



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

VOL. XLVII

SEMI-MONTHLY

No. 7

Anno Mundi 6054—April 1, 1926

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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.

PUBLISHED BY

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY
18 CONCORD STREET □ □ BROOKLYN, N.Y., U.S.A.

FOREIGN OFFICES: *British*: 34 Craven Terrace, Lancaster Gate, London W. 2; *Canadian*: 38-40 Irwin Avenue, Toronto, Ontario; *Australasian*: 495 Collins St., Melbourne, Australia; *South African*: 6 Lelie St., Cape Town, South Africa.

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: This journal is published under the supervision of an editorial committee, at least three of whom have read and approved as truth each and every article appearing in these columns. The names of the editorial committee are: J. F. RUTHERFORD, W. E. VAN AMBURGH, J. HEMERY, R. H. BARBER, E. J. COWARD.

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

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

Entered as Second Class Matter at Brooklyn, N. Y. Postoffice, Act of March 3rd 1879.

I.B.S.A. BEREAN BIBLE STUDIES

By Means of "The Watch Tower"

THE ROLE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS THE BIRTH OF THE NATION
Z Feb. 15, 1925. Z March 1, 1925

Week of May 2 . . . † 1-30 Week of May 23 . . . † 1-19
Week of May 9 . . . † 31-45 Week of May 30 . . . † 20-48
Week of May 16 . . . † 46-70

WORLD-WIDE WITNESS—MAY 30

The topic selected for the next world-wide witness, Sunday, May, 30th, is "*Why World Powers are Tottering. The Remedy.*" The SOCIETY has received such splendid reports of the last two world-wide witnesses in particular that it is unquestionable that the Lord's blessing is upon our united efforts along this line. This has encouraged us to propose that on Sunday, May 30th, another concerted witness be given, and that every ecclesia and every elder possessing speaking ability prepare for this special opportunity, that we may further simultaneously advertise the Kingdom and the kingdom on this occasion. Orders for handbills should be placed early.

RADIO SOUVENIRS

About Christmas time the SOCIETY issued a Souvenir of two of its radio stations. The original cost of the plates made it necessary to sell these Souvenirs for One Dollar. Another edition has been made from the same plates, and it is now possible to sell them for sixty-five cents each, carriage paid. Send in your orders quickly while the supply lasts, as there is only a limited number.

BETHEL HYMNS FOR MAY, 1926

Sunday	2 41	9 203	16 310	23 264	30 195
Monday	3 265	10 288	17 134	24 256	31 202
Tuesday	4 160	11 85	18 106	25 252	
Wednesday	5 104	12 82	19 73	26 99	
Thursday	6 191	13 218	20 322	27 263	
Friday	7 275	14 305	21 22	28 133	
Sat.	1 225	8 117	15 331	22 111	29 129

RADIO PROGRAMS

The following stations are now broadcasting the message of the kingdom:
WBBK, New York City, 272.6 meters, Sun., Mon., Thurs., Sat.
WORD, Batavia, Ill., 275 meters, daily.
CHUC, Saskatoon, Sask., 330 meters, Sun., Tue., Thursday.
KTCL, Seattle, Wash., 305.9 meters, Sunday, 9 to 10 p. m.
KFWM, Oakland, Calif., 207 meters, Sun., Mon., Thurs., Sat.

The WATCH TOWER

AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

VOL. XLVII

APRIL 1, 1926

No. 7

HYPOCRISY AND "THE TRUE"

"With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth."—Psalm 35: 16.

HYPOCRISY is the act of feigning to be that which one is not. It is downright dishonesty. It is the practising of fraud and deceit. It is mockery. It is often used for bringing reproach on others. Like all other evil practices hypocrisy originated with the Devil and is used chiefly in connection with so-called religion. It is one of the practices which Satan the enemy uses to reproach God and every one who diligently tries to be true to God. It is the very opposite of a true and sincere worship of Jehovah. A hypocrite is one who practises hypocrisy. Anyone who is used as a tool by the Devil to reproach the Lord God in the name of the Lord is a hypocrite.

² "The true" is a title or term that applies to those who are unwavering, loyal and faithful to the principles of righteousness. It means that the course of such is always in harmony with the truth. So true and faithful has the Lord Jesus always been to God, his Father, that God gave him as one of his titles "the Faithful and True".—Revelation 19: 11.

³ The Devil and his willing emissaries have followed the course of hypocrisy and mockery toward God. By this means many reproaches have been brought upon the Lord Jehovah. In the same way the enemy of truth and righteousness reproached the Lord Jesus when he was upon the earth and has likewise ridiculed, reproached and covered with ignominy those who have tried to follow in Jesus' footsteps.

⁴ Hypocrisy ultimately leads to disgrace and destruction. Faithfulness ultimately leads to life and glory. The Christian is privileged to learn these great truths in advance of the world. Happy is the man who follows the honest, sincere and faithful course.

⁵ The beginning of hypocrisy, as recorded in the Bible, was in connection with religious worship. The practice has been employed by Satan throughout the ages. In the latter days hypocrisy has reached its greatest height. Truly hypocrisy has gone to seed, and the time for the harvest thereof is due. It is both interesting and instructive to search out from the Scriptures the beginning and working of hypocrisy as practised by the enemy. Much of the Bible is written in symbolic language and could not be understood until God's plan

had progressed in course of fulfilment, and not then until God's due time.

⁶ It is recorded of the serpent that he was more subtle than other beasts. The serpent was employed by Satan to deceive Eve. The serpent is therefore used as a symbol of Satan the enemy. Those who willingly yield to the influence of the Devil and support his cause are designated as "the seed of the serpent". Those who willingly practise hypocrisy, particularly in connection with religion, of necessity would have to be placed in this class.

⁷ A pure and chaste woman is used in the Scriptures as a symbol of the righteous organization of Jehovah God. Zion therefore is designated as "the woman". It is Zion that gives birth to the kingdom of God; that is to say, to the nation that shall rule all the peoples of the earth. It is Zion also that gives birth to the individual members, the one hundred and forty-four thousand and one who go to make up the royal family and who constitute the officials of the new nation or government. For this reason all those who love righteousness and hate iniquity, and who strive to follow in the way of righteousness after having consecrated themselves to do God's will and who are begotten of the holy spirit, are spoken of as the "seed of the woman". When God pronounced judgment at the time of the rebellion in Eden he said to the Devil, as represented by the serpent: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; and it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."—Gen. 3: 15.

⁸ Satan is the greatest of all hypocrites. Since Eden he has followed the course of unrighteousness. God hates iniquity, and all in harmony with God hate iniquity. From the time of Eden Satan, the Devil, has opposed God and fought against every one who has diligently tried to serve God. To accomplish his purposes he has resorted to various methods and employed divers means. These include ridicule, mockery and hypocrisy, by which means the Devil has delighted to reproach God in every possible manner.

⁹ Be assured that God could have imprisoned or destroyed the Devil at any time, but his Word discloses that it has been the purpose of Jehovah to let the Evil

One come to a full in his evil course before he executes his final judgment against him. While he is doing this the Lord permits others of his intelligent creatures to choose either to follow the Devil in his wrongful course or to war against iniquity and follow righteousness and be classed as "the true".

BEGINNING OF HYPOCRISY

¹⁰ Adam was a wicked man because he deliberately disobeyed God and continued in that course. He had one son who loved righteousness, and the Devil caused him to be murdered by his brother. About two hundred and fifty years thereafter a grandson of Adam, named Enos, was born. By that time, as far as the Scriptures disclose, every man on earth was following the course of wickedness. This of course warrants the conclusion that all the human race by that time was under the control of the Devil. Satan must have thought that he had succeeded in having all men worship him and that he had turned them all away from God; and therefore he set about to mock God by establishing a system of hypocrisy. It was in the days of Enos that hypocrisy began to manifest itself for the first time and then in connection with religious worship.

¹¹ It is recorded in the Scriptures: "Then began men to call themselves by the name of the Lord." (See Genesis 4:26, margin.) Why should they desire to call themselves by the name of the Lord if they were wicked? The answer is that such was a scheme of the Devil to have the people pretend to be sons of God and yet to pursue a course in exact opposition to God, and thereby to ridicule and reproach God and hold his name up to scorn.

