The WATCHTOWER

Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

JULY 15, 1966
Semimonthly

THE LONG-SUFFERING OF GOD AN ETERNAL BLESSING TO MANKIND

BE LONG-SUFFERING TOWARD ALL

WHEN IT'S GOOD TO BE TOGETHER

A SIGN THE ASTRONAUTS FAILED TO SEE

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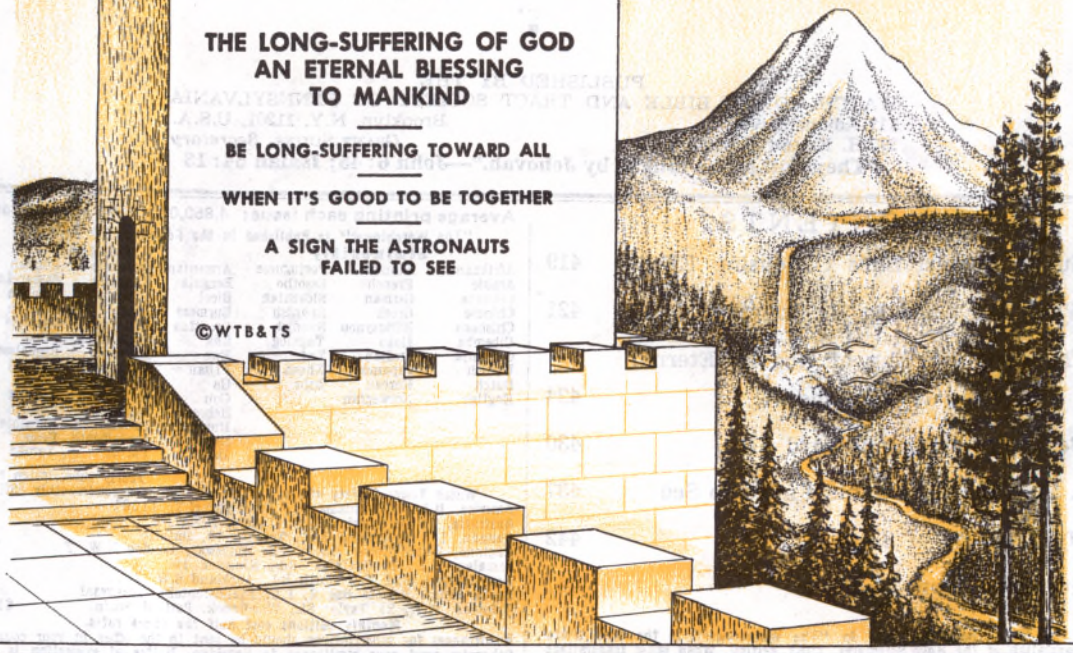

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

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.

PUBLISHED BY THE
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA
117 Adams Street — Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.
N. H. KNORR, *President* — GRANT SUITER, *Secretary*

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

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The Bible translation used in "The Watchtower" is the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures, 1961 edition. When other translations are used the following symbols will appear behind the citations:

AS – American Standard Version
AT – An American Translation
AV – Authorized Version (1611)
Dy – Catholic Douay version
JP – Jewish Publication Soc.
Le – Isaac Leeser's version
Mo – James Moffatt's version
Ro – J. B. Rotherham's version
RS – Revised Standard Version
Yg – Robert Young's version

Average printing each issue: 4,850,000 Five cents a copy

"The Watchtower" is Published in the Following 70 languages

Semimonthly

Afrikaans, Arabic, Cebuano, Chinese, Chishona, Cibemba, Cinyanja, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hiligaynon, Iloko, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Portuguese, Sesotho, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Twi, Xhosa, Zulu

Monthly

Armenian, Bengali, Bicol, Burmese, Croatian, Efik, Ewe, Fijian, Ga, Gun, Hebrew, Hungarian, Ibanag, Ibo, Icelandic, Kanarese, Kikongo, Lingala, Malagasy, Malayalam, Marathi, Melanesian-Pidgin, Motu, Pampango, Papiamento, Polish, Russian, Samar-Leyte, Samoan, Serbian, Siamese, Silozi, Sinhalese, Swahili, Tamil, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Yoruba

Watch Tower Society offices	Yearly subscription rates for semimonthly editions
America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201	$1
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W.	$1
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto 19, Ontario	$1
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London N.W. 7	7/6
Jamaica, W.I., 41 Trafalgar Rd., Kingston 10	7/-
New Zealand, 621 New North Rd., Auckland S.W. 1	7/-
South Africa, Private Bag 2, P.O. Elandsfontein, Transvaal	70c
Trinidad, W.I., 21 Taylor St., Woodbrook, Port of Spain	$1.75

Monthly editions cost half the above rates.

Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to Brooklyn. **Notice of expiration** is sent at least two issues before subscription expires.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS should reach us thirty days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). Write Watchtower, 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, New York 11201, U.S.A.

Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. — Printed in U.S.A.

The WATCHTOWER
Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM
Vol. LXXXVII July 15, 1966 Number 14

GUARD AGAINST SIN'S CALLOUSING EFFECT

YOU love what is right, do you not? Of course, you do, or most likely you would not be reading these lines. This being so, you will want to be on guard against sin's callousing effect, which would make you indifferent to what is right and what is wrong.

The Creator has endowed you with a conscience by which you can judge between right and wrong. Lower animals do not have this faculty, just one of the many evidences of the great chasm that yawns between man and beast. A dog can be trained not to take certain things but he cannot be taught that it is wrong to steal. To appreciate moral principles requires reason, and reasoning is beyond the capacity of dumb brutes. It follows that if a man lets his conscience become calloused, seared, hardened, deadened, by repeated careless or willful excursions into sin and wrongdoing, he becomes like the dumb beast. It is as though his moral warning signal no longer works because of his repeatedly violating it. As the apostle Peter warns, he will pay the price of God's wrath for such wrongdoing. —2 Pet. 2:12, 13.

This callousing effect of sin is seen on every hand, even as foretold: "In later periods of time some will fall away from the faith, . . . marked in their conscience as with a branding iron." As of the Israelites in Jeremiah's day, it can be said of them: "Did they feel shame because it was something detestable that they had done? For one thing, they positively do not feel any shame; for another thing, they have not come to know even how to feel humiliated," or how to blush. They are like the unfaithful wife who commits adultery and who says: "I have committed no wrong."—1 Tim. 4:1, 2; Jer. 6: 15; Prov. 30:20.

The callousing effect of sin might be illustrated by the effect of the tobacco habit. Because of the pleasure obtained from satisfying an acquired craving countless millions today keep on smoking cigarettes in spite of the ever-mounting evidence of how extremely harmful cigarette smoking is. Among the latest such evidence, incidentally, is that given out by the American Cancer Society showing that the death rate from coronary disease in the United States among cigarette smokers is three times that of nonsmokers.—New York *Times,* May 9, 1966.

Yes, sin is like that. Those who by carelessness or willfulness let themselves get calloused by sin become indifferent to ever so many worthwhile things. Thus many a middle-aged man has sacrificed the happiness of family, wife and children, be-

cause of an infatuation for some younger woman, which may well have started by flirting. As a result, he becomes more concerned with self-gratification than with having a good name, which God's Word tells us, "is to be chosen rather than abundant riches." Now the counsel to keep considering whatever things are righteous, chaste, lovable, well-spoken of and praiseworthy falls on deaf ears. If he is a Christian minister he may even become indifferent toward having a "fine testimony" from others and even as regards his hope of everlasting life in happiness in God's new system of things.—Prov. 22:1; Phil. 4:8; Acts 16:2; 1 Tim. 3:7.

Today there is so much inducement to sin, against which one must guard himself. To begin with there is the wicked environment in which we find ourselves. Truly these are the foretold "critical times hard to deal with." (2 Tim. 3:1-5) Never before has lawlessness of every kind been so rampant. Ethics in business, politics, religion and family life are at an all-time low. Criminals, far from being deprecated because of their crimes, are being romanticized because of their audacity, skill and success; as in the case of the British thieves who made away with two tons of bank notes to the value of $7 million and of which only about 10 percent has been recovered.—*Life,* April 8, 1966.

Then there are the sinful tendencies within our bodies, even as acknowledged by the Creator, Jehovah God, right after the flood of Noah's day: "The inclination of the heart of man is bad from his youth up." Some 2,500 years later the apostle Paul testified to the same law operating within his members: "The good that I wish I do not do, but the bad that I do not wish is what I practice." But the apostle never relented in striving against it. —Gen. 8:21; Rom. 7:19.

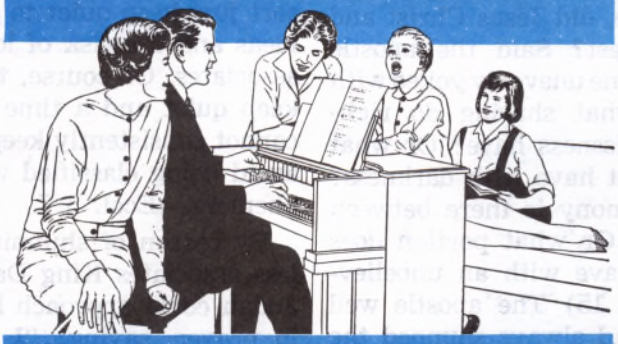
So there is within us a tendency to gravitate downward, against which we continually must strive. It may be the temptation to cheat in school examinations or steal from one's employer or loaf on the job. Unless we strive against such tendencies we will become calloused regarding them and so suffer the loss of self-respect as well as making ourselves liable to more gross forms of dishonesty. Alcoholism, drug addiction and sexual aberrations are extreme cases where more often than not victims do not want to be cured because of the callousing effect of sin.

To guard against sin's callousing effect you must heed Jesus' counsel: "Keep on the watch and pray continually, that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit, of course, is eager, but the flesh is weak." Yes, recognize your weaknesses and erect guards against them. Do as the apostle Paul said he did: "I browbeat my body and lead it as a slave." Not literally beating it, of course, but making it behave. —Matt. 26:41; 1 Cor. 9:27.

Feed your mind on the *right kind of* mental food, in particular read the Bible and related literature; choose as your associates those who feel about these things the way you do. Also, note that prayer, to be of help, must be earnest, "with holy spirit." That means not glibly asking God's forgiveness but resolving and promising him to do better and then acting in harmony with your prayers.—Jude 20.

If in such ways as these you, as the apostle Paul did, 'are exercising yourself continually to have a consciousness of committing no offense against God and men,' you will be guarding yourself against sin's callousing effect and like him be able also to say: "I have behaved before God with a perfectly clear conscience down to this day."—Acts 24:16; 23:1.

When it's GOOD to be TOGETHER



Should truth be compromised to maintain the approval of men? How can you check your associations?

EVERY normal person enjoys companionship. While not all like the noise and commotion of crowds, they are happy to have the communion of affable and cheerful friends. How good it is to be in the company of a group with which you feel at ease, a circle in which you can perhaps find relaxation from the weightier activities and problems of daily life!

No matter where you go you will find the evidences of this strong urge to be together. Humans, like sheep in this respect, tend to flock together. Think of all the societies and guilds, the clubs and associations in which people are drawn together by common interests or in search of the warmth of friendship!

