



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

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

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

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Upon the earth 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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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. Receipt and entry of renewal are indicated within a month by change in expiration date, as shown on wrapper label.

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GERMAN CONVENTION AT CLEVELAND, OHIO

The German friends at Cleveland, Ohio, have arranged for a German three-day Convention, May 30th (Decoration Day), May 31st, and Sunday, June 1st. A number of able German speakers will serve the friends on this occasion. For particulars and program address Brother Aug. Juncker, 2502 Tampa Ave., Cleveland, Ohio.

MEMORIAL REPORTS DESIRED PROMPTLY

It is desired that we receive the reports of the Memorial attendance as promptly as possible. Kindly assist us in this, so that the compiling and publishing of the report will not be delayed.

SERVICE AT BETHEL

In order that our questionnaires might be up to date, we shall be pleased to send blanks to any brothers or sisters who could render service at Bethel. Young men, unencumbered, are preferred. There is also a limited amount of service for sisters desiring to do housework.

BETHEL HYMNS FOR MAY

Sunday	4 135	11 305	18 252	25 85
Monday	5 295	12 52	19 267	26 202
Tuesday	6 91	13 306	20 81	27 221
Wednesday	7 255	14 109	21 311	28 117
Thursday	1 190	8 303	15 331	22 330
Friday	2 313	9 178	16 6	23 154
Saturday	3 24	10 286	17 326	24 208
			31 244	

WATCH TOWER BEREAN STUDY

Quite frequently we have a letter from a class, stating that they have a special Berean study on the leading article in THE WATCH TOWER, and reporting a great blessing from the study. We recommend such a study, believing that it will be helpful to all who participate in it.

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AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

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KEPT IN PEACE

"Thou wilt keep him in peace, peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee."—Isaiah 26: 3.

THE Almighty is the God of peace. Regardless of disorder and confusion among the creatures of his universe, Jehovah is always tranquil, calm and undisturbed. The very creation bespeaks his majesty, dignity, and quiet serenity. The lofty mountain peaks, lifting their hoary heads into the heavens, testify to the calmness and repose of the great First Cause. The peace which God enjoys is centered in himself. The peace which his intelligent creatures enjoy can be had only when such creatures have an abiding confidence in Jehovah.

²Peace is properly defined as a state of calmness and repose, of tranquility and quiet, free from disturbance. At times one may enjoy physical peace; but the peace which the Christian enjoys is that state of mind and heart wherein is calmness and repose resulting from an abiding confidence in Jehovah and in the Lord Jesus. There may be, and frequently are, outward stormy conditions tending to disturb the equilibrium of one; but there is the promise from God that he will keep such an one in peace, even amidst the greatest time of confusion and outward disturbances. The condition precedent to enjoying this peace is that the mind of the creature must be stayed upon the Creator.

³A stay is a strong rope or cable employed to hold fast and to keep steadfast and in place a mast or other object that needs to be supported. To animate, intelligent creatures a stay is an anchor or strong support, giving confidence to the one who enjoys such support. St. Paul tells us of the willingness of God to show to the heirs of promise (the spiritual seed of Abraham) the unchangeableness of his word; and that to do this he confirms or binds it with his oath. By these two unchangeable things God provides strong consolation to those who have laid hold upon the precious promises, and plants a blessed hope in the breasts of such, and thereby furnishes them a stay or anchor which is both certain and steadfast. This is true because that anchor is fastened in heaven, wherein Jesus, who is the Advocate of our cause, faithfully looks after the interest of every new creature. The terms are that those who trust the Lord, confidently relying upon him, keeping the

mind fastened upon him and his precious promises, he will keep in peace, peace.

⁴It will be noticed that the word "peace" is emphasized by repetition, as shown by marginal reading. Otherwise stated, God promises to give those that confidently trust him, and who have their minds stayed or anchored upon him, an abundance of peace. The adversary may assault from every side, cause much commotion and confusion. Yet if the way is clear between the creature and the Creator, and the creature keeps his mind upon the great Creator, he is held sure and steadfast by this stay or support; and there results to him a peace that passeth human understanding. It seems quite certain, from the recorded dealings of Jehovah with those who have attempted to serve him, that he permits trying circumstances and disturbed conditions round about in order that those who have faith in him might have an opportunity to test the willingness of Jehovah and his ability to give peace and quietude. He is the God of peace, therefore the source of all peace; and when he giveth quietness, who can disturb?

EXAMPLES FOR OUR ADMONITION

⁵It has pleased Jehovah to teach the church by precept and by example. By precept is meant the plain statement of his Word of Truth. By example is meant his manner of dealing with faithful men. We are expressly told that these faithful men of ancient times were used as types to foreshadow God's dealing with the new creation. Isaac was one who loved peace. He is referred to in history as "Isaac, the peaceable." He was quiet, thoughtful, and non-resistant, both as a man and as a child. He yielded readily to the cords with which his father bound him to the altar for sacrifice. He readily submitted to his father's will in the selection of his bride. He permitted the herdsmen of Abimelech to monopolize the lands and wells which were rightfully his own by divine inheritance. He loved peace and not strife. Isaac was a type of the church, expressly so stated by the apostle Paul.—Galatians 4: 28.

⁶Isaac was persecuted by the fleshly minded; and even so it is with the antitypical Isaac. It seems that there

are always some who claim to be consecrated to the Lord, and who are associated with others who are consecrated, but who are of a contentious spirit, and love strife more than peace. They even claim to be insisting on principle, and for the enforcement of what they call principle, and thereby find an excuse to level harsh criticism and judgment against their brethren. In this they are wrong. Principle is a synonymous term for God's law, or rule of action. Where one is governed by principle that one is governed by the law of God; and if governed by the law of God such will avoid strife and contention because it is expressly stated that these are the fruits of the flesh. (Galatians 5:20) They evidently fail to have the peace of God because neglecting to stay or fasten their minds upon him, his character, and his Word. It should be remembered that the promise is to keep in peace, real peace, the one who confidently trusts in the Lord and is governed according to his Word.

⁷There are other notable examples in the Old Testament, given for the benefit of the church, that the spiritually minded might obtain profitable lessons therefrom. Jacob was compelled to flee from home because of the wrath of his dishonest brother Esau. He carried with him virtually nothing, except his shepherd's staff, leaving all his earthly possessions behind. They were rightfully his, because he had bought them and earned them. The Lord had granted his blessing. As a lonely fugitive he craved the peace and quietude again of his father's house. The Lord blessed him by granting his desire. —Genesis 28:21.

⁸In olden times heavenly angels materialized in human form, appearing as messengers from God to man on earth. An angel appeared to Manoah and his wife, giving them assurance of the birth of their son Samson. When the angel had ascended up to heaven in a flame from off the altar, where Manoah had offered a sacrifice, and appeared no more, Manoah said to his wife: "We shall surely die, because we have seen God. But his wife said unto him, If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have showed us all these things, nor would, as at this time, have told us such things as these." (Judges 13:18-23) Here the husband was frightened. His peace of mind was disturbed. His good wife had more faith than he and was a comfort to him. And why? Because her mind was fixed upon the Lord, his goodness, and his promises.

⁹Often a good woman is a great blessing to a man. Often her faith is stronger than the man's, and enables the man's faith to grow stronger, also. The most blessed gift that God gives to a man in a tangible form is a good woman, who trusts in the Lord. This statement is borne out by Biblical proof. If the woman would always study to be a blessing to the man, as the Lord's Word points out, the Lord would honor her efforts. Likewise where the man diligently seeks to be governed according to the Lord's Word and to aid the woman, he

is a blessing to her. There must be reciprocity with a view to honoring the Lord. Manoah's wife, having her mind stayed upon the Lord, was in a better condition of mind to reason concerning the Lord's dealings with them. Peace of mind, therefore, is essential to sound reasoning.

¹⁰But it is natural for man to fear, because he is imperfect. An angel appeared unto Gideon who, when he discovered that he had been talking with an angel, was afraid that it meant for him the loss of life. But the Lord comforted him by saying, "Peace be unto thee; fear not." (Judges 6:23) Gideon was a natural man. The new creature in Christ Jesus has a greater basis for his hope and trust in the Lord, and therefore for his peace of mind and heart.

¹¹It is expressly observed from our text that an abiding faith is the basis for this peace. David was a strong example of faith. He was also a target for the adversary. David was a type of the church. While yet a youth he had been anointed to succeed King Saul; but he made no effort to assume the office as king, preferring to wait for the Lord to arrange the matter. Saul attempted to take David's life. For many years David fled from Saul's presence. While in the land of Philistia there came to him a deputation of discontented ones from Saul's domain. David was not sure whether they were on a mission of peace or were bent on evil. Hence he said unto them that if they came peaceably he was glad to see them, and his heart would be knit to them; but if they came to betray him, inasmuch as he had done no wrong, he would appeal his case to Jehovah and Jehovah would rebuke them. The Lord without doubt was pleased with this act of David. Using one of the men, the Lord spoke to David this sweet message: "Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee." (1 Chronicles 12:17, 18) Shortly thereafter David came into possession of the throne of Israel.

DAVID'S IMPLICIT CONFIDENCE IN JEHOVAH

¹²We seem warranted in concluding that the Lord often permits trials to test the faith of his people. When David was being pursued by his enemy he cried unto the Lord, saying, "Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer." After he had prayed unto God he said: "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." —Psalm 4:1-8.

¹³The peace of God adds strength to the one who is weak and weary. An example is given of this in the experience of the prophet Daniel. He was sick and discouraged because of the trouble which he saw coming upon the Israelites. Then the Lord sent unto him a message by his angel, saying, "O man greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto thee: be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened,

and said, Let my Lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me." (Daniel 10:19) A Christian who has experienced some of the fiery trials along the way knows how to appreciate this. If conditions round about disturb the mind and shake the faith, he becomes weak and sick at heart; but when he turns his mind to the Lord, trusting in him and relying confidently upon his promises, then the Lord brings to him sweet peace; and strength results. These examples were put into the Scriptures for our benefit; for St. Paul says that the things heretofore written were written for our comfort.—Romans 15:4.