¹² The reason why it is important to call attention to this ancient occurrence is that it discloses a scheme of Satan which he has followed and practised ever since; namely, to have as a part of his government some kind of organized system of religion by which he could bring ridicule and reproach upon the name of Jehovah. Furthermore, Satan knew that man was so constituted that he would need to worship some higher being. He, of course, wished to always keep man under his control and have man to worship him; but should he not be able to keep man completely under his control and have his worship then he would establish amongst men hypocrisy, and thus while they would pretend to worship their Creator they would be unfaithful to God. This practice of hypocrisy in religion would be a reproach upon the name of Jehovah and a ridicule of God. Subsequently a few men did turn to the worship of the true God, but it is observed that throughout the ages the major portion of religion has been the practice of hypocrisy.

¹³ Seemingly now the time has come when the Lord will give his people a clearer vision of Satan's methods of operation. This would indicate that a final and crucial test is about to be placed upon those of earth

who claim to follow the Master's footsteps, and that all shall fall under the test except those who in honesty and in sincerity follow the truth and keep close to the Lord.

THE TRUE

¹⁴ The first man mentioned with favor in the Scriptures after Abel was Enoch. He was of the seventh generation from Adam. (Jude 14) The Scriptures hold him forth in great contrast to Enos and men of his time. Enoch belongs to the class known as the true. (Genesis 5:22) Aside from Abel every man from Adam to Enoch was undoubtedly evil.

¹⁵ The human race was going the road of corruption and wickedness. Enoch was the exception. He believed in Jehovah God. He believed that some day God would reward all those who would obey him. Satan the Devil had been so active that the people of earth by that time even doubted the existence of Jehovah God. It was necessary for Enoch to exercise faith that God actually exists. This was necessary in order for him to please God. "Without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6) That he pleased God is shown by the following statement: "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him." (Genesis 5:25) To the same effect St. Paul testifies: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."—Hebrews 11:5.

¹⁶ Enoch, because of his faith in God, was an outstanding figure amongst all the men of his day. He was a witness on the earth for God. Surely he was known amongst the other men and known by the fact that he believed on God and served him, while all others were against the Lord. Such faith under such adverse conditions was pleasing to God, and God rewarded that faith by translating Enoch. In those days it was usual for men to live for seven or eight centuries. Enoch lived only three hundred and sixty-five years, and then God took him away. No one saw him go, no one buried him, and no one knew where he went.

¹⁷ Satan the Devil had the power of death, and without doubt he would have killed Enoch had not God prevented him from so doing. Of course God has the power of death, but he did not put Enoch to death for any wrongful act on Enoch's part. Nor did Enoch die because of sickness, the result of the inheritance from Adam, his grandfather. The Devil had nothing to do with putting Enoch to death. He was a young man compared to other men of his day. While in the vigor of youth and while he walked with God and joyfully conformed himself to God's righteous law, the Lord manifested his pleasure in the faith of Enoch by taking him away, by putting him to sleep without his having to

pass through the bitter waters of a lingering or agonizing death.

¹⁸ It seems reasonable that Enoch never saw any one die, because St. Paul testifies that he did not "see death". (Hebrews 11:5) St. Paul, after enumerating a number of faithful ones, including Enoch, states: "These all died in faith." (Hebrews 11:13) It follows, of course, that Enoch was not taken away to live on some other planet, but that God took him by quietly and suddenly putting him to sleep without pain or anguish and without fear of the terrible monster death. Here God began to indicate that at some time he would destroy death and deliver all those who have faith in him from all their enemies, including the enemy death.—1 Corinthians 15:25, 26.

¹⁹ It is recorded that Enoch prophesied that in some future time the Lord would come with a mighty host of saints and execute judgment upon the ungodly. (Jude 14, 15) Of course he would give utterance to this prophecy in the presence of other men, and they would mock and jeer and taunt him, and then the Devil would use every power at his command to destroy him. But the Lord Jehovah held his hand over Enoch. From this scripture it seems quite evident that God had told Enoch, or by some means had put it into Enoch's mind, that some time in the future he was going to send his mighty representative to execute judgment upon all the enemies of God and to deliver the people from bondage. The spirit of the Lord moved upon the mind of Enoch and caused him thus to prophesy, because his heart was right toward God. This was the first prophecy of a coming Deliverer.

²⁰ Thus by these two men, Enos and Enoch, is made manifest hypocrisy, a detestable thing in the sight of God, and true faith, which is pleasing to God. Hypocrisy, the fruit of wickedness, is from the Devil; faith is a gift from God. Thus God early made manifest his rule, from which he will never deviate, that those who have faith in him and walk with him in the way of righteousness, in obedience to his command, shall be rewarded by deliverance from the enemy and be given the blessings of life. The goodness and mercy of the Lord endureth for ever. His loving kindness is marked by his every act.

EXAMPLES OF HYPOCRISY

²¹ Since the days of Enos hypocrisy has been on the increase. Satan has devised scheme after scheme by which he might deceive the people and reproach God. At the birth of Jesus the Devil directed savants of the east to seek the babe Jesus and worship him. Then he steered them directly to Herod, the then petty ruler of the Jews, who was ambitious and wicked. Learning that the prophets foretold that the birth of Jesus would be at Bethlehem, Herod employed hypocrisy in order to destroy the babe. "And he sent them to Bethlehem; and said, Go and search diligently for the young child;

and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also." (Matthew 2:8) Of course Herod had no thought of worshipping the babe Jesus.

²² When the Devil saw his scheme had failed he caused Herod to have all the children in that vicinity under two years old killed. Had Herod been sincere in his expressed desire to worship the Lord such worship would have been proper, but his insincerity and hypocrisy are shown by what followed.

²³ Judas walked with the Lord Jesus for three and one-half years. With others he sat at the Master's feet and listened to the gracious words that fell from his lips. He saw the great work the Lord did. He knew that Jesus was the Son of God sent from heaven and that he was The Christ. While carrying into operation his wicked scheme to have our Lord put to death Judas still feigned to be a follower of Jesus. When Jesus was celebrating the last passover he announced that one present would betray him; and Judas had the effrontery and dishonesty to ask, "Is it I?" When Judas had concluded his wicked arrangement with the clergy to betray Jesus into their hands for the paltry sum of thirty pieces of silver he led the mob to the place where Jesus was found, and approaching the Lord, said, "Hail, Master," and kissed him. Judas met the fate of a hypocrite.

²⁴ The Pharisees, scribes and priests, composing the clergy of Jesus' day, piously claimed to be representatives of God and the spiritual guides of the people. They knew that Jesus was the Son of God and that he was the Anointed One of God. (John 3:1, 2) These clergymen knew the law of God and knew that it commanded that they should not kill. While claiming to be God's representatives and preaching his Word they deliberately planned to murder his beloved Son.—Matthew 12:14; John 8:37-47.

²⁵ Then Jesus told them in plain phrase that they were hypocrites; that they devoured widows' houses, and for a pretense of righteousness made long prayers, that they might be seen and heard of men and be called pious. He told them that they hypocritically encompassed sea and land to make one proselyte and that when he was made he was twofold more a child of death. He told them that they made a pretense of meeting the letter of the law but deliberately avoided its spirit; that they made clean the outside of the cup and of the platter but that within they were full of extortion and excesses. He denounced them as whited sepulchres, which appear beautiful on the outside but within are full of dead men's bones. He told them that they were serpents and a generation of vipers and the children of their father, the Devil.—Matthew 23:13-34; John 8:43, 44.

MODERN PHARISEES

²⁶ These clergymen of that time, like their counterpart of the present time, by the use of hypocrisy de-

ceived many people. As the hypocrites in Enos' time called themselves by the name of the Lord, so the modern Pharisees practise hypocrisy in the name of Christ. The hypocrisy practised in Christ's name at the present time is the worst of all ages.

²⁷ Jesus Christ is the Head over his church which is his body. (Colossians 1:18) He is the chief corner stone in God's organization and also the foundation. No other foundation can be laid.—Isaiah 28:16; Acts 4:11, 12; 1 Corinthians 3:11.

²⁸ Shortly after our Lord began the development of his church Satan, the enemy, began the development of the "mystery of iniquity" or of lawlessness which, following his usual custom, he founded upon hypocrisy. By this means he has reproached the name of Christ and of God. With blasphemous effrontery ambitious men teach that the Roman Catholic system is the church of Christ, founded upon St. Peter; and that all the popes in their regular order are the successors of St. Peter, and that the pope is the representative of Christ on earth with full authority to act as such. Great multitudes of people have been deceived by this stupendous hypocrisy.

