



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. XLVI

SEMI-MONTHLY

No. 22

Anno Mundi 6054—November 15, 1925

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

W.B.E.T.S.

Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking to the things coming upon the earth (society); for the powers of the heavens (ecclesiasticism) shall be shaken. . . . When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Look up, lift up your heads, rejoice, for your redemption draweth nigh.—Matt. 24:33; Mark 13:29; Luke 21:25-31.

## THIS JOURNAL AND ITS SACRED MISSION

**THIS** journal is one of the prime factors or instruments in the system of Bible instruction, or "Seminary Extension", now being presented in all parts of the civilized world by the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY, chartered A. D. 1881. "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 enlighteneth 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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**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. BARKER, E. J. COWARD.

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Entered as Second Class Matter at Brooklyn, N.Y. Postoffice, Act of March 3<sup>d</sup> 1879.

### WORLD WITNESS

Sunday, November 29th, 1925, is the next world-wide witness day following the witness on October 11th, which has already been given. The subject on November 29th will be "The Highway to Life". It is requested that all the classes prepare for this public witness and point out to the people the way that leads to the kingdom.

### MONEY LOST

Many complaints have been recently received at this office of lost money and money orders. We are advised by the Post Office Department that there is a systematic robbery of the mails going on that the Government has been unable to stop. Letters are rifled, cash is taken out, and money orders and checks that cannot be cashed are destroyed. This will explain why many WATCH TOWER subscriptions are not received and why you do not get your WATCH TOWERS. Make all remittances by Post Office money order or draft on New York bank. These can be duplicated if destroyed. Do not enclose postage stamps nor cash in any letter.

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These STUDIES (books) are recommended to students as veritable Bible keys, discussing topically the vital doctrines of the Bible. More than fourteen million copies are in circulation, in eighteen languages. There are seven volumes in the series, handsomely bound in maroon cloth (size 5" x 7 3/4"), gold stamped, printed on dull finish paper. There are over 3,600 pages in the set, and the English volumes sell for only \$2.50, postpaid. Write for information regarding the other languages.

# The WATCH TOWER

## AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

VOL. XLVI

NOVEMBER 15, 1925

No. 22

### THE HOLY SPIRIT POURED OUT

*"And it shall come to pass a'terw-rd, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days I will pour out my spirit."—Joel 2: 28, 29.*

THE inspired apostle assures the church that whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for her benefit, upon whom the end of the age has come. (Romans 15: 4; 1 Corinthians 10: 11) The words of the prophet, above set out, seem to come clearly within the announced rule.

<sup>2</sup> The English word "spirit" is translated from the Hebrew *ruach*, which primarily means wind. The same word "spirit" in the New Testament is translated from the Greek root *pneuma*, also meaning wind. Wind well represents the word spirit. Wind is both invisible and powerful. The words of Jesus convey the same thought. Addressing Nicodemus concerning the operation of the holy spirit in preparing one for the kingdom of God he said: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit."—John 3: 8.

<sup>3</sup> Based upon this and like scriptures we conclude that the proper definition of the holy spirit is: Invisible Power. The power of Jehovah is pure and holy; therefore the spirit of God is the holy spirit. When God exercises his power for the creation of things it is his holy spirit, or invisible power, in operation towards the things created. When the time came for God to create things pertaining to the earth, it is written in Genesis 1: 2: "The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." God needs only to will a thing for it to be done. His will is his law. The operation of his spirit is but the operation of his holy power.

<sup>4</sup> The power of Satan is evil. That power is likewise invisible to man. That power, exercised toward man, means the operation of the evil spirit. The enemy produces what is called in the Scriptures "the spirit of the world", "the spirit of Satan," and "the spirit of anti-Christ".

<sup>5</sup> Poured out means a libation, a gushing out or shed forth. God exercised his spirit towards his creatures to accomplish his purposes. The Scriptures seem to prove conclusively that God pours out his spirit on no one unless that one is willingly in heart harmony with God. One of the prerequisites seems always to be that

the one upon whom the spirit is poured out must have an honest, sincere desire to do the will of God.

#### EXAMPLES OF OPERATION

<sup>6</sup> Abel having faith in God and desiring to do his will, God gave him the spirit of wisdom that he might offer an acceptable sacrifice unto God. Enoch had faith in God, loved and obeyed him, and received God's approval. God exercised his spirit toward Enoch, and took him away that he might not see death. When the tabernacle was to be made and furnished, by the exercise of his spirit God gave certain men the spirit of wisdom and understanding and knowledge in workmanship. Here God exercised his invisible power upon the minds of men to accomplish his purposes.

<sup>7</sup> When, under the direction of Jehovah, Moses selected seventy elders, they did prophesy. (Numbers 11: 25) The spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel, and he prophesied before the king of Israel. (2 Chronicles 20: 14, 15) Concerning the writing of the prophecies the testimony is that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy spirit".—2 Peter 1: 21.

<sup>8</sup> These and other scriptures show that prior to the coming of Jesus the office of the holy spirit was limited to service and to those officially appointed for service. The spirit of the Lord was not given to the nation of Israel as a whole, but was given only to those of Israel who were officially appointed for specific service. This is so apparent that there is hardly room for doubt about it. Only a few Israelites received the holy spirit of God, and these spoke the message of God for the benefit of others.

<sup>9</sup> Among these thus favored by Jehovah was Joel. The spirit of the Lord came upon him and he foretold what was to come. We have the testimony of St. Peter that these prophets did not understand what they wrote nor the time of which they testified, thus proving that it was the holy spirit, or invisible power, of Jehovah operating upon their minds for the purpose of making record of what God desired to be recorded. Joel prophesied that a change in the operation of the holy spirit was coming. As God's inspired prophet he called upon all the inhabitants to hear his message and then for them

to tell it to their children and to their children's children. He prophesied of a great time of trouble coming upon Israel. He gave special warning to those who ministered at the altar, the priestly class. He told them to weep because 'the new wine is cut off from your mouth'. (Joel 1:5) He thus shows God's disfavor to the ecclesiastical element.

<sup>10</sup> At the time of this prophecy Israel was in a covenant with God, and was a part of God's organization, and for this reason properly designated under the title Zion. The inspired prophet warns Zion, and tells her to cry out and sound the alarm. After further warning he utters words of hope for the future. Then come the words of the text: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit."—Joel 2:28, 29.

#### TIME

<sup>11</sup> What did the prophet mean when he said: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh"? Did he mean that after the selection of the church by means of begetting and anointing of the holy spirit, and the development of the new creation to completion, then he would pour out his spirit upon all the peoples of earth? It hardly seems reasonable that such is the meaning of the prophet's words, because during the Millennial Age the holy spirit will not operate to beget or to anoint any one. All the people will then be under the control and supervision of Christ, the Mediator. They will be given knowledge of the truth and therefore an opportunity to accept the gracious provisions God has made for them through Christ the Mediator.

<sup>12</sup> Only those who accept the gift of life will receive it. (Romans 6:23) A gift cannot be effective without consent of the receiver. These will be under the control of the Mediator during the entire age and will be turned over to Jehovah at the end of the age. Surely during the Millennial Age God will not pour out his spirit upon all flesh, regardless of whether the people accept Christ or not. The text does not seem to apply to the Millennial Age at all.

