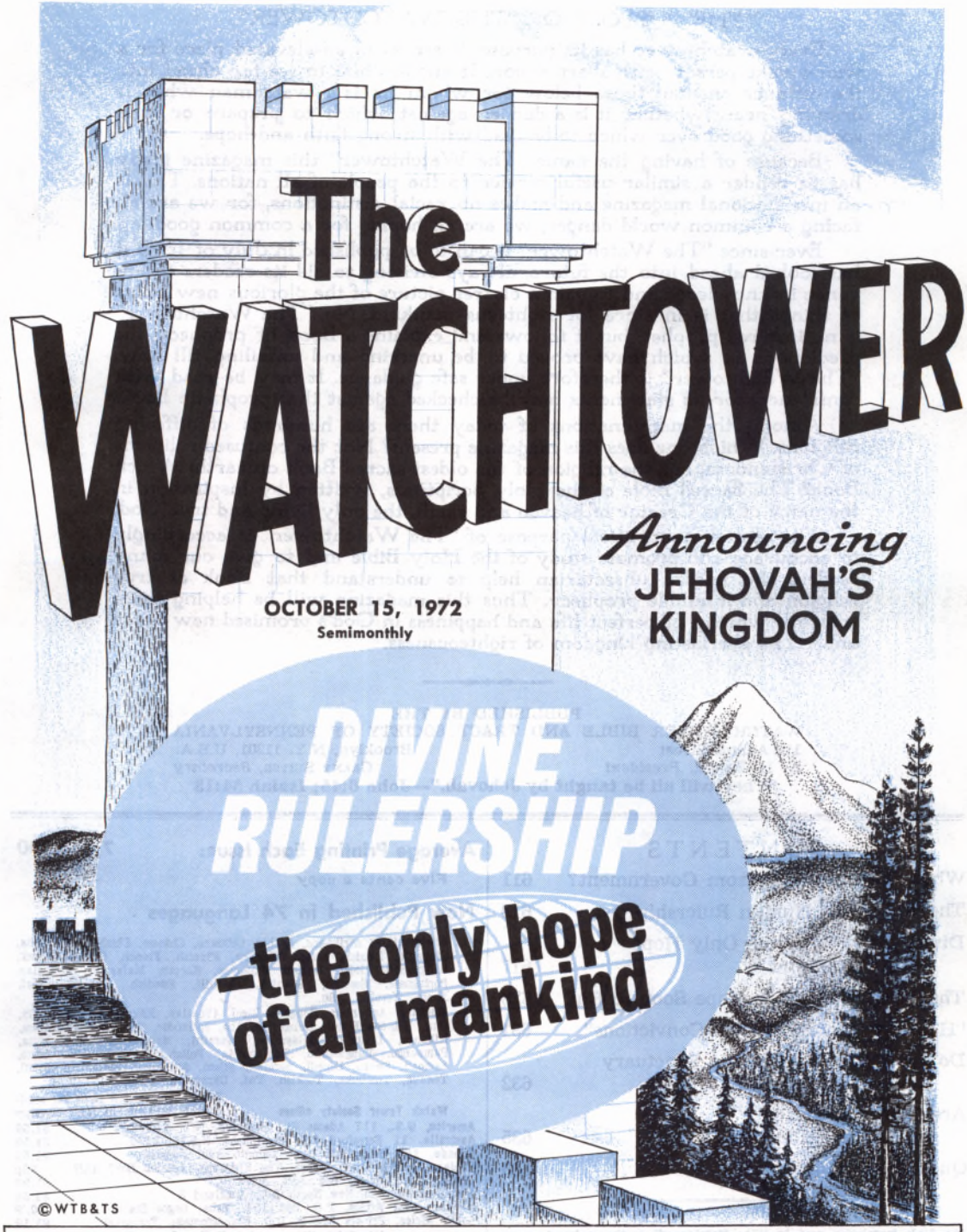

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

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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The WATCHTOWER
Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM
Vol. XCIII October 15, 1972 Number 20

WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM Government?

WHEN we read the declarations of statesmen and rulers we find that they have a knowledge of many things that mankind really needs to be happy. Politicians know what to promise to get the people's vote. These facts show that world leaders have generally not been ignorant or unaware of the responsibility in their hands as leaders of the people. But most persons would agree that these needs have not often been supplied. Is this too much to expect from government?

Really, the wants of men and women for them to be happy do not require volumes to be stated. They amount to a few simple, basic essentials. People do not, for example, expect the government to *give* them all of life's necessities. Neither do they want a government that regulates every act of their lives. They want freedom to work at an occupation they can enjoy, with assurance that they will always have work to support their families. They desire to have some leisure time to enjoy the fruits of their labor, to live with their families in peace, without fear of attack, robbery or molestation. They would appreciate having a clean, unpolluted environment and clean, uncluttered places for recreation, where the beauties of natural creation and wildlife could be enjoyed.

Men and women, to be really happy, must also be free. They must have freedom of thought, freedom of worship, the liberty to speak what they believe, to assemble together and to act as they see fit, as long as they do not infringe on the freedoms and rights of others.

Would you not be happy to live where you had those freedoms and securities? Only a good government, with the cooperation of its people, can assure them. If you could have free communication, travel and association with people of other nationalities or races, with real friendliness, if you were not suspicious or afraid they were plotting war against you, how comfortable that would be!

Therein lies a problem. Even if national governments were to bring security and peace within their borders, this would not assure peace between nations. It would take a world government to do this.

There is another factor essential to happiness, and that is the health of the peo-

ple. Until recent times, governments have not done much toward tackling this problem. Of course, happiness is not complete unless a person has good health, and unless those he loves also have health. And no one who is enjoying sparkling health, peace and freedom wants to leave the scene in death. So for real, unclouded happiness, the fear of death would have to be removed. But what government can do this? What government can provide sure and life-sustaining material provisions and at the same time fill the mental and spiritual needs of its subjects? Or, is there such a possibility?

Can any government bring all, or even most of these desirable and essential things to its people? Can any government instill such love and cooperation among its people that the desirable conditions can be brought about? Or do we have reason to believe that progress toward this goal is being made? What does the record of human rulership to date show?

The Record of HUMAN RULERSHIP

HAS there been any form of government conceivable to the mind of man that he has not tried? Our modern-day governments are to a great extent the product of "political science." This is a serious study of the trial-and-error experiences of man's efforts at ruling himself, with a view to incorporating the most successful methods into government.

Accordingly, we should have governments—at least some governments—that fill the people's needs, that provide what people want from government. Do we have any? What does the modern-day record of human rulership reveal?

AN APPEAL FOR WORLD GOVERNMENT

The New York *Times* of Sunday, May 21, 1972, carried a full-page declaration by a group of well-known citizens of thirty-two countries signing themselves as the "First Planetary Citizens." Entitled "A HUMAN MANIFESTO," this declaration was an indictment of the efforts of man's rulership up to the present time to bring the things most desired. It made the following strong assertions:

"Human life on our planet is in jeopardy.

