



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

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

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

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

THIS JOURNAL AND ITS SACRED MISSION

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

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

TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

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

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

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

THAT for many centuries God, through Christ, has been

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

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

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

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1927 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The general convention of the International Bible Students Association for 1927 will be held July 18th to 26th, at Toronto, Canada. Announcement is made now to permit the friends throughout the earth to get ready. Brethren are expected from many countries.

Toronto is the capital of Ontario and has a population of more than five hundred thousand, with another hundred thousand in the vicinity. It is a railway center. It is only a short distance from Niagara Falls. The city has provided its beautiful fair grounds and all its buildings for the convention. One of the buildings has a seating capacity of ten thousand. The grounds are situated on the lake front, segregated from the busy travel, and in a very pleasant location. It is expected that the entire proceedings of the convention will be broadcast from our own station, remote control being installed at the convention auditorium.

This will be the only large convention during the year.

All classes desiring to hold local conventions should notify the SOCIETY as early as possible so that pilgrims may be routed in that way if at all possible.

MEMORIAL FOR 1927

The memorial of our Lord's death will be celebrated in 1927 on Friday, April 15th, after 6 p. m. The method of calculation is as follows: The new moon nearest the spring equinox occurs in the morning of April 2nd, which marks the beginning of Nisan at sundown on that day. Counting fourteen days thereafter the fourteenth of Nisan begins at sundown, about 6 p. m., April 15th, which is Friday. Announcement is made at this time that the brethren may begin to make preparations. Class Secretaries will confer a favor by promptly reporting the attendance at the Memorial, so that these reports may appear in an early issue of the WATCH TOWER.

BETHEL HYMNS FOR MAY

Sunday	1 155	8 219	15 242	22 186	29 164
Monday	2 214	9 260	16 114	23 152	30 35
Tuesday	3 32	10 Ap. C	17 45	24 248	31 255
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I.B.S.A. BEREAN BIBLE STUDIES

By Means of "The Watch Tower"

<p>"Liberty of the Prisoners" Z Nov. 15, 1926 Week of May 1 . . . ¶ 1-21 Week of May 8 . . . ¶ 22-42</p>	<p>"The Great Multitude" Z Jan. 15, 1927 Week of May 15 . . . ¶ 1-16 Week of May 22 . . . ¶ 17-32 Week of May 29 . . . ¶ 33-50</p>
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The WATCH TOWER

AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

Vol. XLVIII

APRIL 1, 1927

No. 7

THE FEAST OF DELIVERANCE

"And you are they who have continued with me in my trials. And I covenant for you, even as my Father has covenanted for me, a kingdom.—Luke 22: 28, 29, DIAGLOTT.

TIME and again Jehovah has made known through his Word that he is pleased with and rewards loyalty. His beloved Son, Christ Jesus, in this text is announcing the same rule to his disciples. During the period of three and one-half years the faithful eleven had been with him in his trials. They had stood loyally by him when the great religious influence of Palestine was against him. They believed him to be the Messiah, and they loved him. He loved them more than they could love him at the time, because he was perfect.

² Jesus was about to take his departure; hence he left with his disciples the foregoing blessed words of commendation and promise. The words apply to all others who have been inducted into his body by the anointing of the Father. In substance he said to them: 'You have been with me during my trying experiences. You have been loyal and faithful to me. My Father has made a covenant with me to give me the kingdom. This he does because of his loving kindness and because I delight to do his will. I now invite you to be broken with me and to pour out your life blood with me, and then to be with me in my kingdom.'

³ The disciples did not understand at that time the full import of their Master's words. At Pentecost they began to understand, and then they more clearly saw thereafter the purpose of the Memorial. The privilege of partaking with the Lord in his death appears more wonderful to the saints as they journey nearer to the end of the way.

⁴ With burning hearts the Lord's true and properly instructed people are looking forward this year to the approaching celebration of the Memorial of our Savior's death. Their desire to celebrate is not because they are under constraint (except it be that the love of Christ constrains them), but because their Master has given them a gentle command, and because all that is associated with the event has endeared it to their hearts. That all those throughout the earth who are striving to keep God's commandments might partake as the united people of God, THE WATCH TOWER again takes occasion

to announce that the proper time to celebrate the Memorial this year is Friday, April 15th, after six o'clock in the evening.

MEMORIAL PREFIGURED

⁵ The Memorial of our Lord's death was prefigured by the memorial of the slaying of the original Passover lamb in Egypt. That the significance of the occasion might be regularly brought to mind, Jehovah provided for the children to ask this question during the progress of the Passover supper: "What mean ye by this service?" The one presiding at the feast was instructed to be true to God, and true to the historical facts, and to answer: "It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses."—Exodus 12: 26, 27.

⁶ It seems appropriate, therefore, in view of the oncoming celebration, to review briefly the things which led up to, and which grow out of, our Lord's Memorial. Each consecrated child of the Lord may fittingly ask: "What mean ye by this service?" Not that the question implies ignorance; but a review of the Lord's benefits to us, and of all our honorable privileges, is healthful to all in covenant relationship with Jehovah. The health and safeguarding of his people was undoubtedly the thought of the Lord in ordaining a memorial of the death both of the typical Passover lamb and of its antitype.

⁷ Jehovah has long been accused of being the characterization of a boastful and self-centered God, but he is not such. By the memorial he is not inviting attention to himself for self-gratification or vainglory, or for any other selfish reason. Jehovah is the personification of perfect unselfishness. Pure love and selfishness could not inhere in him at the same time. He has been and will for ever be above all selfishness and self-centeredness. For over sixty centuries now his love has expressed itself in mercy and daily goodness toward an ingrate race, without their knowing it and without their seeking as

yet to know and thank the Dispenser of all the good things they enjoy.

* However, Jehovah cannot be untrue to the interests of his creatures, even though his own name is involved. While not seeking notoriety, nevertheless "he cannot deny himself". No person could reasonably be expected to do this. Instead of turning in contempt away from those who ignore him and dismissing them for ever from his attention, Jehovah "humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth" (Psalm 113:6), and condescends to bring his own name to the fore that the teachable and righteously disposed ones may be blessed thereby. He lets it be known that he is God, that his creatures may be delivered from the trap and toils of the deceptive sham god, Satan.

9 Witness an instance of this as recorded in Sacred Writ: Satan had organized the first of his domineering world powers, Egypt. The Egyptians had many false gods and worshiped idols. The ruling factors of Egypt had had the true and living God called to their attention by the faithful witness, Joseph. Disclaiming any credit for interpreting Pharaoh's dreams, Joseph had said: "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace. . . . God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do." (Genesis 41:16, 25) In course of time God fulfilled Pharaoh's dream and the interpretation thereof. Thus he gave testimony to the fact that about the Egyptians did not worship him but served Satan, who was the invisible god of Egypt, yet Jehovah is supreme and could control the affairs of Egypt regardless of Satan.

10 Undoubtedly the Pharaoh, or Pharaohs, contemporary to Joseph respected his God. After Joseph's death Satan quickly caused the Egyptians to forget how Joseph's God had once saved the nation from ruin. A Pharaoh rose up who knew not or refused to acknowledge the God of the Hebrews. Mimicking Satan, who was the real power behind Egypt's throne, Pharaoh outrageously ground down the Hebrews with hard labor and bondage and discriminatory legislation, intending thereby to debilitate or even destroy them. Had he gratefully remembered Jehovah's good turn to Egypt during Joseph's administration things might have gone better for the Hebrews.

11 But lo! the majority of the Hebrews themselves had forgotten the Lord, and had given themselves over to serving either the gods of Ur or the Chaldees or the gods of the Egyptians. Only a remnant among the Hebrews, such as Moses' parents, were faithful to Abraham's God. Satan, the slanderer of God, was elated; whereas God's chosen race was suffering. The reputation of Jehovah as a God of superior ability to Egypt's gods was at stake. His name was in question, both among the heathen as well as among his favored people. Would it be vainglorious and selfish for him to interfere and give tangible testimony to his name, or would it be for the benefit of his elect nation?