<sup>13</sup> The word "afterward" appearing in this text is, according to Dr. Strong, lexicographer, from a root word that is translated many different ways. It has various applications as to manner, time and relation. It is often translated "hereafter" and "after this". The facts seem to show that this is what the prophet means: After this time of which I am now speaking, at a future time from this, a change is coming in regard to the ministration or operation of the spirit of God. Up to that time God had poured out his spirit upon only a few of the house of Israel; but the time was coming when he would pour out

his spirit upon all flesh (even upon Gentiles), "upon whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord."

<sup>14</sup> The setting of this text seems clearly to call for: (1) in the last days of the Jewish Age, and (2) in the last days of the Gospel Age. It is plainly stated that it is just before the great and terrible day of the Lord that he will pour out his spirit upon all flesh. There came a great and terrible day upon fleshly Israel, particularly in A. D. 69 to 73. Jesus emphasizes the fact of a great time of trouble that shall mark the grand finale of Satan's empire. (Matthew 24:21, 22) The pouring out of the spirit seems to just precede both of these periods of time.

<sup>15</sup> A well-defined rule in the fulfilment of prophecy is: First, its fulfilment upon Jesus and his apostles, and later upon the Lord's people in the work done by them in the name of the Lord during his second presence. An illustration of this rule is found in Isaiah 61:1-3 and 52:7. The latter scripture St. Paul quotes in Romans 10:15 and so applies it.

#### ST. PETER'S INTERPRETATION

<sup>16</sup> Where a scripture appears in the Old Testament, and the construction or interpretation of that scripture is in doubt, and that same scripture is interpreted by one of the inspired apostles of the Lord, and is written in the New Testament, such interpretation is conclusive and must be accepted by all Bible students as final. Jesus stated to St. Peter and other of his inspired apostles that what they said on earth would be confirmed in heaven.—Matthew 18:18.

<sup>17</sup> It was on the day of Pentecost that St. Peter, with others, had received the holy spirit. There the spirit operated to beget and to anoint them. (Acts 2:1-5) On that occasion there were divers men from every nation at Jerusalem, speaking their own languages. The apostles stood up before them and preached the gospel so that all understood their words, each in his own tongue. Not only were the apostles begotten and anointed of the holy spirit, but God's invisible power operated upon them to cause them to speak in tongues before then unknown to them. Other men standing by, who heard them, said: "These men are full of new wine." St. Peter replied: "For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day."—Acts 2:13, 15.

<sup>18</sup> Then that it might be understood what was meant by what the people there saw and heard, St. Peter proceeded to interpret the meaning in these words: "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out, in those days, of my spirit; and they shall prophesy: and I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the

earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved."—Acts 2: 16-21.

<sup>19</sup> Prior to that time the holy spirit had operated only upon a few of the Jews. The first one begotten was Jesus at the Jordan. (John 1: 32) Now the apostles were begotten and anointed by the same power. Jesus was the beginning and the Head of the beloved servant class mentioned by other prophets, and now the apostles had been added to that servant class. (Matthew 12: 18; Isaiah 42: 1; 61: 1, 2) This is the class upon whom God pours out his spirit.

<sup>20</sup> At Pentecost the time had come when God would not limit his spirit to only a few; but, as St. Peter there stated, "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Then the Jews cried out and said: "What shall we do?" St. Peter replied: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts 2: 38, 39.

<sup>21</sup> That this was the time of the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel it is further recorded that on that same day there was added about three thousand persons who received the holy spirit. (Acts 2: 41) The word "afterward" spoken by the Prophet Joel is plainly interpreted by St. Peter to mean "in the last days". This corresponds with the meaning of the word as above defined.

#### "ALL FLESH"

<sup>22</sup> The term "all flesh" as used by the Prophet Joel must be interpreted according to St. Peter as meaning all the families of the household of Israel. He was speaking to Israelites. What is said would later apply to spiritual Israel, the meaning being that at the end of the Jewish Age God would not be a respecter of persons of the house of Israel, but that his spirit would be given to the sons and the daughters, to the old men and the young men, and even to the servants and handmaids of the household and they "shall prophesy". The prophesying, or giving the testimony, would therefore not be confined to a few but would be extended to all of the household, hence to all flesh. The facts show that this is exactly what did take place, which is conclusive as to the meaning of the prophecy.

#### "IN THOSE DAYS"

<sup>23</sup> There seems to be no good reason for changing the position of verses 28 and 29 in Joel's prophecy. They appear in the order in which the facts show fulfilment. Prophecy can be best interpreted by the physical facts in fulfilment. The conclusion that verse 29 applies to the Gospel Age, and that verse 28 applies afterwards and during the Millennial Age, does not seem to be warranted

by any of the facts. Using our common method of speech we understand this is what the Prophet Joel, in substance, said: 'Up to this time God has bestowed his spirit upon a few of the house of Israel. After this day he will pour out his spirit upon all the house of Israel, upon whosoever shall call upon his name; and in those days, that is to say, during the time he is pouring out his spirit upon all flesh, his spirit will not be limited to some of the devout men of Israel, but it will extend to your sons and to your daughters, to your old men and to your young men, and even upon the servants and handmaids of the household, even as many as shall call upon the name of the Lord.'

<sup>24</sup> As to the time when this shall take place it will be before "the great and terrible day of the Lord come". "In those days," instead of meaning in the Gospel Age, clearly means within that period of time in which the Lord is pouring out his spirit upon all flesh of the house of Israel. That which actually occurred on the day of Pentecost, and for three and one-half years thereafter, fully and completely corroborates this conclusion. In order to settle it definitely St. Peter at that time said: "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel."—Acts 2: 16.

#### SECOND FULFILMENT

<sup>25</sup> It is proven by many other scriptures that the term "the last days", in the broader measure, applies to the last days of the Gospel Age, when Satan's empire is passing away. While this had application to the last days of the Jewish Age, it also has application even in a broader measure to the last days of the Gospel Age, and refers to the last experiences of the church during the second presence of our Lord. It is not unusual to find more than one fulfilment of a prophecy. Based upon this and other scriptures we should clearly expect another pouring out of the holy spirit in fulfilment of Joel's prophecy, as interpreted by St. Peter; and that this would take place in the last days of the Gospel Age and just before the great time of trouble.

<sup>26</sup> After the apostles had passed from the earth darkness quickly set in. This was because of the opposition of the spirit of the evil one. The Devil began to exercise his invisible power subtly toward the church. The Lord had planted the church a noble vine; and now it rapidly turned into a degenerate plant of a strange vine, as the prophet had foretold. (Jeremiah 2: 21) The dark ages followed, during which time the face of God was turned away from his professed people of earth. During that time the true saints, herded in with the false and ambitious members of the church, were in great distress. The psalmist speaks their heart sentiments, saying, "Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression?"—Psalm 44: 24.

<sup>27</sup> St. Peter at Pentecost speaks prophetically of relief coming to the saints thus oppressed. He there said: "Times of refreshing shall come from the face of the Lord." (Acts 3: 19) The time of refreshing came to

Israel at the end of the Jewish Age, during the first presence of our Lord; and the time of refreshing has come to the spiritual Israelites, the church of God, at the end of the Gospel Age during the second presence of our Lord. The period of time from 1875 to 1918 was a period of refreshing, during which time God restored to his people the great fundamental truths and refreshed them thereby and drew them together. (Acts 3:19; Psalm 50:5) That period of time was particularly a period of preparation and refreshment.