¹⁴The time will come when God will establish peace amongst all the peoples of earth who will trust him. He made a covenant with the Israelites at Mount Sinai, and in that covenant he promised to keep them in safety and in peace. He said: "And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land." (Leviticus 26:6) The Israelites violated that covenant; but God will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, through Christ, the great Prince of Peace. (Hebrews 8:8-13) The prophet Isaiah had faith that this will be so and testified to it: "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us."—Isaiah 26:12.

¹⁵After Israel comes to appreciate God's loving kindness and trusts the Lord implicitly, then the Lord "will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth." (Jeremiah 33:6) The Lord Jesus came to Israel, bearing to them the message of peace and reconciliation; but their leaders refused his message, and influenced the common people to refuse it. Their repeated refusal caused Jesus to weep and say: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." (Luke 19:42) Being permitted to understand God's plan, a Christian now has much consolation when he reads in God's Word: "Behold, I will [yet] extend peace to her [Israel] like a river, and the glory of the nations like a flowing stream." (Isaiah 66:12) Knowing that this peace is coming to Israel and through Israel to all the world, the Christian delights in telling it to those who have the hearing ear.

PEACE WITH GOD

¹⁶Before one can have the peace of God he first must be at peace with God. Jehovah, in his loving kindness, has provided the way for establishing such peace. All the human race, being born in sin and shapen in iniquity, are at enmity with God. When one is tired and sick of being separated from God, and has the desire to come into harmony with Jehovah, the great and loving God draws him to Jesus. The means of our peace with God is through the Lord Jesus, our Redeemer. Of him it was written: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastise-

ment of our peace was upon him." (Isaiah 53:5) He was put to death for our sins, he was raised again for our justification, by which means he brings us to peace with God. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace." (Ephesians 2:13,14) From the one who presents himself in full consecration to the Lord, trusting in the merit of Christ Jesus' sacrifice, the Lord will in no wise turn away. Such a one is seeking peace with God. When the Lord Jesus becomes his Advocate and presents him to the Father, and the Father justifies him, then is made true the statement of St. Paul: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:1) This is the one and *only* way that leads to peace with God.

LEGACY OF PEACE

¹⁷Peace is a priceless jewel. Would that all professed Christians would more keenly appreciate it. It is said of Jesus that he was so poor that he had not a place to lay his head. When he died upon the cross he left no real or personal property; even his clothing was taken from him and divided amongst the soldiers. The legacy he left to the Church, however, cannot be measured by any earthly value. His last night with his disciples on earth was the occasion of committing into their hands this legacy for them, and for those who should afterwards believe upon him. He said: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27) And again: "These things have I 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) The peace here mentioned is not an outward peace but that restful condition of mind and heart resulting from an abiding confidence in the Lord. This is the peace of God that passeth understanding, enjoyed by the one who has already been brought to the relationship of peace with God and who has learned to appropriate to himself the precious promises and rely upon them.

PEACE IN THE CHURCH

¹⁸The importance of peace in the church cannot be overstated. St. Paul says: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14) It is not an unusual thing to find a disturbance in a congregation of Christians. Some are naturally of a contentious spirit, and insist on having their own way. They cause contention and strife. Concerning this the Apostle says: "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." (Galatians 5:15) Some have greater difficulty than others to dwell in peace. This is due to the imperfections of the flesh; and it will be found that where strife and contention exist, selfishness is being

manifested. This selfishness sometimes appears in the form of ambition to lord it over God's heritage. It may be manifested because of envy. Either of these will lead to disastrous results, if not amended. The Lord foreknew this condition would exist in the Church, otherwise he would not have warned against it through the Apostle.

¹⁹The temptations that beset those of the world likewise beset those of the Church, but the Lord has prepared a way for the Church to escape. (1 Corinthians 10:13) That way of escape is by fastening our anchor to the Lord, relying upon his promises, and conforming ourselves to the commandment of his Word. The Apostle, in admonishing the Church as to duties and obligations, says: "Be at peace among yourselves." This requires a large measure of heavenly wisdom. Wisdom that is mentioned by the Apostle is: "First pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." (James 3:17) Every Christian needs this wisdom, and the Lord has graciously promised to give it for the asking. (James 1:5) Wisdom's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."—Prov. 3:17.

²⁰Wisdom means to know the Word of God and to conform our lives to that Word. Where there is confusion and contention in an ecclesia, if each one would calmly ask himself: Is this a manifestation of the spirit of the Lord? and then remember the Apostle's words: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (1 Corinthians 14:33), then govern himself according to the Word, controversies could not long last amongst God's people. Each one in the Church must strive to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3) and, striving thus to do, may know that the result will be beneficial to the members of the body and pleasing to the Lord.

²¹One of the good ways to overcome this contentious spirit is for those who have it to pray for peace, and then to conform their lives to such prayer. This suggestion is given by the Psalmist: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good." (Psalm 122:6-9) When one feels desirous of fighting his brethren, let him remember the words of the apostle Peter: "Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." (2 Peter 3:14) It is better to overlook non-essentials than to be contentious about many things and lose all. He who is willing thus to do will enjoy a greater measure of peace in his own mind.

CONDITIONS OF PEACE

²²Corroborating the words of the prophet Isaiah that God will keep in peace, peace those whose minds are

stayed upon him, the prophet David adds: "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." (Psalm 119:165) The law of God is his Word; and they that meditate upon his Word and love it will strive to conform themselves to it, and will enjoy a peace that passeth understanding. "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: for length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee." (Proverbs 3:1,2) That peace is the result of heeding the commandment of the Lord. As further proof on this point the Prophet says: "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." (Isaiah 48:18) To keep God's law or commandments means to appreciate the spirit thereof. It means really to love God and to delight to do that which would please him. The Christian must, in order to enjoy peace, mind the things of the spirit and not pamper the desires of the flesh. As St. Paul says: "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." (Romans 8:6) To continue in peace one must continue to feed upon the precious words of truth.

²³"The fruit of the spirit is love." (Galatians 5:22) Then the Apostle adds "peace," as one of the elements that go to make up this fruit. Therefore, we conclude that there can be no real peace unless our love for God is supreme. It must be the love of God that will cause us to desire to know and to do his will. We must have the love of Christ that binds us together as one family.

THE GOSPEL OF PEACE

²⁴It is not surprising that we see the Scriptures speak of the true gospel as the "gospel of peace." It is remarkable to note the instances in which this phrase "gospel of peace" is used. The term seemingly applies to the Church when nearing the end of its earthly journey. It seems that to the feet members is left the chief work of proclaiming the "gospel of peace." Seeing, then, that the Lord of the kingdom is here and has committed to the Church the message of reconciliation to the world, how important, therefore, that every member of the Church follow peace and holiness, looking to that blessed time when they may see the Lord face to face and have his approval.

²⁵The Church is nearing the end of her earthly journey. This period of her journey should be marked by sweet peace in the mind and heart of each one of those who expects to enter the kingdom. God assures us through the words of his prophet that this condition of mind and heart will be granted to those who keep the mind stayed upon him. We sometimes wish to emphasize a thought. For instance we say: I am *very* happy. Another will say: I am *very, very* happy. And so the Lord emphasizes this fruit of the spirit which he gives to the Church, saying, 'I will give *peace, peace*, to those who trust me and meditate upon my law.'

²⁶Never was there a time more appropriate for the Church and all of its members this side the veil to dwell in peace and unity than right now. When one has journeyed for a long way through the hot and dusty desert, and with great effort has struggled up the mountain-side, reaching the very summit thereof, and in that calm and quiet environment reclines to rest, there comes to the body and mind an outward and inward peace that human words cannot describe. The very environment bespeaks peace and quietude. The lofty mountain peaks round about silently lifting their heads heavenward testify that all peace cometh down from him who doeth all things well. These inanimate witnesses are in exact harmony with each other. There is no confusion, no noise, no voice; yet their testimony is more powerful than spoken words. The weary traveler, calm and in repose, seemingly hears whispering through the pines of these lofty mountains the sweet words of the Lord, telling of his great love for those who dwell in peace and in holiness. It suggests to the traveler's mind the blessed sweetness that must and will prevail in the heavenly realm, where all things are in harmony and where there is not even a discordant note or sound. As he meditates upon these things of God's creation, from them he has a keener appreciation of the words uttered by the Psalmist: "How good and how blessed for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Psalm 133:1.

²⁷Long has the Church journeyed through the valley of the shadow of death. Many have been the fiery experiences of the various members. Often have they been bowed down with burdens grievous to be borne. They have been subjected to evil report, slandered, misunderstood, and misrepresented; they have grown tired and worn and weary. These have been real desert experiences. Now the church has ascended Pisgah's mountain, and from its summit by faith beholds the promised blessings of her glory home. Now is committed to her the great and wonderful privilege of carrying the message of peace to the world. The prophet Isaiah had a vision of the feet members of the Church in this favored position. The vision thrilled his soul, and in ecstasy he wrote: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"—Isaiah 52:7.

THE TRANQUILITY OF GOD'S PEACE

²⁸As the eternal peaks stand as silent sentinels on watch, even so the Prophet likens these faithful ones of the Church, who love peace and pursue it, to watchmen. Because of their faithfulness the Lord has rewarded them with peace of mind and repose of heart. He represents them as having their hearts knitted together in love, having a clearer knowledge of God's plan, seeing eye to eye in all things pertaining to the kingdom, and

then adds: "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing." By this we understand that these watchmen, the faithful followers of the Lord Jesus, to whom now is committed the message of peace, are joyfully proclaiming that message that others may know that Jehovah is God and that Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords.

