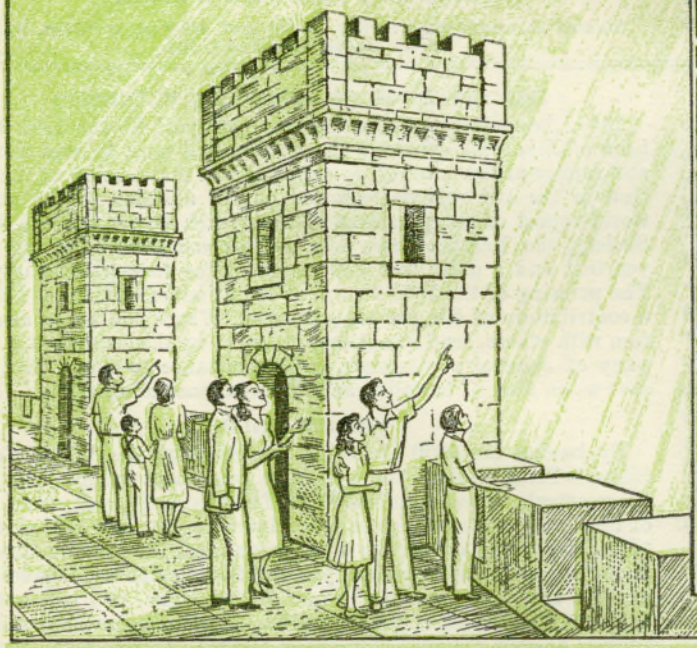
The WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



"They shall know that I am Jehovah."
-Ezekiel 35:15.

VOL. LXXI SEMIMONTHLY NO. 2

JANUARY 15, 1950

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"YE ARE MY WITNESSES, SAITH JEHOVAH, THAT I AM GOD."-Isa.43:12.

The WATCHTOWER

PUBLISHED SEMIMONTHLY BY

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY

117 Adams Street - - Brooklyn 1, N.Y., U.S.A.

OFFICERS

N. H. KNORR, *President* GRANT SUITER, *Secretary*

"And all thy children shall be taught of Jehovah; and great shall be the peace of thy children." - *Isaiah 54:13.*

THE BIBLE CLEARLY TEACHES

THAT JEHOVAH is the only true God, from everlasting to everlasting, and is the Maker of heaven and earth and Giver of life to his creatures; that the Word or Logos was the beginning of his creation and his active agent in creating all other things; and that a cherub son of God rebelled against Jehovah and raised the issue of His universal sovereignty;

THAT GOD created the earth for man, made perfect man for the earth and placed him upon it; that man yielded to the unfaithful cherub, or Satan, and willfully disobeyed God's law and was sentenced to death; that by reason of Adam's wrong act all men are born sinners and without the right to life;

THAT THE LOGOS was made human as the man Jesus and suffered death in order to produce the ransom or redemptive price for obedient men; that God raised up Christ Jesus divine and exalted him to heaven above every other creature and clothed him with all power and authority as head of God's new capital organization;

THAT GOD'S CAPITAL ORGANIZATION is a Theocracy called Zion, and that Christ Jesus is the Chief Officer thereof and is the rightful King of the new world; that the faithful anointed followers of Christ Jesus are Zion's children, members of Jehovah's organization, and are His witnesses whose duty and privilege it is to testify to Jehovah's supremacy and declare his purposes toward mankind as expressed in the Bible;

THAT THE OLD WORLD of Satan began its "time of the end" A.D. 1914, and Christ Jesus has been placed by Jehovah upon the throne, has ousted Satan from heaven, and now proceeds to vindicate His name and establish the "new earth";

THAT THE RELIEF and blessings of the peoples can come only by Jehovah's kingdom under Christ, which has begun; that His next great act is to destroy Satan's organization and establish righteousness completely in the earth; and that under the Kingdom the people of good-will surviving Armageddon will carry out the divine mandate to "fill the earth" with righteous offspring, and that the human dead in the graves will be raised to opportunities of life on earth.

ITS MISSION

THIS journal is published for the purpose of enabling the people to know Jehovah God and his purposes as expressed in the Bible. It publishes Bible instruction specifically designed to aid Jehovah's witnesses and all people of good-will. It arranges systematic Bible study for its readers and the Society supplies other literature to aid in such studies. It publishes suitable material for radio broadcasting and for other means of public instruction in the Scriptures.

It adheres strictly to the Bible as authority for its utterances. It is entirely free and separate from all religion, parties, sects or other worldly organizations. It is wholly and without reservation for the kingdom of Jehovah God under Christ his beloved King. It is not dogmatic, but invites careful and critical examination of its contents in the light of the Scriptures. It does not indulge in controversy, and its columns are not open to personalities.

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ALL SINCERE STUDENTS OF THE BIBLE who by reason of infirmity, poverty or adversity are unable to pay the subscription price may have *The Watchtower* free upon written application to the publishers, made once each year, stating the reason for so requesting it. We are glad to thus aid the needy, but the written application once each year is required by the postal regulations.

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"SEPARATING TO THE RIGHT" TESTIMONY PERIOD

This is the twelfth annual campaign for taking subscription for *The Watchtower*. February, the second month of the campaign, has been set aside as a special Testimony Period entitled "Separating to the Right". Thoughtful readers of this magazine know there is no better Bible publication than *The Watchtower* for helping people to be separated to the right of the King Jesus Christ in this judgment day of the nations. As an added inducement to the public to subscribe, a premium of 8 assorted booklets will be offered with every year's subscription for *The Watchtower* at the regular rate of $1, American money. To persons already subscribing for *The Watchtower* a year's subscription for the companion magazine *Awake!* may be offered, however without the premium added. We especially invite our *Watchtower* readers one and all to join in this campaign during February. A postcard to us will bring instructions and references to local fellow campaigners. Yes, by all means, report on our form the success with which Jehovah God blesses your activities during February.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES

Week of February 26: "A God of Warning,"
¶ 1-18 inclusive, also "Who Will Share in the Final Witness?"
¶ 1-7 inclusive, *The Watchtower* January 15, 1950.

Week of March 5: "Who Will Share in the Final Witness?"
¶ 8-29 inclusive, *The Watchtower* January 15, 1950.

1950 YEARBOOK OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

1949, the most remarkable service year yet! So the 1950 *Yearbook of Jehovah's witnesses* shows. You will want to read about it and rejoice at the noteworthy expansion of the worship of the true God in the 104 regions reported on. In addition to the annual world report of the president of the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society, the *Yearbook* also sets out his comment upon the 1950 yeartext and a daily text and comment for throughout the year. The printing of the 1950 *Yearbook* is in limited edition, and hence a contribution of 50c per copy is asked. Where you are in association with others, send in a group order, as by the servant of a company of Jehovah's witnesses, with remittance to cover. This will save us on time of handling as well as expense of shipping.

1950 CALENDAR

By having the 1950 Calendar published by the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society you will have prominent before your gaze the yeartext, "Preach the word" (2 Timothy 4:2), and also a view of the Society's headquarters home, including the new Bethel structure, from which the service work throughout the earth is directed. Alongside this artistic picture you will find a calendar. Besides giving five interior views of the new Bethel home, this sets out the titles of the bimonthly special testimony periods for 1950 and the specific themes for the intervening months. This service calendar we send to any address at 25c a copy or $1.00 for 5 copies sent to one address, postpaid. So let companies or groups order the Calendar in quantity, through their designated servant, sending remittance to cover the cost at the above rate.

The WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

VOL. LXXI JANUARY 15, 1950 No. 2

A GOD OF WARNING

"Thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me."—Ezek. 33:7.

JEHOVAH God never strikes without warning. Did he deluge the first world in watery destruction without warning? Did he burn out depraved Sodom and Gomorrah in a fiery downfall without warning? Did the Almighty take Egypt unawares as he sent wave after wave of destructive plague through the land? When Jehovah maneuvered the overthrow of Israel and Judah by foreign invasions, were the victims unwarned? Mighty Babylon that ruled like a glamorous queen over peoples and nations, should she have been surprised and caught flat-footed when enemy hosts took her by storm? And what of the desolation that struck Jerusalem during the first century A.D., did that blow fall without warning? To each one of these questions the facts shout the answer, No!

[2] This is not to say that Jehovah God personally visits the earth to deliver a warning. That in itself would spell destruction for man, for if he can be painfully burned and temporarily blinded by a comparatively small sun nearly 93,000,000 miles away, how could he possibly survive a visit from the "Father of lights"? (Jas. 1:17; Ex. 33:20) Out of consideration for man's perishable frame of flesh Jehovah God sends his warnings by messengers in human form, messengers that the warned ones can comfortably listen to and question for details. Of this practice we read, at Jeremiah 7:13, 25, 28: "I spoke to you early and late, but you would not listen, and I called you, but you would not answer . . . I sent all my servants the prophets, early and late, from the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt even to this day . . . 'This is the nation that would not listen to the voice of the LORD its God, the nation that took no warning.' "—*An Amer. Trans.*

[3] Jehovah's warnings have seldom been heeded by a majority, though patiently sounded over long periods of time. Prior to the flood "GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that the whole imagination [purposes and desires] of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" and that "the earth also was corrupt". (Gen. 6:5, 11, *margin*) He determined to cleanse the filth from the earth, not by a mere Saturday night bath of a few minutes' duration, but by a torrential shower of forty days and nights whose waters were not dried from off the earth till ten months and thirteen days!

