The WATCHTOWER

Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

MANKIND'S DELIVERANCE INTO *God's New Order*

APRIL 15, 1972
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"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM
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MANKIND'S DELIVERANCE INTO God's New Order

"Here I am creating new heavens and a new earth."—Isa. 65:17.

IT IS an old saying, "There is nothing new under the sun." (Eccl. 1: 9) But what if there were no more wars, nor even war preparation on earth, nor any natural disasters, nor fatal accidents, nor famines and pestilences? What if there were no crushing burdens of over-expensive governments, no oppression by governments, no revolutions and violent overturning of governments? That would be very nice, would it not? But let us not stop there!

[2] What if there were no more snobbish social distinctions, no more national prejudices, no more racial discriminations? What if none of us were getting old, along with losing sight, hearing, hair, teeth, good bodily functions, but were attaining the bloom and freshness of beautiful youth and *keeping* it perpetually? What if nobody was getting sick and dying, but, instead, people were coming back from the graves and being restored *live* to our midst until the last cemetery was emptied? What if there was universal education in the accurate truth about religion and we were all living in harmony with that truth? What if we were living peacefully in a gardenlike earth, under one government the wide earth around? That would be something new for all mankind, would it not?

[3] Yes, indeed. And an order of things under which such conditions would prevail all over the earth, along with such perfect relations among all the human family, would be a new order, indeed. Even the *idea* of such an order of things on earth is new to countless millions of minds today. Human history discloses that mankind has never existed under an order of that kind down till this present time. What all of us are well acquainted with is what is by now an "old order," this "present order." The human race has been on this earth for thousands of years, and yet the earth's surface is not fully populated, with plenty to eat for all. This has resulted from the fact that death, from many various causes, has been steadily taking its

1, 2. (a) What suggestions are made because of the old saying, "There is nothing new under the sun"? (b) Such suggested conditions provoke what questions?

3. (a) Such conditions would distinguish only what kind of order? (b) What about expecting something on the part of the medical doctors and health experts as regards death?

toll of human lives. It has kept the human family from multiplying even faster than it has been doing in these last two centuries. Death has been an ever-present feature of this old order, and our hosts of medical doctors and health experts of today give us no basis for expecting them to wipe out death as long as this old order stands.

[4] Mankind has had enough of this "present order," or, "disorder," as many prefer to call it. It is time for a change. Yes, but who is destined to change it? Who is there that *can* change it? Men have long been given their opportunity to change it for the better. But the bettering of man's plight has failed to be realized till now.

[5] Men of affairs in the present order are still unwilling to stop putting confidence in men, in human ability, especially now that we have all the scientific advancement of this twentieth century. Long-range planning ahead is feverishly going on. Government planners are looking ahead to the end of this century. They are already speaking of the year 2000, and are optimistically envisioning what the earthly conditions will be by then by means of human ingenuity. They expect great changes. They see the need of many drastic changes. They expect to glorify themselves by bringing in a higher civilization that will afford all mankind greater advantages than ever before, that will make life more worth living. But what about *us* in the meantime?

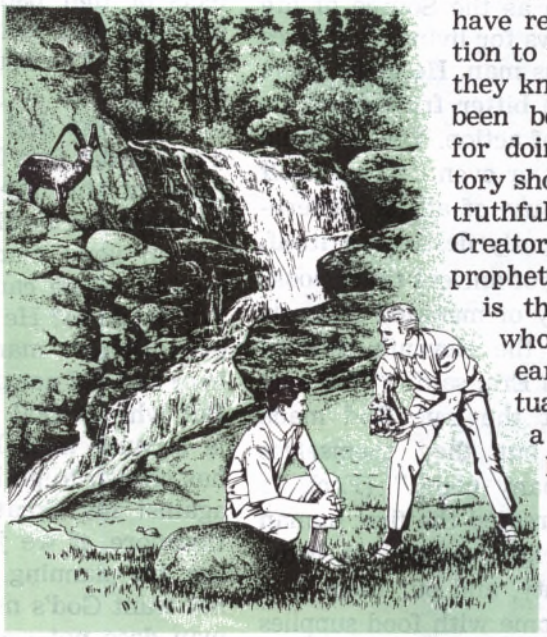
4, 5. (a) How do people feel about the present order, but what question arises as to what they want? (b) In whom are men of affairs putting confidence, and so what are they doing with respect to the future?

[6] Problems on a world scale are with us today and now. The problems are becoming more serious and complicated as time moves on. This is true in spite of all the promises and assurances that have been made by political dictators and world leaders to give the people a bright "new order." Oh, of course, some superficial changes are made in outward appearance of things, but the same "old order" has remained with us with its wars, oppressions, injustices, racial and national ri-

6. (a) What is happening to our present problems? (b) So what do we want, and when do we want it to be?

Deliverance into God's new order will mean living in perfect health and happiness in a delightful gardenlike earth, under one government earth wide

valries, starvation for millions, violence, insecurity, pain, sickness, old age, and going down into the grave. We want something different from that. We want a really "new order." In our natural desire for survival we want it to begin in our generation. Then we ourselves can get the lasting benefit of it. Who can bring it in?



[7] Thousands of years of human experience had already passed when an inspired man wrote: "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man, to whom no salvation belongs. His spirit goes out, he goes back to his ground; in that day his thoughts do perish." The nearly three thousand years of time since those words were penned have proved the soundness of that piece of advice. Well, then, if we cannot wisely put our trust in earthling man, not even in nobles who should be better than the average man, who else is there in whom to put our trust?

[8] Certainly the aforequoted adviser ought not to speak merely negatively and leave us baffled. Reasonably he should offset that negative advice by giving us some positive advice in telling us who outside of man is the one in whom we can put trust without disappointment. He does do this, saying: "Happy is the one who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in Jehovah his God, the Maker of heaven and earth, of the sea, and of all that is in them, the One keeping trueness to time indefinite, the One executing judgment for the defrauded ones, the One giving bread to the hungry ones."—Ps. 146: 3-7.

[9] Is anybody inclined to sneer at that inspired counsel? He is not alone in this attitude. The vast majority have refused to pay attention to this counsel, even if they knew of it. Have they been benefited or blessed for doing so? Human history shows. It bears out the truthfulness of what man's Creator himself said to his prophet Jeremiah: "Cursed is the able-bodied man who puts his trust in earthling man and actually makes flesh his arm, and whose heart turns away from Jehovah himself. And he will certainly become like a solitary tree in the desert plain and will not see when good comes; but he must reside in parched places in the wilderness, in a salt country that is not inhabited." (Jer. 17:5, 6) A curse is the opposite of a blessing, and all the evidence is that men have not been blessed for trusting in men and not God.

[10] Self-confident men, proud of their modern-day achievements, conduct themselves as if they owed nothing to God. They feel no responsibility toward him and ignore his published laws. If they do not

7, 8. (a) After thousands of years of human experience, what did the psalmist say about putting our trust? (b) What does the psalmist say on the positive side of this matter?

9. What did Jehovah say to Jeremiah about putting trust in man, and to what extent has this been true according to human history?

10. (a) How do self-confident men act as to obligations toward God? (b) How could God act toward them as to consequences, and why?

deny his existence or even say that "God is dead," they act as if he did not exist with regard to human affairs. Although they owe everything to Him, God the Creator owes nothing to man. Everything that man has and enjoys, he owes to God. And now that man thanklessly turns his back on God and feels no obligation to Him, to be obedient to Him as the Source of life and of righteous laws for living, God owes nothing to rebellious man. He could leave mankind to eat the bitter fruitage of its own willful course of action. Yes, he could let mankind die out or even destroy itself before then by the use of all its modern-day means for violently destroying itself.

[11] The wisest king of ancient times, looking over the history of mankind from its start and down to the eleventh century before our Common Era, said: "This only I have found, that the true God made mankind upright, but they themselves have sought out many plans." (Eccl. 7:29) The true God created the first human married couple upright, perfect in body, mind, heart, morality, and put them in a delightful garden home with food supplies to keep them alive forever in perfect health.

[12] If they had used their free moral agency aright and had kept upright and had brought up their children upright and had gradually enlarged their Paradise home to embrace all this earthly globe, would there be need today for a "new order"? No! The perfect Paradise state of things on earth would have continued on right down to now and there would have arisen no need for restoring mankind to what it was before when God created it. But under the test of perfect obedience to their Creator and Lawgiver, the first human couple sought out their own plans. (Gen. 1:26 to 5:5) Today, about six thousand years later, we all know how their plans worked out.

11, 12. (a) What did the wise man say concerning man's start, and how was that true? (b) In what case would there have been no need of a "new order," but what have we of today learned about past human plans?

THE CERTAINTY OF THE NEW ORDER

[13] As far as our ability to undo the effects of that bad planning is concerned, mankind has harmed itself beyond self-repairing. The hour is now later than people think. So if people continue to trust in imperfect and dying men to usher in a new order free from all the harmful features of this present order, it will lead nowhere but to disastrous disappointment —soon now! Our Creator, God the Almighty, alone can bring in a new order. Will he do so? He is not obligated to do so, even though man did not ask to come here and did not put himself on this earth. But why is God under no obligation? It is because man has forsaken God. Man has chosen to go his own way in rebellion against his Creator and Lawgiver. Furthermore, if we judge man by his thinking, his planning and his efforts, he does not want God's new order. How so? Well, man does not want to meet the requirements for such a new order.

[14] So now the big question is, Is the Almighty God inclined to install the sorely needed new order? Has He decided to do so? The reliable, authoritative answers to such questions—where can we get them? Nowhere else but in God's written Word, the Holy Bible!