A PICTURE

12 Here we have a general picture of the condition of mankind during the Christian era, and particularly at the present time. Pharaoh, servant to the Devil, together with his hard-hearted taskmasters, picture Satan the invisible superlord of this world, and his angelic cohorts. The Egyptians represent worldlings, the people organized under forms of government, the kingdoms of this world. They give God's people scant sympathy. The oppressed Hebrews represent the people of God, present or prospective.

13 A few of the latter are faithful to Jehovah God; but hundreds of thousands of them are attached to the denominational idols of this world, and are woefully ignorant of God's name. They are in a slave-like condition, languishing in the ecclesiastical prisons, their lives being made bitter by the heavy burdens clerical prison keepers load upon them to build up and sustain the great building operations of ecclesiasticism. Since 1918 their sighings and groanings have come up to the Lord God. He is not untouched by their oppressed condition.

14 In Egypt Jehovah miraculously preserved and raised up Moses. Moses, willing to serve as a type of the Christ, was willing to suffer with the people of God, which sufferings typified the sufferings of the Christ. God rewarded his faithfulness by using him in the deliverance of Israel. Logically the deliverance must be identified with the true Deliverer, in order that all who shared in the deliverance or who witnessed it might know who is truly responsible for it. Since the Deliverer was bound to show his identity, his name, the Lord with all propriety revealed his name to his chosen witness, Moses.

15 Moses was instructed to publish God's name first to God's own people; conditions warranted his making a name for himself among his chosen people. "Thus saith the Lord God, In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, I am the Lord [Jehovah] your God." (Ezekiel 20:5) Through Moses God showed three preliminary signs to the Hebrews, to convince them that he is God.

16 Then Jehovah sent Moses to publish the name of God in the courts of the rulers of Egypt. When his servant demanded Israel's release in the name of God, Pharaoh brazenly retorted: "Who is Jehovah, that I should obey his voice?" (Exodus 5:2) It at once became evident that the name of Jehovah rather than the liberation of the Hebrews was at issue. Nobody was being benefited by this general disregard of God's worthy name. To vindicate his name and to frame it with its proper glory called for a demonstration. That demonstration should be painful to the recalcitrant ones, and simultaneously be a blessing and joy to the ones who were not ashamed to be associated with God's name.

¹⁷ A series of nine plagues followed. By lifting each successive plague at the entreaty of Pharaoh, God was making a name for his goodness as well as for his awe-striking power. But the time for deliverance having come, it was clear that Jehovah could not consistently continue on indefinitely sending and then lifting plagues. There must come a final plague which should accomplish the desired result. Hence God announced to Moses, and in turn through Moses to the Hebrews and to the Egyptian court, that the tenth and last plague would sweep into death all the first-born of man and beast. The Israelites could escape solely by conforming to Jehovah's commandments.

THE PASSOVER

¹⁸ God decreed that the month of the deliverance should be the beginning of the Jewish year. On the tenth day thereof each Jewish household was instructed to take a male lamb or a kid, unblemished and of the first year, into the house. On the evening which marked the beginning of the 14th day this lamb was to be slain. A testimony was to be given both to the Lord and to the Egyptians by bespattering the doorposts and lintel with the lamb's blood. Then the Israelites were to retire into their houses and not stir outside all night. The lamb must be roasted with fire, not a bone of it broken.

¹⁹ In anticipation of the coming deliverance the Israelites were to come to the meal all equipped for their march into freedom at a moment's notice. They must come girded, shod and furnished with staff. The roast lamb was to be served with bitter herbs, indicative of their galling servitude. All partakers of the repast who were males must bear in them the sign of God's covenant with Abraham, which was circumcision. None of the lamb was to be left until the morning. All of it must be disposed of either by eating the whole of it or by disposing of the leavings by fire.

²⁰ The Israelites who displayed their faith by complying with Jehovah's commandments escaped being bereaved of their precious first-born ones. The angel whom God empowered to carry out the terms of the plague espied the blood testimonial on their doors and passed over those particular homes. Appropriately this meal was called the feast of the Passover. It was really a feast of deliverance; and this is the significance that the noted Bible commentator, Gesenius, gives to the Hebrew word *pesach*, meaning passover. The first-borns were passed over and delivered because of obedience with respect to the Paschal lamb and its blood.

²¹ These proceedings of the Israelites were not done in a corner, but were doubtless noised abroad among the Egyptians. They failed to pay any serious attention thereto by refusing to take similar precaution against the plaguing of their first-borns. They suffered fearful consequences at midnight of that epochal day; "for there was not a house where there was not one dead." (Exodus 12:30) This drastic action on Jehovah's part

was effective; the fear of the Lord smote the Egyptians. It did not lead to their conversion, but it caused them verily to thrust out the Israelites from among them.

TYPE AND ANTITYPE

²² All these happenings of old are shadows of similar events of far greater magnitude. (Hebrews 10:1) God, always his own Interpreter, explains them for us. He inspired Moses to refer to himself as a type, in Deuteronomy 18:15, and later used the Apostle Peter to locate the antitype for us. (Acts 3:22, 23) God found Moses an acceptable instrument to use in his service, because it was by faith that Moses had refused to be called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh, and had forsaken Egypt and had returned again on a mission for God. (Hebrews 11:24-29) His faith was accounted to him for righteousness. This imputed righteousness made Moses fit to serve as a type of Jesus, who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners".

²³ Moses withstood Pharaoh and acted for the liberation of God's people. Likewise Jesus, as Michael, "the godlike One," moved into action against Satan in 1914 and flung him from his heavenly location, and now withstands him in behalf of God's people and all for whom He died. Moses' brother, Aaron, served as a mouthpiece in addressing the powers of Egypt. Similarly the brethren of Christ Jesus, the remnant this side the veil, are delivering a witness to both the world powers and all the antitypical Egyptians before there befalls them the catastrophe like unto the death of the first-borns.

²⁴ Egypt's first-born ones were "the chief of all their strength". They were the generation that would fall heir to the estate and the responsibilities of their fathers, and the ones who would be expected to carry forward where their fathers had left off. They find their counterpart in the three great ruling elements of "this present evil world"; namely, "the shepherds and the principal of the flock," who claim to be responsible for civilization and its preservation. The death of the first-born therefore represents the death of these honorable ones of earth, particularly their death to the influential positions and titled offices which they have arrogated to themselves. This plague will strike them down in the impending battle of Armageddon.

²⁵ Israel's first-borns were spared at the expense of the sacrificed lamb. By virtue of Jehovah's deliverance of them they were purchased unto him. He consequently laid claim to all that opened the matrix among the Israelites. This illustrates how the kingdom class which opens the matrix of Zion, namely, Zion's first-born, is holy and dedicated unto Jehovah as his possession. They are "a kind of firstfruits of his creatures".

²⁶ John the Baptist was the first one to designate the antitype of the Passover lamb, when he pointed to Jesus and cried out: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Jesus died as a ransom for the people who are oppressed by the Pharaoh-like Sa-

tan. In the type, however, though Moses was a type of The Christ, he did not there die; but the Passover lamb, a type of Jesus, died in his stead. The lamb was slain in Egypt, picturing how that Jesus would die here on earth.

²⁷ In this connection it should be stated that the Passover was the first feature of the covenant which Jehovah formally entered into with Israel about fifty days later. Note how the Scriptures confirm this; for example, after setting forth various laws and restating instructions respecting the Passover, "The Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel." (Exodus 34:27) The covenant was therefore made at the institution of the Passover in Egypt, and was marked by the blood of the Paschal lamb (Jeremiah 31:32); it was confirmed at Mount Sinai, when Moses acted as the mediator between Jehovah and Israel. There the Lord delivered the written law to Moses amid great convulsions of nature.

MEMORIAL INSTITUTED

²⁸ Jesus, by reason of human birth, was "made of a woman"; and since the woman was a Jewess, he was "made under the law". Now the keeping of a yearly memorial on the anniversary of the slaying of the Passover lamb was commanded upon the Israelites as a part of their covenant with the Lord. Recognizing his obligation to observe this feature of the Law, Jesus drew the inner circle of his disciples about him in an upper room in Jerusalem; for in that city Jehovah had commanded that the Passover Memorial must be held.—Deuteronomy 16:6.

