GOD and the STATE

GOD and THE STATE: your everlasting future hinges on how you decide this interesting issue, at a time when religious-totalitarian dictators put God second, frightening the politicians to cry for union of religion and state. How far may State laws go without encroaching on the claims of God? Should children be punished by the State for putting God first? World developments are forcing all inescapably to a personal decision!

Can you afford to pass by the Scriptural answers and vital information which this booklet presents for your safe guidance to a happy future?

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GOD AND THE STATE

WHEN there is a conflict between two authorities, which one must be obeyed? The State inflicts punishment upon a person who fails or refuses to obey its law.

One who has agreed to obey God's law and then fails or refuses to obey is subject to punishment by death.

A person conscientiously believes that obedience to a certain law of the State is a flagrant violation of God's law. What shall that conscientious person do?

There is a wide distinction between a person who has made a covenant to do God's will and a person who has not made such a covenant.

Jehovah God requires of His children full obedience as a condition precedent to receiving everlasting life. (Proverbs 7:1, 2) By His Word He has emphasized that rule from the time of Adam when in Eden until this very day. Adam failed to obey the commandments of Jehovah God, and the result to him was death. The rules of God never change and are the same toward all.—Malachi 3:6; Acts 10:34.

Life with the right thereto can be had and maintained only by the grace of God. Life everlasting can be had by those only who are obedient unto God. The word "father" means the one from whom life emanates. God is the Father, therefore, of those who gain life everlasting. He is the fountain of life. (Psalm 36:9) He gives or administers life everlasting by and through Jesus Christ, His Executive Officer. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our

Lord." (Romans 6:23) There is no other possible way of obtaining life. (Acts 4:12) Christ Jesus is the Beloved Son of God, and he says: "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psalm 40:8) Because of his full and complete obedience unto his Father under the most trying conditions Jesus was given life immortal, the highest place in the universe next to Jehovah, and the administration of Jehovah's will. (Philippians 2:8-11) Because of his complete obedience Christ Jesus is made "the Author of eternal salvation" to all that obey him. (Hebrews 5:8,9) It is of the greatest importance to know these facts, if one would live.

All of the human kind were born in sin because of the sin committed by Adam, and therefore all of his children inherited death. (Romans 5:12) God has provided redemption and salvation of men from death by and through the sacrifice of the man Jesus unto death. God therefore provides the gift of life to all men who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior and who then covenant to be obedient to the laws of God and hence obedient to Christ Jesus: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—Romans 5:19.

One becomes a child of God when he exercises faith in God and in Christ Jesus as his Savior, and then agrees to do the will of God, and with him God makes a covenant. The one making the covenant, or who is taken into the covenant with Jehovah God, is then in the way to receive the gift of life. Jehovah's command to his covenant people is (Proverbs 7:1, 2): "My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye." The general rules announced in these texts apply to all men who shall ever gain life everlasting.

COVENANT PEOPLE

Jehovah God chose the Israelites as a "people for his name". In Egypt he made a covenant with that people and confirmed that covenant at Mount Sinai. The people of that nation, through Moses as their mediator, agreed to do whatsoever God commanded of them, and thus they voluntarily entered into the covenant. (Exodus 19:5, 8) As a nation the Israelites broke their covenant and were cast away from God's favor, but there were some individuals who remained faithful unto the covenant. Only those who obeyed God's law, as Christ Jesus always does, were preserved unto life.

When the man Jesus became thirty years of age he presented himself to God and submitted to baptism in the Jordan, thus giving outward testimony that he had entered into a covenant with his Father by sacrifice. (Luke 3:21-23) Jesus there became the head and chief of the antitypical spiritual Israelites. His disciples were Israelites by nature, eleven of whom continued faithful, and were taken into the covenant with Christ Jesus for the kingdom of God. Then in due time God began to take out from amongst the Gentiles, or other nations, a people for his name who would follow in the footsteps of Christ Jesus. (Acts 15:14) Each one thus taken into the covenant must become a footstep follower of Christ Jesus, suffer reproaches like those that came upon Jesus, and be faithful even unto death. Such faithful followers of Christ Jesus are spiritual Israelites, chosen of God to be witnesses unto his name and his kingdom. Concerning them it is written: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." (1 Pe-

ter 2:9, 10) "Ye are my witnesses," saith God.—Isaiah 43:12.

That which was written in the law and in the prophecies applies specifically to all Christians who follow Christ Jesus. Upon this point there is not a possibility of doubt, as it is written: "Now all these things happened unto them [natural Israel] for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry." (1 Corinthians 10:11, 12, 14) "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."—Romans 15:4.

Such true followers of Christ Jesus are accepted by Jehovah and acknowledged by him as his children or sons, and these must be obedient to Jehovah God their Father, if they would receive life everlasting.

As children of God they must be obedient to his commandments; otherwise they could not live. To such Jehovah God says: "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments." (Proverbs 3:1) "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life." (Revelation 2:10, *Am. Rev. Ver.*) Such are and must be witnesses to Jehovah and bear testimony to his name and to his kingdom, and hence they are called by the Lord Jehovah "My witnesses". —Isaiah 43:10-12.

The Lord announces his purpose to provide a "great multitude" with the opportunity of life everlasting on earth. (Revelation 7:9-17) All who compose the "great multitude" must agree to do the will of God, and therefore, exercising faith in the shed blood of Christ Jesus as their Redeemer, must consecrate themselves to do the will of God, and must then serve him and obey the commandments of the Lord. They are commanded to "seek righteousness" and "seek meekness", which means that they must endeavor to learn what is God's will concerning them and then to do that which is right-

eous by obeying the will of God.—Zephaniah 2:1-3.

