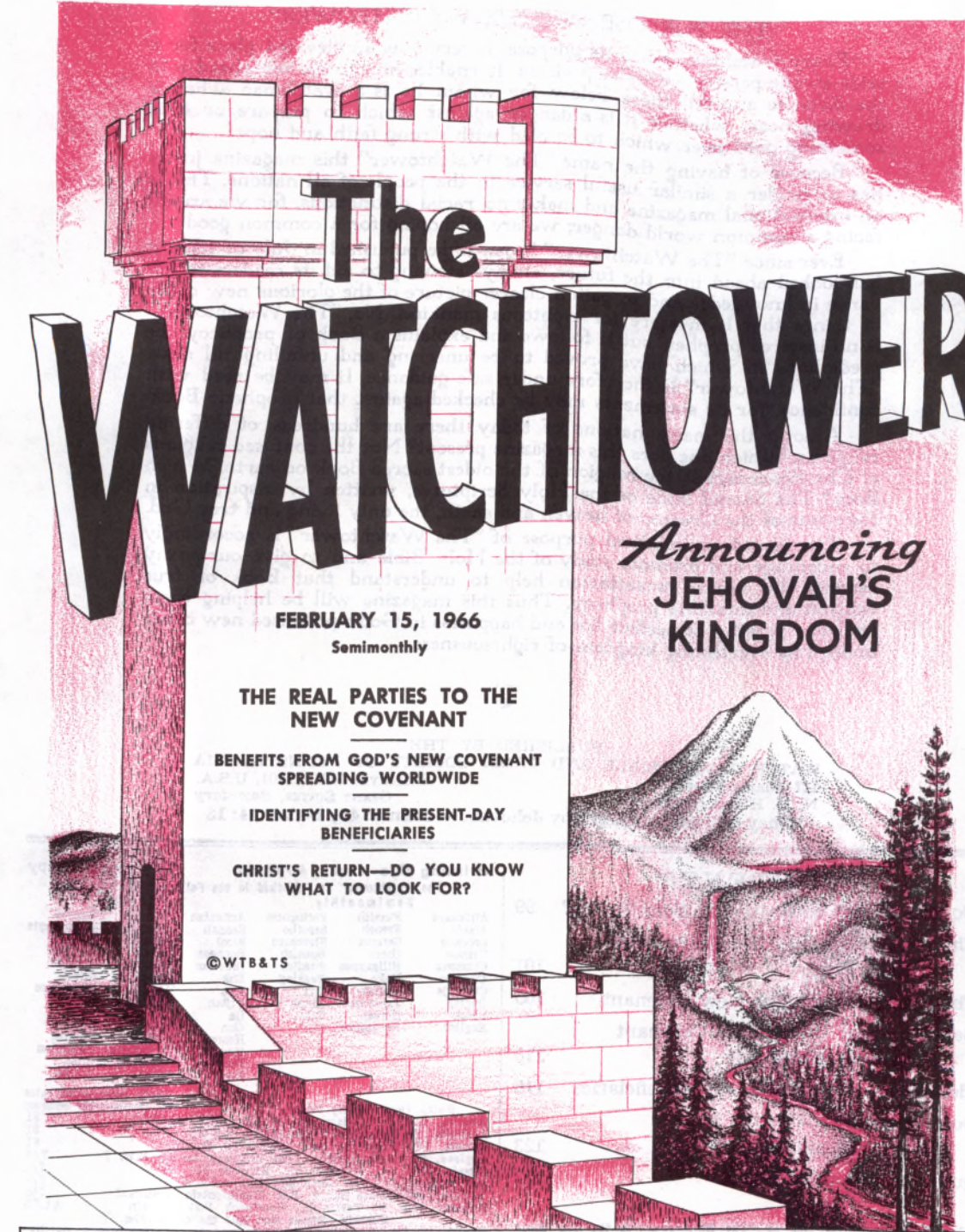




The WATCHTOWER

FEBRUARY 15, 1966

Semimonthly

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

**THE REAL PARTIES TO THE
NEW COVENANT**

**BENEFITS FROM GOD'S NEW COVENANT
SPREADING WORLDWIDE**

**IDENTIFYING THE PRESENT-DAY
BENEFICIARIES**

**CHRIST'S RETURN—DO YOU KNOW
WHAT TO LOOK FOR?**

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Every watchtower has its purpose. It serves as an elevated place for a wide-awake person with sharp vision. It enables him to see far ahead into the distance and tell those below for whom he is a watchman what is drawing near, whether it is a danger against which to prepare or it is something good over which to be glad with strong faith and hope.

Because of having the name "The Watchtower" this magazine justly has to render a similar useful service to the people of all nations. This is an international magazine and makes no racial distinctions, for we are all facing a common world danger; we are all hoping for a common good.

Ever since "The Watchtower" began to be published in July of 1879 it has looked ahead into the future, always striving to aid its readers to advance in knowledge and to gain a clearer picture of the glorious new order of things that is in store for righteous mankind. No, "The Watchtower" is no inspired prophet, but it follows and explains a Book of prophecy the predictions in which have proved to be unerring and unfailing till now. "The Watchtower" is therefore under safe guidance. It may be read with confidence, for its statements may be checked against that prophetic Book.

Among the many nations of today there are hundreds of differing religions. Which one does this magazine present? Not the confused religions of Christendom, but the religion of the oldest sacred Book on earth. Which Book? The Sacred Bible of the Holy Scriptures, written by inspiration in the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, the only living and true God.

The sacred, nonpolitical purpose of "The Watchtower" is accordingly to encourage and promote study of the Holy Bible and to give our many readers the needed unsectarian help to understand that Book of true religion and infallible prophecy. Thus this magazine will be helping them to prove worthy of perfect life and happiness in God's promised new order under His everlasting kingdom of righteousness.



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

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AT - An American Translation	Mo - James Moffatt's version
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Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
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IT IS natural for man to love liberty. But it is not wise to act too independently. There must be a 'give and take,' for we need one another. The very circumstances of life call for cooperation on the part of all of us.

Illustrating the need for cooperation is the item that appeared in the *New York Times*, October 12, 1965, captioned, "Swiss Deport U.S. Citizen in Dispute over His Home." He was deported because of getting involved in many disputes with the local authorities over petty things, such as insisting on building his home nine inches higher than the law permitted. The government held that he was a troublemaker, who either was unable or unwilling to adapt himself to local ways. Deported, he left behind his wife and four small children.

How foolish to make issues over trifles, making trouble for oneself and others! What caused him to act this way? Too much of an independent attitude. Obviously he lacked empathy; he was unable to put himself in the shoes of his Swiss hosts. He wanted everything his own way, and so was deported because he could not fit in, refusing to cooperate with the local authorities. It was an extreme case, which

DO YOU LIMIT COOPERATION TO YOUR TERMS?

highlights a common human failing.

We cannot escape it: Cooperation is the course of wisdom. As a wise king long ago observed: "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their hard work. For if one of them should fall, the

other can raise his partner up. . . . And a threefold cord cannot quickly be torn in two."—Eccl. 4:9-12.

In fact, the animals might be said to teach us the wisdom of this course—although it is no credit to them, as they act from instinct and not from choice. Thus a noted biologist, William A. Wheeler, in his book *Philosophical Biology* points out that there is something fundamentally social in all living things, and that "this must be a characteristic of all life, since every organism is at least temporarily associated with other organisms." He writes that this is true even "of such supposedly unsocial creatures as lions, eagles, sharks, tiger beetles and spiders. There are, in fact, no truly solitary organisms." According to one of America's leading anthropologists, Ashley-Montague, among lower animals cooperation is far more pronounced and important than competition for survival;

and, although a staunch evolutionist himself, he refers to Darwin's theory of survival of the fittest as "Darwin's Fallacy."*

While lower animals cooperate instinctively, it is man's glory that he can cooperate volitionally, out of choice. Cooperation has been defined as 'the act of working with another or others to a common end.' Implicit in cooperation, then, is a goal worth seeking to attain, and it requires that we be willing to yield or "give" for the sake of realizing that goal. In other words, it means the giving up of little things for the sake of bigger things.

For example, a man and a woman wed for the purpose of happy family life. But to realize that goal, each must be willing to make sacrifices for the sake of the other. For either to insist on having his or her own way, or limiting cooperation to one's own terms, would be to frustrate the purpose and shut out family happiness. Yet how often we find married persons doing that very thing, robbing themselves and their mates of happiness by refusing to cooperate on terms other than their own!

For example, a wife might prevail upon her husband to go visiting her relatives, but if he is not particularly fond of them he may do little, if anything, to make the visit a truly enjoyable one. Then, again, a husband might want to bring some friends home for supper, or he might want a certain food. But if his wife does not particularly like those friends or that food, she may go about preparing the meal in an indifferent, routine way, refusing to give wholehearted cooperation, to underscore how she feels about it. How far short each is coming of doing to the other as he would have the other do to him! Yes, and also how foolish! For even as we cannot make others happy without making ourselves happy, so we cannot make others

miserable by refusing to cooperate without making ourselves miserable.—Luke 6:31.

Or it may be at your place of employment that the question of cooperation comes up. The way a certain thing is being done may not make sense to you, but that is no reason for not doing your part, and that to the best of your ability. If the course pursued is not a wise one, most likely time will tell, but in the meantime give it an opportunity to succeed by doing all you can to make it succeed. As the apostle Paul counseled early Christians: "Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah, and not to men."—Col. 3:23.

Especially is this matter of cooperation important where voluntary work is concerned. Where there is a mutual effort for the common good and each one contributes freely of his services or goods, there is often the tendency to take oneself too seriously and to feel free to limit one's cooperation when things are not being done as one would like to see them done, or when one is not given what one feels to be a sufficiently prominent role. Here might be said to be a test of loyalty to the cause, group or organization.

Yes, to limit your cooperation to your own terms can cause the loss of many blessings. In fact, where no principle of righteousness would be violated, there always is a blessing in yielding one's preferences for the sake of others or the common good. It is to man's glory that we can cooperate out of volition, because of wisdom, because of conscience and because of love. It really is a form of giving, concerning which Jesus Christ, the Son of God, said that "there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." So do not limit your cooperation to your own terms. Be willing to sacrifice self-will for the sake of mutual well-being and happiness.—Acts 20:35.

* Darwin: *Competition and Cooperation* (1950).

CHRIST'S RETURN

**—Do you
know what to
look for?**

Many persons during Christ's first presence looked for the wrong things. How can we avoid the same mistake today?

JESUS was born into a nation that was in a state of expectancy. *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (Vol. VIII, page 508) tells us: "After the fall of the Maccabean dynasty, when the despotic government of Herod the Great and his family, and the increasing tyranny of the Roman empire had made their condition ever more unbearable . . . the Jews [sought] refuge in the hope of a personal Messiah. They yearned for the promised deliverer of the house of David, who would free them from the yoke of the hated foreign usurper, who would put an end to the impious Roman rule, and would establish his own reign of peace and justice in its place."

Yes, the majority of the Jews looked for the Messiah to be a conquering Leader, majestically coming forth from Judah and guiding the nation to a resounding victory over Rome, thereby restoring independence and national sovereignty to the Jews. This view was fostered by their religious leaders, particularly the Pharisees. It ap-

pears that the Sadducees did not share this Messianic hope to the same degree but worked toward building up the nation through statecraft and collaboration with the existing political powers.

JESUS CHRIST REJECTED

Jesus did not fulfill the Messianic expectations of the religious leaders who guided the thinking of the Jewish people. Though born in Bethlehem of Judea, he came forth to them from the obscure town of Nazareth in Galilee. (John 7:52) He talked to the Pharisees about *spiritual* liberation from false worship and told them that it was only by remaining in his word that "you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." This was not what they wanted to hear from the expected Messiah; and they self-righteously denied any need for such liberation from sin and wrong worship, calling Jesus a "Samaritan" and, in effect, a 'religious upstart.'—John 8:31-33, 48, 53, 57.

By the Sadducees, Jesus was viewed as a jeopardy, since, in their view, his teachings placed in peril the position of the Jews with regard to the political powers around them. They therefore joined forces with the Pharisees in conniving to bring about Jesus' death.—John 11:45-50; Matt. 16:1; Acts 5:17.