"It is in jeopardy from war that could pulverize the human habitat.

"It is in jeopardy from preparations for war that destroy or diminish the prospects of decent existence.

"It is in jeopardy because of the denial of human rights.

"It is in jeopardy because the air is being fouled and the waters and soil are being poisoned.

"It is in jeopardy because of the uncontrolled increase in population."

What, then, was the conclusion of the declaration? It was expressed in an appeal to enlist further human effort in support of the United Nations.

But does the record of human rulership justify the placing of trust in the United Nations?

WAR

What does the record show as to "jeopardy from war"? Has human rulership made progress toward ensuring peace?

As reported in the *Western Producer,* the Norwegian Academy of Sciences made a calculation of the frequency and severity of wars as far back as history would permit. They discovered that, "since 650 B.C. there have been 1656 arms races, only 16 of which did not end in war. The remainder ended in the economic collapse of the countries concerned."

After the first twenty-five years of the United Nations' history, a review of its record was made. The Philadelphia *Sunday Bulletin* of October 18, 1970, quoted U Thant, then United Nations secretary-general, as saying:

> "I am very much afraid that although we have been able to reach the moon, we often show incredibly shortsighted selfishness, complacency and indifference when it comes to meeting the great challenges we face here on earth."

And Lester P. Pearson, then prime minister of Canada, summed up the results of the United Nations' peace efforts in these words: "Peace rests uneasily on hydrogen bombs. It is sad that the United Nations has found no better resting place for it."

Realistically, then, does human rulership have anything to offer to justify hope that it will ever bring peace?

POLLUTION

Another threat as serious as war is the pollution situation. As one mere sample of the mountainous problems in every phase of the fight against pollution, consider the garbage predicament. *Reader's Digest,* in a condensation from *National Civic Review* of March 1972, cites the answer of more than a score of the United States' leading authorities on solid-waste management, to the question "Just how serious is the trash problem?" They revealed:

> "The volume of solid wastes we pile up every year is stupendous—80 billion cans, 38 billion bottles, 40 million tons of paper and cartons, 180 million old tires, 21 million major household appliances, seven million junked automobiles. Disposal currently costs us $4.5 billion a year—a figure that could double in the next generation."

Probably the most dangerous of all are the wastes dumped into our waters. "By 1980," warns the National Academy of Sciences, "we will be producing enough waterborne wastes to consume all the oxygen in all 22 river basins of the United States."

Is the problem merely that of one nation? *Editorial Research Reports* of December 1, 1971, warns:

> "The big question for the U.N. conference [held in Stockholm in June 1972], and for all subsequent attempts to stop worldwide

pollution, is whether the concern about the environment has come too late to do much good. Has man, in fact, gone too far to turn back? Can the nations make the hard political decisions that are necessary to establish worldwide cooperation in the face of the present crisis? Anything less than a full-scale international effort seems futile. The world's ecosystem is one; it is such that no nation alone can clean up its environment. The atmosphere carries industrial pollutants and pesticides all over the earth. Virtually every international waterway is polluted."

Do you find this record encouraging, or inspiring confidence in human rule?

CRIME

Crime is another destructive factor that no government has been able to stop. In fact, this cancerous infection is spreading at an alarming rate world wide. In some nations crime is almost like a rival underground government. Crime has been called "a worldwide epidemic," an "international tragedy."

In the world's most affluent country, the United States, crime seems to be most rampant. The national cost is now 51.1 billion (51.1 thousand million) dollars a year, equal to more than 5 percent of the gross national product of one trillion dollars. And crime is not confined to the "gangster" element. An enormous amount (eight billion dollars a year) is stolen by executives and trusted employees.

But really fear inspiring are the crimes of violence and crimes against property. It is increasingly unsafe to walk the streets of U.S. cities, and a survey reveals that such danger from crime is increasing almost everywhere.

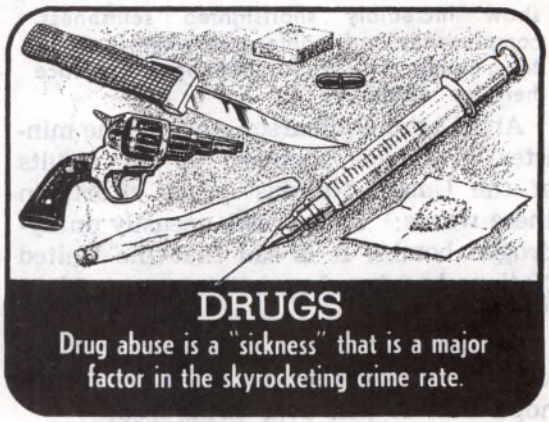
In the United States, F.B.I. figures reveal, crime increased eleven times as fast as the population. Serious crimes (murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, auto theft, larceny [of fifty dollars and over]) went up 148 percent, from 2,014,600 in 1960 to 4,989,700 in 1969.

In London, which has long been known for its freedom from street violence, Britishers are becoming alarmed as assaults, robberies and muggings have increased. A special police squad has been assigned to the Underground (railroad subway system) because of the crime menace. "It is not safe at night in Birmingham," said a police official. Violent crimes in Great Britain went up from 26,000 in 1966 to 41,000 in 1970. And a similar situation confronts other countries.

What signs of remedy from human rule do you see for these problems?

THE DRUG PROBLEM

Drug abuse has been called "the worst sickness in American history," and is rap-

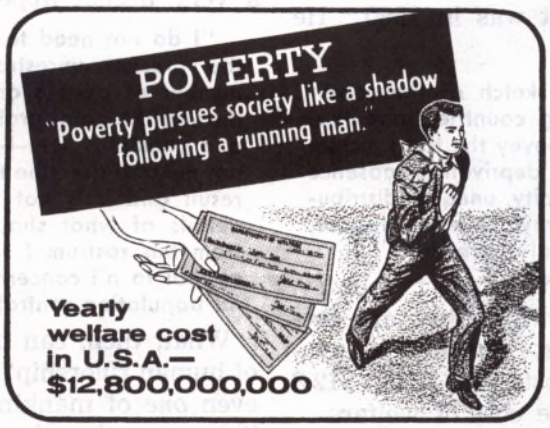


idly becoming such in other nations. It has been a major factor in the skyrocketing crime rate. Art Linkletter, radio and television personality, whose own daughter was a victim of drugs, in a speech before a special United Nations audience in New York city, September 14, 1971, made a strong plea for action on the part of government. His speech made very clear that human rulership had failed in some way to provide people's needs, hopes and desires. Linkletter asked:

"If an empty, agonizing life drives people to drugs, how do we change that life? Why are there so many suicides in the world? Why do so many arrive at a personal crisis unable to face it, resolve it, overcome it? Why is drug abuse so often a part of the tragic picture?"

In his concluding appeal Linkletter implied that human rulership had pointed its aims in the wrong direction. He said:

"For the sake of the human family, the United Nations must reach out to those in trouble. Our world is torn by great debate, but the outcome will not matter if our children are wasted. Our scientists chart our course in the heavens, but we need not make the trip if we leave behind a world in pain."