#### WORK OF THE CHURCH

<sup>28</sup> The period of refreshment and gathering together of the church, known as the period of preparation from 1874 to 1918, was the work of the church foreshadowed by the experiences of Elijah the prophet. There was a brief period of waiting in 1918 and 1919. Following shortly thereafter the spirit of the Lord moved the church into greater zeal and activity in the proclamation of the message of the kingdom. This zeal and activity in doing the Lord's will was foreshadowed by the experiences of the Prophet Elisha. True to the prophecy the church was given a greater measure of the spirit in the service since 1918. Those who have clearly discerned the period of time marking the division of the work foreshadowed by Elijah and Elisha have had greater joy in the Lord and in his service, even as the prophecy foretold.

#### MANY HAVE HEARD

<sup>29</sup> It was thought by some that the work of the church was ended in 1918. The facts show that there has been a greater witness to the message of the Lord since than prior to 1918. In the year 1925 fully 25,000 persons are reported as having partaken of the Memorial than in any preceding year. At the SOCIETY'S convention in Columbus in 1924, in response to a question, fully half of that great multitude stated they had come to a knowledge of the truth since 1918. At the convention at Magdeburg in 1925 a like question was put to an audience of upwards of 12,000, and fully two-thirds of them stated that they had come to a knowledge of the truth since 1922. It was particularly noticed that amongst those was a great number of young men and young women. Upon this great number the Lord has poured out his spirit; and these are the ones who, in the bloom of youth and vigor, are anxious to be used and whom the Lord is using largely in giving the witness. Many of those who were used to proclaim the truth prior to 1918 have turned away, or have relaxed their efforts. The Lord has brought into the field many more. The arm of the Lord has not been shortened.

#### SEE VISIONS

<sup>30</sup> The words of the prophet are: "And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." **To** prophesy means to preach; and it is generally the

young men and the young women that go about preaching, either by word of mouth or by putting into the hands of the people the books which contain the message of the kingdom. Preaching may be done either by word of mouth or by printed matter; and this being an age of reading, putting into the hands of the people the printed message is a more effective way of preaching.

<sup>31</sup> A vision means to have a clearer understanding, or a vision, of the plan of God. "Where there is no vision, the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18) Where there is no vision of God's Word, no understanding of the truth, there is not the spirit of the Lord and the Christians faint. (Amos 8:11-13) Those who have kept abreast with the light of truth that God has caused to shine upon his plan have greatly rejoiced. Those who stopped in 1918 either are in darkness or are dreaming dreams.

<sup>32</sup> "Your young men shall see visions." Those who have come more recently into the truth seem to manifest a greater degree of the spirit of the Lord and to have a clearer vision and understanding of God's plan than many who have had the privilege for years. With this clearer vision of the truth they enter into the joy of the Lord and gladly participate in any service the Lord offers them.

<sup>33</sup> "Your old men shall dream dreams." Many who have been long in the truth continue to build air-castles. In substance they continue to say: "How wonderful it will be to get into heaven and sit on the throne and rule!" That indeed will be wonderful; but those who will ultimately sit upon the throne with the Lord must do something here first to prove themselves faithful and true witnesses of the Lord. What each faithful Christian now says to himself is: "What may I do to glorify the Lord and to be God's witness and prove my faith and loyalty and devotion to him in order that I may receive his approval?" Those who thus continue faithful to the end will be the ones who will have an abundant entrance into his kingdom.—2 Peter 1:10-12.

<sup>34</sup> Let those who desire to indulge in day dreams do so, but let the Christian who really loves the Lord hear his command and joyfully obey the same. The Lord is using, out of the number called, his remnant to do his work and to give the witness even as the prophet foretold. (Joel 2:32) The remnant means the faithful or earnest ones amongst those who have received the spirit of the Lord.

#### EARLY AND LATTER RAIN

<sup>35</sup> The evidence of the fulfilment of this prophecy in the end of the Gospel Age is in harmony with the poetic expression concerning the early and the latter rain. (See Joel 2:23; Hosea 6:3) The early rain is to sprout the seeds, and the latter rain to mature the corn in the ear. From the time of our Lord's second presence, and during the period of preparation, was a time of the early rain. That was a time of refreshing because God turned his face to his people. It was a time of gathering to-



gether the people of God, and this was the work done generally prior to 1918.—Psalm 50: 5.

<sup>36</sup> Then followed a period of expectation and impatient waiting until the completion of the work. Many thought they should be taken home and that the work was done. Then the evidence was given that the Lord came to his temple in 1918. That was the time of the latter rain which greatly refreshed the saints and has brought joy to their hearts. They have entered into the joy of the Lord. This seems to be the time referred to by St. James who wrote: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."—James 5: 7, 8.

<sup>37</sup> During the former rain was performed the Elijah work. During the latter rain is performed the Elisha work. In the latter period the church enters into the joy of the Lord, and those thus doing realize that the joy of the Lord is their strength. No miracles are now being performed; but he who knows that he has the spirit of the Lord and who is blessed by the Lord is more confident than the man who works miracles. He who thus has the Lord's spirit and testimony has greater reason to rely upon the Lord and to go forward in the strength of the Lord and his service. It is this servant class upon whom the Lord plainly says he will pour out his spirit. (Isaiah 42: 1) It is this class that the Lord has honored by making them his witnesses in the earth.—Isaiah 43: 9-12.

#### FURTHER PROOF

<sup>38</sup> As further corroborative proof that the prophecy of Joel finds another fulfilment at the end of the Gospel Age, attention is particularly directed to the words of the Prophet Joel in Joel 2: 30 and 31: "And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come."

<sup>39</sup> Has not the Lord shown his people wonders in the heavens by giving them a better vision than heretofore of the Devil's organization and of the birth of the nation, of the casting of Satan out of heaven and the preparation for the great and final battle on the earth? Blood and fire are symbols of death and destruction. In the earth during the past few years there has been a great amount of death and destruction.

<sup>40</sup> Smoke is a symbol of confusion, and now we see such great confusion as never before in the earth. The nominal Christian system is all in confusion. Their leaders have turned the light of the gospel into darkness by denying the creation, the fall and the redemption of man and by uniting openly with the Devil's organization in an effort to establish what they call God's kingdom on earth. They have so confused many honest people that these know not which way to go.

<sup>41</sup> The moon is a symbol of the law of God, therefore symbolically representing the will of God. It has become unto many the symbol of death. These things have transpired particularly in the last few years and are now apparent to all who have a vision of the divine plans

<sup>42</sup> Note now the prophet says these things shall take place "before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come"; that is to say, before the final trouble mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 24: 21, 22. The prophet's words are that contemporaneously with the happening of these events God will pour out his spirit upon all flesh, upon whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord. The facts show the fulfilment of the prophecy, and that those who have called upon the name of the Lord and fully consecrated themselves, are now joyfully doing his will in this time of stress. These facts should cause the true follower of Jesus Christ to greatly rejoice at the further evidence that the day of complete deliverance is at hand.