Thus, though the common people generally 'listened to him with pleasure,' actively discussed the possibility of his being the promised Messiah, marveled at his miraculous cures, and even went so far as to try, unsuccessfully, to make Jesus their king, yet on the whole they were adversely influenced by their rulers and religious leaders and were led to reject him. (Mark 12:37; John 7:25-27, 31, 40-42; 6:15; Matt. 12:23; 27:20) With no majestic appearance, no victorious conquests, no national independence, there could be no Messiah present—so they reasoned.

THE THINGS OVERLOOKED

They committed a tragic error. Why? The indisputable evidence of Jesus' messiahship was there to see. He was genealogically perfect for the position; chronologically he had come at the precise time foretold in prophecy; and he was undeniably the promised 'prophet like Moses' who not only performed miracles but even raised the dead, something Moses had never done.* Yes, and his humble appearance, his rejection by the nation's leaders, the manner of his death, and his resurrection—all this was there in God's inspired Word, if only they had given attention to it, in preference to their religious leaders. (Zech. 9:9; Ps. 118:22; Isa. 53:12; Ps. 34:20; 16:10) Instead, they allowed their attention to be focused on the wrong things, particularly Jewish national independence. We even find two of Jesus' disciples, following his death, disappointedly saying: "But we were hoping that this man was the one destined to deliver Israel."—Luke 24:21.

Yet Jesus *had* come as a Deliverer and had done the greatest liberation work Israel had ever experienced, opening the gates and showing the way to freedom from captivity to false religion to which their religious leaders had enslaved them.—Luke 4:17-20.

Moreover, Jesus initiated the Christian ministry, which was to spread genuine Bible education throughout the earth and produce an international congregation with a unity based on love unique among the nations. (Matt. 28:19, 20; John 13:34, 35; 15:17-19) Its members would be anointed heirs with Christ to God's *heavenly* kingdom, so superior to any rule out of earthly Jerusalem.—2 Tim. 4:18; 1 Pet. 2:9, 10.

The foundation for a completely new system of things, capable of bringing to

perfection the whole framework of human conditions, was laid by Jesus' sacrifice of his perfect human life. (Heb. 9:15, 28) How much grander this than even the physical cures of specific ailments that Jesus performed!

THE SITUATION TODAY

What, then, about Christ's second presence? What do we have the right to expect? How can we avoid committing the same error as did the Jews during his first presence?

Beginning in the latter part of the nineteenth century, there was a widespread belief in many countries that Christ's return was imminent. Many held themselves in readiness for him to appear suddenly, majestically riding literal clouds, gathering up his chosen ones, resurrecting all the dead and then judging them individually (along with the rest of earth's living millions), all in twenty-four hours.

Many religious leaders, however, rejected the idea of any direct personal intervention by Christ in earth's affairs. They taught that Christ's kingdom is diffused in the hearts of men and that the Christian church by its moral force will, in co-operation with "Christian" governments, steadily bring mankind toward union with Christ.

What should we believe? How can we know what to look for? Certainly we need to be guided by God's Word, the Bible, and by what Jesus himself, as well as his inspired disciples, said about his second coming. Why not now read Matthew 24, 25, Luke 21, Mark 13, and 2 Timothy 3:1-5, which contain some of the most prominent prophecies telling us what to look for at Christ's return?

THE TRUE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S RETURN

In reading the above scriptures, we find that neither Jesus nor his apostles indi-

* Compare Mic. 5:2; Gen. 49:10; Dan. 9:25; Deut. 18:18, 19; Isa. 53:4; with Matt. 2:1-6; Luke 3:23-33; Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 7:11-23.

cated that the time of his return would be a time of international peace and brotherhood, but, rather, a time of international war and violence. (Matt. 24:7, 8) It would not be a time of immediate deliverance from all problems and suffering but a time of famines, plagues, earthquakes, a time of anxiety and distress of nations. (Luke 21:11, 25, 26) Not a time of morality and goodness, but a time of "lawlessness" and of "critical times hard to deal with" due to money-loving, pleasure-loving, uncontrolled, unthankful, delinquent and hypocritically religious men. (Matt. 24:12; 2 Tim. 3:1-5) Jesus did not say that the glad announcement regarding his return and the establishment of his kingdom would be made by prominent, honored, socially popular religious leaders and clergymen. He said it would be announced by persons who would be persecuted and hated by "all the nations" and who would be haled into courts and imprisoned.—Matt. 24:9, 14; Luke 21:12-19.

Compare this with what has taken place since the year 1914. For over thirty years before that date and for half a century since, Jehovah's witnesses have pointed to the year 1914 as the time for the end of "the appointed times of the nations" and the time in which Christ would begin his Kingdom rule. (Luke 21:24) The world-shaking events that began with that year led a group of eight prominent clergymen in Britain to publish a manifesto in the latter part of 1917 stating that "the present crisis points toward the close of the times of the Gentiles" and that the "revelation of the Lord may be expected at any moment." However, after World War I ended, these ministers, like the rest of their clergy associates, became engrossed in national and international matters and discarded their previous declaration relative to Christ's return and the significance of the times. They have since influenced

their religious flocks to reject the preaching of the announcement that Christ's second presence has begun.

Thus, like the clergy of Jesus' day, the clergy of our day have committed a tragic error and for the same reason: They have looked for the wrong things. They have forgotten what Jesus told the Pharisees when they questioned him as to the coming of God's kingdom, namely: "The kingdom of God is not coming with striking observableness, neither will people be saying, 'See here!' or, 'There!' For, look! the kingdom of God is in your midst." (Luke 17:20, 21) The Pharisees failed to recognize Jesus as the Kingdom's principal representative, though he was right among them. So, today, the religious clergy and rulers refuse to acknowledge, and even persecute, the humble men and women whom Jesus sends as his ambassadors to proclaim his Kingdom rule.—Matt. 24:9, 14.

In the past three issues of this magazine we have shown that Christ's second presence is a spiritual return and therefore invisible to human eyes. Now, note what Jesus said, as recorded at Luke 17:26: "Moreover, just as it occurred in the *days* of Noah, so it will be also in the *days* of the Son of man." He also referred to the "*days* of Lot." (Vs. 28) Why "*days*" instead of "*day*"? Because Christ's second presence is not a matter of just twenty-four hours during which he judges people at the rate of over 35,000 a second (as he would have to do in view of earth's vast population). It is, rather, a period of years, just as the "*days* of Noah" and the "*days* of Lot" covered a period of years. During this time the reigning King and Judge is invisibly present and accomplishes a number of purposes. What are these?

THE KING'S PROGRAM

First, he disposed of a major problem: the opposition in heaven of his prime ad-

versaries, Satan and his demons, whom he defeated in a heavenly (and therefore invisible) war and drove into a cornered position down in our earth's vicinity. This did not bring immediate relief for earth's inhabitants but, rather, "woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has . . . great anger, knowing he has a *short period of time*."—Rev. 12:7-12.

Now, from his heavenly throne, the Judge Christ Jesus can direct his attention to earth and reward his faithful followers who are sleeping in death with a resurrection to life in the heavens, that they may "sit on thrones to judge" with him. (1 Cor. 15:20-23; Luke 22:28-30) What about those alive on earth who claim to be his followers? In the parable of the "wheat" and the "weeds" Jesus showed that the world would be full of imitation Christians and that his true followers would have to be separated out at the "conclusion of a system of things." (Matt. 13:36-43) Some who had once served him would begin to say in their heart, "My master is delaying," and would have to be rejected as an "evil slave" class. Others would prove to be of that same "faithful and discreet slave" class as were the apostles and early disciples. Of this "slave" class, Jesus said that he would "appoint him over all his belongings." The "belongings" of the King, Christ Jesus, refer to the earthly interests of his kingdom, which these faithful Christians are to care for as they give out spiritual "food at the proper time." They do this by promoting and expanding the proclamation of the Kingdom message in all the world through an earth-wide preaching campaign.—Matt. 24:45-51.

Also, the King and Judge uses these faithful Kingdom preachers as a sort of "touchstone" in doing a dividing work. From his heavenly throne he, in effect, makes the whole earth a courtroom and

every doorstep a witness stand for householders as he sends these witnesses throughout all nations and thus proceeds to "separate people one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats." The people see, not Christ, but, rather, these faithful followers whom the King calls "my brothers."—Matt. 25:31-45.

In this way a "great crowd" of righteous-hearted persons who hear the announcement of the Kingdom message by these witnesses take their stand for that Kingdom and join in its proclamation. They are drawn into unity as "one flock" with the heavenly Kingdom heirs and are prepared for life in a paradise earth under God's righteous new order.—Rev. 7:9, 10; John 10:16; Rev. 21:1-4.

Since there is a tremendous work to be accomplished, and that in the face of opposition, there is need for endurance, and so the King says: "He that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved. And this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matt. 24:13, 14) Thus when the proclamation and gathering work has been accomplished to the King's satisfaction, he will then act as the executioner of Jehovah's judgments by cleansing the earth of all opposers of his kingdom, both visible and invisible, thereby putting an end to rule of the earth by selfish men and unseen demons.—Dan. 2:44; Rev. 19:11-15; 20:1-3.

The "days of the Son of man" now upon us are days of opportunity, days for action, for making our decision in favor of the now reigning King, Christ Jesus. Those today who persist in waiting for the wrong evidence are in grave danger. May you see clearly the true significance of Christ's return now and act in time to ensure your preservation to life in God's righteous new order, now near at hand.

THE REAL PARTIES

to the New Covenant

"Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant . . . for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more."

—Jer. 31:31-34, AS.

TWENTY years ago, when the United Nations organization was founded, a newspaper (the *New York Post*) described the founding convention in San Francisco, California, as being "the most important human gathering since the Last Supper." That founding convention brought forth an agreement between fifty-one nations in behalf of international peace and security. But what did the Last Supper bring forth to make it superior to any gathering held during the past nineteen centuries till the founding convention of the United Nations? Did it also have to do with any agreement? It did, even though the *New York Post* may not have had this agreement in mind as an outstanding thing of importance back there.

² The United Nations founding convention was held in San Francisco, California, U.S.A., in 1945. The "Last Supper" was held in the Middle Eastern city of Jerusalem in the year 33 of our Common Era. At the opening of the Supper thirteen men were

present in a large upper room in the Holy City. Before the Supper was over, one of the thirteen men had been dismissed by the master of ceremonies. They were celebrating the yearly passover supper along with all the other faithful ones of their nation, eating from a literal roast lamb along with bitter herbs and unleavened bread or *matzoth* and red wine. The passover supper continues to be held by certain religious groups down to this year. Why, then, should that one in 33 C.E. be called "the Last Supper"? Whose last supper was it?

³ It was the last earthly supper of that kind for the master of ceremonies. To the men at supper with him he said: "I have greatly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it again until it becomes fulfilled in the kingdom of God." This also turned out to be the last passover supper that the men spoken to celebrated, for, as matters worked out, they afterward celebrated a supper of a different kind, although it was held on the anniversary date of that same night. It came to be called "the Lord's supper," because it was in-

3. For whom was that the "last" supper, and what supper has been held since on the same anniversary night?

1. According to the *New York Post*, the founding convention of the United Nations in 1945 was the most important gathering since what ancient event, and so what questions arise?

2. When was the "Last Supper" held, where and in what way?



troduced by their Lord, the master of ceremonies, that very night in 33 C.E. It has continued to be celebrated by the faithful followers of the Lord till this year, on the anniversary date of its introduction.—Luke 22:12-16; 1 Cor. 11:20, AS.

⁴ After dismissing the undesirable man from their midst, the master of ceremonies introduced the Lord's Supper to the remaining faithful eleven, using the unleavened bread and the red wine that were still available at the table. He used these two things emblematically. Thus the loaf of bread symbolized his perfect human body that he would allow to be put to death, and the wine symbolized his life-blood that he would shed when suffering an innocent man's death at the hands of his enemies. It was to become a yearly celebration in memory of a perfect human sacrifice offered to God in behalf of the sins of the world of mankind.—Matt. 26:26-30.

