

**GOOD
NEWS**

*to make
you happy*

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you happy***

Is there any good news for mankind today? Yes, there is! It is "good news of a great joy that all the people will have"—earth wide. It touches the life of each one of us now, and it tells of a glorious future in which you and your loved ones may share. It is good news to make you happy.

—The Publishers



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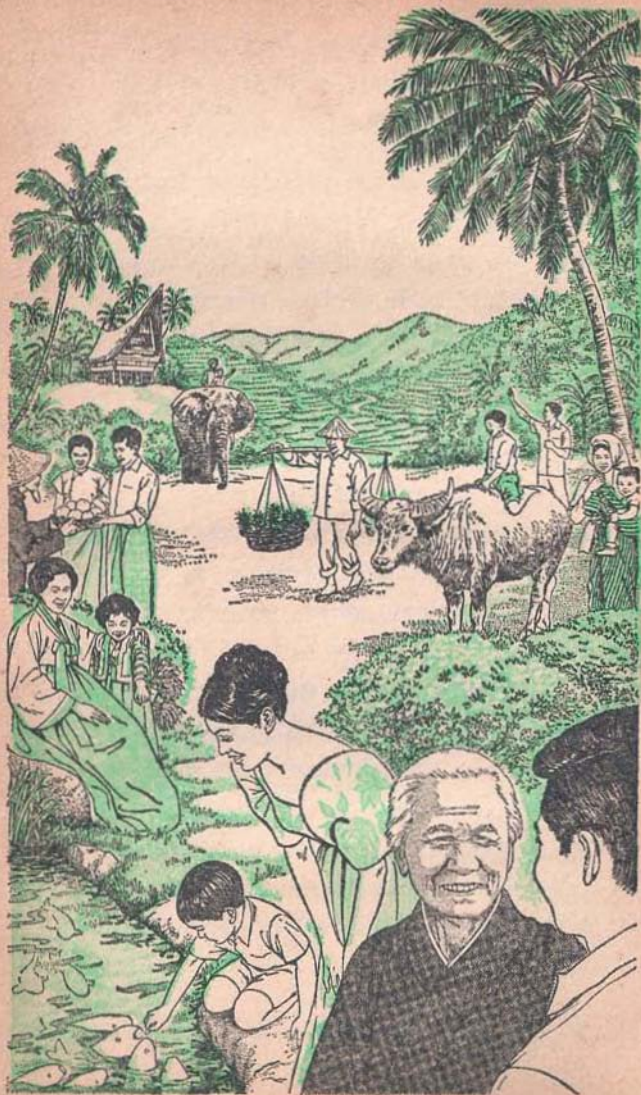
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NOTE: Bible quotations in this book are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, revised edition of 1971.

In connection with dates, the abbreviation B.C.E. means "Before the Common Era," and C.E. means "Of the Common Era."



Where Can Good News Be Found Today?

WE ALL welcome good news, do we not? Well, the purpose of this book is to tell of good news that affects every man, woman and child on this earth today. It points to a bright and secure future for the human family. In fact, when you understand what this good news is all about, we feel sure that you will agree that it is the grandest of good news.

² To be good news to *us*, this news would need to touch our lives. It should cheer us, and encourage us to have an optimistic view of the future. It should help us as we face up to the realities of life. Its effect should be to lighten the burdens that press down on most people during this age of uncertainty. It should aid in removing our fears, and in making life purposeful and worth living.

³ Suppose that each morning as we picked up the newspaper we read headlines like these:

"No Housing Shortage—Secure Jobs for Everyone"

"Record Crops—Plenty of Good Food"

"Racial Barriers Gone"

"Crime Eradicated"

"Global Peace Complete"

"Disease and Old Age Eliminated—Hospitals and Funeral Parlors Closed Down"

1. What would *you* regard as good news?
2. What effect should good news have on us? (Proverbs 12:25; 25:25)
3. What kind of news reports would make you happy?

"Earth's Administrators in Complete Accord—Programs for Full Enjoyment of Life Under Way"

⁴ Surely news like that would make us happy! However, you are probably saying, "That is impossible! It could never happen! That would be a miracle!" But what is a miracle? It is defined as "a marvelous event due to some supernatural agency." And truly we are surrounded constantly by marvels that no natural human agency could bring about or create. Why, life itself is a miracle! And among living things on earth, myriads of miracles are happening every day. The birth of each living creature is a miracle, and so is the blossoming of each flower. The beauty that adorns this earth, and the abundant provision to sustain life on it, cry out that an all-wise, all-loving Creator performed the miracle of producing it all. The good news related herein tells of further marvelous things that he is about to perform in restoring unity, peace and happiness among all his creation.



⁵ Even now, where greedy men have not polluted this earth, all creation testifies to us that

4. (a) Would you consider it miraculous for such good news to come true? (b) Can you think of some everyday happenings that really are miracles? (Luke 12:27) (c) Logically, who is responsible for these miracles? (Acts 14:15, 17) (d) What else does the good news relate?

5. What message do you observe in creation?

the One who designed and made it has marvelous qualities of love, kindness, wisdom and foresight. The glories of his creation are part of his message to us. How restful and appealing to our eyes is the beauty of a green landscape! Yet that same green of the vegetation is the stuff that turns energy from the sun into food to sustain our bodies. A human face has a nose to smell with, ears to hear with, eyes to see with, and mouth, teeth and tongue to eat and speak with. But when all these parts are put together, how beautiful that face can appear in expressing a personality that shows forth Godlike qualities!

⁶ Yes, the marvelous things we see in creation, including the design of man himself, speak to us the message that a Grand Creator lives and has a purpose toward us humans. However, he writes this message, not only in the Book of his creation, but also in black and white in a Book that we today can read in print. In this Book he spells out what he can do in handling the problems and curing the ills that confront us humans today. Consider, please, some examples of what the Creator of our earth talks about doing for his people.

Homes and Secure Jobs for Everyone:

"They will actually build . . . , and plant vineyards and drink the wine of them, and make gardens and eat the fruit of them." "As for the one listening to [wisdom], he will reside in security and be undisturbed from dread of calamity."—Amos 9:14; Proverbs 1:33.

6. (a) In what two Books does the Grand Creator spell out his message for mankind? (b) What hope does Bible prophecy hold out for: (1) Housing and secure jobs for all? (2) Abundant food supplies? (3) Removal of racial barriers? (4) Eradication of crime? (5) Abolition of war? (6) Elimination of sickness, old age and death? (7) Administration of earth in righteousness?

An Abundance of Produce and Food for All:

"The earth itself will certainly give its produce."
"There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth."
"I will exalt you, O my God . . . You are opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing."—Psalm 67:6; 72:16; 145:1, 16.

Racial Barriers Replaced by Brotherhood of Mankind:

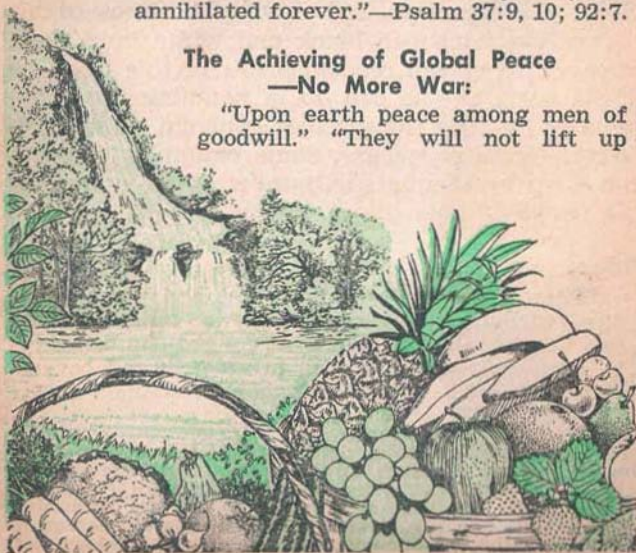
"Look! a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues . . . They will hunger no more nor thirst anymore." "All you are brothers."—Revelation 7:9, 16; Matthew 23:8.

Crime, Violence and Wickedness Eradicated:

"Evildoers themselves will be cut off, . . . just a little while longer, and the wicked one will be no more." "When the wicked ones sprout as the vegetation and all the practicers of what is hurtful blossom forth, it is that they may be annihilated forever."—Psalm 37:9, 10; 92:7.

The Achieving of Global Peace —No More War:

"Upon earth peace among men of goodwill." "They will not lift up



sword, nation against nation, neither will they learn war anymore. And they will actually sit, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble.”—Luke 2:14; Micah 4:3, 4.

Elimination of Disease, Old Age and Death:

“Death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore.” “There were trees of life . . . And the leaves of the trees were for the curing of the nations [of mankind]. And no more will there be any curse.”—Revelation 21:4; 22:2, 3.

One Righteous Administration for All Mankind:

“Look! A king will reign for righteousness itself; and as respects princes, they will rule as princes for justice itself.” “In his days the righteous one will sprout, and the abundance of peace until the moon is no more. And he will have subjects . . . to the ends of the earth.”—Isaiah 32:1; Psalm 72:7, 8.

7 This sounds like marvelous good news, does it not? True, some people ridicule this good news, but they have nothing to offer in its place. You do not need to be like them. You and your family will not lose anything—and can gain much—by examining these grand promises. The good news that we are about to examine has been termed “everlasting good news” that is declared “as glad tidings to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people.” (Revelation 14:6) It tells of permanent, lasting benefits to come to *all* mankind.

7. (a) To how many persons is the good news declared “as glad tidings”? (b) Why may this be termed “everlasting” good news? (Isaiah 40:8)

Making the Book of Good News

WHAT would you expect of a book that provides good news for all mankind? First, it would have to be available in a wide number of languages. Also, its message would have to be meaningful, helping people of all national groups to get the best from life even now, and giving them hope for the future. That is the book we started to discuss in our first chapter. It is:



² What kind of book is the Bible? In the first place, it is a very ancient book, having been started more than 3,400 years ago. It has reached every land and even distant, isolated islands. It may be found in simple huts and modern homes. The book itself has been translated, the whole or in part, into more than 1,575 languages and dialects, so that nearly everyone can read it in his own language. No other book even approaches its circulation, which runs into the billions. Each year millions upon millions of Bibles are distributed earth wide.

³ The Bible is actually sixty-six small books

1. What kind of book would be beneficial to all mankind?
2. (a) How old is the Bible? (b) Why can most people read it in their own language? (c) As to circulation, how does the Bible compare with other books? (Romans 10:14, 18)
3. (a) Why is "Bible" a fitting name for the book? (b) On what were the original writings made?

combined into one. The word "Bible" comes from the Greek word *bibli'a*, meaning "little books." The word *bibli'a* itself is related to *biblos*, which refers to the soft inner part of the papyrus plant. In Bible lands, an ancient form of paper was made from this. Books of the Bible were at one time recopied by hand on this papyrus paper, though the original writings appear to have been made on processed animal skins.

⁴ The sixty-six "little books" of the Bible were compiled by about forty writers over a period of more than 1,600 years, between 1513 B.C.E. and 98 C.E. All its writers are in complete agreement as to doctrine, and in developing one consistent theme. The result is a remarkable, yes, a unique book of wisdom.

⁵ Some persons divide the Bible up into two "Testaments," and claim that the "Old Testament" is not of equal value with the "New Testament." But this is not so, for it is all one Bible. Also, by "testament" is meant a covenant and there are more covenants than just two in the Bible. It is preferable, therefore, to speak of the two parts of the Bible as the "Hebrew Scriptures" and the "Greek Scriptures," as these were the original languages in which most of the Bible was written. The Hebrew

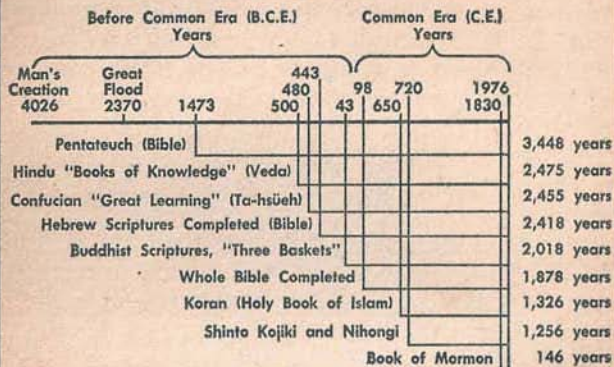
4. (a) How many writers compiled the Bible? (b) During what period did they write? (c) Why is the Bible a unique book of wisdom? (John 17:17)

5. What designations are preferable to "Old Testament" and "New Testament," and why?



AGE OF PRINCIPAL RELIGIOUS WRITINGS

(showing also year each was completed)



[Non-Biblical dates based on "Encyclopædia Britannica," 1971 edition.]

The Bible reaches farther back into man's history than any other ancient writings

Scriptures are an essential background for fully understanding the Greek Scriptures, and the Greek Scriptures are an extension of the Hebrew Scriptures, showing their fulfillment. Each one of the sixty-six "little books" makes its contribution toward rounding out our understanding of the purpose of mankind's Creator.

⁶ Just as the good news in the Bible is provided for all mankind, so too its writers were men who came from many different walks of life. They included shepherds and herdsmen, fishermen and farmers, a doctor and a tax collector. At least two were kings. Others were priests, prophets or scribes. One writer at one time had been a vi-

6. (a) What types of men wrote down the Bible? (b) Why were these things written aforetime? (1 Corinthians 10:11)

cious persecutor of those who believed this good news, but he changed and became one of its most zealous advocates. After his conversion, this former leader in false religion, the apostle Paul, wrote concerning the earlier books of the Bible:

"All the things that were written aforetime were written for our instruction, that through our endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope."—Romans 15:4.

⁷ Though the Bible's greatest distribution has been in countries of the Western world, it is actually an Oriental book. All the men who shared in writing it were Orientals who lived in the Middle East. Most of its action took place in Oriental lands, whose customs it reflects. For example, it depicts the future Ruler over mankind as an Oriental shepherd, caring compassionately for his flock:

"He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has got all his own out, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. A stranger they will by no means follow . . . the fine shepherd surrenders his soul in behalf of the sheep." (John 10:3-5, 11)

What a happy day it will be when we have that once-Oriental Shepherd as our loving Ruler!

HOW THE GOOD NEWS WAS RECORDED

⁸ The men who wrote down the Bible were imperfect, subject to weaknesses and error. As humans, they did not differ from other people. The apostle Paul told men who were wrongly viewing him and his missionary companion Barnabas as gods: "We also are humans having the same infirmities as you do." (Acts 14:15) How, then,

7. Why may the Bible be termed an Oriental book? (Romans 3:1, 2)

8. In what way were the Bible writers similar to us humans today?

was it possible for imperfect men to produce a record that is actually God's message?

⁹ It was because they did not write of their own impulse, but were inspired by God. What is here meant by the word "inspired"? It means that God, the Creator of heaven and earth, moved these men by his spirit or invisible empowering force, putting into their minds what they should write down as his "word," or message, for mankind. For example, the psalm writer David said:

"The spirit of Jehovah [God] it was that spoke by me, and his word was upon my tongue." (2 Samuel 23:2)

And concerning prophetic messages, the apostle Peter wrote:

"No prophecy of Scripture springs from any private interpretation. For prophecy was at no time brought by man's will, but men spoke from God as they were borne along by holy spirit."—2 Peter 1:20, 21.

¹⁰ It was no problem for God, the Supreme Being and Creator of all the universe, to convey messages to faithful men on earth. In modern times men have traveled to the moon, and the messages they sent back from there to earth by radio came through clearly and understandably from over 400,000 kilometers out in space. Also, TV pictures were transmitted over all that distance, so that men on earth could actually sit in their homes and watch astronauts walking about on the moon. If man can transmit messages in this way, how easy must it be for the Creator of

9. How could imperfect men produce a perfect message for mankind?

10. (a) Why would it be easy for God to transmit messages to faithful men? Illustrate. (Exodus 34:27, 28; Jeremiah 1:1, 2, 9; Ezekiel 1:1; Daniel 7:1) (b) What directed the assembling of the complete Bible, and what is this called? (Revelation 22:18, 19)

all things to transmit messages and visions to men on earth, even from beyond "the heaven of the heavens"! (1 Kings 8:27) As God conveyed his thoughts to the minds of Bible scribes, they wrote these down as "the word of God"—his message. (Hebrews 4:12) God, by his spirit, also directed men to assemble these sixty-six "little books," and these only, to make up the complete Bible, known as the Bible "canon."

AN ACCURATE AND RELIABLE RECORD

¹¹ An amazing thing about the Bible is the carefulness with which it records details, and also its complete harmony. For example, in Genesis, chapters 5 and 10, it sets out the family lists from the time of the first man Adam to that of the sons of Noah, covering a period of more than 2,000 years. Later, the priest Ezra wrote First Chronicles and devoted the first nine chapters to repeating and enlarging on these previous family lists, bringing the record down through another 1,500 years of ancient history to the time when the Israelites returned from captivity in Babylonia. Still later, both Matthew and Luke, in their Gospels, repeated essential parts of these earlier records, and extended the Bible family lists down to Jesus Christ. (Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38) Thus, under the direction of God's spirit, the Bible writers made a permanent record of the line of descent from our first ancestor, Adam, down through more than 4,000 years to Jesus, the "Son of man." Of his own Gospel account, the physician Luke wrote:

"I have traced all things from the start with accuracy, to write them in logical order." (Luke 1:3)

The record is indeed accurate and logical.

11. Illustrate the accuracy and logical arrangement of the Bible.

¹² The Bible speaks of early 'histories.' (Genesis 2:4; 5:1) These may have been transmitted by word of mouth. But in this event how could accuracy have been ensured? God created the first man, Adam, perfect. Later, he rebelled against God, so that God sentenced him to die. However, it took a long time for his once-perfect body to deteriorate to the point of death. He lived for 930 years, into the time of Lamech, the father of Noah, who could thus learn early history directly from Adam. Lamech could communicate all of this to Noah, and to Noah's son Shem, whose near-perfect physique enabled him to live on for 500 years after the Flood. Shem would be able to convey to Abraham and to his son Isaac detailed information about the pre-Flood world. Isaac could relay this on to his grandson Levi, and evidently Levi to his grandson Amram, the father of Moses. Thus, in relating early history by word of mouth, only five links would be needed between Adam and Moses—Lamech, Shem, Isaac, Levi and Amram.

12. How may Moses have obtained information on early history?



¹³ However, due to inherited imperfection, and probably due also to changed conditions following the Flood, mankind was growing progressively weaker, Isaac living only 180 years, and Moses, 120 years. As man's life-span dropped toward seventy or eighty years, the Creator saw fit to have mankind's early history preserved accurately as a permanent record. Thus we would always have the reliable information concerning mankind's beginnings. The Creator used Moses, under inspiration, to compile this record, which became the first part of the Bible.

13. Why did the Creator make a record of early history, by means of inspiration? (Psalm 102:18)

God's spirit guided selection from earlier records



Visions while awake



Dreams while asleep



¹⁴ Who was this Moses? He was a descendant of Abraham, the Hebrew, and was born when his people, the Israelites, were slaves in Egypt. As the adopted son of the daughter of Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, Moses was raised and educated in the royal court. However, when it came to an issue, he showed that he valued the spiritual riches that he could enjoy with God's people as far greater than all the material wealth he might have had in Egypt. He chose to be ill-treated along with God's own people. In the course of his life experience in Egypt and later as a shepherd in the wilderness, he cultivated great faith in God and came to be "by far the meekest of all the men who were upon the surface of the ground." (Numbers 12:3) He was well qualified, not only to lead the nation of several million Israelites out of Egypt, but also to serve as God's scribe, under His spirit, in writing the first part of the Bible record. After him, other men of like faith continued to add to the Bible record, until it was completed, 1,600 years later. It is of real interest, and of value to us today, to review what these Bible writings contain.

14. (a) Who was Moses? (Hebrews 11:23-27) (b) Why were Moses and later writers well qualified to make the Bible record? (Acts 3:21)

What the Book Contains

WHEN you pick up a Bible, what is your impression? Do you say, 'What a large book!' or 'It looks too difficult for me'? True, it is large. But a large book is needed to set out all of our Creator's loving purpose for mankind. The Bible deals with the lives of people—people like us. It shows life as it really is, with its joys and sorrows, its successes and mistakes. It tells us how to avoid problems or to solve them, and how to have a real purpose in living. When you get absorbed in its contents, you will find it—no, not difficult, but a thrilling explanation of how to "get a firm hold on the real life" that is in store for mankind.—1 Timothy 6:19.

THE FIRST FIVE BOOKS

² Let us look first at the five opening "little books" of the Bible—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. These are often called the Pentateuch, meaning "Five Rolls," as they were apparently written originally on separate animal-skin scrolls. The prophet Moses wrote all these books in the Hebrew language more than 3,400 years ago! It is of great value for us to learn what these books contain.

³ The first of these five books, Genesis, gives the account of the creation of the heavens and the

-
1. What does the Bible tell us about life? (Proverbs 21:21)
 2. (a) What are the first five Bible books? (b) Who wrote them, in what language, and when?
 3. (a) What does Genesis tell about early history? (b) What does it indicate concerning the Deliverer?

earth, of things on the earth, and of man. It describes how wickedness got its start on earth, when the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, disobeyed their Creator, and how God promised a Deliverer, the "seed." It calls attention to the faithfulness of a few men, such as Noah, and tells of the annihilation of the corrupt world by a global flood. It gives the origin of present-day nations and their languages, and shows that the Deliverer, the "seed," would come through the family line of faithful Abraham. (Genesis 3:15; 12:3; 22:17, 18) Genesis also describes in detail events in the lives of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. Jacob was also called Israel, hence his descendants were called Israelites. This thrilling history helps us to get a long-range view of God's purposes.

⁴ The last four books of the Pentateuch describe events of Moses' lifetime, including the miraculous deliverance of the Israelites at the Red Sea, and the people's behavior under various trials, this being recorded as a warning for us today. These books also include the Ten Commandments and other laws that have greatly benefited mankind, many of the laws being repeated and amplified by Moses in Deuteronomy.

LATER HISTORICAL BOOKS

⁵ There follow a series of twelve "little books," from Joshua to Esther, that make up more than one quarter of the Bible record. This is the history of God's chosen nation, Israel, covering more than a thousand years, from 1473 B.C.E., when

4. (a) What do the books from Exodus to Deuteronomy contain, and with what value to us today? (Deuteronomy 32:46, 47)
(b) What laws are contained in these books, and how have they affected mankind?

5. What events are related in the next twelve Bible books?

FIRST 4,000 YEARS OF MANKIND'S HISTORY

(Based principally on Bible record; parentheses indicate approximate date only)

LIVES OF MEN	YEAR B.C.E.	EVENTS
Adam created	4026	Rebellion; God promises "seed"
God 'takes' Enoch	3039	Enoch prophesied of judgment
Noah's 600th year	2370	Global flood begins
	(2189)	Tongues confused at Babel
Abraham is born	2018	
	1943	God's promise regarding Abraham's "seed"
Isaac is born	1918	
	1913	"Seed" promised through Isaac
Jacob is born	1858	
	1781	"Seed" promised through Jacob
Joseph is born	1767	
Death of Jacob	1711	Jacob prophesies "seed" to come from tribe of Judah
Job keeps integrity	(1613)	God turns back Satan's challenge
Moses starts Bible	1513	God delivers Israel from Egypt
Death of Moses	1473	Joshua leads Israel into "Land"
David becomes king	1077	["Seed" promised through King David of Judah]
Solomon becomes king	1037	
Death of Solomon	997	Kingdom split: Israel and Judah
Isaiah prophesies	(778)	
Hezekiah king in Judah	745	
	740	Assyria destroys 10-tribe Israel
Jeremiah prophesies	647	
Ezekiel prophesies	613	
	607	Babylon desolates Judah
Daniel prophesies	605	
	537	Cyrus of Persia restores Jews to "Land".
Malachi ends prophesying	(443)	Hebrew Scriptures now complete
	332	Greece rules over Judea
	63	Rome begins to rule Jerusalem

Moses' successor, Joshua, led them across the Jordan River into the Promised Land, to about 443 B.C.E. The real-life events related in these pages make exciting and instructive reading. As we observe how God dealt with people in Bible times, we can learn how we may be pleasing to him today, so as to enjoy his blessing on our lives.

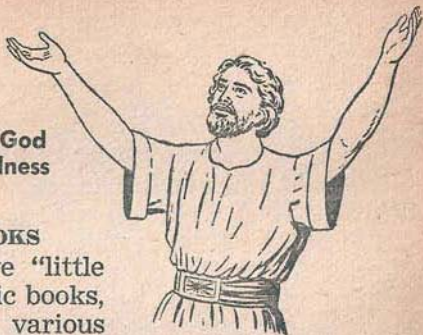
⁶ The books Joshua, Judges and Ruth cover this period up to 1107 B.C.E. and give a candid picture of the blessings and disasters experienced by the nation of Israel, according to how they obeyed or disobeyed their God.

⁷ The history in First Samuel through to Second Kings includes the establishing of the kingdom in Israel in 1117 B.C.E. and the glorious reigns of Kings David and Solomon during the next century. Then it describes the splitting of the nation into the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel and Judah in 997 B.C.E., and also events leading to the desolation of Israel by Assyria in 740 B.C.E., and of Judah by Babylon in 607 B.C.E. The two books of Chronicles set out early family lists, and repeat the histories of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, as written by a skilled copyist and priest, Ezra. The books Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther trace events in Jewish history from the decree of King Cyrus of Persia, which restored the Jews from Babylonian captivity in 537, down to about 443 B.C.E. All these books are much more than just history. They contain valuable admonition for all who love righteousness, and point forward to the promised Deliverer of mankind.

6. What candid picture is given in Joshua, Judges and Ruth? (Judges 2:7, 11, 20-22)

7. (a) What do the books from First Samuel to Esther describe?
(b) Why are they more than just history? (Romans 15:4)

Like King David,
we should thank God
for his loving-kindness



POETIC BOOKS

⁸ The next five "little books," the poetic books, were written at various times during Israel's history. The book of Job was evidently written by Moses, about the same time as the Pentateuch. It shows God's chief adversary to be Satan, a spirit person; it indicates why God has permitted Satan's wicked domination of earth's affairs for so long, and makes known that God rewards those who keep integrity to him in the face of reproaches and persecutions from Satan.

⁹ The Psalms, of which about half were written by King David, feature prayers of praise and of thankfulness for the loving-kindnesses of God. They also give many prophecies concerning the promised Deliverer. The books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and The Song of Solomon were written almost entirely by David's son Solomon. They express much practical wisdom that is especially valuable in helping us to meet the problems of life today. For the most part, these poetic books were written in the eleventh century B.C.E. They

8. Who wrote the book of Job, and why is this book important to us? (Job 2:4, 5)

9. (a) Who wrote many of the Psalms, and what do they contain? (b) Who wrote the other poetic books, and how are they valuable to us? (Proverbs 3:5, 6) (c) When were these books written?

are of special interest in that they point the way to true happiness. In all, the Hebrew word describing "happiness" appears dozens of times in them.

PROPHETIC BOOKS

¹⁰ Would you not like to know what the future holds for you? Well, you *can* know. The seventeen "little books" from Isaiah to Malachi, nearly all of which bear the name of their writer, contain prophecies that have had remarkable fulfillments in past ages. They also foretell events of our own day, such as the power struggle between the Democratic and Communistic nations, which now nears its climax, and the deliverance of God's own people in the world's greatest "time of distress." (Daniel 11:40-12:1) They speak of judgments from God and of a glorious paradise that may be enjoyed by all persons who love him. These prophetic books were all written during the period of the later historical books previously described, starting with the book of the prophet Jonah about 844, and ending with Malachi's prophecy about 443 B.C.E.

THE FOUR GOSPELS

¹¹ At last, in the year 29 C.E., the promised "seed" and Deliverer appears! He is Jesus Christ, his name "Jesus" meaning "Salvation of Jehovah," and his title "Christ" meaning "Anointed One." Jehovah God commissions Jesus as Deliverer by anointing him—not with a fragrant

10. (a) What do the prophetic books contain, and why are they of interest to us today? (Isaiah 2:2) (b) During what period of time were the prophetic books of the Bible written?
11. (a) When at last does the promised "seed" appear? (b) What do his name and title mean? (c) What do the Gospels tell us about this Messiah? (Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:14, 15; Luke 7:19, 22; John 21:25)

oil, as was the custom in installing kings in ancient times, but with His own empowering holy spirit. This is the same active force of God that empowered the Bible writers to record His "word." The "little books" Matthew, Mark, Luke and John describe from various standpoints Jesus' works and preaching, his martyrdom and resurrection, and his fulfilling many prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures that identify him as the Deliverer.

¹² Matthew wrote his account of the life of Jesus in Hebrew about 41 C.E. and later translated this into Greek. Mark and Luke also wrote their accounts prior to the second destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. John wrote his account about 98 C.E. These Gospels, all written in common Greek, the universal language of that day, contain the "good news" of Jesus' Kingdom rule under which we humans may come to enjoy "life . . . in abundance"! (Matthew 9:35; John 10:10) We should thank God for this marvelous provision.



