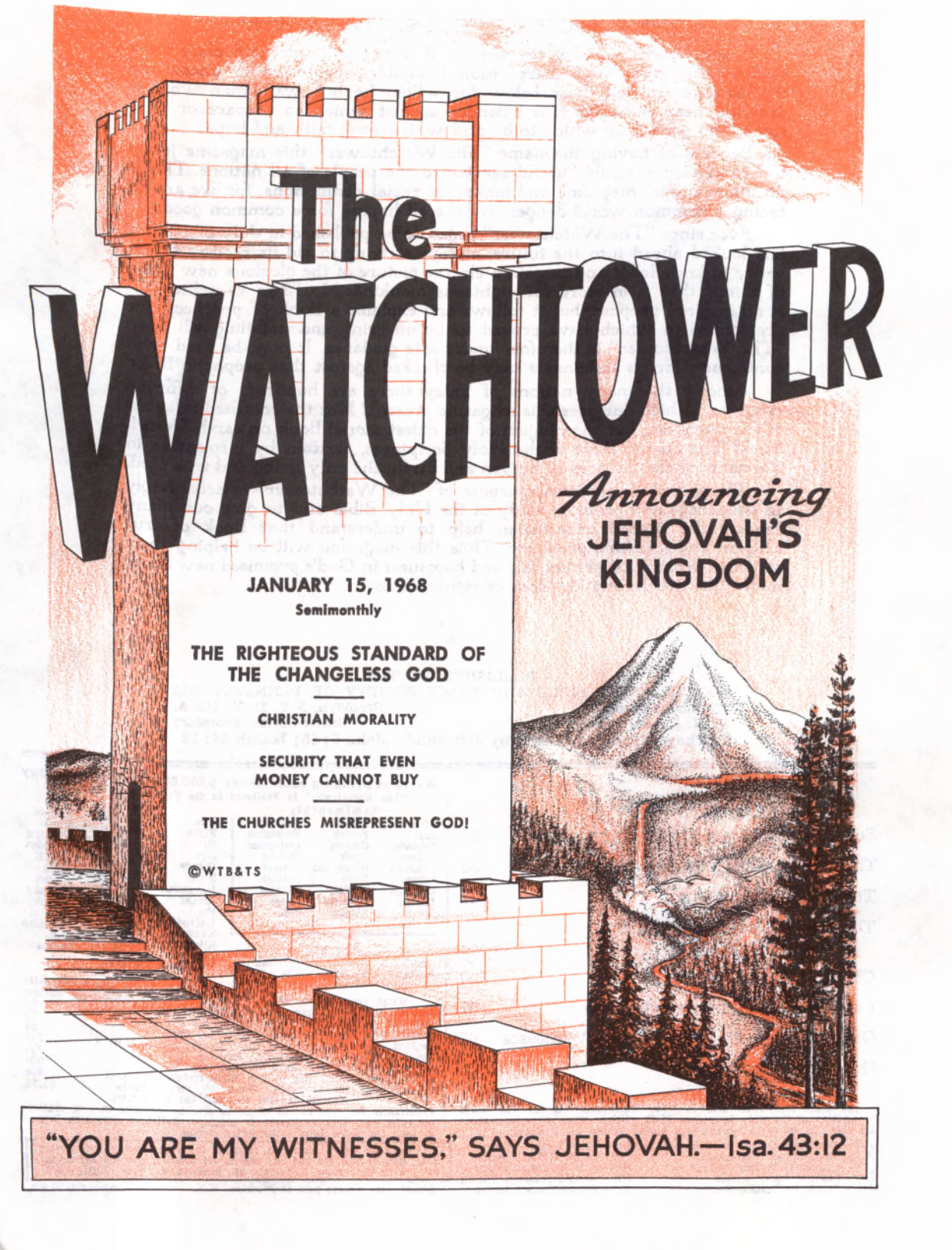




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

JANUARY 15, 1968

Semimonthly

**THE RIGHTEOUS STANDARD OF
THE CHANGELESS GOD**

—
CHRISTIAN MORALITY

—
**SECURITY THAT EVEN
MONEY CANNOT BUY**

—
THE CHURCHES MISREPRESENT GOD!

©WTB&TS

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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AS—American Standard Version
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AV—Authorized Version (1611)
Dy—Catholic Douay version
JP—Jewish Publication Soc.

Le—Isaac Leeser's version
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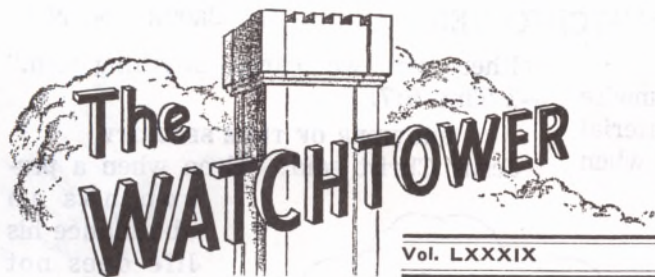
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SECURITY

*that even
Money Cannot Buy*

TO MOST people security means having material possessions. If they have a good job, a fine home and a substantial bank account, they feel they are secure.

While such things can bring a measure of comfort, do they really guarantee security?

Can anyone really guarantee that a person will have his job a year from now? Multitudes of persons have lost jobs for reasons outside their control. Perhaps their company moved, or changed its policies, laying off workers. Or it may go bankrupt, forcing a layoff in workers. In some places, people must even leave jobs due to racial or religious prejudice!

Also, in many lands civil war or rioting has destroyed both homes and places of business. As the aftermath of one such riot in the United States last summer, note the course of action a man took after seeing his life's work go up in smoke in minutes. A report relates: "A negro who lost two businesses in fires that accompanied racial rioting in Cambridge [Maryland] July 24 committed suicide today."

Then there was the grocer who had

worked hard all his life and to whom the following happened, as reported in the press: "A 60-year-old grocer was killed yesterday during an attempted robbery in his shop." His life's hard work came to a bitter end.

What security do millions of persons have when they do not even know where their next meal is coming from? A report from India recently stated the following:

"It has been estimated that between 35 and 40 per cent of the children of India have suffered permanent brain damage by the time they reach school age because of protein deficiency.

"This means that [in India] we are, in effect, producing subhuman beings at the rate of 35 million a year. By the time they reach school age they are unable to concentrate sufficiently to absorb and retain knowledge."

And what of the millions of persons who thought that they had security, only to lose homes, businesses and even their lives in the horrors of two world wars, the Korean war, and now the Vietnam war? What of the many whose savings were wiped out when runaway inflation ruined the value of their money?

INSECURITY OF LIFE ITSELF

How elusive security is, and how unwise it is to put one's whole trust in material possessions, Jesus Christ illustrated when he said:

"The land of a certain rich man produced well. Consequently he began reasoning within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, now that I have nowhere to gather my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my storehouses and build bigger ones, and there I will gather all my grain and all my good things; and I will say to my soul: "Soul, you have many good things laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, enjoy yourself."'

"But God said to him, 'Unreasonable one, this night they are demanding your soul [life] from you. Who, then, is to have the things you stored up?'

"So it goes with the man that lays up treasure for himself but is not rich toward God."
—Luke 12:16-21.

The point of Jesus' illustration is that real security through material possessions is an illusion. Even if a person does manage to hold on to his material possessions all his life, what good will they do him when he dies? He cannot take them to the grave with him. As Job said: "Naked I came out of my mother's belly, and naked shall I return [to the earth]."—Job 1:21.

The truth of the matter is just as the apostle Paul wrote under inspiration: "We have brought nothing into the world, and

neither can we carry anything out."
—1 Tim. 6:7.

PROVIDER OF TRUE SECURITY

Jesus Christ said: "Even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses." (Luke 12:15) No material possession can give life. None can keep a person alive indefinitely either. And certainly

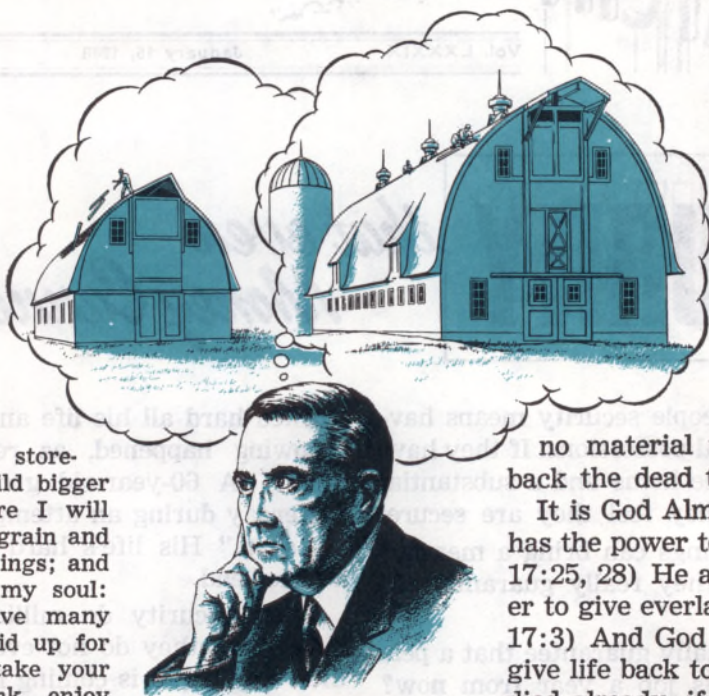
no material thing can bring back the dead to life.

It is God Almighty alone who has the power to give life. (Acts 17:25, 28) He also has the power to give everlasting life. (John 17:3) And God has promised to give life back to those who have died already, if they are within

the scope of Christ's ransom sacrifice! That is why Job was moved to say: "O that in Sheol [the grave] you would conceal me, . . . that you would set a time limit for me and remember me!" (Job 14:13) Yes, God remembers those who put their trust in His provision instead of in material possessions. Even death will not gain permanent victory over them, because in his new system of things God will resurrect, or restore to life, those individuals who are under the benefit of Christ's ransom sacrifice.—John 5:28, 29.

Who else can guarantee you life again? Who else can promise you a restored paradise earth, even if you die before that time comes?—Rev. 21:1-4.

Not only did the Bible writers have such confidence of being brought back to life



in the resurrection, but they also knew that their God, Jehovah, would take care of them while they were alive.

It is the same today. Those who put their trust in God, and not in material possessions, have this security. Loss of material things, while it may cause hardship, does not make them lose their balance or give up. Since they did not put their trust in these things, they are not unduly dismayed if they lose them. They maintain their mental calm and their happiness because they know that God will take care of them. They appreciate that there is no true security anywhere apart from that provided by Jehovah God.

In this regard, note how solid the basis for their confidence is. The Bible states at Hebrews 13:5, 6: "Let your manner of life be free of the love of money, while you are content with the present things. For [God] has said: 'I will by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you.' So that we may be of good courage and say: 'Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?'"

How can you, or anyone else, have such confidence in the security that Jehovah provides? By doing what every person who already has that security has done: study God's Word, the Bible; determine what God's will is; and follow it. Then without fail you will be assured that God will look after your best interests. He will assist you in your time of need, for "God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but along with the temptation he will also make the way out in order for you to be able to endure it."—1 Cor. 10:13.

SPIRITUAL BROTHERS GIVE AID

One who serves the true God has spiritual brothers who also come to his aid in time of need. These are persons who believe in, and serve, the true God just as he

does. Nor are these spiritual brothers few. They are many! In fact, such spiritual brothers who serve the true God, Jehovah, are found in 197 lands world wide. Well over a million persons are actively associated with this organization, and they gladly provide assistance in time of need. The aid they render is very substantial!

For example, in September of 1967 hurricane "Beulah" smashed into lower Texas and upper Mexico along the Gulf coast. Many of Jehovah's witnesses lost virtually all their material possessions. When this became known, their spiritual brothers in nearby areas immediately responded by sending thousands of dollars in money, food and clothing. Truckloads of necessities were rushed to those who were hard hit. When floodwaters forced many to flee their homes, they were taken into the homes of fellow Witnesses in safer places. Food, shelter and clothing were given to them. Such outpourings of Christian hospitality are part of the love that marks true worshipers of Jehovah God, for Jesus himself said: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves."—John 13:35.

One of the many offers of assistance came from congregations of Jehovah's witnesses in New Orleans. Having heard of the difficulties due to hurricane "Beulah," they wrote: "The brothers in this area would like to know what we can do to aid and assist our brothers in those areas." They were deeply appreciative of the privilege of assisting others because they themselves had already been the recipients of such assistance! In 1965 they had been in the path of hurricane "Betsy" when it smashed into the New Orleans area, leaving a trail of ruined buildings and floods. At that time the presiding ministers of the congregations of Jehovah's witnesses there immediately organized a "nose count" to see who needed assistance. Even

though 80 percent of the telephones were not working, and they had to find their way through water and debris that often contained snakes, they accounted for every one of their spiritual brothers!

On that occasion hundreds who needed aid were taken to the homes of fellow Witnesses. And from all over the country their spiritual brothers poured in assistance in the form of thousands of dollars, food, clothing and other needed items. One who received such aid said: "What impressed me was the love that the brothers showed by getting all these things together to aid all of us. It certainly was a display of real love." Yes, these Christians in and around New Orleans had a very deep appreciation of the privilege of helping their brothers in Texas and Mexico who were affected by "Beulah"!

Then, too, when rioting flared last summer in American cities, where it was necessary ministers of Jehovah's witnesses contacted their spiritual brothers and told them to stay indoors. It was arranged for food and other items to be taken to them so that the majority avoided having to expose themselves to danger. And in Detroit, when one of Jehovah's witnesses had her home destroyed by fire, she was quickly moved into another place and her Christian brothers contributed food, clothing and money until she could take care of her needs.

JEHOVAH ALWAYS PROVIDES

However, even when fellow Christians are not at hand to render aid, God fulfills his promise to provide security for his servants. He can open the heart of anyone when the need arises. That is why the psalmist could observe: "A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous left entirely, nor his offspring looking for bread."—Ps. 37:25.

Particularly does Jehovah take delight in providing for the needs of those who are full-time preachers of His kingdom. As they devote their lives to God's work, they look to God to provide as he has promised. They are never disappointed. That is why Jesus said: "Seek continually [God's] kingdom, and these things will be added to you."—Luke 12:31.

So when a person seeks for God and serves him, God promises to take care of him, to provide for him. Not that he will provide material riches now, for he has not promised that. Jesus did not encourage his disciples to pray for a large bank account. He taught them to pray to God: "Give us today our bread for this day." (Matt. 6:11) It is in God's new system that He will shower down material prosperity. Then all of earth's inhabitants will enjoy the good things that God has in store for those who love him.

Until that time comes, the right attitude is the one that the apostle Paul had when he stated: "Having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things." (1 Tim. 6:8) But he also said: "It is a means of great gain, this godly devotion along with self-sufficiency." (1 Tim. 6:6) Yes, taking in knowledge of God, and then serving him, brings the greatest gain possible. It brings many spiritual brothers that really care about you, and deeply so. And it brings the friendship and care of God. That is security that money cannot buy, security that only God can give.

Such security is not temporary either. It will continue forever. Those who serve God now will have God's approval and be preserved alive into his new order where, earth wide, Jehovah promises, "the bow and the sword and war I shall break out of the land, and I will make them lie down in security."—Hos. 2:18.

The Churches Misrepresent



IF YOU are one of the 960 million persons who regard the churches of Christendom as representatives of God, you may be shocked by the bold statement that they misrepresent him. From your personal experience you may not see how this could be so, but permit us to present some facts. If you are not afraid of the truth, you will consider them.

The personal name of God appears as four letters in the portion of the Bible that was originally written in Hebrew. The churches know what these letters stand for. They have even put them on many of their buildings throughout the world, such as Saint Paul's Chapel in New York city, the Basilica of St. Victor in Varese, Italy, and Paris' oldest church, Saint Germain des Près, to mention a few. Although knowing God's personal name, the churches have kept it from the people by suppressing it. They have even done this in their translations of the Bible.

SUBSTITUTE TITLES

Wherever the four Hebrew letters for God's name appear in the Hebrew manuscripts of the Bible, the churches have almost invariably substituted the title "Lord" in their translations. In English the letters for his name are JHVH or YHWH. How can you get Lord out of that? It does not even remotely resemble the personal name of God, which, with vowels added, is Jehovah or, as some prefer, Yahweh.

Church organizations produced the King James Version of the Bible and the Catholic *Douay Version*. The *King James Version* translates God's name as Jehovah on-

ly four times by itself and only three times in combination with the name of a place or altar out of the more than 6,800 times that the letters for his name appear in Hebrew. (Ex. 6:3; Ps. 83:18; Isa. 12:2; 26:4; Gen. 22:14; Ex. 17:15; Judg. 6:24) The *Douay Version* does not translate it as Jehovah even once. Both use the undistinguishing title "Lord" or "God" in place of his name, thus changing what the Bible in its original languages actually says. While keeping people ignorant of God's name, the Catholic church acknowledges the name in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Its edition of 1910, in Volume 8, on page 329, says: "Jehovah, the proper name of God in the Old Testament."

Even though "Jehovah" may not be the way the Hebrews originally pronounced the name, that is not a valid argument for not using it. The name "Jehovah" preserves the four letters representing God's name in Hebrew and has long been recognized as his personal name. It distinguishes him from the millions of man-made gods, such as the 330 million gods of India, which cannot be said for the common title "Lord." While rejecting the name Jehovah, claiming that it is not the accurate Hebrew pronunciation of God's name, the churches inconsistently use the proper name Jesus, although that is not the accurate Hebrew or Greek pronunciation of the name of the Son of God. By suppressing Jehovah's name and substituting titles for it, the churches misrepresent him, making him appear to be nameless.

MISREPRESENTED AS A TRINITY

As if this indignity were not enough, the churches have misrepresented the true God as an incomprehensible triune God of three persons in one. They refer to him as the "Triune God" or the "Blessed Trinity." As you search your Bible, you will not find one mention of the word "trinity" or any statement that Almighty God is three coequal and coeternal persons, as the churches claim. What you will find there flatly contradicts them, making their trinity doctrine a lie.

In support of their doctrine the churches claim that various statements in the Bible imply that God is three persons in one. When he says, at Genesis 1:26, for example, "Let us make man in our image," they claim that the use of the word "us" implies three persons in one God, although the verse does not indicate how many persons were meant by the word. They insist on distorting this scripture to fit their pet doctrine. That the one to whom the Creator was actually speaking was his first creation, his only-begotten Son, is testified to by the Bible at Colossians 1:15, 16: "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; because by means of him all other things were created in the heavens and upon the earth." That mighty spirit Son was Jehovah's master workman. Logically it was to this spirit creature, and not merely to himself, that the Almighty God was speaking.

Another scripture the churches distort to imply seeming support for the trinity is John 10:30, where Jesus says: "I and the Father are one." They contend that Jesus was testifying that he is God, but is that really what he was saying? By comparing John 10:30 with John 17:20, 21, it becomes evident that Jesus was not doing that at all. In the latter scriptures he speaks of those that have faith in him as being one with himself and the Father.

Obviously, Jesus was speaking of unity of purpose and not oneness in godship.

Many churches go so far as to misrepresent God as sacrificing himself for the redemption of mankind. A Catholic publication put out by the Benedictine Convent of Perpetual Adoration in Missouri makes this unscriptural claim in its title: "God Himself Our Sacrifice." And the *Book of Mormon* makes a similar claim at Alma 42:15: "God himself atoneth for the sins of the world." This gross misrepresentation of the eternal God results from the lie that Jesus is God. The *Book of Mormon* carries that lie to the point of having Jesus Christ say at Ether 4:12, "I am the Father."

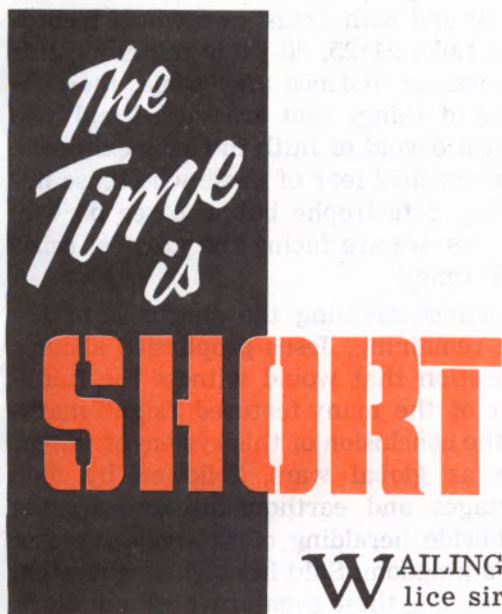
Throughout his ministry Jesus Christ proclaimed himself, not as God, but as the Son of God. He said nothing about being part of a triune God and neither did the Bible writers. Instead of claiming to be equal with his Father, he said: "The Father is greater than I am." (John 14:28) This relationship of inequality with the Father did not change after his resurrection and ascension to heaven. This is shown at 1 Corinthians 11:3 and 15:28, where it shows subjection of the resurrected Jesus Christ to the Father.

Jesus referred to his Father as his God when he told one of his followers: "I am ascending to my Father and your Father and to my God and your God." (John 20:17) He worshiped the same God as did his followers. It was to this God, Jehovah, that he prayed when dying on the torture stake: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"—Matt. 27:46.

As these scriptures plainly show, the churches of Christendom are lying when they say that Jesus Christ is God and that God came to the earth and died to save men. They grossly misrepresent the Creator when they claim that he is a triune God of three persons in one, thus likening

him to what pagans say about their gods. They dishonestly twist the Scriptures to make them appear to imply support for their doctrine. Considering how the churches thus misrepresent the true God

and his name, how could they possibly be his representatives? Do you honestly believe that you can please the God of truth by belonging to such organizations? —Rev. 18:4.



WAILING police sirens paused only momentarily to permit the warning message by loudspeaker: "This is a tornado alert! This is the real thing! Take all emergency steps!" Wise citizens grabbed a few essentials and hastened to shelters. Unwise ones dallied, toying with the thought that it might, after all, be only a false alarm. But suddenly they found themselves engulfed in the fury of the storm as wild winds and flying objects smashed larger buildings like matchwood and lifted scores of smaller ones high into the air.

People living throughout the earth today might well ponder the lesson of such a situation. Survivors often come forth from the shelters to scenes of appalling desolation, but at least they are alive! The

victims are usually those who failed to heed the warning. What if it should at times turn out to be a false alarm? Would it not be far wiser to take precautions and protect one's life? When all the signs point unmistakably to the approach of the tornado, how foolish to ignore warnings!

Yet today a vast multitude of earth's inhabitants are acting and living as though the blackening horizon of our times did not point to a world storm of unprecedented proportions. Yes, all the signs today point to the closeness of God's great war against all the kingdoms of the whole inhabited earth, the war of Armageddon, that must clear the way for a New Order of peace and righteousness. (Rev. 16:14, 16; Dan. 2:44) What is your attitude? Will you heed the warning and take steps for survival, or will you join the heedless ridiculers, who say: "Why, from the day our forefathers fell asleep in death, all things are continuing exactly as from creation's beginning"?—2 Pet. 3:4.

IN THE PATH OF THE STORM

For almost fifty years now Jehovah's witnesses have been sounding the warning. There is no doubt about the reality of this great world storm that is bearing down upon a whole world of disobedient men. Warned Jesus Christ: "Those days will be days of a tribulation such as has not occurred from the beginning of the creation which God created until that time." (Mark 13:19) Think of that! The slaughter in countless wars waged on earth, all of history's earthquakes and famines that have

swept millions into their graves, disease epidemics whose victims have run into the billions, yes, even the destructive forces unleashed during two world wars—all these were accounted by Jesus of little consequence when compared to the great tribulation or time of trouble he was foretelling!

And Jeremiah, God's prophet, foretold that our whole terrestrial globe would be in the path of this unparalleled tempest. Under inspiration he wrote: "Look! A calamity is going forth from nation to nation, and a great tempest itself will be roused up from the remotest parts of the earth. And those slain by Jehovah will certainly come to be in that day from one end of the earth clear to the other end of the earth."—Jer. 25:32, 33.

Just as the tornado smashes everything in its path, sparing neither the wealthy nor the influential, so the warning of the coming great world storm declares: "Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's fury; but by the fire of his zeal the whole earth will be devoured, because he will make an extermination, indeed a terrible one, of all the inhabitants of the earth."—Zeph. 1:18.

NO TIME TO LOSE

But how do we know that the foretold world storm did not already come in the past? Because, since the great deluge of Noah's time, no world calamity has measured up to the intensity of this calamity. Consider these further words of the prophet Jeremiah, for example: "They will not be bewailed, neither will they [the victims] be gathered up or be buried. As manure on the surface of the ground they will become." (Jer. 25:33) Nothing so all-consuming and destructive has yet taken place. It is yet future.

But how far into the future? Not far,

for all the evidences around us point to this time in which we live as the "last days" spoken about by so many of God's inspired penmen. You have only to look around in this restless world of men and compare what you see with the apostle Paul's prophecy at 2 Timothy 3:1-4; and with the apostle Peter's words at 2 Peter 3:3, 4; and with Jesus' own words recorded at Luke 21:25, 26. Note the rising tide of senseless violence and crime, the ridiculing of things that are sacred and true by men devoid of faith in God's existence, the anguished fear of those who sense impending catastrophe but who see no way out. Yes, we are facing the greatest crisis of all times!

Further stressing the shortness of the time remaining, Jesus prophesied about a generation that would witness the fulfillment of the many-featured "sign" marking the conclusion of this system of things, such as global wars, followed by food shortages and earthquakes, and by the worldwide heralding of the good news of God's kingdom. Said he: "This generation [witnessing these events] will by no means pass away until all these things occur."—Matt. 24:34.

You belong to a generation that has either seen those world developments or one that has been told about them by your parents. You have heard about the heralding of the Kingdom message by Jehovah's witnesses throughout the earth, a work now shared in by more than a million Witnesses in 197 lands, a work that began almost fifty years ago and has continuously increased in intensity. Proof, all this, that the "generation" spoken of by Jesus is now close to passing away! The time is truly short!

WHERE DO YOU STAND?

In view of all this, where do you stand? Have you lived your life thus far with

thought only for your own ambitions and pleasures? Has your time, your attention, been absorbed in the pursuit of 'all those things that the nations are eagerly pursuing'? (Matt. 6:32) Of what lasting value are all these things when all the things in the world, yes, and the world of unbelieving mankind itself, are to pass away within the lifetime of the generation that saw World War I?—1 John 2:15-17; 2 Pet. 3:10.

You may even have taken notice of Jehovah's witnesses and read some of the Bible helps they distribute. But where do you stand before God right now? Have you done anything to merit his approval, anything more, that is, than people of pagan religions have done? Yes, you have probably been charitable and tried to deal justly with your fellowmen. But have not people of so-called "heathen" nations done as much?

The vital question is: In view of the shortness of the time before irretrievable calamity befalls this wicked system of things on earth, what is your position in relation to the great God who can grant life or take it away? (Ps. 36:9) If you have virtually ignored him until now and run your own life to suit yourself, surely it is time to show him proper respect by listening to the message that he has provided for all men in the Bible, and especially for these critical times!—2 Thess. 1:7-9.

WHAT TO DO NOW

God caused his prophet Zephaniah to point the way for those desiring refuge and protection during the storm of his

wrath upon all nations. "Seek righteousness, seek meekness," was his message. "Probably you may be concealed in the day of Jehovah's anger." (Zeph. 2:2, 3) So it is urgent to get to know, not the human view, but God's view of "righteousness" and "meekness." The Bible holds the answer, and that is the Book that must become the basis for your study for you to know what is God's will for you.

The loving God has also provided an organization of true worshipers from whom you can obtain help to study the Bible and learn also how to apply the things learned in your life. You are welcome to attend regularly at any one

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Parents' Moral Responsibility.
- Youth's Moral Responsibility.
- The Cross Is of Pagan Origin.
- Apathy Is Dangerous.

of the Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's witnesses. There you can learn not only to help yourself but also how to extend aid to others—your own family, your relatives and friends. They need to be impressed with the danger in which they stand in view of the oncoming tempest of Jehovah's wrath upon the nations. There may yet be time for you to aid them.

This is no time for complacency. It is not the time to hesitate between two opinions. It is God you must please, not men, in order to gain eternal life and happiness. You may not safely procrastinate. Warned Jesus: "Just as it occurred in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building. But on the day that Lot came out of Sodom it rained fire and sulphur from heaven and destroyed them all. The same way it will be on that day when the Son of man is to be revealed." (Luke 17:28-30) Lot and his daughters escaped. Will you?

The Righteous Standard

OF THE CHANGELESS GOD

SOVEREIGN Ruler of the whole universe is what Jehovah God is, and as such he is the champion of peace and order. (1 Cor. 14:33) In this capacity it is his unshakable purpose to maintain order, and, where disorder arises, to correct the situation and restore peace. He may 'tolerate with much long-suffering' those who fail to appreciate the value of order. (Rom. 9:22) Nonetheless, such ones will not be permitted to block his purpose indefinitely. Those who refuse to comply with his arrangements for universal good order are the ones who will suffer irretrievably.

² As we look out into the skies around our planet we should be deeply impressed with the order and harmony that are everywhere manifest. Marvelous laws, many of which are yet unknown to men, bind the countless stars in their galaxies into one vast system in which there is no jarring note of independence. Each star maintains its place in its assigned orbit, and all together they accomplish the will of the Creator. To each he has imparted the tremendous energy to go on rotating on its axis and at the same time to go on hurtling speedily on its orbital flight. The prophet Isaiah points to Jeho-

vah as "the One who is bringing forth the army of them even by number, all of whom he calls even by name. Due to the abundance of dynamic energy, he also being vigorous in power, not one of them is missing."—Isa. 40:26.

³ Were God to relax his laws governing the movements of his huge soulless creations in the sky, can you imagine

what would happen? Doubtless they would fly off wildly on collision courses that would end up disastrously. Happily for us who live on this tiny sphere, there never will be such a contingency, for the very reason that Jehovah is the upholder of order.

⁴ In his written Word the great Creator has caused stars to be compared with humans. Daniel, for example, writes: "The ones having insight will shine like the brightness of the expanse; and those who are bringing the many to righteousness, like the stars to time indefinite." (Dan. 12:3) Abraham's great-grandson Joseph was given a dream-vision of stars representing the members of his own family. (Gen. 37:9) And Abraham's offspring were prophesied to become numberless like the stars.—Gen. 22:17.

⁵ The comparison is so fitting too! Humans, like the stars, have their own place or role in life to occupy. Like the variegated stars, humans differ from one another in appearance and in characteristics. (1 Cor. 15:41) Humans, too, can accurately reflect, if they will, the glory

1. What is Jehovah's attitude and purpose with respect to all disorders?

2, 3. (a) What should impress us about the soulless creations of God in the heavens above us? (b) What would likely result were Jehovah's controlling laws relaxed?

4, 5. (a) Why are the heavenly bodies of more than superficial interest to us? (b) What features in common do astral and human creations have?

of their Creator, even as the stars do. And those foolish men who obstinately refuse to comply with God's righteous standard for humans are appropriately described as "stars with no set course, for which the blackness of darkness stands reserved forever," far from any opportunity to collide with God's useful creations.—Jude 13.

MAN'S NEED FOR A RIGHT STANDARD

⁶ Now, do you begin to realize the need for God to set up his righteous standard for the guidance of every human that lives? Not to deprive anyone of something essential to true happiness. Not just to be arbitrary or to show his authority. Not because he would withhold from anyone true freedom, for Jehovah's spirit is the spirit of freedom. (2 Cor. 3:17) Rather, his grand purpose is to have an assemblage of perfect creatures in heaven and upon earth, like the billions of stars in the sky, all cooperating together in peace, with not even the trace of intrusion by one upon the rights of another. Read about this purpose of God, if you will, at Ephesians, chapter 1, verses 8 to 10.

⁷ To persons who are impatient of control, any kind of requirement may seem to be galling. They want to be free to do as they please. They do not want to be answerable to authority. They are like the popular writer who is reported as saying: "I must be able to live as I want or I don't want to live at all." It is not that they want to be treated like everyone else. They want to be treated as exceptions, as special cases. Yet they know quite well that, if everyone insisted on doing exactly what he felt like doing, conditions here on earth would be even more chaotic than they are. Refusing to take into account the limits imposed by the rights of fellow

creatures, they are, in fact, dedicated to pleasing themselves.

⁸ Early history offers many examples of those who claimed the right to map their own course. Eve disregarded God's command, an action that selfishly dragged her husband into trouble. She allowed her eyes and her heart to lead her off into the way of sin. Adam, too, determined he would rather not live if he could not have life with his beautiful but lawless companion. Their firstborn, Cain, also turned out to be a man who wanted to have his own way. Though God gave him warning, he stubbornly refused counsel and ended up as a condemned murderer. It was not merely that Cain had inherited imperfection. No, for Abel also lived under such a handicap, yet he pleased God. Cain was an independent, and that attitude has been shared by multitudes of Adam's posterity since those days.—1 John 3:12.

⁹ In course of time selfish angels "forsook their own proper dwelling place" in heaven, materialized as men and engaged in debauching the human race. (Jude 6; Gen. 6:1-8) Yet Noah "proved himself faultless among his contemporaries." He maintained proper control of his family, shielding them from the immoral corruptions of a wicked world. He refused to run with the crowd of lawless creatures who ignored God's standard for right conduct and paid for their willfulness with their lives.—Gen. 6:9.

¹⁰ When Abraham's nephew Lot was dwelling in the city of Sodom, "greatly distressed by the indulgence of the law-defying people in loose conduct," Jehovah God determined to register his hatred of filthy sexual practices in a decisive man-

6. What, then, do we learn from the fact that unchangeable laws govern the soulless creation? (b) How is this backed up by God's own record of his purpose?

7. What may we note about persons who insist upon unlimited freedom of decision and action?

8. What attitude early infected the human family, and with what results?

9. What contrasting attitudes were evident just prior to the great Deluge?

10. What particular viewpoint of the changeless God was underlined by the overthrow of Sodom and her sister cities?

ner. As Lot and his family were hurried from the scene, "Jehovah made it rain sulphur and fire," completely overthrowing Sodom and its neighbor cities and snuffing out the lives of their inhabitants. (2 Pet. 2:7; Gen. 19:1-28) The record of that terrible punishment should be a reminder to all, of God's insistence upon the sexual and moral cleanness of those who would have his favor.

¹¹ Into a land where women occupied a prominent and influential role in society Jacob's son Joseph was sold as a slave. When exposed to the seductive importunities of his employer's wife, which course did he choose?

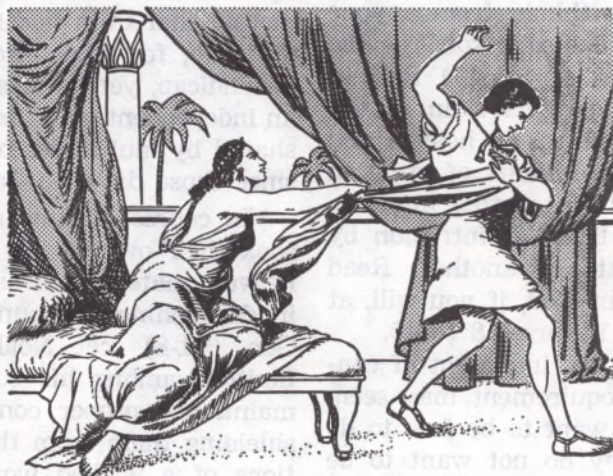
He did have a choice. He could have concluded that there was no harm in doing what his mistress required, leaving the full responsibility upon her. Instead, he took into account a far more important consideration. Note his words of decision as he tore himself from the presence of

the seductress: "How could I commit this great badness and actually sin against God?"—Gen. 39:9.

¹² Contrasting attitudes toward the standard of human conduct that God had communicated to men were displayed by Abraham's grandsons, Esau and Jacob. Esau grew up to be "a man knowing how to hunt, a man of the field, but Jacob a blameless man, dwelling in tents." (Gen.

25:27) The implication is that Esau was not blameless. May it have been because his love of the hunt took him away from the regular supervision of a godly household? His subsequent course proved him to be a wild, independent man, preferring his freedom to please himself to the quiet, industrious life of the keeper of flocks. As a self-pleaser he took wives from among the daughters of Heth, to the great vexation of his mother.—Gen. 27:46.

¹³ Moses, on the other hand, stands as a fine example of those concerned about adhering to God's fine standard for his earthly servants. He could have continued in the lap of luxury as an Egyptian prince, doing and having whatever his heart or eyes desired. But the account tells how he "refused to be called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh, choosing to be ill-treated with the people of God rather than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin."—Heb. 11:24, 25.



Joseph fled from seduction

A WRITTEN STANDARD GIVEN

¹⁴ Because he did not please himself, but looked to the invisible God for direction and power to endure, Moses was greatly favored by being appointed as the mediator through whom God gave a written code to the nation he purchased for himself out of Egypt. Some of the basic

11. How did Joseph view God's righteous standard for human conduct, and against what powerful influences did he take his stand?

12. How did the conduct of Esau and Jacob display their respective attitudes toward God's requirements?

13. What wrong course might Moses have been tempted to follow, had he failed to cast his lot with the chosen people of God?

14. How was Moses rewarded, and what did Jehovah now furnish for the direction of his typical nation?

statutes of that code are as follows: "You must not have any other gods against my face. Honor your father and your mother in order that your days may prove long upon the ground that Jehovah your God is giving you. You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely as a witness against your fellow man. You must not desire" anything belonging to your fellowman.—Ex. 20:3, 12-17.

¹⁵ It is worthy of notice that for any Israelite to insist on being his own judge of right and of wrong would, in effect, be setting himself up as a god. Submission to family authority is required. Depriving a fellow human of the right to live, to have a clean body, to retain his own property and to have a good name are actions that God forbids. Finally, going to the source of all troubles, God's written standard warns against entertaining in the heart illegal and covetous desires. So that no Israelite might plead ignorance of these just requirements, parents were commanded to inculcate them in their children from infancy onward.—Deut. 6: 6-9.

¹⁶ The filthy, immoral rites of pagan worship were warned against: "For you must not prostrate yourself to another god, because Jehovah, whose name is Jealous, he is a jealous God; for fear that you may conclude a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, as they will certainly have immoral intercourse with their gods and sacrifice to their gods, and someone will be certain to invite you, and you will certainly eat some of his sacrifice. Then you will have to take some of their daughters for your sons, and their daughters will be certain to have immoral in-

tercourse with their gods and make your sons have immoral intercourse with their gods."—Ex. 34:14-16.

¹⁷ Jehovah well knew the pattern of things to expect. It would start with apparently harmless social amenities. Just accept the hospitality of those pagans. Then, before the victim is aware of it, he has accepted some of the sacred food offered to the pagan idol, and has brought himself under obligation to comply with other requirements of the false religion, immoral and degrading though they might well be. In ancient times, to eat bread at a man's table put one under obligation to remain in friendly, covenant terms with his host. To eat at the table of a false god likewise placed the partaker in friendly relationship with such a god. Jehovah, however, demanded exclusive devotion from his worshipers.

¹⁸ Knowing that in time to come his people would observe the customs of neighbor nations who set up their own independent standards, and majority groups who would try to stampede them into the wrong way, Jehovah commanded: "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) He left them no basis for going wrong and then claiming in justification, 'Everyone else is doing it.'

¹⁹ That his people might protect themselves against the onset of seductive sin, Jehovah commanded them: "Remember *all* the commandments of Jehovah and do them, and you must not go about following your hearts and your eyes, which you are following in immoral intercourse."

15. The basic laws given to Israel at Mount Sinai embody what deep-lying principles of conduct?

16. Against what wrongful course especially did Jehovah warn his people, if they would continue to enjoy his favor?

17. Why the ban against ordinary social amenities with the peoples of the nations surrounding them?

18. In what way did Jehovah remove any basis for doing what everyone else is doing?

19. How were the Israelites to guard themselves against violation of God's righteous standard, and why did Zimri and other Israelites fall?

(Num. 15:39) Thus their safety lay in continually reminding themselves of God's right standard of conduct and conforming their lives to it. Had this counsel been heeded by Zimri, son of Salu, and 24,000 other Israelites, they would not have had to suffer execution for indulging in immoral relations with the degraded women of Moab.—Num. 25:1-9.

NONE EXEMPTED FROM GOD'S STANDARD

²⁰ Greed and lack of godly fear go hand in hand with sexual looseness, as may be noted in the account about Phinehas and his brother Hophni, sons of the priest Eli who served at God's tabernacle in Shiloh. Not only did they treat with disrespect the sacrificial offerings of the people to Jehovah, but, taking advantage of their trusted office, "they would lie down with the women that were serving at the entrance of the tent of meeting." (1 Sam. 2:17, 22, 34) God acted to uphold his standard. After full opportunity was given Eli to discipline his sons, a man of God appeared with the shocking message: "On one day both of [your sons] will die." That sentence was soon executed when the Philistines defeated the Israelites in battle and carried off the sacred ark of the covenant. Neither position nor privilege excused Eli of parental responsibility and his sons from punishment for sacrilege.

²¹ No one can claim before God that he or she is a special case demanding departure from the strict rules governing right conduct. Not even the royal position of King David could excuse him for coveting the wife of another and then procuring the death of the husband so that his wrong desire might be satisfied. Though his own

life was spared, the child Bath-sheba bore him died and he was destined to suffer throughout the remainder of his life from constant heartaches and troubles fomented by his own sons and trusted servants. Even his wives, his concubines, were to be publicly ravished by a rebellious son of his own house.—2 Sam. 12:1-14; 16:21, 22.

²² In the latter part of his reign, Solomon, David's second son by Bath-sheba, got to ignoring the right standard set by God. He multiplied wives for himself, taking women from pagan nations, women who insisted on importing the worship of their false gods into the land of Israel. The record tells how he catered to those insubordinate females who despised the God of their husband, and how he built temples for their idols. Jehovah decreed that a calamity would befall his kingdom after his death. Ten tribes revolted from the rule of his son and set up an independent kingdom. Two tribes only gave allegiance to the king in Jerusalem.

²³ Later kings of Judah and Israel, with few exceptions, also proved unfaithful to God's requirements, immoral in their intercourse with the false gods of the surrounding nations, filthy in their practice of lewd religious rites. Jehovah eventually gave their kingdoms over to the Assyrian and Babylonian conquerors, leaving the land of Judah a ruined desolation for seventy years. Then he mercifully gave them a release and return to their own land. But did they then subject themselves to his standard of right conduct? No, for they failed to maintain separation from the Canaanites and other mixed peoples around them. Scribe Ezra was shocked to learn how they had taken heathen women

20. What Scriptural example shows the relationship that often exists between materialism and moral looseness, and why did Jehovah act swiftly in that case?

21. What do we learn from King David's bitter experiences following his sin in the matter of Bath-sheba?

22. How did Solomon come to merit the announcement of the coming calamity of his kingdom?

23. (a) Why did Jehovah foretell and permit the miserable fall of the kings of Israel and Judah? (b) What lesson had not yet been impressed upon individual exile Jews up to the time of Ezra?

as wives for themselves and their sons. He lost no time in sounding the warning of God's adverse judgment against the wrongdoers. At his sobering reminder the Jews agreed to make a clean break from their unclean state: "Let us conclude a covenant with our God to put away all the [pagan] wives and those born from them according to the counsel of Jehovah." (Ezra 10:3) The choice was vital. They averted the dreadful consequences of Jehovah's wrath.

NATIONS JUDGED ACCORDING TO GOD'S STANDARD

²⁴ Not individuals alone, but whole nations stood or fell in times past according to whether they honored or ignored the right standard of the changeless God. Moab, Ammon and Edom, all of them Semitic nations who scorned and hated Israel, coveted their land and put on airs against Jehovah, were brought to ruin and desolation by decree of the righteous God. (Ezek. 25:1-14) The Phoenicians, dominated by commercial greed, broke covenant with Israel and began trading off captive Jews into slavery. Israel's God brought calamity upon them first by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and later by Alexander of Greece.

²⁵ Even the kingdoms of Judah and Israel insisted on pleasing themselves and following in the way of the pagan nations round about. Jehovah by his prophets reproved them for their filthy and immoral practices. He calls them "daughters of prostitution" and describes them as "lusting after those passionately loving [them]." However, they ignored his warnings, and he brought upon them the threatened judgment slaughter: "There

will be the bringing up of a congregation against them and a making of them a frightful object and something to plunder. And the congregation must pelt them with stones, and there will be a cutting of them down with their swords. Their sons and their daughters they will kill, and with fire their houses they will burn. And I shall certainly cause loose conduct to cease out of the land." (Ezek. 23:46-48) How foolish of those highly favored peoples to despise the very standard that Jehovah designed for their welfare and happiness!

²⁶ Even after Ezra's day the Jews again fell to the low moral level of the heathen peoples around them. Again by his prophet Malachi God sent solemn warning of their danger: "I will come near to you people for the judgment, and I will become a speedy witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against those swearing falsely, and against those acting fraudulently with the wages of the wage earner, with the widow and with the fatherless boy, and those turning away the alien resident, while they have not feared me. . . . For I am Jehovah; I have not changed." (Mal. 3:5, 6) God's view of these specifically mentioned wrongs remains the same. He has not changed and never will in this respect. He will not overlook the willful violators of his righteous standard.

NOT SWAYED BY THE CROWD

²⁷ The individual or nation that is unduly influenced by the conduct of the majority of imperfect and sinful humans is led into a snare. Those who patterned their lives after the example of the majority in Noah's day, for example, proved to be in the wrong and God's adverse judgment came upon them. Safety was not in num-

24. Hewing to the line in connection with his righteous standard, does Jehovah limit his action to individuals who ignore his requirements? Give examples.

25. How did God's justice operate in connection with the entire nations of Judah and Israel, and why?

26. How does Jehovah, through his prophet Malachi, assure his typical people of his unchangeability with respect to his righteous standard?

27. What is to be said about the majority view of imperfect humans in all such matters?

bers. The popular, the orthodox way of viewing matters is seldom the way that accords with God's will.

²⁸ On the other hand, those who viewed with suspicion the easy road of the majority were the ones who chose to keep their lives in harmony with God's will. Noah, Abraham, Job, Jacob, Moses and other faithful servants of Jehovah followed the way of the minority. They were unswayed by the preponderance of numbers. They knew that the Creator's thoughts and ways were far loftier and of far greater account than the thoughts and ways of men. (Isa. 55:9) They chose the future, everlasting reward of life in a clean New Order promised by God, rather than to have "the temporary enjoyment of sin," or the satisfaction of pleasing themselves. (Heb. 11:25) Soon now such faithful ones will receive that rich reward.

²⁹ It is the course of wisdom, today, to see in these choice records of human history set out in the Bible the counsel and direction so urgently needed in this day of global crisis. How wise to recognize

28. What right mental attitude was displayed by all the faithful men of old who are commended in God's written Word?

29. What are some of the conclusions that God-fearing persons of today should reach?

that no individual can properly claim the right to run his own life just as he pleases, without regard for the interest and welfare of his fellow creatures and without respect for the right standard of conduct decreed by the Creator! Those individuals or nations who presume to act independently of God's arrangement, who violate the moral standard that he has set up to guide his creatures, are headed for disaster.

³⁰ God's dealings with those who in the past either honored or despised his righteous standard of conduct are of vital moment to us who live today. Why? Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, answers: "All the things that were written aforetime were written for our instruction, that through our endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope." (Rom. 15:4) Meantime we can be assured that God's standard for human conduct does not change, for Jehovah is rightly described as "the Father of the celestial lights, and with him there is not a variation of the turning of the shadow." (Jas. 1:17) He is, indeed, the changeless, the everlasting God.

30. Of what can we be assured relative to God's dealings with people of the past?

CHRISTIAN MORALITY

"The minding of the flesh means death, but the minding of the spirit means life and peace."—Rom. 8:6.

BECAUSE Abraham's natural descendants continually fell away from the righteous standard he set up to

1. In sending his own beloved Son to earth, what great change did Jehovah institute, and why?

govern their conduct, Jehovah cast them away from being his special possession, and proceeded to gather together those who would form a new nation for his

praise. Not by an ordinary human servant like Moses did he assemble the new nation of his worshipers, but this time he sent his own Son from heaven "in the likeness of sinful flesh." (Rom. 8:3) In Jesus he furnished the means of ransoming men from the power of sin and death as well as a perfect model in whose steps other men might follow.—1 Pet. 2:21.

² That his Son was "in the likeness of sinful flesh" does not mean that "the two absolutely opposite principles of human ignorance and imperfection, and divine omniscience and perfection," met in Christ Jesus, as affirmed by the Roman Catholic Thomas Aquinas. No, for Jesus was no God-man. "He emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men," but as such, we are assured, he was "guileless, undefiled, separated from the sinners." (Phil. 2:7; Heb. 7:26) As a perfect human Jesus was in position to be submitted to the same test of obedience and integrity as that to which Adam and Eve were subjected. The course he would follow would demonstrate his attitude toward Jehovah's righteous standard.

³ When Jesus appeared the human race had been long under the despotic rule of sin. 'Sin rules as king in their mortal bodies,' is the way the Christian apostle Paul expressed it. (Rom. 6:12) And it hardly needs to be proved that the mortal bodies, with their feelings or sensations, can and do dominate the thinking and actions of most humans. Just think of the powerful influence on human lives that is brought to bear by the sense organs that govern touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing!

⁴ Fleshly sensations, given free rein, are capable of producing the glutton, the

drunkard, and the lover of luxury and ease. There is the jealous eye that wants everything it sees and slave-drives its owner into the path of materialism. (Eccl. 4:8) The sense of touch, when permitted to dominate our thinking, can lead us into lewd and filthy practices. (Matt. 5:30) Even the ear can mislead us by seeking only the pleasurable sounds and shutting out those harsher notes that may come in the form of sober counsel and healthful discipline.—Zech. 7:11.

⁵ Of course, the all-wise Creator did not equip us with those sensory powers in order for them to dictate the course of our lives. Fully cognizant of the powerful influence that would be exerted upon men and women by the fleshly sensations, Jehovah made provision so that intelligence nourished by divine wisdom would act as a counterpoise. Thus in his Word he counsels: "My son, to my wisdom O do pay attention. To my discernment incline your ears, so as to guard thinking abilities; and may your own lips safeguard knowledge itself."—Prov. 5:1, 2.

JESUS LEADS IN THE RIGHT WAY

⁶ Satan the tempter well knew how humans could be influenced through their fleshly senses, and so, in seeking to cause Jesus to break integrity with his God, he suggested to the hungry Son of God that he draw upon the miraculous power of his Father for the appeasement of his appetite. Would Jesus now mind the flesh, that is, pay attention to its demands with a view to obeying it? Or, would he mind the spirit, that is, pay attention to spiritual direction from his Father in heaven? To Satan's chagrin he chose the latter, declaring: "Man must live, not on bread alone,

2. Jesus' being "in the likeness of sinful flesh" meant what, and why was this appropriate to God's purpose?

3. Under what kind of dominion had humankind been subject prior to Jesus' appearance?

4. How do fleshly sensations tyrannize imperfect humans?

5. What was God's purpose in furnishing his human creations with those sensory powers?

6. (a) With what former experience in mind would the Tempter approach the perfect man Jesus? (b) What was the result?

but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth." (Matt. 4:4) Jesus submitted to the right moral standard.

⁷ Showing his awareness of the dangerous influence the members and organs of our human bodies can have over our lives, Jesus warned: "I say to you that everyone that keeps on looking at a woman so as to have a passion for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If, now, that right eye of yours is making you stumble, tear it out and throw it away from you. For it is more beneficial to you for one of your members to be lost to you than for your whole body to be pitched into Gehenna [from which there can be no resurrection]. Also, if your right hand is making you stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you. For it is more beneficial for one of your members to be lost to you than for your whole body to land in Gehenna."—Matt. 5:28-30.

⁸ Manifestly, Jesus was not here teaching self-mutilation, something that would have been in opposition to the principles of God's law to the Jews. But he knew that the eye is capable of kindling a covetous spirit and the hand can be used to manipulate matters for selfish gratification. At the same time, Jesus knew that the eye and the hand are useful for many godly activities when controlled by a mind nourished upon godly teaching. Instead of the fleshly members directing the thinking, the mind should have those members under control.

⁹ On another occasion Jesus assured his followers that "not what enters into his mouth defiles a man; but it is what proceeds out of his mouth that defiles a man."

(Matt. 15:11) In response to their request for clarification, Jesus explained: "Are you not aware that everything entering into the mouth passes along into the intestines and is discharged into the sewer? However, the things proceeding out of the mouth come out of the heart, and those things defile a man. For example, out of the heart come wicked reasonings, murders, adulteries, fornications, thieveries, false testimonies, blasphemies. These are the things defiling a man."—Matt. 15:17-20.

¹⁰ Bad things, in turn, come to be in the heart and mind of the man through his sensory organs, the eye, the hand, the tongue, and so on. Not that those organs are bad in themselves, but, rather, they usurp control of the thinking abilities and crowd out of the mind the fine counsel from God. Then the creature is likely to be led off into an immoral course, a law-defying course, for "the minding of the flesh means enmity with God, for it is not under subjection to the law of God."—Rom. 8:7.

¹¹ James, one of God's inspired Bible writers, outlines the process leading to this lawless and death-dealing course: "Each one is tried by being drawn out and enticed by his own desire. Then the desire, when it has become fertile, gives birth to sin; in turn, sin, when it has been accomplished, brings forth death." (Jas. 1:14, 15) So the evil way finds its root in the heart (seat of affection) influenced by the body's sensation-loving members. How vital, then, to guard our hearts and nourish them with the precious thoughts of our God, thoughts he has generously made available to us in his written Word!

7. How did Jesus show his accurate understanding of human weakness?

8. Why can we be sure that Jesus was not here teaching self-mutilation?

9. On another occasion, how did Jesus identify the worst kinds of defilement and their source?

10. How do bad things come to be in the heart, and with what terrible result?

11. How does Bible writer James explain the process leading to death, and what, therefore, becomes vital for each God-fearing person?

APOSTLES MAINTAIN THE TEACHING OF JESUS

¹² For those who would keep themselves free from the defilements and immoralities now so rife in this world, the apostle Paul recommended filling the mind with good things, including "whatever things are chaste." (Phil. 4:8) This certainly means giving more and more time to the study of the Bible, for it is the contents of that unique Book that are "beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness." (2 Tim. 3:16) In view of the evil inclinations of the flesh, we all need such reproof and discipline applied continuously.

¹³ Again pointing to the need for a well-nourished mind, the apostle offers this excellent counsel: "Brothers, do not become young children in powers of understanding, but be babes as to badness; yet become full-grown in powers of understanding." (1 Cor. 14:20) It is true that we are born into this world with the handicap of imperfection and waywardness inherited from our ancestors, but we do not need to develop to manhood in the ways of this wicked world. We can become weaned from the ways of the world by accepting the direction of God's spirit-filled Word.

¹⁴ The apostle was also mindful of the effect associations would have in directing us toward either "the minding of the flesh" or "the minding of the spirit." He warned fellow Christians: "Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Cor. 15:33) How true this is, whether we are in physical company of persons whose god is their belly, or keeping company with them through the printed page or the movie screen! (Phil. 3:19) Certainly, if we are obedient to the exhortation

to stop associating with those whose appetite for fleshly gratification has become their god, then we cannot read what they have to say or watch their actions, for fear that some of their thinking should rub off on us.

¹⁵ Nor should we ever entertain the idea that we are spiritually strong enough to expose ourselves to worldly associations without danger. The apostles not only warned younger fellow Christians to flee from idolatry and youthful lusts, but they themselves avoided such dangers, and the apostle Paul warned: "Let him that thinks he has a firm position beware that he does not fall." (1 Cor. 10:12) Even in maturity the apostle still recognized his own limitations, and speaking of the reward for faithfulness, he says: "Brothers, I do not yet consider myself as having laid hold on it." No, he himself had to beware of inducements to unfaithfulness and immorality.—Phil. 3:13.

¹⁶ Peter, another of Jesus' apostles, had experienced the fact that one who makes up his mind to submit to the direction of the spirit of God rather than to that of the flesh and its desires will become like a stranger to fleshly-minded persons. So he could appropriately exhort fellow worshipers of God "as aliens and temporary residents to keep abstaining from fleshly desires, which are the very ones that carry on a conflict against the soul." (1 Pet. 2:11) Fleshly desires, therefore, must always be suspect. Do they conflict with righteous principles? Do they obstruct your service of Jehovah? Do they form an inducement to sexual looseness? For our own protection these desires need to be under close surveillance.

¹⁷ Gaining control of the members of the

12. What is the counsel of the apostle Paul, and in view of what inclinations of the flesh?

13. In what way is it proper to be babes, but in what way is it preferable to be adult?

14. Against whom does the apostle Paul warn fellow Christians, and why?

15. Explain why it is perilous to consider oneself strong enough to be exposed to bad associates.

16. What counsel does the apostle Peter offer, raising what pertinent questions?

17. What is meant by 'getting possession of one's own vessel,' and failure to do so results in what?

body and directing one's body in harmony with the right standard of conduct set up by God is also referred to as 'getting possession of one's own vessel.' So Paul earnestly reminds those who would continue as genuine followers of Christ: "This is what God wills, the sanctifying of you [brothers and sisters], that you abstain from fornication; that each one of you should know how to get possession of his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in covetous sexual appetite such as also those nations have which do not know God." (1 Thess. 4:3-5) Failure to keep in mind such spirit-directed counsel has laid the majority of men open to the wily tactics of the Devil, who seeks to gain a hold over them, even as he sought to gain a hold on Jesus, by appealing to their fleshly desires.

NATIONS FLOUT CHRISTIAN MORALITY

¹⁸ Throughout the world during the past few decades crime and immorality have vastly increased. The fruitage is evident in the great upsurge of social disease, lying, stealing, murder and sex perversion. Just as in the days of the apostles, men of the nations proceed "in deeds of loose conduct, lusts, excesses with wine, revelries, drinking matches, and illegal idolatries," and fall into what the apostle Peter termed a "low sink of debauchery." (1 Pet. 4:3, 4) Even a multitude of persons in many lands who profess to be Christians join in the general defiance of God's righteous standard. They insist on doing just as they please. They want to get rid of what they consider to be old-fashioned standards of morality.

¹⁹ Recent interviews with a cross section of British boys and girls revealed the fact that one in five boys and one in ten girls

had had sex experience by the age of fifteen. In a northern English city it was reported that 700 girls were suffering from gonorrhea. In a large industrial area of the country venereal disease has increased during the past decade by 58 percent in young men and 346 percent in girls. Throughout Great Britain two-thirds of all babies born to girls under twenty are conceived out of wedlock.

²⁰ In Sweden studies indicate that some 80 percent of boys and 67 percent of girls under age eighteen have had sexual relations, and almost half of all firstborn children are born out of wedlock. In practically 90 percent of Swedish society it is now accepted that marriage engagement carries with it the privilege of sex intimacy. In Czechoslovakia one out of three firstborn children are conceived before marriage. In West Germany and Denmark the figure is reported to be one out of two. In the United States, according to the best available national statistics, from 40 to 65 percent of all girls have intercourse before they marry.

²¹ In many lands a large number of illegitimate births are forestalled by abortions. In Hungary legal abortions actually exceed the number of live births. In some parts of Greece it is estimated that the rate is as high as 50 abortions per 100 live births. In Japan a million mothers each year cut short unwanted pregnancies by legalized abortion. In the United States more than 1,200,000 abortions or attempted abortions are performed annually.

²² Flouting of the Christian standard of morality is not confined to self-confessed atheists of the East and the West. It is even encouraged and promoted by clergymen and other professional men who profess to be Christian. There is, for example, the Unitarian minister in the United States

18. On what do godless nations insist, and what is the fruitage of such a course?

19-21. How is the rising generation of boys and girls affected by this world's attitude toward Christian morality?

22-24. What are the clergymen of Christendom doing in connection with the worsening moral conditions among the nations?

who claims "the state should not forbid or punish voluntary pre-marital intercourse between persons over the legal age of consent." Then there is the professor of ethics at an Episcopal theological school who declares: "No sexual act between persons competent to give mutual consent should be prohibited, except when it involves either the seduction of minors or an offense against the public order."

²³ A study group of the British Council of Churches made a special report on "Sex and Morality," in the course of which they refused to condemn adultery and adopted the view that casual sex can be "trivially pleasurable or mildly therapeutic." On the subject of masturbation they state in the same report: "It is not at all clear to us that any harm need be done when it is used, in absence of other means, as a relief for physical tensions."

²⁴ In Sweden the editor of a religious magazine stated that "there are many young couples not yet married who are living together and are not acting immorally," and at the same time indicated that he would have no objection to what he termed "premarital monogamy," which is in fact living together as man and wife without benefit of marriage.

²⁵ In all nations, today, the truth about the clean, righteous moral standard of God is being suppressed in one way or another. By some it is ridiculed as being old-fashioned, impractical in this modern age. By others it is beclouded with religious traditions that tend to discredit it. In still other coun-

25. In what ways are men suppressing the truth in an unrighteous way, and with what result to themselves?

tries it is flatly rejected as an authoritative guide. That is why, Paul the apostle declares, the wrath of God is upon those "men who are suppressing the truth in an unrighteous way." Further Paul says: "That is why God gave them up to disgraceful sexual appetites, for both their females changed the natural use of themselves into one contrary to nature; and likewise even the males left the natural use of the female and became violently inflamed in their lust toward one another." —Rom. 1:18, 26, 27.

²⁶ All those nations have preferred to 'mind the flesh' rather than to 'mind the spirit' and so must be prepared to forgo life and peace. Death is their ultimate destiny. By following the dictates of the flesh they have put themselves at enmity with God, the only source of life and peace. The time of God's toleration of their filthy and degraded practices is running out. The destruction of an immoral generation by the great deluge in Noah's day stands as a pattern of what Jehovah will do to the debauched generation of today.

ENSURING FOR OURSELVES LIFE AND PEACE

²⁷ How vital it is, then, to separate ourselves from the immoral attitudes and

26. "The minding of the flesh," then, is leading the nations to what?

27. What wrongful course must all of Jehovah's approved ones now completely avoid, and how may they be aided to do so?



The Flood, a pattern of what God will do to this immoral generation

practices of those doomed nations! That is the only way to avoid sharing their calamity. And it means that we must cleanse our minds of any unhealthy ideas we used to share with fleshly-minded people of the world. The apostle Paul knew that many who were converted to Christianity "at one time walked according to the system of things of this world," and formerly practiced sexual vices and other sins. Now, he exhorts, "be transformed by making your mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."—Eph. 2:2; Rom. 12:2.

²⁸ As followers of Christ we must follow his steps closely, doing and saying and thinking as he did while here on earth. As each difficult situation confronts us, as each issue demands a right decision on our part, the way of success is to ask, "How would Jesus react? How would he decide?" For example, when speaking the comforting message of the Kingdom to the woman at Sychar, did he whitewash or minimize her failure to lead a chaste life? No, he stood firmly for God's righteous standard.—John 4:16-18.

²⁹ Note, too, how positively Jesus spoke of married persons as being "no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has yoked together let no man put apart." No room here for quibbling about excuses for divorce. "I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except on the ground of fornication, and marries another commits adultery." (Matt. 19:6-9) Furthermore, says Jesus, "he that marries a woman divorced from a husband [for any other reason besides fornication] commits adultery." (Luke 16:18) In no way did Jesus ever countenance any watering down of Jehovah's just standard of marital faithfulness.

28. What fine example may they pause and consider in every situation and under every circumstance?

29. How did Jesus forthrightly express Jehovah's requirements as to married persons?

³⁰ Summing up the whole of the Mosaic law and the teachings of the prophets of God, Jesus stressed the keeping of the two great commandments: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind. . . . You must love your neighbor as yourself." (Matt. 22:37, 39) The way to love God and demonstrate that love is not by ignoring and violating his righteous standard for human conduct. No, rather, it is by adhering strictly to the way of life exemplified by Christ Jesus. It is by paying more attention to the guidance of God's holy spirit than to the desires of our imperfect flesh.

³¹ And lest we should somehow get a very limited view of who constitutes our neighbor, Jesus gave the illustration of the Good Samaritan. At its conclusion he asked the pertinent question: "Who of these three seems to you to have made himself neighbor to the man that fell among the robbers?" (Luke 10:36) So it is a matter of making ourselves neighbor to all our fellow creatures, all of whom are in need of our succor in one form or another. By indulging in fornication or adultery, what kind of neighbor are we to someone's father, or brother, or husband? And what kind of neighbor do we make ourselves to the person whose self-respect we steal by such illicit sex relations? Surely the answers are obvious.

³² God's own Son, while in the flesh, demonstrated by his way of life the moral standard to be observed by his followers. It is useless for anyone to call himself "Christian" and pursue a different course. He only makes a hypocrite of himself. To teach and practice what is contrary to the teaching that Jesus received from his

30. How can the two great commandments of life be adhered to?

31. How do we determine who is our neighbor?

32. Can there be any doubt about the true moral standard for Christians?

heavenly Father is to bring oneself into enmity with God, and only death can be the end of such a course.

³³ On the other hand, if we have come to know the mind of God and of Christ we should wisely give heed to the earnest exhortation: "Quit being fashioned according to the desires you formerly had in your ignorance, but, in accord with the

33. How do Jesus' followers become holy, even as their God is holy?

holy one who called you, do you also become holy yourselves in all your conduct, because it is written: 'You must be holy, because I am holy.' " (1 Pet. 1:14-16) Despite our inheritance of sin from Adam and the weaknesses of the flesh, we can become holy. God does not demand of us the impossible. And if, with his help, we continue to 'mind the spirit' we can enjoy peace with God now and attain life and peace in his New Order.

Putting Kingdom Interests *First*

AS TOLD BY ROSCO JONES

THERE were ten children in our family, and we lived on a farm some ten miles east of Raleigh, North Carolina. Here I was born on September 11, 1895, and here I continued until I was twenty-one years of age, helping my father to make ends meet. My parents were quite religious, members of the local Baptist Church. Father was a deacon, and made sure we all got to church services regularly and that we were supplied with all kinds of religious storybooks.

Having had some earlier contact with the Bible Students, as Jehovah's witnesses were then known, and having read some of their literature, my father knew that war and true Christianity just do not mix. He used to talk it over with me. But, when the United States entered World War I, I had to register in the first draft. One Sunday evening three preachers came to

our place and stayed late trying to convince Dad that it would be a blessing for me to join the army.

WAR'S HORRORS BRING DECISION

On March 31, 1918, I was finally drafted. By the time our division landed in France I had already lost all confidence in the clergy. I could easily see that the God of the Bible was not in that war. There were nine huge transports carrying, in all, a hundred thousand men. Several destroyers acted as convoys and kept attacking submarines at a distance.

Once landed, we were hurried to the front line facing the Hindenburg Line. It took us nine days of vigorous hiking to make it on time. We passed our cannons, lined up hub to hub for many miles, ready to open a bombardment of the German positions. Can you imagine the scene when

the big cannons started that night, a hundred thousand men lying on the ground waiting for the signal to go forward, three miles in front of the Allied artillery and two miles from where the shells were bursting on the enemy line? The earth under our feet rocked and rolled as though we were riding a rough freight train. All other sound was drowned out, and at times the night flashed brightly as though by floodlights.

At first it was frightening. Many of the men passed out from shell shock. After the first fifteen minutes I became calm and began to think of the many Bible topics my father had discussed with me. I recalled how God protected those who served him, and I made a sincere vow to God that night. If I ever lived through this nightmare and was permitted to learn more about His ways, I would devote myself to telling others the truth about him and his purposes.

Eventually I was trained as a battalion scout. That meant working on my own most of the time, keeping the enemy under observation without being seen, mapping the territory between the two armies, locating and getting help to lost or wounded personnel. Wounded soldiers had to be made comfortable until first aid arrived, and the identification tag and personal effects of dead soldiers had to be brought back to headquarters. It was dangerous work, but somehow I got through unharmed.

Then the war was over, after four months of heavy fighting. As soon as I was discharged I hurried home to rejoin the family. Everyone seemed fine, though my father had now become an intolerant Baptist. I could not agree with his views anymore, and so moved to Richmond, Virginia, and there, in 1922, I got married. Still having in mind my wartime vow, I

joined the Methodist Church, much to the disgust of my father.

Meantime, my younger brother, Leroy, was living in Washington, D.C. One day he came in contact with one of the Bible Students and had an argument with him about Bible doctrine. Since Leroy did not have his Bible with him at the time, he invited the Bible Student to come to his home, where they continued the discussion for many hours. Leroy was convinced, and his letters to me began to sound quite radical. I invited him to come to Richmond and spend Saturday night with me so I could straighten him out.

When he arrived that afternoon I suggested that we go into the bedroom and pray. "No!" he said, "but let us stick to the Bible right now and we can pray later." Till 3 a.m. that morning our Bible study and discussion lasted, and I knew that what he had was the truth. I could not get to sleep all that night, from sheer thankfulness. I now realized that I was on the right track and would be able to carry out my vow.

ASSOCIATION WITH GOD'S PEOPLE

From Leroy I found out about the Bible literature published by the Watch Tower Society. I gave him \$7 and told him to get me everything available. I could see that I had a long way to go. As soon as the books came to hand I started studying. Meantime, that very morning after Leroy departed for his home, I took my Bible, got on a bus and rode for about three miles; then I started back on foot, calling at homes and trying to tell people some of the things I had learned.

Next, Leroy wrote to tell me that a Mr. Skinner was coming to Washington from the Watchtower headquarters in Brooklyn to give a special Bible lecture. My wife and I made the trip on Saturday, and that

evening I shared in distributing handbills on the streets. The following morning Bible Students took me out in the house-to-house preaching work, and I began to see how best to share Bible knowledge with others. The lecture that day was exactly what I needed, and I hurried home and prepared to start witnessing to my neighbors the following evening.

At the very first door, before I could say much, the woman bawled me out and slammed the door in my face. That really jarred me, so much so that I went back home to cool off. Soon, however, I went right back and started at the next door and continued for five hours without a break.

The meeting in Washington had whetted my appetite, so I looked up the congregation there in Richmond. I was warmly welcomed, and soon began to make some progress.

By 1926 there were eight of us colored Bible Students in Richmond and it seemed advisable to commence our own congregation, seeing that some of the newly interested ones were hesitant about attending the congregation of whites. Meantime my wife and I wrote my father and arranged to have a vacation in North Carolina, taking with us two cartons of books. We soon placed all this literature in the home district, and I arranged to meet with many of my old neighbors outside the church on the following Sunday. In the big oak grove that surrounds the church I had more people listening to me than the preacher had inside. The preacher, my own first cousin, came out to inquire what was going on, so the people asked him the same question I had just been explaining to them: "Where do people go when they die?" He gave the right answer, but then could not explain why so many preachers say that everyone goes right off to heaven or hellfire at death.

Then the board of deacons got after me—my father was one of them—and when they threatened that they were going to turn me out of the church, I told them that that was impossible, for I was not and did not ever intend to become a member. At this they tried to change their tune and use persuasion, but I had made up my mind. I would be a preacher of righteousness, and not the kind of preacher that says one thing and does another.

In 1929 I had been promoted to be one of the headwaiters at the hotel where I worked, but the job kept me from attending meetings of the Christian congregation. I told the manager that I would be leaving early every Sunday in order to get to our Bible study. He told me that I had better look for another job. This happened several times, but when I went back my job was always waiting for me. I carried on in this job for three years, but then it began to bother me that I was missing most of the assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses because of being tied down in this way. What should I now do?

SERVING THE KINGDOM FULL TIME

My wife, who had not been at all sure about my new religion, took her stand with me in 1932. We began to make plans to enter the full-time preaching service wherever we might be needed. By 1933 we were ready to go. My brother Leroy and his wife were already engaged in full-time preaching, so we joined them in a territory at Allendale, South Carolina. A group of six of us pioneer ministers helped to organize a congregation in Atlanta.

We had the great joy, in 1935, of being able to attend every session of the Washington, D.C., convention of Jehovah's witnesses. From there we were assigned to work in rural areas of Georgia, where we had some outstanding experiences. For example, in one place where a white man

gave us permission to park our trailer on an unused section of road, another white man farther up the road told us not to be there overnight if we wanted no trouble. The neighborhood was full of colored people, and many of them begged us to go, for they knew this man was really mean and would cause lots of trouble. They said that he had had a colored man killed about three months ago, and another had been whipped with an ax handle.

We decided to stay, after going to Jehovah in prayer, and nothing happened that night. Next morning, just as we were about ready to leave for our work, we saw a heavily built white man carrying an ax handle and making his way toward us. When he repeated the warning of the other white man, I told him that I did not have anything to do with him or the other, and that I was not afraid of him. Finally I invited him into our trailer. He accepted, leaving the ax handle at the door. While there he saw the Bible booklet with the word "Government" in the heading, and thereafter must have spread the word around that I was a government man, for from then on I could not have had better cooperation than I received from whites as well as colored people.

A few weeks later we were working in another area, notorious for its oppression of the colored people. Just before we reached the colored section where we planned to preach, our car ran out of gas. Just up the road about a quarter of a mile we could see a gas station. On the right side of the road was one white man plowing, on the other side four white men with a bulldog, a rifle and a gallon of whiskey. One of them was picking a guitar. As I sent my wife up ahead for a gallon of gas the four approached me, and the one playing the guitar said: "Dance for us, old man." Another said: "Give him a drink of liquor." I told them I could do

neither, for I was a minister. Then they demanded that I preach a sermon, sing a song or pray a prayer. This also I refused to do, for, as I told them, God is not to be mocked.

Meantime, the plowman approached and told the other four to quit meddling. He then asked where I was going and what I was doing. When I explained, he said, "I know a real good place for you." We got the car started and he got in with us and took us to his own place. As we drove into his yard, he shouted: "Honey, here are some of your people." What a time we had there! We were made right at home for several days, sharing the meals cooked by his wife. Every evening would wind up with three or four hours of keen Bible discussion. The whole family was interested. And when we left, the woman cried and thanked Jehovah for sending us there. They had gained a knowledge of much Bible truth through the literature, but we were the first Witnesses that they had ever met.

ENDURING AS GOOD SOLDIERS

Not all experiences ended up so pleasantly, however. At Seale, Alabama, I was arrested on a minor breach of traffic law and on a summary trial was fined \$35 or six months on the chain gang. I did not have the money, and faced the six-month sentence when the convention of Jehovah's witnesses at Columbus, Ohio, was just a matter of days away. When my wife told me she would bring me back all the news, I told her that somehow I hoped to get there to hear the opening song, "Give Praise to Jehovah." Meantime, the judge told me that he would make it prison for me, rather than the chain gang. So there I was in prison. Saturday morning an old colored lady in the neighborhood came to the jail and told me she would pay the fine for me so that I could get to the conven-

tion, and I could repay her later. Things then moved fast, and I got to Atlanta the day before the group there was to leave for Columbus.

From then on there was no more problem. My Christian brothers contributed funds, one of them paying my return fare to Columbus, and someone else handed me a box of food to last us for the next two days. I had to slip off and cry, so happy was I that Jehovah had seen fit to open the way for me to get to the big convention at Columbus, in time to hear the throng of worshipers unite in singing "Give Praise to Jehovah." At that assembly the Watch Tower Society gave the full-time pioneer ministers the privilege of placing the book *Enemies* and the magazine *Consolation* (now *Awake!*) with all others in attendance. By the time we got back to our assignment we had enough funds to return the loan of \$35 and to buy some badly needed clothing replacements.

When my wife and I commenced offering magazines on the streets of Opelika, Alabama, we were arrested and convicted of a violation of their sidewalk ordinance. This case went through the courts right up to the Supreme Court of the United States, where the ruling went against us in 1942, though the following year the court reversed itself. Meantime a great deal of publicity was given to the Kingdom work and, while some opposers were forced to come out and show their wrong spirit openly, many honest persons had their eyes opened to God's truth.

La Grange, Georgia, was our assignment in 1941. Here, too, the clergy and the police considered themselves the censors of everything that people said or did. They tried to scare us out of the town by threats, and then eventually arrested my wife. When I called to inquire about her, they told me to appear at court next morning. I arrived early and a group of police-

men grabbed me, took me down in the basement and beat me without mercy. Four of them held me, one on each arm and leg, and, raising me off the ground, started kicking me on the stomach and ribs, all of them taking turns. They also beat me over the head with an old bicycle tire.

I came to my senses in a cell, face and head badly swollen, so much so that I could hardly see. I was held for four or five days and then released after one officer took out his pistol and warned me that if he saw me in town again with that black box (my bookcase) he would shoot me. But next day, despite the threats, I determined to make some calls on interested people. As I walked along I could see the squad car coming with two or three men in it. Now, I thought, is the critical point of my life. But as they passed me, they all looked the other way. They did try to influence my landlady to put us out, but she stood her ground.

NO RETIREMENT

For twelve years I enjoyed the great privilege of being a traveling representative of the Society throughout all the southern states. Then in 1955 with my wife I attended the Watchtower School of Gilead for missionary training. That was a wonderful time of taking in knowledge and enjoying the close association with my Christian brothers from other parts of the field and also those from the Brooklyn headquarters of the Society. Then we resumed service as special pioneer ministers, that is, serving in towns where there was need to initiate and build up new congregations of Jehovah's witnesses.

In May 1965 I was sent to the Veterans Administration Hospital at Jackson, Mississippi, for treatment and observation. When I was discharged the doctor told me I was suffering from arteriosclerotic heart

disease, duodenal ulcer, hemorrhoids and bad eyes. He told me I would have to take things easy from now on. Nevertheless, I am getting along fine, and have not slowed down much yet. As I look back

over the forty-odd years of service to Jehovah and count the many blessings that have been mine, I have no regrets; my joy is full. And still the Kingdom interests come first in my life.

GRATEFUL TO BE ONE OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

RECENTLY the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society received the following letter. It speaks for itself.

"Dear Brothers,

"I just wanted to write to tell you how happy I am to be one of Jehovah's witnesses. I am so grateful to my parents for teaching me about the truth. I am fifteen years old and I attend high school. Sometimes it doesn't seem easy to maintain integrity at my age, because it is natural to want to be accepted by others. But I am so satisfied when I see the contrast between this system of things and Jehovah's witnesses. And it makes me feel glad that I have stayed away from the bad influences of this system of things.

"Sometimes during a study hall at school I look at the other students. They, for the most part, seem to have a far-off look on their faces. You can see in them that they are desperate and uncertain about the future.

"Yesterday in a speaking class we were assigned to try to convince the class of something. One boy spoke of the war in Vietnam. Three friends of his had recently been killed there. He was so bitter about it. He said, 'If someone doesn't do something about the condition this world is in, who knows what might happen?' All the students fear the future because they have no hope. I thought to myself how grateful I can be to be one of Jehovah's witnesses. On Monday it will be my turn to give a speech. I'm going to prove to them that God is alive. I don't know what their reaction will be. I'm going to tell them about the hope the Bible offers. But do they want it?

"Some time ago a girl came up to me and asked me if I believed in God. I told her Yes and started to explain why. She said 'OK! OK! All I wanted to know is if you believe in him or not.' I later found out that she was taking a survey.

"Another time I got into a discussion about evolution with a girl in my class. She believed in it strongly, and nothing I said to her really sunk in. It did make her think, though, and I'm glad of that.

"I've come to believe that they don't want to believe in God. Religion in any form is a mockery to them. One girl said to me, 'My boyfriend is Catholic, I'm Protestant, but we're both atheists.'

"Half of the students here are drug addicts. Almost all of them are alcoholics. I think I'm the only person in school who doesn't smoke. This is a residential town too.

"This system of things is searching for something. They don't know what it is, and they can't find it. They are dissatisfied with the conditions of the world, but they don't know how to improve it.

"Seeing the corruption in the world, I am proud and grateful to be able to say that I'm not part of it, and that I am one of Jehovah's witnesses."

Jesus plainly said that his followers would be "no part of the world," that they would stand out as separate and distinct from it because of living by godly principles. (John 15:19) They are a people with a purpose in life; their hope is firmly rooted in God's promise of a righteous new system of things. (2 Pet. 3: 11-13) Is that true of you?



Questions from Readers

● How do Jehovah's witnesses view people who are users of "drugs," including narcotics, LSD, and so forth?—V. K., U.S.A.

This is not something that can be answered with one broad, sweeping statement, since in different parts of the earth people use many things to stimulate and awaken or relax and calm themselves. The Bible does not name all the things being so used today; hence, what we must do is consider the effect of taking a certain substance and then consider how this effect is to be viewed by Christians in the light of Bible principles and commands.

We can gain insight into the Scriptural viewpoint by examining what the Bible has to say about alcoholic beverages. The Scriptures do not condemn the use of alcoholic beverages, either as a stimulant or as a relaxant. We read of wine as making "the heart of mortal man rejoice." (Ps. 104:15; Prov. 31:6; Eccl. 9:7) However, caution is needed if alcoholic beverages are used, since certain dangers are involved. God's Word condemns "excesses with wine, revelries, drinking matches," and it shows the sorrows coming to those getting drunk and losing self-control. (1 Pet. 4:3; Prov. 23:29-35; 20:1; Eph. 5:18) In fact, it says that drunkards, that is, those who make a practice of drunkenness, should be expelled from the Christian congregation; they "will not inherit God's kingdom."—1 Cor. 5:11; 6:9, 10.

In order to produce a certain effect on the body, people in some localities brew nonalcoholic beverages out of herbs, leaves or beans. Others chew special seeds, leaves or twigs. What is the effect on the individual? Does he lose control of body and mind when under the influence of one of these things? Or, even though he is stimulated or relaxed, does he retain his senses and self-control? If he retains self-control, then he must decide on a personal basis whether he will occasionally use such a product in moderation.

Even with many of the more common and accepted stimulants, one can become quite dependent on their use. Though taking such mild stimulants in moderation is not in itself

wrong, some have so accustomed themselves to their use that they become nervous and irritable if deprived of them. It is up to each person as to what he will do in regard to such habits, but it is good to keep in mind that Christians are to display the "fruitage of the spirit," including love, kindness and self-control, at all times. (Gal. 5:22, 23) If one found that a custom or habit made it difficult for him to do that at times, a reevaluation might be in order.

Another thing to consider is that sometimes the way in which a stimulant is used makes it undesirable. Chewing certain stimulants is quite messy, making the chewer unsightly, as well as staining things near him. Each one can ask himself, 'How do the people in my community view this practice?' 'Does it encourage respect for one as a minister of God?' As one progresses toward spiritual maturity, such questions are of increasing importance to him, since, as Christians, we desire "that our ministry might not be found fault with." (2 Cor. 6:3, 4) The Bible sets before Christians as an example to be imitated the standard to be met by overseers and ministerial servants in the Christian congregation. They are to be "irreprehensible" and "free from accusation."—1 Tim. 3:2, 10.

With increasing frequency today people are turning to narcotics, chemicals such as LSD, and other things to get hallucinations or "thrills," to escape from the realities of daily life or to satisfy a craving for sensual pleasure. Though a person's reaction to such things is unpredictable, oftentimes their use results in a loss of self-control. Under their influence one may become violent, irrational and even insane. Since such a person often is unable to use good sense and is unable to discern the difference between right and wrong, he can easily succumb to obscene, immoral or illegal conduct that he might normally avoid.

What difference is there between a person drunk with alcohol who engages in wild, uncontrolled conduct, or who becomes a disgraceful incompetent, and the one who does the same things under the influence of some modern drug or chemical? From a Scriptural standpoint there is no difference! (Rom. 13:13) If a person deliberately pursues a course that causes him to lose self-control, causing mental aberrations so that he does not realize what he is doing or why, then he is just as reprehensible as a drunkard. He has allowed himself to get to the point of acting as a drunk man and so should be dealt with as a drunkard and as one who has lost self-control.

If a person who formerly shared in such unrestrained living sincerely wanted to bring his life into accord with the Bible, becoming a Christian, Jehovah's witnesses would be willing to help him, pointing out the marvelous blessings available now and in the future for those living up to God's requirements. Jesus preached to sinners of all kinds and helped them. (Luke 7:34-47) But he did not join in unscriptural conduct.

What if someone in the Christian congregation unwisely lost control of himself as a result of alcohol or some other stimulant? That would be a rare thing. But if it did happen, possibly that one could be lovingly helped to regain the right way, the way that would have God's approval. (Gal. 6:1) If, though, a person made a practice of it, bringing reproach on himself, his family and the congregation, then he would be disfellowshipped from the Christian congregation so as to maintain the moral purity of God's people.—1 Cor. 5:11-13.

What if one receiving medical treatment is advised to accept some narcotic in order to induce sleep or control pain? The one faced with the situation will have to decide. It is not as if he were taking it for sensual gratification or in order to get some "thrill." True, he may be

rendered unconscious, but not in the manner of a drunkard who passes out because of lack of self-control. This would be under proper supervision and because of a severe physical problem that seemed to warrant such an extreme measure.

It would be well, though, to keep in mind the dangers involved with addictive drugs. To accept needlessly over a period of time something that could become addictive would certainly be unwise. Even if such treatment is medically recommended, is one prepared to face the hard consequences if he becomes addicted to a narcotic? After the physical problem is resolved, what will he do? Many narcotic users have abandoned their families and all moral sense, stealing and even murdering in order to obtain money to purchase illegal drugs. Aside from the depravity that addiction could lead to, there is the illegality of the matter to consider, since Christians are to be in subjection to governmental superior authorities. (1 Pet. 2:13, 14; Rom. 13:1) How would the addict render to Caesar that which is Caesar's? These questions should emphasize the importance of retaining control of one's mind and body so he can render to God 'a sacred service with his power of reason.'—Rom. 12:1.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELD MINISTRY

The faithful men of old times, such as Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the other prophets, endured many trials in proving their faith and love for God. Was it because they were powerful physically? No, but, rather, it was mainly their powerful spiritual condition, their faith, that enabled them to serve and please God. (Heb. 11:32-34) The same is true with Jehovah's Christian witnesses today. Though having physical limitations it is powerful spirituality that enables them to endure successfully the tests of faith in these critical times. Thousands of persons have been aided by them to gain such spirituality through the faith-strengthening magazine, *The Watchtower*. Throughout January, Jehovah's witnesses will be offering to all interested persons a year's subscription for this Bible magazine, along with three Bible booklets, for \$1.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

February 18: The Righteous Standard of the Changeless God. Page 44. Songs to Be Used: 5, 80.

February 25: Christian Morality. Page 50. Songs to Be Used: 71, 88.