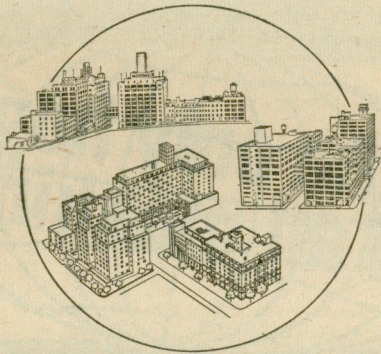


DIVINE RULERSHIP



HOW has the mounting world trouble affected you, our reader? Has it caused you to lose all hope for a brighter tomorrow? It has not affected us in that way. You may wonder why not. Well, it is because we have a hope that is solidly based. In fact, the growing world trouble makes us all the more confident that we have an unfailing hope, the best hope. Our desire is to share it with you. This explains why we are publishing this booklet. It presents in print the public address that features the chain of Divine Rulership Assemblies that is encircling all the earth. May your reading it bolster, if not even rekindle, hope within your heart.

—THE PUBLISHER



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WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
OF PENNSYLVANIA

Publishers

WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
OF NEW YORK, INC.
INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION
Brooklyn, New York

Made in the United States of America

DIVINE RULERSHIP —THE ONLY HOPE OF ALL MANKIND

WHAT can "divine rulership" give to all mankind that human rulership has not already given to the human race? That which human rule has given all mankind till now has certainly not been "divine," as we oftentimes call something that is "surpassingly excellent." Judged in the light of the way that things are going in this world, human rule promises to give us nothing better than what it has already given us thus far. And that is far from being soul-satisfying. Really it is very disappointing. During all the centuries and millenniums past, humankind has proved that all that it can give us people in the way of government rulership is *human* rulership. Since humankind is imperfect, it has been *imperfect* human rulership. The widely held theory of the evolution of man furnishes us no grounds for hoping that men will evolve, during our generation or in the hundreds of millions of years to come, into gods, by sudden "mutations" of a surprising and beneficial kind. Hope for relief from present world distress cannot be based on human rulership.

² Practically the whole world of mankind has been left hopeless. Hope has been explained to be

1. What must be said as regards that which human rulership has given all mankind thus far, and what about basing hope for the future on the outworking of the evolution theory?
2. (a) What has hope been explained to be, and what kind would a hope for all mankind be? (b) How does the United Nations rate as a world hope, and what if it were put out of action?

"expectation of something desired," or, "desire accompanied by expectation of its being satisfied." Hope may also be taken to mean "a person or thing that expectations are centered in." All of us have petty individual hopes and fears, but would it not be wonderful if there was a hope in which all mankind could share, regardless of race, color, nationality or social position? It would be wonderful, indeed, for it would be nothing selfish, nationalistic, racial, but it would satisfy the common desires and needs of all mankind. The United Nations as an organization for world peace and security, after nearly thirty years of operation, has failed to be or to provide such a hope. The adding of more nations to it as members will not turn its failure into success. On a world scale, the United Nations has been the biggest thing that mankind has been able to offer for urgent human needs. Many persons wonder, If the United Nations were to be forcibly put out of action as the previous League of Nations was, what else would there be for mankind to offer?

³ There is no doubt about it: mankind is at its wit's end! The number of thoughtful persons is increasing who honestly admit that human rulership has failed. Their hopes based on man have been blasted. The saddest thing about it is that they have no further hope with which to comfort themselves and to comfort others. All they now have is a yearning for something, a craving for something that has no definite shape or sharp outline in their minds, without any idea of how or from where this heart-satisfying thing is to come or can be expected.

3. What yearning do the many persons have whose hopes based on men have been blasted?

⁴ However, although the already desperate and continually worsening world conditions have killed the hopes of unnumbered persons, these very same conditions imparted fresh vigor to the heightened hopes of others. They are not like the mariners who go down to the sea in ships and who are caught in a terrible storm, concerning whom the ancient lyric writer says: "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end."—Psalm 107: 23-27, *Authorized Version*.

⁵ Who are these exceptional persons, whose hopes keep getting brighter and brighter as the world distress continues and worsens? What have they got that other people do not have? These are the ones who follow the sound advice of the ancient lyric writer who said: "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man, to whom no salvation belongs. His spirit goes out, he goes back to his ground; in that day his thoughts do perish." (Psalm 146:3, 4) That ancient writer advised us not to pin our hopes to human rulership, and so those following this advice today look beyond human rulership. But where else is there to look? Those who uphold the theory of human evolution and those who follow the philosophical theory of materialism say there is nothing else to look to but material things like humans. That is why they find themselves hopeless and will at last become desperate. Their theories are not only unsatisfying but also unconvincing, for they are unreasonable

4. How have world conditions affected the hopes of some expectant persons, and so they are unlike what mariners?

5. (a) What sound advice of the psalmist do these exceptional persons follow? (b) Contrary to what theories, there is what beyond human rulership to which to look?

and contrary to the facts of history. But there is indeed something beyond human rulership to which to look. What is that? Divine rulership! To this the hopeful people of today look!