[4] Jehovah indicated this destruction 120 years in advance. More than twenty years pass, and Noah has three sons. The sons grow to manhood and marry, as perhaps fifty or sixty more years slip by. Then Jehovah God tells Noah of the impending flood and instructs that righteously disposed man to build the ark for the preservation of himself and his family. For some forty or fifty years before the deluge Noah gave a warning witness of its coming, and thereby earned the designation "preacher of righteousness". (Gen. 6:3, 13, 18; 2 Pet. 2:5) But the vast majority of mankind scoffed and looked upon Noah as a false weather prophet and doubted the possibility of an earth-wide flood. God created the earth, he was able to give it a bath. After giving a warning witness through Noah, Jehovah did so bathe the earth to wash from existence the filth that had collected on its surface.

[5] Several centuries later the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are so saturated with grievous sin that their destruction is set. Not even ten righteously inclined persons reside there, and when angels materialized as men stay overnight with Lot sex crimes against their persons are attempted by a mob of men and boys. Their being smitten with blindness should warn them of their wickedness, but they still grope for their victims. When the angels instruct Lot to give a witness concerning the impending destruction of Sodom, his message makes him seem as one who mocks or jests. Even his own household is divided, his wife not taking the instructions seriously enough to gain preservation. Only Lot and his two daughters escape when there "rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; and he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground".—Gen. 18:20, 32; 19:4-28.

1. Does God strike without warning? What instances show it?
2. Does God warn personally or by agents, and why?
3, 4. What number heed the warning, as shown by the flood?
5. How was this shown in connection with Lot at Sodom?

[6] Down in Egypt in the sixteenth century B.C. Jehovah God gives a series of warnings to Pharaoh through His witness Moses. Before each of the plagues the ruler is warned; after each his heart hardens. With devastating effect the ten plagues roll through the land: rivers turn to blood, frogs come over the land, lice everywhere as dust, swarms of flies next, then murrain of beasts, plaguing boils, destructive hail, followed in rapid succession by plagues of locusts and darkness, then the woeful tenth—the death of Egypt's firstborn! These physical facts in fulfillment of the warning witness given by Moses the pagan religious leaders of Egypt try to counteract and misinterpret, unsuccessfully in the end. The plagues were seen and felt throughout the land of that first world power, and the Egyptians certainly had noised among them the witness given by Moses. The Israelites had contact with the Egyptians, talked with them, and found many hearing ears, so much so that when they finally made their exodus from Egypt "a mixed multitude went up also with them" and witnessed the destruction of Pharaoh's armies in the Red sea.—Ex. 12:38; 7:1–14:31.

ISRAEL AND JUDAH WARNED OF THEIR FALLS

[7] Long after the Israelites had entered Canaan, after the centuries in which judges ruled, after the nation had split into two kingdoms, the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel with capital at Samaria received repeated warnings from God. By the prophets Isaiah, Micah and particularly Amos a witness is given to Israel of captivity to come. (Isa. 10:5, 11; Mic. 1:6; Amos 5:27; 7:11) But through the dash and fire of Hosea's words of rebuke and alarm streams the most powerful witness against the ten-tribe kingdom. How heavy her guilt!—the land polluted with blood, robber bands troop over the countryside, priests murder and commit lewdness, physical and spiritual whoredoms are rampant, idols for demon-worship defile the populace, like "a silly dove without heart" her trust shuttles from Egypt to Assyria but never rests in Jehovah God. "They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind!" Hosea cries. "They are gone up to Assyria . . . The Assyrian shall be his king . . . Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up." (Hos. 6:8-11; 7:1-11; 8:7-9; 11:5; 13:16) Israel had warning, before Assyria carried her captive in 740 B.C.

[8] One hundred and thirty-three years later the kingdom of Judah, centered at Jerusalem, fell to Babylon. Caught unawares? Jehovah's prophets Hosea, Micah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel—all of them gave witness of the coming calamity. Micah, Hosea and Isaiah gave witness some 150 years before the fall. (Mic. 3:10-12; 4:10; Hos. 5:5; Isa. 3:8; 5:13; 39:6, 7) During the forty years prior to desolation Jeremiah withstood abuse and mockery, beating and imprisonment, to witness to the doomed city till the time it fell. He even warned of the length of desolation: "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."—Jer. 25:8, 9, 11.

[9] Destruction was determined for this city that bore God's name because it had abandoned Jehovah's worship, offered incense to Baal, poured drink-offerings to heathen gods, sacrificed children to Molech, and mocked the prophets sent to warn them. Yes, this Jeremiah and the others like him were calamity-howlers, social misfits, fanatics, malcontents, against everything and everybody, said the people. Down through the years the prophets prophesied doom, and down through the years the people mocked. They said: "The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil." They said: "The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth." They said: "The days go on, and every vision comes to nothing. . . . The vision which he sees is for many days hence; he is prophesying of times far off." (Zeph. 1:12; Ezek. 8:12; 12:22, 27, *An Amer. Trans.*) But God himself refutes them: "The days are at hand when every vision shall be fulfilled. No longer shall there be any empty vision . . . For I the LORD will speak a word, and it shall be fulfilled—it shall no longer be delayed—for in your days, O rebellious house, I will both speak a word and fulfil it."—Ezek. 12:23-25, 28, *An Amer. Trans.*

[10] The smart people were wrong! The prophets of God were right! The witness of doom was not for the distant future, for times far off. It was for their day, and by repeated visions of the impending desolation Ezekiel was qualified as a watchman to sound warning: "I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me." (Ezek. 33:7) Also through Habakkuk Jehovah revealed that it would come not in distant days but upon those hearing the warning witness: "I will work a work *in your days*,

6. How did Jehovah warn Egypt, and with what response?
7. How did the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel get warning? Why?
8, 9. How was the kingdom of Judah warned, and how refuted?
10. Upon whom was the warning to be fulfilled? And was it?

which ye will not believe, though it be told you. For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not theirs. . . . They shall gather the captivity as the sand."—Hab. 1:5-9.

[11] Jehovah God foretold the victorious rise of Babylon against Judah, but he also forecast her fall. Babylon took approving note of the prophecies favoring her and showed special consideration to Jeremiah because of them, but she forgot the accompanying prediction of her fall: "It shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations." (Jer. 25:12) Unheeded went Habakkuk's words that retributive justice would return upon Babylon's head. (Hab. 2:8) But most amazing was Isaiah's witness concerning Babylon's collapse, given some two hundred years in advance. At length he taunts powerful Babylon about her fall, in detail he tells how it will come about. The conquerors will be the Medes and Persians, the chief militarist will be Cyrus, and before him the city's two-leaved gates will be found carelessly left open. (Isa. 21:2, 9; 45:1-4; chaps. 13, 14, 47) So Babylon should not have been startled when in 539 B.C. Daniel read the handwriting on the wall that was a last-second witness of doom.—Dan. 5:25-31.

[12] Nor should mighty Assyria have been shocked when it came her turn to taste the bitter pill she had once forced upon Israel, namely, the overthrow that she suffered from Nebuchadnezzar in 625 B.C. Jehovah's prophets Micah, Isaiah and Zephaniah had mentioned it, and Nahum bore advance and detailed witness of it.—Mic. 5:6; Isa. 10:12-16; Zeph. 2:13-15; Nahum chaps. 1-3.

THE WARNING IN JESUS' DAY

[13] But the restoration of true worship at the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem following release from captivity was not permanent. As years passed formalistic ceremony and rabbinic traditions grew, till by the time Christ Jesus appeared centuries later true worship had been all but smothered and choked out by such rank, entangling growths. Time for another warning! Time for another witness for true worship! Christ Jesus was not slow to fill the need. After his immersion and as he pioneers through the province of Galilee the electrifying cry breaks from his lips: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand!" With burning zeal he catches up this arresting cry once sounded by John the Baptist and touches off an explosive campaign of warning and witnessing that is to dwarf all preceding efforts. A warning against the quagmires of religious traditions into which multitudes were sinking to their destruction, a witnessing to the facts and prophecies that identified him as Jehovah's Messiah Christ!

[14] He struck at the heart of the densely populated areas. From house to house he went, warning and witnessing. But time was short, multitudes must be reached. So he preached in the streets, in the public squares, in the synagogues—anywhere, everywhere. As he goes from village to village, city to city, the listening crowds increase and his fame spreads, till multitudes flock to hear him, not only from Galilee but from Samaria and the southernmost province of Judea and even from beyond Jordan. The press of growing crowds causes him to move from cramped city areas to hold public meetings in wide open spaces able to accommodate the growing throngs of thousands. On seashores, by riverbanks, in deserts, at mountains, all these places played their part as Jesus witnessed to Kingdom blessings and warned of rabbinical snares.—Matt. 4:12-25; 5:1; 9:35; 14:13-15; 15:32, 33; Mark 4:1; 8:1-4; Luke 8:1; 20:1.