Picnics in the country or by the seashore, campfire chats in the brisk fall evenings, songfests around a piano, all of these are particularly memorable occasions, chiefly because of the joyous friendly togetherness. Even when groups go to see sports events or to hear a musical program, a definite source of pleasure is the company of kindred minds. Attend one of these functions alone, and right away you find there is not the same degree of pleasure. We need one another and we seek one another's association because of a desire that is inborn.

WHEN TOGETHERNESS IS NOT GOOD

In spite of the joys of association, however, it is good to keep in mind that togetherness does not always work out beneficially. There are companionships that can degrade, and others that can elevate. There are those who bring out the worst in you, and those who bring out the best. How vital, then, to have the ability to distinguish one from the other, and the strength necessary to forsake the bad and cling to the good!

Consider, as an example, the situation in early human history when the tribes of earth gathered together on the plains of Shinar. A grandiose scheme was proposed, its motive quite plausible. They would build a great city with a lofty tower so as to hold men together under a central authority. But God's will was for the people to spread abroad over the earth. Jehovah's displeasure at their association became evident when he forced the abandonment of their scheme by confusing their language.—Gen. 11:1-9.

Another association disapproved by God came to view years later when the Israelites entered the land promised to their forefathers. God warned them to avoid any kind of association with the inhabitants of the land. Why? Because he had already doomed the Canaanites to destruc-

tion because of their filthy corruptions, and any association with them would have had the effect of turning Israel from the worship of the true God.—Ex. 34:12; Deut. 7:1-5.

What attitude toward togetherness, even when advanced under a plea for unity and peaceful coexistence, did Jesus Christ and his apostles manifest? Said the apostle Paul: "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. For what sharing do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? Further, what harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever?" (2 Cor. 6:14, 15) The apostle well knew that Jesus had always shunned the companionship of hypocrites, associating rather with humble folk who yearned after righteousness.

PRESENT-DAY DANGERS OF TOGETHERNESS

As in the past so today the cry all too often is for unity without regard to the motive or the objective—peace at any price. 'Come and be one of us regardless of what you believe, as long as you keep your beliefs to yourself,' is frequently the alluring invitation. But whether it is a religious association or simply a small social group, you do well first to investigate their thinking and their objectives.

It so often turns out that a group is dominated by a few who lack respect for God and his written Word. In their circle the open expression of your Bible-based beliefs will be frowned upon. They will tell you that religious discussion divides people instead of uniting them. Yet the same group may be heard hotly discussing some controversial political point. Can it be that their real fear is that discussion of God's Word may bring their habits and practices into judgment?

A definite danger in such association is that you may incur guilt by silence. When the time arrives for open discussion and some of the members lie about God and his Word and speak blasphemously, it takes a person of strong faith to speak out in support of truth. Usually the timorous sort just keep quiet to avoid a collision of ideas and the risk of losing the esteem of associates. Of course, there is "a time to keep quiet and a time to speak," but we cannot consistently keep quiet if we would avoid being classified with liars and blasphemers.—Eccl. 3:7.

By reason of shunning selfish and godless associates King David of the tribe of Judah could approach his God confidently in prayer, saying: "I have not sat with men of untruth; and with those who hide what they are I do not come in. I have hated the congregation of evildoers, and with the wicked ones I do not sit." (Ps. 26:4, 5) "Those who hide what they are" surely includes those who discourage any and all Bible discussion for fear that their taking a clear stand on some principle may cost them "friends" or bring upon them responsibility to act in harmony with their words.

Even if you find yourself in association with persons who are law-abiding, but who have little faith in God and his Word, their influence could prove to be detrimental. You may find yourself gradually deteriorating to the point where you have more concern about man's approval than you have about God's. Nor can you expect to bring about the reformation of such a group. Is it not more likely that their godless attitudes will rub off on you? The apostle Paul perceived this danger and sounded the warning: "Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits." —1 Cor. 15:33.

SEEKING HAPPINESS IN RIGHT ASSOCIATION

Divine wisdom informs us that "a true companion is loving all the time, and is a brother that is born for when there is distress." (Prov. 17:17) It is always delightful to be together with associates of this kind, for they will honor your Bible-founded beliefs and, should you incur persecution for your faith, they are always ready to support and sustain you. They are not ashamed to own you as their brother in the day of distress.

There is only one place to gain such strong and unbreakable friendship, and that is in the congregation of God's true witnesses. Among them there is no aversion to speaking the truth and discussing God's Word and its principles. When adversity comes upon you by reason of your adhering to what is right, they rally to your support and encouragement. Regular association with them at one or more of their weekly gatherings in the Kingdom Hall provides the opportunity for you to build up strong ties of friendship with people who love and honor the Creator.

Of course, there are responsibilities that attach to people who associate together in love for God and righteousness. They cannot be like careless, godless people who must continually seek some new thrill or way to pass the time. No, rather, a worthwhile association leads to worthwhile activities. And in a Christian society wherein people truly bear one another's burdens you soon come to appreciate that serving God in a responsible manner is not something burdensome. It is, in fact, a pleasure.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- What Do We Owe God?
- Baptism Shows Faith.
- Handling Family Problems Before They Grow.
- Are You Irritated by the Message of Jehovah's Witnesses?

WITH WHOM WILL YOU ASSOCIATE?

Naturally each one must make his own decision as to companionships. But the wise person will give heed to God's loving counsel when He warns about godless and self-willed ones: "Do not go in the way with them." Again he reminds us: "He that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly." (Prov. 1:15; 13:20) Through Moses also God expressed his thinking on this matter when he ruled: "You must not follow after the crowd for evil ends; and you must not testify over a controversy so as to turn aside with the crowd in order to pervert justice." (Ex. 23:2) Jehovah looks with detestation upon those who go along unprotestingly with a crowd whose thoughts and actions are at variance with his principles.

Prophesying about these very days in which we live, critical times in which selfish, lawless elements would be influencing the whole of human society to its detriment, the apostle Paul included in his list of wrongdoers those who are "blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful," those who are "without love of goodness," those who are "headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God," and then he solemnly exhorts: "From these turn away." (2 Tim. 3:1-5) In these "last days" of this wicked system of things it is urgent for each Christian to heed that counsel and restrict his companionship to those who love God and who love what is right. Those who follow this course will never be disappointed in their friendships. They will be able to say from the heart, 'It's good to be together.'

The LONG-SUFFERING OF GOD an Eternal Blessing to Mankind

"LOVE IS LONG-SUFFERING."
—1 COR. 13:4.

THROUGHOUT the Holy Scriptures we learn of the long-suffering of God. In the Bible Jehovah is depicted as a God of gentle disposition, One who would rather bless than punish. His forbearance suspends even the deserved stroke, when sin committed cries for vengeance. Jehovah's long-suffering endures repeated provocations from men and angels. He is called by the psalmist a God "slow to anger." (Ps. 103:8) Jehovah suffers long because he is God and because he is love, for "God is love."—1 John 4:16.

[2] Long-suffering is endurance of ill-treatment without irritation or retaliation. It means possessing a spirit that is tolerant of those whose conduct or speech exasperates and provokes to anger or indignation. The literal meaning of the Greek word of which "long-suffering" is the translation is "long-tempered," the opposite of our familiar expression "short-tempered." In three Hebrew Scripture passages (Ex. 34:6; Num. 14:18; Ps. 86:15) the *New World Translation* substitutes "slow to anger," a more literal rendering of the Hebrew phrase "length of face or nostrils, where anger flares up," for the *Authorized Version's* "long-suffering." In many passages, however, such as at Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 103:8; 145:8; Jeremiah 15:15; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2 and Nahum 1:3, the two translations are interchangeable. The two expressions "long-suffering" and "slow to anger" are, therefore, seen to be synonymous or of the same meaning.

[3] The English word "suffer," as used, is given various meanings, among which is: to permit, or tolerate; to hold up, or delay; such as holding up or delaying the execution of a judgment. The Scriptural meaning of the word "suffer" is often the same. It means being slow to express anger, forbearing, disposed to defer, that is, to permit the wicked one to take his own course until God's due time to act.

[4] Long-suffering does not mean a lowering of the standards of justice regarding right and wrong. We are assured of this fact by the prophet Moses who wrote of Jehovah: "The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he." (Deut. 32:4) Those who despise God's forbearance are ignorant of the purpose for which it is manifested. Those who mistake

1. (a) How is Jehovah depicted in the Scriptures? (b) Why is Jehovah long-suffering?
2. (a) Define long-suffering. (b) How is long-suffering rendered in many Hebrew Scripture passages?
3. What is the English meaning of the word "suffer," and how does this agree with the Scripture definition of the word?
4. What does long-suffering not mean, and why?

it for weakness, or for injustice or indifference are simply morally blind.

[5] The long-suffering of God is not pacifism either. It may be and is accompanied by war to the death against evil or wrongdoing. The inspired Proverbs tell us: "Do not become envious of the man of violence, nor choose any of his ways. For the devious person is a detestable thing to Jehovah, but His intimacy is with the upright ones. The curse of Jehovah is on the house of the wicked one, but the abiding place of the righteous ones he blesses." (Prov. 3:31-33; Ex. 20:5, 6) Jehovah does not compromise with the wicked, but is patient with them, "because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance" and live.—2 Pet. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:4; Ezek. 3:17-21.

[6] Long-suffering is, therefore, more than patience. The word implies not merely patient endurance in the face of provocation, but a refusal to give up hope for improvement in the disturbed relationship. This aspect of long-suffering is seen when Jehovah, through the prophet Isaiah, said to ancient Israel: "I have spread out my hands all day long to a stubborn people, those who are walking in the way that is not good, after their thoughts; the people made up of those offending me right to my face constantly." Still God does not disown or destroy them. Why not? The prophet continues: "This is what Jehovah has said: 'In the same way that the new wine is found in the cluster and someone has to say, "Do not ruin it, because there is a blessing in it," so I shall do for the sake of my servants in order not to bring everybody to ruin. And I will bring forth out of Jacob an offspring and out of Judah the hereditary possessor of my mountains; and my chosen ones must take possession of it, and my own servants will reside there. . . . But you men are those leaving Jehovah, those forgetting my holy mountain, . . . I will destine you men to the sword, and you will all of you bow down to being slaughtered; for the reason that I called, but you did not answer; I spoke, but you did not listen; and you kept doing what was bad in my eyes, and the thing in which I took no delight you chose.'" (Isa. 65:2-12) So Jehovah exercised a peculiar kind of long-suffering in behalf of those who would prove faithful to him. These he promises to bless with precious possessions, whereas the wicked he will eventually devote to destruction.

5. Why is long-suffering not pacifism?
6. In what way is long-suffering more than patience, and how is this proved in the case of Israel?

LONG-SUFFERING TOWARD MANKIND

[7] Fortunate for mankind that Jehovah is long-suffering, a God slow to anger. For where would any of us be if he dealt with us only on our merits and deserts? Had Jehovah dealt with the first human pair strictly from the standpoint of his justice after they disobeyed him, the human race would have terminated then and there. (Gen. 2:17) Only God's love and its fruitage "long-suffering" prevented a total catastrophe at that hour. The long-suffering of God had in view the magnifying of his glory by means of the Seed of his promise.—Gen. 3:15; John 3:16; Gal. 5:22.

[8] Shortly after man's expulsion from Eden Jehovah had to continue demonstrating his forbearance toward mankind. In the days of Enosh men began "calling on the name of Jehovah" in a reproachful way. (Gen. 4:26) Wickedness mounted with a growing population. Men and angels defied God. A point was reached where "every inclination of the thoughts of [man's] heart was only bad all the time." The divine record says: "And the

7. Why is it well for mankind that Jehovah is long-suffering, and what purpose does Jehovah's long-suffering have in view?
8. (a) How and why did Jehovah have to demonstrate his long-suffering before the Flood? (b) What vital purpose did his long-suffering serve?

earth came to be ruined in the sight of the true God and the earth became filled with violence. So God saw the earth and, look! it was ruined, because all flesh had ruined its way on the earth." (Gen. 6:5-12) For the sake of the earth and a few decent souls on it (only eight in all), God called a halt to wickedness by destroying the wicked in the Flood. (1 Pet. 3:20; Gen. 7:17-23) His patience had reached its limit. Nevertheless, his long-suffering served a vital purpose. It justified the decision to wipe the earth clean. Not one of the Flood survivors, not for a moment, questioned the wisdom of Jehovah's mighty act. The long-suffering of God left no room for doubt as to its rightness.

9 The forbearance of Jehovah provided mankind with a fresh, new start in the earth. It allowed for the human race to continue. The Flood should have indelibly stamped men's minds with fear and reverence for Jehovah their Savior, but it did not. The offspring of the Flood survivors soon mistook the long-suffering of God for indifference. In the words of the psalmist they said in their hearts: "God has forgotten. He has concealed his face. He will certainly never see it. Why is it that the wicked one has disrespected God? He has said in his heart: 'You will not require an accounting.' " (Ps. 10:11, 13; Eccl. 8:11-13) Wickedness reached another climax in Abraham's day.

10 At Mamre, Abraham, the faithful servant of Jehovah, pleaded with God not to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. But Jehovah argued that these cities had become totally corrupt. "The cry of complaint about Sodom and Gomorrah, yes, it is loud, and their sin, yes, it is very heavy," Jehovah told Abraham. (Gen. 18:20) Nevertheless, Abraham begged for the preservation of these cities. It appears that he could not believe that they were completely debauched beyond saving. So he pleaded: "Will you really sweep away the righteous with the wicked?" (Gen. 18:23) Abraham felt that there were still some good people left in Sodom, that it would be unfair to the righteous ones there to destroy it. So he begged God: "Suppose there are fifty righteous men in the midst of the city. Will you, then, sweep them away and not pardon the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are inside it? It is unthinkable of you that you are acting in this manner to put to death the righteous man with the wicked one so that it has to occur with the righteous man as it does with the wicked! It is unthinkable of you. Is the Judge of all the earth not going to do what is right?" —Gen. 18:24, 25.

11 Then Jehovah answered Abraham: "If I shall find in Sodom fifty righteous men in the midst of the city I will pardon the whole place on their account." But Abraham pressed further: Suppose you find forty-five, or just forty, or thirty, or only twenty, or perhaps ten, what then? Surely if there were less than ten decent people left in Sodom, Abraham apparently felt satisfied that it did not deserve to stand. But ten righteous persons could not be found, only four. Many people today feel that the world is not morally and spiritually as bad as Jehovah's witnesses say it is. They speak hopefully of the world. Yet the Holy Bible compares it to Sodom and Gomorrah that were unable to produce ten righteous souls in the day of their judgment. These cities went up in fire and sulphur, a fact confirmed by Jesus Christ and archaeology. This world, according to God's Word, will also have an end.—Gen. 18:26-33; 19:1-29; Luke 17:29, 30; 2 Pet. 3:7.

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9. How was Jehovah's long-suffering a blessing to mankind after the Flood, and how was it regarded?
10, 11. (a) How was Jehovah's long-suffering demonstrated in connection with the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah? (b) What warning example remains in this for us?

12 Abraham did not complain to God when Sodom and Gomorrah went up in flames. He did not bemoan the loss of property or pity the loss of lives there. The ungodly received their due reward. God's exercise of long-suffering obliges, yes, compels the servant of God to be completely satisfied with the justice of God when it is administered. It leaves no doubt in their minds that the wicked were justly dealt with, and that Jehovah indeed is a God slow to anger and full of loving-kindness and truth. It further helps them to appreciate that "salvation of the righteous ones is from Jehovah; he is their fortress in the time of distress. And Jehovah will help them and provide them with escape. He will provide them with escape from wicked people and save them, because they have taken refuge in him." —Ps. 37:39, 40.

GOD'S LONG-SUFFERING AND ISRAEL

13 Nowhere in the Bible is the long-suffering of God so evident as it is in his dealings with the ancient nation of Israel. Here was a people Jehovah had rescued from Egyptian slavery and made them into a mighty nation. He both favored and distinguished them above all other peoples. Upon them he showered both temporal and spiritual benefits over a period of many centuries. At length he even sent his only-begotten Son among them. Even though they put his Son to death on the torture stake, Jehovah had, in infinite mercy, ordered the first proposals of his good news to be made to them. He besought them, by his prophets, apostles and ministers, to accept of his salvation by means of his Son Jesus Christ. Still the vast majority would have none of it. They strangely mistook the design of God's goodness. It ought to have led them to repentance, as it did a remnant, but, instead, the greater number by far were aggravated at the kindness of God and were base in their ingratitude. They somehow were led to conclude that God's abundant mercy and long-suffering toward them meant that he would always favor them, however ungratefully they rebelled against him. History proves they were badly mistaken in their conclusion.—See Nehemiah 9:4-35 and Acts 2:14-47; 7:51-53.

14 The long-suffering of God was not wasted on the Jews. It did serve its purpose. It gave a remnant an opportunity for repentance. The discoveries of God's mercy furnished them with motives and encouragements to turn from their wicked past and to do what was right. They thus became recipients of God's favor to become his spiritual sons in a heavenly kingdom with Christ as its head.

15 The Jews, however, that rejected the long-suffering of God were in fact the losers. Their loss meant gain for the Gentiles who had been afforded the opportunity to become members of the heavenly kingdom because of Jewish unbelief. Their continued stubbornness resulted in the loss of Jehovah's favor and therefore a loss of his protection and blessing, as was well demonstrated in 70 C.E., when the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman legions. It benefits neither Jew nor Gentile to treat lightly the long-suffering of God.—Romans, chapter eleven.

BEHIND GOD'S FORBEARANCE

16 But why the long-suffering of God? Is it merely for the salvation of men that he has suffered their indignities? Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ, answers for us:

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12. What good purpose did Jehovah's long-suffering serve in connection with these cities?
13. How did Jehovah manifest his long-suffering to ancient Israel, but how was it regarded?
14, 15. (a) Was Jehovah's long-suffering wasted? (b) What further lesson do we have regarding the long-suffering of God?
16. Why is Jehovah long-suffering, according to the apostle Paul?

"If, now, God, although having the will to demonstrate his wrath and to make his power known, tolerated with much long-suffering vessels of wrath made fit for destruction, in order that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory, namely, us, whom he called not only from among Jews but also from among nations, what of it? It is as he says also in Hosea: 'Those not my people I will call "my people," and her who was not beloved "beloved"; and in the place where it was said to them, "You are not my people," there they will be called "sons of the living God."'" (Rom. 9:22-26) In other words, God by means of his long-suffering is taking out a people for his name. And by means of them, he is magnifying himself in all the earth.—1 Cor. 3:9, 16, 17; 2 Cor. 6:16; Acts 15:14.

[17] These ones become Jehovah's witnesses, ordained to declare abroad the excellencies of their God Jehovah. Of them the apostle Peter wrote: "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. 2:9, 10) God's mercy and long-suffering have enabled these to become his sons, his children, or people. "If, then, we are children," wrote Paul, "we are also heirs: heirs indeed of God, but joint heirs with Christ, provided we suffer together that we may also be glorified together. Consequently I reckon that the sufferings of the present season do not amount to anything in comparison with the glory that is going to be revealed in us." (Rom. 8:3, 4, 14-18; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15) What a thrilling prospect, for these make up the heavenly kingdom with Christ! And they are to rule the earth with him for a thousand years, bringing everlasting blessings to mankind. By means of them Jehovah will glorify the very place of his feet, according to his written promise. (Isa. 60:13) Thus we see that behind the long-suffering of God is the vindication of his name and Word by means of Christ and his kingdom.

17. What blessings to mankind have resulted because of the long-suffering of God?

LONG-SUFFERING EXEMPLIFIED IN JESUS CHRIST

[18] Among men on earth, Jehovah's long-suffering was exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul wrote: "We look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus. For the joy that was set before him he endured a torture stake, despising shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 12:2) How long-suffering Jesus was with the sick and the poor! How long-suffering he was with Pilate and Herod! How long-suffering he was with those who staked him, saying: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34) Of Jesus Christ, the prophet Isaiah wrote: "He was hard pressed, and he was letting himself be afflicted; yet he would not open his mouth. He was being brought just like a sheep to the slaughtering; and like a ewe that before her shearers has become mute, he also would not open his mouth." (Isa. 53:7) He did not complain or murmur, but rejoiced in suffering, for he was aware of the joy set before him.

[19] Jesus taught men how to suffer long and with true dignity. By his example, he showed his followers how to put up

18. In whom was Jehovah's long-suffering exemplified, and how?

19. In what way was Jesus Christ's long-suffering an example for us?

with the weaknesses of their associates. Remember how Jesus put up with Peter, Thomas and the other apostles, and how he built them up after his resurrection. (John 20:24-29; 21:15-17) He demonstrated how to put up with the errors and the infirmities of drunkards, lepers and prostitutes. He endured the abuse of ignorant questioners, the malice of evil-minded men, and he did so without repining, without irritation or retaliation, which example recommends itself for us to follow.

[20] There are lessons to be learned in suffering, lessons that even the perfect man Jesus was made to learn. The Scriptures say: "In the days of his flesh Christ offered up supplications and also petitions to the one who was able to save him out of death, with strong outcries and tears, and he was favorably heard for his godly fear. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered; and after he had been made perfect he became responsible for everlasting salvation to all those obeying him." (Heb. 5:7-9) The lesson of obedience must be learned by all those who will gain salvation.—1 Sam. 15:22, 23.

PRESENT NEED FOR GOD'S LONG-SUFFERING

[21] The need for the long-suffering of God in our modern era was highlighted by Jesus Christ, when he said: "Shall not God cause justice to be done for his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night, even though he is long-suffering toward them? I tell you, He will cause justice to be done to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man arrives, will he really find the faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:7, 8) When Jehovah God came to his temple for judgment with his enthroned King-Son, he found a great need to be long-suffering toward those professing Christianity in the earth. Those dedicated to him were steeped in Babylonish religion. Their garments were spotted with religious hypocrisy and political compromises. God suffered long with their weaknesses. In time the honest-hearted appreciated the long-suffering of God and repented of their sins and ordered their lives aright. Jehovah, then, blessed them with the privilege of becoming his witnesses in all the earth. They were given the glorious treasure of service to announce the established kingdom of God and the rapid approach of the war of the great day of God the Almighty at the place called Armageddon.—Matt. 24:14; Rev. 16:16.

[22] Rewarding indeed has been the long-suffering of God. It has resulted in increased glory to God. For mankind it has meant a Redeemer and a renewed hope for everlasting life. (Titus 1:1, 2; 1 John 2:25) Jehovah's long-suffering has made possible a Kingdom government, with many spiritual sons, for the blessing of mankind. In these last days not only has his long-suffering made possible for the number of the body members of the Kingdom to be completed, but it has also opened up a way for a great crowd to respond to God's mercy and receive of his salvation. In addition, it has resulted in true worship being reestablished in the earth and the presence of a society of spiritually clean people dedicated to God's purpose. This is marvelous in our eyes, for if it had not been for the long-suffering of Jehovah no flesh would have been saved. (Matt. 24:22) But now we see the precious fruitage of God's long-suffering with well over a million people

20. What lessons are there to be learned from long-suffering?
21. How was Jehovah's long-suffering manifested in modern times?
22. In what way was Jehovah's long-suffering rewarding to mankind?

praising him. Truly Jehovah has enhanced his glory through his long-suffering!

[23] With this good news, however, comes a word of warning that we individually and collectively not miss the purpose of Jehovah's long-suffering. The apostle Peter wisely cautions us pointedly, saying: "Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise, as some people consider slowness, but he is patient with you because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance." Then the apostle adds: "Yet Jehovah's day will come as a thief." The wicked will be destroyed. We want ever to be assured and impressed with those facts—Jehovah's day will come—the wicked will be destroyed. Since that is the case, "consider the patience of our Lord as salvation." Therefore, take advantage of it. For those who do, there await eternal blessings in the new order of God under Christ, blessings resulting from the long-suffering of God.—2 Pet. 3:9-18; Gal. 6:9.

23. (a) What warning is given in connection with the long-suffering of God? (b) What should Christians always bear in mind so that they do not miss the purpose of God's long-suffering?

BE Long-suffering Toward All

"BE LONG-SUFFERING TOWARD ALL."—1 THESS. 5:14.

AMONG all the creatures of the earth, only man appears to have the divine quality of long-suffering. Even among men it is rare. This is primarily because long-suffering is the fruitage of God's spirit. (Gal. 5:22) Therefore, it can be found mainly among people in whom the spirit of God is at work. The exercise of this fruitage is a blessing indeed, not only to the one who is long-suffering, but to his associates as well. People living today in this impatient, selfish world need to be more long-suffering toward one another.

[2] When we bear in mind that long-suffering is an endurance of ill-treatment without irritation or retaliation, without murmuring or repining, and that it has as its unselfish end the salvation of mankind in view, we are at once appalled at the scarcity of this divine quality among mankind, and we are also impressed at the so great need of it. The need becomes even more evident when we realize that all mankind has been conceived in sin and born into a world alienated from God and steeped in corruption. (Ps. 51:5; 1 John 5:19) Daily survival in itself demands a certain amount of long-suffering, a toleration of minor offenses and injustices. Persons conscious of their personal failings are forever grateful for whatever forbearance does come their way. They actually hope for the tender affections, sympathy and compassion of others. Not to receive mercy and understanding can and often does plunge men into terrible depressions. Many have become overwhelmed under the weighty thoughts of their own unworthiness. So the practice of long-suffering

1. Among whom can long-suffering be found, and why?
2. (a) What facts highlight the scarcity of this quality in the earth? (b) What makes long-suffering desirable?

unburdens their thoughts, gives them a new lease on life, as it were. Long-suffering becomes a precious blessing to them, a quality making life more tolerable and livable for all. It is love's more excellent way, for "love is long-suffering." —1 Cor. 12:31; 13:4.

[3] The servant of God is called upon not only to suffer long under the injustices of others, but he is charged to do so with the proper frame of mind, that is, without grumbling about it. His forbearance must be in imitation of God and Jesus Christ. Jehovah holds no grudges and harbors no ill will or resentment against his opposers. It is this quality of long-suffering that has merit. Jesus said: "You must accordingly be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."—Matt. 5:48.

[4] In addition to Jehovah's marvelous example of long-suffering, the Christian also has added incentives that aid him to bear up under suffering. These he needs, for suffering is never easy. Jesus Christ in his famous Sermon on the Mount briefly touched on what these are, when he said: "Happy are those who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake, since the kingdom of the heavens belongs to them. Happy are you when people reproach you and persecute you and lyingly say every sort of wicked thing against you for my sake. Rejoice and leap for joy, since your reward is great in the heavens." (Matt. 5:10-12) Yes, Jesus drew attention to the reward for suffering evil. And when we compare the suffering endured with the riches of the kingdom and everlasting life, it is a small thing indeed to suffer for righteousness' sake! In fact, we have every reason to rejoice and leap for joy, if we but believe the promises of God. "Brothers," said the disciple James, brother of our Lord Jesus Christ, "take as a pattern of the suffering of evil and the exercising of patience the prophets, who spoke in the name of Jehovah. Look! We pronounce happy those who have endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome Jehovah gave, that Jehovah is very tender in affection and merciful. Happy is the man that keeps on enduring trial, because on becoming approved he will receive the crown of life, which Jehovah promised to those who continue loving him." (Jas. 5:10, 11; 1:12) When under trial for right doing, believe the promises of God and joy will result from your long-suffering.

[5] The apostle Paul also comments on this point of rejoicing during trials and suffering. In his letter to the Colossians, he says: "Be long-suffering with joy, thanking the Father who rendered you suitable for your participation in the inheritance of the holy ones." (Col. 1:10-12) Christian forbearance or long-suffering is to be with joy. This it will be if we consider such suffering a privilege and appreciate that endurance brings approval and approval the crown of life.

[6] Suffering a privilege? Yes! In fact, it is a gift to suffer in behalf of Christ. Note how the apostle Paul makes this point in his letter to the Philippians. He says: "Because to you the *privilege* was *given* in behalf of Christ, not only to put your faith in him, but also to *suffer* in his behalf." (Phil. 1:29) No one with faith will deny that to believe on Christ is a precious privilege, but Paul takes this matter a step farther. He informs us that to suffer in behalf of Christ is no less a privilege and a gift, for a thing given is a gift. And to some extent, "all those desiring to live with godly devotion in association with

3. What other factors about long-suffering must be borne in mind?
4. What aids Christians to bear up under suffering, and how do the Scriptures bear this out?
5, 6. (a) What did the apostle Paul have to say to the Colossians about suffering? (b) How can suffering be termed a privilege and a gift?

Christ Jesus will . . . be persecuted." (2 Tim. 3:12) An appreciation of this fact will help us to understand why it is necessary to be long-suffering toward all.

7 The apostle Paul not only wrote about suffering and being long-suffering, but he had suffered much himself. In his second letter to the Corinthians (11:23-29), he relates some of the things he endured in behalf of Christ. He was imprisoned many times, beaten near death; five times he was whipped with thirty-nine strokes. He was stoned, shipwrecked three times. He knew hunger, sleepless nights and dangers. Yet he calls upon his Christian brothers to be long-suffering toward all. This he could do because he knew the issue involving Christian integrity and because he was convinced of the glorious prize of life that God would give to those who endured. Another factor that strengthened Paul was his conviction that nothing could befall the Christian unless Jehovah permitted it. And if God allowed it to happen, then he as God's servant would delight in the service, whatever the price.—2 Cor. 6:3-10; 2 Tim. 4:6-8.

EXAMPLES IN SUFFERING

8 It is surprising to see this fact of God's will in suffering emphasized over and over again by faithful servants of God. Take, for example, Joseph, the son of Jacob. He was sold into Egypt by his brothers, but he was not angry with them. He was falsely charged and imprisoned; still his spirit did not sour. When after many years he met his brothers and revealed himself to them, what did he say? "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now do not feel hurt and do not be angry with yourselves because you sold me here; because for the preservation of life God has sent me ahead of you." (Gen. 45:4, 5) Joseph saw the guiding hand of God behind all that occurred. This helped him to be long-suffering toward all who wronged him.

9 On one occasion King David suffered the abuse of an evil-mouthed man called Shimei. This son of Gera threw stones at David and shouted: "Get out, get out, you bloodguilty man and good-for-nothing man!" Abishai, a servant of David, wanted to have him killed. But David said: "Let him call down evil, because Jehovah himself has said to him, 'Call down evil upon David!' " (2 Sam. 16:5-13) David endured the humiliation as being God's will. Not many men in positions of power would have done what David did. But David desired to please Jehovah and not himself. This is what helped him to be long-suffering.

10 When Jesus Christ was being mocked, scourged and a mad mob howled for his life, Governor Pontius Pilate curiously asked Jesus: "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Hence Pilate said to him: "Are you not speaking to me? Do you not know I have authority to release you and I have authority to impale you?" Jesus told him what every servant of God who has suffered knows: "You would have no authority at all against me unless it had been granted to you from above." (John 19:1-11) Jesus recognized the will of God in what was taking place. If that meant suffering, then suffer he would and gladly.—Ps. 40:8; Heb. 10:5-10.

11 We see the same mind and spirit in the followers of Jesus Christ down to our day. When Peter and the other apostles of Jesus were flogged for representing Christ,

7. What has been Paul's experience with suffering, and why could he recommend the course of long-suffering to others?
8. What enabled Joseph to be long-suffering toward his persecutors?
9. How did King David respond to abuse, and why?
10. What fact did Jesus emphasize to Pontius Pilate, and how did this aid him to be long-suffering?
11. What spirit do we see in Jesus' followers? Give examples.

they rejoiced "because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of his name." (Acts 5:41) When Paul and Silas were thrown into prison after being inflicted with many stripes, they sang songs of praise to God. (Acts 16:22-25) History abounds with examples of Christians who sang while being thrown to the lions and burned at the stake. Modern accounts of Christian witnesses of Jehovah tell of them as boldly facing the guillotine, gas chambers, firing squads, concentration camps, prisons, salt mines and what have you. These have had impressed upon their minds and hearts the issue of integrity to God. They know why they suffer. And they know, too, the glorious promises for faithfulness, which enable them to rejoice in suffering.—John 15:18-21.

CULTIVATING THE FRUITAGE OF LONG-SUFFERING

12 How can we come to this same appreciation of God's will? How can we cultivate long-suffering in our lives? Long-suffering is a fruit of God's spirit. Therefore, to have this quality we need to have God's spirit. There are primarily four things we must do to gain it. (1) We must study the spirit-filled Word of God, the Bible. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 4:12) By applying its principles in our lives the spirit of God will manifest itself in a new way of life for us. We will then come to appreciate our relationship to Jehovah our Creator and the issue of integrity to God, which involves us. (Job, chapters one and two) (2) We must then associate with those who are interested in carrying out the will of God. Such association will stimulate us to faithfulness. It will aid us to "become doers of the word, and not hearers only." (Jas. 1:22) (3) Prayer is also essential toward gaining and maintaining God's spirit. We must, therefore, learn to pray to Jehovah and to "persevere in prayer." (Rom. 12:12; 1 Thess. 5:17) Jehovah's people know that "a righteous man's supplication, when it is at work, has much force." (Jas. 5:16) And (4), in addition to all of this, there is the need daily to practice the good things learned from the Bible. We need to practice long-suffering toward all. (Phil. 4:9) If we apply this counsel, then we will be the recipients of Jehovah's spirit and the blessings that it brings.

12. How can long-suffering be developed in our life? Give four basic requirements for gaining God's spirit.

MANIFESTING LONG-SUFFERING TOWARD ALL

13 Christians are admonished to "be long-suffering toward all," actually 'to clothe themselves with long-suffering,' 'to walk worthily of the calling with which they were called, with complete lowliness of mind and mildness, with long-suffering, putting up with one another in love, earnestly endeavoring to observe the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace.' (1 Thess. 5:14; Col. 3:12-14; Eph. 4:1-3; 1 Cor. 13:4) How can we best do this?

14 Jesus Christ is our exemplar. And since he came into the world to save sinners, we would do well to pay heed to his example. He left us a sample of his long-suffering in Saul of Tarsus. Saul by his own admission was a blasphemer, a persecutor of Christians, an insolent man, one who approved the murder of the Christian Stephen. Still Christ reached down and made of him a special Christian representative, an apostle, whom we today know as the apostle Paul. To Timothy, Paul said: "The reason why I was shown mercy was that by means of me as the foremost case Christ Jesus might demonstrate all his long-suffering for a sample

13, 14. What are Christians admonished to do? What examples have we to follow? How will this be a help?

of those who are going to rest their faith on him for everlasting life." (1 Tim. 1: 12-16) Let this demonstration of long-suffering of Christ be our sample when we wonder how long-suffering we should be toward one another.—Matt. 6:14, 15; 18: 21, 22; Ps. 103:13, 14.

15 We live in critical times, hard to deal with, where the quality of long-suffering is constantly in demand. (2 Tim. 3:1-5) In the family circle, for example, unless patience and forbearance are shown, the family will be robbed of its joy. It will not prosper. Long-suffering is like soothing oil over heated irritations. Its end is unity and happiness. The apostle Peter gives us some sound advice along this line. He advises wives to be in subjection to their own husbands, "in order that, if any are not obedient to the word, they may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives, because of having been eyewitnesses of your chaste conduct together with deep respect. . . . Let your adornment . . . be the secret person of the heart in the incorruptible apparel of the quiet and mild spirit, which is of great value in the eyes of God." Then to husbands, he says: "You husbands, continue dwelling in like manner with them [the wives] according to knowledge, assigning them honor as to a weaker vessel, the feminine one, since you are also heirs with them of the undeserved favor of life, in order for your prayers not to be hindered." (1 Pet. 3:1-7) The apostle appeals to the marriage partners to consider the spiritual aspect of their lives first, to suffer long under one another's failings with salvation in view, not only for themselves, but for their marriage mate as well.

16 Long-suffering is never the easy way out. It is hope abiding its time. It is prayer serving toward the answer. Some wives have suffered the abuse of their unbelieving husbands for ten, twelve, sixteen and more years, finally to have their husbands come into the way of life. Husbands, too, have done the same. A husband writes: "For twelve years I was the worst enemy of my own wife . . . because she got the truth." He tells about beating her, becoming drunk for spite and being as mean as he possibly could be. "Twelve years thus passed in my wild fight against the truth and against my wife and child," he says. "A short time ago I sat and reviewed the past twelve years of my life. This analysis crushed me. I saw how terribly mean I had been toward my wife, while she had borne everything with humility. . . . The more cruel I was, the more love and mercy she showed. Yes, it is only now that I see all this . . . Two weeks ago I symbolized my dedication to the only true God Jehovah by water immersion, to that God who, during the time of my madness, led my wife and my child in such a wonderful way." A grand reward reaped after twelve years of long-suffering. May this letter be an encouragement to you to be long-suffering toward unbelieving members in your family.

17 The quality of long-suffering should also be applied toward children in the family. If adult behavior is not always angelic, this should help parents to understand that their children will not always be so-called "angels" either. Children in conduct often reflect the inheritance of sin. Therefore, they are in line for the same patience that we expect others to show us because of our inherited failings. Children, also, with their vivid sense of justice and expectation of adult maturity, should appreciate that their parents are

15, 16. (a) Why is long-suffering needed in the family circle? (b) How can long-suffering be applied respecting husbands and wives? (c) What example have we to show that long-suffering is beneficial?

17. (a) How and why should long-suffering be applied toward children? (b) How can children be long-suffering? (c) What advice should both parents and children follow?

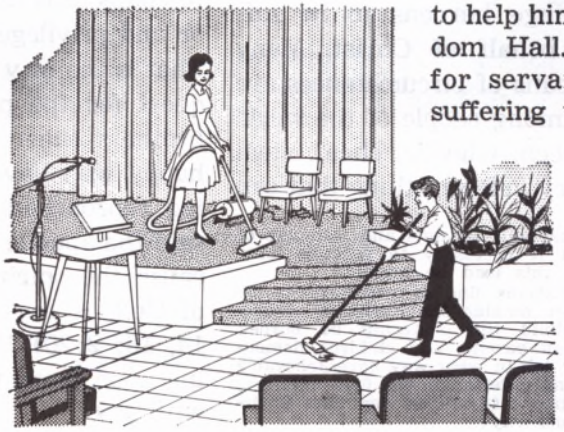
not perfect either. Thus the need for children to be long-suffering toward parents. This can best be accomplished if both parents and children carry out the Scriptural injunction at Ephesians 6:1-4, which says: "Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous: 'Honor your father and your mother'; which is the first command with a promise: 'That it may go well with you and you may endure a long time on the earth.' And you, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and authoritative advice of Jehovah." Long-suffering on the part of both parents and child will make the fulfillment of this command possible, to the blessing of both and to the glory of God.

[18] The family circle calls to mind worldly relatives. Here, too, patience can be practiced. Christian kindness is disarming. It leaves worldlings with a fine impression. Unbelieving relatives get to see that our Christianity is not all words, but truly a pleasant way of life. This may encourage them someday to become Christian witnesses of Jehovah too. We must suffer long to that end.

LONG-SUFFERING IN THE CONGREGATION

[19] Another place where long-suffering can be applied is in the Christian congregation. The overseer must be long-suffering toward all in the congregation, whether they are newcomers or have been with the congregation many years. He may counsel, but never browbeat or show impatience. The overseer must put up with the weakness of habitual latecomers in hope of their improvement. He bears the burden of the inactive with a hopeful longing of their becoming active. He forbears when his assistants do not respond to their responsibilities in the way they should. When some procrastinate, when meeting participation is weak, when parents are indifferent and children misbehave, the overseer must display patience, long-suffering. He suffers long in hope that all in his care may someday come to a full appreciation of the Christian ministry, embrace it whole-souledly as the way of life and live.—Col. 3:23.

[20] Assistant ministerial servants, too, must exercise long-suffering in the congregation. They must forbear when the overseer may appear a little demanding at times, when their Christian brothers do not respond to their privileges in the proper way. For example, the ministry school servant must exercise long-suffering when those on the program do not appear to take their parts; the accounts servant must endure when contributions are slow in coming; the literature servant is patient when literature orders are not picked up, and service center conductors are long-suffering when there is little or no response for service, when lessons are not studied, when few show up to help him clean the Kingdom Hall. There is need for servants to be long-suffering toward all.



[21] Missionaries in foreign assign-

18. Why should Christians be long-suffering toward their worldly relatives?
19. In what ways should overseers be long-suffering to those in the congregation?
20. On what occasions will assistant ministerial servants find need to be long-suffering?
21. Why and how must missionaries and Bethel ministers practice long-suffering?

ments and ministers in Bethel homes, where Bibles and Bible aids are printed, must also practice long-suffering. In some missionary territories people are slow to respond to the good news about the established kingdom of God. The missionary must endure. He must be patient with himself in learning a new language, when adapting himself to an entirely new way of life. In Bethel homes ministers often live in large numbers and at relatively close quarters, which can be trying at times. The shortcomings of one's neighbor must be endured and overlooked. Schedules and routines demand adjustment, discipline. But ministers endure by clothing themselves with love and its fruitage—long-suffering.—Col. 3:12-14.

22 When ministers fall short, a heavy burden invariably falls upon the congregation. Those placed on probation for misconduct or other failings thrust heavy loads on the servant body. These must be borne in love. (Rom. 15:1-6) Disfellowshiped persons cause great hardships and grief not only to members of the congregation but often to related family members. Yet such reproaches must be endured in the spirit of Christ.

LONG-SUFFERING TOWARD ALL OUTSIDERS

23 There are huge burdens to be suffered today in behalf of Christ. Many Christians by means of circumstances are forced to work among people of the world who use vile speech, who lie, cheat, steal and do about every indecent thing that can be imagined. Still the Christian must endure this without being contaminated by it. (John 17:15-19; 1 Cor. 5:9–6:11) Racial indignities, religious hatreds, national prejudices, all must be endured by the Christian. How long have ministers of Jehovah suffered because of mischief framed by law! How long have they endured the hatreds of dictators in Russia, Spain, Portugal and other places on earth! How long have Christian parents and their children suffered the abuse of flag-waving patriots who ignore God's law forbidding idolatry! How long have Christians endured the insults, rudeness and the doors slammed in their faces while in their house-to-house ministry! They have shown almost divine-like patience in their back-call and home Bible study activity. Still they rejoice! And their endurance has not gone unnoticed. A Roman Catholic publication recently stated that a characteristic it liked about Jehovah's witnesses was their "willingness to suffer ridicule and abuse for their beliefs." Christians are spectacles before men and angels. Like eager athletes, they are not content to sit on the sidelines, but rejoice when given the opportunity to prove themselves. For what athlete does not suffer in preparation and striving for a win or the prize? To be given the chance to compete is often considered a rare honor and privilege indeed, despite the costs. That is the way Christians feel about their quest for the prize of eternal life. Their brothers cheer them on and count those happy who have endured. "If you are being reproached for the name of Christ," said the apostle Peter, "you are happy, because the spirit of glory, even the spirit of God, is resting upon you." (1 Pet. 4: 14, 16; 2:20) With Jehovah's spirit resting upon them, they endure suffering long with joy.

22. At what other times will servants and members of the congregation find it necessary to practice long-suffering? How must this load be borne?

23. (a) Why will Christians find it necessary to be long-suffering to others outside the Christian congregation, and how should this suffering be borne? (b) How have Christian parents and children demonstrated long-suffering? (c) In what way have Jehovah's witnesses displayed long-suffering in the field ministry, and has it gone unnoticed? (d) What view have Christians about suffering, and why?

[24] Christian long-suffering is, therefore, unique indeed. It promotes peace and unity. It opens wide the door to repentance. It nourishes obedience and makes faith more firm. Jehovah is glorified by it, his organization advanced and his people made happy. By means of long-suffering the Christian secures for himself and others the prize—the only prize worth suffering for—the prize of everlasting life. What greater incentive could there be for one to be long-suffering toward all?

24. In what ways is Christian long-suffering unique, and what is its reward?

THE ASTRONAUTS FAILED TO SEE

THERE is a general effort today to discredit God and the Bible. A sad commentary on our times is that clergymen who claim to be representing God and his Word are taking the lead, saying: "God is dead!" Wildly absurd things not even worthy of a five-year-old child are said by supposedly learned men. One such effort showing the desperateness of such attempts was the statement of the Russian astronauts who said they did not encounter God in their space flight. Have you considered how weak and meaningless such a statement is? Well, for your own benefit do so now, so that you will not unwittingly dignify the idea in any way regardless of whether you believe in God or not.

The orbit of the astronauts was less than 200 miles above the earth. Do you realize how far in universal space that is? Compared to the size of the earth it is about the distance from the earth that the depth of a peeling would be to an apple. They were hardly out in universal space at all. It takes light a hundred thousand years to cross our galaxy, yet that is only a tiny part of the visible universe. The Creator of all this, who says that he 'stretches out the heavens just as a fine gauze,' and who has "taken the proportions of the heavens themselves with a mere span and included in a measure the dust of the earth," would he be found confining himself to such a comparatively infinitesimal space? or would he appear there just to please puny men who challenge his existence? It is a very foolish thing to which supposedly learned and scientific men have stooped in an attempt to exalt themselves. For God says that men could not find him even if they traveled throughout universal space, inasmuch as he is spirit and man is flesh. In fact, if the astronauts had seen him it would have been a sad thing for them, for they would not have survived the experi-

ence.—Isa. 40:22, 12; Ex. 33:20; 1 John 4:12.

THE SIGN

Not that God does not reveal himself to men, that is, reveal his qualities, his ways and his purposes. But that is where the Russian astronauts and others of like stripe have failed. They have missed seeing what God has provided for them to see. One of the important things that they and everyone else can see if they so desire and that they should see, for they are involved in it, is the sign of Revelation 15:1, which the apostle John describes for us, saying: "And I saw in heaven another sign, great and wonderful, seven angels with seven plagues. These are the last ones, because by means of them the anger of God is brought to a finish."

Why would this sign be important to observe? Because it has to do with God's anger. If he is angry, men should want to know, About what? and Against whom? because they certainly do not desire to be among those toward whom his anger is directed at present and against whom his anger will be poured out at his chosen time. (Ps. 7:11) Revelation, chapter 15, gives a prelude to the pouring out of the plagues expressing God's anger. But just as God's anger is always accompanied by mercy and good news to those who fear him and seek him, so Revelation, chapter 15, first gives us good news, which we shall now consider.

The vision reveals that there will be persons who will praise God for righteously expressing his anger in his time of judgment. We know God has plenty of reason to be angry, not merely because scientists have rocketed through space and not only because of what opposers of God have said, but for many other things that are pointed out in Revelation's description of the seven plagues. Instead of having to feel these outpourings of his anger personally and blaspheming him because of them, we can receive his favor by being in harmony with those doing the outpouring, because the plagues are poured out only upon those who fully merit them. Happy will we be if we take the side of those who uphold God.

In ancient Egypt God brought literal plagues upon the Egyptians in the controversy as to who was the sovereign God. But in our time the plagues on this world, poured out under the control of the seven angels, prove to be symbolical. There is nothing unrighteous about these plagues, for God brings them only as a result of his attributes of justice and wisdom and, as in the case of the ten plagues in Egypt, they result not only in bringing justice to his own name and sovereignty, to the benefit of all humankind; they also soften the hearts of many toward him. They make the enemies of God more and more set and determined against him and reveal the viciousness of these and the deservedness of his outpoured anger upon them.

WHAT THE SEVEN PLAGUES ARE

What are the seven plagues? They are God's judicial expressions of anger and are revelations from his Word. These revelations (1) point out the various world conditions viewed from God's standpoint. They show how these things appear in their true light, that is, just as the One with the greatest discernment of all sees them and (2) they portend what is to result to the world from his judicial opinion as to the peoples of the world. They show exactly what effect these expressions of God's anger actually have upon those against whom his anger is expressed. Such revelations from God's Word must be published and declared by his anointed, commissioned people on earth, pictured by John, who saw this wonderful sign and

prophetic vision. These proclaimers have nothing to do with the hurtfulness of the plagues upon mankind; they merely declare them. To the contrary, they help all those paying attention to see how they can escape being hurt.

Seven is a Bible number signifying perfection and so there is no need for more than seven of these symbolic plagues. They are enough to bring the expression of God's anger to its finish. Angels perform their part in expressing them.

Note the fact that there is a reason for happiness on the part of all those who are faithful worshipers of God in connection with the seven last plagues. As if now before God's throne, John says:

"And I saw what seemed to be a glassy sea mingled with fire, and those who come off victorious from the wild beast and from its image and from the number of its name standing by the glassy sea, having harps of God. And they are singing the song of Moses the slave of God and the song of the Lamb, saying:

" 'Great and wonderful are your works, Jehovah God, the Almighty. Righteous and true are your ways, King of eternity. Who will not really fear you, Jehovah, and glorify your name, because you alone are loyal? For all the nations will come and worship before you, because your righteous decrees have been made manifest.' "—Rev. 15:2-4.

In previous articles it has been shown that the wild beast represents or pictures the Devil's visible, political organization on earth and the image of the beast stands for the League of Nations and its successor the United Nations, which attempts to stand in the place of God's kingdom and claims to bring that which only God's kingdom can actually bring. Now, of course, all those who want to see real lasting peace in the earth and who listen to what the Creator says about it want to get away from the selfish, oppressive man-made substitute for God's kingdom, and they are doing so. They do not look for information from those who are captivated, held in spiritual bondage by the false religions of Babylon the Great and who give worship to the wild beast and its image. They listen to those who support God and who have a successful record, one of victory. The victorious ones keep themselves clean from any marks of agreement, cooperation and compromise with the symbolic wild beast and its image. They give no worship to such political institutions. They have acted upon the warning of the third angel given in Revelation 14:9-12. This they have not done without having anger expressed against them, not God's anger, but anger and persecution and the bitterest opposition from the wild beast and its image and its supporters. The victorious ones recognize more than the fact that God exists; they acknowledge him as the rightful Sovereign. They discern that his anger is about to be expressed in full against this system of things that defies God and has brought so much suffering to the people.

These victorious ones are no others but the faithful, anointed spiritual brothers of Jesus Christ now on the earth. Having harps, they must be included with the 144,000 with harps spoken of in Revelation 14:1-3. There is today a small remnant of them yet on earth and they have heavenly hopes—hopes of reigning with Jesus Christ in the kingdom of the heavens. They are Christians and have followed Jesus' example and command to keep themselves without spot from this world as no part of it. They have busied themselves with preaching the good news of the established kingdom in all the inhabited earth for a witness.—Jas. 1:27; Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10; John 13:15-17.

What are the harps with which they are equipped? Well, a musical instrument is used to give pleasant-sounding accompaniment, support and harmonious background to singing. The harps are provided by God. What is more helpful in making what they say forceful, beautiful and harmonious than the written Word of God with all its teachings, prophecies, revelations and history of God's works? Also, they have in addition the many printed Bible helps for understanding and explaining the Bible. These are produced and printed by workers who are fully dedicated and baptized witnesses of Jehovah.

THE GLASSY SEA

The sign that John saw goes on to show that while God is not visible to those who praise him as his earthly servants, yet he is approachable. They can get an understanding of him and can have a part in his purposes. They are shown standing before a glassy sea. (Rev. 15:2) In Solomon's temple there was a tremendous basin of water that rested on the back of twelve metal bulls and it was called a "sea." The sea before which the singers stand in the sign that John saw is a glassy sea like the one in Revelation 4:6, and therefore must have been of clear glass, transparent glass. This would denote that the singers are serving at the spiritual temple of Jehovah, the temple that was opened revealing the ark of God's covenant, betokening God's presence there. —1 Ki. 7:23-46; 2 Ki. 25:16; 2 Chron. 4: 2-6, 15; Rev. 11:19.

In Solomon's temple the sea was filled with water. It was drawn out into smaller basins resting on carriages and this water was used "for the priests to wash in it." Thus, their activity and their sacrifices were represented as cleansed by being in harmony with the truth of God's Word. The victorious singers are therefore shown to be spiritually of the priestly class, the "royal priesthood" that is under the Chief Priest, Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 2:9; Heb. 3:1) The water in the "glassy sea like crystal" pictures the truth of God's Word, for it both quenches spiritual thirst and has a cleansing effect upon the Christian's life, heart, mind and works. But while God's Word serves his people in this very beneficial way, it also contains judgments against those who oppose God. This is indicated by the fact that John could discern that the contents of the sea were mingled with fire. It would indicate that the priestly remnant of the 144,000 would have to proclaim these fiery judgments.

THE SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB

The singers gathered at the spiritual temple are shown to be singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Of what benefit would it be to mankind advanced in science and looking toward the space age for peace and blessings to go away back to what Moses said centuries ago? Because the Word of God has greater depth to it than all the scientific researches of the men of this space age, and the message is of far greater importance for them to give attention to today. For Moses, as a prophet, prefigured a still greater Jewish prophet, Jesus Christ, "the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." (Deut. 18:15-18; Acts 3:22, 23; John 1:29) The song that Moses sang at the Red Sea when the Egyptian chariots were stopped in their pursuit of the fleeing Israelites is the first song recorded in the Bible. Moses sang another song of praise to Jehovah forty years later, before saying his farewell to the Israelites at the borders of the Promised Land.—Ex. 15:1-19; Deut. 32: 1-43.

Jesus Christ, by referring in Revelation to the songs of Moses, shows that he is fully in agreement with Moses' songs and

that they have a connection with the sign of Revelation, which is having its fulfillment in our present day. Both songs of Moses bespoke the vengeance of Jehovah God against his enemies and those of his dedicated people. Moses sang at the Red Sea that Jehovah ruled as King to time indefinite, even forever. So the song of Moses included praise to Jehovah as well as an expression of blessing upon God's people and vengeance to his enemies. When Jesus was on earth he sang Jehovah's praises and declared his vengeance. (Matt. 26:30; Luke 19:41-44; 21:20-22) The great and final fufillment of these songs is at hand. That is why the remnant of the 144,000 are shown as singing them so vigorously.

The song the anointed remnant sing is that the ways of Jehovah are righteous and true, even when he deals with his enemies. It makes known his name Jehovah and glorifies it. Scoffers at God should stop and pay attention when the song asks who there is that will not fear this God and glorify his name. Why? Because, as the song says (Rev. 15:4), he alone is the loyal God and his worshipers can depend upon him. The scoffers should realize that the Creator of the universe would have unfathomable power. They should know that he would not undignify himself by yielding to their haughty demands. But he does delight in revealing his qualities and his ways and purposes to those who take him at his word. He will come to their assistance. At Deuteronomy 32:43 Moses sang out: "Be glad, you nations, with his people, for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and he will pay back vengeance to his adversaries."

Since God does exist and is the true and living God his Word is true from the beginning and is applicable at all times, particularly in this time of the end when the prophecies are having their fulfillment. So the victorious singers, the anointed remnant of Christ's spiritual brothers on earth, quote Bible prophecies and show that there are many thousands of earth's inhabitants who will come out of all nations and will be glad to take the name of Jehovah and be his witnesses and stand before him. Many who in previous times scoffed have awakened because of the conditions and circumstances that have come about in this time of the end, and see that there is no hope in the efforts of men. They have heard the song and have found it to be absolutely true. The song speaks good for all those who will hear and come to love God and his righteousness; it also tells of the execution of judgment against those who harden their hearts. Hundreds of thousands, formerly unbelievers, are now in full agreement with the justice of Jehovah in clearing the hardhearted, haughty, irreformable enemies of Jehovah off the earth so that the inhabitants of the earth may enjoy righteousness under his kingdom rule.

It is righteous, therefore, for God to be angry with those who deny him and fly in the face of all the evidence of his existence, power and majesty and who fail to appreciate his loving-kindness to his creatures and the many things he has arranged for their welfare and enjoyment. Even now he is so kind as to give warning concerning the plagues he is bringing upon his enemies. Therefore, take notice and avoid the outpouring of his wrath. As we go farther in the book of Revelation, we find that these plagues are poured out by angels who are also invisible to men and far mightier. We will look forward to succeeding articles for a discussion of the part that the angels play in pouring out the plagues and what is accomplished thereby.

MY TREASURE OF SERVICE

AS TOLD BY MABEL HASLETT

"PRECIOUS in the eyes of Jehovah is the death of his loyal ones." These beautiful words of the psalmist (116:15) brought great comfort to me at the death of my lifelong companion. They were quoted in the lovely talk given at my husband's funeral by the overseer of the Japan branch of the Watch Tower Society. I also received many loving letters of sympathy from my spiritual brothers in many places. So I can rejoice for him, and as I look back over the many years that Don and I were privileged to serve God together, I thank our Creator, the Giver of every good gift.

Maybe you would like to take a mental journey with me into our past. I have in front of me our old photograph album, and, as I look through it, it brings back many happy memories. Let us thumb through its pages together, all right?

BIBLE TRUTHS ENTER OUR LIVES

One picture in the photograph album dates back fifty years ago this summer! The picture is of a young couple, Don and me, just turned twenty and engaged to be married. What was our religious background? I had attended an Episcopalian Church school. This picture shows the class at graduation, where the black-robed "sister" told us that the best way to serve God was to marry a rich man who could endow the school. Don had joined the Baptist Church in order to play on their football team.

Then, in August of 1916, we first heard the beautiful words of the truths found in the Bible. They touched a responsive chord in our hearts and we moved quickly to line up our lives with it. We associated with a small Bible study class in Mount Vernon, New York, and then attended our first public lecture on October 1, 1916, at "The Temple." This was the Bible Students' centrally located meeting place in Manhattan at West 63d Street near Broadway, used frequently for the showing of the movie and slide feature, the "Photo-Drama of Creation." Who was the speaker that day? It was Charles T. Russell, the Watch Tower Society's president. I can still remember his piercing eyes and the kindly smile as he shook our hands after the talk.

The next few weeks brought the privilege of seeing the wonderful Photo-Drama of Creation, which gave an overall view of the great Creator's purpose. This, along with constant study and sharing in the preaching work of that time (which consisted of distributing the *Bible Students' Monthly* in the New York city apartments and subways) deepened the conviction that this is what we wanted to do with our lives, that is, serve our loving heavenly Father. Although Don and I were engaged, we thought we could serve God better as single persons.

Opportunity for baptism was afforded on the first Sunday of each month in a pool in the basement of "The Temple." But on October 31 the saddening news came of the death of Brother Russell. His funeral services were conducted on Sunday, November 12. So the first Sunday in December, 1916, saw Don and me being immersed in that pool in symbol of our

dedication to do the will of God. From then on, until Don's death on February 20, 1966, we have tried to the best of our very imperfect abilities to do that will.

DIFFICULT TIMES

The year 1917 brought increased privileges of service for both of us. Don spent his summer vacation working at the Bethel headquarters of the Watch Tower Society in Brooklyn, New York. I was busy in the preaching work, loaning out the six volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures*. Then on July 17, the seventh volume, entitled "The Finished Mystery," was released. From then on, tension increased both inside and outside the organization. War hysteria and clergy opposition mounted against the little band of Kingdom publishers. But we did not take it lying down. In fact, on Sunday, December 30, 1917, we got up before dawn to take part in a mass distribution of a special issue of the *Bible Students' Monthly*. It contained a devastating message—"The Fall of Babylon."

You are probably familiar with the turbulent history of the years 1918, 1919, with the arrest and imprisonment of the Watch Tower Society's officials, including its president, J. F. Rutherford, and also the persecution of the Bible Students, as Jehovah's witnesses were called at that time. It was a very stormy time for young, new ones in Jehovah's organization. Don was accused of supplying me with seditious literature for distribution, but the Chief of Police in my town, who interviewed me, pulled a copy of *The Finished Mystery* out of his desk drawer and said: "I respect Mabel more than I do those who accused her."

We did what we could in those difficult months, and used the time well for study. Then with the end of the war our hopes rose for the release of our brothers who had been jailed. We took part in a nation-wide petition to that end. Now came the joyful word of their release! On the evening of March 26, 1919, those of us who got the news prepared a happy homecoming feast. I remember making a hundred doughnuts, which the brothers seemed to enjoy after nine months of prison fare. I can still see Brother Rutherford reaching out for them. It was an unforgettable occasion as he and the others related their experiences. I also remember short-statured Brother DeCecca standing on a chair so that all could see and hear him.

INCREASING OUR SERVICE TOGETHER

The work of Kingdom preaching revived and rapidly increased. We were overjoyed to be among the 6,000 who attended that first wonderful postwar assembly at Cedar Point, Ohio. At that soul-thrilling convention, without telling me, Don signed up for Bethel service, and I, without telling him, registered for the full-time preaching work. So on the way home from the convention we told each other good-bye forever. But this proved to be forever in the true sense of the Hebrew word *oláhm*, that is, not "forever," but just "to time indefinite."

Here are some more pictures in our photo album. This one was taken on the Bethel roof. It is a group of members of the Bethel family. There is Brother Riemer with a crown of pinkish-red hair, Ed Betler, Ed Hazlett and a young Fred Franz. Also, a dearly loved Evander Joel Coward.

It was Brother Coward who gave Don and me some fatherly advice. It was in connection with First Corinthians 7:20. He explained that an engagement is a contract and that it should be fulfilled. I have to admit we were easily convinced, and, on December 31, 1920, we were married. Here in our photo album is a picture of

our little house where we were privileged to have the local Bible class meetings and to entertain traveling representatives of the Watch Tower Society.

September, 1922, came and with it the second Cedar Point convention. I can still hear the ringing words: "Back to the field, O you sons of the Most High. Advertise, advertise, advertise the King and his kingdom!" Now then, right here in our picture album you can see the result of that assembly for Don and me: a Model-T Ford, loaded with our worldly goods—our little home sold! And the next picture is that of a small wooden structure on a hill overlooking the Hudson River, our headquarters as we worked full time in the ministry in nearby Peekskill.

In this next picture, joining us for three days' service were three people that I think many of you know—Bill, George and Mary Hannan. All of them are still serving faithfully at Brooklyn Bethel, forty-three years since this picture was taken. Incidentally, it was their mother who first turned our minds to the truths found in God's Word, the Bible.

BETHEL SERVICE

This happy full-time service, called "colporteuring" in those days, lasted over a year. Then in the spring of 1924 Don applied for service at Brooklyn Bethel. The application was accepted for both of us to come to the headquarters of the Watch Tower Society. There, for over eight years we enjoyed that privilege, Don working in the service department and my assignment being in the circulation department. I remember when the *Watchtower* subscription list reached 50,000. We celebrated with a tea party!

Don later served as the secretary of Brother Rutherford. This entailed some traveling for Don. Here is a picture of them standing before a very frail-looking airplane somewhere in Europe. And this picture shows Don with Brother R. J. Martin in the garden of the Magdeburg Bethel in Germany. What a history that place had! It was occupied by the Nazis, and now is occupied by the East German Communists.

Oh, here is an interesting snapshot taken at the Columbus, Ohio, convention in 1931. That is when the new name "Jehovah's witnesses" was received. There with me stand Sisters Van Amburg, Thorn, Mari Russell and Brother Van Sipma. And what do you think we are doing? We are taking care of other people's children, 123 of them! This was so because up until that time we followed the custom of putting the children in a playroom so that the parents could hear the talks undisturbed. Of course, children now sit with their parents. What a wonderfully more Scriptural way it is today!

SENT TO HAWAII

Let us turn some more pages of our picture album. Here are some pictures showing palm trees and bananas! Yes, it is Hawaii, where we were sent in the spring of 1934 to work with the handful of brothers there. Here is a picture of a car equipped with loudspeaker horns. Don would ship it to the other islands, and, camping out on the beaches, broadcast the lectures in the sugar and pineapple plantations. The work in Hawaii thus progressed, and, by the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor in December, 1941, there was a solid nucleus of fine brothers of all the island nationalities.

A few days after December 7, there was a knock on the door. Four men armed with pistols took Don to military headquarters for questioning. Martial law was in force. As one after another of the officers shot questions at him, Don would answer from the Scriptures. One said an-

grily, "Leave the Bible out of this!" But Don replied, "I can't—it's my defense." Finally, the one in charge stood up, apparently satisfied, and well after "blackout" time they brought Don home.

After that, although we were occasionally harassed, the work progressed. Don's permit to enter the dock area was revoked, but a friend suggested that he get a fishing license. So all through the war he was able to get the shipments of Bible literature uninterrupted.

Gradually attendance at the Kingdom Hall increased, so that a larger place was needed. But the military government said "No." No building materials were available. When I came home one day, Don was sitting, serious, a letter in his hand. It was an authorization from Brother Knorr, the Society's new president, to build a new Kingdom Hall on the property back of the branch. Don said: "Caesar says we can't build. Jehovah's organization says, 'Build.' Of course, we build."

It was wonderful how the obstacles were cleared out of the way. The brothers worked day and night, bringing sand from the beaches, rock from the mountains and discarded steel rails purchased cheaply from the plantations. And the result? Look at these pictures—a beautiful, substantial meeting place for Jehovah's people, to his praise. As you can see, the inside wall is open to a vista of orchids and island foliage. How we rejoiced!

VOLUNTEERING FOR SERVICE IN JAPAN

After fourteen years, in 1948, our Hawaiian episode comes to an end. There was another letter from Brother Knorr: "Who of the Hawaiian brothers would be willing to go to Japan?" Seven of us volunteered; and until this year, 1966, all seven of us have continued serving here, happy in our loved assignment. In fact, we became nine. The two little girls in this picture, who accompanied their parents to Gilead, have now grown up and are serving as missionaries, one as a circuit servant's wife.

But before going to Japan we were privileged to attend the Watch Tower Society's Missionary School of Gilead, a most blessed interlude in our lives. Don and I were fifty-three then, a bit old to be going to school, but we were highly pleased. Graduation was followed by a visit to Brooklyn Bethel, and this picture taken in front of Bethel shows a red jeep, loaded with our possessions, about to start the trek to Japan. We had a memorable trip across country, and loaded the jeep on a ship in San Francisco. There was a one-day stopover in Hawaii. But now a heartbreak for me! The Japanese government would permit only one of us to enter the country! So that night Don mounted the gangplank and sailed away into the dark unknown alone.

He arrived in Japan just before January 1, 1949, with many problems to face. American money could not be used, and Japanese yen were hard to acquire. There were no living accommodations for foreigners except with the military. So Don lived for a difficult month in Tokyo's Dai Ichi Hotel, which had been taken over by the American Occupation forces. Daily he searched all over the city for a suitable place for a branch home. He was told it would be practically impossible to find a place after all the war destruction. High-ranking army men told him they had been trying for over a year to get permission for their wives to enter the country. Don told me afterward that he prayed to Jehovah God more at that time than in all his life before.

