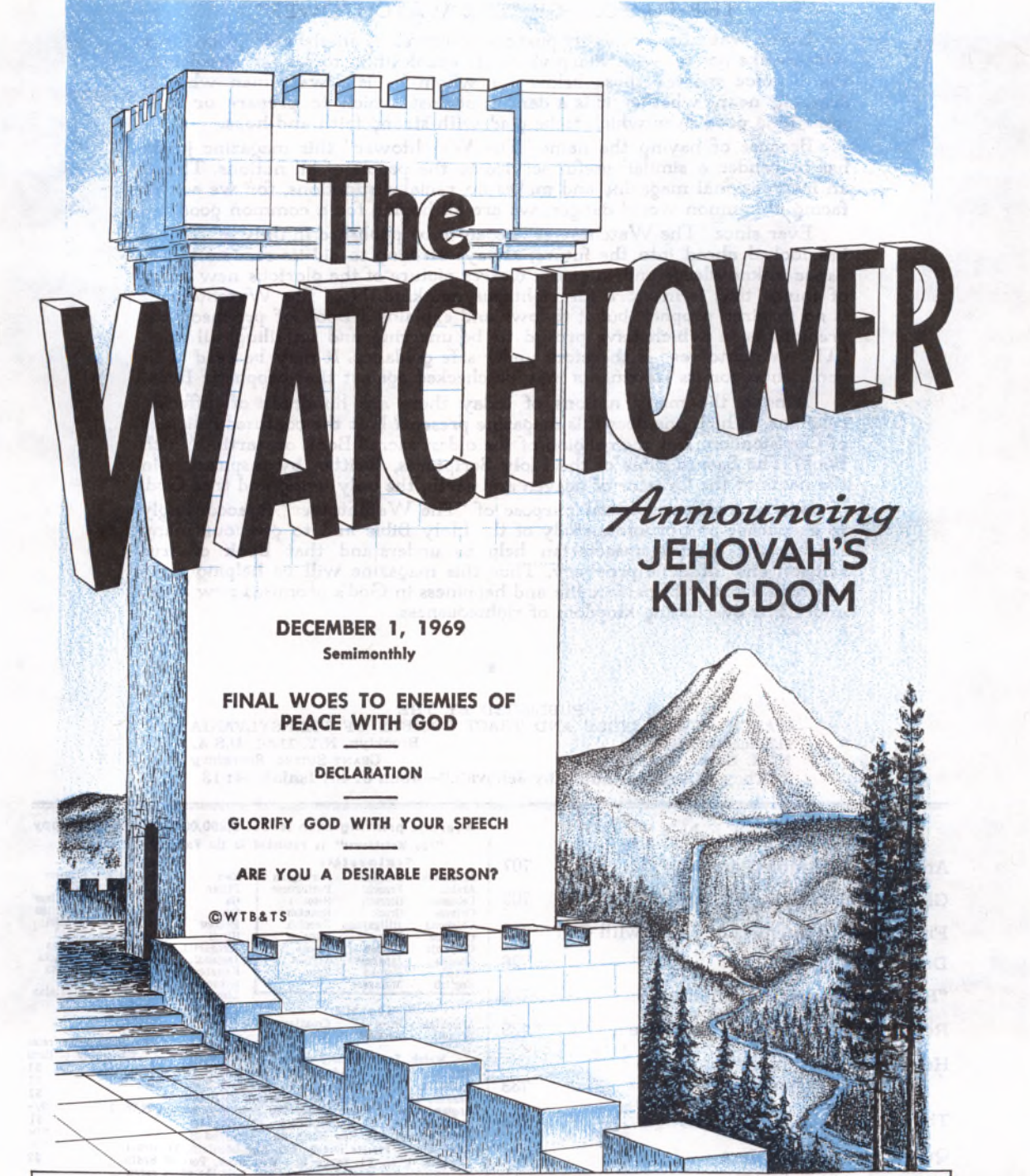




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

DECEMBER 1, 1969

Semimonthly

**FINAL WOES TO ENEMIES OF
PEACE WITH GOD**

—
DECLARATION

—
GLORIFY GOD WITH YOUR SPEECH

—
ARE YOU A DESIRABLE PERSON?

© WTB&TS

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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



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

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Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
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Number 23

Are You a Desirable Person?

THE world has its own standards by which it judges whether a person is desirable or not. Unless you excel in politics or sports, in art, in wealth or in the entertainment field, the world is not likely to consider you very desirable. But do not let that worry you. When Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was on earth, men did not consider him desirable.—Isa. 53:2.

What counts is not whether you are desirable to men, but whether you are desirable to your Creator, Jehovah God. But can a weak, imperfect human creature really appear desirable to the grand Creator of the universe? Indeed he can.

If that idea seems strange to you, then just note what the Bible, when quoting an angel of God, has to say about the prophet Daniel: "O Daniel . . . I myself have come to make report, because you are someone very desirable." "O Daniel, you very desirable man." "Do not be afraid, O very desirable man." (Dan. 9:22, 23; 10:11, 19)

Thus three times Daniel is described as not only desirable, but "very desirable."

What made Daniel a very desirable person in the eyes of God? It was not his personal appearance, nor was it his learning, although he was highly educated. God judges not by the outward appearance, but by the heart. He made this clear when on one occasion he said to his prophet Samuel: "Not the way man sees is the way God sees, because mere man sees what appears to the eyes; but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is." Daniel had a good heart.—1 Sam. 16:7.

Daniel's good heart manifested itself in his sterling honesty, his probity. Though occupying a very high governmental position, he did not exploit it for selfish advantage. In vain his envious enemies tried to find some occasion against him, for we read: "There was no pretext or corrupt thing at all that they were able to find, forasmuch as he was trustworthy and no negligence or corrupt thing at all was found in him." (Dan. 6:4; Prov. 4:23) If we would be persons found desirable to God, we, too, must guard our hearts and live lives above reproach.

Another way in which Daniel doubtless made himself very desirable to God was by his praising God. He was concerned about God's name. When God answered his prayer by revealing to him Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its interpretation,

Daniel said: "Let the name of God become blessed from time indefinite even to time indefinite, for wisdom and mightiness—for they belong to him." And when telling the dream and its meaning to Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel emphasized the fact that it was God alone who was able to reveal these things. Daniel also pleaded for the deliverance of his people on the basis of God's name.—Dan. 2:20, 28; 9:19.

Further, it is apparent that Daniel 'in all his ways took notice of Jehovah.' (Prov. 3:6) One of the ways he did this was by his prayers. When faced with the threat of execution if unable to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the first thing Daniel did was to go to God in prayer. (Dan. 2:18) And Daniel continued faithful in his praying even at the risk of his life. Certainly this made him very desirable in God's sight.—Dan. 6:10, 11.

If we would be persons desirable to Jehovah we also must be concerned about God's honor and name and appreciate the precious privilege of prayer. As the apostle Paul counsels us, we should "persevere in prayer" and "pray incessantly."—Rom. 12:12; 1 Thess. 5:17.

Daniel also made himself desirable to Jehovah by reason of his fully trusting Him. Jehovah God values highly his creatures who do this. Daniel had such confidence in Jehovah that he was willing to risk being thrown into the lions' den. And because Daniel trusted God, God delivered him, even as we read: "Daniel was lifted up out of the pit, and there was no hurt at all found on him, because he had trusted in his God."—Dan. 6:23.

Similarly, if you would be found to be a person desirable to Jehovah God you must trust him even when your life is threatened. As the apostle Paul expresses it, your attitude must be one of good cour-

age as you say: "Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"—Heb. 13:6.

If your course in life is above reproach, if you are concerned about praising Jehovah and bringing honor to his name, if you take notice of God in all your ways, persevering in prayer, and if you so trust God that you will not fear what man can do to you, then you, too, will become a person truly desirable to God. And you may thus be counted among the "desirable things" of whom God speaks: "'And I will rock all the nations, and the *desirable things* of all the nations must come in; and I will fill this house with glory,' Jehovah of armies has said."—Hag. 2:7.

Today, as a result of the preaching of this good news of God's kingdom in all the world, Jehovah God may be said to be rocking the nations. The message that God's judgments are soon to be executed upon them causes the nations consternation. But, at the same time, this preaching is causing honest-hearted lovers of God to manifest themselves as "desirable things." They are, in effect, being shaken out of the nations, and being gathered into the Christian congregation. As they take their stand for Jehovah and his kingdom they can be said to be filling the house of Jehovah with glory, even as the prophet foretold.

To expedite this rocking of all the nations so that all the "desirable things" may be freed is one of the main purposes of the magazine you are now reading. Jehovah's witnesses in your community stand ready to assist you further to be among the "desirable things." O how grand it is to be judged desirable by God! It will mean winning his favor and life. As the Bible says: "Being under his good will is for a lifetime."—Ps. 30:5.

GLORIFY GOD

with YOUR SPEECH



SPEECH is a gift from our Creator, Jehovah God. As all gifts from God, this

one is for the purpose of bringing glory and praise to his name. Since we live in a world where people give little or no thought to praising God, we need regular encouragement and reminders to develop the kind of speech that will glorify him.

In some parts of the world people feel they have a right to say anything they want because, as they say, "this is a free country." However, freedom can be abused. When one abuses a gift from another there is usually a weakening of the bond of friendship between them. At least the giver's respect for the one to whom he gave the gift may be lowered upon seeing how the gift is abused.

Therefore, to help us avoid abusing God's gift of speech and thereby lose a good standing with him, the Bible gives us important advice. For instance, it says: "Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you along with all injuriousness." (Eph. 4:31) That kind of speech does not glorify God. Therefore, the Bible says to get it out of your life. Parents should not be screaming at their children, nor should children scream at one another. It is not pleasing to God for anyone to speak in this way.

There are other types of speech, too, that the Bible tells us to avoid because they do not glorify God. For example, it

How can this be done?
What speech especially
glorifies him?

reports concerning certain women: "At the same time they also learn to be unoccupied, gadding about to the houses; yes, not only unoccupied, but also gossipers and meddlers in other people's affairs, talking of things they ought not." (1 Tim. 5:13) If we want to glorify God with our speech, then we cannot be like such unoccupied gossipers.

On the other hand, the kind of speech that glorifies God is the kind that builds appreciation in the hearts and minds of persons for Almighty God Jehovah. It is speech that instructs "with mildness," that leads others "to an accurate knowledge of truth." (2 Tim. 2:25) This is the kind of speech that we wisely seek to cultivate.

CULTIVATING SPEECH THAT GLORIFIES GOD

How can we develop speech of that kind? How can we learn to speak in a way that will bring glory to Jehovah God?

First, we must have right things in our heart, for as Jesus Christ said: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." (Matt. 12:34) So this means we must meditate on proper things. It requires heeding the Bible counsel: "What-

ever things are of serious concern, whatever things are righteous, whatever things are chaste, whatever things are lovable, whatever things are well spoken of, whatever virtue there is and whatever praiseworthy thing there is, continue considering these things."—Phil. 4:8.