PEACE FEAST

²⁹ Now the Lord Jesus has taken his power and reigns. The Devil has been ousted from heaven, and he sees that he must act quickly in order to keep the people deceived and not permit them to see and hear and understand the message concerning the Lord's kingdom. The peoples of earth have suffered long from strife and war, and they would now welcome peace coming in any reliable manner. The Devil would now make the people believe that their desire for peace can be had only by following the lead of his system of iniquity, the Roman Catholic system.

³⁰ The subsidized press, which forms a part of the Devil's organization, with a great blare of trumpets announces that at the end of the year 1925 the "Holy Father" instituted a new festival day, to be known as "The Feast of the Kingdom of Christ", which will be observed on the last Sunday of October of each year hereafter. The following quotations are taken from the press dispatch from Rome:

The new festivity, says the Pope, is a part of the program of his Pontificate—"The Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ." By recalling each year to every one's mind that Christ is King of all the peoples of the world, it will be an efficacious remedy against "the pest of our age", namely, laicism.

Laicism, continues the encyclical, by lowering Christianity to the level of all other religions, even false ones, causes "discord between nations, unleashing of passions often disguised as patriotism, covetousness for earthly possession, contempt of domestic duties, discord and instability in families, threatens society itself with ruin".

Then the encyclical exhorts all Christians "to militate courageously under the banner of Christ the King, to go back with apostolic fervor to the rebels and misguided ones and strive to maintain the rights of God himself intact";

for "when in international meetings and parliaments the sweet name of our Redeemer is passed in shameful silence it is highly necessary to acclaim it publicly, announcing everywhere the rights of his sovereign dignity and power"!

In conclusion, the encyclical states that the church claims as its right complete liberty and independence from civil power, the same conditions being extended to religious [Catholic] orders and organizations of both sexes. The Pontiff closes with the reminder that not only private individuals must publicly venerate and obey Christ, but also magistrates, law-makers and princes, as one day they will be "called to account to God if they do not obey the divine commands".

The Pontiff declares that for a long, long time the empire of Christ over all the peoples has been denied; even "the right of the church, which springs from the right of Christ to teach the people, give them laws and rule them in order to lead them to eternal happiness", has been denied.

³¹ On the face of it this will appear to many as a laudable move to get all the people to recognize Christ as King, and therefore that this encyclical is the proper thing. It will sound well to millions who will be deceived thereby. Some who claim to be consecrated to the Lord will be deceived. If it were possible "the elect" would be deceived, but that is impossible. If they are deceived they cannot be of the elect.

³² To the child of God this is a plain hypocritical move of the Devil, through his organized system, to turn the minds of the people toward the Catholic system and away from the true kingdom of God. Examination of the encyclical issued by the pope shows that he regards himself as the true representative of Christ on earth and that thereby the people giving allegiance to the kingdom of Christ must do it through him. Truly the hypocrisy of Enos is surpassed a thousandfold at the present time.

³³ The pope, as above quoted, says: "Laicism lowers Christianity to the level of all other religions." The manifest purpose is to keep all the people, aside from the clergy, in ignorance of the Scriptures by holding, as the Papal system has always held, that only the clergy can interpret the Scriptures. Stated in plainer phrase the clergy want the people to lie supinely on their backs while the clergy bind them hand and foot and rob them.

³⁴ Hypocrisy has matured and gone to seed. Of all the reproaches that have been brought upon God's holy name, of all the insolence and vainglory on the part of men and religious systems, of all the presumptuous sins committed against God by men or organizations, those in times past pale into insignificance when compared with the present time. Modern wickedness is worse because evil-doers perform their evil deeds in the name of the Lord. A great religious system, steeped in wickedness and crime, is headed by one man; and it is claimed for his office that he is the vicegerent of Christ on earth and possesses power equal to that of Jehovah God. The clergy of this system fraudulently represent to the people that their loved ones who have died are now consciously suffering in purgatory because of the wrath of God; and these clergy claim to be able

by their prayers, and for a sufficient consideration, to relieve the suffering ones from purgatorial fires. Thus under false pretenses they receive money from the people and turn the minds of the people away from the true and living God. This system is spoken of in the Scriptures as "the great harlot".

³⁵ The offspring of this impure religious system, the daughter, likewise claims to represent God but defames his name by teaching that God is tormenting millions of unfortunate souls in a lake of eternal fire. The clergy of these religious systems hypocritically call themselves by the name of the Lord and pose before the people as God's representatives, at the same time denying the Word of God and repudiating the blood of Jesus Christ given for man's redemptive price. These religious systems have illicit relationship with the commercial and political powers of the world; and the Lord himself denounces the one as the mother of harlots and the other as the daughter, both of equal unchastity and unrighteousness.

³⁶ And now let the Lord's people be fully forewarned and forearmed, that they may not be deceived by the wily enemy. Hypocrisy is practised in such a manner that it will be necessary for each one to be on the alert who desires to escape the deception and its wicked influence.

THE FAITHFUL AND TRUE

³⁷ The right and true course taken by Enoch has been followed by a few others. At all times since Enoch's day it seems safe to say that God has had some faithful witnesses on the earth. St. Paul enumerates a list of these in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Those faithful men conformed to the rules of God insofar as it was possible for them to do so. For their fidelity they suffered at the hands of the enemy. They were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. "And others had trial of cruel mockings, and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goat skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy;) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."—Hebrews 11:36-38.

³⁸ These worthy men refused to compromise with any part of the Devil's organization. "And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned." (Hebrews 11:15) They preferred to bear the reproaches cast upon them as witnesses for the Lord rather than to receive anything that the organization of Satan might give to them. Because of their faithful devotion to God they received his approval, and God has provided for them a place in his kingdom of righteousness and glory. (Hebrews 11:16) These men the apostle cites as examples of faithfulness, and holds them up before the

followers of Christ as true models of fidelity and faithful devotion to the Lord.

JESUS

³⁹ Before he came to earth Jesus was known by the title Logos. He was the only begotten son of God. He was entrusted with the work of the creation of all things that were created. (John 1:1-4) God sent him to earth to perform the great work of carrying out the divine program of redemption and devotion to mankind. As soon as he began his ministry Satan set before him the three great temptations, and used all of his wiles and blandishments to induce the Master to be untrue to Jehovah.—Matthew 4:1-11.

⁴⁰ Jesus refused to receive honor from men. He refused to claim honor for himself, and declared that if he testified of his own honor his testimony would be untrue. (John 8:54) He did not try to make the people believe that the message he preached was his own message. He plainly told them that it was from his Father. (John 5:31) He misled no one. He was always honest and true. For three and one-half years he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. He knew that the reproaches that came upon him were from Satan. He was fully aware of the fact that Satan had for centuries heaped reproaches upon his Father. The prophet represents Jesus as saying, "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."—Psalm 69:9.

⁴¹ In everything Jesus was faithful to his Father and unswerving in his allegiance and devotion to God's righteous cause. By his full and complete obedience to God he gained and received at his Father's hands the title "the faithful and true". The honor conferred upon the Lord Jesus is the greatest in all the universe, God's alone excepted.

⁴² As God was reproached by the Devil even so Christ is reproached by those now who call themselves by his name and fraudulently and hypocritically claim to advocate his kingdom, but who in truth and in fact are drawing the people away from God's great plan through Christ for the establishment of the kingdom of righteousness. Thus the "false prophet", as an instrument in the Devil's hands, with pious face and sanctimonious phrase is proclaiming before the people a fraudulent message; and like a great, windy bullfrog with assumed wisdom (Revelation 16:13, 14), it is announcing that this is the only way to establish peace on earth.

⁴³ The Lord plainly sets forth in his Word that only a "remnant" of the professed Christians will be faithful unto the end. The remnant means those who continue faithful, and who are separate and distinct from those who feign to be lovers of God. Such are finally of the remnant class and will be the ones who are called and chosen and faithful even unto death.

⁴⁴ The hypocrisy practised by the "false prophet" and its two allies, big business and big politicians, the other

two "unclean spirits", are preparing for the great day of God Almighty. (Revelation 16:16) In this conflict that portion of consecrated Christians of earth who compromise in some degree with the Devil's organization, and who are pictured as a part of the "city of Jerusalem", will fall in that great battle; but "the remnant" shall not be cut off from God's organization. (Zechariah 14:1,2) Only those who show their fidelity and love for the Lord will finally be of the remnant.