MALNUTRITION

Robert S. McNamara, President of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, paints a world picture of malnutrition that should awaken one to the inability of human rulership to bring mankind the essentials for happiness. In a speech delivered in Washington, D.C., before the Board of Governors of the World Bank Group, September 27, 1971, he said that in the less advantaged countries malnutrition is widespread, is a major cause of high mortality among young children and is therefore a major barrier to human development.

"And yet," McNamara observes, "despite the evidence that with a relatively small per capita expenditure of resources major gains can be achieved, there is scarcely a nation in the developing world where a concerted attack on the problem is underway."

Mr. McNamara went on to point out that the number of childhood deaths is enormous in the poorer countries. For example, in India there are large areas where deaths in the first year of life number as many as 150 to 200 per thousand live births.

In the United Arab Republic, the proportion of children between the ages of one and two who die is more than 100 times as high as in Sweden.—*Vital Speeches of the Day,* Oct. 15, 1971.

Even earlier in *Reader's Digest,* February 1969, a noted scientist commented: "It is shockingly apparent that, in the battle to feed humanity, our side has been routed. . . . *it is already too late to prevent a drastic rise in the death rate through starvation.*"

POVERTY AND WELFARE

Fundamentally a basic cause of malnutrition is poverty, a problem so far insurmountable and unsolvable, even in the most affluent countries. Dr. John E. Reilly, Senior Fellow of the Overseas Development Council, reports:

"According to the World Bank, income levels per year in developing continents as of 1968 were as follows: Asia $110; Africa $130; Latin America $370; Middle East $330. This compares with the average per capita income in the United States of $4,000; Canada $2,500; Germany $1,900; United Kingdom $1,800.

Dr. Reilly goes on to say that in the low-income countries there are literally millions living on half of the average. Are the efforts of world rulership, even with the help of the United Nations, overcoming this sad condition? No, for Dr. Reilly says: "There is fear that the actual standard of living of millions of people is lower in 1971 than it was in 1960." He continues:

"This gives a brief sketch of the conditions of the developing countries, one that does not adequately convey the total picture of widespread hunger, deprivation, absence of educational opportunity, unequal distribution of wealth, the prevalence of disease, not to mention political repression."

Even in the world's richest country, the United States, entire cities are facing a financial crisis, due to the avalanche of welfare costs. In 1970, $12.8 billion dollars was the cost of welfare.

The situation is one from which economists see no escape, as illustrated by economist Procter Thomson of Claremont Men's College in California. He points out that, in an affluent society, as more and more money is supplied for welfare, those receiving help make demands that build up to the supply. Therefore, he says, "poverty pursues society like a shadow following a running man."

THE POPULATION EXPLOSION

With the population at its present level, the governments are near the breaking point, with problems on every hand and what appears to be a dead end in each avenue. That is bad enough, but now the added population growth throws an aura of doom over their plans for the future. In a report of the Victor-Bostrom Fund for the International Planned Parenthood Federation, Rudolph Peterson, Administrator of the United Nations Development Program, commented:

"The staggering growth of world population casts a dark shadow over all our efforts to promote international development. To improve living conditions in countries where the population doubles every 20 years is like the labour of Sisyphus, eternally pushing a rock uphill only to see it roll down again."

And A. H. Boerma, Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization, makes a very urgent appeal:

"I do not need to dwell on the fact that the present unrestrained upsurge in the number of people on this planet is driving the world's major problems—hunger, poverty and unemployment—toward the brink. I do not need to describe the horrors which would result and it is not for me to go into the details of what should be done. . . . But from this rostrum I should like to make an appeal to all concerned to accept the need for population control."

What, then, can be said for the record of human rulership? Has it actually solved even *one* of mankind's basic problems of living together in peace, freedom from want, fear, hunger, deprivation and crime? Has it given mankind what they really desire from government?

What, then, is ahead for continued man-rule of earth? Every problem—pollution, war, hunger, drugs, or any one of several others—has in itself the potential to bring global catastrophe. Together they constitute a complex situation that human wisdom and efforts have utterly failed to minimize, much less solve.

Is it not time for man to look for higher counsel, yes, time to listen to the Divine Ruler of the universe? What he says and what he purposes as to earth's rulership is a matter of life or extinction, as will be discussed in the following article.

DIVINE RULERSHIP —the only hope of all mankind

"Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of the hope."—Zech. 9:12.

WHAT can "divine rulership" give to all mankind that human rulership has not already given to the human race? That which human rule has given all mankind till now has certainly not been "divine," as we oftentimes call something that is "surpassingly excellent." Judged in the light of the way that things are going in this world, human rule promises to give us nothing better than what it has already given us thus far. And that is far from being soul-satisfying. Really it is very disappointing. During all the centuries and millenniums past, humankind has proved that all that it can give us people in the way of government rulership is *human* rulership. Since humankind is imperfect, it has been *imperfect* human rulership. The widely held theory of the evolution of man furnishes us no grounds for hoping that men will evolve, during our generation or in the hundreds of millions of years to come, into gods, by sudden "mutations" of a surprising and beneficial kind. Hope for relief from present world distress cannot be based on human rulership.

The inspiring message contained in this article has thus far been presented as the main discourse to audiences with a combined attendance of 1,300,000 in many parts of the earth

[2] Practically the whole world of mankind has been left hopeless. Hope has been explained to be "expectation of something desired," or, "desire accompanied by expectation of its being satisfied." Hope may also be taken to mean "a person or thing that expectations are centered in." All of us have petty individual hopes and fears, but would it not be wonderful if there was a hope in which all mankind could share, regardless of race, color, nationality or social position? It would be wonderful, indeed, for it would be nothing selfish, nationalistic, racial, but it would satisfy the common desires and needs of all mankind. The United Nations as an organization for world peace and security, after nearly thirty years of operation, has failed to be or to provide such a hope. The adding of more nations to it as members will not turn its failure into success. On a world scale, the United Nations has been the biggest thing that mankind has been able to offer for urgent human needs. Many persons wonder, If the United Nations were to be forcibly put out of action as the previous League of Nations was, what

1. What must be said as regards that which human rulership has given all mankind thus far, and what about basing hope for the future on the outworking of the evolution theory?
2. (a) What has hope been explained to be, and what kind would a hope for all mankind be? (b) How does the United Nations rate as a world hope, and what if it were put out of action?

else would there be for mankind to offer?

[3] There is no doubt about it: mankind is at its wit's end! The number of thoughtful persons is increasing who honestly admit that human rulership has failed. Their hopes based on man have been blasted. The saddest thing about it is that they have no further hope with which to comfort themselves and to comfort others. All they now have is a yearning for something, a craving for something that has no definite shape or sharp outline in their minds, without any idea of how or from where this heart-satisfying thing is to come or can be expected.

