



WATCHTOWER

His Presence

"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 I will
say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them
that oppose me."—Habakkuk 2:1.

W.T.B.&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; 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 wilfully disobeyed God's law and was sentenced to death; that by reason of Adam's wrongful act all men are born sinners and without the right to life.

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

THAT for many centuries God, through Christ, has been

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

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

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

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

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

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RADIO

The Lord has clearly demonstrated that it is his will that the message of the kingdom shall be proclaimed by radio. There is not a radio station in the immediate vicinity of every class. If a class residing in a city where there is a radio station can make arrangements for the use of said station, other classes in nearby towns or cities should cooperate in arranging and putting on programs. Cooperation can be either by communicating with the Society at Brooklyn, Radio Department, or by writing the class that has made the contract for the broadcasting and arranging with them to share the expenses and the other burdens.

We also make this suggestion: If a radio discourse is put on Sunday afternoon or evening, then on the following Sunday morning let canvassing parties go out in the vicinity

and canvass the people for the books. This will afford an opportunity for all members of the class to have a part in the preaching of the gospel. The friends who have tried this have been wonderfully blessed. This is an indication that the Lord wishes it to be done.

BETHEL HYMNS FOR DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
				271	62	61
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
13	183	231	89	319	276	300
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
86	265	219	189	132	230	238
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
148	268	169	156	330	83	93
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
16	38	46	237	69	233	66

I.B.S.A. BEREAN BIBLE STUDIES

By Means of "The Watch Tower"

"Why in Security"

Z August 15, 1927

Week of Dec. 4 . . . ¶ 1-23

Week of Dec. 11 . . . ¶ 24-45

"Defence and Security"

Z September 1, 1927

Week of Dec. 18 . . . ¶ 1-26

Week of Dec. 25 . . . ¶ 27-49

The WATCH TOWER

AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

Vol. XLVIII

NOVEMBER 1, 1927

No. 21

CHRISTIANS' MISSION ON EARTH

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord."—1 Cor. 1:9.

JEHOVAH GOD is the Author of his plan. He caused it to be made and is working it out exactly in accord with his sovereign will. He never deviates from his fixed purpose. His chief executive officer in the out-working of his plan is his beloved Son. Others have been invited to join with his Son in this work.

² The enemy Satan has at all times sought to turn the mind of the creature away from the Creator. Not succeeding concerning all in this, he has next sought to confuse the minds of those desiring to obey God. Most of mankind have been alienated from God. Even the majority of those who have undertaken to be obedient to God have been greatly confused and misguided. It was so in Paul's day. It has been largely true since then. But today the Christian has a deeper appreciation of God's precious promises than at some times in the past, because the light of the truth is shining more clearly upon the pathway of the obedient ones. The perfect day is approaching, and God is fulfilling his promises to his people. Some are seeing more clearly what is God's purpose concerning the Christian and what is the Christian's mission while on earth; and these are finding greater joy in doing God's will.

THE CALL

³ Jehovah God is the one who calls man. The words of the apostle plainly show this. God does not call sinners. He calls only those who have voluntarily expressed a desire or purpose to do his will.

⁴ A man learns that he is a sinner by nature and that as a sinner he has no right to live. He learns that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ provides redemption for mankind and the means of lifting man out of sin unto the salvation of life. He learns that there is no other name whereby this may be done. He desires to live. He learns of the words of Jesus saying to all such: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matthew 16:24) He is informed that such words mean that he must voluntarily surrender himself unto the Lord, willing to do whatsoever is the will of God concerning him. He takes the step by making a full consecration to do the will of God. This is his part of the covenant. Jesus Christ, his

Advocate, presents him to the great Judge, Jehovah God, who by reason of the man's faith in the blood of Jesus, and by reason of his agreement to do God's will, justifies man. That means that God judicially determines that the man is now right with him and has the right to live. This justification is for the purpose of making man an associate with Christ Jesus in his death and also in his life. God therefore by his own will and by his Word of Truth begets the man thus consecrating to a hope of life on the divine plane and to the divine nature. (James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3-5) By this means God calls man to fellowship with his beloved Son.

PURPOSE OF CONSECRATION

⁵ Why did you as a Christian make a full consecration to do the will of God? What was and is the purpose of Jehovah in calling you? Upon this point many Christians have been confused. For this reason such have suffered much fear and trepidation, and have missed a great amount of joy.

⁶ One will answer the question in this manner: I made a consecration in order that I might get life and go to heaven. I wanted to be saved and God was anxious to save me. Now if only I can be real good and get to heaven I will be satisfied. If only I can get in the back door and find some small place, then all will be well with me.

⁷ It is true that God will cause the truth to be testified to all in order that all may have an opportunity for life; but such is not the reason for calling the Christian and therefore not the reason for consecration during the period of sacrifice. God has never tried to get any one into heaven. Heaven is the reward that the Christian receives after the faithful performance of his mission while on the earth.

⁸ Another answers: I made a consecration that God might take me to heaven there to shine in his presence. My mission therefore since making a consecration is to develop a sweet and beautiful character; and as soon as that is accomplished God will take me to heaven. I am anxious of course to go home and for this reason I am diligently striving to develop such character as is required. In order to develop that character I must

appear to be very pious and speak with great gravity. When I attend a function of the congregation I must wear a long coat and a long solemn face. I must appear on the platform with great solemnity, and in the presence of the congregation bow my head in solemn and silent prayer that they may see how much I am like the Lord. When I speak or pray aloud I must assume a certain carefully studied prayerful voice. When the meeting is ended I must rush down to the door and shake hands with the common people in order to show that I possess a beautiful and sweet character. I must thus have fellowship with them. If before me there have been some great men in the church, I must honor them and give them credit for what they taught because some day I shall expect the people likewise to honor me and give me credit for what I teach.

⁹ The one who blindly pursues such a course does not realize that he is playing squarely into the hands of the Devil. He does not realize that he is trying to have fellowship with the Lord and at the same time is having fellowship with the Devil. The apostle declared that this is an impossible course to pursue to the satisfaction of the Lord.—1 Corinthians 10: 20, 21.

¹⁰ Another answers: I made a consecration; and I am trying to live a good Christian life in order that I may go to heaven and sit with Christ Jesus on the throne to judge the world. I am practising judging now that I may do well the work of judging when I get to heaven. I have been called to that high place; and my mission while on earth is to deeply meditate upon various questions and to assume an air of grave dignity befitting one who shall judge the world, that my character may be duly prepared and polished so that I can reflect the glory of the Lord when I get on the heavenly bench.

¹¹ Like the others this one is blinded to God's real purposes. He has not understood nor appreciated why God has called him, and therefore has not understood and could not properly perform his mission as a Christian while on the earth.