²⁹ It was the evening, and hence the beginning of the 14th day of Abib or Nisan, the first month of the Jewish calendar. As they were gathered about the board, Jesus said unto them: "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." He had special desire to eat because he was soon to suffer even unto death. Before another Passover season could roll around he would no longer be in the flesh, as a Jew, but would have ascended to his heavenly Father. So he said: "For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."—Luke 22:15, 16.

³⁰ Throughout the three and one-half years of his ministry Jesus had been proclaiming, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand"; and now he knew that within not many hours he who was The King, and at that time the sole representative of God's kingdom on earth, would be slain in fulfilment of the Paschal lamb's death. With that event the efficacy of the typical Memorial would pass away. Hence after the requirements of the Law had been complied with by eating of the roast lamb, "Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to

them, saying, Drink ye all [that is to say, All ye, drink] of it: for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."—Matthew 26:26-28.

³¹ Hitherto the Passover lamb had represented the Lord's flesh, his body; but now from henceforth Jesus ordained that the loaf of unleavened bread was to stand for his body. Hence his words, "This [loaf] is [represents] my body." The bread's being unleavened pictured the same thing as the lamb's being "without blemish"; namely, the sinlessness and inherent justification of Jesus. Correspondingly, the blood of the Paschal lamb had foreshadowed the blood of Jesus; but, following Jesus' death, the cupful of wine was to represent the shed blood of our dear Redeemer. Hence his words of explanation, "This [wine] is [represents] my blood of the new testament." By this statement Jesus also linked up his blood with the new covenant, even as the blood of the Paschal lamb was linked with the law covenant.

³² Long years ago Jehovah had testified that he would make a new covenant with the house of Israel, by which covenant he would in verity take away their sins and remember them no more. (Jeremiah 31:31-34) The fact that there was to be a new covenant indicated that the Mosaic Law Covenant would grow old or out of date, and would find a succedaneum in a new and improved covenant. (Hebrews 8:7-13) Now the days were come for the New Testament to be made. Jesus' comment on the wine cup shows that the New Covenant was made at the time his blood flowed on Calvary.

³³ The institution of the Memorial of Jesus' death was really the first feature of the New Covenant. This does not imply, however, that his disciples who celebrate the Memorial are under the New Covenant. The Apostle Paul terms Christians as "able ministers of the new testament". (2 Corinthians 3:6) They are ministers thereof, not in the sense of being subject to the New Covenant but in the sense that they serve in connection with it, and that they will be associated with Jesus in the kingdom in administering that testament.

THREE COVENANTS

³⁴ The Scriptures disclose three great covenants relating to the recovery of mankind, to wit: (1) God's unconditional promise to Abraham, which is a one-sided covenant, because God bound only himself to do anything, and it is therefore called a unilateral covenant; (2) the first Law Covenant, made by Jehovah on one side and with Moses on the other side as mediator for the nation of Israel; and (3) the New Law Covenant, with God on one side and Jesus Christ on the other side as the legal representative on behalf of Israel and through Israel for the whole world of mankind. There is a close relationship between these covenants, and the Memorial links them together more completely than does any other incident or ordinance recorded in the Scriptures.

³⁵ The "seed" of the first or unconditional promise to Abraham was pictured in Isaac and fulfilled in Christ Jesus. The old or first Law Covenant gave life to no one, because no one was able to keep the terms of the law. That Law Covenant, however, served as a schoolmaster to lead Israel to Christ. (Galatians 3:24) A schoolmaster is one who instructs. The Law, therefore, served as an instructor of Israel, of God's purposes to grant life to the people through the New Covenant; and that the blood that would ratify that covenant must be the blood of the One who would be the Redeemer and afterward become the Mediator and Life-giver. The law demonstrated to Israel the absolute necessity of a Savior and a Mediator able to save to the uttermost.

³⁶ The blood shed at the commencement of the Law Covenant was the blood of the paschal lamb. That lamb represented Moses, and was slain instead of Moses. Moses was a type of Christ. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."—Deuteronomy 18:15, 18.

³⁷ The Law being a shadow of better things to come (Hebrews 10:1), the paschal lamb slain at the Passover foreshadowed the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world. (John 1:29) The people of Israel were without the right to life, because of sin; and the Law Covenant promised the taking away of their sin and the giving to them of life on the conditions named. But the conditions could not be met by them. The New Covenant promises life to all who accept and obey its terms; and its Mediator is able to make all keep that covenant who want to keep it. It therefore follows that through the terms of the New Covenant the people must get life.

³⁸ When Jesus had been raised from the dead and had ascended on high, Jehovah did not see good to inaugurate the New Covenant at that time. He bade his Son to sit at his right hand and to wait. Not that Jesus was not then sufficient for the service, nor that the blood of his human sacrifice was not of sufficient worth to be the basis of that covenant, but because Jehovah had other gracious purposes in view. These purposes provided for other "able ministers of the new testament"; for at Mount Sinai Moses as mediator of the Law Covenant had typified not only Jesus, but also the members of the body of Christ.

³⁹ At the time of Jesus' appearing in God's presence these body members of Christ were still to be drawn out of the world, justified through faith in Christ's blood, called, begotten of the Father's will, anointed with his spirit, conformed unto the image of his dear Son, proven faithful unto death, and raised up in glory from the dead to be united with their glorified Head. Furthermore, even as the Law Covenant was made in Egypt

but was inaugurated at Mount Sinai, so also the New Covenant, made by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God on earth, must be inaugurated in the mount, the kingdom of God, in heaven.

"IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME"

⁴⁰ After distributing the Memorial emblems Jesus said to his disciples: "This do in remembrance of me." (1 Corinthians 11:24) By this injunction he did not mean that the disciples were to have him in mind to the exclusion of, or in preference to, the heavenly Father. All he could have meant was that his followers should thus celebrate, not in remembrance of the Passover lamb originally slain in Egypt, but in remembrance of the true Lamb of God that takes away the world's sin. They should regard the reality, the fulfilment, rather than the ancient shadow. In other words, instead of showing forth the typical Passover lamb's death, "ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

⁴¹ Surely the Savior did not wish to draw the chief attention to himself and to detract from the praise of his heavenly Father. He knew that even the Passover of old was "Jehovah's Passover", and that the celebrants were not to have the paschal lamb so much in mind as they were to have Jehovah in mind as the great Deliverer. Likewise, at the Memorial Christians should not think chiefly of Jesus, the Lamb of God, but of Jehovah, the adorable Author of the plan of deliverance and the generous Giver of that "unspeakable gift" through which the deliverance is wrought. Highest praise should go to "the Eternal One", "of whom are all things, and we in him." It was therefore most befitting that before distributing the emblems of his body and blood Jesus gave thanks to the heavenly Father; also that at the conclusion of the service he and his disciples sang a hymn.

⁴² This closing hymn was undoubtedly the intoning of the 115th to the 118th Psalm. It was customary for the Jews to sing the 113th to the 118th Psalm at the Passover supper, the 113th and 114th Psalms being sung at the beginning of the supper. This series of Psalms was called the "Hallel" which means "praise", and very properly so, because it opens with the words, "Praise ye Jehovah"; and throughout it speaks of Jehovah's praise, concluding with the words, "O give thanks unto Jehovah; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." The Memorial therefore should draw one closer to Jehovah God and should magnify our appreciation of him first. Thus Jesus was not glorifying himself as a martyr to God's cause but was glorifying his Father, Jehovah, in arranging a Memorial of his own death.

⁴³ The significance which Jesus attached to the Memorial is of primary importance. Had he detailed the full significance thereof he would have had many things to tell his apostles. But they could not bear them then, because they had not yet received the illumination and

appreciation of the holy spirit. He left it for the Apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17, to call to our attention the deeper meaning by his pointed words. It was specially in the light of this that the Apostle Paul warned the members of the church that some might eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, and be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Hence he solemnly counsels us, saying, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."—1 Corinthians 11:28-31.