**God empowered
Jesus to be the
Deliverer**

ACTS AND THE LETTERS

¹³ The "little book" entitled "Acts of Apostles" describes first the ascension of the resurrected Jesus to heaven and his organizing the congrega-

12. (a) When, and in what languages, were the Gospels written? (b) Why should we humans be thankful for this "good news"? (2 Corinthians 9:15)

13. (a) What is described in the "Acts of Apostles"? (b) Who wrote Acts, and what period does it embrace?

EVENTS OF HISTORY, PAST AND PENDING

(Based on Bible and secular records and prophecy
that is in the course of fulfillment;
parentheses indicate approximate date only)

YEAR B.C.E.

Jesus born 2 From line of Abraham, David

YEAR C.E.

Jesus anointed 29 Jesus becomes Messianic "seed"

Martyrdom of Jesus 33 Disciples scattered

Jesus resurrected 33 Christian congregation formed

Paul converted (34)

Cornelius converted 36

Matthew writes (41)

Gospel

Paul's first tour (47-48)

Paul's second tour (49-52)

Paul's third tour (52-56)

Luke writes Gospel (56-58)

Mark writes Gospel (60-65)

66 Romans besiege Jerusalem, with-
draw. Christians flee city

70 Romans destroy Jerusalem,
temple

John pens (96)

Revelation

John writes Gospel (98)

Death of apostle (100) No restraint now to apostasy

John

325 Constantine founds Christendom

Christ becomes King 1914 Christendom starts World War I

Kingdom preaching 1919 Christendom sponsors League
intensifies

1939 Christendom starts World War II

1945- 'Cold war'; hot wars (Korea,
1975 Vietnam, Holy Land)

Man ends 6,000 years 1975
of history on earth

— U.N. "horns" devastate
"Babylon"

"Great crowd" — Christ destroys nations at
survives Har-Magedon

Christ abysses Devil — 1,000-year reign starts
and demons

tion of Christians, whom God also anoints and empowers by his spirit. Then it tells of the zeal of these early Christians in proclaiming the good news throughout the world of that time, describing particularly the preaching activity of the apostles Peter and Paul. This vivid account was compiled by Paul's traveling companion Luke, a doctor, and embraces the period of 33 to about 61 C.E.

¹⁴ From Romans through to Jude, there follow twenty-one letters of admonition and encouragement, the first fourteen written by Paul and the remainder by other apostles and disciples of Jesus Christ. These "little books" speak confidently of the resurrection hope, and encourage those who love God to right works and zeal in doing his will. They also call attention to the fulfillment of many prophecies. Paul's letters carry the names of the congregations or persons to whom he wrote. Then, from James onward, the letters are identified by the name of the writer.

A REVELATION

¹⁵ This final prophetic book, written by John while in exile on the isle of Patmos, about 96 C.E., records a series of visions given from heaven by God through the glorified Jesus. It is written in highly symbolic language, and sets forth God's judgment messages. It tells why the people of earth suffer so much "woe" and how God and his Christ will deliver mankind from all enemies—religious, political, military and demonic—pre-

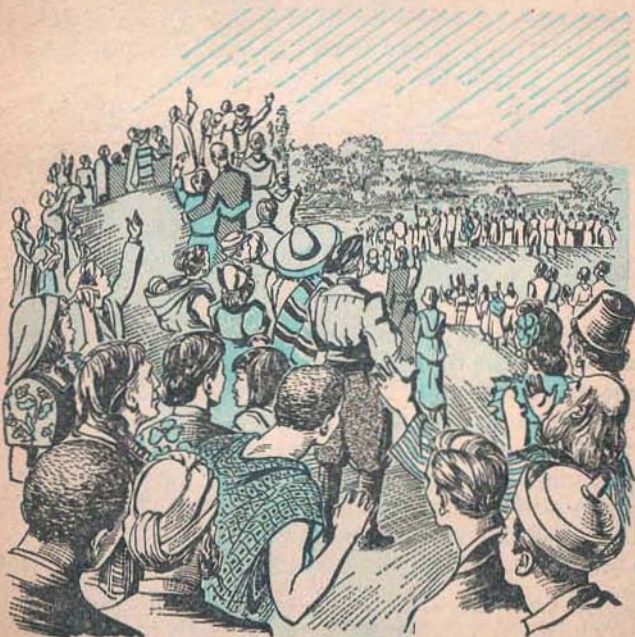
14. (a) Who wrote the twenty-one letters of the Greek Scriptures? (b) What do they contain, and why should this interest us today? (1 Timothy 4:15, 16)

15. (a) Who wrote "A Revelation," where and when, and what does it contain? (Revelation 1:1-3) (b) What does it say about the present "woe," and about future events?

paratory to Christ's thousand-year reign of peace over the earth.—Revelation 12:12.

¹⁰ The Bible's last "little book" thus shows how God's promise of a Deliverer for mankind, described in the first book, Genesis, is brought to glorious fulfillment, and how "God himself . . . will wipe out every tear from their eyes." (Revelation 21:3, 4) Truly, this is "good news" for all of us today!

16. How does this last "little book" of the Bible show the glorious fulfillment of Genesis 3:15?



**God's promised Deliverer will restore happiness
to all races of mankind**

A Practical Guide to True Happiness

ON A dark night, we are glad to have bright streetlights to show us our path. These can also help us to feel safe. Now, in the darkest time of the world's history, surely we appreciate helpful guidance to light the way for ourselves and our families. And if we can have a guide that leads us to a gloriously happy future, we would indeed want to know about that guide! A wise man once addressed himself to God, saying:



"Your word is a lamp to my foot, and a light to my roadway." (Psalm 119:105)

God's "word" is contained in the Bible. It is believed that you will find the Bible to be a wholesome, down-to-earth guide and help toward living a happy, meaningful life.

A BOOK THAT SOLVES PROBLEMS

² The Bible can be of tremendous practical value to us. Many thinking persons have acknowl-

1. (a) What kind of guide should we appreciate today? (b) Why is the Bible recommended as a guide?
2. What did a Hindu leader say about the practical value of the Sermon on the Mount?

edged this fact. As an example, there is the following report in *Treasury of the Christian Faith* by S. J. Corey concerning a conversation between the Hindu leader Mahatma Gandhi and the former British Viceroy of India, Lord Irwin:

"Lord Irwin paid a visit to the Mahatma in his *ashram*. During the conversation Lord Irwin put this question to his host: 'Mahatma, as man to man, tell me what you consider to be the solution to the problems of your country and mine.' Taking up a little book from the nearby lampstand, Gandhi opened it to the fifth chapter of Matthew and replied, 'When your country and mine shall get together on the teachings laid down by Christ in this Sermon on the Mount, we shall have solved the problems not only of our countries but those of the whole world.' That from a Hindu!"

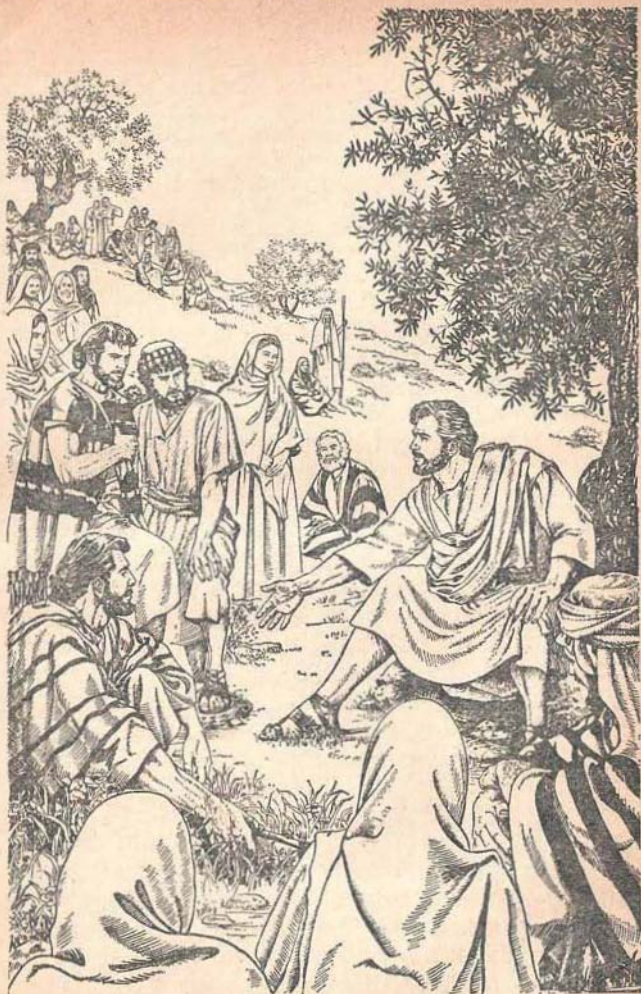
³ As an example of practical Bible teaching, let us consider part of this famous Sermon. It opens by showing the source of true happiness:

"Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need, since the kingdom of the heavens belongs to them.

"Happy are those who mourn, since they will be comforted." (Matthew 5:3, 4)

In these perplexing times, many persons feel the need for food for the mind, to satisfy them spiritually. Many people mourn, feeling hurt at heart over the bad conditions in the world. Are you one of these? If so, you will become happy if you exert yourself to find out the reason for these critical days and what the hope for the future is. As you learn of that hope, your mourning will indeed turn to comfort.

3. How may those who mourn become happy? (Isaiah 61:1, 2)



Jesus' Sermon on the Mount sets forth teachings capable of 'solving the problems of the whole world'

⁴ Jesus' Sermon continues with these words:

"Happy are the mild-tempered ones, since they will inherit the earth.

"Happy are those hungering and thirsting for righteousness, since they will be filled.

"Happy are the merciful, since they will be shown mercy.

"Happy are the pure in heart, since they will see God.

"Happy are the peaceable, since they will be called 'sons of God.'" (Matthew 5:5-9)

In a world where there is so much violence, what a blessing it is to have mild-tempered persons around us! And when the entire earth is filled with such people, as the Bible assures us it will be, mankind will be truly happy. Do you not desire to see all the dishonesty, injustice and wickedness of today removed from the earth? Surely you do! You can be happy now, in pursuing righteousness as your way of life, and that happiness will overflow as you live to see God restore righteousness throughout the universe. Even in this difficult age, the merciful, the pure in heart and the peaceable can live a satisfying life, with God's blessing. But this is only a foretaste of the happiness that will soon abound earth wide.

HAPPY IN TIMES OF TRIAL

⁵ By examining the "good news" you can be helped to have a bright, positive outlook, with real hope for the future. But some persons may oppose or mock you because of your learning the Bible. Is this a reason to stop your study of the Bible? No, for this would mean abandoning

4. What kind of persons may enjoy God's blessing now, and in the future? (Psalm 24:4, 5)

5. If someone opposed your studying the Bible, what would you do about it? (2 Peter 3:3, 13)

the only guide to happiness in these troublesome times. Jesus goes on to say in his Sermon:

"Happy are those who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake, since the kingdom of the heavens belongs to them.

"Happy are you when people reproach you and persecute you and lyingly say every sort of wicked thing against you for my sake. Rejoice and leap for joy, since your reward is great in the heavens; for in that way they persecuted the prophets prior to you." (Matthew 5:10-12)

You will be happy because of having resisted such opposers, for you will progress toward living a purposeful, fruitful life, and toward an everlasting reward from God.

⁶ On the other hand, many who start to study the Bible find that others in their family, or among their friends, become interested in joining them. Why not suggest this to them yourself? It is a fine thing when a family shares together in Bible discussions. This can contribute greatly toward building a happy family.

⁷ At times, the Bible has helped families in solving very serious problems, as the following report shows:

A man in the Philippines was a heavy drinker and gambler, smoked forty cigarettes a day and was developing a cancerous throat. Though he had nine children, his family rarely saw him. He spent most of his time and money in places of ill repute, though he was a nominal Christian. The family started to fall apart. But he was impressed by the humility and friendliness of Jehovah's Witnesses when they called. First some of his children, and then the entire family, started to study the Bible. This man had to make strenuous efforts to rid him-

6. What kind of Bible study is recommended? (Deuteronomy 11:18, 19)

7. Illustrate how study of the Bible can solve even serious family problems.



**Bible study helped to solve problems for
this Filipino family; it can help you too**

self of his unclean habits, but now he and seven other members of his family have dedicated their lives to God, while the entire family continues its Bible studies. Due to his giving up tobacco, his throat problem has cleared up. He is now a devoted family man. His relatives were amazed at his transformation, and many of them also became interested in Bible study.

If your family has a problem, it may not be as serious as this man's. However, the Bible can be a marvelous influence for unity in your family, too.

TRUE NEIGHBOR LOVE

⁸ Let us examine some other teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, in which Jesus probes to

8. How does the Bible warn against wrong desire? (1 John 2:15-17)

the root causes of the problems that afflict mankind. For example, in referring back to the Ten Commandments, he tells us:

"You heard that it was said, 'You must not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone that keeps on looking at a woman so as to have a passion for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5:27, 28)

So it is wrong desire that we must watch. If we cultivate such desire in our hearts, it will lead us on toward wrongdoing. How important, then, that we cultivate right desires, letting our minds and hearts dwell upon wholesome, upbuilding matters!

⁹ In Jesus' day, there were those who taught, "You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But Jesus states it differently:

"However, I say to you: Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you; that you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens, since he makes his sun rise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain upon righteous people and unrighteous." (Matthew 5:43-45)

How unselfish—to seek even good things for our enemies! But note that this is in imitation of our heavenly Father and Creator, who provides bountifully for all who live on earth—even for wicked persons. If all mankind were to show such loving consideration for others, the problems of the whole world could indeed be solved!

¹⁰ Farther on, the Sermon says:

"On this account I say to you: Stop being anxious about your souls as to what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your bodies as to what you

9. By following what example could mankind's problems be solved? (Luke 6:35)

10. Why should we not be anxious about daily needs? (Luke 12:15)

will wear. Does not the soul mean more than food and the body than clothing? Observe intently the birds of heaven, because they do not sow seed or reap or gather into storehouses; still your heavenly Father feeds them. . . . Take a lesson from the lilies of the field, how they are growing; they do not toil, nor do they spin; but I say to you that not even [King] Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. If, now, God thus clothes the vegetation of the field, . . . will he not much rather clothe you . . . ? So never be anxious and say, 'What are we to eat?' or, 'What are we to drink?' or, 'What are we to put on?' For all these are the things the nations are eagerly pursuing. For your heavenly Father knows you need all these things."—Matthew 6:25-32.

¹¹ Here Jesus speaks of the normal concern we all have for food, clothing and shelter. We need these things to make us happy. However, "the nations" of mankind around us are often pursuing, not the *needs*, but the *desires* of man. In

11. (a) What do "the nations" pursue, and with what result? (Matthew 6:19-21) (b) What is the way to true happiness? (Luke 11:28)



**Happiness comes when we imitate the loving God,
who lets his sun shine on people of all kinds**

emphasizing selfish desire and pride in what men possess, this greedy world contributes to mankind's unhappiness. Material possessions may bring some temporary enjoyment, but the way to true and lasting happiness is to "keep on . . . seeking first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness." (Matthew 6:33) Does your own love of righteousness impel you to do this? It should. The Sermon on the Mount gives fine encouragement to this end.

TRUE GUIDANCE IN CRITICAL TIMES

¹² It is especially important to seek righteousness in these times in which we now live. When we look at the world around us, we observe how well it fits the following description by the apostle Paul:

"In the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God, having a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power; and from these turn away."
(2 Timothy 3:1-5)

Paul says that these conditions will be here in the "last days." And today, how obvious it is that human society is facing a day of reckoning! It goes rapidly from bad to worse. So where really may we look for guidance? Paul answers by calling attention to "the holy writings, which

12. (a) What foretold conditions do we see around us today?
(b) But where can we find sound guidance? (2 Peter 1:19)



**In these critical "last days,"
we need the Bible's guidance to survive**

are able to make you wise for salvation," and adds: "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial." (2 Timothy 3:15, 16) Our Creator, God, prepared "all Scripture" and preserved it for our benefit and encouragement in these "last days."

How the Good News Was Preserved

MANY ancient writings have disappeared. Like the men who made them, they have returned to the dust and are forgotten. Only fragments remain of most literature of several thousand years ago. But the Bible lives on! It is just as 1 Peter 1:24, 25¹ states:

“For ‘all flesh is like grass, and all its glory is like a blossom of grass; the grass becomes withered, and the flower falls off, but the saying of Jehovah [God] endures forever.’ Well, this is the ‘saying,’ this which has been declared to you as good news.”

The Bible’s record in surviving both the ravages of time and the attacks of its enemies is remarkable. There is no question that God saw to it that the “good news” was preserved to guide us through the present critical days.

PRESERVING THE BIBLE

² The inspired writers recorded the original “little books” on material made from animal skins. Faithful men saw to it that such early records were preserved safely “at the side of the ark,” the sacred box that God commanded the Israelites to make. (Deuteronomy 31:26; 1 Samuel 10:25) When Israel fell into idol worship, the Law as written by Moses was lost for a time, but

1. Why has the Bible survived?

2. How were the original Bible writings of Moses preserved, and for how long?

good King Josiah found it when he was repairing the temple in Jerusalem. These original writings disappeared at the latest when the Babylonians destroyed this temple in 607 B.C.E.

³ By this time, however, other handwritten copies of these inspired Scriptures had been made, so that God's servant Daniel, a captive in Babylon, "discerned by the books," Jeremiah's prophecy, that the Jews' captivity must end after seventy years, in 537 B.C.E. (Daniel 9:2) And history relates that it did end, by a miracle of God, in that very year, with a remnant of the Jews returning to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple of God.



"Dead Sea scroll"
of Isaiah shows Bible has
been accurately preserved

⁴ After this restoration, "Ezra the copyist" was one who encouraged "a reading aloud of the book of the law of the true God day by day" by the Jews in assembly. (Nehemiah 8:13, 18) Many copyists appear to have been busy in those days, writing out the Scriptures by hand for the use of the Jews, who were now scattered in communities throughout the ancient world. About 280 B.C.E. a start was made in Alexandria, Egypt, to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into

3. (a) What shows that Scripture copies had been made by Daniel's day? (b) How was prophecy fulfilled in 537 B.C.E.? (Jeremiah 29:10)

4. (a) What did Ezra encourage that benefited the Jews? (Ezra 7:6) (b) What new development took place from about 280 B.C.E.?

Greek, for the benefit of Greek-speaking Jews there. This translation is known as the Greek *Septuagint* (meaning, "Seventy"), as it is said to have been translated by seventy Jews.

⁵ Copies of the Hebrew Scriptures were written out with painstaking care and the scribes took unusual precautions to make sure that these were free from error. They checked by counting the number of words, even the number of letters, and if even one letter was wrong, they would discard that section of the manuscript and rewrite it. As proof of this accuracy, manuscripts dated as being of the tenth century C.E. contain essentially the same record as the recently discovered "Dead Sea scroll" of Isaiah, which was copied in the first or second century B.C.E. More than a thousand years of copying and recopying had resulted in no distortion of the Bible text!

⁶ Similarly, minute attention to detail was shown in recopying manuscripts of the Christian Greek Scriptures. Thus we are assured that the Hebrew and Greek texts, from which our modern-day Bibles have been translated, are essentially the same as the original handwritten copies that were "inspired of God." Comparative study of tens of thousands of manuscripts in many languages proves this to be so. Yes, the printed Bible, as we now have it, in over 1,500 languages, is the same "word" that was written down by hand under God's inspiration, from the sixteenth century B.C.E. to the first century C.E.

5. (a) How did scribes guard against error in making copies of the Scriptures? (b) What does a comparison of the "Dead Sea scroll" of Isaiah with tenth-century manuscripts show? (Deuteronomy 4:2)

6. Why can we be sure that the Bible text today is correct?

ATTEMPTS TO SUPPRESS THE "GOOD NEWS"

⁷ There have always been enemies of the Bible. Surprisingly, its principal enemies have been religious leaders who claim to teach the Bible. For example, the religious leaders among the Jews of Jesus' time "made the word of God invalid" because of teaching "tradition" and "commands of men as doctrines." (Matthew 15:6-9) Jesus condemned them for this, telling them:

"You are from your father the Devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father. . . . He did not stand fast in the truth, because truth is not in him. When he speaks the lie, he speaks according to his own disposition, because he is a liar and the father of the lie." (John 8:44)

Because Jesus spoke the truth, proclaiming the "good news" of God's purpose to deliver mankind, those religious leaders had Jesus put to death. And though Jesus established the Christian congregation as "a pillar and support of the truth," the Devil, Satan, continued to oppose the "good news," using his religious agents on earth to this end.—1 Timothy 3:15.

⁸ The apostle Paul foretold what would happen, when, in 56 C.E., he said to the elders of the Christian congregation of Ephesus:

"After my going away oppressive wolves will enter in among you and will not treat the flock with tenderness, and from among you yourselves men will rise and speak twisted things to draw away the disciples after themselves." (Acts 20:29, 30)

True to this prophecy, within three centuries the

7. (a) Who have been enemies of the Bible, what did Jesus say to them, and how did they react? (Matthew 23:27, 28)

(b) Whom has Satan used in continuing to oppose the "good news"? (2 Peter 2:1, 2)

8. (a) How does the Bible foretell the great apostasy? (Matthew 7:15, 20) (b) When was Christendom founded, and by whom?

(c) Of what did the religion of Christendom become a part? (d) What makes Christendom's sects enemies of God?

great apostasy took place. It was in 325 C.E. that the unbaptized Roman emperor Constantine founded "Christendom." Its religious system twisted Christian doctrine and combined it with many of the Satan-inspired mysteries of ancient Babylon, which the Bible shows to be the mother city of all false religion. Thus the religion of Christendom became part of the world empire of false religion, "Babylon the Great, the mother of the harlots and of the disgusting things of the earth." (Revelation 17:3-5) This harlotry refers to the actions of religious sects that claim to belong to God but that are overly friendly with corrupt political leaders of this wicked world; this makes them 'enemies of God.' (James 4:4) Often Christendom's religious sects have prodded the political rulers into persecuting true Christians.

° Outwardly, the religion of Christendom may appear very beautiful, with its magnificent cathedrals, basilicas and churches, pompous processions and impressive music. But what is Christendom's record? Over the centuries Christendom has plundered, colonized and suppressed defenseless peo-



Christendom's wars show her Christianity to be false

9. What events of history prove Christendom to be bloodguilty? (Jeremiah 2:34)

ples. History points an accusing finger at blood-spilling Crusades in the Near East, the cruel Inquisition in many Catholic-dominated lands, the Opium War against China, and also the cruel wars and religious strife of this twentieth century. World War I and World War II both started in Christendom, with Catholics and Protestants slaughtering one another indiscriminately.

¹⁰ The Bible strongly condemns such selfish warring:

"From what source are there wars and from what source are there fights among you? Are they not from this source, namely, from your cravings for sensual pleasure that carry on a conflict in your members? You desire, and yet you do not have. You go on murdering and coveting, and yet you are not able to obtain. You go on fighting and waging war. You do not have because of your not asking. You do ask, and yet you do not receive, because you are asking for a wrong purpose, that you may expend it upon your cravings for sensual pleasure."—James 4:1-3.

OPPOSITION TO BIBLE TRANSLATION

¹¹ The record of Christendom's religions includes bitter opposition to the distribution of the Bible and its "good news." And no wonder!—for it exposes her bloodguilt. During the infamous Dark Ages, when for more than a thousand years Christendom was dominated by the popes of Rome, no effort was made to circulate the Bible among the common people. The few copies available were in Latin, a language that in time came to be known only to the priests. When at last courageous men attempted to translate the Bible into the language of the common people, so that

10. What shows Christendom's religions to be counterfeit? (Matthew 26:52)

11. How did the Catholic Church oppose Bible distribution? (John 3:19, 20)

these could read and understand it, they were persecuted, often to the death. In the fourteenth century C.E., John Wycliffe first translated the Bible from Latin into English. But the Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury, England, described him as "that pestilent wretch . . . the son of the old Serpent," and some years after his death, opponents of the Bible dug up his remains, burned them and threw his ashes into the river Swift.

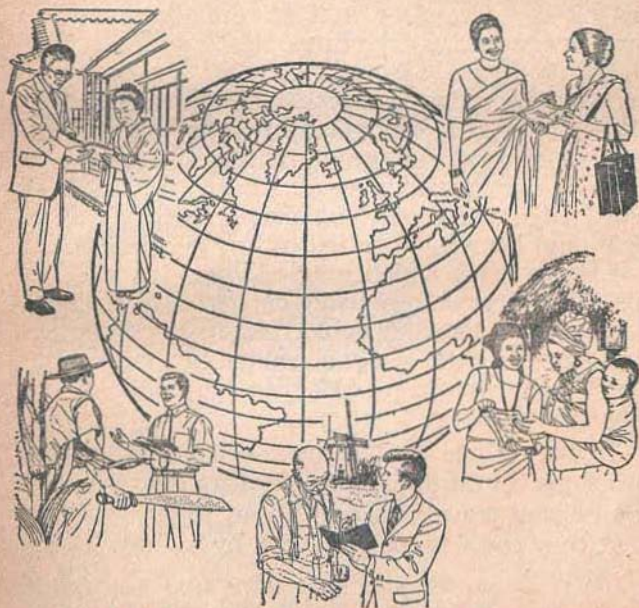
¹² In the sixteenth century, William Tyndale set out to translate the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek into English, declaring, "If God spare my life, I will, before many years have passed, cause the boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scriptures than the priests do." But he had to flee from England to the European continent in order to translate and print his Bible. Copies were then smuggled into England and began to circulate in great numbers, despite the clergy's publicly burning all the Bibles that they could find. A hypocritical person betrayed Tyndale, and he was executed by being strangled at the stake, after which his body was burned. But his Bible translation lived on, so that ordinary people like a plowboy could read its "good news." Later it was extensively consulted in the preparation of the well-known English King James version of the Bible.

¹³ Other Bible translations often encountered problems. In Canton, China, Robert Morrison and his helpers translated secretly at night, knowing that they could be put to death by torture if they

12. (a) What was Tyndale's goal? (Luke 2:10) (b) How did he proceed to attain this goal, but what happened to him? (c) What resulted from Tyndale's work?

13. What is some of the history of Bible translation into Oriental languages?

were detected. At one stage they hid wooden printing blocks of the book of Acts, only to have these eaten by termites. They produced the complete Chinese Bible in 1818. Translation of the Bible into Burmese was completed in 1835, after the translator, A. Judson, had lain in chains for almost a year in a vermin-infested jail, with his translation manuscript concealed in his pillow. In the 1880's, while missionary activity was banned in Korea, translation and printing of portions of the Bible in Korean were done in Manchuria, and many copies found their way into



Despite opposition by false religion,
the "good news" is being "preached in all creation"

Korea. The earliest complete Bible in Japanese was produced in 1887, and some early editions correctly used the divine name, Jehovah, throughout both the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures.

THE "GOOD NEWS" LIVES ON!

¹⁴ Satan's attempts to suppress the Bible failed. In more recent years, excellent translations of the Bible have been made in many languages, and the "good news" has become available to all mankind. Bibles are to be found in many homes. But have the religious sects of Christendom helped the people to understand the Bible? No, for they stand today in the same position as the religious leaders of Jesus' time. They shove the word of God aside "in order to retain [their] tradition," the false teachings from Babylon that were adopted when Constantine founded "Christendom."—Mark 7:9, 13.

¹⁵ Happily, however, there are those Christians in all countries of earth today who have returned to the pure teaching of the good news that Jesus and his apostles proclaimed. As in the time of the first-century Christian congregation, they are again preaching that good news "in all creation that is under heaven." (Colossians 1:23) It is "the glorious good news of the happy God." (1 Timothy 1:11) But who is this "happy God," and how may we enjoy his blessing?

14. (a) What shows that Satan's efforts to suppress the Bible failed? (b) What attitude have Christendom's sects taken toward teaching the Bible?

15. How has the good news come to be "preached in all creation"? (Acts 1:8)

The Source of Good News

—“God”

WHAT is meant by “God”? Hundreds of millions of persons profess to believe in the God of the Bible, but instead of worshiping him they worship a

mysterious Trinity. Hundreds of millions of Hindus also worship a Trinity, the three-headed Trimurti of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, among their 330 million gods and goddesses. Hundreds



**Mankind worships many gods.
But who is the living God?**

of millions of persons worship various images of Buddha, and Shinto has its pantheon of 800 myriad gods, including the sun-goddess Amaterasu Omikami. Then there are hundreds of millions of persons who say they are atheists. Some of these declare that religion is “the opium of the people,” yet they themselves enshrine and idolize their dead leaders.

