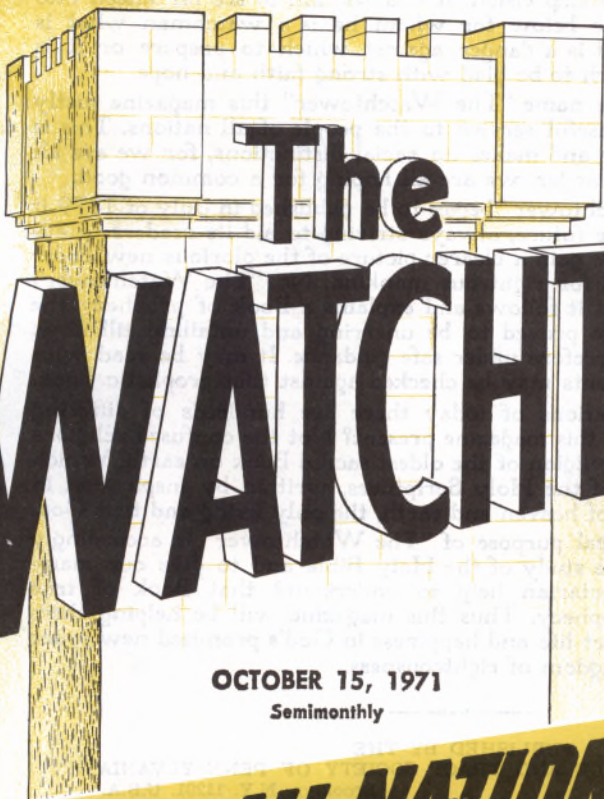




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

OCTOBER 15, 1971
Semimonthly

**WHEN ALL NATIONS
COLLIDE,**

HEAD ON,

**WITH
GOD**

© WTB&TS

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

Vol. XCII

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Number 20

**IT PAYS
TO BE**

INFORMED

WITH only a twelve-hour advance warning, some 50,000 residents of the Mississippi Gulf Coast area fled northward before nightfall of August 17, 1969. They barely escaped the fury of hurricane Camille, one of the greatest storms ever to hit the United States. How thankful they were to be informed!

In Pass Christian, the city hardest hit, Police Chief Jerry Peralta was making his final warning round from house to house. At an elegant apartment house a number of people were gathered to "party away" the storm. They refused to heed Peralta's warning, whereupon Peralta took the names of their nearest of kin. They laughed at him. A short time later the apartment was completely demolished, killing twenty persons.

Said one refugee in Pass Christian: "Storms have hit here plenty times before, and we just pass them off. But this one really fooled us this time, and you'd better believe we paid for it."

On a world scale, warning signs of another kind are now up. Leaders express fear of disaster on many fronts. But the

Bible gives warning of an even greater danger. If this warning is true, and if you are informed, it may mean a saving of life for yourself and your family. If not heeded, it could mean being faced with no way of escape.

With his warning God kindly points out the way of escape. One would be foolish, therefore, to ignore and 'pass off' the warning. If, as the title of the following article in this issue of *The Watchtower* indicates, a collision of the nations with God is just ahead, this is the greatest possible danger. It would certainly pay to be informed as to the reasons for the collision, and what way of escape exists.

That is why Jehovah's witnesses call on people in their homes with this magazine. They are not expressing mere opinion. They are really *witnesses* for God, who does not take pleasure in the death of anyone, but gives ample warning notice. —Ezek. 33:11.

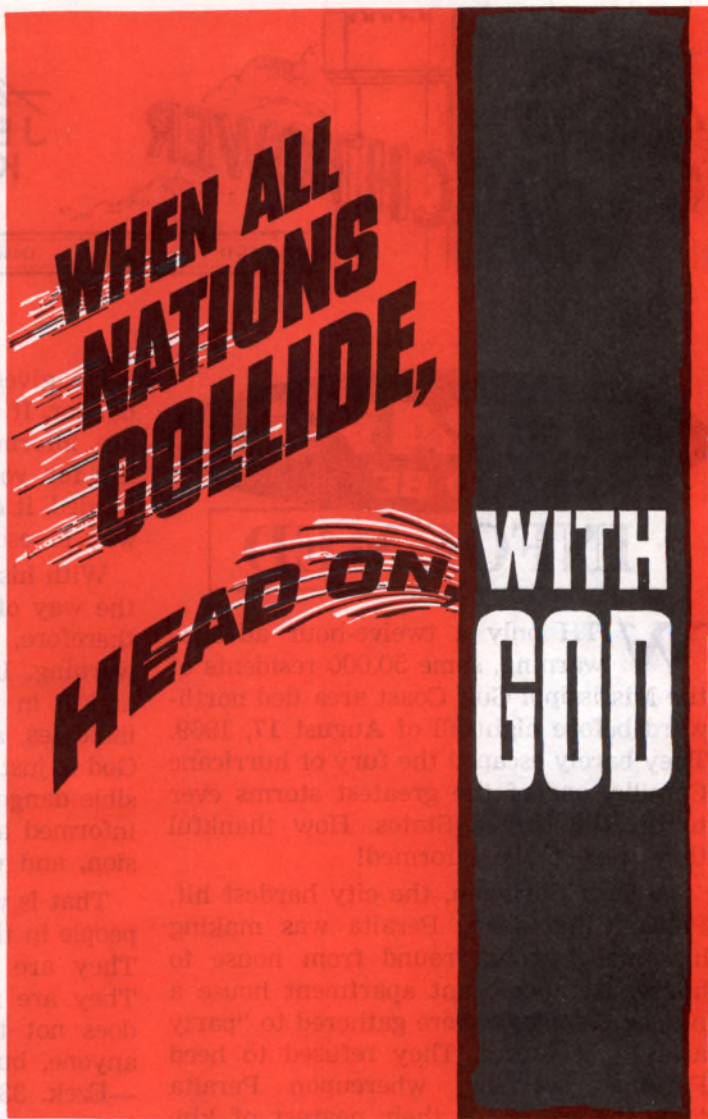
Jehovah's witnesses are concerned with people's lives. However, they can only help to inform you. You have the privilege of weighing the information presented, then either acting on it or declining to do so. But it is extremely dangerous to adopt the attitude that 'this world has weathered storms before, so we'll just pass off this warning.' Do not laugh or scoff at this Christian warning before you have read the article "When All Nations Collide, Head On, with God."

A COLLISION that results in disaster is never anything to laugh about. But this talk of all nations colliding with God—is it not something about which to laugh? Is not the very idea of it ridiculous?

² Oh, yes, the mere suggestion of it may make hundreds of millions of men and women laugh—that is, right now. But the fact that such an idea has never entered their heads before does not take it out of the realm of possibility or even out of the realm of likelihood. And as for its likelihood, what if that is in the near future, within our generation? In that case the present time would be the most advisable time for us to examine this strange idea seriously, even though it may seem so laughable to so many. All the more so because the disaster will prove to be only on the one side of the collision. This means that we can be on the side that escapes unhurt and can have a happier future ahead of us, all because of this oncoming collision. Well, since this is so, it is certainly worth our while to examine the matter now, while time is in our favor.

³ We human creatures are tied down to this earth and

1, 2. (a) Despite being disastrous, how does the idea of a collision of all nations with God seem to so many? (b) Does that fact make it unlikely, and why is now the time to examine the matter seriously?
3. Is mankind moving in the direction of its own interests, and what do the unbelievers in God think about the rendering of an account in course of time?



“As a consequence of the fact that I shall do this very thing to you, get ready to meet your God.”—Amos 4:12.

so are moving with the earth. This terrestrial ball beneath our feet has a glorious future before it. But what about the present generation of human society now living upon the earth? Is it moving in the direction of its own eternal interests? Many informed scientists, learned historians and farsighted statesmen say No! Even the young folks, by their fears for the

future to which they give vent, sometimes with violent demonstrations, say No! In spite of sincere efforts of well-intentioned persons who see disaster ahead, the movement of the mass of mankind has gained such momentum that the direction of movement cannot even be swerved to a sidetrack. Sooner or later—and all indications are that it will be sooner than most people think—mankind will have to enter into an accounting with something or someone. Those persons who do not believe in God and who therefore feel no responsibility to Him say that there will be an accounting with something, but not with God.

⁴ The earth on which such unbelievers in God exist is such a tiny bit of matter. Just think of all the universes that the astronomers have been able to discover! In comparison with the total mass of all these visible universes, our earth is infinitesimal. It appears to be so small that it is not worth noticing. And yet it is the only planet absolutely known to be peopled with intelligent creatures, creatures with a moral sense such as men are. Is this merely by accident, or by design? Certainly man did not get here by himself. Man did not prepare the earth's surface with such a wonderful environment in which to live before man found himself here. The whole earth mass weighs more than six and a half sextillion short tons, and certainly man did not make it. It did not get here by itself. It did not put upon itself man together with animals, birds and fish. It needed a Creator more intelligent than man. That Creator and Source of all life is God.

4. How does the earth compare with the total mass of all the universes, and what about the earth indicates the need of a Creator?

The stirring message contained in this article was presented as the principal discourse to audiences with a combined attendance of 919,755 in many parts of the earth this past summer.

⁵ For a collision to occur between all nations and God there has to be a God that exists. He does, and he will prove the statement true that men who say that there is no God and Creator are fools. *The New English Bible* (of the year 1970)

says, in Psalm fourteen, verse one: "The impious fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.'" But the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* goes back to the original Hebrew text and so renders

this particular verse: "The senseless one has said in his heart: 'There is no Jehovah.'" Today all the nations say, either by word or by action, "There is no God," no Jehovah. Will all the nations for that very reason blindly collide, head on, with Him? The nations do not have to see Him in order to collide with him. When we are in total darkness, we can collide with many things that we do not see. The fact that due to the darkness upon us we do not see what we collide against does not disprove the existence of what we bump into; it is the collision that causes us painfully to know that it is there. Really, the darkness promotes our colliding with it.

⁶ For a head-on collision, the two things involved have to be moving in the same path, but in the opposite directions. Are God and the nations going in opposite directions? And on the same path? For them to be on the same path, there must be an issue, a common point of dispute, at stake. The two parties must be at odds over this issue, and there is no way to compromise. There must be a confrontation.

5. Those who deny God's existence will be proved to be what, and why do nations not need to see God in order to collide with Him?

6. For a collision, what must be true of the things colliding, and what questions arise as to the reason for the collision?

tion. All this is exactly the situation. What is the crucial issue or point in dispute? Why have we about reached the time for its settlement? How will it be settled?