DUTY OF PARENTS

To all persons who have agreed to do the will of God he says: "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil." (Deut. 30:15) To his covenant people Jehovah says: "One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you." (Num. 15:16) "Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country; for I am the Lord your God."—Lev. 24:22.

The "stranger" amongst the typical Israelites pictured those who are now on earth and who covenant to do the will of God and who, if faithful, shall form the "great multitude". Those who form the "great multitude" Jesus designates as his "other sheep", and when these are gathered unto the Lord and given life all shall be of "one fold" under Christ the great Shepherd. (John 10:16) God's announced purpose is to grant life everlasting to those only who believe on him and on the Lord Jesus Christ and who render themselves in obedience. This rule applies to both the spiritual Israelites and those of the "great multitude", that is, to all who shall live: "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—John 3:35, 36.

TEACHING CHILDREN

Marriage and child-bearing are God's arrangement for humankind. All parents who have agreed to do the will of God, and who have children, are bound by the commandments of Almighty God *to teach their children the Word of God and to instruct them in the way of righteousness.* To his consecrated or covenant people Jehovah says: "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons." (Deuteronomy 4:9) "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine

heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." (Deut. 6:6, 7) "Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the Lord thy God."—Deuteronomy 12:28.

Addressing himself to his people who are in a covenant to do his will, Jehovah God gives this specific commandment: "Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law."—Deuteronomy 32:46.

It cannot properly be said that these laws of God apply only to the ancient Israelites. Exactly the contrary is expressed in God's Word. His law is the same toward all who *seek to live*. Children seek knowledge and must be taught, and it is the desire of all sane persons, both adults and children, to receive life everlasting. Obligation is laid by the Lord upon consecrated parents to see to it that their children are instructed in the law of God. They cannot disregard this obligation and expect God's favor. It is also the duty of the parents to have their children in subjection and to carefully guide them in the way of righteousness. Upon this point note these words of the Scriptures addressed to the consecrated parents and to their children: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*"—Ephesians 6:1-4.

Parents are the ones responsible for bringing children into the world, and it is their responsibility to properly instruct those children. The custom amongst the people of all nations of leaving the instruction of

children to schools, presided over by persons as teachers, is man's way, but it is not God's way. Parents cannot escape their obligation laid upon them by the Lord by leaving the instruction of their children to others. In matters pertaining to worldly affairs it seems that instruction of children by a competent teacher in the schools is proper, but as to the Word of God it is the first and bounden duty of consecrated parents to teach their children. That instruction must be given in the manner God has commanded. The consecrated parents must bring up their children "in the nurture . . . of the Lord"; which means as God has commanded. They must bring them up in the "admonition of the Lord"; which means that advice, counsel and instruction must be given to them in righteousness, as that instruction is set forth in the Word of God, the Bible. This is a sacred duty that no one has any right to interfere with and a duty that the parents have no right to ignore.

Life for the child is involved, and hence it is of great importance to the child that it be taught in the right way, that is, God's way. Otherwise it can never obtain life everlasting. Concerning this it is written in God's Word: "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."–Prov. 22:6.

The foundation of the child's education must be laid in the Word of God, because that is the only way that leads to life everlasting. By nature a child's mind seeks information or knowledge. Only those persons who seek the way to life as the Lord has pointed out in his Word shall ever find it. This was emphasized by the Lord Jesus. Little children were being brought to Jesus by their parents that they might learn of him, and the religious-minded tried to prevent the children from being brought to Jesus: "But when Jesus saw it, he was moved with indignation, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not; for to such belongeth the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein.

And he took them in his arms, and blessed them, laying his hands upon them." (Mark 10: 14-16, *A.R.V.*) By these words the Lord clearly meant that those persons *who seek knowledge from him,* as the little children were seeking, can find the way of life; that the kingdom of God is for those and those only who seek the knowledge of truth found in God's Word and who then obey by doing what the Lord commands. It would be impossible to make it more emphatic concerning the obligation to teach the children, from their youth up, than what God has put in his Word.

COMMANDMENTS

The obligation upon the parents begins to be specially binding only after they have made a covenant to do the will of God and have been taken into a covenant with Jehovah God. Parents who are in a covenant to do the will of God must then inform themselves of his will or commandment toward themselves and toward their children, and then must obey those commandments and teach the same to their children, and admonish their children to obey. The state or nation, through its rules of education, has no right whatsoever to limit, interfere with, or hinder the instruction by parents of their children in the Word of God. By one inquiring how one might obtain eternal life by obeying God's commandments the question was propounded to Jesus: "Which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."—Matt. 22: 36-40.

To love God means that the person must be wholly and unselfishly devoted to Almighty God, seeking always to know and to do the will of God. This is well defined by the words of Jesus addressed to Jehovah God: 'I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart.' (Psalm 40: 8) "Neighbour," within the meaning of the Scriptures, is one's fellow creature who

is also a believer on Jehovah and Christ, and who has agreed to do the will of God. God's commandment requires that 'one love his neighbor, even as he loves himself', that is to say, puts his brother Christian on an exact equality with himself. The only way a person can prove his love for God is by fully and sincerely obeying the commandments of God; as it is written: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15) The Christian proves his love for God by joyfully obeying God's commandments. (1 John 5:3) Where the commandments of men are in conflict with God's commandment there is but one thing to do, and that is, to OBEY GOD FIRST.