²⁹If only we daily, yea hourly, could keep our minds fixed upon the exceeding great and precious promises that the Lord has given to us, and know that these promises are ours and intended for our consolation, what a sweet peace it would bring! If each one in the narrow way, meditating upon these precious promises, could at all times fully appreciate the high office to which he is called, what a great inducement it would be to follow peace with the brethren and with all! Where this peace of mind results there would be little or no controversy in the ecclesia; and if some insisted on causing disturbances, no storm nor confusion would interrupt the peace and calm that would continue in the heart of each one who refrains from strife, and who stays his heart upon the Lord and his promises, and strives to obey the same.

³⁰Everything in the world is turmoil and strife and confusion. There is no peace in the world, and there is no power of the world that can bring peace. But the messengers of the Lord, because their minds are stayed upon him and they trust him, have in themselves the peace of God that passeth understanding. They know what will bring peace to the world. With joy and gladness they announce to the world: The Prince of Peace is here. He has taken unto himself his power; he has begun his reign; he will establish the world in righteousness that it cannot be moved. "Blessed are the peacemakers." No storm disturbs their inmost calm; no trial or tribulation drives them away from the duties of their high office to which they are anointed. No persecution nor misrepresentation causes them to falter or turn back; but with complete confidence in the Lord, with hearts moved by pure and unselfish love, and united together in love for each other and dwelling in harmony, they with one accord joyfully proclaim: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." They enjoy sweet fellowship with each other because they are one in Christ; and with gladness they are looking forward to that happy day when they shall be made perfect as members of the body of Christ in glory, to that blessed time when they may enter the house of eternal peace and glory of the Lord, there to dwell forever, to behold his glory and to gain knowledge in his temple. Blessed is the portion of the Church at this hour; blessed are those that have the peace of God, and that continue in peace. More blessed will they be in a little while, when, for faithfulness to their King, they shall enter into their full reward.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

What bespeaks the tranquil and undisturbed character of God? Why is his peace never disturbed? ¶ 1.
 How is peace defined? What kind of peace has the Christian? ¶ 2.
 What is a "stay"? What makes a Christian's hope steadfast? ¶ 3.
 How may peace be emphasized? How may peace be maintained amid outward storms? ¶ 4, 25.
 How does God teach his children? What title is applied to Isaac? ¶ 5.
 By whom was Isaac persecuted? The antitypical Isaac? How is it done? What is the meaning of "principle"? ¶ 6.
 Was Jacob a lover of peace? How was it demonstrated? ¶ 7.
 How was the father of Samson reproved by his wife? What enabled her to do it? ¶ 8.
 What relationship may be a great blessing to a man? How may a husband and a wife be a great blessing to each other? ¶ 9.
 Why do men sometimes have fear? What made Gideon afraid? ¶ 10.
 How did David demonstrate his confidence in Jehovah? ¶ 11, 12.
 What strengthens the weak and weary? How did God encourage Daniel? ¶ 13.
 Has God promised to establish peace in the earth? ¶ 14.
 How did Jesus express his sympathy for Israel? What gives the Christian consolation? ¶ 15.
 How do we differentiate between "peace with God" and "peace of God"? Does Isaiah 53:5 mean that peace must come to humanity? ¶ 16.

What is the legacy which Jesus left us? By what means should we appropriate that legacy to ourselves? ¶ 17.
 Is peace something to be dealt with lightly? Why do some have more difficulty in being at peace with their brethren than do others? ¶ 18.
 Are the surroundings of all mankind practically the same? How does the Christian differ from the man of the world? ¶ 19.
 What does "wisdom" mean? What is the duty of every member in the Church? ¶ 20.
 How may the contentious spirit be gotten rid of? What does 2 Peter 3:14 say? ¶ 21.
 Where are the instructions for maintaining perfect peace? What does it mean to appreciate the spirit of God's Word? ¶ 22.
 What is the fruit of the spirit? What has love to do with peace? ¶ 23.
 What expression do we find often in the Bible? When does it have a special meaning to the Church? ¶ 24.
 Why is now an especially appropriate time for the Church to dwell together in unity? ¶ 25, 26.
 Where has the Church been for a long time? Where is she now? ¶ 27.
 Unto what are the eternal peaks likened? What is the joyful song of triumph? ¶ 28.
 Upon what should we fix our minds? What should be our attitude when strife threatens? ¶ 29.
 Is peace in the world possible? What special blessing is there for heralds of peace at the present time, and in the future? ¶ 30.

PRAYER-MEETING TEXT COMMENTS

TEXT FOR MAY 21

"For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor."—Psalm 22:28.

IN THIS text the Psalmist says that the kingdom is Jehovah's, that he is the governor, meaning thereby that the dominion, the rule or power of the kingdom, resides in Jehovah. This does not at all militate against the fact that it is the kingdom of Messiah, and that he is the ruler.

The Apostle plainly tells us that "all things [are] of God," and that God "hath put all things under his [Christ's] feet," and given him to be the Head over all things to the Church, "that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth."—1 Cor. 11:12; 15:25; Eph. 1:22, 10.

It is always understood, therefore, that the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Christ are one and the same; that Christ exercises all authority and governing power in the kingdom in harmony with the Father's will.

During the Millennial age Christ will be engaged in subduing all things unto himself. "When all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject" unto Jehovah.—1 Corinthians 15:28.

Graciously has Jehovah provided that there shall be associated with Christ Jesus, in the Millennial reign and time of blessing the people, the overcoming saints. Their importance in his kingdom may be somewhat approximated when we call to mind that Jehovah, through Christ Jesus, has occupied a long period of time in preparing those who are to be the saints in glory.

It is well that we keep before our minds this exalted position in order to appreciate why the Lord would permit each one of the kingdom class to pass through many fiery trials. These trying experiences are for the special benefit of those who are tried. Hence St. Paul

says: "We glory in tribulation also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope."—Romans 5:3, 4.

All these trying experiences constitute a test of faith. St. James knew this; hence he wrote: "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations [tests]; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." (James 1:2-4) Then he adds: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." (James 1:12) This shows that no one will attain unto the position of membership in the royal family without passing through trying experiences and getting the victory over them.

It is difficult often for a Christian to understand some of his experiences; but if he patiently waits on the Lord, in due time he will see that God is making good his promise to cause all things to work out for the benefit of the one who is really the Lord's. God's wisdom caused him to prepare the way that leads to glory, not through flowery beds of ease but through tribulation. In no other way could loyalty be so well proven. Loyalty to the very core, loyalty in everything, is that which is pleasing to the Lord. This means that he who shall be associated with Christ Jesus in the kingdom would be loyal under any possible conditions that might arise. He who really has some appreciation of the great privilege of being a member of the kingdom class, which shall govern the whole world and uplift and bless mankind, can appreciate fiery trials. St. Paul had many of these. He rejoiced in filling up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ; for he saw that that was a condition precedent to reigning with Christ. With real enthusiasm he wrote: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable

are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?"—Romans 11:33, 34.

These wonderful things revealed in the Word of God inspire the Christian to battle on with joy in his heart, that he may attain unto the great goal to which Jehovah has called him. Blessed is the man who is now being trained for the office of king and who successfully passes the examination.

TEXT FOR MAY 28

"All kings shall fall down before him."—Psalm 72:11.

THE personal pronoun *him* in this text applies to Christ, the King of glory. The first verse of the Psalm discloses that fact. The Psalmist pictures one standing before Jehovah with reverential respect, who presents a petition to Jehovah, saying, "Give the king thy judgments, O God."

Judgment means a judicial determination. The one to whom judgment is committed must have authority and jurisdiction to hear all causes and to enter a finding or decree, and to execute that decree. That will be the office of the Messiah during the Millennial age.

The petition presented in the first verse of this Psalm seems to be answered subsequently when David, as the mouthpiece of Jehovah, says: "The Lord [Jehovah] said unto my Lord [Christ Jesus], Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Psalm 110:1) Otherwise stated, Jehovah says to his beloved Son: 'Thou shalt occupy my throne for the judicial determination of all things that pertain to man, until all thine enemies have been brought under thy feet.'

Jesus understood that to be the decree of Jehovah; and when on earth he said: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; . . . and hath given him authority to execute judgment also."—John 5:22, 27.

St. Paul understood such to be Jehovah's determination, when he wrote: "For he [Christ] must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet."—1 Corinthians 15:25.

These texts show that our week-text means that all the kings shall fall before the Lord Jesus and that all the nations shall serve him.

Kings, within the meaning of this text, are the ruling factors of the earth. The term is not necessarily confined to those who wear the crown and regal garments and sit on thrones, but it includes big business, big politicians, and big preachers. It is the same class described in Psalm 149 in the words: "To bind their kings with

chains and their nobles with fetters of iron." In this work the saints of Christ shall participate.

The great King of glory, now present, has assumed his power and authority, and is binding the kings and nobles; and now the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of God and of his Christ. From this time forward, as his kingdom increases, these mighty ones of earth must be submissive. Some of them will refuse to be submissive, however. The Scriptures disclose that the judicial determination of the great King upon these will be destruction. All of those who, after a full and fair opportunity before his tribunal, prostrate themselves before the great King and render homage and loyalty to him, shall receive the blessings of life, liberty and happiness.

Throughout the Millennial age the great King of glory shall sit upon his throne, judging the peoples of earth. That is to say, he will hear their causes, judicially determine what shall be done, pronounce the decree, and enforce it. In this wonderful work the overcoming saints shall participate; for Jesus said: "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matthew 19:28) That this means his faithful followers we know; for he said: "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."—Rev. 3:21.

It is a tremendous incentive to the faithful child of God now to appreciate the fact that he is privileged to live when the King is present; that he is privileged now to be the ambassador of the great King and tell the people that the kingdom is being set up; and to know that soon the evil forces shall be completely restrained; and that the judgments of the Lord shall be in the earth, during which the people will learn righteousness. The Lord permits his people now to appreciate these things for their own encouragement; and those who do appreciate are entering into the joy of the Lord.