⁵ When he handed to them the cup of wine to pass from one to another and to drink from, he said: "This cup means the new covenant by virtue of my blood, which is to be poured out in your behalf." (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25) Ah, here we have the mention of a covenant. Jesus Christ, the speaker, called it a new covenant. It was to be a new one, in contrast with another covenant that would thus become old and pass away. It is possible and likely that the eleven men who drank from the cup of wine remembered the ancient prophecy of how God would make a new covenant with his chosen people. This, of course, had nothing to do with the famous covenant of the year 1919-1920, which "Covenant" was

the Constitution of the League of Nations, which was established after World War I but is now dead together with its "Covenant." The prophesied "new covenant" continues in force until now, and its benefits are spreading to people of all nations. What is it?

⁶ "Covenant, in law," says *The Encyclopedia Americana* (edition of 1929), is "an agreement between two or more persons, entered into by deed, whereby one of the parties promises the performance or non-performance of certain acts, or that a given state of things does or shall, or does not or shall not, exist."

⁷ Inasmuch as the prophesied "new covenant" is first mentioned in the sacred Hebrew Scriptures, *The Encyclopædia Britannica* (eleventh edition) says very appropriately:

Covenant . . . a mutual agreement of two or more parties, or an undertaking made by one of the parties. In the Bible the Hebrew word ברית, *berith*, is used widely for many kinds of agreements; it is then applied to a contract between two persons or to a treaty between two nations, such as the covenant made between Abimelech and Isaac, representing a treaty between the Israelites and the Philistines (Genesis 26:26 . . .); more particularly to an engagement made between God and men, or such agreements as, by the observance of a religious rite, regarded God as a party to the engagement. Two suggestions have been made for the derivation of *berith*: (1) tracing the word from a root "to cut," and the reference is to the primitive rite of cutting victims into parts, between which the parties to an agreement passed, compare the Greek [*to cut an oath*] and the account (Genesis 15:17) of the covenant between God and Abraham, when "a smoking furnace and burning lamp passed between the pieces" of the victims Abraham had sacrificed, . . .

4. When was the Lord's Supper introduced, to whom, and with the use of what things emblematically?
5. When serving the wine cup, what new thing did Jesus Christ mention, and how long has it been in force?

6. In law, what is a covenant, according to *The Americana*?

7. What is the Hebrew word for covenant, and what may be the appropriate derivation of this word?

THE PARTIES THERETO

⁸ Who are the parties to the new covenant, and how may we know whether any of us today are party to the new covenant? Evidently, according to what Jesus said when starting off the Lord's Supper, the parties to the new covenant are (1) his own faithful congregation as represented by those eleven apostles and (2) God, to whom Jesus Christ was offering the sacrifice of his human life. Those faithful eleven apostles were circumcised Jews, and so we ask, Is the new covenant made between God and only Jews? Moreover, does not the prophecy of the new covenant, by its wording, indicate that it is made with only Jews or Israelites in a fleshly way? The prophecy of the new covenant was spoken by Jeremiah the Jewish priest in the seventh century B.C.E., and it reads:

“ ‘Look! There are days coming,’ is the utterance of Jehovah, ‘and I will conclude with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah a new covenant; not one like the covenant that I concluded with their forefathers in the day of my taking hold of their hand to bring them forth out of the land of Egypt, “which covenant of mine they themselves broke, although I myself had husbandly ownership of them,” is the utterance of Jehovah.’ ‘For this is the covenant that I shall conclude with the house of Israel after those days,’ is the utterance of Jehovah. ‘I will put my law within them, and in their heart I shall write it. And I will become their God, and they themselves will become my people.’ ‘And they will no more teach each one his companion and each one his brother, saying, “Know Jehovah!” for they will all of them know me, from the least one of them even to the greatest one of them,’ is the utter-

ance of Jehovah. ‘For I shall forgive their error, and their sin I shall remember no more.’ ”—Jer. 31:31-34.

¹⁰ That prophecy was delivered by Jeremiah to the natural-born, circumcised tribesmen of Judah and Israel of his day. With their forefathers Jehovah God had made a covenant when he delivered them from Egypt more than eight hundred years previously. And according to the wording of Jeremiah's prophecy, Jehovah God would at least *offer* to make the promised new covenant with the literal, natural, circumcised Jews of the tribes of Judah and of Israel.

¹¹ Yet the question is, Would the whole Jewish nation, all the tribes of Judah and of Israel, accept the new covenant and agree to enter into it according to the conditions laid down? When God entered into the earlier covenant with them at Mount Sinai in Arabia, he used the prophet Moses as his mediator. When God then proposed the covenant of the Law to the nation of Israel, “all the people answered unanimously and said: ‘All that Jehovah has spoken we are willing to do.’” And later, when the covenant was actually put in force between God and Israel over the sacrifice of animal victims, “Moses came and related to the people all the words of Jehovah and all the judicial decisions, and all the people answered with one voice and said: ‘All the words that Jehovah has spoken we are willing to do.’”—Ex. 19:1-8; 24:1-3.

¹² Today the Jewish people number 12,-867,000 throughout the earth. Do these claim to be in the new covenant? No; but, under the leadership of their rabbis, they

8, 9. (a) Who are the two parties to the new covenant? (b) What prophet was used to foretell this covenant, and what question as to parties thereto does the wording of it raise?

10. According to its wording, Jehovah God would at least offer to make the covenant with whom?

11. To what extent was the old Mosaic covenant adopted by the Israelites, and what question arises as to acceptance of the new covenant?

12. To whom did Jesus offer the wine cup with mention of the covenant, and in what covenant do the Jewish people today claim to be?

stoutly declare that they are still under the old covenant of the Law mediated by Moses at Mount Sinai. Well, then, what about their forefathers nineteen hundred years ago, when Jesus Christ set up the Lord's Supper? To only his apostles he offered the cup of wine, saying: "Drink out of it, all of you; for this means my 'blood of the covenant,' which is to be poured out in behalf of many for forgiveness of sins." Those apostles were all Jews. They accepted this invitation into the new covenant that was to be put in force over the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ. But what about the Jewish nation as a whole?

¹³ Did all Jews there at Jerusalem for the celebration of the passover join in accepting the new covenant as introduced by Jesus Christ? Did their high priests and underpriests, their scribes, Sadducees and Pharisees, enter into a new covenant with Jehovah God, accepting the shed blood of Jesus Christ as the "blood of the covenant" for putting it into force? According to history, not all the Jews did so; only a remnant of them did so.

¹⁴ All the nation, "all the house of Israel," were offered the privilege of undertaking the new covenant. The opportunity was offered first to them to do so. This offer was in full, literal agreement with the wording of the prophecy of Jeremiah 31:31-34. And on the day of Pentecost after Jesus set up the Lord's Supper, the apostle Peter said to a crowd of over three thousand Jews in Jerusalem: "Let all the house of Israel know for a certainty that God made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you impaled." (Acts 2:36) The number of believers then became three

thousand that day. Shortly afterward the number rose to five thousand.

¹⁵ Before the persecution broke out in Jerusalem under the Jewish Pharisee Saul of Tarsus, "the word of God went on growing, and the number of the disciples kept multiplying in Jerusalem very much; and a great crowd of priests began to be obedient to the faith." (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 6:7) But, out of millions of Jews back there, only some thousands accepted the shed blood of Jesus as the "blood of the covenant" and were taken into the new covenant.

¹⁶ *The New Jewish Encyclopedia*, by Bridger, Wolk and Eban, published in 1962 in New York City, does not discuss any "new covenant," but under the heading "Covenant" (Berit) it says:

Jewish tradition looks upon the relation of the Jewish people with God as covenantal. God has imposed certain obligations on and made certain promises to Israel. Israel, in turn, has accepted these obligations and has been confident that He will fulfill these promises. In general, the purpose of the covenant was to spread among the people of the world knowledge of the true God, and to formalize the ritual and ethical requirements of the Law. The promise made by God was that the Jewish people were to be a blessing to all mankind, and a light to the nations. . . . That the western world has accepted the Jewish Bible as a foundation for its thinking, and considered the cultural contributions of the Jews so great as to refer to our civilization as Judeo-Christian is considered to be evidence of the promise partially fulfilled that the Children of Israel were to become a blessing to all humanity. Orthodox and other branches of Judaism to a varying degree accept the doctrine of covenant as well as the "chosenness" of the Jewish people as an eternal fact, in the literal sense of an agreement between God and Israel. It may be noted here that historical Chris-

13. Back there in the days of the apostles, how many or who of the Jewish nation accepted the new covenant?

14. To whom first was the opportunity to undertake the new covenant offered, and how many are reported as becoming believers?

15. Who of the millions of Jews back there also became obedient to the faith?

16. According to *The New Jewish Encyclopedia*, what kind of relationship to God do the Jewish people claim, what was the purpose of this relationship, and how has it been fulfilled?

tianity considers itself the inheritor of this covenant doctrine.—Pages 98-100.*

¹⁷ Well, then, does the new covenant have as the party on the one side only a few thousand Jews of the tribes of Judah and of Israel in a literal sense? Not at all! Jehovah God is the party on the other side of the new covenant, and he let the special, exclusive offer of the privileges of the new covenant continue to be held out to the natural, circumcised Jews for about three and a half years after that Pentecost of 33 C.E. Then the opportunity to be taken into the new covenant was extended to the non-Jewish, non-Israelite nations, and the Italian centurion at Caesarea became a believer in the blood of Jesus Christ as the "blood of the covenant." (Dan. 9:24-27; Acts 10:1 to 11:18) From then onward Jehovah God poured down his holy spirit on the non-Jewish believers and they became his spiritual children, spiritual Israelites.

¹⁸ In that same way, from the day of Pentecost onward, God has poured down his spirit upon the Jewish believers and they have become his spiritual children, spiritual Israelites or Jews. All the believers, whether natural Jews or Gentiles, were brought into the new covenant as *spiritual* Jews, *spiritual* Israelites.

¹⁹ So, after the Italian centurion Corne-

* At Tel Aviv, Israel, on May 25, the third day of the five-day triennial convention of the B'nai B'rith, according to special dispatch to the New York Times, "Former Premier David Ben-Gurion said today that there was a need to revitalize the covenant of the Bible in which a united Jewish people would serve as 'a light to other nations.' In an address that was essentially a dissertation on the meaning of the covenant, Mr. Ben-Gurion gently warned the B'nai B'rith convention of the dangers to American Jews of assimilation. 'There is a great danger to the survival of the Jews in the Diaspora,' Mr. Ben-Gurion said, 'unless Jews everywhere remember the covenant. . . . Our secret weapon as a people is our moral, intellectual and spiritual superiority, which we inherited from the Bible.'"—New York Times, May 26, 1965.

17, 18. (a) Well, then, with God on one side of the covenant, is the party on the other side just some thousands of literal Jews? (b) All those brought into the new covenant are brought in as what kind of persons, and how is this made possible? 19, 20. (a) So since 36 C.E., has it been necessary to be a literal Jew to get into the new covenant? (b) How does the apostle Paul explain this in Romans 2:28, 29 and 9:1-8?

lius was converted in 36 C.E., a believer did not have to be a natural Jew or Israelite to be taken into the new covenant through the Mediator Jesus Christ.

²⁰ This was why the Christianized Jew, the apostle Paul, said: "He is not a Jew who is one on the outside, nor is circumcision that which is on the outside upon the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one on the inside, and his circumcision is that of the heart by spirit, and not by a written code." Consequently, after expressing sorrow because his Jewish brothers according to the flesh came short of their privileges regarding the "adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants," Paul says: "However, it is not as though the word of God had failed. For not all who spring from Israel are really 'Israel.' Neither because they are Abraham's seed [according to the flesh] are they all children, but: 'What will be called "your seed" will be through Isaac.' That is, the children in the flesh are not really the children of God, but the children by the promise are counted as the seed."—Rom. 2:28, 29; 9:1-8.