ONE GOD

There is one God Eternal, The Almighty, whose name is Jehovah. (Ps. 83:18) He is "from everlasting to everlasting", and from him proceeds everything that is good. (Ps. 90:2; Jas. 1:17) All the ways of God are perfect. (Deut. 32:4) God's commandments are perfect, and if a man could at all times deport himself exactly in harmony with God's law he would never make a mistake: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes: the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."—Ps. 19:7-9.

Jehovah God is the fountain of life and the Giver of life everlasting to them that obey him. (Ps. 36:9) Necessarily it follows that, if man makes some creature or thing a god to which he renders obeisance and obedience, it is written, he could never find or possess life everlasting. By reason of the goodness and loving-kindness of Almighty God this unchangeable commandment is given to all who have hope of life everlasting, to wit:

> "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the

earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."—Exodus 20:3-5.

The people who resided in Palestine at the time God sent his covenant people, the Israelites, there were worshipers of gods or demons; and in order to safeguard his covenant people from such demon-worship God commanded them that they should have nothing to do with other gods, lest they be ensnared by such. Again God emphasized this law or commandment to his covenant people by saying to them: "Neither shalt thou serve their gods; FOR THAT WILL BE A SNARE UNTO THEE." (Deuteronomy 7:16) His commandment further emphasized his instruction that his covenant people must have nothing to do with GRAVEN IMAGES or even have a desire for them. "The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire; thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, LEST THOU BE SNARED THEREIN: for it is an abomination to the Lord thy God."—Deuteronomy 7:25.

God, being the Fountain of life, and the only source of life, and life being granted upon condition of obedience, it was his great loving-kindness that provided for the protection of his covenant people by commanding them to refrain completely from giving any worship to any creature or thing. The Israelites violated the covenant of God and became ensnared, and that nation was destroyed. (Psalm 106:36, 40; Ezekiel 21:24-27) Thus God emphasized his unchangeable rule that a willful disobedience to his commandments means death to the creature or nation.

CHRISTIAN

A Christian is one who follows in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and joyfully obeys the commandments of Almighty God. All Christians must follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:21) There is a wide difference between persons who have not made a covenant with the Lord and those WHO HAVE COVE-

NANTED to do his will. Those who enter into an agreement or covenant to be obedient to God, and who are accepted by him as followers of Christ Jesus, are entirely separate and distinct from others in the world. At the end of his earthly ministry Jesus uttered these words, addressed to Jehovah God and concerning those who agree to follow in his steps, to wit: "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. THEY ARE NOT OF THE WORLD, even as I am not of the world. SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH THY TRUTH; THY WORD IS TRUTH."—John 17:14-17.

For centuries Satan has been the invisible ruler or "god of this [wicked] world". (2 Cor. 4:4; 1 John 5:19; John 14:30) Only those who have strictly obeyed the Lord's commandments have been saved from the influence and power of Satan the Devil. For this reason the faithful followers of Christ Jesus are instructed to 'keep yourselves unspotted from the world'. (Jas. 1:27) It follows, therefore, that rules that nations make concerning their people in general cannot always apply to the one who is in a covenant to do God's will.

All true and faithful followers of Christ Jesus are and indeed must be witnesses to Jehovah by declaring his name and his kingdom under and by Christ Jesus. (Isa. 43:10-12; Ex. 9:16) All such covenant people must preach the gospel of God's kingdom in obedience to his commandments. (Isa. 61:1, 2; Matt. 24:14) All persons thus devoted to God and his kingdom must TEACH THEIR CHILDREN the gospel of THE THEOCRACY or Kingdom. Jesus specifically instructed his followers to continuously pray to God: 'Thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as in heaven.'—Matt. 6:10.

RELIGION AND CHRISTIANITY

Indulging in any ceremony or practice whatsoever contrary to the commandment of God is religious. Religion originated with the demons, of which Satan is the chief. It has at all times been used to ensnare and

has ensnared multitudes of people and kept them blind to God's will or commandment. Religion has been the moving influence for the persecution and violent treatment of others, and particularly the persecution of Christians.

Christians are those who do the will of God as commanded in his Word. They are called "Christians" because Christ Jesus is always obedient to God's will and he is the Head and Leader of all who are diligent to obey God's commandments. Christians are therefore commanded by the Lord to avoid anything and all things that are contrary to God's commandments.

SUPREME

The Word of Jehovah God, as expressed in the Bible, is His law, given to man for his correct guide: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105) The law of God is supreme and is the only instruction that man can receive and be equipped to walk in the way of righteousness and life. "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."—2 Timothy 3:16, 17, *Rev. Ver.*

Every Christian is bound by his covenant to be obedient to God's law, as written in the Scriptures. If he voluntarily breaks the terms of his covenant he is subject to death. (Rom. 1:31, 32) All Christians conscientiously believe that the Word of God, as recorded in the Bible, is the truth; and if they willingly violate their conscientious belief, such act constitutes the breaking of their covenant. To CAUSE A CHRISTIAN TO VIOLATE HIS CONSCIENCE is denounced by the Scriptures as "SIN AGAINST CHRIST". (1 Cor. 8:12) These general rules stated in the Bible apply to all persons who believe on God and on Christ and who start to walk in the way of righteousness that leads to life everlasting.