[15] Listen, as He speaks to his prophet Isaiah in the eighth century before our Common Era: "Here I am creating new heavens and a new earth; and the former

13. Who can usher in a really new order, and is there any obligation to do so?
14. What, then, is the question, and where can we get reliable information?
15, 16. (a) By his prophet Isaiah what did God say about his purpose to do so? (b) How does the apostle John show whether God has changed his mind on this, and why was John told to write about this?

things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart. But exult, you people, and be joyful forever in what I am creating." (Isa. 65:17, 18) 'Oh!' some listener might say, 'that was said and written down some twenty-seven centuries ago, and that is out of date by now and does not hold good today.' But listen, now, to a revelation that God gave to the Christian apostle John more than eight hundred years later. In writing it down, John says: "And I saw a great white throne and the one seated on it. From before him the earth and the heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. . . . And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea is no more." (Rev. 20:11 to 21:1) Thus after more than eight centuries the same God had not changed his mind. Also, John wrote further:

16 "And the One seated on the throne said: 'Look! I am making all things new.' Also, he says: 'Write, because these words are faithful and true.' "—Rev. 21:5.

17 Consequently, this God on his heavenly throne could not be true to himself and at the same time change his mind regarding his declared purpose to create a new order with new heavens and a new earth where there will no more be a sea of humanity alienated from God through sin inherited from our first human parents. So, although God does not owe mankind anything, he is inclined to usher in a desirable new order, and he has not changed his mind, even after nineteen hundred years of time. Is that not good news?

WHAT BLOCKS MAN'S EFFORTS?

18 Let us take note that God promises to create, not only a "new earth," but also "new heavens." How well this shows that God knows what is the thing most essential in order for dying mankind to have a new order. There can be no "new earth" without first having "new heavens"! A new sun, moon, stars, planets and galaxies overhead within range of man's vision? No! These visible material unintelligent bodies in the skies do not and cannot have any effect upon man's order of things as the astrologers from the days of ancient Babylon have taught. But by the expression "new heavens" Jehovah God means new invisible spirit intelligences in superhuman heavenly control of mankind.

19 That was the idea when the prophet Daniel used the word "heavens" as he was interpreting the dream of the king of ancient Babylon about a big tree and saying: "Seven times themselves will pass over you, until you know that the Most High is Ruler in the kingdom of mankind, and that to the one whom he wants to he gives it. And because they said to leave the rootstock of the tree, your kingdom will be sure to you after you know that the heavens are ruling." (Dan. 4:25, 26) This idea of invisible, intelligent heavenly rulership and control of mankind was also contained in the words of Jesus Christ, when he proclaimed: "The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near."—Matt. 4:17.

20 God's promise of a "new heavens" indicates that there are old "heavens" that are in control of mankind and that are invisibly running the present order of things. These symbolic old heavens stand as a superhuman roadblock in the way of all sincere efforts of men and women to change the present order for the better and to have lasting reforms in hope of saving mankind from self-destruction. For

17. So now, today, after nineteen hundred years, what is the good news in this regard?
18. Before there can be a "new earth," what must there be first?
19. How was this meaning of the expression "new heavens" indicated by the prophet Daniel, and also by Jesus Christ?
20, 21. (a) What does the expression "new heavens" indicate, and how does this explain man's inability to change things for the better? (b) How do worldly-wise persons fool themselves about this matter?

mankind these old "heavens" are an unseen enemy able to outwit self-reliant men and women at every turn, as human history has demonstrated all the way till now.

21 Worldly-wise people of this scientific Brain Age disbelieve and ridicule the existence of such an unseen, superhuman, intelligent spirit enemy. But that selfsame enemy knows that there are no greater fools than those who fool themselves. But we are not foolish when we ask, Who is that enemy as represented by the old "heavens"?

22 A person who came down from heaven and lived as a man on earth for more than thirty-three years before returning to the invisible spirit heavens tells us who that enemy is. On one occasion on earth seventy men whom he sent out as evangelizers to proclaim the kingdom of God returned and reported: "Lord, even the demons are made subject to us by the use of your name." In reply, what did Jesus Christ say to those jubilant evangelizers? This: "I began to behold Satan already fallen like lightning from heaven." (Luke 10:1-18) In a pictorial illustration that he gave at the close of his prophecy on the conclusion of this system of things he foretold the time when he would say these words to goatish people: "Be on your way from me, you who have been cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels." (Matt. 24:3; 25:31-33, 41) Three nights later, when telling his faithful apostles of his coming betrayal and violent death on an execution stake, Jesus Christ said:

23 "Now there is a judging of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out." "The ruler of the world is coming. And he has no hold on me." (John 12:31; 14:30) "Look! Satan has demanded to have you men to sift you as wheat." —Luke 22:31.

22, 23. How did one who came from heaven and returned there tell men who this enemy is?

24 There we have the word of no one less than Jesus Christ himself as an authority on the subject: Satan the Devil and his demon angels are the ones that make up the symbolic old heavens, the present superhuman "heavens," that are ruling and control mankind during this present old order. Instead of worshiping the true God who promises "new heavens and a new earth," the vast majority of mankind are worshiping the Devil and his demons. The Devil is subtle and wily in concealing his operations and deceptions on the people, for the Christian apostle Paul writes: "The god of this system of things has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, that the illumination of the glorious good news about the Christ, who is the image of God, might not shine through." (2 Cor. 4:4) By that description the apostle Paul meant the false god, Satan.

25 Furthermore, Jesus Christ identified Satan the Devil as being the invisible one who induced the upright Adam and Eve to seek out plans contrary to God's will. Satan thus brought this dying, imperfect condition upon all of us.

26 On one occasion Jesus addressed himself to certain ones in his audience who were wanting to kill him and said to them: "You are from your father the Devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father. That one was a manslayer when he began, and he did not stand fast in the truth, because truth is not in him. When he speaks the lie, he speaks according to his own disposition, because he is a liar and the father of the lie." (John 8:44) In man's original home, the Garden of Eden, Satan the Devil called Jehovah God a liar; and the first woman, Eve, believed the Devil,

24. What did Jesus thus show about the "heavens" now controlling mankind, and, according to Paul, whom is the world of mankind worshiping?
25. Who induced Adam and Eve to seek out plans contrary to God's will?
26. How did Satan become what Jesus called him, "a manslayer"?

and after that her husband, Adam, took her side and joined her in disobeying God. Therefore Jehovah pronounced the sentence of death upon our first parents; and because Satan the Devil induced this result, he became what Jesus called him, "a manslayer." He slew us also, for we have inherited from sinful Adam and Eve our dying condition.—Gen. 2:7–5:5.

27 In spite of all that government rulers and lawmakers and judges and medical doctors and scientists can do, they cannot lift from us the condemnation to death that still rests upon all of us because of inherited sinfulness and imperfection. They cannot bring us back into the Garden of Eden from which our first parents were driven because of rebellion against God the Creator. Despite all that the world's military forces and the social revolutionaries might try to do, they cannot unsaddle from us the demonic old "heavens" that have fastened themselves upon mankind. In this case worldly armies and revolutionaries are contending, not with other human creatures, but with superhuman forces, unseen. What all mankind are up against, the apostle Paul gave us some idea of when he wrote to the Christian congregation in Ephesus in Asia:

28 "Put on the complete suit of armor from God that you may be able to stand firm against the machinations of the Devil; because we have a wrestling, not against blood and flesh, but against the governments, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places."—Eph. 6:11, 12.

29 The apostle Paul, as well as Jesus Christ himself and his other apostles, cast out demons from persons who were obsessed by them, thus liberating the poor human victims. However, Jesus Christ, when on earth, and his apostles never did attempt to overthrow this invisible old "heavens," composed of demon governments, authorities, world rulers of this darkness and wicked spirits in the heavenly places. Nineteen centuries ago it was not the time for such a liberation of mankind. Consequently those wicked demon "heavens" have continued to dominate mankind and human affairs till now. The human family is now experiencing the terrible effects of this invisible rule, and is absolutely helpless against it.

30 Mankind desperately needs a Liberator from these ruinous demonic heavens. Jehovah God has raised up the needed Deliverer! Jehovah's marked time for the desired deliverance is at hand! We cannot look to human "nobles" or to earthling man for the Deliverer. We would become "cursed" for doing so! Force of circumstances oblige us to look to Jehovah for him. Who is he?

31 It is the one chosen by Jehovah God, the one who can put these old demonic "heavens" out of existence. There cannot be a new order for mankind without getting rid of those wicked "heavens" that have dominated this old order. There cannot be a new order for mankind without a "new heavens." This is a basic requirement. It is the first requirement. Jehovah God has promised to create such a "new heavens."

32 As the wicked 'heavens that are now' are composed of superhuman, invisible spirit creatures, so also the new heavens must be composed of superhuman, invisible spirit creatures. The apostle Peter

27, 28. (a) What disability cannot capable men of the world lift from us, or what cannot armies and revolutionaries unsaddle from us? (b) How did Paul give the Ephesians some idea of what we are up against?
29. Despite casting out demons, what did Jesus and his apostles not try to do, with what result today?
30. To whom are we obliged to look for the providing of a Deliverer, and to avoid being "cursed" to whom may we not look?
31. What will Jehovah's chosen one be able to do, and why is that a basic requirement for a new order?
32. How will those in the 'heavens that are now' be counterbalanced by those in the "new heavens," and who is the vital, essential one in the "new heavens"?

cheered his fellow Christians on in their waiting on God and putting confidence in God by writing: "But there are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell." (2 Pet. 3:13) God has already raised up the chief one, the vital and essential one, of those "new heavens," and that one is his faithful Son, Jesus Christ the Lord. Hail this Deliverer!

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR God's New Order

WHEN the apostle Peter wrote to the fellow Christians of his day, "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise," they themselves were expecting to become a part of those "new heavens" at the conclusion of this system of things. (2 Pet. 3:13; Matt. 24:3; 28:20) They expected to be associated with their God-given Leader and Head, Jesus Christ, in those "new heavens" over mankind. They rejoiced in the hope of replacing the wicked demonic "heavens" that are now casting the pall of death and destruction over all mankind. But how can they and the other fellow disciples of Jesus Christ, all of them being mere humans, become part of the "new heavens"?

[2] The apostle Peter points to the key that unlocks this mystery, when he writes to fellow believers in the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for according to his great mercy he gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an incorruptible and undefiled and unfading inheritance. It is reserved in the heavens for you, who are being safeguarded by God's power through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last period of time."—1 Pet. 1:3-5.