THE THING IN WHICH TO CENTER OUR HOPES

⁶ To this the ancient lyric composer points us. Speaking from his own experience and observation, he continues on to say: "Happy is the one who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in Jehovah his God, the Maker of heaven and earth, of the sea, and of all that is in them, the One keeping trueness to time indefinite, the One executing judgment for the defrauded ones, the One giving bread to the hungry ones. Jehovah is releasing those who are bound. Jehovah is opening the eyes of the blind ones; Jehovah is raising up the ones bowed down; Jehovah is loving the righteous ones. Jehovah is guarding the alien residents; the fatherless boy and the widow he relieves, but the way of the wicked ones he makes crooked. Jehovah will be king to time indefinite." —Psalm 146:5-10.

⁷ Because of human rulership and its shortcomings and inabilities, are you one of the "defrauded ones," or of the "hungry ones"? Are you one of "those who are bound," or of the "blind ones," or of the "ones bowed down"? Are you an 'alien resident,' or a "fatherless boy," or a "widow"? Then this King mentioned and named by the ancient lyric writer is the One to whom to look. His rulership is a divine rulership, for he as Ruler is God. He is not a nameless God whose

6. To what is it that the ancient writer points us in Psalm 146: 5-10?

7. Who, then, today need this divine ruler, and how outstanding is his name?

personal identity is lost among all the hundreds of millions of gods that are worshiped in India and the rest of the inhabited earth. He is a God who was not named by men, but is a God who gave himself his name, a name by which no other god in heaven or on earth is named. The inspired lyric writer mentions the divine name seven times, and it is Jehovah.

⁸ Wrongly informed, prejudiced persons may try to discourage you from having anything to do with this God, Jehovah. But you have happiness awaiting you, even in these dismal times, if you rest your hope in Him. The ancient lyric writer said: "Happy is the one . . . whose hope is in Jehovah his God." (Psalm 146:5) Nineteen centuries ago a man whose hope was in Jehovah called Him "the God of hope" or "the God who gives hope." (Romans 15:13) He is the Only One who can give to us a hope in which all mankind can share, for He is the Creator of the human race. In Him alone is the hope of all mankind. The divine rulership that He provides is the hope of all mankind. If He did not provide this, there would be no other hope for all mankind. In order that people of all races, tribes, nations and languages might have this divinely guaranteed hope He caused the sacred inspired Book, the Holy Bible, to be written. By means of this marvelous Book, which is written over God's name, you can learn all about this sure hope.

⁹ This Divine Being, Jehovah, long ago saw that

8. (a) A person will be happy if he puts his hope in whom, and what does Romans 15:13 call Him? (b) In order for people of all kinds to have this divinely guaranteed hope, what did He cause to be written?

9. (a) Because of seeing mankind's need of a hope, what kind of hope did God give them? (b) What prayer was expressed, in Romans 15:13, for those sharing in this hope?

mankind needed a hope, and he set one before them. This hope that He gives has the power to sustain us in the most difficult times and to save us through them until the joyous realization of the hope. That is why, nineteen hundred years ago, it was written to the sharers in this hope: "For we were saved in this hope; but hope that is seen is not hope, for when a man sees a thing, does he hope for it? But if we hope for what we do not see, we keep on waiting for it with endurance." (Romans 8:24, 25) This divinely given hope should fill us with joy and keep us tranquil amid world disturbance, so that our hope overflows and expresses itself to others in their desperate condition. That is why the prayer was offered in behalf of the sharers in this hope: "May the God who gives hope fill you with all joy and peace by your believing, that you may abound in hope with power of holy spirit."—Romans 15:13.

¹⁰ We have to entertain this hope in the midst of a world that is more and more giving itself over to what is evil, under the invisible influence of the unseen "god of this system of things," Satan the Devil. But deliverance from this increasing evil-doing is fast approaching, yes, is now near. That is why the inspired writer when addressing those sharers in the divine hope during the first century of our Common Era wrote them: "I want you to be wise as to what is good, but innocent as to what is evil. For his part, the God who gives peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly." (Romans 16:19, 20) The ancient Hebrew word Satan means "Resister; Adversary," and

10. Whom will God shortly crush under the feet of the sharers in this hope, and in what will this result for heaven and earth?

here refers to the Chief Resister of God, the Resister who started off resistance to God and who leads all other creatures in heaven and earth in resistance to God and his good purposes. God is mightier than this Satan. So God will do the crushing of this Satan, but it will be under the feet of these sharers in the hope that this Satan will lie crushed. This kind of language compares Satan to something that can be crushed underfoot—not a scorpion, but a snake or serpent. What a universal peace this crushing of Satan will result in!

