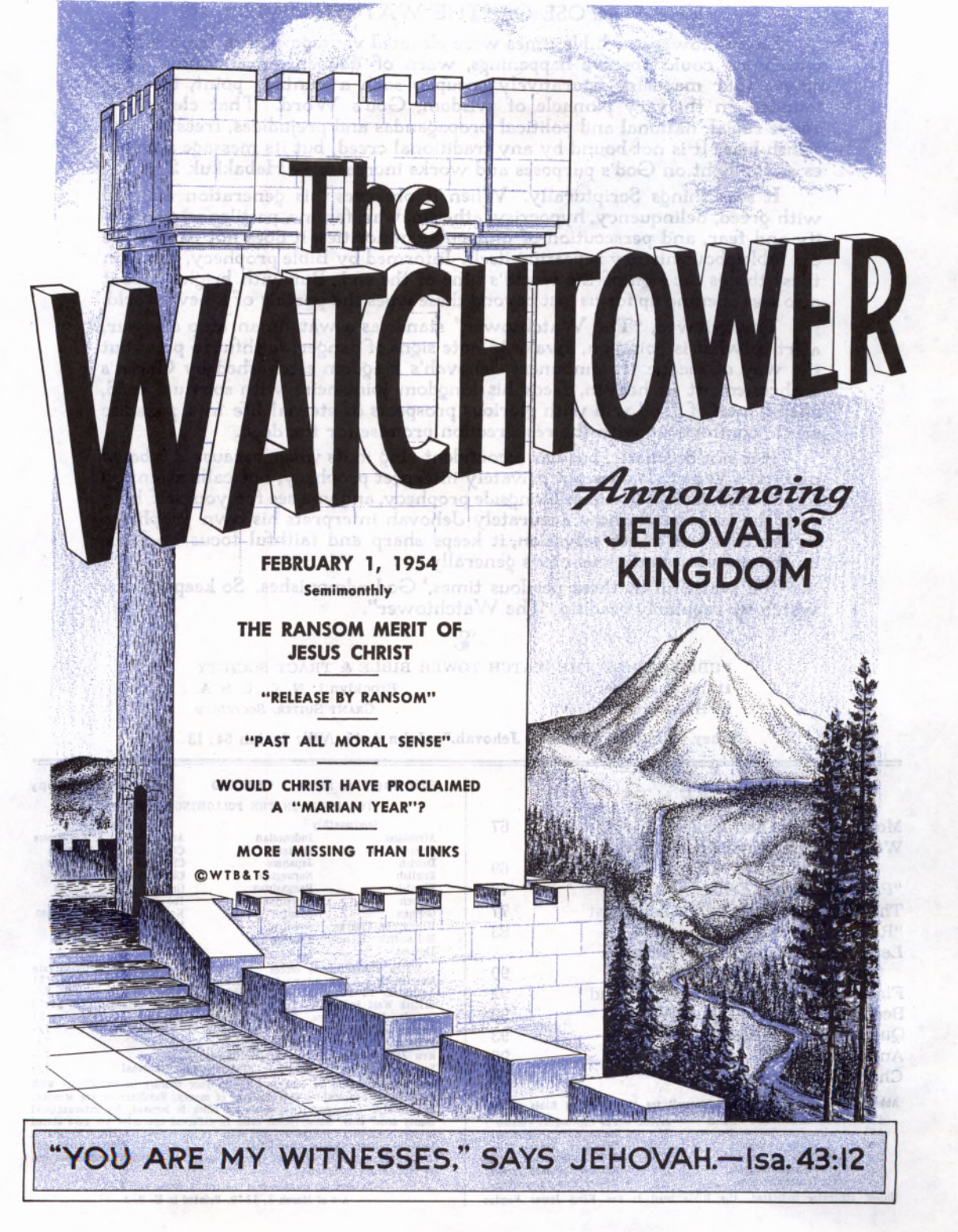




The WATCHTOWER

FEBRUARY 1, 1954

Semimonthly

THE RANSOM MERIT OF
JESUS CHRIST

"RELEASE BY RANSOM"

"PAST ALL MORAL SENSE"

WOULD CHRIST HAVE PROCLAIMED
A "MARIAN YEAR"?

MORE MISSING THAN LINKS

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Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Literal towers in Bible times were elevated vantage points from which watchmen could observe happenings, warn of danger, or announce good news. Our magazine figuratively occupies such a vantage point, for it is founded on the very pinnacle of wisdom, God's Word. That elevates it above racial, national and political propagandas and prejudices, frees it from selfish bias. It is not bound by any traditional creed, but its message advances as the light on God's purposes and works increases. — Habakkuk 2:1-3.

It sees things Scripturally. When it observes this generation afflicted with greed, delinquency, hypocrisy, atheism, war, famine, pestilence, perplexity and fear, and persecution of unpopular minorities, it does not parrot the old fable about history repeating itself. Informed by Bible prophecy, it sees in these things the sign of the world's time of the end. But with bright hope it also sees opening up for us just beyond these woes the portals of a new world.

Thus viewed, "The Watchtower" stands as a watchman atop a tower, alert to what is going on, awake to note signs of danger, faithful to point out the way of escape. It announces Jehovah's kingdom established by Christ's enthronement in heaven, feeds his kingdom joint-heirs with spiritual food, cheers men of good will with glorious prospects of eternal life in a paradise earth, comforts us with the resurrection promise for the dead.

It is not dogmatic, but has a confident ring in its voice, because it is based on God's Word. It does not privately interpret prophecy, but calls attention to physical facts, sets them alongside prophecy, and you see for yourself how well the two match, how accurately Jehovah interprets his own prophecy. In the interests of our salvation, it keeps sharp and faithful focus on Bible truth, and views religious news generally.

'Be watchful in these perilous times,' God admonishes. So keep on the watch by regularly reading "The Watchtower".



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"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6:45, NW; Isaiah 54:13

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AT - An American Translation	Mo - James Moffatt's version
Da - J. N. Darby's version	NW - New World Translation
Dy - Catholic Douay version	Ro - J. B. Rotherham's version
ED - The Emphatic Diaglott	RS - Revised Standard Version
Le - Isaac Leeser's version	Yg - Robert Young's version

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MORE MISSING THAN LINKS

THE Piltdown man was too good to be true. Evolutionists have long looked for the missing link between ape and man. If they could only find something half ape and half man! They have had it all the time. For forty years the Piltdown man was one of the evolutionists' most famous skulls. They always told us the cranium was human but the jawbone was apelike. But evolutionists are difficult to comprehend. When they finally proved the cranium really was human and the jaw was really from an ape you would think they would be happy. But it both embarrassed and saddened them.

Perhaps it was because the human cranium was older than the anthropoid jaw. It would seem Mr. Piltdown was descending to apehood instead of ascending to manhood. That is contrary to the theory, and anything that is heretical is excommunicated from consideration. Nor is it easy to conceive a cranium waiting around a few thousand years to be joined by its jawbone. So it was with some reluctance that the evolutionists acknowledged last November that the famous Piltdown missing link was really missing, banished as a monstrosity that never existed. Bluntly but embarrassingly put, it was a fake and a hoax that fooled these "wise" men for forty years. When its exposure as such was publicized, many who had accepted it came forward and said they had suspected it all the time. Yet some of these same men had

proclaimed it a proof that man had evolved from a primitive ape and displayed it as such on museum shelves.

In view of these facts, how can other controversial claims of evolutionary proof be confidently accepted? When they are exposed as false, how many of their scientific supporters will suddenly remember that they always suspected their authenticity anyway? It is easy to swallow something when your own prejudice is jamming it down your throat. The fact is that evolutionists are so biased in favor of their theory that their fantastic "evidence" has to be blown to bits before they will let loose of it. It is a popular but erroneous view to consider evolutionists as impartial judges weighing the evidence and coolly calculating and evaluating the results with no regard as to the effects on their pet theories. In other fields of science this unemotional scientific attitude and method may operate, but anyone who thinks it obtains in this highly emotional and controversial matter of evolution betrays a misplaced trust and a woeful gullibility. Not only are the needed links missing, but also the needed scientific attitude on the part of evolutionists is missing.

In evolution's chain there are so many thousands of links missing that there is no proof a chain even exists. But to limit ourselves to the links between ape and men, consider the facts on the shattered Piltdown man. In 1908 a small piece of skull

was found in a gravel pit at Piltdown in Sussex County, England. In 1912 another bit of a cranium was found, and then a jawbone with three molars. Several years later an eye tooth was found in a rubbish heap. Though found at different times and in different spots, the bits were put together and Piltdown man was born. A few evolutionists argued that the pieces did not belong together, but the majority ruled and, with no proof but much dogmatism, proclaimed a missing link. Its age? Five hundred thousand years. Proof? No, just more dogmatism. Now the five hundred thousand years have dwindled to fifty thousand and some scientists have even cut it to ten thousand.

Mr. Piltdown's antiquity is gone, his position as a link is shattered, but the dogmatism of his evolutionary sponsors remains. It is demonstrated relative to other so-called links between ape and man. A case similar to the Piltdown man is that of the Java man. In 1891 Dubois discovered in river gravel a few fragments of skull and some teeth. Later, and some fifty feet away, a thigh bone was uncovered. These bits were unjustifiably assumed to be all from one creature, and so were assembled to become the famous Java man. As in the case of Piltdown man, some evolutionists have objected to this arbitrary association of these scattered bones and have pointed out that the skull fragment is undoubtedly from a chimpanzee or gibbon whereas the thigh bone is human. Yet the majority of evolutionists would not allow their manufactured link to be dissolved and to this day hail Java man as one of the strongest proofs of evolution from ape to man. Doubtless when this folly is unmasked before everyone these dogmatic evolutionists will shrug it off as something they suspected all the time.

The average person may think of a completely assembled primitive ape-man when

the Heidelberg man is mentioned. But all science has is a large jawbone complete with teeth. From this the evolutionists tell us the size, posture, diet and tools he used. However, they do not tell us jaws of similar size and proportion are found among the Eskimos of today. You have heard of Peking man, another famous link. It is heralded because its brain size is about halfway between that of man and ape. But again, people of this same skull size and shape exist today; namely, the Veddas in Ceylon. Neanderthal man is no different from some men living today. Moreover, modern-type men are found in earth layers older than those containing these so-called "missing links." There is absolutely no proof of any missing links between man and ape.

Of the famous missing links evolutionist Sir Arthur Keith said: "We cannot trace modern man back to any of these extinct types." Professor Branco of Berlin University said: "Paleontology tells us nothing on the subject—it knows no ancestors of man." Professor Virchow declared: "The man-ape has no existence and the missing link remains a phantom." Austin Clark of Smithsonian Institution said: "Missing links are misinterpretations." And when their finds do not support their theory the evolutionists conceal that evidence, as evolutionist Hooton, Harvard professor of anthropology, admits: "Heretical and non-conforming fossil men were banished to the limbo of dark museum cupboards, forgotten or even destroyed." Incidentally, when Hooton heard of the disgrace and demise of the Piltdown man he termed it "tragic." Little wonder, since he had staunchly defended it in his writings.

