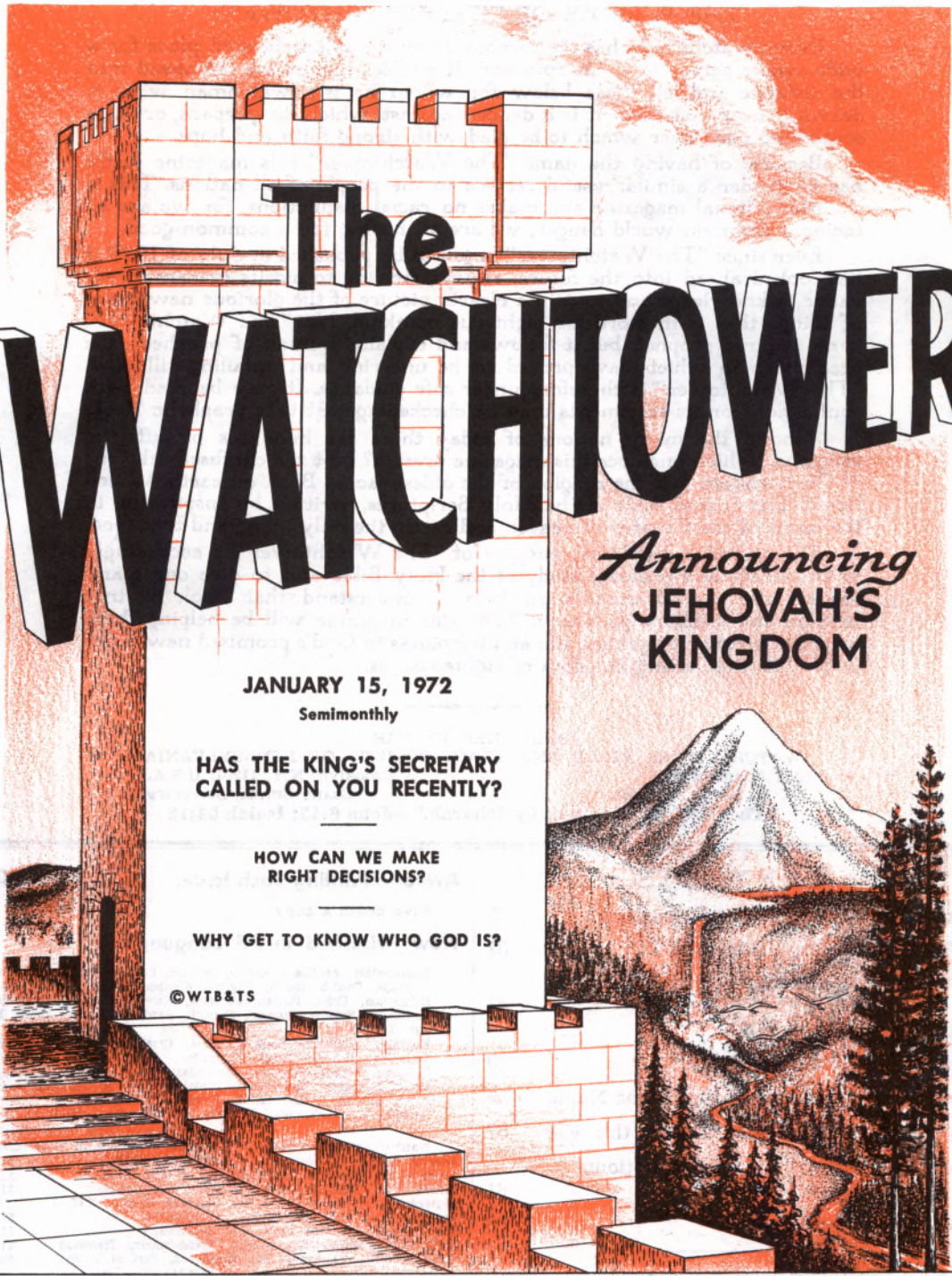




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

JANUARY 15, 1972

Semimonthly

**HAS THE KING'S SECRETARY
CALLED ON YOU RECENTLY?**

**HOW CAN WE MAKE
RIGHT DECISIONS?**

WHY GET TO KNOW WHO GOD IS?

©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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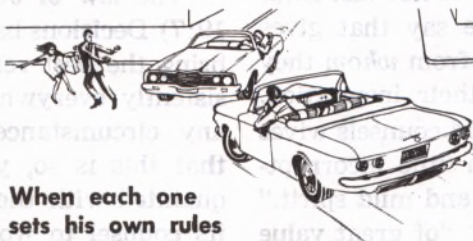
Number 2

How can we make **RIGHT DECISIONS?**

ALL of us, at some time or another, have to make critical decisions. On what do you base yours?

Many men—leaders in politics, business, science, religion and other fields—offer themselves as guides. But when you look at world conditions, or even conditions in your own neighborhood, what do you see to show that these men themselves are making the right decisions? The Bible points us to a far better basis.—Prov. 19:20, 21.

The temptation to look to men to point the way, rather than to an invisible God, is always great. Yet right in the physical world around us we can see abundant reason for seeking God's help in our decisions. (Rom. 1:20) The whole universe testifies that there is a Supreme Lawgiver. Did you ever stop to think that all human sciences—physics, chemistry, mathematics, aerodynamics, to name but a few—depend on knowledge of laws that were here long before man existed?



When each one sets his own rules for life, the results are like the chaos that would result if each one made his own traffic rules

Knowledge of those laws helps tremendously man's ability to accomplish things, to work with success. Is it not reasonable that the Source of all the wisdom bound up in these physical laws is also

the One who can give us wise *moral* laws, standards to guide us in our relations with one another and with Him? In his Word, the Bible, we find the principles and standards we need to make right decisions in life.—Ps. 119:105.

True, many persons shy away from submitting to Bible standards. They prefer to set their own standards, to make up their own rules of conduct. But how would you like to drive in a city where each person made up his own traffic rules and went by them? Certainly even a big city's traffic cannot compare with human relations in complexity.

Rather than rob us of our freedom to enjoy life to the full, accepting Bible standards as our guide brings us far greater freedom. When we base our decisions on these, we are protected from the very things that enslave man in hurtful bondage. As God's Son said: "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32)

With God's Word guiding us, we can make our decisions free from superstition, extreme fear of men, false religious ideas and false hopes.—Prov. 3:21-26.

WHY SUPERIOR

There is a strength to Bible standards that no personal moral code can ever give. Parents who make decisions based on the Bible and who show their children the Scriptural reasons for these have a tremendous advantage. The children can see that this is not just their father's or mother's idea, whim or prejudice. It is what their Creator says. This gives real weight to parental counsel.

Persons who seek Scriptural guidance when problems arise in married life are in a far better position to make right decisions than those with only personal moral codes or human philosophies to guide them. As Ecclesiastes 4:12 says: "A three-fold cord cannot quickly be torn in two." Problems that split up some couples fail to break the unity of the husband and wife who are careful to include their Creator in their decisions by consulting his Word.

The Bible says that a man should love his wife as himself and that she should have deep respect for him. (Eph. 5:33) Someone may say, "But I can read words of similar counsel in modern marriage books." Perhaps so, but it is not just *what* those words in the Bible say that gives them their strength. It is from *whom* they proceed, the Source of their inspiration.

For example, 1 Peter 3:4 counsels wives to adorn themselves with "the incorruptible apparel of the quiet and mild spirit." But *why*? Because this is "of great value in the eyes of God." So, too, husbands are to 'assign honor to their wives as to a more delicate vessel, the feminine one.' But *why*? "In order for your prayers not to be

hindered." (1 Pet. 3:7) Yes, the husband and wife are made to realize that what they do matters to God and is bound to affect their relationship with him.

Only God's Word can authoritatively tell us these things that bear so heavily on what course we decide to follow.

Questions of right and wrong often arise in one's employment. Under the push and pull of pressure and temptation, personal moral codes can crumble. Many decide that a little dishonesty now and then is necessary to get along in a tough world. Even if not caught, they pay a heavy price—the loss of a clean conscience and constant tension caused by fear of exposure.

The Bible gives the strength to decide in favor of honesty and integrity. That is why even those Christians who were slaves in the Roman Empire could give faithful, honest service to their masters, "not with acts of eyeservice, as men pleasers, but with sincerity of heart." Again, *why*? Because of knowing that "it is from Jehovah you will receive the due reward . . . Certainly the one that is doing wrong will receive back what he wrongly did, and there is no partiality." (Col. 3:22-25) No personal moral code, not even the thought of hidden television cameras, can have the power for honesty that the desire to please the Creator does.

"The law of Jehovah is perfect." (Ps. 19:7) Decisions based on it will unfailingly bring the best results, for it applies consistently everywhere, at all times, under any circumstances. To have confidence that this is so, you need to be well acquainted with the Bible; you need to put its counsel to work in your life and see the results. Why not write the publishers of this magazine for a free Bible discussion in your own home to help you to do this? It is a decision you need never regret.

WHY GET TO KNOW

WHO GOD IS?

IS THERE a true and living God? If so, should we be concerned with what he is like, with what he thinks? Should we know whether he cares about mankind or involves himself in men's affairs?

Some clergymen say "God is dead"—that he has no part in current history. But what if these persons are wrong? What if God is concerned about human affairs and is working out a purpose toward mankind? Would it not be dangerous for those who think "God is dead"?

If *we*, having the opportunity to know him, prove to be the ones who do not care about God, might it not be to *our* calamity?

WHO GOD DECLARES HE IS

If a person has been delaying or avoiding a decision on whether there is a God who cares about men, it is time for him to search his own heart and thinking abilities. Is he delaying the decision in order to sidestep accountability? The fact that, of all earth's living things, only man has intelligence and reasoning powers does not mean that man is independent of a yet higher intelligence and that he can run the earth in his own way. The facts of history prove that he cannot. Man's intelligence is given to him so that he can follow the laws of his Creator, and this results in his own welfare.

God speaks to those who should know him, those who have his Word of truth, as people in Christian lands have. He says:

"Have you not come to know or have you not heard? Jehovah, the Creator of the extremities of the earth, is a God to time indefinite."—Isa. 40:28.

By virtue of his creatorship, Jehovah is God. He said to Abraham: "I am God Almighty." (Gen. 17:1) The psalmist writes: "To Jehovah the Sovereign Lord belong the ways out from death." (Ps. 68:20) The Christian apostles acknowledged him as such One, saying, "Sovereign Lord, you are the One who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all the things in them."—Acts 4:24.

Bible history, therefore, testifies that God exists. It reveals that he is not "dead" but that he has much to do with the affairs of men.

THE WORLD POWER HAD TO KNOW

Someone may say, 'If he is almighty and a God of good, why, then, does he not let us *today* see him doing something?' Well, we have to consider that, as Sovereign, God has the right to act when and how he pleases. And we must realize that, being a God of order, he has a time schedule for the development of his purposes.—1 Cor. 14:33; Gal. 4:4.