[3] Notice that expression 'a new birth to an inheritance reserved in the heavens for you.' Also, the words, "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Mankind was not created and has not been born to go to heaven where God's residence is. For any humans to get to heaven, it would require a new birth, a spiritual birth, that no human father can give but only God the heavenly Father can give. Furthermore, we note that all faithful disciples of Jesus Christ have died as humans till now. Certainly, then, for such dead Christians to get to heaven they need to have a resurrection.

[4] Even Jesus Christ, in order to get back to heaven from which he came, needed to die and be resurrected from the dead by the almighty power of his God and Fa-

1. What were those to whom 2 Peter 3:13 was addressed expecting to become, but why does a real question arise on that account?
2. As a key to unlocking this mystery, what did Peter write at the beginning of his first letter?
3. Was mankind meant to go to heaven, and what must faithful dead Christians, in order to get to heaven, experience?
4. In order for the man Jesus Christ to go to heaven, what was it necessary to have take place, as explained by Peter?

ther, Jehovah. Concerning this dying as a human and being resurrected as a spirit person, the apostle Peter makes this statement: "Even Christ died once for all time concerning sins, a righteous person for unrighteous ones, that he might lead you to God, he being put to death in the flesh, but being made alive in the spirit. In this state also he went his way and preached to the spirits in prison, . . . through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is at God's right hand, for he went his way to heaven; and angels and authorities and powers were made subject to him."—1 Pet. 3:18, 19, 21, 22; see also *The New English Bible.*

[5] His death as a perfect human and his resurrection as a perfect spirit person was the way for his gaining entrance back into heaven. Let us note what the apostle Peter says as to the reason why Jesus Christ died. Peter says: "Christ died once for all time concerning sins, a righteous person for unrighteous ones, that he might lead you to God."—1 Pet. 3:18.

[6] Jesus Christ is the "righteous person" there mentioned. Who, though, are the "unrighteous ones"? We, all of us who got our life from the sinner Adam, we are those "unrighteous ones." In dying "once for all time concerning sins," Jesus Christ was not dying for his own sins; had he done so, then his death would have been of no benefit to us dying humans. The sins concerning which he "died once for all time" are our sins, the sins of all mankind who inherited sinfulness, imperfection and death from Adam, who had been sentenced to death by Jehovah God. Because Jesus was born perfect on earth and remained "righteous" till his "being put to death," his death had a sacrificial value. It could gain something for those for whom his life was sacrificed.

[7] Ah, then, this unlocks to us another secret, and that is another thing that is required for a new order to be founded by Jehovah God. Not only are "new heavens" needed for it, but a "new earth" in the which there are no sin and imperfection and hence no condemnation to death. But how could such a righteous "new earth" be founded?

[8] The "unrighteous ones," all mankind that descended from unrighteous Adam, were dying and have been dying according to their just deserts. God's law is: "The wages sin pays is death, but the gift God gives is everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 6:23) But the perfectly born Jesus stayed "righteous" all the time in spite of being in the midst of a sinful world. Concerning him the apostle Peter says in the same letter to Christians: "He committed no sin, nor was deception found in his mouth. He himself bore our sins in his own body upon the stake, in order that we might be done with sins." (1 Pet. 2:22, 24) So, being perfectly "righteous," Jesus did not deserve to die. He died in order to take upon himself what others fully deserved.

[9] In the course of human history many unselfish persons have sacrificed their lives for others, but those others for whom such a sacrifice was made have died thereafter and are still dead. Such other ones have not gained eternal life from such human sacrifices. It was imperfect, dying humans that died for them, and they themselves were imperfect and sinful and remained under condemnation to death. Their human lives were prolonged only a

5. What does Peter say as to the reason why Christ died?

6. (a) Who are the "unrighteous ones" there mentioned, as in contrast with the "righteous person"? (b) For what sins could that "righteous person" die, and how so and with what effect?

7, 8. (a) What else, besides a "new heavens," is required for a righteous new order? (b) What has mankind been experiencing according to their just deserts, and how could Jesus take upon himself what others fully deserved?

9. Why were the sacrifices made by unselfish humans of limited benefit to those for whom they sacrificed their lives?

little while longer, and the sacrificial deaths made in their behalf did not guarantee for them a resurrection from the dead back to life on earth. Moreover, who of those self-sacrificing ones could die for the whole world of mankind, past and present, to keep alive the whole world? Not all the world's armies of soldier boys dying on the battlefield could do so.

10 Sinful human creatures, who are condemned to eternal death for their own sins, can gain no eternal life on earth for other sinful human creatures. Just as Psalm 49: 7, 9 says: "Not one of them can by any means redeem even a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; that he should still live forever and not see the pit."

11 On the contrary, concerning Jesus Christ it is written: "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a corresponding ransom for all." (1 Tim. 2: 5, 6) How could this be? It was because, when Adam sinned and was sentenced to death for his willful sin, all his future offspring died in him. It was just as the apostle Paul writes:

12 "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, . . . through one trespass the result to men of all sorts was condemnation, . . . through the disobedience of the one man many were constituted sinners."—Rom. 5:12, 18, 19.

13 As God's activity is perfect, Adam was perfect when he was created. His wife Eve, who was taken from him by being built up from one of his ribs, was likewise perfect. She was, as Adam said, "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." (Gen. 2:21-23) When Adam sinned, he lost his human perfection and was sentenced to death. From him, the one man, all mankind thereafter inherited sin and death. Accordingly, for all dying mankind to be ransomed it required someone who corresponded with Adam in his human perfection. It required another perfect man to undertake to suffer death innocently in order to lift the death that Adam by his own disobedience has brought upon all his offspring. Spoken otherwise, it required a "corresponding ransom." How, though, was such a "corresponding ransom" to be provided? It could not be done by any of Adam's sinful, imperfect, condemned offspring.

14 Manifestly, only Almighty God, Jehovah, could provide it in a miraculous way. He was not obligated to do so. By all the rules of justice he could not be required to do so. But was he willing to do so? He was indeed willing, because "God is love." (1 John 4:8, 16) His love could find a way to act in perfect harmony with justice and thereby provide the means by which to redeem his human creation by means of a corresponding ransom. In that way, also, he could undo the wicked works of Satan the Devil and vindicate himself as Creator and Theocratic Ruler.—1 John 3:8.

15 Away back in the Garden of Eden, at the time when God was pronouncing judgment upon the various ones tied in with man's rebellion, God said to the Serpent that instigated this rebellion: "I shall put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise you in the head and you will bruise him in the heel." (Gen. 3:15) In heaven God offered the opportunity to become that Seed of the woman to his only-

10. Why cannot any one of us give a ransom for someone else to live forever?
11, 12. (a) For how many could the man Christ Jesus give himself as a ransom? (b) How could this be, as explained by Paul in Romans 5:12, 18, 19?
13. (a) When Adam violated his own innocence in Eden, what did he bring upon his future offspring, and upon how many of them? (b) In order to ransom all of them, what had to be paid?
14. Why was God not obliged to provide such a ransom, but by doing so what could he also accomplish?
15. To whom did Jehovah offer the opportunity to be the woman's Seed of Genesis 3:15, and what did this entail upon that one?

begotten Son, and his Son accepted the offer. He did so voluntarily, although this meant that he must be bruised in the heel by the Serpent.

16 In due time, by means of his holy spirit, Jehovah God transferred the life of his heavenly Son to the womb of the virgin Mary at Nazareth in Galilee. In this way God's only-begotten Son became related to Adam and to Adam's descendants through this human mother Mary, but his life came, not from Adam, but from God. Despite his human birth, he remained the Son of God, and according to his heavenly Father's instructions to Mary he was called Jesus, a name that means "Jehovah Is Salvation." Because his perfect life was originally from God and was transferred from heaven to the egg cell in Mary's womb, Jesus was born as a perfect and sinless Son, free from God's condemnation to death. (Luke 1:31-35; 3:23-38) From then on, by resisting sin and the temptations of Satan the Great Serpent, Jesus could grow up to become a perfect man with reproductive powers, thus being the exact equal of Adam when in his innocence in the Garden of Eden.

17 In order to symbolize his presenting of himself to act as the Seed of God's "woman," Jesus got baptized in water. Then God anointed him with holy spirit and so Jesus became the Christ or anointed one. Hence he was called Jesus Christ. —Luke 3:21-23.

THE RANSOMER THE CHIEF ONE IN THE NEW HEAVENS

18 Jesus knew that he had to die as a man. Otherwise, he could not become a ransom sacrifice for all mankind. To his twelve apostles he said: "The Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many." (Matt. 20:28) To this end he must die innocent, the righteous for the unrighteous. He must sacrifice his human life forever and let its value go in behalf of all mankind. He died without children, and nobody on earth can claim natural descent from Jesus Christ. He sacrificed his perfect human life and parenthood as a corresponding ransom for all mankind.

19 Moreover, as the Seed of God's "woman," he must be bruised in the heel by Satan the Great Serpent, and this meant a violent death for Jesus Christ. In view of this, Jesus Christ yielded himself to his enemies and false accusers to be put to death on an execution stake as if he were a blasphemous criminal. That occurred on Passover day at Jerusalem in the year 33 C.E. However, Jesus really died for preaching the kingdom of God, the Messianic kingdom that will serve as the "new heavens" in God's new order for mankind. —John 18:36.

20 Jesus Christ did all this of his own free will. Jehovah God his heavenly Father did not force him to do this; he merely presented to his faithful Son the privilege of doing this in support of his Father's universal sovereignty and in vindication of his Father's name. But the Father could not arrange for his Son to carry out all this service and go through all this suffering unjustly without giving the Son a reward. And so God set a glorious reward before his Son, that of being the Messianic King in the "new heavens." As such he would bruise the Serpent, Satan the Devil, in the head, and also wipe out all the seed of the Serpent, the demon angels, and thus

16. In due time, how did God make it possible for his only-begotten Son to become the exact equal of Adam in his Edenic innocence?
17. How did this Son Jesus come to be Christ?
18. Why was it necessary for the man Christ Jesus to die, doing this in what personal state?
19. To be the woman's Seed of Genesis 3:15, what must be done to him, and for doing what did Jesus apparently, but really, die?
20. Why did the matter of reward come into this arrangement, and what was that reward?

destroy the old heavens of this present order of things.