[15] Christ Jesus did not feint and spar and shadowbox with diplomatic doubletalk when he proclaimed God's warning. This warning was a matter of life or death, and it was given plain and blunt, undiluted. The false religious leaders of that day were blind guides, leading other blind ones to the ditch of destruction, teaching traditions that voided God's word, coveting flattering titles, donning showy robes, projecting themselves into the public eye, praying long-windedly for effect, doing works to be seen of men, gnat-straining but camel-swallowing hypocrites that appeared piously holy outwardly but were blasphemously filthy within. Backed by the facts, he branded them liars and fools, serpents and vipers, and sons of Satan, the chief serpent. He warned those wicked clerics that bloodshed would come upon their generation, that their house would be left desolate and at the temple not one stone would be left atop another, and searchingly he inquired of them: "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?"—Matt. 15:1-14; 23:1-38; 24:1, 2; John 8:44.

[16] So devastating to the religious pastures of the scribes and Pharisees was the warning and witnessing of Christ Jesus that they wailed to one another: "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him." (John 12:19) Under satanic prompting they stilled his tongue in death. But by that time Jesus had selected and trained apostles and disciples to follow in his footsteps, and they pushed on with the campaign. They copied his

11, 12. Why should not Babylon and Assyria have felt surprised on falling?
13. With what message did Jesus sound warning, and why?
14. Where did he preach, and why there?
15. With what directness of speech did he warn, and why?
16. What was the reaction to Jesus' and his disciples' preaching?

methods, used the same places, and were blessed with the same success. An increase of Kingdom publishers was accomplished by preaching "publickly, and from house to house". (Acts 20:20; 18:28) They, like Christ Jesus, incurred the wrath of the persecuting scribes and Pharisees. Why? Because the result of their intensive warning work was similar to that of Jesus' whirlwind witnessing campaign, as reflected in the anguished cry of stung religionists that the apostles and disciples had "turned the world upside down". (Acts 17:6) Meaning their little religious world built on the false foundation of pomp and ceremony, on the shifting sands of oral tradition. They favored maintaining the status quo in the religious business of their day.

[17] Nevertheless, their place and their nation that they sought to save by shedding the blood of Jesus and his followers were not saved. The flood victims could not nullify Noah's warning by turning the waters back to their heavenly abode. The Sodomites could not quench the rainfall of fire. Furious Pharaoh had no antidote for the ten plagues. Judah was as helpless to hurl back the Babylonians as Israel before her had been to ward off the invading Assyrians. Nor could those heathen nations in their turn prove God a liar by existing beyond the time set for their collapse. Neither could the Jewish nation at the time of Christ turn back void the warning Jehovah had heralded abroad through the preaching of his beloved Son. (Isa. 46:10, 11; 55:11) The "generation of vipers" did see in their lifetime the loss of their place and nation, the overthrow of their city and temple, and did not escape the "damnation of hell" or "judgment of Gehenna".—Matt. 23:33, *Am. Stan. Ver.*, margin.

[18] And neither will "this present evil world" escape the destructive violence of Armageddon that she is being warned of right now!

17. Did the unheeding warned ones escape? And why?

18. So how about "this present evil world"?

WHO WILL SHARE IN THE FINAL WITNESS?

MEN say that history repeats itself. The history of past divine warnings and executed judgments will, for God's Word says that "it all happened to them by way of warning for others, and it was written down for the purpose of instructing us whose lot has been cast in the closing hours of the world". (1 Cor. 10:11, *Moffatt*) Who can deny the typicalness of the rainfalls of water and of fire and brimstone during the days of Noah and Lot, and the accompanying warnings indifferently received by peoples who unconcernedly continued their daily routine of living as though their world would go on undisturbed indefinitely? Did not Jesus say as much when he spoke of his second presence in these "last days"?—"As it was in the time of Noah, so will it also be in the time of the Son of Man. Men were eating and drinking, taking wives and giving wives, up to the very day Noah entered the Ark, and the Deluge came and destroyed them all. As it was also in the time of Lot; they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building; but on the day that Lot left Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from the sky and destroyed them all. Exactly so will it be on the day that the veil is lifted from the Son of Man." (Luke 17:26-30, *Weymouth*) Christ Jesus has been present since 1914 and witness has been given of the signs that prove it, but the veil will not lift from the sightless "eyes of understanding" of humanity's majority till his power is revealed in Armageddon's fury.

[2] That the Egypt which Moses warned and whose power was broken when Jehovah liberated His people was typical and symbolical is proved by Revelation 11:8: "Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city that is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt—where their Lord also was crucified." (*An Amer. Trans.*) The murdered "bodies" picture the stopping of a certain phase of God's witness work toward the close of World War I. Yet it was in this same symbolical Egypt of this twentieth century that Jesus was persecuted and killed, nineteen centuries ago. Egypt, the first world power, figuratively stands for the world-organization, "this present evil world" that through the centuries has oppressed Jehovah's people. The book of Revelation also shows that the Babylon divinely warned by Isaiah and others was typical of a greater Babylon to come, for long after literal Babylon's collapse chapter 18 foretells the fall of a "Babylon the great".

[3] As for Jerusalem and Judah that took God's name but fell so far short of living up to it, how fittingly they prefigured Christendom of today! Christendom takes the name of God and Christ's kingdom, but, like the Jerusalem of Jeremiah's time, she has abandoned true worship for false gods; she serves self, idolizes money, power, creatures, statues and images, sacrifices her children to the god of war and mocks and jails and sometimes kills Jehovah's witnesses that warn her of her derelictions. Like faithless Jerusalem of Jesus' day, she has a form of godliness but denies God's power, her priests and preachers ape the Pharisees by their garb and titles, their philosophy and tradition, their ceremony and creed, their hypocrisy and pious front, their words

1. What history repeats itself? Will our generation find it so?
2. What did Egypt and Babylon prefigure? Why?

3. What was prefigured by Jerusalem and Judah? How well so?

and works said and done for publicity's sake. It is in just such parallel conditions that Christ's true followers can walk in his footsteps, doing a similar work, by similar methods, through similar trials, with similar response to a similar message and warning. But with this difference: the present witness is this world's final witness. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; *and then shall the end come.*"—Matt. 24:14.

WHO SHARE IN THE WORK?

[4] Who share in giving the final witness concerning Jehovah's kingdom and this world's doom at Armageddon? Not the highly esteemed ones of this world, for they are an abomination in the sight of God. Not the worldly wise, not the wielders of influence, not the nobility nor socialites, not the self-styled realists and practical minds that scoff at what they consider unrealistic and foolish gospel-preaching. Jesus said: "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." Paul wrote: "For consider, brothers, what happened when God called you. Not many of you were what men call wise, not many of you were influential, not many were of high birth. But it was what the world calls foolish that God chose to put the wise to shame with, and it was what the world calls weak that God chose to shame its strength with, and it was what the world calls low and insignificant and unreal that God chose to nullify its realities, so that in his presence no human being might have anything to boast of."—Luke 16:15; 1 Cor. 1:26-29, *An Amer. Trans.*

[5] None, whether in fields commercial or political or religious, who support and champion this world and seek to perpetuate its existence despite God's warning of its early end would or could share in giving the final witness. Those who would please Jehovah God will heed his warning concerning this world-organization: 'Christ is not of this world; his kingdom is not of this world; pray not for this world; I have chosen you Christians out of this world; love not the world, neither the things in the world; be not conformed to this world, but set your affections on things above; Satan is the prince of this world, the god of this world, and the whole world lieth in that evil one; finally, those warring for God's cause do not entangle themselves in the affairs of this world, and friends of the world are enemies of God.' (John 17:9, 14, 16; 18:36; 14:30; 15:18, 19; Rom. 12:2; Col. 3:2; 2 Cor. 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17; 5:19, *Am. Stan. Ver.;* 2 Tim. 2:4; Jas. 4:4) Does not this barrage of divine pronouncements sweep even the influential and esteemed orthodox clergy of Christendom from the ranks of true Christian ministers?

[6] On the other hand, does not the foregoing indicate that the unesteemed, weak, lowly, insignificant, uninfluential, unworldly group known as Jehovah's witnesses are God's ministers? They are considered unrealistic and ignorant and foolish by this smart world. Moreover, they are the only ones preaching the good news of the established kingdom of Christ and warning of Armageddon's visit upon this generation. By hundreds of millions of books and booklets, in some eighty-eight languages, plus more millions of magazines and tracts and thousands of public lectures weekly, Jehovah's witnesses have given witness that the wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, strifes and persecutions, unrest and fears, increased world delinquencies and immoralities, failures in national rules and world governments—all are but physical facts fitting the signs Jesus foretold to accompany his second presence and on the heels of which comes Armageddon. Just as at Jesus' first coming the fulfillment of scores of Hebrew Scripture prophecies proved him to be the Messiah, so today his second presence is evidenced by events in fulfillment of prophecy. But just as the influential religious and political leaders rejected him nineteen centuries ago, the same classes reject him today and turn to this world and its schemes for perpetuating itself.—Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Ps. 118:22; Matt. 21:42; 1 Pet. 2:4-8.