¹¹ How, though, can we be sure that this crushing is of Satan as if he were a snake or serpent? Because here the writer of that letter to the hopeful ones in Rome, Italy, was drawing his pictorial speech from the first book of the Holy Scriptures, or from Genesis. In his entire letter he refers a number of times to the book of Genesis. (Romans 4:3, 9, 11, 17, 18, 22; 9:7, 9, 12) And here the writer was referring to Genesis 3:14, 15, where God seems to be addressing himself to a serpent on the ground but is really talking to the Great Resister who used that serpent. There we read: "And Jehovah God proceeded to say to the serpent: 'Because you have done this thing, you are the cursed one out of all the domestic animals and out of all the wild beasts of the field. Upon your belly you will go and dust is what you will eat all the days of your life. And I shall put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise you in the head and you will bruise him in the heel.'" More than four thousand years later the inspired writer, the

11. In thus speaking of the crushing of Satan, to what was the inspired writer referring in Genesis, and to whom was God there really speaking?

Christian apostle Paul, speaks of that first ray of hope.

¹² We today are more than nineteen centuries closer to the carrying out of that hope-inspiring promise of Jehovah God to crush the real Serpent, Satan the Devil, beneath the feet of the Seed whose heel the Serpent Satan bruised to the death and also beneath the feet of the faithful followers of that bruised One. This means that it is now close to six thousand years since God figuratively pronounced the sentence of destruction upon the first Resister, Satan, for turning the first man and the first woman, from whom all of us have descended, into resistance to Jehovah God. The joining in that Satanic resistance brought death upon the whole human family. It also meant the driving of our first human parents out of the Paradise of Pleasure, the Garden of Eden, and the shutting of all of us out of that Paradise home in which our first human parents had been created in perfection. (Genesis 2:7 to 3:24) Is it any wonder that today, even in spite of all the advances in medical science, all of us are dying and that, in spite of all our improved agricultural methods, the earth is becoming so polluted and ruined as to be unfit to live in as our home?

THE ONE UNDER WHOSE FEET THE CRUSHING OCCURS

¹³ Not one of us has been able to escape inheriting the workings of death in our bodies. This is because we all descended from our God-resisting

12. (a) How long ago is it since that sentence of destruction was pronounced upon Satan? (b) Why is it that we are all dying and the earth is being ruined?

13. Who alone that was born into this earth escaped the condemnation of death from Adam and Eve, and how was this made to occur?

parents who took themselves out from under divine rulership in an earthly Paradise home to under the rulership of God's Chief Resister, Satan the Devil. (Romans 5:12) There is only one man that was born into this earth that escaped inheriting the condemnation of death from the first man and the first woman, the sinful Adam and Eve, and that was the man named Jesus Christ. How did this humanly impossible thing take place? It was because Jesus did not have a human father or life-giver. The egg cell in the body of his human mother Mary was not fertilized by a human husband. It was Almighty God in heaven who infused life into Mary's egg cell and made it develop into a perfect human creature. It was not a new life that the Almighty imparted to that human egg cell. Rather, he transferred the life-force of his heavenly Son known as The Word to the virgin's egg cell and started it growing.

¹⁴ By his angel Gabriel he first informed the virgin Jewess Mary of this miraculous operation and told her that she was to call her child, who would be a male, by the name of Jesus. (Luke 1: 26-38) Thus the man whom Mary later married was not the real father of her son Jesus. (Matthew 1:18-25) Thus, as the Holy Scriptures inform us, Jesus was born "undefiled, separated from the sinners." (Hebrews 7:26) He was able, when a full-grown man, to say to his Jewish critics: "Who of you convicts me of sin?"—John 8:46.

¹⁵ The Great Resister, Satan the Devil, made this Jesus Christ the target of his attacks. Why?

14. (a) Who informed Mary of the coming miraculous birth?
(b) What testimony is there to the fact that Jesus was born sinless?

15. (a) Why did Satan make Jesus the chief target of his attack?
(b) To the fear of what did Jesus not yield, and so what kind of death did he die?

Because he realized that this Son of God was the Chief Agent of God for bruising the head of the serpent or for 'crushing Satan underfoot.' Just as foretold in Genesis 3:15, Satan was at enmity with this Promised Seed, Jesus Christ, and set himself to bruising him "in the heel." But he found that he was unable to frighten Jesus into subjecting himself to slavery to Satan by threats of death, violent death. Jesus did not yield to the "fear of death" at the hands of Satan's earthly agents but kept up his enmity to Satan the Serpent and his agents or "seed." Jesus feared only Jehovah God. For this reason he did not compromise with Satan the Serpent and did not fearfully dodge a violent death at the hands of the "seed" of the Great Serpent. Satan could not make Jesus shrink back even from death like a base criminal on an execution stake. The accusations for which Jesus was put to death were false. He died with a clean conscience in a sacrificial death in behalf of creatures of flesh and blood who were in slavery to Satan the Devil.

¹⁶ By having Jesus put to death under false charges, Satan the Great Serpent was only defeating himself. He was only providing the greatest reason for his own self to be brought to nothing, wiped out of existence. This is the point made in the inspired words written concerning Jesus as a man of flesh and blood: "Therefore, since the 'young children' are sharers of blood and flesh, he also similarly partook of the same things, that through his death he might bring to nothing the one having the means to cause death, that is, the Devil; and that he might emancipate

16. By causing Jesus' death under false charges, how was Satan defeating himself, according to Hebrews 2:14, 15?

all those who for fear of death were subject to slavery all through their lives.”—Hebrews 2:14, 15.

