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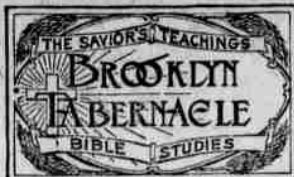
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"NOW IS CHRIST RISEN"

Matthew 28:1-20—December 18

"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world (age)."—Matt. 28:20.

THE Scriptures give very particular details respecting the death of Jesus and his burial in Joseph's new tomb, wherein none had previously been buried and respecting the sealing of the tomb and the setting of a guard lest the body should be stolen at night.



Jesus, the son of Joseph, prepared to be buried in Joseph's new tomb.



He appeared to his disciples after he had risen from the dead.

ably do not now have the same importance that they had when they were written. From this distance we feel inclined to ask about the general character of Jesus' disciples who declared his resurrection, rather than to inquire particularly respecting all the details which they enumerated.

But it was not so at the time of our Lord's death and resurrection. It was then very necessary that every little detail should be explicitly specified. The parts of three days and nights, for instance, were unimportant to them because of Jesus' words, which they remembered. He likened his period in death to the period in which Jonah was in the whale's belly.

"He Rose Again on the Third Day"

With the majority of Christians for these many centuries we agree that Jesus was in the tomb parts of three days and nights; that he died on Friday afternoon, and that he arose from the dead early on Sunday morning.

The sorrowing friends of Jesus did not realize at the time what he had taught them respecting his crucifixion and subsequent resurrection. Hence they were surprised with every incident of their experience on that eventful Sunday morning.

Another account tells us that Mary, separated from the others, met Jesus alone and, mistaking him for the gardener, asked whether the corpse had been removed. They Jesus revealed himself to her. Recognizing her Master she clasped him by the feet as though afraid that he would leave her; but, different from his previous course, he declared, "Touch me not, for I have not yet ascended to my Father and your Father, to my God and to your God."

name, lest he should feel that he was forever rejected because of having denied him!

For forty days Jesus was with his disciples and during that time he appeared some seven or eight times, according to all the different accounts. Once he appeared as a gardener. Once he appeared as a traveler to two of the disciples going to Emmaus. Again he appeared on the shore of the Sea of Galilee to some of the disciples who were returning to the fishing business.

Thus did Jesus demonstrate to his disciples the fact that he was no longer dead, but alive, and additionally, the other fact equally important, namely, that he was no longer alive as a man, but as a spirit being. As St. Paul declares, "He was put to death in flesh, but made alive in spirit."

His Death and Resurrection Needed

It is needless that we seek to dispute as to which was the more important event—the death of Jesus or his resurrection from the dead. Both were equally important. Had he not died there would be no basis for a reconciliation of Adam and his race condemned to death.

Thus Jesus explained to the two with whom he walked to Emmaus on the day of his resurrection, saying, O slow of heart to believe all that God hath spoken in the Law and in the Prophets! Was it not necessary that Messiah should die and should rise from the dead, that in his name repentance and remission of sins might be proclaimed?



Jesus walking with two disciples on the day of his resurrection.



Jesus standing before a crowd of his disciples.

sin and to reform and to live contrary to the tendencies of his fallen nature, because, in so doing, through the Redeemer, he may attain unto eternal life.

The eleven Apostles were commissioned, "Go ye, disciple all nations." (V. 19.) This did not signify, as some suppose, a command to convert the world. It meant that they should make disciples out of people of all nationalities—and not any longer, as formerly, of the Jews only.



THE YOUNG MAN'S ERROR

WHICH LOST HIM A KINGDOM

1 Kings 12:6-16—January 1

"He that worketh with vain men shall be vain; a company of fools shall be destroyed."—(Prov. 13:20.) "Whosoever shall shall a young man cleave his wife? He hath but three things to provide for:—Peace 12:2."—Psalm 127:1.

THE opening of the New Year with all the possibilities thereof for good or for evil strongly resembles the opening of life's maturity to a young man or a young woman. To the thoughtful and experienced there is something very pathetic in the life start of bright boys and girls. Their hopes and aspirations run so high, their ideals are so grand, they have so many air castles. Experience shows that, alas, the great majority of these result disastrously and usually from unwisdom.

King Rehoboam's Unwisdom

When the great king, Solomon, died he left the kingdom to his son Rehoboam—a kingdom which he inherited from the wilderness on the south to the Euphrates on the north, in all nearly as large as England and Wales. It was God's Kingdom, as we read, "Solomon sat upon the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord."



Rehoboam conferring with Solomon's secretaries.

The Crisis and the Error

Besides this, Solomon's great enterprises, palatial buildings, etc., brought the revenue and glory to his capital city, Jerusalem, and did not evenly distribute it throughout the nation. Indeed, following the custom of other kings, wealth was gathered largely from the enforced labor of his subjects, who were compelled to labor at his capital for the common weal without pay.

They sent to Egypt for one of their leaders, whom Solomon had exiled for his outspoken criticisms. Through him the ten tribes had a general conference of their leaders and informed Rehoboam that they were not satisfied with the way they had been treated by King Solomon.

Rehoboam and all realized that a crisis in the affairs of the kingdom had come. The matter was too weighty to be decided hastily. He called for the secretaries of the kingdom, his father's counsellors, elderly men, to know their advice. Their recommendations were good. They recommended that he be a servant of the people; that instead of accumulating wealth at the capital and being personally great, he should serve the entire nation, looking out for all of its interests and forwarding the same—exactly what the ten tribes desired.

The Grievous Decision

Next, Rehoboam called the young men, his friends and acquaintances, his schoolmates, whom he was disposed more and more to bring into power with himself. Their advice was that the one way for a monarch to be successful is to intimidate his subjects and rule them with a heavy hand.



Rehoboam on his throne.

Rehoboam followed the advice of the young men and, in figurative language, said, "You claim that my father made your load heavy, and you ask me to make it light. In my mind, I will add to your load; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."

The king followed the advice of the young men and, in figurative language, said, "You claim that my father made your load heavy, and you ask me to make it light. In my mind, I will add to your load; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."

The greater part of the ten tribes revolted, and the adjacent kingdom, which had been under Solomon's sovereignty also, defected, and left the king but a small minority of his empire, although it was the richest, most influential portion.

The Point of This Study

There is a lesson in this study for all, namely, the importance of wisdom in our decisions, especially the start of life and at various portions of the way, as we come to them in life's journey. To all there is a lesson worth learning in the matter of pride and ambition, threats and unbecoming overness and the operations of such courses, as well as their injustices. Wealth, power, influence, gained through oppression and injustice, are unworthy of noble minds, and this principle can be applied on the smaller scale as well as on the larger. It honors the principle of cooperation between parents and children, between husbands and wives. Alas! too often in the home control is held by force rather than by love and esteem and the appreciation of justice and the general welfare.

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