#### HARDEST AND BEST TIMES

<sup>43</sup> It is true that the present time is the hardest day for the church, because of the temptations of the world, because of a general destruction and the breaking down of everything in the world; because of the turning of the people away from God; and because many who have walked with the Lord have grown weary in well doing or else have proven unfaithful and have turned aside. The present evil world, of which ecclesiasticism forms a large part, is spiritually Sodom. (Revelation 11: 8) Lot was in Sodom; yet Lot was a righteous man. The true church this side the veil is now in the evil city, the antitypical Sodom, amidst the Devil's organization. The church is not like Lot, but her condition is like unto that of Lot. The true church must now be witnesses for God before a wicked and perverse generation.

<sup>44</sup> Jesus declared that these conditions should obtain at the end of the age, where we now are. (Luke 17: 28-30) As Lot in his day was speaking amongst wicked men, so now the members of the true church are witnesses for God and are made a spectacle for men and angels, even the Devil's organization. This is the hardest time because opposition of the world is more pronounced than ever. God's people are gathered together; but the enemy and his organization fight against the church in an attempt to destroy those who keep the commandments of God and who have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Revelation 12: 17) The church needs a greater measure of the spirit of God now; and those who call upon his name, and were begotten and anointed during the past few years, manifest a greater measure of the spirit.

<sup>45</sup> And these are the happiest days for the church, because the light and understanding of the truth is greater than ever before. The saints have entered into the joy of the Lord. They have the testimony of Christ Jesus that they are in the temple class. His blessings are manifest upon those who do serve him. Upon those who now have the spirit of the Lord the glory of the Lord is shin-

ing, and they are honored by being made God's witnesses on earth. Greater is the light, greater is the joy, and greater the opportunity of serving the Lord, and thus the saints are honored by him.—Isaiah 60:1.

<sup>46</sup> The church is confident of the fact that she has the spirit of the Lord, as stated in Isaiah 61:1, 2; and that she is commissioned to declare the day of vengeance of our God against Satan's organization and to bring the message of comfort to the people. It is the complement of our Lord's fulfilment of the same prophecy. Happy the lot of the saints now on earth! With them time is no more. They see that the Lord has taken his power, that the nation of righteousness is born, that the Lord has poured out his spirit upon those who call upon his name and that these are made the witnesses for God.

<sup>47</sup> Joyfully they stand above the disintegrating elements. They stand, as it were, upon the sea of glass and have the harmonious message of God and his kingdom; and they sing the praises of Jehovah and the King. They do not worry about how long they will be on the earth nor the hour when they will enter into everlasting bliss. They gladly wait upon the Lord. Their joy now is greater because they dwell in the secret place of the Most High, knowing that they love the Lord and delight to do his will, and that if they thus continue faithful he will preserve them and in his own good time receive them into his everlasting arms. He will bestow upon them the exceeding riches of his grace through Christ Jesus, his own beloved One.

#### QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

What is the purpose of prophecy? What is meant by the word "spirit" in Joel 2:28? ¶ 1, 2.  
Describe the difference between the holy spirit and Satan's spirit. ¶ 3, 4.  
How can a spirit be "poured out"? Did anybody receive the holy spirit prior to Pentecost? ¶ 5-7.

How was the office of the holy spirit limited in ancient times? What does St. Peter say on this point? Outline Joel's prophecy. ¶ 8-10.

What is the import of the term "afterward" as used by Joel? Is it reasonable that the holy spirit will be literally poured out upon all flesh, in the Millennium, regardless of whether the people accept Christ? ¶ 11-13, 21.

What does the setting of this prophecy indicate as to time? Do prophecies concerning the Lord Jesus sometimes apply also to his body? Illustrate. ¶ 14-16.

What were the circumstances surrounding St. Peter's citation of Joel's prophecy? ¶ 17, 18.

Why did the apostle cite this prophecy, and what is his point concerning it? ¶ 19-21.

What did Joel mean by "all flesh"? To what time does he refer by "those days"? Paraphrase. ¶ 22-24.

To what does the Scriptural phrase "in the last days" usually refer? ¶ 25.

What happened to the church after the apostles fell asleep? When were "times of refreshing" to come? ¶ 26, 27.

How does the type of Elijah and Elisha fit conditions in the end of this age? ¶ 28.

What does Joel mean by the statement "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy"? ¶ 29, 30.

What is meant by "your young men shall see visions"? ¶ 31, 32.

Why does he say, "Your old men shall dream dreams," and how is this fulfilled? ¶ 33, 34.

What is the significance of "the former and the latter rain" mentioned in the context, and how does this establish the time of the prophecy's fulfilment? ¶ 35, 36.

Who are the "servants" upon whom the Lord's spirit is now poured out? ¶ 37.

What does Joel 2:30, 31 further prove as to the time of fulfilment of this prophecy? What are the "wonders in heaven and in the earth"? What is symbolized by the "blood and fire" mentioned? ¶ 38, 39.

What is meant by the "pillars of smoke", and how is the sun darkened and the moon turned into blood? ¶ 40:41. When were these things to take place? Is the outpouring of the holy spirit indicated to be contemporaneous with these events? ¶ 42.

Why is the present a hard time for true Christians? How is our situation similar to that of Lot in Sodom? Does not the church now need a greater measure of the holy spirit? ¶ 43, 44.

In the midst of present hardships why are Christians now so full of joy? ¶ 45-47.

## INTERESTING QUESTIONS

### SATAN CAST OUT OF HEAVEN

**Q**uestion: I am writing you hoping you may help me to understand the last WATCH TOWER article, "The King in Action," also the one on "The Birth of The Nation". I thought that I did understand them; but when so many of the leaders take a different viewpoint and explain them differently, it is so hard to know just where you are. Some of the elders say that the heaven from which Satan was cast out was not a literal heaven but a symbolical or ecclesiastical heaven, while others say he is busier than ever in the ecclesiastical heaven. So it must be some space between here and the heaven where Jehovah's throne is. A few think that the WATCH TOWER meant just what it said when it stated that Satan was literally cast out of heaven and no longer has access to the heavenly courts, and that his activities are now confined to earth.

Some base their interpretation on the reference to the "heavens" mentioned in 2 Peter, third chapter, which Brother Russell calls the ecclesiastical heavens.

If I understand you rightly, the explanation in "The Birth of The Nation" article, March 1st WATCH TOWER, page 69, paragraph 30, is one of the clearest I have ever read. It says: "The Scriptures do not bear out the thought that Satan has been debarred from appearing in heaven since the fall of man in Eden, nor at the time of the Flood; on the contrary the Scriptures and the physical facts seem to indicate that Satan was permitted to remain in heaven." To my mind this is most reasonable. But most of our leaders say the heavens referred to are ecclesiastical, not the literal heaven. Please help us to understand it. May God bless you continually.

—M. WINKLE.

**Answer:** The casting out of heaven, as men-



tioned in Revelation 12:7-9, has no reference whatever to what is usually termed the ecclesiastical heaven. It is clearly stated in the Scriptures that Satan appeared before Jehovah when the sons of God came to present themselves.—Job 1:6; 2:1.

Some may have thought that heaven, the place of abode of Jehovah, is one great open space where every creature can see each other and where all can see God. Such a conclusion is not at all reasonable. Surely the Eternal One has a secret place of his own to which none is admitted. It is reasonable that at times Jehovah meets with the Lord Jesus when no one else is present. There must be different abodes in the heavenly realm even as there are in the earth. Surely God has the power to withdraw himself from the presence of all when he so desires.