[4] However, although the already desperate and continually worsening world conditions have killed the hopes of unnumbered persons, these very same conditions imparted fresh vigor to the heightened hopes of others. They are not like the mariners who go down to the sea in ships and who are caught in a terrible storm, concerning whom the ancient lyric writer says: "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end." —Ps. 107:23-27, *Authorized Version.*

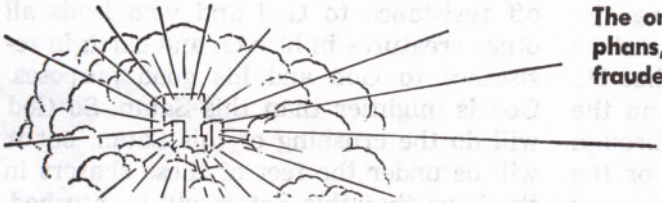
The United Nations, as an organization for world peace and security, has failed to provide a hope in which all mankind can share

[5] Who are these exceptional persons, whose hopes keep getting brighter and brighter as the world distress continues and worsens? What have they got that other people do not have? These are the ones who follow the sound advice of the ancient lyric writer who said: "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." (Ps. 146:3, 4) That ancient writer advised us not to pin our hopes to human rulership, and so those following this advice today look beyond human rulership. But where else is there to look? Those who uphold the theory of human evolution and those who follow the philosophical theory of materialism say there is nothing else to look to but material things like humans. That is why they find themselves hopeless and will at last become desperate. Their theories are not only unsatisfying but also unconvincing, for they are unreasonable and contrary to the facts of history. But there is indeed something beyond human rulership to which to look. What is that? Divine rulership! To this the hopeful people of today look!

The Thing in Which to Center Our Hopes

[6] To this the ancient lyric composer points us. Speaking from his own experience and observation, he continues on to say: "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. Jehovah is releasing those who are bound. Jehovah is opening

3. What yearning do the many persons have whose hopes based on men have been blasted?
4. How have world conditions affected the hopes of some expectant persons, and so they are unlike what mariners?
5. (a) What sound advice of the psalmist do these exceptional persons follow? (b) Contrary to what theories, there is what beyond human rulership to which to look?
6. To what is it that the ancient writer points us in Psalm 146:5-10?



The only hope of all mankind—including orphans, widows, the hungry, blind and defrauded persons—is in government by God

the eyes of the blind ones; Jehovah is raising up the ones bowed down; Jehovah is loving the righteous ones. Jehovah is guarding the alien residents; the fatherless boy and the widow he relieves, but the way of the wicked ones he makes crooked. Jehovah will be king to time indefinite."—Ps. 146:5-10.

7 Because of human rulership and its shortcomings and inabilities, are you one of the "defrauded ones," or of the "hungry ones"? Are you one of "those who are bound," or of the "blind ones," or of the "ones bowed down"? Are you an 'alien resident,' or a "fatherless boy," or a "widow"? Then this King mentioned and named by the ancient lyric writer is the One to whom to look. His rulership is a divine rulership, for he as Ruler is God. He is not a nameless God whose personal identity is lost among all the hundreds of millions of gods that are worshiped in India and the rest of the inhabited earth. He is a God who was not named by men, but is a God who gave himself his name, a name by which no other god in heaven or on earth is named. The inspired lyric writer mentions the divine name seven times, and it is Jehovah.

8 Wrongly informed, prejudiced persons may try to discourage you from having anything to do with this God, Jehovah. But you have happiness awaiting you, even in these dismal times, if you rest your hope in Him. The ancient lyric writer said: "Happy is the one . . . whose hope is in Jehovah his God." (Ps. 146:5) Nineteen centuries ago a man whose hope was in Jehovah called Him "the God of hope" or "the God who gives hope." (Rom. 15:13) He is the Only One who can give to us a hope in which all mankind can share, for He is the Creator of the human race. In Him alone is the hope of all mankind. The divine rulership that He provides is the hope of all mankind. If He did not provide this, there would be no other hope for all mankind. In order that people of all races, tribes, nations and languages might have this divinely guaranteed hope He caused the sacred inspired Book, the Holy Bible, to be written. By means of this marvelous Book, which is written over God's name, you can learn all about this sure hope.

7. Who, then, today need this divine ruler, and how outstanding is his name?

8. (a) A person will be happy if he puts his hope in whom, and what does Romans 15:13 call Him? (b) In order for people of all kinds to have this divinely guaranteed hope, what did He cause to be written?

[9] This Divine Being, Jehovah, long ago saw that mankind needed a hope, and he set one before them. This hope that He gives has the power to sustain us in the most difficult times and to save us through them until the joyous realization of the hope. That is why, nineteen hundred years ago, it was written to the sharers in this hope: "For we were saved in this hope; but hope that is seen is not hope, for when a man sees a thing, does he hope for it? But if we hope for what we do not see, we keep on waiting for it with endurance." (Rom. 8:24, 25) This divinely given hope should fill us with joy and keep us tranquil amid world disturbance, so that our hope overflows and expresses itself to others in their desperate condition. That is why the prayer was offered in behalf of the sharers in this hope: "May the God who gives hope fill you with all joy and peace by your believing, that you may abound in hope with power of holy spirit." —Rom. 15:13.

[10] We have to entertain this hope in the midst of a world that is more and more giving itself over to what is evil, under the invisible influence of the unseen "god of this system of things," Satan the Devil. But deliverance from this increasing evildoing is fast approaching, yes, is now near. That is why the inspired writer when addressing those sharers in the divine hope during the first century of our Common Era wrote them: "I want you to be wise as to what is good, but innocent as to what is evil. For his part, the God who gives peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly." (Rom. 16:19, 20) The ancient Hebrew word Satan means "Resister; Adversary," and here refers to the Chief Resister of God, the Resister who started off resistance to God and who leads all other creatures in heaven and earth in resistance to God and his good purposes. God is mightier than this Satan. So God will do the crushing of this Satan, but it will be under the feet of these sharers in the hope that this Satan will lie crushed. This kind of language compares Satan to something that can be crushed underfoot —not a scorpion, but a snake or serpent. What a universal peace this crushing of Satan will result in!

[11] How, though, can we be sure that this crushing is of Satan as if he were a snake or serpent? Because here the writer of that letter to the hopeful ones in Rome, Italy, was drawing his pictorial speech from the first book of the Holy Scriptures, or from Genesis. In his entire letter he refers a number of times to the book of Genesis. (Rom. 4:3, 9, 11, 17, 18, 22; 9:7, 9, 12) And here the writer was referring to Genesis 3:14, 15, where God seems to be addressing himself to a serpent on the ground but is really talking to the Great Resister who used that serpent. There we read: "And Jehovah God proceeded to say to the serpent: 'Because you have done this thing, you are the cursed one out of all the domestic animals and out of all the wild beasts of the field. Upon your belly you will go and dust is what you will eat all the days of your life. And 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.' " More than four thousand years later the inspired writer, the Christian apostle Paul, speaks of that first ray of hope.