¹⁷ “Through his death” in an innocent way Jesus Christ showed that he was uncompromisingly at enmity with Satan the Great Serpent to the very death. He also vindicated the divine rulership of his heavenly Father Jehovah God as the One to whom all creatures in heaven and on earth, from the highest to the lowest, should be absolutely subject. Would the Almighty, Most High God leave his chief vindicator in the bonds of death and thus deprive himself of any further use of that faithful one? Not according to what Jehovah God had foretold when speaking to the serpent in the Garden of Eden. He had foretold that the wounding of the Seed of the “woman” would be merely a heel bruise, not like being bruised or crushed in the head. So the Almighty God healed the wound by raising Jesus Christ from the dead on the third day, Nisan 16, of the year 33 C.E. God recognized that his Son Jesus Christ had sacrificed his perfect humanity as a sin offering in behalf of all mankind, and therefore God did not raise him to life again as a perfect man of blood and flesh. Rather, God restored him to the heavenly realm from which his prehuman life had been transferred to the womb of the virgin Jewess. God did this by resurrecting his Son Jesus Christ as a glorious spirit creature, clothed with immortality (deathlessness) and with the “divine nature.” (1 Peter 3:18; 1 Corinthians 15:42-54; 2 Peter 1:4) This kind of resurrection made the glorified Jesus

17. (a) How did God not let himself be deprived of his chief vindicator by death? (b) How was Jesus then made far stronger than the Great Serpent, Satan?

Christ far stronger than the Great Serpent Satan and put him in a powerful position where he can "bring to nothing the one having the means to cause death, that is, the Devil."—Hebrews 2:14.

EMANCIPATION!

¹⁸ What does all mankind have to expect from this healing of the bruise that the Great Serpent Satan the Devil inflicted on the "heel" of the Promised Seed of God? Something that all mankind has desired for thousands of years? Yes: *Emancipation!* Yes, freedom from enslavement for all mankind! The stated purpose of the Promised Seed in tasting death as a man of blood and flesh was, not just to do away with the Devil who threatened mankind with death if they did not become his slaves, but also "that he might emancipate all those who for fear of death were subject to slavery all through their lives." (Hebrews 2:15) Some earthly political rulers have been known to free the slave population of their nations from bondage to human slaveholders, but not one of them has been able to emancipate their own peoples or all mankind from the mass slavery of humankind to the Great Serpent Satan the Devil. This is nothing to scoff at, with the idea that there is no such thing as a Devil but the Devil is just a myth. This six-thousand-year-old Devil is smart enough to fool worldly-wise people of today into thinking that he does not exist!

¹⁹ Likely many persons today will say: 'If there is a Devil and if Jesus Christ died nineteen cen-

18. (a) According to Hebrews 2:15, what does all mankind have to expect from the healing of the heel wound of the Promised Seed? (b) Although freeing their slave populations, human rulers have been unable to free mankind of slavery to whom?

19. Why has all mankind not experienced emancipation before now, but what indicates that this is now near?

turies ago to emancipate us from slavery to that Devil, why is it that all mankind has not experienced this emancipation before now? Why is it that all mankind does not feel itself emancipated today, but, instead, we find ourselves enslaved by a system of things the state of which gets worse and worse year after year?" The reason why is that, as the Holy Bible indicates, the time has not yet come for the Promised Seed of God to 'bruise the Serpent's head,' or, to "bring to nothing" Satan the Devil. However, that desirable time is very near now. If, back there in the first century, the Christian apostle Paul could write to fellow Christians in Rome, "The God who gives peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly," this must be very near today, nineteen centuries later. (Romans 16:20) Not just the passage of a long period of time argues for this, but the continuing "anguish of nations" of the earth since the year 1914 C.E. does also. (Luke 21:25) That is why the expectation of those who have the God-given hope gets higher and higher.

²⁰ Before the billions of people who still believe in human rulership will ever be convinced, they must have the full allowance of time for it to be demonstrated that human rulership is (according to their claim) the solution, that it can of itself find the way out and prove to be the emancipator of all mankind. This allowance of time is not yet fully ended. In view of that approaching end, the time is here for people to make their choice of what they want, human rulership first, last and all the time, or God's appointed Emancipator. At the end of the time allowance each one will be

20. (a) In order for them to be convinced, a time allowance had to be made for proving what? (b) Because of the approaching end of that allowed time, what choice must everyone make?

recompensed according to his choice. Then the Divine Ruler will emancipate only those who have pinned their hope to the heavenly Emancipator whom God has provided. Before then the Promised Seed, Jesus Christ, will not bring the long-hoped-for emancipation.