**ALL NATIONS UNITED AGAINST
A COMMON ADVERSARY**

⁷ It is interesting to note, time and again, how humans in a certain community can be in disagreement and in conflict with one another, but let a common adversary put in appearance and they will all unite against that one adversary. That is the state of the nations today. Because of nationalistic self-interest, they are all in a clash with one another in one respect or more. There is one issue on which each one stands by itself, that is, national sovereignty. Except for some few nations, the majority of the nations are divided into two opposing camps on a world issue. What is that? It is world domination. For example, it has been publicly announced that, in the radical camp, the Russian leaders say that they expect to have the whole world communized by the year 1975. However, the bloc of nations in the capitalistic, democratic camp are determined that such a political development shall not be, by 1975 or any other year. Is our earth therefore destined for a divided domination forever? Is that for man to say?

⁸ Lovers of peace hope not, for that would mean a world never free from the threat of nuclear war, in spite of the continuance of the United Nations as an organization for world peace and security. But does man, because of being the visible occupant of the earth, have the natural right to domination of the whole earth? Does one bloc of nations that hold to a

certain political ideology have the right to total world domination because of its military strength and its numerical strength? Or does someone outside all those nations, yes, outside mankind itself, have a prior right and claim to world domination? What about the Creator of the earth and its occupant, man? Who has more of a right to domination of all the earth than God has? Who has a more valid claim to world domination than He has as the source of life to whom the whole world of mankind owes its life and life's provision? As Maker of heaven and earth, he rightfully holds, not such a limited, regional thing as national sovereignty, but universal sovereignty!

⁹ World War I of 1914-1918 was fought over the issue of world domination. Who is there that cannot see that, since that first world war, the nations have been forcing the issue of world domination? And in whose favor has this been? In favor of God the Creator and Universal Sovereign? No! But all in favor of man as represented by one or the other political bloc of nations!

¹⁰ It is very evident that the nations are thinking only of themselves. They are ignoring the unrelinquished superior right of God to world domination. Can this go on forever? Hardly! This clash of interests must come to its culmination at some time. Who is to decide when? Not any particular bloc of nations or the United Nations, but God the Creator. Lovers of peace and righteousness hope that God's time for settling this issue will be soon. They are agreeable that it should be settled by a head-on collision. There can be only one survivor of that world-shaking collision, and they now put themselves on the side

7. On what world issue are all nations divided today, and what are the determinations of the respective national groups?

8. What must be said about the right of any bloc of nations to world domination, and what must be said about the Creator's sovereignty?

9. What issue have the nations been forcing since World War I, and in whose favor is this?

10. According to the way in which the nations think, what are they overlooking, and on what side are lovers of peace and righteousness putting themselves and why so?

of that One who will emerge unhurt from that collision.

¹¹ Thoughtful, observing men and women fear a totalitarian world domination by a one-party group. From how governments are being run today, they can well imagine what world domination by any human group of rulers would be like. They dread it. There is nothing desirable about it. But what would world domination by God be like? We could never know unless we examined the Book that this God caused to be written and in which he tells us of his purpose toward man and why he has permitted such international conflict, violence and anarchy until now. That Book is the inspired Holy Bible. In it he again and again claims to be the inspiring Author of that Book, doing so over his own name, Jehovah. Unless we consult that divinely provided Book, we keep ourselves in the gross darkness of ignorance. That ignorance is death dealing.

¹² By our learning from that Book just why Jehovah God created the earth and put man upon it, we can discover just why it is that all the nations of today are headed for a fatal collision with Him during the lifetime of our generation on earth. To the astronauts in the spacecraft of the Apollo series our earth looked beautiful from away out there in outer space while they were flying to and from the moon. It will look even more beautiful when God brings mankind to the completion of seven thousand years of human existence on earth. The difference in earthly conditions will be as great as that between a refuse dump and a park of paradise beauty. God started man off in a paradise of pleasure, or a "garden of Eden." But a person would never know it

today. God's own report on this, in the first book of the Bible, chapter two, says: "Jehovah God planted a garden in Eden, toward the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. Thus Jehovah God made to grow out of the ground every tree desirable to one's sight and good for food and also the tree of life."—Gen. 2:8, 9.

WHY PARADISE EARTH WIDE HAS NOT YET BEEN REALIZED

¹³ Today, after six thousand years of human existence, we find that, notwithstanding the outcries about a "population explosion," the earth is only partially populated and the animal life is being killed off or is dying off. Why did not the original man whom God put in that garden of Eden extend this paradise to the very ends of the earth? That was God's purpose in creating our earth, to have it eventually in a paradise state everywhere around the globe.

¹⁴ He disclosed this divine purpose when he blessed the first man and his wife and said to them: "Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth." (Gen. 1:27, 28) God did not make the whole earth a paradise before he created the first man and woman. He left the larger part of the earth's surface in an uncultivated state, and planted only a garden large enough for the first human couple to take care of at the start. He left it for the offspring of this first man and woman, Adam and Eve, to extend paradise to the east and to the west until east and

11. What kind of world domination do thoughtful, observing persons dread, and how can we learn what world domination by God would be like?

12. From that Book what do we learn about the beautification of the earth, and according to that Book where did man get his start?

13. What can be said about earth's human population and animal life today, but what question arises about earth's physical state?

14. When did God disclose his purpose concerning the earth, and to whom did He leave the extending of Paradise everywhere?

west met and from north to south until north and south met.

¹⁵ Judging things by the state of man's natural environment today, we might at first thought be inclined to say that God's purpose failed or was somehow thwarted. But was it? We do not have to guess, for God's written record says No! God himself prevented the paradise of pleasure from being spread earth wide. Was that not self-contradictory? Was that not telling Adam and Eve to do one thing, and then He himself doing another? No! Why not? Because God found it necessary to drive Adam and Eve out of that paradise into the uncultivated earth. It was because Adam and Eve had a collision with God. It knocked them out of Paradise.

¹⁶ Let us set matters straight in our minds. When Jehovah God put man upon the earth in human perfection, he did not make him the owner of the earth, but made man only a dweller and worker upon it. God did not let go of his ownership of Paradise and of every other part of the earth. As earth's Creator he owned it, and he remains its Creator always. Over two thousand nine hundred years after man's creation, the psalmist David of Bethlehem wrote and sang: "To Jehovah belong the earth and that which fills it, the productive land and those dwelling in it. For upon the seas he himself has solidly fixed it, and upon the rivers he keeps it firmly established." (Ps. 24:1, 2) That is something that all nations of today choose to ignore and brush aside. How like their first parents! When Adam and Eve ignored God's ownership of the paradise of pleasure and expressly ate of fruit that he commanded them not to eat, they failed in their test of subjection and obedience to him. That was sin against God on their part. Instead of

continuing to walk with God their Creator, they chose self-sovereignty, and collided with him on the issue of sovereignty. —Gen. 3:1-14; Rom. 5:12.

¹⁷ God was not going to have rebellious sinners spread the garden of Eden to the ends of the earth, or even try to do so. Rightfully, he drove Adam and Eve out of the paradise of pleasure, his personal property, and away from the "tree of life," out into the uncultivated part of the earth. There they must die, suffering death as the foreannounced penalty for their sinful rebelliousness. (Gen. 2:15-17; 3:16-24) Thus any expansion of the paradise ceased, about six thousand years ago. Outside the Paradise let man rule himself; let him exercise self-sovereignty in whatever way he wanted. But not inside the Paradise with its tree of life. Outside the Paradise man did not become owner of the earth. It was a place for man to die, not exercise permanent occupancy like an eternal owner. (Gen. 5:1-5) Because of having had a start in human perfection with the possibility of everlasting life on earth, Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years, and yet he died, ceasing to occupy any place on earth. Adam and Eve's offspring, because of being born in sin and under condemnation to death, have likewise had only temporary occupancy. So too with nations.

THE BENEFIT OF WALKING WITH HIM

¹⁸ The way in which not to collide with God is to walk with God. For the most part, Adam and Eve's offspring, outside the Paradise, walked contrary to God, they being born of rebels against Him. In the divine written record it is reported that Enoch, the seventh man in line of descent from Adam, "kept walking with the true

15. Did that purpose of God fall or get thwarted, and why was God's action on the matter not contradictory?

16. What did God, when creating man, do about the ownership of the earth, and on what score did Adam and Eve collide with God?

17. Why was Adam and Eve's occupancy of the earth outside Paradise to be only temporary, and why is it so also for us their offspring and for nations?

18. Why have Adam's offspring, for the most part, not walked with God, and why did God take Enoch suddenly off the scene?

God. Then [at the age of three hundred and sixty-five years] he was no more, for God took him." (Gen. 5:21-24; Jude 14, 15) By Enoch's time the world of mankind was indeed "ungodly," hence was not walking with God. Evidently they desired to kill Enoch, which was why the true God took Enoch off the scene, thereby to spare him from a violent death at their hands. (Heb. 11:5) He has a hope of resurrection from death.

¹⁹ Also, the tenth man in line from Adam walked with his Creator. Concerning him the divine record says: "Noah was a righteous man. He proved himself faultless among his contemporaries. Noah walked with the true God." (Gen. 6:9) Did this bring its reward, as it did in Enoch's case? Yes! Noah avoided any collision with God. This is proved by the astounding fact that he and his family survived the Deluge that engulfed the whole earth and drowned all ungodly human society. (Gen. 6:13 to 9:20; Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:5, 6) That global inundation resulted not only in ice caps at the north and south poles but also in the disappearance of the unexpanded original paradise from the earth. However, the divine Creator and Owner of the Paradise who took it away by the Deluge can also restore it. This he has promised to do. His promise assures us that he was not thwarted in his original purpose but that, in due time, he will gloriously fulfill that purpose and thus beautify all the earth as mankind's everlasting happy home. It was to this restored Para-

dise that Jesus Christ referred as he was hanging on the torture stake.

²⁰ The Bible record, in Luke 23:38-43, says concerning this: "There was also an inscription over him: 'This is the king of the Jews.' But one of the hung evildoers began to say abusively to him: 'You are the Christ, are you not? Save yourself and us.' In reply the other rebuked him and . . . he went on to say: 'Jesus, remember me when you get into your kingdom.' And [Jesus] said to him:

"Truly I tell you today, You will be with me in Paradise.'"