[12] We today are more than nineteen centuries closer to the carrying out of that

9. (a) Because of seeing mankind's need of a hope, what kind of hope did God give them? (b) What prayer was expressed, in Romans 15:13, for those sharing in this hope?
10. Whom will God shortly crush under the feet of the sharers in this hope, and in what will this result for heaven and earth?
11. In thus speaking of the crushing of Satan, to what was the inspired writer referring in Genesis, and to whom was God there really speaking?
12. (a) How long ago is it since that sentence of destruction was pronounced upon Satan? (b) Why is it that we are all dying and the earth is being ruined?

hope-inspiring promise of Jehovah God to crush the real Serpent, Satan the Devil, beneath the feet of the Seed whose heel the Serpent Satan bruised to the death and also beneath the feet of the faithful followers of that bruised One. This means that it is now close to six thousand years since God figuratively pronounced the sentence of destruction upon the first Resister, Satan, for turning the first man and the first woman, from whom all of us have descended, into resistance to Jehovah God. The joining in that Satanic resistance brought death upon the whole human family. It also meant the driving of our first human parents out of the Paradise of Pleasure, the Garden of Eden, and the shutting of all of us out of that Paradise home in which our first human parents had been created in perfection. (Gen. 2:7 to 3:24) Is it any wonder that today, even in spite of all the advances in medical science, all of us are dying and that, in spite of all our improved agricultural methods, the earth is becoming so polluted and ruined as to be unfit to live in as our home?

The One Under Whose Feet the Crushing Occurs

13 Not one of us has been able to escape inheriting the workings of death in our bodies. This is because we all descended from our God-resisting parents who took themselves out from under divine rulership in an earthly Paradise home to under the rulership of God's Chief Resister, Satan the Devil. (Rom. 5:12) There is only one man that was born into this earth that escaped inheriting the condemnation of death from the first man and the first woman, the sinful Adam and Eve, and that was the man named Jesus Christ. How did this humanly impossible thing take place? It was because Jesus did not have a human father or life-giver. The egg cell in the body of his human mother Mary was not fertilized by a human husband. It was Almighty God in heaven who infused life into Mary's egg cell and made it develop into a perfect human creature. It was not a new life that the Almighty imparted to that human egg cell. Rather, he transferred the life-force of his heavenly Son known as The Word to the virgin's egg cell and started it growing.

14 By his angel Gabriel he first informed the virgin Jewess Mary of this miraculous operation and told her that she was to call her child, who would be a male, by the name of Jesus. (Luke 1:26-38) Thus the man whom Mary later married was not the real father of her son Jesus. (Matt. 1:18-25) Thus, as the Holy Scriptures inform us, Jesus was born "undefiled, separated from the sinners." (Heb. 7:26) He was able, when a full-grown man, to say to his Jewish critics: "Who of you convicts me of sin?"—John 8:46.

15 The Great Resister, Satan the Devil, made this Jesus Christ the target of his attacks. Why? Because he realized that this Son of God was the Chief Agent of God for bruising the head of the serpent or for 'crushing Satan underfoot.' Just as foretold in Genesis 3:15, Satan was at enmity with this Promised Seed, Jesus Christ, and set himself to bruising him "in the heel." But he found that he was unable to frighten Jesus into subjecting himself to slavery to Satan by threats of death, violent death. Jesus did not yield to the "fear of death" at the hands of Satan's earthly agents but kept up his enmity to Satan the Serpent and his agents

13. Who alone that was born into this earth escaped the condemnation of death from Adam and Eve, and how was this made to occur?

14. (a) Who informed Mary of the coming miraculous birth? (b) What testimony is there to the fact that Jesus was born sinless?

15. (a) Why did Satan make Jesus the chief target of his attack? (b) To the fear of what did Jesus not yield, and so what kind of death did he die?

or "seed." Jesus feared only Jehovah God. For this reason he did not compromise with Satan the Serpent and did not fearfully dodge a violent death at the hands of the "seed" of the Great Serpent. Satan could not make Jesus shrink back even from death like a base criminal on an execution stake. The accusations for which Jesus was put to death were false. He died with a clean conscience in a sacrificial death in behalf of creatures of flesh and blood who were in slavery to Satan the Devil.

16 By having Jesus put to death under false charges, Satan the Great Serpent was only defeating himself. He was only providing the greatest reason for his own self to be brought to nothing, wiped out of existence. This is the point made in the inspired words written concerning Jesus as a man of flesh and blood: "Therefore, since the 'young children' are sharers of blood and flesh, he also similarly partook of the same things, that through his death he might bring to nothing the one having the means to cause death, that is, the Devil; and that he might emancipate all those who for fear of death were subject to slavery all through their lives." —Heb. 2:14, 15.

17 "Through his death" in an innocent way Jesus Christ showed that he was uncompromisingly at enmity with Satan the Great Serpent to the very death. He also vindicated the divine rulership of his heavenly Father Jehovah God as the One to whom all creatures in heaven and on earth, from the highest to the lowest, should be absolutely subject. Would the Almighty, Most High God leave his chief vindicator in the bonds of death and thus deprive himself of any further use of that faithful one? Not according to what Jehovah God had foretold when speaking to the serpent in the Garden of Eden. He had foretold that the wounding of the Seed of the "woman" would be merely a heel bruise, not like being bruised or crushed in the head. So the Almighty God healed the wound by raising Jesus Christ from the dead on the third day, Nisan 16, of the year 33 C.E. God recognized that his Son Jesus Christ had sacrificed his perfect humanity as a sin offering in behalf of all mankind, and therefore God did not raise him to life again as a perfect man of blood and flesh. Rather, God restored him to the heavenly realm from which his prehuman life had been transferred to the womb of the virgin Jewess. God did this by resurrecting his Son Jesus Christ as a glorious spirit creature, clothed with immortality (deathlessness) and with the "divine nature." (1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Cor. 15:42-54; 2 Pet. 1:4) This kind of resurrection made the glorified Jesus Christ far stronger than the Great Serpent Satan and put him in a powerful position where he can "bring to nothing the one having the means to cause death, that is, the Devil." —Heb. 2:14.

16. By causing Jesus' death under false charges, how was Satan defeating himself, according to Hebrews 2:14, 15?

17. (a) How did God not let himself be deprived of his chief vindicator by death? (b) How was Jesus then made far stronger than the Great Serpent, Satan?

Emancipation!

18 What does all mankind have to expect from this healing of the bruise that the Great Serpent Satan the Devil inflicted on the "heel" of the Promised Seed of God? Something that all mankind has desired for thousands of years? Yes: *Emancipation!* Yes, freedom from enslavement for all mankind! The stated purpose of the Promised Seed in tasting death as a man of blood and flesh was, not just to do away with the Devil who threatened

18. (a) According to Hebrews 2:15, what does all mankind have to expect from the healing of the heel wound of the Promised Seed? (b) Although freeing their slave populations, human rulers have been unable to free mankind of slavery to whom?

mankind with death if they did not become his slaves, but also "that he might emancipate all those who for fear of death were subject to slavery all through their lives." (Heb. 2:15) Some earthly political rulers have been known to free the slave population of their nations from bondage to human slaveholders, but not one of them has been able to emancipate their own peoples or all mankind from the mass slavery of humankind to the Great Serpent Satan the Devil. This is nothing to scoff at, with the idea that there is no such thing as a Devil but the Devil is just a myth. This six-thousand-year-old Devil is smart enough to fool worldly-wise people of today into thinking that he does not exist!