21 All this required first that Almighty God must raise his righteous, innocent Son from the dead, not as a human creature again but as a spirit person. This is what God did on the third day of his Son's death. In proof of this, the resurrected Jesus Christ made appearances to his disciples on his resurrection day and thereafter. On the fortieth day he ascended back to heaven to present to God the value of his human sacrifice.

22 Ten days later, on the Jewish festival day of Pentecost of the year 33 C.E., God began pouring out his holy spirit upon the faithful disciples of his Son Jesus. In this way the true, dedicated, baptized disciples of Christ began to experience the "new birth" to an incorruptible heavenly inheritance. (Acts 1:1 to 2:36) From that day onward God has been giving the "new birth" to those faithful disciples whom He chooses to make up the "new heavens" with his Son Jesus Christ.

23 They know what the apostle Paul wrote: "This I say, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit God's kingdom, neither does corruption inherit incorruption." (1 Cor. 15:50) So they know that they must die and leave behind forever the corruptible flesh. They must prove "faithful even to death," that they may receive the "crown of life" in the "new heavens." In the resurrection after God's kingdom is established they are raised as immortal spirit creatures. In their case what is written becomes true: "It is sown a physical body, it is raised up a spiritual body."—Rev. 2:10; 1 Cor. 15:44.

21. What did this require God to do respecting the dead Jesus Christ, and looking to the presenting of what value to God?
22. When thereafter, and how, did Christ's faithful disciples begin to experience the "new birth"?
23. In view of 1 Corinthians 15:50, what did these disciples know had to take place with them?

THE "NEW EARTH"

24 From these marvelous things we can discern how necessary it was for God to provide first the "new heavens," for the new order that he has promised. But what is this "new earth" that he creates? Well, just as the "new heavens" does not mean new planets and stars in the skies above us, so the "new earth" does not mean a new and different earthly planet beneath our feet. The establishing of "new heavens" calls for the removal of Satan and his demon angels out of their heavenly position of power over mankind. The establishment of a "new earth" calls for the removal of the present wicked human society that is opposed to God's kingdom and that is therefore serving Satan the Devil as the unseen ruler of this world, the "god of this system of things." In its place God will produce a new and righteous human society on this same earth but under His "new heavens," namely, Jesus Christ and his disciples who get the spiritual resurrection.

25 The formation of the "new earth" is already under way! Those who are making up this formative group of dedicated, baptized Christians are separating themselves from those who choose to remain a part of the wicked human society alienated from God, an 'ungodly world' of mankind. The removal of this old figurative "earth" will mean its destruction in a "great tribulation" just ahead, a tribulation that Jesus Christ foretold and said would be a global catastrophe without equal in world history.

26 So widespread and devastating will that tribulation be that, unless God short-

24. (a) What do these things show must come first with regard to the new order? (b) What does the setting up of the "new heavens," and then of the "new earth," call for as respects the old ones?
25. How is the founding of the "new earth" under way, and what is to happen to the old "earth"?
26. Only by what drastic acts of God will there be deliverance for mankind into His new order?

ened the days of it, no human flesh would be saved. (Matt. 24:21, 22; Mark 13:19, 20) That tribulation will spell the utter destruction of this present system of things, but not the destruction of our earth and the starry sky above us. After that the old demonic "heavens" will be removed and Satan and his demons will be put under restraint, under confinement as in an abyss. (Rev. 19:11 to 20:3) Only by these drastic acts of God will there be any deliverance for people on earth into God's new order.

THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Are You Getting the Happiness You Want?**
- **How Do You View Authority?**
- **Why Do Jehovah's Witnesses Call on You Repeatedly?**

[27] Do we want that deliverance into God's new order of "new heavens and a new earth" in which "righteousness is to dwell"? Are we preparing ourselves and striving to prove worthy of such a glorious deliverance? If we long for righteous living in perfect health and happiness in a delightful gardenized earth under righteous governmental heavens, then we will desire to be among the survivors of that coming "great tribulation." The last book of the Bible, with its revelation of things that "must shortly take place," points us to a "great crowd" of persons from all nations, tribes, peoples and languages who will survive that global "great tribulation," coming out of it under God's protection and favor.

[28] From the description that is given us of this crowd of survivors, we note that they are worshipers of the one true God, who is seated on the throne of the universe as Universal Sovereign. Another thing to note is that they accept the ransom sacrifice provided by God's Son, who was offered up like an unblemished, innocent lamb for the "sin of the world." Take note of this as we read:

[29] "And they keep on crying with a loud voice, saying: 'Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb.' . . . 'These are the ones that come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. That is why they are before the throne of God; and they are rendering him sacred service day and night in his temple.' "—Rev. 7:9-15; John 1:29, 36.

[30] Those prophetic words make it certain that this dedicated, baptized "great crowd" are in favor of God's "new heavens," made up of the Lamb Jesus Christ and his 144,000 faithful disciples who have been given the "new birth" to that heavenly inheritance. (Rev. 7:1-8; also 21:1-14) They get their death-dealing sins washed away through washing their robes in the "blood of the Lamb." This puts them on the way to everlasting life in an Edenic garden with which the "new heavens" will beautify the whole earthly globe.

[31] In fact, this "great crowd" of tribulation survivors will serve as the foundation of the "new earth" of God's creation. They are even now, before the tribulation, separating themselves from the doomed old "earth," the worldly human society of today that holds onto the devil-controlled, man-made system of things of today. So,

27. If we really desire that new order, among whom will we want to be found as forevisioned in the Revelation?

28, 29. According to the Revelation description of these survivors of the tribulation, whom do they worship and what provision for salvation do they accept?

30. This vision shows that the "great crowd" are in favor of what feature of the new order and that they are on the way to what?

31. This "great crowd" of tribulation survivors will form the foundation of what feature of the new order?

after the great tribulation removes this old "earth," these survivors will be the basis for a society organized under new heavens. Thus the human family will be given a new start in a new order.

32 This "new earth" will grow and spread, doubtless by *some* human births after the great tribulation is over and Satan the Devil and his demon angels have been imprisoned in their abyss, but not altogether in this way. No, for the Lamb Jesus Christ did not die for just these tribulation survivors and their natural offspring. He is the "Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world" of mankind; he "gave himself a corresponding ransom for all." His human equality with the perfect Adam made him fit to "taste death for every man." (1 Tim. 2:5, 6; Heb. 2:9) The overwhelming majority of the human family for whom the Lamb died nineteen centuries ago have already died. How will they really enter into the benefits of the ransoming value of Christ's death? By a marvelous miracle: by a resurrection from the dead during the thousand-year-long reign of Jesus Christ and his glorified congregation, the "new heavens."

33 Jesus Christ, when on earth as a perfect man of God, performed a number of resurrections. But those resurrected persons died later on in their generation. But when Jesus Christ the King resurrects ransomed mankind during his millennial rule, he will do so that they might live forever in a global paradise of Eden. It all depends upon the resurrected ones. Will they let themselves be incorporated into that righteous "new earth," or will they return to their former bad ways that they pursued during this present system of things? Those who do so will be judged and condemned as unworthy of the gift of eternal life in human perfection and godliness.

34 That is why Jesus Christ, when speaking on the subject of judgment, said: "The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who did good things to a resurrection of life, those who practiced vile things to a resurrection of judgment." (John 5:27-29) Those of the "great crowd" who will start off the "new earth" will be able to help these resurrected ones in order that their resurrection will not result finally in a condemnation.

35 Unusually wonderful is the day in which we are now living! Remarkable but highly significant things have been occurring since the year 1914 C.E. and its first world war. Jesus Christ foretold these things as marking the conclusion of this old system of things. Telling us the right attitude that all of his true disciples should have at this time, he said: "As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." —Luke 21:28.

36 This deliverance into God's new order is now much nearer than when many of us first saw these predicted things "start to occur." Certainly there is no time to delay for proving ourselves worthy to experience this much-desired deliverance. The unrepeatable opportunity is ours now! We are determined to seize it, and also to declare to all other lovers of righteousness, mankind's approaching deliverance into God's new order of "new heavens and a new earth."

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32. After the tribulation and Satan's binding, how will the "new earth" grow and spread?

33, 34. (a) How will the resurrections performed by Jesus Christ as King differ from those that he performed during his earthly life? (b) What will the "great crowd" of tribulation survivors have the opportunity to do toward the resurrected ones?

35. When predicting the things that have been happening since the year 1914 C.E., what right attitude did Jesus Christ tell his disciples to take?

36. In view of that, we want to prove worthy of what privilege, and what are we determined to do?

THE GOD WHO PROMISES

WHO is the God who promises deliverance for mankind? Why should we believe in his promise, and how can we rely on it?

To be able to make such a promise with effect, he would have to be the Creator of all things, the Almighty God. The Bible identifies him as such. There should be no question of his willingness to deliver mankind into a righteous new order; this is evident in his promise to do so. But our own assurance that he *will* do so must come from an examination of his acts and dealings, his fulfillment of other promises he has made.

Aside from his promise of deliverance of mankind through his Messianic kingdom, the most important promise that he has made is that of the Messiah's first coming. Did it actually take place as God promised?

RECORD OF MESSIAH'S FIRST APPEARANCE

That it did can be proved by the historical record. From very early times the Bible set out certain requirements for the Messiah so that he could be identified unmistakably. Some of these requirements are:

(1) He was to be from the tribe of Judah and the lineage of King David:

> "The scepter [symbol of ruling authority] will not turn aside from Judah, neither the commander's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to him the obedience of the peoples will belong." (Gen. 49:10) "Jehovah has sworn to David, truly he will not draw back from it: 'Of the fruitage of your belly I shall set on your throne.' "—Ps. 132:11; Isa. 9:7.