The words "fall before him" in this text, in addition to what has been said, have the thought of doing reverence and worship to the Lord. As the judgments of the Lord proceed, the obedient ones will learn righteousness; and when the work of his great court is complete, and he with his associate justices surrender the kingdom to the Father, then at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, the Father. A beautiful, wonderful, happy universe then it will be. Praise ye the Lord!

"In memory of the Savior's love
We keep this simple feast,
Where every consecrated heart
Is made a welcome guest.

"By faith we take the bread of life
Which this doth symbolize;
This cup in token of his blood,
Our costly sacrifice."

JEHOIADA'S VICTORY OVER BAAL

—MAY 11—2 KINGS 11: 1-4, 11-18—

GOD PROTECTS HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE—DAVIDIC LINE ALMOST OBLITERATED—JEHOIADA RECEIVES SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE—PRESENT PRIVILEGES PREFIGURED.

"Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."—Ephesians 6: 10.

OUR lessons now return to Judah. Today's study brings under review the history of that kingdom from the time of the division to its deliverance from the curse of Baal, which wrought so much destruction in the northern kingdom, and which had been fastened upon it also. Partly because of the overruling providences of Jehovah, and partly through the fact that the temple of the Lord with all its ordained services was in Jerusalem, Judah did not forsake the Lord so quickly as Israel had done. But though they kept more faithful to the worship of Jehovah, they never got free from the worship in the high places. —2 Kings 23: 5, 8, 9.

²Sometimes this was worship of the gods of the neighboring nations, but very frequently was professedly worship of Jehovah; for before the erection of the temple high places were chosen for the place of sacrifice. (See 1 Samuel 9: 12) There were some in Judah who preferred to continue to worship at these shrines even after God had very clearly appointed his altar in the temple in Jerusalem; and there were priests who were content to serve them. Each of these priests had his own little kingdom, and preferred to have that rather than be lost in the large number of the Lord's servants.

³Here is a point still worth attention: All leaders in classes should remember that the Church is one, and that there are general as well as local interests which call for attention. These priests in Judah who served locally lost the idea of general unity which God intended should obtain in Israel, and for which purpose a central place of worship and a thrice-yearly pilgrimage were provided.

⁴No one can truly serve local interests who does not see them first in the larger view as parts of the whole. It was this weakness in Judah which helped to bring on the crisis set before us in today's study. Rehoboam died with a poor record. (2 Chronicles 12: 14) He was followed by Ahijah (three years), and by Asa (forty-one years). Asa brought his people to a high pitch of fervor towards Jehovah (2 Chronicles 15: 12-14), but in his last years his own fervor dwindled. (2 Chronicles 16: 10) Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead. He saw that the knowledge of Israel's calling was being lost; and to help them he appointed teachers accompanied by Levites to go throughout the kingdom to instruct the people in the way of the Lord.—2 Chron. 17: 7-9.

GOD PROTECTS HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE

⁵After some years of service on behalf of the Lord's people, and while Jehoshaphat was yet seeking diligently to walk in the right way, Edom, Moab, Ammon, and a mixed multitude came against Judah unawares. When Jehoshaphat was informed of the danger he sought the Lord earnestly. Crying for help he told the Lord how these nations had combined to destroy Judah, God's people, and to take possession of the inheritance which God had given them. God assured Jehoshaphat that he would attend to this matter, and that this evil combination should be broken. Judah was to march out as if to battle. As they did so, their foes were thrown into confusion and began to slay each other—none escaped. Judah was much enriched with the spoil; for these people had come in confident expectation of staying, and had brought much valuable property with them.—2 Chronicles 20: 1-30.

⁶It is from this event that we get the phrase "the valley of blessing," so sweet to the ears of the Lord's people; and also the words of the song, "I have entered the valley of

blessing so sweet"; though probably the song is inspired more by the thought than by the incident. To get the true thought and the most helpful meaning it should be noted that the valley of blessing was so named because "there they blessed God." (2 Chronicles 20: 26) The valley of blessing is found wherever the heart is ready to praise God for all his goodness. An ungrateful heart never gets into that valley.

⁷Jehoshaphat, apparently bewitched by the brilliancy of Ahab and Jezebel, made affinity with them and married his son to their daughter. Later he visited them in Samaria, and there was a great time of feasting. Ahab invited Jehoshaphat to go with him to an attack on Ramoth-gilead, then held by the Syrians. (2 Chronicles 18: 1-3) The attack cost Ahab his life. (2 Chronicles 18: 34) Jehoshaphat was very unequally yoked with Ahab, and the alliance wrought havoc in Judah. Jehoshaphat died a few years later, soon after the time when Elijah was taken away in the whirlwind. Jehoram of Judah, his son, was a brutal king, evidently under the dominion of his wife. He died a terrible death, unwept and unhonored. (2 Chronicles 21: 18, 19) Ahaziah reigned in his stead.

⁸Ahaziah, of Judah, took counsel with those of the house of Ahab, and walked therein. (2 Chronicles 22: 3) When he had reigned a year Jehoram of Israel, his uncle, invited him to Ramoth-gilead, where Ahab had received his death wound. Jehoram was wounded in the battle and returned to Jezreel, and was followed there by Ahaziah to visit him. His going was of God; for it was then, when these two were together at Jezreel, that Elisha sent to Ramoth-gilead to anoint Jehu, who was conducting the battle as captain of Israel's army. Ahaziah fell into the destruction of Ahab's house, and forty-two of his relatives who went down to Samaria to visit him were also slain by Jehu.—2 Chronicles 22: 5-9; 2 Kings 10: 14.

⁹When Athaliah the queen-mother of Judah heard of all this slaughter, she made a mad attempt to slay all the remaining royal seed of the house of David. Believing that she had succeeded, she assumed the royal prerogative, and immediately took steps to destroy the worship of Jehovah and to establish that of Baal. The temple was closed, and in its precincts a temple to Baal was built. It then seemed as if all God had said about the preservation of David's family had failed. But God does not permit either the devil or any of his agents or dupes to alter the divine plans; and there was a surprise for the usurper.

¹⁰The plan of Satan, of whom Athaliah was a willing agent, had been frustrated by the fidelity of a few faithful persons. On the day when Athaliah, as she thought, had slain all the sons of the royal house, the life of one, Ahaziah's baby boy, was saved. His nurse had stolen him from amongst the king's sons who were slain. (2 Chronicles 22: 11) Apparently the little fellow had been thrown amongst the dead, perhaps after getting a blow which stunned him. The nurse "stole him," and passed him to the care of the wife of Jehoiada the high priest, the sister of the boy's father, though Athaliah was not her mother. For six years the child was hidden in the temple, now unused for worship.

¹¹Jehoiada watched carefully over the boy and was faithful to the Lord, and in the seventh year "Jehoiada strengthened himself in the Lord," and secretly prepared to set the boy on the throne. He sent messengers throughout Judah to stir up the Levites, and a scheme was made to be brought

to completion on a certain sabbath day. The arrangement worked well. On the day appointed the boy Joash was produced, placed at the pillar in the temple where the kings were proclaimed, a crown was put on his head, and with much shouting the people accepted him king.

¹²Athaliah, who lived in the royal palace nearby, came quickly, and apparently alone, to see what the noise was about. The bold woman was ready to face the crowd; but when she saw the boy crowned, and the people proclaiming him king, she cried, as all usurpers do in such cases: "Treason, treason!" (2 Kings 11:14) Jehoiada instructed that she should be led out beyond the ranks of the priests, who were there set in order; and that he who followed her should slay her. And there, just outside the temple courts, perished the wicked woman who had established Baalism in Judah.

¹³Jehoiada, supported by the people, acted immediately. The high priest of Baal was slain, apparently on the threshold of Baal's temple. The temple of Baal itself was destroyed, and all the images were broken. Thus in the seventh year of the boy's life, and of the permission of this evil, and in the seventh year after the death of Jezebel, Baalism in Judah came to a sudden end. (2 Chronicles 23:17; 2 Kings 10:28) It was on a sabbath day this great thing was done, surely typical of the great sabbath when all evil things will be destroyed, and when the rightful King is set on his throne and proclaimed king.

¹⁴To the Bible student there can be no question that this event in Judah is immediately connected with the work of Elijah and Elisha in Israel. It is another picture of the destruction of Baalism from among God's people, in this time, when God is establishing his kingdom in the earth.

¹⁵There were three separate acts used by Jehovah for the destruction of this abomination which had been fastened upon God's people; and they were done under three different aspects, each closely fitting to the work done by the returned Lord through his Church, the Elijah and Elisha class. Our Lord has returned to take up the office and work of PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING. These three phases are not, however, limited to the work of the kingdom after it is established on earth. They are put into operation during the time of its establishment, and they are portrayed in the lessons set for our study.

¹⁶The work which was done by Pastor Russell from the time when God gave him his commission (which, as in Elijah's case, was given because of his showing an earnest desire to spread the true knowledge of God abroad) corresponds with Elijah's witness. Both these servants of God thought that the people would be ready to receive the truth as soon as it was pointed out to them; and both were disappointed in this. Elijah was God's prophet, declaring the truth as to the true place of God—his right to rule and his power to do so. Pastor Russell's message to the people was that God is the great Ruler of the world, and is working all things according to his own purpose.

¹⁷There was, and still is, much worship of an unknown God, with only little reverential worship of "the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ," worship which means a desire to know and to do the divine will with a readiness to live according to its requirements. The knowledge of the plan of the ages brought God back to his people as clearly and as definitely as Jehovah was revealed to Israel on Mount Carmel. It is this knowledge which will bring those who have any love for God into the truth; and this knowledge of the divine purpose and its operation must continue to be proclaimed and taught, that all men may know and see the glory of God. It has pleased God to give his servants this ministry at this time, the work and ministry of the PROPHET.

¹⁸There was other work to be done; for the evil was rooted in high authority. Therefore Jehu was appointed king and charged with the work of destroying all who supported this terrible thing. Baalism, whether as a system of worship in those days, or seen in its symbolic state as now, existing in the high places of the ecclesiastical world where it has substituted the worship of Jehovah, is an evil which has no cure; and those into whom the poison has entered are incurable. Hence our Lord has a great breaking-down work to do; for those in power in this world, whether in ecclesiastical circles or elsewhere, are opposed to the will of God, and to all his interests.

¹⁹Some of this work of Jehu has been done, and the servants of the Lord see that it must all be accomplished before the kingdom is fully established in power. Nothing but the complete destruction of the temple of Baal and the priests of Baal and of all those who voluntarily give their power to this "beast" will serve the purpose of God. These are they who destroy the earth under pretence of saving it. (Revelation 11:18) The Lord's people tell out the truth, and the Lord himself will see to whatever destruction is necessary.

²⁰Besides this the Lord's people have a further work to do. The Prophet declares the truth, showing that Jehovah is the Most High over all the earth (Psalm 83:18); and the King asserts his control and his right to destroy the force of evil. The Priest must also serve in his place.

²¹This third phase is that shown by Jehoiada's service for Jehovah in the production of the young king and in the destruction in Judah of everything which represented Baal. It is now the business of the Lord's people to declare the presence of the King—not merely to say that he is coming; and at the same time to restore the worship of Jehovah. Here is a true priestly service. Not only is theirs the privilege to tell the truth as to the fact of God and his right to rule, and to spread the knowledge of the Lord which will serve to bring about the destruction of all the supporters of this present evil world; but it is theirs, also, to seek to restore true worship; to set the honor of the Lord on high; to open, as it were, a temple of truth wherein all the true-hearted may worship the Lord, and whence they will find his blessings flow.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

Our lesson today returns us to the southern kingdom between what events? What seemed to retard Judah toward Baal worship? ¶ 1. What were some of the outstanding characteristics of worship in Judah? ¶ 2. What is the danger in an exclusive local interest? ¶ 3. Is there a larger interest to be borne in mind? What did Jehoshaphat do? ¶ 4. When the mixed multitude came against Judah and their good king, Jehoshaphat, what did God do to assist his chosen people? ¶ 5. From the slaughter of Judah's foes at this place comes what phrase? What does the ungrateful heart never experience? ¶ 6. What blunder did Jehoshaphat make? May the brutality of Judah's Jehoram be traced to Jezebel? ¶ 7. What was Ahaziah's punishment for seeking counsel with the house of Ahab? What happened to Jehoram of Israel? ¶ 8. What did Athaliah presumptuously design to do? Why would the devil be interested in the destruction of the family of David? ¶ 9. How was Satan thwarted in his purpose? Who was Jehoiada? ¶ 10. What wisdom was displayed by Jehoiada in crowning Joash king over Judah? ¶ 11. What did Athaliah do when she saw that she was defied? What was her fate? ¶ 12. What became of the Baal worship? What is illustrated by this? ¶ 13. Did Elijah and Elisha have anything to do with the demolition of Baal worship? What inference may be drawn? ¶ 14. How soon did the Lord put into operation the work of Prophet, King and Priest? ¶ 15. Brother Russell's work corresponds to whose witness? What was the message? ¶ 16. What has a knowledge of the plan of God done for his people? Who have the ministry of the prophet? ¶ 17. Is there a cure for Baalism? Is the destruction of ecclesiasticism prefigured? ¶ 18. Where are the temple of Baal and the priests of Baal? What is our duty? ¶ 19. The threefold work of the saints is what? How is the third phase carried out? Is the priestly work being done? ¶ 20, 21.

ISAIAH AND THE ASSYRIAN CRISIS

—MAY 18—2 KINGS 18 TO 20; ISAIAH 36 TO 38—

HEZEKIAH, SUCCESSOR TO AHAZ, POET AND MUSICIAN—ANGEL OF THE LORD DESTROYS ASSYRIAN ARMY—SENNACHERIB SHORN OF POWER REPRESENTS SATAN.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."—Psalm 46: 1.

OUR lesson brings into relationship two of the greatest men of the Old Testament, Isaiah the prophet and Hezekiah the king; and also Sennacherib, the great Assyrian king, who was made a servant of Jehovah to chastise his people. (Isaiah 7:20) It was to a decadent people Isaiah was sent; for the development of national wealth under Uzziah had brought the usual accompaniment of social evils. (Isaiah 1:10) There was the accumulation of large estates (Isaiah 5:8), oppression of the poor (Isaiah 3:14, 15), perversion of justice (Isaiah 5:7, 23), the indulgence of luxury (Isaiah 2:7; 3:16), besides the worship of idols (Isaiah 2:8, 20), superstition and necromancy (Isaiah 2:6; 8:19); and the people were skeptical. (Isaiah 5:19) Human nature is ever the same; and that little state is a true miniature of the now universal condition.

²Ahaz, grandson of Uzziah, was one of the most wilful kings of Judah. He closed the temple, and in every available corner in Jerusalem he erected an altar; and apparently the priests were willingly submissive. (2 Chronicles 28:24) In those days the priesthood had grown in power; but the priests were corrupt, as is seen from Isaiah's cry against them.—Isaiah 1:10.

³Isaiah's message called for courage and a clear conviction. It meant that Isaiah must be separate from the people; and separated he was, not only by the fact of his witness but by the favor that he had from God in being called. He said: "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion" (Isaiah 8:18); and his testimony, rejected by the nation, was to be bound up amongst his disciples. His fuller witness is being given now, by the faithful servants of the Lord, whom Isaiah and his children represent, in this time when the Lord of Hosts establishes true Zion.—Isa. 8:16-18.

⁴During all this time Assyria was darkening the eastern horizon. It had begun to push westward in order to bring Syria and Palestine and Egypt under its dominion and thus become the world power. As previous lessons have shown, the kings of Syria and Israel wanted Judah to enter into confederacy with them to resist Assyria. Ahaz declined; indeed, he sought the aid of Assyria against them in order to bring retribution on Syria and Israel for harm they had done to Judah. Syria and Israel then combined to punish Ahaz and to put their nominee on his throne. Ahaz was a bad king, but God would not have others setting whom they would upon the throne of David. That was God's prerogative, and none might interfere.

⁵Isaiah assured Ahaz that the confederacy should not stand, but warned him against entering into one with Assyria. (Isaiah 7 and 8) Yet the king made a compact with Assyria, but got nothing but trouble out of it. On his death, his son Hezekiah reigned. Hezekiah's heart was right towards God, and he immediately set about a general reform. The temple was again opened for worship; sixteen days were required to cleanse it from the rubbish which had been dumped into it. (2 Chronicles 29:16, 17) Helped by Isaiah and probably by Micah, Hezekiah was urgent in his reforms. He decided to keep the Passover; and in order that all the faithful might share he sent messengers throughout all the northern territory, inviting all who would to come to Jerusalem. Many laughed the messengers to scorn, but some went up; and Jerusalem had a time of rejoicing better than any since David's day.—2 Chron. 30:27

HEZEKIAH, SUCCESSOR TO AHAZ, POET AND MUSICIAN

⁶Hezekiah was also a poet and a musician. He speaks of his songs to be sung in the house of the Lord. (Isaiah 38:20) Like his great predecessor David, he took delight in the worship of Jehovah in the temple; and once again praises to Jehovah ascended in the house of God.

⁷It was in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign that the northern kingdom was broken up and its people taken captive. In his fourteenth year Assyria, then ruled by the great Sennacherib, again invaded the land, evidently on the way to Egypt. Hezekiah in weakness acknowledged an offence in not paying tribute, and now paid heavily. (2 Kings 18:14-16) But soon after he was perhaps encouraged by Isaiah to a fuller confidence in the Lord (or it may be that he hoped for help from Egypt); for Sennacherib discerned that he was rebellious. Sennacherib was at Lachish, thirty miles southwest of Jerusalem, laying siege to that city. From there he sent some of his officers with an armed escort to Jerusalem to claim its submission. The messengers came and stood on the high ground on the northwest side of the city, and in bold and blasphemous language called for its submission.

⁸The leaders of Jerusalem asked the chief, the Rabshakeh, to speak in the Syrian language that their people might not understand; but he continued to use the Jews' language. (Isaiah 36:11, 13) He spoke arrogantly against both their king and their God. He extolled the power of Sennacherib, of whom he said that no gods could save those whom he intended to destroy. Hezekiah's officers reported these sayings to him; and he, filled with fear and distress, sent to Isaiah, telling him of the enemy's words of blasphemy, and saying, "This is a day of trouble and of rebuke," and asked him to seek the face of the Lord for the remnant that was left.—2 Kings 19:3-5.

⁹As the Rabshakeh received no answer, he returned to Sennacherib, now at Libnah. Sennacherib sent a letter to Hezekiah, saying, "Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee." (Isaiah 37:10) Hezekiah went up to the house of the Lord and spread the letter before the Lord, and asked him to vindicate himself and save his people "that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord, even thou only." (Isaiah 37:14-20) The Lord answered through Isaiah in the wonderful words recorded in Isaiah 37:22-34. Isaiah declared that the Assyrian should not come into the city, nor shoot an arrow, nor cast a bank against it; but that by the way he came so should he return. The Lord did not delay. That night the angel of the Lord went out to Libnah, and smote the Assyrian army; and in the morning there were 185,000 corpses. (2 Kings 19:35) Sennacherib was not smitten; for the hand of the Lord needed to be manifested on him and his pride be broken, and this could not have been done had he been slain with his army.

¹⁰It was at that time that Isaiah was sent to Hezekiah to tell him to prepare for his end, for his last days had come. (Isaiah 38:1) This was a terrible blow. The message was inexplicable to Hezekiah. He wept sore, and pleaded his endeavor to walk before the Lord in truth and with a perfect heart, and declared that he had done that which was right in the Lord's sight. None of the kings of Israel had sought the Lord's honor more than he—at least in outward things. As yet he was not married, and had no son to follow him on the throne. His father, who had sinned grievously against the Lord, had been preserved; and it seemed, there-

for, as if there was double condemnation coming upon him. Death he must meet at some time; but to be sentenced to death as under condemnation, and for no apparent reason, was as a second death to him. God heard his prayer, and answered it by Isaiah. He gave the king a sign that he should recover, and on the third day should go up to the house of the Lord. Hezekiah's hymn of praise on his recovery is exalted in both conception and language.—Isaiah 38:10-20.

¹¹In these incidents are many points of special interest to the Bible student. He cannot but notice that whereas the Assyrian power was used of God to conquer the northern kingdom and to take the ten tribes into captivity, the same power was almost destroyed when it would make an attempt on Jerusalem. The question naturally arises, Why was there a difference? The answer in part is that the time had not come when God would turn the crown of David over to the Gentiles, to be held by them until "he come whose right it is" to hold it. (Ezekiel 21:27) At that time Jerusalem did not represent that phase of religious life which later God would destroy. Under Hezekiah it rather represented the Church at this present time, under God's protection saved from an apparently overwhelming power.

SENNACHERIB SHORN OF POWER REPRESENTS SATAN

¹²The attack of Assyria on Jerusalem represents an attack by Satan on the Church in an attempt to destroy it and to set up a universal kingdom with God's people crushed out, a purpose and effort the Lord frustrates. Satan makes war with the Lamb for this purpose; but, as with Sennacherib, his army will be smitten while he himself escapes, only to find a harder fate. (Isaiah 37:38; Revelation 20:1-3) The same kind of attempt will be made at the end of the Millennial age. But again Satan's army will be smitten, and he will find the most terrible end to his long and perverted existence. (Revelation 20:9,10) The Lord's people can take comfort from this typical picture; they need have no fear that they will be crushed out of the earth; for they will be preserved and, as other illustrations show, will be partakers in the victory of righteousness. The virgin daughter of Zion again despises the loud and blasphemous threats of Satan and his representatives.—Isaiah 37:22.

¹³After the threatened attack on Jerusalem, and after Hezekiah's recovery from a sickness unto death, he married and had a son to follow him on the throne. There can be little doubt that these experiences provide the illustration for Isaiah's prophecy in chapter fifty-three concerning Christ; for Hezekiah was threatened with being cut off without generation, and judgment seemed to be withheld from him, inasmuch as there was no reason, apparent or expressed, why he should be sentenced to death. Hezekiah was being used of God for the divine purposes; and his bitter experiences were not only, nor perhaps specially, for lessons for himself.

¹⁴His marriage to Hephzibah represents the marriage of the Lord and his bride. Beyond this the picture fails, as all these illustrations do. Hezekiah fell into pride and a measure of condemnation. (2 Chronicles 32:25) His sufferings remind us that God has a right to use his own for his own purposes; and that he may bring circumstances upon one of his children, or upon his Church, which entail much suffering, and may seem even to indicate his displeasure, but which are for his own glory, to be used in behalf of the Church.—John 11:4.

¹⁵Some time previous to the time of crisis, when Hezekiah was threatened by the enemy and sick unto death, Isaiah was sent to Shebna, the treasurer of the king's house. This man, apparently a foreigner and certainly untrue to his trust, was so sure of his position that he had determined to have a sepulchre hewn out for himself according to the

fashion of the nobles and kings of Judah. While he was busied Isaiah denounced him. He told Shebna that his body should not rest there; but that God would have him tossed out into the wilderness as a ball is tossed by the wind; and that there, in discredit and loss and without burial, should his end be. Isaiah also said that Eliakim [whom God sets up] should take Shebna's place; that he would be as a nail in a sure place, driven in by Jehovah; that he should have the key to the treasury of David's house, and the government of all this should be upon his shoulders. The nail (Shebna), which seemed to be so secure, should be smitten, pulled out; and everything hung upon it should fall to the ground.—Isaiah 22:15-25.

¹⁶Here is the Old Testament representation of the servant to whom the Lord "in that day" of his return gives his treasures. Shebna represents the nominal church representatives, foreigners to the covenant of God, who were, as they thought, secure in their strong position. At heart they, like Shebna, seek not the interests of their king nor his kingdom, but seek how they can enrich themselves and make their position secure. They are cut down, and everything hung upon their organization falls to the ground. They themselves are contemptuously tossed like a rolling ball into the wilderness, to be the sport of the winds which blow.

¹⁷God appoints his own steward, his own organization, and drives it as a nail in a sure place. He gives it the care of the King's treasury of truth; none other opens or shuts—some things are opened out, some are shut down. The key, the government of the treasury, is in the servant's care, and all the vessels of truth, both the small cups and the flagons, are hung there. As in Isaiah's day the change of stewardship was made in preparation for the time of crisis which was approaching, so now: An appointment of a treasurer of the things connected with the throne (covenant) of David was made by the Lord "in due time." The appointment is the Lord's; and the nail upon which all the appointments of the household hang is securely fixed by him, and will not be removed.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

Who are the prominent characters in our lesson? What is the miniature picture of the universal condition today? ¶1.
What did Ahaz do? What was the priests' attitude toward the government? ¶2.
What did Isaiah's message call for? What did Isaiah say of himself? ¶3.
What was Assyria trying to do? What were the governmental coalitions at that time? What did the Syro-Israel combination want to do? ¶4.
What did Isaiah tell Ahaz, king of Judah? How well did he obey? Who became king? What was the big undertaking assumed by Hezekiah? ¶5.
What were some of the characteristics of Hezekiah? ¶6.
What was the fate of Israel in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign? Who menaced Judah in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign? What did the messengers of Sennacherib do? ¶7.
Why did the Rabshakeh use the Jews' language? How did Hezekiah receive the threats of Sennacherib, and what did he do? ¶8.
What did Hezekiah do with Sennacherib's letter? How did the Lord answer, and by whom did he send the answer? What happened to the Assyrian army? ¶9.
What terrible blow fell to the lot of Hezekiah, and how was it received? What words did Hezekiah use implying that it meant the second death to him? What was the sign of Hezekiah's recovery? ¶10.
Why did God permit the northern kingdom (Israel) to be taken captive, and would not permit the victorious nation to take the southern kingdom (Judah)? ¶11.
The Assyrian attack on Jerusalem represents what? What was represented by Sennacherib escaping when his army was slain? Wherein is the comfort for the Lord's people? ¶12.
By what experience is it likely that Isaiah was assisted in his prophecy as recorded in Isaiah 53rd chapter? ¶13.
Hezekiah's marriage represents what? Is it necessary to carry the picture further? ¶14.
What was the treasurer of the king's house determined to do for himself? What was the message from Isaiah? What does the word Eliakim mean? ¶15.
Whom does Shebna represent? What will be the fulfillment in the antitype? ¶16.
Who now has charge of the King's treasury? What is the key to the treasury? For what reason is the change in stewardship made? Is Jehovah at the head of affairs? ¶17.

JEREMIAH AND THE BABYLONIAN CRISIS

—MAY 25—JEREMIAH 7:1-26; 9:1-9; 15:1-10; 18:1-12; 25:1-14; 26:1-24; 36:1-32; 38:1-28—

TERRIBLE CONDITIONS EXISTING IN JERUSALEM—JEREMIAH FORETELLS BABYLON'S UTTER DESTRUCTION—JEREMIAH, UNDAUNTED, DELIVERS HIS MESSAGE.

"Amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah your God."—Jeremiah 26: 13.

THE terrible calamity which befell Sennacherib's army at Libnah vitally affected Assyria's power; for at that time Babylon was beginning to assert itself against Nineveh, which for a long time had held it in subjection. The flattering visit of Babylon's messengers to Hezekiah after Sennacherib's disaster is an interesting sidelight on secular records. (2 Chronicles 32:23) But its end, as foretold by Nahum, was not yet due. Sennacherib lived fourteen or fifteen years longer, and was succeeded by his son Esar-haddon. He revived the empire's waning strength. Rebellious Babylon was subdued and made a place of residence from time to time. Hence the king of Assyria was then also king of Babylon.—Isaiah 14:4.

²Perhaps to punish Judah for its friendliness to Babylon Esar-haddon invaded it, and took Manasseh captive. A wicked son of a good father, Manasseh wasted all the good his father had done, and did more to cause Judah to sin than all the kings who preceded him. (2 Chronicles 33:9) Because of this God declared that he would bring such trouble upon Judah that even hearing of it would make the ears tingle. (Jeremiah 19:3) In captivity Manasseh repented; and God caused him to be released, perhaps at the time of Esar-haddon's death. On his return to Jerusalem some of the worst of the idol abominations were removed. But he was not truly repentant, and his fifty-five years' reign saw Judah sink to a very low level. His son Amon reigned for two years, and was worse than his father had been at his worst. He was slain by his servants, and his young son Josiah began to reign when only eight years old. When he was sixteen years of age he began to seek God, and when twenty to purge Jerusalem. The images of Baal and other gods which his father had placed in the temple and throughout the city he broke into pieces, personally supervising the destruction.—2 Chronicles 34:1-4.

³In the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign the Book of the Law was found in the temple, evidently the copy which contained the records of God's dealings with his people. (Deuteronomy 31:24) When it was read before the king, he saw that his reforms were only negative in character; and he began anew. Like his predecessor Hezekiah he arranged for a Passover, and the greatest Passover feast in the days of Israel was then kept. For thirteen years more Josiah continued to uphold the temple worship; and then his end came, unexpectedly. Pharaoh-Necho was crossing Palestine to invade Syria, and Josiah took upon himself the task of opposing him. Pharaoh warned him off in the name of God; but he would take no warning, and in the battle which ensued he received a mortal wound. He was hurried to Jerusalem, but died on the road at Hadadrimmon, after reigning for thirty-one years.—Zechariah 12:11.

⁴Eighteen years had now passed since Jeremiah received his commission to "root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant" (Jeremiah 1:10)—a commission which had prevented him from taking part in the attempts to restore the temple ceremonies. He saw that the time was past when God could send messages of comfort or exhortation to these people; and that he was sent to warn them against impending disaster, and to give them opportunity of mending their ways and of softening their fall in that time of trouble. It was evident to him that their reforms served only to deepen hypocrisy because the people were not really seeking to honor God.

⁵Jeremiah's statement, "For according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah; and according to the

number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal" (Jeremiah 11:13), reveals the terrible condition of Judah in the early part of Josiah's reign. Probably the Prophet's denunciation urged the young king to clear out this evil, though there is no indication that Josiah sought Jeremiah's counsel. Jerusalem was in its own sight a city of righteous persons, but in God's sight it was as Sodom—indeed worse; for not one righteous man was to be found in it, neither amongst the prophets, the priests, nor the people.—Jeremiah 5:1.

⁶The death of Josiah was an altogether unexpected event, and a great blow to the people; their disappointment and even consternation are referred to as the great mourning of Hadadrimmon. (Zechariah 12:11) Why did Jehovah not preserve a king who had wrought so many reforms, and who in the conflict which had brought his death was endeavoring to resist an intrusion on the land of Israel? The people failed to perceive the terrible import of the warnings of God's servants, and that the days when he would specially interfere on their behalf had passed.—2 Kings 21:13.

⁷Josiah had followed his own policy—even Pharaoh warned him as from God (2 Chronicles 35:21); and he perished. These things correspond with the experience and condition of the nominal house of Israel in our day. Again the time is present when, for its sins, God has cast off his unfaithful representative. Since 1878 the Lord has left it to its own devices; and, like Judah then, it is divided in its counsels. Some are for entering into friendly relations with the world (Egypt), seeking the favor of the masses; while some seek power through political combinations, which is like unto seeking the help of Assyria. They are now guided solely by policy; for, though they profess to seek the face of God, they discuss their organization's affairs just as a business management discusses its plans. They do not expect the mind of the Lord to be expressed to them as when the Church first met.—Acts 15:28.

⁸The revivals in Judah's last days are comparable to those revivals of religion which began in the days of the Wesleys, and which have been continued from time to time in America and Britain by various evangelists (?). Both then and in these last days these have had the same result, both being equally effective in producing a wrong idea of a religious life which serves rather to benumb the true sense of worship, and which in these last days has blinded the eyes of the people to the fact and purpose of the kingdom which God will establish by Christ.

⁹The death of Josiah ought to have revealed to the people their need of guidance; but, like the religionists of today, they had no belief in the overruling providence of God, and they merely went deeper into their own schemes for the preservation of their kingdom. At that time the whole world was in a state of unrest; for dominant Assyria was weakening, and both Babylon and Egypt were strengthening themselves for dominion. Judah was in a difficult position; for these rival powers were almost certain to overrun it in their endeavors to get at each other. Its safety was in God, but in its multitude of religious performances it forgot that fact.

¹⁰Josiah's misguided action served to bring Judah under the control of Egypt. After his success in Syria, Pharaoh, while still there, sent for Jehoahaz, Josiah's youngest son, and from there sent him captive to Egypt, and placed his

brother Eliakim on the throne, changing his name to Jehoiakim. (2 Kings 23:33,34) Probably Jehoahaz was opposed to Pharaoh and the Egyptian party in Jerusalem. But evidently the disposition was of God; for the other son served the purpose of hardening the hearts of the people against Jeremiah and against Jehovah. Without doubt Jehoiakim was one of the most perverse of Judah's kings.

JEREMIAH FORETELLS BABYLON'S UTTER DESTRUCTION

¹¹From the beginning of his ministry Jeremiah had foretold trouble from the north, and history tells of a great eruption of Scythians about that time. They came in great numbers from the Caucasus, overran Assyria, and made their way to Egypt. Probably Jeremiah thought that these would bring the desolation he had seen in vision. (Jeremiah 1:13) But they passed Judah on their way to and from Egypt without doing it any hurt; and no doubt many who had heard Jeremiah would convince themselves that he was not wholly dependable. With the accession of Jehoiakim to the throne, there came a change in Jeremiah's message and method. The Lord now directed him to go and stand in the temple court and to say to all the people, "Then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth." (Jeremiah 26:6) From that time he definitely proclaimed the overlordship of Babylon, and foretold desolation by that power, and afterward its own desolation at the hands of Jehovah. (Jeremiah 25) He was treated as a traitor because he advised acceptance of the inevitable rule of Babylon. His message was a hard one for him to give, made all the more so because it was so different from Isaiah's message to Judah under a somewhat similar threat to Jerusalem. (Isaiah 37:33) But Jeremiah by keeping true to Jehovah got all the courage he needed.

¹²As Jehoiakim was the vassal of Egypt, this message brought Jeremiah into danger of his life. The prophets, of whom there were many, and the priests demanded his death; they claimed of the princes and the people that he was not worthy to live. (Jeremiah 26:11) But the princes and the people reheard him, and he was saved from the rabid priests. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim Jeremiah wrote his message from the Lord by Baruch, his scribe; and the roll was read in the court of the temple. (Jeremiah 36) It immediately caused a sensation. It was brought to the king to be read to him. As the roll was read, telling of the desolation to come upon Jerusalem and Judah in common with all the neighboring countries, the king's anger rose. He snatched the penknife from his scribe's side, and hacked at the roll till it was destroyed, and then cast it into the fire; for it was then winter-time. (Jeremiah 36:23) Jehoiakim is not the only one who has thus tried to destroy the Word of the Lord. The higher critics of today cut up the Book to make it more readable. There is a method less crude than the king's.

¹³Jeremiah was in hiding at that time; but on hearing what had happened to his roll, he dictated his message again, and added many more words thereto. (Jeremiah 36:32) There is an almost exact correspondency in our day, so true and so fitting as to seem as if specially connected. The incident easily corresponds to the attempt on the part of Great Babylon, while the World War was on, to cut up and destroy the message of the truth; and to the reiteration of the message with many added words after the release of the Society's representatives from prison.

¹⁴From that time to the end of the kingdom, eighteen years later, Jeremiah had a hard time of service. His advice to accept the yoke of Babylon (Jeremiah 27:12), and thus to make it easier to bear, was hateful to the people. He was a very lonely man. Even Baruch does not appear as a comforter, not even as one into whose ears

Jeremiah could tell his sorrows and thus ease his mental pressure. But none of these things moved him from his fidelity to the Lord. After the deportation of many of the people, soon after the death of Jehoiakim, Jeremiah saw in vision two baskets of figs, one very good, the other very corrupt. He told the meaning: The good figs were those who had been taken into captivity; and the other were those left under Zedekiah in Jerusalem, and fit only for destruction. It was a hard message, but was faithfully delivered.—Jeremiah 24:1-10.

¹⁵Again and again in danger of his life Jeremiah flinched not. He suffered much physical discomfort and pain; for he was beaten as well as put into the stocks and cast into prison. But the Lord sustained him. His message was not wholly of evil; for it was to him more than to any other that God gave the message of restoration. He is preëminently the prophet of the New Covenant. (Jeremiah 31:31) He had a clear conception of his mission as the messenger of the Lord to the nations as well as to Judah. The illustration of the broken earthen vessel (Jeremiah 19), and the Word of the Lord with it, was very definite to him. He saw the world in distress because of its corruption. The light which God lit at Sinai was well-nigh extinguished! Israel's claim to represent the God of heaven was a derision to the nations; for force ruled, and Israel was as nothing. The Chaldees were a fierce people, and it seemed as if the world was settling in the dark; and when these had served Jehovah's purpose they also should drink the bitter cup.—Jeremiah 25:26.

¹⁶These things are figurative of world conditions in this day, when the world is in its last great upheaval. Jehovah has now a controversy with all flesh, and the time of the great whirlwind has come. (Jeremiah 23:19,30-33) As then in miniature, so now in fullest possible extent, the world is involved in trouble. But God's controversy is not merely punitive. He will not smite the earth to destruction, but "will make it again."—Jeremiah 18:4.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

After the calamity of Sennacherib's army did the Assyrians regain any of their old power? Did Babylon court the favors of the conquerors? ¶ 1.
What did Esar-haddon do because of the friendliness of the conqueror with Babylon? What kind of king was Manasseh? Whose son was Josiah, and what did he begin to do at the age of twenty? ¶ 2.
What did Josiah do upon hearing the Book of the Law read? How did he come to his end? ¶ 3.
What was the commission given to Jeremiah, as recorded in Jeremiah 1:10? What did Jeremiah's far-seeing and close-discerning eyes see? ¶ 4.
By what statement was the terrible condition in Jerusalem disclosed? How was Jerusalem deceived as to its righteousness? ¶ 5.
Did the people have reason to expect that Josiah would live to a ripe old age? Why was he permitted to be killed while resisting an intruding army? ¶ 6.
Josiah neglecting to consult Jeremiah represents what in antitype? Was Josiah's death chargeable to Necho, king of Egypt? ¶ 7.
What ill effect have revivals and the preaching of evangelists upon religionists? ¶ 8.
What should the death of Josiah have taught the people? Should not the unrest and religious shakings today alarm the people to arouse them out of their stupor? ¶ 9.
Forsaken Judah coming under control of Egypt, and the people turning against Jeremiah, were caused by what? ¶ 10.
Does God sometimes permit circumstances to shape themselves to bring reproach upon his faithful people? After Jeremiah changed his message, whom did he address? What did he foretell respecting Babylon? ¶ 11.
Did the prophets and priests try to stir up the people against Jeremiah? In what year did Baruch write Jeremiah's message? What did the king do? Whose conduct antitypes the king's? ¶ 12.
When Jeremiah heard that his message had been destroyed, what did he do? What is the correspondency in our day? ¶ 13.
What gave Jeremiah fortitude to withstand his sorrows, and mental pressure, and lack of friends? What was the meaning of the two baskets of figs? ¶ 14.
Was Jeremiah a coward? While many of his prophecies were about pending calamities, what part of his prophecies tended to buoy him up? ¶ 15.
The light of Sinai being dim, force ruling, and the people being fierce, represent what? Does God intend to destroy the people and take them away altogether? What will the grand outcome be? ¶ 16.