²¹ So Jesus Christ believed in this coming Paradise that is to be established world wide under his kingdom. He also believed in the deluge of Noah's day. If we are true Christians, we also should believe in it, even though the nations of this world do not do so. (Matt. 24:38, 39; Luke 17:26, 27) Another thing that the nations do not believe in is what Jesus prophesied about the conclusion of this system of things. What did he say? That, just as the pre-Flood system of things on earth ended in worldwide disaster at the Deluge, so the long-standing present system of things would end in a disaster on a worldwide scale. According to their religious claims, the nations of Christendom should have proved to be different from the so-called heathen nations. But because of making herself like those nations, Christendom, too, is bound to collide with God, for she acts as the counterpart of the ancient nation of Israel.

THE NEXT ISSUE

- Whose Name Do You Respect More
—Your Own or God's?
- How Should You View Discipline?
- Christian Maturity—an Illusive Goal?

19. How was the tenth man in Adam's line rewarded for walking with God, and why has Paradise not disappeared from earth forever?

20. How did Jesus, when dying between two evildoers, refer to that Paradise restored?

21. With what did Jesus compare the end of the pre-Flood human society, and why can even the nations of Christendom not escape a collision with God?

THE CHALLENGE TO PREPARE TO MEET HER GOD

²² Ancient Israel once inhabited a land that was a land "flowing with milk and honey." (Ezek. 20:6; Ex. 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:3) That land was Palestine.

²³ Even in the twentieth century before our Common Era, before Jehovah God brought destruction upon the immoral cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the District of the Jordan River was almost like a paradise. The first Bible book says that it was "like the garden of Jehovah." (Gen. 13:10) Before bringing the nation of Israel into that land in the fifteenth century before our Common Era, Jehovah said to them: "The land is mine. For you are alien residents and settlers from my standpoint." (Lev. 25:23) But did the Israelites treat that beautiful, productive land like God's property? No! is what God's prophets answer to that question. They polluted that sacred land by their idolatries, immorality, violence and bloodshed. Because of the way that they were walking religiously, the prophet Micah said: "What is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be modest in walking with your God?" (Mic. 6:8) But they refused to give back what God asked.

²⁴ Hence a confrontation had to come in course of time. They were violating their national covenant with Jehovah God. They deserved to suffer the penalties explicitly set out in that covenant respecting covenant breakers. Already, in the ninth century before our Common Era, God's prophet Amos rose up. By him the Creator of all the earth warned the disobedient Israelites of the action that he would take against them, saying:

22, 23. What kind of land did ancient Israel once occupy, and in what way did they fail to walk with the Owner of that land?

24, 25. What was due to occur therefore in course of time, and what did God say in warning of this by his prophet Amos?

²⁵ "I caused an overthrow among you people, like God's overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah. And you came to be like a log snatched out of the burning; but you did not come back to me," is the utterance of Jehovah. Therefore that is what I shall do to you, O Israel. As a consequence of the fact that I shall do this very thing to you, get ready to meet your God, O Israel. For, look! the Former of the mountains and the Creator of the wind, and the One telling to earthling man what his mental concern is, the One making dawn into obscurity [as by storms], and the One treading on earth's high places, Jehovah the God of armies is his name."—Amos 4:11-13.

²⁶ "Get ready to meet your God"! This is the challenging order of a military commander, "Jehovah the God of armies." It is a call for a military confrontation! (As in Numbers 20:18, 20; 21:23, 33; 2 Samuel 10:9, 10, 17) Here the nation of Israel was challenged to meet an invisible God. It was not for that reason any joke, any ridiculous idea. This invisible One had visible works of creation like mountains to bear witness to his being a real God. He was higher than the highest mountains in the land of Israel. He could create winds and manipulate them, and he could cause storms early in the day to make the dawning light fade into obscurity.

²⁷ He could use the armies of the enemies of Israel to serve as his visible agencies in executing his judgments upon that covenant-breaking nation, the polluters of the sacred God-given land. He did just that, in the years 609-607 B.C.E., bringing the armies of the Babylonian Empire against the land of Judah and Jerusalem. Get ready all they could, the Israelites were unable to meet "Jehovah the God of

26. That was a challenge to what kind of confrontation and issued by what kind of person, and because the challenger was unseen why was it yet no ridiculous matter?

27. What could this unseen God use in expressing his judgments upon the covenant-breaking nation, and what did he actually use and with what result?

armies" as represented by the armies of Babylon. Jerusalem fell. The land of Judah was depopulated.

²⁸ Today Christendom claims to be spiritual Israel, Christian Israel. (Gal. 6:16) She claims to be in a new covenant with the same God as the One whom ancient Israel worshiped. She got her Bible from the Israelites, for all the writers of the Holy Bible were natural Israelites. But along with the Bible, the nations of Christendom carry weapons of sanguinary warfare, they being more heavily armed than the whole world at any previous time in human history. They are trying to be ready for a confrontation. So to Christendom, the modern-day counterpart of ancient Israel, there appropriately comes the divine challenge to a military confrontation: "Get ready to meet your God"! Circumstances call for this!

²⁹ The certainty of this confrontation is not "in the stars," as the astrologers would say; it is in the written Word of prophecy, the inspired Holy Bible. Christendom is part and parcel of the nations of this world, about half the nations in the worldly United Nations being nations of Christendom, the rest being non-Christian or heathen. In fact, Christendom dominates among the nations of this world, and she cannot escape what is due for all the nations of this world. Repeatedly the Biblical Word of prophecy points to a final confrontation of all the nations of this world with Jehovah God.

³⁰ Let us consider first this Biblical prophecy of the year 606 before our Common Era. It was given in the second year after Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had destroyed the city of Jerusalem and its

temple and thus had become the predominant world ruler. It was given therefore in the second year of the "times of the Gentiles," or, "appointed times of the nations," during which "times" the city of Jerusalem, or the Messianic kingdom of God that it represented, was to be trodden down and trampled upon by the non-Jewish or Gentile nations. According to the Bible's timetable, those Gentile Times, beginning in 607 B.C.E. with Jerusalem's destruction and desolation and running for 2,520 years, would end in the early autumn of the year 1914 of our Common Era. (Luke 21:24) After those Gentile Times ended in 1914 C.E., what was to happen? The prophecy that was given in the second year after Jerusalem's desolation indicates. The inspired prophet Daniel explains it.

³¹ The king of the Babylonian World Power had a prophetic dream that Daniel interpreted for him. He saw a terrifying metallic image, with head of gold, breasts and arms of silver, belly and hips of copper, its legs of iron, and its feet of iron smeared with clay. Since Daniel said that the golden head represented the royal dynasty of Babylon, the silver breasts and arms pictured the next world power, that of Medo-Persia, the copper belly and hips the succeeding Grecian World Power, the iron legs the Roman World Power, and the clay-besmeared feet the outgrowth of that Roman Empire, the varied forms of political government. Among these the two-section world power of Britain and America predominates. That symbolic image of political world powers has overshadowed world politics since the start of the Gentile Times in 607 B.C.E. at Jerusalem's desolation and until the final year of those Times, 1914 C.E. What was to happen in that crucial year?

28. Why does such a challenge to a military confrontation apply to Christendom today?

29. What adds to the certainty of the occurring of this confrontation, and why cannot Christendom escape a part in it?

30. In what year of what marked period of time was this prophecy given, and what question comes up as to the ending of this period?

31. What interpretation did Daniel give to Nebuchadnezzar's prophetic dream, and how long has that symbolic image overshadowed world politics?

³² This: The dreaming king of Babylon saw a stone being cut out of a universal mountain without the aid of human hands. What was done with that prophetic stone? It was hurled toward the metallic image. A confrontation must follow! To the image it could be said: 'Get ready to meet that stone!'

³³ Could the iron of the feet meet the impact of the stone and repel it? No! The feet are smashed. The image collapses. The whole image is then crushed and ground to powder by the stone and is blown away. As for the stone, it grew and became a mountain that filled the whole earth.—Dan. 2: 1-43.

³⁴ What does this all mean? we might well ask, for we are living in the days of those symbolic clay-besmeared iron feet.

³⁵ Daniel, inspired with Jehovah's spirit, gives us the accurate interpretation, saying: "And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these

32. As due to occur at the end of those Gentile Times, what did Nebuchadnezzar see take place in his dream?

33. Were the feet able to withstand the impact of the stone, and what did the stone proceed to do? 34, 35. What question might we well ask, and from Daniel's answer thereto what becomes clear as to the issue over which confrontation takes place?

The Kingdom stone's toppling the symbolic image and then crushing it means that when all nations collide with God, they will be totally destroyed



kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite . . . The grand God himself has made known to the king what is to occur after this. And the dream is reliable, and the interpretation of it is trustworthy." (Dan. 2:44, 45) From this interpretation what could be clearer to us than that the issue over which this confrontation must occur within our generation is that of world domination, tied in with the universal sovereignty of the God of heaven. It is a case of the kings of the earth against the kingdom that God sets up! The dispute over who will rule all the earth must now at last be settled. We today are embraced within the fulfillment of that prophecy! All mankind over all the earth is embraced!

HOW THE END OF THE GENTILE TIMES WAS MARKED

³⁶ When was this kingdom, symbolized by the stone that was cut out of the universal mountain, really "cut out" by God's hands and set up in power? That was at the end of the Gentile Times in the very year that war broke out on earth over world domination. We all know that year—1914! The kingdom in the hands of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was set up, not at the site of old Jerusalem in the Middle East, but in the heavens, where the Son of God sits at the right hand of his heavenly Father. The immediate bearing that the close of the Gentile Times had upon the world conditions then was called to the world's attention in the latter part of 1917, even by clergymen of Christendom. Near the time of the capture of old Jerusalem by the British armies on

36. When and how did the fulfillment of the cutting out of the stone without hands occur, and by what means was the bearing of the close of the Gentile Times on world affairs called to world attention?

December 9, 1917, Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, Dr. F. B. Meyer, and six other well-known clergymen of England, issued a Manifesto, which was republished throughout the earth and which declared:

³⁷ "(1) That the present crisis points toward the close of the times of the Gentiles. . . . (5) That all human schemes of reconstruction must be subsidiary to the second coming of our Lord, because all nations will then be subject to His rule. . . ."—*Current Opinion*, for February 1918.