Jesus was of this lineage, as his genealogy, taken from the public register by the historians Matthew and Luke, shows. (Matt. 1:3, 6, 16; Luke 3:23, 31, 33) This genealogy, being from the Jews' own official archives, was not challenged by the Jewish leaders living in the first century C.E., though they attacked him on every point that they could think of.

(2) He was to be born in Bethlehem:

> "And you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, the one too little to get to be among the thousands of Judah, from you there will come out to me the one who is to become ruler in Israel."—Mic. 5:2.

Matthew, quoting the foregoing text, reports: "After Jesus had been born in Bethlehem of Judea . . ." —Matt. 2:1, 5, 6.

(3) He was to appear at the end of sixty-nine "weeks of years" (483 years) from the rebuilding of Jerusalem's wall (in 455 B.C.E.):

> "And you should know and have the insight that from the going forth of the word to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Leader, there will be seven weeks, also sixty-two weeks. . . . And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah will be cut off, with nothing for himself."—Dan. 9:25, 26.

Jesus did present himself on time, in 29 C.E. (483 years after 455 B.C.E.), to be baptized by John. At that time he became the Messiah (Anointed One), anointed by God's spirit. (Luke 3:21-23) The Jews were aware of this time prophecy and "were in expectation" at the time that John, Jesus' forerunner, began preaching.—Luke 3:15.

Also fulfilling the prophetic promise, Jesus was "cut off" in death as a ransom sacrifice for mankind about three and a half years after his baptism. Isaiah likewise foretold Messiah's sacrificial death. —Isa. 53:10-12.

Secular history acknowledges that Jesus Christ lived on earth and was a remarkable teacher. Flavius Josephus, a Jewish historian of the first century who was not a Christian, wrote that Jesus was on the scene during the governorship of Pontius Pilate, that he was a teacher of great influence, and was the Christ; that Pilate condemned him to death and that he appeared alive again to his disciples on the third day.—*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XVIII, Chap. III, Par. 3; John 19:15, 16; 20:1, 19; Matt. 27:63, 64; Acts 10:40.

Some may disbelieve the testimony of Christ's own disciples as to his resurrection, but consider these facts: There were upward of five hundred witnesses. The disciples were not men of power or influence, to overcome or bribe the soldier guards stationed at Jesus' tomb. There was little likelihood of collusion among so many, especially as to something that would be of no personal material gain to them. Their witnessing to the resurrection could have no selfish motive; it exposed them to suffering and death. They gave their testimony in the very place where the Messiah's bitterest enemies were, where certainly a fraud could be uncovered. And they did not wait, but witnessed right then, while the rage of the Jewish leaders was at its height.—1 Cor. 15:3-8; Acts 2:32; 3:15; 4:10, 18-20; 7:55-58; 8:1.

That these witnesses, in testifying to Jesus' resurrection, were not 'making up' a story can further be seen from the fact that the resurrection came as a surprise to them in their despair and downcast condition. They had looked for him to be a *human* king, and were tremendously shocked when he died. (Luke 24:13-43; John 20:24-29) Really, Jesus' resurrection was the very thing that gave them the courage to bear testimony, courage that could not be broken down under the most violent persecution.

So outstandingly did God fulfill his promise of the Messiah in every detail of the aforementioned prophecies as well as many others, that any reasoning person who considers the evidence should say, 'God is indeed a Fulfiller of his promises.'

TESTIMONY OF OTHER PROMINENT MEN

God's fulfillment of his promise to send his Messiah is a major example of his reliability. But there are countless others. Many men who served God in the past saw and experienced God's reliability in keeping his promises, not just once, but throughout their lives. Among these are Joshua, David and Solomon.

Joshua said, in his farewell speech to Israel:

> "You well know with all your hearts and with all your souls that not one word out of all the good words that Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed. They have all come true for you. Not one word of them has failed."—Josh. 23:14.

King David testified: "The sayings of Jehovah are pure sayings."—Ps. 12:6.

His son, King Solomon, said in prayer before all Israel:

> "Blessed be Jehovah, who has given a resting-place to his people Israel according to all that he has promised. There has not failed one word of all his good promise that he has promised by means of Moses his servant." "O Jehovah the God of Israel, there is no God like you in the heavens or on the earth, keeping the covenant and the loving-kindness . . . you who have kept toward your servant David my father what you promised him, so that you made the promise with your mouth, and with your own hand you have made fulfillment as at this day." —1 Ki. 8:56; 2 Chron. 6:14, 15.

These men were no fools. They were

wise men and leaders of a great nation, and they recognized that only through God's oversight and loyalty to his promises could the fulfillments have come. And they were no deceivers. The candidness of the writers of the Scriptures, exposing their own errors as well as those of their rulers and their nation, testifies to their truthfulness.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS GOD

If we are seriously concerned with deliverance from the corruption of this present system of things, we will give God's promise the deepest consideration. There is no other source that promises a paradise earth, a restoration of our loved ones by a resurrection, and everlasting life. Man's promises of a better world are shabby by comparison—and even these they cannot fulfill.

Moreover, God *loves* man, the creation of his hands. He promises deliverance, not because he is obligated to do so, but out of *love*. The sending of his Son to earth was an act of God's own initiative that laid the foundation for the deliverance of mankind. The apostle Paul wrote: "God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Rom. 5:8.

Why, then, doubt or reject such a loving provision? Rather, get more knowledge of God and his promises. Jehovah's witnesses will be happy to help you to follow the inspired counsel to *"make sure* of all things; *hold fast* to what is fine."—1 Thess. 5:21.

WHAT HAS GOD PROMISED?

A NEW order —what will life be like there? Will all earth's inhabitants have fine, even luxurious homes? What methods of transportation and communication will be used?

The Bible does not say. Why not? Because these are not the most important things to know, particularly at this time. These things do not, in themselves, bring real happiness. What does bring such happiness?

This system of things provides fine homes for many. It can supply a person with luxury in food, clothing, automobiles and pleasures. Yet we see as many broken homes, delinquent children and as much sickness among those having luxury as among poor people.

It is evident, therefore, that spiritual prosperity must precede material prosperity for real happiness. Is it not the spiritual and mental condition of an individual that makes him happy? True and lasting happiness can come only if one has a good conscience toward God and serves the interests of God's kingdom as directed by the Bible.

Looking at the matter from another angle, what is it that brings unhappiness in this world today? Is it primarily the lack of material things? Or is it people and their attitude? Is it not people's lack of consideration and respect for others and for their property? The greed, dis-

courtesy and unconcern for neighbor make for unhappiness, no matter what one's material surroundings may be.

Accordingly, the Bible talks primarily about *people*. It stresses changing one's personality. (Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9, 10) A person may be rich. He may be poor. But either way he can be happy if he follows the Bible's admonition and associates with others who have the same genuine faith.

So, while the Bible guarantees that God will preserve this planet Earth, it speaks much more about the preservation of people. It sets forth the requirements for individual survival.

Need we worry or be deeply concerned, then, about what the exact condition, materially, will be in God's order? True, there are millions of persons on earth who have been forced by circumstances and environment to live under conditions of abject poverty, with no hope of betterment. It is natural and proper for them to desire better material conditions. And it is natural for those hoping in God's promise to wonder what God will provide. But there is no real advantage in spending time in speculation. However, we are justified in looking to see what the Bible *does* say.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE INDICATE?

How can the Bible help us to know what God will provide for people in his new order? Mainly by revealing to us God's personality—what kind of God he is.

First, the Bible tells us that God "becomes the *rewarder* of those earnestly seeking him." (Heb. 11:6) So it is proper to look for a reward for faithfulness to him. We also learn that the things that bring God's favor, resulting in all our needs being supplied, are faith and loyalty to Him. King Solomon requested, not riches, but an obedient heart and understanding to direct God's people Israel. God was pleased, and replied: "For the reason that you have requested this thing and have not requested for yourself many days nor requested for yourself riches nor requested the soul of your enemies, and you have requested for yourself understanding to hear judicial cases, look! I shall certainly do according to your words. Look! I shall certainly give you a wise and understanding heart." But then God went on to say: "And also what you have not requested I will give you, both riches and glory . . . And if you will walk in my ways by keeping my regulations and my commandments, . . . I will also lengthen your days." —1 Ki. 3:9-14.

Consequently, we can be assured that everything needed for fullest happiness will be supplied in God's new order. Of Jehovah God, King David could say from experience: "You are opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing." (Ps. 145:16) God knows the human makeup, the things needed to make one happy, the desires of the heart. (Ps. 139:1-4) He knows what we need better than we ourselves do, even before we are aware of the need and ask for it.—Matt. 6:8; compare John 2:25.

The apostle Paul wrote to the materially poor but generous congregation of Christians in Philippi, Macedonia: "My God will fully supply all your need to the *extent* of his riches in glory by means of Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19; 2 Cor. 8:1, 2) What will be needed by those surviving the destruction of this system of things into God's new order, along with those resurrected during Christ's thousand-year reign?

HUMAN NEEDS ASSURED

By considering God's purpose for Adam and Eve we can get some idea of his pur-

pose in his new order. The first human pair were perfect in mind and body. (Gen. 1:31) They were placed in a beautiful garden home, with every food that was necessary for their sustenance and delight. (Gen. 2:9) Their dominion gave them peace with the animals. (Gen. 1:28) Only when Adam and Eve sinned were they driven out of paradise, it thereby being evident that a paradise is God's provision for the habitation of perfect persons.

It would not be in harmony with God's loving manner of dealing with his faithful people to bring them through the "great tribulation" of this world's destruction into his new order only to inherit a condition of complete desolation. He knows that humans need homes of some kind. But after the destruction of this system of things it may take some time before the earth can be built up and beautified to any great extent, according to the 'architectural' plans to be furnished by Jehovah God, who knows what his design is for the new order. This does not mean that man's own ingenuity and talents will be stifled, but that God will determine the general or overall pattern. In the meantime, the needs of all will be cared for.