But the evolutionists will continue parading their "links" and will *propagandize* for them with unabated dogmatism. From beginning to end, the evolution theory is supported by assertions, not evidence. Any

who argue against it are not authorities, any who criticize it are not scientific; so they say to intimidate and scare off critics and jam the theory down people's throats by the tyranny of authority. So it is not only links that are missing, but proofs and unprejudiced approaches and scientific methods that are missing. Despite hot de-

nials, evolution is accepted on "faith" and faith alone.

Now their faith in Piltdown man is gone. Their words about him are false, their wisdom turned out to be folly. "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." But, "The word spoken by Jehovah endures forever."—1 Cor. 3:19; 1 Pet. 1:25, NW.



Would Christ Have Proclaimed "MARIAN YEAR"?



CHRIST JESUS while on earth kept God's law perfectly. He therefore had due respect for his foster father and his mother, for God's law required that he honor them. But were he present today would he proclaim a "Marian Year" as did his claimed vicegerent, the pope of Rome?

A "Marian Year"? Yes, the New York *Times*, September 27, 1953, reported that on September 8, which, incidentally, is claimed to be the birthday of Mary, the pope issued his twenty-fifth encyclical, which he termed "Fulgens Corona," that is, the "Radiant Crown," wherein he designated 1954 as a "Marian Year" in that it was to be devoted to veneration of Mary.

In this encyclical the pope called upon all Christians, Catholics and non-Catholics alike, to make the year one of special prayer. Among the many things for which they were to pray, three were particularly stressed: the peace of the world, the unity of the church, and freedom for the church in totalitarian lands. No world pilgrimages were to be made to Rome, as this was but a "Little Holy Year"; however, every Catholic church was to be a shrine, with special emphasis on churches named after

Mary and shrines where she is said to have appeared, such as that at Lourdes, France.

And why did the pope designate 1954 as a Marian year? Because it is the hundredth anniversary of the promulgation of the dogma of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, which, according to the opening paragraph of this encyclical, holds "that the Most Blessed Virgin Mary at the first moment of her conception was by a singular grace and privilege of the omnipotent God in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved from all stain of original sin."

SCRIPTURAL SUPPORT?

Whether or not Christ Jesus would have proclaimed a Marian year would first of all depend upon whether Mary was conceived without sin or not. As Christians we, of course, accept God's Word as our authority. Do we find anything therein supporting the dogma under question? We do not. Even the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. VII, page 675, admits that "no direct or categorical and stringent proof of the dogma can be brought forward from Scripture." Is it not strange that a dogma, the

denial of which merits excommunication, should not be mentioned at all in the Scriptures? And that even such early church "fathers" as Origen, Basil and Chrysostom did not hold to it?

Yes, it would be strange if a dogma essential to salvation were not mentioned in the Scriptures. But the fact is that not only is the dogma of the immaculate conception of Mary not mentioned in the Scriptures, but they teach just the opposite. Plainly and unequivocally they state, "All alike have sinned, all alike are unworthy of God's praise." "All alike were guilty men." "If we deny that we have sinned, it means that we are treating him as a liar; it means that his word does not dwell in our hearts."—Rom. 3:23; 5:13; 1 John 1:10, *Knox*.

We also know from the Scriptures that Jesus was an exception to the foregoing. Time and again we are assured that he was without sin: "Who did no sin." He was "holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners," and, although tempted in all points as we are, still remained "without sin." (1 Pet. 2:22; Heb. 7:26; 4:15, *Dy*) Besides, he could not have given his life as a ransom had he been contaminated with sin.—Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6, *Kx*.

But not a word do we find about Mary's also being an exception. If it is necessary for us to be repeatedly reminded in the Scriptures that Jesus was without sin, would it not be even more imperative that the exception of Mary be brought to our attention plainly, stringently and categorically, if she also were an exception? To argue that it was necessary for Mary to be without sin so that Jesus could be without sin would have made it necessary that both Mary's father and mother be without sin, and so on back! No, the Scriptures do not allow for the dogma of Mary's immaculate conception, and so Christ Jesus would not have proclaimed a Marian year

in celebration of the hundredth anniversary of its promulgation.

MARY EVER VIRGIN?

While the Scriptures state that 'in sin did our mothers conceive us,' the claim is made that Mary is "ever virgin" and therefore could have remained free from sin. But what do the Scriptures say? At Matthew 1:25 (*Dy*) we read that Joseph "knew" Mary not, that is, did not have relations with her, "till she brought forth her firstborn son." Clearly the implication is that after Jesus was born Joseph did have relations with her. Further note that Luke also refers to Jesus as Mary's "firstborn son," implying she had other sons. Why did not Matthew plainly state that Joseph *never* had any relations with Mary, and why did not Luke state that Mary brought forth Jesus her *only* son? Because they both knew that Mary had other children, that she was not "ever virgin."—Ps. 50:7*; Luke 2:7, *Dy*.

That is why we read of Jesus' acquaintances saying: "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary, and his brethren James and Joseph and Simon and Jude? And his sisters, are they not all with us?" It cannot be argued that these were his spiritual "brethren," for we are plainly told that these brethren did not believe on him. In fact, he contrasted these with his true followers, saying: "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father that is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother."—Matt. 13:54-56; John 7:3-5; Matt. 12:48-50, *Dy*.

Neither can it be argued that these were merely male and female relatives such as cousins. Why not? Because when a cousin is referred to, as when the angel Gabriel spoke to Mary about her cousin Elizabeth, the Greek word *syngenés* is used, whereas

* Ps. 51:5, non-Catholic versions.

when Jesus' brothers and sisters are referred to the Greek words *adelphós* and *adelphé* are used.—Luke 1:36, *Dy*.

DID JESUS VENERATE HIS MOTHER?

According to the pope's encyclical all men are to pray to Mary regarding many matters. But is there any Scriptural support for such admonition? Did any of the early Christians, while she was alive or after her decease, address petitions to her? Had the early church venerated Mary and addressed petitions to her we may be certain that we would have a Scriptural record of the same. Nowhere do we read that they made pilgrimages to her, that they venerated her, or addressed petitions to her.

Why did they not do so? Because they appreciated that Mary was not important in herself. She had an assignment from God as a female slave or handmaiden to provide a human body for God's Son, and that she did. In doing so she had merely done her duty, and, like all the rest of God's imperfect slaves, she was still but a woman who could say: "I am a good-for-nothing slave." That in itself did not guarantee her salvation nor make her a fitting object for veneration.—Luke 17:10, *NW*.

Certainly if anyone should have given her honor for what she did it should have been her son Jesus. But did he do so? Far from it! In fact, as we examine the Scriptures we find that in every instance in which Jesus addressed her he refers to her, not as "holy mother," or "dear mother," nor even as "mother," but simply as "woman," the same term he used when speaking to the immoral woman at the well. Always his manner was objective and not subjective. When his mother rebuked him at the age of twelve, he did not meekly take the rebuke, but corrected her, saying, "What reason had you to search for me? Could you not tell that I must needs be in the

place which belongs to my Father?"—John 4:21; Luke 2:49, *Kx*.

At the very beginning of his ministry when attending the wedding feast at Cana, his mother called his attention to the fact that the wine had run out. Did he obsequiously reply, "Thanks, mother dear. What do you want me to do?" No, he did not, but the import of his reply was as given by Monsignor Knox's footnote: "Leave me alone, do not interfere with me." And again it was "woman," not "mother."—John 2:1-5, *Kx*.

On another occasion Jesus said: "Nobody is good, except one, God." And in that "nobody" he included also his mother Mary. As proof for that, note his reply to the woman who sought to praise his mother by saying: "Happy is the womb that carried you and the breasts that you sucked!" Not agreement, but, "No, rather, Happy are those hearing the word of God and keeping it!" As far as Jesus was concerned his mother was not better or more blessed than any other of his faithful disciples.—Luke 18:18, 19; 11:27, 28, *NW*.

The exaltation of a woman is nowhere taught in the Scriptures but is everywhere found in pagan religions. Christ Jesus while on earth, as well as his immediate disciples, magnified his Father's name, goodness and kingdom. He addressed his petitions to his Father and taught others to do likewise. Not once do we read that he dwelt on Mary's goodness or her blessed lot. He treated her objectively. In view of all the foregoing, were Christ Jesus here today would he proclaim 1954 a "Marian Year"? He would not!

The Roman Catholic Church by exalting Mary comes in for Paul's criticism found at Romans 1:25 (*NW*): "Even those who exchanged the truth of God for the lie and venerated and rendered sacred service to the creation rather than the One who created, who is blessed forever."

"Past All Moral Sense"

WOULD you trust the doctor that changed the temperature scales on the thermometer to make the fever normal? That would remove the fever from the patient's chart, but would it not remain in his body? To say the sick are well does not cure the sick. To change the label does not eliminate the problem. To deny the disease does not halt death. Such tactics would be more than futile endeavors to hide the doctor's failure; they imperil the life of the patient by camouflaging the danger. You may think you need nothing, while actually lacking your real need: "You say: 'I am rich and have acquired riches and do not need anything at all,' but you do not know you are miserable and pitiable and poor and blind and naked." —Rev. 3:17, NW.

Many of the modern social scientists are just such "physicians of no value." (Job 13:4) They are not scientists in the true sense of the word, but appropriate that classification for themselves to give their work an unearned standing by associating it with pure science. Pricking their bubble of outward show and pretension, a scientist wrote of them: "A social scientist prefers the more long-winded expression every time, because it gives an entirely spurious impression of scientificness to what he is doing." After listing instances where their findings are unreliable because of the unpredictable human element involved, this writer added: "But they are no more af-

fectected by them than the asylum inmate is by being told that he is not Napoleon." Concerning the rash of polls they conduct he observed: "The result is guesswork clad in the long flowing robes of gobbledygook." Which means the inflated, involved, obscure verbiage

found in pompous pronouncements.

Recently social scientists have made sex surveys that show an appalling collapse of morals. The accuracy of the findings has been questioned by many. Nevertheless, the over-all picture of widespread immorality cannot be challenged, and it stands as a confirmation of Bible prophecy that in the last days men would be lovers of themselves and lovers of pleasures, without self-control and without love of goodness at a time when "wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse, misleading and being misled." Conditions now match those prior to the flood of Noah's day, when "Jehovah saw that the badness of man had become great in the earth and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time."—2 Tim. 3:1-5, 13; Gen. 6:5; Matt. 24:37, NW.

But after these glorified pollsters under the guise of science have conducted their survey of people who like to air their sex adventures, what remedies do they offer for the moral ills they found? None. In some respects it is normal and advantageous, they say. It is the Bible's moral code that they view as sick, unhealthy for modern men to follow. Instead of men striving to meet good standards, they would lower the standards to meet bad men. Thus they would remove guilt by closing their eyes to wrong. They practice a kind of Christian Science in the field of morals. Of such Jehovah declared: "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put dark-

ness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!" —Isa. 5:20, 21, RS.

They do not approve of holding to God's standards, but approve as proper freedom the practicing of immorality. Actually, immoral persons have a disapproved mental view: "Although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God nor did they thank him, but they became empty-headed in their reasonings and their unintelligent heart became darkened. Although asserting they were wise, they became foolish. Therefore God in keeping with the desires of their hearts gave them up to uncleanness, that their bodies might be dishonored among them. And just as they did not approve of holding God in accurate knowledge, God gave them up to a disapproved mental state, to do the things not fitting. Although these know full well the righteous decree of God, that those practicing such things are deserving of death, they not only keep on doing them but also approve those practicing them."—Rom. 1:21, 22, 24, 28, 32, NW.