²¹ These *spiritual* Jews, these *spiritual* Israelites, are now the real Israel with whom the new covenant is made. These spiritual ones and Jehovah God are the real parties to the new covenant. The apostle Paul definitely says so. After talking to the congregation of believers in the Roman Province of Galatia, he says, near the close of his letter: "Never may it occur that I should boast, except in the torture stake of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been impaled to me and I to the world. For neither is circumcision anything nor is uncircumcision, but a new creation is something. And all those who will walk orderly by this rule of conduct, upon them be peace and mercy, even upon the Israel of God."

21. Who, then, are the real parties to the new covenant, and how does Paul indicate this in Galatians 6:14-16?

²² In harmony with that rule in Galatians 6:14-16, the disciple James opened up his letter to fellow believers scattered about the earth by saying: "James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes that are scattered about:

22. By what expression in introducing his letter does the disciple James indicate with whom God makes his new covenant?

BENEFITS

from

GOD'S NEW COVENANT

Spreading

WORLDWIDE

THE entire spiritual "Israel of God" accepts the statement of the apostle Paul, in 1 Timothy 2:5, 6: "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a corresponding ransom for all." The prophet Moses has been dead now for more than three thousand four hundred years and can no longer serve as a mediator between God and Jewish men. But what about the Son of man, Christ Jesus? After his death as a "corresponding ransom," he was resurrected from the dead and was rewarded with immortal life in heaven with Jehovah God. So he has continued to serve as the "one mediator between God and men."

² He is the Mediator of the new covenant between God and the spiritual "Israel of God." In proof of that, the inspired letter to Christianized Hebrews (8:6-12) says: "Now Jesus has obtained a more excellent public service, so that he is also the me-

diator of a correspondingly better covenant, which has been legally established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, no place would have been sought for a second; for he does find fault with the people when he says: "'Look! There are days coming," says Jehovah, "and I will conclude with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah a new covenant; not according to the covenant that I made with their forefathers in the day of my taking hold of their hand to bring them forth out of the land of Egypt, because they did not continue in my covenant, so that I stopped caring for them," says Jehovah.' "'For this is the covenant that I shall covenant with the house of Israel after those days," says Jehovah.' " The writer of Hebrews then goes on to quote God's explanation of the new covenant as stated in Jeremiah 31:31-34.

³ That the new covenant is better than the old covenant of the Law with Israel

1. As regards ability to serve as mediators, how do Moses and Jesus Christ contrast with each other?

2. According to Hebrews 8:6-12, Jesus Christ is the mediator of what covenant, and with whom?

3. How does the new covenant compare with the old one, and why?

according to the flesh, the writer proceeds to show, saying: "How much more will the blood of the Christ, who through an everlasting spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works that we may render sacred service to the living God? So that is why he is a mediator of a new covenant."—Heb. 9:14, 15.

⁴ Later in his letter, the writer tells these Christians that, though they are Hebrews, they have not approached Mount Sinai in Arabia where Moses served as mediator. No, but as *spiritual* Israelites "you have approached a Mount Zion and a city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, and myriads of angels, in general assembly, and the congregation of the first-born who have been enrolled in the heavens, and God the Judge of all, and the spiritual lives of righteous ones who have been made perfect, and Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and the blood of sprinkling." "Now may the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an everlasting covenant, our Lord Jesus, equip you with every good thing to do his will."—Heb. 12:18-24; 13:20, 21.

⁵ In Revelation 7:4-8 the apostle John names the "twelve tribes" of spiritual Israel and puts the number of all these spiritual Israelites as 144,000, or 12,000 in each of the "twelve tribes." Revelation 14:1-5 pictures the entire spiritual "Israel of God" as standing on the heavenly Mount Zion with the "Lamb" of God, their Mediator Jesus Christ. These 144,000 are spoken of, not as being redeemed or rescued from ancient Egypt, but as being "bought from among mankind as a first fruits to God

and to the Lamb." Today the natural, circumcised Jews number 12,867,000, and the non-Jewish remainder of mankind number more than three thousand millions. From this fact we can see that comparatively few of mankind are taken by God into his new covenant as mediated by Jesus Christ.

⁶ Today there must be very few persons who are in that new covenant as spiritual Israelites. These are known and identified by their celebrating the Lord's Supper each year on its anniversary date, namely, on the night of Nisan 14 (Biblical calendar), at which time they partake of the emblematic bread and wine. Records collected world wide the year of 1965 show that about 11,500 partook of the emblems and thus confessed that they are in the new covenant with Jehovah God as spiritual Israelites.

⁷ Since so few persons come to be in the new covenant foretold in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and since they are all to be transferred to the heavenly Mount Zion, very few humans indeed benefit directly from the new covenant. Despite this fact, all the world of mankind stands to benefit from this new covenant. Yes, today, the blessings of this new covenant are not confined to the around 11,500 spiritual Israelites who partake of the emblems at the Lord's Supper. No, but already benefits from it are spreading world wide. Especially benefiting therefrom are the more than a million worshipers of Jehovah God who are directly associating with this small remnant of the spiritual "Israel of God." How this is, and how all mankind, living and dead, stands to benefit from the new covenant can be seen in God's purpose behind his new covenant.

4. So, according to Hebrews 12:18-24 and 13:20, 21, what had those Christianized Hebrews approached, and with what blood were they concerned?

5. According to what the book of Revelation shows, what proportion of mankind are taken into God's new covenant through Christ?

6. How many persons must there be today that are in the new covenant, and how do they identify themselves each year?

7. (a) Hence how many persons benefit directly from the new covenant? (b) Nevertheless, how many on earth are benefiting today from the new covenant, and how many will yet do so?

THE DIVINE PURPOSE

⁸ The new covenant takes the place of the old covenant of the Law with natural Israel. So the purpose of the new covenant can be seen in that of the old one. When, at Mount Sinai in Arabia, God proposed to bring the nation of Israel into a covenant with him through the mediator Moses, God said: "You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, that I might carry you on wings of eagles and bring you to myself. And now if you will strictly obey my voice and will indeed keep my covenant, then you will certainly become my special property out of all other peoples, because the whole earth belongs to me. And you yourselves will become to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." —Ex. 19:4-6.

⁹ Note the expressions "my special property" and "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." By strict obedience to their part of this covenant with God, the nation of natural Israel was to become something. What? God's permanent "special property out of all other peoples." They would also become, not a holy nation with only some members of it serving as priests and others as kings, but a "holy nation" that, as a whole, was a "kingdom of priests." That is to say, every member of this "holy nation" would be a kingly priest. The entire "holy nation" would serve God as a royal priesthood.

¹⁰ Such a thing as this God had in mind, but would he gain it from just the nation of natural, circumcised Israel? If natural Israel were to take advantage of this opportunity and become a "kingdom of priests," O what benefits they could bestow on all the rest of humankind from whom

God took them out to be a "special property" to him, his "holy nation"!

¹¹ More than eight centuries after Moses, Jehovah God inspired his prophet Jeremiah to foretell a new covenant, thus showing that the nation of Israel was failing to meet God's purpose. As a nation they would not become his "special property," his "holy nation," his "kingdom of priests." Over six hundred years later the Mediator of the promised new covenant arrived, Jesus Christ, the Son of God from heaven. He being sinless, perfect as a man, he was able to present the needed sacrifice to provide the blood for putting the new covenant into force between God and spiritual Israel. What was its purpose? Nothing less than that of the old covenant of the Mosaic law. The old covenant missed its purpose, the producing of a "kingdom of priests." Would the new covenant also? No! For the "blood of the covenant" is better than the animal blood that Moses sprinkled on the Law book and the Israelites. There is also a better mediator, one who does not die as Moses did. Hence we read:

¹² "He because of continuing alive forever has his priesthood without any successors. Consequently he is able also to save completely those who are approaching God through him, because he is always alive to plead for them. For such a high priest as this was suitable for us, loyal, guileless, undefiled, separated from the sinners, and become higher than the heavens." —Heb. 7:24-27.

¹³ Because of this very important quality, God's High Priest Jesus Christ can completely save his 144,000 faithful followers, the "twelve tribes" of the spiritual "Israel of God," to become God's "holy nation," his "special property out of all other peoples," his "kingdom of priests." The

8, 9. (a) The purpose of the new covenant can be seen from what? (b) According to what God said at Mount Sinai, the purpose of the Law covenant was to produce what?

10, 11. (a) Did the Law covenant accomplish that purpose, and what indication regarding this did Jeremiah give? (b) Will the new covenant miss its purpose, and what favorable factors are there about it?

12, 13. The continuing alive forever imparts what ability to God's High Priest in behalf of those taken into the new covenant?

fact of the matter is that the apostle Peter applies those very terms to Christians whom he addresses as "the temporary residents scattered about," "the ones chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, with sanctification by the spirit, for the purpose of their being obedient and sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ."—1 Pet. 1:1, 2.

¹⁴ Commenting on the difference between them and the natural, circumcised Jews who rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, the Jewish Christian apostle Peter says: "To this very end they were also appointed. But you are 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for special possession, that you should declare abroad the excellencies' of the One that called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. For you were once not a people, but are now God's people; you were those who had not been shown mercy, but are now those who have been shown mercy."—1 Pet. 2: 8-10.

¹⁵ The spiritual Israelites in the new covenant do not miss its purpose to become a "kingdom of priests." In proof of this the apostle John confesses that this is due to the Mediator Jesus Christ, saying: "To him that loves us and that loosed us from our sins by means of his own blood—and he made us to be a kingdom, priests to his God and Father—yes, to him be the glory and the might forever. Amen." (Rev. 1: 5, 6) Also, in this revelation given to John he sees the symbolic twenty-four older persons giving due recognition to the Lamb Jesus Christ and saying: "You were slaughtered and with your blood you bought persons for God out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and you made them to be a kingdom and priests to

our God, and they will rule as kings over the earth."—Rev. 5:8-10.

¹⁶ That the new covenant does not fail to produce this "kingdom of priests," the apostle John sees later on in the revelation given to him. After seeing Satan the Devil bound and imprisoned in the abyss for the thousand years of Christ's rule as king, John says:

¹⁷ "And I saw thrones, and there were those who sat down on them, and power of judging was given them. Yes, I saw the souls of those executed with the ax for the witness they bore to Jesus and for speaking about God, and those who had worshiped neither the wild beast nor its image and who had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand. And they came to life and ruled as kings with the Christ for a thousand years. . . . This is the first resurrection. Happy and holy is anyone having part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him for the thousand years."—Rev. 20:4-6.

¹⁸ Thus the whole nation of spiritual Israel becomes a "kingdom of priests" along with God's High Priest Jesus Christ. In ancient Israel only the family of Aaron was appointed to be a body of priests under Aaron as first high priest. They were not *royal* priests, not a "kingdom of priests" to rule over the rest of Israel.

¹⁹ Centuries later, when Jehovah God gave the nation of Israel a human king, he raised up David of Bethlehem to be the second king of *all* Israel, without priestly powers. Because of David's heart devotion to divine worship, Jehovah God of his own

14. According to Peter, in contrast with the Jews who rejected Christ, what do the Christians in the new covenant become?

15. How does John show, in Revelation, that the spiritual Israelites in the new covenant do not miss its purpose?

16, 17. How does John, in Revelation chapter twenty, see that the new covenant does not fail to produce according to its purpose?

18. How does the nation of spiritual Israel compare with the priesthood of ancient Israel?

19. Kingly powers were finally conferred upon whom in all Israel, and what covenant was made with regard to this privilege?

accord made a covenant with David for an everlasting kingdom within his family.

KINGDOM COVENANT WITH DAVID

²⁰ This kingdom covenant was made with a man under the old law covenant and was therefore done within the Law covenant. (2 Sam. 7:8-17; Deut. 17:14-20) The man who proved to be the permanent heir of that kingdom covenant was a man born under the Law covenant, namely, Jesus the descendant of David. (Gal. 4:4) However, Jesus fulfilled the Law of the old covenant even to the point of dying as a human sacrifice to God, and in this way came out from under that Law covenant. So his kingdom is not under that Law covenant.—Rom. 7:1-6; Matt. 5:17-19; Eph. 2:13-15; Col. 2:13, 14.