³⁸ For decades in advance, by means of the Watch Tower Society publications, the Christian witnesses of Jehovah were pointing ahead, not to the year 1917, but to 1914 as being the year for the close of "the times of the Gentiles." (Luke 21:24, *Authorized Version*) The close of the Gentile Times marked the critical time for Jehovah God to issue orders to his enthroned Son in fulfillment of King David's prophecy in Psalm 110:1, 2: "Jehovah saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Jehovah will send forth the rod of thy strength out of Zion: Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." (*American Standard Version*) Hence the symbolic "stone," God's kingdom by Christ, did not strike the symbolic "image" of political power in the year 1914. It merely began to rule in the midst of its enemies. So it has been hurled forth by divine power. It is now on its way, headed toward that political "image." To the nations of Christendom, who are among "those kings" represented in the feet of the "image," Jehovah's challenge to a military confrontation rings

out: "Get ready to meet your God"! —Amos 4:12.

³⁹ Why should the political "image" be struck on the feet, when these are motionless, apparently doing nothing wrong? It is because that "image" is an idolatrous image, and the people of the whole world idolize this system of politics. Also, the "feet" of that idolatrous "image" are standing where they ought not to stand since the close of the Gentile Times in 1914. They are standing in opposition to God's kingdom as governed by His Christ. This kingdom was born in the heavens in 1914 as the only government with right to rule all the earth.—Rev. 12:1-10.

⁴⁰ Let there be no mistake about the matter in anyone's mind. The Holy Bible outrightly says that "those kings," those political rulers of the earth, are fighting against God's established kingdom. Let us turn to the last book of the Bible, to Revelation chapter seventeen. There we see through picture language how the political rulers of this earth will destroy Babylon the Great, which is the world empire of false religion that had its start with ancient Babylon. The scarlet-colored wild beast on which Babylon the Great rides until her destruction is pictured as having seven heads and ten horns. Those seven heads point to the seven successive world powers of human history, from ancient Egypt, through Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome and the Anglo-American World Power. Verse eleven says that the wild beast is itself "an eighth king," that is, an Eighth World Power. That Eighth World Power is the present-day United Nations, the international organization for world peace and security

37. Pertinent to this, what did that Manifesto say?

38. To what year had Jehovah's witnesses pointed forward as marking the close of "the times of the Gentiles," what did God's kingdom begin to do then, and to whom does God's challenge now ring out?

39. Why is the "image" struck on its motionless feet, which are seemingly inoffensive?

40. In Revelation, chapter seventeen, the wild beast ridden by Babylon the Great is said to be what, and why so, and what does it symbolize in our day?

and so for keeping the "feet" of the idolatrous "image" standing where they ought no longer to stand.—Rev. 17:11; Dan. 2:33, 34.

⁴¹ That United Nations organization stands for world domination by man, not by God. Within that organization the two opposing blocs of nations stand for world domination by man-made political systems and ideologies. World domination by God's kingdom in the hands of his Christ they do not want, nor do they consider it realistic. They prefer their own political sovereignty to the universal sovereignty of Jehovah God. To the question, Who owns the earth? they answer, We do! And we are going to keep it!

⁴² Once that the political rulers have done away with Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, they will show themselves as never before to be "fighters actually against God." (Acts 5:39) Notice what Revelation, chapter seventeen, verses twelve to fourteen, tells us then to expect, saying to the apostle John to whom the Revelation was given:

⁴³ "And the ten horns that you saw mean ten kings, who have not yet [in John's day] received a kingdom [that is, membership in the organization for world peace and security], but they do receive authority as kings one hour with the wild beast [the United Nations]. These have one thought, and so they give their power and authority to the wild beast [the United Nations]. These will battle with the Lamb [Jesus Christ], but, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings, the Lamb will conquer them. Also, those called and chosen and faithful with him will do so."

41. What does the United Nations organization stand for as respects world domination and ownership of the earth?

42, 43. After they destroy Babylon the Great, what will the nations show themselves actually to be, and what does Revelation 17:12-14 tell us then to expect?

HOW NATIONS FIGHT AGAINST THE INVISIBLE

⁴⁴ The question might here be asked, Since the Lamb Jesus Christ is an invisible heavenly spirit person and since his kingdom is also heavenly, how can those symbolic horns and wild beast here on earth fight against Jesus Christ, "the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world"? (John 1:29, 36; Rev. 5:6-13) They can do so by refusing to yield place to God's kingdom under Christ, by refusing to yield their national sovereignty over to him and by thus striving to perpetuate their own political position on earth. They can also do so by opposing and persecuting those who are the "ambassadors for Christ," the earthly proclaimers of the good news of his kingdom. (Matt. 24:14) These are the anointed footstep followers of Jesus Christ, whom Revelation 17:14 speaks of as "those called and chosen and faithful with him." The Christian apostle Paul, when addressing these dedicated, baptized, anointed followers of Christ, writes:

⁴⁵ "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."—2 Cor. 5:20, AV.

⁴⁶ The apostle Paul also gives these ambassadors of Christ another status. He speaks of the "city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," along with an "innumerable company of angels." (Heb. 12:22, AV) Also, after writing to his Christian brothers about the "prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," he points them heavenward, saying: "Our citizenship exists in the heavens." (Phil. 3:14, 20; AV) They are therefore citizens of that "city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem."

44. In what ways can the symbolic ten horns and wild beast on earth fight against the heavenly kingdom of Christ?

45. In 2 Corinthians 5:20, what did Paul term these anointed followers of Christ?

46. What status as citizens does Paul give to these ambassadors?

⁴⁷ The nations of Christendom and of the rest of this world already have a notorious reputation for persecuting the anointed Christians who are bearing witness to Jehovah God and who are preaching world wide the good news of His kingdom by Christ. Consequently, when those nations will have destroyed Babylon the Great and then threateningly turn against these called, chosen and faithful anointed ones, they will be taking ungodly action against "ambassadors for Christ," against citizens of God's city, "the heavenly Jerusalem." In fighting against these whom they can see in their midst, they will be fighting against the Lamb Jesus Christ, the King of kings, even though they cannot see him nor see Jehovah God. Could there be any more manifest fighting against the invisible God and his Christ than that? What did Jesus Christ himself say about this in his final prophecy about the "conclusion of the system of things"? He said this: "To the extent that you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." —Matt. 25:40; 24:3.

COLLISION! ITS SURVIVORS!

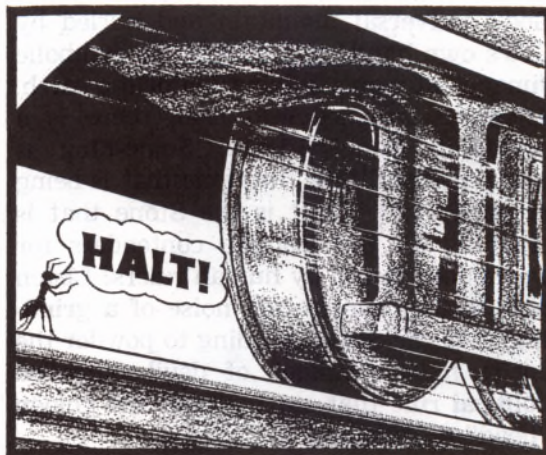
⁴⁸ Collision with God is bound to follow. What will that mean? Nothing less than the "war of the great day of God the Almighty." By that time the nations will have reached the field of the final battle, that is to say, the critical stage of world developments spoken of prophetically as the "place that is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon [Armageddon, AV]."—Rev. 16:14-16.

⁴⁹ All the nations are now on the march to Har-Magedon! This much can be unerr-

47. Thus after destroying Babylon the Great, how will the nations be able to fight manifestly against God and Christ, and what pertinent rule on this did Jesus Christ give in Matthew 25:40?

48. What is bound to follow, and at what prophetic place?

49. To where are all nations on the march, to what does God invite them to come on, and, to Him, what are they, comparatively speaking?



For the nations to try to stop God from carrying out his purpose would be like an ant trying to halt an oncoming locomotive

ingly said according to the Bible's timetable and according to world events in fulfillment of Bible prophecy. The confrontation with God is imminent! To Him, as He says, all the nations together are but as a drop falling out of an emptied water bucket. (Isa. 40:15) Because his due time for action has come, he challengingly invites all the nations, in the language of the prophecy of Joel 3:9-12, to come on for the encounter. No matter how thoroughly they have prepared themselves, no matter how strong they feel so as to be able to defy God and his Government by Christ, the situation of the nations will be as if an ant planted itself firmly on the railroad track and defiantly shouted to the oncoming huge diesel-engine locomotive: 'Stop! You can't run over me! You just don't dare to do so!'

⁵⁰ Crash! comes the head-on collision! See there the United Nations organization! Will it be able to stand its ground and repel the divine onslaught? Divine prophecy says No! The Kingdom stone, cut out of

50. How does the crash now come, and what does the prophecy show as to whether the United Nations will save the situation for the "image" of political rule?

God's universal mountain and hurled by God's own hand, now strikes the symbolic "image" of man's domination of the earth. As stone smashes into iron, there is a deafening Bang! Listen! Something is being crushed! Is it the stone that is being crushed? No! but it is the Stone that is crushing all the ironlike contenders for world domination by human rulers! Listen now to that ear-grating noise of a grinding! It is the Stone grinding to powder the entire fallen "image" of devil-controlled political rule that started with the golden "head" of Babylon!

⁵¹ The stormwind of God's righteous anger will blow away all such powdery vestiges of the anti-God political "image," like chaff from the threshing floor. All traces of the old system of things will be gone for all time! The "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon, as described in the last book of the Bible (Rev. 19:11-21), will end with Jehovah God and his military forces of heaven the only ones remaining on the field of battle, gloriously victorious. The issue of world domination will have been settled forever, in favor of Jehovah!

⁵² When this tremendous collision occurs, will there be any place of safety on earth? Will any humans be able to survive the collision? Yes, and this will be only on the side of Jehovah God. It is only to those who place themselves on His side and on the side of his Kingdom by Christ that the divine promise applies: "Only with your eyes will you look on and see the retribution itself of the wicked ones. Because you said: 'Jehovah is my refuge,' you have made the Most High himself your dwelling; no calamity will befall you." (Ps. 91:8-10) Those now taking a firm stand in

support of Jehovah's universal sovereignty will stand on the sidelines and take no active part in that "war of the great day of God the Almighty." In their place of refuge under divine protection, they will see Jehovah and his Christ gain the victory over all the opposing nations. They will thus see fulfilled the prophecy: "He has scattered the peoples that take delight in fights." (Ps. 68:30) They will behold the divine answer to the prayer of Psalm 83: 17, 18 against God's enemies:

⁵³ "O may they be ashamed and be disturbed for all times, and may they become abashed and perish; that people may know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth."