When those once immoral become Christians and abandon loose conduct in order to meet God's law, their former lustful companions that are without such legal restraint speak abusively of them. To such reformed ones the Bible says: "The time that has passed by is sufficient for you to have worked out the will of the nations when you proceeded in deeds of loose conduct, lusts, excesses with wine, revelries, drinking matches, and idolatries that are without legal restraint. Because you do not continue running with them in this course to the same low sink of debauchery, they are puzzled and go on speaking abusively of you." Wrongdoers love company. It eases *their own* guilt when others share in their sins. They hate to have examples of

moral uprightness confronting them. So, Christians, do not be disturbed when they "are speaking slightly of your good conduct." Their best defense of their badness is a diverting offense against your goodness.—1 Pet. 4:3, 4; 3:16, NW.

"SHAMEFUL EVEN TO RELATE"

Do not misunderstand. This is not arguing against proper sex education. Jehovah God created man and woman with the powers of sex for the purpose of producing offspring, and he set standards to guide in its use in cleanness. To understand the natural and clean functions of sex is beneficial. But such instruction is not gained by delving into filthy and degraded perversions done in secret and then relating them publicly. The mind is not cleansed by feeding on filth, no more than a sow is washed by wallowing in the mire. Real Christians are neither prudes shocked by clean sex nor perverts stimulated by sexual immoralities. Their mind is open to clean instruction but closed to degrading obscenities, in keeping with Bible counsel: "Let fornication and uncleanness of every kind or greediness not even be mentioned among you, just as it befits holy people, neither shameful conduct nor foolish talking nor obscene jesting, things which are not becoming, but rather the giving of thanks. Keep on making sure of what is acceptable to the Lord; and quit sharing with them in the unfruitful works which belong to the darkness, but, rather, even be reproving them, for the things



that take place in secret by them it is shameful even to relate."—Eph. 5:3, 4, 10-12, NW.

To feed minds on immorality builds up desires of fallen flesh that are otherwise kept subdued: "Each one is tried by being drawn out and enticed by his own desire. Then the desire, when it has become fertile, gives birth to sin; in turn, sin, when it has been accomplished, brings forth death." (Jas. 1:14, 15, NW) Sex surveys are lewd word pictures in scientific frame or setting. Reading minds envision the immoral acts and may be enticed to copy them, especially when assured the majority are doing them. Also the inexperienced reader may learn of sordid acts for the first time, and in quest of new sex adventures may take up their practice. So the Bible wisely advises against publicizing such sins unless it is done as a warning to others to avoid them. Some reviewers of one of the latest widely publicized sex surveys put their critical finger on that exact vulnerable point. One of them wrote:

"An aspect of the discussion, which now centers around the report, is deeply concerned with the justification of making such a survey available to the general public. Can such a survey of behavior be made accessible to all without affecting the behavior of the readers and those who hear of it? Kinsey himself in discussing the advantages of an interview over a questionnaire points out that in the former the inexperience of some interviewees would be respected and writes: 'But a questionnaire must cover all of the activities which the most experienced adult may have had, and there would be a variety of objections to undertaking such an exposition of all the possibilities of human sexual behavior in the course of a single interview.' The obvious extension of this remark is that there might be also a variety of objections to exposing all the possibilities of human

sexual activity to inexperienced readers as well."—*Natural History*, October, 1953.

Minds filled with such thoughts may lay plans for expressing them in actions, contrary to the advice: "Do not be planning ahead for the desires of the flesh." Instead, "Put away all moral badness." Rather than plant filthy ideas in the mind, "put away all filthiness and that superfluous thing, moral badness, and accept with mildness the implanting of the word which is able to save your souls." It is by taking in accurate knowledge of God that former unclean practices give way to decent conduct: "Deaden, therefore, your body members which are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of those things the wrath of God is coming. In those very things you, too, once walked when you used to live in them. But now really put them all away from you, wrath, anger, injuriousness, abusive speech, and obscene talk out of your mouth. Do not be lying to one another. Strip off the old personality with its practices, and clothe yourselves with the new personality which through accurate knowledge is being renewed according to the image of the one who created it." It is by now rejecting impure thoughts and taking in edifying ideas that you can "quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over."—Rom. 13:14; 1 Pet. 2:1; Jas. 1:21; Col. 3:5-10; Rom. 12:2, NW.

"MARKED IN THEIR CONSCIENCE AS WITH A BRANDING IRON"

Christians obey God not only out of a fear of his wrath, but also and primarily out of a good conscience, a conscience trained in its sense of right and wrong by God's Word. Paul stressed that point when admonishing Christians to be subject to Jehovah and Christ: "There is therefore compelling reason for you to be in sub-

jection, not only on account of that wrath but also on account of your conscience." Men speak of the conscience as a guide; so does the Bible. It says that when persons who do not know Jehovah's law do things "their conscience is bearing witness with them and, between their own thoughts, they are being accused or even excused," according to whether the things are good or bad. But since "the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" without guidance from God's Word, it is only the divinely educated conscience whose prickings and prodings constitute a safe guide. Only it fits the description: "The conscience of a man is the lamp of the LORD, searching the whole innermost being." It must be kept clear, clean and sensitive if we are to "hold a good conscience."—Rom. 13:5; 2:15, NW; Jer. 10:23; Prov. 20:27, AT; 1 Pet. 3:16, NW.

But what about those who turn a deaf ear on the voice of their conscience, or rationalize their misdeeds to silence the legitimate protests of conscience? To go roughly and heedlessly against its cries hurts it, and to rub against it and wound it repeatedly will force it to callous and scar over for its own healing and protection. The Bible describes those who do that as being "marked in their conscience as with a branding iron." When flesh is seared by a hot branding iron the mark left becomes scarred tissue void of nerve endings and sense of feeling. Consciences so marked are rendered incapable of sensing right or wrong, and their owners have become more "like unreasoning animals born naturally to be caught and destroyed," in that beasts have no conscience. Like animals, such men view sex as merely a biological urge to be satisfied rather than as unselfish love. Like animals, such men have become insensible to high principles of conduct and have degraded past all

moral sense. God's Word warns Christians away from such mental darkness and alienation from godly living: "You no longer go on walking just as the nations also walk in the unprofitableness of their minds, while they are in darkness mentally, and alienated from the life that belongs to God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the insensibility of their hearts. Having come to be past all moral sense, they gave themselves over to loose conduct to work uncleanness of every kind with greediness."—1 Tim. 4:2; 2 Pet. 2:12; Eph. 4:17-19, NW.

The concern of thinking persons today is not just the moral collapse, but the calloused indifference to it and acceptance of it, the insensibility and hardness of heart toward it, the deterioration of many "past all moral sense." This moral decay spreads far beyond sexual morality; it honeycombs all the thoughts and acts of mankind. A leading United States magazine queried: "Have morals gone out of style?" Clergyman R. J. McCracken pointedly asked: "Is the moral tone of the nation—its politics, its business life, its literature, its theatre, its movies, its radio networks, its television stations—Christian?" Confused cleric Reinhold Niebuhr puzzled over the moral collapse: "It is not quite clear why everything seems to have gone wrong in man's actual history."

THE OUTCOME OF THE MORAL COLLAPSE

It is quite clear to those who believe and understand the Bible. They know that Satan is the god of this system of things, that the whole world lies in his power, that demonic propaganda fills the entire inhabited earth as Satan is confined to its vicinity, that the real foes of men are the wicked spirit forces, and that the only sure protection is for men to "put on the complete suit of armor from God" Jehovah. (2 Cor. 4:4; 1 John 5:19; Rev. 16:14;

12:12; Eph. 6:11-17, NW) This wisdom from God's Word may appear foolish to men saturated with worldly wisdom. So they turn from the Bible to imbibe the philosophies and theories of men. They turn from the only sure protection and leave themselves defenseless before the invasion of demonic influences. Even the knowledge they accumulate they use in degraded and depraved ways, hastening their own moral decay. Ensnared in their craftiness, blinded by their own conceit, they are unable to see that the woes of our time are in fulfillment of Bible prophecy and are the last spasms of a dying system of things. Their worldly-wise ridicule of the Bible blinds them to the incoming, righteous "new heavens and a new earth."—2 Pet. 3:3, 4, 13, NW.

The moral collapse is more than a foretold sign of the last days of this wicked system of things. (2 Tim. 3:1-5) It is a divider of men, a separator of lovers of righteousness and morally indifferent evil-doers. While the majority shrug off the immorality as normal, a minority of righteously disposed persons are deeply disturbed and grieved by it. They are like Noah, who refused to walk with his fellow man whose wickedness "had become great in the earth and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time." They are like Lot, for "that righteous man by what he saw and heard while dwelling among them from day to day was tormenting his righteous soul by reason of their lawless deeds." They are of the class that "sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done." They are the ones who will be delivered at Armageddon to life in Jehovah's new world of high morality. The bumper crop of evil-doers indicates the nearness of the destructive harvest: "When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for

ever."—Gen. 6:5; 2 Pet. 2:8, NW; Ezek. 9:4, AT; Ps. 92:7.

By their course people are deciding to champion morality or accept immorality. Do you favor scuttling the standards because few live up to them? Because many sink should everyone drown? From those struggling in the seas of immorality social scientists would take their life belts and throw them a rock. The Bible standards are life preservers to those who cling to them. Do not let your mental grip on righteousness be loosened by taking filth into your mind, but keep integrity strong by filling your mind with pure thoughts, as advised: "Whatever things are true, whatever things are of serious concern, whatever things are righteous, whatever things are chaste, whatever things are lovable, whatever things are well spoken of, whatever virtue there is and whatever praiseworthy thing there is, continue considering these things." Right thinking is the key to good behavior. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man out of his good treasure sends out good things, whereas the wicked man out of his wicked treasure sends out wicked things." "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he."—Phil. 4:8; Matt. 12:34, 35, NW; Prov. 23:7.

So fill the mind with what is good to avoid being snared by what is bad. To reap what is good we must first sow what is good. And we must keep on sowing good until harvesttime, unweakened by the moral collapse, never giving out: "God is not one to be mocked. For whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap; because he who is sowing with a view to his flesh will reap corruption from his flesh, but he who is sowing with a view to the spirit will reap everlasting life from the spirit. So let us not give up in doing what is right, for in due season we shall reap by not giving out."—Gal. 6:7-9, NW.

The Ransom Merit of Jesus Christ

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a corresponding ransom for all kinds of people."

—1 Tim. 2:5, 6, NW, margin.

JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth rose from birth in a manger to a position of vital importance to humankind. No other single individual since the creation of Adam has made such an indelible imprint on the pages of history, nor has any other person ever been so universally the subject of controversy. Countless other men have gone down into death as martyrs for causes they deemed worthy of their full devotion, but in no other instance has there been attributed to such martyrdom the role of savior. Jesus Christ stands alone in world history as one whose death is said to qualify him to act as the Redeemer of humankind. So unique is his position that a devoted disciple of his was compelled to say, "There is no salvation in anyone else, for there is not another name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved." (Acts 4:12, NW) Certainly no such efficacy is attributed to the death of any other man.