TRUE REASON

¹² God in his loving kindness is clarifying the issue now; and those who are walking in the light are seeing more clearly the proper way and are therefore in the joy of the Lord. When one sees what the obligation laid upon him is and is moved with unselfishness to perform it, then he is making progress as a Christian.

¹³ The call of and by Jehovah is a summons to the one who has consecrated himself to the discharge of a particular or specific duty. It is an invitation to enter into training for a specific purpose; it is a designation to the performance of official duties. If the one called proves his loyalty and faithfulness while on the earth, then he shall enter upon the high and responsible duties of the heavenly mission of the Christian. Therefore the consecration of the real Christian is for the purpose

of affording him an opportunity to prove his loyalty and his faithfulness to God. In order to prove his loyalty and faithfulness he must do the will of God while on earth, and must do it joyfully.

¹⁴ God never called any one for the purpose of giving him a chance to develop a beautiful character. Had he wanted only beautiful characters he would have selected the angels that have always remained loyal to him. Jesus was a perfect character before he was called. It is written that by the things which he suffered he was made perfect. These things he suffered by reason of his faithfulness in the performance of duty while on earth. By the things which he suffered he proved his loyalty and faithfulness unto God. He is the founder of Christianity. He is the first and the Head of The Christ. The body members are called to follow in his steps.

RELIGION

¹⁵ Different ones have been drawn to present truth for different reasons. Some have associated themselves with those of present truth because they desire to be religious and have understood that the Bible Students practise a religion which seems to them better than some other religion. The Bible Students do not practise a religion. The Association is not a religious institution or association. Religion means an outward form or ceremony by which men indicate their recognition of the existence of a supreme power. The Devil's organization has various religions, and the people practise such. The ecclesiastics practise a religion. "Organized Christianity" so-called is a religion. A true Christian appreciates the fact that there is something more to do than to merely go through some outward forms and ceremonies indicating his belief in a supreme power.

¹⁶ God's Word defines the proper religion as meaning to visit the widows and the orphans and to keep oneself unspotted from the Devil's organization. (James 1: 27) When the Lord's people came out of Babylon they brought with them bedraggled garments from Babylon. A garment is a symbol of identification. It took a long while to tell the difference between those in Babylon and some who have claimed to come out of Babylon. The latter have continued to practise certain forms and ceremonies in keeping with ecclesiasticism. This is not the proper course, however, for the true Christian. Such tends to hypocrisy; and hypocrisy is despicable in the eyes of the Lord.

FELLOWSHIP

¹⁷ Mark that the Apostle Paul in the text says: "Ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." What is meant by the word "fellowship"? Many have understood this to mean that when they attend a convention or a meeting of the Lord's people they must spend a part of the time in shaking hands and indulging in gossip. Often an hour is set aside for what is known as fellowship and in that hour almost

everything is discussed except ways and means to further the cause of the truth. Surely that is not what is meant by the words: "Ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord."

¹⁸ Fellowship properly understood means partnership. It means an association of one with another or one who participates with another in a certain work. Jehovah God summoned his beloved Son to discharge the duties of great High Priest unto Jehovah; that is to say, to fill the office of executive unto God in the outworking of his plan. God then condescended to call other men to participate with the Lord Jesus Christ in that work; that is to say, to have fellowship or partnership with him therein. God plainly defines the duties of such while on earth, and likewise has revealed some of the duties that will devolve upon these called ones in heaven. In support of this conclusion the following is submitted:

¹⁹ Peter declared that the members of the body are called to follow in the footsteps of Jesus (1 Peter 2:21); that is to say, they must take the same course of action that Jesus took.

²⁰ Paul wrote concerning himself as a follower of Jesus Christ: "I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. . . . That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the *fellowship of his sufferings*, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." (Philippians 3:8, 10, 11) John the apostle wrote: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. . . . But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—1 John 1:3, 7.

²¹ To walk means to pursue a certain course of action; it means to deport oneself in a certain way. To walk, then, as Jesus walked means that the Christian on earth must deport himself as Jesus did and he must follow Jesus as his companion by doing the same things that Jesus did. There is no evidence that Jesus wore a long and sanctimonious face and a long coat, or that he stood on the platform and indulged in silent prayer to be seen of men. On the contrary he rebuked those very things that were so marked in the Jewish clergy. (Matthew 6:5) There is no evidence of Jesus' teaching his disciples to develop a beautiful and sweet character so that all who might come in contact with them would be able to see how sweet they were. On the contrary the record shows that Jesus spoke the truth with boldness and plainness, and that his disciples did likewise, and that the clergy and the courts took note of the boldness of his disciples and thereby perceived that they had walked with Jesus and learned of him.—Acts 4:13.

GOD'S PURPOSE

²² The purpose of Jehovah God stands boldly upon the pages of his Sacred Record. Throughout the ages he has had some to be his witnesses, that his name might not be forgotten by men. This he has done for man's benefit. During the same period of time Satan the enemy has pushed his own name to the front, in order to blind the minds of men concerning God and his goodness.

²³ God sent his prophets to testify to his name. From Abel to John the Baptist these faithful men performed the duties laid upon them. There is no evidence that they indulged in any assumed piety or sanctimonious ceremonies. On the contrary the record is that they were bold and faithful witnesses to the Lord and by reason thereof they suffered bonds and imprisonment and all manner of wicked and cruel persecution. Of Moses, one of these faithful ones, it is written that although given every opportunity to receive the honor that is bestowed upon royalty he preferred the afflictions of the people of God rather than the pleasure or honor that the Devil's organization might bestow upon him. These faithful men are cited as examples to the Christians. (James 5:10) They were faithful witnesses to the name of Jehovah, and the Christian is admonished by the apostle to be guided by their example.—Heb. 12:1.

WITNESS FOR GOD

²⁴ In due time God sent Jesus to the earth. At the age of thirty he consecrated himself wholly to Jehovah. For what purpose did he make a consecration? Let those elders who are inclined to be ecclesiastical take notice to the answer of this question. Jesus answered it, saying, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." (John 4:34) He further said: "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." (John 5:30) "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."—John 6:38.

²⁵ His mission on earth is summed up in the pointed words which he uttered before Pilate, Satan's representative, when he stood before him at the final hearing: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."—John 18:37.

²⁶ His course of action proved that he came to earth to bear witness to the truth. For three and one-half years he walked about from place to place and from house to house, telling those who would hear that Jehovah is God, and that his purpose is to bless all the families of the earth through his kingdom. Jesus refused in any manner to compromise with the Devil or his organization, because he said: "The prince of this world . . . hath nothing in me." (John 14:30) With boldness of speech he bore witness to the name of his Father; and in his death and resurrection the name of Jehovah was magnified. When he had finished his earthly mission, because of his loyalty and faithfulness

God gave to him the beautiful title, "The Faithful and True Witness."—Revelation 3: 14; 19: 11.