When an earthly potentate leaves the innermost portion of his castle and reviews his soldiers, these appear before him. He may not leave the castle or he may. Surely Jehovah could permit his sons to appear before him in heaven without their entering into the secret chambers of the great Eternal God; and this is what they did, as described by Job. When these came, Satan also appeared. God could have prevented him, but did not. He could have prevented Satan all these centuries from interfering with mankind, but it has not pleased him to do so.

It is certain that Satan seduced a number of angels of heaven and drew them after him. Because these appeared before God on certain occasions it would not mean that they would see him at all other times. This statement of Job being true, then it must follow that Satan was in heaven at that time. If these sons of God could behold Jehovah at all times, then there would be no occasion for Job to say that they came and appeared before him. It was on these occasions that Satan came and held conversation with Jehovah.

Since the day of defection in Eden until the coming of the Lord Jesus as King of glory God has permitted Satan to pursue his own course, and during that time has permitted him to follow out his wicked designs without hindrance. For many centuries Satan has been god of the whole world. During that time he has been the chief amongst the devils. The Jews all understood this, and so accused Jesus of being Beelzebub.

All of these devils could be in heaven without being in the presence of Jehovah God. There has been some place in the realm invisible to man where Satan and his cabinet officers have been carrying on his government of wicked angels and the governments of this earth. These constitute the old heaven and old earth of 2 Peter 3rd chapter. This heaven has no reference to ecclesiastical companies.

An occasion is recorded in which an angel was sent from God to bear a message to Daniel in answer to his prayer. This angel told Daniel that "the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty

days; but lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me." (Daniel 10:13) This angel also told Daniel that he would return and that the prince of Persia would fight against him and that later the prince of Grecia would come. (Daniel 10:20) Here is the plain statement, then, about two princes, relating to two different worldly governments. A prince means a governor or ruler. The cabinet officers rule with the president of the United States. They are members of his official family. By a similar arrangement the princes of Persia, Grecia, etc., would rule with Satan. In other words these princes would be governors to whom Satan delegated the power to look after certain countries of his empire.

Since Satan was then the god of the whole world and chief amongst devils, based upon this scripture we must conclude that the prince of Persia and the prince of Grecia were members of Satan's official family. St. Paul plainly states that there are principalities and powers and rulers of this wicked world, who are invisible to man and who are fighting against the Christians.—Ephesians 6:12.

From what place have these, under the supervision of Satan, been conducting their office of state? Surely from some place in heaven; that is to say, in the realm removed from the earth and invisible to the creatures of earth. Is not this the "old heaven" which the apostle says must pass away in the last days? (2 Peter 3:10-12) Is not this the heaven in which there has long been unrighteousness and which must make way for the "new heaven" wherein dwelleth righteousness and of which the Lord Jesus is the chief ruler?—2 Peter 3:13.

In the light of these scriptures we must conclude that Satan has had some place in heaven from which he has been operating and directing his government. A number of the pictures in Revelation indicate this, which space will not permit us here to discuss.

The time comes for the Lord Jesus, whose right it is, to begin his reign. Would it not be reasonable that he would take up his position in heaven for this purpose, in obedience to the command from Jehovah: "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies"? (Psalm 110:2) In the scripture here quoted Jehovah sends forth the sceptre or authority out of his organization, by his beloved Son, and commands that he rule amidst his enemies.

Of course Satan did not willingly surrender the place or position, but he must get out; for the time has come. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, . . . and he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."—Revelation 12:7-9.

In this fight the Devil is thrown out. Surely the words of Isaiah 14:12 are prophetic words, which did not have application at the time Satan caused the trouble in Eden. At that time there were no nations to weaken. Now read the prophecy: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" It is after he weakens the nations that he falls from heaven.

Then the Revelator plainly states that the Devil confines his operations to the earth. His place of operation in heaven has ceased, and now he must confine them to the earth. Being a spirit being, he is still invisible to man. He could operate from heaven as well as from some place on earth, and probably better; but now being excluded from that place his operations are confined to the earth. The Revelator adds: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." (Revelation 12:12) Evidently the "earth" here refers to the ruling factors of the earth, and the "sea" to the restless element of humanity; and surely both of these are having their woes now, and their woes continue to increase.

Then follows the preparation for the great and final battle on earth, the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. (Matthew 24:21, 22) While this preparation is going on Satan and his emissaries are making a desperate effort to destroy the saints, because these are the only witnesses on earth for Jehovah God, and they are telling the people that God's kingdom is at hand. He goes forth "to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ".

It is quite evident that the Lord has permitted his church to have some understanding of this scripture at this time as a special warning, that the members thereof may be prepared to withstand the assaults of the evil one. Of course the Devil would put forth his best efforts to confuse the minds of the Lord's people and would induce one elder to say one thing and another to say another thing, to camouflage the matter so that it would appear merely symbolic. Let no one be deceived by believing that this is merely a symbolism referring to the ecclesiastical systems.

The specific answer to the question is: The heaven from which Satan has been excluded is the place and high position from which he, together with his wicked assistants, has for many centuries ruled the invisible realm of wickedness and also the world. Clearly it is not the ecclesiastical heaven. The Devil has never resided in the ecclesiastical heaven. He has been the ruler of these systems. He has ruled them by exercising his invisible power or evil spirit; and this he is still doing. He would not need to be in that heaven to do this. His ecclesiastical systems are confined to the earth, and here

he is operating and using them probably in a more effective way than he has heretofore.

The Scripture seem to warrant the conclusion that the Lord Jesus Christ, as the great executive officer of Jehovah God, has thrown Satan out of heaven; and that now while the preparation goes on for the great and final conflict, the battle of God Almighty, he is commanding the followers of Jesus to proclaim amongst themselves and to the world the great witness that Jehovah is God, that the time has come for him to get himself a name, and that his kingdom of righteousness shall be established, that the world might be stabilized that it cannot be moved.

In this connection it may also be said that the evil spirits who have been operating with the Devil are not the evil spirits who were confined in prison at the time of the Flood. It will be noted that these were confined because "they kept not their first estate". (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6) Their first estate was on the spirit plane. They materialized, cohabited with women and produced a progeny. Because of their wickedness in thus leaving their first estate God incarcerated them. But without a question of a doubt there has been a host of evil spirits operating with the Devil on the spirit plane, in his invisible realm; and these are the ones who are now operating with the Devil and who are seeking to destroy those who keep the commandments of God and who have the testimony of Jesus Christ. The saints who abide in the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of his wing, within the hollow of his hand, will be invulnerable to the attack of the enemy. Therefore with confidence and with joyful hearts they can proclaim, and will proclaim, the glad message that Jehovah is God, that Christ Jesus is King, and that the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

#### ABSTAINING FROM ALL FORMS OF EVIL

**Question:** To engage in the voluntary distribution of the message of the kingdom in the form of tracts or books appears in the eyes of some as evil. St Paul wrote: "Abstain from all appearance of evil." (1 Thessalonians 5:22) Are we violating this Scriptural injunction by handing to the clergy copies of the Indictment or Message of Hope or other literature published by our SOCIETY? Just what is the meaning of this Scripture text?