⁵⁴ God's victorious kingdom, pictured by the stone that struck the symbolic image on the feet, will then grow as that stone did and become like a "large mountain" that fills the whole earth. (Dan. 2:35) God's kingdom by his Christ will be everywhere on this earth. What a privilege it will be to survive the final collision of the nations with God and live in that kingly mountain!

⁵⁵ As respects those who happily dwell in that same mountain it is written in the prophecy of Isaiah 11:9: "They will not do any harm or cause any ruin in all my holy mountain; because the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea." Added to this is the soul-satisfying prophecy: "And Jehovah of armies will certainly make for all the peoples, in this mountain, a banquet . . . He will actually swallow up death forever, and the Sovereign Lord Jehovah will certainly wipe the tears from all faces. And the reproach of his people he will take away from all the

51. What will happen to the powdery vestiges of the symbolic "image," and who will remain on the battlefield, victorious?

52, 53. Where will there be a place of refuge for survivors on earth, will they take an active part in the "war," and what prayer for divine supremacy will they behold answered?

54. How extensive will God's victorious kingdom then become, as pictured by the stone that struck the image?

55. What prophecies are written in Isaiah respecting those who will then dwell in that "mountain"?

earth, for Jehovah himself has spoken it.”
—Isa. 25:6-8.

⁵⁶ So do not fear the reproach of men now for taking your stand on the side of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah and his kingdom by Christ. Do not walk with the nations in a course contrary to God to that unavoidable collision ahead. Be like that obedient man Noah who scorned the re-

56. Should we fear the reproach of men for taking the right stand, and like whom of old should we be in our walking, and with what reward?

proach of men and “walked with the true God.” (Gen. 6:9) Then, like him, you may rejoice in the hope of surviving the end of this international system of things and live on into his everlasting new system of things under the kingdom of his reigning King Jesus Christ. There you will see God swallow up even death in victory, that you may enjoy everlasting life and serve and worship him in perfect health and happiness in a never-fading paradise over all the earth.

WHY DOES GOD NOT PREVENT THE COLLISION?

IT IS obvious to the thinking person that, to the Creator of the universe, the earth is a very small thing. The nations of earth are therefore insignificant in comparison with Him. Could he not therefore swerve them from their collision course or step aside to avoid the clash? Is he acting as a bully, with his superior power, to let the collision take place?

No. Within the requirements of his own dignity and justice, God cannot prevent the collision. He has allowed time for the nations to try all sorts of man-rule. He has let them go, providing evidence over thousands of years of history, proving that the nations cannot govern the earth in peace. Nevertheless, they *want* to go the way they are going and God is holding off from interfering with their freedom of action until his exact time comes.

However, the nations themselves could have turned voluntarily from a bad and disastrous way. They have had the opportunity. God has shown the nations the way to go. Even pagan rulers have some measure of God-given conscience, as one of Christ's apostles explains:

“For whenever people of the nations that do not have law do by nature the things of the law, these people, although not having law, are a law to themselves. They are the very ones who demonstrate the matter of the law to be written in their hearts, while their conscience is bearing witness with them and, between their own thoughts, they are being accused or even excused.”
—Rom. 2:14, 15.

Now, as to the nations called Christian, they are even less excusable, for they have the principles of right government and of justice clearly set before them in God's Word the Bible, and they profess to be bound by its laws. But they have to a great extent rejected Bible principles.

In the light of these facts, God is not arbitrary or hasty in dealing with the nations. No one can accuse him of acting against a righteous nation. Rather, he has always followed the principle he states at Jeremiah 18:7, 8:

“At any moment that I may speak against a nation and against a kingdom to uproot it and to pull it down and to destroy it, and that nation actually turns back from its badness against which I spoke, I will also feel regret over the calamity that I had thought to execute upon it.”

God has shown the nations that he is the rightful Owner of the earth. He says: "The whole earth belongs to me." (Ex. 19:5) Man could not be on the earth if God had not put him here. The nations themselves recognize their right of ownership, jealously guarding territory that they have taken over by purchase, discovery or conquest. But they refuse to recognize God's ownership rights. They deny his authority to set the standards by which nations should conduct themselves.

But God has let the nations know that there is a time limit to the exercise of their authority, and that earth's rulership is to be exercised by his Messianic King. (Ps. 2:6-8) Contrarily, the nations prefer to have the earth continue to be divided up into hundreds of conflicting governments, with unrest, national jealousies, strife and wars. Instead of willingly acknowledging that their governments have not brought happiness to their people and instead of asking God to take over earth's rule, they continue to use the same old political methods to hold on to their rulership. They could avoid colliding with God if they were willing to submit, as he kindly warns them:

"And now, O kings, exercise insight; let yourselves be corrected, O judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear and be joyful with trembling. Kiss the son, that He may not become incensed and you may not perish from the way."—Ps. 2:10-12.

GOD ACTS FOR BENEFIT OF EARTH AND MAN

Meanwhile, the governments of earth really show a condemnable lack of concern that the earth is being ruined, becoming more unfit for human habitation day by day. They admit that crime, pollution, threat of earth-wide starvation and many other bad circumstances are out of their control. Many believe that a third world war could occur at any moment, practically depopulating the earth. Yet in spite

of these things their principles or methods of operation remain basically the same. They still engage in political intrigue, diplomatic lying and international spying.

So, as would any owner who cares for his property, God is not going to stand idly by and see the earth destroyed and made uninhabitable. He would be remiss, indeed, to let such a thing happen. He would not be acting in trueness toward those who hate the corruption and the disgusting things taking place in the earth and who want better living, right living. Knowing the path the nations would take, he foretold that there would be a time for calling a halt, saying:

"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. 11:18.

Actually, God, by his firm action for right principles, takes a positive course opposite to that of the oncoming nations, so that there is a collision head on, as the only way to stop the nations from forcing all humankind completely into self-made oblivion. He does it primarily to settle the issue of sovereignty in his own favor. But he also remembers those who want righteousness and justice and who will accept his sovereignty.

As a consequence, we can be happy that God does have almighty power at his disposal and that, even though in comparison with the universe this earth is very small, he takes an interest in humans upon it. We can be glad that God is willing to turn his attention to and exercise his great power toward this small planet for the everlasting welfare of its inhabitants.

But is the corrupt political rule of the nations God's only reason for displeasure? No. There are even stronger reasons, as the following discussion will reveal.



Are the Churches



LEADING THE NATIONS INTO COLLISION WITH GOD?

MAINLY, what the people believe about God they have learned from the churches, or from what church leaders have said or done. But have they really learned the truth about God? Or have they received a distorted picture? If one reads about God purely from the Bible, does its portrayal of God collide with what the churches teach and do?

The majority of Christendom's churches say that there are three persons in one God, that he is, as it were, a 'three-headed' God. They teach that when Jesus died, God died. According to this teaching, God is not really the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, the Father and Source of all life. Rather, he shares these positions with the Son and with the so-called "holy ghost," considered to be the third person of the trinity.

But the Bible says (Moses speaking): "Listen, O Israel: Jehovah our God is ONE Jehovah." (Deut. 6:4) And the Christian apostle Paul writes: "There is actually to us ONE God the Father, out of whom all things are, and we for him; and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things are, and we through him." (1 Cor. 8:6) Jesus said: "The Father is greater than I am," and spoke of Jehovah as "my God." (John 14:28; 20:17) And the Bible throughout does not portray the holy spirit as a person, but as an unintelligent force, the active force of God.—Acts 2:17, 33.

ATTEMPTS TO HIDE OR OBSCURE GOD'S NAME

In still other ways the churches distort matters. The Bible says that God will

make known to the nations that his name is Jehovah, and that he alone is Most High over all the earth. (Ps. 83:18; Ezek. 38:23) God's personal name in the form of the Tetragrammaton, the four-letter Hebrew word transliterated as JHVH or YHWH in English and translated as Jehovah or Yahweh, appears nearly 7,000 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. Jesus Christ, when on earth, said that he 'made God's name known' to his disciples, and Jehovah has commanded that his name, with all the righteous principles that it stands for, be proclaimed and "sanctified" earth wide. This is in order that people may learn of his ways and walk in his paths.—Matt. 6:9; John 17:6, 26; Rev. 14:6, 7; 19:6.

But the religious clergy hide the name. In their Bible translations they substitute the titles LORD and GOD where the *name* of God, Jehovah, appears. Moreover, they misrepresent him, actually besmirching his name by such doctrines as hellfire, portraying God as a fiend more vicious than the torture experts of the Nazi Gestapo and the concentration camps.

However, God's own Word says that Jehovah is a God of justice and mercy. (Ex. 34:6, 7) His law says, "the wages sin pays is death," not torment. (Rom. 6:23) Though the wicked must die, God takes no delight in their death. (Ezek. 33:11) His disposition toward the torment of humans was shown when he condemned the people of Israel for offering up their children by fire to the pagan god Baal. He sent his prophet Jeremiah to tell them: "And they built the high places of the Baal in order to burn their sons in the

fire as whole burnt offerings to the Baal, something that I had not commanded or spoken of, and that *had not come up into my heart.*”—Jer. 19:5.

If the reader will look into the Bible at Revelation 20:14, he will see that the “lake of fire,” which clergymen have long called a place of eternal torment, is actually symbolic, meaning the “second death,” not torment. In fact, hell or Hades (which is actually the common grave of mankind) is itself destroyed in this symbolic “lake of fire.”

Many of the clergy have increased God's displeasure with them by calling him a liar. These say that his Word is not inspired, that the accounts of Adam and Eve and the fall of man, the Flood, the miracles and the virgin birth of Christ are mere myths and unreliable fables. And they even say, “God is dead,” that is, he has nothing to do with man and his problems.

IMMORALITY WINKED AT

Furthermore, the church leaders have in many instances condoned immorality in their congregations, not expelling persons practicing fornication, lying and stealing. Some have spoken in favor of premarital and even of extramarital sex, and homosexual “weddings” have been performed by clergymen.

Those in the churches who practice such things will doubtless condone such clergy action, saying that it is in harmony with the “new morality” and the modernizing of religious ideas. But *are the clergy representing God in doing or approving these things?* Just the opposite, for the Bible says: “Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be without defilement, for God will judge fornicators and adulterers.” (Heb. 13:4) Moreover, God's anger is especially aroused against men who teach lies about him, at

the same time receiving money and material support under guise of being God's representatives to the people.

The sad fact is that the religions, particularly those of Christendom, have actually been the ones primarily responsible for the collision course the nations are taking. How?