REWARD OF THE TRUE

⁴⁵ Men who practise hypocrisy deceive the people and often deceive themselves by reason of the seductive influence of Satan, but they never deceive the Lord. The heavenly reward is not promised to those who merely believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and confess his name. Many are called but few are chosen to membership in the royal family. Those who will share with Jesus in his kingdom and receive the high reward will be subjected to a severe and crucial test, which test manifestly includes loyalty to God. Each one must faithfully serve the Lord. There can be no compromise with any part of the Devil's organization. Love for God is the principal thing; and this does not mean feigned love but it means an unfeigned, honest and sincere devotion to the Lord.—2 Corinthians 6:1-6; 2 Peter 1:7.

⁴⁶ Now since Satan is cast out of heaven he is using every means within his grasp to destroy the last members of the body of Christ on earth, known as the remnant. (Revelation 12:17) No doubt he will try to induce all who profess consecration to merely call themselves by the name of Christ and not to be extremists; that is, causing them to be careful to say little or nothing about the ecclesiastical, hypocritical systems. Among the professed followers of Christ who believe in his presence and his kingdom there will be found some who will say: Why should we say anything in particular about the Devil's organization now? Let us continue in the love of God and be good, and the Lord will take care of everything. Such will be lulled to sleep by the enemy.

⁴⁷ Let the consecrated remember that the time has come when God will make for himself a name in the earth, and that he will have a witness of himself and his kingdom given in the earth by those who are devoted to him; that those who are approved finally as faithful will be the ones and only ones who show an unfeigned allegiance to the Lord and who will have boldness in the proclamation of his message.—1 John 4:17,18.

⁴⁸ It is written concerning the Lord Jesus that he "loved righteousness and hated iniquity". He hesitated not to tell the hypocrites of their unrighteous course. It is not for us to single out individuals and call them hypocrites, but it is the duty of the consecrated to plainly point the people to the kingdom of God as the only solution of man's ills. All faithful ones must hold them-

selves aloof from every alliance or entanglement with Satan's organized world, meanwhile speaking against it.

⁴⁹ Let no Christian now be content by merely calling himself by the name of Christ. Let him remember that he must be faithful unto death if he would receive the Lord's approval. There could be no title more desired than that of "Faithful and True". Let each one of the followers of Christ now diligently endeavor to manifest his devotion and love to the Lord so fully that the Lord may be able to say of him: He is faithful and he is true. In this hour of great stress upon humankind none others have the assurance of preservation except the faithful. Everyone who is faithful will love the Lord. The greatest thing is love. Love means an unselfish, unreserved, unfeigned, honest and faithful devotion to God. "O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer."—Psalm 31:23.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

What is hypocrisy and where did it originate? Who are designated "the true", and what does the title imply? ¶ 1, 2, 5.

Who practises hypocrisy, and why? To what does such a course lead? ¶ 3, 4.

Why has not Satan's scheme of religious hypocrisy been clearly understood in times past? Who constitute "the seed of the serpent"? ¶ 5, 6, 13.

How is God's organization symbolized? To what does Zion give birth? Who constitute "the seed of the woman"? ¶ 7. In what ways does Satan reproach God? Why does not God destroy him? ¶ 8, 9.

Who is the first righteous man mentioned after Abel? What hypocrisy was instituted in the days of Enos, and why? ¶ 10-12, 14.

What does the Bible say about Enoch? How was he rewarded? ¶ 15-18.

Who was the first to prophesy a coming Deliverer? What is made manifest by the lives of Enos and Enoch respectively? ¶ 19, 20.

What hypocritical worship did Satan suggest at the birth of Jesus, and why? What other notable case of religious hypocrisy occurred 33½ years later? ¶ 21-23.

Did the Pharisees and rulers who opposed Jesus know who he was? (John 3:1,2) What did Jesus say of them? Is there such a class on earth today? ¶ 24-26.

How has Satan counterfeited God's organization? What is one of Satan's latest pronouncements? ¶ 27-30.

How is this encyclical hypocritical? ¶ 31-33.

Why is modern hypocrisy in both "mother" and "daughter" systems especially reprehensible? What should be our attitude relative thereto? ¶ 34-36.

Has God always had witnesses on earth since Enoch's day? Name some of these. ¶ 37, 38.

What was Jesus' title before he came to earth? How was he tempted when he began his ministry? When he resisted, what did Satan proceed to do? ¶ 39-41.

What is the "false prophet" of Revelation 16:13? Who are represented in the other "unclean spirits"? Who constitute "the remnant", and will all remain faithful? ¶ 42-44.

Who only are promised heavenly reward and how may they attain it? How does Satan now seek to overreach these? ¶ 45, 46.

What is our present duty as witnesses for Jehovah, and what title will the loyal ones receive? ¶ 47-49.

PRAYER-MEETING TEXT COMMENTS

TEXT FOR MAY 5

"City of the great King."—Psalm 48: 2.

THIS song was sung at the temple service. While it had some reference to the natural city of Jerusalem it is a prophecy relating to Jehovah's great organization of which Christ Jesus, the King of glory, is the head. We are now witnessing the beginning of the transition period. Satan's organization is crumbling before the onward and victorious march of the great King whom God has set upon his throne. In the near future, as we believe, the Lord's kingdom will be in full sway in the earth. Gradually the people will learn of the mighty and righteous organization of God. This organization is spoken of in poetic phrase as "the city of the great King".

As the people learn of the goodness and loving kindness of the King of kings they will come to Zion with songs of praise upon their lips. To them Zion will be a place of refuge, refreshing and blessing. As the people become obedient to the law of the government of righteousness, and are the recipients of the blessings thereof, the beauty of the city of God will be greatly enhanced in their minds. It will then become to them what the Psalmist here prophetically says: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King." (Psalm 48: 2) That the people will recognize it as God's kingdom is shown by the expression, "on the sides of the north," which is the position of Jehovah with reference to all of his creation.

By faith the anointed of the Lord now see and appreciate the city of the great King; and it is their privilege to sing the King's praises and to tell the people of the blessings that will be brought to them through this kingdom. Thus they are blessing God out of Zion.

TEXT FOR MAY 12

"Out of Zion shall go forth the law."—Isaiah 2: 3.

LAW means rule of action commanding that which is right and prohibiting that which is wrong. It is the will of God that when a creature learns of God's law and obeys the same he is converted or returned to the favor of God. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."—Psalm 19: 7.

Zion being the official part of God's government as related to man, Jehovah's rule of action will be expressed through that organization. For this reason it is written that "out of Zion shall go forth the law". Likewise the message or announcement of the law will be from Jerusalem, which is another name of God's organization. It is the place of authority from which proceeds the expression of God's law. To Zion will be committed the authority of declaring the law of God to mankind.

"The word of the Lord from Jerusalem" seems merely to be a poetical manner of expressing the fact that it will be from the organization of God that will go forth the message to the people, announcing to them what is the law by which they must be governed. The obedient ones of the people will learn to delight in the law of God that proceeds from Zion. They will say: "Give me understanding and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart."—Psalm 119: 34.

Before the kingdom is in full operation in the earth some one must give to some of the people a witness of the coming blessings. This privilege is committed to the anointed ones designated by the Scriptures as "the remnant". These must now lift up a standard for the people by telling them that God's kingdom is at hand and will relieve them from all their woes. They must be pointed by these messages to the highway that leads to life. Those who truly love the Lord will engage in this proclamation with joy. From the depths of the heart they now are saying, "Blessed be the Lord out of Zion." They are saying this by word of mouth and by placing in the hands of the people the printed message concerning his kingdom.

TEXT FOR MAY 19

"Heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ."—Romans 8: 17.

CHRIST Jesus, the King of glory, is the chief corner stone of Zion. He is also the heir of all things. (Hebrews 1: 2) Because of his loyalty and faithfulness unto Jehovah he attained to this most honorable of all places in the universe. It was necessary for him to go through suffering that he might learn obedience and thereby be made perfect. (Hebrews 5: 8) All those who will be joint-heirs with Christ Jesus must of necessity meet the terms the Lord has provided before they can be of that favored class. To meet such requirements entails suffering upon those who are striving for this great prize. Being in an environment that is wicked, dwelling in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation, the ones who give a true and faithful witness for the Lord must expect to have some suffering, even as their Master suffered.

Gladly these meet such requirements because they know it is the Father's will. So great is Jehovah's interest in each one who is thus running for the prize that he overrules all things for their good. Because of their faithful devotion to the Lord he delights in them. Appreciating his privilege and his blessings the anointed child of God in these days of turmoil and the disintegration of Satan's kingdom, delights to sing "Blessed be the Lord out of Zion." He appreciates the fact that this is now his work upon the earth and that he may, thereby be a witness that Jehovah is God.

