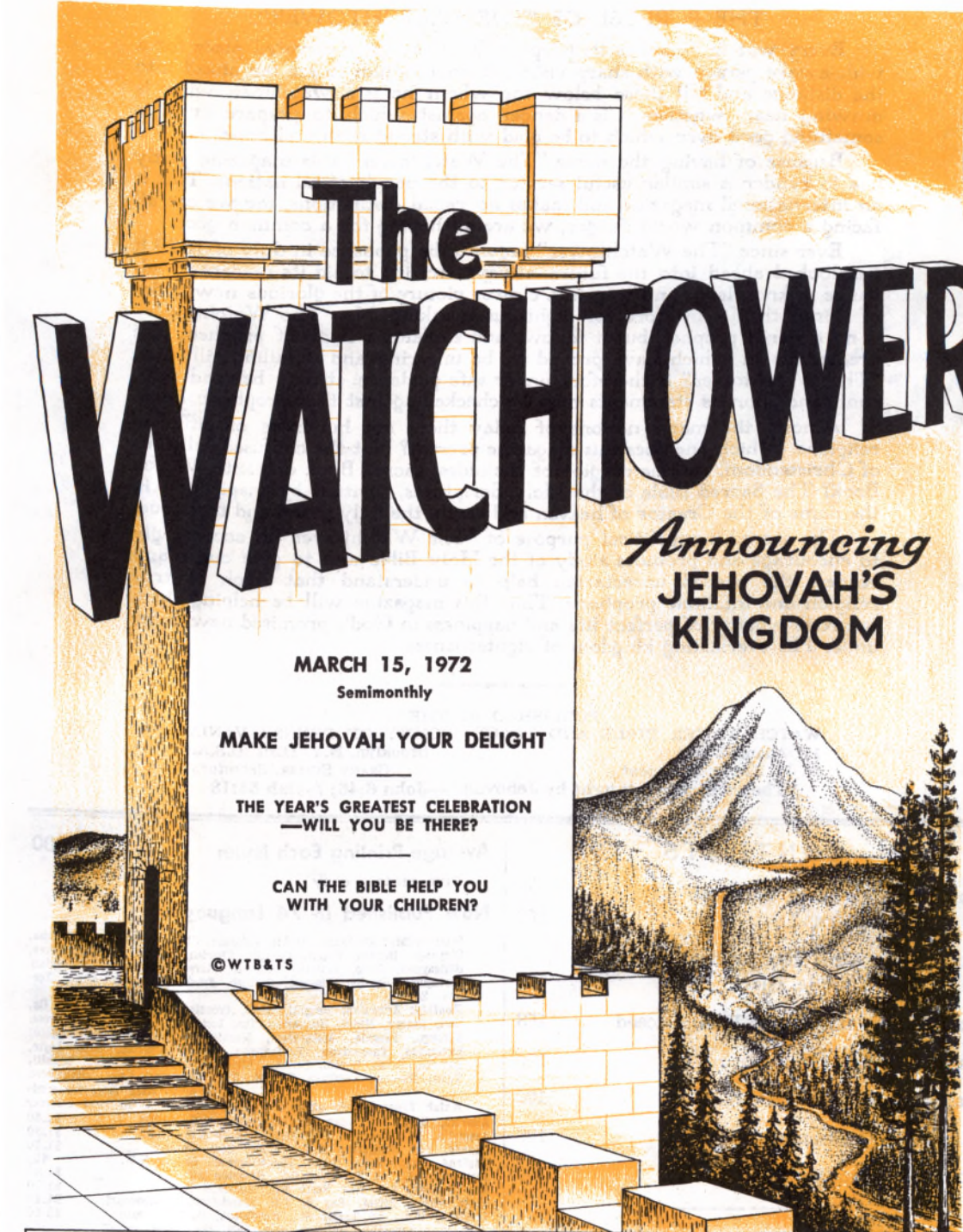




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

MARCH 15, 1972

Semimonthly

MAKE JEHOVAH YOUR DELIGHT

—
**THE YEAR'S GREATEST CELEBRATION
—WILL YOU BE THERE?**

—
**CAN THE BIBLE HELP YOU
WITH YOUR CHILDREN?**

© 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

CONTENTS

Can the Bible Help You with Your Children?	163
The Year's Greatest Celebration—Will You Be There?	165
The Delight of Jehovah Will Succeed	168
Taking Delight in Suffering	174
Make Jehovah Your Delight	180
Wanted—a Messenger	186
Questions from Readers	190

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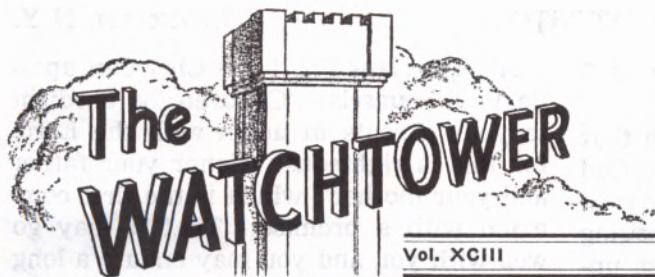
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CAN THE BIBLE HELP YOU WITH YOUR CHILDREN?

"IT'S hopeless!" This is how many parents today feel about the problem of rearing children amid growing delinquency. But is it really hopeless?

No; the Bible can give the needed help. How? First of all, by giving parents reassurance that their role is of divine origin. It reveals that God himself instructed the first human pair to "be fruitful and become many and fill the earth." (Gen. 1:28) It does not present men as mere offshoots of animals by some evolutionary process, hence breeding like animals out of mere instinct. The Bible makes clear that God holds human parents responsible for their offspring, and therefore they can count on God's backing if they sincerely strive to care for that responsibility as unto Him.—Deut. 6:6, 7.

This can make a big difference in parent-child relations. For example, what do you rely on to get respect from your children? Solely the fact that you had a share in giving the child life? Agreed, that should be a powerful reason for meriting respect. (Prov. 23:22) But is just procreation enough to maintain or win your child's respect? Unfortunately there are many things that may weaken respect resting only on that basis.

For one thing a child thinks far more

in terms of the present than of the past. Though obviously knowing that he or she was born, the child just as obviously does not remember that event. Often of greater weight to the child is: What are my parents doing *now* that calls for my loving respect?

Then, too, sooner or later children begin to realize that childbirth *can* result simply from satisfying sexual desire—more or less a "side effect." Thus there are a large number of illegitimate children whose fathers show not the slightest interest in them. "Unwanted" pregnancies among women are equally common. Abortions by the thousands testify eloquently to the attitude of many women (and men as well) toward having children.

Parents may be very conscious of the labor, pain and expense they underwent to bring the child into the world and to this point in life. But they may find they still need to demonstrate to their children that they are really different from the many who procreate but have no genuine love for their offspring. Can the Bible help parents to do this? Yes, it can. How?

The Bible's wholesome viewpoint toward children is well summed up at Psalm 127: 3: "Look! Sons are an inheritance from

Jehovah; the fruitage of the belly is a reward."

Do you wholeheartedly agree with that and feel deeply your responsibility to God to care for your children? Then show your children that you do. Avoid damaging their confidence in your love through unwise remarks or practices. Does a new pregnancy bring open expressions of dismay or annoyance? Then will not the children the parents already have begin to wonder if their parents did not feel the same way before *they* were born? Some parents even talk before their child about what they would have done if the child had not 'come along,' implying their regret over losing freedom to pursue certain personal goals and pleasures. They may lose their child's trust and confidence in the bargain.

To help children to stay confident of the genuineness of their love, parents need to show pleasure in them, not making the children feel that the parental role is viewed as unpleasant and burdensome. But what is the effect if parents rely heavily on "baby-sitters," perhaps right from the child's tender years onward? Or what if the mother takes on secular work when the need is not really great? Does she not give the impression that she finds the job more rewarding and pleasurable than staying home with her child or children? What if the father seems always to be "too busy" or "too tired" when his children seek some of his attention? Should parents who do this be surprised when they find their children developing an increasingly distant attitude? Parents must give their children great attention if they want God's blessing themselves.—Gen. 18:19.

Many parents, however, may feel that they have demonstrated sincere love for their children in the past. Still they feel that their children's respect is waning. Here, too, the Bible can help.

At Ephesians 6:1-4 the Christian apostle Paul counsels: "Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous: 'Honor your father and your mother'; which is the first command with a promise: 'That it may go well with you and you may endure a long time on the earth.' And you, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." What does this tell us?

Your child will have greater reason for respecting *you* and your counsel if he sees clear evidence that you are "in union with the Lord," being a true servant of God and a genuine follower of his Son, a disciple of his. You will also be in position to do the most for your child if you are truly "in union with the Lord."

You may not be the strongest, the wealthiest, the best educated or the most capable person in the world. But if you can, by word and example, convey to your children the knowledge, understanding and wisdom that are to be found in the Bible, there is no person on earth that can give more to your child than that. You will be giving them what they need in order that they "may endure a long time on the earth," yes, may gain eternal life in God's favor. (Eph. 6:3) Moreover, you will positively show yourself to be a parent superior to the vast majority on earth today—for relatively few are willing to take the time, effort and thought to do as the apostle exhorted: "Go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah."—Eph. 6:4.

To do that you need knowledge—accurate knowledge of God's Word. If you sincerely want that knowledge, for your own sake and for the benefit of your children, Jehovah's witnesses will be glad to help you, free of charge. Simply ask them.

The Year's Greatest Celebration

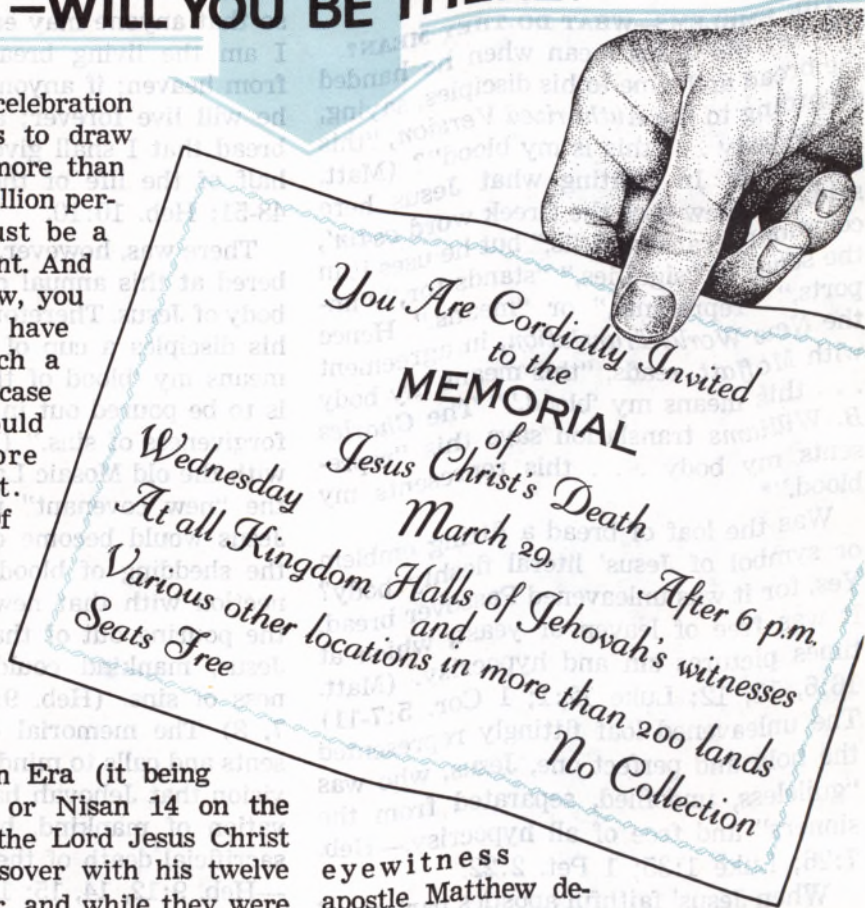
—WILL YOU BE THERE?