[7] Christians consecrated to do God's will accept the obligation to share in the final witness, as commanded by Christ Jesus. (Matt. 24:14) Their consecration vow is not the quickly forgotten babble of wordy fools: "A fool's voice is known by multitude of words. When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay." (Eccl. 5:3-5) Nor are they like the empty clouds and blowing winds of Proverbs 25:14 (*Moff.*): "Clouds and wind that bring no rain—like him who promises what he never gives!" Christians do not merely assemble for a few minutes one day a week in a besteepled building and pay some titled cleric to preach to them. Each and every Christian is a minister and must preach to others.—Jas. 1:22-25.

HOW THE WITNESS IS GIVEN

[8] Christians make effective use of printed Bibles and Bible helps. This is not new. Moses presented commands written on tablets of stone. Joshua wrote upon stone altars. Jeremiah wrote a witness to the captives in Babylon and Baruch recorded some of Jeremiah's prophecies on a roll that was placed with King Jehoiakim. A hand from God wrote a message of doom on the palace wall of King Belshazzar. Apostles and other early Christians wrote

4, 5. Who do not share in the final witness? And why not?
6. But who are proved to be God's ministers, to evidence what?
7. Who accept the obligation to preach? With what performance?
8. What voiceless means have also been used to preach?

epistles, and Paul was particularly anxious about some parchments. (Ex. 31:18; Josh. 8:32; Jer. 29:1; 36:1-32; Dan. 5:5, 25-28; 2 Tim. 4:13) These are only a few of many examples where writing was used to preach, in addition to the written scrolls that eventually made up the sixty-six books of the Bible itself.

[9] Today high-speed printing presses flood out an endless stream of reading matter that makes more pointed than ever before Solomon's warning against the endless making of books whose study is a weariness of the flesh. But King Solomon exempted certain material from this warning, saying: "The words of the wise are like goads; and collections which are given by one teacher are like nails driven with a sledge." (Eccl. 12:12, 11, *An Amer. Trans.*) In ancient times goads, long sticks with iron points, were used to keep oxen moving in the right direction. Wise words from the Bible or based upon the Bible keep true Christians moving forward in Kingdom service, not allowing them to lag or hold back or stray down wrong pathways without pricking guilty consciences. (Acts 26:14) Scriptural exhortation is pointed and sharp. All sixty-six books of the Bible, inspired by the one Teacher Jehovah God and collected under the guidance of his spirit, contain pointed truths that must be driven deep into one's mind. Like nails sledged into a board, they will not pull out but can be held onto with confidence, serving as a sure anchor to keep us from being slapped and tossed and battered about by the blowing winds of worldly propaganda. (Jas. 1:6-8) Hence the Bible and reliable Bible helps such as distributed by Jehovah's witnesses are not wearisome. Rather than weary the flesh, their counsel heeded will return flesh to the freshness of childhood!—Job 33:25.

[10] Today Jehovah's witnesses are aided in giving the final witness by huge supplies of literature. Far more than faithful men of old and early Christians who sounded the past warnings of Bible times. And having more committed to them, more is demanded, namely, a world-wide witness to all nations spread over the entire globe. (Luke 12:48; Mark 13:10) Bibles and Bible literature they distribute by going from house to house. Jesus preached by this method and trained his followers to conduct themselves properly at the doors of the people. (Matt. 10:7-15) Also, "In every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house." Even over in Babylon centuries before Christ's coming the doorways were considered appropriate places to discuss God's message.—Acts 5:42; 20:20; Ezek. 33:30.

9. Have such been a weariness to the flesh or otherwise? Why?
10. How is this distributed? Why appropriately so?

[11] "I am no peddler of God's message." (2 Cor. 2:17, *An Amer. Trans.*) Like Paul, Jehovah's witnesses today can say this because they do not stop with the placement of literature in the homes of the people. Book peddlers have completed their work with the distribution of their wares, but not so the minister placing Bible helps. In his wielding of the "sword of the spirit" he does not make one thrust in the form of a book placement and then sheathe the truth-sword, but follows through by making a stab for a home Bible study. He is zealous to revisit those willing to hear him again on these vital subjects. (Acts 15:36; 17:32, *An Amer. Trans.*) And on such revisits he conducts Bible studies free of charge. Jesus taught in homes and revisited homes where there was special interest. (Luke 10:38-42; John 12:1-3) He continues to do so till this day, not in person, but representatively by his footstep followers: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." —Rev. 3:20.

[12] On busy streets Christian ministers take up strategic positions, holding forth the word of life to passers-by. The streets and public squares were long ago used as places to declare God's wisdom: "Wisdom cries aloud in the streets, she lifts up her voice in the squares; at the head of noisy thoroughfares she calls, at the openings of the city gates she utters her words." Again, "Does not Wisdom call, and Reason lift up her voice? At the head of the highways, on the road, between the streets she takes her stand; by the gates that enter the city, at the doorways she cries aloud." (Prov. 1:20, 21; 8:1-3, *An Amer. Trans.*) Of Christ Jesus the people said: "Thou hast taught in our streets." (Luke 13:26) In the public squares or market-places Paul preached to those present.—Acts 17:17; *An Amer. Trans.*

[13] Hence when persons accustomed to the orthodox religious rut of Sunday sermons in a church building demand to know why we do not conform to that method, we can point to the foregoing scriptures to show we are conforming to our Exemplar, Christ Jesus. We can add, "The most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands." (Acts 7:48) Nevertheless, we can show that as Jesus and his apostles used the temple and synagogues Jehovah's witnesses do use Kingdom Halls for holding congregational meetings, including public lectures. Also, they conduct open-air meetings in parks and elsewhere, as did Christ Jesus nineteen centuries ago.

ARE ANY EXEMPT?

[14] "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season." (2 Tim. 4:2) This all of Jehovah's faithful

11. How do they act on placing of literature? After whose example?
12. In what public places also do they offer the message, rightly?
13. What Scripture proof do we offer for our places to preach?
14. How, to what extent, do some preach under varying conditions?

witnesses do. Some are able to devote full time to the preaching work; others can be only part-timers, having to do some secular work to provide their livelihood. There are circumstances that limit the activity of some, but all can find opportunities to share in the final witness. Physical ailments may incapacitate some, but even these can preach by word of mouth to neighbors, to friends, to callers at the door or over the telephone, or by writing letters and sending literature through the mail. Indeed, what circumstance could knock the faithful witness out of Jehovah's service completely?

[15] Are any too young to serve? Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians A.D. 50, and in that epistle referred to Timothy as a "minister of God". He must have been a lad in his teens, for more than ten years later he was still young, and Paul advised, "Let no man despise thy youth." (1 Thess. 3:2; 1 Tim. 4:12) At the age of twelve years Jesus preached and amazed hearers with his wisdom. (Luke 2:42, 46, 47) Jeremiah was only a child when he started to warn Jerusalem of her fall. (Jer. 1:5, 6) And, do you know, Samuel ministered unto Jehovah at the tabernacle and prophesied right after he was weaned! (1 Sam. 2:11, 18; 3:1-21) Are you younger than that?

[16] Some may plead old age as a reason to retire. Aaron was ordained a priest when 83 years old, and Moses was 80 when he was launched into service as a mediator between Jehovah and Israel, in which capacity he foreshadowed Christ Jesus and served till his death, at the age of 120. (Ex. 7:7; 28:1-4; Deut. 34:7) When first a prisoner at Rome because of faithfulness to God Paul referred to himself as "Paul the aged", but after his release and for some years he still preached. (Philem. 9) And the apostle John was around one hundred years of age when he wrote his contributions that completed the Bible canon. Are you older than a hundred?

[17] Ill health limits service activity, but should it halt preaching entirely? Recall the case of Job. After suffering the loss of his children and material riches, he was smitten with a loathsome disease. Elephantiasis, or black leprosy! This ulcerous disease covers the skin with dark scales and swells the legs to two or three times natural size till they appear like shuffling elephant feet, hence the names black leprosy and elephantiasis. Job's physical activity was greatly limited and suffering was intense, yet when three callers visited him he zealously witnessed to them and maintained integrity. (Job 2:7, 8, 11; 3:1) Even youthful Timothy had stomach trouble and "frequent attacks of illness", and Paul served despite a "bitter physical affliction". (1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Cor. 12:7, *An Amer. Trans.*) Today there are witnesses who preach in spite of such extreme physical handicaps as crippling paralysis, blindness and inability to either hear or speak.

15, 16. Are any too old or too young to preach? What shows so?
17. Should physical infirmity halt preaching completely? Why?