²¹ Of course, Jehovah God had an earlier king in the earth, namely, Melchizedek king of Salem. He was also “priest of the Most High God,” and as such he received religious tithes from the patriarch Abraham, whom he as priest blessed. (Gen. 14:18-20) Melchizedek ruled for a time in the land that was later given to the nation of Israel, but he was never under the Law covenant. King David of Israel was not a successor of King Melchizedek nor was he like Melchizedek. However, in Psalm 110:1-6, King David reports that Jehovah God swore that there would be a priest forever like Melchizedek and that this priest would sit on a royal throne, even at God’s right hand in heaven. King David acknowledged that this coming

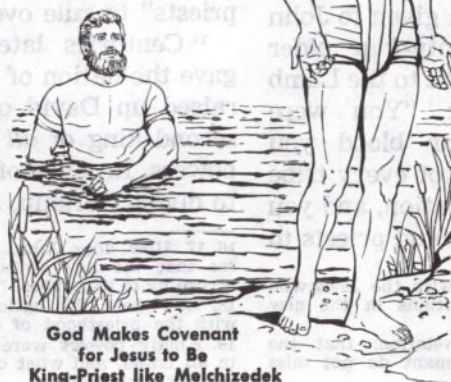
20. That kingdom covenant was made within what other covenant, and how was the kingdom of the Permanent Heir brought out from under that other covenant?

21. (a) Who was Melchizedek, and did David become his successor? (b) However, in Psalm 110:1-6, what did Jehovah swear that has a connection with Melchizedek?

heavenly King-Priest would be his “Lord.”

²² Jehovah God swore concerning this “priest to time indefinite according to the manner of Melchizedek.” This sworn oath had nothing to do with the old Law covenant with the nation of Israel. It was not a part of that covenant nor was it made within it, even as King Melchizedek was never within the Law covenant of Israel. Jesus Christ is the one to whom Jehovah God swore that he should be a priest forever like King Melchizedek. (Heb. 5:5-10) But God does not swear this to the 144,000 spiritual Israelites who follow Jesus and who are in the new covenant. So God’s oath concerning the royal priesthood like that of Melchizedek is a *personal* covenant. God made it with Jesus Christ alone. When did God swear to him in that behalf? It was when God anointed Jesus with holy spirit after Jesus was baptized in water. God’s oath and anointing qualified Jesus to be a Priest, the Mediator of the new covenant.—Heb. 5:4-10.

²³ But as regards the new covenant, it is not a personal covenant. It is a covenant that God makes through a mediator with a people, a whole nation, with the end in view of their being all a kingdom of priests. But with whom will this nation in the new covenant



God Makes Covenant
for Jesus to Be
King-Priest like Melchizedek

22. (a) Was God’s sworn oath concerning Melchizedek a part of the old Law covenant, and was it sworn to the 144,000 spiritual Israelites in the new covenant? (b) When was it that God thus swore in fulfillment of Psalm 110:4?

23, 24. (a) What shall we say as to whether the new covenant is a *personal* covenant? (b) For what does Jesus Christ covenant with those in the new covenant, and what covenant does God first make with Jesus Christ?

be a "kingdom of priests," a "royal priesthood"? This was indicated by the Mediator of the new covenant on the night that he set up the Lord's Supper and mentioned the new covenant. Afterward when his faithful apostles started a discussion as to "which one of them seemed to be greatest," Jesus said: "You are the ones that have stuck with me in my trials; and I make a covenant with you, just as my Father has made a covenant with me, for a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in *my* kingdom, and sit on thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel."—Luke 22:24-30, NW; Ro.

²⁴ Notice that here Jesus Christ speaks of what he calls "my kingdom." He is the one that makes the covenant with his disciples for a kingdom, namely, to be with him in *his* kingdom. But first Jehovah God makes His own covenant for the Kingdom with the one person, Jesus Christ. Afterward Jesus Christ brings his 144,000 disciples into his kingdom with him. To that end he mediates the new covenant between God and his 144,000 disciples, and it is this new covenant that includes priesthood, an office that Jesus did not mention when he talked about making a covenant with his disciples for a kingdom. As a priest like Melchizedek, Jesus reigns in heaven.*

* Jehovah God does not need to make a new Kingdom covenant personally with Jesus for him to come into David's throne, for Jesus came into the ancient kingdom covenant that God made with David naturally, that is, by human birth. Thus he becomes Permanent Heir to David's kingdom. But God's oath concerning a priest forever like Melchizedek is something different. It is a covenant for a heavenly kingdom. It is a *personal* Kingdom covenant, made only with Jesus Christ. Thus those two covenants concerning kingdom did not apply to the nation of Israel or to Christ's disciples, but only to Jesus Christ himself. On the other hand, the new covenant is made *through* a mediator, Jesus Christ, with his 144,000 disciples. This new covenant with the "holy nation" of spiritual Israelites is what brings forth the "kingdom of priests," to serve under Jesus Christ, the King-Priest like Melchizedek. Hence Jesus appointed a kingdom to his disciples in Luke 22:28-30. Hence we must

"KINGDOM OF PRIESTS"

²⁵ The new covenant is limited to just the "holy nation" of 144,000 spiritual Israelites. Yet the benefits resulting from this covenant will be worldwide. How so? Because it produces a "kingdom of priests," a "royal priesthood," to serve under the royal High Priest Jesus Christ, the King-

Priest like Melchizedek. By the new covenant God produces a "royal priesthood" under Jesus Christ for the benefit of all the world. The bene-

fits from this "kingdom of priests" produced by the new covenant will become especially manifest during the thousand years when they "will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him."—Rev. 20:4-6.

²⁶ However, the benefits from the new covenant have already begun to spread world wide. Nineteen centuries ago the apostle Paul wrote to spiritual Israelites in the city of Corinth, Greece, and said: "Our being adequately qualified issues from God, who has indeed adequately qualified us to be ministers of a new covenant, not of a written code, but of spirit; for the written code [through Moses] condemns to death, but the spirit makes alive." (2 Cor. 3:5, 6) Back there, Paul and his companion Timothy were acting as "ministers of a new covenant." They benefited only the spiritual Israelites, who were brought into the new covenant through the ministry of Paul and Timothy. But today the remnant of the "ministers of a new covenant" are also benefiting mankind in general.

distinguish between the Kingdom covenants that apply to the one person, Jesus Christ, and the new covenant that applies to the nation of spiritual Israel. Jesus Christ became a King-Priest in heaven by Jehovah God's oath, not by virtue of the new covenant.

²⁵ To whom is the new covenant limited, and yet who will get benefits from this, and particularly when? ²⁶ Whom did Paul and Timothy in their day benefit as "ministers of a new covenant," and whom do the remnant thereof benefit today?

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Assume Your Christian Obligations.
- The Additional Obligations of the Overseer.
- The Kingdom of God in the Hands of Christ.

Identifying the PRESENT-DAY BENEFICIARIES

TODAY, in the year 1966, the ministry of the remnant of "ministers of a new covenant" is known among all nations. However, the people who particularly benefit from their ministry are what the last book of the Bible calls "a great crowd, which no man was [then] able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne [of God] and before the Lamb [Jesus Christ]." The apostle John saw the vision of this "great crowd" after he beheld the sealing of the 144,000 members of the twelve tribes of spiritual Israel. (Rev. 7:4-9) Hence this "great crowd" are not in the new covenant, yet they receive early benefits from it because of their associating at present with the remnant of spiritual Israel who are "ministers of a new covenant."

² Who is this "great crowd"? This was long a mystery. In the very first year that the magazine *Zion's Watch Tower* was published the attention of readers was called to this "great multitude." (Rev. 7:9, AV) But it was thought to be a spiritual class of Christians with a heavenly destiny. The 144,000 faithful disciples become the heavenly Bride of Christ, whereas the "great multitude" was thought to be made secondary to this Bride class in heaven like bridesmaids or "companions" of the Bride class.—Ps. 45:14, 15.

1. According to Revelation, chapter seven, who particularly benefit from the ministry of the remnant, and what shows whether they are in the new covenant?
2, 3. (a) When did *Zion's Watch Tower* first call attention to this "great crowd"? (b) Of what was this "great multitude" thought to be composed, and what was their destiny?

³ For instance, the fourth issue of *The Watch Tower*, that of October 1879, said in its article "The Day of the Lord":

It is then, while the "little flock," the "Bride," the "overcoming church," is thus enthroned with Jesus, and while she is inflicting the judgments written, and while the other class of Christians in the church, the carnal-minded ones, left in the world are "washing their robes," that the Lamb feeds them with truth, and leads them (some quickly, others more slowly) unto living fountains of water, bringing, finally, as many as will be led, to the heavenly condition, beyond all tears, pain and sorrow, receiving them into his eternal home; and so we see them (Rev.vii.14) "clothed in white robes and palms in their hands:" and we are told: "These are they that came out of" . . . "the great tribulation, and have washed their robes," etc.; "Therefore are they before the throne and serve God in his temple."—Paragraph seven.

Paragraph nine applies Psalm 45:13 to them as being "companions" of the heavenly Bride of Christ.

⁴ The next article of the same issue, entitled "Reconciliation of the World," speaks of this great company and says, in paragraph twenty-four: "The 'little flock,' or bride company, and the company who come out of the great tribulation (Rev.vii 14,) will ever be given spiritual bodies."

⁵ This early view prevented the real "great multitude" or "great crowd" from receiving the due attention until God's own time. It caused the remnant of the 144,000

4. Out of what was this great company to come, and what kind of bodies was to be given to them?

5. (a) What was the expectation as to whether the "great multitude" would survive the battle of Armageddon? (b) What misdirection did this viewpoint give the remnant of the 144,000?

"ministers of a new covenant" to look for a great company of spirit-begotten Christians to come out of Babylon the Great during the final "great tribulation" upon the whole world, washing their robes of identification clean and shedding their own blood in martyrdom. They were expected not to survive the battle of Armageddon on earth, but to die before its finish. From such a viewpoint the remnant kept looking for the wrong thing.

⁶ In the year 1914 a tribulation greater than any that had yet come since the Flood came. This did not surprise the remnant, for they knew that the Gentile Times, or "the appointed times of the nations," would end about October 1 of the year 1914.

⁷ World War I dragged on for years, and the remnant were persecuted as never before, but they saw no "great multitude" come *en masse* out of the many religious systems of Christendom. Then, as World War I neared its climax, on Sunday, February 24, 1918, the then president of the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society delivered in Los Angeles, California, the talk "The World Has Ended—Millions Now Living May Never Die." It held out a hope of never dying off the earth but of surviving the "great tribulation" that had begun on the earth, clear through the battle of Armageddon and into the new order of things under God's heavenly kingdom by Christ. This talk did not identify the earthly survivors of Armageddon as being the "great multitude" of Revelation 7:9 (AV). It considered them just as people in general who are devoted to righteousness, even though they were not dedicated to God or were not spirit-begotten.

⁸ Five years later, in the same city of Los Angeles, on Sunday, August 26, 1923, the same speaker addressed an audience of more than 30,000 on the subject "All Nations Marching to Armageddon, But Millions Now Living Will Never Die." This speech was the climax to an eight-day convention of Jehovah's people. On the previous afternoon he spoke to the convention on Jesus' parable of the "Sheep and Goats" as given in Matthew 25:31-46. In this talk he identified the "sheep" class as being the earthly class that will survive Armageddon into God's new order under the heavenly kingdom. At the close of the talk he read and moved adoption of a Resolution of seventeen paragraphs, the last of which appealed to the sheeplike people, "that they individually and collectively declare themselves on the side of the Lord and in sympathy with his cause, and be ready to receive the blessings of God's kingdom which he has prepared for them from the foundation of the world." However, no specific effort was made to gather such "sheep."

⁹ At that time Bible Students thought that the new covenant as foretold in Jeremiah 31:31-34 did not apply to the 144,000 spiritual Israelites but was to be made with the natural Jews after the battle of Armageddon. Lectures were given to large public audiences on "Jews Returning to Palestine," and in October of 1925 the book *Comfort for the Jews* was published. Under the subheading "The New Covenant," pages 97-103 discussed this covenant and reserved it for the natural Jews regathered to Palestine. The third paragraph from the end of the book said: "The day of jubilee is come; the good news must be given to the people of Israel and

6. Why were the remnant not surprised when the tribulation started in 1914?

7. (a) During World War I, whom did the remnant not see emerge? (b) What hope did the speech in Los Angeles in 1918 hold out, but whom did it not identify?