ABRAHAM AND THE STRANGERS

—MAY 16—GENESIS 18:1-8, 16-19—

"All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him."—Genesis 18:18.

AFTER the events related in connection with the rescue of Lot God said to Abraham in a vision by night, "Fear not, Abram: I will be thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Perhaps Abraham feared that his conquest of the kings would bring fear of him amongst the people of the land, and that they might combine against him.

² Abraham, already rich in cattle and goods, reminded God that he was childless, and that one of his servants was his heir. God assured him that he should have a son of his own who should be his heir. He took Abraham out of his tent and bade him tell the number of the stars, and said, "So shall thy seed be." (Genesis 15:1, 3, 5) Abraham believed in the Lord, and it was counted to him for righteousness. God then entered into a solemn covenant with Abraham that his seed should inherit all that land, from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates.—Genesis 15:18.

³ But the years passed and still Abraham had no son. Following an accepted custom he took Hagar to wife, and Ishmael was born. But when the boy was about thirteen years old God told Abraham that Ishmael could not be the promised seed and that Sarah should bear a son to him. It was at that time God changed Abram's name, calling him Abraham instead of Abram; then also he made the covenant consequent on circumcision: none should share in the covenant if uncircumcised. At once Abraham, now ninety-nine years old, obeyed. At that same day he and all the men of his household were circumcised.

⁴ Not long after this, as Abraham sat in his tent door in the heat of the day he saw three men standing near him. With quick hospitality he hastened to them; and as there was that about them which seemed to call for honor, he bowed himself to the ground before them. As if there was a movement to pass on Abraham begged of the one who seemed to be chiefest that he would stay and take rest and refreshment. They agreed. Abraham hastened to Sarah to tell her to bake cakes, then to the herd, and selecting a tender calf, had it prepared.

⁵ To Abraham's surprise they asked for his wife by name, saying, "Where is Sarah thy wife?" (Genesis 18:9) And then came the promise that she should have a son. Sarah close by, behind the tent door, heard this and laughed to herself; she had no longer any expectation of having such pleasure. Challenged as to her laughter she denied that she had laughed; for she was afraid. There was no rebuke except in the plain statement, "Nay; but thou didst laugh."—Genesis 18:15.

⁶ In accordance with the custom of the Bible which makes a messenger speak as its sender, the speaker is now said to be Jehovah. The Scripture does not intend us to understand that the invisible God was now on the plains of Mamre, eating meats and cakes and drinking

milk; for God never describes himself as changing into human form. We may properly suppose that it was he who ever represented Jehovah and had the right to use his name as representative, and who elsewhere is called the angel of the Lord and the angel of his presence. (See Exodus 23:23; Isaiah 63:9) That these were angels (even though such an angel as the glorious Logos) is clear from Hebrews 13:1.

⁷ The men rose and made as if they would go to Sodom; and Abraham, continuing his hospitality, went with them to bring them on the way. As Abraham was on the point of leaving them, and as if the question only now arose, the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?" And the Lord added, speaking not to Abraham but to those with him, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."—Genesis 18:17-19.

⁸ The disclosure was in respect to Sodom. The cry against Sodom and Gomorrah was great because their sin was very grievous, and Jehovah by his representative had come to make inquiry. The two men now went on their way towards Sodom, but Abraham stood before the Lord as if he would detain him. Abraham knew of the wickedness of Sodom, but took upon himself thus to stand before the Lord and make an appeal. He asked first if God intended to destroy the righteous with the wicked, and that if there should be fifty righteous within the city that it might be spared.

⁹ Abraham was moved with kindly feelings; and as he had even then been reminded that all the nations of the earth should be blessed in him, he presumed that he had some privilege of being a mediator, and that here he might venture on his privilege. He continued his supplication from fifty until he got down to ten, and then left off. There were not ten righteous persons there.

¹⁰ If we consider that Abraham somewhat presumed in speaking thus to Jehovah's angel, certainly he was not blamed for standing before the Lord. This is the first recorded instance of prayer, and it is appropriate that it should be a petition of mercy offered by the one whom God had appointed as the earthly holder of the covenant by which all the families of the earth are to be blessed.

¹¹ There are those who think that Abraham failed; that he should have continued pleading for God to spare the cities even if no righteous person was found in them. These little understand the way of the Lord. They indeed presume, and that through failure to take the instruction of the Word of Truth.

¹² The promise made to Abraham when he entered into the land is like a grand bow of promise stretching over all human history, over all nations, and all the families of all nations. The preparation for the fulfilment of that covenant promise is the main theme of the Bible, both how the seed is gathered, and how, then by means of the kingdom of righteousness, it shall be fulfilled.

¹³ Today the Christian world pays little heed to these things. The numbers of those who have faith in the Word of God spoken to Abraham, in which he trusted and whereby he became the father of believers (Romans 4:11), are very small in comparison with the multitude of professors. The Modernist has no place for them as realities; to him they are vain imaginings. The Fundamentalist accepts them as facts, but he emasculates the promise of blessing the world by saying it was fulfilled when Jesus died for mankind.

¹⁴ The close of the present order of human history is now on the world, and only a few even of earth's present millions have heard of Jesus. Comparatively few know why he died, and still fewer trust in him as their Savior. The Fundamentalist by adhering to the creedal teaching effectively prevents himself from seeing that the covenant with Abraham calls for the blessing of the multitudes of the human family.

¹⁵ Abraham is given a chief place in the world, but his day is yet to come. Paul speaks of him as "heir of the world". (Romans 4:13) Yet Abraham becomes second to his seed; for the seed is Jesus Christ, and the consecrated who faithfully follow in his steps are chosen with him, as Paul says, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Galatians 3:29.

¹⁶ Also the apostle declares that the oathbound promise made to Abraham respecting his seed is primarily for those who come into Christ. (Genesis 22:18; Hebrews 6:18) These, the seed of Abraham according to the faith, are with Christ exalted to divine glory, and by these, his spiritual children, even Abraham himself is to be placed in his position of favor.

¹⁷ Abraham had no promise of heaven, and when he died he did not go there. He lies asleep, "gathered to his people" (Genesis 25:8), and sleeps until awakened in the resurrection. When he shall be awakened his promise is still his. His inheritance, his land of promise, is the land of Palestine, waiting for him and his children, sharers with him in his covenant. Isaac and Jacob were partakers with him; also with him will be those who shared his faith. It is evident that God will restore these to perfect manhood, and that these are the princes who will rule and guide the nations of the earth under the guidance of Abraham's spiritual seed.—Psalm 45:16; Isaiah 32:1.

¹⁸ Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived as strangers in the "land of promise" but looked forward to the time when it would be their homeland. God has provided this for them in that city (organization or government) called

the city of God, that government which will bring all God's promises to fulfilment.—Hebrews 11:9-16.

¹⁹ The way in which this account of the immediate promise of a seed is given leaves the impression that had Abraham not offered hospitality to the strangers they might have passed him by. Evidently this is what the apostle meant when he urged that hospitality should be a prominent feature of the disciple's life. (Hebrews 13:2) Evidently the grace of hospitality is a necessity to a complete life; failure to have it as a grace of life means that many of God's blessings will be missed.

²⁰ But there is a further demonstration of Abraham's grace revealed in this incident. It is seen in his willing desire to serve. First he entertained the strangers, then he would take them on their way. But it was only as they were about to part that he got the favor of hearing what was to happen to Sodom.

²¹ Very probably there was no other man at that time who was of such a disposition towards God and righteousness, and who would train his children in the way of righteousness, as Abraham. This is indicated in Jehovah's words, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." God always rewards righteousness.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

After the rescue of Lot what special encouragement did Abraham receive? Why should he need such encouragement at that time? ¶ 1.

What were the terms of the covenant which God then made with Abraham? Why was his name changed at that time? Upon what condition could his descendants share in that covenant? Has this covenant yet been fulfilled? Why? ¶ 3, 4.

Relate how Abraham entertained angels unawares. On what mission had they come to him? Had his hospitality any bearing upon the further promise that he should have a son within the year? ¶ 4-7, 19.

Why were Sodom and the other cities of the plain to be destroyed at this time? In what way do Abraham's words seem to indicate that he thought the judgment upon them a hasty one? Does the Lord criticise him for pleading in their behalf? ¶ 8-11.

Of what importance is the covenant made with Abraham? Why may the preparation for its fulfilment be said to be the main theme of the Bible? ¶ 12.

Why do so few professing Christians know anything about the Abrahamic Covenant? What prevents them from seeing its importance? ¶ 13.