⁴⁴ The Lord has a cup and a table, and the Devil has likewise. (1 Corinthians 10:21) A Christian cannot consistently partake of both. He should keep his spiritual perception quickened so as to "discern the Lord's body". The Memorial calls his attention to that body. The loaf of unleavened bread represents not only the fleshly body of Jesus but also his mystic body, in which the 144,000 called and chosen and faithful ones are privileged to be members. Through eating Christ's flesh, in a figurative sense, they received justification by faith, which led to their acceptance for sacrifice and membership in Christ's body. As partakers of the body of Christ they are privileged to be broken with him as the one loaf was broken.

⁴⁵ The Memorial wine symbolizes Jesus' bloodstream, which had the value of a perfect human life. But it also symbolized that blood poured forth from his earthly body; in other words, sacrificial death, entailing considerable sufferings. Blood-drinking was punishable by death among the Hebrews, according to God's plain law. (Leviticus 17:10) Drinking the Memorial cup pictured the drinkers being joined with Christ in death by a covenant by sacrifice. Only those who "endure [breaking] with him shall reign with him". Only those who are and who remain "dead with him shall live with him".

⁴⁶ To live with him means the attainment of life on the same plane of existence with him; namely, immortality. Under the New Covenant arrangement mankind shall be privileged to eat the flesh of Christ Jesus and thereby gain justification at the conclusion of the Millennial Age. But Jesus discriminated between his few disciples and the vast race of mankind, by saying, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," that is, immortality.

WHO MAY PARTAKE

⁴⁷ Those who discern the Lord's body and discern themselves to be faithfully abiding in that body may properly partake of the Lord's Memorial. Just as no uncircumcised male, be he natural Jew or Gentile, might partake of the Passover, so no unconsecrated person may partake of the emblems of our Lord's body. Jehovah confined the holding of the Passover Memorial to the city of Jerusalem. In close harmony with this picture he limits the celebrating of the Lord's death to those dwelling in his organization, of which Jerusalem

was the symbol. Only those who dwell as members in his body may do as he so indicated, when he said: "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."—John 6:56.

⁴⁸ It is a rare privilege then to drink the Lord's cup, a privilege confined solely to the Christian era. Very soon "all" the faithful disciples will have drunk their share of it. The Apostle Paul correctly calls it "the cup of blessing which we bless". Can we not give thanks for it as did Jesus? We can. As the wine spelled death to the trampled grapes but joyful exhilaration to the drinker thereof (Judges 9:13), likewise the Memorial cup symbolizes a death potion joined with a draught of fulness of joy eternally. There is joy even amid the death potion, because God's loving kindness is better than life.—Psalm 63:3.

⁴⁹ The cup does not represent experiences, although drinking the cup will lead to experiences. It symbolizes the will of God toward the members of The Christ. Obedience to that will, as pictured by imbibing from the cup, results in human death, but also in endless supernatural joys. It was in this latter sense that Jesus referred to the cup, saying, "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come."

⁵⁰ And now the kingdom of God has come! The Lord Jesus has come in his kingdom. In 1914 Jehovah God gave it to him as his due right, and sent the rod of his strength out of Zion, saying, "Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." As the Chief Executive and Priest of the Most High God he there went forth to vindicate his Father's name which he loves and honors so highly, joyful in his privilege of thus doing. Thus the Lord drank the wine of joy in the kingdom of God. At the same time it is the privilege of the faithful saints still on earth to sip a foretaste of that wine of the Lord's kingdom joys.

⁵¹ The Lord, having come to his temple in 1918, caused a thorough purging of the antitypical priests, "The sons of Levi," polished brightly with "the present truth" and gloriously reflecting the light of the truth to the utmost ends of the earth. These he has covered with the "robe of righteousness" from Jehovah. At the realization of this fact the anointed ones do greatly rejoice in Jehovah, and their souls are joyful in their God. To these the King, enthroned on Zion, gives "the testimony of Jesus Christ", saying, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore await their entrance actually into the Father's presence. Then they shall in the complete sense enter into the kingdom which Jesus has covenanted for them.—Luke 22:29, DIAGLOTT.

⁵² While not unmindful of the poignant sufferings of our beloved Head and Redeemer Jesus, neither unsympathetic therewith, yet the disciples of Jesus may now partake of the Memorial with kingdom joy in their

hearts. It is a feast of deliverance. For though it points backward to our Lord's death nineteen hundred years ago and reminds us of our covenant to suffer and be dead with him, it also points forward to the future deliverance which the wide-awake disciples see drawing near, deliverance during this dark night through the Lamb's death, and deliverance out of their own death state by the triumphal first resurrection.

⁵³ As long as we are in the flesh, dying with the Lord Jesus, can we forget or overlook his sufferings? It is our privilege to "show the Lord's death till he come". Seeing that the Lord Jesus has not yet come in the complete sense, that is, with the full number of his glorified saints, and seeing that we are still dying with him, and that Jehovah's deliverance of us and of the world of mankind has not come in its fullest measure, conditions do not make it unseemly to continue celebrating the Lord's Memorial.

JOY OF THE LORD

⁵⁴ When the holy spirit had come and illuminated the minds of the faithful disciples, and they had learned the real meaning of the Memorial which the Lord had instituted and requested them to keep, it must have thrilled their hearts with joy. Previously they had hoped to be a part of his earthly kingdom. Now they saw that they were to be members of the house of God, eternal in the heavens, not made with hands; that they would see Jesus in all his glory and beauty, and be by him presented to the great eternal Father; that they would dwell for ever in the house of the Lord and behold his beauty and inquire in his temple (Psalm 27:4); that then they would experience fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore. As they thus contemplated the blessings to come they would remember the words of the Master, when he said: "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."—Matthew 26:29.

⁵⁵ We believe that the resurrection of the saints who have finished their course faithfully has already taken place; that the Lord, having come, has taken unto himself his power and begun his reign; that he came to his temple in 1918; that he there began to approve even some this side the veil, and as he found these zealous and faithful he said to them: 'You have been faithful over a few things; I will make you ruler over many things; enter [now] into the joy of your Lord.'—Matthew 25:21.

⁵⁶ Now the saints this side the veil see that God's purpose is not merely to get them into heaven. They see that to be members of the kingdom means that they will be a part of the great Mediator of the New Covenant; that through the terms of this covenant God's great promise to Abraham will be fulfilled; and that they, being a part of the promised Seed, may see the people blessed, and may participate in uplifting the groaning

creation out of death and despair, and be privileged to help the obedient ones back to life and happiness and into complete harmony with God.

⁵⁷ An appreciation of these great truths now necessarily thrills the heart of the Christian. He sees the saints now rapidly approaching "the general assembly and church of the firstborn"; and he knows that the kingdom is here and that the inauguration of the New Covenant is about to take place. Seeing that he is about to participate in the kingdom, with eagerness he enters the Lord's service. He serves God acceptably and with reverence and godly fear, which means that he delights to engage in the service and that the service to him is joyful. He appreciates the fact that the joy of the Lord is his strength.

⁵⁸ The cup not only represented the blood of our Lord, but it also is a symbol of joy and good cheer. Drinking of the cup with his body members in the kingdom must of necessity be a time of great joy. Surely those saints who have been resurrected and are for ever with the Lord are partaking of that cup of joy with him. Surely those who have had their change since the resurrection began have entered into that joy. Theirs is a blessed condition. (Revelation 14:13) Now since the Lord has taken unto himself his power and reigns, since he has come to his temple, surely this is the time when the saints this side the veil are hearing the message of the Psalmist: "Let the saints be joyful in glory." (Psalm 149:5) Therefore we conclude that those who are of the temple class on this side the veil have in a measure entered into the joy of the Lord, as symbolized by the cup; and that they appreciate the fact that the joy of the Lord is their strength.