² Yet, despite the widespread confession in Christendom that Jesus Christ is the Ransomer of fallen mankind, there is great misunderstanding as to the role he plays in the purposes of the Almighty God. Even among those professing to believe on him there is actually startling disbelief in the

merit of his life given as a ransom. Then, of course, there are millions who, though recognizing his prominence in Jewish history, attribute nothing spectacular to his life or death beyond his devotion to certain principles he considered good. However, in contrast, even before Christ made his appearance, "other men were tortured be-

cause they would not accept release by some ransom, in order that they might attain a better resurrection" through the ancient promise of God to send forth a "seed" that would provide an eternal release from sin and death.—Heb. 11:35; Matt. 20:28; 2 Tim. 2:8-10, NW.

³ Upon the basis of what the Bible teaches, what is the position of Jesus Christ in Jehovah's magnificent arrangement of things for establishing a completely new world? Should he be regarded only as a legendary figure of noble ideals who set for us a splendid example of moral living? Or should we view him as the one who poured out his lifeblood in sacrifice so as to purchase by ransom the life rights that Adam lost through rebellion, and thus make it possible for men to ultimately live forever? The correct answer to these questions is vital to every living person today.

⁴ It is important to appreciate that Jesus Christ did not suddenly burst upon the human scene and proclaim himself a savior. He was not merely a man of unusual gifts and mental brilliance who made a mark upon civilization by reason of his energetic activity, as other men have done with varying degrees of success from time to time. No, indeed! Rather, his appearance was singularly different, for long centuries beforetime his coming was foretold.

1. How does Jesus Christ stand alone in world history?
2, 3. What contrasting views are held concerning him, prompting what vital questions?

4. How was the appearance of Christ different from that of any other man?

Men of godly understanding looked for the appearance of a savior of humankind because of the promise Jehovah gave in Eden concerning the coming of a "seed" of righteousness.—Gen. 3:15; Gal. 3:19, NW.

⁵ Nearly 1,900 years before the birth of Christ, Jehovah with an oath confirmed his promise to Abraham concerning this Savior, saying: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." (Gen. 22:18, AS) Abraham and other faithful men of ancient days looked for this "seed" and longed for the blessings that would come through it. The apostle Paul removes all doubt as to the identity of the "seed" when he says: "Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. It says, not, 'And to seeds,' as in the case of many such, but as in the case of one, 'And to your seed,' who is Christ."—Gal. 3:16, NW.

⁶ More than three hundred years after Abraham's day Moses spoke to Israel about this same coming savior, saying that anyone who failed to listen to him would not live. (Deut. 18:19; Lev. 23:29) Peter confirms the historical fact that Moses predicted the coming of the savior, Christ, saying: "In fact, Moses said: 'Jehovah God will produce for you from among your brothers a prophet like me. You must listen to him according to all the things he speaks to you. Indeed, any soul that does not listen to that Prophet will be completely destroyed from among the people.'" (Acts 3:22, 23, NW) David was a direct descendant of Abraham, and respecting him Jehovah repeated the promise concerning a savior some six hundred years before Christ appeared. "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall

reign as king . . . and [he] shall execute justice and righteousness in the land."—Jer. 23:5; 33:15, AS.

⁷ Approximately 150 years before Jeremiah penned the above words in the sacred Record, the prophet Isaiah, knowing full well that the Redeemer was to come through Abraham and David's line, under inspiration wrote: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever." (Isa. 9:6, 7, AS) Bethlehem was predicted as the place of his birth. (Mic. 5:2) In fact, all the prophets agreed that a redeemer was due to appear upon the human scene; and "to him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone putting faith in him gets forgiveness of sins through his name."—Acts 10:43, NW.

⁸ The prophet Isaiah in advance declared remarkable details concerning Jesus Christ, namely, that he would be despised, rejected, be a man of sorrows and be acquainted with grief; that his life would be made an offering for the sins of many, that he would intercede for mankind, that when he was oppressed and afflicted he would not open his mouth to complain but would submit to his sacrifice like a lamb that is led to the slaughter. No wonder John the Baptist, when he saw Jesus approaching, loudly exclaimed, "See, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29, NW; Isa. 53:3-9, AS) That John was

5. How is the promise to Abraham brought into view here?

6. The words of Moses and the promise to David show what respecting the Christ?

7. What other prophetic things were written concerning Jesus Christ, and upon what are all the prophets in agreement?

8. What supporting facts demonstrate that John was not wrong in his identification of Jesus?

correct in his identification of Jesus as the Redeemer is made sure by the record of the angel's declaration thirty years previous, when that mighty spirit creature said to the shepherds, "Have no fear, for, look! I am declaring to you good news of a great joy that all the people will have, because there was born to you today a Savior, who is Christ the Lord, in David's city." (Luke 2:10, 11, NW) Beyond any question, Jesus Christ was not a self-proclaimed savior, but had come in fulfillment of promises made by God long centuries before.

⁹ The apostle John supports this view with the forthright declaration that it was God who sent Jesus. "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16, NW) Jesus was thus not an ordinary mortal whom Jehovah selected to use in providing a ransom, but, with good reason, was one who came direct from God's own heavenly realm for the specific purpose of vindicating the Father's name and providing a ransom. Jesus' prehuman existence extended back before humankind or even the earth itself came into being. (John 1:1-3; Prov. 8:22-36, AS) His disciples appreciated Jehovah's great expression of love in sending his Son. They knew Jesus Christ was no mere man like themselves, and they showed no hesitancy in declaring so. (Matt. 16:16, NW) "By this the love of God was made manifest in our case, because God sent forth his only-begotten Son into the world that we might gain life through him. . . . we ourselves have beheld and are bearing witness that the Father has sent forth his Son as Savior of the world."—1 John 4:9, 14, NW.

9. How do the apostles confirm the truth that Jesus was sent?

¹⁰ But there are some religious men who deny Jesus was God's son and had come in the flesh by Jehovah's miraculous transference of him to the womb of a Jewish virgin, Mary. Instead they teach the incarnation theory, saying that Jesus was actually God himself who clothed his spirit body with a covering of flesh, as angels had done in appearing to Abraham, Lot and others. (Gen. 18:1, 2; 19:1; Judg. 13:9-11, 16) Trinitarians are stuck with the same false reasoning, since they believe that God and Christ are one and the same. This erroneous doctrine forces still other wrong conclusions. For instance, this theory must assume that Jesus' weariness and suffering were merely feigned, because no spirit creature can be weary and suffer. It is bound to force the conclusion that his prayers were feigned, since he was only praying to himself after all, and did so merely for the profound impression such made upon his disciples and others. (John 17, NW) Still farther along the same road of error it would have to be concluded, on the basis of the original premise, that Christ's death was merely an appearance of death, for God, being immortal, cannot really die; hence there was no real death and pouring out of blood as a ransom for humankind at all!

¹¹ Closely akin to this hazardous reasoning are the conclusions of those who believe in the "moral influence theory." They hold that the sole mission of Christ was to reveal the love of God in a way so moving as to melt the heart and induce men to forsake sin. (*Theology at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*, p. 261) "Strictly speaking," say they, "the death of Christ was not necessary to human salvation."

¹² It is not surprising, then, to find a very prominent religious leader saying this in regard to the ransom: "Of course I do not

10. How do false conclusions of some religionists lead them into error regarding the Christ?

11,12. What other views are held by religious leaders?

believe in the Virgin Birth, or in that old fashioned substitutionary doctrine of the Atonement; and I do not know any intelligent Christian minister who does. The trouble with these fundamentalists is that they suppose that unless one agrees with them in their doctrinal set-up, he cannot believe in the profound, substantial, everlasting truths of the Christian gospel that transform men's lives, and are the only hope of Christ's saviorhood in this world."* Included in this class of men are those who ridicule the death of Jesus Christ as necessary to provide a ransom because, as they say, it requires a murder to fulfill the will of God.

¹³ Thus we find religious men, leaders at that, who actually deny the ransom merit of Jesus Christ. Yes, they talk about the "everlasting truths of the Christian gospel," but in their eyes the principles embodied in the Ten Commandments plus the new commandments that Christ taught, the love of God, the love of neighbor unto dying for him—these are the things "that transform men's lives, and are the only hope of Christ's saviorhood in this world." By their own words and deeds they do not believe that the life of Jesus Christ, laid down in sacrificial death, actually served to open up the way for mankind to regain that perfection of flesh and unity with God that Adam first lost by his sin of rebellion. They do, in fact, disown Christ as their redeemer and savior, and do not believe that the value of his shed blood was the

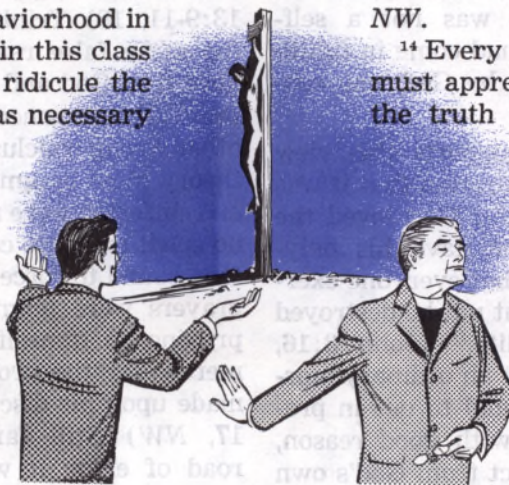
price paid over to God to regain for mankind the life rights lost by Adam. Pretending to be servants of God, they are actually false teachers. How accurately Peter describes them: "There will also be false teachers among you. These very ones will quietly bring in destructive sects and will disown even the owner that bought them, bringing speedy destruction upon themselves."—2 Pet. 2:1; 1 Cor. 1:18, NW.

¹⁴ Every person interested in life must appreciate the full impact of the truth that the Sacred Scrip-

tures are overwhelmingly specific and definite in making known that only through the ransom merit of Jesus Christ will anyone ever attain to salvation. Moreover, anyone gaining salvation must meet the terms of the ransom and

thus qualify according to God's standards. In the final analysis, the philosophies of men and all the worldly knowledge and human reasoning they can bring to bear against the Scriptures will avail nothing. The Word of God is sure, firm, to be relied upon as coming from the one who has all knowledge and who possesses all power to back up his word and fulfill it. Rightly we go to him for an explanation of the position of his Son in the divine purpose as it relates to the salvation of humankind.

¹⁵ To "ransom" means to "redeem from captivity, slavery, punishment or the like, by paying a price; to buy out of bondage; to deliver, as from sin, its penalty, or the like; to be the Redeemer of." (Webster's



* *Christian Beacon*, May 9, 1946, Vol. XI, No. 13 (Harry Emerson Fosdick).

13. How is their disbelief in the ransom shown, placing them in a class described by Peter?

14. What full impact of truth must be appreciated by honest persons?

15. To "ransom" means what, and why does the whole human race need such?

New International Dictionary, 2nd Edition) That mankind since Eden has been in bondage to sin and its penalty, death, stands admitted. "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me," said David. (Ps. 51:5, AS) That confession of bondage applied not only to David himself, for Paul confirms it as being true of the whole human race, when he says, "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned." (Rom. 5:12, NW) The whole human race has been and is in bondage, slavery, which results in death, and needs a Ransomer to effect release if the full freedom of Eden in its perfection is ever to be realized again.—Heb. 2:15, NW.