To consider these praiseworthy, righteous things requires a personal study of God's Word where these things are discussed. But for this study really to be beneficial it must be done with a proper motive. As the Bible proverb explains: "The heart of the righteous one meditates so as to answer." (Prov. 15:28) So if we meditate with the purpose of answering questions that people may have about God and his purposes, our speech truly will glorify Jehovah God. It will lead others "to an accurate knowledge of truth." —2 Tim. 2:25.

But in addition to studying God's Word privately, regular attendance at congregational meetings of Jehovah's people also is necessary if we are to cultivate speech that glorifies God. The fine counsel and training received at these meetings will assist us to answer Bible questions more effectively. It gives us a good feeling when we can do this. It is as the Bible proverb says: "A man has rejoicing in the answer of his mouth, and a word at its right time is O how good!"—Prov. 15:23.

Prayer, too, is vital in cultivating speech that will glorify God. The Christian apostle Paul asked for others to pray in his behalf, "that ability to speak may be given me . . . to make known the sacred secret of the good news." (Eph. 6:19) On an earlier occasion the apostles and other disciples also prayed that they might be able to speak the truth boldly, petitioning: "And now, Jehovah, . . . grant your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness."—Acts 4:29.

That this prayer was pleasing to God

is clearly shown by God's answer. The Bible says that when the apostles finished praying, "the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were one and all filled with the holy spirit and were speaking the word of God with boldness." (Acts 4:31) Thus prayer should not be overlooked as an important factor in uttering speech that is pleasing to God.

SPEECH FURNISHES BASIS FOR JUDGMENT

Whether we obtain God's favor and his blessing of eternal life depends to a considerable extent upon our speech. Speech is that important; it is a life-or-death matter. It furnishes a basis for judgment. Jesus Christ showed this when he told the religious Pharisees of his day: "I tell you that every unprofitable saying that men speak, they will render an account concerning it on Judgment Day; for by your words you will be declared righteous, and by your words you will be condemned." —Matt. 12:36, 37.

How vital it is, therefore, to examine our speech! Does it *really* glorify God? It is not enough that our speech be free of abusiveness, screaming, lying and gossip. While this is essential, it alone does not endear our speech to Jehovah God. It is not simply a matter of refraining from saying things that God condemns; rather, speech that truly glorifies God must be a positive thing, expressing what God wants his servants to express.

We cannot escape the fact that God desires his people to declare the good news about his heavenly government. Jesus Christ proclaimed the "kingdom of God," explaining: "I must declare the good news of the kingdom of God, because for this I was sent forth." (Luke 4:43) Jesus also pointed forward to "the conclusion of the system of things," and said: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to

all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matt. 24:3, 14.

Therefore, if we want God's favor and eternal life we simply must recognize the necessity of imitating the example of Jesus Christ. We must proclaim the Kingdom message as he did, and not be ashamed of his course of life or the message he preached. As Jesus explained: "Whoever becomes ashamed of me and of my words, the Son of man will be ashamed of this one when he arrives in his glory." And on another occasion Jesus said: "He that disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God." (Luke 9:26; 12:9) How vital it is, therefore, that we do not allow anything to interfere with our making public declaration concerning God's purposes, for this is speech that truly glorifies God.—Rom. 10:10.

SPEAK PERSUASIVELY

The message regarding God's purposes is urgent. Even in the first century Christians felt the urgency of declaring the good news of the Kingdom, and they did so with boldness and persuasiveness. Of the ministry of the apostle Paul in the city of Ephesus we are told: "Entering into the synagogue, he spoke with boldness for three months, giving talks and using persuasion concerning the kingdom of God." (Acts 19:8) Yes, the apostle Paul tried to persuade people, to convince them that God's kingdom was the only hope for good government and peace. We should do the same.

On another occasion, when the apostle Paul spoke before King Agrippa his speech was so moving that the king said: "In a short time you would persuade me to be-

come a Christian." The apostle Paul answered: "I could wish to God that whether in a short time or in a long time not only you but also all those who hear me today would become men such as I also am." (Acts 26:28, 29)

The apostle of Jesus Christ desired people to become true worshippers of God. It was his purpose to persuade them to accept Bible truths. That is our purpose, too, as Christian ministers.

THE NEXT ISSUE

- Can Your Marriage Be Saved?
- "Go . . . Make Disciples . . . Baptizing Them."
- The Battle for Men's Minds.

We desire to convince people that they should worship God in harmony with his will, and to break free from false religion.

The apostle Paul was effective in his ministry because of his persuasive use of Scriptural arguments. Concerning his ministry in Thessalonica the Bible says: "He reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving by references that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying: 'This is the Christ, this Jesus whom I am publishing to you.' As a result some of them became believers." (Acts 17:2-4) The apostle Paul did not just read the Scriptures; he reasoned upon these Scriptural references with people. He got them to think about things. He explained and proved points by use of the Scriptures.

For your speech truly to glorify God you will want to imitate this apostolic example. After getting the good things of God's Word into your mind and heart, you will want to speak persuasively to others about these things. By using your speech in this way, you will qualify for eternal life in God's righteous new order. So make it your determination to declare God's purposes effectively at every opportunity. Obtain the reward that God offers to those who glorify him with their speech.

FINAL WOES

TO

ENEMIES

MODERN science is more and more being forced to recognize a certain critical disturbing fact. What is that? That man is at peace neither with the works of creation nor with the forces that are in operation throughout creation.

² This fact means that man is really at war with what the scientists call "nature." By the term "nature" they mean "the material world, especially as surrounding man and existing independently of his activities"; also, "the sum total of the forces at work throughout the universe." (*The American College Dictionary*) For a long time the scientists have made a deity out of "nature." When speaking of it they use the feminine pronouns "she" and "her," and even call it "Mother Nature." Thus they make a goddess out of "nature," inasmuch as they claim that she is responsible for man and his environment. She is supposed to provide these things and to operate the vital laws that govern them. Viewed from such standpoint of the scientists, man is not at peace with this goddess, but, as the only alternative, man is at war with this goddess.

³ How much this resembles the way

1. Science is obliged to recognize what concerning man's peace?
2. (a) What have scientists made out of "nature," and how? (b) Accordingly, how is man acting toward it?
3. (a) This way of science resembles what ancient pagan practice? (b) What questions does this raise concerning "nature," and what is the Scriptural answer?

OF
*Peace
with
God*

"The second woe is past. Look! The third woe is coming quickly."—Rev. 11:14.

that the ancient pagans worshiped the various forces and operations of "nature" as gods and goddesses, even deifying the sun, the moon, the stars and the earth! When modern scientists make a goddess out of what they call "nature," it causes thoughtful persons to ask, "Did Nature always exist? Or, Did Nature create itself?" But how impossible that is! The universal design and harmony and movements in so-called "nature" argue for, yes, call for,

an intelligent, sight-possessing Creator, a lone Designer and Controller of the whole creation. This one Creator is God. Starting with the beginning of things, the opening words of The Holy Bible show a good sense of orderliness and say: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."—Gen. 1:1.

⁴ From this fact it reasonably follows, then, that, through not being at peace with "nature," modern man is not at peace with God, for God is the Creator of "nature." This fact makes it serious.

⁵ How can man be at peace with his Creator when he is ruining the natural environment, the earthly surroundings, in which he lives, and is thus hastening his own destruction? He is also ruining the moral climate in which mankind should live, and is reaping an increase in crime and moral looseness. It is quite proper for man to turn away from false religious teachings, but at the same time he mistakenly turns to a type of modern-day thinking and teaching that is falsely called "science," for "science" basically means "knowledge," that is, a true knowledge. (1 Tim. 6:20, 21) He is thus ruining his understanding of the truth and is destroying his appreciation of the Book of Truth, The Holy Bible, the Sacred Scriptures. He is putting himself at odds with Jesus Christ, for this Son of God said with respect to the Word of God: "Your word is truth." (John 17:17) In these respects also, and not alone in connection with his natural environment, man finds himself not to be at peace with God, for the living and true God is a God of good morals and of truth.—Ps. 31:5; 117:2.

⁶ Very evidently, then, the eternal salva-

tion of mankind lies in their getting back into peace with God. This is, in fact, the very thing that man's Creator desires, for he knows that war carried on against him by mankind spells the utter destruction of mankind. Because he knows that mankind needs to be reconciled with him through his intermediary Jesus Christ, he has sent forth faithful followers of Christ to appeal to estranged mankind, saying: "As substitutes for Christ we beg: 'Become reconciled to God.'"—2 Cor. 5:20.

⁷ But, just as nineteen centuries ago in the days of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ there were enemies of man's gaining peace with God through Christ, even so there are such today. Strangely, the most strenuous enemies of peace with God today are hypocritical followers of Jesus Christ, so-called Christians, particularly their religious clergy, Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant, who take the lead in this hostility to peace with God on a proper basis. And yet, back in the days of Christ's apostles, it was his own people who, although claiming to be still the chosen people of Jehovah God, were most bitter enemies of peace with God.

⁸ The so-called Christian world, or Christendom, is the most populous religious system on earth today. Roughly, it makes up a third of the world, for the world population today is estimated as being 3,420,000,000, whereas Christendom is made up of 977,383,000 professed Christians. Because Jehovah's Christian witnesses hold strictly aloof from Christendom, the religious clergy of all denominations have branded them as not being Christians. It irks these clergymen that those who make up this minority group

4. With whom therefore is man not at peace?

5. (a) Because of ruining his environment and moral climate, man must be in what relationship with the Creator? (b) Because of turning to modern "science," man has put himself out of peace with God in what other respect?

6. What does God desire regarding estranged mankind, and so what has he done in this behalf?

7. Strangely, who today are the most bitter enemies of man's peace with God, like whom in apostolic days?

8. (a) Roughly, Christendom makes up what part of the world population? (b) What controversial questions have arisen as regards Christendom and Jehovah's witnesses, and how or by what rule can the matter be settled?

of Jehovah's Christian witnesses have come out mainly from the religious sects of Christendom rather than principally out of pagandom. Hence for decades the controversy has been, Who are the real Christians ordained of God? Who are preaching the true kingdom of God? Jehovah's witnesses or the religious sectarians of Christendom? By what rule can the controversy be settled? By the rule laid down by Jesus Christ, when he warned against false and hypocritical Christians, saying: "Really, then, by their fruits you will recognize those men."—Matt. 7:20.

⁹ Jehovah's witnesses have laid great stress upon Jesus' prophecy concerning the sign of the end of this system of things, namely: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matt. 24:14) In addition to using sound-equipment horns or loudspeakers, they have used all the modern means of publicity, by printed page and by sound of voice, to spread the Kingdom message world wide. That preaching of the good news of God's kingdom has included the declaring of the "day of vengeance on the part of our God," the divine vengeance with which the end comes upon the enemies of the good news. (Isa. 61:1, 2) Contrary to what we might expect of people who profess to be Christians, that preaching of God's kingdom has been very objectionable to Christendom, and not just to the radical elements who believe in godless materialistic governments like those of socialism and communism.

9. What foretold activity of Jehovah's witnesses has been specially objectionable, to which elements, and why?

Both to Christendom and to radical elements the preaching of God's vengeance has been devastating and painful like the effects produced by heavenly angels sounding loud trumpets, as described in Revelation, chapters eight through eleven.

DEVASTATING EFFECTS

¹⁰ What would you think if a third of the earth's surface were burned over, and a third of the trees were burned, together with all the green vegetation? You would expect that to produce a great unbalancing of conditions in man's natural environment, would you not? Well, that is what seemed to occur following the blowing of the trumpet by the first of God's seven angelic trumpeters; yes, according to the religious sensibilities of Christendom, the membership of which is about a third of the world. What Jehovah's witnesses began proclaiming by word of mouth and by printed publications of the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society after World War I was like "hail and fire mingled with blood" hurled down from on high to the earth.—Rev. 8:2, 6, 7.

10, 11. Like what were the effects produced by developments after the first angel sounded his trumpet?



The proclamations of heavenly truth from God's Word have been like "hail and fire," consuming the sham of Christianity worn by the treelike clergy and vegetation-like laity

¹¹ To the high ones, like "trees," and to the low ones, like the "green vegetation" or grass, the message preached was inflammatory and consuming, hard-hitting and death-dealing.

¹² The message preached contained the heavenly truth of God's written Word, all right, but these truths were not like refreshing drops of rain. They were, rather, like hard cold hail that beat down upon both clergy and their church members, stunning them with Bible truth forcefully presented, unsparingly. They were fiery, consuming the sham of Christianity that the treelike clergy and the vegetation-like laity wore, burning them up as Christians, as it were, proving that Christendom was not Christian, either in doctrine or in practice. World War I had made her religious hypocrisy stand out glaringly. The shedding of blood during that world war was death-dealing to the poor victims; and, similarly, the postwar preaching of Jehovah's Christian witnesses was death-dealing in that it showed how Christendom was doomed to eventual death and that those sticking with her till the time of her destruction would die with her. Spiritual life was not to be gained even now by means of Christendom. (Rev. 8:7) Further exposing her own lack of true Christianity, Christendom struck back by persecuting these preachers of God's Kingdom.

RADICALISM UNDER DIVINE JUDGMENT

¹³ Even according to the frank statements of a number of religious clergymen, godless communism was largely due to the religious hypocrisy of Christendom and its favoritism toward the materially

rich and politically powerful as against the oppressed poor people. Christendom's failure to live up to the image of Jesus Christ left a vacuum that materialistic communism tried to fill, both by persuasive means and by violent compulsion. Thus through the rise and spread of international communism a great flaming political issue was hurled in among the disturbed, restless, aspiring peoples of the earth.

¹⁴ How would it affect you emotionally if you saw a motion picture showing a flaming earth-mass like a great mountain being hurled into the sea, and a third of the sea becoming blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea being killed, and a third of the seagoing vessels being wrecked? You would shudder and say it was a horror picture! Well, those were the scenic effects that followed the blowing of the trumpet by the second of God's seven angelic trumpeters. Do you grasp the meaning of those scenic effects?—Rev. 8: 8, 9.

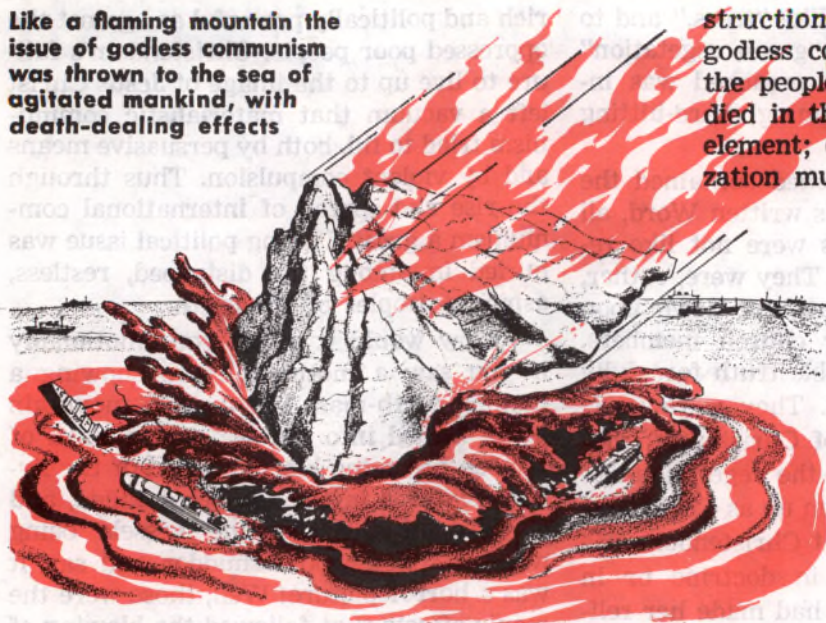
¹⁵ Small to begin with, in once-czarist Russia, international communism has seized other countries and has aggressively extended itself to take in a third of the world's population. Like a large-looming mountain, which the Bible uses to symbolize a national government, this issue of radical communism as a desirable form of rulership for mankind was thrown abruptly to the sea of agitated mankind near the close of World War I, or in November of 1917. It claimed to be the liberator of the downtrodden peoples, promising to bring to them a more abundant materialistic life with the equality of comradeship, free of political and religious despotism. It needed the coming of no Messiah from God to bring in a paradise on earth for the people.

12. How did the message preached have effects (a) like hail, (b) like fire, and (c) like blood?

13, 14. (a) To whose religious failure is the rise and spread of communism charged? (b) What scenic effects went following the second angel's blowing his trumpet?

15. How was the issue of radical communism thrown to the symbolic "sea," and what did it claim to be and promise?

Like a flaming mountain the issue of godless communism was thrown to the sea of agitated mankind, with death-dealing effects



struction. According to what godless communism brought to the people, every creature soul died in that bloody Communist element; every boatlike organization must suffer wreckage.

BITTER WATER FROM RELIGIOUS STARS

¹⁷ Turning seawater into blood is one thing, and turning fresh water into bitter water is another thing, and both are due to different factors. Would you think, though, that a "star" could turn

¹⁶ Jehovah's witnesses did not wait for the arrival of the year 1969 to let history first show us what international communism would bring to the sea of mankind, which was so restless because of not having the peace of God or peace with Him. (Isa. 57:20, 21) As ambassadors for God's Messiah or Christ, they at once spoke out for the symbolic mountain of God's Messianic kingdom. In stark contrast with it, godless communism was like a burnt-out mountain, destroying itself in its own flames. Its impact upon the sea of surging humanity was not to be life-giving. It would result in death as symbolized by shed blood. Not to speak of premature violent death to many persons, it brought spiritual death to its adherents. It deadened any hope of a person's resurrection from the dead and of gaining life everlasting in an earthly paradise under God's kingdom. It doomed those that would be found adhering to international communism at Har-Magedon to death and de-

struction. Such a star could do so, if it lived up to its name Wormwood or Absinthe, a bitter plant of which several varieties are found in the Mideast. The apostle John saw this happen in a tableau scene after the third one of God's angelic trumpeters blew his trumpet. John saw a "star burning as a lamp" fall from heaven and down into a third of the rivers and water fountains, thus making a third of the fresh waters bitter like wormwood, so much so that "many of the men" died from drinking them. (Rev. 8:10, 11) Such a star named Wormwood or Absinthe fell from its high position where it could serve as a guide to men and steer them to refreshing waters of life.

¹⁸ Figuratively speaking, a "star" should shed heavenly light upon men, like those seven figurative stars that John saw being held in the right hand of the glorified Je-

16. (a) What stand did Jehovah's witnesses at once take toward the issue? (b) How has the impact of communism been productive of symbolic "blood" and shipwreck?

17. After the third angel blew his trumpet, John saw fresh waters turned to wormwood in what way, and by what?

18. Whom does that burning fallen "star" picture, and why appropriately so?

sus Christ and that symbolized the spiritual overseers of the Christian congregations. (Rev. 1:16, 20; 3:1) In its being a fallen "star" and being able to affect the drinking water of possibly a third of the men disastrously, this "star" named Wormwood pictured the religious clergy of Christendom, whose population embraces "many of the men," about a third of earth's population. Claiming to be a Christian clergy ordained by God as ministers, they are apostate religious leaders, produced by apostate religious systems. Their fall from their high position of Christian opportunity brings about their own destruction, like that of a "star burning as a lamp" but being consumed in its own blaze. Like a star in the sky it should have beamed down heavenly or spiritual light upon the people of Christendom, guiding them to the refreshing waters of Christian truth found in the Bible, and to a course in life in harmony with those Bible truths.

¹⁹ Today, in this year 1969, we can see more clearly than ever before how the clergy of Christendom have miserably failed in their professed Christian mission. They have taught their church people religious doctrines that have been bitter to their spiritual taste, adulterating God's Word with pagan doctrines or exalting the traditions of uninspired men above the Bible. They have led Christendom in a course of active association with this wicked world that has made church people the enemies of God and that has brought spiritual death to them now and that leads on to literal physical death during the approaching "day of vengeance on the part of our God." It has been a bitter potion that the clergy have given their church people to drink thus far, but the greatest bitterness of this clergy-given

potion will be tasted by them at Har-Magedon. There a destruction awaits them at God's hand because of swallowing and following the religious doctrine and counsel of this fallen "star" named Wormwood! —Jas. 4:4; Isa. 61:1, 2; Rev. 16:14, 16.

DARKNESS

WHERE THERE OUGHT TO BE LIGHT

²⁰ Now imagine the blacking out of a third of the daytime, and then the blacking out of a third of the night, with no light from the moon and the innumerable stars! Such a phenomenon the apostle John next saw. He writes: "And the fourth angel blew his trumpet. And a third of the sun was smitten and a third of the moon and a third of the stars, in order that a third of them might be darkened and the day might not have illumination for a third of it, and the night likewise." —Rev. 8:12.

²¹ The fulfillment of this prophetic tableau has come at a time in human history that modern men call the Age of Enlightenment. Amid this human boasting, Christendom claims to be the most enlightened part of the world, and she estimates herself to comprehend about a third of the world of mankind by her program of world conversion. Enlightened, yes, in a scientific sense to a large extent. But what about being enlightened religiously?

²² In the segment of the world's population where there should be the greatest enlightenment in a religious way, there exists the greatest religious darkness. That large segment is Christendom! As she has viewed the religious situation, heathendom, as she calls it, has been groping in the dense darkness of false worship, but

20. What did John see happen after the fourth angel blew his trumpet?

21. In what Age of human history has the fulfillment of this occurred, and upon what third of mankind?

22. Where does this type of darkness exist, but, according to the claims made, what should be the state of enlightenment there?

19. Figuratively speaking, how has that "star" Wormwood embittered the fresh waters, fatally for many?

she, on the other hand, has been basking in the light of God's truth and favor. If she were living up to the claim of being the realm of true Christianity, that ought to be the case. For centuries she has enjoyed the circulation of the one Book of Light, The Holy Bible, to the circulation by now of two billion copies, in more than thirteen hundred languages. Her clergy have been ordained to preach that Bible, and have been assigned the time and been paid the money to teach the Bible as full-time preachers for life. Reasonably, this should have resulted in making Christendom the most intelligent in regard to the Holy Bible and the most deserving of the light of God's favor and blessing. But the apostle John presented the picture otherwise!

²³ Like the apostle John, Jehovah's Christian witnesses of today have long pointed out that the religious situation is otherwise with Christendom. Not that "heathendom" is not in gross religious darkness, but that the contrary should have been expected of Christendom on the basis of her claims. By day and by night she should have enjoyed the light of God's truth and favor. With her it is now as Jesus Christ said: "If in reality the light that is in you is darkness, how great that darkness is!" (Matt. 6:23) Christendom's imagined religious enlightenment is in reality religious darkness, to her own great deception. Jehovah's Christian witnesses have rightly raised the challenging question, "Christianity or Christendom—which

is the 'light of the world'?" To this question they have straightforwardly answered, Not Christendom, but Christianity! Christendom has proved false to her name. Her not having the Bible truth is an evidence that she does not have the light of God's favor and blessing. His light has been cut off from her, day and night. Her future is just as dark as that of the rest of the world of mankind.



FURTHER WOES

²⁴ As those foregoing prophetic scenes were shown following the blowing of the trumpets by the first four angels of God, doubtless those whom God has used to point out the fulfilled facts to earth's inhabitants have been under angelic guidance. (Heb. 1:14; Matt. 24:31) To the people, especially to Christendom, it was already painful enough for Jehovah's Christian witnesses to make public, as if by widely sounding trumpet blasts, the modern realization of those four prophetic tableaux. It would do no good for Christendom to yell out, "Enough!" There were yet three prophetic tableaux that the people must be made to see, yes, be made to feel. The fulfillment of these final tableaux would outstandingly be woes to people dwelling on the earth. The interruption of events after the sounding of the fourth trumpet allowed for a warning of this special woe to be widely announced with eagle-like foresight. Before the blowing of

23. (a) What have Jehovah's witnesses long pointed out regarding the condition of Christendom as to the true light? (b) How have they answered the question as regards Christianity and Christendom?

24, 25. (a) Under whose guidance were Jehovah's witnesses evidently acting, and how had Christendom been affected by the part these Witnesses played in connection with those four trumpets? (b) What did John now see and hear?

the fifth trumpet the apostle John writes:

²⁵ "And I saw, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven say with a loud voice: 'Woe, woe, woe to those dwelling on the earth because of the rest of the trumpet blasts of the three angels who are about to blow their trumpets!' "—Rev. 8:13.

²⁶ Those woes are, not for the angels of heaven, but for human creatures, "those dwelling on the earth." Those woes came from God, who authorizes and appoints his angels to blow the attention-arousing trumpets. Those at peace with God have nothing to fear from those woes; only the enemies of peace with God.

THE TORMENTING LOCUST PLAGUE

²⁷ Already as early as in the midst of the first world war (of 1914-1918 C.E.) the clergy of Christendom, together with their political and military allies, had decided that they had experienced enough religious trouble with the Christian witnesses for Jehovah God and his kingdom by Christ. They took advantage of the war conditions and of wartime laws to put to death the public activities carried on by these witnesses. They did not like to be notified that the "times of the Gentiles" had run out in the year 1914 and that these witnesses had been vindicated by world events in pointing forward for decades to that year as the time for God's kingdom by Christ to come into full control in the heavens, with authority to oust the Gentile nations from the earth. The cry of the clergy was, "Kill the witnesses!" That is to say, Cause these International Bible Students to cease from being witnesses in public to God's kingdom of his Messiah or Christ. With the aid of the

political and military powers they succeeded in technically 'killing the witnesses' by the middle of the year 1918, just some months before World War I ended.

²⁸ Thus the extensive public witnessing work ended, even those who were foremost in the witnessing work being put behind prison bars under long-term sentences, also the witnessing organization being badly disrupted, limited. The "witnesses" were as if in the "pit of the abyss." Being figuratively in such a low location, they were like out of sight and as dead, dead as to being courageous, organized, well-equipped witnesses to God's established Messianic kingdom. But not for long. Who loosed them?

²⁹ With a loud trumpet peal the fifth angel announced the loosing of the abyssed "witnesses" and their work that followed. Was this to be a "woe" to "those dwelling on the earth"? With prophetic vision the apostle John watched to see. Look! A "star" had fallen, not into the sea or into the fresh waters, but to the earth. But its fall was not disastrous to it. Rather, this "star" comes as a Freedom-giver, a Liberator of others, for "the key of the pit of the abyss was given him." He is also a King, for he is "the angel of the abyss" and is the King of those whom he releases from the abyss; in harmony with which fact those whom he releases wear what, to John, "seemed to be crowns like gold." This symbolic "star" also has a name for this occasion. In Greek its name is Apollyon, which means Destroyer. In Hebrew it is Abaddon, which means Destruction. All these features about this symbolic "star" reveal him to be the glorified Jesus Christ. When, as a man on earth, nineteen centuries ago, he died as a martyr

26. From where do those further woes come, and who have nothing to fear therefrom?

27. What were the desire and effort of Christendom's clergy as to the Kingdom witnesses during World War I, and how far did they realize their aim?

28. How did this affect the activity and organization of the "witnesses," and into what low condition did they come figuratively?

29. After the fifth trumpet peal, the symbolic "star" that John sees proves to be whom according to its mission and its name?

for God's kingdom, he went into the abyss. On the third day God released him and seated him at His right hand.

³⁰ To this resurrected, glorified Jesus Christ, God has given the "keys of death and of Ha'des," that he might act as a liberator therewith. Crowned as reigning King in the heavens at the end of the "times of the Gentiles" in the year 1914, he comes to release certain ones from their restrained condition as in the 'pit of an abyss.' Whom? The remnant of his followers on earth who are called to be kings with him in heaven. (Rev. 1:6, 17, 18; 20:4-6) In the year 1919 he used the "key of the pit of the abyss" and opened the pit and let his repentant, faithful remnant of Kingdom joint heirs out.

³¹ But what an appearance they take on

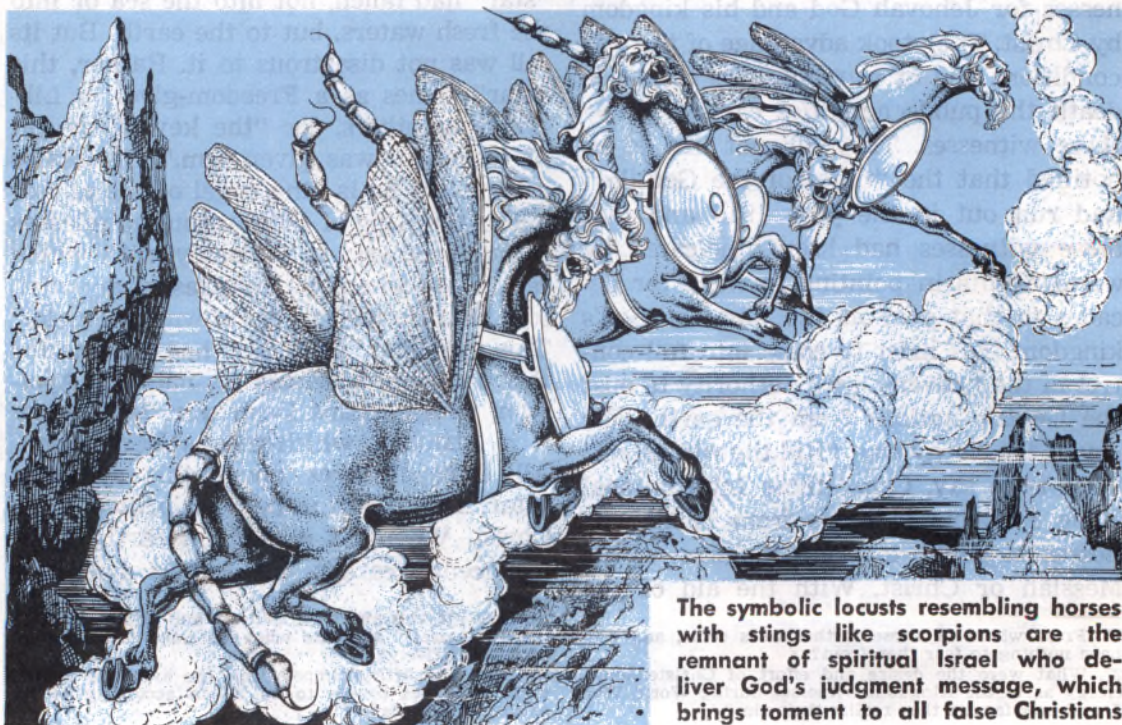
30. What key was given to this symbolic "star," and whom did he release, and when?

31. What appearance did those of this released remnant take on, according to John's description of them?

as John sees them in prophetic vision! Coming out of a great smoke that ascends from the abyss and bedarkens both the sun and the air, they look like a strange species of locust. John says: "And the likenesses of the locusts resembled horses prepared for battle; and upon their heads were what seemed to be crowns like gold, and their faces were as men's faces, but they had hair as women's hair. And their teeth were as those of lions; and they had breastplates like iron breastplates. And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running into battle. Also, they have tails and stings like scorpions; and in their tails is their authority to hurt the men five months. They have over them a king, the angel of the abyss."—Rev. 9:1-11.

³² Under command of their heavenly

32. If not vegetation, what do the symbolic locusts go after, and how do they stand out in contrast with such target?



The symbolic locusts resembling horses with stings like scorpions are the remnant of spiritual Israel who deliver God's judgment message, which brings torment to all false Christians

King Jesus Christ, the remnant of anointed witnesses of Jehovah swarmed forth in 1919 from their abysmal condition of restraint, heated up with godly zeal as if emerging from a furnace. These symbolic locusts did not try to eat up all the greenery of the earth; their target was men. Which men? "Only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads." But they were not authorized to kill those particular men; they should only torment them for five months, which is the lifetime, the summertime of activity, for insect locusts. These symbolic locusts were really the ones that were sealed with the "seal of God on their foreheads," for they were the remnant of those spiritual Israelites, 144,000 of them, whom John saw undergo this sealing, according to his description in Revelation 7:1-8. As long-haired women are obedient to their husbands, so these symbolic locusts are subject and submissive to their King, Jesus Christ, their Bridegroom to be.

³³ Who, then, are "those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads"? All unsealed men, including the "great crowd" at God's temple whom the apostle John saw and described in Revelation 7:9-17? No! Only those men whom we would expect to have the "seal of God on their foreheads" according to their religious professions in Christendom. Those who outstandingly claim to be spiritual Israelites in the new covenant with God through Christ the Mediator are the religious clergy of Christendom, together with professional politicians, commercial profiteers and big militarists, who are church members and who are given the greatest prominence and consideration by the religious clergy. The conduct of "those men" proves that they are not producing the fruitage of God's spirit, by means of which

spirit the identifying seal of God's ownership is put, as it were, upon one's forehead for all to see.—Gal. 5:19-23; 2 Cor. 1:22.

³⁴ These are the ones whom the symbolic locusts are tormenting, stinging them with the judgment message from God's inspired Word, very painfully as if striking them with the venomous scorpion's tail. This judgment message has to do specially with the international organization for world peace and security, which the clergy have claimed to be the "political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth," but which the symbolic locusts tormentingly proclaim is a mere man-made substitute for God's Messianic kingdom and is therefore doomed to fail and be destroyed by God's true kingdom. Those unsealed men of Christendom would like to get away from this religious torment by these symbolic locusts. They would like to die rather than to endure longer. But the "locusts" are not authorized to "kill" those unsealed men; so those men keep living. Also, the symbolic locusts keep living and keep up the torment, for they are authorized to do this tormenting work "five months," which, being the literal lifetime of an insect locust, symbolize all the lifetime of the symbolic locusts down till the war of Har-Magedon.

³⁵ It was no overstatement for the "eagle" flying in midheaven to announce that this would be a "woe" to those directly affected by this locust plague. What, then, could the second "woe" be?

"THE SECOND WOЕ"

³⁶ The "second woe" does not necessarily start after the first one is all over. It is really another woe, an additional woe, and

34. (a) In what particular regard are those unsealed men tormented by the symbolic locusts? (b) How long are those men obliged to endure the torment?

35. Was what the "eagle" called this locust plague any overstatement?

36. How is the next of the series a "second woe"?

33. Whom do "those men" without the seal of God picture today?

runs concurrently with the first woe. It helps to make the first woe even more distressing, and that over a wider area.

³⁷ The "second woe" is loudly heralded by the sixth angel of God to blow the trumpet. This "woe," also, is pictured as following a liberation work. This liberation is a release or loosing from Babylon the Great, the world empire of false Babylonish religion. This Greater Babylon was prefigured by the ancient imperial Babylon situated on the Euphrates River. To this ancient Babylon the natural Israelites were taken into exile in the seventh century before our Common Era. Likewise the anointed remnant of the spiritual Israelites were taken into exile in Babylon the Great during World War I. In answer to sincere prayers that ascended like incense smoke to him Jehovah God released the Israelites from exile in ancient Babylon after her fall. Likewise, the same God answered prayer and released his anointed remnant from modern Babylon the Great in the first postwar year of 1919. The apostle John saw this in vision and described it, saying:

³⁸ "And the sixth angel blew his trumpet. And I heard one voice out of the horns of the golden altar that is before God say to the sixth angel, who had the trumpet: 'Untie the four angels that are bound at the great river Euphrates.' And the four angels were untied, who have been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, to kill a third of the men." —Rev. 9:13-15.

³⁹ The remnant of anointed Christian witnesses that were loosed from Babylonish bondage in 1919 correspond to those so-called "four angels" in that the designation

"angels" literally means "messengers," and does not in all cases mean heavenly spirit persons. Messengers—ah, that is what the untied remnant were to be, messengers of God to bear his special message for after the end of the Gentile Times and after the wrong conduct of Christendom during World War I. Rejoicing in being restored to freedom to serve once again as God's messengers, the anointed remnant felt disposed to serve at God's orders at any "hour and day and month and year" that he appointed. They prepared themselves to be ready at all times and for all features of his Kingdom service. What was their mission for which they must be "prepared" as the four released "angels" or messengers? This: "To kill a third of the men." But with what instruments?

⁴⁰ Killing a "third of the men" would certainly be a "woe," and to show how this was done toward Christendom, the picture instantly changes from beside the Euphrates to a tremendous battle charge of cavalry. Describing the charge, John says:

⁴¹ "And the number of the armies of cavalry was two myriads of myriads: I heard the number of them. And this is how I saw the horses in the vision, and those seated on them: they had fire-red and hyacinth-blue and sulphur-yellow breastplates; and the heads of the horses were as heads of lions, and out of their mouths fire and smoke and sulphur issued forth. By these three plagues a third of the men were killed, from the fire and the smoke and the sulphur which issued forth from their mouths. For the authority of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with these they do harm." —Rev. 9:16-19.

37. The "second woe" as announced by the sixth angel follows what liberation work, and in whose behalf?
38. How does John describe the vision of this liberation work?

39. (a) To whom do the "four angels" correspond, and why is the designation "angels" fitting? (b) At what time are they disposed to serve, and what is their mission?

40, 41. (a) Would this work be a "woe," and how does the location change for the next scene? (b) What description does John give of the cavalry?



The myriads of lion-headed horses breathing out fire are symbolic "horses" of Kingdom publicity—the Bible literature used in declaring God's judgment message

⁴² Nothing is said of the horsemen except that they had to the fore of them breastplates that suggested fire, smoke and sulphur capable of causing a consuming destruction. The horses under these riders are given the most description, and these horses are the ones that do the killing with the plagues that issue from their mouths and with their serpentlike tails. Hence these "two myriads of myriads" or 200,000,000 "horses" are the instrumentalities by means of which the four untied "angels" do the killing of the "third of the men," Christendom's membership. Since the horses have riders on them, it means that they are humanly guided.

⁴³ What, then, do the two hundred million horses symbolize? They symbolize the instrumentalities or vehicles that the

anointed remnant use in declaring the "day of vengeance on the part of our God." What are these vehicles? The Bibles, Bible-study-aid books, booklets, magazines and tracts, that tell of the fiery utter destruction to come upon hypocritical Christendom in the day of God's vengeance, also leaving a serpentlike sting with "men" whose religious sensibilities were hurt and showing them to be dead spiritually. (Isa. 61:1, 2) Up-to-date Bible literature began to be produced in enormous quantities. To produce these symbolic "horses" independently of worldly book-printing companies, the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society set up its own printing

plants and enlarged them as time went on. Distribution of all literature was assigned, not to commercial bookshops, but to the anointed remnant.

⁴⁴ Since the establishment of its first small printing plant in 1920, the Watch Tower Society has, by its larger printing facilities since then, turned out and let loose far more than two hundred million symbolic "horses." The anointed remnant took the responsibility for these "horses," individual members each putting out hundreds and thousands of pieces of the Bible literature by going from house to house. Thus each symbolic "horse" was humanly, intellectually guided and directed. Particularly since the year 1935 the anointed remnant have been joined by the dedicated, baptized "great crowd" in this Bible distribution work that has proved to be

42. What feature gets the greater description, and what do the "horses" symbolize?

43. (a) What further do those strange "horses" symbolize? (b) How have those vehicles been provided, and to be managed by whom?

44. Have 200,000,000 symbolic "horses" been provided, and what human guidance of them has been provided?

such a "woe" to the "third of the men," Christendom's flock.

"THE THIRD WOЕ"

⁴⁵ Nineteen centuries ago the apostle John saw that the "second woe" did not turn the "rest of the men" from their sinful worldly ways. Neither has the infliction of the "second woe" in these modern days made such an impression on mankind as to turn either Christendom or the rest of the people from the course that leads to destruction in the day of God's vengeance. They refuse to come to peace with God. (Rev. 9:20) The apostle John saw the need of a third woe to deal with all these unrepentant people. At the right moment he reported: "The second woe is past. Look! The third woe is coming quickly." (Rev. 11:14) What would this third woe be? It would be seen after the seventh angel heralded it.

⁴⁶ John writes: "And the seventh angel blew his trumpet. And loud voices occurred in heaven, saying: 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever.' And the twenty-four older persons who were seated before God upon their thrones fell upon their faces and worshiped God, saying: 'We thank you, Jehovah God, the Almighty, the one who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and begun ruling as king. But the nations became wrathful, and your own wrath came, and the appointed time for the dead to be judged, and to give their reward to your slaves the prophets and to the holy ones and to those fearing your name, the small and the great, and to bring to ruin those ruining the earth.'"—Rev. 11:15-18.

⁴⁷ What is here seen to be the "third woe"? It is the "kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." It is the joint kingship of the Lord God Jehovah and of his Messiah or Christ. It is the Messianic kingdom of God over all the world of mankind. Jehovah God the Almighty has himself taken his great power and begun to reign, and rightly so, because all the earth is his and he made both it and its inhabitants. He waited till the lease of rulership that he had granted to the non-Jewish or Gentile nations had run out in the year 1914 C.E. At that time the Gentile nations refused to recognize the end of the "times of the Gentiles," and refused to seat Jehovah's Messiah or Christ as a king over them. Did Jehovah God leave it to the Gentile nations to decide matters with regard to the earth? No, but he in his almightiness took his great power and exercised it. How? By enthroning his own Son, Jesus, as the Messiah or Christ, in the heavens. By this governmental stroke he established his Messianic kingdom.—Luke 21:24.

⁴⁸ How, though, is God's Messianic kingdom a "woe," the most emphatic woe? Is not this kingdom appointed to bless all the world of mankind? Do not Christ's followers offer the prayer that he taught them: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth"? (Matt. 6:9, 10) Yes, all this is true. But at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 the worldly nations did not see their rulers imitate the course of the "twenty-four older persons who were seated before God." The worldly kings did not fall down from their thrones

45. What worldly reaction to the "second woe" made it fitting for John to announce the "third woe"?

46. What does John describe as immediately following the blowing of the seventh trumpet?

47. (a) What is thus seen to be the "third woe"? (b) When did the Lord God take his power and begin reigning, and how?

48. (a) What questions arise as to whether this Messianic kingdom is a "woe"? (b) How did the earthly nations prove themselves to be enemies of peace with God?

and worship God and say: "We thank you, Jehovah God, the Almighty, the one who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and begun ruling as king." (Rev. 11:16, 17) Just to the contrary: "the nations became wrathful," and they expressed their wrath by persecuting the anointed "ambassadors substituting for Christ," who were preaching the good news of God's Messianic kingdom. Being wrathful toward God's Messianic kingdom, those nations proved themselves to be enemies of peace with God.

⁴⁹ On that basis, the "kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" must become Woe to the nations. God's wrath must come upon the hostile nations. They are the ones who really are "ruining the earth." In a very real sense they are ruining the literal earth by the way they are exploiting the earth and making it uninhabitable for mankind and threatening to ruin it still more by their nuclear, bacteriological and radiological warfare in a third world conflict. For this ruinous work alone they deserve to be ruined themselves, even if God the Almighty did not take into account their wrathfully persecuting the anointed ambassadors of his Messianic kingdom.

⁵⁰ Let the ruinous nations make no mistake about the matter: They will have to settle accounts with Jehovah God the Almighty against whom they are wrathful for taking over the "kingdom of the world." He will bring them to ruin in the war of all wars, namely, "the war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon. (Rev. 16:14-16) This will be the grand climax of this third and last woe. God's kingdom of his Messiah is his means

by which he visits this woe upon the wrathful nations. After it another woe will not be needed.

⁵¹ What is a woe to the worldly nations and to their invisible ruler and god, Satan the Devil, will be a boundless joy to all those in heaven and on earth who thank Jehovah God the Almighty that he took his great power at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 and began ruling as King forever by means of his Messiah who was then enthroned. That Kingdom's taking on the nature of a disastrous woe to the wrathful, ruinous nations at Har-Magedon is what these thankful ones pray for in the prayer taught by Jesus Christ: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come." (Matt. 6:9, 10) The nations have been notified. God cannot be accused of having failed to be fair in giving them advance notice and warning. His seven heavenly angels have sounded their trumpets in this "time of the end." The events announced and introduced by those trumpet blasts have come to pass in fulfillment of the things seen in vision by the apostle John almost nineteen centuries ago. The effect of those things will shortly reach its culmination in the "day of vengeance on the part of our God" upon all enemies of peace with God.

⁵² When that day breaks, the nations will express their wrath to the limit. It will then become the fitting time for the long-patient Jehovah God to give them their recompense. As Revelation 11:18 puts it, "Your own wrath came." He will not forever hold back his wrath, but will express it in his due time against the nations who challenge his right to kingship

49. (a) What therefore must God's Messianic kingdom become to the nations? (b) For what course alone do those nations deserve to be ruined?

50. What will be the grand climax of this "third woe" upon the nations?

51. (a) For whom will that Messianic kingdom be a joy? (b) Why will the nations be unable to charge God with failing to give them advance notice and warning?

52. (a) When will it be the due time for the prophecy to be true concerning God, "Your own wrath came"? (b) How will God thus bring peace to earth, and in keeping with the earnest desire of whom?

of the world. Since the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 those nations have been squatters on the earth. Since then Jehovah God the rightful King has had the legal right to oust them. Now will have come his time to do so. His having to do this in wrath will signify their destruction. Only by thus annihilating these enemies of peace with God will he bring peace to this earth, the lasting peace that people who are reconciled to God desire so earnestly. Only such peace lovers who are reconciled to Him through his Messiah or Christ will be spared alive during that time of catastrophic woe to the wrathful nations.

⁵³ God's wrath is not against those who

53. (a) Therefore with whom will God start the new peaceful system of things? (b) How will the greatest peace disturbers be dealt with, and what will all earthly creation then do?

have peacefully sought reconciliation with him. Such reconciled ones will be the earthly subjects with whom he will start his peaceful new system of things for all redeemed mankind. Satan the Devil and his demons, the greatest peace disturbers, will be enchained in the completely shut abyss of isolation and restraint, no longer being a wicked "heavens" over the world of mankind. The "new heavens" of God's kingdom of his Messiah will rule. All earthly creation, no longer being ruined or polluted, will rejoice in peace and brotherly love and give praise and thanks to God.

[At the conclusion of the foregoing discourse, "Final Woes to Enemies of Peace with God," at the "Peace on Earth" International Assemblies of Jehovah's Witnesses of 1969, the following Declaration was presented to the audience for adoption:]

DECLARATION

WE, Christian witnesses of Jehovah, gathered together in the "Peace on Earth" Assembly in (name of city and land), this (date), take this favorable occasion to set forth our position and attitude in this most turbulent and perilous period of human history:

² **PEACE WITH the Creator of heaven and earth, by means of his long-promised kingdom of his Messiah—this is what we hold to be the key to an enduring peace for all the world of mankind. When we**

keep our peace with God, we can never be at war with our neighbors who are fellow creatures of God; peace with God and peace with our fellowman go together. In order to be children of God and loyal subjects of his Messianic kingdom we are obliged to be peacemakers. (Matt. 5:9) We therefore disclaim all connection with the professed Christian realm known as Christendom, for her history proves her to be a fomenter of carnal warfare between even fellow religionists, staining her skirts with their blood. She has persecuted with torture and violent death those who have differed from her in religious conscience. She has not promoted the inter-

1. Jehovah's witnesses, gathered in the "Peace on Earth" Assembly took it as the favored occasion to do what publicly?

2. (a) What is the key to enduring peace for mankind, and what is required to be children of God? (b) We disclaim all connection with whom, and why?

ests of God's Messianic kingdom, notoriously failing in this regard since the outbreak of World War I in 1914. We can have no part with her, for it is now clearly manifest that the judgments of God as expressed in the Holy Bible are against Christendom and will shortly be executed upon her.

³ The types of political government that obtained previously down till the world conflict of 1914-1918 have failed to maintain the stability of the world of mankind. Since then world revolution in favor of radical forms of government has been attempted and is still being pursued. Much of earth's population has been brought under Communist domination, to a large extent unwillingly and not by free popular vote. The issue of whether to have a revolution and establish a radical government has been hurled in among the restless people. We, however, still maintain as heretofore our strict Christian neutrality toward the political controversies of this world. From the start we have pointed to the written Word of God to show that long life with peace and prosperity will never be brought by radical political governments of men who are not at peace with God. According to the unerring prophecies of God's Word, political radicalism must fail as a world remedy.

⁴ We will continue to disapprove of the dividing up of the religious people into clergy and laity. We have the Bible behind us in this position. The clergy and exalted religious leaders of Christendom have fallen short of their obligations toward people who look to them to guide them into peaceful relationship with God.

Once holding a heaven-high position in which they could have shone like stars with spiritual enlightenment for their parishioners, they have fallen to earthly, materialistic levels, lacking real spiritual uplift. They have brought no life-sustaining refreshment to Christendom, not to say the rest of mankind. They have made bitter the potion that they have caused their people to drink, both by their sectarian doctrines and by the course in life into which they have directed the people. Because of this embitterment spiritual death has resulted to untold numbers.

⁵ We hold fast to the declaration that Christianity, not Christendom, is "the light of the world." As dedicated, baptized Christians we recognize our united obligation to serve as "the light of the world." (Matt. 5:14-16) This obligation we, as Jehovah's witnesses, will continue to discharge by preaching and teaching His written Word. In this Scriptural manner we shall keep on trying to brighten the darkness for as many persons as possible in Christendom, which the clergy and high religious leaders have failed to enlighten spiritually or to bring into the light of God's favor.

⁶ We recognize Jesus Christ as our God-given religious Liberator. He has released us from religious subjection and deadness under Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, including Christendom. In his own days on earth Jesus Christ spared not the religious feelings of the men who claimed to be God's ordained teachers and guides of the people. In imitation of him, we cannot hold back from pointing out to the trusting people of Christendom the delinquency of their clergy and other religious leaders before God.

3. (a) Since World War I world revolution in favor of what has been pursued, and why and how? (b) What position will we continue to maintain, at the same time showing what from the Scriptures?

4. (a) Of what religious division do we disapprove? (b) How have the clergy failed as a light, and caused spiritual death to many?

5. What obligation upon us do we recognize, and how will we try to discharge it?

6. (a) Whom do we recognize as our religious Liberator, and how will we imitate him as regards the religious sensibilities of certain ones? (b) Rather than hoping and trusting like these, what will we do?

Even though this hurts the religious sensibilities of those religious leaders and is a woe to them, we shall continue to do this as long as we live and they are around in influential positions over Christendom. We will not join them in putting our hope and trust in any man-made international organization for world peace and security, but will continue to declare the doom of such organization.

⁷ We hold ourselves at God's disposal for his service at any time according to his appointment. He has untied us, loosed us from captivity to Babylon the Great, the figurative mistress of the Euphrates River. Our religious liberty being due to Jehovah God through Jesus Christ, we must use it in harmony with his will at this most crucial time in human history. In obedience to his Holy Bible we confess ourselves to be under orders to reveal to the people that there is no possibility for spiritual life now and everlasting life in the future in or by means of Christendom. She spells spiritual death for her tremendous church membership now and literal death for them in the fast-approaching "day of vengeance on the part of our God." We Christian witnesses of Jehovah are few in comparison with the 977,383,000 members of Christendom. But God has increased our capabilities as publishers of his present-day message a hundred-fold, yes, double that. Through his own earthly organization he has supplied us hundreds of millions of printed pieces of literature, Bibles, books, booklets, magazines, tracts, as vehicles for us to ride in

spiritual warfare against the strongholds of error in spiritually dead Christendom. By means of these myriads of publicity vehicles we shall carry out to the end our duty to declare the "day of vengeance on the part of our God," as a "woe" to Christendom.

⁸ Mankind's only hope for peace, happiness, prosperity, life, yes, resurrection of the dead, is God's Messianic kingdom. Happy is our privilege to announce to all nations the establishment of that kingdom in the heavens at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914. We join our voices with those in heaven in saying that the kingship of the world of mankind has become the kingship of our Lord God Jehovah and of his Messiah or Christ. We publicly thank Him that he has taken his great power and begun his everlasting reign by his Messiah, his Son Jesus.

⁹ We know that this kingdom means finally a disastrous woe to the political nations at the climax of the day of God's vengeance, but we will not fear their wrath because of this. Loyally we will, to the end, give our unqualified allegiance to God's Messianic kingdom. We will obey our reigning King Jesus Christ and carry out further his command to preach "this good news of the kingdom" everywhere for a witness to all the nations until their end comes. We will without letup turn teachable people to God's Messianic kingdom for realization of the hope of 'glory to God in the highest with peace on earth forever for his men of good will.'

7. (a) At whose disposal for active service do we hold ourselves, and why? (b) What do we hold ourselves under orders to reveal, and what publicity vehicles will we use to increase our capabilities as publishers of God's message?

8. (a) What is it our happy privilege to announce? (b) What do we join our voices with heaven in saying, and so for what do we give thanks?

9. (a) What will God's kingdom mean to the nations in the day of his vengeance? (b) Yet what will we loyally do with regard to that kingdom?

"Peace on Earth" Assemblies

On October 16, 14,644 persons attended the "Peace on Earth" International Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in Korea, and a few days later 12,614 attended in Japan. These are in addition to the 840,572 assembly delegates in North America and Europe. In Korea, an amazing total of 1,511 were baptized; 798 in Japan.

Remembering

I WAS born just after the turn of the century in a city that lies athwart the beautiful river Isar. The city is Munich, Bavarian capital, center of Catholicism, scene of many historic events and onetime capital of the Nazi movement.

At ten years of age I was already interested in questions to which my Catholic teacher could offer no satisfying answers: Why do people die? Does death signify the end of existence?

Not until 1926 did I have my first encounter with genuine Bible truth, for that is when my own brother told me about a meeting of a Bible research group that he had attended. I began attending too, and soon after acquired a Bible, a Catholic version.

Thus I became a Bible reader, and one of the earliest texts that really impressed me was Amos 8:11, where the prophet speaks of a great famine for hearing Jehovah's words. I realized that I was one of the hungering multitude, and here at last I was getting satisfying food for the mind.

PERCEIVING A RESPONSIBILITY

'Can anyone who loves God share in announcing his kingdom?' was one of my early questions. The answer was, Yes. So I asked for a district to be allotted to me, filled my bag with fifty booklets, aids to a study of the Bible, and off I went on my first solo experience in the house-to-house ministry. In a very short time I had only twelve booklets left. That was but the first of many happy hours in the Kingdom-preaching service.

Jehovah's guidance

As told by Martin Poetzinger

In the autumn of that same year I am convinced that Jehovah led me to the point of taking another major step. A large meeting had been arranged in the huge tent of the "Circus Krone," where a lecture on the theme of Isaiah 6:8 was presented. The speaker then asked those who had heard and understood to rise and join in a solemn declaration to Jehovah: "Here I am! Send me." Filled with God's Word at that moment, I joined a large group who repeated the prophet's words and really meant it. Soon after I was baptized.

That baptismal day is etched in my memory, especially my father's words as I was on the point of leaving: "Son, have you considered this step well?" I assured him I had. His next words I shall never forget: "I don't want to stop you, but remember, when one makes a pledge to God, he has to keep it." That was exactly what I intended to do. My next vacation I spent in the Bavarian Forest, not relaxing, but gaining some experience in the house-to-house ministry full time.

A lifesaving service I knew our preaching activity to be, but not until one experience in the Bavarian Forest did I real-

ize how literally this was so. With only one book left in my case I was hastening back to my lodging place in a nearby village so as to avoid a threatening storm. All at once I spied a little house high up on the hill. It seemed like an ill-considered time to climb up that steep track, but somehow a sense of responsibility moved me to go. Up I went, only to find the house locked up. As I hesitated I thought I heard a slight noise at the barn. I pushed open the door, and there stood a man who asked, with a tired voice, "What do you want?"

When I explained, he informed me that such things no longer had any meaning for him. He confessed that he had sent his people out into the fields so he could be alone, and with the rope he still held in his hand he had planned to take his own life. Immediately I took out my last book and began showing him the hope that God's Word holds forth to the weary, heartbroken ones—a Kingdom of peace and righteousness. The storm was now drawing close. I awaited his reaction. After a few moments he wiped his forehead, hung the rope back on the wall and said: "For this Kingdom I still have the courage. Young man, God sent you at the last minute. I would like to keep this book and study it carefully."

FULL-TIME MINISTRY

October 1, 1930, was the date when I finally commenced regular full-time preaching. With several others I was assigned territory in the Black Forest region as far as the Swiss border, along Lake Constance and deep into the Bavarian Catholic territory. Then in 1931 we received an invitation to attend the Paris convention, where Witness delegates from twenty-three nations would assemble. There was also a meeting in Berlin and a

visit to the Watch Tower Society's branch headquarters in Magdeburg.

In 1931 we acquired the name Jehovah's witnesses. Astonished faces appeared at every door when we introduced ourselves with the words: "I have come to you today as one of Jehovah's witnesses." People would shake their heads or ask: "But you are still Bible students, are you not? Or have you joined a new sect?" But now, after thirty-seven years, what a change! Before I say a word people will remark: "You must be one of Jehovah's witnesses."

I recall that the yeartext for 1933 reminded us that the name of Jehovah is a strong tower. (Prov. 18:10) We certainly needed this assurance, for by this time belligerent nationalism backed by religious influence was spreading. Our preaching work was forbidden, our meeting places closed down and our literature confiscated. Was this to be the end of my beloved full-time service? The notorious Gestapo visited me, and, finding nothing incriminating, left me with the ultimatum: Stay inside the city of Munich or prepare to be sent to the concentration camp at Dachau.

PREACHING IN OTHER LANDS

Conditions in Germany daily grew more difficult. That autumn the Society invited me to move into Bulgaria to look after the Kingdom interests there. Happily for our preaching work, we had testimony cards introducing each publication in whatever language was called for. That was a big help to me, for this would be for some time the only bridge of communication with Bulgarians. I soon realized, however, the importance of quickly mastering the Cyrillic alphabet, for many were illiterate, and needed to have even the card read to them.

Adults in this land had lived through troublous times, and so very few had the benefit of schooling. Thus it often hap-

pened that young children would have to read to a circle of oldsters by the light of a petroleum lamp. The Kingdom message was heard from the mouths of little children.

One custom that badly confused me at first was that the Bulgarian, when he means "No," nods his head affirmatively; when he means "Yes," shakes his head negatively. That was hard to get used to, and it often happened that I began to turn away, thinking a person had no interest in our Bible message.

Within a year pressures mounted to the point that those of us who were non-nationals were deported, and my next move was to Hungary, where a new language and new customs had to be learned. In Budapest I was delighted to find a group of German pioneers (full-time ministers) who conducted regular study meetings, something I had missed for more than a year. Since residence of foreigners was limited to six months at a time, I would travel into Slovakia and help the German-speaking Witnesses in Bratislava.

It was here that I was falsely arrested as a spy and jailed for three days, after which I was deported. This time, at my own expense, I traveled to Prague. From there the Society directed me to go to Yugoslavia and take oversight of a group of pioneer ministers there. It was wonderful to have Jehovah's guidance through his theocratic organization.

Many are the happy memories of that period: Walking many kilometers through the countryside and villages, literature packed on one's back; hospitable people offering us food and even a bed for the night; hiking through the night over the Hungarian "Pusta" (plains), starry sky above, the sound of a balalaika wafting from a distant farmhouse through the cool night air; then making my way back again through the night with a load of literature

from our depot so as to be ready on the next day for a new territory; spending an evening in a farmhouse where I had been invited to stay, with neighbors coming in to hear more of the comforting message of the Kingdom.

BACK IN THE LIONS' DEN

After a serious illness that necessitated a long stay in a hospital in Zagreb, I found it necessary to return to Germany, where I was soon in the midst of the underground movement, not any political movement, but the countrywide underground preaching of Jehovah's witnesses. In 1936 two very different events affected my life. In August I married one of the faithful companions of those thrilling days of preaching in Central Europe. That year, too, I was arrested and sent to a concentration camp for refusal to renounce my faith and acknowledge Hitler's government as highest authority. There I was in Dachau while my wife was in prison in some other location.

My first impression of the camp, as I observed the prisoners march on the double to their work, was that of a madhouse of demons. But worse was to come, for when Dachau became a recruitment center, we were transported to the extermination camp at Mauthausen, Upper Austria. There in the granite quarries one had to exert every effort to hold on to one's faith.

There were 145 of us Witnesses in this camp, where the Gestapo tried every method to induce us to break our faith in Jehovah. Starvation diet, deceitful friendships, brutalities, having to stand in a frame day after day, being hung from a ten-foot post by the wrists twisted around the back, whippings—all these and others too degraded to mention were tried. But Jehovah's guidance was always with us, calling to mind his grand counsel: "Be

wise, my son, and make my heart rejoice.”
—Prov. 27:11.

JOY IN THE MORNING

At last the longed-for day arrived; the nightmarish life in a Nazi concentration camp was over. The American forces had disarmed the Viennese police, who had in the last few weeks taken over guard duty at Mauthausen. The guards were now themselves prisoners. To many non-Witness prisoners this was the opportunity to arm themselves and settle accounts with vicious erstwhile guards. A ghastly scene resulted, one in which over a thousand prisoners lost their lives.

Meantime we Witnesses assembled in one of the camp's open streets and joined in prayer. As armed fellow prisoners ran to and fro seeking out their ex-tormentors, Jehovah protected his own, not permitting one casualty even from stray bullets. No one had any account to settle with us, for we were well known as peace-loving Christians.

Eventually, I was with the group transported to my hometown of Munich. Amid the ruins of the city we arranged for meetings and began to lay the groundwork for resumption of the Kingdom-preaching above ground. Soon after I was asked to do my best to get in touch with our fellow Witnesses in Austria. With the help of a Christian sister who knew the ground thoroughly, I managed to get to Salzburg, convene a meeting of faithful, responsible Witnesses, and lay before them the Society's suggestions for reorganizing. What a joy to note their beaming faces as they readied themselves for a vast postwar rehabilitation work!

CONTINUOUS FLOW OF BLESSINGS

Then came, in swift succession, blessing after blessing. Imagine the joy of reunion with my loyal wife after both of us had

undergone nine cruel years of imprisonment! The Society organized a series of ten conventions, commencing with one in Nuremberg, September 28-30, 1946. What a victory for Jehovah! On the famous Zeppelinwiese, the onetime assembly place of the Nazi party, in the huge auditorium, open to the sky, facing the 144 immense pillars, Jehovah's people were assembled in peaceful consideration of God's Word, while on the very same day twenty-one prominent Nazis were sentenced to death for their crimes against humanity.

Words fail to describe the joys of attending the 1950 assembly in New York; and again in 1953 the visit to Yankee Stadium with its sea of happy faces; the thrill of receiving our invitation to attend Gilead School in 1958; the unforgettable parting from that beloved school at South Lansing in the Spring of 1959; then back to Germany for many more privileges, with greatly strengthened assurance of Jehovah's guidance.

We have now behind us a total of over seventy-five years as full-time ministers, in pleasurable season and in troublesome season. From our hearts my wife and I say to all who can do so, "Become a pioneer!"

Should we be asked whether we would be guided along the same way if we were starting out in youth again, here is our answer: YES! With the exception that we would not wait so long before starting. By taking up the joys and responsibilities of the full-time ministry at an early age, one can experience so much more Jehovah's guiding hand, his direction over one's life. By readily responding to Jehovah's invitation with "Here I am! Send me," we can enjoy many blessings not only now, but in that new order just ahead, when we will be able to reminisce happily over all the way in which Jehovah has guided our steps.

Heads Up—Because of Our Nearing Deliverance!

What proves that the great prophecy of Jesus Christ concerning the “conclusion of the system of things” was not completely fulfilled with Jerusalem’s destruction in 70 C.E.?

Jesus foretold that there would be a time of trouble such as had not occurred since the world’s beginning and would never be again. Certainly worse disasters took place before Jerusalem’s destruction, and there have been much worse ones since, such as World Wars I and II. Further, Jesus said that at that time *all the tribes of earth* would be beating themselves in lamentation at what they would see coming. They certainly did not do this in 70 C.E. And that Jesus also had a far distant event in mind can be seen from his foretelling that Jerusalem would be trodden underfoot until the “appointed times of the nations” were fulfilled.*

How do we know that our deliverance is getting near?

By the physical facts seen in fulfillment of Jesus’ great prophecy. For the past fifty-five years we have witnessed wars, earthquakes, pestilences, food shortages, and increase of lawlessness. In particular have Jesus’ words about the preaching of the good news of God’s kingdom world wide seen fulfillment. And we have also been made aware of “signs in sun and moon and stars.” (Luke 21:25) Great flares of nuclear energy from the sun are known to bombard the earth with cosmic rays. Tremendous quasars are being discovered, and men have actually been on the moon.

There has also been fulfillment of Jesus’ words about the “roaring of the sea and its agitation.” (Luke 21:25) We have heard of underwater earthquakes. And there is ever more effective use of the sea for warfare with fleets of submarines, some carrying missiles with nuclear warheads.

More than that, we see as never before “men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth.” (Luke 21:26) Political, financial, social and religious elements are becoming more and more perplexed because of the mounting unrest and increase in crime and lawlessness. Appeals also are being made to the United

Nations organization to prevent the spread of atomic and nuclear weapons into the hands of nations outside of the Big Five, because of the harm these could bring. There is also the threat that modern scientific developments are posing to the balance of man’s natural environment, causing some to wonder, “Can the World Be Saved?”—*New York Times*, March 31, 1968.

What warning do all Christians now do well to heed?

The warning that all Christians now do well to heed is that recorded at Luke 21:34-36: “Pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare. . . . Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication.”

Yes, now of all times we should avoid becoming bowed down and letting our heads drop and nod in slumber or drowsiness because of our overindulging ourselves with the world in their efforts to forget the things taking place since 1914. Because it is so late, it is the time of all times for us to keep alert to what is taking place in the world’s speedy approach to the unavoidable climax, the destruction of Babylon the Great and the war of Armageddon, and at all times to act as observant, understanding Christian witnesses of Jehovah God. A snare is triggered to snap on its victim before he can escape. If we want to avoid being caught beyond all chance to work ourselves loose we must ‘pay attention to ourselves.’ And since we cannot do this in our own strength, we must continually do as Jesus also counseled, ‘making supplication so that we may escape all the things that are destined to occur and that we may stand approved before the Son of man,’ Jesus Christ.

To ‘lift our heads up’ means to do what?

It means to keep our full powers and faculties awake, active in God’s service, seeking first Jehovah’s kingdom and his righteousness. It includes our standing erect in the full dignity of our service as free, dedicated servants of the Most High God, obediently, joyfully and fearlessly proclaiming the kingdom of Jehovah and serving its interests.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, December 15, 1968.

They Reject the Holy Bible!

CHRISTENDOM claims that its teachings and practices are based on the Holy Bible. Yet the facts show that her clergy and the majority of her members do not believe it. This is illustrated by the following two experiences:

"My wife and I regularly attended the Grace Lutheran Church in Plainville, Connecticut. Since my youth I had a deep reverence for the Holy Bible. It was always displayed on a table in our home. When I was old enough I read portions of it.

"Having read in the Bible that God wants a cheerful giver, I became irritated at the frequent money-raising talks by our then minister. In 1965 our pastor was called to another church in New Jersey because he was having difficulties with the Connecticut congregation. In his farewell address, he credited himself for the increase in church membership during his ten years. I remembered Acts 2:47 (about the Lord being the one who added new ones to the congregation) and I felt disgusted to hear him take credit for what I thought then was God's doing.

"Around this time Jehovah's witnesses called on us and offered to conduct a Bible study with us free of charge. We gladly accepted, and right from the beginning my wife and I realized how very little we knew about the Bible. Soon I began telling other church members what I was learning. A pastor from Kensington was alerted to my new activities and he was sent to 'help' me. He arrived at my home while we were studying the Bible with the Witnesses. He did not have a Bible with him and he declined to discuss it. However, after two hours, the truth about him was apparent. He did not believe in portions of God's Word the Bible.

"Another minister was now sent to see me. He too rejected portions of the Bible. The church's next move was to invite me to speak before the church board. I was astonished to find how ignorant they were of the Scriptures. These were men I had admired as ministers of God. One board member, in defending the church teaching that the human soul is immortal, said that doctors had found a rapid drop in body weight soon after the death of a person. He argued that this was due to the departure of the soul from the body. [This is false. The drop in body weight is due to dehydration which occurs within a few days.]

That did it! I was now fully convinced that these leaders of religion were false to the Bible.

"My final good-bye to the church came two weeks later when the new pastor visited me. He was unable to answer with Bible authority the barrage of questions I asked him. He left, saying that all of us, including himself, were trying to find truths and that if I felt that I had found the truth, it was wonderful. My wife and I think it is really Jehovah's undeserved kindness that has led us to the way of life, and for this we are extremely thankful."

The second experience is from a woman in Canada who writes: "I was a Sunday school teacher in an old United Church close to the Pattula Bridge in Surrey, British Columbia. I was allowed to teach the children whatever I thought best for them out of the Bible, things that suited me, as I did not agree with some of their doctrines. I felt I was being of some help there, for some of the children were from poor and broken homes.

"After two years of teaching there Jehovah's witnesses began calling at our home. We were impressed by their sincerity and accuracy with regard to the Bible. We began attending a few of their meetings at the Kingdom Hall, but I was still teaching Sunday school at the church as I still thought I was needed there.

"I did not realize the necessity of getting out of false religion until one day at Sunday school I was reading about Adam and Eve to the children. The elderly woman in charge of the Sunday school came in and the children wanted to know about cavemen. She explained that one of Adam's sons must have married a cave woman who had been evolving outside the garden of Eden. She also said that the first part of the Bible was probably a myth.

"When I came home I discussed this with my husband. I then remembered the *Witnesses'* showing us that "all Scripture is inspired of God," and that we should study the Bible to have an accurate knowledge of the truth. (2 Tim. 3:16) I stopped teaching Sunday school shortly thereafter and began studying the Bible and attending the meetings with the Witnesses more regularly.

"Now my husband and I are dedicated ministers of Jehovah God, and we rejoice to uphold and proclaim the Bible as His Word of truth."



● Can the word "angel" properly be applied to resurrected anointed Christians?—R. C., U.S.A.

The Bible does not use the word "angel" in speaking of anointed Christians who have been resurrected to heavenly life. However, by noting the way the Bible does use the Hebrew and Greek words that can be translated "angel" one can see why it apparently would not be amiss to apply in a general sense the term "angel" to these Christians who become heavenly spirit creatures.

Both the Hebrew (*mal'akh'*) and Greek (*ag'gelos*) words translated "angel" in the Bible literally mean "messenger." In the Bible they are applied to spirit messengers of Jehovah. But they are also used with reference to human messengers. (2 Sam. 5:11; 11:25; Jas. 2:25) The apostle John was told to write to the "angels of the seven congregations." (Rev. 1:20) He would logically not be writing to spirit creatures in heaven but to the anointed human overseers of seven congregations in Asia Minor. Thus it can be seen that the Scriptures do not restrict to spirit creatures the Hebrew and Greek words that can be translated "angel."

The exalted Jesus Christ and the anointed Christians resurrected to rule in heaven with him are actually on a higher level than the spirit creatures normally called angels. Jesus and his anointed followers in heaven are immortal. (1 Tim. 6:15, 16; 1 Cor. 15:51-54) In contrast, the angels are mortal, as can be seen from the fact that Satan and his disobedient angels will be destroyed. (Rev. 20:10, 14; Luke 8:30, 31) Additionally, the Bible shows that Christ has been elevated above the angels and that his anointed followers will share in judging angels.—Heb. 1:4; Phil. 2:9-11; 1 Cor. 6:3.

Nonetheless, Jesus after his resurrection is still called Michael the archangel. (Jude 9; Rev. 12:7) And it appears that the exalted Jesus is referred to as an angel in Revelation 20:1 for, as God's king, he is the logical one to bind Satan and the demons. So evidently, the term "angel" as designating an office may be

used in a general sense to refer to all heavenly spirit creatures.

● What is "the language of Canaan" referred to at Isaiah 19:18?

As one point in Isaiah's "pronouncement against Egypt" the prophet foretold: "In that day there will prove to be five cities in the land of Egypt speaking the language of Canaan and swearing to Jehovah of armies."—Isa. 19:1, 18.

This prophecy written about 732 B.C.E. referred to what would take place after the destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. The Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar left a remnant of the poor Jews in the land. Some rebels struck down Governor Gedaliah, and the people fled to Egypt, contrary to the counsel of Jeremiah. (Jer. 41:1-3; 42:9-43:7) The record specifically mentions three cities where they took up dwelling: Migdol, Tahpanhes and Noph. (Jer. 44:1) And it may be that those who fled to Egypt for sanctuary on this occasion joined Jews who were already in the land.—Jer. 24:1, 8-10.

The language we now speak of as ancient Hebrew was not referred to by that designation in the Hebrew Scriptures. On occasion it was called "the Jews' language" or "Jewish." (2 Ki. 18:26; Neh. 13:24) It belongs to the Semitic group of languages, and the language used in the land of Canaan in the time of Abraham appears to have been related to Hebrew. When once the Israelites took over the Promised Land or the land of Canaan, their language might be termed "the language of Canaan" in two senses. It was similar to the tongue of the Canaanite inhabitants who were killed, and it was the language of the people who now ruled the territory of Canaan.

Consequently, the comment in Isaiah 19:18 about cities in Egypt "speaking the language of Canaan" refers to the Hebrew language being spoken in Egyptian cities by Jews who had fled there.

● How was the "dove's dung" mentioned in 2 Kings 6:25 used?—H. F., U.S.A.

This verse describes conditions in the city of Samaria when it was besieged by the Syrians during the days of Elisha. We read: "In time a great famine arose in Samaria, and, look! they were besieging it until an ass's head got to be worth eighty silver pieces, and the fourth of a cab measure of dove's dung was worth five silver pieces."—2 Ki. 6:25.

Accordingly, about one-half dry pint or .3

of a liter of dove's dung was worth about \$2.38. But the question of how the buyer would use the dung has been widely discussed.

Some persons have thought that "dove's dung" may have applied to a plant, basing this view on the facts that Arabs use the name "sparrow's dung" for a plant eaten by persons of little means and that in the area of Samaria there grows a plant the Latin name of which means "bird's milk." However, there is no evidence that either of these plants was ever known as "dove's dung" or that they would be available to people bottled up in besieged Samaria.

If the expression is to be taken literally, what use would be made of dove's dung? The suggestion has been offered that this material has long been used by people in the Near East as fertilizer. But it is improbable that persons bordering on death by starvation would be concerned about fertilizing crops that might not be available for months.

There is the possibility that the dove's dung was used for food. In an attempt to frighten the people of Jerusalem Rabshakeh once warned that an Assyrian siege would drive them to "eat their own excrement and drink

their own urine." (2 Ki. 18:27) The thought of consuming dung is repulsive, yet the fact that the hunger was so great that women would boil and eat their own children indicates that they would consume anything available. (2 Ki. 6:26-29) Though dung would be of limited nutritional value, starving persons frequently eat anything to deaden the pangs of hunger. According to Josephus, Jews besieged by the Romans in 70 C.E. ate dung from "old dung-hills of cattle." And there is a report that during a famine in England in 1316 C.E. people ate "their own children, dogs, mice and pigeon's dung."

Perhaps the most likely suggestion is that the dung was used for fuel. The prophet Ezekiel was instructed to portray the equally dire siege conditions due to come upon Jerusalem by cooking his food with dung as the fuel. (Ezek. 4:12-17) Even to this day, dried cattle dung, called by some "cow chips," serves as a fuel in parts of the earth. If this view of dove's dung is correct, then the account is simply stating the cost of the food (in this case an ass's head) and the cost of the fuel to cook it. The succeeding verses indicate that the people were as yet not eating raw flesh.

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- December 21: Final Woes to Enemies of Peace with God, ¶20-39. Page 717. Songs to Be Used: 83, 103.
- December 28: Final Woes to Enemies of Peace with God, ¶40-53, and Declaration. Page 722. Songs to Be Used: 96, 90.