SELF-EXAMINATION

⁵⁹ The members of the church are not to put each other through an examination and render judgment as to whether or not they pass. (James 4:11,12) It is entirely proper, however, that each Christian examine himself. Especially is this true when approaching the Memorial. He should see to it that he understands why he partakes of the Memorial, and whether or not he is in a proper condition of heart to partake. St. Paul says: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."—1 Corinthians 11:28,29.

⁶⁰ Why, then, do you partake? one may ask. The faithful Christian answers: Because I recognize that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Seed of promise; that the Seed of promise constitutes the Mediator of the New Covenant and the royal family of heaven; that the New Covenant is ratified by the blood of Christ; that the blood is shed by Jesus laying down his life for mankind; and that the church is permitted to have partnership in his death and, if faithful unto death, to have a part

in his resurrection and a part in the administration of the New Covenant; that Jesus has asked me to keep this Memorial in memory of his death, and this I rejoice to do because I appreciate the value of his death to me, and not to me only but to the whole world; that I appreciate the great invitation to participate with him in his death that I may have a part in his kingdom, and my desire is to be made conformable to his death, if by any means I might attain unto his resurrection.—Philippians 3:1-11.

⁶¹ Having agreed, in harmony with the terms of our covenant, to be dead with our Lord Jesus, and even now drinking partially of the fruit of the vine with him in the kingdom, let us strive to continue worthy to eat the bread and drink the cup at the coming Memorial. Especially now do the saints appreciate more and more their privilege of thus eating and drinking. Safely covered with the Almighty Hand they look abroad through the land and see the thousands upon thousands of prison camps of the great adversary, who refuses to open “the house of his prisoners”. (Isaiah 14:17) They behold “the great multitude” of prisoners, chained, in darkness, ill-fed and ill-clad spiritually, groaning and sighing.

⁶² Surely these prisoners are not drinking the joy-inspiring cup with the Lord. They are in close contact with the cup and the table of devils, where all is full of drunken spew and filthiness, so that there is no place clean. (Isaiah 28:8) They little, if at all, discern the Lord's body clearly; and there is a question about their eating and drinking worthily at the Lord's table. How wretched their condition! Yet as we contrast our joyful condition and privileges with theirs, let us not overlook that our larger knowledge and understanding bring us responsibility. Let us examine ourselves carefully according to the Scriptures, to see that we are “holy unto the Lord” and therefore worthy through Christ Jesus. Let us be unqualifiedly for the Lord and on his side.

⁶³ The anointed King is here. Jehovah has brought him forth and presented him to the nations, particularly to the Lord's professed people. The test is on! To the many he is “a stone of stumbling”, not even excepting the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (Isaiah 8:14,15) The Devil's organization on earth, including the shepherds and the principal of the flock and all their retainers, have rejected the Anointed of the Lord. They are feasting at the Devil's table and drinking deeply of his cup. The Devil, like a monstrous devouring dragon, is making war against all those who spurn his table and prefer to keep the commandments of God.

⁶⁴ The Stone wherein are seven eyes is laid before Joshua, the priestly servant class this side the veil (Zechariah 3:9), and the Lord has dropped the plumb-line of judgment therefrom. He is measuring the righteousness, the right-doing, of his saints according as his Word indicates what is the right thing to do. He is laying that righteousness to the plumbline to see how true it is thereto. Let none therefore sleep at this crit-

ical time; let the sickly promptly betake themselves to the Lord for healing.

⁶⁵ Let us not fear as we come to this Memorial, just as the Israelites needed not to fear when they left their homes apparently unguarded to celebrate the feast in Jerusalem. (Exodus 34:24) Let us be lovingly devoted to the Lord; then shall love cast out the torments of fear; then shall we memorialize our Lord's death worthily; and then, though all the Devil's organization compass us about like bees, yet, as the song of the Hallel (Psalm 118:12-15) says, “The voice of rejoicing and salvation [shall be] in the tabernacles of the righteous.”

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

What principle is announced in our text, and to whom do the words apply? When was this statement first understood? ¶ 1-3.

Why do Christians rejoice to celebrate the Memorial? How was our Lord's death prefigured? How was the significance of the picture impressed upon the Israelites? Was the Passover instituted for God's glory, or for what reason? ¶ 4-8.

When and why did Jehovah demonstrate to the world that he is God? Did the majority of God's chosen people faithfully serve him in Egypt? How was prefigured the condition of mankind during the Christian era? ¶ 9-13.

Why did Jehovah reveal his name to Moses? Why did he give him the witness of the three signs? When Moses was sent to Pharaoh what was the great issue? ¶ 14-16.

Why did God successively lift the nine plagues? What was the tenth plague, and how did the Israelites escape it? How were they instructed to eat the Passover? Explain the significance of these instructions. Why do we call it a “feast of deliverance”? What happened to the Egyptians that night? ¶ 17-21.

Whom did Moses typify? Why was he thus honored? Aaron, in association with Moses, represented whom? Who was pictured by Egypt's firstborn? Whom did Israel's firstborn typify? ¶ 22-25.

When was the antitypical Paschal Lamb first identified? When was the Law Covenant made? When was it confirmed? ¶ 26, 27.

How was Jesus “made under the law”? Did he regularly observe the Passover? Did he know that the slaying of the paschal lamb foreshadowed his own death? When, how and why did he institute the Memorial? ¶ 28-30.

Show the relationship between the paschal lamb and the Memorial loaf and cup. What did Jesus mean by saying, “This [wine] is my blood of the new testament”? In what sense have Christians been “able ministers of the new testament”? ¶ 31-33.

Name the three great covenants. Explain the difference and the purpose of each. Contrast the old and the new law covenant. Why was not the New Covenant inaugurated when Jesus arose and ascended on high? ¶ 34-39.

When Jesus instituted the Memorial why did he say, “This do in remembrance of me”? Whom should we have chiefly in mind while partaking of the Memorial? How did Jesus evidently direct attention to Jehovah at the conclusion of the Memorial supper? ¶ 40-42.

Why did Jesus leave it to the Apostle Paul to explain the deeper meaning of the Memorial? What is meant by “not discerning the Lord's body”? How do we “eat his flesh”? How are we “broken” with him? ¶ 43, 44.

What does the drinking of the cup signify? Will mankind ever “eat his flesh” and “drink his blood”? Why did Jesus say that he would drink the cup with his disciples in the kingdom? ¶ 45-49.

Since the Lord has now begun his reign, why is it appropriate to still observe the Memorial? ¶ 50-53.

What joy came to the disciples at Pentecost? What greater joy is ours today? ¶ 54-58.

What judgment should we now do? What is meant by eating and drinking "unworthily"? Summarize the reasons why we partake of the Memorial. Are all Christians now

drinking the joy-inspiring cup of the Lord? What is the present responsibility of those who are? ¶ 59-62.

What test is now on the church? What judgment is now being conducted by the Lord, and how? Should we be fearful, or what should be the attitude of the faithful? ¶ 63-65.

PETER HEALS THE LAME MAN

—MAY 22—ACTS 3:1—4:31—

"And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved."—Acts 4:12, R. V.

THE outpouring of the holy spirit at Pentecost brought the church into life and activity; for about 3000 persons then accepted Jesus as God's Messenger to his people. Believing on him they were baptized; and as accepting Jesus and his message meant consecration to God—for the preaching of Christ was unto discipleship, not merely belief—it meant that immediate arrangements must be made for their instruction in teaching and service for Christ. This sudden increase altered the aspect of the lives of the apostles and of those closely associated with them; they all were thrown into great activity.

² The work of Jesus was now obviously bearing fruit. For a moment while in his stress in Gethsemane it had appeared even to him as if his work had been almost wasted, so little seemed to have been accomplished; for even his own disciples did not understand. (See Psalm 116:11.) But besides the immediate results in Palestine the reports of his work had been carried abroad by the constant stream of visitors who had come to the various feasts of Pentecost, Passover, and Tabernacles.

³ These would tell on their return of the wondrous teacher who was stirring the homeland with his teaching and his miracles, and that the leaders of Israel were opposing him. Many had believed that God had once again visited his people; and now being in Jerusalem, and knowing that Jesus had been crucified at the Passover seven weeks before, there was before their eyes a demonstration of the power of God which Jesus' apostles declared to be from God through Jesus, and a proof that he had been raised from the dead.

⁴ The gift of the holy spirit at Pentecost was therefore evidently arranged by God at a time when visitors were in Jerusalem from all places where the dispersed Jews dwelt. It was not therefore Peter's preaching, nor in itself even the gift of the holy spirit, which converted the people to belief in Jesus; it was the combined results of these with the work of Jesus. While most of the 3000 who joined the church at Pentecost were of Jerusalem, many were visitors, who being free from the local prejudice would help to break it down.

⁵ The now enlarged company of believers in Jesus met frequently for worship, for fellowship, for prayer, and

for instruction; and the apostles shepherded them, fed them, taught them, and gave themselves to them in service. (Acts 2:42) During this time Peter and John were the two leaders of the apostles and the church. It was a happy fellowship of service; and because they loved and esteemed each other they got very close to each other.

⁶ The apostles continued to go to the temple for prayer and worship; for as yet they did not understand that since the time when Jesus had said to the leaders of Israel, "Your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:38) it was really no longer his Father's house. He had told his disciples that the time was soon to come when there would not be one stone of the temple left upon another, but they had not yet learned the import of his words; and since he had not said that they were not to go to the temple they continued to worship there, as they were pleased to do so, but not as having any obligation. Probably they thought that it was about to be used as a house of prayer for all nations. If they made a mistake in following this course they were in no way rebuked of the Lord. God was about to have it demonstrated that the leaders of the people would not have the truth in the temple or its courts.

⁷ One afternoon Peter and John went up to the temple to pray. At the gate a well-known cripple asked alms. They must have known him by sight; for he had been there day by day for many years. The eyes of the cripple and of the apostles met. Peter, moved by the holy spirit, bade the man look on John and him. Then speaking as representing the Lord Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." (Acts 3:6) With confident expectancy and to help the man he put forth his hand. The man immediately received strength in his feet and ankles, and springing up went with them to the temple, "walking, and leaping, and praising God." It was the first occasion in which a work was done in the name of Jesus. The Lord honored the faith of his servant, and thus Peter began to use his authority to loosen those who were bound.—Matthew 16:19.

⁸ The miracle was a notable one. It is probable that

Jesus had seen the man and had passed him on several occasions; but in the order of divine providence Jesus had not healed him, that this miracle might be wrought by the apostles. A crowd was attracted; and in his gratitude they saw the man holding Peter and John. As they crowded around, Peter addressed them, giving on the spur of the moment one of the most striking and direct statements of Scripture, setting forth the fact that God's promises meant that there should be "times of restitution", when not merely a cripple here and there should chance to be restored to strength, but when the whole world should be brought under the divine care and be restored from its crippled condition, mentally, morally, physically, until it could stand once again in the image of God.

⁹ Peter's is the first plain statement in the Bible of this plan of God. Well would it have been for the truth's sake if Peter had been followed by those who have claimed to be his successors. He could not then see that the time would be long before the times of restitution should come. He saw that God's Israel were to be the means of blessing for the world, "all the families of the earth," as the Abrahamic promise has it; but he could not then see that his own people Israel could not be that people. Later he learned that the Israel of God was a peculiar people, a spiritual nation, gathered chiefly from the Gentiles, with a remnant of Jews as its nucleus.

¹⁰ Peter urged his hearers to repent, to turn about, to turn to Christ in order that the blessings of God might come on Israel, bringing them "the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord", which were to precede the times of restitution of all things spoken by the prophets, which will accomplish all God's good purposes. (Acts 3:19-21) While Peter was speaking to the people, the rulers were told of the miracle and of the crowd which was listening to Peter as he told them about Jesus. They were angry that the people should be interfered with or informed about anything, save by themselves; and they had foolishly thought that when they had crucified Jesus of Nazareth they had for ever settled that matter.

¹¹ The rulers at that time were Sadducees, who believed in neither a resurrection nor much else save in their present chances. They were therefore all the more angry that the resurrection of Jesus was proclaimed, and the fact demonstrated by the holy spirit as to which also they were unbelievers. They sent their men to put the disciples into prison for the night. But these men, though in power, were powerless to stop the work of the Lord. They carried off the apostles, but 5000 persons were added to the church that day.—Acts 4:4, R. V.

¹² On the morrow the two apostles were taken before the council. Then with the pomp and ceremony intended to overawe those who appeared before it, the apostles were asked by what power and in what name they had done this miracle—surely a foolish question to ask; for in their short-sightedness they had opened a way for a

declaration, and Peter took full advantage of it. The miracle was there, the evidence before their eyes; for they had set the healed man also before the court, as if he were a witness against the apostles.

¹³ Speaking as if he was giving a formal notice to them, Peter said that if they asked these questions concerning the good deed done to the impotent man his answer was that the miracle was wrought by the power of and in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, "whom ye slew." He went on to tell them that Jesus of Nazareth was the Stone of which the prophets had spoken, and that in rejecting him they had fulfilled Scripture, but that God had made him the head of the corner. The boldness and assurance of Peter and John, unlettered men, was to them as much a miracle as was the healing of the cripple.—See Matthew 21:42.

¹⁴ The council retired Peter and John, and conferred among themselves. They were faced with facts impossible to deny or explain except by admitting the fact that Jesus was the Christ. All they could do was to attempt to intimidate these men; and they commanded them that they should speak no more in the name of Jesus. Peter and John asked them what they themselves thought about such a case; did the council really expect them to refrain from speaking of the things they had seen and heard? The apostles asked them to judge for themselves whether it was right to listen to them rather than to God. The rulers threatened them further and let them go.

¹⁵ Going to their own company the disciples all rejoiced together, for they saw that the Scriptures were being fulfilled; and they prayed for further boldness to speak in the name of Jesus and that further signs might be wrought in his name. They were immediately answered; for the place where they were was shaken as if by the same rushing wind which they had first experienced. These things had a great effect upon the church; the whole company were bound together as one.—Acts 4:32.

¹⁶ A long time has passed since then. The disciples of Jesus now live in the days which Peter then saw afar off. The time of the setting up of the kingdom has come. It seems strange to have to record that the same conditions prevail now as then. The great religious systems have exactly the same attitude toward the truth concerning the second advent as the leaders of Israel had at our Lord's first advent. They are unprepared for the Lord's return and do no more believe in it than the Pharisees and Sadducees believed in the first advent.

¹⁷ The representatives of Jesus cannot now work miracles as Peter and John did; but the people are being taught the truth; and the Sadducees of today, the ministers and their associates who do not accept the divine revelation, and the Pharisees, who do accept but pervert the truth, are angry that this is so. They know that if the people learn the truth then their own days are numbered; and under pretence therefore of keeping

the peace they would have all teaching of the truth suppressed. The time has again come when the servants of the Lord must make a stand for their Master. Peter was one who taught the disciples to be subject to the powers that be, to magistrates and to those who are in authority; but there was none bolder than Peter in standing against rule and authority which would hinder them from serving their Master.—1 Peter 2:13.

¹⁸ If the disciples of today cannot work miracles so as to call attention to the truth they preach and stand for they can and do give evidence of association with Jesus. It is their highly prized privilege to witness for their Master as to the purpose of his return; namely, the setting up of the "times of restitution". They also witness to the ecclesiastics of all denominations that they have finally rejected the Stone which God set, and that God has made it the Head-stone of the corner. Their rejection of the witness of our Lord's return and their acceptance of the League of Nations as the human ex-

pression of his kingdom caused them to be finally rejected of God, even as the leaders of Israel were in the days of the miniature fulfilment at the first advent.—Matthew 21:43.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

When did the work of Jesus obviously begin to bear fruit? Why did Jehovah select Pentecost as the time for the outpouring of his holy spirit? ¶ 1-4.

Who were the outstanding leaders of the early church? Why did Peter and John go up to Herod's temple to pray? What great miracle did Peter perform there? ¶ 5-7.

What did Peter then say to the crowd that gathered? Did he understand the full meaning of his own words? How did the rulers regard his miracle and message? What effect did these things have upon the people? ¶ 8-11.

What happened to the two apostles on the morrow? How did Peter answer the charge of the rulers? What was the outcome? ¶ 12-15.

What similar conditions exist today? Do the Lord's people now have as great a privilege of witnessing for him as did the apostles who could perform miracles in his name? ¶ 16-18.

PETER UNDAUNTED BY PERSECUTION

—MAY 29—ACTS 5:17-4?—

"We must obey God rather than men."—Acts 5:29, R. V.

PETER continued to be the central figure of the church. His position in it was confirmed by the swift judgment which fell on Ananias and Sapphira his wife. The ever increasing company of believers realizing their separation from their brethren, partly by reason of the fact that the people hated Jesus so much as to hate every one who believed on him, partly because of their consecration to God, and also by the impulsion of the holy spirit which led them to look for blessings heavenly rather than earthly, the disciples felt themselves separated to themselves and the Lord.

² It therefore appeared to the disciples that they must form a separate community, and they proceeded to act upon this. The rich sold their possessions, and the money was put into a common fund for the service of all. Amongst those who sold their possessions were Ananias and Sapphira. Ananias came before Peter and the other apostles and laid his gift, professing it to be the whole proceeds of the sale. Peter, quickened by the spirit, perceived deception; and he questioned Ananias. He did not ask him why he had brought only a part, for that was purely a personal matter; but he did ask why Ananias had allowed Satan to fill his heart to lie to his brethren. Peter then said, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." (Acts 5:4) Ananias, as if struck with shock, fell down and expired.

³ About three hours after this his wife came into the company, knowing nothing of what had happened, and was called by Peter. "Tell me," he said, "whether ye

sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much." Peter said to her, "How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?" He then sentenced her to death, saying, "The feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out." Sapphira fell dead before the company.

⁴ This event caused great fear to come upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things. (Acts 5:8-11) It was the first untoward happening in the church of God. There are some sins amongst his people of which God takes immediate notice. This swift action corresponds with the destruction of the spies at the beginning of Israel's wanderings, and with the stoning of Achan at the beginning of Israel's warfare.

⁵ This sharp lesson at the beginning of the church's life was intended to show that the Lord was watching every movement. But there was also another purpose. Luke says that fear came upon all who heard these things. If any one would join this new community for what he might get out of the distribution of wealth, here was a warning notice given to all that whether in giving or in receiving, this movement was a clean one; there was an unseen eye watching over it. God would have all men know that his people were called to holiness of life.

⁶ In this incident Peter had no doubt as to what course he should take; he used the authority given by the Lord when he said, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven." (Matthew 16:19) God con-

firmed his action. In their work the apostles did in the city many miracles, and they met regularly in Solomon's porch in the temple. There they had an opportunity of speaking with the people; for the porch was common ground for all who went up to worship. The company of believers, both men and women, was continually increasing; and the people magnified the apostles. But none of the rulers and those of their society dared join themselves to the apostles.—John 12:42.

⁷ The people brought into the streets their sick, laid on couches; and they were healed even if only the shadow of Peter fell on them as he passed. The Lord fulfilled his word, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." (John 14:12) The purpose of the Lord was served; the attention of the people was given to the truth as a result of these miracles. All Judea was stirred by these things, and the sick and those who had unclean spirits in the towns and villages round about were brought into Jerusalem, and none went away unhealed. There is no suggestion here that sick *believers* were healed; these were God's blessings intended for his people Israel, and to call attention to his goodness.

⁸ The high priest and all those who were with him, all of whom were Sadducees, unbelievers in everything except the privileges of power and wealth which they got from their offices, began to stir themselves. They were filled with what they persuaded themselves to be righteous indignation; the people were receiving blessings and being taught, and they, the rulers were ignored. They had the apostles arrested and put into prison, no doubt on the charge that they were disturbing the peace. But the angel of the Lord visited the prison that night; and the apostles were led out past the unconscious guards, and were instructed to go early next morning to the temple and speak to the people "all the words of this life". (Acts 5:20) This the apostles did.

⁹ That same morning, following the miraculous escape from prison during the preceding night, the rulers met; the full council of the Sanhedrin having been called for the occasion. They sent for their prisoners, but the guards went into an empty prison. The court does not appear to have doubted the word of their officers who reported that the guards had seen nothing through the night; but they began to wonder amongst themselves where this thing would end. Whilst they were talking amongst themselves they were told that the apostles were in the temple courts, teaching the people. They sent for them, but were careful not to have any violence used, because they feared the people.—Acts 5:26.

¹⁰ The Sanhedrin must have realized itself to be in a very weak position; for when the apostles appeared before them, the high priest spoke to them as if the Sanhedrin had a grievance against the apostles rather than as if they as custodians of the peace of the city had a charge to make or a judgment to pass. He said, "Did

not we straitly command you, that ye should not teach in this name?" And, as if he were unable to restrain himself, he said, "Behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."—Acts 5:28.

¹¹ The rulers were afraid of their lives as well as their "livings". Their words came back on themselves. It was not long since the rulers, as well as the people, had cried to Pilate when that weak man seemed about to release Jesus, "His blood be on us, and on our children." (Matthew 27:25) Now they were afraid that it was coming on them; they feared what the Romans would do; and perhaps they had some lurking fear of retribution coming on themselves from God.

¹² Peter answered in a way that immediately disarmed them of their chief argument. His reply would ordinarily be considered clever. Undoubtedly he was led by the holy spirit; for Jesus had told his disciples, and all his faithful followers through them, that whenever they were held up before the rulers of this present evil order they should not meditate beforehand as to what they should say, for they would be told what to answer. What gave these untutored men this ability and courage, this confidence and power? Peter said, "We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29) None of those present could object to that; for it was the leaders themselves who were the closest sticklers for the rights of the Jewish religion against the aggression of the Romans. It was their religious fervor which caused the Romans their chief concern in the government of the Jews.

¹³ Peter struck at once into the heart of the trouble. If they questioned the apostles' speaking in the name of Jesus, he would have them know that more than that was involved. They had killed Jesus of Nazareth and had done him the indignity of hanging him on a tree, thus in their law making him accursed. Peter did not charge the Romans with the death of Jesus, but those who were now before him; for Pilate would not have done this thing if these men had not called for Jesus' blood.

¹⁴ Then Peter pointed out that God, whom they professed to worship and serve, had manifested his favor toward the One whom they had treated as accursed; for God had raised him from the dead. Further, God had made him to be a Prince and a Savior, to give to Israel both repentance and forgiveness of sins; and, added Peter, "We are his witnesses of these things." But God himself is witness; for he has given this same holy spirit to all who obey the Word of Jesus, a conclusive proof that God is blessing his people.—Acts 5:29-32.

¹⁵ This bold witness was too much for these men; they were "cut to the heart", and took counsel to slay the apostles. This is always the effect of the holy spirit on evil minds. If truth is not received honestly by those who know of it, it has a damaging effect; those who thus receive it are reduced to a condition of malice. If the Lord had not preserved the apostles these maddened

rulers would have slain them as quickly as they dared, the consideration being their own safety; for at the moment they feared the people.

¹⁶ Then one of them, Gamaliel, the tutor of Saul of Tarsus, counselled moderation. He could see that there was a power behind this which he thought might be of God; if it were of God they were putting themselves in a terrible position; if on the other hand it were not, it would die out as other movements had done. They took his counsel, it was the safest for them; but they did not alter in spirit. Gamaliel's advice is often quoted as being wise. Yet it was from a purely selfish viewpoint; it saved him and his fellows from difficulty and danger. It was simply human wisdom, of the same nature as the worldly proverb, When in doubt do nothing.