¹⁶ Death comes to man justly, through the operation of Jehovah's righteous and perfect laws. It was no injustice on God's part, for man brought this slavery upon himself, with its punishment of death. In keeping with justice, God could allow death to reign over men for all time to come, but his great quality of love and mercy moves him to provide a way out for men who incline to righteousness. In exercising his mercy, however, Jehovah cannot disregard or ignore the justice of the penalty judgment of death entered against man. "Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot"—this expresses the terms and principles under which God has always operated. (Ex. 21:23, 24, AS) Consequently what Jehovah had decreed as the penalty for mankind's sin, namely death, could be lifted only by the payment of a ransom or corresponding price. If one could be found willing and able to make payment of this ransom, thus fulfilling Jehovah's just law, then his mercy might be extended toward mankind. Jesus Christ

was the one willing and able to buy man out of his bondage.

¹⁷ That it was Jehovah's love and mercy that moved Christ to provide the payment of a ransom is plainly shown at John 3:16 (NW): "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." It was an action initiated by God, and it was accompanied by the willingness of his Son to meet the terms of justice in paying the ransom. "By this the love of God was made manifest in our case, because God sent forth his only-begotten Son into the world that we might gain life through him. The love is in this respect, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent forth his Son as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins." (1 John 4:9, 10, NW) Jesus Christ was willing to pay the ransom price, out of love for Jehovah and for fallen man.

¹⁸ It was no new thing for Jehovah to thus require a ransom payment. He was merely following the same basic principle he followed in his dealings with Israel as that nation's Ransomer or Redeemer. He said of himself, "For I am Jehovah thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I have given Egypt as thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in thy stead. Since thou hast been precious in my sight, and honorable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men in thy stead, and peoples instead of thy life." (Isa. 43:3, 4, AS) The ordinances of the law covenant given to Israel provided for the payment of a ransom as a redemption for one's life in certain kinds of offenses. The poll tax of half a shekel for every Hebrew was deemed the ransom to propitiate for their lives. (Ex. 21:28-32; 30: 12-16) The annual offering of a bullock

16. Upon what conditions might man recover from sin's penalty of death?

17. How is God's great love shown in this respect?

18. Was the requirement of a ransom a new thing with God?

and of a goat for the sins of the people served as an atonement or ransom that Jehovah recognized and accepted.—Lev. 4:1-35; 5:1-19; 16:1-31; Prov. 21:18.

¹⁹ In the case of man, the ransom God required to restore perfection and everlasting life could not be paid with silver, gold or other precious things, nor by the blood of animals, for these payments would not correspond or be equal to the perfect life that Adam lost for all mankind. (1 Pet. 1:18, 19, NW) To all the “inhabitants of the world, both low and high, rich and poor” Psalm 49 (AS) points out that man can never give to God a ransom for his life, “for the redemption of their life is costly, and it faileth for ever.” It follows, then, that unless Jehovah provided the means of paying over the corresponding ransom, there would never be a recovery from sin and death. God made this provision by granting his only-begotten Son the privilege to lay down a perfect human life in sacrifice.—Gal. 4:4, 5, NW.

²⁰ Jehovah did not have to coerce his Son into this sacrificial course, but Jesus willingly pursued it when he perceived that it was his Father's will. Says Paul concerning him, “He . . . gave no consideration to a seizure, namely, that he should be equal to God. No, but he emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men. More than that, when he found himself in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake.” (Phil. 2:6-8, NW) Jesus himself confirms his own willingness to lay down his life in sacrifice, saying, “This is why

the Father loves me, because I surrender my soul [life], in order that I may receive it again. No man has taken it away from me, but I surrender it of my own initiative.” (John 10:17, 18, NW, margin) As the sacrificial lamb of God, Jesus Christ moved steadily, willingly and unwaveringly toward his sacrifice on the torture stake, with full appreciation of the ability it would give him to provide the ransom for believing mankind.—Isa. 53:7, AS.

²¹ It was doubtless at a distant time before his miraculous coming to earth that Jesus in his prehuman existence expressed his willingness to provide the ransom. It must have been so, for through Abraham, long before the earthly advent of Jesus, Jehovah illustrated how he would give his Son in sacrifice, and how that Son would of his own free will lay down his life. (Gen. 22:1-19) Immediately following this prophetic portrayal by Abraham, Jehovah made the promise that “in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,” which “seed” Paul identified as the Christ. So God was showing that, at a fixed time future from Abraham's day, his own beloved Son would come to make the great sacrifice. In his written Word Jehovah was laying a groundwork so that righteously disposed men might fix their hope upon this great event and the untold blessings it would open up to them. A reliable record was being established by which men would be able to identify the one providing a ransom for them. (Prov. 8:22-36; John 8:58, NW) A great release was now in sight, but it would certainly come through the ransom of Jesus Christ.

19. How is the payment of a ransom a difficult thing?
20. What was Christ's attitude regarding this sacrificial course laid out for him?

21. In his loving-kindness how did Jehovah provide a basis for belief in the ransom of Jesus Christ?



"RELEASE BY RANSOM"

BORN in sin and shaped in iniquity, men were doomed to live in sin and pay its penalty, death. Under the Mosaic law given to Israel the sins of the people were forgiven in a pictorial way by the animal sacrifices made and offered up by the high priest. Yet in a real sense the blood of bulls did not effect an actual release of permanent nature from the penalty of sin, death; for all those conforming to the law eventually died. Moreover, the sacrifices had to be repeated at regular intervals. The law covenant was actually a "shadow of the good things to come," illustrating what God would do through his Son, Jesus Christ. (Heb. 10:1-3, NW) "Consequently, the Law has become our tutor leading to Christ, that we might be declared righteous due to faith."—Gal. 3:24, NW.

² But even under the law arrangement righteousness was imputed only by the shedding of blood. In viewing the sacrifice and ransom of Jesus we must bear in mind the plain statement of Scripture that "unless blood is poured out no forgiveness takes place." That is why Israel through the high priest continuously offered the blood of animals to obtain, in a pictorial sense, the yearly release from sins. But with the coming of Jesus Christ there is a great change, for "he entered, no, not with the blood of goats and of young bulls, but with his own blood, once for all time into the holy place and obtained an everlast-

"By means of him we have the release by ransom through the blood of that one, yes, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his undeserved kindness."—Eph. 1:7, NW.

ing release for us." (Heb. 9:22, 12, NW) No more was it necessary to periodically offer an animal blood, for the one who was

foreshadowed by these animal sacrifices had come and established an everlasting release. Now it was a matter of qualifying to receive the benefit of that release by ransom.

³ The entry of Jesus Christ to make propitiation for the sins of humankind and thus effect a release was not an entry into any earthly temple. "For Christ entered, not into a holy place made with hands [as the high priest of Israel did] which is a copy of the reality, but into heaven itself, now to appear before the person of God for us. . . . the Christ was offered once for all time to bear the sins of many." (Heb. 9:24-28) It was into the presence of Jehovah God in heaven that Christ went, following his resurrection, to offer the merit of the perfect lifeblood he had poured out, this to effect a permanent release for those of mankind who would exercise faith in the merit of that ransom. Peter confirms that it is the shed blood of Jesus that provides the ransom merit: "For you know that it was not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, as a ransom that you were released from your fruitless form of conduct received by tradition from your forefathers. But it was with precious blood, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb, even Christ's."—1 Pet. 1:18, 19, NW.

⁴ The lifeblood of the perfect man Jesus,

1. How did sacrifices under the Law fall short of effective "release," but what purpose was served?
2. What important part did blood play under the Law, but how did the coming of Jesus make a great change?

3. In what way was the sacrifice of Jesus superior?
4. Why is it folly to regard the sacrificial death of Jesus as unnecessary?

poured out in sacrificial death, is thus seen to have a saving merit in behalf of those who exercise faith in it. Hence it is the blood given in sacrifice that is needed to effect the salvation of the world, not merely the "profound, substantial, everlasting truths of the Christian gospel." There would be no release without the shed blood. The Scriptures emphasize this truth outstandingly. It is sheer folly, then, to view the self-sacrificing course of Jesus as essentially unnecessary to his saviorhood of the world. If the merit of the shed blood is not applied in behalf of any person, that man has no hope of gaining everlasting life. The perfect life-blood of Jesus Christ corresponded to that life value that Adam lost. When Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, he had in his possession the right to perfect human life with all its prospects, exactly what Adam by the sin of disobedience had lost for the human race. This ransom price Jesus handed over in the presence of God and in exchange therefor received the human race for the purpose of giving deserving members of it the opportunity to gain everlasting life.—Rom. 5:15-19, NW.

⁵ This brings to the fore the question as to who benefit by the ransom. Do all men benefit, whether good or bad? Was it not God's great love for all men that prompted the giving of his Son? And does not that support the view held by many that all must ultimately be saved, Adam himself included, and even the Devil? Decidedly

5. What great question is posed, and how does the wrong view of matters work injury to men?

not, for nothing could be farther from the truth. Holding to such a universal salvation theory works great injury upon men, for it blinds them to the real purpose of the ransom. It lulls men into a false sense

of security and irresponsibility, for it tells them that everything will come out all right in the end, no matter what they do or how they live. Through belief in "salvation for all" they fail to see the need for examining God's purpose and ascertaining upon what grounds they can qualify for "re-

lease by ransom through the blood" of Jesus Christ.

⁶ Stop, think, and examine some simple facts. When Jesus was on earth and preached repentance, some heard him in belief and others despised his teaching. To those who heard with belief and 'stuck with him in his trials' Jesus promised great blessings in the Kingdom. (Luke 22:28-30, NW) And he said that other sheep would in later times listen with faith and receive blessings, also. But to those unbelieving Jews who encircled him and derided his message demanding to know if he was the Christ, Jesus replied, "I told you and yet you do not believe. . . . you do not believe, because you are none of my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give them everlasting life, and they will by no means ever be destroyed." (John 10:16-30, NW) Those unbelievers later tried to stone Jesus. Promise of a ransom to everlasting life was held out to abso-

6. What simple facts support the correct view?



lutely no such persons, but only to the believers, the "sheep."

⁷ Proponents of "salvation for all" must close their eyes to the scathing testimony of Jesus against the false teachers of his day, the scribes and Pharisees. Claiming to worship God, they did all manner of evil. Jesus predicted nothing good for them, but only woe upon woe. Forcefully he pointed out their utter inability to escape the judgment of Gehenna (destruction) at Jehovah's hand because of their wicked course. Would you say, then, that he died to provide a ransom for them? Could they be both ransomed and destroyed? Certainly not, as any reasoning person must admit! Yet Jesus did tell them they were doomed; so there could be no ransom for them. —Matthew 23, NW.