ORIGIN OF APOSTATE CHRISTIANITY

Well, the apostle Paul, not long before his death, foretold an apostasy from true Christianity. During their lifetime the apostles were able to hold back promoters of false doctrine in the congregation, but Paul said:

“However, the inspired utterance says definitely that in later periods of time some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to misleading inspired utterances and teachings of demons, by the hypocrisy of men who speak lies, marked in their conscience as with a branding iron.”—1 Tim. 4:1, 2.

Paul also warned certain ones in leading positions in the Christian congregation:

“I know that after my going away oppressive wolves will enter in among you and will not treat the flock with tenderness, and from among you yourselves men will rise and speak twisted things to draw away the disciples after themselves.”—Acts 20:29, 30.

The apostle Peter likewise voiced a similar strong warning:

“However, there also came to be false prophets among the people, as there will also be false teachers among you. These very ones will quietly bring in destructive sects and will disown even the owner that bought them, bringing speedy destruction upon themselves. Furthermore, many will follow their acts of loose conduct, and on account of these the way of the truth will be spoken of abusively. Also, with covetousness they will exploit you with counterfeit words. But as for them, the judgment from of old is not moving slowly, and the destruction of them is not slumbering.”—2 Pet. 2:1-3.

This apostasy from true worship and

doctrine took place and, particularly from the fourth century, false, apostate Christianity flourished and became united with the State, becoming a state religion. The area in which it predominated came to be called "Christendom" (meaning "Christian dominion"). This was directly contrary to Christ's words: "My kingdom is no part of this world," and "they [Jesus' disciples] are no part of the world."—John 18:36; 17:14.

History records that from that time on religious leaders have been the counselors, yes, often the directors, of national rulers. Where they could not exercise power they were willing to provoke revolution or warfare against those rulers resisting them. Today, where they cannot be in favored, powerful positions among national rulers, they are often prominent among groups rebellious against the established government.

RESPONSIBLE FOR BLOODSHED

For this reason all false religion, of which apostate Christianity is the dominant part, is described in the Bible as a "city," "Babylon the Great," a symbolic empire, for it has "a kingdom over the kings of the earth." Also, it is personified as a "harlot," of whom it is said: "In her

was found the blood of prophets and of holy ones and of *all those who have been slaughtered on the earth.*"—Rev. 17:1, 2, 5, 18; 18:24.

According to verses 3, 12-14 of the seventeenth chapter of Revelation, the "harlot" rides a symbolic "wild beast" whose horns represent "kings" or rulers of the earth. Due to the "harlot" rider's influence, these kings "battle with the Lamb," Jesus Christ. Here, then, is further evidence that the false religions of the earth actually take the lead, being principally responsible for the nations' collision course.

Is it surprising, then, that God is displeased with the world's religions? Really, it would be more surprising if he did not act to clear his name and to help persons who also hate the immorality and corruption in the churches, and the lies taught about God.

'Yes,' someone may say, 'God has plenty of provocation to act. But is it not unloving for him to destroy the people on account of conditions in which false religion and politics bear such a large responsibility? Could he not merely bring about a change in government and spare the lives of the people?' The article to follow will consider this question.

DO THE PEOPLE SHARE RESPONSIBILITY WITH THE RULERS?

IF THE nations collide with God there will inevitably be great destruction. But if religious and political leaders are in the forefront in antagonizing God, why should the *people* suffer?

Well, can we put the blame on rulers

alone? No. That a government merely reflects the people it governs is acknowledged by men of affairs. "Every country has the government it deserves," was the way Joseph de Maistre, a French diplomat living at the turn of the nineteenth cen-

ture, expressed the idea. And William Penn, British statesman, taught: "Governments rather depend upon men, than men upon Governments. Let men be good, and the Government cannot be bad. If it be ill they will cure it, but if men be bad, let the Government be ever so good, they will endeavor to warp and spoil it to their turn." With this the Bible agrees, as far as the matter applies to man-made governments.

Even in Israel, where God's law was the nation's 'constitution,' both the rulers and the people of Israel became guilty and suffered. The reason was, as Jehovah said: "The prophets themselves actually prophesy in falsehood; and as for the priests, they go subduing according to their powers. And *my own people have loved it that way.*"

In Christendom, which claims to be God's people, his holy nation, the same situation exists. So God's words to Israel apply with equal force to Christendom now: "Should I not hold an accounting because of these very things, . . . or on a nation that is like this should not my soul avenge itself?"—Jer. 5:29-31.

In the field of religion, have not the people listened to men rather than to God? They have the Bible and can read it, yet they have continued to belong to and support the churches where false teachings about God and rejection of his Word have been taught, where dishonest and immoral men have gone uncorrected, and where even the God-denying theory of evolution has been accepted. Can God be pleased with this?

WORLD GOVERNMENTS CANNOT CURE EARTH'S ILLS

It is acknowledged by men of prominence that the governments cannot eliminate the numerous ills that beset the world: crime, the drug epidemic, venereal

disease, pollution and other serious threats to humankind. Why not? Because to eliminate these the people themselves must give full cooperation, must keep the law wholeheartedly, must give consideration to their neighbors and, instead of showing selfishness and greed, must practice real love. But this is not the case.

Righteousness cannot be inculcated in the people by the governments. Selfishness is so ingrained that no educational program designed by worldly agencies will eliminate it. Programs that are set up, such as welfare, rehabilitation, and so forth, are eventually ruined because of favoritism, selfishness, bribery and corruption. (Eccl. 1:15) The people themselves therefore bear a large share of the responsibility.

All these conditions that affect the people physically and socially are actually a reflection of the bad spiritual condition that exists. The Bible likens the spirit that is 'breathed' by the people of the world to the air of our atmosphere. This spirit or dominating force, the world's attitude or inclination, is a spirit of disobedience. (Eph. 2:2) It pervades and exercises pressure all around us, as does the air. In the Bible book of Revelation God's anger is shown as being 'poured out upon the air,' as a 'plague.' Certainly the spirit that motivates the world in general is a 'sick' spirit and its sickness is now manifesting itself in literal plagues of deterioration in all the activities of modern society.—Rev. 15:1; 16:17.

AN ENTIRE SYSTEM OF THINGS MUST GO

God, in viewing mankind from His superior position, sees this and realizes that no one group or element is *alone* to blame. Rather, the entire system of things as it exists today has people 'locked' into a way of life that makes it very difficult for any-

one to avoid going along with it. It is the system that has to be replaced. It cannot be swerved to go in another direction, any more than a locomotive can turn off its rails and go across the country. Jesus Christ showed that the system of things of this world would come to a "conclusion" under the circumstances we see in the earth today.

Some feel that the only way of survival is to go along with the system of things and its dishonest principles. But this aban-

donment of right principles brings one into sharing responsibility for its wickedness, with destruction ahead. However, no one needs to feel unavoidably impelled to go along with this system. *God holds each individual responsible for his acts.* Therefore he provides a way out for those who really are willing to follow a straight, clean course of life. (Zeph. 2:3; 1 Cor. 10:13) He is preeminently a God of love. His loving-kindness is the subject we will next consider.

ONE of God's prophets, given a vision of divine execution of judgment against corrupt, vicious oppressors and worshipers of idols, petitioned God: "During the agitation, to show mercy may you remember." (Hab. 3:2) Another prophet, observing in prophetic vision God's destruction of wickedness among God's own professed people Israel, cried out: "Alas, O Sovereign Lord Jehovah! Are you bringing to ruin all the remaining ones of Israel while you are pouring out your rage upon Jerusalem?"—Ezek. 9:8.

Both of these prophets made these expressions because they knew Jehovah to be a God of love and mercy, just as God's friend Abraham had earlier addressed Jehovah in speaking of the judgment about to come upon Sodom: "It is unthinkable of you that you are acting in this manner to put to death the righteous man with the wicked one so that it has to occur with the righteous man as it does with the wicked! It is unthinkable of you." Yes,

GOD EXHIBITS

*Loving-
Kindness*

**IN ENFORCING
JUSTICE**

Abraham knew that to destroy the righteous was completely contrary to Jehovah's principles.—Gen. 18:25.

Abraham was given the answer, as was Ezekiel, that God would be selective in his judgment, and that those not deserving of destruction would be spared. Such proved to be the outcome.

These occasions give us an insight into the personality of God. He declared to Moses: "Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness and truth, preserving loving-kindness for thousands, pardoning error and transgression and sin, but by no means will he give exemption from punishment." (Ex. 34:6, 7) In his majesty and dignity as supreme Sovereign, Jehovah must maintain law and order in the universe. He cannot condone law-breaking. Yet he provides mercy and deliverance for those who want to do what is right.

Jesus Christ counseled his disciples: "Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you; that you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens, since he makes his sun rise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain upon righteous people and unrighteous." (Matt. 5:44, 45) God gives to all full opportunity to show what their hearts really desire. He lets all breathe the same air, eat the same food, observe his beautiful creation and choose the way they want to take.

EACH RESPONSIBLE FOR COURSE HE CHOOSES

It is only right and just that, being allowed to choose right or wrong, each individual should 'eat the fruitage of his way.' (Prov. 1:31) No one can rightly accuse God of injustice when a person comes into calamity because of his own willful wrongdoing. God gives kind warning so that a person may avoid disaster. He says to the young person: "Rejoice, young man, in your youth, and let your heart do you good in the days of your young manhood, and walk in the ways of your heart and in the things seen by your eyes." Yes, the young person is free to do this; God will not prevent him. "But," God adds, "know that on account of all these the true God will bring you into judgment. So remove vexation from your heart, and ward off calamity from your flesh; for youth and the prime of life are vanity."—Eccl. 11:9, 10.

God is not going to force anyone to serve him. But if a person takes a course of bad, or goes along with a system of things that is corrupt, he himself is sharing in badness. Or if he remains affiliated with an organization, religious, political or commercial, that is reproaching God and thereby is making its members tacit sharers in dishonesty or immorality, then he

should expect to account to God for his course.

This does not mean that there is no forgiveness for one who has been such a person, but who comes to recognize his own imperfection, his wrong acts or wrong course. He can turn from it and receive forgiveness on the basis of God's provision of Christ's ransom sacrifice. The penalty for sin is not unjustly ignored or bypassed by God, but on the basis of his own Son's perfect human life as a sacrifice for sins the requirements of justice are fully met. The apostle Peter said: "[Christ] himself bore our sins in his own body upon the stake, in order that we might be done with sins and live to righteousness." By this provision of the ransom God can "be righteous even when declaring righteous the man that has faith in Jesus."—1 Pet. 2:24; Rom. 3:26.