8. In 1923, what parable was explained in the Los Angeles convention, and to whom did the last paragraph of the resolution adopted appeal, and to do what?

9. Bible Students then thought that the new covenant applied to whom, and what did *Comfort for the Jews* say in that regard?

then to all the peoples of the earth.—See Psalm 89:15.”

¹⁰ Later the material of *Comfort for the Jews* was embodied in a large clothbound book entitled “Life,” and on July 15, 1929, this book was released to us, to circulate mainly among the Jews.

¹¹ On page 331, under the subheading “All Nations,” it said:

Not only will the Jews be favored with restitution under the terms of the new covenant, but that favor will be extended to all the peoples and nations of the earth. God’s unchangeable promise is, ‘In thy seed shall all the peoples and nations of the earth be blessed.’ That seed is The Christ. (Gal. 3:16, 27-29) This is another reason why the “remnant” of the Christians now on earth have the keenest interest in restitution.

Farther along in the last chapter, pages 340, 341 said:

God promised the land of Palestine to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. . . . They must be resurrected in order that the promise of God may hold good. . . . Jesus declared that these men should be in the kingdom as representatives thereof on earth.—Matt. 8:11, 12. The Scriptures warrant the conclusion that Jerusalem will be the city of first importance on the earth. Long ago God chose to put his name there. When he has restored his faithful men of old, who at all times were loyal and true to him, and has brought them into the land of Palestine, it would be the most reasonable thing that Jerusalem would be made the earthly seat of the government.

¹² Thus, in the year 1929, more attention and interest were being paid to the natural, circumcised Jews than to the “sheep” of Jesus’ parable on the sheep and the goats. These “sheep” were made secondary to the Jews, and after Armageddon they were to line up under the Jews. No special effort was made to gather them

at that time into the “one flock” of the “Fine Shepherd,” Jesus Christ.

¹³ In 1930, the book *Light*, in two volumes, gave a verse-for-verse commentary on the book of Revelation, but it still applied the “great multitude” of Revelation 7:9-17 (AV) to a spirit-begotten class of professed Christians who, after a martyr’s death at Armageddon, would each “get life as a spirit creature,” but secondary to the Bride of Christ. (Volume 1, pages 91-97) Due to this there was no concentrated attention being given to the earthly “sheep” class, the “other sheep” of the Fine Shepherd.—John 10:16; *The Watch Tower*, October 15, 1923, page 310, paragraph 33.

¹⁴ In 1931 the first volume of the book *Vindication* was published. In dealing with chapter nine of Ezekiel’s prophecy it said concerning the people who were to be marked in their foreheads and spared from execution: “The ones marked could not refer to the ‘great multitude’, or ‘tribulation’ class, because . . . they will not be spared in the great time of trouble, but, on the contrary, they are appointed to die. . . . They will not be carried through the time of trouble. They will be forced into the time of trouble to take their stand on the side of the Lord, but must die in order to live as spirit creatures.” Then the book *Vindication* goes on to identify the ones marked as being the earthly “other sheep,” the “sheep” of Jesus’ parable of the Sheep and Goats, which “sheep” will survive the battle of Armageddon into God’s new order.

¹⁵ In speaking of the marking work, page 111 of *Vindication* said that “this work of giving the testimony is not for the purpose

10, 11. (a) The material of that book was later embodied in what larger book, and in what year was this released? (b) According to this book, how were the Jews to be specially favored, and what was to happen to Palestine and Jerusalem?

12. Under whom were the “sheep” of Jesus’ parable on the sheep and the goats expected to line up, and what was the attitude toward gathering these “sheep”?

13. To whom did the book *Light* of the year 1930 apply Revelation 7:9-17, and so how much attention was being given to the “other sheep”?

14. (a) In 1931 the book *Vindication* ruled out the “great multitude” as being the ones marked in their foreheads, because of what understanding? (b) Whom did this book identify as being the marked ones?

15. What did page 111 of *Vindication* say regarding the purpose of the testimony work, and so what work regarding the “other sheep” was not encouraged?

of converting the people of the world and bringing them into some organization, but it is to make known the fact that those who desire to flee from the wicked organization of Christendom may do so and declare themselves on the Lord's side, and thus be in line to be brought through the time of trouble, when the slaughtering begins." Thus no real gathering and organizing of these marked ones, the "other sheep," was encouraged, even in the year 1931, when the remnant of the 144,000 spiritual Israelites embraced the name "Jehovah's witnesses."

¹⁶ Very plainly, the natural, circumcised Jews and the supposed "great multitude" of second-rate spirit-begotten Christians were diverting the attention of the spiritual remnant.* However, in the year 1932 volumes two and three of the book *Vindication* were published, dealing with the remaining twenty-four chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy. By means of these books Jehovah revealed to his people that the prophecies about restoration did not apply to the earthly, natural, circumcised Jews or Israelites, but applied to the faithful remnant of *spiritual* Israel since the year 1919 C.E.—See Volume Two, from page 253 on to the end.

¹⁷ This explanation took the spotlight off the Jews, but it still left the matter of the new covenant to be settled and it also left expectations of the emergence of a spirit-begotten "great multitude" of professed Christians who needed to be helped out of

* Note what *Vindication*, Volume One, page 212, has to say about the confirming or inaugurating of the new covenant with the natural Israelites, when "God's ancient prophets and witnesses will stand as earthly sponsors for the Jews." (Edition of 1931) See also Volume Three, pages 255-257, of the 1932 edition, concerning the inauguration of the new covenant as being future and for all mankind.

16. (a) Thus by whom was the attention of the remnant being diverted? (b) In 1932, what did volumes two and three of *Vindication* reveal regarding the Bible's promises concerning restoration?

17. How did this explanation affect the Jews, but what expectations did *Vindication* leave regarding the "great multitude"?

Babylon the Great, particularly Christendom. Volume Three of *Vindication* said that this secondary spiritual class was pictured in Ezekiel's prophetic temple, which is described in his prophecy, chapters forty to forty-eight.—See pages 240, 265-269.

¹⁸ Two years later, in 1934, increased understanding came. In the issue of April 15, 1934, of *The Watchtower* (page 117, paragraph 10) it declared that the new covenant will not be made with the natural, circumcised Jews in Palestine after Armageddon, but that the new covenant is in force *now*, with the *spiritual* Israelites. It said: "The new covenant was made . . . with and for the benefit of spiritual Israel. . . . Natural Israelites having broken the terms of the law covenant made in Egypt, it would be entirely inconsistent for God to make with that same people a new covenant, which new covenant is higher and more exalting than the old law covenant. This of itself would preclude the conclusion that the new covenant is made with the natural descendants of Abraham." (See also the book *Jehovah*, pages 171-173, edition of 1934.) Such correction of understanding brought great joy to the remnant.

"OTHER SHEEP" AND BAPTISM

¹⁹ Real encouragement, too, was given to the "other sheep" in the *Watchtower* issue of August 15, 1934. In ancient times those earthly "other sheep" were pictured by the non-Israelite man named Jonadab the son of Rechab and the friend of King Jehu of Israel. So the article entitled "His Kindness" spoke of the "other sheep" as Jonadabs or the Jonadab class. In paragraphs 34, 35 it said:

Should a Jonadab consecrate himself to the Lord and be baptized? Answer: Most assuredly it is proper for a Jonadab to con-

18. What increased understanding came in 1934 by way of the *Watchtower* magazine concerning the new covenant?

19. In the issue of August 15, 1934, of *The Watchtower*, what encouragement was given to the "other sheep" regarding dedication, baptism and Bible studies?

secrete himself to do the will of God. No one will ever get life without doing that. Water immersion is merely a symbol of having made a consecration to do God's will, and that would not be out of order. . . . The time is now here for the instruction of the Jonadab or "millions" class, which mean one and the same thing.

And then the *Watchtower* article went on to tell how members of the anointed remnant should conduct meetings with the Jonadab class, saying: "Such studies are now essential and particularly for the benefit of those of the Jonadab company, that they may learn what is the will of God concerning them."

²⁰ However, three months later in that same year, or on November 15, 1934, the book *Jehovah* came off the Society's printing presses in Brooklyn, New York, and on page 182 it still expressed belief in a secondary spiritual class, yet expected to come out of Babylon the Great and take a stand on Jehovah's side. Accordingly, though the book pointed out that the new covenant did not apply to the natural, circumcised Jews, pages 181, 182 said:

The spiritual house of Israel embraces all who, trusting in the blood of Christ Jesus as the redemption for man, have made a covenant to do the will of God and have been begotten of God, and this necessarily includes all spirit-begotten ones, particularly the "little flock." . . . This prophecy is concerning a new covenant to be made with the house of spiritual Israel, meaning that it embraces all of spiritual Israel, including all the spirit-begotten ones, and with the house of Judah, thus identifying the King-

20. According to the book *Jehovah*, issued on November 15, 1934, with whom was the new covenant made as being embraced under the expression "with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah"?

dom company, which company is to be associated with Christ Jesus, who is "the Lion of the tribe of Juda". (Rev. 5:5)—See also page 185, paragraph two.

²¹ Thus this secondary class of spirit-begotten spiritual Israelites was still diverting the attention of the remnant late in 1934 and was taking a place of greater importance than the Jonadabs or earthly "other sheep" class, who were to be marked in their foreheads. (Ezek. 9:4) So these marked ones were not specifically invited to attend the celebration of the Lord's Supper on Nisan 14, 1935.*

DISCERNING THE GREAT CROWD

²² However, great joy was now near for the Jonadab company or "other sheep." A five-day general convention of Jehovah's witnesses was announced. Beginning with

the April 1, 1935, issue of *The Watchtower* the announcements thereof said: "Again *The Watchtower* reminds its readers that a convention of Jehovah's witnesses and Jonadabs† will be held at Washington, D.C.,

beginning May 30 and ending June 3, 1935. It is hoped that many of the remnant and the Jonadabs may find it convenient to attend the convention. Heretofore not many Jonadabs have had the privilege of attending a convention, and the convention at Washington may be a real comfort and benefit to them." (Page 98) "This is a service convention, and it is expected that all

* See *The Watchtower*, as of February 1, 1935, page 47, paragraphs one and two.

† At that time the Jonadabs or "other sheep" were not considered to be "Jehovah's witnesses."—See *The Watchtower*, August 15, 1934, page 249, paragraph 31. ²¹ Thus before the attention of the spiritual remnant, what class was taking a place of greater importance than the "earthly sheep" late in 1934?

²² In the issue of April 1, 1935, of *The Watchtower*, what general assembly was announced, and who were specifically invited to it?

The GOLDEN AGE

JULY 17, 1935

As all who were at the convention were well aware, the special treat for God's people who were gathered in the capital city was Jehovah's identification of the "great multitude" (Revelation 7:9-17) as one and the same with the "Jonadabs" (2 Kings 10:15-23) and the "millions now living that will never die".

At the discourse by Judge Rutherford Friday, May 31, 1935, 4:00 p.m.

Beginning at page 308

the remnant and the Jonadabs will participate in the service.”—Page 110.

²³ That Washington, D.C., convention indeed proved to be of benefit to the Jonadabs. On the second afternoon of this convention (May 31), the then president of the Watch Tower Society addressed the visible audience at the Washington Auditorium and also invisible audiences over radio stations WBBR and WHPA on the subject “The Great Multitude” as foretold in Revelation 7:9-17 (AV). In this speech he pointed out that the long-discussed secondary spiritual class did not exist and that the picture of the “great multitude” applied to no such class. Rather, the “great multitude” was made up of the modern-day Jonadabs, and these had to show the same degree of faithfulness to Jehovah God as the spiritual remnant.