ANY formal celebration that expects to draw an attendance of more than three and a half million persons certainly must be a very important event. And this it truly is! Now, you may say that you have never attended such a celebration. In that case you no doubt would like to know more about the event. Who sponsors it? Of what significance is it? Why is it so important to attend?

As a matter of history: In the spring of the year 33 of our Common Era (it being Thursday evening or Nisan 14 on the Jewish calendar), the Lord Jesus Christ celebrated the Passover with his twelve apostles. Thereafter, and while they were still reclining around that Passover table, Jesus instituted something new, something that has since then been observed by his faithful followers down to this day. It is called the "Memorial" or the "Lord's Evening Meal," and it is celebrated annually "in remembrance" of Jesus' ransom sacrifice.—Mark 14:22-26; 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

Some of the details of that historic night 1,939 years ago are of special interest. The

eyewitness apostle Matthew describes for us what happened. "As they continued eating, Jesus took a loaf and, after saying a blessing, he broke it and, giving it to the disciples, he said: 'Take, eat. This means my body.' Also, he took a cup and, having given thanks, he gave it to them, saying: 'Drink out of it, all of you; for this means my "blood of the covenant," which is to be poured out in behalf of many for forgiveness of sins. But I tell you, I will by no means drink henceforth



any of this product of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in the kingdom of my Father.' Finally, after singing praises, they went out to the Mount of Olives."—Matt. 26:26-30.

THE EMBLEMS—WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

What did Jesus mean when he handed the bread and wine to his disciples, saying, according to the *Authorized Version*, "this is my body . . . this is my blood"? (Matt. 26:26, 28) In relating what Jesus here said, Matthew uses the Greek word *es-tin'*, commonly translated "is," but he uses it in the sense of "signifies," "stands for," "imports," "represents," or "means." Hence the *New World Translation*, in agreement with *Moffatt*, reads, "this means my body . . . this means my 'blood.'" The *Charles B. Williams* translation says this "represents my body . . . this represents my blood."*

Was the loaf of bread a fitting emblem or symbol of Jesus' literal fleshly body? Yes, for it was unleavened Passover bread. It was free of leaven or yeast, which at times pictures sin and hypocrisy. (Matt. 16:6, 11, 12; Luke 12:1; 1 Cor. 5:7-11) The unleavened loaf fittingly represented the holy and perfect one, Jesus, who was "guileless, undefiled, separated from the sinners" and free of all hypocrisy.—Heb. 7:26; Luke 1:35; 1 Pet. 2:22.

When Jesus' faithful apostles partook of the bread, they were deriving some nourishment from it. And nourishment is associated with life and existence. Accordingly, acceptance of what the bread represents is comparable to partaking of life-

sustaining food. Hence, with reference to the benefits that the sacrifice of his fleshly body would bring, Jesus said of himself: "I am the bread of life. . . . This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that anyone may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread he will live forever; and, for a fact, the bread that I shall give is my flesh in behalf of the life of the world."—John 6:48-51; Heb. 10:10.

There was, however, more to be remembered at this annual observance than the body of Jesus. Therefore, Jesus next passed his disciples a cup of wine, saying, "this means my 'blood of the covenant,' which is to be poured out in behalf of many for forgiveness of sins." (Matt. 26:27, 28) As with the old Mosaic Law covenant, so also the "new covenant" mediated by Christ Jesus would become operative only with the shedding of blood. Also, and in connection with that new covenant, without the pouring out of that precious blood of Jesus, mankind could have no forgiveness of sins. (Heb. 9:17-20, 22; Ex. 24:7, 8) The memorial cup of wine represents and calls to mind this wonderful provision that Jehovah has made for the salvation of mankind, by and through the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ.—Heb. 9:12, 14, 15; 10:28, 29.

FEW PARTAKERS—WHY?

If you accept the invitation and come to the annual Memorial celebration you will observe that not many, if any in attendance, will partake of the emblematic bread and wine. Last year, for example, throughout the whole world there were on the average only three partakers in every one thousand in attendance. Who, then, is entitled to partake? First of all, a person would not qualify if he is not a baptized worshiper of Jehovah and actively serving

* A footnote on Matthew 26:26 in *The New Testament* by Geo. W. Clark and J. M. Pendleton, first published in 1884 and reprinted in 1947 by The Judson Press, says: "26. *This is my body*: not literally, for Christ was present in his body, and the broken bread was visibly not a part of it. The meaning is, This represents my body. So Jesus calls himself a door (John 10:9), a vine (John 15:1), a star (Rev. 22:16). So Paul says, 'that rock was Christ' (1 Cor. 10:4); 'Agar is Mount Sinai' (Gal. 4:25). Such emblematic expressions are common in all languages, and are easily understood."

as one of his witnesses, in imitation of Christ Jesus, "the Faithful Witness," and his apostles. Does this mean that all of Jehovah's Christian witnesses partake? No. Only a very small percentage of such ones partake of the emblems.—Rev. 1:5; 3:14; John 18:37.

This is understandable in view of what took place when the Memorial was first instituted in 33 C.E. On that occasion there were present only eleven faithful apostles whom Jesus invited to enter into a Kingdom covenant with him. "You are the ones that have stuck with me in my trials; and I make a covenant with you, just as my Father has made a covenant with me, for a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel." Jesus also told them "I am going my way to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am you also may be." (Luke 22:28-30; John 14:1-3; Matt. 19:28) Eventually, those making up this "little flock" of joint heirs and fellow associates of Christ Jesus in the heavens total but 144,000.—Luke 12:32; Rev. 14:1-3.

Today there are only a few thousand of this heaven-bound class remaining on earth, a mere remnant, and these are the only ones entitled to partake of the emblems. In contrast, there is associated with this remnant "a great crowd" of about one and a half million whose hopes are to live on earth forever to be subjects of the Kingdom with its 144,001 rulers. (Rev. 7:9, 10) These many persons with earthly hopes are most happy to attend this annual Memorial observance, for they are interested in the government that will see to it that God's will is done on earth. But, knowing that they are not in the Kingdom covenant, they do not partake of the emblems. In this way they show an enlight-

ened understanding of matters along with due respect for the occasion.

MAKE SURE YOU ARE THERE

Think of it, in less time than one turn of the earth on its axis, people in more than 200 lands, and speaking more than 160 languages, will commemorate this grand observance. Why, in many countries where Jehovah's worship is banned, tens of thousands of persons will keep the feast secretly, doing so at the risk of their freedom and perhaps at the cost of their very lives!

Now, do you think that these people would take such risks for a meal of physical food of which the majority will not even partake? Of course not! The spiritual aspects of this important celebration prompt them to attend. The whole attention of those present will be focused on the Source of life, Jehovah himself, and his grand provision for everlasting life through the ransom sacrifice of his beloved Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The death of that one on a torture stake will be remembered, not only because it provided the ransom for mankind, but also because it demonstrated Jesus' love, devotion and obedience to Jehovah. In this way Jesus proved the Devil a liar in vindication of Jehovah's Word and name.

Therefore, anyone deliberately staying away from this celebration, on March 29, does well to consider this question: If willful disregard of the ancient Passover was punishable by death, would not a more severe punishment be meted out to one who spurns the Lord's Evening Meal, trampling on the provision represented by the bread and wine? Surely you will want to accept the invitation to be present for this celebration and, in faith, accept the provision of Jesus' ransom sacrifice.—Num. 9:13; Heb. 10:26-31.

THE DELIGHT OF JEHOVAH WILL SUCCEED

"In his hand what is the delight of Jehovah will succeed."—Isa. 53:10.

HAVE you ever said: "Oh! that would be delightful, if only I could be sure about it"? Doubtless you have, many times. It may have been some cherished dream of childhood. Perhaps it was something more serious and worth while, your life's ambition and fondest hope—only to realize it was too costly and beyond your reach, resulting in much heartache and wistful longing. Though you may have acknowledged the existence of a Creator, perhaps you have concluded he was too remote to be concerned about you as an individual. Is this a correct conclusion? Might there be sound reasons for thinking otherwise, giving you a fresh outlook and renewed hope?

² Many and varied have been the efforts to solve life's problems. There has been no shortage of remedies promising a solution, put forward by individuals, also by organizations of all kinds. By and large, however, what have been the results? A few have claimed to have found the secret of success, but on what basis? Surely it has often been brought about by shutting oneself off, either literally or figuratively, from the disagreeable things of life, resulting in a self-centered attitude. Do you

think that brings real satisfaction? Others seek a solution by refusing to be bothered about such things. They resent any approach being made, feeling it is an attempt to disturb their way of life. Do you think that is a wise and good attitude to adopt?

³ In contrast, whether we look at the heavens above or the earth beneath, we marvel at the smooth running of things, animate and inanimate. The whole arrangement, whether viewed through a telescope or microscope, or just with the naked eye, causes us greatly to admire the efficiency and beauty of it all. It is both a delight and a success, and we are led to admit, with compelling logic, that there surely must be a grand Designer and Creator. The Book of Visible Creation teaches us that much, but it does not go far enough. It leads us to wonder and inquire if there is some other book that not only gives promise of a satisfactory explanation of the things affecting mankind, but also tells of a solution that we can individually take advantage of, this leading to a delightful and permanent outcome. Is that asking too much?

⁴ Certain books, sponsored by religious

1. What can cause heartache and disappointment, leading to what conclusion?

2. What efforts have been made to solve life's problems? With what results?

3. Where do we find a contrast to man's problems, prompting what inquiries?

4. How is the Bible generally viewed today, and who is responsible for this?

organizations, are held to be inspired, and purport to lay down a way of life resulting in all that is to be desired. But there is only one book, or, more literally, collection of books, that really claims to give, and does give, complete and satisfactory answers to our questions. That book is the Holy Bible. Please do not say you are familiar with it, or at least certain parts, but that at best it has only been a temporary benefit, giving a certain peace of mind and enjoyment. Please also do not be discouraged by the use to which the Bible is put in the churches of Christendom, which use can only be described as an empty formality for the most part. Particularly since World War II, the Bible has been given less and less attention, respect and credit. This is true of those who should be its best friends, the members of Christendom's churches. The same can be said of many books, such as Bible dictionaries and commentaries, which profess to be good friends of the Bible. The modern tendency is to lean more and more toward higher criticism, and to accept human reasoning and opinion, rather than accept the Bible itself as the final authority.

⁵ There is one body of Christian people, however, who stand out in marked contrast to this general trend. Jehovah's witnesses, both in their attitude and course of action, also in their publications, are strong champions of the Bible as being God's Word. They say with conviction, as did Christ Jesus, their Leader: "Your word is truth." They say and believe as did the apostle Paul, that "all Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, . . . for every good work," for meeting every need. Jehovah's witnesses are not a disappointed, frustrated people, and we sincerely invite you, along with them, to consider the good grounds for entertaining and realizing that

which will give you the greatest happiness and certain satisfaction.—John 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; see also 2 Peter 1:21.

⁶ First, we will look at the Creator's purpose as outlined in his Word. We will see how it is being worked out, why it will be accomplished with assured success, and why it can properly be called his delight. This, in turn, will help in building up in your own heart and mind the finest possible desires and aims, coupled with the necessary guidance and assistance to ensure their attainment. Contrary to your present experience, these cherished hopes will not end up in grief and vexation. This does not mean that your course in life henceforth will be easy and plain sailing. Rather, you will be like the man who, before starting on a great project, first sits down and carefully 'calculates the expense,' then decides he is willing to pay the price. You will be like the man who, after years of suffering as a Christian, said: "We do not give up . . . for though the tribulation is momentary and light, it works out for us a glory that is of more and more surpassing weight and is everlasting." Your own purpose in life, being brought into full conformity with the Creator's grand purpose, this is the secret of success for you personally.—Luke 14:28; 2 Cor. 4:16-18.

GOD'S UNFAILING PURPOSE

⁷ Jehovah is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and all things therein, including man. More than just starting them off, however, and leaving them to carry on, he has a lasting purpose in their creation. This is confirmed by what John, in vision, heard those in heaven say: "You are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the pow-

6. (a) On what basis can good expectations be built? (b) Does this mean an easy course, and what is the secret of success?

7. (a) Did God have a purpose in creating man, and how is he created in God's image? (b) How can you benefit from this, and what conditions must be met?

5. Where and how do we find a contrast to the general trend, leading to what expectation?

er, because you created all things, and *because of your will* they existed and were created." (Rev. 4:11) We are not creatures of chance, still less the products of some process of evolution, blind and impersonal. Rather, as the Bible says, man was created "in God's image." (Gen. 1:27) Man possesses a mind and a heart, not controlled automatically by instinct, but capable of independent thinking and reasoning, making plans and decisions, exercising a free will, building up strong desires and motivation. That is why you are capable of exercising the fine qualities of love and loyalty, of devotion and integrity. That is why you are also capable of understanding what God has revealed in his Word respecting his will and purpose, and how you can find achievement and contentment in bringing your own life into complete harmony therewith. True, you cannot acquire that understanding just by a surface reading of the Bible. As Jesus said, these things were "hidden . . . from the wise and intellectual ones," but were "revealed . . . to babes," those who had a sincere, humble, childlike desire to "get the sense of it with their hearts." He encouraged such by saying: "Keep on asking, and it will be given you; keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you."—Matt. 11:25; 13:11-15; Luke 11:9-13; see also 1 Corinthians 1:21; 2:11-16.

⁸ Can God's purpose respecting man and his home be summarized in a few words? Jesus, the Son of God, did so when he gave us a model prayer in these words: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matt. 6:9, 10) From this we learn that God's purpose is centered in his kingdom, which will bring about the ac-

complishment of his will, or purpose, respecting man and his home, and thus His good name will be sanctified. One thing will naturally and logically lead to another, finally resulting in a glorious outcome. To illustrate this, a man or a woman might greatly desire to have and build up a fine home and happy family. This calls for much effort and planning. If successful, they get a good name, bringing them untold joy and peace of mind. They think it well worth whatever sacrifice and cost, even suffering, that are involved. They are glad they determined on such a course. Similarly with Jehovah, only on a much higher and grander scale, and with no possibility of any failure or shortcoming, as with man's schemes and efforts. God does not have to plan ahead, to see if he has the wisdom and strength to carry out his desires. Whatever God determines is carried out completely without a hitch.

⁹ Another factor is involved. In human affairs, a good scheme can fall short, or fail, because of the mistakes, or maybe crooked dealing, on the part of the agent used, on whom much depends. In contrast, God uses a foremost agent who proves trustworthy to the limit. Notice how this, and the foregoing points, are emphasized in God's Word. "Jehovah, the Creator of the extremities of the earth, is a God to time indefinite. He does not tire out or grow weary. There is no searching out of his understanding." "I am the Divine One . . . the One telling from the beginning the finale . . . the One saying, 'My own counsel will stand, and everything that is my delight I shall do.'" And regarding God's "Chief Agent," Paul wrote: "He [God] made known to us the sacred secret of his will. It is according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself for an administration at the full limit of the appointed times, namely, to gather all

8. (a) How does the Lord's Prayer summarize God's purpose? (b) What does this teach us, and how might it be illustrated?

9. How does the Bible strengthen faith in God and in his purpose, also in his "Chief Agent"?

things together again in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth . . . according to the purpose of him who operates all things according to the way his will counsels."—Isa. 40:28; 46:9, 10; Eph. 1:9-11; Heb. 2:10.

¹⁰ Thus we learn that God places the administration of his kingdom in the care of Christ Jesus. "The princely rule will come to be upon his shoulder." Under his direction, all who are willing to conform will be gathered and restored to full harmony with God and his beloved Son. Jehovah will thus build up a united and happy family. He will give them a fine home, not for a few years, but on a paradise earth "standing even to time indefinite," when "death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore."—Isa. 9:6; Eccl. 1:4; Rev. 21:4.

¹¹ You can be sure about this. Why? Because the full limit of the "appointed times" was reached in 1914 C.E., when God installed his Son as king on the heavenly Mount Zion. In proof of this, in that very year, there was the great outbreak of wrath among the nations over the issue of world domination, as foretold at Psalm 2:1-6 and Revelation 11:15-18. Then was fulfilled the message of the one "bringing good news . . . to Zion: 'Your God has become king!' . . . Jehovah gathers back Zion." Since then the gathering has been in full swing. It commenced with those whom John saw, in vision, standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion, the Christian congregation. In fact, the gathering of the remnant of these began in a preliminary way about forty years prior to 1914. However, especially since 1935 there has been the gathering of God's larger family, the "great crowd" having the earthly hope, that John saw after the sealing of the 144,000.—Isa. 52:7, 8; Rev. 7:4, 9; 14:1.

FORMER AND REPURCHASER

¹² Besides the prospect of being a member of that happy family, you can have the delight and thrill of sharing in that gathering work. This will bring you much comfort, and will enable you to help and comfort others. This forms part of the main theme of the latter part of Isaiah's prophecy. Here we find a wealth of information regarding the Kingdom work, and also learn how Jehovah is the Former and Repurchaser of his people. Commencing at Isaiah 40:1, listen to God speaking to his servant: "Comfort, comfort my people . . . Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call out to her that her military service has been fulfilled, that her error has been paid off. For from the hand of Jehovah she has received a full amount for all her sins." The prophecy goes on to tell of a "woman bringing good news for Zion . . . for Jerusalem." Listen to her message, telling of the gathering and comforting that God will carry out through his ruler, Christ Jesus: "Look! The Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself will come even as a strong one, and his arm will be ruling for him. . . . Like a shepherd he will shepherd his own drove. With his arm he will collect together the lambs; and in his bosom he will carry them. Those giving suck he will conduct with care."—Isa. 40:1, 2, 9-11.

¹³ Jehovah further identifies and encourages his servant: "But you, O Israel, are my servant, you, O Jacob, whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend . . . Do not be afraid, for I am with you. . . . I will fortify you. I will really help you. I will really keep fast hold of you with my right hand of righteousness." (Isa. 41:8-10) In passing, note that in addressing God's people, or their capital city, both of their names are often used in a

10. What good things will result from this?

11. What is the evidence that we are at the full limit of the "appointed times"?

12. The latter part of Isaiah's prophecy highlights what theme?

13. (a) How is God's servant further identified? (b) What parallel names are given God's servant and God's city?

parallel way, that is, Jacob and Israel, and Zion and Jerusalem, as at Isaiah 41:14, 27. Remember that (1) Jacob's name was changed to Israel (Gen. 32:28), and (2) that Zion, where was situated the throne, also later the Ark site, came to be a term often applied to the entire city of Jerusalem.—Ps. 2:6; Isa. 8:18.

¹⁴ We also want to remember the general framework within which many prophecies are fulfilled. First, they had a literal fulfillment in their own day. Secondly, they had a later fulfillment when Jesus was on earth, seen in such events as his miraculous birth, the work of John the Baptist, and Jesus' own quotation of a passage referring to his preaching commission. (Isa. 7:14; 40:3; 61:1, 2; Matt. 1:18-23; 3:1-3; Luke 4:17-21) Additionally, Paul and others show that certain prophecies applied to the Christian congregation as a *spiritual* Israel, the real "seed of Abraham my friend." As Paul said: "The children in the flesh are not really the children of God, but the children by the promise [like Isaac] are counted as the seed." He also said: "If you [Christians] belong to Christ, you are really Abraham's seed." (Rom. 9:8; Gal. 3:29) It is essential to accept this inspired guidance when we consider the final and major fulfillment of these prophecies now and in the near future. Only by doing so can you respond to Jehovah's invitation to work with him and his Son. By doing so, you can "become steadfast, unmovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in connection with the Lord."—1 Cor. 15:58.

¹⁵ See in what a full capacity Jehovah reveals himself in this latter part of Isaiah's prophecy. In human procreation, it

is the father who provides the new life. He starts it off, but it is the mother who provides and nourishes the body for that new life, formed within her during pregnancy. Also after birth, it is she who is mainly responsible for its further care and feeding. With Jehovah, however, he is not only the initial Creator of his servant. Speaking to his servant, he refers to himself by seven different titles, as "your Creator . . . your Former . . . your God . . . your Savior . . . the Repurchaser of you people . . . your Holy One . . . your King." He emphasizes his role as Former, saying: "This is what Jehovah has said, your Maker and your Former, who kept helping you even from the belly."—Isa. 43:1, 3, 14, 15; 44:2; see also Isaiah 44:21, 24.

¹⁶ This had a beginning with God's ancient people. Commencing with Jacob's twelve sons, God began to form them as a people, and preserved them during their long stay in Egypt. That period could be likened to a pregnancy, preceding their birth as a nation at Mount Sinai, with the giving of a national code of laws, embodied in the Law covenant. God was also their Repurchaser, delivering his people by force when Pharaoh refused to let them go. In fact, Pharaoh had to pay the price in the death of his firstborn son, also Egypt in the loss of her army at the Red Sea. (Ex. 4:23; Isa. 43:3) In Isaiah's day, seven centuries later, a new situation had arisen, giving Jehovah's titles added significance. Both the kingdoms of Israel and of Judah were guilty of gross idolatry and lawlessness. Judah went into captivity to Babylon, who reckoned to hold them as slaves forever. Jehovah lovingly promised to wipe out the transgressions of his people, declaring himself to be "your Repurchaser and the Former of you from the

14. (a) Prophecy often has what initial, secondary and final fulfillments? (b) How is a spiritual fulfillment seen, and why is this important?
15. In what fullness of capacity does Jehovah reveal himself?

16. (a) How did God early on form and repurchase his people Israel? (b) In this respect, what was the situation in Isaiah's day?

belly." He even foretold long in advance how and by whom this would be done, that he was "the One saying of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd, and all that I delight in he will completely carry out'; even in my saying of Jerusalem, 'She will be rebuilt,' and of the temple, 'You will have your foundation laid.'" (Isa. 44:21-28) The remnant who returned in due course from Babylon had a share in this grand work, and, though many were lacking in faith, what a delight it was to such faithful servants as Zechariah and others to help bring this work to a successful conclusion.—Zech. 4:9, 10.

¹⁷ Like things happened with the early Christian congregation. Commencing with the disciples of John the Baptist, and on through Jesus' ministry, God was preparing and forming a body of people to become a "holy nation," spiritual Israel. (1 Pet. 2:9; Gal. 6:16) The birth of that nation occurred at Pentecost, 33 C.E., when they were brought into the new covenant, and received the outpouring of the holy spirit. Writing to the Romans, Paul showed that these early Christian converts were a further fulfillment of the "remnant" mentioned by Isaiah. He also quoted from Isaiah to show that others, non-Jews, would be added so that "all [spiritual] Israel will be saved."—Rom. 9:27-29; 11:5, 25, 26.

¹⁸ As already indicated, we are now privileged to see and share in the full swing and activity accompanying the final fulfillment of these prophecies. The present-day "remnant" is identified as the remain-

ing members of the Christian congregation. As their Former, Jehovah began a preliminary gathering of these many years prior to 1914. He has also been their Repurchaser. Not only were they "purchased with the blood of his [God's] own Son," but they were repurchased, or bought back, when a further deliverance became necessary in the World War I period. They fell captive to "Babylon the

Great." Though they had mostly come out of Christendom's churches, they retained certain Babylonish traits, such as fear of man and creature worship. This incurred God's displeasure, requiring

them to be disciplined and cleansed. Those true at heart appreciated this, and, when delivered by the Greater Cyrus, Jesus Christ, they rejoiced to exalt God's name and proclaim the Kingdom message fearlessly. Their experience and sentiments were aptly foretold: "I shall thank you, O Jehovah, for although you got incensed at me, your anger gradually turned back, and you proceeded to comfort me. Look! God is my salvation. . . . Give thanks to Jehovah, you people! Call upon his name. Make known among the peoples his dealings. Make mention that his name is put on high. Make melody to Jehovah, for he has done surpassingly. This is made known in all the earth."—Acts 20:28; Rev. 17:5; Isa. 12:1-5.

¹⁹ This has been made known in all the earth. As a result, many others, not spiritual Israelites, have responded to the good news. All of these, both the remnant and the "great crowd," have been repurchased and formed into "one flock, [under] one

THE NEXT ISSUE

- "Exert Yourselves Vigorously"!
- Does Sexual Morality Make Sense?
- "Good Health to You!"

17. What similarly happened with the early Christian congregation?

18. How has Jehovah been the Former and Repurchaser of his present-day people?

19. (a) What fine expansion has resulted from this? (b) Wherein can we find delight and success?

shepherd," Christ Jesus. (John 10:16) This is the happy experience of Jehovah's witnesses. Before our very eyes we can see the Creator's purpose being worked out with complete success, bringing great delight to him, and giving delight and comfort to those gathered in union with God's reigning king, Christ Jesus. It is just as Jehovah promised: "It [my word] will not return to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which I have delighted,

and it will have certain success in that for which I have sent it."—Isa. 55:11.

²⁰ Before considering further how you can identify your own purpose in life with that of the Creator, and share in the same assurance of success, we want to take a closer look at a certain part of Isaiah's prophecy that poses a problem. It concerns suffering, yet at the same time it is spoken of as a delight.

20. What problem invites our attention?

TAKING DELIGHT

IN SUFFERING

ISAIAH was inspired to record many prophecies concerning Jehovah's servant, who was and is Christ Jesus, the Messiah. The entire fifty-third chapter of Isaiah tells of the Messiah's suffering, death and burial. That this is the inspired application of this chapter is generally recognized, because of the many quotations made from it in the Greek Scriptures. The opening words of Isaiah 53:1 are quoted by John at John 12:37, 38, and, as reported at Luke 22:37, Jesus applied one of the closing expressions of Isaiah 53:12 to himself.

² At Isaiah 53:10 we read: "But Jehovah himself took delight in crushing him; he made him sick." Just taking this ex-

pression by itself, a thing that is often done by Christendom's teachers, a critic or commentator might exclaim: "What a sadistic God, to take delight in crushing his own Son!" We must keep in mind, however, that when seeking the understanding of any part of God's Word, it is of the utmost importance to look carefully at the context. Consider not only the immediate setting, but also any other related passages, knowing that the true understanding will be in harmony with all such references; never at variance. It is the widespread failure to observe this guiding principle that causes many interpretations to be put forward that make the Bible appear to contradict itself.

³ In this instance, notice the interesting enlightenment that we get when reading the entire verse: "But Jehovah himself

1. To whom does Isaiah, chapter 53, apply, and how can this be proved?

2. (a) What wrong conclusion might be reached from the first part of Isaiah 53:10? (b) What rule must be followed in seeking the right understanding of any scripture?

3. (a) For Jehovah's delight to succeed, what must first be done? (b) Why could Jehovah take delight in crushing his servant?

took delight in crushing him; he made him sick. If you will set his soul as a guilt offering, he will see his offspring, he will prolong his days, and in his hand what is the delight of Jehovah will succeed." (Isa. 53:10) Did you notice the connection between the two uses of the word "delight"? You cannot afford to separate them. The "delight of Jehovah" is centered in his kingdom. This will cause his will, or good pleasure, to be carried out successfully. First of all, however, man's guilt, due to inherited sin, must be set aside in a way that would meet the requirements of God's justice. This would open the way to restore a righteous standing before God for those who would gratefully accept such a merciful provision. Not one of Adam's sons could make such a provision. Jehovah therefore arranged for his servant, his Son, to come to earth and give himself a "corresponding ransom for all." Yes, "Christ was offered once for all time to bear the sins of many." Moreover, it was Jehovah's good pleasure to provide a tested, loyal servant, who would be fully qualified to carry out all the fine objectives of God's kingdom. This would involve the work and the duties of a king, also that of a high priest who could intercede, or interpose, on behalf of fallen man. Who better than the one who became the 'propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the whole world'? Being "made perfect" for such an onerous position required that he be tested to the limit. He "learned obedience from the things he suffered." Because there was a glorious and delightful end in view, it helps us to understand why Jehovah "took delight in crushing" his servant. It was not a case of the end justifying the means. The means in themselves, though so painful, were worthy means, as we shall see more fully.—1 Tim. 2:6; Heb. 9:28; 1 John 2:2; Heb. 5:8-10; Rom. 3:25, 26.

⁴ Immediately, though, see how a further look at the context confirms the foregoing scriptures and comments, showing also that Jehovah's servant would be satisfied with the outcome. "Because of the trouble of his soul he will see, he will be satisfied. By means of his knowledge the righteous one, my servant, will bring a righteous standing to many people; and their errors he himself will bear. . . . he himself carried the very sin of many people, and for the transgressors he proceeded to interpose."—Isa. 53:11, 12.

⁵ Though it is agreed that Jehovah inspired the prophetic record concerning his delight in determining the course and suffering of his servant, the question might arise as to the servant's own view of the matter. Was the suffering forced on him? Did Jesus, God's servant, know from the start of his ministry the kind of suffering that was in store for him? Did he foreknow the crushing ordeal that would terminate his life on earth? If so, did he express his inner feelings, his mental attitude, in this regard?

⁶ Before noting what Jesus himself said about this, we know that, like Timothy, he had been taught the holy writings from infancy, and, in addition, retained them with a perfect memory. He would be told what the angel Gabriel said to his mother at the time of her conception, also Simeon's inspired word that a long sword would be run through her on his account. At the age of twelve, his words show that his mind and heart were centered on his true Father, and on his Father's house. (2 Tim. 3:15; Luke 1:30-35; 2:34, 35, 49) When coming to John to be baptized, and possibly long before that, he realized the purpose of his coming to earth to provide the all-sufficient sin offering in fulfillment of

4. How does the context give further support to this view?

5. What questions arise as to Jesus' own view of his sufferings?

6. In considering Jesus' background, what do we learn?

the typical animal sacrifices under the Law. He would say, as foretold: "To do your will, O my God, I have delighted." (Ps. 40:6-8; see also Hebrews 10:5-9.) He would appreciate the significance of John the Baptist's introduction of him: "See, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." Early in his ministry, at the first cleansing of his Father's house, he indicated his own violent death, also his resurrection. Near the close of his ministry, he gave very clear answers to the foregoing questions, and these deserve our close consideration.—John 1:29; 2:18-22.

JESUS' MENTAL ATTITUDE

⁷ With this background in mind, we can appreciate the depth of meaning in what Jesus said to Andrew and Philip. The occasion was when, after his entry into Jerusalem as king, causing much attention, also intense annoyance to the Pharisees, there were some Greeks who had come for the Passover festival, and who asked to see Jesus. (John 12:20-22) But Jesus knew that at this Passover, only few days ahead, he would have to face and endure the terrible weight of all the suffering foretold concerning him, ending with the agonizing death on the torture stake. This was no time to court popularity, or satisfy some passing interest. Instead, in a few words, he disclosed to Andrew and Philip exactly what was ahead of him, how he viewed it and felt about it, also mentioned underlying principles that affect every one of us. This is what Jesus said:

⁸ "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified. Most truly I say to you, Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains just one grain; but if it dies, it then bears much fruit. He that is fond of his soul destroys it, but

he that hates his soul in this world will safeguard it for everlasting life. If anyone would minister to me, let him follow me, and where I am there my minister will be also. If anyone would minister to me, the Father will honor him. Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me out of this hour. Nevertheless, this is why I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.' Therefore a voice came out of heaven: 'I both glorified it and will glorify it again.'"—John 12:23-28.

⁹ Beyond any doubt, Jesus was keenly aware of what was ahead of him. It gave him a foretaste of that vivid prophetic word at Psalm 116:3: "The ropes of death encircled me and the distressing circumstances of Sheol themselves found me. Distress and grief I kept finding." If only it could be avoided! But, no, as he said: "This is why I have come to this hour." He was in full agreement with the entire process, every part of it. His opening and closing words clearly prove this, mentioning first his own glorification, then leading to the final glorifying of his Father's name. And what a strength and comfort it must have been to hear immediately and audibly his Father's confirmation on this, the main issue: "I both glorified it [my name] and will glorify it again." From the beginning to the end of his ministry, Jesus was determined to pursue the course set out for him. At the start, he overcame John's resistance to his 'being baptized,' and, when approaching the end, "he firmly set his face to go to Jerusalem." In the same connections, he again had direct and wonderful evidence of his Father's approval. He proved that his mental attitude was exactly as foretold in that same 116th Psalm: "My vows I shall pay to Jehovah, yes, in front of all his people." —Matt. 3:13-17; Luke 9:28-35, 51; Ps. 116:14, 18.

7. How did Jesus respond to the Greeks' request to see him, and why so?

8. What did Jesus say in his explanation to Andrew and Philip?

9. How did Jesus show his full agreement with God's purpose for him?

¹⁰ Next, notice the fine reasoning and apt illustration, showing the necessity for a sacrificial death, mentioned at John 12: 24, 25. A grain of wheat cannot be fruitful in providing more grains unless it is put in the ground and dies. This had a special application in the case of Jesus. If he held on to his human life selfishly, going contrary to his Father's will, he would lose out. Besides, he could only confer temporary benefits to others. If, however, he was willing to lay down his soul, his life, "in this world," as prescribed by the Great Sower, Jehovah, he would not only "safeguard it for everlasting life" in God's new order, but could become the 'Father for eternity' to countless others. As Paul said: "For to this end Christ died and came to life again, that he might be Lord over both the dead and the living." —Isa. 9:6; Rom. 14:9.

¹¹ It is evident, however, by what Jesus said next, at John 12:26, regarding those who would minister to him, that he was not thinking only of himself. True, he knew he was going to die a sacrificial death on a torture stake, with a unique merit attached to such a sacrifice. But he also knew that it was his Father's good pleasure that he should have close, footstep followers, or disciples. These would be invited to pursue a similar course of disowning themselves, picking up the torture stake, and following him continually. This is confirmed by what Jesus said earlier, just before his transfiguration, and recorded in almost identical wording by each of the other Gospel writers: "If anyone wants to come after me, let him disown himself and pick up his torture stake and continually follow me. For whoever wants to save his soul will lose it; but whoever loses his soul for my sake will find it."

10. What application to himself did Jesus make respecting a grain of wheat?

11. In this regard, how do we know that Jesus was not thinking only of himself?

—Matt. 16:24-27; Mark 8:34-38; Luke 9: 23-26.

¹² In making a strong appeal to these followers, note Paul's fine description of the mental attitude of Christ Jesus. Note, too, how Paul shows that, as a direct result of Christ's suffering, "in his [Christ's] hand what is the delight of Jehovah will succeed." (Isa. 53:10) Paul wrote: "Keep this mental attitude in you that was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he was existing in God's form, gave no consideration to a seizure, namely, that he should be equal to God. No, but he emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men. More than that, when he found himself in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake. For this very reason also God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground, and every tongue should openly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2:5-11.

¹³ How can we get and keep the same mental attitude that Jesus had, and which he proved by his entire course? How did Jesus himself maintain such a fine attitude of mind and heart? Surely the answer is that he was careful to get the right viewpoint on everything affecting his life and ministry. He obtained this by thoroughly absorbing his Father's Word, as foretold concerning him: "Your law is within my inward parts." It was this that enabled him to say at the beginning of his ministry and trialsome course: "To do

12. (a) How does Paul describe Jesus' mental attitude? (b) What fine result does Paul then point out?

13. What was necessary in order for Jesus to get and maintain the right attitude?

your will, O my God, I have delighted."
—Ps. 40:8.

¹⁴ The same is true of us. The right viewpoint is essential if we are to build up and maintain the right mental attitude. Conversely, the wrong viewpoint, though held in sincerity, will likely lead to a wrong attitude. This is what happened with Eve. Notice the opening words, stressing God's bounty and generosity, when he "laid this command upon the man: 'From every tree of the garden you may eat to satisfaction.'" Then came the one exception: "But as for the tree of the knowledge of good and bad you must not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will positively die." Now notice Satan's opening words, spoken through the serpent, when it "began to say to the woman: 'Is it really so that God said you must *not* eat from every tree of the garden?'" Why, it was just the opposite to what God had said! By inference, in question form, it was really the first lie, giving a false viewpoint, creating the atmosphere of doubt, leading to the first direct lie: "You positively will not die." (Gen. 2:16, 17; 3:1-5) Her allowing herself to be "thoroughly deceived" quickly led to a bad attitude, and thus Eve "came to be in transgression." We should take this as a pointed warning, putting us on guard, as Paul said: "I am afraid that somehow, as the serpent seduced Eve by its cunning, your minds might be corrupted away from the sincerity and the chastity that are due the Christ."—1 Tim. 2:14; 2 Cor. 11:3.

REJOICE TO SHARE IN CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS

¹⁵ This warning is particularly necessary where suffering is involved, which is generally looked upon as something to be

avoided at all costs. This is the main argument in Isaiah, chapter 53. A suffering Messiah? Not for the Jews, either then or now. "He was despised and was avoided by men, a man meant for pains and for having acquaintance with sickness. . . . we ourselves accounted him as plagued, stricken by God and afflicted." (Isa. 53: 3, 4) They looked at the Messiah from a selfish, human viewpoint, leading to an attitude of hate, even of murder. In contrast, what a blessing it is when we get Jehovah's viewpoint, and learn why he took delight in his Son's willing sacrifice and suffering. We can say with deep appreciation and gratitude: "Truly our sicknesses were what he himself carried; and as for our pains, he bore them. . . . he was being pierced for our transgression; he was being crushed for our errors."—Isa. 53:4-6.

¹⁶ However, those forming the Christian congregation not only benefit from Christ's sufferings, they are invited to share in them. Indeed, it is essential that they should. As Paul explains: "It was fitting . . . in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Chief Agent of their salvation perfect through sufferings," and, further, that "he was obliged to become like his 'brothers' in all respects, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest . . . for in that he himself has suffered when being put to the test, he is able to come to the aid of those who are being put to the test." (Heb. 2:10, 17, 18) Ah, yes, how fitting and necessary that there should be similar testing and perfecting for all who share as kings and priests with the Chief Agent in his heavenly throne. (Rev. 20:6) Such severe testing involves pressure, discipline, endurance, cleansing and refining, all of which entail suffering. As Paul later says: "Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, as

14. (a) Does the same apply to us? (b) In Eve's case, how was the wrong viewpoint given, leading to what bad attitude?

15. How does Isaiah, chapter 53, show the contrast between the two viewpoints respecting God's servant?

16. (a) Why is it necessary for the Christian congregation to share Christ's sufferings? (b) Why should we not give out when being disciplined?

we look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus." He then emphasizes the right viewpoint: "'Do not belittle the discipline from Jehovah, neither give out when you are corrected by him; for whom Jehovah loves he disciplines; in fact, he scourges every one whom he receives as a son.' . . . True, no discipline seems for the present to be joyous, but grievous; yet afterward to those who have been trained by it it yields peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness."—Heb. 12:1-11.

¹⁷ The next Bible writer, James, confirms this, saying: "Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you meet with various trials, knowing as you do that this tested quality of your faith works out endurance. But let endurance have its work complete, that you may be complete and sound in all respects, not lacking in anything." (Jas. 1:2-4) 'Rejoice,' no, not in the trial itself, but in the end result if taken the right way. Peter, too, confirms this in his first letter, and, after warning: "Let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a busybody in other people's matters," he concludes: "Let those who are suffering in harmony with the will of God keep on commending their souls to a faithful Creator while they are doing good."—1 Pet. 1:6, 7; 4:15, 19.

¹⁸ It is evident that God foreknew and predetermined just how much suffering and tribulation would be needed in the case of Christ and his congregation. Paul, for one, was willing to undergo his share, as he said: "I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for you, and I, in my turn, am filling up what is lacking of the tribulations of the Christ in my flesh on behalf of his body, which is the congregation." His own record testifies how much he endured. (Col. 1:24; 2 Cor. 11:23-27) Neither was

he taken unawares, as we know from what the Lord said to Ananias: "I shall show him [Paul] plainly how many things he must suffer for my name."—Acts 9:16.

¹⁹ Though the foregoing scriptures have their primary application to the Christian congregation, the underlying principles also apply to the present "great crowd" of "other sheep." Much of the suffering is due to the opposition from Satan's world. As it nears its end the opposition increases. As Jesus said to his disciples: "You will be objects of hatred by all the nations on account of my name," and added: "But he that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved." He followed this with the illustration of the sheep and goats, showing that the "sheep" are those who openly identify themselves with, and minister to, Christ's "brothers" in their suffering hunger, sickness and imprisonment.—Matt. 24:9-13; 25:35-40.

²⁰ In this Scriptural view of suffering, can we include all the sorrow and distress due to sickness and bereavement, and other things common to all mankind? Yes, if taken as an opportunity for working out greater endurance, faith and integrity. The Scriptural rule for the Christian is to "do all things for God's glory," even eating and drinking, everything that makes up daily life. (1 Cor. 10:31) Hence, on this basis, all such suffering provides a good opportunity for taking God's side of the great issue raised by Satan.—Job 1:8-11; 2:3-5.

²¹ We can therefore learn how to take delight in suffering, whether viewed collectively or individually. Collectively, we rejoice to be living in the day when Jehovah, through his "messenger of the cove-

17. How do James and Peter confirm this?

18. How did Paul fill up what was lacking respecting Christ's sufferings?

19. Do the present "great crowd" of "other sheep" share in the suffering, and to what end?

20. What view should the Christian take of suffering due to distress caused by sickness, and so forth?

21. How can we take delight in suffering, collectively and individually?

nant," has been "like the fire of a refiner and like the lye of laundrymen" to the anointed remnant and has thereby fulfilled the promise that "they will certainly become to Jehovah people presenting a gift offering in righteousness." Individually,

you can, like Job, learn by "the suffering of evil and the exercising of patience," and, not only learn, but actually experience that "Jehovah is very tender in affection and merciful."—Mal. 3:1-4; Jas. 5:10, 11.

MAKE JEHOVAH YOUR DELIGHT

THERE is much in God's Word, the Bible, to encourage and guide us in identifying our aim and purpose in life with Jehovah and his purpose, with the certainty of a successful outcome. This not only gives us a sure hope for the future, but contributes to our present happiness and peace of mind, despite the sufferings and trials that may be involved. It makes life worth living, in making Jehovah our delight.

² There are two main ways in which we can thus identify ourselves. These are (1) by bringing our own personality and conduct into full harmony with Jehovah and his requirements, and (2) by pursuing those objectives and activities that are pleasing to him. We must follow Jesus' example, and "always do the things pleasing to him [Jehovah]," and must "work the works" of Jehovah while there is opportunity. (John 8:29; 9:4) As an illustration, consider a physician. In the first place, he must be a man of integrity and good principles. His conduct, including his manner and appearance, must be up to the recognized standard of his profession. Ad-

ditionally, his actual work as a physician, whether in private practice or with a hospital or public institution, must be for the advancement, and in the best interests, of the cause to which he is attached. It often happens that if a person has taken up a responsible position in connection with a certain cause, and is keen to advance it, then that comes first in his life. Since the same priority should be given to the sacred cause of which Jehovah himself is the Promoter, we will consider that aspect first.

³ The Scriptures clearly show that the righteous cause that God is promoting is his kingdom. It is by far the most worthy cause of all, and will bring about the vindication and sanctification of his name, Jehovah. Christ Jesus, by God's appointment, is the king of that kingdom. His enthronement took place in heaven in 1914 C.E. The foretold waiting period had expired, and then was fulfilled the prophecy at Psalm 110:2: "The rod of your strength Jehovah will send out of Zion, saying: 'Go subduing in the midst of your enemies.'" What a delightful moment that must have been to the king and all the holy angels with him! (Matt. 25:31) Similar to the

1. How can we get proper guidance in seeking to pursue a right purpose?

2. (a) In what two ways can we identify ourselves with God and his purpose? (b) What illustration helps us in this regard, and how so?

3. (a) How will God's kingdom prove to be the most worthy cause? (b) From what center does the Kingdom operate, in David's day and ours?

expression at Psalm 2:6, Zion is where the king is enthroned, and is the center of operations. To David, of course, this meant the literal city of Zion, or Jerusalem, where he reigned for 33 years. (1 Ki. 2:11) He was the writer of these psalms, and they had a literal fulfillment during his kingship, when all the land promised to his forefather Abraham came under his rule. In the major fulfillment, however, the Greater David is Christ Jesus, David's permanent heir. He reigns in the heavenly "Mount Zion," and standing there with him are the 144,000 who make up the Christian congregation. As already mentioned, there is a remnant of this congregation still on earth, forming the Zion class, and in whom we can see the modern fulfillment of the many grand promises and prophecies featuring Zion. We have considered a few of these, and now wish to pay attention to others that throw much light on the immediate outworking of Jehovah's purpose, and show how we can identify ourselves with it.—Rev. 14:1.

MY DELIGHT IS IN HER

* Psalm 110, similar to Psalm 2, tells in a striking way the primary objective of God's anointed king. For long enough now Jehovah's enemies have greatly reproached his name. In defiance, they are "massed together as one against Jehovah and against his anointed one." The time has come for those enemies to be subdued. "Jehovah himself at your [Christ Jesus'] right hand will certainly break kings to pieces on the day of his anger. He will execute judgment among the nations; he will cause a fullness of dead bodies." However, before this final execution, a final appeal and warning is given to all opposers to subject themselves to Jehovah, and to "kiss

the son [in fealty], that He [Jehovah] may not become incensed and you may not perish from the way, for his anger flares up easily [when the time limit is reached]."—Ps. 2:2, 12; 110:5, 6.

* Jehovah's witnesses count it a great privilege and a delight to share in this work. For one thing, it openly identifies them as being on Jehovah's side, and against his enemies. It is evidence that, like God's Son, they love righteousness and hate lawlessness. (Heb. 1:9) Furthermore, it attracts favorable attention on the part of those who "are sighing and groaning over all the detestable things that are being done" in Christendom and all of Satan's system of things. (Ezek. 9:4) The work is not easy, but we will see how Jehovah has built up, fortified and equipped his servants for it. For long enough Jehovah's enemies have oppressed Zion and her children, but now her harsh 'military service has been fulfilled, and her error has been paid off.'—Isa. 40:1, 2.

* See, now, how that early on in Isaiah's prophecy we find a most encouraging vision of the Zion, the "heavenly Jerusalem," enjoying God's favor. She is referred to as "the mountain of the house of Jehovah . . . firmly established above the top of the mountains." With what result? "And many peoples will certainly go and say: 'Come, you people, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will instruct us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths.' For out of Zion law will go forth, and the word of Jehovah out of Jerusalem." What a delightful vision! Would you not like to join that happy crowd going up to Jehovah's house (his spiritual temple), and invite others to go along with you?—Isa. 2:1-3.

5. How do Jehovah's witnesses view their commission, and why so?

6. What encouraging vision was given to Isaiah, prompting what participation?

4. What is the primary objective of God's anointed king, following what warning?

⁷ Turning toward the end of Isaiah's book, we read many prophecies where repeatedly Zion's role is depicted in the most glowing terms. "For Jehovah will certainly comfort Zion. He will for certain comfort all her devastated places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert plain like the garden of Jehovah. Exultation and rejoicing themselves will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of melody." (Isa. 51:3) An inviting picture of Zion once again productive and prosperous, and this is certainly true of God's dedicated people today. You are invited to share in this, and in the exultation and rejoicing experienced by Jehovah's witnesses. In the next chapter, the prophecy speaks excitedly of the stirring message: "Wake up, wake up, put on your strength, O Zion! Put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city!" She hears the "good news of something better, the one publishing salvation, the one saying to Zion: 'Your God has become king!'" With what response? "Listen! Your own watchmen have raised their voice. In unison they keep crying out joyfully; for it will be eye into eye that they will see when Jehovah gathers back Zion." Today's "watchmen," the older men of the anointed Christian congregation, on the lookout, are likewise united in "telling you all the counsel of God," explaining the precious truths of God's Word and their present-day application. Why not follow the fine lead given by these older men, and share with them in 'crying out joyfully' the good news of God's kingdom now established? The work of declaring the Kingdom message is not limited to within the city walls, just to those already in God's organization. The prophecy continues: "Jehovah has bared his holy arm be-

fore the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth must see the salvation of our God."—Isa. 52:1, 7-10; Acts 20:27; Matt. 24:14.

⁸ In Isaiah, chapter 54, further encouragement is given to Zion, though from a different angle. Jehovah addresses Zion as her "husbandly owner," and tells what the restoration of his favor will mean to her remnant on earth. "Cry out joyfully, you barren woman that did not give birth! . . . for the sons of the desolated one are more numerous than the sons of the woman with a husbandly owner. . . . For to the right and to the left you will break forth, and your own offspring will take possession even of nations, and they will inhabit even the desolated cities." The reason for this dramatic change is then given: "For your Grand Maker is your husbandly owner, Jehovah of armies being his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Repurchaser. . . . For a little moment I left you entirely, but with great mercies I shall collect you together. With a flood of indignation I concealed my face from you for but a moment, but with loving-kindness to time indefinite I will have mercy upon you." This grand reversal of conditions is the thrilling experience of the anointed remnant today, who are seeing the ever-increasing numbers of "other sheep" flocking into the theocratic organization. They are sharing in the promise given: "And all your sons will be persons taught by Jehovah, and the peace of your sons will be abundant." This instruction, from Jehovah's Word and through his organization, leads to another fine promise: "Any weapon whatever that will be formed against you will have no success, and any tongue at all that will rise up against you in the judgment you will condemn."—Isa. 54:1-8, 13, 17; see also Isaiah 49:14-21.

7. (a) How does Isaiah 51:3 give an inviting picture? (b) What rousing call does Zion hear, and how does she respond? (c) In what way, and to what extent, can you share in this response?

8. (a) How does Jehovah address Zion at Isaiah 54:1-8, promising her what? (b) What further promises does this lead to?

⁹ Are you enjoying the benefit of these good things? You can, for they are not limited to the spiritual Israelites, whose "citizenship exists in the heavens," in the heavenly Zion. Why not identify yourself with the "foreigners," by fulfilling the conditions mentioned concerning them at Isaiah 56:6, 7: "And the foreigners that have joined themselves to Jehovah to minister to him and to love the name of Jehovah, in order to become servants to him . . . I will also bring them to my holy mountain and make them rejoice inside my house of prayer. . . . For my own house will be called even a house of prayer for all the peoples."—Phil. 3:20.

¹⁰ As we read on, the prospect for Zion becomes more inviting. After giving the assurance: "My spirit that is upon you and my words that I have put in your mouth—they will not be removed . . . from now on even to time indefinite," then Jehovah gives a clarion call to Zion. It is the call that she has longed to hear, the realization of which far exceeds her anticipations. Listen as it rings in her ears: "Arise, O woman, shed forth light, for your light has come and upon you the very glory of Jehovah has shone forth. For, look! darkness itself will cover the earth, and thick gloom the national groups; but upon you Jehovah will shine forth, and upon you his own glory will be seen. And nations will certainly go to your light, and kings to the brightness of your shining forth." At last Zion takes her rightful place as the duly appointed 'administration to gather all things together again in the Christ.' (Eph. 1:10) Yes, here they come! "Raise your eyes all around and see! They have all of them been collected together; they have come to you." Besides personnel, other resources come in

abundance: "At that time you will see and certainly become radiant . . . because to you the wealthiness of the sea will direct itself; the very resources of the nations will come to you." Again "foreigners" are mentioned, who "will actually build your walls" and "will be your farmers and your vinedressers." Greatly improved theocratic conditions are brought into the visible earthly organization that represents Zion: "Instead of the copper I shall bring in gold, and instead of the iron I shall bring in silver, . . . and I will appoint peace as your overseers and righteousness as your task assigners." The increase is made certain: "The little one himself will become a thousand, and the small one a mighty nation. I myself, Jehovah, shall speed it up in its own time."—Isa. 59:21; 60:1-5, 10, 17, 22; 61:5.

¹¹ And now comes the climax! "And the nations will certainly see your righteousness, O woman, and all kings your glory. And you will actually be called by a new name, which the very mouth of Jehovah will designate. . . . No more will you be said to be a woman left entirely; and your own land will no more be said to be desolate; but you yourself will be called My Delight Is in Her [Hephzibah], and your land Owned as a Wife. For Jehovah will have taken delight in you, and your own land will be owned as a wife." (Isa. 62:2-4) This new name signifies a closer and deeper relationship with Jehovah. For him to take such a delight in his people is indeed wonderful. This is no mere wishful thinking. Although it is almost too good to be true, Jehovah's witnesses are actually experiencing all these fine things. They are saying as was foretold: "When Jehovah gathered back the captive ones of Zion, we became like those who were dreaming. At that time our mouth came

9. Though not a spiritual Israelite, what privilege can you have as a 'foreigner'?

10. (a) What is Zion's rightful place, and how is it depicted? (b) How are the many resulting blessings described?

11. (a) Isaiah then tells of what grand climax? (b) In what way are Jehovah's witnesses experiencing these good things?

to be filled with laughter, and our tongue with a joyful cry. At that time they proceeded to say among the nations: 'Jehovah has done a great thing in what he has done with them.' Jehovah has done a great thing in what he has done with us. We have become joyful." They give all the credit to Jehovah, and, as foretold, pray to him for continued success: "This has come to be from Jehovah himself; it is wonderful in our eyes. This is the day that Jehovah has made; we will be joyful and rejoice in it. Ah, now, Jehovah, do save, please! Ah, now, Jehovah, do grant success, please!"—Ps. 126:1-3; 118:23-25.

¹² After reviewing these scriptures, what stronger inducement could you have for identifying yourself with heavenly Zion, and helping to advance its sacred Kingdom cause? The time is short, the work is urgent, but you are not being conscripted. When Zion's king is told to "go subduing in the midst of your enemies," note what immediately follows: "Your people will offer themselves *willingly* on the day of your military force. In the splendors of holiness, from the womb of the dawn, you have your company of young men just like dewdrops." (Ps. 110:2, 3) It is truly a delight to be numbered with this people as a willing volunteer. Is that your desire?

YOUR HEART'S DESIRE GRANTED

¹³ King David had a great desire. He set his heart on it as a longed-for delight. This is how he expressed himself about it:

12. The scriptures considered should arouse what desire, and how should the response be made?

13. How did David express his heart's longing, and with what intensity of feeling?

"One thing I have asked from Jehovah—it is what I shall look for, that I may dwell in the house of Jehovah all the days of my life, to behold the pleasantness of Jehovah and to look with appreciation upon his temple." (Ps. 27:4) Other versions render the last expression: "to inquire in his temple," but David desired

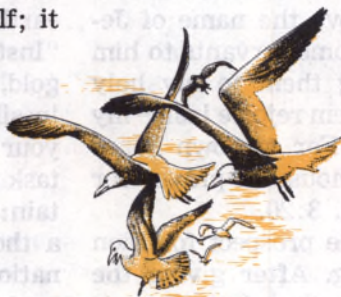
more than this. The Hebrew verb, *ba-qar*, basically, means to slit; to divide. It took on the meaning of scrutinizing.* The psalmist uses it in the sense of seeing with pleasure or delight. For an example of contem-

plating, how do sea gulls regard a field that is being cultivated? If near the sea, there is often an excited crowd of these birds closely following the plow, regardless of a noisy tractor. The air is filled with their wings and sharp cries. Those birds surely "look with appreciation" on every worm and grub that is made to appear.

¹⁴ David showed the same eager spirit. Being of the tribe of Judah, he could never render priestly or Levitical service at the temple. In fact, it was not even built during his reign, though it seems that the tent housing the Ark was at times called a temple. (1 Sam. 1:9) However, he always rejoiced to join with others when they were saying: "To the house of Jehovah let us go." (Ps. 122:1) You, too, can have and manifest the same eager spirit of devotion. Jehovah will grant your desire. He has made it possible for you to join with the

* See page 144, column 2, of *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* by Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner.

14. Should all true Christians have a similar desire, and with what assurance of it being granted?



"great crowd," who have "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. That is why they are before the throne of God; and they are rendering him sacred service day and night in his temple."—Rev. 7:9, 14, 15.

¹⁵ Jehovah's Theocratic organization is the center of pure worship; that is proved by devoted service. You are invited to identify yourself with that organization, as seen in Jehovah's witnesses. In a practical way you will be helped to see and to appreciate the "pleasantness of Jehovah." You will be encouraged to learn how to make him your delight. Dwelling in his spiritual house all the days of your life, making it your spiritual home, you will share and rejoice in the strong confidence manifest by all theocratic servants of Jehovah. You will say as David said: "And now my head will be high above my enemies all around me; and I will sacrifice at his tent sacrifices of joyful shouting; I will sing and make melody to Jehovah."—Ps. 27:6; Heb. 13:15.

¹⁶ In this same connection, notice the excellent guidance given in Isaiah's prophecy regarding our delight, leading to a triumphant outcome. Isaiah says: "If in view of the sabbath you will turn back your foot as regards doing your own delights on my holy day, and will actually call the sabbath an exquisite delight, a holy day of Jehovah, one being glorified, and will actually glorify it rather than doing your own ways, rather than finding what delights you and speaking a word; you will in that case find your exquisite delight in Jehovah, and I will make you ride upon the high places of the earth; and I will cause you to eat from the hereditary possession of Jacob your forefather, for the mouth of Jehovah itself has spoken

it." (Isa. 58:13, 14) Christendom, like unfaithful Israel of old, reckons to observe the sabbath, though paying little attention to it these days. In this, and all other respects, Christendom's adherents delight in their own ways. There is no true spirit of love and devotion to Jehovah. In many cases they do not even believe in a personal God. Neither is there real neighbor love. The great majority just find pleasure in their own ways, maybe "having a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power." Paul adds: "From these turn away." (2 Tim. 3:5) Christendom forms the leading part of "Babylon the Great," and the command rings out clear and strong: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues."

¹⁷ Yes, turn away from Babylon the Great, the enemy city, the world empire of false religion, and flee to Zion for refuge. Lose no time, for shortly Jehovah will "do what is his delight upon Babylon." (Isa. 48:14) She has already suffered a fall, and will shortly experience her destruction. (Rev. 18:2, 21) Now is the time to take positive action, for "everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will get away safe; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will prove to be the escaped ones, just as Jehovah has said, and in among the survivors, whom Jehovah is calling."—Joel 2:32.

¹⁸ Observe the true sabbath of Jehovah. Do not dedicate just one day in seven, but dedicate yourself, your whole life, in delighting to do God's will, as Jesus did. Enter into God's rest, not trusting in your own works, but in the all-sufficient redemptive work of Christ Jesus. Like Jesus, absorb God's Word into your inward parts, resting in an undertone day and night.

15. Why do Jehovah's witnesses invite you to share with them?

16. (a) What guidance and warning does Isaiah give respecting our delight in the sabbath? (b) How does Christendom fail in this regard?

17. Those quitting "Babylon" should flee where, and why quickly?

18. How should we show our delight in true sabbath keeping, resulting in what blessing?

As a result, you will be "like a tree planted by streams of water," ever fruitful and ever green, and 'everything you do will succeed.'—Heb. 4:10; Gal. 3:10-14; Ps. 1:1-3; 40:8.

¹⁹ Do not leave your heart's desires unexpressed. In faith, make definite request, as David did: "Instruct me, O Jehovah, in

19. What request should we make to Jehovah, and with what assurance?

THERE is a real need today for someone to speak as a true representative of God. Why?

Because things are taking place that people do not understand—things that greatly affect their daily activities, yes, their very lives. The churches do not have a satisfactory explanation. But God does have. Is there someone who can bring the truth of God's Word to the people, letting them know what is ahead and what they can do for safety and survival?

We can better understand what is taking place by going back to something described in the Bible that took place under conditions very similar to today's situation. By seeing what God did then, and for what reasons, we can discern what he is doing today, and where we fit in. We can be sure that our discernment will thus be accurate, for God never changes his principles. The way he viewed matters back there is the way that he views similar matters now.—Mal. 3:6.

In the situation referred to in the past a messenger was needed, and one was found and commissioned. He was a Jewish servant of God, the priest Ezekiel. Ezekiel was living when his people, the Jews, were in a sad condition. The year was 613 B.C.E., and Ezekiel was with some of his

your way, and lead me in the path of uprightness on account of my foes." In harmony with your prayer, bring your whole life into full conformity with the Creator's grand purpose. You will not be disappointed or frustrated. It will not end in heartache. "Take exquisite delight in Jehovah, and he will give you the requests of your heart."—Ps. 27:11; 37:4; see also Philipians 4:6, 7.

WANTED

A Messenger

countrymen in exile in Babylonia. But the majority of the Jews were yet back in Jerusalem and the land of Judah, and though they were unaware of it, they were facing great danger. For this reason, most of the message delivered by Ezekiel, though he was in Babylonia, was a warning to the Jews remaining in Jerusalem, reinforcing a like message being delivered by the prophet Jeremiah in Jerusalem itself. But Ezekiel's message also served to correct the Jews in Babylonia as to their attitude toward God.

Jehovah God appeared to Ezekiel in a vision in which he beheld the celestial chariot of Jehovah. (Ezek. chap. 1) Overwhelmed to the point of prostrating himself before the "likeness of the glory of Jehovah," Ezekiel heard the voice of the chariot's Rider commissioning him.

Jehovah addressed Ezekiel, not by his personal name, but as "son of man." By this expression, in Hebrew *ben adam*, the Most High God called attention to Eze-

kiel's lowly state and origin, as but an offspring of earthling man. The prophet's own name, therefore, receives no prominence in the prophecy.

We are not to understand this addressing of Ezekiel as "son of man" to mean that he was a "type" of Jesus Christ, who spoke of himself seventy-six times as "the Son of man." In Jesus' case, he was comparing himself, not with Ezekiel, but with the "son of man" seen in vision in Daniel 7:13. That "son of man" received kingly authority from God.—Compare Acts 7:56.

EZEKIEL COMMISSIONED

As Ezekiel lay prostrate on the ground, Jehovah said to him: "Son of man, stand up upon your feet that I may speak with you." God's command imparted active force to Ezekiel: "And spirit began to come into me as soon as he spoke to me, and it finally made me stand up upon my feet that I might hear the One speaking to me." (Ezek. 2:1, 2) The serious need for a messenger was then revealed to Ezekiel, God saying:

"Son of man, I am sending you to the sons of Israel, to rebellious nations that have rebelled against me. They themselves and their forefathers have transgressed against me down to this selfsame day. And the sons insolent of face and hard of heart—I am sending you to them, and you must say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said.' And as for them, whether they will hear or will refrain—for they are a rebellious house—they will certainly know also that a prophet himself happened to be in the midst of them."—Ezek. 2:3-5.

Ezekiel was thereby commissioned. Note that he did not raise himself up to be a prophet. This difficult mission was not one an individual was likely to choose for himself. The fact that Jehovah appeared to him in a remarkable vision (and later in the vision revealed things to him that could not otherwise have been known by Ezekiel), also that Jehovah commissioned

him directly—all these things prove that what Ezekiel said and wrote in his prophecy was inspired by Jehovah. He was in an outstanding way made a witness of Jehovah God. His being a witness of Jehovah is emphasized by his unusually frequent use of God's personal name.

EZEKIEL PROPHETIC OF A GREATER MESSENGER

Moreover, not only were Ezekiel's words prophetic, but also he was a prophetic figure in his action, as shown on occasion. (Ezek. 24:24) He was a "portent" or sign. Of whom was he—this messenger—a prophetic figure, since he did not prefigure Jesus Christ? Consider first this evidence.

It was only about six years after Ezekiel's vision of God's celestial "chariot," namely, in 607 B.C.E., that Jerusalem was destroyed by the armies of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. So, if the evidence shows that Ezekiel was a prophetic figure of a 'messenger' of God today, this world's system of things does not have much longer before its complete end. Certainly the world would need a God-sent messenger to give warning.

Indications are that since 1914 this world has been in its 'time of the end.' Modern historians are agreed that an era ended in that year when World War I began its violent, destructive course. They have arrived at this conclusion without realizing that the Bible's chronology marks 1914 as the date for the end of the "times of the Gentiles."—Luke 21:24, *Authorized Version*.

How does the Bible show 1914 to be a marked date? Why is it of such great importance? Because it has to do with God's exercise of his sovereignty toward the earth. Up to the time of Jerusalem's fall to Nebuchadnezzar, God had expressed his sovereignty over part of the earth, that is, the domain of the kings of Judah, through

the rule of kings of the line of David, who were said to sit on "Jehovah's throne." (1 Chron. 29:23) But in 607 B.C.E. he removed that kingdom and let the land lie desolate for seventy years. Even after the seventy years God did not put a king back on the throne, but Jerusalem continued under the domination of Gentile powers.

The prophet Daniel, a fellow exile of Ezekiel, was used by God to point out that there would be a prophetic period of "seven times," that is, seven years of 360 days each, or 2,520 days, each day counting for a year in the larger fulfillment. (Dan. 4:25; Ezek. 4:6) The 2,520 years run from 607 B.C.E. to 1914 C.E. At the end of that time God would again express sovereignty, this time toward the entire earth by means of his Messianic King. He would begin to 'rule in the midst of his enemies,' taking steps toward the complete ousting of man-rule from the earth.—Ps. 110:1, 2.

Consequently, both Bible chronology and worsening conditions, especially in the nations called "Christendom," cause us to look for a counterpart of the messenger Ezekiel. Should we look for one man? No. Rather, we should look for a body of persons, a composite, unified group. Why?

Because the message, though directed first to Christendom, Jerusalem's counterpart, is to be declared also to all the nations. It requires more than one man to do this. In the past God has addressed a composite group of persons by the word "servant" (singular number). (Isa. 43:10) Jesus Christ told his followers they would be witnesses for him, taking the good news to the nations, and the apostle Paul likened these Christians to a body made up of many members, just as the human body is. (Rom. 12:4, 5) So, what body of persons does God call together to deliver his message warning Christendom of his coming war against her?

FOUND IN JEWRY OR CHRISTENDOM?

Since Ezekiel was a Jew, we might look first among the natural circumcised Jews. But we find that, rather than acting as a mouthpiece and active agent of Jehovah, they took active part with the nations of Christendom in World War I. Chaim Weizmann, the famous Zionist leader, even lent his services as a discoverer in the chemical field to the British government during that world conflict. Thereafter Jewish efforts in Palestine were primarily political, directed toward establishing a National Homeland for the Jews rather than furthering the worship of Jehovah, or the proclaiming of his name.

Should we, then, look to Christendom? We surely would find no unified, composite body there among the hundreds of conflicting religious sects of which Christendom is composed. Not only that, but World War I was mainly Christendom's war, and she was gruesomely bloodstained therein. Also, instead of advocating Jehovah's sovereignty through his Messianic kingdom, she was afterward absorbed in establishing a political peace arrangement, even dealing with the newly arisen godless Communist State in Russia. Surely Christendom was not in any way a counterpart of Ezekiel.

CHRISTENDOM'S CHURCHES PROVE TO BE FALSE MESSENGERS

Since that time have the churches of Christendom shown themselves qualified to be commissioned as God's messenger? They claim to be the representatives of Christ and of God. During the war they had been divided into two camps. Afterward they wanted to patch up their disunity and again become religious friends. But because of the Vatican's strongly pro-German position during the war it was not allowed to have any part in drawing up the Peace Treaty of Versailles of 1919. The

Covenant of the League of Nations was made a part of that peace treaty.