[18] Too busy to preach? Like some in Jesus' day, do any make excuses that they have a farm, or livestock, or a wife that takes their time and leaves no time for the new world? (Luke 14:17-20) Do they allow thorny entanglements with this world and its cares and riches to choke out gospel-preaching? (Matt. 13:7, 22) Do not most persons find some time for less essential things, such as secular work? shopping for food? reading the newspaper? listening to the radio? visiting friends? relaxing by some form of recreation? and perhaps even sleeping in some Sunday mornings? The last query reminds of the next—too lazy? Proverbs 6:6-11 says (*Moff.*): "You sluggard, how long will you sleep? When will you rise from your slumber? 'Let me sleep for a little, a little! let me fold my hands for a little, to rest?' yes, and poverty will pounce on you, want will overpower you." But perhaps such ones are too tired to live forever, and prefer to sleep forever, in death, undisturbed by clanging alarm clocks or resurrections!

[19] Others may hold back because of timidity or fear. Jeremiah surmounted that obstacle. (Jer. 1:6-9, 17-19) Perfect love for God casts out the ensnaring fear of men. (1 John 4:18; Prov. 29:25) Do you feel unable to speak in Kingdom service? Both Jeremiah and Moses felt the same way at the start, but look at the stirring oral testimony they gave after they overcame this false fear. (Ex. 4:10-12) Nor need fear of questions hard to answer block one from sharing in the final witness. Theological training in a religious seminary does not equip one for Jehovah's service now, no more than it did in Jesus' day when he and the apostles confounded such trained ones. Private study of the Bible and group study with other witnesses, plus Jehovah's spirit, give ability to answer second to none! "Thy commands make me wiser than my foes; I am never without them. I have more insight than all these oracles, for I muse on thine injunctions! I know more than these sages, for I carry out thy behests!" (Ps. 119:98-100, *Moff.*) Note how young Elihu extols Jehovah's spirit as the vital factor in wisdom: "I am of few days, while you are aged; therefore I feared and was afraid to show you my knowledge. I thought days should speak, and many years should teach wisdom. However, it is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty, that makes them intelligent; it is not the old that are wise."—Job 32:6-9, *An Amer. Trans.*

18. Should any be too occupied to preach? Why your answer?
19. Should fear of men or of inability stop one? Why?
20, 21. (a) How much faith need we to preach? (b) How do we develop the irrepressible urge to preach? As shown by what examples?

STUDY AND PREACH WITH THE ORGANIZATION

[20] To preach requires faith, but not much. As little as a grain of mustard seed will move a mountain.

Less than even that little bit should move us into field service, we are so much smaller than mountains! None should need to be driven by others or by themselves to be active in witnessing. But what if one does not feel the urge to preach? Study. Meditate in God's law day and night. Talk about the Scriptures at congregational meetings, listen to the comments of others. Take in the truth through eye and ear till it fills the mind and heart, till it wells up inside and overflows out the mouth in field service. It will do this of itself. We talk of what is in our mind and heart. "Of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh." (Luke 6:45) Some gossip, carry tales, air family troubles, detail their ailments and describe their operations, or nag or complain or quarrel. That is what fills their mind. What is on our mind, we want to get off. So get the truth on your mind, and then get it off your mind in your witnessing territory!

[21] If we feed our minds upon God's truth and fill our hearts with it, we will tell it or burst, must let it flow from our lips to get relief! Elihu experienced just such feelings when he stood impatiently by and heard the false and blasphemous mouthings of Job's three "comforters". At a lull in their words Elihu spoke out: "I also will answer my share, I too will declare my knowledge. For I am full of words; the spirit within me constrains me. Behold, my bosom is like wine that has no vent; like skins of new wine it is ready to burst. Let me speak, that I may get relief; let me open my lips, and reply." (Job 32:17-20, *An Amer. Trans.*) Keeping silent will be more torturous than the persecution that public witnessing might bring, as Jeremiah discovered: "I have become a laughing-stock all day long, everyone mocks me. As often as I speak, I must cry out, I must call, 'Violence and spoil!' For the word of the LORD has become to me a reproach and derision all day long. If I say, 'I will not think of it, nor speak any more in his name,' it is in my heart like a burning fire, shut up in my bones; I am worn out with holding it in—I cannot endure it."—Jer. 20:7-9, *An Amer. Trans.*

[22] Let none wear themselves out holding in the truth, but unload the flimsy reasons and excuses that curtail Kingdom service, that tire you more to carry around and battle with your conscience than would the witness work. Let other publishers in the organization help you direct your zeal, now that it is fired by knowledge to a burning pitch. Direct it into tactful and organized gospel-preaching. Jehovah's visible organization can use you, but can get along without you too. But you cannot get along without it. Fruitless ones are eventually pruned off and never missed as new ones are grafted in. Pruned-off branches soon wither and die, being cut off from the circulating, life-giving sap. Likewise, if a hand or foot is cut from the human body the severed member perishes, or if it is kept inactive in a cramped position it goes to sleep, gets numb, loses its ability to move. The blood in which is the life fails to circulate to those parts, fails to bring in new food supplies and carry off waste matter. So it is with Jehovah's visible organization. All must associate together, get the life-giving spiritual food that God circulates to his people through the organization, get the new truths that take away old ideas and the admonition that keeps down queer personal ideas, all of which keeps us fresh and strong and active, seeing eye to eye and fighting shoulder to shoulder. Don't become a withered branch or a paralyzed foot. Don't amputate yourself from the organization and commit spiritual suicide.—John 15:1-8.

22. How must gospel-preaching be directed? For what reason?

THE PEOPLES DIVIDED

[23] Leave the suicidal course to this old world of unrighteousness. Let it sneer and mock and say to us, as the Jerusalemites said to Jeremiah: 'God is not interested in the earth. He has forsaken it. He will not do good or evil. And even if Armageddon comes someday, it will not come in our day, not in this generation.' The warning witness is indifferently brushed aside by millions who may not violently persecute but who merely fail to act upon it. That indifference is enough to class them as "goats". (Matt. 25:41-46) Those smugly indifferent or those whose supposed superior intelligence will not let them consider the warning, who brush it aside with an airy dismissal that deluded simpletons were warning of the world's end in their father's day or grandfather's day, who say things will go on as they have in times past, should remember that the scoffers reasoned the same in Noah's day and in Lot's day and in Jeremiah's day. The apostle Peter warned of the presence of such superior scoffers in the "last days". —2 Pet. 3:3-7.

[24] There is another class that manifests itself during these days of final witness. They know about the witness work of Jehovah's witnesses. They believe that Jehovah's witnesses have the best religion and that their publications present the most harmonious explanation of the Bible. Specially lovely and delightful do they consider the truths concerning the blessed conditions of living in Jehovah's new world, and they come and listen as though to a beautiful song. They always come to the meetings when their favorite speakers are on the program, and seldom miss conventions, and never Memorial services. But they do not act upon what they hear, and zealous witnesses are likely to be considered extremists and fanatical

23. What fate awaits the scoffers and the indifferent?
24, 25. What class of inactive ones are associated with us? How fated?

by them. They will come to their senses too late, according to Ezekiel 33:31-33:

[25] "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not. And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them." Christ Jesus spoke of this class as foolish, saying: "Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."—Matt. 7:26, 27.

[26] But if the final witness stirs up scoffers and persecutors, and tickles the ears of the indolent and selfish and foolish, it also brings into the open a sheeplike class of lovers of righteousness. They not only listen but give heed, see the signs proving Christ's second presence, believe the warning of Armageddon's approach, and take to heart the admonition to flee from old-world entanglements. Isaiah foretold this glorious increase and ingathering as a result of letting the light of truth shine abroad into all the earth. As the abundance of the seas they would be converted, as doves that darken the sky by their flying masses they come to the only light of Jehovah's organization. The gates of the organization are open continually, shut neither day nor night. Though false religion, politics, commerce, militarism, demons and the Devil himself try to slam shut the gates, they will never close for a moment, but remain open to let the light shine out and receive in the "other sheep" of the Lord! A little one becomes a thousand, a small one a strong nation, and Jehovah hastens to accomplish it as his ministers give the final witness.—Isa. 60:1-22.

SHARE IN THE WITNESS AND THE VICTORY!

[27] These incoming lovers of righteousness do not come to Jehovah's visible organization to greedily consume spiritual food to fatten self or to have ears tickled by pleasant truths of Kingdom blessings. No, they are prompted by no such selfish motives, but count it a greater blessing to give out the truth to others than it was to receive it themselves in the first place. They fall in step with others of Jehovah's witnesses, take their places in the ranks, march with the antitypical locust army, herald abroad the message that burns the lush pastures where the clergy have made hay, burns it as thoroughly as did the jackal-borne firebrands that Samson loosed in the standing grain of the faithless Philistines. Only today the anointed witnesses and their good-will companions have no jackals to carry the firebrands of truth. But with voices joined to swell the volume of the growing shout of witness, they will continue till the final witness is given to all nations, till the end comes, till "the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate".—Acts 20:35; Joel 2:1-11; Jer. 25:36; Judg. 15:4, 5; Isa. 6:11.