We may consider the seventy or so years of our life as a long time, or several centuries an almost interminable time. To God, who sits high above the earth, the inhabitants of the earth who oppose him are as grasshoppers. How long does a

grasshopper live? But of Jehovah it is written: "A thousand years are in your eyes but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch during the night." (Ps. 90:4; Isa. 40:22) So an event that occurred as far back as the year 1513 before our Common Era, nearly three and a half millenniums ago, took place a mere half week ago in God's time reckoning.

It was indeed an event that took place this "half week" ago that illustrates to us the reason why we need to get to know who God is. And we do not want to disregard that event as a small-scale thing. It seriously crippled the world power of that day. That mighty nation came to know who God is, but very reluctantly, and in a calamitous way that they could have averted had they used the reasoning and good sense to know God in a peaceful, friendly way.

What happened then is a part of history that is repeating itself in this day, only on a far grander scale. The power that dominated the earth in that sixteenth century B.C.E. was of one of the three great branches of the human family from Noah, namely, the one through Noah's son Ham. Also dwelling in that land, Egypt, was a nation springing from Shem, another son of Noah. These people, though numerous, were not political agitators. They were peaceful residents of that land. Nevertheless, just as we have seen in some nations in our time, that Hamitic government began a campaign against those Shemites, a program of genocide.

Was it, as is often the case, a racial issue that brought about this genocidal attempt? No. It was a RELIGIOUS issue. The Shemites, though they had become slaves in Egypt, refused to share in worship of the many gods of the land. This was because they knew and worshiped the one God of all the earth, the Sovereign Lord Jehovah.

Jehovah had made wonderful promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the forefathers of the Shemites. But he had not yet brought the fulfillment of the most significant promises. These forefathers knew God and his name Jehovah, but likely some of the sons of Jacob or Israel did not know God fully for who he really is. However, Jehovah had given their forefather Abraham a prophecy setting forth the time when he would bring an end to their affliction in this land. Then they would come to know God as never before. In that sixteenth century B.C.E. the time had finally arrived.—Gen. 15:12-14.

By God's deliverance of those oppressed Shemites the great military power of Egypt also came to know who Jehovah is.

HOW DID GOD DO IT?

In order to convince that mighty enslaving nation that he is God, the Sovereign, who does as he purposes among mankind, Jehovah had to use superhuman power, miraculous power. In this way, not only would he be recognized as existing; he would also make his name to be respected, indeed, to be feared by the great world power as well as by the other nations with whom his people would later have dealings. By these demonstrations of power and intelligence far beyond anything men possess, he proved that he is indeed GOD.

Egypt had its many gods and its magic-practicing priests. How, then, would miraculous acts of God be distinguished so that the Egyptians would not attribute them to their own gods or their priests? In a simple and very effective manner. God would use a man as his spokesman or prophet to announce the miracles beforehand. Then, when they occurred, particularly when the miracles adversely affected the Egyptian gods, the people would be forced to know that their gods had been powerless before the superior might of Jehovah.

In working out his purpose God had a qualified man available. This man was Moses, born in Egypt and trained by his mother in the knowledge of the true God. Moses had attempted the Israelites' deliverance forty years previously, but found it was not yet God's time and was forced to flee from Egypt. For the next forty years he experienced training in patience, endurance and humility as a shepherd in Midian. Then, at Mount Horeb in the wilderness of Sinai, God sent his angel to Moses, saying:

"You must tell the Israelites this, that it is JEHOVAH the God of their forefathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, who has sent you to them. This is my name for ever; this is my title in every generation. Go and assemble the elders of Israel and tell them that JEHOVAH the God of their forefathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has appeared to you and has said, 'I have indeed turned my eyes towards you; I have marked all that has been done to you in Egypt, and I am resolved to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt, into the country of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.' They will listen to you, and then you and the elders of Israel must go to the king of Egypt."—Ex. 3:15-18, *New English Bible*.

THE CHALLENGE MADE AND MET

That it was a religious issue was made clearly evident when Moses appeared before Pharaoh and requested that the Israelites be allowed to go a distance into the wilderness to celebrate a festival to Jehovah. Pharaoh replied: "Who is Jehovah, so that I should obey his voice to send Israel away?" Then, to back up his defiance of Jehovah as if He were a mere Nobody, the idol-worshipping Pharaoh added: "I do not know Jehovah at all and, what is more, I am not going to send Israel away."—Ex. 5:1, 2.

God's sovereignty was hereby brazenly challenged. He met the challenge in a way that left no doubt in the minds of God's bitter opponents as well as of his worshipers. He proved that he was a God concerned, even taking action, in the affairs of men. By bringing a series of ten devastating plagues upon Egypt he brought Pharaoh to his knees.

The first three plagues, (1) turning the Nile waters into blood, (2) frogs in all the land, and (3) swarms of gnats, were experienced by both Egyptians and Israelites. Israel knew, however, that Jehovah was not meaning to punish them, but by suffering also they were enabled to feel how real a blow it was to the oppressive Egyptians. Doubtless any among them who doubted came to know Jehovah in this way.

Because of these circumstances, Pharaoh and his priests may have doubted Jehovah's ability to protect his own people. Additionally, the magic-practicing priests seemed to imitate the first two plagues. But at the third, the plague of gnats, they were powerless to duplicate it and had to admit: "It is the finger of God!" It is notable that they avoided using God's name Jehovah. But the facts spoke for themselves as to who brought the plagues against them and their gods.—Ex. 8:19.

Was there any protection possible through worshipping the true God, even this God with the unliked name? This question was undeniably answered by the fourth plague. For this plague as well as those that followed did not touch Israel. So on two counts Pharaoh was made to know that the true God is Jehovah: first, the priests were unable to duplicate the plagues, starting with the third one; and second, Jehovah separated and protected his own people. In fact, when the seventh plague hit, a very heavy hail, even the

servants of Pharaoh who heeded Moses' warning and brought their livestock under cover saw them spared. This proved that Jehovah was not a mere tribal or national God, but the God of the whole earth and the Preserver of all those who put their trust in him.—Ex. 9:18-21.

There is a warning to the nations today in what followed. Three more plagues came, ending with the death of the first-born of all the Egyptian households. Then Pharaoh made haste to let Israel go. Surely God had given Pharaoh and his subjects more than enough opportunity to come to their senses and save their lives. He was long-suffering with them. But with Pharaoh the principle proved true: "A man repeatedly reprov'd but making his neck hard will suddenly be broken, and that without healing." How?—Prov. 29:1.

A few days after Israel's release, when they were camped by the Red Sea, Pharaoh showed that he was unworthy of any favor or further patience. He had hardened himself against Jehovah beyond recovery. As Jehovah had said to Moses: "Pharaoh will certainly say respecting the sons of Israel, 'They are wandering in confusion in the land. The wilderness has closed in upon them.' So I shall indeed let Pharaoh's heart become obstinate, and he will certainly chase after them and I shall get glory for myself by means of Pharaoh and all his military forces; and the Egyptians will certainly know that I am Jehovah."—Ex. 14:1-4.

However, it was not the Israelites who were trapped, but the Egyptians who fell into a trap for their destruction. For that night, under the light of the Passover moon, the hundreds of thousands of Israelites passed across the bed of the Red Sea with the miraculously parted waters of it on each side of them. The military forces

entered the dried seabed in pursuit, but when Jehovah began to hamper their progress, the Egyptian military forces sensed danger and began to feel that they were fighting against Jehovah. At last making an acknowledgment of Him by name, they said to one another: "Let us flee from any contact with Israel, because Jehovah certainly fights for them against the Egyptians." But it was too late, for Jehovah caused the waters to close in upon them to their destruction, while his people Israel were safely on the opposite shore looking on.—Ex. 14:25.

IN WHAT WAY WE OUGHT TO KNOW GOD

Thus the Egyptians knew that God is Jehovah before they went into destruction. Political rulers and nations today who have a Pharaoh-like attitude against that name should take care. And individuals in such nations can, if they will, take note of this actual historical example and avoid a like fate. Those hardened against the Divine Name will know that God is Jehovah just before their destruction, but this is not a desirable way to find out about him. We should want to know him now as the true God and Sovereign, the Purposer, and the Protector of those who trust him. We should know him as Moses did and as Jesus Christ encouraged others to know God. It is a matter of life or death, as Jesus truly said: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ."—John 17:3.

Jehovah's witnesses, who themselves have heeded the preaching of the good news, have come to know Jehovah by studying his Word. They are glad to help others, free of charge, to come to this knowledge. You will profit by studying the Bible in your own home with them.

FOR a number of years now the King's secretary has been making his calls at the homes of the people. Has he called on you recently? It may be that you are surprised at the question. You may say: 'No one identifying himself as the King's secretary called on me at any time.' But it may be that, because of the fear of opening the door to an unexpected caller in these dangerous times, you kept your door shut and locked. Or, if you did open the door at his call, you did not recognize him as the King's secretary. Your not identifying him does not rule out the likelihood that he called on you. His work is very urgent, and he was calling on you in your interest. 'How was I to know?' you may exclaim. 'Tell me, just who is this King, and who is his secretary? And what is his business in calling?' The answers to these questions of yours are very important in these days of uncertainty when some emergency or contingency is bound to happen.

² Our unusual question can be understood in the light of the circumstances under which it is framed. The world situation of today is not altogether new. Long ago there was a situation like it, but on a miniature scale. It is therefore a warning example for us today, and that is why it was recorded in ancient history in order that its lesson might not be lost. We today need the lesson, and for our lasting good we need to take it to heart and heed it. Just like back there in the typical situation,

1. What questions might you raise with regard to a call by the King's secretary, and are the answers to such questions of importance?

2. What king is here involved, and why was the sending of his secretary forth to the people something to be looked for in our day?

Has the

**KING'S
SECRETARY**

*Called
on You
Recently?*



"There was one man in among them clothed with linen, with a secretary's inkhorn at his hips."—Ezek. 9:2.

the greatest King of all is implicated at the present time, yes, the very same King. The secretary whom he has now sent out corresponds with the one whom He commissioned to go forth long ago for the sake of the people in their need. How many kings on earth will do such a thing? At least this great King has done so. He foreshadowed that he would do so in our times by what he did long ago under like circumstances. For our enlightenment and guidance today, He took care that a genuine accurate record was made of it.

³ Let us now turn to the record and

3. Two thousand five hundred and eighty-two years ago, what was the situation with respect to world power and a kingdom with a long line of kings in one family, and why did the event that befell that kingdom prove to be of world importance?

transport ourselves back 2,582 years to the year 612 before our Common Era. A new mighty world power (Babylon) had lately taken the dominant position in the realm of world politics. A kingdom that had ruled for 465 years in the one royal family since 1077 B.C.E. was about to be destroyed. It had but five years yet to go according to the way that history worked out. So, in actuality, its capital city—Jerusalem—was destroyed in 607 B.C.E., and along with it the temple of the kingdom's God. This event was to affect the whole world of mankind, for then a period of 2,520 years was to begin during which the Babylonian World Power, the Medo-Persian World Power, the Grecian World Power, the Roman World Power, and the Anglo-American World Power were to dominate all mankind in succession.