²⁴ The unspeakable joy that the Jonadabs at Washington, D.C., experienced that afternoon was spread to all this class around the globe by the publishing of this revelation in the article “The Great Multitude,” in two parts, in the *Watchtower* issues of August 1 and 15, 1935. Later the *Yearbook of Jehovah’s Witnesses* for 1936 (page 63) said: “This revelation stirred the brethren and stimulated them to renewed activities, and everywhere throughout the earth come the reports exhibiting joy in the fact that the remnant now have the privilege of carrying the message to the great multitude, and these together working to the honor of the Lord’s name.”

²⁵ In the congregations of Jehovah’s people larger privileges of service were opened to the members of the Jonadab class or “great multitude” when the *Watchtower*

issue of May 1, 1937, page 130, announced concerning the companies or congregations:

When there are none in the company capable of filling the places of company servants or service committees and there are Jonadabs who have the ability and zeal, let the Jonadabs be placed on the service committee and give them opportunity to serve.

How providential this arrangement was for the future can now be seen, twenty-nine years later, when the remnant of the “ministers of a new covenant” have dwindled to about 11,500 and it has become necessary for the “other sheep” to provide the overseers and ministerial servants of most of the more than 24,000 congregations world wide.

²⁶ At the celebration of the Lord’s Supper following the above announcement concerning “Company Servant,” the Jonadabs were specifically invited to attend as companions of the remnant on April 15, 1938. (*The Watchtower*, February 15, 1938, page 50) But a grand climax of joy for the Jonadab class or “other sheep” came in 1950. On Saturday night, August 5, 1950, at the international assembly of Jehovah’s witnesses in Yankee Stadium, New York City, it was revealed from the Scriptures that competent men among the “other sheep” now being gathered may be appointed as “princes in all the earth” after the battle of Armageddon along with those referred to in Psalm 45:16.—*The Watchtower*, October 1, 1950, pages 364, 365; November 1, 1950, pages 414-417.

²⁷ Thus at last the dedicated, baptized members of the “great multitude,” the “other sheep,” were finding their proper place in association with the anointed remnant of “ministers of a new covenant.” The

23. (a) At that Washington convention, what revelation was made concerning the “great multitude” of Revelation 7:9-17 (AV)?

24. How was the joy at such a revelation spread around the globe, and what did the 1936 *Yearbook* report about this?

25. (a) How were the service privileges of the Jonadab class enlarged in May of 1937? (b) How providential did this arrangement prove to be for the future, as can be seen today?

26. (a) Thereafter, what event were the Jonadabs specifically invited to attend each year? (b) What climax of joy for the Jonadab class came in 1958 with regard to service possibilities?

27. Where, at last, was the Fine Shepherd now bringing the “other sheep”?

Fine Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, began bringing in his "other sheep" into the "one fold" where the remnant of the "little flock" were already gathered, that there might be even now "one flock" under "one shepherd."—John 10:16; Luke 12:32.

THE SPREADING BENEFITS

²⁸ The raging of World War II during 1939-1945 did not break up the union of the anointed remnant and the earthly "other sheep." So the number of these "sheep" who do good to Christ's spiritual brothers has kept on growing into indeed a "great crowd" at the present time. In the midwar year of 1942 there were 5,232 congregations of Jehovah's dedicated people reporting activities in preaching "this good news of the kingdom" in all the inhabited earth, 160,000 of the remnant and "other sheep" taking part in publishing this message of salvation. (1943 *Yearbook*, pages 221, 222) During this past service year of 1965 there were 24,158 congregations in more than 190 lands, and a monthly average of 1,034,268 publishers from among the remnant and the "other sheep."

²⁹ That meant indeed that the number of "other sheep" already gathered into the "one flock" had increased to a "great crowd," for by then the number of the remnant of "ministers of a new covenant" had decreased to 11,550. These partook of the emblematic bread and wine at the Lord's Supper on April 16, 1965, when a worldwide total of 1,933,089 persons memorialized the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant.

³⁰ Beyond all question, then, the benefits of the new covenant are already spreading throughout the world of man-

kind. According to the terms of this new covenant, the anointed remnant who are in God's new covenant were to know Jehovah "from the least one of them even to the greatest one of them." This knowledge of the Most High God the remnant now have and they are sharing it with the increasing "great crowd" from all parts of the world.

³¹ Furthermore, in the new covenant, Jehovah said that he would forgive the error and remember the sin of the remnant of spiritual Israelites no more. (Jer. 31:34) They have such forgiveness of sin through the perfect sacrifice, that of the self-sacrificing Mediator of the new covenant, Jesus Christ, the "Lamb of God."

³² Today the "great crowd" who have dedicated themselves and symbolized their dedication by water baptism also enjoy forgiveness of their sins through the blood of the Lamb Jesus Christ. They thus enjoy peace with Jehovah God and become numbered among his "men of good will." (Luke 2:14) Jesus' parable of the Sheep and Goats calls them "the righteous ones." Revelation 7:9, 14 pictures them as "dressed in white robes," which robes they have washed and made white "in the blood of the Lamb." God now recognizes them, and so "they are rendering him sacred service day and night in his temple," and he wipes out every tear from their eyes.—Rev. 7:15-17.

³³ As the anointed remnant of the "ministers of a new covenant" keep on ministering, assisted by the "other sheep," the "great crowd" of those receiving the benefits of their ministry on earth increases. Thus even though God's new covenant does not apply to all the world of mankind, its

28. How many congregations of Jehovah's people were there in the midwar year of 1942, with how many reporting preaching work, but how many congregations and publishers have there been in this past service year?

29. What did this mean as regards the increase of "other sheep," and how many memorialized the Lord's death during that service year?

30. As regards knowledge, what was to be one of the benefits of the new covenant, and with whom is this knowledge being shared?

31. What benefit of God's mercy did the new covenant promise, and through whom does this come to the remnant?

32. Who else today enjoy such forgiveness, and how do the Scriptures classify such dedicated, baptized ones?

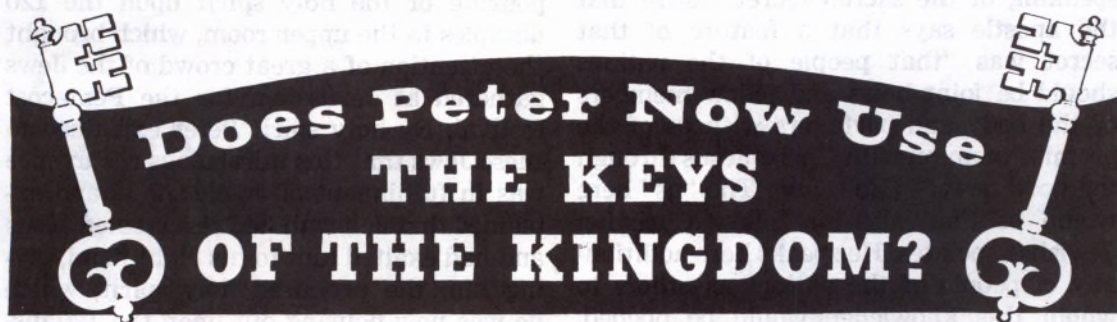
33. (a) How many today on earth are receiving benefits from the new covenant, and through whose ministry? (b) What promise awaits fulfillment when these finish their earthly ministry?

benefits are spreading more and more world wide, bringing life-giving knowledge of Jehovah God and of his reigning King Jesus Christ to the sheeplike people for their eternal salvation. (John 17:3) In God's due time the remnant will finish their earthly ministry. According to the promise of Jesus Christ they will be united to him in heaven.—Luke 22:28-30.

³⁴ Then the "kingdom of priests" that

³⁴ How will those ministers then serve, and who on earth will get the benefits from God's accomplished purpose of the new covenant?

God's new covenant successfully produces will be complete. They will do kingly and priestly service with the great King-Priest, Jesus Christ, foreshadowed by Melchizedek. Then during the thousand years of Christ's reign all the world of mankind, living and dead, will, as never before, get the benefits resulting from God's having triumphantly accomplished the loving purpose of his new covenant.—Rev. 20:4-6; 21:3, 4.



IT IS a common belief fostered by some of the religious systems of Christendom that Peter is the gatekeeper in heaven, and that one can be either admitted by Peter at the gate or rejected. It is true that Peter is now in heaven, for he was a faithful disciple and apostle of Jesus Christ and died a faithful death. He had to await in death in the grave, however, for many centuries until the second coming of Jesus Christ to God's spiritual temple, just as did the faithful apostle Paul. (2 Tim. 4:8) In 1918 he was resurrected to the heavens along with the other faithful members of Christ's congregation who had died prior to that time. But Peter is no gatekeeper. Those who are resurrected to the heavens with Christ are to reign as *kings* and *priests* with him during the thousand-year reign. Then Peter will sit on a heavenly throne as one of 144,000 associate kings, members of the body of Christ, who share

with him in his kingly and priestly rule.—Rev. 14:1-3; 20:6; Luke 22:28-30.

The questions therefore arise, What does Jesus mean when he says to Peter: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens"? (Matt. 16:19) What are the keys? How many are there? When were they used and for what? Who benefits from the use of the keys?

Jesus gave us a clue to what the keys open up when he said to the Jewish Pharisees: "Woe to you who are versed in the Law, because you took away the key of knowledge; you yourselves did not go in, and those going in you hindered!" (Luke 11:52) The keys, then, would have something to do with unlocking knowledge. They would unlock something that had been previously locked up for centuries. They would have to do with the sacred secret of God, his administration of the universe by his heavenly kingdom. (Rom.

16:25; Col. 1:26, 27) While faithful men of ancient times had looked forward to the coming of the Messiah and his kingdom, it was never understood by them that associated with him would be men taken from earth to heaven to be heavenly kings and priests. The apostle Paul explains the purpose of this sacred secret at Ephesians 1:9-12; 3:5, 6.

Since even the faithful prophets of old did not have this knowledge, when was it first opened up? When were the keys used and how many of them were there? In speaking of the sacred secret, notice that the apostle says that a feature of that secret was "that people of the nations should be joint heirs and fellow members of the body and partakers with us of the promise in union with Christ Jesus through the good news." (Eph. 3:6) The "us" here would be Paul and his fellow Christian Jewish associates. He speaks here additionally of people of the nations as others to whom this knowledge would be opened. So there were two keys of the Kingdom, keys that unlocked knowledge. First, the Jews had the opportunity unlocked to them of entering into the heavenly kingdom and, second, the Gentiles were later invited to this great privilege.

FIRST KEY USED

The time for using the keys had to do with Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks of years.* The beginning of the seventieth week was to be marked by the coming of the Messiah and it was, as Jesus appeared exactly on time, in the fall of 29 C.E., to be baptized by John the Baptist, and he was anointed as Messiah the Leader. The Jews were favored by the Messiah's presence and ministry for three and one-half years. Daniel's prophecy also foretold that the middle of the seventieth

week of years would mark the time for the Messiah to be cut off in death. This took place in the spring on the fourteenth day of the Jewish month Nisan, in the year 33 C.E. There were yet three and one-half years to run in this "week" of special favor to the Jews.—Dan. 9:24-27.

Accordingly, the greatest favor ever offered them was that which God held out to them a short time after Jesus' death, at Pentecost, 33 C.E., for at this time Peter stood up and used the first of the keys of the Kingdom. There was a miraculous outpouring of the holy spirit upon the 120 disciples in the upper room, which brought the attention of a great crowd of the Jews gathered at Jerusalem for the Pentecost festival. By holy spirit Peter explained to these Jews that this miraculous occurrence was in fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32 and explained that Jehovah had resurrected Jesus and had exalted him to his right hand, giving him the promised holy spirit, which he was now pouring out upon the 120 disciples. Peter then unlocked the door for these Jews by saying to them: "Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the free gift of the holy spirit." (Acts 2:38) There were three thousand Jews that immediately grasped the opportunity for gaining the heavenly kingdom with the Messiah or Christ. Shortly after this the number grew to five thousand.—Acts 2:1-41; 4:1-4.