WARNING, AND PATIENCE

So God is loving toward his creation, and wishes the best for them. He is slow to anger, slow to execute justice toward those who practice wrong, with the hope that they might repent. (2 Pet. 3:9) God exercises remarkable patience with persons who choose not to serve him. To some who claimed to serve God but who practiced wrong things the apostle Paul appealed, writing: "Do you despise the riches of his kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, because you do not know that the kindly quality of God is trying to lead you to repentance?"—Rom. 2:4.

But wickedness cannot be allowed to flourish indefinitely. It must be eliminated in behalf of peace and order in the universe, for the relief and happiness of those who want to live peaceably with their fellowman. Therefore the wicked must be removed. "The wicked is a ransom for the righteous one; and the one dealing treacherously takes the place of the upright

ones," says the inspired writer, at Proverbs 21:18.

Stated otherwise, the price of peaceful, happy living for the right-minded persons of earth is the removal of those who will not live honestly and peaceably and who work harm toward their neighbor. It is as Jehovah's prophet said: "Though the wicked one should be shown favor, he simply will not learn righteousness. In the land of straightforwardness he will act unjustly and will not see the eminence of Jehovah."—Isa. 26:10.

When God finally takes action he is impartial in enforcing his just laws. His anger is under control and he executes only those deserving death. (Prov. 2:21, 22) His war is not like the wars of the nations, that kill both good and bad indiscriminately. We can be sure that God, "the Judge of all the earth," will do what is right, and that, when he destroys anyone, such person actually *does not want righteousness*. (Gen. 18:25; Prov. 21:10) He does not have any place for it in his heart.

A LOVING FATHER

What other kind of God would anyone want as his God? We appreciate fathers who discipline their children for their good, yet who love them and provide all necessary good things for them. The apostle says to fellow Christians:

"We used to have fathers who were of our flesh to discipline us, and we used to give them respect. Shall we not much more subject ourselves to the Father of our spiritual life and live? For they for a few days used to discipline us according to what seemed good to them, but he does so for our profit that we may partake of his holiness. True, no discipline seems for the present to be joyous, but grievous; yet afterward to those who have been trained by it it yields peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness."—Heb. 12:9-11.

Accordingly, it behooves us to come to God as to a loving Father, learn of him, be corrected by him, conform our ways to his written Word. He is preparing persons today for life in a righteous new order that will encompass the earth for the happiness and well-being of all. You, like everyone else, can take advantage of the opportunity now.

Preparing for a

NEW ORDER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

GOD has declared his purpose that mankind will live in happiness on earth governed in righteousness by His laws. But it is not by converting the world that he will accomplish this desirable condition for humankind. This fact is clearly seen when we consider that the nations are constantly drifting farther from the Bible's standards.

God did not convert the world that existed before the Flood, but destroyed it. The account reads: "Jehovah saw that the badness of man was abundant in the earth and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time." Nevertheless, Jehovah in his loving-kindness "felt hurt at his heart." He gave men 120 years before acting against them. Their going into destruction was the re-

sult of their own choice of a bad way.—Gen. 6:3, 5, 6.

This historical fact is of interest to us, because Jesus Christ said: "Just as the days of Noah were, so the presence of the Son of man will be. . . they took no note until the flood came and swept them all away."—Matt. 24:37-39.

ONLY THOSE PREPARED WILL SURVIVE

When God destroys the present system of things he is not going to leave a vacuum. That is, he is not going to have a depopulated earth. Nor is he going to have a few people left who do not know God's ways or who do not want to recognize his sovereignty.

When Noah and his family, eight persons in all, stepped out of the ark as the sole survivors of the Flood, they were not ignorant people. They had practiced God's principles and had lived by them. Noah, in fact, had done so for 600 years. The wisdom he had obtained from 'walking with God' enabled him to give right direction to the things to be done as men again began to grow in numbers on the earth.—Gen. 6:9; 7:11.

God is giving humankind at this time the opportunity to prepare for life in a new order—the opportunity now to get on to the road to life. Have you heard the proclamation that "the Kingdom is at hand"? Has anyone spoken to you at your home, your place of business, or other place, about the paradise condition of earth near at hand, where one can live everlastingly? If so, you may appreciate that the Kingdom is indeed near. You may identify the proclamation as an educational work that God is having done to inform and train humans for survival.

You can prepare for life in a new order by making a study of God's laws and putting them into effect in your life now.

It is not education in science, politics or the philosophy of this world that is the essential thing. That education will not help one to survive. That knowledge is mere information. It is not real wisdom, for it does not help one to know how to live peaceably with his fellowman and in harmony with his Creator. As the Creator and Architect of the universe, God knows everything about his creation. It is knowing and following his laws that constitute real wisdom.

Many persons today seek after knowledge. But not many have hearts that are willing to obey God. People with good hearts who are loyal and trustworthy through and through are the ones valuable in God's eyes. These persons God will give, along with wisdom, all the knowledge, technical and otherwise, that is necessary for an organized society on earth in his new order. They will be able to "subdue" the earth, making it a paradise to God's glory.—Gen. 1:28.

What does the Bible say about God's new order and its governmental arrangement?

WHAT GOVERNMENT FOR THE NEW ORDER?

In this present system of things we have governments often made up of large bodies of men. The legislative, judicial and executive branches of a government comprise sizable numbers. Over these world governments, the Bible says, is an invisible body of rulers. Who are these rulers? They are wicked spirit persons, unknown to most of mankind because of being invisible. One of Christ's apostles counsels Christians that they must stand firm against the machinations of the Devil, then continues:

"Because we have a wrestling, not against blood and flesh, but against the governments, against the authorities, against the

world rulers of this darkness, against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places."

—Eph. 6:11, 12.

These wicked spirits, constituting the "heavens," or invisible ruling power over the "earth" or present-day human society, are to be removed. "The heavens will pass away," says the apostle Peter. (2 Pet. 3:10) Then the "new heavens" will rule the "new earth" of righteous human society. (Rev. 21:1-4) These "new heavens" the Bible describes as being composed of Jesus Christ the King and High Priest of God and his associate kings and underpriests numbering 144,000 persons. Will there be a *visible* governing arrangement for humankind? —Rev. 14:1, 3, 4; 20:4, 6.

At Psalm 45 the inspired writer speaks as addressing the King. The Christian Scriptures make quotations from this psalm, applying it to Jesus Christ. (Ps. 45:1, 6, 7; Heb. 1:8, 9) There the psalmist says to the King: "In place of your forefathers there will come to be your sons, whom you will appoint as princes in all the earth." (Ps. 45:16) Righteous men like Noah, Abraham and David were among Jesus' forefathers according to the flesh. These were men of loyalty and proved integrity. They will become "children" of the "Eternal Father" Jesus Christ by reason of receiving a resurrection through Christ's ransom sacrifice. (Isa. 9:6) With other such men of unbreakable integrity to God they will constitute visible "princes," just as the prophet Isaiah wrote:

"Look! A king will reign for righteousness itself; and as respects princes, they will rule as princes for justice itself. And the work of the true righteousness must become peace; and the service of the true righteousness, quietness and security to time indef-



Study of God's Word and conforming to it are vital to preparing for life in his new order

inite. And my people must dwell in a peaceful abiding place and in residences of full confidence and in undisturbed resting-places."

—Isa. 32:1, 17, 18.

Thus, under the "new heavens" and with the body of "princes" operating according to information transmitted by the "new heavens," the survivors of this old system's destruction will make rapid progress toward perfection. Since Christ's sacrifice is not only for the living, but also for the dead, people will be resurrected and will be taught the same principles that the prospective survivors are observing now.—Acts 24:15; 2 Tim. 4:1.

The just and righteous principles of the Almighty God are now easily understood by any who want to know them. Those who accept the Bible in its entirety as inspired of God and who earnestly conform their lives to these principles are preparing for life in a new order of righteousness. They can confidently say to God: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." The Kingdom 'comes' into collision with the nations to clear the way for God's will and purpose to take place, with real peace on earth.—Matt. 6:10.

Do you want such a change? Are you willing to investigate whether such a change in earth's conditions would require a change on your part?

Would You Really Like to See a Change?

FACING life under the conditions that exist at the present time, millions of persons would like to see a change.

When people are asked what they would most like to see announced in the news headlines, some say world peace, some, the elimination of crime or pollution, or a cure for cancer. Others speak of certain political changes they desire. The subjects of taxes and the world food shortage also come in for comment.

A world of peace and plenty, with clean air and water and wholesome food for all, a balanced ecology and the end of oppression, is indeed desirable.

This world would have to undergo a great many changes for all these desired conditions to exist at the same time. How far-reaching would the changes be? Would it require personal adjustments in your daily life? If so, would you be willing—even if making these adjustments now should inconvenience you seriously?

As stated earlier, the responsibility for the world's deplorable situation does not rest altogether on the rulers. If individuals obeyed the laws there would be no crime problem. If each one had consideration for his neighbors, his fellow workmen, his employer, his employee, and dealt honestly and kindly with others, there would be few prejudices and hatreds, and no tie-ups due to strikes. If each person were willing to work and if he did his work with real interest and concern, the economy would be much more stable and taxes would be greatly reduced.

But is this the way things are today? For example, how does the average workman feel about the materials, supplies and equipment belonging to his employer?

Does he reason, 'The small items I will take will never be missed, and, besides, the company can afford it'? Or does he feel that 'the company is making lots of money and they really don't pay me enough anyway'? Are people generally careless with the property of others? How about their treatment of public facilities such as parks, rest rooms, streets, public buildings? What is your own attitude about these things? Changing our attitudes and practices along these lines is not easy. But these bad practices are some of the basic sources of trouble in present-day society and would be completely out of place in a righteous society.

Moreover, if every individual had love for his fellowman, wars would be no more. And if he were willing to be more than passive in demonstrating his love, if he would exert himself by going out of his way to help others, having as much concern for his neighbor's welfare as his own, then real peace and relief from tension would come. Do you regularly show that deep a concern for your fellowman?

It is clear that action on the part of everyone, major changes in everyone's life, are necessary for all those who would live in a desirable world. One not making these changes and ordering his life along these lines would cause trouble for others. He would be a real misfit. He would not be deserving of the peace and tranquillity of that world.

The righteous new order that God promises is just such a fine, desirable arrangement, with the added prize of everlasting life in perfect health. The Bible describes the good conditions we have discussed as realities in the earth under God's Messi-

anic Kingdom rule. How does all this appeal to you?

ARE YOU A DOER AS WELL AS A HEARER?