²⁷ In order to have fellowship with Christ Jesus the Lord, in order to have partnership in the work which God gave him to do, the Christian must walk in the light and truth which God gives to his people. Now the light of truth is shining upon the pathway of the Christian as it has not heretofore shone, because it is God's due time for it to thus shine. He who walks in the way that the ecclesiastics walk is walking in the darkness, and is not participating with God and with Christ Jesus. Concerning such John wrote: "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth."—1 John 1: 6.

²⁸ There are those today in the church occupying the responsible position of elder who insist on holding to many of the foolish things brought from Babylon, who refuse to encourage their brethren to have part in the service, and who refuse to participate in the service themselves. They object to the truth that God has given to his people through *The Watch Tower*, and they try to discourage their brethren in the study thereof. They scoff at the suggestion of going from door to door to carry the message of God, his King and his kingdom, to the people. By their course of action in the church they cause discouragement and division amongst the brethren.

²⁹ The time has come for the faithful to mark such and to avoid them, and to say to them that no longer will we entrust such men with the office of eldership or other position of service in the church; for as the apostle said, "Such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly [selfishness]; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple [unlearned]."—Romans 16: 17, 18.

• PAUL AN EXAMPLE

³⁰ Paul was a faithful witness for the Lord. He delighted to have partnership in the sufferings of Christ Jesus. Did such sufferings result to him because of assumed piety and by reason of wearing a long and solemn face and long garb and speaking with a sanctimonious voice? No; he suffered not for that, because he did not indulge in such. He suffered by reason of the fact that he was a bold, fearless and faithful witness to the truth. In his day some of the elders were making trouble in the church, even as they are at this day. He anticipated more trouble and for this reason gave warning. He was on his way to Jerusalem. He stopped at Miletus, and sent and had the elders of Ephesus brought to him that he might encourage them and warn them that they might be a help and encouragement to others of God's flock. He would not have referred to his own experiences on this occasion in order to exalt himself, but he did mention himself and his experiences for the manifest purpose of showing the elders what is the proper course of a Christian on earth carrying out the

commission given him by the Lord. He told them that they would not again see his face. It was a solemn and important hour with him, and he spoke with plainness.

HOUSE TO HOUSE

³¹ It seemed good and pleasing to the Lord during the past few years that the brethren should go from house to house, calling upon the people, telling them of God and of Christ, of his kingdom, and placing in their hands the message of truth that the people might read and know the Lord and his plan. *The Watch Tower* has urged this course upon the brethren because the Lord's manifest blessing has been upon it. *The Watch Tower* has received much criticism because it stresses the importance of service in this hour. That criticism and opposition has come from the elders who have thought it beneath their dignity to go from house to house and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and his kingdom by placing the printed message in the hands of the people.

³² But now mark the words of Paul when speaking to the elders at Ephesus. He was clothed with a special commission as an ambassador for Christ to the Gentiles. That, however, did not swell his head. He remembered at all times that he was a servant of God and of Jesus Christ. He did not think it beneath his dignity to go from house to house to preach the gospel. Speaking to the elders on that occasion he said: "Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."—Acts 20: 18-21.

³³ Not only did he go from house to house to testify to the truth, but he made no distinctions of men. He did not insist on having his territory amongst the rich or the influential. It was rather out of place according to the customs of men for Jews to call upon Greeks; yet the apostle called on both Jew and Greek, telling them of God and his kingdom. What Paul, the special apostle of Jesus Christ, did surely we can do. If he found it pleasing to the Lord and profitable to the cause in giving a witness to go from house to house, then surely his example is such that other Christians may follow. Furthermore, Jesus the Son of the great Eternal God journeyed from house to house and place to place, speaking to the poor and teaching the outcast concerning the truth. What Jesus Christ the great Redeemer and Head of the church did, surely every member of the body should delight to do. This was his work, and this was the work that the Apostle Paul had partnership in, and such is the work that other Chris-

tians must participate in in order to have partnership with Christ Jesus while on the earth.

HAVE CONDITIONS CHANGED?

³⁴ Some who do not delight to do the service of the Lord will reply: 'Conditions have changed since the days of the apostles. At that time the only way they had of going about was afoot from house to house. In these modern times such would be out of place. We, as the representatives of the congregation, should cover ourselves with the garb of a preacher and go only upon the public platform and leave the other service to the less important ones in the congregation.'

³⁵ Have conditions changed? Yes; they have changed to some extent and with the change have come greater light, greater opportunities, and therefore greater responsibility. We are now living in the presence of the Lord. He has been pleased to disclose to his church the hideousness of the Devil's organization, and how it has so long and wickedly oppressed the people. He has shown to his people some of the beauty and glory of God's organization, and how it will soon release the people from oppression and bring them into full harmony with him and how the name of Jehovah God shall be vindicated and exalted. The people are now oppressed and many of them are held in the ecclesiastical prison houses by the wardens or prison keepers. They are timid and fearful, and have not the strength to come out and take their stand on the side of the Lord. Under their oppression they groan and cry for relief, and their cries have ascended up to Jehovah God. The Lord says now to his faithful ones: 'Go carry the message of truth and comfort to these prisoners.'

³⁶ In order to open the way God has brought into action at this time and at this crucial hour the powerful radio. He has made it possible for the timid prisoners to sit quietly and secretly in their homes and listen to a brief message by the radio from time to time, telling of God and of Christ and of the blessings that will come through his kingdom. But they need more than that, and God has made provision for it. He has provided for the publication of books, pamphlets and magazines; he has furnished the buildings and the machinery, and put his spirit upon otherwise unlearned men to operate these and produce the books. As surely as the Lord specially qualified men in the time of Moses in the preparation of and the building of the tabernacle, he has specially qualified his servants at this time in the operation of the machines that he has provided for the preparation and manufacture of the books and literature to enlighten the people.

³⁷ Why has the Lord done this? Surely not merely to sell books to get money, as some have wrongfully or ignorantly charged. All the money belongs to the Lord, and he could produce any amount of it to carry out his purposes. His will is that the people shall have a chance to know the truth, and those who make some

little sacrifice by spending a small amount of money to get a book containing the truth will appreciate it more. He has made it possible to produce books in great quantities and at cheap prices. Now God says to those whom he has called to fellowship with his beloved Son: 'Go and carry the message of truth to the prisoners. Say to them, Go forth and take your stand on the side of the Lord; to them that sit in darkness, Come out and show yourselves as on the Lord's side. They that hear and obey shall feed upon the truth and shall rejoice.'

³⁸ This testimony concerning the King and his kingdom must be given to the name of Jehovah, and it must be given by those whom the Lord has called and who are really devoted to him. Those who really have fellowship or partnership with Jesus Christ will walk in the light as the Lord gives it to his people, and will greatly rejoice in obeying his commandments by carrying to the people the message concerning his kingdom. None others will have fellowship with the Lord at this time.

REASONABLE SERVICE

³⁹ The great God did not call his people and tell them to exalt themselves. He did not call them to shine in the eyes of men, but he called them to have fellowship with his beloved Son in doing the work he assigned to his beloved Son to do on earth. When Jesus declares that he was born into the world and came for the purpose of being a witness for the truth, then that definitely establishes the proper course that must be taken by everyone who has fellowship or partnership with God and with him. His course of action brought reproach upon him. Faithfulness of his followers will bring reproach upon them of course; but the promise is that if any man suffer as a Christian happy is he, because that is evidence that he is pleasing to God. We must have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings if we will have fellowship with him in his glory in the kingdom. No one had a keener appreciation of this fact and his privileges than the Apostle Paul. Because of his love for God and love for his brethren and his great desire to see them enter into full fellowship with Christ he said: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Romans 12:1.

⁴⁰ By following such a course the Christian sacrifices his good name, fame and reputation amongst men of the world. He will also be using up his strength in bearing the message to others as the ambassador of the Lord. But such is his reasonable service, and is the condition and obligation laid upon those who will have fellowship with Christ Jesus here and in his kingdom. God made this provision and called those that love him to such fellowship.

PROOF OF LOVE

⁴¹ Loyalty and faithfulness is that which God requires of those whom he will approve. He outlined a portion

for the Christian and provides it for him that he might have the opportunity to prove his loyalty and faithfulness. Loyalty and faithfulness can be the result of but one right motive, to wit, love. That means an unselfish devotion to God. When one devotes the qualifications with which God has endowed him unselfishly to the performance of the mission given to the Christian, he is but pursuing the course which Jesus blazed and one which is required of those who have fellowship with Christ Jesus our Lord.

⁴² How can a Christian prove his love for God? The Apostle John answers: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth, is not made perfect in love."—1 John 4:17, 18.

⁴³ That means of course that the Christian will speak the truth in the love of the truth firmly, boldly, and give the Lord credit therefor. It means that he will not fear what man or the Devil or any part of the Devil's organization might do unto him. The Apostle Paul declared that he counted not his life dear unto him and that no amount of persecution or threats deterred him in the performance of his duty. He was following in the course that the Lord had marked out for him. The Christians of this day must do the same thing.

⁴⁴ In order for the Christian to partake of the resurrection of Christ and to participate with him in his glorious and blessed work of the kingdom, he must first partake of or have partnership in the sufferings of Christ while on the earth. That will mean that he must take his stand unequivocally on the side of the Lord. He must refuse to have any part in or sympathy with the Devil's organization. He must hold himself aloof therefrom and refuse to practise any of the ceremonies inaugurated and practised by ecclesiasticism, which is a part of the Devil's organization. He will necessarily be the target for the darts of the Devil and his emissaries. By following this course and giving a true and faithful witness to God and to the Lord Jesus Christ, he will have the testimony that he is the Lord's and will know that his loyalty and faithfulness will bring God's approval.

⁴⁵ The crucial hour for the church and for the world is here. The forces of evil are arrayed against the Lord and against his anointed. The time is at hand when the Lord will exalt his name in the earth. This he will do by a demonstration of his power. But before he does so, his purpose is to have those whom he has called give notice thereof to the peoples and nations of the earth.

⁴⁶ Long centuries ago Jehovah promised that he would produce The Christ and through The Christ he would bless all the families of the earth. God is faithful to his promise. He has called the members of the body of Christ to fellowship or partnership with his beloved Son in the wonderful work that he has assigned to him.

Of these he requires loyalty and faithfulness in the performance of duty before giving his final approval. Each one of the called and anointed ones must now speak the same message of truth. Each one of these, being a watchman and a witness for the Lord, will see eye to eye the great truths as God unfolds them to his people. Together they will lift up the voice. Harmoniously and unitedly they will move out in solid phalanx in giving testimony against the enemy, and will join joyfully in proclaiming the name of God and his Christ and telling the people that the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

State five facts connected with the outworking of the divine plan for human salvation. Who has opposed the outworking of that plan, and what two methods has he used in thus opposing? To what extent have Christians escaped from the confusion upon the world? What special light are the obedient ones now enjoying? ¶ 1, 2.

Name five steps to be taken by all who desire to enter into covenant relationship with God. What part does the Advocate, Christ Jesus, take in this transaction? What part does Jehovah God perform? ¶ 3, 4.

Cite three illustrations of the confusion respecting the purpose of consecration now existing among professed Christians, and point out the error contained in each view. ¶ 5-11.

Why is it essential that a Christian understand the purpose of consecration? What is meant by the expression, "called of God"? What class of people are called? How do such show their loyalty and faithfulness to God? Demonstrate that "developing character" is not the purpose of the Christian's call. ¶ 12-14.

What is the meaning of the word religion? How do we account for the many religions practised throughout the earth? What definition of the word religion does the Apostle James give? Why are Christians in great confusion on this subject of religion? ¶ 15, 16.

What wrong idea of Christian fellowship have some of the Lord's people held? What is the correct meaning of that term? What is it to have fellowship with our Lord and King? Give Scriptural proof that this is the true meaning of the term fellowship. What is meant by walking as our Lord walked? ¶ 17-21.

What has been Jehovah's purpose in having witnesses upon earth? Name some of his faithful witnesses in the past, and point out that to which they witnessed. What success did they meet? Who was interested in defeating their purpose? Did he succeed? ¶ 22, 23.

What did our Lord state to be the purpose of his consecration? What was his mission on earth? What course of action did he pursue in carrying out his mission? ¶ 24-27.

How may we determine whether we are walking in the light or in darkness? What class in the church is especially liable at this time? Why? What great mistake are some of them making, and what effect has their example upon others? What evidently is the duty of the faithful with respect to such elders? What faithful apostle set the example for both elders and ecclesias to follow? What did he say on this subject? ¶ 28-30.

What work has the Lord given his people to do at this time? What evidence have we that this work is blest of the Lord? What two great examples of faithfulness in this work are mentioned in the New Testament? Quote scriptures to prove that theirs was a house-to-house work. ¶ 31-33.

What answer should we give to those who claim that present conditions require a different method in our day?

What great advantages have we that the early church did not have? What method of witnessing is the Lord especially blessing today? What class of people is it reaching that have been inaccessible heretofore? What change is it producing in the house-to-house canvassing? How do we know? What message is given at this time? ¶ 34-38.

What constitutes our reasonable service today? What results may we expect if we render that service? What blessings accompany it? ¶ 39, 40.

What does God require of those who will receive his approval? What motive must be present if one would possess these qualifications? How can one prove that he loves God? What makes a true Christian fearless at this time? ¶ 41-43.

What must one do who wishes to partake of the first resurrection? What does this mean that he will do? In what sense is the present "the crucial hour for the church and the world"? What is Jehovah God about to do? Who are God's watchmen? What is their duty at this time? ¶ 44-46.

ISAIAH TEACHES RIGHT LIVING

—DECEMBER 4—ISAIAH 3:1 TO 5:30—

"Pure religion and undefiled before God our Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."—James 1:27.

THE Prophet Isaiah is ever a messenger of restitution. After describing the terrible conditions of Israel which were before us in our last study, he tells how Jehovah, the mighty One of Israel, for his own sake and for his people's sake will ease himself of his adversaries, and will avenge himself of his enemies. The enemies in this case are not those outside Israel, but are Israel's own leaders. Isaiah speaks of them thus, "Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: everyone loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them."—Isaiah 1:23.

² These leaders of God's people will be destroyed, as such. Then Jehovah will turn his hand upon his people, and will purge away their dross. He says, "And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city." (Isaiah 1:26) This is distinctly a prophecy of Israel's restitution.

³ Probably there is a double reference here: (1) To the restoration of the city of Jerusalem and Zion's return from the captivity which Isaiah sees coming upon Israel, and (2) to the restoration of Israel's order of government as it was instituted by Moses, when there were seventy elders or counsellors who were made sharers with him in the government of the people. It was after the Babylonian captivity that the Sanhedrin was formed, a people perhaps guided thereto by this passage in Isaiah.—See Numbers 11:16; Exodus 24:1, 9.

⁴ After this prophecy of Israel's restitution Isaiah tells of the blessing that shall come to the Gentile peoples, the nations. This is typical of Isaiah's message; for whenever he tells of Israel's being blessed of Jehovah he always associates the peoples of the earth with that blessing.

⁵ Very early in his prophecy (Isaiah 2:11) Isaiah uses the phrase "in that day"; afterwards it was used very frequently by him and by other prophets, as any full reference Bible or concordance will show. "That day" is the day of Jehovah, when he begins and continues that great work in the earth which ends in the estab-

lishment of the kingdom of righteousness. It is the great day of trouble for God's enemies, and upon all those who have refused to hear his warnings, but of blessing for those who have served him; and it brings blessing for those of the world who will learn the ways of righteousness, accepting the rule of the King set in Zion.

⁶ Our present study continues to tell of the trouble which Isaiah foretold was to come upon Jerusalem and Judah. He foretells the time when everything that has been considered stable and necessary to a well-ordered state of society shall be taken away or broken down. There will be famine; there will be a lack of confidence in the mighty man, the judge, the prophet, and the leaders who have been supposed to have wisdom to guide the people. Children will be exalted to be princes; and the people be oppressed not only by their rulers, but everyone by another, everyone by his neighbor; children would behave themselves proudly against their elders. So low is the condition of life pictured that a man will say to his brother who has no qualifications for rulership, save that he has clothing, "Be thou our ruler, and let this ruin be under thy hand." The prophet gives the reason for the desolation. He says, "Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen; because their tongue and their doings are against Jehovah, to provoke the eyes of his glory."—Isaiah 3:1-8.

⁷ Isaiah again shows the need of Jehovah's intervention if his people are to be delivered. Jehovah says, "As for my people, children are their oppressors and women rule over them. O my people, they that lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths." (Isaiah 3:12) But the Lord will stand up to plead for and to judge the people, and will say to the oppressors, "What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord of hosts." (Isaiah 3:15) After denouncing the wrong of the leaders of Israel, the prophet turns to the women; and, describing their pride in their many changes of apparel and their adornments, so numerous, he declares that the Lord will strip them and disclose their nakedness.

⁸ These terrible pictures are descriptive of those many

sects of Christendom which in the Scripture symbolisms are called women, as for example Great Babylon, the great false Christian system, is called the "mother of harlots". (Revelation 17:5) These sects have adorned themselves to be seen of men, and have endeavored to attract the world to them that they might be made prosperous. In the sight of God they have been profligates, and have sought their pleasure and their increase from men and from the arrangements which this world affords, rather than from God. Isaiah in a strange passage tells how "in that day", the day of the Lord's kingdom, "seven women shall take hold of one man." (Isaiah 4:1) They offer to eat their own bread, and provide their own clothing, but wish to be called by the name of the man, "to take away our reproach."

⁹ This is not a mere reference that at the end of the age there will be more women than men, as some have thought; but that the many church systems will find that they have a need of the protection from danger which a man is supposed to provide for his wife. Thus this passage has been interpreted as showing that there will be a desire on the part of many of the non-conformist sects to combine with the older established systems, such as the church of England, or even the church of Rome which, by reason of their definite constitutions, may be looked upon as masculine rather than feminine. The prophet shows that in that day the Lord will begin to judge his people and purify them; that all those who profess his name will be subjected to the fires of purification.

¹⁰ In the form of song to Jehovah Isaiah tells how God's people Israel had been to him as a vineyard planted on a very fruitful hill. He had fenced it round about, had gathered out the stones, had planted it with the choicest vine trees, had built a tower in the midst, and had hewn a wine-press therein; for he looked for the harvest of grapes. But the vineyard brought forth wild grapes.

¹¹ In this brief but graphic picture God's disappointment with his people Judah is portrayed. The prophet, speaking for God, asks his people Judah what more he could have done for them than he had done. Why had they been as a good vine, and had brought forth only wild grapes? Nothing more could be done; and therefore God said that he would lay his vineyard waste, and in place of the vine there should come up briars and thorns; he would command the clouds that no rain should fall upon it.—Isaiah 5:1-7.

¹² Israel's wrong was that they had sought to join house to house and field to field. Many powers cooperated with each other, and the poor were crushed. The prophet gives a terrible description of the iniquity which existed and of the injustice done as between rich and poor. But God would be exalted in judgment, and sanctified in righteousness, in that he would remove everything that was an offense, and would save his remnant.

¹³ So bold were the people of Israel that they said of God, perhaps to the prophet, "Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it." (Isaiah 5:19) Because of this the anger of the Lord would be kindled against his people; and he would cause the nations from afar, that is in particular, the nations which composed or were members of the Assyrian empire and under the control of the ruthless Sennacherib, to come against Israel. "And in that day they shall roar against thee like the roaring of the sea; and if one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof." (Isaiah 5:30) The coming of the great Assyrian army would be like the dashing of the sea against the shores of Israel, and the sorrow which would be brought would be as the darkening of the heavens.

¹⁴ Again it has to be said that these things written so long ago by Isaiah, and considered by the majority of those who now read the Bible as being written only for his own day, have a much wider and deeper meaning than they had to the people who first read or first heard the prophet's words. We again draw attention to the fact that the words "in that day" always refer to the day of Jehovah, that day when he will establish his righteous rule in the earth, and when in order to do that he will break down all opposition to himself in whatever form it is manifest.

¹⁵ The people of Israel, and especially the nation of Judah, represented God's vineyard. He planted it with care. He had a right to expect much fruit from it. But when he sent Jesus to gather the fruits, that is, to gather those who through the care of the husbandmen would be ready for Jesus and for the work then to be done, the husbandmen, the leaders of the people, thought they had a chance of getting the vineyard as their own permanently. They had reaped the fruits of the vineyard for themselves; and they had used for their own interests their opportunities for serving God; and they said, "This is the heir, let us kill him." God had to destroy those men miserably.—Matthew 21:38-40.

¹⁶ But Israel is only a picture or miniature of the greater thing that God has done, or caused to be wrought out through the centuries that have passed since Jesus was upon earth. Again he planted a vine, and Christendom has professed to be that vine as represented in its branches. They have professed to be the disciples of Jesus, and therefore to be God's vine. But instead of being faithful to him they have brought forth wild grapes; and when the time came for God to send his Son again into the world according to promise, that the fruitage of the vine might be gathered, namely, a people prepared for the work of Jehovah then to be done, Christendom was proved to be false. They had done as Israel had done.

¹⁷ The leaders had allied themselves and their flocks with the powers of the world; they had used their op-

portunities of serving God to their own advantage by blinding the people as to the truth, and causing the people to keep them well-fed and well cared for, the pastors becoming the care of the flock instead of the flock being the care of the pastors. In this graphic way these things written long ago were written for our instruction; that is, that the members of the true church might realize their own position as faithful servants of the Lord and, in being the antitype of Israel's prophets who stood before the people on behalf of Jehovah, to tell them of their sins against God, and to warn them of the consequences which were immediately coming upon them.

¹⁸ That Isaiah and his children are thus typical is declared by himself. He says, "Behold, I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion." (Isaiah 8:18) That this does not refer in particular to his own day is evident from the fact that they were to be signs only when the Lord was established in Mt. Zion. It is true that Jehovah was in a measure established in Zion from the time that the ark was set there, but that was only typical of the true establishment of Zion when God sets his kingdom Zion in power in the earth. It follows, therefore, that when the true Zion is established God has his servant Isaiah and his children as signs and wonders; that is, as representative men who are seen to be doing the work of God in the earth.

¹⁹ This passage in Isaiah's prophecy shows that God has two forces at work in the punishment of those who have so heedlessly and selfishly taken their own way, though they have professed to be his people, and in the destruction of that system of religious worship which they have performed in his name. There is (1) a direct witness against the people for their wrong, and against the institutions which they have supported, and (2) the actual force of destruction which is represented by the Assyrian power which Isaiah saw coming. Organized religion and the world systems which have supported it, and of which it has been considered a necessary integral part, are as surely doomed to destruction as Jerusa-

lem was when the dark hordes of the Chaldeans were loosed upon it.

²⁰ The injunction to right living is therefore not to be considered as being addressed to the outside world, the non-members of churches, but is addressed to professors themselves. Judgment, says the Apostle Peter, first begins at the house of God. It is now too late in the day to save those institutions which have misled the people. But God will save his remnant, and afterwards will establish his kingdom of peace which will bring its blessings to all, even though death has seized them, and those who, according to orthodoxy, are past hope. It is not too late for those who hear the warning cry to free themselves from their bondage in great Babylon's prisons, and share in the last great work which God does in the establishment of the kingdom of his Son.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

What is the constant theme of Isaiah's prophecies? Upon what class does he lay the blame for Israel's deflection? What punishment will overtake this class? Along what two lines may Israel expect restoration? What effect will that restoration have upon the world in general? ¶ 1-4.

Explain the phrase, "In that day," used by Isaiah and other prophets. What will that day bring to God's enemies? To his friends? ¶ 5.

Describe the sevenfold nature of the trouble which was to come upon Israel. What does the prophet say was the cause of this desolation? From whom alone could deliverance come? Why? What two classes are given special prominence in Isaiah 3? ¶ 6, 7.

What reason is here for applying these prophecies to our day? Explain Isaiah 4:1. ¶ 8.

Explain the application of the figure of a vineyard to Israel. In what had Israel's iniquity especially manifested itself? How was the prophet's message received by the people? Which of the great world powers finally destroyed the ten-tribe kingdom? ¶ 9-15.

Apply the figure of the unfruitful vineyard to "Christendom" so-called. Of what class in our day are Isaiah and his children typical? In what way are these "signs and wonders"? ¶ 16-18.

What two forces are at work in the punishment of those who are only professors of Christianity in our day? What will become of their elaborate system of worship? To whom is the prophet's injunction of right living applicable? What great work now looms up before the faithful remnant class? ¶ 19, 20.

ISAIAH COUNSELS RULERS

—DECEMBER 11—ISAIAH, CHAPTERS 7, 31, 36, 37—

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

THE Prophet Isaiah said of himself and his children, "Behold, I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion." (Isaiah 8:18) In this word he gives a definite expression to the fact which is frequently seen in Scripture, and which probably is really always the case, namely, that those whom God chooses for his ser-

vants are identified with that service. God's servants the prophets were never automata: they were never merely writing instruments. For instance: Isaiah was called to walk barefooted for a time; Ezekiel was bidden to lie on his side for many days, while Hosea and his family were called to go through bitter experiences making illustration of Israel's waywardness and God's mercy.

² The prophets of God to Israel were always "sent";

none went out on his own account. It is only to those who are appointed by the Lord that the word of the Lord, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it," can apply. The true prophet must always be charged with his message; not merely moved by his spirit as when Amos said, "The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?"—Amos 3:8.

³ Isaiah was frequently in communication with the kings of Judah; but he was no politician as such; there was no policy which he claimed as his own. He was first and last the servant of Jehovah. His first recorded appearance before the kings of Judah was when Jerusalem was threatened by the confederate armies of Israel and Syria. These kingdoms had joined for the purpose of settling their nominee "the son of Tabeal" upon the throne of Judah. (Isaiah 7:6) Isaiah was told to go to the king Ahaz, as he was superintending the water supply of the city. He was to tell the king to have no fear of the threatened invasion.

⁴ These kings were interfering with God's business, and it was because of this that God sent Isaiah to the house of David to tell them that no enemy would be allowed to interfere with God's purpose to keep the seed of David upon the throne of Judah unless God willed to have it so. By this message God showed that if the people would walk in his ways he not only would be the defence of the throne of Judah, but would see to all that was necessary for the safety of the people and the city.

⁵ Apparently the water supply of the city was inadequate at certain seasons. Yet it may be presumed that as Jerusalem was the place where God had chosen to put his name, there would be no ordinary danger of scarcity of water. Apparently it was only when Judah had forgotten to trust in God that they took these precautions. That Ahaz was a great "religionist" is shown by his building in Jerusalem a fine altar, a copy of one he had seen in Damascus. But he was no lover of Jehovah, as that false action demonstrated. Therefore though Isaiah carried this assuring message from Jehovah to him it did not mean that Jehovah approved of him personally.

⁶ At this time Judah feared the rising power of Assyria, which had already done much damage to the ten tribes. They also feared Egypt, which was again bidding for world power. Since they neglected to place their faith in Jehovah, it was a question with them as to which of these two powers they should make an alliance with. Isaiah's message to Israel was already weighted with the trouble which should finally dethrone the king and break down their kingdom; but God had showed him that out of all the trouble which should come he would preserve to himself a remnant.—Isaiah 1:9.

⁷ In the then threatening trouble from Samaria and Syria a picture was to be made. Jehovah bade Isaiah when going to the king to take with him his son Shear-jashub, whose name means "a remnant shall return".

Isaiah assured the king that not only would this attack not succeed, but that within sixty-five years Ephraim, the northern kingdom, would be broken so that it should no longer be a people.—Isaiah 7:8.

⁸ This prophecy, while in itself comforting to Ahaz, inasmuch as it gave him some immediate relief yet, under the circumstances, must have given him cause for concern for himself. He would see that there was more in Isaiah's words than assurance of present help. The prophet intimated that when he added, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established." (Isaiah 7:9) Isaiah and his son were a witness against the people and the king. The incident was made a test for the king. Perhaps because he showed some lack of faith, it would not be easy for him to drop the scheme of providing water for the city. Isaiah told Ahaz from Jehovah that he should ask for a sign, and whatever it should be God would answer. In an insincere profession Ahaz said he would not tempt God, and refused. His action seemed like humility; but it was not that; for humility would at once have agreed to God's expressed will. Since Jehovah had offered a sign one would be given. Then was spoken that which has become one of the most noted of prophecies, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," quoted by Matthew (chapter 1:23) as having its fulfilment in the birth of Jesus of the virgin Mary.—Isaiah 7:14.

⁹ That this was not a prophecy related only to the birth of the son of Mary is certain from the fact that the birth of the child was to be a sign for Ahaz; for before the child to be born should grow up to know the difference between good and evil the lands of these two kings who were in confederacy to interfere with God's plans should have lost both kings. (Isaiah 7:16) Matthew's use of the text may not be disputed.

¹⁰ Three fulfilments are now seen. It seems reasonable to think that a child was born to Isaiah, and was named Immanuel. God was doing more than speaking by his servant Isaiah to Ahaz and to Israel: he was making the events of that day and time typical of things yet to be. Later another child was to be born and he was to be named Maher-shalal-hash-baz. These two last names mean respectively "God with us", and "speed, spoil, hurry, prey". Here then are three names of Isaiah's children, all with special names; his own name, Isaiah, meaning "Salvation of Jehovah". The times were typical, thus the family was typical. Hence the prophet says, "Behold, I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion."

¹¹ It is important, however, to note that Isaiah associates Zion with the events which were thus portrayed. It is only when the Lord of hosts is established in Zion that these words become living messages. These represent the salient features of the work which Jehovah is doing in the earth. Isaiah, "the salvation of Jehovah,"

represents the general fact of the time when the salvation of Jehovah is being revealed; for the time has now come when the salvation of God, hitherto known only by those who have accepted God's will in Christ, is to be made manifest to all men.

¹² There are three main features or truths connected with the harvest of the age which God has made clear: (1) That he is gathering a remnant out of great Christendom; (2) that the time of his presence has come, namely, his representative Immanuel, the glorious Christ, is now with his people, God with us; (3) that this necessarily brings a time of fierce judgment on all those things which are contrary to the will of God. The spoiler comes, and makes haste for his prey. Christendom is being broken up; and there is a great and terrible destruction coming, so that unless heaven interfered there would be no flesh saved.

¹³ Isaiah as a messenger of Jehovah represented one phase of the destroying power; for he was to preach the word which should act upon the people to bring them to judgment. Besides this the Assyrian would surely come upon them. This corresponds with the present time; for Christendom is now threatened by two forces: (1) That which may be called the onslaught of the truth, which in ever increasing force batters the walls of great Babylon; (2) the destructive force of irreligion, ever growing in intensity. Probably it is true to say there is no more suggestive Bible picture than this which gives us part of our present study.

¹⁴ After these things Isaiah's prophecies tell of events in the days of Hezekiah. Hezekiah was one of the outstanding men of the Old Testament, both because of his loyalty to Jehovah and because of his ability. In his day the Assyrian power was becoming more and more aggressive. The kingdom of Judah was not in itself sufficiently attractive to tempt the Assyrian to leave Mesopotamia; but it was on the road to Egypt, and was liable to be overrun with one or the other of these world powers.

¹⁵ In the second passage there is to be noted a similarity between the words of Rabshakeh, which we must suppose he spoke on behalf of his master, the Assyrian king, and those spoken by Pharaoh to Moses, when he said that Jehovah had sent him. "Who is Jehovah?" said Pharaoh. Rabshakeh said that which amounted to the same thing. To the people he said, "Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria. What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? . . . Who are they among all the gods of these lands that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?" (Isaiah 36: 4, 20) It may be expected that Jehovah would not allow this challenge to go by.

¹⁶ It was a day of humiliation for the people, as they must hear these things. The more ready among them might have thought that Jehovah would smite the blasphemer as his words came out of his mouth. But God had a vastly greater lesson to teach both Israel and As-

syria than such an immediate act could give. His plans must mature.

¹⁷ At this time Sennacherib, Rabshakeh's king, sent Hezekiah an insulting letter. Hezekiah laid it before Jehovah. God heard his pleading for the honor of his name. Isaiah was sent to him to tell him that the Assyrian "shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there", that God would defend it, "for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake." (Isaiah 37: 33-35) God took the Assyrian in hand. In one night the whole of the Assyrian army was slain. We are not told how; it is merely said the angel of the Lord went forth, and in the morning they were all dead men.—Isaiah 37: 36.

¹⁸ Here is a set of circumstances so extraordinary as mark themselves out as typical. Because Sennacherib lifted up his hand against God his army was smitten as it were with the breath of God. Jerusalem and Hezekiah and Isaiah and God's people were preserved from that attack which threatened to destroy them. The typical pictures which are here drawn evidently represent a series of experiences which come upon the church towards the end of the time of her work on earth. The Assyrian attack represents an attempt on Satan's part against God's organization. The forces under his control are a combination of the kingdoms over which he ruled. Without question Satan will yet gather his forces together to break in on God's organization as it is represented in the earth. But that will be the signal for the destruction of all his forces. Let the people of God take heart. Zion, God's organization, cannot be broken by any power of the enemy, but shall prevail.

