

also watch against these beginnings of sin and keep his heart in a cleansed and pure condition, by going continually to the fountain of grace for help in every time of need. He who seeks to live a life of holiness and nearness to the Lord by merely guarding and striving against outward or presumptuous sins, and who neglects the beginning of sin in the secrets of his own mind, is attempting a right thing in a very foolish and unreasonable way. As well might we seek to avert smallpox by outward cleanliness, while permitting the germs of the disease to enter our systems. The bacteria or germs of presumptuous sins enter through the mind, and their antiseptics and bacteriacides of the truth and its spirit must meet them there and promptly kill the bacteria of sin before it germinates and leads us to such a condition of evil as will manifest itself in our outward conduct.

For instance, whenever the bacteria of *pride* and self-importance present themselves, let the antidote be promptly administered from the Lord's great medical laboratory for the healing of the soul. The proper dose to offset this species of bacteria is found in the words, "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted"; and, "Pride goeth before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall."

If the thought presented to our minds be the bacteria of *envy*, then let us promptly apply the antidote which declares that envy is one of the works of the flesh and of the devil, and contrary to the Spirit of Christ, which by our covenant we have adopted as ours. And let us remember that envy is closely related to and apt to be followed by *malice*, *hatred* and *strife*, which, under some circumstances, mean murder, according to our Lord's interpretation.—1 John 3:15; Matt. 5:21, 22.

If the bacteria which presents itself to our minds is *avarice*, with the suggestion of unjust methods for its gratification, let us promptly apply to it the medicine furnished in the Lord's Word, namely, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "For the love of money is the root of all evil, which some, coveting after, have erred from the truth and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

The more attention we give to this subject, the more we will be convinced, from our own personal experiences, of the truth of the Scriptural declarations respecting the beginnings of sin as *secret faults in the mind*; and the more we will appreciate the statement of the Word, "Keep thy heart [mind, affections] with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."—Prov. 4:23.

But we are not to wonder that God has so constituted us as to permit temptations to come to our minds, nor are we to pray that we may have no temptations; for if there were no such presentations, no such temptations, then there could be no victories on our part, no overcoming of

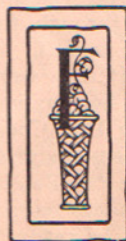
sin and of the Wicked One. But we know that for this very reason we are now in the School of Christ; not that we shall there be shielded from all temptation, but that we may learn of the great Teacher how to meet the Tempter, and, by our Master's grace and help, to come off conquerors, victors in the strife against sin. The degree of our success in this conflict will depend largely upon the keenness of our faith and trust in the great Teacher. If we feel confident of his wisdom, we will follow closely his instructions and keep our hearts [minds] with all diligence. Faith in the Lord's wisdom and in his help in every time of need is necessary to us in order that we may be thoroughly obedient to him; and hence it is written, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your *faith*;" that is, it will be by the exercise of faith and the obedience which flows therefrom that we shall be enabled to "come off conquerors and more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us."

Nor are we to seek Divine aid far in advance; as, for instance, to be kept throughout the year to come, or month to come, or week to come; rather we are to know that if we have made a covenant with the Lord and are his, that he is near us at all times in every trial, in every temptation; and that his assistance is ready for our use; if we will but accept it and act accordingly. Hence, our prayers should be for help *in the time of need*, as well as general prayers for the Lord's blessing and care for each day. In the moment of temptation the heart should lift itself to the great Master, in full assurance of faith, recognizing his love, his wisdom and his ability to help us, and his willingness to make all things work together for good to those who love him. Asking for his assistance in such a time of need would surely draw to us the Lord's counsel and help and strength for righteousness, truth, purity and love; and thus we should be hourly victorious, daily victorious, and finally victorious.

The difficulty with many is that they are looking for some great battles, instead of averting the great battles by availing themselves of the Lord's provision, and keeping their minds cleansed from secret faults. The little battles, which are much more numerous, are the ones in which we gain the victories with their ultimate rewards. "Greater is he that ruleth his own spirit [mind, will] than he that taketh a city."

Finally, the grand results of obedience to this counsel of the Lord, the grand attainment of those who have faithfully kept their hearts with diligence, is expressed in our text, and may well be the repeated earnest prayer of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus—"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION



OR many years the dear friends who regularly meet all over the world for the study of God's Word, using WATCH TOWER publications as helping hands, have been perplexed to know how to advertise themselves. We have continually warned against everything simulating sectarianism and Churchianity. But we have been at a loss to know what to suggest to the friends along this line. It is true that wherever two or three are met in the Lord's name, they would be entitled, if

they chose, to speak of themselves as a Church. But if the name Church be used our friends and neighbors inquire, What Church, What denomination? And we find it impossible to explain to them in a reasonable time that we do not mean a sect or party separate from other Christians. Indeed, there is danger of our losing sight of the fact that we are non-sectarian—that we acknowledge all as brethren and members of our Church, Christ's Church, the Church of God, who give evidence of full consecration to self-sacrifice, following in the footsteps of the Redeemer. There is a disposition on the part of

some, unconsciously, to fellowship only such Christians as are outside of all denominations. Our true position, nevertheless, is that we recognize all loyal to our Redeemer, whether babes or fully-grown, whether in Babylon or out of her, whether they follow with us or indirectly speak evil of us.

Now in the Lord's providence we have thought of a title suitable, we believe, to the Lord's people everywhere, and free from objection, we believe, on every score—the title at the head of this article. It fairly represents our sentiments and endeavors. We are Bible students. We welcome all of God's people to join with us in the study. We believe that the result of such studies is blessed and unifying. We recommend therefore that the little classes everywhere and the larger ones adopt this unobjectionable style and that they use it in the advertising columns of their newspapers. Thus friends everywhere will know how to recognize them when visiting strange cities.

In harmony with New York State laws the association

will be under the direction and management of the Peoples Pulpit Association, which, in turn, represents the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

We have adopted the style *Brother* instead of *Pilgrim*, as requiring less explanation to the public; and the term *lectures* instead of *sermons*, as carrying with it less prejudice. It should be our desire, while holding the Truth in love, to present it as acceptably as possible, giving none offense to any—Jew, Gentile or Christian—seeking in everything to glorify God and to assist his people out of darkness into his marvelous light.

To avoid everything that might be construed as "joining," the membership is confined to those constituting the chartered *Peoples Pulpit Association*. The provision is made that all Bible Student Classes using the Bible Study Helps published by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society may consider themselves identified with the Association and are authorized to use the name "International Bible Students' Association" in respect to their meetings.

## THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND

—MATTHEW 10:1-15.—APRIL 10.—

*Golden Text:—"Freely ye have received, freely give."—Matthew 10:8.*



JESUS had been preaching for more than a year when he appointed twelve of his followers to be specially his representatives sent forth—Apostles. He sent these two and two throughout Judea. They had not the Father's appointment. They had not yet received the holy Spirit from on high and did not receive it until Pentecost, some two years later. The holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:39.) But by virtue of the holy Spirit given without measure to Jesus at the time of his baptism, he conferred upon these Apostles his own special powers that they might heal the sick, cast out demons, etc. But their special mission, like his own, was not that of healing physical ailments merely, nor chiefly. They were to proclaim the Lord Jesus to be the King, the long-expected Messiah, and to tell the people that the time was at hand for the establishment of his Mediatorial Kingdom, in conjunction with their nation. This message would be in harmony with the expectation of all the Jews. For centuries they had been waiting for the fulfillment of God's promise made to Abraham that through them all the families of the earth would be blessed. The miracles of Jesus and the Apostles were to call attention to the proclamation, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." (Matt. 3:2.) This message, in harmony with that of John the Baptist, was expected to arouse all the "Israelites indeed" and to attract their attention to Jesus as the King. They were particularly warned that their message was not for the Gentiles, nor even for their neighbors, the mongrel people called Samaritans. True Jews, and these only, were called upon to make ready their hearts and minds that they might be participants in the Kingdom and its glories. Their message was only "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—V. 6.

They were to make no provision for their journey—neither money nor extra clothing. They were to learn a lesson of absolute dependence upon the Master who sent them forth. They were not to be beggars seeking from house to house. On the contrary, they were to recognize the dignity of their mission and service for God and am-

bassadors of Messiah and were to inquire in each village for the most worthy, the most saintly, the most holy people, because these would be the ones who would be specially interested in their message—whether rich or poor. And such of these as received their message would be glad indeed to treat them as representatives of the King, whose Kingdom they announced. Their stay in each place was to be as guests until they were ready to depart to the next place. On entering into a house they were to salute the householder in a dignified manner, advising him of the object of their call. If received peacefully, cordially, their blessing would be upon that house. Otherwise they were not to lose their own confidence and serenity, but to pass along and look for one more worthy of the message and of them as its representatives. Those receiving them would receive a blessing. Those rejecting them and their message would lose a great privilege.

### THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

Many wonder greatly why it was proper for our Lord and the Apostles to declare the Kingdom of Heaven at hand when, as a matter of fact, it has not yet come and, by the Lord's directions, its followers still pray, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." The understanding of this furnishes the key to the appreciation of much of the Bible that is now misunderstood. We must, therefore, outline the matter in some detail.

For more than sixteen centuries Israel had been waiting for the fulfillment of God's promise that they would become so great that through them the Divine blessing would extend to every nation. Our Lord through the Apostles signified that God's time had come to fulfil all of his promises made to the Jewish nation if they were ready for them. To be ready they must be a holy nation. And to instruct them and prepare them their Law Covenant had been introduced to them through Moses centuries before. And now, just preceding Jesus, John the Baptist had preached to them reformation, repentance, getting into harmony with the Law, that they might be ready to receive the Messiah. While as a people they were the most religious nation in the world at that time, neverthe-