[28] Then ahead of obedient mankind will stretch endless blessings in a new world; but to reap those blessings then we must sow the seed of truth now. Faithfulness in so doing will bring down persecution on our heads. Men will prey like lions on God's witnesses, blaze against them, fire mobs to attack them. The enemies are burned up by the message of doom and set aflame by the fiery judgments. Hence they roast the witnesses in the public press and pulpits and use their teeth and tongues as spears and swords to pierce the good reputation of the witnesses by hurling names and smears at them. As David said: "My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword." (Ps. 57:4) But Jehovah supplies a godly armor that turns aside the fiery darts of the wicked, and where human power and might fail his spirit gives the victory!—Eph. 6:10-17; Zech. 4:6.

[29] Share in the glorious treasure of giving the final witness now, that you may feed on the fruits of victory. The time is short—even Satan knows that! (Rev. 12:12) The time will not drag if spent in zealous work. Why, the Bible says that "Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her". And when the time lengthened beyond his expectations, it still passed quickly. (Gen. 29:20, 27, 28) Because of the love we have for God and his King and the Kingdom work the time separating us from Armageddon will seem as a fast stream of pleasant days. When those days are past the history of the final witness will be recorded, and that is a history that will not repeat itself. (Nah. 1:9; Matt. 24:21) This old world has been weighed in the balances and found wanting, its days are numbered, its hours are numbered, as God knows its final hour. (Matt. 24:36) Our hours for gospel-preaching are numbered with it. The Devil uses the short time remaining as a wild, raging, roaring lion seeking to prove his challenge; we should use our time as zealously for good as he uses his for evil. Gone will be the time for proving

26. Preaching brings what others into the open? In what numbers?
27. What course of action do these take, and for how long?
28. What is now our experience for preaching the truth?
29. How long yet is the time, and why preach now or never?

him a liar and sharing in the final witness when the great clock of God strikes and booms out the fateful hour of Armageddon! Share in the final witness now or never!

UNITED STATES DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES OF 1949

JEHOVAH is a God of love, and his witnesses preach and practice true neighbor love. The Creator's love for obedient mankind is shown not only by his provision of an earthly home that meets man's physical needs, but also by God's bounty in supplying the more vital spiritual needs of the human family. These supplies he channels to men through his Word the Bible, and also through a visible organization on earth directed by his spirit. By the distribution of Bibles and Bible helps necessary spiritual food is made available to all men of meek and humble spirit who discern that this old world and its schemes offer no real hope. But more than mere distribution of printed truth is provided: meetings for group study are a vital addition to that service. The meetings may be of only two or three gathered in His name in a private home; they may consist of dozens in a small community area, or hundreds in local Kingdom Halls, or several thousand in auditoriums or stadiums serving attenders from several states. And not only do these meetings welcome into their midst any good-will persons desiring to attend, but also these meetings reach out to private homes and public streets to extend their blessings to all men.

All of this was demonstrated by the district assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses recently held in the United States. The country is divided into seven districts, and in each of these districts two assemblies were held to serve those sections, to make a total of fourteen district assemblies in the United States in 1949. The program schedule was the same for all of the meetings, but since the various speakers were supplied with only outlines the detailed material of the same talk varied with each speaker. But the general information given at these district assemblies will eventually appear in *The Watchtower,* so space need not be given to that in this article. This article will endeavor to give some highlights from each of the district assemblies, points that make that particular assembly stand apart from the others.

FT. WORTH, JACKSONVILLE

Dramatic events centered around the meeting-place in the first of these district assemblies, held May 27-30 at Fort Worth, Texas. Two weeks prior to the assembly a tremendous fire devastated La Grave Field, where the convention was to be held. The stands were reduced to a mass of twisted steel, which had buckled with the intense heat, practically melting it in places. Littered over the grounds were heaps of charred debris. When one knows that this field was considered one of the most modern minor league ball parks in the country, and that along with it were destroyed expensive sound equipment and newly installed television broadcasting equipment, one can understand why the catastrophe was reported as a million-dollar loss. It was providential that the witnesses were able to get on such short notice the Northside Coliseum, to replace La Grave Field as meeting-place for the assembly.

Fire had failed to halt the assembly; now water tried its hand. Three days after the fire ten inches of rain fell in twelve hours and turned the ordinarily docile Trinity river into an uncontrollable and rampaging mass of water, rising to a height of twenty-nine feet. It flooded the fire-gutted stadium and reached to within a few feet of the coliseum. It cut off the city water supply, which was not restored until a few days before the convention date, and was not pronounced safe until Thursday afternoon, just a day before the assembly was to convene. But neither fire nor water prevailed against the assembly, and Saturday evening's attendance of 3,109 witnesses swelled to 4,345 for the public talk on Sunday, entitled "It Is Later than You Think!" Many attending understood only Spanish, so provision was made for them to hear some of the talks in their own language. Eighty-seven were immersed to symbolize their consecration to do God's will.

On this same week-end the first of two district assemblies for colored brethren was held in Jacksonville, Florida. This assembly was the very essence of appreciation and enthusiasm. As speakers made strong points murmurs of approval ran across the audience like the rustle of wind through pines. Applause was frequent. Speakers with little worldly education presented excellent material, by Jehovah's grace. These brethren showed exceptional understanding of human nature and skillfully applied Bible texts to tear away excuses or to offer encouragement in overcoming difficulties encountered in the field work. The few white brethren who assisted in looking after the assembly arrangements were outspoken in their praise of the way the colored brethren did the work assigned to them. While the assembly was for colored persons, there was no color line as far as the witnesses were concerned. Vain squabbles about immaterial differences in skin color are left for quarreling worldlings, not for true Christians.

Twenty-eight were immersed, and 1,163 were present for the public lecture. Mention might be made of an interesting reaction from a local businessman who was furnishing a steamtable and other equipment for the cafeteria. When first contacted he wanted to know whether the equipment was for another convention being held in Jacksonville at the same time. When it was clarified that the request was being made for the Watchtower assembly he brightened up. Certainly they could have it. And the price? "Well, if it was for that other convention I would stick them plenty; but for the Watchtower you may have it free."

LITTLE ROCK, NEW ORLEANS

On June 3-5 the assembly scene shifted to Little Rock, Arkansas. The people of Little Rock were hospitable in opening their homes to accommodate the visiting witnesses, and likewise helpful were the businessmen. And not only these, but also the officials of the city were very cooperative in lending the needed assistance. Quite a change from the mob-crazed city that turned on this same group of Christians seven years earlier, canceled the same auditorium and

then endeavored to prevent holding the assembly at a location several miles out of the city. One of the officials referred to this by saying, "You need never fear any such action as your people received here in 1942."

Distinctive in this assembly was the taxi service. On a lot four blocks from the auditorium two large tents sheltered kitchen, cafeteria and refreshment stands. To solve the transportation problem for poor walkers twelve cars provided a free taxi-shuttle service between auditorium and cafeteria. None were poorly fed, either temporally or spiritually. As at many of the other district assemblies, witnesses brought the householders with whom they were staying to the public lecture. One such woman, who had never heard any of the lectures before, was delighted and when the speaker closing the final session mentioned the eight-day international convention to be held in New York city in 1950, this lady declared she was going to attend that one too. A fine turnout of public were at the Sunday meeting, 3,003 being Sunday's attendance, to compare with 2,151 witnesses present on Saturday evening. Thirty-seven were immersed.

While witnesses in reformed Little Rock were enjoying their assembly colored brethren in New Orleans, Louisiana, were holding theirs. It might not have been accompanied by the crowds and fanfare of the religious and riotous mardi gras, but it was well advertised among the colored inhabitants and far exceeded the mardi gras in benefits brought to those who attended. The opening session made it apparent that the San Jacinto Club would not be adequate to seat the crowd expected at the public lecture. Efforts to gain additional facilities were fruitless, however, so the witnesses proceeded to get the most out of (perhaps we should say into) the facilities they had. Aisles grew narrower as chairs were inched closer, with the hard-to-imagine result that accommodated for the Sunday talk were 1,553 persons! A crowd gathered in front of the building attentively listened to the loudspeaker outside, heads peered in at every window opening onto the outside walkways, and neighbors sat on their steps and gave ear as the talk was delivered.

Everyone who observed the progress of the assembly was impressed by the way in which Jehovah's spirit was manifested upon the brethren, many of whom had little previous experience in the work of the assembly assigned to them. But organization did not lack; the work progressed smoothly from preconvention days even to the end of the last session on June 5. The witnesses present appreciated the fact that, even though forced by the law of the southland to practice segregation, Jehovah's hand was in no wise shortened; rather, it was more gloriously seen upon his people, for it made the gifts of the participating brethren more manifest. As they left for their scattered homes the cheery call "I'll see you in New York in 1950" was upon many lips. And when Jehovah's witnesses meet in that northern city in international convention, with scores of thousands attending from many nations and with a variety of skin colors and many different tongues, there will be no segregation of Christian brethren necessary. A glorious prospect, that!