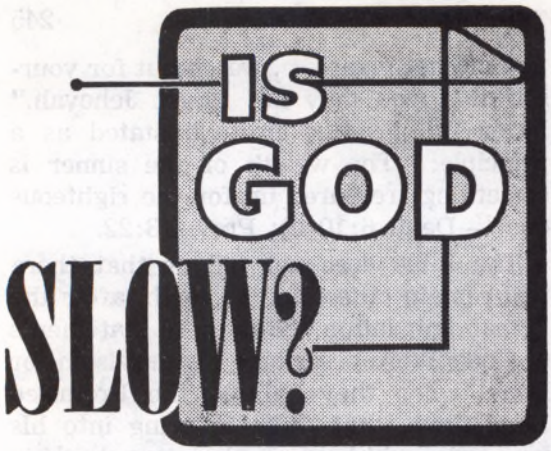
What God did for his people Israel when they entered the Promised Land reveals that God will certainly provide necessities for those surviving into the new order. Moses told Israel beforehand: "And it must occur that when Jehovah your God will bring you into the land that he swore to your forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to give you, great and good-looking cities that you did not build, and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns hewn out that you did not hew out, vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant, . . . watch out for yourself that you may not forget Jehovah." Later the inspired proverb stated as a principle: "The wealth of the sinner is something treasured up for the righteous one."—Deut. 6:10-12; Prov. 13:22.

The Bible does not tell us that there will remain cities, and so forth, after the "great tribulation." But these statements of God's Word describing his provision for Israel when they entered the Promised Land prove that those entering into his new order will have ample to supply their material needs along with the priceless inheritance of life on this delightful planet Earth.

What God promises and what he brings are, we can be sure, the very best for all concerned. Often we desire things that, when obtained, are disappointing. We cannot, therefore, determine what will be best for us in God's new order. But we can take hold of what God gives us now in a spiritual way, the things that are of *real* value in life.

In God's due time he will reveal to us all that he has in store for us, things more delightful than our minds can now envision. Our primary concern now should be to get 'accurate knowledge and full discernment, that we may make sure of the more important things' so as to be on hand to enjoy his new order of righteousness. —Phil. 1:9, 10.

What these important things are and what we can do in order to have a really good conscience toward God and to practice the things that are right in his eyes will be considered in a later article in this magazine, entitled "Preparing for God's New Order."



SOMETIMES people feel that conditions are so bad that they cannot get much worse. They see dangers on every hand that take the joy out of living. Often we hear the remark, 'Why doesn't God do something?' or, 'If God is ever going to do something, why doesn't he do it now?'

Jehovah's witnesses have been trying to reach everyone with the good news they have found in the Bible that God's time to act is soon, yes, during the lifetime of this generation now living. (Matt. 24:34) Many persons listen with keen interest. In just the past three years, almost a half million persons have joined them in bringing this good news to nearly every person in the nations called Christendom. And a great proclamation has been made in other lands all over the earth.

But there are many who doubt early action on the part of God. They do not rely on the promise of his kingdom so frequently spoken of in the Bible. They are impatient with God, unwilling to recognize that he has a timetable for carrying out his works. They count him slow.

Yet, at the same time, some of these very persons continue to support and vote for certain men in governmental offices. They continue to have faith in the promises politicians make. They are very patient with this system of things and willing to wait for years. They sometimes remark that it may take generations for man's efforts in government, education, ecological development, and so forth, to solve all the problems. When the men in office fail to bring in a new and better order, they elect new ones, hoping that these men will somehow start things on the right road.

When such persons are told that God is the Sovereign and that righteous government can come only by the direct exercise of that sovereignty through his Messianic kingdom, some may answer, 'God works through men; he has left men to work out a better world for themselves.' But that is not what the Bible says. It speaks of divine intervention in the affairs of men, to establish an enduring government from a heavenly source.—Dan. 2:44.

How can persons who reject what God says expect God to help them? He is not responsible for their form of government nor for the actions of the men they put in office. They have heard God's promise of deliverance of mankind through his kingdom, but they have ignored it in favor of man-rule. Some even go so far as to oppose the proclamation of God's promise. The Bible describes their thinking: "Because sentence against a bad work has not been executed speedily, that is why the heart of the sons of men has become fully set in them to do bad."—Eccl. 8:11.

NOT SLOWNESS, BUT PATIENCE

Nevertheless, God is not slow. The apostle Peter wrote: "Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise, as some people consider slowness, but he is patient with you because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance." (2 Pet. 3:9) He has set his deliverance of mankind as due to occur in this generation. (Luke 21:32) God, with all

power in heaven and earth, is in no necessity to make promises he cannot fulfill. One of the apostles of Jesus Christ said, 'God cannot lie.' And the prophet Isaiah wrote: "Trust in Jehovah, you people, for all times, for in Jah Jehovah is the Rock of times indefinite."—Titus 1:2; Isa. 26:4.

If we realize that man-rule is not the solution for mankind's problems, and instead look to God, we will appreciate from investigating his Word of truth that his apparent 'delay' is not slowness. The apostle goes on to say: "Furthermore, consider the patience of our Lord as salvation." (2 Pet. 3:15) And, today, many are taking up the way of salvation. They are taking advantage of the time to learn what God has arranged for mankind, forsaking trust in this failing system of things. They realize that it is not without purpose that God's Word warns, 'Buy out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked.' (Eph. 5:16) They know that when God's patience runs out, the destruction of this system of things will not move *slowly*. It will begin as though a steel trap had snapped shut.

Therefore, rather than to blame God as being slow, is it not far better to check ourselves, to see whether we are living in a manner worthy of a new order? Is it not better to take the advice of Jesus Christ? After giving his hearers a foreview of the end of unfaithful Jerusalem and, later, the end of this present system of things, he said: "But pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare. For it will come in upon all those dwelling upon the face of all the earth. Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication that you may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur, and in standing before the Son of man."—Luke 21:34-36.

Preparing for GOD'S NEW ORDER

IF YOU move to a foreign country, to be a permanent resident there, usually many changes are required. To get along really well, you need to learn the language. You must know something about the laws, the customs and practices of the people. There are certain expressions and habits that may have been fully accepted in your native land, but which you have to drop because they cause offense among the people of your newly adopted country. It takes some time to alter your thinking processes and ways of life before you fully fit in and get along without embarrassment or difficulty.

What, then, if you were to be transferred into a different society, a new order, in which complete justice prevailed, and right dealing with one's neighbors, yes, even true hospitality and love regardless

of race or nationality—a place where you could trust your fellowman? Would you say that such would be a change from the society that now surrounds you, a change even greater than moving to another country?

HIGHER STANDARDS OF THINKING NECESSARY

This transfer is what God promises to make. And certainly it means many major changes from the standards and practices of present society. Would those living in even "Christian" nations have to make such a change? The nation of Israel, though professing to serve God, was living in the manner that the people in so-called "Christian" lands are living today. That is, they had 'a form of godly devotion, but proved false to its power' by not letting the high standards of God's laws govern their lives. (2 Tim. 3:5) They ignored God's commands and lived according to their own way, which led them into corrupt practices. Jehovah therefore told them: "The thoughts of you people are not my thoughts, nor are my ways your ways, . . . For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."—Isa. 55:8, 9.

Would a change into a new order require a change in your thinking, your expressions and dealings? Undoubtedly. How much different it would be to associate with people whom you could trust in a transaction, whose attitude toward you would be for good, whose expressions were clean and upbuilding. Certainly a change would be necessary if one wanted to be part of a society with such high standards.

But the questions present themselves, If we want to prepare ourselves *now* for living in a new order, how can this be done, in the midst of the bad practices going on? And can a person get along in this present system of things if he practices strict honesty and clean living? Will it be possible for him to provide for his family? Will he be able to survive in this world without going along with it in its crooked practices?

The answer is, Yes. How? Well, we must accept the Creator at his word. From his Word of truth the Bible we can get right principles, those the Creator himself sets forth, and that *really work* to the benefit of those who follow them. It is then up to us to put these principles into practice in our lives and trust in him to see us through, as he has bound himself by promise to do. But let us see what God requires and promises.

A CHANGE IN "LANGUAGE"

According to the Bible, to make the needed change we have to learn a new "language." When God spoke about restoring Israel from Babylonian exile, he said: "For then I shall give to peoples the change to a pure language, in order for them all to call upon the name of Jehovah, in order to serve him shoulder to shoulder." (Zeph. 3:9) This was not a change in Israel's literal tongue, but a change in *what* they spoke, their *way* of speaking, a language of pure truth, purity of language that brought praise to God and unity of worship, with peace.

Now God is doing as he did back there, 'gathering nations, collecting together kingdoms, in order to pour out upon them his denunciation, all his burning anger.' So, too, now he is giving to righteous-hearted peoples of all lands, regardless of the tongue they speak, the "pure language" of truth.—Zeph. 3:8.

Now, this change of language means a change in our entire lives. We are commanded:

"Let fornication and uncleanness of every sort or greediness not even be mentioned

among you, just as it befits holy people; neither shameful conduct nor foolish talking nor obscene jesting, things which are not becoming, but rather the giving of thanks." —Eph. 5:3, 4.

The change we make is well described by the apostle Paul:

"Deaden, therefore, your body members that are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of those things the wrath of God is coming. In those very things you, too, once walked when you used to live in them. But now really put them all away from you, wrath, anger, badness, abusive speech, and obscene talk out of your mouth. Do not be lying to one another. Strip off the old personality with its practices, and clothe yourselves with the new personality, which through accurate knowledge is being made new according to the image of the One who created it."—Col. 3:5-10.

To speak this new language, then, requires that we get rid of our former expressions, bad habits and ways of life, replacing them with the "fruitage of the spirit" so that we may qualify for deliverance into God's new order. (Gal. 5:22, 23) These are the "*important* things" the apostle speaks about that require accurate knowledge and full discernment. (Phil. 1: 9, 10) All must "quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, that you may *prove to yourselves* the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."—Rom. 12:2.

DO NOT FEAR TO MAKE THE CHANGE

This change in living *can be made,* even in the midst of a corrupt world. God says that he will be with those who follow his principles of uprightness and honesty. We do not need to be afraid that it will bring upon us bad economic conditions so that our families may not have enough to eat. "For he has said: 'I will by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you.' " —Heb. 13:5, 6.