²¹ In the first century of our Common Era, when Jesus Christ partook of blood and flesh on the earth as a perfect man, he knew that it was not then the time for the emancipation of all mankind through a government of his own. He was thirty years of age when he decided upon a self-sacrificing course according to the will of God, and he symbolized the presentation of himself for sacrifice by being baptized in the Jordan River. (Hebrews 10:1-5; Matthew 3:13-17) After that baptism he went alone out into the wilderness of Judea to fast and study over the matter for forty days. At the end of that time he was as fully determined as ever to carry out the divinely marked course of sacrifice, even to the death. On the fortieth and last day of fasting in the wilderness he found that he was not alone. Someone came to him, someone to tempt him away from the way of self-sacrifice. That Tempter was Satan the Devil. He tried to tempt Jesus to a life of selfish gratification and glory and power as a man of blood and flesh. The third and last temptation was the climactic one. Here is the account of this ambitious temptation as recorded by a personal disciple of Jesus Christ, namely, Matthew (4:1-9):

²² "Again the Devil took him along to an unusu-

21, 22. (a) What did Jesus as a man on earth know about the time for the Kingdom, and why did he get baptized at thirty years of age? (b) To what kind of life did Satan try to tempt Jesus, and what was the last temptation he presented?

ally high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him: 'All these things I will give you if you fall down and do an act of worship to me.' "

²³ Jesus did not brush the matter aside and say: 'There is no Devil. So how could he give me "all the kingdoms of the world and their glory" if I performed one simple act of worship to him? How could I even worship what does not exist?' Jesus was not like the nationalistic human rulers of today who resent the idea and even persecute the teaching that "all the kingdoms of the world" are in the hands of the Tempter, Satan the Devil. He did not deny that the Devil existed and that the Devil had the invisible control of "all the kingdoms of the world." He did not deny that the Devil could rightly say to him concerning the "kingdoms of the world": "I will give you all this authority and the glory of them, because it has been delivered to me, and to whomever I wish I give it. You, therefore, if you do an act of worship before me, it will all be yours." (Luke 4: 5-7) Here a real temptation was being presented to Jesus and by a real person who stated the facts of the case. How much Jesus' choice meant for enslaved mankind!

²⁴ The Great Serpent, Satan the Devil, was here not trying to bruise God's Promised Seed in the heel. He was offering Jesus something that would apparently mean avoiding a violent death by "the one having the means to cause death, that is, the Devil." He was offering Jesus world ruler-

23. How did Jesus differ from modern-day human rulers as to their view of Satan's power, and what claim of Satan did Jesus not deny?

24. (a) What kind of rulership was the Devil offering to Jesus?
(b) What was the issue here, and what choice could here have been made?

ship as a man, rulership over "all the kingdoms of the world," human rulership over all the earth. Yes, but "human rulership" as a worshiper of the Devil and under the control of the Devil, a super-human spirit person. The great choice here was between rulerships. The issue was, Rulership! Human rulership or divine rulership? Human rulership as a gift from the Devil and in subjection to the Devil, or rulership at the hands of the Divine Being and in subjection to Him? If Jesus were to choose human rulership for himself like a worldly politician, what hope would that be leaving for enslaved mankind?

CHRISTENDOM, AN EXAMPLE OF THE WRONG CHOICE

²⁵ We are not left to imagine! We have an actual historical example of what it would have meant. Where? Why, right here in Christendom. How so? Well, Christendom claims to be the realm on earth where Christianity is practiced. Many nations and their governments claim to be Christian. Christendom did not start with Jesus Christ and his twelve apostles. Jesus' own earthly nation, the Jewish nation, did not become Christendom's beginning. The Jewish nation as a political body died in the year 70 C.E., fighting there at Jerusalem, not for Jesus the Messiah as King, but for Judaism and its own political independence from imperial Rome. Three years after destroying Jerusalem, the Roman legions captured the last Jewish stronghold, the fortress of Masada, in the year 73 C.E. To this day the natural, Orthodox

25. (a) Where today do we have an example of what would have resulted if Jesus had accepted the Devil's offer? (b) Did Jesus and his apostles start Christendom, or did the Jewish nation become its beginning?

Jews world wide are no part of Christendom, although cooperating with Christendom.

²⁶ Nearly three centuries after the temptation of Jesus Christ in the wilderness of Judea, Christendom came into existence. This was in the days of the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great, who was baptized as a professor of Christianity just before his death in the year 337 C.E. But he had claimed to be converted to Christianity years earlier, in the year 312 C.E. By that time what was called Christianity had moved so far away from the teachings of Jesus Christ and his apostles that there were so-called Christians in military armor fighting for this pagan general and politician Constantine. Besides that, there were bishops in the churches of that day who were teaching the pagan doctrine of the Trinity, a triune God composed of "God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Ghost." Bishops were hotly disputing over whether God was the one God, Jehovah, of the Hebrew Scriptures, or a so-called "God in three persons," all "persons" coequal and coeternal. Constantine tried to put an end to the disputing.

²⁷ As the pagan Pontifex Maximus, Constantine tried to win over all the bishops of the churches. He tried to create a fusion religion, an "interfaith" religion, combining heathen paganism with Christianity. Acting as Pontifex Maximus and hence as religious head of the Roman Empire, he offered the bishops positions of power, prominence and wealth with the Roman government as officers

26. When did Christendom get started, and how, and with what kind of professed Christians?

27. (a) What kind of religion did Constantine try to create, and what did he offer to the church bishops? (b) Who was behind this offer made to the bishops, Christ or Satan?

of the Roman State religion. Here now was an offer of human rulership in conjunction with the political government being made to so-called Christian bishops. Are we to think that Jesus Christ in heaven was here offering such "bishops" a human rulership in connection with "all the kingdoms of the world" that He had refused? Or, was it the Tempter, Satan the Devil, who still laid claim to those kingdoms as having been delivered to him? The right answer is not hard to arrive at: it was Satan the Devil through his Pontifex Maximus on earth who was offering to the bishops a temptation similar to that offered to Jesus Christ. But did the bishops, including the "bishop of Rome," follow Jesus' example?

²⁸ Secular and ecclesiastical history answers No! Many bishops fell for the temptation and entered the imperial service as the hierarchy of the Roman State religion, the Roman State Church. Thus Christendom was born and grew. In the year 378 C.E. the bishop of Rome went so far as to adopt the title and responsibilities of Pontifex Maximus, that had been discarded by the Roman Emperor Gratian. Throughout the following centuries Christendom experienced many splits, accompanied by religious wars, crusades and persecutions among so-called Christians. Many distinct National State Churches were established. Christendom has grown to be the most powerful and numerous religious organization on earth. It has become a spectacle to all the pagan, non-Christian world, now over two thirds of the earth's population. But an example of what? Of true Christianity? Or of a so-called divine rulership

28. (a) Did those bishops follow Christ's example, and so what resulted? (b) What title did the "bishop of Rome" assume, and what happened to the unity of Christendom?

as exercised through a religious hierarchy that cooperates with human kings who claim to have the "divine right of kings"?

²⁹ Was World War I Christian because it began between two European political states that claimed to be Christian? Was the League of Nations Christian because it was backed by the Church of England and because the American clergymen called it "the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth"? Was World War II Christian for the reason that it began with the invasion by armies of one so-called Christian State into the territory of another "Christian" State? Is the United Nations a Christian organization for world peace and security because about half of its 132 member nations claim to be Christian? Are the steady preparations for World War III with nuclear bombs and missiles Christian because Christendom feels obliged to protect herself with such weapons for survival?

³⁰ Look at the conditions in Christendom today after sixteen centuries of her existence. Are the moral degeneration within her, the increasing crime, the social and racial injustices, the oppressions, the economic hardships, the poverty and hunger, the lack of respect for rightful authority, the misgovernment, the madness for selfish pleasures, the lack of love of neighbor which means lack of love for God—are these things the expression of Christianity? Absolutely not! They are the outgrowth of the setting up of Christen-

29. Why do we ask about the Christianity of the two world wars and the world peace organizations and the preparations for another world war?

30. (a) What bad features mark Christendom today, and are these the expression of Christianity? (b) What do these things illustrate as to the choice of world rulership offered to Jesus by the Tempter?

dom in the fourth century C.E. And inasmuch as Christendom resulted from the yielding of the bishops of the churches to the temptations set before them by the pagan Roman Empire, they vividly and painfully illustrate what would have resulted if Jesus Christ himself had accepted the bribe offered to him of human rulership over "all the kingdoms of the world." But did Jesus Christ accept the tempting offer of Satan the Devil? Is he responsible for the world anguish today?

³¹ The Bible record says: "Then Jesus said to him: 'Go away, Satan! For it is written, "It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service."' Then the Devil left him, and, look! angels came and began to minister to him."—Matthew 4:10, 11; Mark 1:12, 13.

³² Flatly Jesus Christ refused human rulership at the hands of Satan the Devil. He recognized the divine rulership, that of Jehovah God. That is why he went up and down the land of the nation of Israel proclaiming: "Repent, you people, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." After his baptism in the Jordan River he had been anointed with God's spirit to preach that message. He sent forth his twelve apostles to preach that same message of hope for all mankind. (Matthew 4:13-17; Luke 4:16-21; 9:1-6; Matthew 10:1-7) Jesus Christ waited upon God to express his divine rulership by establishing the heavenly kingdom in the hands of the Promised Seed who is to crush the Great Serpent, bruising him in the head and thus bringing him to nothing

31. How did Jesus treat the offer made by the Tempter?

32. (a) What rulership did Jesus recognize, as indicated by the message preached? (b) In this regard, what did Jesus wait upon Jehovah God to do?

in order that all mankind might be emancipated. Jesus died faithful to the divine rulership, acknowledging no one else but Jehovah God as the Supreme Ruler, the Universal Sovereign.

THE LONG WAITING IN HOPE SOON TO END

³³ Even after he was resurrected from the dead on the third day, Jesus continued to wait upon God's time for the setting up of the heavenly kingdom over all mankind. With respect to this it was written to Hebrew Christians in the first century C.E.: "But this man offered one sacrifice for sins perpetually and sat down at the right hand of God, from then on awaiting until his enemies should be placed as a stool for his feet." (Hebrews 10:12, 13) This is a reference to Psalm 110:1, 2, where we read: "The utterance of Jehovah to my Lord is: 'Sit at my right hand until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet.' The rod of your strength Jehovah will send out of Zion, saying: 'Go subduing in the midst of your enemies.'" By obeying this command Jesus Christ will have the backing of Divine Rulership and all enemies on earth will be made his footstool, all being completely subdued and destroyed. (Psalm 110:5, 6) So all of us today know what to expect if we line up with his enemies, who are enemies of divine rulership.

³⁴ In the time that yet remains for these enemies, what do they have to offer mankind? Nothing better than what they have already presented

33. According to Hebrews 10:12, 13, till when did Jesus continue to wait at God's right hand, and what does Psalm 110:1, 2 show will happen to us if we line up with his enemies?

34. (a) In the yet remaining time, what does human rulership, yes, the Devil himself, have to offer to mankind? (b) Since the ousting of Satan from heaven, mankind has been made to know the meaning of what outcry in heaven?

to us. What has the invisible one who has the unseen authority over these enemies, namely, Satan the Devil, to offer mankind through the "kingdoms of the world"? Nothing but their being bruised or crushed along with Satan himself under Christ's feet. By the fulfillment of the prophetic book of Revelation, chapter twelve, Satan the Devil and his demon angels have already been cast out of the holy heavens and down to the vicinity of our earth. All mankind has felt the effects of this restraint of the Great Serpent Satan and his demons to our earth, ever since the first world war of 1914-1918. In the more than half a century since then all mankind has been made to know in a most painful way the meaning of the outcry that was heard in heaven at the ousting of Satan and his demons: "Be glad, you heavens and you who reside in them! Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time."—Revelation 12:12.

³⁵ Human rulership, even equipped with all its modern scientific advantages and increased learning, has been unable to remove this devilish "woe" from the earth and from the sea. The "great anger" of Satan the Devil against Divine Rulership will not stop short of leading all the political establishments of human rulership into absolute ruin. If he himself cannot rule over the earth, then he is determined that none of these earthly forms of human rulership shall survive him. In a suicidal attempt, he now leads all political human rulership into destruction under the feet of

35, 36. (a) Has human rulership been able to remove that "woe" from earth and sea? (b) To what extent will Satan's "great anger" against divine rulership go, and how did Jesus describe what this will signify for mankind?

God's Promised Seed, Jesus Christ. This will signify a time of trouble the like of which the earth's inhabitants have never experienced before. Jesus Christ, when foretelling the "conclusion of the system of things," described this, saying:

³⁶ "Then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again. In fact, unless those days were cut short, no flesh would be saved; but on account of the chosen ones those days will be cut short."—Matthew 24:3, 21, 22; Mark 13:19, 20.

³⁷ The horrors of the siege and destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Romans in the year 70 C.E. were just a typical sample of the horribleness of the approaching global tribulation with which Christendom and all the rest of this human system of things will be annihilated. Just as surely as the foretold globe-encircling flood came in the days of the righteous preacher Noah, just as surely as the foretold destructions of ancient Jerusalem came in the days of Jehovah's prophets and of the apostles of Jesus Christ, just so surely this foretold world-wrecking tribulation will come—in our own generation. For almost one hundred years now Jehovah's Christian witnesses have been warning all mankind of this world catastrophe. Not just to prove true what they have been preaching, but rather to prove true Jehovah's prophetic word that they have been preaching. None of mankind can escape it; all mankind must enter into that tribulation of tribulations. The question is, Who of mankind will survive it?

37. (a) The horrible siege and destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. was a typical sample of what? (b) How surely will the world-wrecking tribulation come, and what question about it arises?

³⁸ Nobody on earth will be able to survive in his own strength or by means of what human protective measures that he can take. Christendom will prove to be no haven of refuge and survival just because of parading Christ's name and having crosses on her church steeples. The United Nations, repeatedly called mankind's "last hope," will fail to be such a thing. The regional alliances and treaty organizations of the political nations will fail to carry either the human rulers or the human ruled safely through the unparalleled "great tribulation." Nothing of human devising can serve as a hope. The prophecies of the Holy Scriptures forewarn of this coming desperate plight of all mankind. In the face of this utterly hopeless outlook for the entire human system of things, it becomes plain to every reasoning person that the only hope for all mankind must lie outside the human realm. Mankind's salvation has never come and will never come from mankind itself, as if by mankind's lifting itself up by its own bootstraps. Hence the communistic philosophical theory of materialism, namely, that nothing exists but what is material, leads to a dead end, a *cul-de-sac*!!

WHERE TO TURN IN REAL HOPE

³⁹ Our hope, in order to be something that will be happily realized, must lie in something spiritual. No, not in that spiritual "god of this system of things," the Great Serpent Satan the Devil, the wicked bringer of the present "woe" upon mankind. (2 Corinthians 4:4) He is what the Christian apostle Paul calls "the spirit that now operates in

38. What human means of surviving the "great tribulation" will fail, and so the only hope for all mankind lies where?

39. (a) Our hope must be something in what realm, but who there is excluded from being such a hope? (b) To what does the Divine Ruler tell the "prisoners of the hope" to return?

the sons of disobedience," all of whom have "walked according to the system of things of this world." (Ephesians 2:2) No, we who desperately need a true hope must turn our eyes away from that invisible "ruler of this world." (John 12:31) We must turn our yearning eyes away from his death-dealing, woe-bringing system of things. To what of a spiritual kind and higher than man and Devil must we look? To what alone can we turn with confidence? Down through the hallways of millenniums of time come sounding the words of the Divine Ruler: "Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of the hope."—Zechariah 9:12.