BIRMINGHAM, SACRAMENTO, RALEIGH

Two district assemblies at widely separated points occupied the days of June 10-12. One was held at Birmingham, Alabama; the other at Sacramento, California. Both used as assembly places the spacious fairgrounds of those states, with the traditional southern hospitality at Birmingham being matched by the western variety at Sacramento. At the southern assembly 57 new ministers symbolized their consecration by water immersion, and some 1,200 persons of good-will attended the public lecture, to swell the total attendance figure for that meeting to 3,900. In the west 309 were baptized, and attendance rose from Saturday's 7,406 to a gratifying 10,615 for the public lecture on Sunday. Post-assembly reports state that many home Bible studies have been started as a result. At Sacramento some pioneer witnesses switched their energies from the field of gospel-preaching to fields of farming in order to stock the cafeteria with food for the conventioners, as the following report shows:

"A great saving in the food bills was realized during preconvention work when quite a contingent of pioneers engaged in fruit and berry picking daily. Thirteen hundred pounds of cherries were picked at one farm, and another nurseryman, who is a brother, devoted the whole second crop of his strawberry patch free, yielding enough for one full meal at the assembly. These same pioneers, along with the help of the company publishers in the Sacramento company, remained till after 9 p.m. preparing and putting this choice food in deep freeze for the big event. On one occasion pioneers worked all night cutting and packing head lettuce (lettuce has to be cut after midnight) which was obtained at 50c per crate (normally $6). Fifty crates were the fruits of the night's work, realizing a saving of more than $250 on head lettuce alone."

The district assembly held in Raleigh, North Carolina, June 24-26, had an unusual feature: an interview over one of the radio stations with the speaker who was to give "It Is Later than You Think!" This allowed for giving an excellent witness as to who are Jehovah's witnesses and what are their methods and purposes. As it came over the air the assembly sound department recorded it and then played it for the entire assembly at the close of Saturday evening's session. Very cooperative with the witnesses were the townspeople, businessmen, hotels, officials and newspapers, in addition to the radio station. After the assembly the following letter was received from the city manager and auditorium superintendent:

"We would like to take this occasion to state that your convention held here in Raleigh was a well-conducted affair. During all of this time we did not have a complaint, and the director of buildings stated that your group was fine and very cooperative. We hope that as individuals and as a group you will again return to Raleigh to visit us."

As it so frequently seems to occur, this assembly of Jehovah's witnesses in Raleigh was held about the same time as a convention of the American Legion. The Legion convention moved out of the auditorium on Tuesday; on Friday Jehovah's witnesses were holding their sessions there. As usual, the contrast was remarkable. One hotel manager observed that he holds his breath when the Legion announces its convention, but really likes the way Jehovah's witnesses conduct themselves. This shows that we are constantly on trial and being scrutinized in our actions. How important it is that our behavior be Christian at all times! On Satur-

day 2,659 attended, and on Sunday 3,778 more than filled the auditorium.

DETROIT, PORTLAND, SPRINGFIELD

Three district assemblies were held in the United States on the days July 1-4, in Detroit, Michigan; Portland, Oregon, and Springfield, Massachusetts. The program at Detroit was specially appreciated because of daily discourses by N. H. Knorr, president of the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society. On Sunday he delivered the public talk "It Is Later than You Think!" to 12,402 persons, a crowd that overflowed the capacity of the state fairgrounds Coliseum. On Saturday 7,500 attended and 231 were immersed.

During the course of the assembly one of the preconvention experiences was related relative to obtaining rooming accommodations. A publisher called at a nice home in an exclusive section. In response to the publisher's request for rooms the man of the house said, "Sure, I have a room, and you can have it upon two conditions. First, that you send someone who would not object to our playing classical music, and second, that they spend an hour or two explaining your work." And the room would be free. The sequel was told by the witness having the good fortune of occupying the room. After a long day's work at the assembly, this brother and his companion arrived at the room about 11 p.m. The family, along with three friends, were waiting up for them, reminded them of the requirement for occupying the room, and requested that the Society's work be explained. Discussion lasted till 2 a.m. Between then and Sunday afternoon more discussion followed, with the result that this family attended the public lecture. When the publishers were preparing to leave on Monday, they were persuaded to stay over another night to further explain the work. Does this not show how great a witness can be given by lodging in the homes of the people at convention time?

A joyous throng delighted in the assembly at Portland, where opening day saw 3,308 present, to be followed by 4,337 on Saturday, 6,755 on Sunday and 4,334 on Monday. Immersed were 130. An interesting incident took place at the close of the public talk on Sunday. A well-dressed businessman went backstage to talk with the speaker, told him that he appreciated the truths that he had just heard, and said he had something that he had intended giving to one of the prominent clergymen of the city but after hearing the talk "It Is Later than You Think!" he had decided to give it to Jehovah's witnesses for their work. With that he thrust into the speaker's hand some bills and quickly walked away. He had contributed $50 toward the work of gospel-preaching.

Outstanding at the Springfield assembly was the publicity given in the newspapers. A few days before the assembly one local paper printed a report on the witnesses that sounded the usual sour note, due to a false report submitted by a prejudiced reporter. A feeling of distrust was evident on the part of officials that came to make routine inspection tours. But they were surprised and pleased with what they found, and one official notified the papers that they had better cover this assembly, as something was really happening. The papers did, and, to their credit, covered it honestly. So effective was the advertising conducted by the witnesses that one priest said, "After all, someone must counteract the work of these people." So he did. How? By attaching a derogatory sign about the witnesses to a car and driving it all over the city, honking the horn. Less tooting of a horn and more preaching of the Bible might make Bible truths declared by Jehovah's witnesses less embarrassing to Christendom's clergy. All the counteracting priest got out of it was a ride, for more than 4,000 persons of good-will attended the public talk, and, added to the witnesses attending, this made an audience of 10,789. Immersed were 169.

The effects of this district assembly were felt beyond the limits of Springfield itself. Note the following editorial that appeared on July 5 in the *Daily Transcript and Telegram* of the neighboring city of Holyoke:

"Jehovah's Witnesses

"It is not possible to pass over that great convention of Jehovah's Witnesses at the Eastern States ground over the past week-end without taking some time for study of what it means. In the intense heat of the past few days some twelve thousand men, women and children gathered to thrill over the ancient Biblical prophecies that betoken a manifestation of God among His children.

"The group gathered at Eastern States come from New England, New York and New Jersey. What is it that inspires such a following of what to many people seems like a phony interpretation of Scriptural teaching? These people have no ministers and no regular church organization. Each man is his own master in the sect but his mastery includes working closely with those other independents who think as he does.

"It is doubtful if any other of what we might call the Protestant groups would gather in such force amid the Fourth of July discomforts of the eastern states. These people are terribly in earnest. They study their Bible as modern man does his sports pages. They believe that Jesus was the promise of Jehovah, but that he was only part of the promise. They have conned Scripture and later writings for proof of their faith in sacred prophecy. They glory in the praise of Jehovah, the one God whom they wish to prove.

"With all their hazy organization the Witnesses held 450,446 meetings last year. On the whole, there is youth among the Witnesses. Pictures of them in convention showed that they were on the young side of middle life. They brought their children with them. They seem to be filled with a tremendous zeal to put nothing between them and their God—not even the American flag.

"Each of the Witnesses believes himself or herself to be personally a witness in truth to God. They look to see the world regenerated. There must be no bar against a personal relationship with their God.

"In convention they seemed to have been led by representatives of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. They were told to put on their armor of God and go forth and preach the gospel as Jesus and His disciples did. They accept this command.

"What is it that gets such a following among plain average American men and women? Is it the natural yearning of men to somehow get to something out higher than he is, and perhaps touch its hand or feel the hem of its garment? In an age where there are so many churches, can it be that

the churches have missed something in their reach to people?

"The fact of twelve thousand people attending Jehovah's Witnesses' summer convention, a few miles down the river, and there thrilling to the promise that the old world is dying and the new world of Biblical prophecy is at hand is not something to be just looked at—and passed over. The movement must give faith and hope to people who feel they have missed the way in more established religious forms."

INDIANAPOLIS, LINCOLN, SIOUX FALLS, BALTIMORE

Indianapolis is a friendly midwest city of almost half a million population, and is sometimes referred to as the 'Speedway City' because of the annual 500-mile automobile race which attracts crowds of 100,000. There it was that the state of Indiana played host to the eleventh district assembly held in the United States. Advertising was specially intensive in Indianapolis, the witnesses swarming through the city's downtown areas like locusts. Handbills, placards attached to publishers, window signs, car signs, all these and other means were used till the title "It Is Later than You Think!" became a byword with the inhabitants of the city. But it had the desired effect, for from nearly 5,000 on Saturday the attendance increased to 8,123 for the public talk on Sunday. Baptized were 130.