QUESTIONS FOR BEREAN STUDY

Give several illustrations of the fact that God's servants are always identified with his service. What wrong idea regarding the origin of prophecy have some held? ¶ 1, 2. Account for Isaiah's familiarity with the court circles of his day. What foreign invasion was threatening Judah when the prophet made his first recorded public appearance? What acts of the king of Judah demonstrated that he was a mere religionist? Why, then, did the Lord defend him? ¶ 3-5. What two world powers were a menace to the land of Palestine? Why? What question was perplexing the rulers of Israel? Show that their perplexity resulted from a lack of faith in Jehovah. What became of the northern kingdom? When? ¶ 6, 7. What test did the Lord put upon King Ahaz? How did the test reveal his wrong condition of heart? Quote Isaiah 7: 14, and give three fulfilments of this scripture. What light does the word Zion throw upon this prophecy? ¶ 8-11. What three great truths connected with the harvest of the age have been made clear to the remnant class? What two forces are now threatening "Christendom"? How are these forces pictured in Isaiah's prophecy? ¶ 12, 13. Who was King Hezekiah? Why did the Assyrian forces attack his territory? In what way did Sennacherib's insolence resemble that of the Pharaoh of the Exodus? In each instance what was the result produced by the ruler's insolence? How was the strength of each of the first two world powers broken? Show points of similarity between Hezekiah's experience and that of the remnant class. ¶ 14-19.

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Time and again we have called the attention of our readers not to remit currency in unregistered envelopes. It is a temptation to men to steal. A man who has been in the Postal service forty-two years has been arrested and will doubtless go to prison because he opened our mail and was caught at it by the officials. Not only is it a temptation to weak men, but you lose your money and then cannot understand why you do not hear from us. Please observe what we have said time and again: Remit by post office money order or New York draft. Do not send personal checks on any bank outside of New York.

CANVASSING PARTIES

All canvassing parties and all individuals who canvass should mention the radio station in that vicinity that is broadcasting the truth. This often proves a means of opening the way to place the books into the hands of the people. Have in mind that the chief purpose of the radio is to call the people's attention to the truth and then furnish the opportunity for them to get a wider understanding of the truth by reading what is being printed.

RADIO

A list of radio stations in the United States and Canada which are now regularly broadcasting the kingdom message will appear on the last page of our next issue.

and therefore God permitted them to go in the way of evil and to do those things which are unrighteous. As the knowledge of men increased they have turned that knowledge into selfish and wrongful channels. Satan, seizing upon the opportunity, has builded a mighty organization on earth. In the latter days, due to the great goodness of God, knowledge has increased; but this knowledge has been used among men under the influence of Satan to strengthen his organization. The commerce of the earth, the political machinery of earth, and the organized religion of earth, are all under the control of Satan. He has united these into one mighty organization, which organization is cruel and oppressive. He stands opposed to God and everything that represents God.

⁹ Throughout the ages only those who have been faithful to God have stood aloof from the Devil's organization and refused to yield thereto. Many of these have suffered martyrdom, and over them Satan's organization apparently has triumphed. Many others for a time have stood in opposition to Satan's organization, but under his subtle influence have fallen into his snares. Today upon earth there is but a remnant that is true and faithful to God. Against these Satan and his organization now make desperate assault with the determination of destroying them because they keep the commandments of God and have the witness that they are the Lord's.

GOD'S ORGANIZATION

¹⁰ God's organization is unknown to all except a few. It consists of Jesus Christ, his beloved Son and great High Priest, and a host of true and holy angels, and the members of the body of Christ in glory, and of those anointed ones on earth who are yet faithful and true to the Lord. Over all of these is the great Eternal Jehovah God. The fact that one of his names is Jehovah of Hosts means that he has a mighty army of holy angels that delight to render complete obedience unto him. These not only carry out his purposes in general, but under his direction furnish protection for the faithful ones on earth. God's representatives on earth are small in number and meagre in power. In themselves they have no strength. The faithful ones have entered into the secret place of the Most High; and dwelling there in the shadow of the Almighty God they are safe while the battle rages. With confidence and with a complete sense of security they can perform and do perform their duties.

DIVINE RULES

¹¹ It appears that God has fixed rules of procedure concerning world powers: (1) He manifests toward such his own goodness that the people thereof, and particularly the rulers, may see evidences of his righteousness in contrast with the wickedness of the evil one. (2) He serves notice upon them of his purposes to punish their evil course: (3) He magnifies his own name by a man-

ifestation of his supreme power that all may know that there is no Almighty God besides him and from him alone proceed all things that are good and righteous.

¹² It also appears that another fixed rule of God is that where there is greater knowledge, or opportunity to obtain the same, there is greater responsibility resting upon those who do know or who might know. Having in mind these fixed rules will enable us to more fully appreciate what are the present duties of the remnant and what Armageddon may mean.

BEGINNING OF WORLD POWERS

¹³ Nebuchadnezzar succeeded his father upon the throne of Babylon, a nation that had existed for many years. In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar he had a dream. Daniel the Hebrew was brought before the king and gave the interpretation of his dream. In that interpretation Daniel, the prophet of God, specified four kingdoms or world powers. (Daniel 2:36-40) From the description given, however, and from other facts that appear on the Sacred Record it is manifest that these four are not all the world powers revealed by the Scriptures and that Babylon was not the beginning of world powers.

¹⁴ The Gentile Times began under the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. When Daniel stood before that potentate to give interpretation of his dream he said: "God maketh known what shall be in the latter days." Those words would indicate that God would reveal to his people in the latter days a better understanding of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and of its interpretation, which was in fact a prophecy. God's purpose in making the dream and its interpretation appear so prominently in the Bible must be of greater significance merely than to record a historical fact to be thereafter remembered by the people. It now appears that the primary purpose of the record concerning that world power was and is that God thereby serves notice on the ruling factors of the world that he is the only true God, that his name shall be magnified notwithstanding the enemy, and in his own due time he will demonstrate this to all creation.

EGYPT

¹⁵ It is an indisputable fact that long prior to the existence of Babylon as a world power there were two other great world powers. The first was Egypt. God permitted Joseph to be sold into Egypt, and then to be elevated to a position of great power and authority in that government. There was a divine purpose in this. It was through Joseph that God gave Egypt evidence of his own goodness. That nation was the predominant world power then. That nation received many blessings from God ministered to it and its people through the hand of Joseph, the servant of Jehovah.—Genesis 41.

¹⁶ The rulers of Egypt learned of God and his goodness. Joseph died, and another king arose who was against God and forgot the favors that the empire had re-