**Answer:** No. While those who oppose the Lord's kingdom might think it evil to deliver to them the message of his kingdom it is in no way violating the Scriptures to so deliver the message. Doing the commandments of God or of the Lord Jesus is always right. The adversary is an adept at using scriptures to support his position. He suggests to his emissaries or agents the same method of opposition.

This text is properly rendered: "Abstain from every form of evil." There are instances then in which a thing may appear an evil to one, which is not a form

of evil. For a long while the Methodists declared dancing to be an appearance of evil. To some it might appear evil, and in fact evil can be made of dancing. What appears evil to one does not appear evil to another. It would appear evil in America for a man to publicly drink beer with his family. This is not at all an appearance of evil in Germany, because there it is a common practice. The people there think no more of it than we do of drinking coffee with the members of our family.

The nominal church teachers have long laid stress on this text in support of their contention that morality is Christianity. Every honest person should strive to be moral. Many who are strictly moral and upright as far as their conduct toward others is concerned make no pretense of being Christian. The text should never have such a narrow limitation. It should be properly considered in the light of its setting.

The entire chapter relates specifically to the end of the Gospel Age, during the second presence of our Lord, and is written in a form of instruction and admonition to those who are walking in the light. St. Paul says to those whom he addresses: "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, . . . ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober." There is a distinction between evil and that which appears to be evil; also a distinction between evil and sin. Any transgression of God's law, whether wilful or due to weakness, is sin. Satan the Devil is the evil one, and from him proceeds an evil power. Evil therefore is that which is prompted by a malignant heart; that is to say, the motive is wrong as well as the act.

We know from other scriptures that the church is now in the time described in Revelation 12:17 as a period of peculiar trials. It is the time in which the evil one, the Devil, is making war against those who keep the commandments of God and who have the testimony of Jesus Christ that they are of the Lord's organization. We know that the Devil's organization includes not only the commercial and political powers but the religious systems of the world. It is quite manifest from the context that the apostle is admonishing the Christians to keep themselves entirely aloof from the worldly systems made up of the three elements above mentioned.

St. Paul says: "Despise not prophesyings," which means, Do not despise the preaching of the Word of God concerning the kingdom. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." In other words, when anything is advanced as truth, prove it by the Word of God as to whether or not it is in harmony with the Lord's organization, or whether it is some part of the Devil's organization, a scheme of his sugarcoated and camouflaged with some truth to deceive others. A thing may have the appearance of good and in fact be a form of evil.

To illustrate the point: The Fundamentalists claim to believe the Bible. They may say to a real follower of Christ Jesus: Come and join us; we believe the Bible. An unsuspecting Christian might say: Well, that is a good reason why I should join with you. And he might do so. But the Fundamentalists are a part of the Devil's organization. These nominal Christians openly ally themselves with the commercial and political powers of the world and claim that they are going to establish God's kingdom on earth. For a real Christian to unite with them under any pretext would be a form of evil.

The apostle is especially admonishing against such in 1 Thessalonians 5:22. The true follower of Christ Jesus is not to do evil nor to be unkind to anyone whether claiming to be a Christian or not, but must hold himself aloof and separate and apart from any worldly organization. St. John gives the same thought when he says: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15) Corroborating this St. James says: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." (James 4:4) It would be a form of evil for any representative of the King to manifest sympathy and support for any part of the Devil's organization.

Zion is God's organization. Jehovah says to those who are his representatives on earth: "Ye are my witnesses, . . . that I am Jehovah." (Isaiah 43:12) By this we must understand that Jehovah is saying, 'If you are my witnesses you must refrain from having anything whatsoever to do with the Devil's organization.' Satan has deceived the people for ages. Now the time has come for a witness to be given in the earth that Jehovah is God and that his kingdom shall be established; and it is while this witness is being given that the admonition is to "abstain from every form of evil". The very context of the apostle's words shows that this is what he means.

Stated otherwise, the children of the light should walk in the light, should represent the great Source of light, should keep their hands off from everything that is not the light, and faithfully represent the great Jehovah God and his beloved Son, the King. Of course the Devil will despise them and persecute them, and of course their action will appear to his representatives on earth as evil. Therefore in the distribution of the message of the kingdom these have the appearance of evil in the eyes of the enemy. In the eyes of God they are approved. They are abstaining from every form of evil and are following righteousness.

There are some in Zion, that is to say, in God's organization, who desire to take a course that compromises themselves with the members of the Devil's organization. They will escape much persecution by so doing, and

they will not appear in the eyes of the enemy as evil, nor will they be able to stand in the final conflict. These who take this position of compromise are clearly the ones mentioned by the prophet as "sinners in Zion". The prophet says: "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites." (Isaiah 33:14) St. John says: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment," and where there is perfect love there is no fear. (1 John 4:17, 18) Then the prophet propounds the question: "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" The great time of trouble is approaching. It will be a devouring fire that will devour the Devil's organization and all those in sympathy with it.

The Prophet Isaiah therefore propounds the question: Who will be able to stand? He answers it then: "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly." This must mean those who abstain from every form of support of the evil one or of the evil one's institutions.—Isaiah 33:14-16.

The prophet continues: "He that despiseth the gain of oppressions," meaning that he hates any gain that results by fraudulently taking advantage of the people which results in their oppression. He refrains and abstains from it.

Further the prophet continues: "That shaketh his hands from holding of bribes," meaning he who refuses to hold his hand behind him while some one else contributes a bribe into it; he who refuses because of popularity or favor from any part of the Devil's institution to support in any manner or by any form the systems of error.

The prophet further says: He "that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil"; which means he who refuses to be lulled to sleep by the flatteries of others and who will not look with favor and approval upon any arrangement that will compromise the Lord's kingdom with any part of the Devil's institution, and who refuses to hear any slander that tends to destroy his brethren.

Then the prophet adds: "He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure." (Verse 16) This is exactly in harmony with the words of St. Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5: 22, 23: "Abstain from all appearance [forms] of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The evil one became such because of his disloyalty and unfaithfulness to God. The children of God now in the final test must refrain from anything that has a tendency towards disloyalty or unfaithfulness. Surely this text means much more than to refrain from the petty evil things to which all fallen flesh is heir. Of

course all should strive to keep themselves from such; but the broader construction of this text shows us how much more important it is that our unswerving allegiance shall always be to our God and to our King, and then anything that has the form of disloyalty or unfaithfulness we will absolutely refrain from.

#### IN RE CLASS ORGANIZATION

*Question:* Regarding the position of Chairman of a Class and members of the Executive Committee, would it not be well for the same brethren to continue in office rather than changing the Chairman and members of the Executive Committee every year or two? Any suggestions along the lines of Class Organization would be much appreciated.

THE WATCH TOWER has advised on one or two occasions that "the Class Secretary be not changed any oftener than necessary". Is the thought that the same Secretary should continue year upon year?

*Answer:* Experience has shown that it is well to occasionally change the Committee members, probably every year or two unless there is some good reason not to do so. There is always danger of a class getting into a rut and of a few beginning to think that the entire affairs of the class devolve upon them. We believe, therefore, it would be well for a change to be made probably every two years.

THE WATCH TOWER has heretofore advised classes not to change secretaries oftener than necessary. THE WATCH TOWER wishes to reverse its advice on this point. Quite often it has been proven that a secretary long in office is not the best thing for a class. This condition should be taken into consideration and unless there is a hearty cooperation and a meek and humble service to the class, it would be well to change the secretary from time to time. A change is a healthy thing, quite often, and it affords opportunities for others to have some experience in service of this kind. When any change is made please notify the office as quickly as possible, so that our records may conform to the change.

#### CONCERNING BEREAN STUDIES

Another matter concerning which the friends frequently write in about is as to how a Berean study should be conducted. The following is quoted from one of these letters:

"The leader teaching our class forms his own questions, some of which are so simple that it seems a waste of time; while others are so crudely expressed that one has to guess at the point he is trying to bring out. He then leaves out some of the most important printed questions given for the lesson. He will sometimes use a question given in the Question Booklet, but will change it enough to make it catchy and insist that we are not to memorize these questions. This method is discouraging."

It is unfortunate than any elder takes himself so seriously that he would want to teach in this manner. An elder who is moved by the right spirit would wish to help the class, not to confuse it. If an elder

knew more about formulating the questions than the committee in the office appointed for that purpose, then he would be sent for to come in and formulate the questions. Questions are prepared and published for the benefit of the classes after a careful study. The proper way to conduct a Berean study is to propound the question as it appears either in the Question Booklet or the WATCH TOWER; then let the elder ask two or three

in the class to express their views and then call for anyone who desires to express his views. Then the elder may express his own views and the matter should be summed up by asking someone in the class to read the paragraph in the study or in the WATCH TOWER. Then if anyone in the class desires a further explanation or discussion he may propound a question, and the elder should put it to the class.

## THE SON OF GOD BECOMES MAN

—JANUARY 3—JOHN 1:1-18—

JOHN THE BAPTIST A FAITHFUL WITNESS—JOHN THE APOSTLE'S TESTIMONY—PARALLELS IN OUR DAY.

*"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth."—John 1:14, R. V.*

OUR new year's lessons open with a series of studies in the message of the Gospel according to John. To the Modernist the four accounts of our Lord's life known as the Gospels are merely the attempts of four men to write about the things which they knew, or of which they had gained some knowledge. But to the true disciple the four Gospels are four aspects of the life of Jesus placed on record under the guidance of the holy spirit and necessary to the follower of Jesus to enable him to walk the narrow way first opened by the Lord.—Hebrews 10:20.

<sup>2</sup> Each account has its own particular phase of the truth revealed in him. Matthew's is a record of Jesus presented in relationship to the kingdom of heaven, which God was to establish; Mark's is a record of Jesus as a faithful servant. Luke tells of the human side of Jesus' ministry, and relates Jesus to humanity more directly than do others. It was left to John to present the message of the gospel of the kingdom from quite a different aspect, to tell of Jesus as the messenger of God come from heaven. Hence it is that John tells of the coming of Jesus from a higher to a lower plane of life.

<sup>3</sup> The Gospel of John begins by telling of one, a glorious spirit being, who had been with God, and who became flesh and dwelt among men; one whose glory, a glory different from that of men, was seen full of grace and truth. He thus connects Jesus with the Father more directly than do the other evangelists; for though both Matthew and Luke show that the coming of Jesus was according to prophecy, neither tells of the intimate relation which Jesus previously had with the Father.

<sup>4</sup> John says of this messenger that he was the Word of God, but this English translation of the Greek *Logos* does not give the full meaning of the word; it means the channel or agent of speech as well as the things spoken. He repeats, saying that the Word was in the beginning with God. He does not say, and he

may not be read as if he said, that this one had no beginning, even as God himself had no beginning. His assertion is that in the beginning of all things revealed, the *Logos* was then with the Father.

<sup>5</sup> The statement in John 1:1-3 corresponds to the opening words of divine revelation which disclose the Creator as saying to another, "Let us make man in our image." (Genesis 1:26) John further states that it was by this honored one, God's first creation (Revelation 3:14), that all things were made; but he is careful to restate this to show that they were not made of this one's volition. He says that nothing which the Creator would make was made apart from the *Logos*. He was the expression of the will of God, hence was the Word of God, the thought of God expressed. Therefore when God said: "Let there be light," not only was the action performed by the *Logos*; but the outward expression of this divine purpose was his also. Therefore it is not to be expected otherwise than that John would speak of this one who was in the beginning with God as being a god, a mighty one.

<sup>6</sup> Orthodoxy, supported by both Modernist and Fundamentalist, expounds this statement as meaning that these two beings are one and the same, and adds to this impossible idea their declaration that God's holy spirit or influence is also another being, whom they must acknowledge, thus making the one God into an incomprehensible trinity of gods. They further say that no one can be saved unless he says that he believes this self-manifest impossibility.

<sup>7</sup> How beautiful and simple the truth! The self-existence of God, without beginning or possible end, is indeed beyond the capacity of our reason; but it is in harmony with reason; and the revelation of God the Creator, pursuing his purpose in and by the one who is his first creature, here introduced as the *Logos*, is easily understandable. The truth is reasonable; the errors of dogma never are.

<sup>8</sup> The apostle then says: "In him was life; and the

life was the light of men." (John 1:4) In his first epistle (chapter 1:2) John says that the life was manifested; that is, the Word was made man. It was this life which showed to men the way to the will of God and therefore his life became the light of men. The darkness of the world of men when Jesus appeared in it was comparable to the darkness which enveloped the physical earth when God first caused the sun to shine upon it through the swaddling vapors. (Job 38:9) But at creation the sun scattered the darkness; whereas now, though the Son of God had come as a light in the world of men, that darkness comprehended it not. The world was ignorant alike of its depravity and its need, hence the fact that a light was shining amongst them needed to be proclaimed.

#### JOHN THE BAPTIST A FAITHFUL WITNESS

<sup>9</sup> John proceeds with the account of the coming of Jesus. He tells of John the Baptist, a man sent from God, who came to be a witness of the light which God was about to send. This was in order that all through him might believe; for if John the Baptist witnessed of a coming one whom he himself did not know, and if that one came, the evidence was definite that God had sent both the herald and the Savior, the Light of the world.

<sup>10</sup> So brightly did John's light shine that all the people acknowledged him to be a prophet and a messenger from God. They would have rested in his light, but John was ever faithful in his testimony that he was only a herald of one who was coming. Every Jew who wanted to be a true Israelite must accept John as a messenger from God; but he who went no further on the road, and who did not go past John to the one to whom he pointed, could not continue in the way of truth. It was only those who wanted to be in harmony with the will of God who really perceived and received John's mission. Thus he came both as a witness to the people and also to prepare a people for the Lord.—Luke 1:17.

#### JOHN THE APOSTLE'S TESTIMONY

<sup>11</sup> John says: "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John 1:9) To cover its errors orthodoxy teaches that this means that every man has the light of Christ in him by nature—a teaching which not only is manifestly absurd, but is a perversion of what John says; for he speaks of a light specially sent, thus indicating that prior thereto men did not have it. Conscience or the moral sense has not enlightened the world, nor does conscience bring men into responsibility to God's final judgment of life and death. Men are judged according to their acceptance or rejection of his will as expressed through his Son, not on their own ideas of things.