A little farther west and a few days later, and we are at Lincoln, Nebraska, for the next assembly, July 15-17. Victorious surmounting of opposition added zest to this convention. About three weeks before time for the assembly the contract to use the fairgrounds was canceled. The excuse given was that the roads on the grounds needed to be oiled. When this feeble excuse was released to the press, the Lincoln *Star* called in representatives of the Watchtower Society to inform them that the American Legion members were filing complaints with the governor's office, the fairgrounds board and other state officials, objecting to the use of the grounds by Jehovah's witnesses. The *Star* said it was going to publish the complaints, and that alongside these the witnesses were welcome to have printed their side of the story. This was done, and when exposed to view in cold print the complaints sounded vapid and silly. The Lincoln *Journal* also lived up to its reputation for fairness in its handling of this matter. The contract was reinstated and the fairgrounds used.

This episode had the usual result, advertisement of the assembly and Jehovah's witnesses. It paved the way for an opportunity to broadcast over radio station KFOR, at which time many pertinent questions were answered concerning Jehovah's witnesses and their work. Another broadcast was given over an Omaha station, WOW. Both radio stations and newspapers gave straightforward and fair reports on the assembly. Nearly 4,000 heard the public talk, and 61 were immersed.

For the following week-end the assembly scene shifted to Sioux Falls, South Dakota. There 3,422 heard the key lecture "It Is Later than You Think!" Expressions from persons of good-will who attended parts of this three-day assembly of Jehovah's witnesses prove what was stated at the outset of this report, namely, that the witnesses practice neighbor love. One man said he could never fathom why a group of people would gather from towns and cities surrounding Sioux Falls and then, without expecting one cent of payment, spend time and energy for four to six weeks going from house to house preaching and obtaining lodgings for others. He thought that people who would do that must have the real thing; so he attended the assembly to find out what that "real thing" was.

One newly interested person said after one session, "That settles it. For some time I've been studying with Jehovah's witnesses, but still going to church. I couldn't make up my mind, and came to this assembly to try to decide once for all. As soon as I get back home I'm breaking off from my church for good!" A man, husband of one of Jehovah's witnesses, would never attend meetings before; but he did this time. "I can't find a stranger among them, they're all friends!" was his comment. Nothing could keep him away after that. Many other similar experiences indicate that Sioux Falls and vicinity will provide a fertile field for backcalls and home Bible studies for the future.

The fourteenth and last of the United States district assemblies was held in Baltimore, Maryland, August 26-28, and it was the second American one attended by Brother Knorr. The most unusual feature of this occasion was the appearance on television of Brothers Knorr and Larson, using about eight minutes of a program in an interview at the station's studio. A large television receiving set was placed on the auditorium stage during this time, and part of the audience was able to see and hear this unique convention addition. Closing off his public talk to the 11,668 that overflowed the armory's main auditorium, Brother Knorr stressed the lateness of the time and the importance of each one's studying his Bible. Two hundred and nine were immersed at the Baltimore assembly.

On the day after each of these fourteen assemblies closed a representative from the Society's headquarters met with the district and circuit servants and their wives to discuss organizational problems and methods to assist companies and field workers. Such meetings forward better organization and enable more efficient preaching work to be done among the peoples in the various territories.

Surely these district assemblies have been a blessing to Jehovah's covenant people, and they accept them as a further expression of his love for them. But also these occasions were used by the witnesses to preach to thousands of persons in those cities, calling on them at the homes and businesses, and meeting them on the streets. Thousands of these visited persons responded by coming to the assemblies as guests of Jehovah's witnesses, and they benefited by what they heard. It was love for their neighbors that prompted the witnesses to invite and welcome these persons to their conventions, to enjoy with them the spiritual food there provided. The combined figures of the fourteen assemblies show that 49,641 attended the Saturday sessions, and on Sunday the grand total was 85,441. At the fourteen assemblies 1,644 symbolized their consecration to do God's will, being baptized by water immersion.

And now *The Watchtower* looks forward to the time when it can report on the next convention to be held in the United States of America, the big international convention of 1950 in New York city.

LETTERS

"THE HUMAN SOUL MORTAL"

October 17, 1949

Dear Brother:

Referring to yours of the 10th inst. on "dead souls":

Argue as you may, the literal statement is there in the original Hebrew text, and not only that, but the Greek *Septuagint Version* has rendered the Hebrew literally into the Greek, at Numbers 6:6, as a *dead psyche* (*psychei teteleutekuiai*). True, the Hebrew expression could GRAMMATICALLY be translated "soul of the dead", as Rotherham shows in his marginal reading, but then we run up against the doctrinal error of the soul of a man surviving after he dies. The *LXX* translation, however, cannot grammatically be translated "soul of the dead", but literally means "dead psyche". Likewise, in all other places where the Scriptures speak of becoming defiled through touching the dead the Hebrew text uses the word (*nephesh*) for "soul" as the thing touched, and likewise the Greek *LXX* translates it by "psyche". When you become defiled by touching a *psyche,* what kind of a *psyche* is it, or what kind of a *nephesh?* The context shows that death surrounds such *psyche* or *nephesh.* The translators from both the Hebrew and the Greek *LXX* get around the difficulty and hide the truth by rendering *nephesh* and *psyche* in such cases as "dead body". (Numbers 9:6, 7, 10; 19:11, 13; Haggai 2:13) But here we get into difficulty when we come across Isaiah 10:18, which speaks of consuming "both soul and body", as also at Matthew 10:28, which speaks of destroying both soul and body. Hence we are not exaggerating matters when we translate literally and use the Bible expression "dead soul". Where the Bible uses the term *nephesh* or *psyche* by itself to mean soul, why, the context shows whether it is a living or a dead soul.

At any rate, the force of the original, literal expression of God's Word is to prove that the pagan doctrine of the immortality of the human soul is a myth and wholly unscriptural. If you use the term "person" instead of a long definition or description of what a "soul" Scripturally is, it will help you over your mental difficulty on the matter.

Faithfully yours in Kingdom service,

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY

"FREE AT HOME FOR A YEAR TO CHEER HIS WIFE"

November 21, 1949

Dear Sister:

Answering yours of October 29:

The first year of an Israelite's married life was used merely as an illustration, not to indicate any literal year such as 1918 to 1919. The point is that it would hardly be in keeping with this picture for Christ Jesus to be enthroned and get married in 1914 and immediately after this union with his bride begin the war in heaven lasting till 1918. —Deut. 24:5.

After the married Israelite had been exempted for the first year in order to stay at home and comfort his new wife he was conscripted for war duty and thus had to leave his wife and, likely, child. Since, as we understand, the marriage of the Lamb and his bride began in 1918 and the remnant have been gathered into the temple condition with him, then all these years since that date have been a time in which he could comfort his bride class. And certainly he has done so. Having now comforted her, he could be called to duty at Armageddon by his heavenly Father and Commander in Chief, even if this meant to turn aside from his marital arrangement with his bride class. Thus it would not be necessary for him first to glorify the remnant of his bride class and take them from the earth to heaven to be with him up there before he began the battle of Armageddon. Hence there is nothing in this picture that militates against the thought that the remnant of Christ's bride will pass through Armageddon with the "other sheep" and will be here after Armageddon until Jehovah's purposes for them on earth have been fully served. Revelation 2:26, 27 indicates that those of the bride class already glorified with the Bridegroom Christ will take part with him in the heavenly operations at the war of Armageddon.

Faithfully yours in Theocratic service,

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY

"IMMORTALITY IN THE SPIRIT REALM"

September 16, 1949

Dear Brother:

Answering yours of September 13:

The article "The Manifestation of Messiah's Presence" in the August 1 issue of *The Watchtower* did not say, at paragraph 19, "the resurrection of those sleeping members of Christ's body to immortal life in the spirit realm," to imply that immortal life or immortality will also be enjoyed by mankind in the earthly realm in the everlasting new world.

Webster's Dictionary may define "immortality" as "exemption from death; unending existence", but the Holy Scriptures do not allow for such a broad definition. Revelation 2:11 states that only the faithful 144,000 members of Christ's body will "not be hurt of the second death", whereas the Scriptures show that the human dead in resurrection from the tombs in the new world under Christ's kingdom will be liable to the second death, and at the end of Christ's millennial reign they will be subjected to the loosing of Satan for a little season to determine whether they should be plunged into the second death, pictured by the lake of fire and brimstone. (Revelation, chapter 20) The resurrection argument of the apostle Paul at 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, shows that only the members of Christ's body will be clothed upon with immortality and incorruptibility, and Romans 2:7 shows that these seek this and will get it as a particular reward.

If "immortality" meant merely exemption from death and unending existence, then 1 Timothy 6:14-16 would be wrong in saying that only the King of kings and Lord of lords has immortality or had it at the time that Paul wrote, for at that time the faithful angels of heaven were enjoying exemption from death and existence that is unending for their faithfulness.

So *The Watchtower* maintains its position that immortality will not be bestowed upon faithful men and women on earth in the new world, but only everlasting life for their loyalty and unbreakable devotion will be given them as a reward. They will always be fleshly mortals. Only the faithful church taken from among men will be immortal with their Head and Savior Jesus Christ, who is in heaven.

Joyfully yours in Kingdom service,

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY