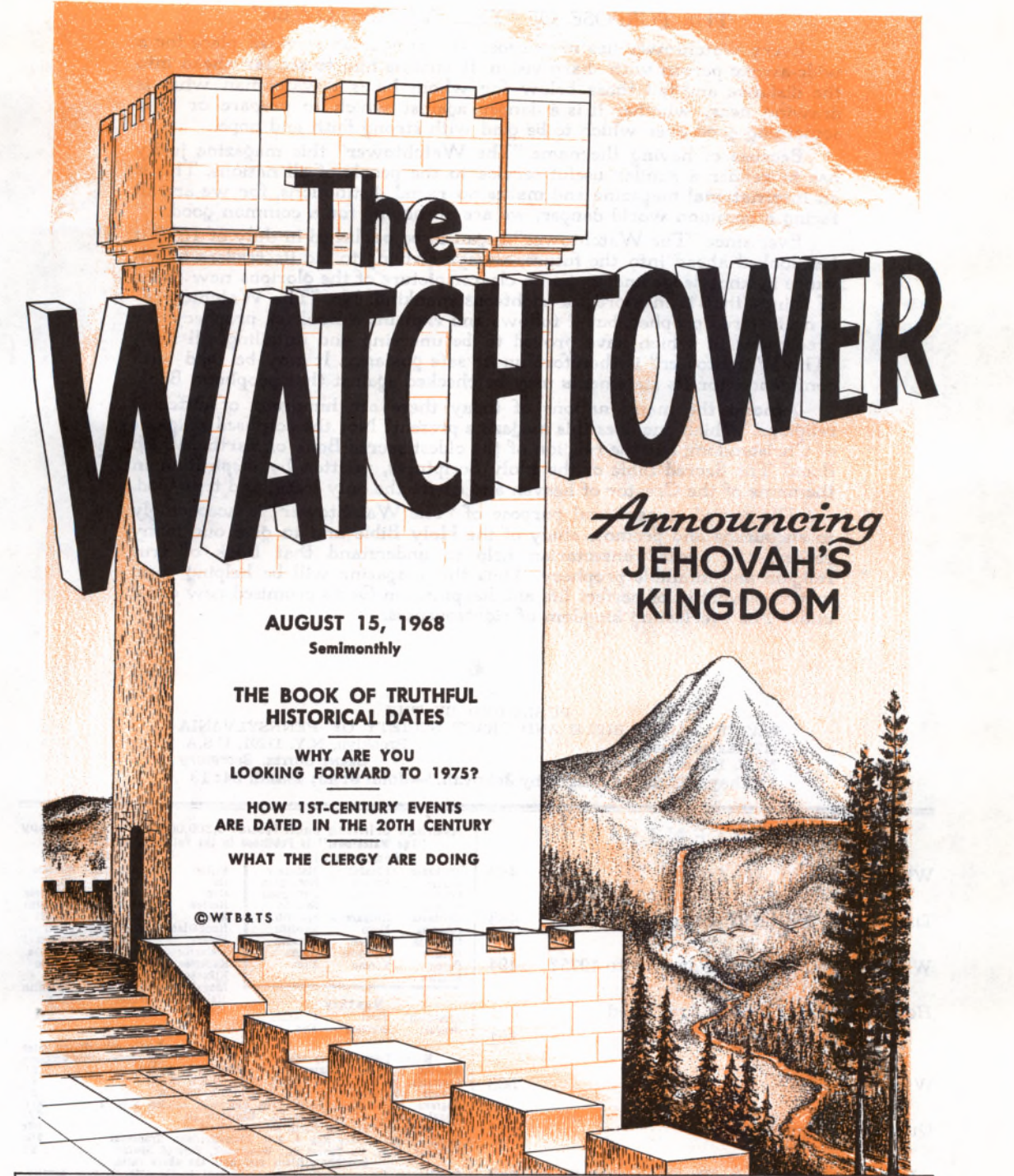




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

AUGUST 15, 1968
Semimonthly

**THE BOOK OF TRUTHFUL
HISTORICAL DATES**

**WHY ARE YOU
LOOKING FORWARD TO 1975?**

**HOW 1ST-CENTURY EVENTS
ARE DATED IN THE 20TH CENTURY**

WHAT THE CLERGY ARE DOING

© 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.

PUBLISHED BY THE

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

117 Adams Street

N. H. KNORR, *President*

Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.

GRANT SUITER, *Secretary*

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

CONTENTS

What the Clergy Are Doing	483
The Book of Truthful Historical Dates	488
Why Are You Looking Forward to 1975?	494
How 1st-Century Events Are Dated in the 20th Century	501
What Can I Do?	508
Questions from Readers	511

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

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

Average printing each issue: 5,300,000 Five cents a copy
"The Watchtower" is Published in the Following 72 Languages

Semimonthly			Monthly		
Afrikaans	Finnish	Malagasy	Fijian	Melanesian	Riamese
Arabic	French	Norwegian	Ga	Pidgin	Siloli
Cebuano	German	Portuguese	Gun	Motu	Sinhalese
Chinese	Greek	Sesotho	Hebrew	Pampango	Slovenian
Chishona	Hiligaynon	Spanish	Hindi	Pangasinan	Swahili
Cibemba	Iloko	Swedish	Hungarian	Papiamentu	Tamil
Cinyanja	Italian	Tagalog	Ibanag	Polish	Tswana
Danish	Japanese	Xhosa	Icelandic	Russian	Tumbuka
Dutch	Korean	Zulu	Kanarose	Samar-Leyte	Turkish
English			Kikongo	Samoa	Twi
			Lingala	Sango	Ukrainian
			Malayalam	Sepedi	Urdu
			Marathi	Serbian	Yoruba

Watch Tower Society offices

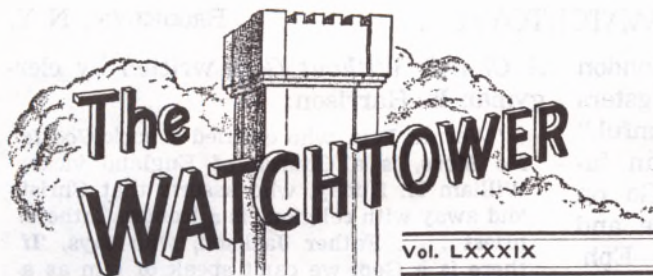
America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201	Yearly subscription rates for semimonthly editions
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W. 2135	\$1
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto 19, Ontario	\$1
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London N.W. 7	8/6
Jamaica, W.I., 41 Trafalgar Rd., Kingston 10	7/-
New Zealand, 621 New North Rd., Auckland 3	90c
South Africa, Private Bag 2, P.O. Elandsfontein, Transvaal	70c
Trinidad, W.I., 21 Taylor St., Woodbrook, Port of Spain	\$2

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

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

Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y.

Printed in U.S.A.



Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

Vol. LXXXIX

August 15, 1968

Number 16

A LITTLE boy picked up a dust-covered Bible in his home and asked his mother: "Is this God's Book?"

"Yes," replied his mother.

Then the boy said: "Well, hadn't we better take it back, because we don't ever use it?"

A headline in *This Week* magazine of February 25, 1968, asked: "What's Happening to Religion?" It noted: "Protestants accuse their religion of 'being run like a business.' Catholics say birth control is a private matter and reject the Pope's infallibility. Nuns abandon convents to live in downtown apartments. Priests leave the church in unprecedented numbers to marry. One of the nation's best known Episcopal Bishops is accused of heresy. Teachers of religion announce that 'God is dead.' . . . Today, chaos, acrimony and confusion are apparently the order of the day."

Why all this chaos? Why, in the great majority of homes claiming to be Christian, does the Bible gather dust? Why are the laws of God so often ignored and belittled? And why is there such a growing lack of respect for clergymen today?

What The CLERGY ARE DOING

BELITTLING

THE BIBLE

Jesus Christ, his apostles and the first-century Christians all had deep respect for God's word as found in the Bible. Jesus said in prayer to God: "Your word is

truth." (John 17:17) The apostle Paul said to Christians in his day: "When you received God's word, which you heard from us, you accepted it, not as the word of men, but, just as it truthfully is, as the word of God."—1 Thess. 2:13.

Yet, in the *Providence Journal* of September 30, 1967, the following item appeared:

"Washington—(RNS)—After analyzing, clause by clause, the Lord's Prayer as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, the Rev. Duncan Howlett, of All Saints' Unitarian Church, said it would no longer be used in his church.

"The minister told the congregation that the prayer lacks real meaning, . . . As an example of his reasoning, Mr. Howlett said the clause 'Hallowed be Thy name' is a 'joke' in an age when the name of God is 'no longer as sacred as that of Washington, Lincoln or Kennedy.'"

Nor is this an isolated case. More and more clergymen belittle the Bible. A New York newspaper carried the headline: "Cleric Is Critical of Bible Teaching." It

noted that clergyman H. Smith of London said that Bible teaching for youngsters "is a waste of time and can be harmful." Yet the apostle Paul told Christian fathers regarding their children: "Go on bringing them up in the discipline and authoritative advice of Jehovah."—Eph. 6:4.

In the *Toronto Star Weekly*, the front cover showed clergyman G. Goth stating: "The Ten Commandments are Dead." The impression his article gave was that God requires persons to obey the Mosaic law today, that it is irrelevant, and that the entire Hebrew Scriptures are valueless. Nowhere did he explain, as the Bible so clearly does, that the Mosaic law is not binding upon Christians, but that it is filled with principles and prophetic patterns that are of vital importance to them.—Rom. 6:14; Heb. 10:1.

So completely have most clergymen downgraded the dynamic, inspiring message of the Bible that the religious editor of the *Oakland Tribune* said: "A recent study reveals that . . . the day of the 30 to 40 minute sermon is past. The study suggested that ministers confine their remarks to 10 minutes and not more than 15." Indeed, some even suggest a more radical confining. P. Berton of Canada, in his book *The Comfortable Pew*, stated: "The lukewarm pulpit makes hypocrites of its occupants . . . the whole problem of the Sunday sermon and its lack of conviction is one that profoundly worries men of conviction. No wonder that some, in desperation, have seriously suggested a moratorium on all preaching . . . for a period of at least a year and probably longer."

The blame for this lack of interest in God and his Word must rest largely with the clergy. They have so confused people that they no longer know what to believe. Notice how this is shown in the book

A Church Without God, written by clergyman E. Harrison:

"Werner Pelz, who entitled a book *God Is No More*, is a Church of England vicar; William H. Dubay, who asserts that Christ 'did away with religion,' is a Roman Catholic priest . . . Father Jackson, who says, 'If there is a God, we can't speak of him as a supreme being,' is a university chaplain; Thomas Altizer [God is dead], who wrote *The Gospel of Christian Atheism*, is an Associate Professor of Bible Studies at an American university; I am on the staff of an Anglican parish in Toronto. I claim to be a Christian and an Anglican; yet I can say, in all seriousness, that there is no God."

Observing how far Christendom's clergymen have strayed away from Christian standards, author Berton, a former member of the Anglican Church in Canada, stated:

"It has all but been forgotten that Christianity began as a revolutionary religion whose followers embraced an entirely different set of values from those held by other members of society. Those original values are still in conflict with the values of contemporary society; yet religion today has become as conservative a force as the force the original Christians were in conflict with."

Yes, the clergy of Christendom have abandoned true Christian teaching and practice. They have become the very thing that Jesus and the first-century Christians exposed as working contrary to God's will. They are like the ones to whom Jesus said: "You have made the word of God invalid because of your tradition. You hypocrites, Isaiah aptly prophesied about you, when he said, 'This people honors me with their lips, yet their heart is far removed from me. It is in vain that they keep worshiping me, because they teach commands of men as doctrines.'"—Matt. 15:6-9.

SOCIAL DUTIES TAKE PRECEDENCE

Much of the clergy's time today is devoted, not to Bible teaching and study, but to social affairs. *The Saturday Eve-*

ning Post said of the average clergyman today:

"He is, instead, . . . an organizer of committees, a club chairman, and a settler of petty squabbles among good ladies of the altar guild. He is a fund raiser, a builder, a luncheon speaker, a participant in and contributor to every worthy community project, so incessantly tugged and hauled at that he must literally hide himself away if he is to find the time to let the springs of the spirit fill up through meditation, prayer and the study of the Scriptures."

Similarly, the book *The Comfortable Pew* notes: "The chains of parish life make it difficult for him to break out and be anything else, since so much of his time is devoted to tea-cup balancing and inoffensive palaver with the natives. . . . The dominance of parish life, with its social club atmosphere, means that the church is tightly tied to the secular social hierarchy of the community."

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

One of the main reasons for the decline in esteem that the clergy are suffering is their involvement in the politics and wars of this world. More and more persons are coming to see how inconsistent it is for clergymen to support both sides, especially in military struggles. In this regard the New York *World-Telegram and Sun* reported on March 11, 1966:

"Representatives of three religious faiths sought yesterday to convince a group of Brooklyn students that the Biblical injunction against killing did not apply to the war in Viet Nam.

"In general, the attempt was unsuccessful. The audience . . . left with the feeling, as one student put it, that the speakers were 'putting us on.'"

The clergymen involved were Catholic, Jewish and Protestant. In attempting to justify involvement in war, one of them said: "Killing must be done with a pure heart."

In a poll taken of clergymen serving as military chaplains, it was discovered

that their views in no way differed from those of other military men as to the morality of modern warfare. As author Berton notes: "None felt that the individual soldier had any more responsibility in the matter except to serve his country. This outlook is very similar to the one that formed the core of Adolph Eichmann's defence during his trial in Israel."

Bertrand Russell said that in England "the Anglican Church has upheld every Government view including those concerning war and killing." He noted that the church actually had become a force for establishing "resistance to conscientious protest."

Of the Catholic church, the New York *Times* of December 29, 1966, reported:

"Traditionally Catholics support the nation's war efforts and leave moral responsibilities for the wars' conduct to the political authorities. . . .

"In the past local Catholic hierarchies almost always supported the wars of their nations, blessing troops and offering prayers for victory, while another group of bishops on the other side publicly prayed for the opposite outcome. And while this took place, the Vatican usually maintained a careful neutrality and advocated an early end to hostilities. . . .

"The contradiction between the Christian spirit and the conduct of the war, which was often obscured by theological subtleties, seems increasingly clear to many, as weapons grow more brutal."

At the funeral of a soldier killed in action, the pastor of a Lutheran Church in Des Moines, Iowa, performed the service. The *Register* of February 10, 1968, related: "The Rev. Martin Haerther, church pastor, said . . . he knew it was God's will." The clergyman added: "When a soldier dies in line of duty in a just war, not only is it a glorious death in the service of country but it is a blessed end for him . . . I am sure the angels were on hand to carry his soul into heaven and he is now enjoying peace."

This clergyman mentioned a "just" war. A booklet, *The Church and War*, published by the National Council of Catholic Men in the United States, comments on this. In reviewing the booklet, United Press International writer Louis Cassels observed that "the mainstream of Christian tradition is represented by the doctrine of the 'just war,' spelled out in the 5th century A.D. by the great St. Augustine." What were Augustine's rules for a "just" war? (1) It should be waged only as a necessity; (2) its only legitimate objective is to achieve a just and stable peace as quickly as possible; (3) it should be fought with mercy, avoiding all needless brutality and restricting use of violence to the minimum.

When reporting on this booklet's publication, Cassels pointed out: "In World War II, however, both sides abandoned any pretense of 'minimum' force in favor of all-out, 'total' war. Each side rained bombs on the other's cities, and millions of civilians, including women, children and the aged, were killed, maimed or rendered homeless."

Yet all the time the clergy of *both sides* regarded the war as a "just" war. Clergymen of the *same religion* prayed for victory on each of the opposing sides!

CHRISTIAN VIEW

Is a war that pits "brothers" of the same "Christian" religion against one another really a "just" war? By whose definition? Augustine's? But is Augustine a greater authority on Christian conduct and doctrine than Jesus Christ, or the apostles, or God's written Word, the Bible?

Jesus said to those who would claim to be Christian: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:35) The apostle Paul said to Christians: "You should all speak in agreement, and . . .

there should not be divisions among you, . . . Does the Christ exist divided?" (1 Cor. 1:10, 13) Could there be any division greater than that which results in members of the same religion killing one another?

Some clergymen do admit that there is no basis whatsoever in early Christianity for the support they have given to this world's wars. Clergyman I. Evans, former editor of *Blackfriars*, a British journal, acknowledged that such shedding of blood was incompatible with the "inherent Christian tradition of turning the other cheek." The *Eugene Register-Guard* of January 22, 1967, reported: "Until 313 A.D., Evans said, Christians took no part in the wars of the Roman Empire. With the Edict of Milan in 313 A.D. the Emperor Constantine gave the minority group of Christians full rights and obligations as Roman citizens. This, Evans said, was the beginning of the just war theory." Later, Augustine elaborated on it.

Note the sources of the "just" war theory. It comes, not from God, not from Jesus Christ, not from the apostles, not from the first-century Christians. Instead, it originated with politicians and with clergymen who had already turned apostate by the fourth century of our Common Era.

During World War II the vast majority of the clergy of all major religions in Germany accepted Constantine's and Augustine's unscriptural views. They supported Hitler's war machine. Yet after World War II the Nuremberg trials of Nazi political and military leaders found them guilty of carrying out Hitler's murderous orders. The clergy, however, were just as guilty, since they encouraged their followers to obey Hitler's orders for mass murder. On the other hand, Jehovah's witnesses upheld the true Christian view and unitedly refused to carry out the

murderous designs of the Nazis. They went to concentration camps rather than violate the Christian standard of neutrality in war, knowing that "we must obey God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 5:29.

Though Hitler has long since been discredited, and the support given him by clergymen exposed, some clergy today still uphold his memory! In the May 12, 1968, issue of *La Vanguardia Española* in Barcelona, Spain, a headline declared: "Funeral Rites for Hitler's Eternal Rest." The accompanying article said:

"In the Church of San Martín in Desengaño Street, a mass for the eternal rest of Hitler's soul was held yesterday. In the memorial cards distributed during the service it was precisely declared that the mass was offered 'for the eternal rest of Adolf Hitler and of all the fallen in defense of Christendom and of Western Civilization.'"

PART OF THE WORLD

By their involvement in the politics and wars of this world the clergy have become part of it. Added to this is their justifying the "new morality" and their attempts to reshape doctrine and practice to conform to what is popular rather than what is right.

When a Barnard College sophomore was recently threatened with expulsion from school for breaking regulations by living with her boyfriend in an off-campus apartment, two clergymen testified in her behalf. The New York *Daily News* declared in a front-page headline: "Clerics Back Linda in Love Trial." The paper said:

"A minister, a rabbi, and a philosophy professor spoke in her behalf . . . claiming that the college has no legal right to regulate students' private affairs. . . . The Rev. William Starr, Protestant counselor of Columbia University, cited the housing rules as 'ridiculous.' . . .

"Starr was followed on the stand by Rabbi A. Bruce Goldman, Jewish counselor

of Columbia University. Praising Linda for what he said was her courage and conviction, Goldman said the hearing was a 'test of civil and individual rights.'"

Similarly, *Time* magazine of May 10, 1968, reported: "Should Christianity permit polygamy? Under certain conditions, yes, argues a Roman Catholic missionary in Africa. . . . His recommendation: 'If polygamy is the established custom of a place, take the lot into the church—kids and all.'"

But does true Christianity condone fornication and adultery? No, it upholds high moral standards. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) So how can clergymen call themselves Christian and yet promote ideas so contrary to Christianity? What they promote cannot be true religion approved by God.

Truly the clergy are a part of this world. They apply its methods, tactics, doctrines and morals. Yet God's Word warns: "Do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God."—Jas. 4:4.

Does the Bible urge sincere persons to try to reform the religions and clergymen that refuse to abide by God's standards? No. Instead, God's Word urges: "Get out from among them, and separate yourselves."—2 Cor. 6:17.

Why is such separation urgent? Because, very shortly, God will execute his judgments against all religions and religious leaders that break his laws and lead others to do the same. All will come to their end soon, as well as those who adhere to them. That is why God's Word warns concerning false religion: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues. For her sins have massed together clear up to heaven, and God has called her acts of injustice to mind."—Rev. 18:4.

The Book of TRUTHFUL

HISTORICAL DATES

THERE is no question in our minds as to where we are as of this moment, and we, of course, know how we got here. We are also quite conscious of time in relation to events we have personally experienced. We know, for instance, where we were and what we did an hour ago, a day ago, a week ago. Most of us know how old we are, and we can relate with a good deal of accuracy some of the great events in our lifetime.

² But what about the distant past before our time? What do we know about dates and events that were no part of our personal experience? For example, do we know what year Jesus was born or, more important, the date of his death? After all, he was the greatest man ever to walk this earth. Do we know what year Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians? That particular date is highly important if we are to understand why certain events have occurred in our lifetime. Where are we today on the stream of time? Do we know that the seventh year from now will conclude the 6,000th year since Adam was created? And if we live to that year 1975, what should we expect to happen?

³ These are certainly interesting and important questions, but where can we find truthful answers to them? Since

events that occurred long before we were born have a great bearing on these matters, how may we obtain the facts? What written records of the past can we rely upon as factual and true?

⁴ The honest seeker of the truth should not be stymied in his search for answers to these questions, thinking it is a hopeless undertaking. In reality he has at his disposal the most ancient book of history and, more important, one that can be trusted and depended upon as the supreme authority, one by which all other testimony can be measured and judged. Fortunately, this historical document is now translated in the language the inquirer can read. This book is the Holy Bible, the inspired and sacred Word of Jehovah God. Jehovah alone knows both the end and the beginning.—Isa. 46:10.

⁵ Secular historians who reach back in time to tell us of the distant past, but who scornfully ignore the Bible's record, are compelled to fill in the gaps between their meager fragmentary archaeological findings with unreliable traditions, fancy calculations and outright guesswork. On the other hand, honest investigators, and

1. With what events of history are we personally acquainted?

2, 3. What are some important questions concerning past historical events?

4. What encouragement do we have to aid in finding answers to our questions?

5. Of what value is the Bible as a book of history?

there are many, recognize the truly genuine worth of the Bible as unimpeachable testimony, confirmed by all the discoveries that have been unearthed. When put to the test, the Bible indeed has proved its worth as the most complete record of ancient happenings and as a book of sterling accuracy. We are therefore equipped, with this book of truthful historical dates in hand, to count all the way back to Adam's creation with little difficulty, filling in the gaps of secular history with dependable data. What is more, we can do so quickly and with little effort.

CHANGES IN THE CALENDARS

⁶ Today we measure time on the Gregorian calendar, but this yardstick is less than 400 years old. It was Pope Gregory XIII, who, in 1582, did away with the Julian calendar, which by that year was some ten days out of time with the sun. To correct the discrepancy the pope ordered ten days dropped out of the month of October. So October 5 was made October 15, 1582. This present calendar is so accurate that there is only about 26.3 seconds difference between it and the true solar year, and this difference increases at the very small rate of 0.53 seconds every century. That is a difference of less than nine minutes every hundred thousand years, less than a day every sixteen million years.

⁷ The Julian calendar, which the Gregorian calendar superceded, was instituted by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C.E., known as "the year of confusion." This was because at that time the older calendars were some three months ahead of the sun's schedule, making it necessary for the year 46 B.C.E. to have 445 days so the sun could catch up with the calendar, so to speak.

6. When was our present calendar adopted, and how accurate is it?

7. When was the Julian calendar put into use, and what discrepancy did it correct?

⁸ If events recorded in the Bible were dated according to the Julian or other preceding calendars, it would be a rather simple matter to convert such dates to the Gregorian calendar. But not so. The Bible tells of particular and often detached periods and events, and these are dated in their own special ways, independent of one another. Sometimes they are dated according to the beginning of a certain king's reign (Neh. 2:1; Esther 1:1-3; Dan. 9:1, 2; Luke 3:1), or by a military victory or the destruction of a great nation (1 Ki. 6:1; Ezek. 1:1, 2; 8:1; 20:1; 40:1), or they are dated in relation to an unusual event such as the flood of Noah's day. (Gen. 9:28, 29) The difficult task, then, is to determine when these Bible events occurred if measured by our present-day calendar.