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Leon, Okla.	" 4	Valliant, Okla.	" 13
Ardmore, Okla.	" 5	Durant, Okla.	" 14, 15
Madill, Okla.	" 6, 7	Atoka, Okla.	" 16
Durant, Okla.	" 8	McAlester, Okla.	" 18

C. W. CUTFORTH

Leduc, Alta.	May 1	Malahat, B. C.	May 15
Prince George, B. C.	" 4, 5	Victoria, B. C.	" 16-18
Prince Rupert, B. C.	" 7, 8	Sidney, B. C.	" 19
Vancouver, B. C.	" 11	New Westminster, B. C.	" 21
Nanaimo, B. C.	" 13	Vancouver, B. C.	" 23-25
Ladysmith, B. C.	" 14	Chilliwack, B. C.	" 26

BROTHER H. H. DINGUS

Piedmont, Ala.	May 1, 2	Athens, Ala.	May 9
Rome, Ga.	" 4	Albany, Ala.	" 11
Pell City, Ala.	" 5	Tuscumbia, Ala.	" 12
Lincoln, Ala.	" 6	Nashville, Tenn.	" 13
Seddon, Ala.	" 7	Lebanon, Tenn.	" 14
Cullman, Ala.	" 8	Milton, Tenn.	" 15

BROTHER A. J. ESHLEMAN

Bowie, Tex.	May 1	Sweetwater, Tex.	May 9
Stonewall, Tex.	" 2	Lubbock, Tex.	" 11
Wichita Falls, Tex.	" 4	Plainview, Tex.	" 12
Childress, Tex.	" 5, 6	Lockney, Tex.	" 13
Electra, Tex.	" 7	Snyder, Tex.	" 14
Rochester, Tex.	" 8	Sweetwater, Tex.	" 15

BROTHER M. L. HERR

Montgomery, Ind.	May 1	DePauw, Ind.	May 12
Evansville, Ind.	" 2, 4	Palmyra, Ind.	" 13
Boonville, Ind.	" 5	Jeffersonville, Ind.	" 14
Tell City, Ind.	" 6	New Albany, Ind.	" 15
Magnet, Ind.	" 7, 8, 9	Salem, Ind.	" 16
Louisville, Ky.	" 11	Bedford, Ind.	" 18

BROTHER W. M. HERSEE

Port Dover, Ont.	May 2	St. Thomas, Ont.	May 11, 12
Simcoe, Ont.	" 4	Ridgetown, Ont.	" 13
St. Williams, Ont.	" 5	Blenheim, Ont.	" 14
Delhi, Ont.	" 7	Leamington, Ont.	" 15, 16
Courtland, Ont.	" 8	Pelee Island, Ont.	" 18, 19
Aylmer, Ont.	" 9	Kingsville, Ont.	" 20

BROTHER H. HOWLETT

Black River Falls, Wis.	May 1	Winnipeg, Man.	May 9-11
Minneapolis, Minn.	" 2	Brandon, Man.	" 12
St. Paul, Minn.	" 4	Regina, Sask.	" 13
Fergus Falls, Minn.	" 5	Moose Jaw, Sask.	" 14
Northcote, Minn.	" 6	Maple Creek, Sask.	" 15
Dominion City, Man.	" 8	Medicine Hat, Alta.	" 16

H. S. MURRAY

Sanford, Fla.	May 1, 4	Jacksonville, Fla.	May 14
Grand Island, Fla.	" 7	Monticello, Fla.	" 15
Apopka, Fla.	" 8, 9	Thomasville, Ga.	" 16
Olando, Fla.	" 11	Cairo, Ga.	" 18
Palatka, Fla.	" 12	Marianna, Fla.	" 19, 20
Green Cove Springs, Fla.	" 13	DeFuniak Springs, Fla.	" 21, 22

BROTHER G. R. POLLOCK

Miles City, Mont.	May 1	Fargo, N. Dak.	May 13
Billings, Mont.	" 2	New Rockford, N. Dak.	" 14
Rapelje, Mont.	" 4	Minot, N. Dak.	" 15, 16
Billings, Mont.	" 5, 6	Enderlin, N. Dak.	" 18, 19
Bellevue, N. Dak.	" 7, 8	Wyndmere, N. Dak.	" 20
Dunn Center, N. Dak.	" 9, 11	Fergus Falls, Minn.	" 21, 22

BROTHER B. M. RICE

Brainard, N. Y.	May 1	Watervliet, N. Y.	May 8
Albany, N. Y.	" 2	Troy, N. Y.	" 9
Utica, N. Y.	" 4	Glens Falls, N. Y.	" 11
Canajoharie, N. Y.	" 5	Athol, N. Y.	" 12
Gloversville, N. Y.	" 6	Saratoga Springs, N. Y.	" 13
Schenectady, N. Y.	" 7	Fort Edward, N. Y.	" 14

BROTHER V. C. RICE

Oxford Junction, Ia.	May 1	Dubuque, Ia.	May 11
Cedar Rapids, Ia.	" 2, 4	Clinton, Ia.	" 12
Vinton, Ia.	" 5	South Bend, Ind.	" 13
Shellsburg, Ia.	" 6	Cleveland, O.	" 14
Waterloo, Ia.	" 8	Schenectady, N. Y.	" 18
Oelwein, Ia.	" 9	Fort Edward, N. Y.	" 25

BROTHER C. ROBERTS

Elko, B. C.	May 1	Peachland, B. C.	May 15
Cranbrook, B. C.	" 2, 4	Vernon, B. C.	" 16, 18
Balfour, B. C.	" 6	Armstrong, B. C.	" 19
Nelson, B. C.	" 7, 8	Kamloops, B. C.	" 21, 22
Trail, B. C.	" 9, 11	Vancouver, B. C.	" 23-25
Penticton, B. C.	" 13, 14	Nanaimo, B. C.	" 26

BROTHER R. L. ROBIE

Pomeroy, Wash.	May 1	Puyallup, Wash.	May 9
Walla Walla, Wash.	" 2	Tacoma, Wash.	" 11
Yakima, Wash.	" 4	Olympia, Wash.	" 12
Wapato, Wash.	" 5	Aberdeen, Wash.	" 13
Ellensburg, Wash.	" 6, 7	Chehalis, Wash.	" 14
Enumclaw, Wash.	" 8	Long Branch, Wash.	" 15, 16

E. D. SEXTON

Lodi, Calif.	May 1	Quincy, Calif.	May 9
Stockton, Calif.	" 2	Paradise, Calif.	" 12
San Francisco, Calif.	" 4	Ashland, Ore.	" 14
N. Vallejo, Calif.	" 5	Medford, Ore.	" 15
Sacramento, Calif.	" 6	Jacksonville, Ore.	" 16
Chico, Calif.	" 7, 11	Rogue River, Ore.	" 18

BROTHER O. L. SULLIVAN

Sturgis, Mich.	May 1	Hillsdale, Mich.	May 9
Elkhart, Ind.	" 2	Adrian, Mich.	" 11
South Bend, Ind.	" 4	Dundee, Mich.	" 12
Marcellus, Mich.	" 5	Ann Arbor, Mich.	" 13
Charlotte, Mich.	" 6, 7	Jackson, Mich.	" 14
Battle Creek, Mich.	" 8	Lansing, Mich.	" 15

BROTHER W. J. THORN

Roland, Ark.	May 1	Donaldson, Ark.	May 11
Little Rock, Ark.	" 2, 4	Little Rock, Ark.	" 12
Scott, Ark.	" 5	Judsonia, Ark.	" 13
Pine Bluff, Ark.	" 6, 7	Batesville, Ark.	" 14
Hot Springs, Ark.	" 8	Marcella, Ark.	" 15
Homan, Ark.	" 9	Cotter, Ark.	" 16

BROTHER T. H. THORNTON

Garfield, Kan.	May 1	Friend, Kan.	May 8
Lewis, Kan.	" 2	Garden City, Kan.	" 9
Dodge City, Kan.	" 4	Syracuse, Kan.	" 11
Elkhart, Kan.	" 5	Holly, Colo.	" 12
Rolla, Kan.	" 6	Pueblo, Colo.	" 13
Garden City, Kan.	" 7	Trinidad, Colo.	" 18

BROTHER S. H. TOUTJIAN

Reno, Nev.	May 2	Buhl, Ida.	May 12
Ordgen, Utah	" 4	Twin Falls, Ida.	" 13
Midvale, Utah	" 5	Weiser, Ida.	" 14
Salt Lake City, Utah	" 6	Ontario, Ore.	" 15, 16
Pocatello, Ida.	" 7, 11	Boise, Ida.	" 18
Challis, Ida.	" 8, 9	Emmett, Ida.	" 19

BROTHER L. F. ZINK

Paola, Pa.	Apr. 29	Easton, Pa.	May 6
Downingtown, Pa.	" 30	Allentown, Pa.	" 7
Lansdale, Pa.	May 1	Bangor, Pa.	" 8
Lehighton, Pa.	" 2	Pen Argyl, Pa.	" 9
Kunkletown, Pa.	" 3	Brooklyn, N. Y.	" 11
Danielsville, Pa.	" 4	East Stroudsburg, Pa.	" 14