19 Likely many persons today will say: 'If there is a Devil and if Jesus Christ died nineteen centuries ago to emancipate us from slavery to that Devil, why is it that all mankind has not experienced this emancipation before now? Why is it that all mankind does not feel itself emancipated today, but, instead, we find ourselves enslaved by a system of things the state of which gets worse and worse year after year?' The reason why is that, as the Holy Bible indicates, the time has not yet come for the Promised Seed of God to 'bruise the Serpent's head,' or, to "bring to nothing" Satan the Devil. However, that desirable time is very near now. If, back there in the first century, the Christian apostle Paul could write to fellow Christians in Rome, "The God who gives peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly," this must be very near today, nineteen centuries later. (Rom. 16:20) Not just the passage of a long period of time argues for this, but the continuing "anguish of nations" of the earth since the year 1914 C.E. does also. (Luke 21:25) That is why the expectation of those who have the God-given hope gets higher and higher.

20 Before the billions of people who still believe in human rulership will ever be convinced, they must have the full allowance of time for it to be demonstrated that human rulership is (according to their claim) the solution, that it can of itself find the way out and prove to be the emancipator of all mankind. This allowance of time is not yet fully ended. In view of that approaching end, the time is here for people to make their choice of what they want, human rulership first, last and all the time, or God's appointed Emancipator. At the end of the time allowance each one will be recompensed according to his choice. Then the Divine Ruler will emancipate only those who have pinned their hope to the heavenly Emancipator whom God has provided. Before then the Promised Seed, Jesus Christ, will not bring the long-hoped-for emancipation.

21 In the first century of our Common Era, when Jesus Christ partook of blood and flesh on the earth as a perfect man, he knew that it was not then the time for the emancipation of all mankind through a government of his own. He was thirty years of age when he decided upon a self-sacrificing course according to the will of God, and he symbolized the presentation of himself for sacrifice by being baptized in the Jordan River. (Heb. 10:1-5; Matt. 3:13-17) After that baptism he went alone out into the wilderness of Judea to fast and study over the matter for forty days. At the end of that time he was as fully determined as ever to carry out the divinely marked course of sacrifice, even to the death. On the fortieth and last day of fasting in the wilderness he found that

19. Why has all mankind not experienced emancipation before now, but what indicates that this is now near?

20. (a) In order for them to be convinced, a time allowance had to be made for proving what? (b) Because of the approaching end of that allowed time, what choice must everyone make?

21, 22. (a) What did Jesus as a man on earth know about the time for the Kingdom, and why did he get baptized at thirty years of age? (b) To what kind of life did Satan try to tempt Jesus, and what was the last temptation he presented?

he was not alone. Someone came to him, someone to tempt him away from the way of self-sacrifice. That Tempter was Satan the Devil. He tried to tempt Jesus to a life of selfish gratification and glory and power as a man of blood and flesh. The third and last temptation was the climactic one. Here is the account of this ambitious temptation as recorded by a personal disciple of Jesus Christ, namely, Matthew (4:1-9):

[22] "Again the Devil took him along to an unusually high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him: 'All these things I will give you if you fall down and do an act of worship to me.'"

Satan the Devil offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. The issue was: Human rulership or divine rulership?

[23] Jesus did not brush the matter aside and say: 'There is no Devil. So how could he give me "all the kingdoms of the world and their glory" if I performed one simple act of worship to him? How could I even worship what does not exist?' Jesus was not like the nationalistic human rulers of today who resent the idea and even persecute the teaching that "all the kingdoms of the world" are in the hands of the Tempter, Satan the Devil. He did not deny that the Devil existed and that the Devil had the invisible control of "all the kingdoms of the world." He did not deny that the Devil could rightly say to him concerning the "kingdoms of the world": "I will give you all this authority and the glory of them, because it has been delivered to me, and to whomever I wish I give it. You, therefore, if you do an act of worship before me, it will all be yours." (Luke 4:5-7) Here a real temptation was being presented to Jesus and by a real person who stated the facts of the case. How much Jesus' choice meant for enslaved mankind!

[24] The Great Serpent, Satan the Devil, was here not trying to bruise God's Promised Seed in the heel. He was offering Jesus something that would apparently mean avoiding a violent death by "the one having the means to cause death, that is, the Devil." He was offering Jesus world rulership as a man, rulership over "all the kingdoms of the world," human rulership over all the earth. Yes, but "human rulership" as a worshiper of the Devil and under the control of the Devil, a superhuman spirit person. The great choice here was between rulerships. The issue was, Rulership! Human rulership or divine rulership? Human rulership as a gift from the Devil and in subjection to the Devil, or rulership at the hands of the Divine Being and in subjection to Him? If Jesus were to choose human rulership for himself like a worldly politician, what hope would that be leaving for enslaved mankind?

Christendom, an Example of the Wrong Choice

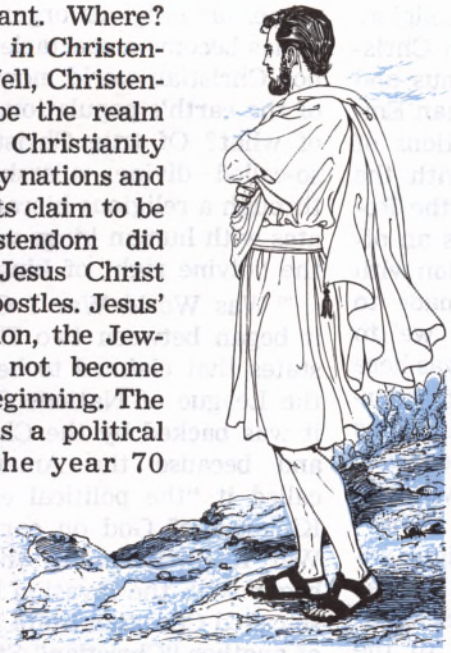
[25] We are not left to imagine! We have an actual historical example of what it

23. How did Jesus differ from modern-day human rulers as to their view of Satan's power, and what claim of Satan did Jesus not deny?

24. (a) What kind of rulership was the Devil offering to Jesus? (b) What was the issue here, and what choice could here have been made?

25. (a) Where today do we have an example of what would have resulted if Jesus had accepted the Devil's offer? (b) Did Jesus and his apostles start Christendom, or did the Jewish nation become its beginning?

would have meant. Where? Why, right here in Christendom. How so? Well, Christendom claims to be the realm on earth where Christianity is practiced. Many nations and their governments claim to be Christian. Christendom did not start with Jesus Christ and his twelve apostles. Jesus' own earthly nation, the Jewish nation, did not become Christendom's beginning. The Jewish nation as a political body died in the year 70 C.E., fighting there at Jerusalem, not for Jesus the Messiah as King, but for Judaism and its own political independence from imperial Rome. Three years after destroying Jerusalem, the Roman legions captured the last Jewish stronghold, the fortress of Masada, in the year 73 C.E. To this day the natural, Orthodox Jews world wide are no part of Christendom, although cooperating with Christendom.



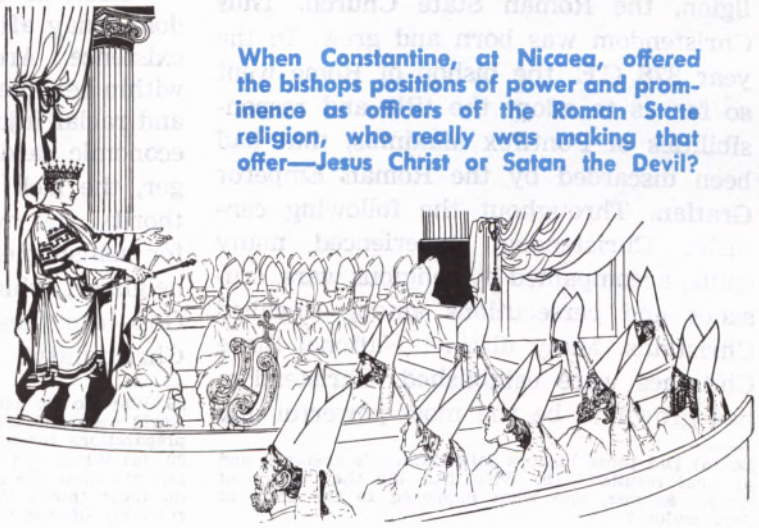
Jesus rejected human rulership

[26] Nearly three centuries after the temptation of Jesus Christ in the wilderness of Judea, Christendom came into existence. This was in the days of the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great, who was baptized as a professor of Christianity just before his death in the year 337 C.E. But he had claimed to be converted to Christianity years earlier, in the year 312 C.E. By that time what was called Christianity had moved so far away from the teachings of Jesus Christ and his apostles that there were so-called Christians in military armor fighting for this pagan general and politician Constantine. Besides that, there were bishops in the churches of that day who were teaching the pagan doctrine of the Trinity, a triune God composed of "God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Ghost." Bishops were hotly disputing over whether God was the one God, Jehovah, of the Hebrew Scriptures, or a so-called "God in three persons," all "persons" coequal and coeternal. Constantine tried to put an end to the disputing.

[27] As the pagan Pontifex Maximus, Constantine tried to win over all the bishops of the churches. He tried to create a

26. When did Christendom get started, and how, and with what kind of professed Christians?

27. (a) What kind of religion did Constantine try to create, and what did he offer to the church bishops? (b) Who was behind this offer made to the bishops, Christ or Satan?



When Constantine, at Nicaea, offered the bishops positions of power and prominence as officers of the Roman State religion, who really was making that offer—Jesus Christ or Satan the Devil?

fusion religion, an "interfaith" religion, combining heathen paganism with Christianity. Acting as Pontifex Maximus and hence as religious head of the Roman Empire, he offered the bishops positions of power, prominence and wealth with the Roman government as officers of the Roman State religion. Here now was an offer of human rulership in conjunction with the political government being made to so-called Christian bishops. Are we to think that Jesus Christ in heaven was here offering such "bishops" a human rulership in connection with "all the kingdoms of the world" that He had refused? Or, was it the Tempter, Satan the Devil, who still laid claim to those kingdoms as having been delivered to him? The right answer is not hard to arrive at: it was Satan the Devil through his Pontifex Maximus on earth who was offering to the bishops a temptation similar to that offered to Jesus Christ. But did the bishops, including the "bishop of Rome," follow Jesus' example?

[28] Secular and ecclesiastical history answers No! Many bishops fell for the temptation and entered the imperial service as the hierarchy of the Roman State religion, the Roman State Church. Thus Christendom was born and grew. In the year 378 C.E. the bishop of Rome went so far as to adopt the title and responsibilities of Pontifex Maximus, that had been discarded by the Roman Emperor Gratian. Throughout the following centuries Christendom experienced many splits, accompanied by religious wars, crusades and persecutions among so-called Christians. Many distinct National State Churches were established. Christendom has grown to be the most powerful and numerous religious organization on earth. It has become a spectacle to all the pagan, non-Christian world, now over two thirds of the earth's population. But an example of what? Of true Christianity? Or of a so-called divine rulership as exercised through a religious hierarchy that cooperates with human kings who claim to have the "divine right of kings"?

[29] Was World War I Christian because it began between two European political states that claimed to be Christian? Was the League of Nations Christian because it was backed by the Church of England and because the American clergymen called it "the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth"? Was World War II Christian for the reason that it began with the invasion by armies of one so-called Christian State into the territory of another "Christian" State? Is the United Nations a Christian organization for world peace and security because about half of its 132 member nations claim to be Christian? Are the steady preparations for World War III with nuclear bombs and missiles Christian because Christendom feels obliged to protect herself with such weapons for survival?

[30] Look at the conditions in Christendom today after sixteen centuries of her existence. Are the moral degeneration within her, the increasing crime, the social and racial injustices, the oppressions, the economic hardships, the poverty and hunger, the lack of respect for rightful authority, the misgovernment, the madness for selfish pleasures, the lack of love of neighbor, which means lack of love for God—are these things the expression of Christianity? Absolutely not! They are

28. (a) Did those bishops follow Christ's example, and so what resulted? (b) What title did the "bishop of Rome" assume, and what happened to the unity of Christendom?

29. Why do we ask about the Christianity of the two world wars and the world peace organizations and the preparations for another world war?

30. (a) What bad features mark Christendom today, and are these the expression of Christianity? (b) What do these things illustrate as to the choice of world rulership offered to Jesus by the Tempter?

the outgrowth of the setting up of Christendom in the fourth century C.E. And inasmuch as Christendom resulted from the yielding of the bishops of the churches to the temptations set before them by the pagan Roman Empire, they vividly and painfully illustrate what would have resulted if Jesus Christ himself had accepted the bribe offered to him of human rulership over "all the kingdoms of the world." But did Jesus Christ accept the tempting offer of Satan the Devil? Is he responsible for the world anguish today?

31 The Bible record says: "Then Jesus said to him: 'Go away, Satan! For it is written, "It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service."' Then the Devil left him, and, look! angels came and began to minister to him."—Matt. 4:10, 11; Mark 1:12, 13.

32 Flatly Jesus Christ refused human rulership at the hands of Satan the Devil. He recognized the divine rulership, that of Jehovah God. That is why he went up and down the land of the nation of Israel proclaiming: "Repent, you people, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." After his baptism in the Jordan River he had been anointed with God's spirit to preach that message. He sent forth his twelve apostles to preach that same message of hope for all mankind. (Matt. 4: 13-17; Luke 4:16-21; 9:1-6; Matt. 10:1-7) Jesus Christ waited upon God to express his divine rulership by establishing the heavenly kingdom in the hands of the Promised Seed who is to crush the Great Serpent, bruising him in the head and thus bringing him to nothing in order that all mankind might be emancipated. Jesus died faithful to the divine rulership, acknowledging no one else but Jehovah God as the Supreme Ruler, the Universal Sovereign.