⁸ The instructions Jesus gave to his disciples add weight to the truth that the ransom would not apply to *all* men individually, for, said he, "wherever anyone does not take you in or listen to your words, on going out of that house or that city shake the dust off your feet. Truly I say to you, It will be more endurable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on Judgment Day than for that city." (Matt. 10:14, 15, NW) He was pin-pointing the utter impossibility of ransom for unbelievers or those willfully wicked, because Sodom and Gomorrah were irrevocably condemned and destroyed, beyond any possible recovery.

⁹ Satan the Devil is the god of this world based upon evil and wickedness. He is a deliberate and willful sinner and violator

7. The record at Matthew 23 presents what perplexing situation to those who believe in "salvation for all"?



8. Jesus' instructions to his disciples support what view?

9. How is there a difference between the position of Satan, Adam and humankind in general?

of God's sovereignty. For him there is no recovery, but only a certain destruction. The man Adam willfully and deliberately chose the same course of rebellion as that taken by Satan, and God in justice meted out death to him. But for Adam's offspring the situation is different, because they were born under condemnation as a result of Adam's willful act, yet not because of anything they themselves had done. (Rom. 16:20; Rev. 20:10, NW; Hos. 6:7, AS; Rom. 5:14, NW) Hence, for them Jehovah provided the opportunity for recovery from this slavery by a release by ransom through Jesus Christ.

¹⁰ In the days when Jesus preached the good news, not all of Adam's descendants then alive heard and believed, and hence not all came under the ransom Jesus later made available. On the other hand, in the case of those who did believe, a marvelous transformation was made in their lives, as was true with the apostles. So today those who ultimately benefit by the ransom must first effect a transformation in their lives. It means more than refraining from evil and maintaining a neutral or aloof position from rank wickedness, thus hoping for ransom because of beautiful character built up through one's own efforts. Rather, it requires hearing and belief in the good news that Jesus preached and that is, true to his promise, being preached today throughout the earth. It means activity in a positive way to support the entire arrangement of Jehovah God for the establishment of a new world, for which the blood of Jesus provided a basis. The Devil and all those who are of like mind, deliberate sinners, will not support the new world. Neither will they benefit by the ransom, nor ever

10. What transformation must take place in the life of one who benefits by the ransom?



experience release from slavery to their own selfish will, which drives them on to death.

¹¹ In describing the division of earth's people into two classes, sheep and goats, as a result of the Kingdom message being preached, Jesus foretold destruction for the "goat" class but ransom and life for the "sheep" class. It will generally be admitted that the sin of one man, Adam, brought death to all men; but it is equally true that "through one act of justification [on the part of Jesus Christ] the result to men of all kinds is a declaring of them righteous for life." (Rom. 5:18; Matt. 25:45, 46; John 3:36, NW) These "men of all kinds" are the "sheep" who hear and believe in the ransom merit of Jesus Christ, and who show their belief by their works and way of living. These are the ones who have the ransom merit of Jesus' blood applied in their behalf, because they recognize its worth and apply for its benefits on the terms Jehovah lays down in his Word.

¹² Carefully note that these "sheep" do not include all men of all nations no matter what their belief or living habits. Indeed not, for we must remember that the primary purpose of Jesus Christ is to vindicate his Father's reproached name. Likewise the primary purpose of the ransom, in keeping with this, is to enable Jesus to buy out or redeem from the penalty of death men who by their faith and devotion would prove the Devil a liar. It follows that if some men, by their willful submersion in evil and complete disregard of the saving message of the Holy Scriptures, show themselves to be opponents of truth and righteousness, they have no hope in the merit of Christ's ransom. "That is how it will be in the consummation of the system of things: the angels will go out and

separate the wicked from among the righteous and will cast them into the fiery furnace."—Matt. 13:49, 50, NW; Isa. 26:10, AS.

¹³ The Bible itself is careful to mark the selectivity of the purchase by ransom, saying of Jesus: "You were slaughtered and with your blood you bought persons for God out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation." (Rev. 5:9, NW) Note that those bought or ransomed for the Christian congregation, the heavenly "royal priesthood," were "persons" out of every tribe, tongue, people and nation. Entire peoples and nations are not purchased wholesale. Why not? Because they do not qualify for the ransom. It is a difficult thing for an upright man to qualify for ransom because of the great testings of faith involved. "And if the righteous man is being saved with difficulty, where will the ungodly man and the sinner make a showing?"—1 Pet. 4:18, NW.

¹⁴ A similar view of ransomed ones is described in Revelation 7:9, 10, and they come from all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues. Yes, it is God's will "that all kinds of men should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth." (1 Tim. 2:4, NW) So he does not discriminate against any in granting them the opportunity to receive life by means of the ransom, but neither does he force the ransom's benefit upon men against their own choice. He owes men nothing, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," but in his loving-kindness he offers life as a gift, because "it is as a free gift that they are being declared righteous by his undeserved kindness through the release by the ransom paid by Christ Jesus." But men must seek and accept that gift with thankfulness, as did the apostle Paul, who

11. How does the illustration of the "sheep" and "goats" show the ransom is limited? Why?

12. What additional facts show a limit to the ransom?

13. How does the Bible mark the selectivity of the ransom?

14. What further Bible record supports the availability of the ransom to all men, but on God's specific terms?

exclaimed: "Thanks be to God for his indescribable free gift."—Rom. 3:23, 24; 2 Cor. 9:15, NW.

¹⁵ The "great crowd" of Revelation 7:9 are shown as having a favorable standing before God because "they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," and hence the ransom merit of the blood has been applied in their behalf. Certainly none of the willfully wicked, of men or angels, are included in this group pictured as benefiting by the ransom. It could not be so, because the wicked do not serve God at all, and yet this "great crowd" is described as "rendering him sacred service day and night." They are persons from everywhere who have heard the good news and left the darkness of this world to walk in the light; and, as John says, "if we are walking in the light as he himself is in the light, we do have partnership with one another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin."—Rev. 7:14, 15; 1 John 1:7, NW.

¹⁶ Clearly, then, it was the new world of righteousness that God loved so much that he gave his Son to provide the basis for its establishment by the pouring out of his blood. It is a world now near at hand that will be inhabited by people who accept the free gift of life and who have been released from the condemnation of sin and death inherited from the common father Adam. And it is in this connection that each person must demonstrate his personal desire for application of the ransom merit in his behalf by belief and right works. Here is where "release by ransom" for all men individually is ruled out, because not all choose to serve God and accept the free gift. What, then, is required to come under the release?

15. How is it that the "great crowd" cannot include all men?

16. What "world" did God love that prompted the giving of his Son? And what must each person demonstrate in this connection?

¹⁷ Well, we must have faith of the same kind that Abraham had and, like him, we must back up that faith with works. Abraham believed Jehovah and 'it was counted to him as righteousness.' (Gen. 15:6, NW) Abraham's faith gave him a good standing before God and because of this he is due for a resurrection and blessings of new-world life, made possible by Christ's ransom. Paul argues that the expression "'it was counted to him' was written, however, not for his sake only, but also for the sake of us to whom it is destined to be counted, because we believe on him who raised Jesus our Lord up from the dead. He was delivered up for the sake of our trespasses and was raised up for the sake of declaring us righteous."—Rom. 4:22-25, NW.

¹⁸ Paul himself and other believers of Jesus' day laid down their earthly lives sacrificially, because they all died faithful to God. Their faith, like Abraham's, was counted to them as righteousness with God. It gave them a favorable standing and placed them in position to receive the "release by ransom" and all its benefits then by imputation. Because of proving faithful as Christ's fellow sacrificers to the death they will receive a resurrection to heavenly life to be joint heirs of Kingdom glory with Christ. To Daniel, who was a man of faith like Abraham, the promise was given that though he died before Christ's first coming, yet his righteous standing before God would not fail of benefit to him, "for," said God, "thou shalt rest, and shalt stand in thy lot, at the end of the days." (Dan. 12:13, AS) Held within the memory of God are all suchlike men of faith, and the ransom of Jesus Christ will not fail them in the new earth of the new world now close at hand.

17. How was the situation with Abraham similar to that with us?

18. Why does the ransom not fail men of faith in bygone days?

¹⁹ Today we have approached the end of this old system of things. It marks the time of final warning to all nations, and the close-at-hand complete "release by ransom" for men of all kinds who prove of good will. Before all of us there is a great choice, namely, to accept the gift of God or cast it aside. True to the accurate prediction of Jesus, the good news of the Kingdom is being preached in all the inhabited earth as a testimony. (1 Cor. 10:11; Matt. 24:14, NW) Persons who hear must, before they can ever place their hope in the great blessings of the Kingdom, first exercise faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. They must appreciate the efficacy of his blood in opening up the way to life in that new world. They must be firmly convinced that there is "one mediator between God and men, a man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a corresponding ransom for all kinds of people." (1 Tim. 2:5, 6, NW, margin) They must confess Jesus Christ as their savior, by Jehovah's undeserved kindness, and seek their approach to God by means of him, according to the way outlined in Jehovah's Word. This means they must dedicate themselves to him through Christ according to the principles of righteousness set forth in the Holy Scriptures, to be faithful servants of God and show their faith by works.

²⁰ It means more than joining in an emotional religious "revival meeting," raising the hand and saying one is saved. It means more than opening one's mouth to say, "Yes, I believe in Jesus Christ and in his shed blood." If that were all there is to it, anyone could do that, including drunkards, fornicators, idolaters and murderers. But the Scriptures are plain in declaring that such kind of persons do not qualify for the ransom. (1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:20, 21, NW)

19. What great choice is before all men today, and what is absolutely necessary on their part?

20. Why are mere expressions of faith ruled out? And what is really required?

No, it means, rather, the development of a new pattern of life and the setting aside of the old. It means conscientious effort to let one's actions and living be governed by the fixed principles of Jehovah's Word, and to keep one's hope and desire established in the new world of righteousness. It means following the advice of the apostle John who said of this present corrupt system of things, "Do not be loving either the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him; . . . Furthermore, the world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:15-17.

²¹ So do what, then? "Strip off the old personality with its practices, and clothe yourselves with the new personality which through accurate knowledge is being renewed according to the image of the one who created it, . . . let the peace of the Christ control in your hearts, . . . Let the word of the Christ reside in you richly in all wisdom. . . . And whatever it is that you do in word or in work, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, thanking God the Father through him."—Col. 3:9-17, NW.

²² If you do this you will be walking in the light and following a life pattern that will guarantee salvation to yourself. But you say, "How can I do this? Is it possible for me to make such a complete change when all my life I have been trained in the ways of the old world?" Yes, it is possible, otherwise Jesus Christ would not have died to save men of all kinds from all tribes, tongues and nations. And they could not benefit by his ransom if it were not possible for them to change and hew out a new life pattern. So you can do it! Therefore "God, after producing his Servant, sent him forth to bless you by turning each

21. So what is to be done?

22. Can you do it? Why and how?

one away from your wicked deeds." "Repent, therefore, and turn around so as to get your sins blotted out, that seasons of refreshing may come from the person of Jehovah and that he may send forth the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven, indeed, must contain within itself until the times of restoration of all things of which God spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets of old time."—Acts 3:26, 19-21, NW.

