development', and has thereby caused them to lose sight of the necessity of being true and loyal to God and to

trusting in the merit of Christ as the only means of salvation. This very deception of Satan has been the chief element in the development of ecclesiasticism. It has made cowards of men; they deny the Lord and completely fall into the Devil's trap.

#### FLESHLY WEAKNESS

<sup>33</sup> Every one of Adam's offspring is weak. All were born sinners. God gave the Jews an opportunity to learn that by nature they are imperfect, and that by one's own efforts man cannot possibly be saved. The lesson given to the Jews was intended for the benefit of Christians. The law was a schoolmaster, and all who become Christians should profit by the lessons that the schoolmaster taught. Had a Jew kept the law, that would have proved him to be a perfect character or a perfect man. Such, however, was an impossibility; and the Lord showed the honest Jews that only through Christ could perfection be attained.

<sup>34</sup> When one becomes a new creature in Christ he still has an organism or body of flesh. That organism is weak by nature. The Christian must fight against the inherited weaknesses. The Apostle Paul enumerates these as works of the flesh, and then adds that any one who practises these wrongful things, and does so willingly, will never inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21) To the new creature he says: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." (Romans 8:13) These inherited weaknesses the Christian must resist with all of his power. Therefore the apostle says: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: in the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds."—Colossians 3:5-9.

<sup>35</sup> The new creature must constantly fight against these inherited weaknesses of the flesh and see to it that he does not willingly yield to that which is wrong. Every honest person should do this. He should strive to be chaste, virtuous, clean in thought, word and action. The nearer he can come to perfect conduct the better man he is, and therefore the better character he is. But the Devil deceives many and induces them to believe that by developing a character, so-called, that will entitle them to a place in God's kingdom. Those who are thus deceived fall, because they fail to rely upon the Lord. Others, believing thus, become discouraged, because of their inability to do perfectly. Every Christian knows, or at least ought to know, that he cannot even *think* perfectly, and surely cannot speak nor act perfectly. The true Christian finds himself always striving to do his best; and even then he finds that he makes

many mistakes, and he would become completely discouraged were it not for the promises given to him in the Lord's Word.

<sup>36</sup> The apostle points out what God has done for the Christian through Christ, and then says: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John 2:1) Otherwise stated, he tells the Christian to war against the inherited weaknesses of the flesh, but that if because of his weaknesses he comes short he should remember that he has an advocate in Christ Jesus, and that if he confesses his wrong and asks his forgiveness he may confidently expect to be forgiven. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) God has provided that the merit of Christ shall make up for or cover all of the unwilling weaknesses of the new creature. God judges, therefore, not according to the outward appearance but according to the honest devotion of the heart of the new creature.

<sup>37</sup> If by fighting inherited weaknesses of the flesh character is developed and if such 'character development' constitutes overcoming and is a guarantee of entrance into the kingdom, then no one of Adam's race could ever be of the kingdom class. We know that God could not even look upon that which is imperfect. We also know that man cannot develop himself to perfection in the flesh. This alone should convince us that "overcoming" means something more than merely fighting against inherited weaknesses.

<sup>38</sup> There is only one thing in which a Christian can attain perfection while in the flesh, and that is perfection in complete loyalty and faithfulness to God. This is the perfection that is required of every one who will be of the kingdom. To reach this perfection the Christian must overcome the world. The precious promises are given only to those who do overcome. In plain phrase, the apostle says that if we suffer with the Lord we shall reign with him; and that if we deny him he will also deny us. (2 Timothy 2:12) Jesus never did suffer by reason of weakness of the flesh. When we suffer because of our imperfections of the flesh that counts for nothing, within the meaning of the Scriptures. To 'suffer with Jesus' means to suffer for the same cause and from the same enemy that made him suffer. He suffered because of his absolute devotion to God, and his suffering was induced by the world and its god, who is opposed to Jehovah.

<sup>39</sup> Let us now imagine a man who is well educated, and polished in word and in action; his conduct is beyond reproach amongst men; he speaks with kindness to every one; he is attentive and considerate; he professes to be a Christian; he is a regular attendant at church service; when called upon to pray he assumes an attitude of great piety and speaks with grace; he would not engage in nor look upon any so-called worldly

amusements; he is honest and trustworthy with his fellow creatures; he is moral and chaste, and of good reputation. Would such conduct be evidence that he is a true follower of Christ? Not at all. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7) With God it is the motive that counts. It may be that such a man, while pursuing the course marked out, is using his religion and his piety that he may gain some personal advantage to himself. He may be doing so merely to gratify his eyes; that is to say, to enable him to move in a circle that he enjoys and would look upon with admiration. He may be doing so for pride; that is to say, that others might speak highly of him. If so, the motive is worldly, therefore devilish.—1 John 2:15-17.

<sup>40</sup> Suppose a professed Christian says: "I will join the Masonic lodge or some like organization, because by so doing I can have some personal benefits that I could not otherwise possess. It will give me some advantage in my business or social standing." Would such be wrong? It would be yielding to the "lust of the flesh" and, at least indirectly, approving and supporting the world, and would therefore mean to that extent disloyalty to God.

<sup>41</sup> One may say: "I would like to be associated with the Presbyterian church, because there everything is so genteel in appearance. The music is grand and lofty, the preacher uses such choice phrases, and the entire environment is pleasing." A Christian thus doing would be yielding to worldly temptations described as the "lust of the eye".

<sup>42</sup> Another may say: "I am a Christian and expect to be of God's kingdom, and I now see that there is a movement of reformation to better the world; therefore I will join in this and have a part in this reformation to establish righteousness; and the people will look upon me and say, Here is a real Christian and a noble character." Such a course would be yielding to the "pride of life", because it would show a disposition to ignore God's way. Jehovah has his time of reformation and his way of reformation, and of this he has informed us. Any one who pursues a course contrary to the Lord's way is not overcoming but is being overcome by the world.

#### HOW TO OVERCOME

<sup>43</sup> Since Jesus was "in all points tempted like as we are" it follows that there is but one way for the Christian to overcome, and that is the way that Jesus overcame. He overcame the world by strictly adhering to the Word of God. Against each and every temptation he launched the polished shaft of truth. His one weapon was: "It is written" in God's Word. He refused to take a contrary course. For centuries the Devil and his organization had reproached God. With the coming of Jesus these reproaches fell upon him, and this was because of his zeal and devotion to the Father. (Psalm 69:8, 9) The Christian must follow in Jesus' footsteps.



His zeal and loyalty as a witness for the Lord will bring upon him reproach from the Devil's organization. If he is suave and prides himself upon his speech or his appearance, that he might have the approval of men, he is falling under the temptation of the world and is not overcoming.

<sup>44</sup> Character improvement, or development, means to become a better man by being improved or advanced mentally, morally and physically. Such improvement is eminently proper and right. Every honest person should strive to thus improve, whether he is a Christian or not. To teach, however, that by character improvement or development the Christian can be an "overcomer" is to teach a delusion and a snare of the Devil. One who is pleased and satisfied with his own character development is exercising selfishness and is not looking to the Lord, from whom cometh his strength. Such produces pride within him, and he falls an easy victim of the adversary. Nowhere in the Scriptures is it written that by character development we can be overcomers. On the contrary it is written: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John 5:4.

<sup>45</sup> Faith means to know God's will as expressed in his Word, and to confidently rely thereupon. Loyalty means to faithfully obey the commandments of God as they are written. No one can be faithful unless prompted by love so to be. It was the love of Jesus for his Father that caused him to be loyal under the most adverse conditions. No matter how much he suffered, he was loyal, faithful and true. That is the reason why he was perfected and made the Author of eternal salvation and the Head of God's organization. It was only after he had thus proved his loyalty by overcoming the world that God exalted him to the place on his throne.

<sup>46</sup> To his followers Jesus says: 'If you overcome I will make you to sit down with me on my throne, even as I overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne.' (Revelation 3:21) This statement of the Lord is proof conclusive that only those will be in the kingdom who overcome the world as Jesus overcame. He did not overcome by character development, but he overcame by an unswerving and unyielding devotion to Jehovah. He did not possess the weaknesses that the body members have in the flesh, but he stands sponsor for them and covers their weaknesses and mistakes that are not willingly done. The body members therefore stand on an equal footing with him because of his merit, and they must fight the same fight and win the same victory.

#### SUMMARY

<sup>47</sup> Now the issue is clearly drawn: The world is the Devil's organization; and within that organization are many who profess to be Christians, many of whom have no doubt made a consecration to do God's will. God's organization is Zion, of which Jesus Christ is the Head. It is God's will that each one of those who consecrate

to do his will must be put to the test as to whether he will be loyal to God or will compromise with the Devil and his organization. The overcomer is he who absolutely refuses to sympathize with or in any manner support any part of the Devil's organization. He must be always for the Lord God. He must be a faithful and true witness of God. To such the Lord, through his apostle, has said: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." (1 John 4:4) Thus it is proven that the overcoming is not by reason of character development, but because God is for his own people and through Christ Jesus he gives the victory to them, the faithful, who remain loyal and faithful and true to him unto the end.

<sup>48</sup> All who are the Lord's will delight to keep his commandments. His commandments include being faithful witnesses to the name of Jehovah. All such now "see eye to eye" and together lift up their voices with singing, which means a harmonious proclamation of the name and the kingdom of God. (Isaiah 52:8) All such will love God and will have boldness in this day of judgment to declare the message of his kingdom. (1 John 4:17,18) There can be no real faithfulness without love. Therefore he who is unselfishly devoted to God will count not his life dear unto him but will delight to do the will of God, and he will be loyal and faithful and true and through Christ will be an overcomer.

<sup>49</sup> The great climax of the Christian era has been reached. The Lord has taken his power and begun his reign. He has come to his temple and is completing the temple of God. The test is on. The question now is, Who shall stand the test and abide the fiery ordeal? (Malachi 3:1-3) Who shall stand in the holy place of the Lord and be counted through Christ an overcomer? "He that hath clean hands [that is, he who is using all his faculties to the glory of God], and a pure heart [that is, he who is unselfishly devoted to the Lord]; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully [that is, he who has made a covenant with the Lord and is diligently carrying it out]. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation."—Psalm 24:4, 5.

<sup>50</sup> Those who are true, loyal and faithful to God, and who are prompted by love in so doing, will overcome. To such the Lord has said: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God; and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."—Revelation 3:12.

#### QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

What is the difference, if any, between the anointed class and the overcomers? Did Jesus need to overcome anything? If so, what? ¶ 1-3.

**What have many erroneously thought "overcoming" means? How is character generally defined? How should the term be used? If Jesus was a perfect character, against what did he need to fight? ¶ 4, 5.**

**What have many erroneously considered "the world" to mean? What is the correct definition? What do the symbolic "heavens" and "earth" comprise? ¶ 6, 7.**

**Who constitutes "the seed of the woman" that shall bruise the Serpent's head? What does the woman symbolize? Has Satan counterfeited both? Explain fully. ¶ 8-10.**

**Explain the twofold meaning of the terms Zion and Babylon. What is meant by the symbol "beast" in the Scriptures, and what does it include? What is meant by having the mark of the beast in the *hand* and in the *forehead*? ¶ 11, 12.**

**Who are specifically included in the Devil's organization? ¶ 11-13.**

**What did Jesus mean by saying, "I have overcome the world"? Why did Jesus need to be tested? ¶ 14-17.**

**How was Jesus made perfect? When, why and how did Satan tempt Jesus? Show how the Devil's propositions would constitute a real test to the perfect One, and explain how he met them. ¶ 18-24.**

**Failing in these attempts against Jesus, what did Satan do next? How and why did certain Pharisees extend hospitality to Jesus, and how did he converse with them on such occasions? Why did he say that the world would hate his followers? ¶ 25-28.**

**Explain in detail how some have reasoned concerning the matter of overcoming the world, the flesh and the Devil. Why would Satan emphasize "character development"? ¶ 29-32.**

**What great lesson should the Mosaic law teach to the Christian? What do the Scriptures say about fighting against hereditary weaknesses? Should we not strive to overcome these and live as nearly perfect lives as possible? But will this entitle us to a place in the kingdom? If not, why should we not be discouraged? ¶ 33-36.**

**Can the Christian while in the flesh be perfect in anything? If so what? What caused Jesus to suffer, and what does it mean to "suffer with him"? Can a person be religious, pious, kind, honest and moral, and at the same time be actuated by wrong motives? Explain. Give three specific illustrations of subtle temptations to yield to the "lust of the flesh", "lust of the eye" and "pride of life". ¶ 37-42.**

**What is the one and only way to overcome the world? Should we not strive for character improvement or development? What delusion must be guarded against in this connection? ¶ 43, 44.**

**Define faith and loyalty, and show how perfectly they were exemplified in Jesus. Do his body members stand on an equal footing with the Head; and if so, why? ¶ 45, 46.**

**Summarize the chief points of this lesson, showing what is included in the terms "world", "Zion" and "overcomers". How do the Lord's witnesses now see "eye to eye"? Who shall stand on the Lord's side as overcomers? ¶ 47-50.**

## GOD'S PROMISE TO DAVID

—AUGUST 21—1 CHRONICLES 17—

*"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; and the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of thy kingdom."*

—Hebrews 1: 8.

THE reign of David, who as king in Israel was a man after God's own heart, may be called the "golden age" of the kingdom of Israel. It is true that in the days of his son Solomon when the temple, the distinguishing feature of Jerusalem as a city, was erected, and when there was none of the distraction of war which had marked David's days, there were more feasting and more show of kingly glory. But David was so true to Jehovah, and to the high ideal of the kingdom of Israel as Jehovah's kingdom, that Israel under him was stronger and more firmly knit together than at any other period of their national life.

<sup>2</sup> That which distinguished David and made him strong was his ready submission to the fact that he was king according to God's appointment. He claimed no right to rule, therefore was not wilful in respect to the rights and privileges of God's people, over whom for a time he was caretaker. He does not appear to have had or to have claimed that absolute authority which eastern monarchs usually claimed; but, recognizing that Jehovah had raised up men who were faithful to him, his reign was more that of constitutional rather than absolute monarchy. But it was he to whom the form of government was committed, and it was his idea to have

Jerusalem the center of Israel's government and of their worship.

<sup>3</sup> It is evident that the spirit of God guided David; and that God intended Jerusalem to be the place where his name should dwell is manifest from many scriptures, as for example, "But I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel" (2 Chronicles 6: 6), and, "Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, which I have chosen."—1 Kings 11: 13.

<sup>4</sup> David had set his heart upon bringing together the altar of burnt offering, the golden altar and the ark, which since the days of the desolation of Shiloh had been separated, and to place them in a temple, a permanent building worthy of the housing of these three most sacred things. He began to gather material of much value to accomplish his purpose. The Prophet Nathan encouraged him. But Nathan spoke only out of his own heart; for Jehovah later sent Nathan to David to tell him that while his desire was not unacceptable, nevertheless since David had been a man of war who had shed much blood in battle, such a building as he desired would not be acceptable to God from David. It

could not be that the temple of peace should be built by a man of war.

<sup>5</sup> But because David's heart was right God permitted the material he gathered to be saved for the time when his son should be ready for that work who, God said, should build the temple. And God gave to David the pattern which the temple should bear, as he had given Moses the pattern of the tabernacle. God also gave David an unexpected reward. David could not build a house for God, but God said that he would build David a house, and it was then that Jehovah gave him the promise, saying, "I will make thee a name like unto the name of the great ones that are in the earth . . . and I will subdue all thine enemies. Moreover I tell thee that Jehovah will build thee a house . . . I will set up thy seed after thee, . . . and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me a house, and I will establish his throne for ever."—1 Chronicles 17: 8-14.

<sup>6</sup> That David's desire to build a temple for the ark meant more than merely housing it is seen from Jehovah's word to him, when he said, "I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another." (1 Chronicles 17: 5) This expression associates the ark with Jehovah. The ark of Jehovah's covenant with Israel always represented him. Thus when the pillar of cloud or fire removed from over the tabernacle, signifying that the ark was to be removed to another place, Moses taught the people of Israel to sing, "Rise up, O Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee." (Numbers 10: 35) The ark was thus the symbol of Jehovah's presence with Israel.

<sup>7</sup> God continued to speak to David by the prophet, and asked, "Wheresoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why have ye not built me an house of cedars?" (1 Chronicles 17: 6) God had never called upon them to build a more permanent dwelling for the housing of the ark than that which he himself had instructed Moses to build. But the proposal of David that came from so warm and so loyal a heart was acceptable to Jehovah.

<sup>8</sup> Then God, as aforementioned, said to his beloved servant that though he (David) could not build a house for the Lord, yet his son should do so. Jehovah said, "And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers [We note in passing that Jehovah did not say, When thou shalt come to me to heaven.], that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me an house, and I will establish his throne for ever."—1 Chron. 17: 11, 12.

<sup>9</sup> These words correspond with Psalm 132, which tells how David when a youth minding his father's sheep in the fields of Ephratah, determined that when he came to be king he would find out a place for Jehovah, a

habitation for the mighty God of Jacob, when he could say, "Arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength." (Psalm 132: 4-8) David in vision saw the enemies of God conquered and the ark going no more out before the people to battle, but now at rest in the building which to his mind would be suitable for it. He saw the saints shouting for joy, and the priests clothed with righteousness.

<sup>10</sup> All these things are symbols of the great things of the heavens. They show that Jehovah, the Most High, who rules all things according to his own will, with none to stay his hand, does not come into his rest until his Zion is established and the powers of evil are subdued. It is not until then that God's glory is fully manifested and he is seen as established in his permanent place of power. For his own wise purpose he allowed evil to have an apparent triumph over him. Even the angels have been tried, and it is only when the powers of evil are subdued that the angels fully know. Then heaven and earth are made at one, never again to be disturbed by the powers of evil, save that at the end of the Millennial reign of Christ the Devil will be loosed for a brief space of time from his prison house where he will have been bound for a thousand years.

<sup>11</sup> God's promise to David (1 Chronicles 17: 11, 12) was the second occasion in which the Lord entered into a personal covenant with a man. The first was his covenant with Abraham, which was that Abraham should be the blesser of all the families of the earth, and with which was associated the inheritance of the land of Palestine. It is true that God gave a personal promise to Isaac and to Jacob, but that was entering them into his covenant with Abraham rather than making a new covenant with them.

<sup>12</sup> Now out of one branch of the patriarch's family a king is chosen. Here is a significance that with the blesser there shall be power to enforce the purpose of God; an assurance, too, that no enemies shall be able to thwart the purpose and will to bless. For there are both in the heaven and in the earth enemies of God, and men who will do all that is possible to prevent God from doing good, and to prevent man from receiving any good from God or from knowing of his good designs.

<sup>13</sup> The favor of God to David, in which he promised him and his seed the throne of Israel, and which represented the throne of God's kingdom, was, however, a great step forward in the divine purpose. It is that which is spoken of by Isaiah as "the sure mercies of David" (Isaiah 55: 3), sure because God gave the covenant to him by oath. (See Psalm 89: 35.) The only other covenant made by God with a person is that which he made with Jesus, and to which Jesus referred when he entered his disciples into his covenant.—See Luke 22: 29.

<sup>14</sup> These two covenants rank together. As the one to Abraham selected him out of the ever-increasing families of earth, that through his family should come the

seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head and thus bring hope of a deliverance (See Genesis 3:15.); so now the covenant with David chose his family through Solomon as the one by whom the Deliverer of Israel would come. Both covenants are alike in that they are not limited to an individual, as the afterwards-revealed Word of God showed. Abraham could not know that the seed which he was to have would prove to be such as Paul saw it to be, as the spirit of God revealed it.

<sup>15</sup> It was made clear to Paul that when Jesus entered the church into his covenant "on the night in which he was betrayed" The Christ of Scripture was composed of Jesus and as many others as God may choose to call. He saw that God gave these the same spirit and the same anointing. It therefore became clear to him that God had an ideal Israel, whom he would gather out of the world as a "people for his name". Thus he proclaimed the oneness of those "in Christ", as having one hope, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father. (Ephesians 4:5,6) Therefore he said, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Galatians 3:29.

<sup>16</sup> To those who thus share with Jesus in the faith of Abraham, and who share in becoming "the seed of promise", the promise of becoming the seed of David is made, and therefore these have the hope of becoming joint-heirs with him. (Romans 8:17) To these are given "the sure mercies of David", gained by resurrec-

tion to spirit life and elevation to sit with Jesus on his throne of glory.

<sup>17</sup> This does not mean that either Jesus or they will have an earthly crown—that could mean nothing to those raised to the divine image. It means that the power of the kingdom of God, represented by David, will be theirs; and it is God's guarantee that all the evil, opposing forces which began with Satan in his deflection, and which have continued through evil spirit beings and evil men, will be for ever destroyed; that those who love righteousness and the will of God may enjoy him and his blessings for ever—the church in heaven, mankind in the earth.

#### QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

What may be called the "golden age" of the Israelitish kingdom, and why? Wherein lay King David's strength? ¶ 1-3.

On what achievement had David set his heart, and why was he not permitted to accomplish it? How did God nevertheless reward him? ¶ 4, 5.

What did the ark of the covenant represent, and what did God say to David concerning it? What covenant did he then make with David? ¶ 6-8.

Read and explain Psalm 132:4-8 in this connection. ¶ 9, 10. What other personal covenant had God made with imperfect man? How are these two covenants related? ¶ 11-14.

What great truth was first revealed through the Apostle Paul? To whom are given "the sure mercies of David", and what does that imply? ¶ 15-17.

## NATHAN LEADS DAVID TO REPENTANCE

—AUGUST 28— 2 SAMUEL 11:1-12; 12:1-25—

*"A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."—Psalm 51:17.*

**T**HAT David made mistakes, and that he made some purposely—as when he deceived Ahimelech by saying he was on the king's business when he was actually leaving Saul's service—is plain from the records of his life. In some instances he seems to have been very careful to seek the will of God, but in other cases he took his own way. He was ever watchful in matters where his course seemed to have immediate connection with the honor of Jehovah; but where Jehovah's honor did not seem to be in question he took his own way, and appears to have been ruled by his discretion or his own desire. His justice was not to be questioned; he was not a robber. Indeed, he acted as a caretaker for the people when King Saul was not ready enough to do his duty, as when he protected the people of the south lands from attacks of the wandering murderous Amalekites.—1 Samuel 25:14-16.

<sup>2</sup> David has been freely condemned for taking to himself many wives; as if he were a man of unusual passion, giving himself up to inordinate fleshly desires.

The facts do not warrant that conclusion, and it should be noted that the Bible does not condemn him; though on the other hand it should not be inferred that the absence of condemnation means God's approval. Without doubt David's many marriages, though customary in those days, laid up a possible store of trouble for him. In his older days it was the means God used to bring righteous retribution upon him, when he might have been in the enjoyment of family peace. His several families brought him much trouble.

<sup>3</sup> It is proper to consider that David, realizing that God had called him to the throne of Israel, brought himself to believe that it would be good policy to have a large family in order that his throne might be made secure to his house. It has ever been common for kings thus to try to secure their throne to their family. If David did so think, it would be once more a case of man trying to help God with his plans—as when Abraham married Hagar in order to have the seed which God had promised him and which Sarah was apparently

unable to give him, and afterwards married Keturah in order to have such a number of children as would seem to be some fulfilment of God's promise of a numerous progeny. David, as well as Abraham, might better have left all these things with God; and yet God overruled in these matters to make them work out for some good.

<sup>4</sup> But in this matter David broke no divine commandment. The Mosaic law had no commandment against polygamy; indeed, it allowed for plural marriages (See Deuteronomy 21:15.); though in saying, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife," it indicated the will of God in such matters, as at the first had been clearly shown, even though not specially defined. (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5) However, it must have been obvious that David could not take to himself many wives without some breaking down of those barriers which preserve a man in purity. This may be said to be a natural consequence to be met and fought. The disciple of Christ must live according to the example of his Master, and walk after the spirit; and he may not contravene God's original purpose in respect to marriage.

<sup>5</sup> Our story specially concerns the outstanding sin in David's life, that which made the greatest blot on his ordinarily fine record. David was 'a man after God's own heart', but this was not said in respect to his personal and family relationship. It was in respect to his care as king over God's people; for whom he was a true shepherd of the sheep and willing to give his life for the sheep. Never was this more pointedly shown than when, after another sin of pride on his part, a plague was sent upon the people, and David's heart smote him as he saw the destroying angel abroad amongst the people as the result of his sin; and he exclaimed, "Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house." (2 Samuel 24:17) He was willing rather to be blotted out, and have the kingdom taken from his house, than that the people should be made to suffer.

<sup>6</sup> After David had settled his government on Mt. Zion, and the ark had been taken there, he entered upon a series of wars against the neighboring peoples who were occupying the land which God had given to Abraham by promise (Genesis 15:18), and who, without exception, had shown themselves to be enemies of Israel. David, seeing himself as God's anointed king on God's throne, could do no other than follow his purpose of bringing the Abrahamic covenant, so far as it applied to Israel, into full operation.

<sup>7</sup> Joshua had overcome seven nations when he led Israel (Deuteronomy 7:1); but he was commanded to destroy those degenerate peoples. David had a difficult objective; his purpose was to destroy the opposition of the neighboring nations, so that Israel might dwell in safety and have the freedom of all the land of promise. It was during this time that he fell into the sin which most marred his life's record.

<sup>8</sup> It was David's custom to lead his army in their wars (1 Samuel 8:20), but for some reason unexplained he did not go with his army against Ammon. At this time, while resting on his housetop in the cool of the day, he saw a woman (Bathsheba) washing herself. She was beautiful, and his desire for her was excited. On inquiry he found that she was the wife of one of his officers, a Hittite who fought for Israel; yet David sent for her. Apparently she willingly gave herself to the king. Later, being with child, she informed David; and he began a series of subterfuges. He sent for her husband from the war, as if he would inquire from him as to its success. Then he sent the husband home, where he had sent food for feasting. But Uriah, a true soldier, would not go home; he slept with the king's servants. Next David, apparently giving him a lead, made him eat and drink too much; but still Uriah would not go to his house.

<sup>9</sup> David then sent him back to Joab to the war, bidding Joab put him in such a position as would almost certainly lead to Uriah's death. This scheme was carried through. Uriah was slain; and David as soon as possible married Uriah's wife. This thing "displeased Jehovah". (2 Samuel 11:27) David had sinned grievously, and had involved many others with him. Nathan, the Lord's prophet, was sent to David. He placed a matter before the king, mentioning no names; and the king was exceedingly angry at that which he supposed to be a case of great injustice on the part of one of his subjects. For the wrong he had done in Israel, said David, the man should surely be put to death. Nathan, in a word which has become the world's example of courage, said, "Thou art the man."—2 Samuel 12:7.

<sup>10</sup> Then speaking through his servant the prophet, Jehovah told David of the many things he had done for him. David had been taken from the sheepfold to be king over God's people. God had given him much honor, and there was nothing that God would have withheld from him. But he had misused his trust, and had done that which in the eyes of the nation would tarnish the name of the God of Israel. (2 Samuel 12:14) David had thus damaged his moral sense by his actions, done in deceit and so carefully planned; else he would surely have seen his wrong and confessed it without this stern measure by Jehovah. Now no expression of sorrow could make amends; there must be punishment, severe, in accordance with the sin of the king against Jehovah.

<sup>11</sup> There were two things which David must suffer: As he had destroyed a family union by taking a man's wife and causing the death of her husband, his own family should henceforth never be free from trouble. The other punishment was immediate; the son born to David and Bathsheba should not live. This was a great blow to David; it was probably the first death in his family; but it marked for all Israel the disapproval of God, whom David had otherwise so earnestly sought to honor before all Israel.

<sup>12</sup> In Jehovah's rebuke and mark of disapproval there was no forgetfulness of David's endeavors to honor him; but in this break David had misused his privilege and trust, and had done much to dishonor the name of Jehovah. His pleading for the life of the child could not be heard. The child died. The greatest affection in David's life was then manifested. While the child was alive David would not eat; but when by its death he saw that it did not please Jehovah to hear his prayer, he rose and began again his regular life. He knew what death meant. He said, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." (2 Samuel 12:23) That new little life in itself could hardly be so precious to David as to cause him so much sorrow at its passing; rather we must suppose that he mourned so much because of what its death meant. That death was a special mark of God's disfavor. The child, had it lived, would have been heir to the throne.

<sup>13</sup> David henceforth had to live under changed conditions; the past could not be undone. God forgave him his iniquity; but the lesson which he had to learn, and which is intended too for all God's people, is that there are some things wrong in the sight of God which can never be undone. The sin is forgiven, but God does not undertake to make the life as if the sin had not been committed.

<sup>14</sup> But David had not lost Jehovah's favor. Another son by Bathsheba was born to him, and by Nathan the prophet he was told of Jehovah's love for the child. The child was Solomon, who was to have the throne of Israel after David. Thus God manifested to David his acceptance, and the acceptance of the mother. (2 Samuel 12:24, 25) If it be asked why the child of David's latest wife was accepted as his heir instead of one of the earlier born children, the answer is that Bathsheba was the only wife whom David married after he became king of all Israel. Thus Solomon was the legitimate heir to the throne.

<sup>15</sup> The heading of the fifty-first Psalm connects that psalm with David's sin; and though these superscriptions are no part of the sacred writings, there seems some reason for thinking that the tradition which unites

the psalm and the sin is correct. The psalm is not the triumphant song of the overcomer; it is rather the wail of the disciple who finds that he has been blinding himself by following his own way. To suggest that in this psalm David speaks for that great company who "wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb" does no violence to any principle of interpretation; for David in his experiences seems to represent the whole church.

<sup>16</sup> More than any other, this psalm tells of the awakening and the consequent distress of those who have had much privilege from God but who have failed to use it. They have sacrificed to God—as we must suppose David did at the time, during the greater part of the year before his sin was brought home to him. They find, as he did, that the sacrifices which please God are not offerings made to him such as a man might give out of his substance, nor those observances of worship which are rendered, but are those of a "broken spirit" and a "contrite heart". —Psalm 51:17.

<sup>17</sup> The golden text of this lesson is a very gracious word. Satan tempts those who have sinned into the belief that they have committed a sin unto death; but there is God's own assurance that if there is true contrition and submission of spirit there is sure acceptance with him.

#### QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

In what matters was David faithful, and in what things was he wilful? ¶ 1.

Why does not the Bible condemn David for taking many wives? How did David probably reason in this matter, and did he act wisely? ¶ 2-4.

In what sense was David a man after God's own heart? What was his purpose in engaging in aggressive wars? ¶ 5-7.

Who was Uriah, and what great sin did King David commit against him? How was the king rebuked by Nathan the prophet? ¶ 8-10.

What two things must David now suffer, and why did the death of Bathsheba's infant grieve him so greatly? What lesson may we learn from these things? How did God later bless David, and why? Why was Solomon the legitimate heir to the throne? ¶ 11-14.

What seems to be the significance of the fifty-first Psalm, and whose entreaty does it apparently foreshadow? What comforting suggestion does it contain? ¶ 15-17.

## INTERESTING LETTERS

### TRUTH PENETRATING EVEN REMOTE DISTRICTS

DEAR BROTHER RUTHERFORD:

In submitting our monthly reports we do so with much gratitude to the dear heavenly Father, who has opened the way for greater activity in his service.

With fair weather, and an average of about thirty-five workers weekly, we continued to specialize on the cheap edition of DELIVERANCE, 1,600 of which were put out as against 600 in the preceding month.

During the month we were able to charter a bus on several occasions, when a band of twenty-five workers was able to canvass various rural districts that had never be-

fore been systematically done. Although the cost is high, we believe that a good witness is so given, because we always bring to the attention of the people our belief that Messiah's kingdom is now being established. Hundreds here, living in quiet places quite out of touch with world events, have now heard this testimony; and many are rejoicing.

At the same time a systematic canvass of the city of Georgetown and the town of New Amsterdam (the capital, and the principal town), is being undertaken. All the workers are zealous, rejoicing in present privileges, and looking forward to greater opportunities in the future.

We rejoice that in addition to the usual work, we were



able to arrange for an Easter visit to the town of New Amsterdam, Berbice—about seventy miles from Georgetown, on the other side of the Rio Berbice.

Twenty workers traveled thither on Thursday, 14th, in order to cooperate with our Berbice brethren in an extended witness in that county. Incidentally, we were privileged to partake of the Memorial with them, much to their joy as well as ours.

It is impossible to describe the joy and enthusiasm of the dear friends when they learned that they could spend four consecutive days entirely in the Lord's service!

We canvassed the villages on the right bank of the Rio Berbice for about eight miles from New Amsterdam (the farther stretches having already been done), and then along the "Corentyne Coast" for forty-seven miles, i. e., to Skeldon, the eastern end of the Colony, almost opposite to Nieuw Nickerie, Dutch Guiana.

The result was one of the greatest witnesses given in this Colony in such a short space of time, and 1,000 DELIVERANCE books were sold.

The Town Hall, New Amsterdam, was engaged for a public lecture on Sunday evening, April 17th, the topic being "The Destiny of Men and Nations". Although the attendance was not all that could be desired, on account of the holiday atmosphere, yet the 100 persons who attended manifested good attention.

The workers, and indeed all members of the Classes concerned, have been greatly refreshed by this visit; and all are rejoicing in the fact that whereas formerly only one lecturer could give a witness, now all can participate in the wonderful work of advertising Messiah's kingdom.

All join in sending you much love, dear Brother; and we wish you continued joy and encouragement in the Father's service,

Yours in the Redeemer,  
BRITISH GUIANA BRANCH.  
FRED PHILLIPS

#### BLESSINGS FROM WATCH TOWER STUDY

DEAR BRETHREN:

We are rejoicing in the wonderful spread of the truth. The message over the radio is preparing the field for the workers. Surely the Lord is blessing this means of spreading the gospel of the kingdom! Our privileges thus far this year have been so wonderful that we hope you will enjoy hearing of what we have done.

Comparing the result of the effort put forth during the first quarter of 1927 with that of the same period of 1926 we rejoice in the part the Lord has permitted us to have in this great work. We placed a total of 3019 books and booklets in 1927, as compared with 987 in the same period of 1926, or an increase of 206%. We also find an increase of workers, ten workers per week this year and five workers per week during the same period last year. This shows that each worker averaged twenty-four books per week against sixteen books last year, or an increase of fifty percent per worker, and an average of three hours per worker this year and last year.

The WATCH TOWER articles are getting better and are very encouraging. Surely the Lord is using the SOCIETY as a channel for his truth. We are glad to note the effort put forth to show that the Lord is making a name for himself in the earth and we agree that all honor and glory is due him. The work of the "remnant" and the great privilege that is now ours as outlined in the WATCH TOWER to us seems reasonable, and by studying the WATCH TOWER we have been enabled to impress upon the brethren what a wonderful opportunity the Lord has granted us. This explains the increase in the number of workers.

May the Lord continue to bless you and the zealous work-

ers who make it possible for us to have the message in printed form to leave with the people. We know your privileges and responsibilities are great and we want you to know we appreciate your labor of love and watchful care for the interests of the church. Our hearts go out to you in Christian love.

Your fellow servant,  
F. E. MCPHERSON.—V. J.

#### COOPERATION BRINGS JOY AND STRENGTH

DEAR BROTHER RUTHERFORD:

We always fear to trespass on your time. I have written perhaps a half dozen times lately. Each time I tore up the letter because I did not wish to bother you; and I felt that my message might not be worth the time for you to read it. It is not always easy to tell whether a word of appreciation is of value. The great cumulation of blessings which have come to us impels me to mention to you again the fact that you are inexpressably dear to us who are in the field. We can see that God is using you in your capacity of leader of his people. If you could see how wonderfully we are blessed by your faithful stewardship of kingdom interests, then you would surely be encouraged. It is plainly to be seen that the Lord is teaching us through his channel. We see that you have his spirit and his blessing. And we find as we cooperate in the orderly program that you present to us for honoring his name, we surely have the joy of the Lord; and it is to us a great strength.

The WATCH TOWER is a never-failing help. The current "Feast of Deliverance" study is the most satisfying Memorial study I have ever seen; likewise the Elijah Work and Elisha Work studies. The book DELIVERANCE was a delightful class study; and the pleasure of putting it into the people's hands is most wonderful.

Our class is happy in service. Our quota is 15,000 against a previous record of 7,000; and we are going at quota speed, and have been since February 10. At our recent convention ("the best ever") we greatly enjoyed and profited by Brother Barber's presence. Please be assured that your brethren in the field, as they wait before the Lord to learn of his pleasure in his way, are happy; and that they surely greatly love you.

Yours in the hope,  
C. E. CROOK.—Ohio.

#### INSPIRATION TO GREATER ACTIVITY

DEAR BROTHER RUTHERFORD:

Greetings in the name of Christ our King. The Spokane Ecclesia wish to convey their grateful appreciation to you for the many spiritual blessings received through the SOCIETY during the past year. Among the greatest of these blessings are the studies in THE WATCH TOWER, which are meat in due season. They give us an incentive to a deeper spiritual life and an inspiration to greater activity in the kingdom service.

We assure you, dear Brother, of the loyal support of the Spokane friends; we are glad to cooperate with you in spreading the "glad tidings" of the kingdom as a witness.

The progress of the work of putting out the books and booklets, as well as that of radiocasting the kingdom message in the Spokane territory, has increased in volume; and surely this is a criterion of the progress of the work at headquarters and over all the earth.

Praying the continued blessing of the Lord on your faithful efforts in directing the work of witnessing, and your ministry to the saints, we are,

Your brethren in Christ,

THE SPOKANE (WASH.) ECCLESIA,  
W. J. BAXTER, Sec'y.

# International Bible Students Association Classes

Lectures and Studies by Traveling Brethren

## BROTHER T. E. BARKER

Boston, Mass.	July 3	Vermillion, S. Dak.	Aug. 3, 4
Toronto, Ont.	" 18-26	Conde, S. Dak.	" 14, 15
Detroit, Mich.	" 28	Mitchell, S. Dak.	" 5-7
Chicago, Ill.	" 29, 31	Mellette, S. Dak.	" 8, 9
Cedar Rapids, Ia.	Aug. 1, 2	Ipswich, S. Dak.	" 11, 12

## BROTHER J. A. BOHNET

Hazleton, Pa.	July 14	Binghampton, N. Y.	Aug. 5, 7
Wilkes-Barre, Pa.	" 15	Buffalo, N. Y.	" 8, 9
Toronto, Ont.	" 18-26	Detroit, Mich.	" 10, 11
Brooklyn, N. Y.	" 31	Saginaw, Mich.	" 12, 14
Scranton, Pa.	Aug. 3, 4	Bay City, Mich.	" 15, 16

## BROTHER C. W. CUTFORTH

Toronto, Ont.	July 18-26	Cameron, Ont.	Aug. 10, 11
Stouffville, Ont.	" 28	Lindsay, Ont.	" 12
Haliburton, Ont.	" 29	Toronto, Ont.	" 14
Haliburton West, Ont.	" 31	Brampton, Ont.	" 15
Haliburton East, Ont.	Aug. 7	Orangeville, Ont.	" 16