We can be free from fears that beset the world, for we know that "if God is for us, who will be against us?" Moses, who experienced God's protection through many troubles, could truthfully say: "Because you said: 'Jehovah is my refuge,' you have made the Most High himself your dwelling; no calamity will befall you." —Rom. 8:31; Ps. 91:9, 10.

Another reason exists why we can live by God's standards even now, with hope of living in a totally righteous new system of things. That reason is that God has an organization on earth, formed to help those who now want to serve him. Jehovah's witnesses have accepted the standards and principles of God's Word. They are applying them in their lives. They realize that by birth they are sinners, just as is mankind in general, but by speaking the "pure language" they are making over their personalities and are serving as one man, "shoulder to shoulder."—Eph. 4:20-24; Phil. 1:27, 28.

According to his promise God has helped this group of people, who come from all walks of life, all nations and races. As a body of a million and a half persons, all cooperating in unity, they can attest to the truth of King David's words: "A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous left entirely, nor his offspring looking for bread." (Ps. 37:25) Also, Jehovah's witnesses are happy. Their happiness has attracted the attention of others who have joined their ranks. While Christendom's religious systems are declining, the Witnesses, who sincerely practice true Christianity, are increasing in number, in unity and in peace. They prove themselves to be a people preparing for life in God's new order.

IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP ENOUGH?

'WILL I be among those delivered into God's new order?' Everyone who believes God's promise is bound to ask that question. Many also want to know, 'Will my church membership assure me of God's favor?'

These questions really deserve serious consideration, especially in view of the fact that so many churches exist, with conflicting teachings and practices.

What, then, about those who are baptized members of Jehovah's witnesses? These also might well ask, 'Does my association, including my participation in the study meetings of Jehovah's witnesses and in preaching from house to house, ensure my deliverance when this system of things is destroyed?'

To answer either of these questions you have to consider, What does God require of me? He says: "I am the Lord thy God, a jealous God [or, "a God exacting exclusive devotion"]." (Deut. 5:9, *Douay Version;* compare *New World Translation.*) Therefore, of *you* as an *individual* he requires exclusive devotion. You must serve him personally, from the *heart,* with accurate knowledge of what pleases him. —1 Chron. 28:9; Matt. 22:37.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WORD ESSENTIAL

This knowledge can be gained only from God's Word of truth the Bible. A person professing to serve God may be zealous, sincere. He may feel that his church leaders are also sincere. But those things in themselves will not ensure God's favor.

The Bible gives us a striking example of this. It emphasizes the point that, even though sincere, an individual or even an entire organization can fall far short of exclusive devotion to God. The apostle Paul said of his countrymen the Jews, whom he loved: "Brothers, the goodwill of my heart and my supplication to God for them [the Jews] are, indeed, for their salvation. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God; but not according to accurate knowledge; for, because of not knowing the righteousness of God but seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God."—Rom. 10:1-3.

Knowing what God requires is not hard, if you open-mindedly read and accept what the Bible says, doing so without prejudice from previous beliefs or teachings. For illustration: Just prior to his statement with regard to his requirement of exclusive devotion, God said:

"Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of any things, that are in heaven above, or that are in the earth beneath, or that abide in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them: and thou shalt not serve them." (Deut. 5:8, 9, *Dy*) Notice that God says not to "make" them or to "adore" them. Later, God declared: "I, the Lord: this is my name. I will not give my glory to another, nor my praise to graven things."—Isa. 42:8, *Dy.*

If, therefore, you have been using images in worship, whether they be of Christ, angels or saints, you know, regardless of what men may say, that you have not been giving *exclusive devotion* to God.

So you undoubtedly can appreciate that a church that teaches you to use images in worship, even though it is considered

only relative worship, would not protect you by membership in it. Anything that does not glorify God falls short of exclusive devotion to him. And any organization that teaches doctrines that do not glorify God, or that contradict his Word, brings no blessing of God to its members. Rather, by membership in, or support of, that organization you would suffer destruction when God wipes off the earth all things not glorifying him.—2 Thess. 1:7-9.

PERSONAL CONDUCT VITAL

Again, you may be a diligent student of the Bible. You may know the principles it teaches, particularly its moral principles. Whether you associate with other professed Christians or not—in fact, even if you associate with those you know are giving God exclusive devotion—the important question is, Are *you* living according to these right principles?

The apostle Peter points to the responsibility upon each individual professing to be Christian when he says: "If you are calling upon the Father who judges impartially according to each one's work, conduct yourselves with fear during the time of your alien residence [as living in this world but being no part of it]." Later he warns: "It is the appointed time for the judgment to start with the house of God. Now if it starts first with us, what will the end be of those who are not obedient to the good news of God? 'And if the righteous man is being saved with difficulty, where will the ungodly man and the sinner make a showing?' "—1 Pet. 1:17; 4:17, 18.

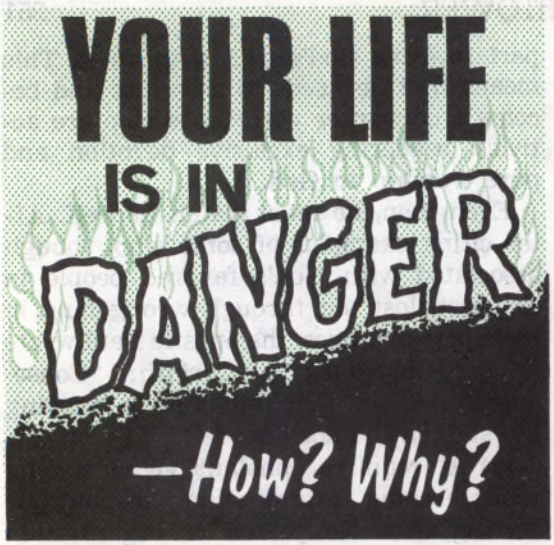
So, a person cannot rely on his church membership or affiliations. Nor can he be safe merely by leaving a church that promotes wrong teachings or condones practices contrary to the Bible. He must additionally take *positive* action on his own part to *learn* God's will, then *do* it. This means that he needs to associate and become a co-worker with those who are actively rendering exclusive devotion and pure worship to God.

Even then, he must watch himself. After citing examples of some who, though associated with God's favored people in the past, lost out through wrongdoing in their personal lives, the apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth: "Consequently let him that thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall." (1 Cor. 10:6-12) It requires constant vigilance and soul-searching examination to continue serving God. No person or organization can save any individual, for "each of us will render an account for himself to God." —Rom. 14:12; compare Hebrews 4:12, 13.

Even so highly favored a person as the apostle Paul said of himself: "The way I am running is not uncertainly; the way I am directing my blows is so as not to be striking the air; but I pummel my body and lead it as a slave, that, after I have preached to others, I myself should not become disapproved somehow."—1 Cor. 9:26, 27.

Summing up, then, as to the question, Is church membership enough? we answer with a definite No! The person desiring to serve God must forsake his religious system if it does not follow God's Word. His next step will be to associate with those who serve God in pure worship. Then, in rendering exclusive devotion to Jehovah God, he must *live* so that his life 'adorns the teaching of our Savior, God, in all things.' (Titus 2:10) The one doing this can be confident in God's promise:

"Jehovah is near to all those calling upon him,
To all those who call upon him in trueness.
The desire of those fearing him he will perform,
And their cry for help he will hear, and he will save them."—Ps. 145:18, 19.



MOST persons recognize that their lives are in danger every day. Statistics show that the probability of death from accidents, crime, fire and other causes is steadily increasing.

Then there is the threat of nuclear war. This is so menacing that the responsibility for world peace has been placed in the hands of an international organization, the United Nations. However, the UN has been a disappointment as a peacemaker.

But a far more serious danger than these exists. What is that?

The danger to the spiritual interests of the people. For spiritual interests have to do with eternal life or eternal death. How? Because God is the Life-giver, and one's prospects for everlasting life depend on one's standing with God.—John 17:3.

The religious leaders, particularly in the so-called "Christian" nations, have stood in the position of caretakers of the people's spiritual interests. They have claimed to lead these nations in the way of the God of the Bible. They have professed to be followers of God's Son Jesus Christ. But have they actually directed these nations in the worship of God?

Consider their record during World War I. The clergy of *Catholic*, Protestant and Orthodox denominations preached their flocks into killing one another in that conflict. Nationalism took precedence over worship of God.

But did the clergy repent, turn around from their course and point the people to God's kingdom as the hope for mankind? Did they support the Bible and its principles? No. Their course since, including during World War II, shows they did not.

Consequently, anyone who hopes to experience deliverance into God's new order must have better spiritual guidance than what the clergy give.

GOD CONCERNED OVER YOUR LIFE

Jehovah God, the Supreme Spirit Being, is not going to let the failure of these false religious leaders cause honest-hearted persons to lose out on deliverance and life in his new order. Jehovah is the Shepherd and Overseer of his people. (1 Pet. 2:25; Ps. 23:1) Accordingly, he raised up as his "servant" a body of persons who were faithful, reliable and not rebellious. This group was confronted with a difficult assignment to carry out, because it required their proclamation of a strong denunciatory message against Christendom. Why? It was essential that right-hearted persons be warned so as to see clearly their danger. These persons must forsake all association and affiliation with false religion. They must take a firm stand for the truth of God's Word and position themselves on the side of his Messianic kingdom in order to be delivered.

The group to be used by God was prefigured by Ezekiel, an Israelite priest. The year 613 B.C.E. was a late time in the forty-year "time of the end" for Jerusalem. Jerusalem had only six years left before that city and the land of Judah

would be completely desolated. Jerusalem's religious leaders as well as those Jewish leaders then in exile with Ezekiel over in Babylon had failed the people and were responsible for their plight.

Likewise, this present system of things is well along in its "time of the end,"* with the spiritual condition of Christendom in a bad plight indeed. Therefore we observe with keen interest what Ezekiel was commanded to do and what this foreshadowed for our day.