Jehovah seems to have answered those prayers, for a place was found and quickly purchased in the name of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. At the time

there was a large Japanese-style house on the property, and this was to serve adequately as branch headquarters for fourteen years. Soon after the purchase Don moved in and camped there all through the cold month of February. There was strict food rationing then, so that he would stand in line with the neighborhood people and get his allotment of perhaps one long carrot or a few leaves of cabbage, together with some rice. He said that one time the vegetable man took pity on his big frame and brought a whole cabbage to the back door at night, accepting no money for it. The next day Don feasted!

I waited in Hawaii and engaged in the full-time ministry. Then there came that happy day—a letter with my permit to join Don! I was sent off by plane by a crowd of loving Hawaiian brothers, the trip taking twenty-four hours in those days. As you can imagine, we had a happy reunion.

Then in rapid succession the other dear missionaries joined us, and as you leaf through the album you see the quickly expanding scene. Here is a fine, large missionary home purchased in Tarumi, Kobe, and these later homes at Nagoya, Osaka, Sendai, Yokohama, Kyoto and Sapporo. Here are assembly pictures, first of small groups of new brothers, then of larger and larger groups. There were baptisms in rivers in summer and in Japanese bathhouses in winter.

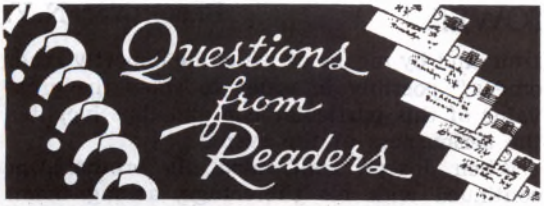
Today our old branch home has been torn down, and here is a picture of our beautiful new branch building, which stands six stories high. Don rejoiced to have a big share in its construction, supervising much of the work. Now it serves more than 4,000 Kingdom publishers in Japan, and the shipments of magazines alone have doubled in the two-and-a-half years since the building was completed. It is a real hive of activity.

So, thanks to Jehovah's preserving power, it has been a happy, full life. Of course, there have been the difficult times —puzzling, heartbreaking experiences, these permitted and necessary to test the quality of faith of imperfect creatures. These have been valuable in giving opportunity to prove that, if we stick through thick and thin, nothing can separate us from God's love. So we can forget the trials and thank our loving heavenly Father for the peaceable fruit.

Well, thank you for coming along with me on this mental journey into the past. Now, at the end of the story and of the picture album, gratitude wells up in my heart. As one of God's "loyal ones," Don has finished his earthly course. For me, my prayer is that 'the God of all undeserved kindness will finish my training and make me firm and strong.' (1 Pet. 5:10) I am happy to keep on here in my assigned place.

Relatives have written: "Of course, now that you are alone, you will come back to your own country." But I am not alone. As Brother Knorr said in a kindly letter, "When these more severe trials hit us it brings us very close to our God and we can appreciate his loving-kindness." Also, here in Japan I am surrounded by a host of loving friends whom I love, and by dear, faithful fellow missionaries. By constantly turning to Jehovah God the void is filled with the glorious treasure of service, that of finding and feeding sheeplike persons. There is no more rewarding work on earth today.

My help is from Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth.
—Ps. 121:2.



● When Jesus Christ was on earth he stated: "I began to behold Satan already fallen like lightning from heaven." (Luke 10:18) Does this mean that by that time Satan the Devil had already been ousted from heaven?—O. B., Australia.

No. We are not Scripturally justified in taking that view of Jesus' statement recorded at Luke 10:18. Christ was evidently referring to a future event but was moved to do so on the basis of current happenings.

Earlier "the Lord designated seventy others and sent them forth by twos in advance of him into every city and place to which he himself was going to come." (Luke 10:1) Upon successfully completing their assignment the seventy disciples returned with joy, saying: "Lord, even the demons are made subject to us by the use of your name." (Luke 10:17) This was a marvelous display of God's power over the demons! After such a grand report Jesus was fittingly moved to utter his significant words respecting Satan's fall, words denoting mastery over that wicked one.

That by his words recorded at Luke 10:18 Christ was not referring to any past literal falling of Satan from heaven becomes apparent upon considering what is said elsewhere in the Bible. At Revelation 12:7-9 we are told about the hurling of Satan and his angels from heaven down to the earth. But this did not occur prior to or during the days of Jesus' human life on earth. It should be noted that the entire book of Revelation consists of prophetic material. It is not a compilation of past history. Revelation 1:1 indicates this, in stating: "A revelation by Jesus Christ, which God gave him, to show his slaves the things *that must shortly take place.* And he sent forth his angel and presented it in signs through him to his slave John." The apostle John received the revelation on the Isle of Patmos toward the end of the first century of our Common Era, completing the writing of it about 96 C.E. That was many years after Jesus Christ made the statement recorded at Luke 10:18.

A careful examination of Revelation chapter 12 indicates that the ouster of the Devil and his wicked angels from heaven was to follow the birth of God's kingdom. (Rev. 12:5, 10) As has often been proved Scripturally in the columns of *The Watchtower,* the heavenly kingdom with Christ as King was established in 1914 C.E. Not long after his installation, Jesus Christ, or Michael, took action and "war broke out in heaven." Michael and angels under him battled with Satan and his angels, casting them out of heaven and down to the earth.

It appears, therefore, that Jesus had in mind Satan's ultimately being cast out of heaven when he said: "I began to behold Satan already fallen like lightning from heaven." This fall was assured by the fact that the seventy evangelizers though mere men on earth had cast out demons in Jesus' name. To Jesus this was a sign that Satan was sure to fall from heaven in God's due time. To Jesus it was as if he already saw Satan cast out and fallen from heaven. So even then he could speak of this future event as a certainty, as though he saw it already accomplished. Christ himself, by dying in faithfulness and being resurrected as a mighty spirit creature, would be granted the power to fulfill that prophecy by ousting Satan and the other demons from heaven. In fact, later the exalted Jesus Christ would also abyss and finally destroy these wicked spirit creatures.—Rev. 20:1-3, 7-10; Heb. 2:14; Rom. 16:20.

● Looking for omens is condemned in the Bible. (Deut. 18:10) How, then, can we explain Genesis 44:5, which indicates that Joseph, who had God's favor, possessed a cup by means of which he read omens?—A. J., Rep. of the Congo.

Joseph was Egypt's food administrator, a high official of a pagan land. Because of a severe famine, his brothers had come all the way from Canaan to obtain food supplies in Egypt. (Gen. 42:1-7) Years earlier, they had sold Joseph into slavery. Now, though they did not realize it, they were requesting food from their own brother. Joseph had not yet chosen to reveal himself to them. Instead, he was determined to test them. Genesis 44:5 should be viewed with this in mind.

Evidently, Joseph was proceeding according to a certain design, representing himself, not as their brother who had faith in Jehovah God, but as an administrator of a pagan land. In line with his purpose, Joseph commanded the man over his house to fill their bags with

food, place each one's money in the mouth of his bag and put Joseph's silver cup in the mouth of the youngest one's bag. (Gen. 44:1, 2) Joseph's brothers had not gone far when he told his servant: "Get up! Chase after the men and be certain to overtake them and to say to them, 'Why have you repaid bad for good? Is not this the thing that my master drinks from and by means of which he expertly reads omens? It is a bad deed you have committed.'" (Gen. 44:3-5) Joseph, acting in a manner consistent with what he sought to achieve, told the man who was over his house what to say. He had him describe the cup as "the thing that my master drinks from and by means of which he expertly reads omens," possibly in order to show the great value of this particular cup and thus heighten the seriousness of the event.

When Joseph confronted his brothers, he continued with his subterfuge, asking them: "Did you not know that such a man as I am can expertly read omens?" (Gen. 44:15) Later, no longer able to control himself, Joseph revealed his true identity.—Gen. 45:1-15.

Hence, the cup was evidently all part of the subterfuge. We may be sure that Joseph, as a worshiper of Jehovah, did not really use the cup to read omens, just as Benjamin did not actually steal it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ASSEMBLIES STILL FUTURE

The "God's Sons of Liberty" District Assemblies of Jehovah's Witnesses are already under way. Preparations for those still future are progressing and plans are being perfected by those expecting to attend. How are your plans developing? Time is running out. A fine program is in prospect and thousands of persons like you, who are interested in peaceful living, will be united with you in sharing joyful association. The featured talk at each assembly will be "What Has God's Kingdom Been Doing Since 1914?" For assistance in obtaining rooming accommodations write to Watchtower Convention at the rooming address listed for the assembly city of your choice.

JULY 13-17: Montreal, Que. (English and French) English: The Forum, 2313 Ste. Catherine W. Rooming: 1637 Ste. Catherine St. W., Montreal 25, Que. French: Marche Atwater, Atwater & Notre Dame. Rooming: 1637 Ste. Catherine St. W., Montreal 25, Que.

JULY 27-31: Winnipeg, Man., Winnipeg Stadium, Empress St. & Rapelje Ave. Rooming: 1338 Main St., Winnipeg 4, Man.

AUGUST 3-7: Dallas, Tex. (English and Spanish), Market Hall, 2200 Stemmons Freeway. Rooming: 234 S. Patton St., Dallas, Tex. 75203. **Newark, N.J.** (Spanish only), Newark Armory, 180 Sussex Ave. Rooming: 129 Morris Ave., Newark, N.J. 07103. **San Francisco, Calif.** (English and Spanish), Candlestick Park Stadium, San Francisco, Calif. Rooming: 3435 Alemany Blvd., San Francisco, Calif. 94132. **Vancouver, B.C.,** Empire Stadium, Exhibition Park. Rooming: 3280 Grandview Hgwy., Vancouver 12, B.C.

AUGUST 10-14: Anchorage, Alaska, West Anchorage High School Auditorium, 1700 Hillcrest Dr. Rooming: 1438 Medfra St., Anchorage, Alaska 99501. (Hotel and motel accommodations cost approximately double the normal rates in Canada and continental United States.)

AUGUST 17-21: Baltimore, Md., Baltimore Memorial Stadium, 33d & Ellerslie Ave. Rooming: 7824 Eddlynch Rd., Baltimore, Md. 21222.

AUGUST 24-28: Miami Beach, Fla. (English and Spanish), Miami Beach Convention Hall, 1700 Washington Ave. Rooming: 6620 N. Miami Ave., Miami, Fla. 33150. **Mobile, Ala.,** Municipal Auditorium-Theater, 401 Auditorium Dr. Rooming: 4059 Halls Mill Rd., Mobile, Ala. 36609.

BRITISH ISLES

JULY 27-31: Glasgow, The Ice Rink, off Glasgow Rd., Paisley. Rooming: Kingdom Hall, 21 School Wynd, Paisley, Glasgow.

AUGUST 24-28: London, Rugby Union Football Ground, Whitton Rd., Twickenham, Middx. Rooming: Same address.

FIELD MINISTRY

It is important for every one of Jehovah's witnesses to keep in mind the Scriptural counsel not to "neglect the house of our God." And it is a great kindness to others to encourage them to attend the meetings of the congregation too. At their weekly Bible studies held in relatively small groups in various neighborhoods throughout their congregation territory, Jehovah's witnesses are at present studying the fine book *"Things in Which It Is Impossible for God to Lie."* With a view to sharing this vital information with others, during July they will offer that book, with a booklet, to other interested persons on a contribution of 50c.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

August 7: The Long-suffering of God an Eternal Blessing to Mankind. Page 424. Songs to be used: 23, 43.

August 14: Be Long-suffering Toward All. Page 430. Songs to be used: 115, 56.