² Truly, there is a confusing array of gods in the realm of religion, which extends like a

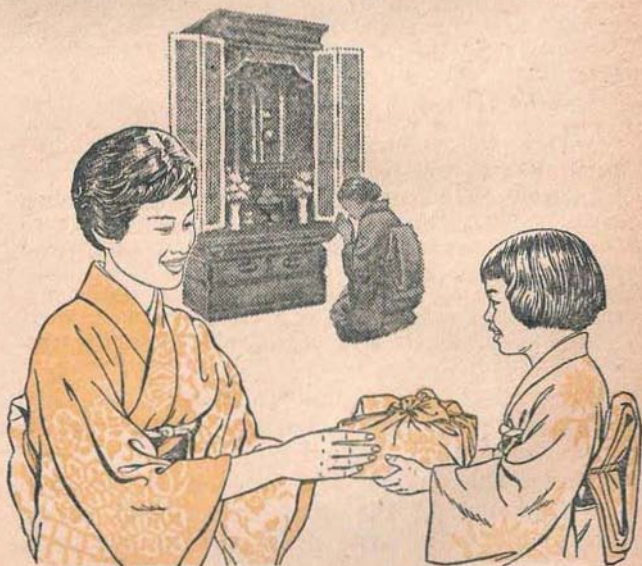
1. What different kinds of gods do people worship today?
2. What should each one of us want to find out with regard to God? (1 Corinthians 8:5, 6)

vast empire into every corner of the earth. It should be to our benefit to examine this situation with an open mind, and see whether we can determine what the truth is with regard to God.

FAMILY GODS

³ There are many people who worship their ancestors, and some are very sincere in this. Of course, everyone should honor parents and grandparents who are worthy of such honor. The apostle Paul quoted the fifth of the Ten Com-

3. (a) Should we honor our parents? (Deuteronomy 5:16)
(b) To what would ancestor worship logically lead us? (Genesis 3:1-6)



Worship dead ancestors or lovingly honor living parents—which is beneficial?

mandments as follows: "Honor your father and your mother . . . that it may go well with you and you may endure a long time on the earth." (Ephesians 6:2, 3) But does that mean we should worship them? If we were to worship our ancestors, and carried this worship back to the beginning of history, we would be worshiping mankind's first parents, Adam and Eve, whose disobedience in the garden of Eden got mankind started in their troubles and unhappiness! Surely we would not want to worship *those* ancestors!

⁴ The practical advantage of giving due honor to older persons *while they are alive* is illustrated by these reports from the Orient:

In a Japanese family the daughter, who adhered closely to Bible principles, cared lovingly for her Buddhist parents right down to their death. She gave them real comfort. On the other hand, the son did nothing to help his parents while they were alive, but after they died bought them a \$300 *butsudan* (family Buddhist altar) so that they could be worshiped.

In Korea, a young man accepted Bible teaching, but when he returned to his native village he was severely opposed by his ancestor-worshiping parents and the elders. However, when he explained about honoring live parents and not worshiping dead ones, an eighty-one-year-old village elder acknowledged: "We should walk the way of life rather than the way of the dead."

It is true that in Christendom, as well as in non-Christian lands, much worship centers around masses, chantings and other rites for the dead. However, the God of the Bible is described as "the God, not of the dead, but of the living." (Matthew 22:32) Even dead persons live in his

4. (a) What do reports from the Orient illustrate with regard to honor and worship? (b) How is God described at Matthew 22:32, and why? (1 Thessalonians 4:13)

memory, and in due time he will restore them to life here on earth. So he does not approve of costly, showy funeral rituals. Who, then, is this living God?

"THE HAPPY GOD"

⁵ The Bible describes him as "the happy God," who is the Author of "glorious good news" for mankind. (1 Timothy 1:11) He loves the world of mankind, and wants us to be happy too. As the Creator of all the universe, he has the power to make us happy, and as "the Ancient of Days" who lives for all eternity, he has the supreme wisdom needed for bringing about happy conditions on this earth. (Daniel 7:9) As "a lover of justice," he will see that those who are loyal to him and his right principles "will possess the earth, and . . . reside forever upon it." (Psalm 37:28, 29) The Bible says of this Creator and God:

"Before the mountains themselves were born, or you proceeded to bring forth . . . the earth and the productive land, even from time indefinite to time indefinite you are God." "Now to the King of eternity, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever."—Psalm 90:2; 1 Timothy 1:17.

⁶ The God of the Bible is the living God, the God of high moral principles, the God who will carry out his grand purpose to make mankind happy. One of the psalm writers says of him:

"Our God is in the heavens; everything that he delighted to do he has done." (Psalm 115:3)

Hence he could never be compared to lifeless do-

5. What are some qualities of "the happy God"? (Psalm 146: 5, 6)

6. Why would it be wrong to compare God to idols? (Isaiah 42:5, 8)

nothing idols! Of those who trust in such idols the same psalmist goes on to say:

"Their idols are silver and gold, the work of the hands of earthling man. A mouth they have, but they cannot speak; eyes they have, but they cannot see; ears they have, but they cannot hear. A nose they have, but they cannot smell. Hands are theirs, but they cannot feel. Feet are theirs, but they cannot walk; they utter no sound with their throat. Those making them will become just like them, all those who are trusting in them." (Psalm 115:4-8)

Rather than worship dead idols, we should worship the living God.

⁷ The way to true happiness is for us earnestly to seek to know this happy God, for, as the apostle Paul states, "he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (Hebrews 11:6) This God is not too difficult to find, nor should we be fearful of him. The same Paul, in talking to a group of idol-worshipping Greeks, explained Him in this way:

"Men of Athens, I behold that in all things you seem to be more given to the fear of the deities than others are. For instance, while passing along and carefully observing your objects of veneration I also found an altar on which had been inscribed 'To an Unknown God.' Therefore what you are unknowingly giving godly devotion to, this I am publishing to you. The God that made the world and all the things in it, being, as this One is, Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in handmade temples, neither is he attended to by human hands as if he needed anything, because he himself gives to all persons life and breath and all things. And he made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth, and he decreed the appointed times and the set limits of the dwelling of men, for them to seek God, if they might grope

7. Why should we seek after God? (Psalm 34:8)

for him and really find him, although, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us. For by him we have life and move and exist, even as certain ones of the poets among you have said, 'For we are also his progeny.'

"Seeing, therefore, that we are the progeny of God, we ought not to imagine that the Divine Being is like gold or silver or stone, like something sculptured by the art and contrivance of man."
(Acts 17:22-29)

Some of Paul's hearers scoffed, but others were convinced and became believers in the living God.

GOD THE CREATOR

⁸ There are persons today who deny the existence of God. Some say, "God is dead." But is their theory right? Speaking of such persons, Paul states in one of his letters:

"[God's] invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship, so that they are *inexcusable*." (Romans 1:20)

The vast universe and all the marvels that it contains are truly an expression of God's "eternal power."

⁹ Even famous scientists have at times acknowledged their own smallness in comparison with the stupendous power and wisdom apparent in creation. For example, Albert Einstein once testified:

"It is enough for me to . . . reflect upon the marvelous structure of the universe, which we can dimly perceive, and to try humbly to comprehend even an infinitesimal part of the intelligence manifest in nature."

8. What can we learn about God from his works of creation? (Psalm 19:1)

9. What have famous scientists acknowledged about man's position in the universe?

¹⁰ The discoverer of the "law of gravity," Sir Isaac Newton, was another who was deeply impressed by the evidence of God's invisible qualities that are to be seen in His creation. The following account relates how Newton testified to his belief in Almighty God:

Newton once had a skilled mechanic make for him a model of the solar system. Balls representing the planets were geared together so as to move realistically in orbit. One day an atheist friend visited Newton. On seeing the model, he operated it, and exclaimed in admiration, "Who made it?" Newton answered, "Nobody!" The atheist replied, "You must think I am a fool! Of course somebody made it, and he is a genius." Newton then said to his friend, "This thing is but a puny imitation of a much grander system whose laws you know, and I am not able to convince you that this mere toy is without a designer and maker; yet you profess to believe that the great original from which the design is taken has come into being without either designer or maker!"

Newton's friend came to acknowledge that the great Designer and Maker of all things is God. Surely we, too, as we look on the marvels of creation about us, in the heavens and on earth, must acknowledge that an all-wise Creator made it all! How thankful we should be that this mighty Creator lovingly placed man here on this earth and that he is deeply interested in us!

GOD'S ILLUSTRIOUS NAME

¹¹ As human persons we each have a name. As the greatest Personage in the universe, God also has a name. What is that name? God's great

10. How did Newton convince a friend that the Creator lives?
11. (a) Why is it only reasonable that God have a name?
(b) What is God's name? (Isaiah 12:2, 4) (c) How often does it appear in the Bible? (d) How did God make his name known in a special way in the days of Moses? (Exodus 6:3, 7, 8)



**Only the living God could design
and make the solar system**

name appears around 7,000 times in the Bible record. For example, Psalm 83:18 speaks of it thus: "You, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth." When God used Moses in delivering Israel from the cruel Pharaoh of Egypt, He made His name known in a most special way. Pharaoh said defiantly, "Who is Jehovah, so that I should obey his voice to send Israel away?" (Exodus 5:2) Jehovah showed very plainly who he was! After bringing ten devastating plagues upon Egypt, Jehovah God led his people out, miraculously parting the waters of the Red Sea to give them passage. And the cream of Pharaoh's army perished in those same waters as they came together again.

¹² Jehovah thus showed that his illustrious name is tied in with his purpose to deliver those who love and obey him, something that we may come to appreciate with thanksgiving when Jehovah acts soon to bring destruction upon the present-day world of ungodly persons. As God

12. With what purpose is God's name tied in? (Exodus 3:13-15)

יהוה
JEHOVAH



**Jehovah magnifies his name by destroying the wicked,
while preserving his loyal servants**

himself declares more than sixty times through the prophet Ezekiel, "They will have to know that I am Jehovah."—Ezekiel 38:23.

¹³ However, many of mankind today are coming to know Jehovah in a way that will be to their blessing. This great God has marvelous qualities, even as he proclaimed to his prophet Moses:

"Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness and truth, preserving loving-kindness for thousands, pardoning error and transgression and sin, but by no means will he give exemption from punishment." (Exodus 34:6, 7)

Throughout the Bible we read of Jehovah's expressing his abundant loving-kindness toward those who serve him loyally. "God is love." (1 John 4:8) He is merciful in a large way toward humans who turn from the world's wickedness and who seek his righteousness. He abounds in truth, and this he expresses through the pages of the Bible. As we search for his truth, we will find satisfying answers to many questions that we may have about life.

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13. (a) What did Jehovah tell Moses about His qualities?
(b) What is God's most outstanding quality? (Romans 8:38, 39)
(c) How may we find satisfying answers to questions about life?

Preparing a Happy Home for Mankind

IF SOMEONE designed and built for you a delightful home in lovely surroundings and gave it to you as a free gift, would you not thank him for it? Of course you would! Then you should be truly thankful to the great Designer and Builder of this planet earth. For the Bible tells us that "Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth," has given the earth "to the sons of men." (Psalm 115:15, 16) What a gracious gift! And as we review how Jehovah God prepared this earth for man's habitation, we must indeed marvel at the wisdom and power that He displayed as Divine Architect and Master Builder.

"IN THE BEGINNING"

²Turning to the very first words of the Bible, we read: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1) It was doubtless billions of years ago that God performed this stupendous creative act, and regardless of the conflicting theories of some scientists as to how this came about, a glorious heavens and a lovely earth continue to testify to the magnificence of God's creation.

1. What has Jehovah given to man as a home, and how should we evaluate it? (Hebrews 3:4)
2. What things testify to the magnificence of God's creation? (Psalm 8:3, 4)

³ What wisdom and foresight Jehovah showed in putting together the materials of the universe! For example, there is water—a most abundant commodity here on earth. Unlike other liquids, it has the unusual property of growing lighter in weight as its temperature drops close to freezing, so that colder water then rises and forms a protective layer of ice on top of lakes and seas. If ice were heavier than water, this earth would long since have been put into a “deep freeze” in which no life could survive. Today, water serves as a solvent, for irrigating the earth, as a source of electrical energy—why, even about two thirds of our body is composed of water. We could not live without water. The wise Creator foresaw all of this when he covered earth with a “watery deep.” —Genesis 1:2.

⁴ In this creation by God, the relation of the earth to the heavens is also of tremendous interest. God slanted the earth’s axis at an angle of $23\frac{1}{2}$ degrees to the plane of its orbit, so that during its annual journey around the sun, each hemisphere is taken successively through spring, summer, autumn and winter. The earth’s distance from the sun is just right for sustaining life. If it were much closer, earth would become too hot for life; if much farther away, it would be perpetually frozen. The moon was placed so that its pull of gravity causes the gentle rise and fall of the tides to wash earth’s shores. Reflecting on this, surely we should want to “praise Jah [Jehovah] . . . for his works of mightiness”! —Psalm 150:1, 2.

3. How did God display wisdom in supplying the earth generously with water? (Psalm 104:1, 5, 6)

4. How does the positioning of earth in relation to the sun and the moon magnify God’s wisdom? (Job 26:7, 14)

"DAYS" OF CREATION

⁵ For countless ages, the earth was shrouded in darkness and was empty of life. But "God's active force was moving to and fro over the surface of the waters." (Genesis 1:1, 2) What would result?

⁶ Here we enter upon the seven "days" of creation. How long were these "days"? Much longer than twenty-four hours! The Bible tells us that "one day is with Jehovah as a thousand years." (2 Peter 3:8) But each of these "days" of creation must be even longer than that. How do we know? Genesis 2:2 says that, after six "days" of creating, God "proceeded to rest on the seventh day from all his work that he had made." The Bible shows that Jehovah's 'rest day' still continues. For the apostle Paul writes that Christians should, through faith and obedience, do their "utmost to enter into that rest." (Hebrews 4:9-11) The Bible count of time shows that it is now close to six thousand years since God began 'resting' from his creative works on earth. Just ahead of us lies the thousand-year reign of Christ, by the end of which God's purpose of filling the earth with a happy human family will have been accomplished. God's 'rest day' will then end. This would indicate that this 'rest day' would be of seven thousand years' duration. (Genesis 1:28; Revelation 20:4) It is reasonable to conclude that each of the six preceding "days" of creation would occupy similar periods of time, during each of which Jehovah carried out a further stage of preparing earth to be man's future home. As we now observe how He did this, we should truly appreciate the force

5, 6. How can we reason on the length of the 'creative days'? (Hebrews 4:3-5)

of the psalmist's words: "How great your works are, O Jehovah! Very deep your thoughts are."
—Psalm 92:5.

"LET LIGHT COME TO BE"

⁷ Tens of thousands of years ago Jehovah proceeded to say: "Let light come to be." That marked the beginning of the first 'creative day.' By the end of that long "day," God had cleared the way for light from the sun to shine through to "the surface of the watery deep" that enveloped the earth. No longer did a thick screen of darkness prevent a division between Day and Night with regard to this earth. Because of this light of "Day," man would in due course be able to work and enjoy the beauties of earth around him, and "Night" would enable him to renew his energies by sweet repose.—Genesis 1:3-5.

"LET AN EXPANSE COME TO BE"

⁸ On the "second day" of creation, God caused a separation in these waters, into waters that stayed upon the surface of the earth and waters that became suspended like a great canopy around our globe. He called the expanse between these two great bodies of water "Heaven." It included our atmosphere. Here God provided exactly the right proportion of gases, mainly nitrogen and oxygen, to sustain the plants and breathing creatures that he would produce later. He made this atmosphere just right for pleasant living, and to serve as a protection from meteors and harmful radiation. Truly God is a wise and loving Creator!
—Genesis 1:6-8.

7. How did "light come to be"? (Isaiah 45:7)

8. What foresight did Jehovah show in making "the expanse"?

EARTH, SEAS, VEGETATION BROUGHT FORTH

⁹ God's active force, or spirit, continued to move to and fro over the surface of the globe. Now, on the third 'creative day,' he proceeded to raise the dry land out of 'the waters beneath the expanse.' No doubt there were great convulsions as landmasses were pushed up and seas were gathered into their sunken basins. Here, again, God's wisdom and love are clearly apparent. When the time came for their creation, animals and man would be able to make their homes on dry land. The seas would swarm with marine life, and the vast areas of ocean would have a moderating effect, preventing too great extremes of heat and cold around the globe.—Genesis 1: 9, 10.

¹⁰ But more was to appear on this "third day." For the first time, life! The Bible gives the account:

"God went on to say: 'Let the earth cause grass to shoot forth, vegetation bearing seed, fruit trees yielding fruit according to their kinds, the seed of which is in it, upon the earth.'" (Genesis 1:11)

So God brought forth wonderful cellular structures, made to multiply according to a "blueprint" locked up in every individual cell. Some "kinds" became stately trees, giving shade and binding together the soil. Other "kinds" were smaller trees and bushes, bearing fruits, nuts and berries, to provide, along with vegetables, a tasty variety of foods. God produced a glorious array of flowers to adorn and beautify the earth. Each "kind" of

9. What did God have in mind in producing "Earth" and "Seas"? (Isaiah 45:18)

10. (a) What appeared for the first time on the "third day," and in what forms? (b) How would this benefit mankind? (Genesis 1:29, 30; Psalm 104:14)

plant life could reproduce only its own "kind," but in a delightful variety of colors and forms—as with the delicate types of roses.—Genesis 1:12, 13.

¹¹ God endowed the green parts of plants with a substance called "chlorophyll." By means of this complex substance, light from the sun causes carbon dioxide from the air and water from the soil to react together to form sugars, producing as much as 150 billion tons of these around the earth each year, and at the same time releasing oxygen to renew the air. Plants use up these sugars in growing, converting them into the various kinds of food that we eat. Thus the

11. How did God provide so that the earth would produce food? (Jeremiah 10:12)



The Creator marvelously designed plants to use sunlight, air and water to produce food

energy that sustains the great variety of living things on earth all comes from this miraculous process involving sunlight, air and water, and the secret of this process is still unknown to man! Very true are the words: "How many your works are, O Jehovah! All of them in wisdom you have made. The earth is full of your productions." —Psalm 104:24.

LUMINARIES APPEAR IN THE HEAVENS

¹² On the "fourth day," God went on "to make the two great luminaries, the greater luminary for dominating the day and the lesser luminary for dominating the night, and also the stars." (Genesis 1:14-19) However, had not God created these heavenly bodies earlier, "in the beginning"? Yes, he had. But please note that there is a difference between the verb "created" (Hebrew, *bara'*) at Genesis 1:1 and the verb 'made' (Hebrew, *asah*) at Genesis 1:16. What apparently happened on the "fourth day" is that for the first time the outline of sun, moon and stars became quite visible from the surface of the earth, probably because of a clearing of the atmosphere. A radiant sun now served as "luminary" to brighten the day, bringing cheerful warmth. But what of the moon? Well, space researchers have commented that more than 50 percent of the moon's surface is composed of glass particles, admirably suited for reflecting the sun's rays. Whenever we admire a moonlit landscape we can reflect on God's wisdom and love in providing this "lesser luminary" to shine at night!

12. (a) Why is there no contradiction between Genesis 1:1 and 1:16? (b) What apparently happened on the "fourth day"? (Psalm 136:1, 7-9)

¹³ In due course, man would be able to measure time by these luminaries. However, any time-pieces constructed by man would always be inferior to and be governed by the heavenly bodies that the Great Timekeeper, Jehovah God, had set in motion on exact time schedules, for man's benefit. On this fourth 'creative day,' as on each "day," God's work started at "evening," when the dim outline of his activity began to appear, and continued through to "morning," when all of his glorious accomplishment became clearly apparent.

¹⁴ On completing his great works of both the third and fourth "days," God saw that it was "good." (Genesis 1:12, 18) But two thrilling "days" of creative work and a 'rest day' still remained. The grand Creator was to continue making loving preparation of man's home, looking to his future happiness. For this, each one of us should be thankful, as was King David, who said:

"Many things you yourself have done, O Jehovah my God, even your wonderful works and your thoughts toward us; there is none to be compared to you. Were I inclined to tell and speak of them, they have become more numerous than I can recount."
—Psalm 40:5,

13. (a) What would man measure by these luminaries? (Ecclesiastes 3:1) (b) Why is "evening" placed ahead of "morning"? (Proverbs 4:18)

14. Why have we reason to be thankful for these things that God did? (Revelation 4:11)

The Creator Populates

"Spaceship Earth"

BY THE end of God's "fourth day" of creation, Earth's surface presented a beautiful sight. It was alive with color. Much later, in this twentieth century of our era, an astronaut viewed it

from the lifeless surface of the moon, and commented:

"When you look at our earth from two hundred and forty thousand miles away, especially over a horizon that has been bombarded for eons, you see that our planet is the only thing in the universe that has any color in it. . . . We share such a beautiful planet.

. . . The overwhelming wonderment is why in the world we can't appreciate what we have."

By experience that astronaut came to know how weightless living in the cramped quarters of a man-made spaceship contrasts with the normal



**Earth excels in every respect
any spaceship of men**

1. (a) How does the earth contrast with the moon, and with man-made spaceships? (b) How do many persons show that they do not truly appreciate our earth? (Psalm 10:4)

life that man can enjoy right here on "spaceship Earth," in the environment that God prepared for him. However, not only do the majority of men fail to appreciate what they have, but for the most part they ignore the illustrious Designer and Maker of this earth. Many persons choose to be like the senseless one who "has said in his heart: 'There is no Jehovah.'"—Psalm 14:1.

FISH "SOULS" AND FLYING CREATURES

² Not millions of years in the past, as some persons theorize, but in comparatively recent times, God proceeded according to his own timetable to populate our "spaceship." He created the first "souls." The word "soul" (Hebrew, *ne'phesh*), as it appears here in the Bible account of creation, refers to a breathing, sentient creature, whether fish, bird, animal or man. On this fifth 'creative day,' God produced fish and bird "souls."—Genesis 1:20-23.

³ What a wealth of divine wisdom is manifest in the structure of these living things! To some extent, man has been able to copy principles that he finds in this creation, such as the jet propulsion of the squid, the sonar of the bat and some of the aerodynamics of birds. But there are many astounding secrets in the makeup of these "souls" that man has been unable to unlock. Fish and bird life have added beauty and interest to man's earthly home, besides providing tasty additions to his menu when God decreed for them to "serve as food" for man.—Genesis 9:2, 3.

2. (a) When did God start to populate our "spaceship"? (b) What is a "soul"? (Revelation 16:3) (c) What souls were created on the "fifth day"?

3. (a) How has man been able to use principles that he finds in creation, but what must he admit? (Job 12:7-10) (b) How have fish and bird life been a blessing to mankind?

LIVING SOULS FOR THE EARTH

⁴ As the sixth 'creative day' opened, Jehovah said:

"Let the earth put forth living souls according to their kinds, domestic animal and moving animal and wild beast of the earth according to its kind."
(Genesis 1:24)

God's invisible spirit became active in forming a marvelous variety of animal "kinds," some of which fulfilled a temporary purpose, and others of which have survived, for the benefit of man, to this day. Some of these animals are much more than pets: There are horses for riding, dogs for shepherding, elephants for transporting, oxen for plowing, sheep for providing wool, and so on. Animal "souls" have indeed served for the benefit and happiness of mankind.

⁵ We can truly thank Jehovah for these productions! As the psalm writer says:

"Jehovah's expressions of loving-kindness I will sing about even to time indefinite. . . . Heaven is yours, the earth also is yours; the productive land

4. (a) What did God form on the "sixth day," and how?
(b) In what ways have the animals served man? (Genesis 1:25)
5. Why should we thank God for these productions? (Psalm 8:4, 6-9)





A great gulf separates God's human creation from the animals, proving "evolution" to be false

and what fills it—you yourself have founded them."
—Psalm 89:1, 11.

THE CROWNING GLORY OF EARTHLY CREATION

“During all this creative activity, Jehovah had beside him a helper—a “master worker”—the most beloved of all his angelic sons in the invisible heavens. (Proverbs 8:30) Toward the close of the sixth ‘creative day’ Jehovah said to this companion worker:

“Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and the domestic animals and all the earth and every moving animal that is moving upon the earth.”
—Genesis 1:26-28.

6. (a) What helper did Jehovah have beside him in creation? (John 1:1-4) (b) What did God say to this companion worker, and so what relation would man have toward the animals?

⁷ Did God and his companion “worker” make man by some complicated evolutionary process? No, it was much simpler than that. For the Bible tells us:

“Jehovah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul.” (Genesis 2:7)

The Bible here says nothing about man evolving upward from hairy, grunting apelike creatures. Surely, he could not acquire an appreciation of beauty and of music, the ability to look into the past and into the future, inventiveness, a conscience to discern between right and wrong, and the marvelous qualities of kindness and love, by mere chance evolution! Only a higher, intellectual Personage—God—could bestow such attributes. Jehovah God created the first man in His own “image,” and not the image of any previous earthly creation, such as “birds and four-footed creatures and creeping things.” (Romans 1:23) Between the dumb, unreasoning beasts and the intelligent, upright creature man, there exists a gulf that no evolutionary process could ever start to cross.

⁸ When God later took a rib from the man as he slept, built it into the woman, Eve, and presented this lovely wife to Adam, the man was not limited to mere primeval grunts in expressing his joy. Spontaneously he spoke the first poetry:

7. (a) By what process did God create man? (Job 33:4)
(b) What proves that man could not have evolved? (Psalm 100:3)

8. (a) What shows that the first man had a good command of language? (b) What was the quality of all of God's creation? (Deuteronomy 32:4)

"This is at last bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh.
This one will be called Woman,
Because from man this one was taken."
(Genesis 2:21-23)

So in creating mankind as "male and female"
God brought his earthly creation to its conclusion.

"After that God saw everything he had made and,
look! it was very good. And there came to be evening
and there came to be morning, a sixth day."—Genesis
1:31.

REASONS FOR THANKING OUR CREATOR

⁹ The masterpiece of God's earthly creation—man—was indeed "very good." As descendants of that first man and woman, we should be continually thankful for God's marvelous workmanship. Think of the joy we can derive from our senses—the taste of delicious meals, the touch of loving hands, the sight of breathtaking landscapes, the sound of birds or of delightful music, the aroma of flowers and of foods! And for good measure, God has endowed us with two each of eyes, ears, nostrils, besides other vital body parts. Ten fingers coordinate perfectly with one another for getting work done and thirty-two superbly designed teeth enable us to bite and chew our foods, and to flash smiles at those around us. Our ability to express pleasure and humor by laughing (something animals cannot do) is another of our many blessings. What zest we can get from life through the God-given abilities of walking, running, jumping, swimming! In appreciation of a thousand marvelous features of the body that

9. What are some details in the design of man that should cause us to laud our Creator?

our Creator gave us, we should want to express ourselves the same way that King David did:

“O Jehovah, you have searched through me, and you know me. I shall laud you because in a fear-inspiring way I am wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, as my soul is very well aware.”

—Psalm 139:1, 14.

¹⁰ Truly wonderful among God's gifts to man is the capacity to reproduce his own kind. Though a corrupt world has abused sex and used it for immoral purposes, it is not unclean when used by married persons in harmony with God's purpose and commandments. What a marvelous process human reproduction is! In the woman, the egg cell—no larger than a pinpoint—is fertilized by a male sperm cell 1/85,000 the size of that egg cell. From the union of those two tiny particles there matures in time a complete human, inheriting qualities from both parents according to the composite “blueprint” (DNA) formed at the time the cells united. Modern architects sometimes fill large volumes with blueprints of a building under construction, but God could incorporate the “blueprint” for making an entire human being—far more complicated than any building—in a cell that is almost invisible. Speaking of this “blueprint” for a human person, King David acknowledges that Jehovah is able to see all things, including the infinitely small:

“You kept me screened off in the belly of my mother. Your eyes saw even the embryo of me, and in your book all its parts were down in writing, as regards the days when they were formed and there was not yet one among them. So, to me how precious your thoughts are! O God, how much does

10. How does the process of human reproduction magnify Jehovah's wisdom? (Ecclesiastes 11:5)

the grand sum of them amount to!"—Psalm 139: 13, 16, 17.

¹¹ True, God's thoughts are precious! And we can be most thankful that God has given us a brain that is capable of thinking his thoughts. What a magnificent organ this is! The human brain contains a memory system so efficient and so intricate that, if man himself constructed an electronic computer to do the same work, it would need to be as large as the Empire State Building in New York city.* Truly, Jehovah knows how to economize on space! Also, according to biochemists, the capacity of the human

brain far exceeds that of animal brains. It is estimated to have the awesome capability of storing *a thousand million times* more information than a person now stores in a lifetime of seventy to eighty years. In harmony with His purpose for man to live on earth forever, God gave him a brain that could keep on memorizing new items for eternity! How important to keep filling our minds with "praiseworthy" thoughts! —Philippians 4:8.

* *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1973, Vol. 2, p. 459.



**A computer
with memory
equaling man's
would fill a skyscraper**

11. For what capabilities of the human brain should we thank God?

GOD'S PURPOSE IN CREATING MAN

¹² God had a purpose in creating man, and it should be our desire to live in harmony with that purpose. At the time that Jehovah created the human pair, he blessed them, and told them:

“Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:28)

However, what do we see today, six thousand years later? In some areas, the earth has become filled with humankind, but for the most part they do not acknowledge dependence on their Creator, Jehovah God, nor do they worship him. And rather than subdue the earth, in a large measure they are polluting and ruining it, along with much of its animal life. However, we can be thankful that God has declared his determination to bring to “ruin those ruining the earth” and to have all earth transformed into his purposed glorious paradise by the end of his great ‘rest day.’—Revelation 11:18.

¹³ Truly there are marvelous prospects for the future of “spaceship Earth”! And for man upon it! According to God’s grand purpose, his ‘rest day’ will end with the earth transformed into a paradise, populated by a righteous human race that has in subjection all other created earthly souls. We can thank Jehovah that he created “man in his image,” and that he provides for us so wonderfully here on earth—now, and on into limitless time.—Genesis 1:27.

12. (a) What was God’s purpose in creating man? (b) Despite mankind’s ruinous ways, what will this earth become, and when? (Isaiah 65:17, 18)

13. For what glorious prospect can we be thankful? (Psalm 145:11, 15, 16)

Sin Robs Mankind of Happiness

JEHOVAH GOD provided the first human pair with a lovely home in the parklike “garden of Eden,” which name means “Pleasure, Delight.” This appears to have been located near Mount Ararat of modern Turkey, in the area where the Euphrates and Tigris (Hiddekel) Rivers still find their source.—Genesis 2:15; 8:4.

² What a breathtaking prospect lay before Adam and his wife—that of transforming the entire earth into a paradise and filling it with

1. What kind of home did Jehovah provide for the human pair, and where may it have been located? (Genesis 2:8, 10, 14)
2. (a) What prospect lay before Adam and his wife? (Genesis 1:28) (b) By what means did God purpose to maintain unity in the human family, and why was this proper? (Jeremiah 10:23)





First Eve, then Adam, sinned, 'missing the mark' of perfect obedience to God

thousands of millions of their descendants, all made in the "image" and "likeness" of God and doing His will on the earth! In so large a family, it would be essential to maintain peace and unity. God purposed to do this, not by having man govern himself, but by exercising His own loving sovereignty over mankind. After all, God, the Designer and Creator of man, knows what we need for real happiness 'before ever we ask him.' —Matthew 6:8.

³ God placed in the middle of the garden "the tree of the knowledge of good and bad," and gave man a very simple command:

3. (a) What simple command did God give man? (b) Why did this not bring hardship? (1 John 5:3) (c) What would result from obedience? (Proverbs 3:1, 2, 7)

"You must not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will positively die." (Genesis 2:17)

This requirement brought no hardship, for the human pair could find delight in eating of the abundance of other foods in the garden. God was simply asking them to respect and show their subjection to his sovereignty. If they, along with the billions of their future offspring, were to obey him, mankind would be forever united around the worship of the one Supreme Sovereign.

⁴ However, the harmony of that paradise of pleasure was soon shattered! The rebellious spirit creature, Satan, speaking through a harmless-looking serpent, encouraged Eve to eat the forbidden fruit and so disobey God's command. Satan lied to Eve, saying:

"You positively will not die. For God knows that in the very day of your eating from it your eyes are bound to be opened and you are bound to be like God, knowing good and bad." (Genesis 3:4, 5)

Wrong desire got the better of Eve, and she ate, thus missing the mark of perfect obedience to God. Adam was not deceived, as Eve had been, into thinking that his disobedient eating of the fruit would not result in death; but in a spirit of willful independence he joined her in disobeying God. They chose to "do their own thing," and took themselves out from under God's sovereignty.

⁵ Becoming embarrassed now about their naked condition, they made loin coverings out of fig leaves, and tried to hide themselves from their God. When he called them for judgment, they

4. (a) How was the harmony of paradise shattered? (James 1:14, 15) (b) What mark did Eve, then Adam, miss, and with what result? (1 Timothy 2:14)

5. What resulted to Adam and Eve, and to their offspring? (Genesis 3:5, 6, 21-24)

each in turn tried to "save face" by passing the blame elsewhere. God sentenced the rebellious pair to death and drove the man and woman out of the paradise of pleasure, to fight thorns and thistles in an earth now "cursed" on man's account. (Genesis 3:16-19) There they brought forth children in their now sinful image, and hence also subject to death. The apostle Paul summarizes it thus:

"Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned."—Romans 5:12.

WHAT SIN IS

⁶ Some persons have argued that wrongdoing is "sin" only if it results in harm to others. But that is not what the Bible teaches. In the Bible, the root meaning of the verb "to sin" is "to miss," in the sense of falling short of a goal or standard. In the case of Adam and Eve, they 'missed the mark' of perfect obedience to their loving Creator. Though they had been made in the "image" and "likeness" of God, they now fell short of reflecting his personality. They no longer measured up to God's righteous standards, and the entire human family inherited this disability from them. As Paul says: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."—Romans 3:23.

⁷ However, it is possible for humans who respect God's sovereignty to fight inherited sin. They can develop Godlike personalities and make use of their imperfect bodies in serving God, doing works of faith. God provided a basis for such faith when he said, in sentencing "the serpent,"

6. What do some persons view as "sin," but how does the Bible define it?

7. (a) How may we fight sinful tendencies? (Romans 12:1)

(b) In Eden, what basis did God provide for faith?

that He would bring forth from his symbolic "woman"—his heavenly household of holy angels—a "seed," or Deliverer, who would "bruise" and put out of action Satan and all who follow him.—Genesis 3:15.

⁸ Abel was the first human to show approved faith in the promise of this "seed," the Messiah. Although he had inherited sin from his father, Adam, Abel demonstrated his faith by sacrificing to God the best portions of "some firstlings of his flock." This pointed forward some 4,000 years to the time when the promised "seed," or Messiah, would be sacrificed as the "Lamb of God."—Genesis 4:4; John 1:29.

⁹ On the other hand, Abel's brother Cain made an offering to God of "some fruits of the ground." Because God accepted Abel's sacrifice and rejected Cain's offering, Cain "grew hot with great anger." God warned him of "sin crouching at the entrance," and that if he did not master this it would lead to his committing gross sin. Cain failed to heed the warning. He murdered his brother. (Genesis 4:3-8) This sin differed from the sin inherited from Adam. It was a wicked act, arising out of selfish hatred that Cain had nourished in his heart. The apostle John warns us against developing a disposition like that of Cain, saying:

"We should have love for one another; not like Cain, who originated with the wicked one and slaughtered his brother. And for the sake of what did he slaughter him? Because his own works were wicked, but those of his brother were righteous."

(1 John 3:11, 12) *Read*

Abel was a sinful descendant of Adam, but God

8. What faith did Abel demonstrate, and how? (Hebrews 11:4)

9. (a) Of what did God warn Cain? (b) What kind of sin did Cain commit?

counted him "righteous" because of his works of faith. On the other hand, Cain added to his inherited sin, becoming wicked. God condemned and banished him.

¹⁰ The difference between inherited sin and willful sin is shown also in the record concerning Enoch, the second man of approved faith mentioned in the Bible. Enoch was a prophet of Jehovah. He fearlessly proclaimed God's message against the wicked persons of his day, saying:

"Look! Jehovah came with his holy myriads, to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly concerning all their ungodly deeds that they did in an ungodly way, and concerning all the shocking things that ungodly sinners spoke against him." (Jude 14, 15)

Enoch was an imperfect man, a sinner, but he abhorred the willfully wicked, ungodly world around him. By faith "Enoch kept walking with the true God." He pleased God well, and God quietly removed him in death from among the dangerous, wicked people of that time.—Genesis 5:24.

¹¹ Another noteworthy example of the difference between inherited sin and wickedness is to be observed in Noah's time. Again, Noah and his family were sinful humans, prone to make mistakes, as we are today. However, they exercised faith in God and obeyed him. So the Bible says:

"Noah was a righteous man. He proved himself faultless among his contemporaries. Noah walked with the true God." (Genesis 6:9)

But the rest of mankind was corrupted and wicked. Much of this came about when spirit sons

10. How is the difference between inherited sin and willful sin shown in the case of Enoch? (Hebrews 11:5, 6)

11. (a) How could Noah be righteous, even though he was sinful? (Hebrews 11:7) (b) How was the earth ruined, and so what did Jehovah determine to do? (Genesis 6:6-8)

of God in the heavens departed from their assigned positions to come down to earth and cohabit with the good-looking daughters of men. The offspring of these unholy unions were the giant Nephilim, superhuman "mighty ones," that filled the earth with violence.

"Consequently Jehovah saw that the badness of man was abundant in the earth and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time. And the earth came to be ruined in the sight of the true God and the earth became filled with violence. So God saw the earth and, look! it was ruined, because all flesh had ruined its way on the earth." (Genesis 6:5, 11, 12)

Jehovah determined to destroy that wicked world by a flood.

¹² This deluge was to be no mere local rain-storm or flood limited to the Euphrates Valley. In that event, God could have simply led Noah's family and the animals

12. By what means did God bring the deluge on the earth? (2 Peter 3:5, 6)



Abel, Enoch and Noah, though sinners, were approved because of faith; willful sinners were punished

to nearby hills for protection. But no! This flood was to be of global proportions. So God had Noah build an ark of preservation, according to the design that He provided. After God had closed the door on Noah and the animals in the ark, He broke up the waters "above the expanse"—the great deep that he had separated from the waters on the earth during the "second day" of creation.

"All the springs of the vast watery deep were broken open and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. And the downpour upon the earth went on for forty days and forty nights."—Genesis 1:6-8; 7:11, 12.

¹³ Imagine that cataclysm! An entire heavens of waters crashing down on the earth, overwhelming every living thing, and covering all the mountains! The tremendous pressures involved would bring about great changes on the surface of the earth, pushing up mountain ranges and forming depressions to receive the waters. Within the space of about one year these had receded into the oceans as we know them today. It was only by a miracle of God that the frail ark, with its precious cargo of eight humans and two of each kind of beast and bird (or seven in the case of clean animals), was able to survive. Wicked Nephilim and humans and all other living creatures on the surface of the earth perished. As for the rebellious "sons of God," these were forced to return to the spirit realm, where by God's decree they are now "reserved for judgment" and cutting-off.—2 Peter 2:4, 5, 9.

¹⁴ What took place in Noah's day shows that

13. What happened to Noah and his family, and to wicked men and angels? (Jude 6)

14. What do events of Noah's day foreshadow? (Matthew 24:21, 22, 44)

EVIDENCE OF THE GLOBAL DELUGE

Jesus Christ testifies: "In the days of Noah, . . . the flood arrived and destroyed them all."—Luke 17:26, 27.

There is physical evidence that the pre-Flood earth was like a global "greenhouse" of uniform climate under the water canopy that God broke open to cause the cataclysm of the Flood:

Scientific Monthly, August 1949: "In those days the earth had a tropical or sub-tropical climate over much of its land surface . . . The land was low and there were no high mountains."

Science et Vie, July 1966: "[Antarctica] was once a green land where streams flowed among flowers, where birds sang in the trees."

Science News, October 4, 1975: "In almost every culture . . . emerge strikingly similar tales of a great flood that swept away emerging civilizations and changed the face of the earth. New evidence gathered from sea-floor cores . . . confirms the existence of such a universal deluge."

The Deluge Story in Stone, by Byron C. Nelson: "The way fishes by the millions are entombed in the rocks of England, Scotland, Wales, Germany, Switzerland, the American Rockies; the way elephants and rhinoceroses are buried by the millions in Alaska, Siberia, England, Italy, Greece; . . . the way reptiles are buried by the millions in western Canada, the United States, South America, Africa, Australia, to mention only a portion of such instances, absolutely require the explanation of great catastrophes for their elucidation."

Monarchs and Tombs and Peoples—The Dawn of the Orient, by Prince Mikasa: "Was there really a Flood? As a result of excavations by archaeologists in recent years, the fact that the flood actually took place has been convincingly proved."

Jehovah God is able to save, and he will save, ordinary sinful humans who put their faith in him and in his provision for salvation, which now centers in "the Son of man," the promised "seed" and Messiah, Jesus Christ. (Galatians 1:4) Speaking of the day in which we now live, when the Son of man comes to destroy the "present wicked system of things," that Son himself said:

"For just as the days of Noah were, so the presence of the Son of man will be. For as they were in those days before the flood, eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and they took no note until the flood came and swept them all away, so the presence of the Son of man will be." (Matthew 24:37-39)

Shortly, all persons who choose selfishly to ignore Jehovah's provision "will certainly be annihilated together; the future of wicked people will indeed be cut off."—Psalm 37:38.

¹⁵ However, you need not think that the sinful flesh that you inherited from your forefather Adam, and the unintentional mistakes that you make day by day, put you in the same class with those wicked ones. Like Abel you can show faith that is pleasing to God, basing this now on Jesus' sacrifice. Like Enoch, you can walk with God, speaking to others about His judgments against the present ungodly world. Like Noah, you can be a "preacher of righteousness," telling your neighbors about Jehovah's promise to create a human society in which "righteousness is to dwell." (2 Peter 2:5; 3:13) Thus you can abide in the place of security in this time of world crisis.

15. (a) Does our inheritance of sin make it impossible for us to please God? (b) What qualities and acts of Abel, Enoch and Noah should we seek to imitate, and why? (3 John 11)

What Happens to Us When We Die

AS SINNERS, inheriting imperfection from Adam, we all die.

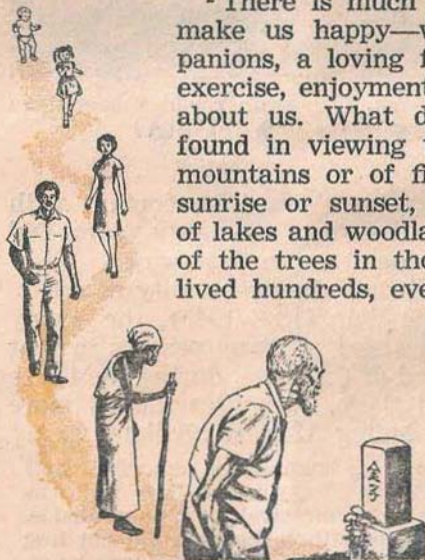
"The wages sin pays is death." (Romans 6:23)

But do you really want to die? Especially if you are in good health, surely you want to go on enjoying life.

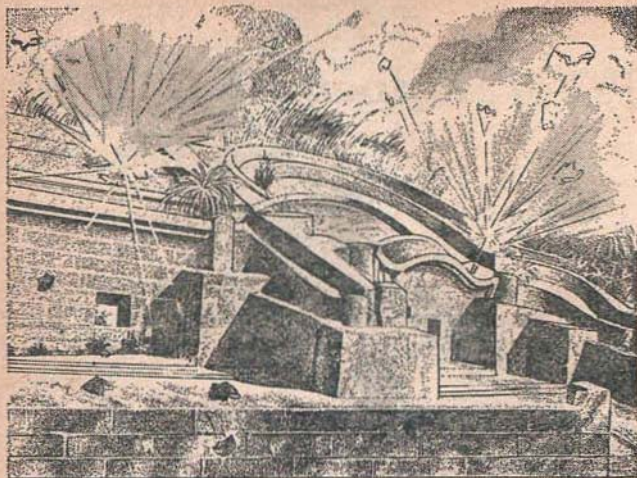
² There is much in life that can make us happy—wholesome companions, a loving family, healthful exercise, enjoyment of the creation about us. What delight is to be found in viewing the grandeur of mountains or of fiords, a glorious sunrise or sunset, or a panorama of lakes and woodlands! Why, some of the trees in those forests have lived hundreds, even thousands, of

years! Yet we humans, whom God created for a far no-

1. Why do we all die? (Romans 5:12)
2. (a) Why should we want to keep on living? (b) What suggests that man was made to live longer than seventy or eighty years? (Genesis 2:9)



**God purposes a happier
outlook for mankind**



During the Pacific War, Okinawan civilians kept alive by sharing tombs with the dead

bler purpose than trees, must be content with a life-span of about seventy or eighty years. Did our Creator purpose it to be that way?

³ All of us must face the eventuality of death. During the Pacific War (1941-1945), the enemy death became very real to many persons in that area. On the island of Okinawa, during the fierce battle that raged there, casualties totaled more than 203,000, including 132,000 civilians.

One of the surviving Okinawans describes how she took refuge with her forty-day-old son. This was inside her family's large ancestral tomb on a hillside. Contrary to local superstition, her son did not lose his soul on approaching the tomb. During long hours spent in there, she observed that the remains of her

3. What experience caused one person to conclude that death is the end? (Psalm 104:29)

ancestors looked no different from the ground outside, and concluded that they must be completely dead. Shortly after the war she met Jehovah's Witnesses, who showed her from the Bible that the dead do indeed "return to the ground," with nothing surviving. She became the first native Okinawan to proclaim "good news" of the real hope for those "sleeping in death."—Genesis 3:19; 1 Thessalonians 4:13.

⁴ What else did this Okinawan person read in the Bible that confirmed her view of the condition of the dead? Here are some scriptures that she read and which bear directly on the matter:

"For the living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all, neither do they anymore have wages, because the remembrance of them has been forgotten. All that your hand finds to do, do with your very power, for there is no work nor devising nor knowledge nor wisdom in Sheol [gravedom], the place to which you are going." (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10)

"O Jehovah, . . . save me for the sake of your loving-kindness. For in death there is no mention of you; in Sheol [gravedom] who will laud you?" (Psalm 6:4, 5)

"What able-bodied man is there alive who will not see death? Can he provide escape for his soul [Hebrew, *ne'phesh*] from the hand of Sheol [gravedom]?" (Psalm 89:48)

"Earthling man . . . goes back to his ground; in that day his thoughts do perish."—Psalm 146:3, 4.

⁵ The above texts include three of the more than sixty occurrences in the Bible of the Hebrew word *Sheol*, which literally means "gravedom." A corresponding word in the Greek Scriptures, *Hades*, which appears just ten times, means the same. Both of these words always refer, not to individual tombs, but to the "common grave,"

4. How does the Bible describe the condition of the dead?

5. What are Sheol and Hades, and what is the condition of those who go there? (Psalm 115:17)

where Adam's sinful descendants go at death. This is a place of nonexistence, unconsciousness, where the dead must remain until God resurrects them. They are completely dead, but not without hope.

WHAT IS THE "SOUL"?

⁶ However, many people believe that man has a "soul" that departs from the body at death, to live elsewhere. Some persons think that the Bible teaches this. One reason is that the Hebrew and Greek words in the Bible (*ne'phesh* and *psy-khe'*) are translated into other languages by words that allow for spirit life after death. In English, this word is "soul." It is most important, therefore, that we understand the real meaning of these Hebrew and Greek words that are translated "soul."

⁷ The Hebrew word, *ne'phesh*, which occurs about 750 times in the Bible, means actually "a breather." As we have already seen, fish, birds, animals and humans are all called "souls [*ne'phesh*]" in the Bible. They do not *have* souls. They *are* souls, breathing creatures. And as the psalms quoted above show, the "soul" cannot escape the hand of gravedom. It dies. Examination of the 102 occurrences in the Greek Scriptures of the corresponding word *psy-khe'* likewise shows that man is a soul.

"The first man Adam became a living soul [*psy-khe'*]." (1 Corinthians 15:45)

6. (a) What is the "soul," according to common belief? (b) What are the Hebrew and Greek words that are translated "soul"?

7. (a) How many times does this Hebrew word occur in the Bible, and what is its actual meaning? (b) What other souls are there besides human souls, and do souls die? (c) How is the Greek word for soul used with respect to Adam? (d) How did Adam become a living soul, and what reverse process took place later? (Job 34:15)

God made this "soul" by blowing the breath of life into the nostrils of the man that he had formed out of dust from the ground. Thus man *became* a "breather," or living soul. When Adam rebelled, God passed sentence of death on him, saying:

"You [will] return to the ground, for out of it you were taken. For dust you are and to dust you will return." (Genesis 3:19)

When that sentence was carried out, Adam ceased to be "a breather," or a soul, and went back to the lifeless dust from which he had been taken. It was the reverse of the creation process. No part of him lived on. He went completely into non-existence.

^s The "soul" is the physical, living person himself, not just a spiritual part of him. Many authorities present this viewpoint. For example, one of America's foremost Hebrew scholars, Dr. H. M. Orlinsky, said regarding the word "soul":

8. (a) How do Hebrew scholars define *ne'phesh*? (b) How do Greek-English lexicons define *psy·khe'*? (c) What words of Jesus prove that the soul is not immortal? (Matthew 26:38)



Body + Life-Force = Living Soul

"The Bible does not say we have a soul. 'Nefesh' is *the person himself*, his need for food, the very blood in his veins, his being."

As for the Greek word *psy-khe'*, Greek-English lexicons give such definitions as "life," and "the conscious self or personality as centre of emotions, desire, and affections," "a living being," and show that even in non-Biblical Greek works the term was used of "animals."* That "a living being" is not immortal is shown by Jesus' saying at Matthew 10:28 that God "can destroy both soul [*psy-khe'*] and body in Gehenna."

⁹ However, what is this "Gehenna"? Since it is translated "hell" in a number of languages, is it not a place of conscious torture after death? No. Ancient "Gehenna," outside the walls of Jerusalem, was a valley used as a rubbish dump, where the corpses of executed criminals were often thrown to be destroyed among the burning refuse. "Gehenna" is thus used twelve times in the Greek Scriptures as a symbol of the everlasting destruction of grossly wicked souls. It signifies annihilation, not eternal torment. Those destroyed in Gehenna were no more tormented than are the bodies that are burned in a modern-day crematorium.

PERPETUATION OF A LIE

¹⁰ No, there is nothing that survives after man's death. Where, then, did this teaching that man has an immortal soul originate?

* Liddell and Scott's *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1968, ninth ed., pp. 2026, 2027; Donnegan's *A New Greek and English Lexicon*, p. 1404.

9. (a) What is "Gehenna"? (b) Is anyone conscious there? (Matthew 18:9)

10. What survives after man's death? (Isaiah 53:12)

¹¹ After the flood of Noah's day, his great-grandson Nimrod became a tyrant, "in opposition to Jehovah," one who hunted men and animals. He regimented the people and had them build cities for him, including Babel, or Babylon, which became the "mother" of false religion. There Nimrod started to erect a tower in defiance of God. So Jehovah confused the people's language, and scattered them, according to their language groups, "over all the surface of the earth." (Genesis 10:8-10; 11:5-9) As they went they took Babylon's religion with them, establishing "daughter" religions throughout the earth.

¹² The *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1910 ed., Vol. 3, p. 115) says of the ancient Babylonian religious teaching about the condition of the dead:

"The conception prevailed of a large dark cavern

11. (a) How did Nimrod defy Jehovah? (b) How did Babylon become the "mother" of false religion throughout the earth? (Revelation 17:5)

12. (a) What teaching has always been prominent in Babylonish religion? (b) But what does the Bible teach?



Gehenna, outside Jerusalem, where bodies of executed criminals were cremated

below the earth . . . in which all the dead were gathered and where they led a miserable existence of inactivity amid gloom and dust."

Thus, earth wide, Babylon's "daughter" religions have perpetuated this teaching that "the soul" is immortal, and that it lives on after death in a spirit world. This is far different from the Bible's plain statement concerning sinner man: "The soul . . . it itself will die."—Ezekiel 18:20.

¹³ Greek philosophers, such as Plato, also taught that the soul is immortal. In this connection, the French newspaper *Le Monde* of November 8, 1972, quotes French author Roger Garaudy as saying that Greek philosophy "led Christianity astray for centuries." We further read:

"The dualism of soul and body and the consequent myth of immortality of the soul . . . are Platonic theories that have nothing to do with Christianity or the Bible."

Even the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Vol. 13, p. 449) admits, under the heading "Soul (in the Bible)":

"There is no dichotomy [division] of the body and soul in the [Hebrew Scriptures]. . . . The term *nepes*, though translated by our word soul, never means soul as distinct from the body."

¹⁴ The religions of Christendom and of other lands have therefore been teaching a lie in saying that the soul survives the death of the body. In all of the 850 or more occurrences of *ne'phesh* and *psy-khe'* in the Bible, there is not one case where they are modified by such terms as immortal, indestructible, imperishable, deathless, or the like.

13. How do authorities confirm the Bible teaching on the soul?

14. What proves that Christendom has been teaching a great lie? (1 Timothy 4:1, 2)

"The soul [*ne'phesh*] that is sinning—it itself will die." "Any soul [*psy-khe'*] that does not listen . . . will be completely destroyed." (Ezekiel 18:4; Acts 3:23)

The soul (*ne'phesh*, *psy-khe'*) does not live on after death.

HOPE FOR THE DEAD

¹⁵ What, then, is the hope for dead persons? Unless God made some provision, they would remain dead, just like the animals.

"For there is an eventuality as respects the sons of mankind and an eventuality as respects the beast, and they have the same eventuality. As the one dies, so the other dies . . . All are going to one place. They have all come to be from the dust, and they are all returning to the dust." (Ecclesiastes 3:19, 20)

Yes, it is quite plain that man dies the same as the animals. But note what the same Bible writer says later about the "spirit," or life-force, that God has placed in humankind:

"The dust returns to the earth just as it happened to be and the spirit itself returns to the true God who gave it." (Ecclesiastes 12:7)

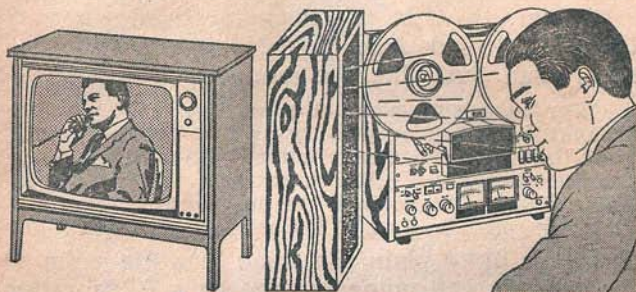
So, God takes back that person's life-force.

¹⁶ What if the true God decides to restore the "spirit" of life to that person? With His perfect memory, God can remember exactly what the person was like. It is similar to what men today do when they use magnetic tapes to record the voices and actions of people and reproduce these by radio or on a video screen long after these persons have died. Truly it will not be difficult for God, the Creator, with His infinite memory, to

15. (a) What eventually happens to both men and animals? (Psalm 49:12) (b) What is the "spirit" referred to at Ecclesiastes 12:7, and what happens to it at death?

16. (a) What illustrates that God could easily re-create a person? (Job 14:13) (b) How does God restore the "spirit"?

remake a human from the dust of the earth, incorporate in him every detail of his previous personality and mind, and restore his spirit, or life-force, so that he lives again. To God, this will be no more difficult than his creating the first man. And the Bible assures us that God "raises the dead up and makes them alive."—John 5:21.



**Man can reproduce actions and voices of those dead;
God can bring the dead back to life**

¹⁷ What is it that God 'raises up'? In most cases, nothing remains of the dead person's body. The corpse may even have been burned or perhaps devoured by beasts. However, in the resurrection, God will create an entirely new body from the elements of the earth, implant therein the personal identity of the individual's former life, and restore the life-force to make that soul live again. If we remain in our Creator's love, we may have strong assurance that, even in the event of our death, God will restore us to life in the resurrection. This he will do for mankind after he has cleaned up this earth, making it a fit place in which to live forever.

17. (a) What is it that God 'raises up'? (b) So, what firm assurance can we have? (Mark 12:26, 27)

God Does Not

Torment Souls

IT HAS been a common teaching in Christendom, as well as in the religions of the Orient, that "souls" of wicked persons undergo cruel torment after death in a fiery "hell." Since they have this inhuman belief, many religious leaders have thought it to be a fine thing to persuade the rulers to torture and burn people alive in this life also, especially if they held to another faith.

² However, Jehovah, the Creator, is a God of love. He is merciful and kind. His attitude toward the wicked is expressed at Ezekiel 18:23:

"'Do I take any delight at all in the death of some one wicked,' is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, 'and not in that he should turn back from his ways and actually keep living?'"

Thus, Jehovah does not want to see even the wicked person die, let alone be tortured. God's compassion for, and interest in, mankind is expressed in Jesus' words at Matthew 10:29-31:

"Do not two sparrows sell for a coin of small value? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father's knowledge.

1. What have religious leaders taught and done about "hell"?
2. (a) What kind of God is the Creator? (1 John 4:8) (b) What shows God could not approve of torture? (Jeremiah 7:31)



**God cares for
birds; even
more for you**

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Therefore have no fear: you are worth more than many sparrows."

The God who regards mankind in that way would not approve of torturing persons in this life or in a life to come. The Bible contains no such teaching.

ORIGIN OF "HELL" TORMENT TEACHING

³ The idea of a "hell" of torment stems from ancient Babylon. It is found also among the religious teachings of ancient Persia and Phoenicia. *The Encyclopedia Americana* (1956 ed., Vol. 14, p. 82) says:

"While there are many and significant variations of detail the main features of hell as conceived by Hindu, Persian, Egyptian, Grecian, Hebrew and Christian theologians are essentially the same."

Though most religions of history have taught that there is a fiery "hell," their teachings have differed as to its purpose. Says the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1971 ed., Vol. 11, p. 320):

"The Roman Catholic Church teaches that hell is a state of punishment for those who die unrepentant in grave sin. Hell will last forever; its suffering will have no end. . . . The traditional Protestant teaching on hell remained until modern times substantially the same as Catholic doctrine and is still held by many conservative Protestant groups."

On the other hand, Hindus and Buddhists teach that hell is a place of purification, akin to the Catholic "purgatory," and that a person who goes there may have a rebirth, though rarely as a

3. (a) Which religions have taught a hell of torment? (b) How have some of these teachings varied?

human, after his evil karma (deeds) have been burned up.

⁴ Describing the Buddhist hells, the above edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* states:

“There are eight hot hells and eight cold hells plus the realm of the *pretas* (ghosts with small mouths and great stomachs who are tortured by hunger and thirst). A person is born in hell as a result of the ‘ripening’ of his evil *karma*.”

On page 104 of this book, some idea of the supposed fiendish tortures administered in this “hell” is given in an illustration taken from a Buddhist scroll entitled “Kanzen Choaku” (meaning, Recommending the Good, Disciplining the Bad). It has many similarities to the “Inferno” of the Roman Catholic Dante, a portion of which is shown in this book on page 105.

⁵ Can you believe that such a hell really exists? Is it reasonable? Of course, if you wish to belong to a religion that teaches these things, you are perfectly free to do so. But these teachings of fiery torment are far different from what Jesus taught. He gladly aided tax collectors, harlots and other sinners, who were considered to be outcasts by the religious leaders of his day, so that they could clean up their lives, and “find refreshment” for their souls. (Matthew 11:28-30) The Bible shows that it is only the incurably wicked that God will punish everlastingly—not with eternal torture, but by mercifully putting them out of existence forever:

4. (a) What are the Buddhist hells like? (b) What similar teaching does the Roman Catholic religion have?

5. (a) What was and is Jesus' attitude toward sinners? (Luke 15:1, 2, 7) (b) Who only will be punished everlastingly, and in what way? (2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9)

"The wicked . . . are like the chaff that the wind drives away. . . . The very way of wicked ones will perish."—Psalm 1:4, 6.

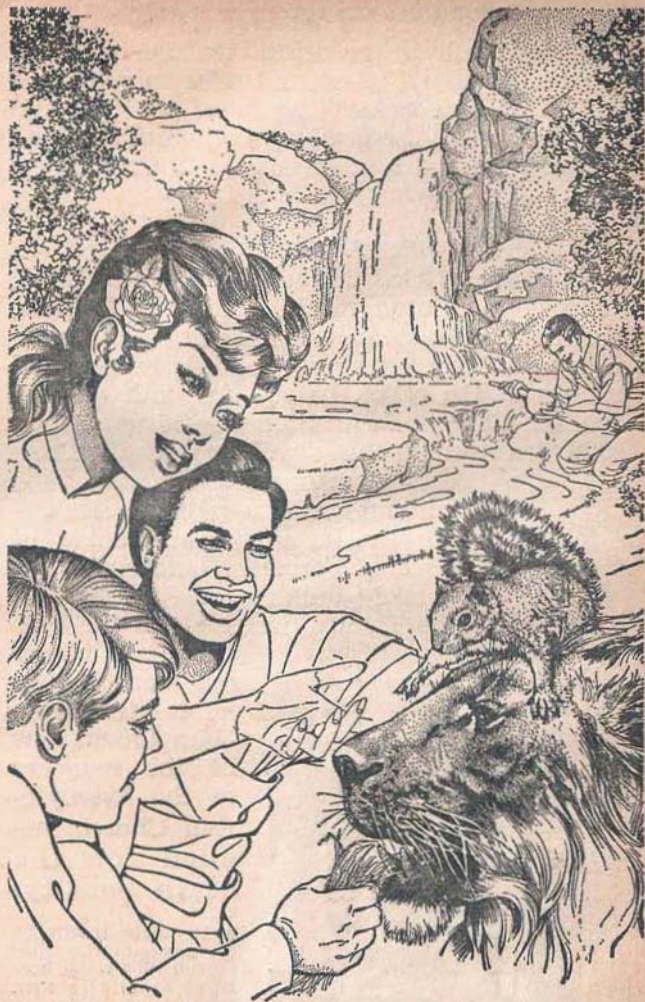
⁶ However, some persons may point to Jesus' parable at Luke 16:19-31, which describes a rich man in a "blazing fire" of torment. The dictionary defines a "parable" as a "short fictitious story"—not something that literally happens in real life. Here, Jesus was illustrating how, as a class, the religious leaders of the Jews would "die" figuratively toward having God's favor and come into distress while alive on earth—as they did on hearing Jesus proclaim his message against them. The Bible says nothing about God's tormenting people after death in "hellfire."* The idea of torment by fire is completely foreign to Jehovah God, who forthrightly condemned apostate Jews for the "detestable thing" of making "their sons and their daughters pass through the fire to Molech," the god of Ammon.—Jeremiah 32:35; 2 Chronicles 28:3.

⁷ Like the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, that of a "hell" of torment is based on the Babylonish lie that man's soul lives on after death. This lie has its source in Satan, who is "the father of the lie." (John 8:44) Religious priests and clergymen have made effective use of this lie, holding many persons in bondage to their religious sects by striking into them fear

* See the book *Is This Life All There Is?*, pages 98-110.

6. (a) Why does Luke 16:19-31 not support the "hellfire-torment" teaching? (Matthew 13:10, 11) (b) How was this parable fulfilled? (Matthew 21:45, 46)

7. (a) Who is "the father of the lie" about a "hell" of torment, and how have religious leaders used this lie? (2 Corinthians 11:13-15) (b) But how does Jehovah show himself to be the "God of all comfort"? (Romans 15:5, 6)



**Not eternal torment, but an opportunity for life
in paradise, lies ahead for sinful mankind**

of a fiery "hell" after death. On the contrary, Jehovah, as "the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort," purposes a bright and happy future for the dead ones of sinful mankind who are promised a resurrection.—2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.

TORMENTS IN THIS LIFE

⁸ Consistently, God does not approve of living souls being tortured in this life. The Catholic Church used the notorious Inquisition to stamp out so-called "heretics" by fiendish torture and burnings at the stake. In the sixteenth century alone, the Catholic Inquisition burned more than 30,000 "heretics" in this way. Nor were the Prot-



Tens of thousands died in fiery persecutions in Christendom

estant reformers of that time without guilt, a notable case being the burning near Geneva of Michael Servetus, because of his publicly declaring the truths that the Trinity doctrine and the bap-

tism of infants are contrary to Bible teaching. John Calvin, one of the founders of the Presbyterian Church, argued for the death penalty,

8. In their treatment of persons who disagreed with them, how have Catholic and Protestant religions failed to follow God's teaching and example? (Matthew 7:21-23)

and looked on while Servetus was literally roasted alive in a slow fire for about five hours till dead.

⁹ Jehovah, the 'God of love,' has never consented to such tortures. All men can look to him with complete trust and confidence in his loving-kindness.

"How precious your loving-kindness is, O God! And in the shadow of your wings the sons of men themselves take refuge."—Psalm 36:7.

¹⁰ Nor would such a loving God approve of the eternal torment of souls according to the sutra of the "Lotus of Truth" of Nichiren Buddhism in Japan. This sutra states in its concluding chapter 28:

"He who scoffs at the devotee of this sutra shall in every existence have his teeth broken and separated, his lips shall be ugly, his nose flat, his feet and hands contorted, his eyes squinting, his body disgusting; he shall have ulcers, pus, and blood shall come from his body, his belly shall swell up with water, he shall be short of breath and suffer from all kinds of malignant and serious diseases. Therefore, if one should see—even from afar—a man who is keeping this sutra, one should rise and show him the same reverence as the Buddha."

Surely it would not be right to afflict even a scoffer in that way! It would be most unloving to heap such everlasting misery on him. In any case, as the Bible shows, the souls of sinners do not survive the death of the body to be tortured in other existences. Those souls "die."—Ezekiel 18:4.

9. Because of what qualities of Jehovah can we have confidence in him? (Psalm 11:7)

10. Would you agree that scoffers should be treated as outlined in the Lotus Sutra?



Law of karma teaches "wheel" of endless rebirths

DO SOULS TRANSMIGRATE?

¹¹ The above sutra describes the supposed tortures to be inflicted upon a scoffer in "every existence." Here reference is made to the belief, common in Buddhism and Hinduism, that at death the soul "transmigrates" or passes over into another body. Persons who believe this feel that they have lived innumerable lives before and will continue to pass from one life to another in a virtually endless cycle of rebirths. Karma (deeds) performed in one life will determine what type of life the next one will be.

¹² One of the Hindu scriptures, the *Chandogya*

11. What is the belief of "transmigration," which is common in Buddhism and Hinduism?

12. How do the Hindu scriptures describe the law of karma, and how do you react to these statements?

Upanishad, explains the law of karma in this way:

"Those who are of pleasant conduct here—the prospect is, indeed, that they will enter a pleasant womb, either the womb of a Brahmin [priest], or the womb of a Kshatriya [the military], or the womb of a Vaisya [farmer or merchant]. But those who are of stinking conduct here—the prospect is, indeed, that they will enter either the womb of a dog, or the womb of a swine, or the womb of an outcast."

In similar vein are the following excerpts from the Hindu code of Manu concerning women:

"Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife. . . . By violating her duty towards her husband, a wife is disgraced in this world; after death she enters the womb of a jackal, and is tormented by diseases, the punishment of her sin."

¹³ Of course, Hindus and others are completely free to believe that way if they want to. But does such a belief bring them happiness? Professor John Noss writes in *Man's Religions*:

"Hindus have come to speak of the process of rebirth as 'The Wheel.' They look upon it with despair. . . . their hearts have failed them at the prospect of a possible thousand million rebirths stretching out their length before them."

Hinduism teaches that when a person realizes that his real self is a part of God, he can lose desire for further physical life, escape from the rebirth cycle, and attain Nirvana. According to various sects of Hinduism, this can result from Yoga, or from ecstatic dancing and chanting. Zen

13. (a) What effect has the teaching of transmigration had on people? (b) How is it said that Nirvana may be attained?



Buddhist scroll shows torments of bad souls in "hell"

Buddhism in Japan also stresses meditation as the way to Nirvana.

¹⁴ Let devotees of these religions follow these beliefs if they will. However, the Bible, in contrast,

brings us the simple, down-to-earth teaching that all men are mortal souls, inheriting sin and death from the first man, Adam. Death is the end of the road for each soul until the happy time when God resurrects the dead:

"The wages sin pays is death [not tormenting fires or the 'Wheel' of rebirth], but the gift God gives is everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord."
(Romans 6:23)

Now the question arises: Why has God tolerated wrong religious teachings for so long? Why has he permitted all the unhappiness that continues to afflict mankind?

14. What is the plain teaching of the Bible as to the condition of and hope for the dead? (1 Corinthians 15:20, 21)

Locations in the Buddhist "hell," as shown on page 104, reading from top to bottom: Way to Hell, Murderous Winds, Way of Thirst and Starvation, Mount of Needles, Clothes-Stripping Hag, Lake of Blood, Hiding-Place from World, Way of Slaughter, Hell of Repeated Lives, Place of Excrement and Mud, Hell of Black Ropes, Hell's Assembly, Grove of Sword Blades, Hell of Shouts and Yells, Wind of Gloom and Fire, Hell of Extreme Agony, Hell of Unceasing Torment.



**Roman Catholic "Inferno"
as depicted by Dante**

Why Has God Permitted Unhappiness?

HISTORY contains a frightful record of man's inhumanity to man. Its pages are bloodied by religious wars, massacres and persecutions. Horrible destruction of innocent people has accompanied the two world wars that Christendom started and the wars that have followed in Korea, Indochina and other places. Violence, revolution and crime continue to flare up in many countries. Why does God permit these terrible conditions? Why has he not removed unhappiness long ago? God himself explains why, in his Book of "good news."

² The God who could create the vast universe certainly has the power to remove all unhappiness. As the 'God of love,' he really cares for humankind. However, he is also the God of "practical wisdom." (1 John 4:16; Proverbs 2:6, 7) His wisdom is shown in his taking time to settle an issue of universal importance. Though this has meant his permission of unhappiness for a season, yet the long-range result will assure eternal happiness for all intelligent creatures in the universe.

1. Why should we be interested in knowing God's reason for permitting wickedness? (Psalm 94:2, 3)

2. (a) Can God remove wickedness, and does he want to? (Joel 1:15) (b) How has God shown wisdom in this matter?

³ This may be compared to the trial of a notorious murderer. It may take months to argue the case, sift all the evidence and arrive at a righteous and conclusive judgment. Then the murderer may be put away, and all others whose lives may have been endangered because of him can be happy that the threat has been removed. Similarly, time—some six thousand years—has been required to settle an issue raised by a manslayer, God's archenemy, but how brief is this time when compared with the eternity of happiness that lies ahead! For in God's sight "a thousand years are . . . but as yesterday when it is past."—Psalm 90:4.

THE ISSUE

⁴ What is the great issue that must be settled? It involves Jehovah's sovereignty over his creatures. At the time of the rebellion in Eden, Satan put God's sovereignty at issue. Not that he had power to remove God as Sovereign. No, but he

3. (a) Illustrate why time is needed to settle the issue. (b) Why is the time required comparatively brief? (Habakkuk 2:3)
4. (a) What is the great issue? (Psalm 83:18) (b) In what way has God's sovereignty been put in question?



A court trial takes time. So, too, the great issue of sovereignty must be fully examined

raised the question, Is God's sovereignty over his creatures right and in their best interests? Is that sovereignty righteous, and does it deserve their support? Through a serpent, Satan said to Eve in Eden: "Is it really so that God said you must not eat from every tree of the garden?" After attacking Jehovah's sovereignty by insinuating that He had lied, Satan persuaded Eve, and through her Adam, to take themselves out from under God's sovereignty, to be independent and decide for themselves what is "good" and what is "bad." (Genesis 3:1-5) Thus it was the rightness, righteousness and deservedness of God's sovereignty that was called into question.

⁵ God sentenced the wicked rebels to death. But he permitted them to keep living for a time, and he allowed Adam and Eve to bring forth imperfect offspring. Indeed, he has permitted wickedness to continue, under Satan's rule, to this present day. And why? To prove once and for all time that his sovereignty is altogether righteous and that no creatures can enjoy lasting happiness independent of his sovereignty and righteous laws. Thus he convicts Satan as a "manslayer," liar, slanderer and deceiver, and removes him together with all other lawless ones. Then God's judgment will stand as a precedent and serve as a touchstone throughout eternity in the event any creature again calls into question the sovereignty of Jehovah.—John 8:44.

⁶ How has this trial in the court of the universe

5. (a) Why has God permitted wickedness? (Romans 9:17)

(b) How will God's judgment serve for all eternity?

6. (a) What has been demonstrated regarding man-rule?

(b) What picture does man-rule present today? (Ecclesiastes 8:9)

worked out? Man has demonstrated clearly that he is unable to govern properly outside God's sovereignty. It has been exactly as the prophet Jeremiah states:

"I well know, O Jehovah, that to earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jeremiah 10:23)

At no time has this been more apparent than today, when the world is divided into Democratic, Communistic and "Third World" segments. Internally, these segments are split by further disunities. In man-rule, corruption and lying diplomacy are to be found everywhere. While one quarter of the world of mankind is starving for food, rulers spend huge sums on arming themselves, in many cases with nuclear weapons capable of annihilating the entire human race. Most rulers are in economic or other serious trouble, and often they are toppled overnight. Any alliances made by statesmen fit the description of Psalm 127:1:

"Unless Jehovah himself builds the house, it is to no avail that its builders have worked hard on it."

7 There are basic reasons why Jehovah's sovereignty is vastly superior to man-rule. God's sovereignty is based on love, which is "a perfect bond of union." (Colossians 3:14) Man-rule usually deteriorates into selfishness and greediness. God's sovereignty has power to unite and "to gather all things together." (Ephesians 1:10) Man-rule fosters division, hatred and strife. God's sovereignty is exercised "by means of justice and . . . righteousness." (Isaiah 9:7) Man-rule is usu-

7. (a) Why is God-rule superior to man-rule? (Psalm 45:6)
(b) What will God now do with regard to man-rule, and why? (Nahum 1:9)

ally oppressive of the poor and partial to the rich. It has proved under test to be a dismal failure, and now God is about



Job, sorely tried, kept integrity

to move it out of the way in order to exercise fully his own righteous sovereignty over the earth again.

MAN'S INTEGRITY

⁸ However, a related issue was also raised in the garden of Eden. It is this: Since the first humans rebelled, can God put any man on earth who will remain loyal to him under test? The Bible book of Job shows that there is such an issue. Its first two chapters describe what happened in the courts of heaven some 3,500 or more years ago. There, as the heavenly sons of God assembled before Jehovah, Satan also appeared, and Jehovah spoke:

“Jehovah went on to say to Satan: ‘Have you set your heart upon my servant Job, that there is no one like him in the earth, a man blameless and upright, fearing God and turning aside from bad?’ At that Satan answered Jehovah and said: ‘Is it for nothing that Job has feared God? Have not you yourself put up a hedge about him and about his house and about everything that he has all around? The work of his hands you have blessed, and his livestock itself has spread abroad in the earth. But, for a change, thrust out your hand, please, and touch everything he has and see whether he will not curse you to your very face.’”—Job 1:8-11.

8. What challenge did Satan raise regarding Job?

⁹ Jehovah permitted this test. Job lost his livestock, and his children in death, but he did not curse God, or turn against him. Later, when Satan afflicted him with a loathsome disease, his wife said finally in desperation: "Curse God and die!" But he still held fast his integrity to God. Three false comforters then added to his suffering, but Job declared:

"Until I expire I shall not take away my integrity from myself!" (Job 2:9, 10; 27:5)

Later, Job was rewarded richly for his integrity-keeping.

¹⁰ The Bible record, including Hebrews chapter 11, shows that many others of mankind have chosen unselfishly to uphold Jehovah's sovereignty, despite every kind of fiendish assault that Satan could make on their integrity. The long line of integrity-keepers continues down to this day.

¹¹ As an example, during Hitler's reign in Germany, Jehovah's Christian witnesses refused to salute the Nazi flag and to accept the dictator as their savior. Many hundreds sealed their integrity with their lifeblood. One of these, on the night of his execution, sent the following message, which is typical, to his beloved wife:

"When this letter reaches you my life will be fulfilled. We know that the sting has been removed from death and victory has been won over the grave. . . . The hour will come when the name of the Al-

9. What record did Job make, and how was he rewarded? (Job 42:12-16; James 5:11)

10. What record have other integrity-keepers made? (Hebrews 12:1)

11. (a) What examples of integrity-keepers are there today? (Proverbs 27:11) (b) How will God vindicate his sovereignty, and for how long? (Ezekiel 36:23)

mighty God will be vindicated and mankind will see it. When they ask today why he has not done this up till now, then we know it is because His power will thereby be demonstrated more effectively. . . . I have now reached the end, and I pray that you may also endure . . . so I look once more into your serene and glistening eyes, and wipe away the last sorrow from your heart; and, in spite of the pain, lift up your head and rejoice, not about death, but over the life that God will give those that love Him."

Shortly, Jehovah will vindicate his sovereignty, and all those who have supported it, in a demonstration of power against his enemies that will exalt his name "in all the earth."—Exodus 9:16.

THE OUTSTANDING KEEPER OF INTEGRITY

¹² However, the issue of integrity involves more than us humans. Even an angel of heaven had rebelled to become Satan, and other 'sons of God' later joined him in rebellion. (Genesis 6:4, 5) The issue is thus universal. No one could better prove Jehovah's side of the issue than the highest person in the universe next to Jehovah—the "master worker" who had assisted him in the creation! This heavenly Son gladly consented to God's transferring his life to the womb of an Israelite virgin, Mary, so that he was born as a human on this earth where Satan had raised the issue.

¹³ After growing to adulthood, God's Son Jesus was baptized in symbol of his presenting himself to carry out the special task that God assigned to him. Satan soon came to the attack! He offered Jesus the sovereignty, which Satan then held,

12. Who was most suited to prove Jehovah's side of the issue, and how did he become human? (John 1:14)

13. How did Jesus meet Satan's challenge? (1 Peter 2:21-23)

over all human kingdoms on earth, provided he would do an act of worship to Satan and so break integrity to Jehovah. Jesus answered Satan:

"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.'"—Matthew 4:10.

¹⁴ Having failed to budge Jesus from following the righteous law of Jehovah, Satan next put tremendous pressure on him through the religious leaders of his day. They persecuted him cruelly and finally had him put to death on an execution stake, but they failed to make him swerve from the path of perfect integrity and obedience to God's sovereignty. On the day of his death, Jesus could say of Satan: "He has no hold on me." (John 14:30) On the third day thereafter, Jehovah rewarded His faithful Son by resurrecting him in the spirit and later exalting him to His own "right hand" of favor in heaven.—Acts 2:32, 33.

¹⁵ To his loyal disciples this integrity-keeper had declared:

"In the world you are having tribulation, but take courage! I have conquered the world." (John 16:33)

Jesus' apostles and many Christians after them have also proved to be integrity-keepers, down to the death.

14. Why could Jesus say that Satan had 'no hold on him'?

15. How did Jesus encourage his disciples, and what have they proved to be? (Philippians 2:5, 8, 9)

**Jesus Christ, the
greatest integrity-
keeper of all**



TRIED AND FAITHFUL RULERS

¹⁶ Another important purpose has been accomplished by God's permitting Jesus' disciples to endure trials and persecutions. Just as Jesus himself "learned obedience from the things he suffered," so these, too, have been trained and molded through sufferings to develop the same sterling qualities of loyalty to God's sovereignty. The Bible shows that God selects a "little flock" of these disciples of Jesus, "a hundred and forty-four thousand" in number, to share in a spiritual "first resurrection," and to rule with Christ in his thousand-year kingdom over mankind. What a contrast that heavenly Kingdom rule will be to the corrupt, unprincipled man-rule of today! Further, the future visible administrators of all the earth are to include men like Job and a multitude of other integrity-keepers, both of ancient times and of this twentieth century where we now live! What confidence mankind will have in that administration!—Hebrews 5:8; Luke 12:32; Revelation 14:1-5; 20:6.

¹⁷ We should be happy that Jehovah has been "long-suffering" in holding back from destroying the wicked, for it has given many the opportunity to take Jehovah's side of the great issue. (Romans 2:4) May you also be blessed in supporting his sovereignty!

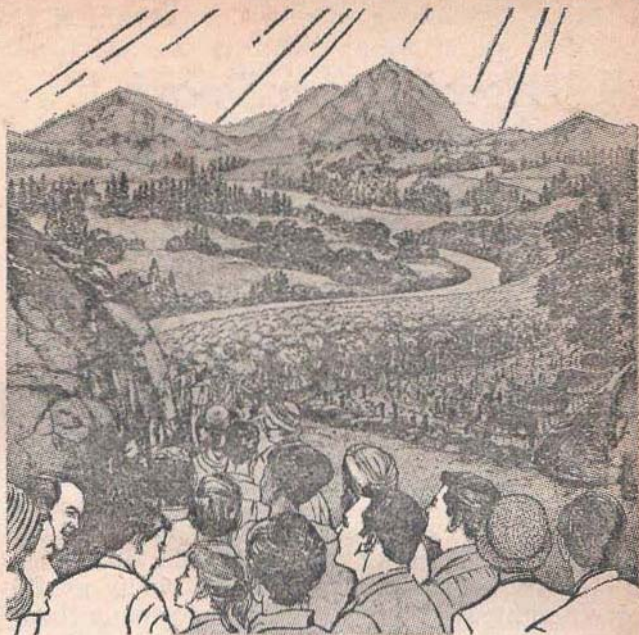
¹⁸ The long-standing issue involving God's sovereignty and man's integrity is about to be settled once and for all time, and completely in Jehovah's favor. Shortly, Jehovah will execute

16. Why can mankind have confidence in earth's new administration? (Isaiah 32:1)

17. Why has God's long-suffering been beneficial to us? (2 Peter 3:9, 15)

18. (a) How will God execute judgment? (Jeremiah 25:31)

(b) What kind of place will earth then become? (Isaiah 11:9)



Thousand-year kingdom of Christ will exalt Jehovah's righteous sovereignty and bless all mankind

his "court judgment" in ousting from the earth Satan and all others who oppose God's rule. Earth will then become a glorious place where "every breathing thing" will "praise Jah," Jehovah. (Psalm 150:6) But to *keep on* praising God, man will need to *keep on* living. How could this be possible? The next chapter will tell.

A Release from Death to Life

THE cruel wars of this twentieth century have resulted in many orphans. Imagine a family of orphans who have lost both parents. Without home or means of support, they are wandering destitute through life—hungry, sickly and without hope for the future. However, suppose a kindly gentleman takes note of their plight, and shows love toward them. He instructs his own son, who is unmarried, to befriend these orphans and to bring them into the home. There he cleans them up, feeds and clothes them, and pays off their debts. Becoming like a real father to them, the son raises them to enjoy a full life. Should not those orphans be thankful to the kindly gentleman and his son? Truly, they should thank them!

² Do you realize that you are a member of just such a family of orphans? Yes, for you are a descendant of Adam, the father of mankind, who through his own willful sin abandoned the entire human family to the miserable condition in which it finds itself today. Just like those orphaned children, we are “sold under sin,” inheriting this unhappy condition from Adam.—Romans 7:14.

³ Since we are sinners by birth, all of us humans are in the seemingly hopeless situation described at Psalm 49:7:

1. As described here, what might happen to a family of orphans that would give them reason to be thankful?
2. How have all of us become like “orphans”? (Romans 5:12)
3. Why are we powerless to redeem ourselves? (Psalm 51:5)

"Not one of them can by any means redeem even a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him."

Unless someone from outside the human family helped, we would all die and remain dead forever. For God cannot permit creatures that continue to fall short, or "miss the mark," of his righteousness to keep on living indefinitely. They would be a contaminating influence in a clean universe.

⁴ However, just like the kindly gentleman described above, Jehovah God has shown that he cares for mankind, and he has acted as the Bible tells us:

"God loved the world [of mankind] so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

This Son is described as "only-begotten" because he is the first and only direct creation of God. As we have already noted, he worked beside Jehovah as a "master worker" in bringing forth all other creations. As God's chief spokesman, he is also called "the Word."—John 1:1-3.

THE SON COMES TO EARTH

⁵ Jehovah arranged to send this Son from heaven to earth. God 'prepared a body for him,' a perfect human body, by transferring the Son's life-force from the realms of heaven to the womb of a virgin, Mary, a descendant of King David, and so in the course of nine months she bore him here on earth as the "Son of man." (Hebrews 10:5; John 3:13) When he grew to maturity as a

4. (a) What shows that God cares for mankind? (1 John 4:9, 10) (b) Who is "the Son"?

5. (a) How did the Son come to be a man on earth? (Luke 1:30-35) (b) In what way did Jesus correspond to the perfect Adam?

man, this Son, Jesus, corresponded exactly to the original man, Adam. Just as the perfect man Adam had reflected God's glory, so Jesus now reflected that glory:

"The Word became flesh and resided among us, and we had a view of his glory, a glory such as belongs to an only-begotten son from a father; and he was full of undeserved kindness and truth."

—John 1:14.

⁶ Jesus was not half God, half man. He was not God in the flesh. To atone for "one man's [Adam's] trespass," "the one man Jesus Christ" had to correspond exactly to the once-perfect Adam. He had to be a perfect man, nothing more, nothing less. (Romans 5:15) Like Adam, Jesus could have married and produced his own family, made up eventually of billions of perfect humans. But that was not the Father's will for him. God's will was for Jesus to remain childless and to present himself as a perfect human sacrifice. His blood poured out in death would represent his perfect human life corresponding exactly to Adam's life, and this he would use in buying all of Adam's family to be his own. Thus Jesus would become "father" to this orphaned family, the "many" of whom he speaks at Matthew 20:28:

"The Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many."

CANCELING THE DEBT OF SIN

⁷ Just like the kindly gentleman's son in our illustration, who paid off the debts of the or-

6. (a) Why did Jesus have to be a perfect man? (1 Timothy 2:5, 6) (b) Why did Jesus not produce his own family? (c) How did Jesus, as God's agent, buy mankind? (1 Peter 1:18, 19)

7. (a) How did Jesus obtain the "ready cash" to cancel mankind's debt of sin? (b) How was he able to pay this over to Jehovah? (1 Corinthians 15:45)

phaned family, Jesus could cancel the debt of sin that the human family had inherited from Adam. However, Jesus must first have on hand the value of his life, like "ready cash," to pay that debt. He had to die as a human in order to release his right to human life for use elsewhere. To this end, he willingly submitted to a cruel death at the hands of God's enemies. But these enemies could not take from him that right to human life. It became now like "cash" in his hands. When God had resurrected him "in the spirit" and he had ascended again into heaven, he still had that "cash" on hand to pay over to Jehovah as a "ransom." Thus he could buy back what Adam lost—life for all Adam's offspring.—1 Peter 3:18; Romans 3:24.

⁸ As in the case of the orphaned family described earlier, Jesus, as God's agent, took action to relieve mankind of their distressed state. For more than one thousand five hundred years before Jesus made his great sacrifice, Jehovah had the Israelites enact, each year, a prophetic pattern of that procedure. On the annual day of atonement, Israel's high priest slaughtered certain unblemished animals and carried their blood into the tent of worship (later, the temple), and there he sprinkled it before the mercy seat, which represented the judgment seat of Jehovah God himself. In this way he atoned for the sins of the people for another year.

⁹ In his letter to the Hebrews, the apostle Paul describes in detail how Jesus fulfilled that ancient pattern:

8. What prophetic pattern does the Bible give of atoning for the sin of humankind? (Leviticus 16:34)

9. How did Jesus fulfill the ancient pattern?

"Christ entered, not into a holy place made with hands, which is a copy of the reality, but into heaven itself, now to appear before the person of God for us. Neither is it in order that he should offer himself often, as indeed the high priest [of ancient Israel] enters into the holy place from year to year with blood not his own [with animal blood, not that of a perfect human]. Otherwise, he would have to suffer often from the founding of the world. But now he has manifested himself once for all time at the conclusion of the systems of things to put sin away through the sacrifice of himself. And as it is reserved for men to die once for all time [due to Adam's sin], but after this a judgment, so also the Christ was offered once for all time to bear the sins of many." (Hebrews 9:24-28)

Thus in heaven Jesus completed the legal procedure whereby he could not only free mankind from their sins inherited from Adam, but also adopt them as his own family, to whom he can now administer everlasting life.

A GRAND EXPRESSION OF LOVE

¹⁰ What a high price Jesus was willing to pay in order to ransom mankind from sin! How happy we can be that the Father and Son have made this loving provision for the human family! It is truly a grand expression of their love for mankind, and we should show our appreciation thereof by joyfully accepting all of God's provision for life on His terms. Those exercising faith in Jesus' sacrifice may "most truly" have everlasting life, as Jesus illustrates:

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread he will live forever; and, for a fact, the bread that I shall give

10. (a) Why is the ransom a grand expression of love? (John 15:9, 13) (b) How may we show appreciation for this provision, and with what result to us? (Colossians 3:17)

is my flesh in behalf of the life of the world."
—John 6:47, 51.

¹¹ In the illustration of our orphans, these waifs had to accept the standards of life in their new home. They had to clean themselves up. It is the same with those who show faith in Jesus' sacrifice and who desire to have him as their "Eternal Father." (Isaiah 9:6) As Jesus said to his disciples:

"If anyone wants to come after me, let him disown himself and pick up his torture stake and continually follow me." (Matthew 16:24)

We should not think that this is too difficult, for, remember, Jesus also said: "My yoke is kindly and my load is light." (Matthew 11:30) And if we accept the hospitality of God's household, and serve there wholeheartedly, we will experience untold joys. Just as the son fed those orphans, and helped to clean them up and clothe them, so Jesus will nourish us with spiritual food from God's Word, the Bible, and help us to put on a clean, new personality, "created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty."—Ephesians 4:24.

ADMINISTERING THE GIFT OF LIFE

¹² For six thousand years now, death has "ruled as king" over mankind. That has been the wages of sin inherited from Adam, but now God offers us the marvelous "gift [of] everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 5:14; 6:23) How is this gift administered? First, Jesus carries

11. (a) What is required of those who desire everlasting life? (Romans 12:2) (b) What results from accepting the hospitality of God's household?

12. (a) For whom does Jesus first do an atoning work, and for what purpose? (b) What results to those brought into the "new covenant"? (Hebrews 8:10)

out an atoning work on behalf of his "little flock" of integrity-keeping followers, 144,000 in number, who are "bought from among mankind as first-fruits to God and to the Lamb [Jesus]," and who are to "rule as kings over the earth" with Christ Jesus. (Luke 12:32; Revelation 14:4; 5:9, 10) On the basis of Jesus' sacrifice, these are brought into a "new covenant" with God as members of spiritual Israel, and each one of them must finish his course on earth in faithfulness, after which he shares in the resurrection to heavenly life. (Hebrews 8:8) A small remnant of this "little flock" is still serving on earth.

¹³ But look! In more recent times a "great crowd" has appeared on earth, "out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues," numbering into the hundreds of thousands. These also are exercising faith "in the blood of the Lamb," Jesus, and proving integrity to God's sovereignty. Shortly, they are to pass through the "great tribulation" by which God will destroy Satan's wicked system of things, and on into a cleansed earth that will be transformed into a paradise. (Revelation 7:9-14) Through the loving administration of his kingdom, Christ Jesus will then apply the merit of his great sacrifice in their behalf so as to raise them to the mark of human perfection. Those who adhere to God's sovereignty under test will enter into everlasting life.

¹⁴ And again, look! As paradise is restored to earth, behold the fulfillment of Revelation 20: 11-13:

13. (a) What other group has appeared in recent times? (Romans 8:21, 22) (b) What happy prospect lies ahead for these? (Revelation 7:15-17)

14. (a) What does Revelation 20:11-13 describe? (John 5:28, 29) (b) How are the resurrected ones to be judged? (Acts 24:15)

"I saw a great white throne [in heaven] and the one seated on it [Jehovah God]. . . . And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened. . . . And the dead were judged out of those things written in the scrolls according to their deeds."

The masses of mankind in gravedom are to be restored to life on earth. They, too, are among the "many" of Jesus' family, bought with his sacrifice, and whose imperfections he now removes. (Hebrews 9:28) He judges them, not according to their previous sins, but according to their deeds in measuring up to what is "written in the scrolls"—God's requirements for their gaining life in the paradise earth.

¹⁵ Like the kindly gentleman and his son in our illustration, the heavenly Father, Jehovah, and his Son, Christ Jesus, do indeed perform a marvelously loving service in ransoming us humans from an orphan-like condition and restoring us to the real life. In contemplation of this magnificent provision, we exclaim:

"O the depth of God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How unsearchable his judgments are and past tracing out his ways are!"—Romans 11:33.

15. Who makes all this marvelous provision, and so how might we appropriately express ourselves? (1 Corinthians 15:55, 57)

Worshipping the Living God

TRUE worship is upbuilding. It expresses love of God and of neighbor, and it avoids the uncleanness of the world. Jesus' half brother James describes it this way:

"The form of worship that is clean and undefiled from the standpoint of our God and Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their tribulation, and to keep oneself without spot from the world." (James 1:27)

It is not a matter of your following just any sect of religion, like taking any of many paths up a mountain. Such paths may be dangerous and lead you astray, for there are now a multitude of conflicting sects, with leaders who are mistaken or who have selfish motives. To the contrary, true worship will guide you according to "the wisdom from above," which is "first of all chaste, then peaceable, reasonable, ready to obey, full of mercy and good fruits, not making partial distinctions, not hypocritical."—James 3:17.

² Some persons justify their belonging to a certain religion, saying, 'We and our ancestors have worshiped in this way for generations.' But history shows that many of those ancestors were

1. (a) What kind of worship does God approve? (b) Why is it not safe to follow just any sect? (Matthew 15:14) (c) In what path will true worship guide you? (Philippians 4:8)

2. (a) Why have some of our forefathers changed their religion? (b) So what is it wise for us to do today? (1 Thessalonians 5:20, 21)

willing to change, if they thought it to be beneficial. For example, in Japan everyone followed Shinto worship until the ninth century. Then many persons were attracted to Buddhism and accepted that religion. Today most Japanese persons will tell you that they are Buddhist. That is because their ancestors did not take the attitude, 'My parents' religion is good enough for me.' They were willing to listen to someone else. Now, many persons are listening to the Bible.

³ What kind of worship does the Bible recommend? When Jesus was here on earth, most people thought that ceremony and formalism were important in worship. Some worshiped in a particular mountain,

and others at the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus said of them:

"The hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you people worship the Father. You worship what you do not know . . . The hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshipers will worship the Father with spirit and truth, for, indeed,



**Not temples and shrines, but
spirited worship is what counts
with God**

**3. What mistaken view
did Jesus correct when
speaking of worship?
(Isaiah 46:5-7)**

the Father is looking for suchlike ones to worship him. God is a Spirit, and those worshiping him must worship with spirit and truth.”—John 4:21-24.

⁴ What did Jesus mean by this? He meant that formalistic worship at a shrine or church, by showy rituals, is not what God wants. Jehovah God is “the Spirit.” (2 Corinthians 3:18) It is our spirited worship, expressed from appreciative hearts, that counts with him anywhere. Just as God loves us, and shows it by all the grand provisions he has made for us, so we can worship him “with spirit” by demonstrating *our* love for him, as well as for our neighbor. We can worship him ‘with truth’ by learning from his Word the Bible what his purpose is concerning us, and then doing that will of God. Our worshiping ‘with truth’ also requires that we firmly reject all religious falsehoods.

“GET OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE”

⁵ In order for our spiritual worship to be acceptable to Jehovah, we must completely abandon all false worship. The Bible makes this very plain in a number of passages:

“My beloved ones, flee from idolatry.” “You cannot be partaking of ‘the table of Jehovah’ and the table of demons.” “Little children, guard yourselves from idols.” (1 Corinthians 10:14, 21; 1 John 5:21)

To this, the Revelation adds the powerful command: “Get out of her, my people.” Get out of whom? Out of “Babylon the Great, the mother of the harlots and of the disgusting things of the

4. What is meant by worshiping God “with spirit and truth”? (Luke 10:27)

5. (a) What kind of worship does the Bible show we should avoid? (Jeremiah 10:3-5) (b) How does Revelation describe the world empire of false religion, and why? (James 4:4)

earth"—the world empire of false religion, Catholic, Protestant and non-Christian, all of which reject Bible truth! As we noted previously, her spiritual harlotry consists of giving comfort and support to worldly rulers and politicians. She has even organized her own religion-dominated political parties. Along with her "daughter" sectarian religions she has built up a record of supporting dictators and other political rulers in their wars and programs of violence or oppression. She has looked pretty outwardly, in her professing to make politics "clean," in giving the rulers a veneer of holiness and in blessing their weapons of war. But heaven tells us urgently: 'Stand clear of her!' For the political powers—her former "lovers"—are about to destroy her!—Revelation 17: 3-5, 16; 18:4.

⁶ So, we need to separate from all false religious schemes, teachings and practices. What are some of these practices? The British cardinal Newman describes a number of them in his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, published in 1878:

"The use of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints, and ornamented on occasions with branches of trees; incense, lamps, and candles; votive offerings on recovery from illness; holy water; asylums; holydays and seasons, use of [religious] calendars, processions, blessings on the fields; sacerdotal vestments, the tonsure, . . . images at a later date, perhaps the ecclesiastical chant."

In his essay, the cardinal speaks of the Catholic Church's 'sanctifying' these practices by adopting them from the non-Christian religions, even

6. Can you name some common religious practices that stem from ancient Babylon?

though, in his words, these are "the very instruments and appendages of demon-worship."

⁷ However, such practices are not approved by the God of truth. Nor does he approve of festivals based on Babylonish religion. As an example, there is the annual festival of Christmas that



**Christmas is
not Christian**

pretends to celebrate the birth of Jesus, though it has origins in ancient Babylon. The Bible indicates that Jesus was actually born about October 1, 2 B.C.E. But the celebration of Christmas, on December 25, started only in the fifth century C.E., when apostate Christendom attached the name "Christ" to the boisterous year-end orgies of the nations. Says the *Encyclopedia Americana*, 1959 edition, Volume 6, page 622:

"Most of the customs now associated with Christmas were not originally Christmas customs but rather were pre-Christian and non-Christian customs taken up by the Christian church. Saturnalia, a Roman feast celebrated in mid-December, provided the model for many of the merry-making customs of Christmas. From this celebration, for example, were derived the elaborate feasting, the giving of gifts, and the burning of candles."

In some parts of the earth, non-Christian Buddhists, Jews and others celebrate "Christmas" with as much zest as Catholics and Protestants.

7. (a) What religious festivals does God not approve? (b) Is Christmas celebrated on Jesus' birth date? (c) According to the *Encyclopedia Americana*, where did Christmas customs originate? (d) What view do true worshipers take toward Christmas, and why? (2 Corinthians 6:17) (e) What one event did Christ command his followers to observe? (Luke 22:19, 20)

It is often tied in with commercialism and greed. It is not Christian. Nowhere does the Bible support the celebration of the birthday of Jesus or of anyone else, but what Jesus *did* command was that his followers annually observe his *death* as a "remembrance." This was because his death was essential for the salvation of the human race. —1 Corinthians 11:23-26.

⁸ The living God of truth does not approve the idolatrous practices and political "courtships" of the world empire of false religion. Truly, these identify her as "Babylon the Great," concerning which Revelation 18:21 tells us:

"And a strong angel lifted up a stone like a great millstone and hurled it into the sea, saying: 'Thus with a swift pitch will Babylon the great city be hurled down.'"

If we are to avoid 'sharing with her in her sins,' and in her destruction, it is urgent that we separate ourselves completely from false religion! —Revelation 18:2-4.

WORSHIP THAT GOD APPROVES

⁹ The apostle Paul describes what true worshipers of God should be doing today, in these words:

"Let us hold fast the public declaration of our hope without wavering, for he is faithful that promised. And let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works, not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom, but encouraging one another, and all the more so as you behold the day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:23-25)

8. Why is it urgent that we separate from false religion? (Jeremiah 51:6)

9. Why should true worshipers congregate together? (Ephesians 4:15, 16)

So, as the day fast approaches for God to destroy Babylon the Great and all other unrighteous systems, and to restore on this earth a glorious paradise, those who love Him congregate together, in order to learn God's Word and encourage one another.

¹⁰ However, true worship involves much more than assembling with others who love God. In order to be acceptable to God, we must turn away, not only from false religion, but also from the corrupt way of life of the world. The apostle Paul counsels us to put away "the old personality," with its loose conduct, uncleanness and greediness. Also, he says:

"You should be made new in the force actuating your mind, and should put on the new personality which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty." (Ephesians 4:19-24)

Our way of life should therefore be morally clean and spiritually upbuilding to those around us. In loyalty to God, we should accept him as Sovereign in our lives.

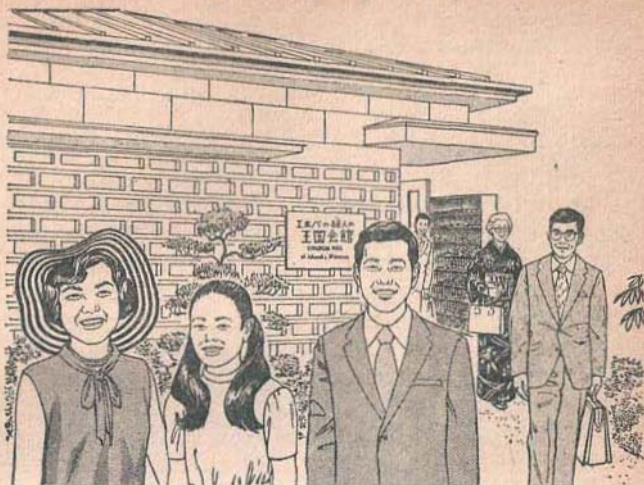
¹¹ Jesus himself set the pattern for true worship in another important way. Shortly after he had been tempted by the Devil, he took up the work described at Matthew 4:17:

"From that time on Jesus commenced preaching and saying: 'Repent, you people, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.'"

Some three years later, at his trial before Pilate, Jesus confirmed that his witnessing to the truth concerning God's kingdom had been a key part of his worship while on earth. He said:

10. How is our personality involved in true worship? (Colossians 3:9, 10, 12-14)

11. What other pattern of true worship did Jesus supply? (Luke 8:1)



**Worshippers of Jehovah assemble to study God's Word
and share good news with their neighbors**

"For this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone that is on the side of the truth listens to my voice." (John 18:37)

Have you listened to his voice? Then you, too, may enjoy the privilege of witnessing to the truth of God's kingdom as Jesus did.

¹² Another important part of true worship is prayer, which should be offered to Jehovah through the name of Jesus, whose atoning sacrifice opened the way for us to approach God. The Bible condemns formalistic, repetitious prayer. Jesus himself said:

"When praying, do not say the same things over and over again, just as the people of the nations do,

12. What model for prayer did Jesus leave us? (John 14:13, 14; 15:16)

for they imagine they will get a hearing for their use of many words. So, do not make yourselves like them, for God your Father knows what things you are needing before ever you ask him. You must pray, then, this way."

Jesus then provided a model prayer, not to be repeated as a ritual with the use of a rosary or image, but to serve as a guideline for us. He said that first we could properly pray for the name of our heavenly Father, Jehovah, to be sanctified, for his kingdom to come and for his will to be done here on earth as in heaven. In the second place, we could pray for God to supply our daily needs, to forgive our sinful shortcomings, and to help us to keep integrity in spite of "the wicked one," Satan. (Matthew 6:5-13) All prayers, whether uttered privately, in our family or in an assembled congregation, should be expressed, not as a sanctimonious recitation, but sincerely from the heart. Our prayers must be completely free of the superstitious practices of Babylonian religion. 'But are superstitions harmful?' you may ask. Let us see.

Superstitions Can Lead to Unhappiness

IS IT harmless to follow superstitions? Some people think so. Consider, for example, the innocent-looking “seven gods of good luck” of Japanese folklore—imported three hundred years ago from India. These are said to represent the seven virtues: longevity, fortune, popularity, candor, amiability, dignity and magnanimity. Some of these “virtues” may be fine in them-

1. When do seemingly innocent practices become dangerous? (John-8:31, 32)



**Superstitions related to “good luck” gods,
charms and fortune-telling are dangerous**

selves, but when they are embodied in images, to which people look for "good luck," they enter the realm of superstition.

² Superstitious people the world over place much store in "good luck" charms. In Catholic lands, some travelers still have their St. Christopher medals, and in the Orient many persons carry "protection charms" that bear the name of a temple, or "good luck" threads of cotton tied around the wrists. In Western countries, many people avoid the "unlucky 13," while in Japan superstitious persons frown on the number "4," because it is pronounced the same as "death." In many countries, local superstitions exercise a strong influence on the lives of the people.

³ How does the living God, Jehovah, view such superstitions? If we want to be truly happy, it will be to our benefit to take the same view that he takes. When the Israelites fell away from the pure worship of Jehovah into the superstitious practices of neighboring peoples, God's prophet told them:

"You men are those leaving Jehovah, those forgetting my holy mountain, those setting in order a table for the god of Good Luck and those filling up mixed wine for the god of Destiny. And I will destine you men to the sword." (Isaiah 65:11, 12)

Those who honored "the god of Good Luck" were destroyed!

⁴ Why is Jehovah so strongly opposed to superstitious practices? It is because they originate with Satan the Devil and his demons, who use these to turn and keep people away from wor-

2. What superstitious practices have you noticed in your locality, and have these been beneficial?

3. Why should we take note of Jehovah's view? (Matthew 4:10)

4. Why does Jehovah strongly oppose superstitions? (Acts 16:16-18; Deuteronomy 6:5, 14)

shipping God "with spirit and truth." If Satan could get men to trust in "lucky" charms, fortune-telling and popular superstitions, he could keep them in his grasp, blinding them to the "good news" that comes forth from the true and living God. In this regard, Paul said:

"If, now, the good news we declare is in fact veiled, it is veiled among those who are perishing, among whom the god of this system of things has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, that the illumination of the glorious good news about the Christ, who is the image of God, might not shine through." (2 Corinthians 4:3, 4)

Satan would like to have all mankind follow blind superstition, rather than make right decisions based on the "good news" in the Bible.

PROTECTION AGAINST DEMON ATTACK

⁵ In another of his letters, Paul makes it clear that we must stand firm "against the wicked spirit forces," and that we can do this by putting on "the complete suit of armor from God," spiritual armor that is far different from "good luck" charms or idolatrous practices. He tells us:

"Stand firm, therefore, with your loins girded about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and with your feet shod with the equipment of the good news of peace. Above all things, take up the large shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the wicked one's burning missiles. Also, accept the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, that is, God's word, while with every form of prayer and supplication you carry on prayer on every occasion in spirit." (Ephesians 6:11-18)

By learning the truth, cultivating righteousness

5. How may we find protection against wicked spirits?

and telling "the good news of peace" to others, we can have the strong faith that will shield us against all demon attacks.

⁶ However, there are some who have dabbled in demonistic practices, such as spiritism, before learning the "good news." Such persons may have to put up quite a fight to get free from the demons. For example, there was one person who daily received a message from a wicked spirit, urging her to commit suicide. Another was harassed continually by the demons—until she finally broke completely free from her previous way of life. Such persons have gotten rid of the demons by filling their minds with wholesome Bible teachings, praying to Jehovah, and even calling aloud on his name.

"The name of Jehovah is a strong tower. Into it the righteous runs and is given protection."—Proverbs 18:10.

⁷ Anyone who comes under demon attack would be wise to remove from his person and from his home any items that may have had a connection with demonism. Wicked spirits have been known to come back to such items and to attack the owner by making him ill, weak or fearful. When Paul preached in Ephesus, new believers there took a course of action that was richly blessed by Jehovah:

"Quite a number of those who practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them up before everybody. . . . Thus in a mighty way the word of Jehovah kept growing and prevailing."
—Acts 19:19, 20.

6. How may persons free themselves from the demons? (James 4:7, 8)

7. (a) What items may cause difficulty? (b) Why were new believers in Ephesus blessed by God?

BEWARE OF THE "PRACTICE OF SPIRITISM"!

⁸ How does Jehovah regard fortune-telling? This is made very clear at Deuteronomy 18:10-12, where he identifies it with spiritism:

"There should not be found in you anyone who . . . employs divination, a practicer of magic or anyone who looks for omens or a sorcerer, or one who binds others with a spell or anyone who consults a spirit medium or a professional foreteller of events or anyone who inquires of the dead. For everybody doing these things is something detestable to Jehovah."

Thus, demonistic practices such as reading crystal balls, palmistry, casting hypnotic spells, consulting Ouija boards or spirit mediums are all abominable in Jehovah's sight. Mediums that claim to speak with "departed spirits" are actually communicating with wicked spirits who impersonate dead persons. A wicked spirit impersonated the dead prophet Samuel in conveying a message to unfaithful King Saul, in the incident recorded at 1 Samuel 28:8-14. At Galatians 5:19-21, "practice of spiritism" is listed among the corrupt "works of the flesh" that will exclude a person from the kingdom of God.

⁹ It is of interest that the Greek word here translated "practice of spiritism" is *phar-ma-ki'a*, which literally means "druggery." In Vine's *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* we read:

"PHARMAKIA . . . primarily signified the use of medicine, drugs, spells; then, poisoning; then, sorcery, . . . See also Rev. 9:21; 18:23. . . . In sorcery,

8. (a) What are some forms of spiritism, which God condemns? (b) What will result to those who practice spiritism? (Revelation 21:8)

9. (a) What is the literal meaning of the Greek word *phar-ma-ki'a*? (b) What practices have a connection with spiritism?

the use of drugs, whether simple or potent, was generally accompanied by incantations and appeals to occult powers, with the provision of various charms, . . . to impress the applicant with the mysterious resources and powers of the sorcerer."



Fortune-telling is not approved by God

Persons today who take drugs such as opium, heroin, marijuana and other narcotics are laying themselves open to demon attacks. This is indicated in that some who have taken "trips" with drugs say that they 'approached God,' 'expanded their minds,' and so forth. Also to be tied in with "druggery" is addiction to betel nut or to tobacco, "unclean"

practices that dull the senses and weaken the power to make right decisions, and that are devoid of neighbor love.—2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1.

THE SNARE OF ASTROLOGY

¹⁰ In recent years, great numbers of people have turned to astrology for guidance. Also, history records that many famous persons—Hitler, Mussolini, Napoleon, Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great and others—have superstitiously followed "the stars." On what is astrology based? Astrology divides a belt of the heavens, the zodiac, into twelve sections of stars, or constellations, each of which was long ago named after a particular animal or person. It is said that a person's rela-

10. What is the basis of astrology? (2 Chronicles 33:5, 6)

tion to the zodiac at the moment of birth will determine his future and his characteristics. Charts, or horoscopes, are drawn up to show what a person's "fortune," good or bad, will be day by day.

¹¹ But do the stars affect humans at the time of their birth? According to scientists, the basic personality of an individual is determined, not at birth, but at conception—nine months earlier than reckoned in astrology charts. However, the stars are too far removed to influence a person by gravitation or radiation, *either* at birth *or* at conception. All that can come from outer space by way of astrology is demon influence, and that is where dabbling in "the stars" can lead—to control by wicked spirits.

¹² Where did astrology get started? The *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed., Vol. II, p. 796) answers:

"The history of astrology can now be traced back to ancient Babylonia, and indeed to the earliest phases of Babylonian history. . . . In Babylonia as

11. How does science show astrology to be in error?

12. Where did astrology originate? (Isaiah 47:1, 12-14)



The astrologer's zodiac originated in Babylon, the cradle of the world empire of false religion

well as in Assyria . . . astrology takes its place in the official cult as one of the two chief means at the disposal of the priests . . . for ascertaining the will and intention of the gods, the other being through the inspection of the liver of the sacrificial animal [for omens]."

Thus astrology got started in the same place as did the entire world empire of false religion—in ancient Babylon.

¹³ What, then, should be our attitude toward astrology, fortune-telling, "good luck" charms and other forms of superstition? If we want to please God, our stand should be similar to that of good King Josiah, who "put out of business . . . those making sacrificial smoke to Baal, to the sun and to the moon and to the constellations of the zodiac and to all the army of the heavens." (2 Kings 23:5) We too should put all kinds of superstition right out of our lives. By relying in any way on astrologists or other fortune-tellers, not only would we displease the living God, but we could be led into wrong decisions or practices, to the ruination of our lives.

¹⁴ Where, then, should we place our trust for the future? King Solomon tells us:

"Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight. Do not become wise in your own eyes. Fear Jehovah and turn away from bad." (Proverbs 3:5-7)

Through the wise counsel provided in the Bible, Jehovah frees us from slavery to useless superstitions, and gives us a sure guide leading to a truly happy life under his righteous kingdom.

^{13.} (a) What stand did good King Josiah take as to the practice of astrology? (b) Why should we put superstitions out of our lives? (Job 31:26-28)

^{14.} Where should we put our trust, and why? (Psalm 25:8, 9)

Making One World

Under God's Kingdom

IT IS becoming increasingly evident that all mankind are one world and must get along together as one world if they are to survive. Many world leaders are deeply aware of this fact. For example, some years ago, President Ferdinand E. Marcos of the Philippine Republic told the General Assembly of the United Nations:

"The problems of world security and development . . . are global in their dimensions and they hammer home in crisis after crisis the one central fact of our existence: that our world is one, in technology, in economics, in vulnerability to the atomic weapons of war, in long-term warfare, in the ultimate destiny of the human species."

More recently, a prime minister of Japan, Takeo Miki, declared:

"The world is becoming smaller and smaller and the whole of mankind shares the same fate aboard the same ship. . . . To our regret, however, the world has not yet reached a stage where . . . interdependence is fully realized. If this situation persists, it is clear that in the not-too-distant future we will be doomed."

The alternatives are clear to many thinking persons: Unite mankind as one world, or let "the human species" perish.

² What body of men is there on earth today

1. According to world leaders, what two alternatives now face mankind?

2. What is the only hope for uniting mankind, and why? (Psalm 68:20)

that can unite all mankind as one world? Not even the United Nations can start to shoulder that task. The reason is plain. If mankind is to become united, *it must be under God's sovereignty*. Just as the vast universe is held together by Jehovah's physical laws, so mankind, in order to survive and to enjoy peace and happiness, must become united under God's moral laws.

³ The means that Jehovah uses to restore unity and peace in all the universe is the Messianic kingdom of Christ Jesus. This is a kingdom rulership operating under Jehovah's sovereignty, but always exalting God's own supreme kingship. Even though he himself was a powerful king, David declared:

"Yours, O Jehovah, are the greatness and the mightiness and the beauty and the excellency and the dignity; for everything in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Jehovah, the One also lifting yourself up as head over all. The riches and the glory are on account of you, and you are dominating everything; and in your hand there are power and mightiness, and in your hand is ability to make great and to give strength to all. And now, O our God, we are thanking you and praising your beauteous name." (1 Chronicles 29: 11-13)

As we now review Jehovah's purpose respecting his kingdom, we should, like David, want to thank and praise Him for what He is doing on our behalf.

THE KINGDOM IN PROPHECY

⁴ The angel Gabriel said of Jesus: "Jehovah

3. (a) What means does Jehovah use to restore unity to all the universe? (Daniel 7:13, 14) (b) Whose sovereignty did King David exalt, and in what declaration of his may we join?

4. In what ways does Jesus' reign resemble those of David and Solomon? (Revelation 19:11; Isaiah 9:6)

God will give him the throne of David his [fore]-father . . . and there will be no end of his kingdom." Also, Jesus referred to himself as "something more than [David's son] Solomon." (Luke 1:32, 33; 11:31) As a warrior-king, David extended the borders of Israel to the full limit of the territory that Jehovah had promised His people, and then King Solomon reigned for a glorious forty years of peace over a prosperous nation:

"Judah and Israel were many, like the grains of sand that are by the sea for multitude, eating and drinking and rejoicing." (1 Kings 4:20)

But as a far greater warrior than David, Jesus will go forth "conquering and to complete his conquest" of the entire wicked world. Then with a far grander and wiser rulership than Solomon's he will reign in peace "for a thousand years." (Revelation 6:2; 20:4) What a happy time all mankind will enjoy when Christ Jesus rules as King over a paradise earth!

⁵ Many faithful prophets of God pointed forward to the Messianic kingdom. Literally hundreds of their prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus, thus serving to identify him clearly as the promised Messiah. For example, these foretold that he would be born of a virgin in the city of Bethlehem, that he would be despised, afflicted and impaled, and that he would rise again on the third day.

⁶ The sufferings that Jesus went through could not possibly have been "staged" just to make the ancient prophecies come true. The cruel persecutions that Jesus' own countrymen heaped upon him were real, and Jesus' integrity in support of

5. The fulfillment of what prophecies identify Jesus as Messiah? (Luke 24:25-27)

6. How was Jesus identified as King? (Matthew 21:4-9)

Jehovah's sovereignty was also real. All of this established him to be the promised Messiah. When on trial before Pilate, Jesus acknowledged that he, Jesus, was "a king," but made it plain that his kingdom is "no part of this world." Pilate then wrote a title to put on the execution stake: "Jesus the Nazarene the King of the Jews." (John 18:36, 37; 19:19) However, Jesus' kingdom was yet future.

⁷ Because Jesus had shown integrity to the death, God now resurrected him in the spirit and raised him to His own right hand of favor in the heavens. The apostle Peter pointed out how this fulfilled David's prophecy at Psalm 110, saying:

"David did not ascend to the heavens, but he himself says, 'Jehovah said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet."' Therefore let all the house of Israel know for a certainty that God made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you impaled." (Acts 2:34-36)

"This Jesus" is no longer a babe in a manger. Nor is he a helpless martyr nailed to a cross. No, he is now the mighty "Lord of lords and King of kings" whom Jehovah will use in restoring His sovereignty in all the universe.—Revelation 17:14.

THE KINGDOM RULES IN POWER

⁸ In order to demonstrate God's sovereignty, the Kingdom must exercise real power. The time for this is now here! It is the time when "the kingdom of the world" becomes "the kingdom of our

7. (a) How was Psalm 110:1 fulfilled? (Hebrews 12:2)

(b) What is Jesus' position today? (Revelation 12:10)

8. What grand pronouncement is reported at Revelation 11:15-18?

HOW THE MESSIAH FULFILLED BIBLE PROPHECY

Prophecy

Matters Foretold

Fulfillment Stated

Prophecies in Psalms

Psalms 2:1, 2	Rulers act against anointed	Matthew 27:1, 2
Psalms 2:7	Jehovah declares Jesus "Son"	Romans 1:4
Psalms 16:10	Raised before corruption	Acts 2:24, 27
Psalms 22:1	Forsaken to enemies by God	Matthew 27:46
Psalms 22:7, 8	Jesus reviled while on stake	Matthew 27:39-43
Psalms 22:16	Impaled by hands and feet	John 20:25
Psalms 22:18	Lots cast for his garments	Matthew 27:35
Psalms 27:12	False witnesses against him	Matthew 26:59-61
Psalms 34:20	None of Jesus' bones broken	John 19:33, 36
Psalms 41:9	Unfaithful apostle betrays	John 13:18, 21-30
Psalms 69:4	Jesus hated without a cause	John 15:24, 25
Psalms 69:9	Zealous for Jehovah's house	John 2:13-17
Psalms 69:21	Given wine drugged with myrrh	Mark 15:23, 36
Psalms 78:2	Jesus speaks in illustrations	Matthew 13:34, 35
Psalms 118:22	Rejected, but sure foundation	Matthew 21:42-44

Prophecy of Isaiah

Isaiah 7:14	Jesus born of a virgin	Matthew 1:23-25
Isaiah 9:1, 2	Light in Naphtali, Zebulun	Matthew 4:13-16
Isaiah 9:7	Descendant, heir of David	Matthew 1:1, 6-17
Isaiah 40:3	John the Baptist prepares way	Matthew 3:1-3
Isaiah 42:1-4	Does not wrangle in streets	Matthew 12:14-21
Isaiah 53:1, 2	Jews do not put faith in him	John 12:37, 38
Isaiah 53:4	Carries sicknesses of mankind	Matthew 8:16, 17
Isaiah 53:7	Silent before his accusers	Matthew 27:11-14
Isaiah 53:9	Burial place with the rich	Matthew 27:57-60
Isaiah 53:11	Bears the errors of many	Matthew 20:28
Isaiah 53:12	Counted with transgressors	Luke 22:36, 37, 52
Isaiah 61:1, 2	Spirit-anointed to preach	Luke 4:16-21

Other Prophecies

Genesis 49:10	Ruler out of tribe of Judah	Luke 3:23-33
Jeremiah 31:15	Babes killed after birth	Matthew 2:16-18
Daniel 9:25	Appears at end of "69 weeks"	Luke 3:1, 21, 22
Daniel 9:26, 27	Cut off after 3½ years	John 19:14-16
Hosea 11:1	Called out of refuge in Egypt	Matthew 2:14, 15
Jonah 1:17	Resurrected on third day	Acts 10:40, 41
Micah 5:2	Born in Bethlehem of Judah	Matthew 2:1-6
Zechariah 9:9	Enters city on colt of ass	Matthew 21:7-11
Zechariah 11:12	Betrayed for 30 silver pieces	Matthew 26:15
Zechariah 12:10	Pierced while on stake	John 19:34
Zechariah 13:7	Shepherd struck, flock scatter	Matthew 26:31, 56

Lord [Jehovah] and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever." Concerning this grand occasion, pronouncement is made in heaven itself:

"We thank you, Jehovah God, the Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and begun ruling as king. But the nations became wrathful, and your own wrath came, and the appointed time for the dead to be judged, and to give their reward to your slaves the prophets and to the holy ones and to those fearing your name, the small and the great, and to bring to ruin those ruining the earth."—Revelation 11:15-18.

⁹ When does all of this happen? Well, when notably in human history did the nations become wrathful against the Kingdom proclamation and set about ruining the earth? Is it not in this twentieth century, and especially from World War I in 1914, that the earth has been plagued by violence and pollution on an international scale? Certainly this is so. There is much other evidence, too, that Jehovah took his great power and began to rule over the earth through Christ's kingdom in that year 1914. As David foretold concerning his "Lord," Jesus Christ is now poised to "go subduing in the midst of [his] enemies." —Psalm 110:1, 2.

¹⁰ First, however, there is a Kingdom work to be done here on earth. Jesus foretold this nineteen centuries ago when his disciples asked him the question, "What will be the sign of your presence [in Kingdom power] and of the conclusion of the system of things?" In his answer, Jesus described the world wars, the food shortages, the great

9. What proves that Jehovah has taken his power through Christ's kingdom? (Revelation 6:3-8)

10. (a) What prophecy given by Jesus is fulfilled from 1914 on, and how? (Luke 21:10, 11, 25, 26, 28) (b) What special work was foretold for this same time? (Mark 13:10)

earthquakes, the pestilences, the lawlessness, the persecutions, the fear and the anguish of nations that have afflicted mankind ever since 1914. Then he went on to say:

"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. . . . For 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 24:3-14, 21, 22.

¹¹ In fulfillment of this prophecy, the Christian witnesses of Jehovah have, since 1914, been proclaiming throughout the earth that Christ is present in Kingdom power. This witness has penetrated to the islands of the sea, through bamboo and iron curtains and into lands long darkened by the sectarian religions of "Babylon the Great." So now "the end"—the "great tribulation"—is due to come. But some "flesh" from among mankind will be saved!

¹² How does the "great tribulation" take place? Jesus says that it comes suddenly, like a thief, within the "generation" of those who are observing the fulfillment of his "sign" today. (Matthew 24:34) As Revelation chapters 16 to 19 describe, Jehovah uses beastlike radical powers from within the United Nations as his agents in devastating the world empire of false religion, "Babylon the Great." Then, at the world situation called Har-Magedon, Christ Jesus will fight the decisive "war of the great day of God the Almighty" against

11. (a) How extensive has the witness been, and what is resulting? (b) Will some people survive the "great tribulation"? (Zephaniah 2:3)

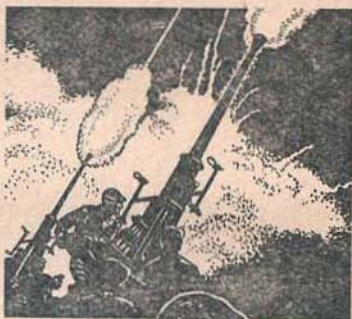
12. How does the "great tribulation" come, and with what order of events? (Revelation 17:16; 19:19-21)

"SIGN" OF THE INVISIBLE PRESENCE OF EARTH'S NEW KING

(Matthew 24:3-25:46; Luke 21:7-36)

"Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom." 'Lawlessness will increase.' (Matthew 24:7, 12)

World War I in 1914 ushered in "the century of Total War"; 69 million died in two world wars. Appalling growth in crime has followed.



"There will be great earthquakes, and in one place after another pestilences and food shortages." (Luke 21:11; Matthew 24:7)

Since 1914, 700,000 persons have died in earthquakes; 21 million died in 1918-1919 'Spanish flu,' and over 1,000 million are now starving or are undernourished. Food prices spiral.



"On the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out . . . while men become faint out of fear." (Luke 21:25, 26)

Combined nuclear arsenals of United States and Soviet alone contain bombs equivalent to 5 tons of dynamite for each person on earth. New York "Times" headlines, March 1, 1976: "World's Spending on Arms . . . at Record Levels. . . . Annual Outlay at \$300 Billion . . . [Arms] Race 'out of Control.'"



"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)

More than 2 million witnesses of Jehovah, now active in 210 countries and territories world wide, conduct weekly Bible studies in 1,400,000 homes. Since 1942 volunteer Witnesses have manufactured for field distribution 415 million Bibles and Bible textbooks and 5,950 million copies of the "Watchtower" and "Awake!" magazines.



"As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near."—Luke 21:28.

"the kings [rulers] of the entire inhabited earth."
—Revelation 16:14, 16.

¹³ The prophet Daniel describes these political powers of earth as an immense image, and Christ's kingdom as a stone that Jehovah cuts out of the mountain of His universal sovereignty. This stone He hurls against the feet of the image, so as to crush it and grind it to powder. (Daniel 2:31-35) Describing this action against the wicked rulers, Daniel continues, saying:

"In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite." (Daniel 2:44, 45)

Thus Christ's kingdom vindicates God's universal sovereignty for all time! The King then hurls Satan and his demon angels "into the abyss" of immobility, and enters on His peaceful thousand-year kingdom that will at last unite all mankind as one world. How our hearts thrill at the prospect of these great events that "the grand God himself" purposes for the immediate future!—Revelation 20:2, 3.

13. (a) How does Jehovah vindicate his sovereignty? (Isaiah 26:20, 21) (b) By what means does God purpose to unite mankind as one world? (Isaiah 9:7)



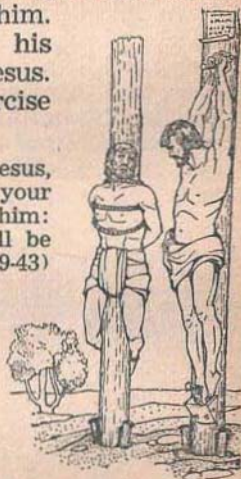
A Paradise of Joy for All Mankind

ACCORDING to Luke's account, Jesus' last conversation before he died was with an evildoer nailed to a stake beside him. This evildoer even rebuked his fellow robber for abusing Jesus. Evidently he had begun to exercise faith in Jesus.

"And he went on to say: 'Jesus, remember me when you get into your kingdom.' And [Jesus] said to him: 'Truly I tell you today, You will be with me in Paradise.'" (Luke 23:39-43)

What a marvelous promise to the dying man! God's mercy could reach out even to this vile criminal, comforting him with the hope of life in the glorious paradise to come.

² God's compassion and mercy can indeed extend to embrace persons who have been far removed from doing his will. The following is a modern-day example:



**Jesus extended hope
of paradise even to
a dying criminal**

1. (a) How did an evildoer who died alongside Jesus start to exercise faith? (b) What hope did Jesus give the evildoer, emphasizing what quality of God? (2 Corinthians 1:3, 4)
2. Illustrate how real one's hope of paradise can become. (Hebrews 6:18)

In western Japan, a teen-ager was sentenced to death for committing a double murder. During the years that he was awaiting execution, he came in touch with the Bible and its "good news," studied and accepted the Kingdom message, and was baptized in the prison. Guards were amazed to see his beastly disposition change to one of love, joy and peacefulness. He studied Braille and transcribed a number of Bible textbooks to help blind persons outside the prison in their study. He wrote many letters to people outside, encouraging them in the Christian faith. On the morning of his execution, a missionary accompanied him to the gallows. The young man recognized that he must now satisfy justice, giving 'life for life,' but he could express himself: "Today I feel strongly confident in Jehovah, and in the ransom sacrifice and the resurrection hope." After a Scripture reading, song and prayer, he walked calmly to his execution, his face clearly reflecting the strong hope in his heart. His parting words were: 'For a little while I will sleep, and if it be Jehovah's will I shall meet you all in paradise.'

Like the evildoer who died with Jesus, this young man could express faith in God's mercy and loving-kindness. Is such faith well founded? Yes, for the Bible encourages all mankind to "have hope toward God . . . that there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous." (Acts 24:15) What a marvelous prospect! The masses of dead mankind, the good and the bad, are to be raised out of gravedom, and have opportunity to qualify for everlasting life in the restored paradise on earth. But this earthly paradise is to be merely the reflection of an even grander paradise.

3. What marvelous hope is there for the dead? (1 Corinthians 15:22)

A GLORIOUS SPIRITUAL PARADISE

⁴The apostle Paul relates that in a vision "he was caught away into paradise and heard unutterable words." What is that "paradise"? Not some stage of a physical heavens, but a spiritual paradise that would at some future date bring joy to God's people right here on this earth. —2 Corinthians 12:1-4.

⁵Jehovah established this spiritual paradise in his own due time. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, sincere Bible students became aware that many of the practices and teachings of Christendom's churches stemmed from ancient Babylon's religion, and not from the Bible. They began to expose false teachings such as the inherent immortality of the soul, hellfire torment and the Trinity, and to restore the Bible teachings on Jesus' ransom, the resurrection and God's kingdom. From 1879, they have continuously published the *Watchtower* magazine as a champion of Bible truth. For more than thirty years, on the basis of Bible chronology, they pointed forward to 1914 as significant in Bible prophecy. And when 1914 came, World War I broke out, to be followed by other troubles, marking "a beginning of pangs of distress," just as Jesus had foretold. During that period, the world's religious leaders reviled and heaped "hatred" upon Jehovah's faithful witnesses, but by 1919 these had broken clear of all bondage to the world empire of false religion—"Babylon the Great." (Matthew 24:3-9; Revelation 17:5) They pressed forward on a "Way of Holiness," into the spiritual

4. In the first century what then-future paradise did the apostle Paul see in a vision?

5. (a) What events led up to the entry of Jehovah's servants into the spiritual paradise? (b) What conditions prevail there? (Isaiah 11:6-9)

paradise of which the prophet wrote long ago:

"And the very ones redeemed by Jehovah will return . . . ; and rejoicing to time indefinite will be upon their head. To exultation and rejoicing they will attain, and grief and sighing must flee away."
—Isaiah 35:8-10.

⁶ The prophecies have much to say about the glories of this spiritual paradise. First, the remaining ones of Jesus' "little flock" of anointed followers have been ushered into this paradisaic condition. (Luke 12:32) But after telling about the selection of these 144,000 spiritual Israelites, the Revelation to John describes others who are privileged to enter this beauteous paradise:

"And, look! a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne [of Jehovah] and before the Lamb [the once-sacrificed but now glorified Jesus], dressed in white robes." (Revelation 7:14, 9)

Right here on this earth, the "great crowd" join the remaining ones of the "little flock" in an approved condition in the spiritual paradise.

⁷ The "great crowd" is very much in evidence today! When the remaining ones of the "little flock" emerged from World War I persecutions, they numbered but a few thousand, located in a handful of the major countries of Christendom. But on March 27, 1975, when Jehovah's Witnesses assembled in more than 38,000 congregations in 210 countries and territories throughout the earth, to celebrate the Lord's Evening Meal in commemoration of Jesus' death, the total attendance was 4,925,643 persons. Truly, the spiritual paradise has now expanded to global proportions!

6. (a) Who are first ushered into this spiritual paradise?

(b) What class next makes its appearance? (Isaiah 2:2-4)

7. To what extent has the spiritual paradise expanded? (Isaiah 60:22)

BEHOLD THE EARTHLY PARADISE!

⁸ Just as the ark and its passengers survived the flood of Noah's day, so the spiritual paradise and those dwelling in it will survive the "great tribulation" and emerge into a pollution-free earth. What glories will then unfold on earth! The surviving "great crowd" will have work to do in 'subduing the earth' and transforming it into a place of loveliness that reflects all the splendor of the spiritual paradise concerning which Isaiah wrote:

"The wilderness and the waterless region will exult, and the desert plain will be joyful and blossom as the saffron. Without fail it will blossom, and it will really be joyful with joyousness and with glad crying out. . . . There will be those who will see the glory of Jehovah, the splendor of our God." (Isaiah 35:1, 2)

The breathtaking beauty of that global paradise will truly extol the magnificent Creator of heaven and earth!

⁹ In that paradise earth, human voices will also join in praising Jehovah and magnifying his kingship:

"About the glory of your kingship they will talk, and about your mightiness they will speak, to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts and the glory of the splendor of his kingship." (Psalm 145:10-13)

Remember, there is to be a thousand-year kingship, exercised by Jehovah through his Son, Christ Jesus, for the blessing of all races and national groups of mankind. It will be a reign of peace. All programs started for the uplifting of mankind will be carried through to grand

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8. What will the earthly paradise reflect? (Revelation 21:2, 3)
9. What kind of kingship will be exercised over paradise, and through whom? (Psalm 72:12)

success. Greed and corruption will be replaced by unselfishness and love. No longer will rulers cater to the rich and suppress the poor and needy, for God's prophet exclaims: "Look! A king will reign for righteousness itself; and [here on earth] as respects princes, they will rule as princes for justice itself." (Isaiah 32:1) Under the one world rulership, that will be a paradise indeed!

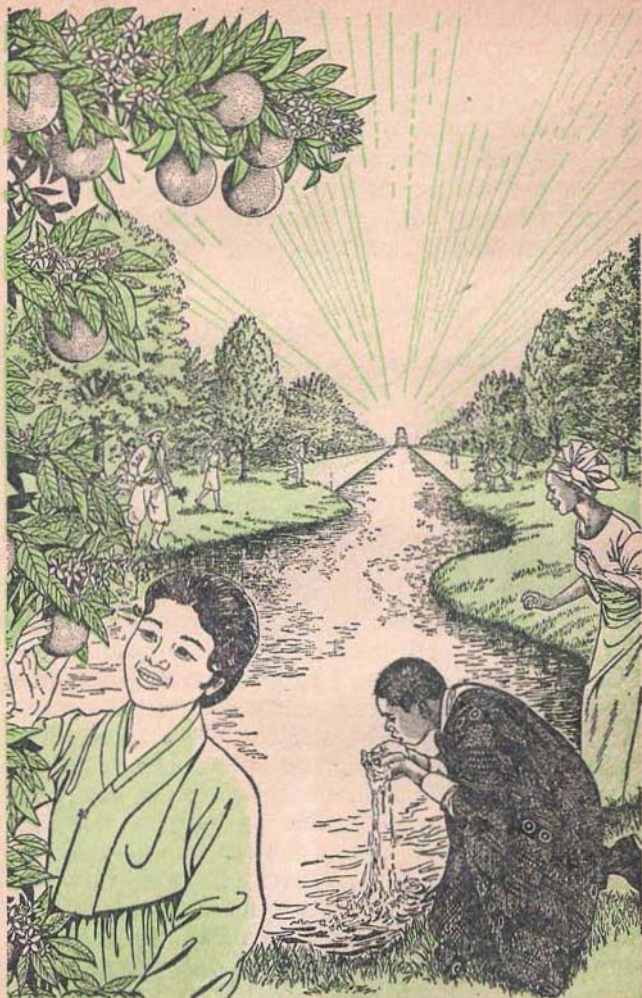
¹⁰ What a joy to know that the dead will "come to life" to share in that paradise! (John 11:25) The last chapter of Revelation describes for us the sum total of Jehovah's provision that he makes through Jesus Christ for imparting life to these and all others of mankind at that time. It is as "a river of water of life, clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb." This symbolic river flows down the broad way of the heavenly city, "New Jerusalem," where the glorified Jesus and his 144,000 associate "kings" reside.

"And on this side of the river and on that side there were trees of life producing twelve crops of fruit, yielding their fruits each month. And the leaves of the trees were for the curing of the nations." (Revelation 22:1, 2)

Thus, people on earth will enjoy the curative application of Christ's sacrifice to remove their sins and to heal them of all their sicknesses and imperfections. Concerning Christ's Kingdom rule it is written:

"He must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing." (1 Corinthians 15:25, 26)

10. (a) Who will "come to life" in paradise? (Revelation 20:12, 13) (b) How is the sum total of Jehovah's provision for life pictured? (Ezekiel 47:1, 9)



**Jehovah's provisions for eternal life are like
a refreshing river among fruitful trees**

In the paradise earth, death due to inheritance from Adam's sin will "be no more"!—Revelation 21:4.

LIFE IN A DEATHLESS PARADISE

¹¹ Death-dealing scourges, such as cancer, heart disease and old age, will vanish due to the application of Christ's atoning sacrifice. 'But how about accidental death?' someone may ask. Even this will disappear, for the earthly paradise will be patterned after the heavenly, where "harm" and "ruin" are unknown. (Isaiah 11:9) Man's spirituality will guard him against taking foolhardy risks. Perfect man will no more make misjudgments than does the mountain goat that leaps unerringly from rock to rock on the face of a cliff. Also, in the case of unforeseen danger, God's angels will no doubt provide physical protection, even as they now have a "command" to guard God's people in their place of spiritual security. —Psalm 91:11.

¹² Someone else may ask, 'If people do not die off, will the earth not become overpopulated?' Well, back in 1970 the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization estimated that the earth could produce food enough for more than forty times its present population! It is only due to the shortcomings of man-rule that people are now starving. The earth is able to support a much larger human family than it does today, and that would include all the resurrected dead. Further, God's original command to man was to "fill the earth and subdue it," not to overflow on it to the point of discomfort. When you ask someone to

11. Why will death from illness and accident disappear? (Isaiah 25:8; Job 33:25)

12. To what extent will earth be populated? (Matthew 22:30)

fill a bucket, you do not expect him to leave the faucet running until the entire house is flooded out. Likewise, it can be expected that Jehovah will terminate human reproduction on this earth in his own time and way, and without grieving perfect mankind.—Genesis 1:28.

¹³ 'But will not everlasting life become boring?' another may say. That could never be! With brains restored to perfection, and bodies to the vigor of perpetual youth, mankind will have zest for exploring the limitless marvels of creation. There will always be new things to discover, new avenues for creative talent, opportunities for self-expression and for sharing with one's fellowman all the joys of an earth made glorious. And after Jehovah's 'rest day' has ended, what new creations may he not bring forth to delight his creatures?

¹⁴ Above all, how exhilarating it will be to keep drinking at the fountain of "the greatly diversified wisdom of God," and to receive continually the abundant riches of his love and wisdom! (Ephesians 3:10) Jesus, who enjoyed a long prehuman association with Jehovah, said of himself, "I live because of the Father." As a happy, restored family under God's sovereignty, the billions of mankind, including even former evildoers, will also "live" because of Jehovah's marvelous provision. Their continued 'taking in of knowledge' of Him will mean their enjoyment of the very fullness of life for all eternity to come!—John 6:57; 17:3.

13. Why will life everlasting never become boring? (Psalm 145:16)

14. For what outstanding reason will eternal life be a constant delight? (Psalm 37:3, 4)

Happy Families in the Purpose of God

JEHOVAH GOD is "the Father, to whom every family in heaven and on earth owes its name." As "the happy God," he knows how to make his universal family happy, too. (Ephesians 3:14, 15; 1 Timothy 1:11) He generously takes care of all the needs of his children, and for this we should continually thank him, as did the psalmist:

"Know that Jehovah is God. It is he that has made us, and not we ourselves. We are his people and the sheep of his pasturage. . . . Give thanks to him, bless his name. For Jehovah is good; his loving-kindness is to time indefinite, and his faithfulness to generation after generation."—Psalm 100:3-5.

² Jehovah has made a most loving arrangement for families here on earth. When he commanded our original parents to "be fruitful and become many and fill the earth," this was not to be done in a haphazard way. It was to be accomplished through the honorable institution of human marriage. Each couple—husband and wife—would "become one flesh" in a permanent union that would be free of trouble and divorce, and that would provide a stable basis for nurturing and raising families in the paradise of God.—Genesis 1:28; 2:22-24.

1. What does Jehovah do to make his family happy, and so why should we thank him? (James 1:17)

2. How did God purpose the command to "fill the earth" to be carried out? (1 Corinthians 7:10, 11)

³ When the wicked religious leaders of Jesus' day tried to trip him up with hard questions about divorce, he confirmed the sanctity of God's original arrangement for marriage:

"In reply he said: 'Did you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female and said, "For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and will stick to his wife, and the two will be one flesh"? So that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has yoked together let no man put apart. . . . Whoever divorces his wife, except on the ground of fornication, and marries another commits adultery.'"—Matthew 19:4-9.

⁴ What a glorious future Jehovah purposed for this earth! Since man was created "in God's image," then all the families of mankind would likewise come to reflect His personality. At last, the entire earth would be filled with a multitude of perfect men and women, brothers and sisters, all praising God, the Creator. (Genesis 1:27) That purpose will surely be accomplished!

⁵ However, what we see today is far different from what God had in mind for married persons. And why? It is because mankind no longer reflects the "image" of God's personality. Especially in these "last days" has marriage been marked by disloyalty and lack of "natural affection," so that an epidemic of divorces, broken homes, social diseases, illegitimate births and abortions has resulted. Many persons have failed to heed the healthful advice of the apostle Paul:

"Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be without defilement, for God will

3. How did Jesus confirm the sanctity of marriage? (1 Corinthians 6:18)

4. What purpose of God toward earth will at last be accomplished? (Isaiah 45:12, 18)

5. Why do many marriages today fail? (Romans 1:24, 31)

judge fornicators and adulterers."—Hebrews 13:4; 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

⁶ How may we hold sex and marriage in honor today? We may do so by shunning "fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness," and clothing ourselves "with the new personality, which through accurate knowledge is being made new according to the image of the One who created it," Jehovah God.—Colossians 3:5-10.

⁷ This "new personality" is of vital importance to all who wish to enjoy a happy, rewarding family life. By putting on this personality, family members can reap the benefits of living up to Bible principles on marriage. In this connection Paul's further words apply:

"As God's chosen ones, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering. Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also. But, besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union." (Colossians 3:12-14)

Yes, love is "a perfect bond of union," and this is fostered in a family by all taking an interest in one another, in spending time at meals and on other occasions in communicating with one another, in finding enjoyment together in recreation, vacations and other upbuilding activity. By conscious effort, all in a family—adults and children—can share in building this unity, and the

6. How may we hold sex and marriage in honor? (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8)

7. (a) How may we cultivate a new personality? (Ephesians 4:22-24) (b) What practical steps can a family take toward building unity? (Philippians 2:2-4)

result of a happy, harmonious family can be most exhilarating. Each individual should contribute his part, as Paul goes on to explain.

THE WIFE'S PART

⁸ Wives stand to benefit by heeding Paul's words:

"You wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as it is becoming in the Lord." (Colossians 3:18)

This is in harmony with God's original arrangement, that the wife is to be a "helper as a complement" to her husband. (Genesis 2:20) Where there are two heads, there is pulling and tugging against each other, resulting in disunity. But where the wife always shows "deep respect for her husband" and for his decisions, even to overlooking his failings, she can make a powerful contribution toward a harmonious and joyful family. If she is diligent in "watching over the goings on of her household," including the instruction of her children, these will "pronounce her happy." Also, her husband will praise her. —Ephesians 5:33; Proverbs 31:10-31.

⁹ Even if her husband is an unbeliever, he is still the "head" of his wife. On becoming a believer, she should continue to perform her wifely duties, but with even more loving interest in his welfare than previously, as becomes a *Christian* helpmate. (1 Corinthians 11:3) The apostle Peter recommends that wives put on a "quiet and mild spirit," saying:

"You wives, be in subjection to your own hus-

8. (a) What place should wives hold to, and why? (1 Peter 3:5, 6) (b) How may a wife win the love and approval of her household?

9. What counsel does the Bible give concerning unbelieving mates? (Romans 12:17, 18)

bands, in order that, if any are not obedient to the word, they may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives, because of having been eyewitnesses of your chaste conduct together with deep respect." (1 Peter 3:1-4)

By loyally continuing with an unbelieving husband, even though he is opposed to her religious activities, a wife may have her patience rewarded in her husband's later examining and accepting the "good news." In any case, her young children, if obedient, are regarded by God as "holy" in the family arrangement that she perseveres to maintain. Similar principles apply where believing husbands are united in marriage to unbelieving wives.—1 Corinthians 7:12-16.

THE HUSBAND'S PART

¹⁰ Husbands will be richly rewarded in heeding Paul's next words to the Colossians:

"You husbands, keep on loving your wives and do not be bitterly angry with them." (Colossians 3:19)

The husband's headship is to be exercised always in a loving way, not in a tyrannical manner. As he 'keeps on loving his wife,' he should apply himself to showing her "honor as to a weaker vessel," having regard for her emotional makeup and womanly vicissitudes. (1 Peter 3:7) Before making family decisions, he should talk things over with her and give loving consideration to her opinions and desires. He should always have at heart her best interests, and especially her spiritual welfare.

¹¹ In all aspects of life, the husband should

10. How should husbands treat their wives? (Proverbs 5:18)

11. Why should husbands not be harsh with their wives? (1 Corinthians 11:3; Matthew 11:28, 29)



continue loving his wife "just as the Christ also loved the congregation and delivered up himself for it." In the Gospels, we never read of Christ as being "bitterly angry" with the congregation, do we? Nor should husbands treat wives harshly. They should be "loving their wives as their own bodies," cherishing them as their

own flesh, for, indeed, both are "one flesh" together.—Ephesians 5:25, 28-30.

¹² But what of our children? They are very precious to us, and we want to see them share with us in praising Jehovah for eternity in the earthly paradise of God. We will examine next how we may help them toward this goal.

12. In what grand prospect do we want our children to share? (Psalm 148:12, 13)

Children—"An Inheritance from Jehovah"

KING SOLOMON described children as "a reward" and "an inheritance from Jehovah." (Psalm 127:3) If you are a parent, surely you treasure your children! And if you are a child, surely you want to make your parents joyful and to live a happy, useful life with them!

² After giving helpful advice to husbands and wives, the apostle Paul went on to counsel children and parents, in these words:

"You children, be obedient to your parents in everything, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord. You fathers, do not be exasperating your children, so that they do not become downhearted." (Colossians 3:20, 21)

So, youths, remember that your parents love you, and that you should try to obey them in the everyday things of life. And parents, help your children to feel your love for them, and that they are an important part of the family unit.

³ There are times, of course, when every child needs discipline, even with the literal rod, but this should be done—and not overdone—firmly and in love, without displaying the heat of anger. Children will come to appreciate deserved chastisement, and it will not 'exasperate' them. They

1. How should parents and children regard one another? (Psalm 128:1, 3, 4)

2. What responsibility should children feel toward parents, and why? (Exodus 20:12)

3. When and how should correction be given? (Proverbs 13:24)

will appreciate, too, the kindness and loving care that they receive at other times.

MAKING CHILDREN "WISE FOR SALVATION"

⁴ In a final letter written just before his execution, Paul spoke warmly of the "faith . . . without any hypocrisy" that his young companion Timothy had acquired from his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice, a Jewess. Though Timothy's Greek father was an unbeliever, his mother exerted herself, as all believing parents should, in raising her son in the faith. Not only oral teaching, but also the parent's sincere example in always behaving "in a manner worthy of the good news," will set the pattern for the young one's way of life. From what age onward did Timothy receive such instruction? Paul wrote him that "from infancy you have known the holy writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through the faith in connection with Christ Jesus."
—2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15; Philippians 1:27.



**A child's abilities
develop rapidly
even from infancy**

⁵ However, is an infant child capable of absorbing spiritual matters? Yes, it is! Consider this: At birth a child's brain is only one fourth the weight of an adult brain. But in *just two years*

4. (a) What was the result of Eunice's diligent training of Timothy? (Acts 16:1, 2) (b) From what age should a child be helped to know "the holy writings"? (Psalm 22:9, 10)

5. Why is it important to implant God's thoughts in a child from an early age? (Luke 2:40)

that brain grows so rapidly that it reaches three fourths of its adult weight. In that brief time, the child absorbs much of the basic information that will set it up in life, including a start in the difficult task of learning a language.

“Whatever the infant hears on spiritual matters may be absorbed, too! And it has a need for spiritual information, for man was created “in God’s image.” (Genesis 1:27) That is why God instructs fathers, at Deuteronomy 11:18, 19: “You must apply these words of mine to your heart and your soul . . . You must also teach them to your sons.”

Parents can be aided to reach the hearts of their children if they set a good example in applying godly principles in their own lives. Those who mold the hearts and souls of their little ones “from infancy” will have their reward!

6. What will aid parents to reach the hearts of their children? (Proverbs 4:23)



**Children need to be nourished
spiritually**

⁷ How may this be done? Perhaps humans could learn from certain animals that are usually with their young, training and disciplining them for life. There is no substitute for spending time with our little ones. Oriental mothers who are accustomed to tying their youngsters on their backs, and who are constantly talking to them over their shoulders as they do their household chores and go marketing or visiting, have had good success in impressing worthwhile matters on little ones.

One mother taught her baby to sing, and then to include Scriptural matters as the words. By the time the baby was two years of age she could sing the names of the books of the Christian Greek Scriptures. At two years and three months she could sing the names of the sixty-six books from Genesis to Revelation. As she learned to repeat God's attributes of wisdom, justice, power and love, and also the nine fruits of the spirit of Galatians 5:22, 23, these were impressed on her by teaching her how to express each with meaningful gestures. As she "pioneered" with her mother in daily door-to-door preaching of the "good news" and attended Bible studies in the homes of interested persons, her appreciation of spiritual things increased month by month.

Thousands of other believing parents have had similar joy in training their little ones.

⁸ The matter of spending time profitably with one's children is emphasized in the Hebrew Scriptures. Thus, after clearly stating the greatest commandment—"You must love Jehovah your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your vital force"—Moses went on to tell Israelite fathers:

7. (a) Why is it vital to spend time with little ones? (Proverbs 4:1-4) (b) Relate an experience showing how parents may find joy in training children.

8. How may parents interest children in Jehovah's works and wisdom? (Psalm 78:2-4)

"These words . . . must prove to be on your heart; and you must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up." (Deuteronomy 6:4-7)

From the time of waking in the morning to the time of retiring at night, parents can benefit their

little ones by teaching them, as appropriate, about the marvelous wisdom of Jehovah so manifest in the productions of creation.

⁹ However, it must be remembered that young minds tire rapidly, and that youngsters need periods of play and relaxation. Sessions of Bible study with young children can be made informal, brief and



**Spend time with your children.
It will be rewarded**

interesting, but when it is seen that their minds are starting to wander, it may be best to discontinue the instruction until another time. It is vital for success that both parents and youngsters find joy and pleasure in what they are studying together. Parents, build up love for God in those young hearts! Never should you make the "good news" appear like a list of "don'ts" and "shouldn'ts." Rather, help your children to trust

9. (a) As to length of study sessions, what should parents keep in mind? (b) How can the good news be presented to one's children in a positive manner, and with what goal? (Psalm 71:17, 18)

God even as they do you, their earthly parents, and to appreciate His goodness, His kindness and His generosity. In time they will want to serve Jehovah out of love and thankfulness for all his grand provision for life, now and in the future.

¹⁰ Children that are well trained according to Bible principles can grow up to be a credit and a joy to believing parents. And often an unbelieving parent, on noting the fine qualities that Bible instruction instills in his child, may be persuaded to take an interest in the "good news."

A family head told the following on the day of his baptism: 'I was the overseer at a construction site, but every evening I got drunk, and this began to affect my work. My wife and family were studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. One night my little boy, not yet five years old, suddenly came to me, laid his head on my shoulder, and said: "Daddy, every night you get drunk and smoke tobacco. It is so upsetting to mommy and my sisters, and even more hateful to Jehovah God. The Bible says that as a child I should obey my daddy, and that daddy should obey Jesus Christ. So please study the Bible the same as mommy." For two hours he talked persuasively to me, and had a fine attitude. So I promised to try to study. As soon as I started to learn the truth, I found I could give up my independent ways and develop self-control. Our home became a bright and happy place.'

It has often happened that an unbelieving mate has listened to a child well trained in the Bible and been impressed.

AS YOUNGSTERS GROW UP

¹¹ For families of God's people, regular attendance at weekly congregational meetings pro-

10. How can believing children benefit an unbelieving parent? (Proverbs 10:1)

11. Why should families attend meetings together? (Psalm 84:4, 10-12)

vides for joyful association. Indeed, it was the commandment in Israel, to "congregate the people, the men and the women and the little ones . . . in order that they may listen and in order that they may learn." (Deuteronomy 31:12) As young ones sit alongside parents, endeavoring to listen, learn and share in meetings, happy family groups contribute toward the warmth, love and unity of the Christian congregation.

¹² On entering school, youngsters are exposed to new associations and also to teachings, such as evolution, that may conflict with the Bible. Parents need to take special care to guard them against wrong influences, taking an interest in all their activities and reasoning out with them what is good and what is bad according to Bible principles. As Proverbs 22:6 states it:

"Train up a boy according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it."

¹³ The good behavior at school of Bible-trained children has often made a fine impression, as the following report shows:

One day at school a sixth-grade girl and her younger sister were called to the teacher's office. There, fifty-two teachers, obviously worried about the rising delinquency among students, interviewed them for two hours before a group of fellow students, inquiring minutely into their background of Bible training, the controls that their parents placed on viewing TV programs, reading comic books, and so forth. In conclusion the headmaster remarked, "If all children

12. (a) What special care do parents need to take when their children enter school? (1 Corinthians 15:33) (b) What long-term blessing may proper child training bring? (Deuteronomy 11:18-21)

13. As related in the book, what fine impression may Bible-trained children make?

were trained like those of Jehovah's Witnesses, we would have a fine school, with no children who harass others or answer back." As a result of this meeting, the young girl was able to start Bible studies with twenty-six of her classmates.



**Happy those families
that press on unitedly
toward eternal life**

¹⁴ The family that is united around the Bible, and that places spiritual interests first in life, is well equipped to stand against the trials of these "critical times hard to deal with." (2 Timothy 3:1) In the grand spiritual paradise that now extends to the ends of the earth, a multitude of family groups from all nations, tribes and peoples can testify that Jehovah's arrangement for families really works, to the blessing of those who love him! They extol Jehovah as Head of "every family in heaven and on earth," and look forward to his bestowing

blessings on all families that support his sovereignty, through into the paradise earth that is now so close at hand.—Ephesians 3:15.

14. What testifies to the fact that God's arrangement for families really works?

A Way of Life That Leads to Happiness

MANY people take the attitude, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we are to die." However, the apostle Paul warns us against having "associations" with such persons. (1 Corinthians 15:32, 33) On the other hand, there are some people who try to achieve some useful goal in life, but always they face the eventuality that everything will be cut short after a brief seventy or eighty years. How wonderful it would be to pursue a worthwhile purpose in life through hundreds, and even thousands, of years! Would that not bring us real happiness? Certainly it would!

² And—joy of joys!—that is exactly what God purposes for humankind. "Even time indefinite he has put in their heart," and this he would not do if their lives were to be cut off without opportunity to search out in a satisfying way "the work that the true God has made." (Ecclesiastes 3:11) Yes, an eternity of purposeful life and happiness lies ahead for those who will be privileged to live in the earthly paradise of God.

³ As we learn of the way to life, we should

1. (a) Why are so many persons today unhappy? (Ecclesiastes 2:11, 18) (b) What would bring real happiness to our lives?
2. Why is it reasonable to think that God wants us to enjoy an eternity of life? (Psalm 133:1, 3)
3. (a) What positive way of life did Jesus recommend? (Luke 6:31, 36) (b) How did Jesus state the two leading commandments? (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18)

come to look at things positively and with confidence. There may be some merit in negative statements, such as that of Confucius: "Do not do to others what you would not want them to do to you." But of how much greater value is Jesus' positive statement of the Golden Rule: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them"! (Matthew 7:12) And in indicating what the entire law of Moses pointed forward to, Jesus recommends much more than a passive way of life:

"The first [commandment] is, 'Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah, and you must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength.' The second is this, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."—Mark 12:29-31.

* Truly, this calls for an active, meaningful life, demonstrating that we truly love our God and Creator and that we really care for our neighbor. In this connection, Jesus also says:

"I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:34, 35)

In what way is this commandment "new"? In that it calls for a unique quality of self-sacrificing love. A person having this love would go even to the extent of 'surrendering his soul in behalf of his friends,' just as Jesus did.—John 15:12, 13.

⁵ Recognizing that we are now living at "the

4. What "new" commandment did Jesus give? (1 John 3:16)

5. How may you share in fulfilling prophecy? (Mark 13:10)

conclusion of the system of things," Jehovah's Witnesses also show love of God and neighbor by sharing in the fulfillment of Jesus' great prophecy that "this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." (Matthew 24:3, 14) You can share in this, too, by telling your neighbors of the grand hope of God's kingdom and its rule over the earth. However, being a witness to the true God is not just a matter of talking Bible truths to others. It is also a matter of *living* the truth, applying Bible principles in all of one's way of life.

⁶ This does not mean your having to follow a lot of rules or "don'ts." It means your living a normal, wholesome life, giving of yourself on behalf of others and showing respect for the counsel provided by "the faithful and discreet slave" class of anointed Christians whom the "master," Jesus, has appointed to provide spiritual "food at the proper time." (Matthew 24:45) In the first century, this "slave" class did not lay down a lot of rules to control the lives of non-Jewish Christians. But they did mention a number of things to avoid, which include the following:

"The holy spirit and we ourselves have favored adding no further burden to you, except these necessary things, to keep abstaining from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication. If you carefully keep yourselves from these things, you will prosper. Good health to you!" (Acts 15:28, 29)

What is involved in "these necessary things"?

6. (a) What kind of life does God require us to live? (Colossians 1:9, 10) (b) So, what kind of counsel did the "faithful and discreet slave" class give to non-Jewish Christians?



Witnesses lovingly tell others of Kingdom blessings

'ABSTAIN FROM IDOLS'

'In the second of the Ten Commandments, Jehovah God strongly forbade idolatry. The apostle Paul also gave clear instruction, at 1 Corinthians 10:14:

"My beloved ones, flee from idolatry."

But why? Because the magnificent personality of the living God can never be represented in lifeless images formed from wood, stone or metal. These degrade the true and living God. The martyrs of early Christian times could have saved themselves from being torn to pieces by wild beasts in the arena by offering just one pinch of incense before the statue of the Roman emperor, but they refused thus to dishonor God. Likewise, those who desire to please the living God today must take a firm stand against offering incense at funerals, and food or drink at family or public shrines, as well as against other kinds of idolatry.

7. Why is it important to refrain from idolatry? (1 Corinthians 10:20, 21)

'ABSTAIN FROM BLOOD'

⁸ This prohibition had been made in the law of Moses, and even earlier when Jehovah commanded Noah, the forefather of all of us today: "Blood—you must not eat." (Genesis 9:4) We should respect blood as sacred. The reason, as stated at Leviticus 17:14, is that "the soul [or, life] of every sort of flesh is its blood," and life is precious in the sight of the Life-Giver, Jehovah God. Hence the Bible shows that we should avoid meats, such as strangled fowl, that have not been drained of the blood—for spiritual reasons.

⁹ This "abstaining" logically extends to our not taking human blood into our bodies through transfusions. In this way we not only obey God's law, but also find protection against infectious diseases such as syphilis, malaria and hepatitis, which have even brought death to many transfused patients. Those who wish to respect God's law on blood do well to search out a doctor who will honor their conscientious stand and use plasma volume expanders if the need should arise. There have been rare occasions when a person who has conscientiously refused blood has died, but integrity kept to God's law assures such a one of a resurrection in the paradise of God.

'ABSTAIN FROM FORNICATION'

¹⁰ The decision of the "faithful and discreet slave" class and also the counsel of individual apostles make it clear that we should "flee from fornication." (1 Corinthians 6:18) But how different is the world's viewpoint today! Fornication

8. Why is the command to 'abstain from blood' binding on all mankind? (Acts 15:19, 20)

9. Would it be proper for you to receive a blood transfusion, and does this put you at any disadvantage? (Acts 21:25)

10. Why should we hold to God's viewpoint on sex and marriage? (2 Peter 2:9, 10, 14)

—which includes adultery and all perverted sex practices, such as sodomy, homosexuality, bestiality and others—is now freely practiced among many classes of society. God's law protects us against all of that. By holding to God's viewpoint on sex and marriage, we can not only honor our Grand Creator, but also avoid much suffering and many heartbreaks.

¹¹ If you want to please God, you should observe these "necessary things," for, spiritually, physically and emotionally, they will result in "good health to you!"

BECOMING SLAVES OF THE LOVING GOD

¹² Speaking of "the love of God," the apostle John says:

"The love is in this respect, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent forth his Son as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins." (1 John 4:9, 10)

How can you respond to this love of God? You can do so by presenting yourself in dedication to Jehovah, to become his willing "slave."—Romans 12:11.

¹³ Another apostle, Peter, indicated what is required in thus dedicating yourself to God, when he said:

"Repent . . . and turn around so as to get your sins blotted out, that seasons of refreshing may come from the person of Jehovah." (Acts 3:19)

You must repent of whatever part you have had in the immoralities, the politics and the wars of "the present wicked system of things." (Galatians

11. What will result from observing these "necessary things"? (2 Timothy 1:13)

12. What should God's love motivate us to do with our lives? (Romans 6:17, 18)

13. What is required in making a dedication to God? (Hebrews 11:1, 6)

1:3, 4) You must turn around, striving to put on a truly Christian personality, after the pattern of our Exemplar, Jesus Christ, and give wholehearted support to Jehovah's sovereignty, as represented in Christ's kingdom. Thus you cease to be a "part of the world."—John 17:14-16.

¹⁴ Some of your former associates may be "puzzled and go on speaking abusively of you," because of your no longer sharing in their "loose conduct, . . . idolatries" and other excesses. (1 Peter 4:3, 4) However, your determination to live honestly and uprightly before God may often result in unexpected rewards, as in the following experience related by one of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Philippines:

"There was a mass laying off of salesmen in our company, due to dishonest practices. Because I had followed Christian principles I came to be the only salesman that was not fired on that occasion. Not long after this I was promoted to another department, where soon it was found out that many were making out fake job orders for personal gain. Again I was the only one who retained his job, since they found that I was never involved in the dishonest practices. From these two incidents I proved that honesty and faithfulness to Bible principles free one from many heartaches and produce praise to God's name."

¹⁵ Are you one who wishes to make true Christianity your way of life, with the prospect of everlasting life in the earthly paradise of God? Then, after repenting and turning around, you may dedicate yourself in prayer to Jehovah to become his "slave," on the basis of your faith in Jesus' sacrifice, and then symbolize this dedica-

14. Illustrate how a stand for right principles may be rewarded. (Psalm 15:1-3)

15. When should a person get baptized? (1 Peter 3:21; Matthew 28:19, 20)

tion of yourself by receiving Christian baptism. In doing this, you will become a joyful slave like those in Thessalonica whom Paul commended in these words:

"In every place your faith toward God has spread abroad . . . You turned to God from your idols to slave for a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from the heavens, whom he raised up from the dead, namely, Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath which is coming."—1 Thessalonians 1:8-10.

¹⁶ In order to become baptized witnesses of Jehovah, some persons have had to triumph over bitter opposition, as in this example:

A Chinese girl in Taiwan began to share in the meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses and to talk to others about God's kingdom. But family opposition became extreme. She was beaten many times. Her parents

16. What example shows that obedience to God is rewarded? (Acts 5:29)



Baptism starts a happy relationship with God

hired local gangsters to go and intimidate the "pioneer" Witnesses who were studying with the girl. Her mail was intercepted and her Bible and Bible literature were destroyed many times. However, kind but firm efforts on the part of the girl gradually brought more freedom. The "pioneer" Witnesses left her town, but as the girl showed Christian understanding and love, her parents' attitude softened and they allowed her to travel an hour each way to the town where she could attend meetings. After two years of patient effort she was baptized.

Because of her determination to obey God and to advance to Christian baptism, this young lady was able to get a firm hold on "everlasting life." What a reward!—1 Timothy 6:12, 19.

¹⁷ Baptism is not some kind of "graduation." It is, instead, the beginning of a most happy relationship with Jehovah. However, in starting on this way of life, you are still a "child" in the truth and must keep 'pressing on to maturity.' As you "slave for Jehovah" your joys will increase and your life will become ever more meaningful and satisfying. (2 Timothy 2:1; Hebrews 6:1) True, there will be trials and problems along the way, but you can meet these with the whole-hearted conviction expressed by the apostle Paul:

"We are coming off completely victorious through him that loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life nor angels nor governments nor things now here nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor any other creation will be able to separate us from God's love that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:37-39)

Your remaining in God's love will be your protection.

17. (a) Why do newly baptized persons need to keep making progress? (Ephesians 4:14, 15) (b) What will result from our remaining in God's love? (1 John 4:16-19)

God Makes

"All Things New"

OUR knowing Jehovah, the Sovereign Lord of the Universe, will result in everlasting blessings. As Jesus said in prayer to Jehovah:

"This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3)

But this includes much more than just having head knowledge. It requires our learning about God and his magnificent attributes and works, and our really appreciating in our hearts the grand privilege of coming into a happy relationship with him on the basis of the atoning sacrifice of his Son, Jesus Christ.

² Having learned the "good news" of Jehovah's purpose to rid the universe of all wickedness and to bring this earth once more into a clean, peaceful, happy condition, do you not feel moved to praise and thank him? You should! What a joy it is to see his purposes unfolding and to know that we can share therein!

GLAD TIMES AHEAD!

³ The day fast approaches when Jehovah will give the decree to execute the world empire of

1. What does it mean to "know" God and Christ? (John 1:14, 18)

2. How should knowledge of Jehovah's purposes move us? (Psalm 112:1)

3. Why does heaven rejoice to see false religion devastated? (Deuteronomy 32:43)

Babylonish false religion. Her devastation will come quickly, as though "in one hour." Some former supporters may weep over her, saying, "Too bad, too bad," but those who have been distressed by the reproach she has cast on God's name will rejoice:

"Be glad over her, O heaven, also you holy ones and you apostles and you prophets, because God has judicially exacted punishment for you from her!"

—Revelation 18:19, 20.

“But that is not all! The “great tribulation” will continue to sweep “from nation to nation, . . . from one end of the earth clear to the other end of the earth,” bringing annihilation to all the wicked. (Jeremiah 25: 32, 33) That storm of destruction will come with



God will cleanse the earth, wiping away all wickedness and sorrow

startling suddenness, “just as it occurred in the days of Noah,” and it will be brief. So great will be the “tribulation” that unless Jehovah “cut short the days, no flesh would be saved.” The entire universe will be swept clean of those who have disputed the righteousness and rightness of Jehovah’s sovereignty over his creatures.

4. Why will the “great tribulation” be reason for God-fearing humans to rejoice? (Luke 21:28)

That, indeed, will be reason for rejoicing!—Luke 17:26, 27; Mark 13:19, 20.

"BE JOYFUL FOREVER"

⁵ With the subtle influence of Satan and his demons removed, and with man-rule no longer bearing down like an oppressive "heavens" over the earth, the "great crowd" of survivors will work at cultivating a paradise of beauty to the ends of the earth. They will "offer themselves willingly" for this task, just as they do in God's service today. (Psalm 110:3) Also, they will have help from God's arrangement for that time, the "new heavens and a new earth," which Jehovah is even now creating. He invites us:

"Exult, you people, and be joyful forever in what I am creating. For here I am creating Jerusalem [the heavenly kingdom] a cause for joyfulness and her people a cause for exultation." (Isaiah 65:17, 18)

"The new heavens" will be a permanent, loving arrangement for administering the affairs of "the new earth"—an eternal blessing to Jehovah's "people" and their "offspring."—Isaiah 66:22.

⁶ What joy usually accompanies a wedding! And when the once-sacrificed "Lamb," now the enthroned Jesus Christ in heaven, is united there with his "bride"—the resurrected 144,000 members of the "little flock" of overcomers—joy will know no bounds! This spiritual "bride" class is beautifully described in the closing chapters of the Bible as part of the "new heavens" that showers blessings on the "new earth," the righteous, visible society of mankind. She is spoken

5. (a) What former "heavens" over mankind will be removed? (2 Peter 3:7) (b) What permanent arrangement will then bring joy to God's people? (Isaiah 32:1)

6. (a) Who is the "bride" of the "Lamb," and how does she share in blessing mankind? (Revelation 19:6, 7) (b) What happy relationship will man then enjoy with God? (Psalm 86:9, 10)

of as "the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God," not physically, but in the sense of turning attention to the human family on earth and healing them. Thus earth's peoples will come into a most happy relationship with God:

"God . . . will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away."—Revelation 21:1-4.

⁷ "Unbelievable," you say? No, it is completely believable! It is certain to come! For all the prophecies of the Bible, starting from God's promise in Eden six thousand years ago, focus on the events of this present day, when God's sovereignty is to be completely vindicated through his Messianic "seed." All of his grand purpose must be accomplished for the blessing of those out of "all nations" who come to serve him in integrity.—Genesis 22:18.

⁸ And what of God's stated purpose to resurrect out of gravedom the billions of human dead? Are we to say that this is unbelievable? No, for Jesus himself assures us: "Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear [Jesus'] voice and come out . . . to a resurrection." (John 5:28, 29) What cries of joy will accompany the reunions then to take place in the paradise earth! And what happiness there will be in educating these restored ones concerning God's spiritual paradise! "Scrolls" of instruction will be provided, and

7. Why are these grand promises sure of fulfillment? (Joshua 21:45)

8. Why will the resurrection be a time of joy? (Proverbs 10:22)



**When God makes "all things new,"
everything on earth will again
bring honor to the Creator**

these will help them to perform right "deeds," leading to their names remaining written in "the book of life"! —Revelation 20:11-15.

⁹ Jehovah himself declares: "Look! I am making all things new." What a heartwarming promise! Does

the apostle John hesitate to record such amazing things? Jehovah reassures him, saying: "Write, because these words are faithful and true." They are as good as accomplished already, for Jehovah adds: "They have come to pass!"—Revelation 21:5, 6; Romans 4:17.

¹⁰ A thousand years of glorious restoration, rejuvenation and rejoicing lie just ahead for mankind. And what a marvelous spectacle the earth will present at the end of that thousand-year rule by Jesus and his heavenly "bride"! Physically, morally, spiritually—the globe and its billions of human inhabitants will sparkle as a gem in the heavens to the glory of its Creator. Never will "spaceship earth" have looked more magnificent than at the end of Jehovah's great 'rest day.' —Genesis 2:2, 3.

9. Why can we be sure that Jehovah will make "all things new"? (Isaiah 55:11)

10. How will "spaceship earth" look at the end of God's 'rest day'? (Psalm 104:1, 24)

¹¹ Then, having "brought to nothing" all effects of death due to Adam's sin, Jesus obediently "hands over the kingdom to his God and Father." All mankind, at the end of the thousand years, will now stand directly responsible to Jehovah for their future course as perfect human creatures "in God's image." (1 Corinthians 15:24-26; Genesis 1:27) For a short season, "Satan will be let loose out of his prison" to test that perfected world of mankind, as to their choice of God's everlasting sovereignty. Then Satan and his demons, together with any individual humans who choose to follow him, will be hurled into "the lake of fire"—a symbol of "the second death," from which there is no resurrection.—Revelation 20:7-10, 14.

AWAITING GOD'S PROMISE

¹² With joy we await the earth-wide rule of "new heavens and a new earth." But we should not be idle! As the apostle Peter tells us:

"There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell. Hence, beloved ones, since you are awaiting these things, do your utmost to be found finally by him spotless and unblemished and in peace." (2 Peter 3:13, 14)

We cannot afford to have any "spots" showing on us due to sharing in the practices of false religion or the immoralities of the world. We cannot permit any disfigurements in our new Christlike personalities. We must be at peace with Jehovah, and with one another. This oneness we can demonstrate by standing firmly for Jehovah's

11. What happens at the end of Christ's thousand-year kingdom? (Revelation 15:3, 4)

12. How should we exert ourselves while awaiting fulfillment of God's promise? (1 Corinthians 15:58)



**"The glorious good news of the happy God"
is provided to make YOU happy!**

sovereignty and by encouraging one another to "keep on the watch." And why? "Because at an hour that you do not think to be it, the Son of man [Jesus Christ] is coming" to execute judgment on the old system of things and to bring in the new.—Matthew 24:42-44.

¹³ This is the marvelous "good news of the kingdom"! What joy all of Jehovah's people now have in proclaiming it "in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations"! (Matthew 24:14) Surely, it is the grandest of good news! And in the paradise earth, as Jehovah continues to use Christ's kingdom in making "all things new," good news will abound for mankind. Truly, "all the families of the earth will be blessed"! (Acts 3:25) What rejoicing there will be as all peoples pursue a real purpose in life under a heavenly kingdom administered by rulers who extol Jehovah as "Sovereign Lord" and who really understand and care for mankind! (Revelation 6:10) This is indeed "the glorious good news of the happy God." It is good news to make *you* happy.

13. (a) What special joy may Jehovah's people have now?
(b) Why is the "good news of the kingdom" the grandest of good news?



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