⁴⁰ Those rousing words delivered through the prophet Zechariah nearly two thousand five hundred years ago were addressed to those who sincerely desired to be the favored people of the Great Spirit, of whom Jesus Christ said: "God is a Spirit, and those worshiping him must worship with spirit and truth." (John 4:24) The "stronghold" to which the "prisoners of the hope" needed to "return" was the Messianic kingdom of God, which was represented away back there by the city of Jerusalem, where a king of the royal family of David of Bethlehem used to sit on a throne that was called "Jehovah's throne." (1 Chronicles 29:23) To this earthly form of divine rulership the "prisoners of the hope" had to "return," coming out from their long exile in pagan Babylon, the locality where organized false religion was begun in opposition to Jehovah God in the days of Nimrod the notorious hunter. (Genesis 10:8-10; 11:1-9) In the prophet Zechariah's time this

40. (a) To whom were those words of Zechariah 9:12 first addressed, and what was the "stronghold" away back there? (b) From where did those "prisoners of the hope" have to return, and how was the way to freedom opened?

Babylon had occupied the seat of world domination, as the third world power of Bible history. In 539 B.C.E. Almighty God broke Babylon's hold on its "prisoners" and opened the way to freedom!

⁴¹ A thrilling bit of history that was in the dim ancient past! But it is not dead history. It is *prophetic* history that lives for today and finds its live parallel today, in our generation. That is why this was written and preserved among the prophecies of Zechariah, one of the last prophets of Jehovah before Jesus Christ. Well, then, can we people today be classified as "prisoners of the hope"? Yes, if we see and accept the hope that the "God of hope" holds out before us. The last book of his Holy Scriptures, the Revelation, pointed forward to the existence of, not ancient Babylon, but Babylon the Great in our day. This mightier Babylon symbolizes the world empire of false religion, which has religious connections with the political governments of this system of things, even with Communist Russia. All peoples of the world, whether practicers of the hundreds of religions or stickers to the worldly political institutions, are "prisoners" of Babylon the Great and her political associates. For their salvation, these "prisoners" need to be emancipated, liberated!

⁴² It is highly urgent that this take place. Why? Because Babylon the Great and all her political paramours are doomed now to early destruction! How can men be emancipated from their spiritual

41. (a) Why is that not a mere bit of ancient dead history?
(b) Who are the "prisoners of the hope" today, and what do they need?

42. (a) Why is it highly urgent that this liberation take place?
(b) What is the "stronghold" today to which the "prisoners" must return, and what has Jehovah sent out therefrom since 1914 C.E.?

prison, where there is nothing more to expect than destruction in the coming "great tribulation"? There is only one way to emancipation, and that is by turning to "the stronghold" that Jehovah God has set before all "prisoners of the hope." That "stronghold" is the Messianic kingdom of God, which was anciently represented in the stronghold city of Jerusalem. The earthly Messianic kingdom in Middle Eastern Jerusalem long ago passed away. It has been revived in our time, not over there in earthly Jerusalem, but in the heavens, where the royal Descendant of King David sits, namely, Jesus Christ. His is not some perishable material throne in earthly Jerusalem, but it is really "Jehovah's throne," for he sits at the "right hand" of Jehovah God in the heavens. (Psalm 110:1, 2; Acts 2:34-36; 7:55, 56; 1 Peter 3:22; Revelation 3:21) From there since the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 Jehovah has sent forth the 'rod of Christ's strength.'

⁴³ It is under the feet of this Christ and his faithful followers that Jehovah will "crush Satan" shortly. (Romans 16:20) The kingdom of this Messianic Emancipator is the commissioned representative of the Divine Rulership of the Most High and Almighty God, Jehovah. It is the only hope of all mankind. It is the divinely appointed stronghold to which to turn for freedom and life in endless happiness. Since the close of World War I in 1918 the Christian witnesses of Jehovah have left their spiritual imprisonment in Babylon the Great and have 'returned to the stronghold,' to the established Messianic kingdom of God in

43. (a) What, then, is the only hope of all mankind? (b) Since 1918 C.E. from where and to where have Jehovah's Christian witnesses 'returned,' and how are they telling all other "prisoners" to turn to that "stronghold"?

the heavenly Jerusalem. Despite the worsening fatal world conditions, they are now enjoying their wonderful spiritual emancipation and are rejoicing in their glorious hope for the near future. In great compassion for all mankind they cry out urgently to all the "prisoners" everywhere to 'turn to the stronghold,' as they fulfill Christ's prophetic command: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matthew 24:14.

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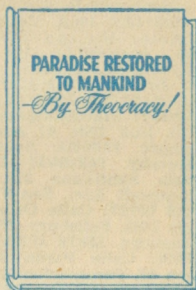
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