²³ How will you start? Well, first put aside all false religious ideas you may have concerning the ransom of Jesus as applying to *all* men. And put aside teachings that tell you all you need do to gain God's approval is live a decent life and do to others as you would have them do to you. Yes, you must put aside these ideas that you have been taught all your life and you must begin to fill your mind with the correct teachings of the Sacred Scriptures. You must "quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and complete will of God." (Rom. 12:2, NW) Your mind is where you must begin, by absorbing the truth of God's Word without false religious adulteration of any kind. This truth will overflow in your heart, too, and it will move you in the way of salvation by prompting right works.

²⁴ This does not mean you will now become perfect in the flesh. Nor does it mean that you will be admired by all men who will praise you for your high moral life. But it does mean you will have a righteous standing before God and your service to him will be acceptable; and that the merit of Christ's ransom will therefore apply in your behalf, because you seek it in the proper way. Your faith will become mani-

fest in your works, and you will take your place with other faithful servants of God, both past and present, and will "enjoy peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have gained our approach by faith into this undeserved kindness in which we now stand."—Rom. 5:1, 2, NW.

²⁵ In such a position, with continued application of your mind and heart to study of God's wonderful way of salvation, and of your hands in works of praise, you will be unshaken by whatever comes. (Rom. 5:3-5, NW) You will have full confidence in Jehovah God, being fully aware of his great love for the new world and for those who seek entrance into it. You will take courage in the knowledge that "God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, therefore, since we have been declared righteous now by his blood, shall we be saved through him from wrath. For if by the trespass of the one man death ruled as king through that one, much more will those who receive the abundance of the undeserved kindness and of the free gift of righteousness rule as kings in life through the one person, Jesus Christ."—Rom. 5:8, 9, 17, NW.

²⁶ You will not be lulled into a false sense of security in the belief that God *must* apply the ransom merit of Jesus Christ in your behalf, but you will appreciate that full release by ransom is a marvelous gift and will be received only by men who seek it in the narrow way God has provided. So you will guard against a return to the evil ways and practices of the old world, a willful plunge once again into sin, knowing that only death can result; "for if we practice sin willfully after having received the accurate knowledge of the truth, there

23. Where is the starting point? And how is the heart involved?

24. If you will not become perfect now, what does this wise course do for you?

25. What knowledge and confidence will it bring you?

26. The return to what condition must you guard against? Why?

is no longer any sacrifice for sins left, but there is a certain fearful expectation of judgment and there is a fiery jealousy that is going to consume those in opposition."—Heb. 10:26, 27, NW.

²⁷ Make no mistake about it, Jehovah God has a very definite purpose in providing the ransom for mankind, and the key to that purpose lies in the vindication of his own great name. The building of a new world, including the starting once again of a human society that will worship him, is part of his purpose in the vindication of himself as the eternal sovereign. This helps us to understand why he arranges for the payment of a ransom by Christ Jesus, for through it a nucleus of men qualify to take part in the "new earth" after Armageddon and in bringing forth children and training them in the ways of God. "For the undeserved kindness of God which brings salvation to all kinds of men has been manifested, instructing us to repudiate ungodliness and worldly desires and to live with soundness of mind and righteousness and godly devotion amid this present system of things, while we wait for the happy hope and glorious manifestation of the great God and of our Savior Christ Jesus, who gave himself for us that by a ransom he might release us from every kind of lawlessness and cleanse for himself a people

27. What is the key to understanding God's purpose in providing the ransom?

peculiarly his own, zealous for good works."—Titus 2:11-14, NW.

²⁸ The next striking manifestation of God and his Son, Jesus Christ, at Armageddon, will not be a pleasing one for those who do not qualify for the merit of his ransom. It will be a righteous act on Jehovah's part, for "it is righteous on God's part to repay tribulation to those who make tribulation for you, but, to you who suffer tribulation, relief along with us at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his powerful angels in a flaming fire, as he brings due punishment upon those who do not know God and those who do not obey the good news about our Lord Jesus. These very ones will pay the penalty of everlasting destruction from before the Lord and from the glory of his strength, at the time he comes to be glorified in connection with his holy ones and to be regarded in that day with wonder in connection with all those who exercised faith, because the witness we gave met with faith among you." (2 Thess. 1:6-10, NW) Do not be lulled to sleep by the teaching that God *must* save all men. He will not do so! But he does make the ransom available to "all kinds of men" who will accept it on the terms he lays down. Examine whether you are meeting those terms, for it means your life.

28. What appearance of Jesus Christ will be both a blessing and a time of trouble? And what examination should be made by every person now?

Letter Regarding "New Heavens and a New Earth"

THE following interesting letter from the twenty-second class of Gilead to the president of the Watch Tower Society is published because of its general interest.

November 9, 1953

Dear Brother Knorr:

The new earth founded 1919! Indeed a

faith-strengthening fact to all lovers of truth and righteousness. We, the students of the 22nd class of Gilead, having completed an absorbing study of the book "New Heavens and a New Earth", are very grateful to the "Giver of every good and perfect present" for this provision and, through you, we desire to express our

heartfelt thanks to the "faithful and discreet slave."

From its opening chapter our appreciation grows for Jehovah our God, who does not leave us in ignorance or at the mercy of worldly scientists, but rather invites us to ask Him questions concerning His purposes and operations for the blessing of mankind. With forceful simplicity our questions were reasonably and Scripturally answered as we were quickly carried through the revealing study of creation, exhibiting the wonderful harmony of true science with His Word.

Our attention was next irresistibly drawn to the account of Ezekiel, chapter 28, detailing the striking parallelism of the once faithful, but later treacherous, course of conduct of the king of Tyre with God's people; how this so exactly fits the perfidious action of the archenemy, Satan the Devil, in whom this prophecy finds its major fulfillment!

Exciting as these truths were to us, of surpassing joy was the clear realization of the establishment and operation of the New World society. Since the "new heavens" are higher than the "new earth," so a righteous heavens will guarantee a righteous earth. How proper, then, to delight in the qualifications of the tried and tested foundation stone, Christ Jesus! Contrasting his course with the failure under test of the original "covering cherub" serves to emphasize the solid, enduring and perfectly righteous qualities of the new world's foundation, laid in heavenly Zion A.D. 33 in the first instance, but in full scale when the Kingdom was born A.D. 1914.

Tracing the history of the prophetic city of Jerusalem, or Zion, down to its fatal end and the vivid description of the desolating of spiritual Israel thereafter, prepared us for the masterly exposition of Isaiah 66. Barrenness and desolation ended! In one day, Jehovah's day, Zion, the universal or-

ganization, brings forth a heavenly man-child government in 1914, and in 1919 a new nation, yes, also a new land! With liberation from Babylonish captivity the new nation of the anointed remnant are brought into the new land of organized activity, these happy inhabitants thus forming the "new earth." Joy at this realization increased as we learned that the land, a visible organization, has now expanded to include additional inhabitants, the "strangers," men of good will from all countries and "the isles afar off," who join in with the new nation in building up the land, the New World society organization.

To learn how Isaiah 65:25 also applies now in that the "new earth" is free from all beastliness, animalism and any vicious disposition to be wild and hurtful to fellow associates, greatly enhances our appreciation of living and working under the New World society.

Striking a note of urgency, the book directs our attention to Luke 21:20, 21 and highlights the prophetic significance of the "disgusting thing that causes desolation" as to 'Jerusalem's being surrounded by encamped armies.' A strong appeal is made to all to follow the course of the faithful Christians who, when the Roman armies first encircled Jerusalem A.D. 66, rightly took this as the cue foretold by Jesus and 'fled to the mountains.' So today, as we see the leftist totalitarian forces contained within the modern "disgusting thing," the alliance of apostate religion with the United Nations, lined up against antitypical Jerusalem, should this not alert the discerning reader to flee posthaste to God's organization, the New World society?

In a ring of optimism the last chapter gives us a clearing vision of the operation of the New World society after Armageddon. Stepping out as pioneers into a cleansed earth, they will undertake, under the direction of the New World society,

tremendous reconstruction projects. Living in the resultant paradise will never become monotonous, but will be a daily delight, perpetually warmed with love from God and his King and from fellow man. This transformed earth will never end, but will be preserved by the Creator of the "new heavens and the new earth" to be an eternal monument testifying to the vindication of his universal sovereignty and holy name.

In the intervening period between now and Armageddon we feel this publication will be the means of directing many thousands to associate with the New World society. With its striking title, concrete hopes, wealth of Scripture proofs, colored illustrations and chart of historical dates, we are eagerly looking forward with the rest of our brothers under the New World society to offering this latest textbook in

the house-to-house ministry. As a medium for home Bible studies we are convinced of its excellency. Above all, we are assured that this book will prove particularly advantageous at the congregational book studies where an examination of it will deepen the faith and appreciation of all associates of the New World society.

Our own study of this book has made us look forward with increased faith and zeal to the time when we can, in a more abundant way, help those who 'sigh and cry' to appreciate Jehovah's "new heavens" and to gain everlasting life as part of His righteous "new earth."

Your co-workers in the interests of the New World society,

THE STUDENTS OF THE
22ND CLASS OF GILEAD

Finding Hearing Ears in Thailand

FROM Watch Tower missionaries in Thailand comes the following letter: "To reach the village of Pe Pong we had to travel some twenty-four kilometers (approximately fifteen miles) by bus, which took four hours, and then we had to wade through flooded rice fields several more kilometers. We were received well by the villagers, and after a few minutes of rest we proceeded to advertise the Bible lecture to be held that evening.

☞ "The lecture began at 7 p.m., with all of us seated on the floor. Never had we seen an audience give such careful attention as did that one. Many of them had brought along big Bibles and from time to time they would check what the speaker said with their Bibles. By the time the lecture was completed we found that more than seventy had come through darkness and flooded and snake-infested rice fields and roads, and some from long distances. But they did not want to go home after hearing just one lecture; they wanted more. So other lectures were given and after that their many questions were an-

swered. It was one o'clock in the morning before everybody was satisfied and content to go home.

☞ "The next morning at ten o'clock the villagers gathered again, wishing to hear another lecture, and they did. Three young men wanted to see how Jehovah's witnesses carried on their preaching activity and they went along with us.

☞ "In the evening at seven o'clock we had a Bible study with the aid of *The Watchtower*, and some of our new friends answered as well as did our own brothers. Then another Bible lecture, which was attended by sixty villagers. They asked questions until twelve o'clock and would have kept us there longer but we told them we were going to sleep. After the final talk the elder of this congregation expressed himself as follows: 'We have opened our doors to everybody who has come with the Word of God and to every religious group that we have in Thailand. But never have we had people like you Jehovah's witnesses.'

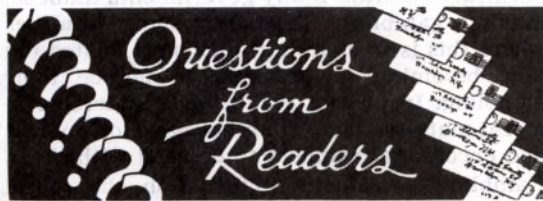
Become Skilled in Your Work

WHEN it comes to work, Jehovah is the great Expenders. He never tires of carrying out his purposes, he always completes what he starts out to do and he works with consummate skill. As we consider his works of creation we are impelled to exclaim: "O Jehovah, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all."—Ps. 104:24, AS.*

Jehovah's example as a worker was followed by Christ Jesus. In the first place he worked alongside his Father in the monumental task of building the universe. Then, upon being sent to earth, he worked faithfully with consuming zeal and great skill, accomplishing the threefold purpose for which he had been sent, namely, to bear witness to the truth, to give his life a ransom for man, and to vindicate his Father's name by maintaining integrity under test.