¹⁷ Men are generally safer if, when uncertain of a course, they take time for further consideration. But to wait for developments may be positively harmful. It was in this case; for there was clear evidence that God was with these men, and the rulers ought to have moved in accordance. Gamaliel ought to have advanced with the light which God was giving to his people and have been an adviser of movement rather than of inaction. He himself waited too long; for not even the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, his brightest pupil, to belief in Jesus as the Christ brought him into the way of Truth.

¹⁸ The evidences which were before the council were sufficient to make Gamaliel question whether he and his fellows were right in the course they took; but delay caused them to recede into dimness, and he lost out. Nor is there any reason for thinking that any of the members of the Sanhedrin benefited spiritually from the

counsel given them. No doubt the Lord made use of Gamaliel's counsel; for had these men followed their passion they would have found themselves fighting against God in a matter which was urgent to God, and they must surely have been put out of his way, for the time-had come when the gospel of the kingdom must go forth.

¹⁹ Religious bigotry is the hardest of all kinds and the most difficult to overcome. Signs are not lacking that the religious leaders of this professed liberal and enlightened day will, if they find it possible, seek to do to those who tell the people the truth concerning God's exaltation of Jesus to power on earth what the Sadducees would have done then to the apostles. These people change not. It is also true that the followers of Jesus change not; and when the time shall come that a very direct witness must be given, the Lord will have his people ready for his service.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

Who was the central figure in the early church? Why did the disciples institute a community arrangement? What was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira, and what penalty came upon them? ¶ 1-3.

What was the purpose of this severe judgment upon them, and what effect did it have upon the church? ¶ 4, 5.

What other miracles did Peter perform, and how was his witness regarded by the people? What did the rulers do about it, and how did the Lord overrule their action to his praise? ¶ 6-8.

What action did the Sanhedrin take next day, and how did Peter disarm them? ¶ 9-14.

What is meant by their being "cut to the heart"? Who was Gamaliel? What did he advise, and why? Has the attitude of ecclesiastics and rulers toward the Lord's work materially changed since that time? ¶ 15-19.

INTERESTING LETTERS

NOW SEES AND UNDERSTANDS

DEAR SIRs:

Please find inclosed 10¢ for which kindly mail me the booklet "WORLD DISTRESS, WHY?" Have just finished reading the book DELIVERANCE, and I wish to say that it is one of the best books I have ever read. It has a wonderful message of real hope and understanding, for any one who will read it and study it.

For a good many years I have tried to understand the ministers of many of the churches, and after hearing them there always was a doubt about many things that they said. Then after reading the Bible there seemed to me to be a difference; but I never understood where the difference was until about a year and a half ago when, one Sunday, I was listening in over the radio and happened to tune in on station WBBR and heard Judge J. F. Rutherford speaking. What he said gave me something to think about; and the more I heard him talk the more I seemed to understand.

Then I sent and got many of the books and booklets from your station, and began to study up; and now I am beginning to see and understand things as never before. Since that time I have been a regular listener to your programs; I never miss one if I can help it; and I get much comfort

from them. I shall always feel that it was Judge Rutherford who gave me the first real understanding of the Bible and of God's message of comfort for the people of earth. May God guide him in his good work, and also your work from the station as well.

I am, truly yours,

ALONZO WAYCHOFF.—N.J.

A PLEDGE OF LOYALTY

DEAR BRETHREN:

Upon the unanimous and whole-hearted request of our little class, I am writing to extend to you our love. We would join in the expression of the Shareholders' Resolution as published in the December 1st issue of THE WATCH TOWER.

Dear, faithful brethren, we recognize your devoted loyalty to God as manifested in service for the honor of his name, and we delight to daily pray for you the continued blessing of the Lord and his keeping power.

In appreciation of all your labor and loving ministry,

Yours in his service,

PLAINFIELD (N. J.) ECCLESIA,

L. R. WHEELER, Secy.

International Bible Students Association Classes

Lectures and Studies by Traveling Brethren

BROTHER T. E. BARKER

Sutton, Neb.	May 2	Whitman, Neb.	May 9
Hastings, Neb.	" 3	Alliance, Neb.	" 10
Grand Island, Neb.	" 4	North Platte, Neb.	" 12, 15
Ravenna, Neb.	" 5, 6	Big Springs, Neb.	" 13
Litchfield, Neb.	" 8	Brady, Neb.	" 16, 17

BROTHER H. E. PINNOCK

Pipestone, Minn.	May 4	Austin, Minn.	May 11, 12
Superior, Ia.	" 5, 6	Fountain, Minn.	" 13
Estherville, Ia.	" 8	Whalen, Minn.	" 15, 16
Lake Mills, Ia.	" 9, 10	Tunnel City, Wis.	" 17, 18

BROTHER J. A. BOHNET

Wheeler, Mich.	May 2	Flint, Mich.	May 8
Merrill, Mich.	" 3	Port Huron, Mich.	" 9, 12
Saginaw, Mich.	" 4, 5	Croswell, Mich.	" 10, 11
Birch Run, Mich.	" 6	Bay City, Mich.	" 13, 15

BROTHER G. R. POLLOCK

Seattle, Wash.	May 1, 6	Alderwood Manor, W.	May 10, 11
Port Townsend, Wash.	" 2, 5	Marysville, Wash.	" 12
Port Angeles, Wash.	" 3, 4	Stanwood, Wash.	" 13
Everett, Wash.	" 8, 9	Burlington, Wash.	" 15

BROTHER H. H. DINGUS

Macon, Ga.	May 1, 5	Eastman, Ga.	May 8
Willard, Ga.	" 2	McRae, Ga.	" 9, 10
Milledgeville, Ga.	" 3, 4	Fitzgerald, Ga.	" 11, 12
Dublin, Ga.	" 6	Waycross, Ga.	" 13, 15

BROTHER V. C. RICE

Louisville, Ky.	May 1, 3	Rineyville, Ky.	May 8, 9
New Albany, Ind.	" 1	Beaver Dam, Ky.	" 10, 11
Jeffersonville, Ind.	" 2	Providence, Ky.	" 13
Elizabethtown, Ky.	" 4, 5	Dixon, Ky.	" 15, 16
Cecelia, Ky.	" 6	Evansville, Ind.	" 17, 18

BROTHER G. H. DRAPER

Jamestown, Kan.	May 3	Salina, Kan.	May 10, 13
Solomon, Kan.	" 4, 5	Russell, Kan.	" 11, 12
Waldo, Kan.	" 6	Abilene, Kan.	" 15, 16
Hill City, Kan.	" 8, 9	Junction City, Kan.	" 17, 18

BROTHER W. J. THORN

Carbondale, Pa.	May 2	Benton, Pa.	May 9, 10
Honesdale, Pa.	" 3	Nanticoke, Pa.	" 11, 12
Cortez, Pa.	" 4, 5	Hazleton, Pa.	" 13, 15
Scranton, Pa.	" 6, 8	Lehighton, Pa.	" 16, 17

BROTHER H. E. HAZLETT

Jallowell, Me.	May 3, 4	Blaine, Me.	May 12, 13
Pittsfield, Me.	" 5, 6	Easton, Me.	" 15
Guilford, Me.	" 8, 9	Mapleton, Me.	" 16
Bangor, Me.	" 10, 11	Oldtown, Me.	" 17, 18

BROTHER M. L. HERR

Marshfield, Wis.	May 2, 5	Athens, Wis.	May 9, 10
Loyal, Wis.	" 3, 4	Auburndale, Wis.	" 11, 12
Unity, Wis.	" 6, 8	Withee, Wis.	" 13, 15

BROTHER J. C. WATT

Westboro, Mass.	May 2, 3	Franklin, Mass.	May 11
Worcester, Mass.	" 4, 8	Woonsocket, R. I.	" 12, 13
Charlton City, Mass.	" 5, 6	Pawtucket, R. I.	" 15, 16
Milford, Mass.	" 9, 10	E. Greenwich, R. I.	" 17, 18

BROTHER H. S. MURRAY

New Orleans, La.	May 2, 3	Folsom, La.	May 9-11
Baton Rouge, La.	" 4, 5	Bogalusa, La.	" 12, 13
Covington, La.	" 6, 8	New Orleans, La.	" 15