When the League of Nations was proposed as an international organization for world peace and security, the bloodstained religious organizations backed it, seizing upon this circumstance as an opportunity to "save face." The Church of England and the churches of Canada supported the League, since Great Britain was the League's proposer and chief backer. In the United States of America there was the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America (superseded in 1950 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., a federation of 33 Protestant and Orthodox churches). On December 18, 1918, this Council sent its adopted Declaration to the American president and urged him to work for the League. The Declaration said, in part:

"Such a League is not a mere political expedient; it is rather the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth. . . . The Church can give a spirit of good-will, without which no League of Nations can endure. . . . The League of Nations is rooted in the Gospel. Like the Gospel, its objective is 'peace on earth, good-will toward men.'"

By accepting the League of Nations as "the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth," the members of the Federal Council of churches were really accepting a counterfeit "Kingdom of God on earth." Why? Because Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, when on trial for his life before the Roman governor Pontius Pilate, in 33 C.E., said: "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If it did, my followers would be fighting to save me from arrest by the Jews. My kingly authority comes from elsewhere." (John 18:36, *New English Bible*) The fact that they were not, as a body, a commissioned messenger of God was made clear and their hypocrisy exposed when, twenty years later, the League of Nations was knocked out of

business by the outbreak of World War II. The churches again entered into this war with all their might, encouraging their members to take part.

WHAT IS REQUIRED OF GOD'S MESSENGER

Therefore, when it came time for the name of Jehovah and his purposes to be declared to the people, along with God's warning that Christendom is in her "time of the end," who qualified to be commissioned? Who was willing to undertake this monumental task as Jehovah's "servant"? Was there anyone to whom Jehovah's heavenly "chariot" could roll up and whom it could confront? More accurately, was there any group on whom Jehovah would be willing to bestow the commission to speak as a "prophet" in His name, as was done toward Ezekiel back there in 613 B.C.E.? What were the qualifications?

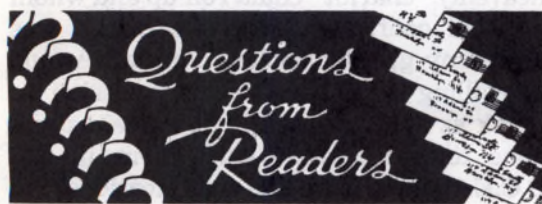
Certainly such a messenger or "servant" group would have to be made up of persons who had not been defiled with blood-guilt as had Christendom and the rest of Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, by sharing in carnal warfare. In fact, they would be a group that had come out from the religious organizations of Babylon the Great. More than that, they would be persons who not only saw the hypocrisy and God-defaming action of these religions, but in addition actually rejected them and turned to Jehovah God in true worship of him as set forth in the Bible. Who would they be?

In identifying the group that is truly commissioned as God's messenger, these are points for us to consider seriously. God does not deal with persons who ignore his Word and go according to their own independent ideas. Nor does he recognize those who make a profession of serving him and at the same time associate with religions that teach God-dishonoring doc-

trines. No one can serve two masters, claiming to be a worshiper of God and meddling with the politics, the radical movements and other schemes of this world. (Matt. 6:24) Jehovah's chief representative, Jesus Christ, said: "Not everyone saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but the one doing the will of my Father who is in the heavens will."—Matt. 7:21.

It is of importance to every individual on earth to identify the group that Jeho-

vah has commissioned as his "servant" or messenger. We must recognize and understand the warning that he brings. We need to take action on the warning to safeguard our lives, for they are in a danger as grave as that of the lives of Jerusalem's citizens as that city neared destruction. For this reason forthcoming issues of *The Watchtower* will further discuss the identity and work of Jehovah's commissioned messenger as revealed in His vision to Ezekiel.



● Why did the Mosaic law prohibit the eating of fat?—U.S.A.

Under the Law given to the Israelites, both the blood and the fat were considered as belonging exclusively to Jehovah God. The Law stated: "It is a statute to time indefinite for your generations, in all your dwelling places: You must not eat any fat or any blood at all."—Lev. 3:17.

The blood represents the life of a person or an animal. For this reason the Bible speaks of the "soul" as being "in the blood." (Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:11, 14) Since only Jehovah God can give life, life or that which represents life, the blood, rightly belongs to him.

The fat was regarded as the best or richest part. This is evident from such figurative expressions as the "fat part of the land," "the best [literally, the fat] of the oil," and "the best [literally, the fat] of the new wine and the grain." (Gen. 45:18; Num. 18:12) Thus the prohibition against eating fat evidently served to impress upon the Israelites that the "first" or best parts belong to Jehovah, to be offered up to him in sacrifice. The eating of fat would therefore have been an illegal appropriation of something that had been sanctified to Jehovah. It would have been an invasion of his rights. However, in the case of

an animal that died of itself or was killed by another beast, fat could be used for other purposes.—Lev. 7:23-25.

Many Bible commentators believe that the command about fat pertained only to animals acceptable for sacrifice. But there are indications that this prohibition against eating fat applied to the fat of all animals. The injunction respecting fat is linked with the one regarding blood. And the blood of *all* animals was prohibited for food. (Lev. 17:13, 14; Deut. 12:15, 16) Reasonably, therefore, the regulation regarding fat likewise embraced the fat of all animals.

It may also be noted that proper bleeding did not remove every molecule of blood from the meat, and yet the residue of blood remaining did not make the meat unfit for consumption. Similarly, the prohibition on the eating of fat did not render meat with traces of fat unsuitable for food.

Of course, the prohibition on fat did not rule out the feeding or fattening of sheep or cattle for the table. The Scriptures even mention "fattened cuckoos." (1 Ki. 4:23) In view of the restriction on the use of fat for food, evidently the 'fattening' was not for the purpose of producing layers of fat, but that the animals might become full-fleshed, not skinny.

At Deuteronomy 32:14 the reference to the "fat of rams" as being given to the Israelites is figurative. It designates the best of the flock (similar to the English expression "the cream of the crop"). Hence *The Jerusalem Bible* reads, "rich food of the pastures." The words of Nehemiah 8:10, "Go, eat the fatty things," are to be understood similarly. The "fatty things" figuratively denote rich, luscious

portions, doubtless including tasty items prepared with vegetable oil. The translation by James Moffatt says, "eat the dainty pieces." Some things, such as cakes made from grain, were cooked in "deep fat." This was not animal fat, but was vegetable oil, often olive oil.—Lev. 2:7.

Unlike the prohibition on blood, which has been in force toward the entire human race since the flood of Noah's day, Christians today are not under the restrictions of the Mosaic law concerning foods. (Gen. 9:4) Under inspiration the apostle Paul wrote: "Let no man judge you in eating and drinking or in respect of a festival or of an observance of the new moon or of a sabbath; for those things are a shadow of the things to come, but the reality belongs to the Christ." (Col. 2:16, 17) Nevertheless, the law concerning fat should remind Christians of the continual need to give their very best to Jehovah God. (Prov. 3:9, 10) This should be reflected in every aspect of the Christian's life. The Bible's counsel is: "Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah, and not to men, for you know that it is from Jehovah you will receive the due reward of the inheritance."—Col. 3:23, 24.

● Second Timothy 3:6, 7 says: "From these arise those men who slyly work their way into households and lead as their captives weak women loaded down with sins, led by various desires, always learning and yet never able to come to an accurate knowledge of truth." Who are the men and women referred to in this passage?—U.S.A.

The preceding verse (2 Tim. 3:5) reveals that these corrupt men come from among persons "having a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power." They are like those described by the apostle Paul as "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ" and 'ministers of Satan who keep transforming themselves into ministers of righteousness.' (2 Cor. 11:13-15) In the first century C.E. these false teachers threatened the Christian standing of the Corinthian congregation, prompting the apostle Paul to write: "I am afraid that somehow, as the serpent seduced Eve by its cunning, your minds might be corrupted away from the sincerity and the chastity that are due the Christ. For, as it is, if someone comes and preaches a Jesus other than the one we preached, or you receive a spirit other than

what you received, or good news other than what you accepted, you easily put up with him."—2 Cor. 11:3, 4.

Not only did such men seek to corrupt Christians by means of false teachings, but they also tried to involve others in immoral conduct. As the disciple Jude noted: "Certain men have slipped in who have long ago been appointed by the Scriptures to this judgment, ungodly men, turning the undeserved kindness of our God into an excuse for loose conduct and proving false to our only Owner and Lord, Jesus Christ."—Jude 4.

Second Timothy 3:6 indicates that the apostate men direct their attention chiefly to "weak women." This does not refer to women in general as being 'weaker vessels' in contrast to men, as at 1 Peter 3:7. Instead, it refers to women who are weak spiritually or morally, as the context indicates. The apostates do not openly advance their wrong views in a manly way, but "slyly work their way into households." They curry the favor of such "weak women" and, through these, endeavor to influence the rest of the household. Not being well-grounded in Christian teaching, such "weak women" readily succumb to false teachers who perhaps by a graceful manner and flattering speech make themselves appear to be ministers of righteousness.

These "weak women" are also described as being "loaded down with sins" and "led by various desires." This evidently means that sinful inclinations and desires weigh heavily upon them. They do not really hate what is bad nor do they have a genuine love for righteousness. Their sinful inclinations make them easy prey for false teachers, some of these women no doubt even allowing themselves to be talked into committing sexual immorality on the basis that God understands human weaknesses and is very merciful and forgiving.

It becomes readily apparent why such "weak women" would 'always be learning and yet never be able to come to an accurate knowledge of truth.' Not having the needed motivation to acquire a full understanding and appreciation of Christian truth, they never improve their spiritual standing. They may continue to learn things, but they never come to know and appreciate the sense of the entire body of Christian teachings so as to conduct themselves accordingly. They allowing themselves to come under the influence of false teachers, their situation only worsens.

There are, of course, many fine women, as there are men, who learn the truth of the Bible and hold onto it. But, especially in Christendom, women often have more leisure time and are generally less involved with the business world than men, and usually give more attention to religious matters. Women tend to look up to men who are prominent and who are ready and eloquent with words. So they can become victims of such men as the apostle describes. They may easily come under the influence of greedy or immoral men who pose as wise and knowledgeable. These men excuse their immoral course by saying that God knows we all are imperfect and that God forgives, but they are wickedly presuming on God to gain their ends.

Eve was an example of one who, though she knew God's command, did not really come to *know* God through appreciation, love and loyalty to him. She became a weak woman led by her desire. Satan the Devil used her as a tool to reproach God and to induce Adam to sin.—Gen. 3:1-5.

Since corrupt men can also slip into a congregation of God's people in these "last days," Paul's words emphasize the need for true Christians to be alert to discern false teaching and improper reasoning. (2 Tim. 3:1) A person who desires to maintain an acceptable standing before Jehovah God should put forth every effort to 'go on walking in union with Christ Jesus, rooted and being built up in him and being stabilized in the faith.' (Col. 2:6, 7) This calls for study of the entire body of Christian teaching as set forth in the Holy Scriptures and application of the things learned. Then, when individuals present thoughts contrary to God's Word, one will not be deceived and ensnared by sinful inclinations.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

April 23: The Delight of Jehovah Will Succeed.

Page 168. Songs to Be Used: 50, 2.

April 30: Taking Delight in Suffering. Page 174.

Songs to Be Used: 21, 44.

May 7: Make Jehovah Your Delight. Page 180.

Songs to Be Used: 114, 80.

These "weak women" are also described as being "flooded down with sin," and "led by various desires." This evidently means that sinful inclinations and desires weigh heavily upon them. They do not really have what is called a genuine love for God and for his people, but they have a genuine love for themselves. Their sinful inclinations make them easy prey for false teachers, some of these women no doubt even allowing themselves to be talked into committing sexual immorality on the basis that God understands human weakness and is very merciful and forgiving.

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