⁴ The domination of the earth by those world powers was not to be interrupted by the Supreme Power of the Universe by means of any kingdom of His establishment. Historically, that long period of uninterrupted political world domination ended in the year 1914 C.E., when international war broke out that finally engulfed twenty-eight nations, including the dual world power of Britain and America, namely, the first world war of human history. Hence we can now appreciate that that year of long ago to which our attention is here directed—612 B.C.E.—was a crucial year for that time and foreshadowed a crucial time for now.

⁵ Already, in 612 B.C.E., there were ten thousand individuals from Jerusalem and the Kingdom of Judah who had been deported from there into exile in Babylon. (2 Ki. 24:14) These included men who became prophets of Jehovah God, namely,

Daniel and Ezekiel a son of Buzi the priest. (Dan. 1:1-6; Ezek. 1:1-3) The year 612 B.C.E. was the sixth year of the exile of these two deportees. In that year the prophet Ezekiel had a vision. Bodily, he remained in a place called Tel-abib near the river Chebar in Babylonia, but in spirit or by inspiration he was transported back to Jerusalem. (Ezek. 3:15; 8:1-4) In this vision he was taken on a tour through the temple that had been built by King Solomon the son of David, for the worship of Jehovah as the God of the Kingdom of Israel. Jehovah forbids the use of any images or pictures in the worship of him as the invisible God; and yet here at the temple dedicated to the worship of this God of heaven and earth the prophet Ezekiel saw images and wall pictures being used in the worship of false gods. For instance, one of the sights Ezekiel saw was this:

⁶ "Look! there was every representation of creeping things and loathsome beasts, and all the dungy idols of the house of Israel, the carving being upon the wall all round about. And seventy men of the elderly ones of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan standing in among them, were standing before them, each one with his censer in his hand, and the perfume of the cloud of the incense was ascending. And he proceeded to say to me: 'Have you seen, O son of man, what the elderly ones of the house of Israel are doing in the darkness, each one in the inner rooms of his showpiece? For they are saying, "Jehovah is not seeing us. Jehovah has left the land." ' "—Ezek. 8: 10-12.

⁷ Time would tell, and that very soon, whether those seventy elders inside Jehovah's temple were correct in saying such things and in expecting to go unpunished

4. In what way was that period of world domination to be an uninterrupted one, when did it end, and why is the year 612 B.C.E. of interest to us today?

5. What was the location of ten thousand Jews in that year 612 B.C.E., and what experience did Ezekiel have in a vision in that year?

6. In this temple tour, what did Ezekiel see seventy elders of Israel doing there?

7. What was Jehovah justified in bringing upon those seventy idolatrous elders, and why so?

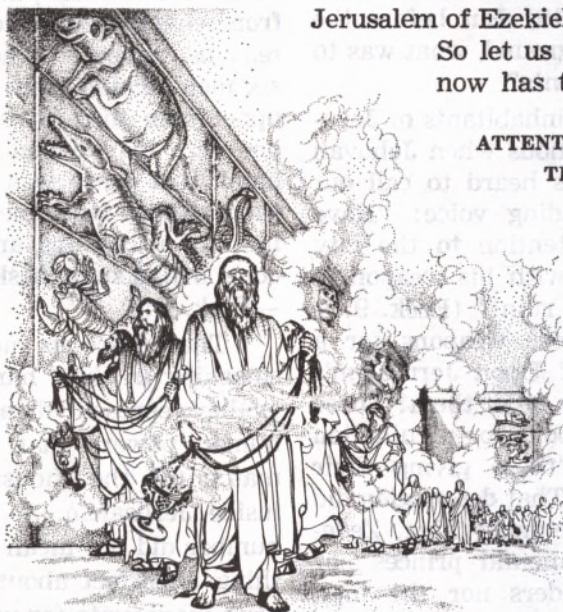
for degrading and polluting Jehovah's house of worship in this way. In a detestable way they were breaking the first and second of the Ten Commandments. Jehovah is a "jealous God" in the sense of demanding exclusive devotion and not sharing His glory with false gods and His praise with idolatrous images. Upon all the practicers of false worship right in His own temple at Jerusalem, Jehovah was justified in bringing the punishment for their error and iniquity. (Ex. 20:1-6; Isa. 42:8) That he was unchangeably set to do so, he indicated to his prophet Ezekiel. After letting Ezekiel become an eyewitness to even the practice of sun worship in His temple, Jehovah said to him:

⁸ "I myself also shall act in rage. My eye [which those seventy elders thought was blind] will not feel sorry, neither shall I feel compassion. And they will certainly call out in my ears with a loud voice, but I shall not hear them."—Ezek. 8:13-18.

⁹ What shall we, who live in a similar crucial time, say to this? Shall we ask, Is Jehovah a pitiless God? Will he show no mercy to anyone in the coming climax of our own critical situation? We cannot blame him in the least for leaving the hypo-

critical and false worshipers to the consequences of their own wrong practices. And because Jehovah has plainly told all of us that he *does* this very thing, we should appreciate that He is not a God to be tampered with. The people of the prophet Ezekiel found that out, this historical fact proving that he is a real, live God, that he is in truth the only living and true God in all existence. The present-day generation of mankind is going to find that out also! But what hope is there for divine pity toward any individuals of this generation? From what took place in the case of Jerusalem of Ezekiel's day we can find out.

So let us listen to what Ezekiel now has to tell us:



Ezekiel saw in vision seventy elders who were polluting Jehovah's house of worship and saying, "Jehovah is not seeing us"

ATTENTION TO BE GIVEN TO THE CITY—HOW?

¹⁰ "And he proceeded to call out in my ears with a loud voice, saying: 'Have those giving their attention to the city come near, each one with his weapon in his hand for bringing ruin!'"

¹¹ It is Jehovah who is issuing this command in Ezekiel's hearing. (Ezek. 9:1) Where is He? There He is, seated on that glo-

rious throne that rides on that chariot with fearfully high wheels, with a heavenly cherub alongside each of the four wheels. (Ezek. 8:2-4; 10:1, 2) He has the right to issue orders respecting the city of Jerusalem, for He is a King. He is "the King of eternity." (1 Tim. 1:17, *New World Trans-*

8. In what words did Jehovah indicate that he was set to bring due punishment?

9. In this regard, what proves that Jehovah is not a God to be tampered with, and so what question do we ask about individuals?

10, 11. (a) Who was the one that called out in Ezekiel's hearing, and from where? (b) Why did he have the right to issue commands respecting the city?

lation; *Moffatt*; Rev. 15:3) He was really the invisible King of Ezekiel's nation; and the anointed king that sat upon the throne of Jerusalem was said to sit upon "Jehovah's throne," as the visible representative of Jehovah the invisible King. (1 Chron. 29:23; Ezek. 20:33) Jesus Christ called the Jerusalem of his day "the city of the great King." (Matt. 5:35) So he had the supreme royal right to give orders as to how the city of Jerusalem was to be disposed of. According to the next vision in this series of visions to Ezekiel, Jerusalem was to be burned down. (Ezek. 10:1-7; 2 Ki. 25: 8, 9; 2 Chron. 36:17-19) But before the city was razed to the ground, what was to be done to its inhabitants?

¹² As respects these inhabitants of Jerusalem, it sounded ominous when Jehovah the invisible King was heard to call out with a loud commanding voice: "Have those giving their attention to the city come near, each one with his weapon in his hand for bringing ruin!" (Ezek. 9:1) Upon whom were those weapons for a ruination to be used? Upon Jerusalem's own inhabitants? Upon all of them? Those armed with such weapons for a ruination were spoken of as "those giving their attention to the city." That description did not mean the then reigning king, Zedekiah, nor his governmental princes nor the military commanders nor the high priest and the second priest of the temple. These would not turn ruinous weapons upon their own people in Jerusalem. Who, then, were the armed men?

¹³ Being subject to Jehovah, who was about to "act in rage," they were His executioners, who were to execute his judicial decisions upon Jerusalem's inhabitants, in

that way "giving their attention to the city." Although in the vision they appeared as men, they were really holy angels of Jehovah to be used in executing His adverse judgments upon the city's inhabitants. According to history, the armed forces of Babylon were used visibly in executing Jehovah's judgments upon the rebellious city, but these were not the ones pictured in Ezekiel's vision. These Babylonians were merely employed by the heavenly angels against Jerusalem.

¹⁴ At Jehovah's royal command, how many armed men put in appearance, and from what direction did they come? Ezekiel tells us, saying: "And, look! there were six men coming from the direction of the upper gate that faces to the north, each one with his weapon for smashing in his hand; and there was one man in among them clothed with linen, with a secretary's inkhorn at his hips, and they proceeded to come in and stand beside the copper altar." —Ezek. 9:2.

¹⁵ There were six men with weapons for smashing in their hands. Not many, but, as they represented angels, they had superhuman powers that were more than a match for the thousands of inhabitants inside Jerusalem. So, their being six in number did not mean that there was anything imperfect about them or that they were inadequate for work as executioners. We notice that these six executioners come "from the direction of the upper gate that faces to the north." This was a foreboding of the fact that the Babylonian armies would march against Jerusalem from the north, to serve as instruments on earth for Jehovah's executorial angels. From the south there came up the armies of

12. What questions arise as to those weapons for bringing to ruin, and who are the ones not meant by the expression "those giving their attention to the city," and why not?

13. Who, then, were those armed men in the vision, and what, therefore, must be said about the Babylonian armed forces?

14. How many armed men came at Jehovah's call, and from what direction?

15. (a) Who really were those visionary "six men," and what did the direction from which they came forebode? (b) How was triumph for Jehovah's determination to "act in rage" over resistance shown?

Pharaoh of Egypt in response to the appeal of King Zedekiah of Jerusalem, but these allied forces were beaten back by the Babylonians. Jehovah's determination to "act in rage" for the destruction of Jerusalem was not to be thwarted. The symbolic "six men" with weapons for smashing whom He had called to give "attention to the



Six armed men accompanied the King's secretary. They represent God's angelic forces who will soon wipe out this corrupt system, including Christendom

city" had divine support and were bound to triumph over all resistance.

¹⁶ Let not the force of that prophetic circumstance be lost on us today. What this present worldwide system of things is facing up to in the near future is not mere human forces of destruction and demolition. What these radical, anarchistic,

nihilistic, disorderly human elements may fail to break down and obliterate, Jehovah's superhuman angelic armies for the executing of his "rage" against this wicked system of things will wipe out. Every vestige of this corrupt, polluted system of things must perish!

¹⁷ Christendom also? Yes, for she is today the dominant section of this system of things. Moreover, she is the particular organization that is pictured by ancient unfaithful Jerusalem and its domain, the land of Judah. She is the religious organization that claims to worship the God of the Holy Bible, who is named Jehovah. She claims to recognize Jesus, the Son of Jehovah God, as being the Christ, and for that reason she has chosen to be called Christendom. But, like ancient Jerusalem, she has broken her religious covenant with Jehovah and has corrupted herself with the pagan religions of this world and hence does not practice true Christianity. Her religious name will not protect her. The solemn hour draws near when the prophetic "six men" will 'give attention to Christendom' with their weapons for smashing. You people of Christendom, this is indeed something for you to be alarmed about!

¹⁸ The shattering, the smashing to pieces, of this entire system of things, including Christendom, is a dead certainty that is due within this generation. There will be no avoiding this world catastrophe that comes from the hand of Jehovah, the universal King who rides on his celestial chariot to the full execution of his judgments. Is there anything that we can individually do about it—now, before those symbolic "six men" start smashing worldly things with their weapons for a ruination? In order to know, let us examine further

17. What reasons are there as to whether this includes Christendom or not, and why do the people of Christendom have reason to be alarmed?

18. When is this smashing due, can it be avoided, and what question arises as to us individuals?

16. In view of this circumstance, what are the nations really facing in the near future?

the prophetic drama that the prophet Ezekiel saw in vision.

IDENTIFYING THE KING'S SECRETARY

¹⁹ Let us take note that there were not just "six men" that came from the north and entered the temple courtyard and stood beside the copper altar of sacrifice. There were seven. Also, the seventh man was not armed like the other six. Ezekiel says: "And there was one man in among them clothed with linen, with a secretary's inkhorn at his hips." (Ezek. 9:2) Who is he anyhow?

²⁰ Why, that is the King's secretary. His nonmilitary attire together with his inkhorn containing pen and ink identifies him as being a secretary. He too must give his attention to the city, and since he was summoned by the One seated enthroned upon the celestial chariot, he must be the secretary of Jehovah, whose earthly visible throne at Jerusalem was then occupied by King Zedekiah of the royal family of David. He is the secretary, not of rebellious King Zedekiah, but of the King of Eternity, Jehovah. Who was he back there in Ezekiel's day, or who is he today?

²¹ Since he was in among the "six men" who represented angels of heaven for the execution of Jehovah's judgments, does he also represent a heavenly angel or angelic band? If he were an unseen heavenly angel, how would you know whether he had called on you recently? But, according to the work that Jehovah assigns him to do, he apparently pictures something here visibly on earth used in a peaceful way. Well, then, he stands for a man, does he not? Well,

19. How many men came from the north and stood beside the altar, and were they all armed?

20. Who was that seventh man, and was he in the service of King Zedekiah of Jerusalem?

21. What may be said as to whether the linen-clad man was an angel or not, and was an effect like that produced by him in the vision accomplished back in Ezekiel's time?

looking back to Ezekiel's time, we have no record in the Bible of any one man literally doing the work that this man "clothed with linen" was told to do. The prophet Jeremiah, who was back there in Jerusalem, did not do so. Ezekiel did not do so, for he got back to Jerusalem only in vision, by the spirit of inspiration from Jehovah. But though no literal man with a secretary's inkhorn was then seen going through Jerusalem doing the work that Ezekiel saw in vision, the beneficial effect of such a secretary's work showed up just as if a literal man had gone through the city and done the work assigned. So the man with the inkhorn was just a pictorial device to point to an *accomplishment* by God back there.

²² How, though, about our day? It becomes clear that the vision of the man with the secretary's inkhorn was meant to have application primarily for our day, for the benefit of us "upon whom the ends of the systems of things have arrived." (1 Cor. 10:11) Back in Ezekiel's day no single man was depicted, although an individual man could have done the job within ancient walled Jerusalem during the time that yet remained before the city was destroyed. But when we consider that the antitypical "city" of today is Christendom, with her worldwide dimensions, we can appreciate that it is no one man's job. It must be the work of a group of men over years of time. Hence, for our day, the visionary man "clothed with linen, with a secretary's inkhorn at his hips," must picture a modern composite man, that is, a united group of men, all working together under one headship in the one same work, with the same one end in view, in the service of Jehovah, "the King of eternity." Such is the King's secretary of our day.

22. For whom or when was the primary fulfillment of this vision to be, and who, then, is the King's secretary today?

²³ Just because this composite "secretary" is in Jehovah's service, it does not today mean a Jewish group of people. Jehovah was the God of their forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and of Moses, but the circumcised natural Jews or Israelites of today are certainly not in Jehovah's service today. Unfortunately they exclude themselves from this, because they do not accept the impaled and resurrected Jesus as being the Messiah or Christ, the Son of Jehovah God. Furthermore, they as Jews would not be doing throughout Christendom the *Christian* work that fulfills the work done by the man "clothed with linen" who was seen in Ezekiel's vision. Neither are the clergymen of Christendom acting as a united body in doing the secretarial work of Jehovah God. Those clergymen see no need for such a work, for they do not believe that Christendom is shortly to be destroyed by Jehovah by the hands of his angels under his Son Jesus Christ. For example, what did the Roman Catholic pope of Vatican City say this past Easter Sunday, April 11, 1971?

²⁴ Under date of the next day the New York Times published the special dispatch datelined "Rome, April 11," and said: "Pope Paul VI in a hopeful Easter message said today, 'The great ideas which are the guiding lights of the modern world shall not be put out.' 'The unity of the world shall be achieved,' the Pope asserted. . . . In what he termed his 'Message of Hope,' the Pontiff said: 'The dignity of the human person shall be recognized not only formally but effectively. The inviolability of life from that in the mother's womb to that of old age shall have general and effective support. Unworthy social inequalities shall be overcome. Relationships

between peoples shall be peaceful, reasonable and fraternal.'"

²⁵ In disbelief of the Bible prophecies for our time, the religious clergy and groups of Christendom work, hope and pray for her perpetuation with all of her detestable things. The modern realization of the prophetic man with the secretary's inkhorn is not to be found in such religious groups of Christendom. Who, then, has been doing the work of the modern-day composite man "clothed with linen"? The historic facts as published throughout the earth are at hand to identify who that composite "man" is.

²⁶ It is that small body of dedicated, baptized Christians who, in the year 1931, recognized the impending destruction of Christendom and therefore the need for the work of the "man clothed with the linen" to be done in its modern application. On July 30, 1931, at the general convention of these anointed Christians in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A., at 3:00 p.m., the lecture "The Man with the Writer's Inkhorn" began to be delivered and immediately after the close of this lecture the book *Vindication* explaining Ezekiel, chapters 1 through 24, was released to the thousands there gathered in convention. Just four days prior to this, or on Sunday, July 26, 1931, this convention of spirit-anointed Christians embraced as a distinguishing name for themselves as Christians the designation "Jehovah's witnesses." Not just the name, but the work carried out by them since then proves that this anointed remnant of Christian witnesses of the Most High God are unmistakably the twentieth-century fulfillment of the man "clothed with linen, with a secre-

23, 24. (a) Why are the natural Jews not fulfilling the vision of the linen-clad man? (b) Are the clergy of Christendom doing the secretarial work for Jehovah, and what is the reason?

25. Why is the modern-day realization of the composite man with the secretary's inkhorn not found in religious groups of Christendom, but what are available to identify such one?

26. Who, then, is the King's secretary, as became manifest in the year 1931 and thereafter?

tary's inkhorn." So this is the modern "King's secretary." Has he called on you recently?

²⁷ That the work of this anointed remnant is not some man's scheme but originates with Jehovah God is well pictured in the vision seen by Ezekiel. Showing from where the "man clothed with the linen" received his instructions, Ezekiel tells what he saw and heard, saying: "And as regards the glory of the God of Israel, it was taken up from over the cherubs over which it happened to be to the threshold of the house [the temple sanctuary], and he began calling out to the man that was clothed with the linen, at whose hips there was the secretary's inkhorn."—Ezek. 9:3; 10:2.

²⁸ Thus Jehovah's glory moved from the platform that was above the wheels alongside of which the four cherubs were located and it took its position over the threshold of the Most Holy compartment of the temple of Jerusalem. Jehovah was now indeed in his holy temple, and it was from Him there that the "man clothed with the linen" was told what to do. It was not from the unfaithful priests of the polluted temple. This man was to move into action first, before the "six men" armed with weapons for smashing did. What was he to do ahead of those six executioners? Jehovah says: "Pass through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and you must put a mark on the foreheads of the men that are sighing and groaning over all the detestable things that are being done in the midst of it."—Ezek. 9:4.

²⁹ Jehovah did not tell this man to pass through the temple and do the marking.

27, 28. (a) In Ezekiel's vision, what shows whether the linen-clad man received orders from men in some men's scheme? (b) Of the group of seven, who was to act first, and orders were issued to do what?

29. Why was the linen-clad man not told to do marking work in the temple, and why was he sent through the midst of Jerusalem?

There were no foreheads to mark there, for the prophet Ezekiel during his inspection tour had been shown that the worshipers there in the temple were practicing false worship, with some women weeping over the false god Tammuz and not over the detestable things that were being done in the temple and in the midst of Jerusalem. (Ezek. 8:13, 14) Hence the "man clothed with the linen" was ordered to go outside the temple and "through the midst of Jerusalem." Jehovah saw that throughout unfaithful Jerusalem there were persons "sighing and groaning over all the detestable things" being done in the midst of it.

³⁰ How would the "man clothed with the linen" locate such individuals who were thus "sighing and groaning"? Not just by going to the public square or to the marketplace, but to the homes of the people, going from house to house. In that way he would be able to hear their heartfelt expressions and decide whether they should be marked on the forehead or not. This was no speedy operation, by any means, but called for patiently and conscientiously going from house to house or from door to door and making an honest inspection, showing no partiality but marking only those who sincerely grieved at all the detestable things that others were doing inside the royal city. The "man clothed with the linen" did not ask these to bare their bosom and then pen a mark over their hearts. No, but he put the distinguishing mark upon their foreheads where it could be publicly seen by friend or foe. This mark, and not the kind of clothing that they wore along with hypocritical religious speech, would indicate them to be Jehovah's worshipers.

30. How would the linen-clad man locate the individuals of the right kind, and for what reason were they marked in the place designated?

A VITAL question for today is, Have you been marked in your forehead by the modern-time “man

Completing the Work

OF THE

KING'S SECRETARY

clothed with the linen”? Do not look into the mirror to see whether you have a literal mark on your forehead. In Ezekiel's vision it was a literal mark, but it is not such a thing today. What, then, is the mark, and how is it inscribed as it were on the foreheads of people? A preliminary question is, Do you deserve to be marked in your forehead? Back in Ezekiel's day the ones marked were those who were worshipers of Jehovah. We know that, because those marked were loyal to Jehovah and believed in his pure worship and hence were “sighing and groaning” over all the detestable things being done in what ought to be the holy city of Jerusalem. Such detestable things included idolatry at the very temple of Jehovah. Besides that, Jehovah told Ezekiel of other detestable things, saying:

² “The error of the house of Israel and Judah is very, very great, and the land is filled with bloodshed and the city is full of crookedness; for they have said, ‘Jehovah has left the land, and Jehovah is not seeing.’”—Ezek. 9:9.

³ Since the marked ones back there were the loyal pure worshipers of Jehovah, you must ask yourself, ‘Am I a true, loyal worshiper of Jehovah?’ Then you can look for the identifying mark. Yes, the symbolic mark today is that which marks or identifies you as a worshiper of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. Figuratively it is put upon your forehead, not to picture that you have had Bible knowledge concerning Jehovah God put into your head and inscribed upon your brain. Many persons inside and out-

side of Christendom had read the Bible through from cover to cover a number of times, and despite the knowledge in their heads they have not been marked as Jehovah's worshipers who are grieved to the heart over the Jehovah-defaming things being done throughout Christendom, such as her crookedness, her bloodshed, her religious error, her various forms of idolizing things apart from Jehovah.

⁴ So more is required than mere knowledge in your head. It is not what you have in your head that counts, but what you really are as a personality. As if stamped in your very forehead, it becomes plainly visible and readable to all who look at you and study you. This personality, which does have Bible knowledge as a basis, has to be developed in you. And here is where the modern “man clothed with the linen” comes into the matter. Following the events of the aforementioned year 1931 this composite “man,” namely, the anointed remnant of the Christian witnesses of Jehovah, have been busy at the marking of the foreheads of the worthy ones.

⁵ True, this anointed remnant of dedicated, baptized Christians have gone from house to house, from door to door, from city and village to city and village, distributing Bible literature, as well as giving Bible lectures from public platforms with “seats free and no collection.” But more is required than just letting people read

1, 2. (a) What questions arise as to the “mark” today, and what preliminary question must we ask ourselves as to worthiness and why? (b) Of what other detestable things about the land did Jehovah tell Ezekiel?

3. What is that mark today, and what does putting it figuratively on the forehead indicate?

4. So what more than mere head knowledge is required, and since when and by whom has the marking work been going on?

5. In course of time the need to do what became appreciated by the anointed remnant, and by 1936 what did they begin to do and why?

these pieces of literature as aids to Bible understanding. The readers need further personal help to understand what they read and how to apply the things they read. In course of time this need became more fully appreciated, and by the year 1936 return visits began to be made on receivers of literature. Then a course of home Bible study was established with the interested ones and was conducted by members of the anointed remnant, weekly or more frequent return visits being made on the interested for this purpose.

⁶ These newly interested persons may already have been disgusted at what they observed in Christendom. But when they got their eyes open to the Bible truths regarding pure worship of the one living and true God, they saw more discerningly the "detestable things" that were being carried on by religious hypocrites in Christendom. In view of this, they saw the need to withdraw and divorce themselves from all partnership with Christendom and from all moral support of her in committing her "detestable things." The anointed remnant helped these persons loyal to Jehovah to grow in knowledge and understanding to the point where they made their personal decision and dedicated themselves to Jehovah God through Jesus Christ his Son and symbolized this dedication by being immersed in water. By thus becoming "disciples" of Jehovah's Son, Jesus Christ, they got marked in their foreheads.—Matt. 28:19, 20.

⁷ In the year 1935 the anointed remnant saw, from Revelation, chapter seven, verses nine through seventeen, that a "great multitude," a "great crowd" out of all nations, tribes, peoples and languages were to be marked in their foreheads as those

who publicly stand before the throne of God and of his sacrificed Lamb, Jesus Christ, and say: "Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb." Symbolically speaking those of this "great crowd" are identified by "white robes," for, as Revelation 7:14 says, "they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Not only do they have approved recognition "before the throne of God," but they "are rendering him sacred service day and night in his temple." This requires them to obey the Scriptural command: "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not be planning ahead for the desires of the flesh." (Rom. 13:14) Is not the Christlike personality that they thus put on an approved mark that openly distinguishes them as if they were plainly marked in their foreheads? Yes, indeed!

⁸ These dedicated, baptized members of the "great crowd" are further helped to share in the house-to-house work, hunting out still others who are "sighing and groaning over all the detestable things" that are being practiced inside Christendom. In this way they have a share in the marking work under the supervision of the anointed remnant. By doing this they are openly displaying the symbolic "mark" on their foreheads to all the world, inside and outside of Christendom. As a result thousands on thousands of other seekers of the pure worship of Jehovah God are proving fit to receive the identifying "mark" on the easily visible forehead. For example, in the service year of 1970 alone 121,226,605 return visits were made on interested persons world wide and 164,193 were baptized in water to symbolize their dedication to Jehovah God. This explains why from year to year the number of the "great crowd"

6. How were individuals helped to discern fully the things in Christendom that were "detestable," and how did they get to be marked?

7. In 1935 the anointed remnant saw that who were to be marked, and what were they to put on that would serve as a forehead mark?

8. How are those of this "great crowd" being actively helped to display their marked forehead openly, and what explains why the number of the "great crowd" keeps increasing from year to year?

keeps increasing. But of what value is that identifying mark?

**EXECUTIONAL WORK BY
THE "SIX MEN" NEARS**

⁹ If we value our earthly lives we will be interested in the value that the "mark" carries with it. We learn to appreciate it as we hear what the King Jehovah says from his throne after he tells the "man clothed with the linen" what to do. The prophet Ezekiel tells us what Jehovah says next in the vision: "And to these others he said in my ears: 'Pass through the city after him and strike. Let not your eye feel sorry, and do not feel any compassion. Old man, young man and virgin and little child and women you should kill off—to a ruination. But to any man upon whom there is the mark do not go near, and from my sanctuary you should start.'"—Ezek. 9:5, 6.

¹⁰ Does it sound cruel for Jehovah to say, "Old man, young man and virgin and little child and women you should kill off—to a ruination"? Yes, but think of the divine mercy revealed in Jehovah's express command to the symbolic "six men" armed with weapons for smashing, "But to any man upon whom there is the mark do not go near"! Ah, now, we appreciate that there is protective value in that mark. If, in the coming "great tribulation" upon Christendom and all the rest of this detestable system of things, we desire to be spared by Jehovah's angelic armies, we will make sincere efforts now to acquire the

"mark" for our preservation. We will try to aid others in acquiring the "mark" also, that they may be part of that "great crowd" concerning whom it is prophetically written: "These are the ones that come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. 7:14) If we appreciate that the marking work is nearing its end and that soon the symbolic "six men" are about to smash the unmarked heads, we will lovingly endeavor to

back up the lifesaving work of the King's secretary.

¹¹ Let us not egotistically presume that we, if with unmarked foreheads, shall be able somehow to go unnoticed by the armed "six men." When ancient Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians in 607 B.C.E., then, according to the hard facts, little children as well as virgins, women, young men and old men were destroyed. If the little babies did not die from hunger or pestilence or at the hands of the cruel Babylonian soldiers, then they died at the pitiless hands of their own starving mothers, who ate them like cannibals. The prophet Jeremiah, who was a prisoner inside Jerusalem until it fell to the besiegers, tells us so. (Lam. 2:20, 21) What about your children who are too young today to make an intelligent dedication and get baptized in symbol of becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ? They may be too young to get the mark in the forehead personally.

¹² But are you yourself marked with that

THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Make Jehovah's Purpose Your Way of Life.**
- **What Sort of God Is Jehovah?**
- **Why Avoid Self-Abuse?**

9. We are helped to see that there is value in the "mark" by what words of command next uttered by Jehovah?

10. (a) Despite apparent cruelty, by what command is Jehovah's mercy revealed? (b) This helps us to appreciate what about the "mark," and whom therefore will we actively back up now in his work?

11. (a) What should unmarked persons not presume to think about the coming time of execution, and why not, according to history? (b) What question comes up as to our children who are not yet sufficiently intelligent?

12. (a) What questions should parents ask respecting both themselves and their children? (b) In what attitude should parents not be presumptuous as to the extending of mercy due to their own marked forehead?

mark of dedication and of Christian personality? Are you striving to do as the Christian apostle Paul admonishes a parent to do, namely, bring them up in the discipline and the mental-regulating of Jehovah, and are they obediently responding to your loving efforts?

(Eph. 6:1-4) Only if this is the case can you trust that the merit of the "mark" in your own forehead will extend to your minor children and that they will be mercifully spared with you from execution or destruction in the oncoming "great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again."

(Matt. 24:21) Now in the short time that remains is the time to do this, before the modern-day "man clothed with the linen" finishes his marking of all worthy foreheads and the symbolic "six men" start using their smashing weapons on all unmarked foreheads that they discover. You parents, do you want your little children to be considered, not "unclean," but "holy," because of your marked forehead in Jehovah's day for executing vengeance? Naturally you should. But do not presume that your children who are intelligent enough to make a decision and personally dedicate themselves to Jehovah through Christ will come under the merit of your marked forehead.

¹³ Another thing to watch now is our religious connections. Remember that the "six men" were ordered to start their shattering of heads from Jehovah's sanctu-

13. In view of those upon whom the "six men" started using their smashing weapons, why are our religious connections another thing to be watched?

ary, where those who tried to mix Jehovah's pure worship with unclean pagan worship were. The "six men" did not feel compassion or pity for the hypocritical religionists, for we next read: "So they started with the old men that were before the house. And he said further to them: 'Defile the house and fill the courtyards with the slain ones. Go forth!' And they went forth and struck in the city."

(Ezek. 9:6, 7; 8:10-12) Later the temple as well as the city was destroyed by the Babylonians. So, if we keep associating with that hypocritically religious crowd inside Christendom, can we reasonably

expect to be marked by the King's secretary in the forehead and be spared the disastrous end of those unrepentant false worshipers? Not at all!

¹⁴ So extensive will the snuffing out of lives in Christendom and in the whole worldwide system of things be that it will appear as if no one would be spared and escape. But we should not think that Jehovah is going too far with his execution of judgment, nor should we feel sorry for those executed by God's means and agencies. Jehovah God is not unjust, and we should respect him by taking his viewpoint. To teach us this lesson, note what Ezekiel goes on to tell us, as he watched the slaughter work go on:

¹⁵ "And it came about that, while they were striking and I was left remaining, I

14, 15. (a) How extensive will be the slaughter, and what fearful impression might be gained for this reason? (b) Whose viewpoint should we take, and how should we feel regarding the slaughtered?



Christian parents need to bring up their children in the discipline of Jehovah. Only if they are obediently responding can the merit of the parental "mark" extend to minor children

proceeded to fall upon my face and cry out and say: '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?' So he said to me: 'The error of the house of Israel and Judah is very, very great, and the land is filled with bloodshed and the city is full of crookedness; for they have said, "Jehovah has left the land, and Jehovah is not seeing." And as for me also, my eye will not feel sorry, neither shall I show compassion. Their way I shall certainly bring upon their own head.'"—Ezek. 9:8-10.

¹⁶ Is that undue cruelty on God's part? Is it unjust when he lets violators of the divine laws eat the fruitage of their own doings, suffer the terrible outcome of their own chosen course of action? In vindication of Jehovah God we say No! All those of mankind who do not now get their foreheads marked are in effect saying: 'Jehovah has left the earth, and it is now our obligation to control the earth and rule it in the way that we choose. He is not seeing what we are doing; he is blind, yes, dead, as far as we are concerned, and therefore we

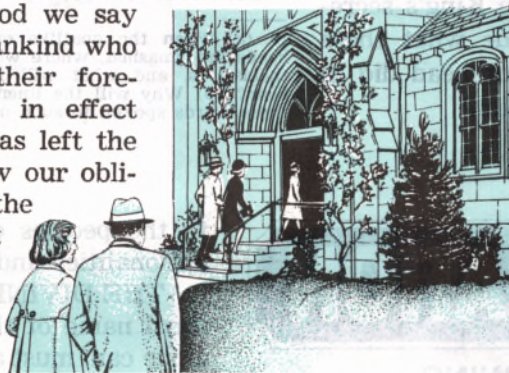
can get away unpunished with whatever we do. So on with the false worship! On with the bloodshed! On with the error of our course! On with the crookedness of our dealings! Such ignorers and defiers of Jehovah God rightly deserve to have Him bring their own way upon

their unmarked heads. The vision given to Ezekiel, as historically fulfilled upon ancient Jerusalem in 609-607 B.C.E., makes certain that He will do so. When His "man clothed with the linen" called they paid no attention.

REPORT MADE ON THE FINISHED WORK

¹⁷ Has the modern "man clothed with the linen," the secretary of the reigning King Jehovah, called on you recently? You can answer intelligently, for you now know how to identify him, how to recognize him. The more critical question is, How did you receive him? The sensible reception that leads to eternal life in God's new system of things is to let this King's secretary begin his marking work upon your forehead, Scripturally speaking. The life-saving work of this composite "man clothed

with the linen" is now nearing its end. Regardless of resistance to it by the hypocritical religionists, the work will be carried out to completion according to the divine will. What the prophet Ezekiel saw in vision guarantees this successful conclusion, for Ezekiel tells us at the close of this vision: "And, look! the man clothed with the linen, at whose hips there was the



Can any who keep on associating with Christendom's hypocritically religious crowd really expect to be marked by the King's secretary?

inkhorn, was bringing back word, saying: 'I have done just as you have commanded me.'"—Ezek. 9:11.

¹⁸ That denotes that the modern "man

17. (a) What is the sensible response to the call of the King's secretary on one, now that he is recognizable? (b) How far will the secretary's work be carried on, and what guarantee of this do we have from Ezekiel's vision?

18. (a) When this closing feature of Ezekiel's vision is fulfilled, for what will those marked in the forehead have reason to be glad? (b) What will the final report as rendered by the King's secretary cover and include?

16. (a) In this regard, what attitude do we take as respects charging cruelty and injustice to God? (b) What are those ignorers and defiers of God in effect saying, and why do they deserve to have their way brought upon their own heads?

clothed with the linen" will be faithful in carrying out his commission from the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. How glad mankind can be for this! Only after he has marked the last worthy forehead plainly and indelibly will he be able to report to the King: "I have done just as you have commanded me." How glad all God-fearing persons marked in their foreheads will be that the King's secretary called on them recently, or since that memorable year of 1935! How glad they will be that they could do good to this secretary of the King and thereby show their loyalty and devotion to the King himself! Glad they will be that they had the rare privilege of backing up the King's secretary and helping out in the marking work that he was doing on such an extensive worldwide scale. The final report, when rendered by the King's secretary, will cover and include what these whom he marked in the forehead did in assistance and support to him.

¹⁹ When shortly the goatlike persons with the stubborn unmarked foreheads are smashed into destruction by the King's executorial force of the "six men," the sheeplike ones with marked foreheads will find themselves at the right hand of Jehovah's Messianic King, Jesus Christ. Sweet in their ears will be the words of the Lamb of God to them: "Come, you who have been blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the founding of the world." The man who is clothed with linen as the King's secretary will also rejoice to hear such words spoken to those future inheritors of the paradisaic earthly realm of Christ's kingdom, for thereby he will know that his work with the "secretary's inkhorn" was a heart-satisfying success and was not in vain. —Matt. 25:31-46.

19. (a) When the goatlike ones with unmarked foreheads are smashed, where will the sheeplike ones find themselves, and what will it be sweet for them to hear? (b) Why will the linen-clad man rejoice to hear those words spoken to such ones?

DECLARATION

CONCERNING

The Divine Name

WE, as God-fearing men and women, who are met together in a general convention called the "Divine Name" District Assembly in

, this day of 1971, feel ourselves stirred to make this Declaration, based on the Holy Scriptures,

1. On what occasion throughout the earth was the Declaration Concerning the Divine Name presented for adoption, and by whom?

to the peoples of all races, colors, nationalities and languages:

² THE DIVINE NAME is the personal name of the One from whom alone can, must and will come a new and righteous order, adorned by a peaceful Paradise over all the earth, amply filled with perfect human creatures dwelling together in love and happiness and in the reverential fear of the Divine Name. The knowledge of that name is of highest importance to all mankind. By calling upon that name in faith and confidence they will be saved from eternal annihilation, so as to enjoy the endless blessings that flow from the Divine One in his promised new order.

2. What will come from the One who has the Divine Name, and to whom is that Name of importance and why?

³ Today countless thousands of good-hearted persons have a sincere desire to know what the divine name is and the One to whom that name belongs, that they may come into harmonious relationship with Him and thus intelligently worship and serve Him and share in his loving favor. Those persons with such proper heart desires have been betrayed by their religious leaders, who have dominated over them and kept them in spiritual darkness, hiding from them the Divine Name and not making known to them the saving power of that Name. These clerical leaders in the religious realm known as Christendom possess the inspired sacred book that reveals the Divine Name and this book shows the indissoluble connection of that Name with the divine purpose to deliver all mankind from the enslaving control of human imperfection, human error and all operations of death.

⁴ The results of such serious delinquency on the part of the clerical leaders are plainly seen in the woeful religious condition of Christendom today, in which the hundreds of religious sects that call themselves Christian vainly try to come to a religious unity along with sectarian diversity. Beyond all denial, the ignoring of the Divine Name by professed Christians, the downgrading of it, the treating of it as being inconsequential as if it were replaceable by mere impersonal titles—all this has not worked out for the benefit of the church people of Christendom nor for the exaltation of that holy Divine Name among the "heathen" nations.

3. (a) What proper desire do countless thousands of good-hearted people have? (b) How have they been betrayed by those who have dominated over them religiously?

4. Where may the results of such delinquency be plainly seen, and what course toward the Divine Name has not worked for the good of church people or of heathens?

⁵ The religious clergy of Christendom have committed an affront against the Divine Name. Because of their doing so the rescue of the people from the disastrous course of the confused, turbulent, lawless world has been gravely hampered and hindered.

⁶ All the evidences that have been mounting up since the world-shaking year of 1914 lead thoughtful people to conclude that all nations are embarked on a suicidal course that spells annihilation for the whole human race. In their anguish and perplexity the nations are not calling upon the Divine Name for salvation from the calamitous consequences of their own willful works. Not even those nations that claim to be followers of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, are doing so. The religious clergy of Christendom have given the nations no reasonable basis for reverencing the Divine Name and for putting reliance upon it as designating the one and only Source of life and salvation. By the clergy the nations have been kept in ignorance of the beneficent purpose of that One to bring in a workable government over all the earth for the imparting of life, happiness, prosperity and peace to all peoples without discrimination, as being one big human family, all being the earthly children of the one loving Creator. What has been the result?

⁷ All nations, including those of Christendom, not only are acting in ignorance of the Divine Name, but are pursuing their own selfish, unrealizable schemes in defiance of the Divine Name.

⁸ After about four thousand two hundred

5. Of what affront are the clergy guilty, and what rescue work has been greatly hampered and hindered?

6. (a) From all the evidences since 1914, what have thoughtful people been led to conclude about the nations? (b) Upon what are the nations not calling for salvation, and their having no reliance thereon is due to what?

7. As a result, how are the nations acting with respect to that Name?

8. Near to the end of what have the nations come, and the time is at hand for what expression?

years since the building of the Tower of Babel in the land of Mesopotamia, all nations have come near to the end of the divine patience and self-restraint. The time is at hand for the One whose name is being ignored and defied to express himself, to make himself known by name to the defiant nations. He owes it to himself to do this.

⁹ In this connection he must live up to his often restated purpose, a purpose that has been on record now for three thousand four hundred and eighty-three years, yes, since when the divinely sent prophet Moses appeared before the ruler of Egypt and demanded that this Pharaoh let Moses' people go free. In the Holy Scriptures, from the second book written by Moses down to the twenty-ninth book of the Holy Scriptures, the prophecy of Joel, the divine statement is set out for more than seventy times that individuals, peoples and nations "shall know that I am Jehovah." (According to the American Standard Version of the Bible)

¹⁰ Whether the nations, the so-called Christian nations or the so-called pagan nations, like it or not, Jehovah is the Divine Name. For his own sake and for the salvation of the human race Jehovah himself must rise up and make his name known in a way that will go down in universal history imperishably. When he does so, the defiant nations must be defeated and destroyed in the approaching "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at that stage of world affairs called Har-Magedon. (Rev. 16:14, 16) Immortal God the Almighty will emerge vindicated as the rightful Sovereign of all earth and heaven. His name Jehovah will be crowned with undying glory.

9. To what stated purpose must He live up, and where and how many times has that purpose been set out, and to what effect?

10. So, what is the Divine Name, and what must He do regarding it, when and with what results?

¹¹ In the seventh century before our Common Era Jehovah raised up the watchman Ezekiel to warn ancient Jerusalem of the impending "sword" of divine warfare against her because of her crookedness, her bloodguilt, her political and religious error. Thousands who defied the Divine Name perished miserably in the siege and destruction of that religious capital Jerusalem during 609-607 B.C.E.

¹² A situation more serious than that facing ancient Jerusalem confronts the nations of Christendom as well as all the non-Christian nations of today. Under these similar but worse circumstances Jehovah would not be acting according to his divine rules of action if he left the nations without warning of what awaits them, namely, the "sword" of divine warfare on a scale never before known in human history. True to principle, Jehovah has raised up his modern-day "watchman." Since 1919, the next year after the end of World War I, Jehovah's "watchman" has been sounding the warning to more and more nations as time has gone on.

¹³ Twentieth-century history identifies this "watchman," not as an individual man of a particular race or nationality, but as a group of dedicated, baptized, spirit-anointed Christians, to wit, the anointed remnant of Christian witnesses of Jehovah. International opposition and persecution against this "watchman" class testifies to the fact that this "watchman" class has been heard giving the warning throughout the earth and that this Christian group has played the foretold role in modern-day fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

11. Jehovah raised up Ezekiel to give what warning, and what happened to defiers of His name during Jerusalem's siege and destruction?

12. Under the present circumstances, how would Jehovah not be acting according to divine rules of action, but how has he acted true to principle?

13. Whom does twentieth-century history identify this "watchman" as being, and what testifies to the fact that he has been heard?

¹⁴ We, who are a "great crowd" of companion witnesses of Jehovah, count ourselves highly favored in associating with this "watchman" class and joining with it in sounding ever more widely the warning of the "sword" of divine warfare that is hanging as if by a slender thread over the head of all races, peoples and nations. Inasmuch as we have been made aware of this menacing situation through our study of Jehovah's prophetic Word and through the trend of international events, we recognize our bounden duty and obligation to sound this timely warning in obedience to divine command.

¹⁵ We well know that we shall encounter further antagonism and persecution for thus obeying God as ruler rather than men. But our love for Jehovah God and his Son Jesus Christ our Lord and love for our fellowmen impels us to this faithful course of action.

¹⁶ As we ourselves once were, likewise uncounted numbers of righteously disposed persons are sick at heart over what is

14. Who count themselves favored in associating with that "watchman," and what do they recognize to be their bounden duty and obligation, and why?

15. Despite what prospect do we obey God as ruler, being impelled by what to this faithful course?

16. (a) How do uncounted numbers feel at heart, along with what heart hunger? (b) What do we have that will meet their need, and what are we disposed to do in that behalf and to what end?

taking place in this corrupt, anarchistic, unreliable world, especially in the religious part of it. They have a gnawing hunger in their hearts; they want to know and get in touch with the One who can really prove to be their Deliverer and Blessor. We, as Christian witnesses of Jehovah, are happy to confess that we have that which will satisfy their spiritual need, according to Jehovah's loving-kindness to us through Jesus Christ. We do not dare and we are not disposed to keep the lifesaving enlightenment from Jehovah to ourselves; and therefore we will continue to shed forth the Bible light concerning the Divine Name, Jehovah, and his promised Kingdom by his Messiah Jesus. In this loving way we shall help all these truth-hungry persons to identify themselves as worthy to be spared when the "sword" of Jehovah strikes this wicked system, in order that they may survive into Jehovah's new order where a Paradise earth will be provided for man's everlasting home under God's kingdom by Jesus Christ.

¹⁷ Accordingly, on this occasion, we renew our resolve to preach this good news of the Kingdom until Almighty God fulfills his declaration that "the nations shall know that I am Jehovah."—Ezek. 39:7, AS.

17. What resolve do we renew, and until when?

UPBUILDING ASSOCIATIONS

Smooth the Way

IT WAS August 10, 1941, previously announced as "Children's Day" at a Christian assembly in St. Louis, Missouri. The Watch Tower Society's president, J. F. Rutherford, directed his remarks to the

As told by Jennie Klukowski

15,000 children seated before him: 'All of you children who have agreed to do the will of God and have taken your stand on

the side of the Theocratic Government by Christ Jesus, and who have agreed to obey God and His King, please STAND UP!"

I stood up. I was thirteen years old, and delighted to be associated with that happy crowd. It was my first big assembly. This kind of upbuilding association was what smoothed the way for my becoming a full-time proclaimer of God's kingdom.

LEARNING GOD'S TRUTH

I was born and reared in the state of Michigan. It was in a one-room country schoolhouse that the teacher began speaking to the classes of the unusual times in which we are living and what the future would be for mankind, in the light of Bible prophecy. I found it all very interesting. One day after classes she asked me if we had a Bible at home. "Yes," I said, "my mother reads it often." She offered to visit us one evening to show us how to study the Bible, which she did, as she was one of Jehovah's Christian witnesses.

At this time my older sister moved to the city. Seeing a sign about Bible studies in the window of a private home, she knocked on the door and made it known that she was interested, and a Bible study was arranged. On her weekend homecomings we talked of what we were learning about the Bible and discovered that we were talking about the same organization!

THE WAY OPENS FOR FULL-TIME SERVICE

My sister soon began working full time proclaiming the good news of God's kingdom. With her encouragement I also made that my goal. In January 1942 I was baptized. Time weighed heavily until I finished grade school and was able to start devoting my full time to proclaiming the good news. I received my parents' consent because I would be working with my older sister. My first assignment as a full-time preacher

of God's Word was dated January 1, 1943. I was then fourteen years old.

After ten months of working with my sister in Alma, Michigan, she received a new assignment to East Rochester, New York. I went along with her. It was our first assignment somewhat isolated from a Christian congregation. How we looked forward to going to Rochester to attend meetings and to associate with the friendly, hospitable congregation there.

It was while in this assignment that I found for the first time a person who was deeply interested in the Bible's message. She asked so many questions that I felt overwhelmed and worried that she would not be satisfied with my answers. "I'll bring my older sister the next time I come," I promised her.

"Is she much older than you?" the lady asked.

"Oh, yes," I said, "She's old—she's twenty-three!"

On my next visit there with my sister, the lady told her what I had said—much to my chagrin. She continued studying and became one of Jehovah's witnesses along with other members of her family.

Our stay there proved to be all too short, for on the first day in our new territory my sister received an invitation to attend the third class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, in preparation for foreign missionary service. After three months, my sister went to Gilead and I returned home to wait until my parents would agree that I could leave home and be on my own in the full-time preaching work.

BACK TO FULL-TIME SERVICE

That day came the following year, in September 1945, when I turned seventeen years old. I began preaching in Flint, Michigan, living with a Christian sister and her husband who were like my own family. It was in this assignment that I

spent one and a half years in upbuilding association with a congregation that included about twenty zealous teen-agers. Our association was mutually upbuilding and smoothed the way for continued full-time service in the interest of God's kingdom.

What a happy time I had in July of 1969 when some of these former teen-agers arranged a surprise 'get-together' for all those who had grown up and worked together in the Flint congregation more than twenty years before. Now those 'teen-agers' are overseers, ministerial servants, full-time pioneer ministers, traveling ministers, missionaries and zealous publishers of the good news. What a warm feeling and pleasant memories I have of those years spent together and of these few hours of reminiscing, updating and looking ahead!

I enjoyed some fine experiences over twenty years ago while associated with the Flint congregation. I met a lady in isolated territory just waiting to learn God's truth. Soon she was preaching in the little town with me, witnessing enthusiastically about God's kingdom to neighbors and relatives, undaunted by their indifference. Today, in her letters she tells me of the progress of the local congregation.

Then came an invitation to do pre-assembly work for eight weeks in preparation for the big international assembly that would be held in Cleveland, Ohio, August 4 to 11, 1946. How nice to meet and work with so many full-time proclaimers of God's kingdom, scouring the city six times over in a house-to-house search for accommodations for convention delegates.

In January of 1947, I was asked if I would accept an assignment in Jackson, Michigan. Three months later I was there. Somehow, from the letter I had sent the presiding minister and his wife, they as-

sumed that I was an elderly woman, so they arranged a place for me to stay with two elderly women, one being a full-time proclaimer of the Kingdom also. They were quite amused to find an eighteen-year-old girl waiting for them when they arrived home one Sunday afternoon.

Later I was joined by two more full-time proclaimers of about my age. The presiding minister and his wife turned out to be a second set of parents to the three of us, and to this day their letters are signed "Pa and Ma." The whole congregation, young and old, took us in—how could we feel far away from home?

In time more joined us in Jackson, Michigan, in the ranks of full-time preachers of God's Word. And when an elderly Christian sister in the congregation lost her husband in death we moved in with her, living in the upstairs part of her house for a nominal fee. Her love of Bible truth, youthful spirit and sense of fun helped her to be patient with us, and six of those who lived with her during that period became missionaries.

TO GILEAD SCHOOL AND BRAZIL

My invitation in 1948 to the thirteenth class of the missionary school of Gilead was an unexpected surprise. I had not thought about going to Gilead until then. I spent many days in meditation. Would I really find in another land the fine association I had enjoyed until now, association that had smoothed the way to continued full-time service? Shortly before the invitation arrived, my youngest sister who had just graduated from high school had come to work with us in the full-time preaching work. It would mean leaving her also.

But February 1949 found me at Gilead School. No time to feel lonely with so many classes, classmates and so much homework. In five and a half months I thought: "How

sad to say good-bye to so many friends going so far!"

But I had been assigned to go to Brazil with six others. And after three months in the East Manhattan Unit in New York, we were on our way on a ship. On the morning of the thirteenth day aboard ship, we awoke in time to look out of the port-hole and see the glistening white and pastel-color buildings of what has been called the world's most beautiful port, Rio de Janeiro. Coming off the ship, we found the branch servant, missionaries and local Witnesses waiting to greet us. No time to think about being "far away"!

During weekdays one would stay home to cook while six went out to work. We would work straight through until afternoon, then return home to rest, eat and study Portuguese. We would exchange experiences, telling of what people said and what we said.

Gradually the fear and apprehension of the new language and customs disappeared and the warmth and patience of the Brazilian Witnesses convinced us that Christian love knows no boundaries.

After one year in Rio de Janeiro we went to an interior city, Belo Horizonte. All together now, I have been in six assignments during my twenty-two years in Brazil. Three have been to establish congregations and three to work in those already established. My youngest sister joined me in the missionary work here after graduating from the eighteenth class of Gilead.

In one small town, São João del Rei, we found for the first time a territory that was difficult. The mayor was a priest, and in the evening by means of a radio program he discouraged people from listening to the message we brought from the Bible. At one gate the man of the house grabbed the Bible from the hands of a missionary and tore it to pieces,

though it was a Catholic version at that. Sometimes we would work for three hours or more without being able to leave a single piece of Bible literature with anyone, since people feared what their neighbors would say or think. But still we found some who wanted to have a Bible study, and we were able to see the beginning of a new congregation before we were transferred to another city.

My present assignment is Belém, Pará, at the mouth of the Amazon River, a city of about 600,000 inhabitants. We have five congregations in the city, with over 400 Witnesses.

One Saturday morning while offering *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* in the business territory of this city, I met a man who asked me to bring him a "Protestant" Bible as he said he had read the "Catholic" translation and wanted to make a comparison. He was able to learn that God's truth is the same regardless of which translation is used. In time he came to be the presiding minister of my congregation.

In another experience, a woman with whom I had studied the Bible moved to the interior because of her husband's secular work. 'How would she fare?' I wondered, as she was newly baptized, and there were no Witnesses in this little town. When she moved back to Belém five years later, she left a thriving congregation with their own Kingdom Hall.

Recently we moved into a new, spacious and airy missionary home built over Belém's first congregation-owned Kingdom Hall. Here we enjoy upbuilding association with our Christian brothers and sisters like that of those I have lived and worked with over the last twenty-eight years. How grateful I am that such association has smoothed the way for so many blessings, such as having spent more than half my life here in a missionary assignment, and helping others to enjoy Kingdom service.

HOW VALUABLE ARE

The Superscriptions in the Book of Psalms?

scriptions originated either with the writers or the collectors of the Psalms. Even in the Dead Sea Psalms Scroll (dated between 30 and 50 C.E.) the superscriptions are *part of the main text*.

SUPERSCRPTIONS ARE HELPFUL

Were it not for the superscriptions,

IN YOUR Bible reading, you have probably noticed the headings or superscriptions found at the beginning of numerous psalms. These identify the writer, furnish background material, provide musical instructions or indicate the use or purpose of the psalm.

For many centuries the superscriptions were, with rare exceptions, viewed as part of the inspired Word of God. But in the latter part of the eighteenth century their authority came under serious attack. This trend has continued so that most modern scholars question the historical value of the superscriptions. This viewpoint being so prevalent, it might appear that they are of little value. But is this really the case? More importantly, can a wrong view of the superscriptions hinder our getting a better understanding of the Psalms?

An examination of the Bible reveals that introductory material like that in these superscriptions is not unique with the Psalms. Other poetic portions are frequently prefaced by comments much like those in these superscriptions. These introductory remarks are clearly an integral part of the Bible text.—Ex. 15:1; Deut. 31:30; 33:1; Judg. 5:1.

The evidence of ancient manuscripts supports the conclusion that the super-

scriptions would be more difficult to understand. This is because the superscriptions at times provide just the information we need to locate other scriptures that illuminate a particular psalm.

By considering the background of the Psalms, to which background information the superscriptions lead us, we are helped to appreciate that the Psalms are based on actual happenings. They are more than beautiful poetry. The Psalms depict life as it really is—the joys, blessings, sorrows, fears and disappointments. We are thereby enabled to identify ourselves with the circumstances depicted. And God's dealings with his servants can prove to be a real source of encouragement and comfort.

A case in point is Psalm 57. According to its superscription, this Psalm pertains to the time 'when David ran away because of Saul, into the cave.' In the book of First Samuel we find that David on one occasion hid from King Saul in the cave of Adullam (1 Sam. 22:1) and another time in a cave in the wilderness of Engedi. (1 Sam. 24:1, 3) The psalm itself points to the cave in the wilderness of Engedi as the probable setting. Verse six of this psalm reads:

"A net they have prepared for my steps;
My soul has become bowed down.
They excavated before me a pitfall;
They have fallen into the midst of it."

Yes, Saul and his men were hunting down David. They had, as it were, excavated a pitfall for him. But what happened? First Samuel 24:3, 4 reports that "Saul came in to ease nature" in the very cave where David and his men had concealed themselves. This made it possible for David to kill Saul, if that had been what he wanted to do. Thus, by entering the cave and coming to be at the mercy of David, Saul fell into the very pitfall that he had dug for David.

Like David, Jehovah's faithful servants today are often plotted against. But, as Saul failed in his attempts to bring David to ruin, they, too, can rest assured that those seeking their injury will fail, getting ensnared by their own schemes.

As revealed in its superscription, Psalm 51 deals with an entirely different situation. It concerns the time 'when Nathan the prophet came in to David after he had had relations with Bath-sheba.' Since David gained Jehovah's forgiveness, this psalm can be a real source of comfort to those overtaken in serious transgression. It helps one to appreciate what true repentance is and how one should respond to correction such as was given to David by Nathan. Were it not for the superscription, much of the force of Psalm 51 would be lost.

Even the mere mention of a name in a superscription can be helpful. Psalm 101, for example, is a melody attributed to David. So when reading Psalm 101, we are actually considering King David's manner of administering affairs of state. Realizing this, we now learn from the Psalm that, as his servants or officials, David selected only faithful persons. He could not put up with arrogant individuals

and did not tolerate slander. Daily he was concerned about bringing wicked ones to justice.

How encouraging this should be to us! The permanent heir of King David, Jesus Christ, will likewise be concerned about upholding justice. In fact, he will do so to perfection. Never will the rule of Jesus Christ and his associates become corrupt and oppressive. It is primarily with reference to his kingship that the prophetic words of Psalm 72 apply:

"May he plead the cause of your people
with righteousness

And of your afflicted ones with judicial
decision.

Let the mountains carry peace to the
people,

Also the hills, through righteousness.

Let him judge the afflicted ones of
the people,

Let him save the sons of the poor
one,

And let him crush the defrauder.

In his days the righteous one will
sprout,

And the abundance of peace until
the moon is no more."—Ps. 72:2-4, 7.

Surely if we want to enhance our understanding of the Scriptures, we should never ignore the superscriptions. As opportunity affords, we can locate the historical basis for various psalms in other parts of the Bible. Often this will take us to First and Second Samuel, which Bible books narrate the major events in the life of David, the one to whom the composition of a large percentage of the Psalms is ascribed. The specific events alluded to in the superscriptions can readily be located by using a Bible with cross-references.

The superscriptions are indeed a valuable part of the Holy Scriptures. Both internal testimony and external evidence in the form of ancient manuscripts confirm this. So why not let the superscriptions assist you in getting the full impact of the inspired Psalms? You will be spiritually enriched.



● Is it proper for a Christian to wear a wedding ring?—Greece.

Many sincere Christians have asked this question out of a desire to avoid any custom of which God might disapprove. Some of the questioners know that Catholic prelate John H. Newman wrote: "The use of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints, . . . sacerdotal vestments, the tonsure, the ring in marriage, turning to the East, images at a later date, perhaps the ecclesiastical chant, and the Kyrie Eleison, are all of pagan origin, and sanctified by their adoption into the Church." (*An Essay on the Development of the Christian Doctrine*, 1878)* While the facts prove that many of the current religious practices Newman lists definitely were adopted from pagan worship, is that true of the wedding ring?

Actually there are conflicting ideas as to the origin of the wedding ring. Let us give a few examples: "Originally . . . the ring was a fetter, used to bind the captive bride." (*For Richer, for Poorer*) "The ring is a relatively modern substitute for the gold coin or other article of value with which a man literally purchased his wife from her father." (*The Jewish Wedding Book*) "The wedding ring is supposed to be of Roman origin, and to have sprung from the ancient custom of using rings in making agreements." (*American Cyclopædia*) "Various explanations have been given of the connection of the ring with marriage. It would appear that wedding-rings were worn by the Jews prior to Christian times."—*The International Cyclopædia*.

It is thus seen that the precise origin of the wedding ring is uncertain. Even if it were a fact that pagans first used wedding rings, would that rule such out for Christians? Not necessarily. Many of today's articles of clothing and aspects of life originated in pagan lands. The present time divisions of hours, minutes and seconds are based on an early

* This book was first written while Newman was still an Anglican, and was published in 1845. After converting to Catholicism, Newman published a somewhat revised edition in 1878. The next year he was made a Cardinal in the Catholic church.

Babylonian system. Yet, there is no objection to a Christian's using these time divisions, for one's doing so does not involve carrying on false religious practices.

Of course, our concern is greater as regards the use of wedding rings, since this relates, not to minor secular matters, but to the marriage relationship, which the Christian rightly views as sacred before God. Really, the question is not so much whether wedding rings were first used by pagans but whether they were originally used as part of false religious practices and *still retain such religious significance*. As has been shown, the historical evidence does not allow for any definite conclusion on this. What does the Bible say about the use of rings?

The Bible shows that some of God's servants in the past wore rings, even ones that had special meaning attached to them. Wearing a signet ring could indicate that one had received authority to act in behalf of the ruler who owned it. (Gen. 41:42; Num. 31:50; Esther 8:2, 8; Job 42:11, 12; Luke 15:22) So, while wedding rings are not mentioned, these true worshipers clearly did not scruple against using rings for more than mere adornment.

Some persons say that a wedding ring represents one's unending love and devotion in marriage. The increasing divorce rate in many lands where married persons usually wear a wedding ring proves that this meaning is more imagined than real. Nonetheless, for the majority of persons, including Christians, in lands where wedding rings are common, the ring is an outward indication that the wearer is a married person. In other localities the same point is shown in a different way, such as by a woman's wearing a certain style of clothing.

Of course, a wedding ring is by no means a Christian requirement. One Christian might decide not to wear a wedding ring, because of conscience, personal taste, cost, local custom, or some other reason. Yet another Christian might decide to indicate his married status by means of a wedding ring. Hence, in the final analysis the decision is a personal one, to be made in accord with the conscientious views one holds.

● In view of God's law prohibiting the eating of blood, is there any objection to using vitamins containing red bone marrow, desiccated liver and similar organic derivatives?—U.S.A.

God's law on blood, as given to Noah and his family, required that an animal be properly

bled before being used for food. (Gen. 9:3, 4) That requirement also applies to Christians, as shown at Acts 21:25.

To the Jews, under the Law covenant, further details were given, namely: "Whenever your soul craves it you may slaughter, and you must eat meat . . . Only the blood you must not eat. On the earth you should pour it out as water." Also, "You must not eat any fat or any blood at all." (Deut. 12:15, 16; Lev. 3:17) No restriction as to eating fat was stated to Noah, and in the first century C.E., when the Christian governing body restated the prohibition against eating blood, the restriction as to fat was not included. So that applied only to Israel. However, the prohibition against eating blood does apply to Christians, and the details in the Law help us to appreciate its application.

Of course, even proper bleeding does not completely remove every vestige of blood from the muscles and organs of the animals. But as long as an animal has been properly bled, any part of it may be used as food or in other ways.

Though red bone marrow plays a vital role in the formation of blood, this does not make marrow unsuitable for food. It is noteworthy

that the prophet Isaiah refers to "well-oiled dishes filled with marrow" in connection with a "banquet" that Jehovah himself provides for his people.—Isa. 25:6.

This makes it clear that there is no objection to using animal products, provided that God's law respecting blood has been obeyed. If a person has any doubts about whether certain vitamins and other products are produced from animals that have not been properly bled, he would do well to investigate the matter *personally* by writing to the manufacturer of the items in question.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

February 20: Has the King's Secretary Called on You Recently?, ¶1-22. Page 41. Songs to Be Used: 97, 92.

February 27: Has the King's Secretary Called on You Recently?, ¶23-30, and Completing the Work of the King's Secretary, ¶1-12. Page 47. Songs to Be Used: 106, 96.

March 5: Completing the Work of the King's Secretary, ¶13-19, and Declaration Concerning the Divine Name. Page 52. Songs to Be Used: 113, 117.

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