<sup>12</sup> John's statement is surely this: God, who sent the Word into the world and made him the light of the

world, had the full and set purpose of making all men know of the salvation that he had for them in and by his Son. Nothing is more certain than that the race of mankind has not had the light of life. But the Scriptures consistently teach that God eventually will have all men come to the knowledge of himself. (1 Timothy 2:4) It is for this purpose amongst other things that Jesus is given the kingdom of heaven, and has power to bring the dead forth that they also may hear, and hearing to obedience may live. (John 5:25; Revelation 1:18) This passage (John 1:9) is John's way of stating that fact.

<sup>13</sup> The world had sunk into darkness and ignorance so dense that men could not perceive the light of life. Even when 'he came unto his own, his own received him not' (John 1:11), though they as the chosen family and people had had his favor for more than 2,000 years. To them God had sent his prophets. To deliver them from their enemies, and for special preparatory instruction (Romans 9:4; Galatians 3:24), he had wrought for them mighty miracles; and his providences of discipline had also been over them. (2 Chronicles 36:15,16) But when he set his Son born of Israel they did not perceive that he was the great light for which Israel was to look. The sweet words which fell from his lips pleased yet irritated them; the purity of his life was a condemnation of theirs. They rejected him because they did not wish to have light. They preferred their evil way, and that preference both dimmed their eyes and veiled their hearts.—2 Corinthians 3:13.

<sup>14</sup> But to those who received him the greatest of possible blessings came. To those he came not as a mere reformer, to readjust the life of Israel and to correct the things that were wrong. The word which he brought and the light which shone transformed the hearts and minds of those who received him. These began to see; and in due course they found that a new hope was set before them—something which none of the prophets, nor even their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the holders of the covenant of promise, knew. To those who received him was given the power or right to become the sons of God. (John 1:12) It created a hope which, realized, meant their sharing with him the glory which the Father was giving him. Hence John says that these have a new birth, not as natural as of the will of the flesh or purpose of mind. It is not the result of meditation; it is the will of God.

<sup>15</sup> As Jesus came into the world a human child begotten by the power of God and became at Jordan a spirit-begotten Son of the Father, so these are begotten of God to a nature which finds its fellowship with heaven and which at last will find its only suitable environment in heaven itself. Such realize a change of nature from earthly or human to divine, and know themselves as prospective members of the heavenly family of God.—Colossians 3:1-4; Hebrews 3:14.



## PARALLELS IN OUR DAY

<sup>16</sup> In verse 14 John restates the fact of the transference of the Word (the Logos) to earth, saying that he was made flesh. The Babe of Bethlehem was the earthly visible link of a life which had been lived in heaven. For thirty years that life was hid in comparative seclusion; but at the maturity of his life, and exactly on time, he was manifested to those who were ready for him; and those who saw him saw the glory as of an only begotten of God. There was none like him in all the earth; for he was full of grace and truth.

<sup>17</sup> To the up-to-time Bible student (and the term is perfectly in order; for since the return of the Lord, and especially since the beginning of the establishment of his kingdom in 1914, the opening out of the truth has kept pace with the march of the years) the special value of the study is the fact that an exactly similar state of conditions obtains today. This is the day of the Lord's second presence. He has come again into the world; and the world knows him not; even the religious world will not see the light of life which God has sent.

<sup>18</sup> Again his messenger has been sent, and some have heard him and have been blessed accordingly. But Christendom has done worse than the Jews whom they despise; for it has rejected the message. Now Christendom hastens into the darkness, refusing the light of our Lord's second presence and the message of the establishment of the kingdom of heaven. Ecclesiasticism, which blames and despises the Jews for their treatment of Jesus, is caught in exactly the same way as were the Pharisees and the scribes and all the rulers of the people. These are related to each other as type and antitype. The religious leaders of today are the true descendants of those who rejected the truth in Jesus' day, and who finally crucified "the Light of the world".

<sup>19</sup> Again the power of the truth is realized by those who receive the returned Lord. These know that they are privileged to live and act as sons of God, and as true sons they seek the honor and glory of their Father.

## QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

- How are the four Gospel narratives viewed by Modernists? How are they appreciated by true Christians? ¶ 1.
- What particular phase of truth concerning our Lord's life is revealed by each of the four evangelists? Why did John alone make mention of the prehuman Logos? ¶ 2, 3.
- How was Jesus in his prehuman life "the Word of God"? What does John mean when he says that the Logos was "in the beginning" with God? Does this signify that the Logos had no beginning, even as Jehovah had no beginning? ¶ 4.
- How does John 1:1-3 stand related to the Genesis account? Why does the apostle refer to the Logos as a god? ¶ 5.
- How can both Modernists and Fundamentalists support "orthodoxy"? How have the opening verses of John's Gospel been misinterpreted? ¶ 6.
- Is error ever reasonable? Is truth ever unreasonable? ¶ 7.
- How did Jesus' life become "the light of men"? How was the darkness of the people comparably more dense than the darkness of the physical earth at creation? ¶ 8, 13.
- What was the mission of John the Baptist and how was he received? Did all who followed him continue and become footstep followers of Christ? ¶ 9, 10.
- Is the Light "which lighteth every man" merely a conscience light implanted in all men by nature, as orthodoxy claims? Could conscience alone enlighten the world? ¶ 11.
- What is meant by "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"? ¶ 12.
- What special advantages did the Jewish nation possess for 2,000 years? Why then did they reject "the Light of life"? ¶ 13.
- How was Jesus regarded by the faithful of Israel and what blessings were theirs as a result? ¶ 14, 15.
- Was Jesus recognized as "the Light of life" prior to his baptism? ¶ 16.
- What special value does John's Gospel hold for Bible students of today? ¶ 17.
- How does modern Christendom compare with Judaism at the first advent? What has ever been the blessed experience of Israelites indeed? ¶ 18, 19.

## AN INTERESTING LETTER

## OUR MESSAGE A SONG OF PRAISE

DEAR BROTHER RUTHERFORD:

Permit me to express my sincere appreciation of all the WATCH TOWERS, and especially at this time the August 15th and September 1st issues. They bring "a feast of fat things" to eager hearts.

May I add a comment on the inspiring and comforting article entitled "Protection and Deliverance", with its wonderful exposition of Psalms 32 and 33?

In Psalm 33, verses 1 and 2 instruct the saints to rejoice and sing Jehovah's praises. Verse 3 begins, "Sing unto him a new song." Our message is indeed a new song unto God's praise; for never before has our Father's character of justice, love, power, and wisdom been so beautifully, clearly, and harmoniously revealed to mankind.

And how gladdening it is to find that this is the very summary of our song or message that the inspired psalmist here gives:

Justice: "For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth. He loveth righteousness and judgment."

Love: "The earth is full of the goodness [Margin, mercy] of the Lord."

Power: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him."

Wisdom: "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought; he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."

May the loving Lord bless you in your efforts to serve him and his people.

In his service,

H. A. Seklemian.—Calif,

# International Bible Students Association Classes

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Lebanon, Mo. ....	" 7, 8	Louisville, Ky. ....	" 15
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Yakima, Wash. ....	" 6	Seattle, Wash. ....	" 14, 20
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San Antonio, Tex. ....	" 6	Kingsbury, Tex. ....	" 15
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