## BROTHER H. H. DINGUS

Erie, Pa.	July 28	St. Louis, Mo.	Aug. 7
Ellyria, O.	" 29	Little Rock, Ark.	" 8, 9
S. Bend, Ind.	July 31, Aug. 1	Atlanta, Tex.	" 10, 11
Logansport, Ind.	Aug. 2, 3	Texarkana, Tex.	" 12, 14
Decatur, Ill.	" 4, 5	Bassett, Tex.	" 15, 16

## BROTHER G. H. DRAPER

Westfield, N. Y.	July 27, 28	Indianapolis, Ind.	Aug. 7, 8
Erie, Pa.	" 29, 31	Brazil, Ind.	" 9, 10
Marion, O.	Aug. 1, 2	Terre Haute, Ind.	" 11
Muncie, Ind.	" 3, 4	Mattoon, Ill.	" 12, 14
Anderson, Ind.	" 5	Pana, Ill.	" 15, 16

## BROTHER R. G. GREEN

Michigan City, Ind.	July 28	Berlin, N. Dak.	Aug. 8, 9
Dubuque, Ia.	" 29, 31	Enderlin, N. Dak.	" 10
Sioux City, Ia.	Aug. 1, 2	Kathryn, N. Dak.	" 11, 12
Yankton, S. Dak.	" 3, 4	Wyndmere, N. Dak.	" 14
Mitchell, S. Dak.	" 5-7	Milnor, N. Dak.	" 15, 16

## BROTHER H. E. HAZLETT

Toronto, Ont.	July 18-26	Minneapolis, Minn.	Aug. 12, 14
Zion, Ill.	Aug. 3, 4	Glenwood, Minn.	" 15, 16
Milwaukee, Wis.	" 5, 7	Parkers Prairie, Minn.	" 17
Fond du Lac, Wis.	" 8, 9	Detroit, Minn.	" 18
Stevens Point, Wis.	" 10, 11	Fargo, N. Dak.	" 19-21

## G. S. KENDALL

Toronto, Ont.	July 18-26	Cedar Rapids, Ia.	Aug. 3, 4
Ashtabula, O.	" 27, 28	Omaha, Neb.	" 5, 7
Sandusky, O.	" 29	North Platte, Neb.	" 8, 9
Chicago, Ill.	" 31	Fort Laramie, Wyo.	" 11
Clinton, Ia.	Aug. 1, 2	Casper, Wyo.	" 13

## BROTHER H. E. PINNOCK

Hammond, Ind.	July 8, 10	New York, N. Y.	Aug. 7
Battle Creek, Mich.	" 11, 12	Lewistown, Pa.	" 14
Jackson, Mich.	" 13, 14	Altoona, Pa.	" 15
Detroit, Mich.	" 15, 17	Wheeling, W. Va.	" 16
Toronto, Ont.	" 18-26	Parkersburg, W. Va.	" 17

## BROTHER G. R. POLLOCK

Toronto, Ont.	July 17-26	Kansas City, Mo.	Aug. 5, 7
Niagara Falls, N. Y.	" 27, 28	Wichita, Kan.	" 8, 9
Cleveland, O.	" 29, 31	Arkansas City, Kan.	" 10
Toledo, O.	Aug. 1	Oklahoma City, Okla.	" 11, 12
Chicago, Ill.	" 2, 3	Fort Worth, Tex.	" 14

## BROTHER J. C. WATT

Stamford, Conn.	July 11, 12	Toledo, O.	Aug. 8, 9
Port Chester, N. Y.	" 13	Defiance, O.	" 10
Allentown, Pa.	" 14-17	Fort Wayne, Ind.	" 11, 12
Toronto, Ont.	" 18-26	Danville, Ill.	" 14, 15
Detroit, Mich.	Aug. 7	St. Louis, Mo.	" 16, 17

## BROTHER J. B. WILLIAMS

Erie, Pa.	July 13, 14	Wilson, N. C.	Aug. 8, 9
Westfield, N. Y.	" 15	Florence, S. C.	" 10, 11
Toronto, Ont.	" 18-26	Savannah, Ga.	" 12, 14
New York, N. Y.	" 31	Jacksonville, Fla.	" 15, 16
Washington, D. C.	Aug. 7	Waldo, Fla.	" 17, 18

For the benefit of our readers the announcement is made that the following radio stations are broadcasting the kingdom message:

STATION	CITY	METERS	TIME
WBBR	New York, N. Y.	416.4	Daily
WHK	Cleveland, O.	278.	Sun. & Thurs.
WORD	Chicago, Ill.	275.	Daily
KFWM	Oakland, Calif.	214.2	Daily
CKCX	Toronto, Ont.	291.	Sun., Tues., & Fri.
CHCY	Edmonton, Alta.	517.	Sunday [& Thurs.
CHUC	Saskatoon, Sask.	329.5	Sun., Tues.
WCAH	Columbus, O.	265.3	Sunday [& Sat.
CFYC	Vancouver, B. C.	411.	Sun., Tues., Thurs.
WNBF	Endicott, N. Y.	205.4	Sunday
WLSI	Providence, R. I.	441.	Sun., Wed., & Fri.
WBAX	Wilkesbarre, Pa.	256.	Sunday
WCBM	Baltimore, Md.	229.	Sun. & Sat.
WBT	Charlotte, N. C.	275.	Thursday
WSAS	Huntington, W. Va.	243.8	Sunday
WBRL	Tilton, N. H.	420.	Sunday
WTAL	Toledo, O.	250.	Sunday
KFJF	Oklahoma City, Okla.	261.	Sunday
KFEQ	St. Joseph, Mo.	267.7	Sunday
KLZ	Denver, Colo.	384.4	Sunday
KWTC	Tustin, Calif.	441.	Saturday
WRHM	Minneapolis, Minn.	252.	Sunday
WREC	Memphis, Tenn.	254.	Sunday