How do we know that the world has reached the climax of its history? How widespread is the knowledge of the work accomplished at our Lord's first advent? Of the purpose of the return of our Lord to set up his kingdom? ¶ 14.

What light has the Apostle Paul thrown upon the Abrahamic Covenant? ¶ 15, 16.

Where is Abraham now? What will be his reward when he returns to earth? Who will share with him in his covenant? ¶ 17, 18.

What graces of life did Abraham evidently possess, as suggested in this lesson? Why probably were the angels sent to him rather than to Lot or any other man? ¶ 20, 21.

ISAAC AND HIS WELLS

—MAY 23—GENESIS 26:12-25—

"A soft answer turneth away wrath; but a grievous word stirreth up anger."—Proverbs 15:1.

A BRAHAM lived in the land of Canaan for one hundred years, and died at the age of one hundred and seventy-five "in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people". (Genesis 25:7, 8) Isaac was then seventy-five years of age, the same age that his father was when God brought him unto the land of Canaan. When forty years old he had married Rebekah, his cousin.

² Soon after his father's death there was again a famine in the land; and, naturally, this would be a test to him as the previous famine had been to his father. Isaac seems to have purposed doing as his father had done, namely, move on to Egypt; but God appeared to him and told him not to go down to Egypt but to sojourn in the land of promise, and God would bless him there. Then God repeated to him the covenant already given to his father. God said, probably as both an assurance and an encouragement to Isaac, that he now received this oath-bound covenant promise because Abraham had kept the obligation which the covenant laid upon him: "Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."—Genesis 26:5.

³ Isaac remained in Gerar of the Philistines, where God had spoken to him. But owing to the same lack of faith his father had shown, he made the same kind of arrangement with Rebekah his wife as his father had made with Sarah; they were to pose as brother and sister, for he was afraid that he would be slain if he said she was his wife. Rebekah did not get involved in such danger as that into which Sarah fell, but the deception was discovered; for Abimelech the king saw Isaac sporting with Rebekah, and that their relationship was more familiar than that which usually obtained between brother and sister. Abimelech reproved Isaac and saw that he and Sarah were protected.—Genesis 26:11.

⁴ Isaac sowed in that land and was blessed of God; he reaped the fullest crops. Also he had great possessions of flocks and herds, and a great store of husbandry. The Philistines envied him, and to injure him filled up the wells which his father had digged. At last King Abimelech requested Isaac to leave them. He did so, but did not go far away. He digged again other wells which had also been stopped, and gave them the names his father had given them; also in the valley he found a spring, a well of living water. The Philistines contested his right to the water, and there was strife between the herdsmen. Precious though it was, Isaac let the Philistines have it. He digged another well, and they strove for that also. Then he removed further away and digged another well, and for that there was no strife. He called the name Rehoboth, meaning room; for he now had room to live in peace.

⁵ But from there he went northward to Beer-sheba; and, as if God accepted his action, that same night God appeared to him and told him that he would be with him and would multiply him for Abraham's sake. Isaac built an altar there, pitched his tent, and there his servants digged a well. Here also Abraham had digged a well. Both were called Beer-sheba, or the well of the oath. The two wells are said to be there even today.

⁶ To him there came Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, and desired to make a covenant of peace, and to gain a promise that Isaac would not seek to hurt them, and saying, what was hardly true, that they had done him nothing but good and had sent him away in peace. They also said, "Thou art now the blessed of the Lord." (Genesis 26:29) They saw and acknowledged him as in Abraham's stead, and that the blessing of the Lord was upon him. Isaac entered into agreement with them, and they departed in peace.

⁷ Besides the later very full account of Isaac's attempt to bless Esau and to make him his heir in opposition to the known will of God, and though he knew that Jacob was the holder of the birthright, Esau having shown that he despised it (Hebrews 12:16), the foregoing is almost all we know of Isaac's life. Isaac does not bear the stamp of a strong man; but that he was a man of faith waiting upon the Lord we know. God made him a sharer with his father Abraham in the great covenant which is God's instrument for conveying a blessing to all the families of the earth, in fulfilment of the hope he gave to the fallen pair ere yet they were sent out of the garden of Eden.—Romans 8:20.

⁸ It should be noted that in both the instances when God spoke to Isaac promising blessings, they were promised because Isaac was the son of his father, of course with the condition that Isaac was obedient. Isaac was a mild man, a man of peace; and it was by this characteristic that he received his guidance from God. When the Philistines strove with his servants Isaac, instead of continuing the fight and contending for his rights, took each occasion as if it were an order from God to move on.

⁹ That Isaac represents the church of God, the true followers of Jesus, is stated by the Apostle Paul when he says, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." (Galatians 4:28) There the particular correspondency is that of the birth of Isaac and that of the members of the church, new creatures in Christ Jesus. Isaac was born by the power of God; for Abraham had grown old beyond the expectation of having a son and Sarah his wife had gone past the time when she could have any expectation of giving birth to a child. Isaac therefore was a type of those who are brought forth by the power of God according to the spirit, the spiritual class.—John 1:14; Romans 8:1,

¹⁰ No evolutionary process can produce new creatures in Christ Jesus; neither knowledge, nor desire, nor development from within avail. The life is the gift of God. True discipleship of Jesus is more than being moved by good desires; it means the active operation of the spirit of God in the heart and the mind. No man may command this, but God has given the holy spirit to all who have come to him in full consecration through Christ.—Acts 2: 38, 39.

¹¹ Also Isaac's sheltered and protected life represents the care of God over his own, whether the individual as he seeks to walk with God in spirit, or the company of the consecrated as they seek to represent him in an alien world. For as Isaac was a stranger in the land, so the follower of Christ is a pilgrim and a stranger in this world. (Hebrews 11: 13; 1 Peter 2: 11) Evil disposed men have ever sought to destroy the followers of Jesus, and still seek to do so. Satan ever seeks their destruction in such ways as are possible to him. But God cares for his own and directs their way.

¹² The consecrated are enjoined to have the same spirit as Isaac had when he moved out of the way rather than fight for what were undoubtedly his rights. The truth as it is revealed and the service of God they cannot give up; but they may not fight for those things which after all only prove they are yet strangers and pilgrims in the world. They seek to honor God both in their warfare for truth and in living peaceably with all men as far as it is possible.—Romans 12: 18.

¹³ Apparently Isaac moved into the land of the Philistines with some danger to himself and Rebekah, even as was the case with his father and mother. But when there God told him to remain; yet when circumstances came which caused Isaac to move he saw them as providences, and instead of striving he took their leading. There is no reason for thinking that Isaac desisted from strife through fear or lack of energy; he wanted peace, and God blessed him and renewed the covenant to him.

¹⁴ This lesson shows us that though God's blessing was manifested upon Isaac, it was no part of his plan to keep him free from the things which would test his faith. Hence even the land of promise and hope was stricken with famine. To Isaac must have come the question as to whether the land was all that should be expected of a God-given everlasting home, and could really be considered as a land having God's special favor.

¹⁵ Besides the correspondency between Isaac and the spiritual children of God through Christ Jesus, begotten of the holy spirit, in that both are born out of the order of nature and also in that the experiences of Isaac are like those of the members of the church in that they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1: 3), there is in this lesson that which has a very close connection with the church of God at this day when we are gathered together as one body to him.

¹⁶ The connection is seen in the golden text for the

study, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." (Isaiah 12: 3) It is also made in the meaning of Isaac's name "laughter", given to him because his father laughed, and his mother did also, when it was promised that the child should be born to them.

¹⁷ In the beautiful song of praise from which the golden text is taken (Isaiah 12) the people of God restored to favor are heard voicing their praise. The song is for "that day", the day of the Lord's favor to his church, that which comes to them with the time of his return. Till the time of the return of Jesus the Lord's people had difficulty in finding the truth, so deeply was it hidden under the creedal rubbish heaps; and there was but little of the water of life to be found in the desert places of the church systems. But with the return of the Lord came the blessings and fulness of joy in the disclosing of the plan of God. The Bible was made plain. The Lord's people began to meet together in study; and with joy they found continuous supplies from the wells of truth, the knowledge of the salvation of God then made known. This joy began to be realized in the year 1878, when present truth began to be made known; and truth seekers rejoiced in it; and since that time the joy of drawing the water of truth from God's wells of salvation has been ever increasing in quantity.

¹⁸ Also when in the Psalms or the Prophets there is mention of a time of joy for the people of God, it will be found that there is a reference to the time or fact of the setting up of the kingdom of God; for that is the time when the promises of God are to be realized by his waiting people. Weeping endures during the night of waiting, but joy comes with the morning.—Psalm 30: 5.