AN ASSIGNMENT TO PREACH

In vision, Ezekiel beheld a great celestial chariot coming out of the north, to roll up before him. From atop this chariot, which was accompanied by cherubs, and was symbolic of a great heavenly organization, Jehovah God spoke to Ezekiel, commissioning him. Then Ezekiel was handed a scroll, with the command: "Eat this roll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." —Ezek. 3:1.

The scroll had "dirges and moaning and wailing" written on both sides. (Ezek. 2:10) It was a full message because of the fullness of the measure of Israel's sins. Was Ezekiel willing to eat it and to proclaim the sad message, as an example for the modern "Ezekiel"?

Ezekiel did as commanded. He gradually ate the roll. (Ezek. 3:2, 3) Surprisingly, the gloom-laden roll was sweet as honey in Ezekiel's mouth. This was because it was a good, wholesome, sweet experience for Ezekiel to be assigned a special work at the hand of the Most High God. The apostle John, seven hundred years later, had a like experience. John, then exiled on the Isle of Patmos in the Aegean Sea for his faithful preaching of the word of God, writes of his vision:

> "And the voice that I heard out of heaven is speaking again with me and saying: 'Go, take the opened scroll that is in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the earth.' And I went away to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. And he said to me: 'Take it and eat it up, and it will make your belly bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.' And I took the little scroll out of the hand of the angel and ate it up, and in my mouth it was sweet as honey; but when I had eaten it up, my belly was made bitter." —Rev. 10:8-10.

John's experience was not merely a fulfillment of Ezekiel's experience, for that would have been meaningless repetition. Rather, it showed that Ezekiel's vision was prophetic and that he represented the same thing as John, who, as a spirit-begotten disciple of Jesus Christ, probably the last surviving apostle, pictured the remaining ones on earth today of the spirit-begotten, anointed brothers of Jesus Christ.

The visionary scroll that Ezekiel ate did not picture the prophetic book of Ezekiel, for Ezekiel's book is not all dirges, moaning and wailing. It also contains prophecies of blessing for God's people. The roll pictures Jehovah's denunciatory message against Jerusalem and Judah, concluding with the declaration against their Gentile enemies, completed at Ezekiel 35:15.

Similarly, the anointed remnant received the "roll of a book," symbolically, at the time for the beginning of their great worldwide proclamation of the Kingdom message in 1919. This scroll likewise did not picture the book of Ezekiel. Rather, the scroll represented all the declarations in the entire Bible that have to do with the judgments, spiritual plagues and tribulations that are to come upon Christendom and her religious and political associates in the "time of the end." As the servants of God saw and accepted their commission it was an assignment that tasted sweet to them.

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* See the book *"Babylon the Great Has Fallen!" God's Kingdom Rules!*, pages 174-181. Published by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, New York.

A "LANGUAGE" PROFESSORS OF CHRISTIANITY CANNOT FAIL TO UNDERSTAND

Since it is the lives of the flocks of Christendom's churches that are in such imminent danger, the Ezekiel-like anointed ones on earth logically would be sent primarily to them. God told Ezekiel:

"Son of man, go, enter in among the house of Israel, and you must speak with my words to them. For it is not to a people who are unintelligible in language or heavy of tongue that you are being sent—to the house of Israel, not to numerous peoples unintelligible in language or heavy in tongue, whose words you cannot hear understandingly. If it was to them that I had sent you, those very ones would listen to you. But as for the house of Israel, they will not want to listen to you, for they are not wanting to listen to me; because all those of the house of Israel are hardheaded and hardhearted. Look! I have made your face exactly as hard as their faces and your forehead exactly as hard as their foreheads. Like a diamond, harder than flint, I have made your forehead. You must not be afraid of them, and you must not be struck with terror at their faces, for they are a rebellious house." —Ezek. 3:4-9.

Ezekiel did not have to learn a new language. He was sent to his own people. God has always warned those professing to serve him, and he has made the warning very plain, in terminology with which they were familiar. So to the Jews he sent a spokesman who used their language.

It was like that when Jesus Christ was on earth. He said that he was sent specifically to Israel. (Matt. 15:24) He spoke to the Jews in the current language that they used every day. Also they had the Scriptures, to which Jesus continually referred, and which bore testimony to him. (John 5:39) They knew what he was talking about when he referred to their history, their customs, when he used their religious terms and expressions. He said to those Jews:

"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! because if the powerful works had taken place in Tyre and Sidon that took place in you, they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes. Consequently I say to you, It will be more endurable for Tyre and Sidon on Judgment Day than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you perhaps be exalted to heaven? Down to Hades you will come; because if the powerful works that took place in you had taken place in Sodom, it would have remained until this very day. Consequently I say to you people, It will be more endurable for the land of Sodom on Judgment Day than for you." "Men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it; because they repented at what Jonah preached, but, look! something more than Jonah is here."—Matt. 11:21-24; 12:41.

Likewise, the anointed Kingdom proclaimers, pictured by Ezekiel, are sent to 'their own' people, people who speak the same general Biblical language and who, like them, profess to be Christian. When Jehovah's witnesses speak to the people in the "Christian" lands about the Bible, the people know what is meant. They are familiar with Bible expressions and terminology, so that they are on common ground. There is no excuse for them not to understand what the modern "Ezekiel" says. If they do not respond with hearing ears it is because they do not want to.

A MESSAGE OF LOVE

Just as only a few among the Jewish nation believed Jesus, so only a small percentage in Christendom accept the message of Jehovah's witnesses. Christendom in general has proved to be a rebellious house, not seeing the danger hanging over it. But hardheaded and hardhearted as Christendom is, Jehovah has strengthened his servants so that they have no fear in proclaiming God's message to them. He has made his servants' foreheads of superior hardness, like a diamond. They are not paralyzed by fear of men. (Prov. 29:25) However, the persistence of Jehovah's witnesses in preaching under all circumstances is sometimes misunderstood as

fanaticism. Actually it is love and the spirit of God that impels them, for Jehovah the loving God knows the dire danger people are facing and he wants to deliver everyone whose heart can be reached with the good news.—Ezek. 33:11.

God further spoke to Ezekiel: "Son of man, all my words that I shall speak to you, take into your heart and hear with your own ears. And go, enter in among the exiled people, among the sons of your people, and you must speak to them and say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said,' regardless of whether they hear or they refrain." —Ezek. 3:10, 11.

FLEE FROM SPIRITUAL CAPTIVITY

The Jews among whom Ezekiel preached were in exile in Babylon. Similarly, the people in "Christian" lands today are not practicing the truth that sets one free from enslavement to sin. Moreover, they are in a spiritual captivity to Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion. They are actually in "exile" from God and his true worship. (John 8:31, 32, 34) Their practices are foreign to the pure principles of the Bible. The so-called "new morality," for example, denies the Bible's standards and denies God's right to set the standards humans should follow.—Gal. 5:19-21.

So, action is necessary on the part of the modern-day Ezekiel. This was foreshadowed by what next occurred in Ezekiel's case. He relates:

> "And a spirit proceeded to bear me along and I began to hear behind me the sound of a great rushing: 'Blessed be the glory of Jehovah from his place.' And there was the sound of the wings of the living creatures that were closely touching each other, and the sound of the wheels close beside them, and the sound of a great rushing. And the spirit bore me along and proceeded to take me, . . . and the hand of Jehovah upon me was strong. So I entered in among the exiled people at Tel-abib, who were dwelling by the river Chebar, and I began to dwell where they were dwelling; and I kept dwelling there for seven days, stunned in the midst of them."—Ezek. 3:12-15.

What was "his place" from which Jehovah's glory was to be blessed? Not the temple in Jerusalem, which was called his place, for it had been defiled, polluted by the idolatrous and rebellious acts of the Jews. Jehovah's "place" was with his commissioned prophet Ezekiel. Today Jehovah's glory is not blessed in Christendom, which nominally claims to be the place that declares his glory. It is with his faithful Ezekiel-like anointed ones who actually declare his name and the glory of his kingdom as his instrument for delivering mankind into his new order.

Do you discern that your spiritual interests are in danger, and, therefore, your life is also? Are you concerned? Then follow God's command to honest-hearted ones who are in the religious systems of Babylon the Great: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues. For her sins have massed together clear up to heaven, and God has called her acts of injustice to mind."—Rev. 18:4, 5.

Doing this first, then become one who declares God's glory to others and have his favor and deliverance. Be among those of whom He says: "They are before the throne of God; and they are rendering him sacred service day and night in his temple; and the One seated on the throne will spread his tent over them. They will hunger no more nor thirst anymore, neither will the sun [of divine displeasure] beat down upon them nor any scorching heat [of God's chastisement], because the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, will shepherd them, and will guide them to fountains of waters of life. And God will wipe out every tear from their eyes." —Rev. 7:15-17.

● Why, while hanging on the stake, did Jesus Christ cry out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"—U.S.A.

Jesus' question was a quotation from a psalm of David. (Ps. 22:1) In David's case the question related to a momentary condition of abandonment. Surrounded by enemies, David found himself in a situation that made it appear that he was completely forsaken by Jehovah. The tremendous strain resulting therefrom moved David to ask why it had happened despite his being unaware of any guilt. But David had not lost faith, for in the same psalm he prayed: "Do make haste to my assistance." —Ps. 22:16-19.

Similarly, when uttering the words of Psalm 22:1, Jesus keenly sensed that his Father had momentarily withdrawn his protection and "forsaken" or released him into the hands of his enemies, to die as an accursed criminal on a stake. (Gal. 3:13) In asking "why," Jesus did not imply that he did not know the reason for this abandonment nor was he expecting an answer from his Father. The situation is comparable to that of a Christian who knows the reason for human suffering but is moved, under the weight of intense difficulties, to ask "why" either silently or audibly. The questioner thereby reveals that he has no reason to think that the suffering is due to his transgressions. Thus, besides fulfilling Psalm 22:1, Jesus' outcry evidently served to confirm his innocence and focused on the real purpose for his suffering.—Matt. 27:46; compare John 12:27, 28, 33.

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