During the three and one-half years left of the seventieth week the Christian congregation continued to be made up exclusively of natural Israelites, Samaritans and circumcised Jewish proselytes. It was during this period of time that Saul of Tarsus, outstanding Jewish persecutor of Christians, was converted by the miraculous appearance of Christ himself to Saul. Jesus appointed Saul, who came to be called Paul, to the office of apostle. He came to

* See the book "Babylon the Great Has Fallen!" *God's Kingdom Rules!* by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.

be known as the apostle to the nations or as an apostle or teacher of nations, that is, of uncircumcised Gentiles. (Rom. 11:13; 1 Tim. 2:7) The key of knowledge and of opportunity for entering the Kingdom had been used on behalf of the Jews by Peter. Would Paul be the one to use the key to open similar opportunities to the Gentiles? No, Jesus had given this privilege also to Peter.

The seventieth week of special favor to the Jews continued on. It would end in 36 C.E., the seventh anniversary of the baptism of Jesus. Would the Jews grasp the opportunity of entering Kingdom privileges and membership and fill up the number that God had foreordained for this kingdom, namely, 144,000? The apostle Paul in a later writing explains what took place. He likened the congregation of Jewish candidates who were in line *naturally* for the heavenly kingdom to an olive tree that had a definite number of branches attached to the tree trunk, which pictures the Messiah. As he goes on to show, the Jews failed to take good advantage of this opportunity to make up the complete Kingdom body because of lack of faith in Jesus as Messiah. And so these Jewish branches were broken off. God's purpose had to stand and therefore the vacant places had to be filled to make up the complete Kingdom membership. Paul explains: "A dulling of sensibilities has happened in part to Israel [only a remnant of Israel believed in the Messiah] until the full number of people of the nations [the Gentiles] has come in, and in this manner all Israel will be saved [the complete number of the 144,000 will be gathered out of the Gentile nations, filling up the places of the branches broken off]. Just as it is written [in Isaiah 59:20]: 'The deliverer will come out of Zion [heavenly Zion] and turn away ungodly practices from Jacob.'" —Rom. 11:13-26; Rev. 7:4-8.

SECOND KEY USED

How did it come about that Peter used the second key? Just as in the first instance holy spirit directed him, so in the second instance it was not his own idea. He did not bind up the opportunity exclusively for the natural Israelites until the end of the seventieth week. He did not loose the Gentiles from their restrictions to enter into the race for the heavenly Kingdom. All this was arranged in heaven first by God, not by Peter on earth, as the account of the facts shows.

There was a Gentile man, a devout worshiper of God but not a Jewish proselyte, a centurion named Cornelius. Exactly at the time of the end of the seventieth week, God by a vision and by his spirit instructed Peter to accept Cornelius' invitation to his home in Caesarea, after Peter had hesitated. When Peter arrived and saw the Gentile people gathered there to hear the Kingdom message, he said: "For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial [now to the Jews], but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." Heaven thus directed Peter and he stood up and used the second key by preaching to those Gentiles about the Anointed One, Messiah the Leader, and how he died. He said: "God raised this One up on the third day and granted him to become manifest, not to all the people, but to witnesses appointed beforehand by God [Jehovah], to us, who ate and drank with him after his rising from the dead. Also, he [Jehovah God] ordered us to preach to the people and to give a thorough witness that this [Jesus] is the One decreed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone [Gentile or Jew] putting faith in him gets forgiveness of sins through his name."

The Gentiles listening accepted this Kingdom message with full faith, and Je-

Jehovah God himself showed his approval of Peter's use of the second key by his acceptance of the Gentiles to be grafted in to fill the places the Jewish nation had vacated. (Rom. 11:17-19, 24) The account reads: "While Peter was yet speaking about these matters the holy spirit fell upon all those hearing the word. And the faithful ones that had come with Peter who were of those circumcised were amazed, because the free gift of the holy spirit was being poured out also upon people of the nations. For they heard them speaking with tongues and glorifying God [like on the day of Pentecost]." Peter acted on this indication from God by informing these Gentiles what to do, saying: "Can anyone [Jewish] forbid water so that these might not be baptized who have received the holy spirit even as we [natural Jews] have?" No circumcised Jew present forbidding, Peter "commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ."—Acts 10:1-48; 15:7-9.

NO MORE KEYS NEEDED

The question arises, Did Peter continue to carry these keys of the Kingdom around with him to open to those whom he would and to close to others the opportunities for entering the Kingdom? Are there more keys besides the two? The answers are shown in the following facts. Up to this time Jehovah had divided up mankind into just two classes: the Jews, whom he dealt with as his special people, and the people of the nations, the Gentiles. So only two keys were needed. Neither could Peter use the keys further, for the door was opened to both Jews and Gentiles now. In using the second key Peter did not shut the door to the Jews but merely opened up the opportunity to the Gentiles as well as Jews. From this time on, Jews and Gentiles were on the same basis as to opportunities of entering into Kingdom privileges. There

was therefore no need for further keys and neither could Peter close or lock the door of opportunity thus opened, for the two keys were to *unlock*, not to *lock up* Kingdom opportunities.

The fact that Peter could not close the door of Kingdom opportunity by the use of either key, that, in fact, these keys once used were no longer needed, is strengthened by a circumstance that came about in the Antioch congregation. In Antioch of Syria first the disciples of Jesus were by divine providence called Christians. (Acts 11:20-26) Peter had learned from the circumstances surrounding his use of the second key that the Gentiles were accepted by God. When he afterward came to Antioch he at first went into the homes of Gentile converts and ate meals with them. Neither did he insist upon their being circumcised like Jews before he would eat with them. But certain Jewish Christians came down from Jerusalem and said that James, Jesus' half brother, who was overseer of the congregation there, was of the opinion that Jewish believers could not associate with uncircumcised Gentile believers. This was certainly a question of faith and morals. In this instance did Peter act as the chief of the apostles or as the pope? We refer to the account:

"When Cephas [Aramaic for Peter] came to Antioch, I resisted him face to face, because he stood condemned. For before the arrival of certain men from James, he used to eat with people of the nations; but when they arrived, he went withdrawing and separating himself, in fear of those of the circumcised class. The rest of the Jews also joined him in putting on this pretense, so that even Barnabas was led along with them in their pretense. But when I saw they were not walking straight according to the truth of the good news, I said to Cephas before them all: 'If you, though you are a Jew, live as the nations

do, and not as Jews do, how is it that you are compelling people of the nations to live according to Jewish practice?"—Gal. 2: 11-14.

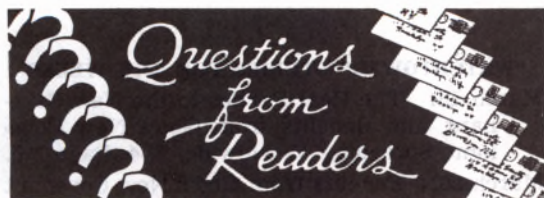
DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY REMAINS OPEN

Here the apostle Peter was publicly reproved, and rightly so, for Peter was not walking straight according to Christian faith and morals. Fear of men was again influencing Peter as it had done when he denied Jesus three times on the night of betrayal by Judas Iscariot. (Matt. 26:31-35, 69-75; Mark 14:27-31, 66-72; Prov. 29:25) It was as if Peter was trying to use the second of the keys of the kingdom of heaven to shut and relock the door in the faces of the uncircumcised Gentiles. But he did not have the power to do so, for the resurrected Jesus Christ said later on: "These are the things he says who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens so that no one will shut, and shuts so that no one opens, 'I know your deeds—look! I have set before you an opened door, which no one can shut.'" (Rev. 3: 7, 8) So heaven did not agree with the course Peter was taking at Antioch. He quickly corrected his course, no doubt, in line with the counsel of his fellow-apostle Paul. This was in agreement with what Peter said when he spoke during the debate over circumcision in Jerusalem. (Acts 15:6-11) And he admitted that Paul had spoken and written correctly when he

wrote in his own second letter to Christian believers:

"Consider the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul according to the wisdom given him also wrote you, speaking about these things as he does also in all his letters. In them, however, are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unsteady are twisting, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction."—2 Pet. 3:15, 16.

Peter did not consider himself an infallible pope, nor did he think he was a gatekeeper to heaven. All this is in harmony with the rest of the Bible, which teaches that Jehovah God, not Peter, is the Great Judge of his people and he uses Christ Jesus as the associate Judge with him. Also, those who do enter into the kingdom of the heavens must grasp this opportunity while on earth and must live a life of integrity. If one enters into heaven, it is because he really has followed Jesus' footsteps on earth. To Jehovah God goes all the credit for his undeserved kindness in opening the way to the kingdom of heaven and selecting those to be Kingdom heirs with Christ. Correspondingly, to Jehovah goes the credit for arranging for the Kingdom rule of the earth and establishing his kingdom in 1914 C.E., with full blessings to begin to be poured out on mankind during this generation by his undeserved kindness.



● Must a person fulfill all vows he made to God prior to becoming a dedicated Christian?
—R. J., U.S.A.

Vows are not to be treated lightly, as indicated by the Bible at Ecclesiastes 5:4-6: "Whenever you vow a vow to God, do not hesitate to pay it, for there is no delight in the stupid ones. What you vow, pay. Better is it that you vow not than that you vow and do not pay. Do not allow your mouth to cause your flesh to sin, neither say before the angel that it was a mistake."

When a person makes a solemn vow to God, he does so voluntarily, not under duress. So

there should be a willingness to fulfill the vow. In view of the seriousness of the matter, the Scriptures recommend careful advance consideration of the obligations one would assume upon making a vow. Proverbs 20:25 states: "It is a snare when earthling man has rashly cried out, 'Holy!' and after vows he is disposed to make examination." Hence, vows to God should not be treated lightly but should be the result of careful advance consideration, not mere emotion or momentary enthusiasm.

Marriage vows serve to illustrate these points. A person may decide that he should get married. Entering wedlock is something he does of his own volition. He acts wisely if he gives the matter advance thought, acquainting himself with the responsibilities that will be his upon entering matrimony. Then, when taking the marriage vow before God and human witnesses, he should view the vow seriously and maintain fidelity to his marriage mate. (Matt. 19:4-6) Regardless of who the marrying agent is, if the marriage is legal, his vow is binding upon him, and it continues to be binding when he becomes a dedicated Christian.

An individual may have voluntarily made some other personal vow to God in years past, prior to becoming a dedicated Christian. It was more than a mere desire or plan in his mind or expressed to a friend; it was a solemn vow to God. He was under no compulsion to

make the vow. However, now he may desire to be relieved of it. He may ask someone else whether the vow is binding. But it should be realized that another person is in no position to relieve the vower of the responsibility he has taken upon himself as a result of his solemn vow to God. This is a matter between the obligated person and Jehovah God.—Rom. 14:4.

Perhaps the vow was not one required by the Bible. Nevertheless, if it did not conflict with the Scriptures, it would be proper to keep the vow, even if this presents problems in later life.

However, before learning the truth from God's Word, a person may have made a vow to do something that conflicts with Jehovah's will. He may become aware of this conflict as he pursues a study of the Bible. What view should he now take of this vow that does not harmonize with God's will as expressed in the Scriptures? He must decide, but it would be an evidence of faithfulness to Jehovah to act in accord with God's plainly stated will. This means taking positive steps, such as desisting from practices or breaking off associations that are unclean and improper from God's standpoint. Such a display of devotion to Jehovah will result in a blessing. (2 Cor. 6:16-18) A person cannot dedicate himself to God through Christ if he does not render such a vow null and void.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELD MINISTRY

Witnesses of Jehovah God have great joy because of their relationship to him and to his anointed king, Jesus Christ. Unselfishly they endeavor to aid others to share that joy, and they do this by taking to them the faith-inspiring message of the Bible. During February, as they share in this Christian work, they will offer to all persons the outstanding aid to Bible study, *The Watchtower*, with three booklets, on a \$1 contribution.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

- March 13: The Real Parties to the New Covenant, and Benefits from God's New Covenant Spreading Worldwide, ¶1-4. Page 105.
- March 20: Benefits from God's New Covenant Spreading Worldwide, ¶5-26, and Identifying the Present-Day Beneficiaries, ¶1-6. Page 111.
- March 27: Identifying the Present-Day Beneficiaries, ¶7-34. Page 117.