CONSCIENCE

In forming the United States government the lawmakers were careful to safeguard the conscience of

men, particularly concerning the worship of Almighty God. That part of the Constitution known as the Bill of Rights guarantees to all citizens the right to freely exercise the conscience relative to belief or non-belief, worship or non-worship. Almost all the state constitutions provide that all men shall be free to exercise their conscientious belief and to practice the same without interference unless that practice endangers the welfare of others. As an illustration: William Penn refused to remove his hat when entering the presence of others because he conscientiously believed that such would be a violation of God's commandment; and for that he was punished. Penn had much to do with framing the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and especially with reference to the freedom of the exercise of conscientious worship. The highest court of that Commonwealth, discussing the principles of liberty of conscience, said: "Liberty necessarily embraces the right of the individual to exercise his conscience and THAT WITHOUT INTERFERENCE. That includes the right to worship the Supreme Being according to the dictates of his own conscience; to adopt any creed or hold any opinion whatsoever on the subject of religion; and TO DO OR FORBEAR TO DO ANY ACT FOR CONSCIENCE' SAKE, the doing or the forbearing of which is not prejudicial to the public weal."—Commonwealth *v.* Lesher, 17 S. & R. 155.

The Supreme Court of the United States, in the case of Church *v.* United States, 143 U.S. 457, held that God is supreme and that America is a Christian nation. Leading law-writers of the nations of the world called "Christendom" have said, concerning the supremacy of the law of Almighty God, this, to wit: "It is binding over all the globe, in all countries, at all times. No human laws are of any validity if contrary to this [God's law]; and such of them as are valid derive all their force and all their authority, mediately or immediately, from the original. The revealed or divine laws are to be found only in the Holy Scriptures. No human law should be suffered to contradict this."—*Black-*

stone Commentaries, Chase 3d Edition, pages 5-7.

"No external authority is to place itself between the finite being and the Infinite when the former is seeking to render homage that is due, and in a mode which commends itself to HIS CONSCIENCE and judgment as being suitable to him to render, and acceptable to its object."—Cooley's *Constitutional Limitations,* 8th Edition, page 968.

VIOLATION

In more recent years irreverent persons, who have no respect for the supreme law of God, and who have no faith in God or in Christ, have taken the lead in public affairs and in lawmaking. Such men, ambitious to appear as the acclaimed guardians of the public welfare, have conceived the idea of compelling school children to indulge in a fixed ceremony of saluting the flag. The idea appeared to be good to others who give no heed to God's Word, and soon school boards began to make rules compelling all the children to indulge in such ceremony. This has developed until now there is a general hysteria abroad in the land, which has led to the punishment of children by ill-treating and by expelling them from school because they conscientiously decline to indulge in the religious ceremony of saluting any flag. Such children have been taught by their parents to obey God, and, because they obey their parents and obey God, the children are expelled from school and their parents are punished for not compelling their children to violate their conscience and to violate the law of Almighty God. This modern ceremony of "heiling" men and saluting flags first became prominent in modern times in the arbitrary government of Germany, the purpose of which is to put the state above God.

If boards of public education believed in Jehovah as the Almighty God and in Christ Jesus as the Savior of men, and that God's law is supreme, they would never attempt to compel any child to violate its conscience by saluting any flag or bowing down to any creature or thing. Boards of education in the United

States in recent years have shown a zeal in the one direction of attempting to instill patriotism in children, and in this they have completely ignored God's Word. The words of Mr. Justice Brandeis, late of the Supreme Court of the United States, are here quite appropriate, to wit: "The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well meaning, but without understanding."—Olmstead *v.* United States, 277 U.S. 479.

In the time of the apostles there were religionists of the same category as above mentioned, and concerning which the apostle wrote: "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."—Romans 10: 2-4.

The wrong is not in the flag, because the flag of the United States is the symbol of liberty and justice. The wrong is not in the salute, but, as to a conscientious Christian, the wrong lies in compelling or attempting to compel that one, against his conscience, to violate God's specific commandment. As above stated, God has specifically emphasized his law, that no form of worship or reverence shall be given to any creature or thing, and to attempt to compel a person to violate his conscience and to violate God's commandment is absolutely wrong.

DEFINITIONS

According to the authoritative definitions, the saluting of the flag is a religious ceremony which gives reverence and worship, contrary to God's law. These definitions are given as follows, to wit:

"The flag, like the cross, is sacred. . . . The rules and regulations relative to human attitude toward national standards use strong, expressive words, as, 'Service to the Flag,' . . . 'Reverence for the Flag,' 'Devotion to the Flag.'—*The Encyclopedia Americana,* Vol. 11, page 316.

SACRED means "set apart by religious ceremony".

DEVOTION means "a form of prayer or worship".—Webster.

REVERENCE means "veneration, expressing reverent feeling, worship".

SALUTE means "to greet with a kiss, to bow and courtesy, the uncovering of the head, a clasp or wave of the hand or the like . . . to honor formally or with ceremonious recognition". (*Century Dictionary*, page 5321) "To greet with a sign of welcome, love or deference, as a bow and embrace, or a wave of the hand." —Webster.

Under the word "image" this definition is given by Webster's Dictionary: "Image, in modern usage, commonly suggests RELIGIOUS VENERATION."

According to the Bible, 'Bow down to a symbol or image' includes all postures or attitudes toward the image, even a kiss. (See 1 Kings 19:18; Hosea 13:2; Job 31:25-27.)

Thus worldly lexicographers recognize the saluting of a flag as A RELIGIOUS FORMALISM. According to the Bible there cannot be the slightest doubt about it, because by such salute there is bestowed upon the image or thing reverence, devotion, a form of prayer or worship, and which thing, or image of that which it represents, is regarded as SACRED.