⁹ The problem may be illustrated by the following story. An English traveler, visiting a historic place on the continent of Europe, left his hotel one morning and slowly walked through the woods, stopping briefly at the scenic spots and the refreshing pools along the way. Sometime during the afternoon he crossed a stream and followed the path over the mountain. Toward the close of the day the question of how far he had traveled came to mind. He remembered that earlier during the day the distances between the places where he stopped were clearly marked in meters on the signposts, but after crossing the bridge the signposts were discontinued.

¹⁰ To learn how far he had come, it was not enough for our traveler to go back and translate from meters to feet the recorded distances on the early part of his journey. He must first of all measure back

8. How were events in the Bible dated, and what problem does this present in terms of our present-day calendar?

9, 10. (a) How may the problem be illustrated? (b) What is the first thing our traveler should do to solve his problem?

from his present position, over the mountain and across the bridge, to the last-recorded marker. Once this distance was determined, the rest would be comparatively easy, if he would but trust the figures on the signposts.

¹¹ So too in determining where mankind is on the pathway of time, it will not solve the problem simply to translate ancient calendars into present-day systems. One must first measure back in time across the gulf that separates the present from the ancient Biblical record of the past, to a stationary point in history, to a fixed date of the past, to an *absolute date*, if you please. Such a date must be one where sacred and secular historical events coincide and are linked in perfect agreement with current methods of measuring time distances. With such a date fixed in terms of the Gregorian yardstick we will know how far we have come from that point and where we are at present. Then from that pivot point we can also measure either forward or backward in dating other events of Bible history even though originally they were dated according to a different system.

THE ABSOLUTE DATE OF 539 B.C.E.

¹² One such fixed or absolute date is in connection with the events recorded in the fifth chapter of Daniel, verses one to thirty-one. That was concerning the time when the Medes and Persians under Cyrus the Great broke up Belshazzar's notorious carousal, captured the city of Babylon, and overthrew the Third World Empire. The year was 539 B.C.E. on the Gregorian calendar, four years after the Buddhist Era began in India.

11. (a) What, then, is the first thing to do in learning where we are on the pathway of time? (b) What is meant by an "absolute date," and of what value is such a date?

12. What absolute date do we have in connection with the overthrow of Babylon by Cyrus?

¹³ The fixing of 539 B.C.E. as the year when this historical event occurred is based on a stone document known as the Nabonidus (Nabunaid) Chronicle. This important find was discovered in ruins near the city of Baghdad in 1879, and it is now preserved in the British Museum. A translation of this finding was published by Sidney Smith in *Babylonian Historical Texts Relating to the Capture and Downfall of Babylon*, London, 1924, and reads in part:

¹⁴ "In the month of Tashritu [Tishri, Hebrew 7th month], when Cyrus attacked the army of Akkad in Opis on the Tigris, the inhabitants of Akkad revolted, but he (Nabonidus) massacred the confused inhabitants. The 14th day, Sippar was seized without battle. Nabonidus fled. The 16th day [October 11-12, 539 B.C.E., Julian, or October 5-6, Gregorian] Gobryas (*Ugbaru*), the governor of Gutium and the army of Cyrus entered Babylon without battle. Afterwards Nabonidus was arrested in Babylon when he returned (there). . . . In the month of Arahshamnu [Heshvan, Hebrew 8th month], the 3rd day [October 28-29, Julian], Cyrus entered Babylon, green twigs were spread in front of him—the state of 'Peace' (*Sulmu*) was imposed upon the city."—*Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton; 1955), James B. Pritchard, p. 306.

¹⁵ Please note, the Nabonidus Chronicle gives precise details as to the time when these events took place. This, in turn, enables modern scholars, with their knowledge of astronomy, to translate these dates into terms of the Julian or Gregorian calendars. Explaining why this Chronicle makes no particular reference

13, 14. The determining of 539 B.C.E. as the year of Babylon's fall is based upon what important find?

15, 16. What accounts for the fact that the Nabonidus Chronicle makes no mention of Belshazzar in connection with the fall of Babylon?

to Belshazzar in connection with the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, and also confirming the date of 539, note what professor Jack Finegan says in *Light from the Ancient Past* (1959), pages 227-229:

¹⁶ "Nabunaid (Nabonidus) shared the kingship with his own oldest son Belshazzar. Belshazzar is named as the crown prince in Babylonian inscriptions. . . . Since, therefore, Belshazzar actually exercised the coregency at Babylon and may well have continued to do so unto the end, the book of Daniel (5:30) is not wrong in representing him as the last king of Babylon. In the seventeenth year of King Nabunaid, Babylon fell to Cyrus the Persian. The Nabunaid chronicle gives exact dates. In the month of Tashritu on the fourteenth day, October 10, 539 B.C., the Persian forces took Sippar; on the sixteenth day, October 12, 'the army of Cyrus entered Babylon without battle'; and in the month of Arahsamnu, on the third day, October 29, Cyrus himself came into the city."

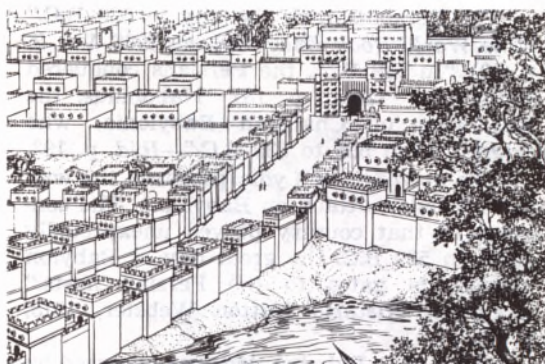
¹⁷ Other investigators say this: "The Nabunaid Chronicle . . . states that Sippar fell to Persian forces VII/14/17* (Oct. 10, 539),† that Babylon fell VII/16/17 (Oct. 12), and that Cyrus entered Babylon VIII/3/17‡ (Oct. 29). This fixes the end of Nabunaid's reign and the beginning of the reign of Cyrus. Interestingly enough, the last tablet dated to Nabunaid from Uruk is dated the day after Babylon fell to Cyrus. News of its capture had not yet reached the southern city some 125 miles distant."—Brown University Studies, Vol. XIX, *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C.—A.D. 75*, Parker and Dubberstein, 1956, p. 13.

* "VII/14/17": The 7th Hebrew month Tishri, 14th day, 17th year of Nabonidus' reign.

† Julian calendar.

‡ The 8th Hebrew month Heshvan.

17. What other authorities confirm the day, month and year of Babylon's fall?



**Mighty Babylon,
apparently impregnable,
fell in 539 B.C.E.**

¹⁸ Recognized authorities of today accept 539 B.C.E. without any question as the year Babylon was overthrown by Cyrus the Great. In addition to the above quotations the following gives a small sampling from books of history representing a cross section of both general reference works and elementary textbooks.□ These brief quotations also show that this is not a date recently suggested, but one thoroughly investigated and generally accepted for the past sixty years.

"Cyrus entered Babylon in 539 B.C." (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1946, Vol. 2, p. 852) "When Cyrus defeated the army of Nabonidus, Babylon itself surrendered, in Oct. 539, to the Persian general Gobryas." —*Ibid.*, Vol. 6, p. 930.

"In 539 B.C. Babylon fell without a struggle to the Achaemenid Persian, Cyrus the Great."—*The Encyclopedia Americana*, 1956, Vol. III, p. 9.

"Babylon was captured by Cyrus in 539 B.C."—Yale Oriental Series · Researches · Vol. XV, 1929, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar*, Dougherty, p. 46.

□ To extend the list would be an easy matter, but it would only serve to further confirm a date not in question.

18. (a) On what date do some twenty historians and commentators agree? (b) Has this agreement only recently been reached?

"The Persians took the city in 539 B.C." (*The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1966, Vol. 2, p. 10) "In 539 B.C., the Persians conquered Babylonia." (*Ibid.*, p. 13) "Nabonidus, the last king of Chaldean Babylonia, who reigned from 555 to 539 B.C."—*Ibid.*, p. 193.

"The downfall of Lydia prepared the way for a Persian attack on Babylonia. The conquest of that country proved unexpectedly easy. In 539 B.C. the great city of Babylon opened its gates to the Persian hosts."—*Ancient History*, Hutton Webster, 1913, p. 64.

"In 539 B.C. Babylon, too, was captured by Cyrus."—*The Story of the Ancient Nations*, W. L. Westermann, 1912, p. 73.

"In 539 B.C., however, Cyrus advanced for the conquest of Babylonia. . . Sippar was taken without a blow and, two days later, the van of the army of Cyrus entered Babylon."—*History of the Hebrews*, F. K. Sanders, 1914, p. 230.

"It is not likely that there was a long interval between his [Nebuchadnezzar's] death and the fall of the Chaldean Empire before the onslaught of Cyrus in 539."—*The Biblical Period*, W. F. Albright, Reprinted from *The Jews; Their History, Culture and Religion*, edited by Louis Finkelstein, 1955, p. 49.

"Cyrus entered Babylon on October 29, 539 B.C. and presented himself in the role of the liberator of the people."—*The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, 1965, p. 193; see also pages 93, 104, 198, 569.

"Nebuchadnezzar had surrounded Babylon with huge walls, but after the defeat of Belshazzar's army the city surrendered with slight resistance in 539 B.C."—*World History at a Glance*, Reither, 1942, pp. 28, 29.

"When the Neo-Babylonian Empire fell to the Persians, Babylon opened its gates to Cyrus in 539 B.C. without opposition."—*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 1962, p. 335.

"In the seventeenth year of Nabonidus (B. C. 539), Cyrus captured Babylon."—*The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopædia and Scriptural Dictionary*, Fallows, 1913, Vol. 1, p. 207.

"Cyrus the Great, in 539 B.C., added the Babylonian to the other empires which he had acquired and consolidated with magical ease and celerity."—*A New Standard Bible Dictionary*, 1926, p. 91.

"The city [Babylon] was taken by surprise B. C. 539."—*The Universal Bible Dictionary*, Peloubet, 1912, p. 69.

"539 B.C. marked the collapse of Semitic hegemony in the ancient Orient, and the introduction of Aryan leadership which continued for at least a thousand years. This conquest of Babylon by Cyrus laid the foundation for all the later developments under Greek and Roman rule."—*Darius the Mede*, Whitcomb, 1959, Introduction, p. 2.

"It was Cyrus, also, who conquered Babylon in the year 539 B.C. and thus became master of Mesopotamia and Syria."—*Ancient and Medieval History*, Hayes and Moon, 1930, p. 92.

"Nabonidus (Nabunaid) . . . was the last King of Babylon (555-539 B.C.)."—*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1907, Vol. 2, p. 184.

"In 539 the kingdom of Babylon fell to Cyrus."—*The New Funk & Wagnalls Encyclopedia*, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 3397.

"The Chaldean Empire, with its capital at Babylon (Second Babylonian Empire), lasted, . . . until 539 B.C., when it collapsed before the attack of Cyrus."—*The Outline of History*, H. G. Wells, 1921, p. 140.

"Cyrus conquered Babylonia in 539 B. C."—*The International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*, 1960, Vol. 1, p. 367.

"In the year 539 Cyrus conquers the city Babylon, Babylonia becomes a province of the Persian Empire."—Translated from the German *Bibel-Lexikon*, edited by Herbert Haag together with associates, printed in Switzerland, in 1951. See page 150 under Babylonia.

¹⁹ With the date 539 B.C.E. so firmly fixed and agreed to by so many scholars, we are quite confident where we stand today in relation to the fall of Babylon twenty-five centuries ago. October 6, 1968, will mark 2,506 years since the fall of that third world empire.* Other important events which occurred prior to 539 may now be quite accurately dated. If one will accept the dates posted in the Bible, this becomes a rather easy matter, and some of the erroneous pitfalls into which

* In adding 539 and 1968 subtract 1 because of no zero year between B.C.E. and C.E.

19. So, then, how long ago has it been since the fall of Babylon to the Persians?

traditional chronologers of Christendom have fallen will be avoided.

JERUSALEM DESTROYED, 607 B.C.E.

²⁰ Believers in Daniel's God Jehovah know that the historical accuracy of the Bible does not rest upon undiscovered, incomplete, imperfect, uninspired worldly documents. So just because in the pagan cuneiform inscriptions *so far discovered* the name "Darius" is nowhere found, that does not alter in any way the truthfulness of the Bible's testimony. The historical facts written under divine inspiration are clear: "In that very night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was killed, and Darius the Mede himself received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old." (Dan. 5:30, 31) Some investigators believe, and the argument is strong, that Darius was the same as Gubaru, Cyrus' governor, who entered Babylon with him and who appointed governors in the city.* However, Daniel repeatedly speaks of Darius the Mede, not as Governor, but as King, even personally addressing him as such.—Dan. 6:1, 6-9, 12-25.

²¹ During the few months that Darius was on the throne Daniel made a startling chronological discovery: "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus of the seed of the Medes, who had been made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans; in the first year of his reigning I myself, Daniel, discerned by the books the number of the years concerning which the word of Jehovah had occurred to Jeremiah the prophet, for fulfilling the devastations of Jerusalem, namely, *seventy years*." (Dan. 9:1, 2) Without a doubt the question as to when this time limit of seventy years would expire was one that pressed

hard upon Daniel's mind. Fortunately, he did not have to wait long for the answer.

²² The reign of Darius I was brief; mention of "the first year" of his reign infers he was king for at least a full year. (Dan. 9:1; 11:1) Cyrus followed him on the throne by late 538 and Jehovah's prophet Daniel continued in his high office. "As for this Daniel, he prospered in the kingdom of Darius and in the kingdom of Cyrus the Persian." (Dan. 6:2, 28) That there was a very close association between these two kings and their kingdoms is indicated by the repeated expression, "the law of the Medes and the Persians." —Dan. 6:8, 12, 15.

²³ Two centuries earlier Jehovah by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah had declared: "[I am] the One saying of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd, and all that I delight in he will completely carry out'; even in my saying of Jerusalem, 'She will be rebuilt,' and of the temple, 'You will have your foundation laid.'" (Isa. 44:28) Without further delay this two-hundred-year-old prophecy was about to be fulfilled. Cyrus acceded to the throne and "in the first year" of his reign, at least before the spring of 537, "Jehovah roused the spirit of Cyrus." He issued the famous edict permitting the Jews to return and rebuild Jehovah's temple, copies of which were written and circulated throughout the realm. This allowed sufficient time for the Jews to resettle in their homeland, 'establish the altar firmly upon its own site,' and "from the first day of the seventh month" start offering up burnt sacrifices to Jehovah. This date, the "first day of the seventh month," according to the best astronomical tables available,[†] is calculat-

* See *Darius the Mede* (1959 American Edition), J. C. Whitcomb, Jr., chap. 7; and *Babylonian Problems* (1923 Edition), W. H. Lane, p. 201.

20. (a) Does the name "Darius" occur in cuneiform inscriptions? (b) But of what are we sure?

21. In the first year of Darius' reign what exciting discovery did Daniel make?

[†] Brown University Studies, Vol. XIX, *Babylonian Chronology* 626 B.C.—A.D. 75, (1956) Parker and Dubberstein, p. 29.

22. How long did Darius I reign, and who succeeded him as king of Babylon?

23. (a) What grand prophecy was about to be fulfilled? (b) By what date were the Jews back in their homeland? Due to what speedy developments?

ed to be October 5 (Julian) or September 29 (Gregorian) 537 B.C.E.—Ezra 1:1-4; 3:1-6.

²⁴ Here, then, very definitely established, is another milestone—the time when the seventy years of desolation of the land of Judah came to an end—about October 1, 537. (Jer. 25:11, 12; 29:10) It is now a simple formula to determine when the seventy years began. One has only to add

24. So when did the seventy years of desolation begin, and when did they end?

70 to 537 to get 607. So about October 1, 607 B.C.E., the desolating of the land of Judah and the complete emptying out of its inhabitants was fully accomplished.

²⁵ The importance of the year 607 B.C.E. in this Biblical chronology will become more apparent in the following article, as we seek an answer to the provocative question, When was Adam created?

25. The answer to what question is related to the year 607 B.C.E.?

WHY ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO 1975?

WHAT about all this talk concerning the year 1975? Lively discussions, some based on speculation, have burst into flame during recent months among serious students of the Bible. Their interest has been kindled by the belief that 1975 will mark the end of 6,000 years of human history since Adam's creation. The nearness of such an important date indeed fires the imagination and presents unlimited possibilities for discussion.

² But wait! How do we know their calculations are correct? What basis is there for saying Adam was created nearly 5,993 years ago? Does the one Book that can be implicitly trusted for its truthful historical accuracy, namely, the Inspired Word of Jehovah, the Holy Bible, give support and credence to such a conclusion?

1. 2. (a) What has sparked special interest in the year 1975, and with what results? (b) But what questions are raised?

³ In the marginal references of the Protestant *Authorized* or *King James Version*, and in the footnotes of certain editions of the Catholic *Douay* version, the date of man's creation is said to be 4004 B.C.E. This marginal date, however, is no part of the inspired text of the Holy Scriptures, since it was first suggested more than fifteen centuries after the last Bible writer died, and was not added to any edition of the Bible until 1701 C.E. It is an insertion based upon the conclusions of an Irish prelate, the Anglican Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656). Ussher's chronology was only one of the many sincere efforts made during the past centuries to determine the time of Adam's creation. A hundred years ago when a count was taken, no less than 140 different timetables had been published by se-

3. Is the date for Adam's creation as found in many copies of the Bible part of the inspired Scriptures, and do all agree on the date?

rious scholars. In such chronologies the calculations as to when Adam was created vary all the way from 3616 B.C.E. to 6174 B.C.E., with one wild guess set at 20,000 B.C.E. Such conflicting answers contained in the voluminous libraries around the world certainly tend to compound the confusion when seeking an answer to the above questions.

* In the previous article we learned from the Inspired Writings themselves, independent of the uninspired marginal notes of some Bibles, that the seventy years of desolation of the land of Judah began to count about October 1, 607 B.C.E. The beginning of this seventy-year period was obviously tied to its ending, that is, with the fall of Babylon in 539 B.C.E. So with 607 B.C.E. as dependably fixed on our Gregorian calendar as the absolute date of 539 B.C.E. we are prepared to move farther back in the count of time, to the dating of other important events in Bible history. For instance, the years when Saul, David and Solomon reigned successively over God's chosen people can now be dated in terms of the present-day calendar.

* At the death of Solomon his kingdom was split into two parts. The southern two-tribe part, composed of Judah and Benjamin, continued to be ruled by Solomon's descendants, and was known as the kingdom of Judah. The northern ten tribes made up the kingdom of Israel, sometimes called "Samaria" after the name of its later capital city, and were ruled over by Jeroboam and his successors. By our applying the prophetic time period of 390 years found in Ezekiel 4:1-9 with regard to Jerusalem's destruction the death of Solomon is found to be in the year 997 B.C.E. This was 390 years before the destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E.

4. What have we learned in our previous study, and, hence, what are we now prepared to do?
5. What history-making events took place in 997 B.C.E.?

ISRAEL'S ERRORS CARRIED 390 YEARS

* Notice what is said on this matter by the prophet Ezekiel:

"And you, O son of man, take for yourself a brick, and you must put it before you, and engrave upon it a city, even Jerusalem. And you must lay siege against it . . . It is a sign to the house of Israel. And as for you, lie upon your left side, and you must lay the error of the house of Israel upon it. For the number of the days that you will lie upon it you will carry their error. And I myself must give to you the years of their error to the number of *three hundred and ninety days*, and you must carry the error of the house of Israel. And you must complete them. And you must lie upon your right side in the second case, and you must carry the error of the house of Judah *forty days*. A day for a year, a day for a year, is what I have given you. . . . And as for you, take for yourself wheat and barley and broad beans and lentils and millet and spelt, and you must put them in one utensil and make them into bread for you, for the number of the days that you are lying upon your side; *three hundred and ninety days* you will eat it."—Ezek. 4:1-9.

* This chapter of Ezekiel was not recounting past historical events but was prophecy of future events. It was telling of the time in the future when the glorious city of Jerusalem would be besieged and its inhabitants taken captive, all of which occurred in 607 B.C.E. So the forty years spoken of in the case of Judah ended in that year. The "error" of the northern kingdom, said to be carried for 390 years, was nearly tenfold greater when compared with the error of Judah carried for 40 years. When, then, did these 390 years end?

6, 7. What time periods are referred to in Ezekiel 4:1-9?
8. When did the carrying of the "error" of the southern kingdom end?

⁹ They were not terminated in 740 B.C.E., when Samaria was destroyed, for the simple fact that Ezekiel enacted this prophetic drama sometime after "the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin," which would make the termination not earlier than 613 B.C.E., that is, 127 years after the destruction of Samaria by Assyria. (Ezek. 1:2) Since this whole prophetic drama plainly pointed forward to the destruction of Jerusalem, and since both the house of Israel and the house of Judah were in reality one inseparable covenant-bound people, the remnant of whom would not be a divided people upon their return from exile, there is only one reasonable conclusion, namely, the errors of both houses ran concurrently and terminated at the same time in 607 B.C.E. In this way the 70 years of desolation of the land of Judah ended 70 years after the termination of carrying the error of both houses, so that thus a remnant of both houses could return to the site of Jerusalem.

¹⁰ If the "error of the house of Israel" ended in 607, its beginning, 390 years prior thereto, was in 997 B.C.E. It began the year that King Solomon died and Jeroboam committed error, yes, great error, in that Jeroboam, whose domain was ripped off from the house of David, "proceeded to part Israel from following Jehovah," causing them "to sin with a great sin."—2 Ki. 17:21.

DATE OF EXODUS, 1513 B.C.E.

¹¹ Looking back into the distant past we see another milestone in man's history, the never-to-be-forgotten exodus of the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, under the leadership of Moses. Were it not for Jehovah's faithful Word the Bible, it would

be impossible to locate this great event accurately on the calendar, for Egyptian hieroglyphics are conspicuously silent concerning the humiliating defeat handed that first world power by Jehovah. But with the Bible's chronology, how relatively simple it is to date that memorable event!

¹² At 1 Kings 6:1 we read: "And it came about in the four hundred and eightieth year after the sons of Israel came out from the land of Egypt, in the fourth year, in the month of Ziv, that is, the second month, after Solomon became king over Israel, that he proceeded to build the house to Jehovah."

¹³ With this information one has only to determine what calendar year Solomon began building the temple, and it is then an easy matter to figure when Pharaoh's army was destroyed in the Red Sea.

¹⁴ "And the days that Solomon had reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel were forty years." (1 Ki. 11:42) This means that his last full regnal year ended in the spring of 997 B.C.E.* Adding 40 to 997 gives 1037 B.C.E., the year that Solomon began his peaceful reign. He did not begin the temple building, as the account says, until the second month of the fourth year of his reign, which means he had ruled a full three years and one month. Thus subtracting 3 years from 1037 one gets 1034 B.C.E., the year that the building work began. The time of the year was the second month *Ziv*, that is, April-May. This, the Bible says, was "in the four hundred and eightieth year" after the Israelites left Egypt.

¹⁵ Anytime we put a "th" on the end of

* "The reckoning of the regnal years of the kings is based upon the year which began in the spring, and is parallel to the Babylonian method in which this prevailed."—*The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, 1957, Vol. 12, p. 474.

9. What indicates the "error" of the northern kingdom also ended in 607 B.C.E.?

10. So when did the "error" of Israel begin?

11, 12. What other event in man's history are we now prepared to date, and with the aid of what key text?

13, 14. (a) On the Gregorian calendar, in what year did Solomon begin to reign? (b) In what year did he begin the building of the temple?

15. (a) Explain the difference between a *cardinal* and an *ordinal* number. (b) So when did the Israelites leave Egypt?

a number, for instance on the number 10, saying 10th, the number is changed from a *cardinal* to an *ordinal* number. When one speaks about playing baseball in the *tenth* inning of the game, it means that nine full innings have already been played, but only part of the tenth; ten innings are not yet completed. Likewise, when the Bible uses an ordinal number, saying that the building of the temple began in the 480th year after the Israelites left Egypt, and when that particular year on the calendar is known to be 1034 B.C.E., then we add 479 full years (not 480) to 1034 and arrive at the date 1513 B.C.E., the year of the Exodus. It too was springtime, Passover time, the 14th day of the month Nisan.

HOW LONG SINCE THE FLOOD?

¹⁶ Already with the help supplied by the Bible we have accurately measured back from the spring of this year 1968 C.E. to the spring of 1513 B.C.E., a total of 3,480 years. With the continued faithful memory and accurate historical record of Jehovah's Holy Word we can penetrate even deeper into the past, back to the flood of Noah's day.

¹⁷ Stephen, the first martyred footstep follower of Jesus Christ, referred to what Jehovah said would befall Abraham's offspring. "Moreover, God spoke to this effect, that his seed would be alien residents in a foreign land and the people would enslave them and afflict them for four hundred years." (Acts 7:6; Gen. 15:13) Stephen here mentions three of Israel's past experiences: As alien residents in a foreign land, as people in slavery, and as people afflicted for four hundred years.

¹⁸ It would be a mistake to assume that

all three of these experiences were of equal duration, or that they were separate individual experiences that followed one another in consecutive order. It was long after their entrance into Egypt as aliens that they were enslaved, more than 70 years later, and sometime after the death of Joseph. Rather, Stephen was saying that within the same 400-year period in which they were afflicted, they were also enslaved and were also alien residents.

¹⁹ Please note that, when Stephen said they were "alien residents in a foreign land . . . for four hundred years," he did not say and he did not mean to imply that they were not alien residents before entering Egypt. So it is a mistake to insist that this text proves the Israelites were in Egypt for four hundred years. It is true that, upon entering Egypt and being presented before Pharaoh for the first time, Joseph's brothers said: "We have come to reside as aliens in the land." But they did not say nor did they mean that up until then they had not been alien residents, for on the same occasion their father Jacob, when asked by Pharaoh how old he was, declared: "The days of the years of my alien residences are a hundred and thirty years." And not only had Jacob spent his whole lifetime as an alien resident before coming to Egypt, but he told Pharaoh that his forefathers before him also had been alien residents.—Gen. 47:4-9.

²⁰ Since the affliction of Israel ended in 1513 B.C.E., it must have begun in 1913, 400 years earlier. That year would correspond to the time that Isaac was afflicted by Ishmael "poking fun" at him on the day that Isaac was weaned. At the time, Isaac was five years old, and this

16. How far back in history have we now penetrated, and what are the prospects of probing even deeper?

17. In recounting Israel's experiences, to what events and to what time period does Stephen refer?

18. What argues against the conclusion that these events were separate experiences following one another in consecutive order?

19. How do we know the Israelites were "aliens" before entering Egypt?

20. When did these 400 years end, and when did they begin?

was long before the Israelites entered Egypt.—Gen. 21:8, 9.

²¹ Well, then, how long were the Israelites down in Egypt as alien residents? Exodus 12:40, 41 says: "And the dwelling of the sons of Israel, who had dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came about at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, it even came about on this very day that all the armies of Jehovah went out of the land of Egypt."

²² Here verse 40 in the *Septuagint* reads: "But the dwelling of the sons of Israel which they [and their fathers, *Alexandrine* MS] dwelt in the land of Egypt AND IN THE LAND OF CANAAN [was] four hundred and thirty years long." The Samaritan *Pentateuch* reads: "IN THE LAND OF CANAAN and in the land of Egypt." Thus both of these versions, which are based on Hebrew texts older than the Masoretic, include the words "in the land of Canaan" together with the word "Egypt."

²³ From the time that Abraham entered Canaan until Isaac's birth was 25 years;* from that time until Jacob's birth, 60 more years; and after that it was another 130 years before Jacob entered Egypt. All together this makes a total of 215 years, exactly half of the 430 years, spent in Canaan before moving into Egypt. (Gen. 12:4; 21:5; 25:26; 47:9) The apostle Paul, under inspiration, also confirms that from the making of the Abrahamic covenant at the time the patriarch moved into Canaan, it was 430 years down to the institution of the Law covenant.—Gal. 3:17.

* Incidentally, adding 5 more years to the 25, and bringing it down to the time Isaac was weaned, makes a total of 30 years. This accounts for the difference between the 400 years (Gen. 15:13; Acts 7:6) and the 430 years (Ex. 12:40; Gal. 3:17).

21, 22. Were the Israelites 430 years in Egypt exclusively, and how do certain ancient manuscripts shed light on this point?

23. (a) So how long were the Israelites actually in Egypt, and how does Paul confirm this? (b) Explain the difference between the 400 and the 430 years mentioned in the Scriptures.

²⁴ By adding this 430 years to the 1513 it puts us back to 1943 B.C.E., the time when Abraham first entered Canaan following the death of his father Terah in Haran, Mesopotamia. It is now only a matter of adding up the years of a few generations to date the Flood correctly. The figures are given in Genesis, chapters 11 and 12, and may be summarized as follows:

From start of Flood	
To Arpachshad's birth (Gen. 11:10)	2 years
To birth of Shelah (11:12)	35 "
To birth of Eber (11:14)	30 "
To birth of Peleg (11:26)	34 "
To birth of Reu (11:18)	30 "
To birth of Serug (11:20)	32 "
To birth of Nahor (11:22)	30 "
To birth of Terah (11:24)	29 "
To death of Terah in Haran, and Abram's departure to Canaan at age of 75 (11:32; 12:4)	205 "
Total	427 years

²⁵ Adding these 427 years to the year 1943 B.C.E. dates the beginning of the Deluge at 2370 B.C.E., 4,337 years ago.

6,000 YEARS FROM ADAM'S CREATION

²⁶ In a similar manner it is only necessary to add up the following years involving ten pre-Flood generations to get the date of Adam's creation, namely:

From Adam's creation	
To birth of Seth (Gen. 5:3)	130 years
To birth of Enosh (5:6)	105 "
To birth of Kenan (5:9)	90 "
To birth of Mahalalel (5:12)	70 "
To birth of Jared (5:15)	65 "
To birth of Enoch (5:18)	162 "
To birth of Methuselah (5:21)	65 "
To birth of Lamech (5:25)	187 "
To birth of Noah (5:28, 29)	182 "
To beginning of Flood (7:6)	600 "

Total 1,656 years

²⁷ Adding this figure 1,656 to 2,370 gives 4026 B.C.E., the Gregorian calendar year

24, 25. The Flood began in what calendar year, and how long was this before Abraham entered Canaan? 26, 27. (a) How long before the Flood was Adam created? In what year? (b) What indicates that Adam was created in the fall of the year?

in which Adam was created. Since man naturally began to count time with his own beginning, and since man's most ancient calendars started each year in the autumn, it is reasonable to assume that the first man Adam was created in the fall of the year.

²⁸ Thus, through a careful independent study by dedicated Bible scholars who have pursued the subject for a number of years, and who have not blindly followed some traditional chronological calculations of Christendom, we have arrived at a date for Adam's creation that is 22 years more distant in the past than Ussher's figure. This means time is running out two decades sooner than traditional chronology anticipates.

²⁹ After much of the mathematics and genealogies, really, of what benefit is this information to us today? Is it not all dead history, as uninteresting and profitless as walking through a cemetery copying old dates off tombstones? After all, why should we be any more interested in the date of Adam's creation than in the birth of King Tut? Well, for one thing, if 4,026 is added to 1,968 (allowing for the lack of a zero year between C.E. and B.C.E.) one gets a total of 5,993 years, come this autumn, since Adam's creation. That means, in the fall of the year 1975, a little over seven years from now (and not in 1997 as would be the case if Ussher's figures were correct), it will be 6,000 years since the creation of Adam, the father of all mankind!

ADAM CREATED AT CLOSE OF "SIXTH DAY"

³⁰ Are we to assume from this study that the battle of Armageddon will be all over by the autumn of 1975, and the long-looked-for thousand-year reign of Christ

will begin by then? Possibly, but we wait to see how closely the seventh thousand-year period of man's existence coincides with the sabbathlike thousand-year reign of Christ. If these two periods run parallel with each other as to the calendar year, it will not be by mere chance or accident but will be according to Jehovah's loving and timely purposes. Our chronology, however, which is reasonably accurate (but admittedly not infallible), at the best only points to the autumn of 1975 as the end of 6,000 years of man's existence on earth. It does not necessarily mean that 1975 marks the end of the first 6,000 years of Jehovah's seventh creative "day." Why not? Because after his creation Adam lived some time during the "sixth day," which unknown amount of time would need to be subtracted from Adam's 930 years, to determine when the sixth seven-thousand-year period or "day" ended, and how long Adam lived into the "seventh day." And yet the end of that sixth creative "day" could end within the same Gregorian calendar year of Adam's creation. It may involve only a difference of weeks or months, not years.

³¹ In regard to Adam's creation it is good to read carefully what the Bible says. Moses in compiling the book of Genesis referred to written records or "histories" that predated the Flood. The first of these begins with Genesis 1:1 and ends at Genesis 2:4 with the words, "This is the history of the heavens and the earth . . ." The second historical document begins with Genesis 2:5 and ends with verse two of chapter five. Hence we have two separate accounts of creation from slightly different points of view. In the second of these accounts, in Genesis 2:19, the original Hebrew verb translated "was forming" is in the progressive imperfect form. This does not mean that the animals and birds

28. How does this chronology differ from Ussher's in regard to Adam's creation?

29. Why be concerned with the date of Adam's creation?

30. What may occur before 1975, but what attitude should we take?

31. What do the first two chapters of Genesis disclose?

were created after Adam was created. Genesis 1:20-28 shows it does not mean that. So, in order to avoid contradiction between chapter one and chapter two, Genesis 2:19, 20 must be only a parenthetical remark thrown in to explain the need for creating a "helper" for man. So the progressive Hebrew verb form could also be rendered as "had been forming."—See Rotherham's translation (*Ro*), also Leeser's (*Le*).

³² These two creation accounts in the book of Genesis, though differing slightly in the treatment of the material, are in perfect agreement with each other on all points, including the fact that Eve was created after Adam. So not until after this event did the sixth creative day come to an end. Exactly how soon after Adam's creation is not disclosed. "After that [Adam and Eve's creation] God saw everything he had made and, look! it was very good. And there came to be evening and there came to be morning, a sixth day." (Gen. 1:31) After the sixth creative day ends, the seventh one begins.

³³ This time between Adam's creation and the beginning of the seventh day, the day of rest, let it be noted, need not have been a long time. It could have been a rather short one. The naming of the animals by Adam, and his discovery that there was no complement for himself, required no great length of time. The animals were in subjection to Adam; they were peaceful; they came under God's leading; they were not needing to be chased down and caught. It took Noah only seven days to get the same *kinds* of animals, male and female, into the Ark. (Gen. 7:1-4) Eve's creation was quickly accomplished, 'while Adam was sleeping.'

(Gen. 2:21) So the lapse of time between Adam's creation and the end of the sixth creative day, though unknown, was a comparatively short period of time. The pronouncement at the end of the sixth day, "God saw everything he had made and, look! it was *very good*," proves that the beginning of the great seventh day of the creative week did not wait until after Adam and Eve sinned and were expelled from the Garden of Eden.

1975! . . . AND FAR BEYOND!

³⁴ Bible chronology is an interesting study by which historic events are placed in their order of occurrence along the stream of time. The Watch Tower Society over the years has endeavored to keep its associates abreast with the latest scholarship that proves consistent with historic and prophetic events recorded in the Scriptures. Major problems in sacred chronology have been straightened out either due to fulfillment of Bible prophecies or by reason of archaeological discoveries or because better Bible translations convey more clearly the records of the original languages. However, several knotty problems of chronology of a minor nature are not yet resolved. For example, at the time of the exodus from Egypt when Jehovah changed the beginning of the year from autumn time on the secular calendar to spring time on the sacred calendar, was there, in the Jewish calendar, a loss or a gain of six months?—Ex. 12:1, 2.

³⁵ One thing is absolutely certain, Bible chronology reinforced with fulfilled Bible prophecy shows that six thousand years of man's existence will soon be up, yes, within this generation! (Matt. 24:34) This is, therefore, no time to be indifferent and complacent. This is not the time to be toy-

32. What indicates the sixth creative day did not end immediately with Adam's creation?

33. (a) How do we know the end of the sixth creative day came very soon after Adam's creation? (b) How does Genesis 1:31 prove the sixth day ended before Adam and Eve sinned?

34. What has brought about a better understanding of Bible chronology?

35. Why is this no time for indifference and complacency?

ing with the words of Jesus that "concerning that day and hour *nobody* knows, neither the angels of the heavens nor the Son, but only the Father." (Matt. 24:36) To the contrary, it is a time when one should be keenly aware that the end of this system of things is rapidly coming to its violent end. Make no mistake, it is sufficient that the Father himself *knows* both the "day and hour"!

³⁶ Even if one cannot see beyond 1975, is this any reason to be less active? The apostles could not see even this far; they knew nothing about 1975. All they could see was a short time ahead in which to finish the work assigned to them. (1 Pet. 4:7) Hence, there was a ring of alarm and a cry of urgency in all their writings. (Acts 20:20; 2 Tim. 4:2) And rightly so. If they had delayed or dillydallied and had been complacent with the idea the end was some thousands of years off they would never have finished running the race set before them. No, they ran hard

36. What helpful example did the apostles leave us in this regard?

and they ran fast, and they won! It was a life or death matter with them.—1 Cor. 9:24; 2 Tim. 4:7; Heb. 12:1.

³⁷ So too with Jehovah's faithful witnesses in this latter half of the twentieth century. They have the true Christian point of view. Their strenuous evangelistic activity is not something peculiar to this present decade. They have not dedicated their lives to serve Jehovah only until 1975. Christians have been running this way ever since Christ Jesus blazed the trail and commanded his disciples, "Follow me!" So keep this same mental attitude in you that was in Christ Jesus. Let nothing slow you down or cause you to tire and give out. Those who will flee Babylon the Great and this Satanic system of things are now running for their lives, headed for God's kingdom, and they will not stop at 1975. O no! They will keep on in this glorious way that leads to everlasting life, praising and serving Jehovah for ever and ever!

37. So what will you be doing between now and 1975? And beyond that, what?

How 1st-CENTURY EVENTS ARE DATED in the 20th Century

IN THE previous two articles the truthfulness of the Bible's ancient history as far back as Adam's creation has been tested and proved. Any consideration of historical dates, however, would certainly be incomplete if it failed to locate Jesus' earthly ministry and that of his apostles on the stream of man's history, for, in-

deed, no one ever walked this earth who had a more profound effect on the lives and destinies of men and nations the world over.

² As already pointed out, neither our present Gregorian calendar, nor the Julian calendar, which it replaced less than 400 years ago, is in itself an adequate

1. Why is a further consideration of Bible dates important?

2. What is first necessary before first-century events can be dated?

device for locating events recorded in the Christian Greek Scriptures. This is because the Bible used an entirely different system of dating important happenings. As a consequence, before any correlation of Bible events in terms of modern calendars can be made, it is necessary to have a common starting point in time, an absolute fixed date attested to by both the Bible and proved secular history. This accomplished, other historic events reported in the Bible can be dated according to the civil calendar.

³ After the death of Julius Caesar, his adopted son, Gaius Octavius, adroitly suppressed the power of the Roman senate, skillfully changed the image of the Republic to that of an empire, and finally seated himself securely in the saddle as Rome's first emperor. In 27 B.C.E., on his way to becoming deified, Octavius assumed a religious title of reverence, that of *Augustus*. He is also remembered for his renaming the month *Sextilis* on the Julian calendar after himself, and borrowing a day from the month of February so that the month of *August* would have as many days as July, which was named after his predecessor Julius Caesar. Now it so happened that Augustus Caesar died the 19th day of the month of his namesake, August, in the year 14 C.E., Julian calendar (August 17, Gregorian calendar). On the same day Augustus' stepson and son-in-law, Tiberius, succeeded him as emperor.

⁴ August 19, 14 C.E., Julian calendar, therefore, is an established undisputed date in Roman history. All reasonable doubt is therefore removed as to what year it was when John the Baptist began his preaching work in the wilderness of the Jordan, for the historian Luke declares that it was "in the fifteenth year

of the reign of Tiberius Caesar." (Luke 3:1) That "fifteenth year" did not end until August 16, 29 C.E., Gregorian calendar. It was in that year, evidently in the spring, when John the Baptist began his work.

⁵ Luke, perhaps anticipating that antagonists might attack this important event, reinforced it beyond a historical shadow of doubt. After saying that it was "the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar," Luke added that it was at the same time when six other important rulers were in office, namely, "when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea [27 to 37 C.E.], and Herod was district ruler of Galilee [until 40 C.E.], but Philip his brother was district ruler of the country of Ituraea and Trachonitis [until 34 C.E.], and Lysanias was district ruler of Abilene, in the days of chief priest Annas and of Caiaphas [about 18 to 36 C.E.]." (Luke 3:1, 2) With this array of rulers all in power at the same time in the fifteenth year of Tiberius' reign it would be impossible for doubters to prove from Roman and Jewish history that John's ministry did not begin in the year 29 C.E.

SEVENTY WEEKS-OF-YEARS

⁶ The year 29 C.E. is of interest not simply because it was the year John the Baptist began proclaiming: "Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens [or, of God] has drawn near," but, more importantly, because the one whom God would anoint for that kingdom was standing at the very threshold. (Matt. 3:2) John as the forerunner was about six months older than Jesus. (Luke 1:34-38) It follows, therefore, that Jesus' baptism and anointing took place in the autumn of that same year, 29 C.E., Jesus being at the time

3, 4. (a) When did Tiberius Caesar become emperor?
(b) So John the Baptist began his preaching work in what year?

5. How does Luke make sure for us when John the Baptist began his ministry?

6. What other very important event occurred in the year 29 C.E.?

"about thirty years old." (Luke 3:23) On that occasion John testified that Jesus there became the Anointed One, or Christ, being anointed with God's holy spirit.—John 1:32-34.

⁷ That the start of the teaching work of this Anointed One was in the fall of 29 C.E. is corroborated by the long-range prophecy of Daniel 9:25, which reads in part: "From the going forth of the word to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah [meaning Anointed One] the Leader, there will be seven weeks, also sixty-two weeks." If the seven plus sixty-two weeks, that is, sixty-nine weeks, were to be literal ones of seven days each, then the period of waiting for Messiah to put in an appearance would have amounted to only 483 literal twenty-four-hour days, a mere sixteen months! Rather, these weeks were prophetic ones. So, following the Bible rule of "a day for a year," they would represent 483 years (69 weeks-of-years, not weeks-of-days).—Num. 14:34; Ezek. 4:6.

⁸ When, then, did "the word to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem" go forth? Not in 537 B.C.E., for the decree of Cyrus that year was not to restore and rebuild the city, but only to "rebuild the house [or temple] of Jehovah . . . which was in Jerusalem." (Ezra 1:2, 3) Nor was it in 468 B.C.E., the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes I, king of Persia, when Ezra went to Jerusalem with a special letter from the king. Nowhere in that letter does it authorize or command the rebuilding of Jerusalem; it dealt only with matters pertaining to the temple services at Jerusalem.—Ezra 7:1-27.

⁹ But in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes I it was reported to Nehemiah what "a very bad plight" the city of Jerusalem was in, and how "the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its very gates have been burned with fire." So when the opportunity afforded, Nehemiah brought these matters to the king's attention, and requested: "If to the king it does seem good, . . . that you would send me to Judah, to the city of the burial places of my forefathers, *that I may rebuild it.*" Furthermore, Nehemiah continued, "If to the king it does seem good, let letters be given me . . . a letter to Asaph the keeper of the park that belongs to the king, that he may give me trees to build with timber the gates of the Castle that belongs to the house, and *for the wall of the city* and for the house into which I am to enter."—Neh. 1:2, 3; 2:5-8.

¹⁰ This plea to the king was made in the spring of the year, in the month Nisan, but by the time the letters were drawn up and Nehemiah made the long trip of perhaps 900 miles, from the Persian palace in Shushan, over 400 miles east of Babylon to Jerusalem, and by the time he delivered the king's letters to the governors "beyond the River" Euphrates, it was at the end of the lunar month Tammuz (tenth month) when Nehemiah arrived in the broken-down city. As he says, "At length I came to Jerusalem." (Neh. 2:9-11) So it was in the latter half of Artaxerxes' twentieth year of rule when the command "to restore and to rebuild" began to take effect, namely, Ab 3 or 4, 455 B.C.E., and when the 69 weeks of the prophecy began to count.—Neh. 2:11 to 6:15.

¹¹ It is established on competent author-

7. (a) When, according to Daniel's prophecy, was Messiah scheduled to come? (b) How long a period of waiting was this to be?

8. How do we know that the order to rebuild Jerusalem was not given in 537 B.C.E., or in the seventh year of Artaxerxes' reign?

9. What events occurred in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes' reign that mark it as the time when the word went forth to rebuild Jerusalem?

10. What time of the year was the decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem issued? But when did it take effect?

11. What year did Artaxerxes come to the throne? So when was the twentieth year of his reign?

ity that Artaxerxes I began reigning in 474 B.C.E. The Greek historian Thucydides, who lived during Artaxerxes' time, says that General Themistocles fled from Greece to Asia when Artaxerxes had "lately come to the throne," and not during the reign of his father Xerxes. The Greek biographer Plutarch of the first century C.E., and Nepos the Roman historian of the first century B.C.E., both support Thucydides on this point. Upon his arrival in Ephesus (in Asia Minor) this General Themistocles asked Artaxerxes' permission to study the Persian language for one year before appearing before the king. Permission was granted, the appearance was made, and, according to the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus of the first century C.E., Themistocles died in 471 B.C.E. In harmony with this, his arrival in Asia, as shown in Jerome's Eusebius, was in 473, which would put Artaxerxes on the throne in 474. This means that the twentieth year of this king's reign fell in or overlapped on 455 B.C.E. Based on this and other historical evidence the noted scholar Ernst Wm. Hengstenberg (1802-1869) in his *Christology of the Old Testament*, translated from the German by Reuel Keith, Volume 2, page 389, says: "The twentieth year of Artaxerxes is the year 455 before Christ. . . ." And with this Archbishop Ussher and others agree.

¹² So, with the issuing and applying of Artaxerxes' famous decree for the rebuilding of Jerusalem securely anchored to the year 455 B.C.E., the ending of the 483 years of waiting until Messiah made his appearance came in the latter half of 29 C.E.* With all these facts, proof as to when Jesus' baptism and anointing occurred certainly is not lacking.

* In calculating this date, there is no "zero" year between B.C.E. and C.E.

12. Explain how this information about Artaxerxes' reign helps fix the time of Jesus' baptism?

¹³ The fixing of Jesus' baptism in the year 29 C.E., when he was thirty years old, also establishes the date of his birth as the year 2 B.C.E., in the fall. Jesus, then, was one year old in the fall of 1 B.C.E. There being no zero year, in the fall of the next year, 1 C.E., he was two years old, and in the fall of 29 C.E. he was thirty years old. Some chroniclers put the date of Jesus' birth at 4 B.C.E., or even as early as 6 B.C.E., basing their conclusions on Josephus' testimony that shortly before Herod's death there was an eclipse of the moon. (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XVII, chap. VI, par. 4) It has been calculated that there was such an eclipse March 13, of the year 4 B.C.E., and so they say the Savior was born before that date, to allow for Herod's order, calling for the killing of babies two years old and under, to be carried out.

¹⁴ However, this is not sufficient proof for setting Jesus' birth at 4 B.C.E., since eclipses of the moon are a rather common occurrence, in many years there being two eclipse seasons. More significant is Josephus' statement that Herod died thirty-seven years after being made king by the Romans. (*Antiquities*, Book XVII, chap. VIII, par. 1) Actually, Herod did not capture Jerusalem and begin his reign as king until the summer of 38 B.C.E. So if Josephus dated Herod's reign from the capture of the city, and when he actually began ruling as king, and not from when the Roman senate gave their consent three years earlier, then it brings us to 1 B.C.E. as the year of Herod's death. This easily allows time for Jesus' birth in the fall of 2 B.C.E., the visit by the Chaldean astrologers, and for the slaughter of the innocent babes of Bethlehem.—Matt. 2:1-18.

13, 14. (a) Since he was baptized in the year 29 C.E., when was Jesus born? (b) But when do some commentators say Jesus was born, and upon what evidence? (c) How does the year of Herod's capture of Jerusalem help to determine the year of Jesus' birth?

¹⁵ The rest of Daniel's prophecy concerning the seventy weeks of years confirms these dates. Daniel 9:26, 27 says that "Messiah will be cut off, with nothing for himself," an event that occurred *after* the 69 weeks-of-years and in the midst, or "at the half" of the 70th week. Since this last week, the seventieth, is logically the same length as each of the other sixty-nine, then it too was seven years long. Messiah was therefore cut off three and a half years after the fall of 29 C.E., "at the half" of the seven-year-long seventieth week, or in the spring of 33 C.E. "At the half of the week he will cause sacrifice and gift offering to cease" officially, for it was then that the Law covenant with its sacrifices was legally canceled "by nailing it to the torture stake." (Dan. 9:27; Col. 2:14) This allowed time for Jesus to fit into his ministry the four annual Passover celebrations mentioned in the Scriptures.*

¹⁶ Certain astronomical facts also give confirmation that it was 33 C.E. when Jesus was put to death. This event occurred during the twenty-four-hour day of Nisan 14, which began with 6 p.m. on Thursday and ended at 6 p.m. on Friday. This means that Jesus died Friday afternoon about 3 p.m., "the ninth hour." (Mark 15:34-37) The day after Passover, Nisan 15, was always a sabbath day regardless of what day of the week it came on. (Lev. 23:6, 7) If it fell on a scheduled weekly sabbath, then Nisan 15 was known as 'a great sabbath,' as was the case at the time of Jesus' death. (John 19:31) Now astronomical tables† show there was

just such a Passover full moon on Thursday night, March 31, 33 C.E., Gregorian calendar. The only other occurrence of a full moon on Thursday night in the month of Nisan during Jesus' ministry was in the year 30 C.E., but this is ruled out as the likely year of his death, since it would allow Messiah only a six-month ministry. It is, therefore, beyond a reasonable doubt that Jesus died Friday afternoon, April 1, 33 C.E.

DATING EVENTS BETWEEN 36 C.E. AND 49 C.E.

¹⁷ The balance of the seventieth week after Messiah was put to death on the torture stake, a period of three and a half years, ran to the fall of 36 C.E., during which time Jehovah's special invitation to be of the heavenly Kingdom class continued extended exclusively to the Jews and Jewish proselytes, just as the prophecy foretold: "He must keep the [Abrahamic] covenant in force for the many for one week." (Dan. 9:27) It is for this reason that the good news of salvation did not go to the Gentiles until the fall of 36 C.E., when the apostle Peter was privileged to baptize Cornelius and members of his household.—Acts 10:1-11:18.

¹⁸ Now with the coming of autumn time of that year 36 C.E. the preaching work about the Christ was due to be greatly expanded, among the Gentile nations. Here, again, we see that Jehovah the Great Timekeeper, and the one who adequately provides precisely on time for every new feature of his work, had a man already well prepared to be the "apostle to the nations," namely, Saul of Tarsus, who became the apostle Paul.—Rom. 11:13; Gal. 2:8, 9.

¹⁹ Paul was not a newly converted novice in the year 36. Because he was a Jew his

* John 2:13 (30 C.E.); 5:1 (31 C.E.); 6:4 (32 C.E.); 12:1; 13:1 (33 C.E.).

† *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C.—A.D. 45, 1942*, by Parker and Dubberstein, p. 46; also *Canon der Mondfinsternisse*, 1887, by Oppolzer, Vol. II, p. 344.

15. If Messiah was cut off in the middle of the "seventieth week," what year would that have been in our Common Era?

16. What astronomical facts give further proof that Jesus died Friday afternoon, April 1, 33 C.E.?

17. What occurred during the balance of the "seventieth week," and when did that week end?

18. What was due to begin from the fall of 36 C.E.?

19. By the year 36 was Paul prepared for the assignment he received?

conversion did not have to wait until 36. The light of truth, it appears, struck him within the first year after Jesus passed off the scene in the spring of 33. For the next two or two and a half years Paul worked in Damascus until it was necessary for him to make his escape in a basket through a hole in that city's wall. He then went into Arabia for a time, and finally returned to Damascus briefly before going up to Jerusalem. Paul tells us that it was three years after his conversion, which would date it 36 C.E., when he first visited Peter and James in Jerusalem. He says: "After that I went into the regions of Syria and of Cilicia."—Acts 9:23-25; Gal. 1:15-21.

²⁰ Continuing in this same letter to the Galatians, Paul writes: "Then after fourteen years I again went up to Jerusalem." (Gal. 2:1) The fourteenth year from 36 would make it 49 C.E., according to the custom of those days of using ordinal numbers. On that visit to Jerusalem the issue of circumcision was brought before the governing body and was settled.—Acts 15:2-29; Gal. 2:3-9.

²¹ There are some other interesting happenings related in the Bible that occurred between the years 36 and 49 C.E. For example, when Claudius was emperor and just prior to the death of Herod Agrippa I, the prophet Agabus, by and through Jehovah's spirit, foretold a coming famine; the apostle James was put to death by Herod; and Peter was miraculously delivered from the same fate by Jehovah's angel.—Acts 11:27-12:11.

²² Secular histories agree that these events occurred in 44 C.E., since Claudius was proclaimed emperor in 41 and Herod Agrippa I was eaten up with worms after the Passover of 44 C.E. (Acts 12:21-23) The foretold famine, however, did not

come until the year 46, at which time Tiberius Alexander was the Roman procurator in Judea. So this allowed sufficient time, two full years, for the Christians of Antioch to prepare for the emergency and arrange for the relief measures mentioned in the account. Following these events the Bible continues in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Acts to tell of Paul's first missionary tour. In company with Barnabas Paul visited the island of Cyprus and many cities in Asia Minor before returning to Antioch in Syria. This first trip, it seems, occupied the greater part of the years 47 and 48, yet leaving Paul sufficient time to return to his home in Antioch before making the aforementioned trip to Jerusalem in the spring of 49.

DATING OTHER EVENTS IN PAUL'S MINISTRY

²³ See now how helpful the Bible's remarkable record is in fixing the date on our calendar of Paul's second missionary journey, between the years 49 and 52 C.E. He returned to Antioch in the spring of 49 with the special letter drawn up by the governing body in Jerusalem, a copy of which is preserved for us. (Acts 15:23-29) The account says that "after some days," probably by now the summer of the same year, 49, Barnabas returned to the work in Cyprus, but Paul and Silas set out to serve the congregations in Syria and adjacent Cilicia.—Acts 15:36-41.

²⁴ It therefore must have been spring-time, 50 C.E., when Paul and Silas, having moved through Asia Minor, crossed over into Europe for the first time. (Acts 16:1-12) The next six months was a very busy time as these pioneers blazed a new trail and established new congregations in Philippi, Thessalonica, Beroea and Athens before reaching Corinth in the fall of 50.

20. When was the issue of circumcision decided by the governing body in Jerusalem?

21, 22. What events mentioned in the Bible occurred between the years 41 and 49 C.E.?

23, 24. When did Paul set out on his exciting second missionary tour, and how long did it take him to get to Corinth, Greece?

What a service year that had been! Just think of it, in a matter of perhaps fifteen months, these first-century missionaries had traveled some 1,300 miles, probably a great deal of it on foot, and had firmly established many new congregations made up of both Jews and Gentiles.

²⁵ That it was late in the year 50 when Paul arrived in Corinth is confirmed by secular history. Paulus Orosius, a historian of the early fifth century, says that it was January 25 in the year 50 when Emperor Claudius ordered all Jews to leave Rome. So time is allowed for Aquila and Priscilla to pack up their belongings, obtain passage, sail for Corinth, arrive there and settle down in what was to be their new home for the next year and a half, and set up a tentmaking business, all this would have easily filled the months of time until Paul got to Corinth in the fall of the same year. As we read, Paul "found a certain Jew named Aquila . . . who had recently come from Italy, and Priscilla his wife, because of the fact that Claudius had ordered all the Jews to depart from Rome."—Acts 18:2.

²⁶ Another point on which the historical accuracy of the Bible is confirmed is found in this same eighteenth chapter of Acts, verse 12. "Now while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews rose up with one accord against Paul and led him to the judgment seat." Archaeologists have found a fragment of an inscription, containing a rescript of Emperor Claudius, which proves that Gallio was proconsul of Achaia from the summer of 51 to the summer of 52. After Gallio threw this case out of court Paul remained in Corinth "quite some days longer" before leaving for Antioch in Syria. (Acts 18:18) So it appears that Paul arrived in Corinth in the fall

of 50, was dragged before Gallio a year or so later, and left there in the spring of 52, as the Bible says, after a stay of eighteen months all together. (Acts 18:11) This allowed him time to reach Antioch by midsummer, 52 C.E.

²⁷ One might reasonably conclude that after so many busy years of full-time missionary service, and after enduring all the hazards and perils of first-century travel, Paul would have settled down in retirement here in Antioch for a good long and well-earned rest. (2 Cor. 11:26, 27) But no! Paul gave no thought to retiring. In all his writings, in all his activity, there is a constant and compelling urgency to press forward with the work with even greater speed and efficiency.

²⁸ We therefore are not surprised to find that after only a short time in Antioch this energetic missionary again took to the road. After "he had passed some time there" in Antioch it was probably the fall of 52 when he set out on his third tour. Traveling overland this time "from place to place through the country of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples," he reached Ephesus where he probably stayed the next two and a half years. (Acts 18:23; 19:1-10) Then, as he says, he left there after the festival of Pentecost (now the year 55), went through Macedonia and down to Corinth, spending the winter there, before retracing his steps through Philippi by Passover time the next spring. This then allowed Paul sufficient time to reach Jerusalem at the time of Pentecost, 56 C.E.—1 Cor. 16:5-8; Acts 20:1-3, 6, 15, 16; 21:8, 15-17.

²⁹ No sooner had Paul arrived in Jerusalem than he was pounced upon by his

25. What historical evidence shows that Paul did not get to Corinth until the latter part of the year 50 C.E.?
26. What find by archaeologists confirms Paul's stay in Corinth as being from the fall of 50 to the spring of 52?

27. Was Paul content to retire now that he was back home in Antioch?

28. Tell about Paul's third missionary tour, both the places visited and the time covered.

29. What dates are assigned to Paul's experiences, from the time of his arrest in Jerusalem until his death in Rome?

religious adversaries, and for safety's sake he was secretly hustled down to Caesarea by Roman soldiers. There he remained in jail for two years, until bribe-seeking foxy Felix was replaced as governor by Festus. (Acts 21:27-33; 23:23-35; 24:27) As to the year Festus became governor, *The Encyclopædia Britannica* comments on the two schools of critics who contend for 55 and 60-61 respectively, saying: "It can be said confidently that the truth is between these two extremes, for the arguments urged in each case appear less to prove one extreme than to disprove its opposite."* We therefore accept the year 58, in harmony with all the foregoing facts, as the time that Paul's appeal to Caesar for a hearing of his case was granted, and he was shipped off to Rome. After surviving the most famous shipwreck of all history, and wintering on

* *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1946 Edition, Vol. 3, p. 528; and Young's *Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, p. 342, under "Festus."

the island of Malta, the following spring, in 59, Paul arrived in Rome, where for the next two years he remained a prisoner, preaching and teaching, until the year 61. (Acts 27:1; 28:1, 11, 16, 30, 31) Paul's second imprisonment in Rome, which terminated in his execution, was probably during the years 64-65 C.E.—2 Tim. 1:16; 4:6, 7.

³⁰ This review of first-century events has been both interesting and faith-building. The Bible writers knew nothing about modern calendars, yet their care and accuracy and the methods they used in dating events have proved most helpful in pinpointing ancient happenings on the stream of time. The harmony of sacred chronology in every detail, its integrity to the truth, adds to our confidence and trust in the Holy Scriptures, and our belief that the Bible is indeed Jehovah's Word of Truth.

30. Of what benefit has this study of first-century events proved to be?

What can **I** do?

WHAT can I do? That is a good question. But more to the point, what do you want to do? Have you dedicated your life to the Giver of every good thing, Jehovah God? Would you now like to carry out that dedication in the fullest manner possible?

Possibly you are now employed in some kind of secular job. But if you are one of God's dedicated ministers you can never make a career of that job, can you? You may even enjoy to some degree the luxu-

ries of these modern days. But is it not a fact that these soon become commonplace? Car, television, comfortable home, and so on—they still do not fully satisfy. Nothing short of having the fullest share possible in the primary work of God's devoted servants here on earth can really satisfy.

Well, there is a way for single men and women, and young married couples, yes, and older ones too, to gain more joy and peace in dedicated service. It is in a ca-

reer of full-time preaching. Instead of giving the major part of your time and energy to secular activity, why not give it to the Kingdom work, with just enough secular work to defray daily expenses? Trust Jehovah, whose Word, the Bible, promises: "Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other [necessary] things will be added to you."

—Matt. 6:33.

But are you not so sure? Why not give Jehovah God the opportunity to make good his promise in your case? Those who have tested out the certainty of God's promises have discovered that this is the way of success.

TESTIMONY FROM PARAGUAY

Here is what one missionary in Paraguay says: "Arranging my personal affairs so as to be unencumbered with financial and other obligations proved to be the only obstacle to my taking up missionary work. After serving for more than ten years here in Paraguay, I am still firmly convinced that I made the wise decision. Helping spiritually impoverished ones with God's Word and aiding fellow Witnesses to grow to maturity have been a source of great spiritual happiness to me."

And a young woman, not quite two years in a missionary assignment, explains: "I wanted to be used to the fullest extent in Jehovah's service. Reading the *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses* stimulated my desire to teach Bible truth to people in other lands who have not been privileged to hear the Bible message. So I started out as a pioneer. Then came the call to Gilead School for training as a missionary. Now, here I am in Paraguay,

happy to have attained such a wonderful privilege."

And the opportunities in Paraguay have not run out. Referring to Concepción, a city of 30,000 inhabitants, a report has this to say: "Missionaries have served here in the past, and the small congregation of seven continues to spread Bible knowledge faithfully. We hope soon to be able to bolster their efforts with special pioneer help. Its setting, along the east bank of the Paraguay River, and the friendli-

ness of the people make it a most desirable assignment."

"Then there is Villarrica," the report continues: "Local special pioneers (engaged full time in preaching) are now looking after this congregation of thirty persons. If the needed personnel were available the Society would reopen a missionary home here, for with new industries starting up the population is bound to grow. The Witnesses already there would appreciate help, and would give their fullest cooperation to anyone who might come to assist them."

"Though the Society maintains two fine missionary homes in Asunción, Paraguay's capital, and though there are three congregations there with a total of some 300 Witnesses, there is still plenty of territory and so many interested ones that the Witnesses here cannot find time to call back on all of them. There are many among the city's population of 350,000 who will patiently listen to the Kingdom message, even if spoken in faulty Spanish. People here still have time to talk about the Bible and God's purposes."

Of course, there are many other places in Paraguay that just as eloquently answer your question, What can I do?

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- "Whatever a Man Is Sowing, This He Will Also Reap."
- "Let Us Not Give Up in Doing What Is Fine."
- Is Your Soul Immortal?
- What It Means to Be Honest.

URUGUAY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

Note, too, the experiences in Uruguay of those who came from other lands, learned the local language and customs, and settled down to a career of aiding humble Uruguayans to an accurate knowledge of God's Word. There is one Witness from the United States, a former Catholic, who left the comfort of home to take up full-time preaching. She was invited to Gilead School for missionary training, and now has been in her foreign assignment for more than twenty-two years. She says: "I wouldn't want to change a day of it."

And another missionary here in Uruguay graduated from Gilead School's first class back in 1943 and has been busy here ever since. Is he sorry about the way things turned out? "Why should I be sorry," he says, "when I have been an eyewitness to the growth of the Kingdom work in this land? I have observed and shared in the growth from 33 Witnesses to well over 2,400." To this day he recalls how, when the public lecture campaign began, twenty persons to whom he had witnessed about the Kingdom came to hear. Today, several in that first audience are themselves active Witnesses.

But there is still lots of opportunity for willing helpers. A missionary Witness relates that she and three others were assigned in 1963 to work a section of Montevideo, a vast territory extending along the coast and including the pleasant residential area of Carrasco. When they first began work they conducted a Bible study in their apartment for the benefit of a handful of eager students. Now the attendance has grown far beyond the apartment-size study group. And they report that even now much of the territory is reached but once a year. Help is truly needed in order to concentrate better on the planted seeds of Bible truth, if they are to be productive of more praisers of God.

ANSWERING YOUR QUESTION

So there is something you can do, if you are willing, if you are prepared to do without nonessentials, if you really want to fill your life with satisfying labor that will always be remembered by God. (Heb. 6:10) You may not need to leave your own land, if it contains areas where there is still need for more intensive Kingdom proclamation. You could, under direction of the branch office of the Society in your country, move to another area and find some kind of part-time secular work with which to maintain yourself in a fruitful ministry.

It may even be that there is urgent need for more preaching activity in your own neighborhood. In that case your enrolling as a full-time representative of the Society would give you the extra time. It may be that your present employer would consider keeping you on on a part-time basis, leaving ample time for you to carry on the vital Kingdom ministry. Otherwise, you may seriously consider changing your place and even your type of secular work, just so you can put the Kingdom and its interests first in life.

If, however, you are in position to move to another land, it is your privilege to write the Office of the President, Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 124 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201, and inquire for basic information needed by those who wish to enter a foreign land. Also, it would be of assistance to write the Society's branch office in the country to which you would like to move. Such correspondence should be sent to the Watch Tower Society at the appropriate address appearing on the concluding page of the 1968 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*.

If you lay your circumstances before the branch office, frankly informing them about your health, your financial status,

your plans and your knowledge of the language, your Christian brothers there will be able to appraise the situation and advise you of the possibilities that are open to you. It must be kept in mind, of course, that the Society's branch office cannot become responsible for you. However, it will give full cooperation in matters such as putting you in touch with local Witnesses, informing you of the types of secular work available, setting out the requirements for those entering their country, and so on.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Meantime, you could obtain a beginner's grammar book of the language in the country to which you plan to go. If you have previously studied a foreign language, you will have the advantage of knowing how to go about it. If there is someone who knows the language, it may be that you could enlist his aid. If you can attend evening-school classes in the language, without interfering with your ministry and theocratic studies, this could be helpful.

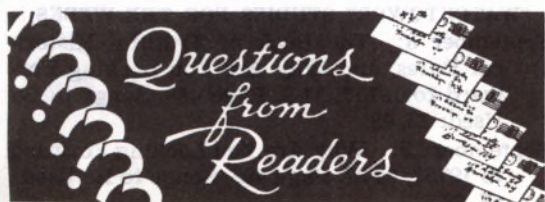
It is, of course, to be expected that obstacles will arise as you take steps toward a life of greater usefulness in the Kingdom ministry. Is it not obvious that the "god of this system of things" will seek to discourage you in such a purpose? (2 Cor. 4:4) But be persevering. Refuse to be easily deterred. Remember, it is God's will that "in all the nations the good news has

to be preached first." (Mark 13:10) He will assuredly bless your consistent effort to increase your share in this most unselfish service.

Finally, can you think of any more effective answer to the question, *What can I do?* than that appearing on page 59 of the *1968 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*? It says:

"With the marvelous expansion now taking place in foreign lands and the crying need for more disciple-makers, every one of Jehovah's witnesses with health and the freedom to take up missionary work should give the most serious consideration to saying, 'Here I am! Send me.' The highest profession one can follow is to serve Jehovah full time. The missionary service in particular is a privilege, which, if engaged in zealously between now and Armageddon, will ensure immeasurable happiness in the ages to come. Consider the joy of experiencing, in the new order, the happy companionship of those you now help to escape the destruction of this system of things."

Even if you are not eligible for Gilead training as a missionary, it may well be that your maturity and years of experience as a minister of the Kingdom have equipped you so that you could do justice to some other assignment where the need for Kingdom preaching is urgent. Why not answer the question, *What can I do?* with positive action?



● Why did the apostle Paul say, as recorded at 1 Corinthians 1:17, that Christ dispatched

him "not to go baptizing"? He did baptize believers, did he not?—G. Q., U.S.A.

In the midst of his comments about a problem with divisions existing in the Corinthian congregation, the apostle Paul wrote: "For Christ dispatched me, not to go baptizing, but to go declaring the good news, not with wisdom of speech, that the torture stake of the Christ should not be made useless."—1 Cor. 1:17.

We can be certain that Paul was well aware of Jesus' command to make disciples and to

baptize them. (Matt. 28:19, 20) And Paul traveled widely, making disciples and teaching people to observe all the things Jesus commanded. He did not minimize the importance of baptism, but recommended it.—Acts 19:1-5.

The statement in 1 Corinthians 1:17 must be understood in context. In the verses before, Paul mentioned that he baptized Crispus, Gaius and the household of Stephanas. (1 Cor. 1:14-16) He was not doing that without Christ's permission, but, rather, with the authorization recorded at Matthew 28:19.

The point the apostle was making was that he did not consider the baptizing of individuals his exclusive or primary assignment. Christ specifically told Paul that he was to preach, to

be "a witness" to the nations. (Acts 26:16; 9:15) While Paul could and did baptize individuals, there are reasons why he may not have baptized great numbers. The context shows that divisions could spring up. If the apostles themselves specialized in baptizing, it might have contributed to the formation of parties or cliques of Christians baptized by certain men.

So when Paul stayed in Corinth, some years before writing his first letter to the congregation there, he did baptize some persons. But baptism was not a special rite to be performed just by the apostles, nor was it more meaningful when performed by an apostle than when done by another male member of the Christian congregation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELD MINISTRY

Those who have dedicated their lives to Jehovah God desire to magnify his name and aid their fellowmen to love and serve him. As the Bible shows, the "God of peace" equips his people as an organization "with every good thing" so they might perform his will. (Heb. 13:20, 21) So equipped, they pattern their ministry after that of Jesus and his apostles, calling from house to house to find persons interested in the Word of God. During August, they will be offering, in their house-to-house ministry, such Bible-study aids as the books *"Things in Which It Is Impossible for God to Lie"* and *Life Everlasting—in Freedom of the Sons of God*, on a contribution of 50c each, or either of these in combination with the book *Did Man Get Here by Evolution or by Creation?* for 75c.

THE ANNUAL MEETING IN PITTSBURGH

At ten o'clock in the forenoon of Tuesday, October 1, 1968, the annual meeting of the members of Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania will be held at the Society's office located at 4100 Bigelow Boulevard, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. All members of the corporation should be certain that the Secretary's Office has their addresses so that the letters of notice will reach them shortly after September 1.

Along with the notice of the annual meeting, which will be mailed to all the members of the corporation, proxies will be sent. The proxies are to be returned so as to reach the office

of the Secretary of the Society not later than September 15. Each member should complete and return his proxy promptly whether he is going to be at the meeting personally or not.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

September 8: The Book of Truthful Historical Dates, and Why Are You Looking Forward to 1975?, ¶1-3. Page 488. Songs to Be Used: 22, 43.

September 15: Why Are You Looking Forward to 1975?, ¶4-37. Page 495. Songs to Be Used: 45, 68.

September 22: How 1st-Century Events Are Dated in the 20th Century. Page 501. Songs to Be Used: 77, 79.