So that the work of bearing witness might continue and so that others also may have a share in the vindication of Jehovah's name, by maintaining integrity,

* For details see *The Watchtower*, April 1, 1953.



● Is gambling a violation of Bible principles? Is it wrong for a Christian to have secular employment in a gambling project, such as a legalized lottery or gambling house?—V. W., Haiti, West Indies.

Christians are to work for their income. "Work with your hands, just as we ordered you, so that you may be walking decently as regards people outside and not be needing anything." "When we were with you, we used to give you

and gain for themselves the benefit of his ransom, Jesus Christ while on earth formed a service organization with his twelve apostles, whom he personally trained.

Although a great falling away took place after the apostles fell asleep in death, as a result of which we see today a Christendom teaching false doctrines, indolent and divided by a clergy-laity distinction, yet Jehovah has in recent years, by means of his Word, his spirit and his guiding providences, again provided for a service organization in the earth to carry out his purposes. Known as the New World society, it brings to the people the truth, has no clergy-laity distinction but all its members work and preach.

And you, the individual ministers in the organization, upon whom rests the burden of preaching the good news of the Kingdom, while pushing ahead with zeal, remember that the effort made is not everything; it is results that count in the final analysis, and results can be expected only if the effort is applied efficiently, if you become skilled in your work.

this order: 'If anyone does not want to work, neither let him eat.' To such persons we give the order and exhortation in the Lord Jesus Christ that by working with quietness they should eat food they themselves earn." "Make honest provision, not only in the sight of Jehovah, but also in the sight of men." "Provide the right things in the sight of all men." "Certainly if anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has disowned the faith and is worse than a person without faith." (1 Thess. 4:11, 12; 2 Thess. 3:10, 12; 2 Cor. 8:21; Rom. 12:17; 1 Tim. 5:8, NW) Gambling is not rendering service for the money you win; it is getting something for nothing from someone who does not want you to have it. Moreover, gambling often becomes a fever with some and

they lose so much that they are no longer able to provide for their own.

But what if the gambler can afford his losses, which do not interfere with his providing for his family or meeting other obligations? If he can afford to lose the money, is there not a better use for it than enriching professional gamblers and gangsters, racketeers and criminals? Even if the proceeds go to support the government, is not the motive of the one who gambles wrong? Is he not wanting to gain money without giving any service for it in return? He is not wanting to give to the government, but receive from it. The majority complain about government taxes; they are not wanting to give more. There is a better use for the Christian's money than gambling. If he can afford to lose it, he can afford to give it. As long as he has spiritual brothers that are poor he can use his surplus money to meet an obligation: "In case some one of your brothers should become poor among you in one of your cities, in your land that Jehovah your God is giving you, you must not harden your heart or be closefisted toward your poor brother." (Deut. 15:7, NW) Better to give to your brother than lose to gamblers. Also better to contribute to Jehovah's work than to gamblers: "Honor Jehovah with thy substance." (Prov. 3:9, AS) So a Christian would not want to gamble and win something for which he gave no honest service or goods, nor would he choose to gamble and lose money he could put to a Christian use.

Other Scriptural reasons forbid gambling. Jesus said: "By their fruits you will recognize them. Never do people gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles, do they? Likewise every good tree produces fine fruit, but every rotten tree produces bad fruit; a good tree cannot bear bad fruit, neither can a rotten tree produce fine fruit. Every tree not producing fine fruit gets cut down and thrown into the fire. Really, then, by their fruits you will recognize those men." (Matt. 7:16-20, NW) Gambling appeals to selfishness and weakens moral fiber; it tempts many into habits of cheating and crookedness. Its enterprises are largely run or controlled by gangsters and racketeers, and this hoodlum empire produces rotten crops of violence and murder. Christians do not wish to be parties to its sins or recipients of its plagues. "The love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by

reaching out for this love some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains."—1 Tim. 6:10, NW.

The operators of games of chance never lose in the long run; the players as a group never win. The mathematical odds are so figured that the operators win heavily. To win the players must count on luck and not skill, on hunches and not logic. As a result most gamblers are inclined to be superstitious, playing hunches and trusting to fortune and fate and chance. The ancients gambled, and they had their gods and goddesses to which they appealed for luck. When the Jews backslid they fell into the evil practices of the heathen nations and sacrificed to false gods and goddesses, some of which were the deities of the gamblers. On one such occasion Jehovah said to his delinquent people: "Ye that forsake Jehovah, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for Fortune, and that fill up mingled wine unto Destiny; I will destine you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter." (Isa. 65:11, 12, AS) Or, as the *Leeser* translation says: "That set out a table for the god of Fortune, and that fill for Destiny the drink-offering." Moffatt's translation states: "Spreading tables to Good Luck, pouring libations to Fate." The Jews got in trouble with Jehovah when they sacrificed to the gods and goddesses of gamblers.

Both Catholic and Protestant church organizations of Christendom conduct a variety of gambling activities. They attempt to justify it on a number of grounds. They say it is not harmful to morals. Many governments think so, making gambling illegal. In some localities where this is so church groups have flouted the law, becoming lawbreakers to pursue their gambling. Instead of giving high leadership in moral matters, many churches have low morals and encourage members to descend with them. Gambling's weakening effects on the moral fiber of men are apparent to all not blinded by their own greed. It was in the interest of good moral standards that Jehovah's law commanded: "You must not covet." (Rom. 7:7; Ex. 20:17, NW) Gamblers covet money not their own, seeking it without earning it. To covet is not morally upbuilding, but is degrading.

Churches use the plea that the stakes are small and hence of no consequence to the players. Jesus said: "The person faithful in what is least is faithful also in much, and the person

unrighteous in what is least is unrighteous also in much." (Luke 16:10, NW) If it is wrong to gamble, the amount is not the deciding factor. We must not violate principles. Satan uses small and seemingly trivial violations as a wedge to open the way for bigger sins. Some things, such as eating or drinking, become wrong only when indulged in to excess, to a degree beyond moderation. But that is not the case with gambling. Small losses accumulate and over a period of time become dollars that could be better used or freely given, instead of being extorted by using hope-for-gain as a pry. But worse than that, petty gambling can grow to a fever and lead to grievous consequences for the player.

Religious organizations have sought to justify gambling by pointing to Israel's casting of lots. True, Israel cast lots, but not for sport or pleasure or material gain. There were no bets or wagers or stakes, no losses or winnings. It was not done to enrich the temple or the priests or for charity. The lots were used merely to show Jehovah's decision or direction in a matter: "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole decision is of Jehovah." (Prov. 16:33, Da) It was a means of ending disputes: "The lot puts an end to disputes, and decides between powerful rivals." (Prov. 18:18, AT) It was not for gambling, and should not be wrested to appear so.

Many will acknowledge that gambling generally is wrong, but think that if it is run by a church to finance its work or to perform charity it is all right. Actually, it is soliciting on a bad basis. It appeals to wrong motives, enticing and luring the victim through his selfish hopes to gain. The giver does not want to give; he wants to gain, to get the money of other players rather than let it all go to the church. If the players would give without the prospect of winning, then all the money could be used for church work, and not part of it siphoned off to return to the gamblers. Gambling was rampant in pagan Rome and throughout its empire, but neither Jesus nor the apostles or other Christians authorized gambling as a means of revenue for the church.

The Bible shows how funds for charity are to be obtained: "Let the stealer steal no more, but rather let him do hard work, doing with his hands what is good work, that he may have something to distribute to someone in need." (Eph. 4:28, NW) We are to give out of love,

not lose by gambling. When Paul was gathering money for the relief of needy brothers he did not commend sad losers, but he did say: "Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9:7, NW) Jehovah is not interested in gambling losses, but in cheerfully offered gifts. In church gambling it is the winners that are cheerful, because the money came to them instead of going to the needy objects of charity. They are cheered by pocketing the winnings, not by giving through losses. It is because churchgoers refuse to give out of Christian love that the clergy stage gambling games to overcome unchristian selfishness and extract money from unwilling pockets. When charity is forced by the lure of winning something, it is not Christian, not how Jesus said it should be: "When you spread a dinner or evening meal, do not call your friends, or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors. Perhaps some time they might also invite you in return and it would become a repayment to you. But when you spread a feast, invite poor people, crippled, lame, blind; and you will be happy, because they have nothing with which to repay you. For you will be repaid in the resurrection of the righteous ones." (Luke 14:12-14, NW) Christendom's gamblers want more than repayment; they want a payment for nothing. They have no faith to look to a payment through resurrection. True Christians are not forced to lose to make them give.

Can a Christian be employed in a gambling enterprise that is legally recognized and allowed? He may think that he can do so if he refrains from gambling himself or allowing his spiritual brothers to gamble through his services. One may be able to conscientiously do this, while another would not be able to do so in good conscience. Each one will have to decide individually whether he can or cannot do so conscientiously. It is doubtless preferable to be separate from the atmosphere surrounding such activities, and the Christian may wisely arrange to make a change in his occupation. It is a matter each one must decide for himself and in accord with his circumstances and conscience. The Watch Tower Society does not decide as to an individual's employment, as we previously stated in the September 15, 1951, *Watchtower*, page 574.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BECOME SKILLED IN YOUR WORK

"Do not loiter at your business. Be aglow with the spirit," was the apostle Paul's wise counsel to early Christians. (Rom. 12:11, NW) Also, Christians today want to be skilled in the ministry so as to efficiently do the work approved by God. "You see a man skilled at his work? He will stand in the presence of kings." (Prov. 22:29, AT)

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES

Week of March 7: The Ransom Merit of Jesus Christ; also, "Release by Ransom," ¶1-3.

Week of March 14: "Release by Ransom," ¶4-28.

✓✓ CHECK YOUR MEMORY ✓✓

After reading this issue of "The Watchtower", do you remember—

- ✓ What embarrassing admission evolutionists made concerning the Piltdown man missing link? P. 67, ¶2.
- ✓ What testimony shows the other famous missing links are no better than Piltdown man? P. 68, ¶3.
- ✓ What proves Mary was not always a virgin? P. 70, ¶4.
- ✓ How a scientist described the social scientists and their polls? P. 72, ¶2.
- ✓ Why the publicizing of the results of sex surveys is unscriptural? P. 73, ¶3.
- ✓ What a preacher said that reflected on the intelligence of every Christian minister that believes the ransom? P. 79, ¶12.
- ✓ Who gain life through Jesus' ransom sacrifice? P. 83, ¶4.
- ✓ Why the "salvation for all" belief is not reasonable or Scriptural? P. 85, ¶7.
- ✓ What is Jehovah's definite purpose in providing the ransom for obedient mankind? P. 90, ¶27.
- ✓ Why gains from gambling are not to be sought by Christians? P. 93, ¶7.
- ✓ Why gambling cannot be justified by pointing to Israel's casting of lots? P. 95, ¶1.
- ✓ Why raising church or charity funds through gambling violates Bible principles? P. 95, ¶3.