Non-Christians may salute the flag without reference to the foregoing rules. Those who are real conscientious Christians are in a class entirely different from others of the world. Jehovah's witnesses are Christians and in a covenant to be entirely obedient to God's law. They must teach their children and admonish them to obey God's law, as he has commanded. They are conscientious and they sincerely believe that for them to indulge in the formalism or ceremony of saluting any flag is a violation of God's specific commandment as set forth at Exodus 20:3-5 and emphasized in many other scriptures. The reason that such flag saluting is a violation of that commandment is that the salute attributes salvation to the state, which the flag represents, thus making the state a mighty one, or

a "god", whereas 'salvation belongeth alone to Jehovah, the Almighty God', and to none other. (Ps. 3:8) Jehovah's witnesses conscientiously and sincerely believe the Word of God and that their violation of their conscience and the violation of God's commandment would mean their certain destruction; as it is written: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."—Acts 3:22, 23.

Children who have been reared and taught in the nurture and admonition of God's law and who, because they are in a covenant to do God's will and conscientiously attempt to obey God, refuse to indulge in the ceremony of saluting any flag and for that reason are expelled from school and denied the right of education, what shall they do? The parents of those children, who have obeyed God's law to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord", are punished because they do not compel their children to violate their conscience and to violate God's law, and the parents are deprived of their liberty and right to have their children educated in the schools, as the law requires. What shall they do? Many children and many parents in the United States find themselves confronted with this important question.

Members of the boards of education have the responsibility of answering those questions. Let the members of the boards of education ask themselves this question: If I had made a consecration to God, and entered into a covenant to do His will, and conscientiously believed that the Word of God is supreme and that His Word forbids me to indulge in flag saluting, what would I do if an attempt were made to compel me to violate my conscience and to violate God's law? Would I refuse to comply with man-made rules and suffer punishment at the hands of men, or would I break my covenant with God and suffer everlasting

punishment by destruction at the hand of God? These are serious questions and fraught with great weight. Every person must either choose to be obedient to God's commandment or choose to take a contrary course.

GOD FORGOTTEN

Most of the men who had to do with laying the foundation of the American government believed in God and relied upon His Word; but in recent years there has been a rapid falling away from faith in God and in the Bible, particularly so amongst those who have to do with governmental or public affairs. Today many of the lawyers and judges of the courts, as well as other public officials, entirely ignore the Word of God. There are some lawyers, however, who firmly hold to the fundamental principles relied upon by the nation, and who trust in God, and who believe that every man should be free to exercise his conscientious reverence and worship of God without interference and that the conscientious and sincere belief of all should be respected and not interfered with. More than one hundred years ago the courts of America laid down the rule that the INDIVIDUAL ALONE IS PRIVILEGED TO DETERMINE WHAT HE SHALL AND SHALL NOT BELIEVE, and that the COURTS HAVE NO RIGHT TO INTERFERE WITH BELIEF OR PRACTICE, except when the practice endangers the welfare of others. In 1784 Thomas Jefferson introduced in the Virginia legislature a bill which he had prepared, the preamble of which, written by him, reads as follows: "That to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion, and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles on supposition of their ill tendency, is a dangerous fallacy which at once destroys all religious liberty, it is declared that it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order."

The Gobitis case, which originated in Pennsylvania, aptly illustrates the point with reference to forgetting or ignoring God. The Gobitis parents are conscientious

Christians, in a covenant to do the will of Almighty God. They have brought up their children as commanded by the Scriptures, "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The children also consecrated themselves to God and entered into a covenant to do his will. The school board promulgated a rule requiring a daily practice of saluting the flag, and going through a certain ceremony in connection therewith. The Gobitis children, because of their conscientious belief that such flag saluting would be a violation of their covenant and a violation of God's law, asked to be excused therefrom and to remain silent during the ceremony. For this they were expelled from school. Suit was begun in the United States District Court, presided over by Judge Maris. That court held that the flag-salute rule could not be enforced against the Gobitis children because of their conscientious belief in God and His Word, and in his Opinion, amongst other things, he said: "In these days, when religious intolerance is again rearing its ugly head in other parts of the world, it is of the utmost importance that the liberties guaranteed to our citizens by the fundamental law be preserved from all encroachment."

In that Opinion Judge Maris quoted from the Opinion of Justice Gibson, rendered in the Lesher case, and further said: "In these words that eminent jurist [Justice Gibson] clearly stated that the principle which underlies the Constitutional provision of the state, and which is one of the fundamental bases upon which our nation was founded, namely, that individuals have the right not only to entertain any religious belief but also TO DO OR REFRAIN FROM DOING ANY ACT ON CONSCIENTIOUS GROUNDS, which does not prejudice the safety, morals, property or personal rights of the people. . . . On the contrary, that regulation [of the School Board], although undoubtedly adopted from patriotic motives, appears to have become in this case a means for the persecution of children for conscience' sake. Our beloved flag, the emblem of religious liberty,

apparently has been used as an instrument to impose a religious test as a condition of receiving the benefits of public education."

On appeal the United States Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the judgment of the District Court. The case was then appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States, and there the judgments of the lower courts were reversed. The majority Opinion in that case DID NOT hold that citizens can be compelled to salute the flag, but did hold that the board of education may make and enforce rules compelling children to indulge in the ceremony of flag saluting. The real issue was side-stepped. It is manifest that the writer of that Opinion does not believe in and rely upon God and Christ, but that he is controlled by science and public opinion. The first paragraph in that majority opinion says: "A grave responsibility confronts this Court whenever in course of litigation it must reconcile the conflicting claims of liberty and authority. But when the liberty invoked is liberty of conscience, and the authority is authority to safeguard the nation's fellowship, judicial conscience is put to its severest test. Of such a nature is the present controversy."