¹⁹ There is sadness while the Lord, the Bridegroom, is away, and when evil powers seem as if they were set forever; but with the morning comes deliverance, and laughter comes with the joy. They say, "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them" (Psalm 126: 1, 2. See also Psalm 47: 1; 98: 4-8.), a prophecy which the Lord's people realize is fulfilled in their experiences in their deliverance from "Babylon".

²⁰ Isaac's enjoyment of the wells of water after the time of strife, coupled with the fact that he was the promised seed of Abraham, shows that he was a figure of the spiritual seed of Abraham, clearly manifested to be so by the blessings of God, and discerned by the Philistines. This type or figure shows then that there would come a time when God would give his people the joy of rest in undisturbed possession of the truth, the water of life. This is indeed the present privilege and the experience of those who watch the way of the Lord and seek to know it in order to do his will.

JACOB AT BETHEL

—MAY 30—GENESIS 28:10-22—

"I am with thee, and will keep thee whither thou goest."—Genesis 28:15.

ISAAC married his cousin Rebekah when he was forty years old, but until twenty years later there were no children of the union. Then in response to Isaac's entreaty of the Lord on his wife's behalf she became a mother. Twins were born, two boys, whom the parents named Esau and Jacob.

² Esau became the favorite of his father, but for no better reason than that Isaac loved the venison and the savory dishes which Esau brought him. Jacob was loved by his mother and for the reason which ought to have attracted his father to him, for Jacob was a plain man; that is, an upright man, no roamer, but a dweller in tents. He saw the need of care of his father's property, and sought to live in harmony with a people called to be separate to God.

³ The revelation of the attitude of the parents to the children discloses their attitude to the covenant. Isaac cannot be commended in his treatment of his sons. He saw Esau growing up without any respect to the promise, and yet because he loved the savory meat which Esau brought he indulged himself in that son's ways. Jacob on the other hand lived according to the tradition of the covenant and sought the interests of the family. But as to both Jacob and his mother we must think of them as being concerned in the hope of the family. Rebekah the mother, who had left home to share in the promise, must have asked herself the question, What if Esau becomes the inheritor? Is he the kind of man to live in harmony with it?

⁴ Developing into manhood Esau, spending his time and strength in hunting instead of caring for the things of home, one day came from the field faint; and finding his brother Jacob preparing a meal for himself, he asked for it. The brothers, so different in temperament, were not specially loving toward each other; and probably Jacob realized that Esau had no regard for the hope of his grandfather Abraham. Jacob took the occasion to ask for a trade deal. He said, "Sell me this day thy birthright." (Genesis 25:51) Esau showed at once that Jacob rightly appreciated Esau's estimate of the birthright, namely that Esau was without respect to God or the covenant. He was ready to barter his birthright with which was associated the hope of the promise, for the savory food he smelt. Jacob, untrustful, asked him to swear to his word, and the transaction was completed.—Genesis 25:34.

⁵ It should not be understood that Jacob drove a hard bargain with his brother. Esau said he was ready to die, but that was merely an expression of a tired, faint man. He had 100 years of strong healthy life before him, and he would not have died if Jacob had not happened to be there preparing some food for himself. That Jacob took advantage of the circumstances cannot be questioned, but that he took an unfair advantage

of his brother cannot be held. The camp was near, Esau could have gotten all the food he needed.

⁶ Very many years later, when Isaac was 137 years old, and thinking his end was not far distant, and without notice to his family of what he purposed, he called Esau to him, and telling him he knew not the day of his death, he asked him to go out into the field and "make me savoury meat such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat: that my soul may bless thee before I die."—Genesis 27:4.

⁷ Rebekah heard this and was immediately concerned and distressed. She was confident that a great wrong was about to be done. Jacob was surely the one who was God's choice for the continuance of the Abrahamic hope to whom Isaac should give his parting blessing. Esau was still a hunter apparently caring little for the family interests, and she would know that Esau had sold his birthright blessing to Jacob.

⁸ We must think of Rebekah not as a designing, selfish woman, but as a good woman of energy and ability, sincerely desirous of doing right. Believing as she did, what was she to do? Isaac was set in his purpose. The peculiar situation caused by the elder son showing continued despite of the family hope did not seem to affect him. Should Rebekah protest to Isaac? The wifely attitude which obtained amongst the patriarchs almost prevented her from taking that course. She immediately decided on a subterfuge in order to get for Jacob that which now by right belonged to him.

⁹ Rebekah told Jacob of her plan. She would prepare savory food, and Jacob was to act as Esau and to cover his wrists and the smooth of his neck with goat's skin, so that if Isaac touched him he would feel like Esau. Jacob agreed. Their action cannot be commended, but their course was as right as that which Isaac and Esau took. All the four are seen as committing wrong. Isaac paid no notice to the fact that his son was not of the right spirit to inherit the birthright, and he must have known that Esau had sold his birthright. Esau was certainly acting dishonorably; he had sold his birthright for what he thought was a good equivalent, but was nevertheless ready to defraud his brother.

¹⁰ The scheme succeeded, for though Isaac was doubtful he gave his blessing to Jacob. (Genesis 27:23) When Esau on returning discovered that Jacob had got their father's blessing for himself he cried bitterly, and asked his father for a blessing for himself. He said that as soon as their father died he would slay Jacob. He said his brother was rightly named Jacob, or supplanter, for he had now supplanted him twice; he had taken his birthright and now his blessing. Esau did not speak the truth. He had despised that which he now cried for and which he had lightly sold for a meal. He

had no right to the blessing which he would now have taken from his brother.

¹¹ Esau wept bitterly. Tears in full flowing from a grown man bring sympathy; but bitter tears arise from resentment and disappointment. If he sought a place of repentance his tears were not for the wrong he had done, but for the loss he had sustained. Had he been really repentant he, like all others, would have found the favor of God, for God is near to the contrite heart. That there was no change of mind in Esau is evident, for he said that he would slay his brother.—Gen. 27:41.

¹² This was told to Rebekah, and she urged Jacob that he would go away till Esau's anger had softened and he had forgotten "that which thou hast done to him". (Genesis 27:45) In order to accomplish bringing this about she went to Isaac, saying that her life was made weary by reason of Esau's two Canaanite wives, and if Jacob should also take a Canaanite wife to himself "what good shall my life do me?" This apparently roused Isaac, and he called Jacob and charged him that he should not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan, but he was to go to his own people, his mother's brother, and take a wife from amongst them. Sending him away he called God's blessing upon Jacob.—Genesis 28:4.

¹³ It seems necessary to state these matters in some measure of detail because of the wrong conception which has obtained as to Jacob's action, and because immediately afterwards when Jacob left home God appeared to him at Bethel and made him a sharer in the covenant given to Abraham and Isaac. The fact that God did this without calling upon Jacob for a repentance from evil ways, and without any suggestion that he was a selfish, grasping man who sought to get rich even at the expense of others, should be sufficient for any devout Bible reader to come to the conclusion that God did not see in Jacob that for which unimaginative interpreters have condemned him.

¹⁴ Jacob's first day's journey took him to Bethel. Tired with the day's hard walking through the hill country he lay down to sleep. He took of the stones of that place, perhaps those of the altar Abraham had built there 100 years before, and made himself a pillow. As he slept he dreamed. He saw a ladder set on earth, and the top of it reached to heaven, and the angels ascending and descending on it. He heard the voice of Jehovah speaking to him, and saying, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."—Gen. 28:13-15.

¹⁵ When Jacob awoke, he said, "Surely the Lord is in

this place; and I knew it not." He was afraid and said, "How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." (Genesis 28:17) Very early in the morning he set up the stone upon which he had slept as a pillar, and poured oil on it, and called the name of that place "Bethel" because to him it was the house of God. He then vowed a vow.—Genesis 28:20-22.

¹⁶ The covenant of promise to Abraham, that in him and his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, had now been given to Isaac and to Jacob. The covenant is expressed a little differently to each of these three, and as such it was never spoken to any but these three. To Abraham the covenant was full and general. When God gave it to Isaac he said, "I will make thy seed to multiply as the *stars of heaven*." (Genesis 26:4) To Jacob he said, "Thy seed shall be as the *dust of the earth*." (Genesis 28:14) This marks a difference in the holders of the covenant, and also the corresponding phases of the salvation of God.