Almost everyone would like to enjoy the material human benefits the Bible promises, but not all want to change their way of life, forsaking materialism and becoming spiritually minded. They are comparable to those Jews in Babylon to whom God's prophet Ezekiel spoke. God told Ezekiel:

"They will come in to you, like the coming in of people, and sit before you as my people; and they will certainly hear your words but these they will not do, for with their mouth they are expressing lustful desires and after their unjust gain is where their heart is going. And, look! you are to them like a song of sensuous loves, like one with a pretty voice and playing a stringed instrument well. And they will certainly hear your words, but there are none doing them."
—Ezek. 33:31, 32.

If, really, in your heart, you would like to see a change to the fine conditions of God's new order, then you will be like the ones to whom the apostle Peter spoke, saying: "Get saved from this crooked generation." They asked with the greatest earnestness: "Men, brothers, *what shall we do?*" (Acts 2:37, 40) You will have the attitude of Zacchaeus the tax collector, who, on listening to Jesus' teaching, acted immediately at great expense to himself to right his wrongs and to change his life. (Luke 19:2, 8, 9) You will be like Lydia of the city of Thyatira, who made no excuses or inward reservations, so that "Jehovah opened her heart wide to pay attention to the things being spoken by [the apostle] Paul."—Acts 16:14, 15.

A SWEEPING BUT BENEFICIAL CHANGE

The only one who can make the change that will bring all the desirable things mentioned is the Creator. Of him alone it can be truly said: "You are opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every

living thing." (Ps. 145:16) This change will affect every living thing, for earth's symbolic "foundations" are out of balance. Jehovah spoke of the injustices of the rulers and judges of his covenant people Israel, saying concerning the situation of the people: "They have not known, and they do not understand; in darkness they keep walking about; all the foundations of the earth are made to totter." (Ps. 82:5) Through his prophet Isaiah, God said: "The land has gone to mourning, has faded away. The productive land has withered, has faded away. The high ones of the people of the land have withered. And the very land has been polluted under its inhabitants, for they have bypassed the laws, changed the regulation, broken the indefinitely lasting covenant."—Isa. 24:4, 5.

These words are true in a larger and more widespread way in Christendom, which professes to be in a covenant with God. However, the psalmist depicts the state of affairs as it should be, and as it will be in God's new order. In inspired song the commandment is given to humans of all kinds, men and women, young and old, to praise Jehovah, and along with them "you wild animals and all you domestic animals, you creeping things and winged birds." (Ps. 148:10-13) Thus, all creation will be brought back into harmony, with happiness and unlimited benefits to all.

It is inescapable, then, that a sweeping, large-scale change in the life of every human must take place, that is, in the life of every human who wants to live under the conditions for which God originally made man. But the change is certainly worth while, and is the only way to achieve true happiness. How can this change be made? This is the question dealt with as we proceed to the discussion, "What Do You Want to Do?"

WHAT DO *You* WANT TO DO?

IN READING this magazine, particularly the article "When All Nations Collide, Head On, with God," you have considered information from the Word of God regarding the situation now facing us and events about to break upon the world. You are informed of the danger ahead.

The question before you, as it is before all people, is, What can you do? or, rather, What do you want to do? For if you want to, you can take the course of safety.

EVERYONE MUST MAKE A DECISION

Certainly safety will not come by doing nothing, by "sitting tight" and waiting to see what happens. The words of God are not given in vain. Jesus gave an illustration that sets the matter before us clearly:

"Therefore everyone that hears these sayings of mine and does them will be likened to a discreet man, who built his house upon the rock-mass. And the rain poured down and the floods came and the winds blew and lashed against that house, but it did not cave in, for it had been founded upon the rock-mass. Furthermore, everyone hearing these sayings of mine and not doing them will be likened to a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain poured down and the floods came and the winds blew and struck against that house and it caved in, and its collapse was great."
—Matt. 7:24-27.

"These sayings" that Jesus referred to were not demanding anything unreasonable of his hearers, but were only those things that any person who has genuine respect for God and for the rights of his fellowman should do. If you read Christ's

Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapters five to seven you will see that he stressed, first of all, the importance of being conscious of one's spiritual need, seeking righteousness, being pure-hearted and peaceable. And he emphasized proper living, repeatedly mentioning the kingdom of the heavens, the need to seek it and God's righteousness. Jesus stated that safety lies in *obedience* to these teachings.

A MATTER OF FREE WILL

All these things are left to the free will of each individual to do or not to do. No one is forced. God delights in the fact that he rules by love. "God is love," says the apostle John, and Jehovah himself says: "I am Jehovah, the One exercising loving-kindness, justice and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I do take delight."—1 John 4:8; Jer. 9:24.

It is in harmony with his creatorship and his dignity and sovereignty that he lets each intelligent individual choose to accept and acknowledge His sovereignty. God is interested, not in mere service to him, but also, primarily, in *heart motive*. "I, Jehovah, am searching the heart," he declares. "Jehovah is making an estimate of hearts," says the inspired writer. (Jer. 17:10; Prov. 21:2) God is not impressed with one's great ability. On the other hand, he does not accept a mere show or profession of loyalty. One must have *genuine works*, proving his loyalty.

Of course, any organization claiming to be Christian should instill in its members strong faith in God, a knowledge of his Word, and loyalty to his kingdom. However, you may, on seriously considering these matters, find that you are affiliated with a religious organization that is not teaching the truth of the Bible. If that

organization has not enabled you to understand the Bible so that you have the ability to explain it to others, and furthermore, if the organization condones wrongdoing, shows partiality to the rich and influential or preaches doctrines contrary to the Bible, what will you do? Will you follow the command: "Therefore get out from among them, and separate yourselves," says Jehovah, 'and quit touching the unclean thing'?"

WHERE TO TURN

To what or where, then, should you turn? Not to atheistic evolution, which is grossly materialistic, nor to a policy of complete isolation. This would not be seeking righteousness, and no safety would be found therein. No, rather, God goes on to say to those who are faithful believers, "and I will take you in." God shows how to come under his care.—2 Cor. 6:17.

First of all, it is urgent, a matter of life or death in these critical times, to read and study the Bible with *understanding*. And you will find that you make much faster progress in understanding the Bible by receiving help from one who understands, and who can find the answers to your questions in the Bible.

At this time, very near the end of this system of things, there is an association, a society of Christians, ministers, who are preaching and teaching the good news of God's kingdom and bringing their lives into conformity with Bible principles. They are expending time and energy in harmony with Jesus' command: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, *teaching* them to observe all the things I have commanded you. And, look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things."—Matt. 28:19, 20.

This work is not done "in a corner," just as the apostle Paul declared. (Acts 26:26) It is international. All over the world those who believe God's Word associate with fellow believers in God and Christ. The apostle Peter corroborates this in his writings, saying: "Have love for the whole association of brothers."—1 Pet. 2:17; 5:9.

Jehovah's witnesses are thus associating in carrying on this work of teaching. They do not feel that they are intrinsically or inherently better or wiser than others. But they are thankful that through a study of the Bible and because of being helped by others of this Christian society they are informed. They are following the command to "quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by *making your mind over*, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."—Rom. 12:2.

AN INVITATION TO INVESTIGATE FURTHER

In reading this magazine, you may have had unanswered questions. Jehovah's witnesses invite you to read the Bible. At your convenience they will be glad to study the Bible with you, free of charge. You will find it encouraging and upbuilding to investigate and examine more fully what the Bible says, and to take the direction it recommends as the course of safety for yourself and those you love.

You have the assurance from God's Word that if you sincerely "keep on seeking" the truth you will find it. (Matt. 7:7) If you pray to Jehovah God in Jesus' name, asking Him to help you find the right way, you will be answered. Said King David of Israel: "He [Jehovah] will teach the meek ones his way." And God's warm love toward you is expressed in the apostle Paul's words: "In fact, [God] is not far off from each one of us."—Ps. 25:9; Acts 17:27.

Questions from Readers

● Does Job 28:5 refer to the apparent molten state of earth's interior when it says: "As for the earth, out of it food goes forth; but underneath it, it has been upturned as if by fire"?—Cyprus.

No. The context reveals that this pertains to man's efforts to find earth's treasures. (Job 28:1-4) Aboveground the farmer peacefully prepares the soil, sows seed and cares for the growing grain. Thus the earth produces food. Underneath earth's surface, however, man carries on a turbulent 'upturning' activity, with effects comparable to that of a ravaging fire. Miners gouge and wrest from earth's bosom precious stones and metals.

It may be noted that a number of translations render Job 28:5 somewhat differently.

For example, the *Authorized Version* reads: "As for the earth, out of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire." Based on this rendering, some commentators suggest that the fire refers to the glow of precious stones and metals that are uncovered by man. However, our understanding the "fire" to allude to man's mining operations fits the context better and agrees with the renderings of many modern translations.

Though sparing no efforts to mine earth's concealed treasures, man does not find true wisdom by exploring the physical creation. (Job 28:1-12) For this, man must turn to God. Job concludes: "Look! The fear of Jehovah—that is wisdom, and to turn away from bad is understanding."—Job 28:28.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

November 14: When All Nations Collide, Head On, with God, ¶1-27. Page 612. Songs to Be Used: 13, 66.

November 21: When All Nations Collide, Head On, with God, ¶28-56. Page 619. Songs to Be Used: 2, 84.

AN INVITATION TO INVESTIGATE FURTHER
In reading this magazine, you may have had unanswered questions. Jehovah's witnesses invite you to read the Bible. At your convenience they will be glad to study the Bible with you, free of charge. You will find it encouraging and uplifting to investigate and examine more fully what the Bible says, and to take the direction it recommends as the course of safety for yourself and those you love. You have the assistance from God's Word that if you sincerely "keep on seeking," the truth you will find it. (Matt. 7:7) If you pray to Jehovah God in Jesus' name, asking him to help you find the right way, you will be answered. Said King David of Israel: "He [Jehovah] will teach the meek ones his way." And God's warm love toward you is expressed in the apostle Paul's words: "In fact [God] is not far off from each one of us."—Ps. 25:9; Acts 17:27.

First of all, it is urgent, a matter of life or death in these critical times, to read and study the Bible with understanding. And you will find that you make much faster progress in understanding the Bible by receiving help from one who understands, and who can find the answers to your questions in the Bible. At this time, very near the end of this system of things, there is an association, a society of Christians, ministers who are preaching and teaching the good news of God's kingdom and bringing their lives into conformity with Bible principles. They are expending time and energy in harmony with Jesus' command: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you. And, look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things."—Matt. 28:19, 20.