The court further in that opinion ruled that the responsibility is upon SCHOOL BOARDS OR BOARDS OF EDUCATION, and NOT UPON THE COURTS, to determine what rules shall be made and enforced. Further discussing the matter, the opinion says: "The influences which help toward a common feeling for the common country are manifold. Some may seem harsh and others no doubt are foolish. Surely, however, the end is legitimate. And the effective means for its attainment are still so uncertain and so unauthenticated by science as to preclude us from putting the widely prevalent belief in flag-saluting beyond the pale of legislative power."

"The wisdom of training children in patriotic impulses by those compulsions which necessarily pervade so much of the educational process IS NOT FOR OUR INDEPENDENT judgment. Even were we convinced of the folly of such a measure, such belief would be no proof

of its unconstitutionality. For ourselves, we might be tempted to say that the deepest patriotism is best engendered by giving unfettered scope to the most crochety beliefs. Perhaps it is best, even from the standpoint of those interests which ordinances like the one under review seek to promote, to give to the least popular sect leave from conformities like those here in issue. But the COURT ROOM IS NOT THE ARENA FOR DEBATING ISSUES OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY. It is not our province to choose among competing considerations in the subtle process of securing effective loyalty to the traditional ideals of democracy, while respecting at the same time individual idiosyncrasies among a people so diversified in racial origins and religious allegiances. So to hold would in effect MAKE US THE SCHOOL BOARD FOR THE COUNTRY. THAT AUTHORITY HAS NOT BEEN GIVEN TO THIS Court, nor should we assume it."

"Judicial review, itself a limitation on popular government, is a fundamental part of our constitutional scheme. But to the legislature no less than to courts is committed the guardianship of deeply-cherished liberties. Where all the effective means of inducing political changes are left free from interference, education in the abandonment of foolish legislation is itself a training in liberty. To fight out the wise use of legislative authority in the FORUM OF PUBLIC OPINION and before LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES rather than to transfer such a contest to the judicial arena, serves to vindicate the self-confidence of a free people."

A minority Opinion was also rendered and filed in that case, and the learned Justice who differed from the majority Opinion, amongst other things, said: "The Constitution may well elicit expressions of loyalty to it and to the government which it created, but it does not command such expressions or otherwise give any indication that compulsory expressions of loyalty play any such part in our scheme of government as to override the constitutional protection of freedom of speech and religion. And while such expressions of loyalty, when voluntarily given, may promote national

unity, it is quite another matter to say that their compulsory expression by children in violation of THEIR OWN and THEIR PARENTS' religious convictions can be regarded as playing so important a part in our NATIONAL UNITY AS TO LEAVE SCHOOL BOARDS FREE TO EXACT IT DESPITE THE CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEE OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION. The very terms of the Bill of Rights preclude, it seems to me, any reconciliation of such compulsions with the constitutional guaranties by a legislative declaration that they are more important to the public welfare than the Bill of Rights.

"But even if this view be rejected and it is considered that there is some scope for the determination by legislature whether the citizen shall be compelled to give public expression of such sentiments contrary to his religion, I am not persuaded that we should refrain from passing upon the legislative judgment 'as long as the remedial channels of the democratic process remain open and unobstructed.' This seems to me no more than the surrender of the constitutional protection of the liberty of small minorities to THE POPULAR WILL. . . .

"The Constitution expresses more than the conviction of the people that democratic processes must be preserved at all costs. It is also an expression of faith and a command that freedom of mind and spirit must be preserved, which government must obey, if it is to adhere to that justice and moderation WITHOUT WHICH NO FREE GOVERNMENT CAN EXIST. For this reason it would seem that legislation which operates to repress the religious freedom of small minorities, which is admittedly within the scope of the protection of the Bill of Rights, must at least be subject to the same judicial scrutiny as legislation which we have recently held to infringe the constitutional liberty of religious and racial minorities.

"With such scrutiny I cannot say that the inconveniences which may attend some sensible adjustment of school discipline in order that the religious convictions of these children may be spared, presents a prob-

lem so momentous or pressing as to outweigh the freedom from compulsory violation of religious faith which has been thought worthy of constitutional protection."

The majority Opinion in the Gobitis case ignores the supremacy of God's law, declines to exercise its authority under the Constitution to restrain the infringement upon liberty properly exercised and which is guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, and shifts the burden upon BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND ADVISES FIGHTING IT OUT IN THE PUBLIC FORUM.

RESULT

Welfare and stability of the nation depend NOT upon ceremonies, such as saluting a flag, but do depend upon recognizing Jehovah God as supreme. Criminals salute the flag upon all occasions and then straightway violate the law of which the flag is a symbol.

The result of the majority Opinion in the Gobitis case breaking down the Constitutional guarantee of liberty of worship, and ignoring God's law, was seized upon as an excuse for immediate violent action against sincere Christians. It was like a lighted match applied to a field of dry grass. In communities dominated by the Catholic Hierarchy, who lead men that are controlled neither by law nor by reason, and where "Catholic Action" is rampant, Catholic priests led fanatical or demonized mobs that assaulted, abused and ill-treated hundreds of Jehovah's witnesses merely because these witnesses remained faithful and true to God in declaring and obeying his Word. These mobs abused and ill-treated men, women and children; destroyed their property; drove them from their homes; burned their houses; burned their books; burned their money, and tied groups of them together, forced castor oil down their throats, herded them like wild beasts and drove them through the land; and committed numerous other deeds of wickedness against sincere Christians, and continue to do so to this day. Public officials, yielding to the influence of Catholic priests, broke into homes of private citizens, kidnaped and carried them from one state to another, broke up their private meet-

ings in the study of the Bible, burned their furniture and their literature. Sincere lawyers called upon the attorney-general frequently to invoke the law of the land against such lawless elements, and received promises that this would be done, but more than six months has passed and no action has been taken whatever against lawless mobs of this nature. The harsh, arbitrary, totalitarian-gestapo methods have rapidly spread throughout the United States since the rendering of that Opinion. Public opinion thus expressed in lawlessness, instead of instilling patriotism, has induced even greater lawlessness, and mobs continue to assault Christian people without any just cause or excuse. School boards in many of the states continue to expel children from school and to ill-treat them and their parents because the parents and children ask to be permitted to conscientiously obey the law of Almighty God without interference. Freedom of speech, and freedom of worship, are therefore rapidly disappearing in America. The nation is entirely forgetting God. Appropriate here for consideration are the forceful words of Mr. Justice Sutherland, late of the Supreme Court of the United States, to wit: "Do the people of this land—in the providence of God, favored, as they sometimes boast, above all others in the plenitude of their liberties—desire to preserve those so carefully protected by the First Amendment; liberty of religious worship . . . ? If so, let them withstand all BEGINNINGS of encroachment. For the saddest epitaph which can be carved in memory of a vanished liberty is that it was lost because its possessors failed to stretch forth a saving hand while yet there was time."

If boards of education and other legislative bodies, and the nation in general, continue to ignore the law of God and to punish innocent children and parents because such conscientiously give heed to and obedience to the Word of God, what will be the end thereof? Can a nation once acknowledging itself to be "Christian", a nation that has based its fundamental law upon the law of God and recognized that the law of

God is supreme, and which nation then forgets God and ignores his law, expect to continue to exist? Let the Word of God give the answer to that question: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and ALL THE NATIONS THAT FORGET GOD."—Psalm 9:17.

Will Almighty God excuse or pass by unnoticed those who directly or indirectly inflict punishment upon children and their parents for exercising their conscientious belief in obedience to God's law? Will Almighty God avenge his covenant people, whom he has selected to serve him? The answer is found in the words of Jesus, to wit: "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"—Luke 18:7, 8.

LOYALTY

"Loyalty" means to be obedient to the law. Anyone who attempts to take the law into his own hands and compels others to obey it is lawless. Duly constituted authorities may make and enforce laws that are consistent with the supreme law. Should not all citizens be loyal to the country in which they reside? Yes, in harmony with and consistent with God's law, they should obey the laws of the land. Jesus Christ stated the rule by which all Christians must be governed: "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's."—Mark 12:17.

Necessarily that means obedience to God's law or commandments is first, and then obedience to the laws of the state that are not contradictory to God's law. Jesus emphatically stated the supremacy of God's law, and all HIS FOLLOWERS must abide thereby.

God commands his servants that they shall not give reverence, devotion or worship to any image or thing. No human authority can rightfully compel the doing of that which God's law forbids. If the child of God conscientiously believes that the flag-salute ceremony is a violation of God's law, and for that reason asks to be excused from indulging in such ceremony, no hu-

man authority can rightfully interfere with the exercise of the conscience of that person who is devoted to Almighty God.

Jehovah's witnesses, being devoted followers of Christ Jesus, gladly obey all laws of the state or nation that are not in conflict with God's laws and commandments. This they do, not because of compulsion, but because such is right. That they may show their devotion to Almighty God and at the same time show their respect for the flag and the laws of the nation, all of God's covenant people, both parents and children that have agreed to be obedient to God, do willingly make and subscribe to the following pledge, to wit:

"I have pledged my unqualified allegiance and devotion to Jehovah, the Almighty God, and to His Kingdom, for which Jesus commands all Christians to pray.

"I respect the flag of the United States and acknowledge it as a symbol of freedom and justice to all.

"I pledge allegiance and obedience to all the laws of the United States that are consistent with God's law, as set forth in the Bible."

What honest, sincere and law-abiding person can find objection to that pledge? It places God and the nation in their proper places in the mind of all persons. The tendency will be to cause others to have greater reverence for Almighty God, have greater respect for the nation, and to make of them better citizens. In harmony with this it is written in the Scriptures: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord [Jehovah]." (Psalm 33:12; *Am. Rev. Ver.*) The adoption of such a pledge would be entirely consistent with the course taken by the founders of the American nation. To deny Christian children the right and privilege to publicly make the foregoing pledge in the schools, and to compel them to violate their conscience by saluting the flag, as school boards have done, means that the human authorities of the nation are fighting against God and hence have forgotten God. The responsibility, therefore, must rest upon the shoulders of those who refuse to recognize the right of a conse-

crated Christian to exercise his conscientious belief in and devotion to Jehovah and his Word. Those who oppose Almighty God he declares are wicked, and the fate of such individuals and nations he announces in these words: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."—Psalm 9:17.

The highest court of the land has shifted the responsibility of compulsory flag-saluting upon boards of education or school boards, manifestly because some members of that court are ashamed to acknowledge Jehovah, the Almighty God, as the Supreme Being. The school boards must now decide whether it is of greater importance to compel children to violate their conscience in order to comply with human rules or to have them obey Almighty God. (Acts 4:19, 20) Which will do the greater amount of good to the people?

A somewhat similar question was before the United States Senate, and that law-making body went on record that the flag of the Papal Hierarchy is above the flag of the United States. The question before the Senate was, Whether the flag of the pope should be displayed during religious services on the ships of the nation above the flag of the United States. A senator from Massachusetts, in his argument before the Senate, took the position that the flag of the pope is the flag of God. In his argument before the Senate he used these words: "I for one refuse to depart from the time-honored American custom of placing the emblem of God above every other emblem of the world. I will not run down the pennant of God for any other emblem." The senate, by a vote of 68 to 10, decided that the religious flag of the pope should be displayed above the flag of the United States. That occurred in February, 1929. (See the *Congressional Record* No. 47, page 2851.)

It is entirely inconsistent for the nation and its constituted legal authorities to attempt to compel little children to acknowledge the flag of the United States as above or superior to the specific commandments of Almighty God, and to then punish such children and

their parents because they insist on obeying God rather than men. The nation, by its senators, and previously by its courts, has acknowledged a religious institution as superior to laws of the land; and even though they did it ignorantly, with stronger reasoning should we acknowledge the commandments of Almighty God as supreme and above the laws of man.

ALTERNATIVE

Two propositions are before the parents and children who are in a covenant to obey Almighty God: (1) Participate in the prescribed ceremony of saluting the flag, even though the same be in violation of your conscientious devotion to Almighty God. Penalty for refusing is expulsion from school and additional punishment to the parents.

(2) Render obedience to Almighty God first and obey the rules of the state when such rules are not in conflict with God's commandments. Failure or refusal to do so means punishment at the hand of the Lord by everlasting death.

The person who is in a covenant with God to do his will does not hesitate as to which of these two propositions he will accept. He knows that the most severe punishment the State can inflict upon him is death, from which death God will resurrect his faithful servants who have been put to death by man because of faithfulness to God. He knows that the willful violation of God's commandment means death everlasting, from which there is no resurrection. He prefers to have everlasting life. He follows the advice of Christ Jesus, to wit: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matthew 10:28) The covenant people of Jehovah God unhesitatingly obey God first and at all times, and implicitly trust him as to the final result.

In taking that course the conscientious children and parents in obedience to God's commandments are following the same course as that taken by the apostles of Christ Jesus. Those faithful men were in a covenant

to do God's will, and, receiving his commandments, they obeyed by going about preaching the gospel. Their action was contrary to the law of the land, as declared by religious Jews. Those faithful men were punished by imprisonment, and yet, as soon as they were released, they straightway went again to publicly preaching the gospel of the Kingdom. Again they were haled into court, charged with violating the law, and their reply was: "WE OUGHT TO OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN." (Acts 5:29) They chose to follow the rule which Jesus had announced. (Mark 12:17) The Bible records many instances showing God's approval of the course taken by the apostles in rendering full obedience to God rather than obeying men.

The government of Babylon promulgated a law requiring all persons to bow before a certain image. Three of God's typical covenant people were in Babylon. They remembered Jehovah had commanded: 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me; thou shalt not bow down to them nor serve them.' (Exodus 20:3-5) They had respect for the commandments of God. They refused to obey Babylon's command and were told by the highest authority of that nation that they would be put to death by burning. They replied to the law-enforcement body: 'We have no need to obey you in this matter; and if it be that you cast us into the fire, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the fiery furnace, and he will deliver us.' They were cast into the fiery furnace, which was so hot that it destroyed the men who cast them in, and from that fiery furnace God delivered them, with not even a scorch on their garments. God rewarded their faithfulness.—Daniel 3:15-27.

Daniel, another man in a covenant with God to do His will, was cast into a den of lions because he declined to obey the law of the nation, obedience to which law he conscientiously believed to be idolatry. For his faithfulness God delivered Daniel unharmed.—Daniel 6:1-23.

Over a period of many centuries Satan has caused

men to form conspiracies to kill or otherwise punish faithful servants of Almighty God. The hypocritical ceremony of flag saluting and "heiling" of men originated in Germany, with the Nazis, and is another effort on the part of the Devil to break down faithful devotion to Almighty God by men who have pledged themselves to serve God. That same Satanic, totalitarian rule is attempting to be enforced throughout the nations of the earth. In the United States the people have gotten on for 150 years or more without being compelled to salute flags; and the saluting of flags has never lessened crime. The most enthusiastic flag-wavers in America today are those who have the least respect for the law of man and no respect for the law of God. On the contrary, Christians respect the flag, and are diligent to obey Almighty God, and they refuse to yield to the Satanic conspirators, and in this they have ample proof of God's approval.

At the eleventh chapter of Hebrews God caused to be recorded a list of faithful men who throughout the ages withstood the unreasonable rules or laws of nations which attempted to break down their devotion to the Almighty God. Those men steadfastly served God in the face of all opposition, and for such faithfulness they suffered cruel punishment at the hands of men. Of them the Lord's Word says: 'The world was not worthy of them.' They all received God's approval for their faithful obedience, and they have the assurance that they shall live forever.—Hebrews 11: 1-40.

In the schools children are taught to respect the Constitutional guarantees of liberty of conscience, speech and worship. They should not at the same time be compelled to make hypocrites of themselves by violating those Constitutional guarantees. To compel children to violate God's commandments and their own conscience in order to meet the requirements of some human-made rule is doing violence to the child, and those who enforce such a rule are doing violence to the Lord, as He emphatically declared at Matthew 25: 32-46.