¹⁷ Isaac, as we have already seen, is typical of the spiritual seed of Abraham, that seed of which Jesus was the first member and which is composed of all those who in the days of the holy spirit have come to God by him and have been begotten of that spirit. Jacob in this connection represents the earthly phase of the Abrahamic promise. Abraham has two seeds; the one consisting of those who are his children according to the spirit, the other his children according to the flesh.

¹⁸ This great covenant of blessing is shortly to be put into full operation, for the spiritual seed represented by Isaac is now almost gathered. With the close of the call to the Narrow Way, which means full consecration to God, there will come a return of the favor to earthly Israel with which will be associated the return from the dead of Abraham and of those with him who were faithful to God before the call to follow in the footsteps of Christ was made known. This gracious work of spreading abroad the knowledge of the Most High will then go on until all mankind have been brought to a saving knowledge of the truth of God.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

Why were the twins which were born to Isaac and Rebecca so named? Which son was Isaac's favorite and which was Rebecca's favorite? ¶ 1, 2.

What does this attitude of the parents toward their children reveal? Were the twins fond of each other? Under what circumstances did Esau sell his birthright? ¶ 3-5. How and why did Rebekka and Jacob conspire to obtain Isaac's blessing? Are they blameworthy for their deception? ¶ 6-9.

What attitude did Esau assume when he learned of the scheme? Was his resentment justifiable? ¶ 10, 11.

Why did Isaac charge Jacob to marry among his kinsmen, and what parting blessing did he give him? Why did not God call upon Jacob for repentance? ¶ 12, 13.

Where and under what circumstances did Jacob's ladder dream occur? What did he see in the dream and what did he say and do when he awoke? ¶ 14, 15.

How was the covenant of promise expressed to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob respectively? Whom did Isaac and Jacob typify? When will the promise be fulfilled? ¶ 16-18.

International Bible Students Association Classes

Lectures and Studies by Traveling Brethren

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Wesler, Ida.	Apr. 15	Pendleton, Ore.	Apr. 25
La Grande, Ore.	" 16, 19	Weston, Ore.	" 26
Joseph, Ore.	" 18	Pomeroy, Wash.	" 27, 28
Pendleton, Ore.	" 20	Waitsburg, Wash.	" 29
Hermiston, Ore.	" 21	Dayton, Wash.	" 30
Heppner, Ore.	" 22, 23	Walla Walla, Wash.	May 2

BROTHER V. C. RICE

San Marcos, Tex.	Apr. 16	Waco, Tex.	Apr. 29
Austin, Tex.	" 16	Gustine, Tex.	" 27, 28
Bastrop, Tex.	" 19, 20	Furness, Tex.	" 29
Taylor, Tex.	" 21	Waco, Tex.	May 2
Temple, Tex.	" 22, 25	Alvarado, Tex.	" 3
Kempner, Tex.	" 23	Midlothian, Tex.	" 4

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Chester Springs, Pa.	Apr. 8	Chester, Pa.	Apr. 15
Linfield, Pa.	" 11	Camden, N. J.	" 16
Boyetown, Pa.	" 12	Philadelphia, Pa.	" 18
Pottstown, Pa.	" 13	Wilkes Barre, Pa.	" 19
Lansdale, Pa.	" 14	Buffalo, N. Y.	" 20
Norristown, Pa.	" 14	Niagara Falls, N. Y.	" 21

BROTHER C. ROBERTS

Bracebridge, Ont.	Apr. 16	Oxdrift, Ont.	Apr. 29
North Bay, Ont.	" 18, 19	Kenora, Ont.	" 30
MacLennan, Ont.	" 20, 21	Winnipeg, Man.	May 2, 3
Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.	" 22, 23	Portage La Prairie, Man.	" 4, 9
Searchmont, Ont.	" 25	Alonsa, Man.	" 6, 7
Port Arthur, Ont.	" 27, 28	Altona, Man.	" 10

BROTHER H. H. DINGUS

Pittsburgh, Pa.	Apr. 18	Greensburg, Pa.	Apr. 25
Waukesburg, Pa.	" 19	Butler, Pa.	" 26
Washington, Pa.	" 20	Elwood City, Pa.	" 27
Canonsburg, Pa.	" 21	New Brighton, Pa.	" 28
Kittanning, Pa.	" 22	New Castle, Pa.	" 29
New Kensington, Pa.	" 23	West Middlesex, Pa.	" 30

BROTHER R. L. ROBIE

Lucedale, Miss.	Apr. 7	Okolona, Miss.	Apr. 19, 20
Mobile, Ala.	" 8, 11	West Point, Miss.	" 21
Waynesboro, Miss.	" 12, 13	McCool, Miss.	" 22
Enterprise, Miss.	" 14	West Point, Miss.	" 23, 25
Meridian, Miss.	" 16	Houlka, Miss.	" 26
Columbus, Miss.	" 18	Maben, Miss.	" 27

BROTHER A. D. ESHLEMAN

Roanoke, Va.	Apr. 18	Salisbury, N. C.	Apr. 25
Winston Salem, N. C.	" 19	Kannapolis, N. C.	" 26
Liberty, N. C.	" 20	Concord, N. C.	" 27
High Point, N. C.	" 21	Charlotte, N. C.	" 28
Welcome, N. C.	" 22	Gastonia, N. C.	" 29
Barber, N. C.	" 23	Hickory, N. C.	" 30

BROTHER W. J. THORN

Oakdale, Calif.	Apr. 15	Palo Alto, Calif.	Apr. 23
San Francisco, Calif.	" 16, 18	Redwood City, Calif.	" 25
Hollister, Calif.	" 19	San Bruno, Calif.	" 27
San Jose, Calif.	" 20	Oakland, Calif.	Apr. 28, May 2
Santa Cruz, Calif.	" 21	Healdsburg, Calif.	May 3
Mountain View, Calif.	" 22	Eureka, Calif.	" 4, 5

BROTHER H. E. HAZLETT

Zanesville, O.	Apr. 15	Portsmouth, O.	Apr. 23, 25
Dresden, O.	" 16	Ironton, O.	" 26
Newark, O.	" 18	Ashland, Ky.	" 27
Hebron, O.	" 19	Huntington, W. Va.	" 28
Columbus, O.	" 20	Gallipolis, O.	" 29
Chillicothe, O.	" 21	Wellston, O.	" 30

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Terrell, Tex.	Apr. 19	Tyler, Tex.	Apr. 27
Grand Saline, Tex.	" 20, 21	Rusk, Tex.	" 28
Alba, Tex.	" 22	Kelrys, Tex.	" 29
Canton, Tex.	" 23	Broadus, Tex.	" 30
Big Sandy, Tex.	" 25	Treva, Tex.	May 2
Kerens, Tex.	" 26	Shreveport, La.	" 3, 4

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Ravenna, Neb.	Apr. 18	Clearwater, Neb.	Apr. 26
Grand Island, Neb.	" 19	Stanton, Neb.	" 27
Ericson, Neb.	" 20, 21	Omaha, Neb.	" 28, 29
Columbus, Neb.	" 22	Nebraska City, Neb.	" 30
Winnsboro, Neb.	" 23	Lincoln, Neb.	May 2
Norfolk, Neb.	" 25	Beatrice, Neb.	" 3

BROTHER J. C. WATT

Black Creek, Wis.	Apr. 16	Auburndale, Wis.	Apr. 27
Plover, Wis.	" 18	Athens, Wis.	" 28
Black River Falls, Wis.	" 19, 20	Withee, Wis.	" 29
Tunnel City, Wis.	" 21, 22	Unity, Wis.	" 30
Junction City, Wis.	" 23, 26	Marshfield, Wis.	May 2
Stevens Point, Wis.	" 25	Loyal, Wis.	" 3

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Pine Bluff, Ark.	Apr. 16	Pyatt, Ark.	Apr. 23
Hot Springs, Ark.	" 18	Cotter, Ark.	" 25
Malvern, Ark.	" 19	Kenett, Ark.	" 26, 28
Batesville, Ark.	" 20	Judsona, Ark.	" 27
Marcella, Ark.	" 21	Rondo, Ark.	" 29
Turkey, Ark.	" 22	Hellena, Ark.	Apr. 30, May 2

BROTHER G. R. POLLOCK

Wooster, O.	Apr. 16	Ravenna, O.	Apr. 23
Canton, O.	" 18	Akron, O.	" 25
Dalton, O.	" 19	Mansfield, O.	" 26
Massillon, O.	" 20	Gahon, O.	" 27
Barberton, O.	" 21	Crestline, O.	" 28
Kent, O.	" 22	Shelby, O.	" 29