31. How did Jesus treat the offer made by the Tempter?
32. (a) What rulership did Jesus recognize, as indicated by the message preached? (b) In this regard, what did Jesus wait upon Jehovah God to do?

THE LONG WAITING IN HOPE

Soon to End

EVEN after he was resurrected from the dead on the third day, Jesus continued to wait upon God's time for the setting up of the heavenly kingdom over all mankind. With respect to this it was written to Hebrew Christians in the first century C.E.: "But this man offered one sacrifice for sins perpetually and sat down at the right hand of God, from then on awaiting until his enemies should be placed as a stool for his feet." (Heb. 10:12, 13) This is a reference to Psalm 110:1, 2, where we read: "The utterance of Jehovah to my Lord is: 'Sit at my right hand until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet.' The rod of your strength Jehovah will send out of Zion, saying: 'Go subduing in the midst of your enemies.'" By obeying this command Jesus Christ will have the backing of Divine Rulership and all enemies on earth will be made his footstool, all being completely subdued and destroyed. (Ps. 110:5, 6) So all of us today know what to expect if we line up with his enemies, who are enemies of divine rulership.

[2] In the time that yet remains for these enemies, what do they have to offer mankind? Nothing better than what they have already presented to us. What has the invisible one who has the unseen authority over these enemies, namely, Satan the Devil, to offer mankind through the "kingdoms of the world"? Nothing but their being bruised or crushed along with Satan himself under Christ's feet. By the fulfillment of the prophetic book of Revelation, chapter twelve, Satan the Devil and his demon angels have already been cast out of the holy heavens and down to the vicinity of our earth. All mankind has felt the effects of this restraint of the Great Serpent Satan and his demons to our earth, ever since the first world war of 1914-1918. In the more than half a century since then all mankind has been made to know in a most painful way the meaning of the outcry that was heard in heaven at the ousting of Satan and his demons: "Be glad, you heavens and you who reside in them! Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time." —Rev. 12:12.

[3] Human rulership, even equipped with all its modern scientific advantages and increased learning, has been unable to remove this devilish "woe" from the earth and from the sea. The "great anger" of Satan the Devil against Divine Rulership will not stop short of leading all the political establishments of human rulership into absolute ruin. If he himself cannot rule over the earth, then he is determined

1. According to Hebrews 10:12, 13, till when did Jesus continue to wait at God's right hand, and what does Psalm 110:1, 2 show will happen to us if we line up with his enemies?

2. (a) In the yet remaining time, what does human rulership, yes, the Devil himself, have to offer to mankind? (b) Since the ousting of Satan from heaven, mankind has been made to know the meaning of what outcry in heaven?

3, 4. (a) Has human rulership been able to remove that "woe" from earth and sea? (b) To what extent will Satan's "great anger" against divine rulership go, and how did Jesus describe what this will signify for mankind?

that none of these earthly forms of human rulership shall survive him. In a suicidal attempt, he now leads all political human rulership into destruction under the feet of God's Promised Seed, Jesus Christ. This will signify a time of trouble the like of which the earth's inhabitants have never experienced before. Jesus Christ, when foretelling the "conclusion of the system of things," described this, saying:

4 "Then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again. In fact, unless those days were cut short, no flesh would be saved; but on account of the chosen ones those days will be cut short."—Matt. 24:3, 21, 22; Mark 13:19, 20.

5 The horrors of the siege and destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Romans in the year 70 C.E. were just a typical sample of the horribleness of the approaching global tribulation with which Christendom and all the rest of this human system of things will be annihilated. Just as surely as the foretold globe-encircling flood came in the days of the righteous preacher Noah, just as surely as the foretold destructions of ancient Jerusalem came in the days of Jehovah's prophets and of the apostles of Jesus Christ, just so surely this foretold world-wrecking tribulation will come—in our own generation. For almost one hundred years now Jehovah's Christian witnesses have been warning all mankind of this world catastrophe. Not just to prove true what they have been preaching, but, rather, to prove true Jehovah's prophetic word that they have been preaching. None of mankind can escape it; all mankind must enter into that tribulation of tribulations. The question is, Who of mankind will survive it?

6 Nobody on earth will be able to survive in his own strength or by means of what human protective measures that he can take. Christendom will prove to be no haven of refuge and survival just because of parading Christ's name and having crosses on her church steeples. The United Nations, repeatedly called mankind's "last hope," will fail to be such a thing. The regional alliances and treaty organizations of the political nations will fail to carry either the human rulers or the human ruled safely through the unparalleled "great tribulation." Nothing of human devising can serve as a hope. The prophecies of the Holy Scriptures forewarn of this coming desperate plight of all mankind. In the face of this utterly hopeless outlook for the entire human system of things, it becomes plain to every reasoning person that the only hope for all mankind must lie outside the human realm. Mankind's salvation has never come and will never come from mankind itself, as if by mankind's lifting itself up by its own bootstraps. Hence the Communistic philosophical theory of materialism, namely, that nothing exists but what is material, leads to a dead end, a *cul-de-sac!*

Where to Turn in Real Hope

7 Our hope, in order to be something that will be happily realized, must lie in something spiritual. No, not in that spiritual "god of this system of things," the Great Serpent Satan the Devil, the wicked bringer of the present "woe" upon mankind. (2 Cor. 4:4) He is what the Christian apostle Paul calls "the spirit that now

5. (a) The horrible siege and destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. was a typical sample of what? (b) How surely will the world-wrecking tribulation come, and what question about it arises?

6. What human means of surviving the "great tribulation" will fail, and so the only hope for all mankind lies where?

7. (a) Our hope must be something in what realm, but who there is excluded from being such a hope? (b) To what does the Divine Ruler tell the "prisoners of the hope" to return?

operates in the sons of disobedience," all of whom have "walked according to the system of things of this world." (Eph. 2:2) No, we who desperately need a true hope must turn our eyes away from that invisible "ruler of this world." (John 12:31) We must turn our yearning eyes away from his death-dealing, woe-bringing system of things. To what of a spiritual kind and higher than man and Devil must we look? To what alone can we turn with confidence? Down through the hallways of millenniums of time come sounding the words of the Divine Ruler: "Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of the hope."—Zech. 9:12.

THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Divine Rulership—Are We for It or Against It?**
- **What the Way You Dress Tells About You.**
- **Was Peter Ever in Rome?**

[8] Those rousing words delivered through the prophet Zechariah nearly two thousand five hundred years ago were addressed to those who sincerely desired to be the favored people of the Great Spirit, of whom Jesus Christ said: "God is a Spirit, and those worshiping him must worship with spirit and truth." (John 4:24) The "stronghold" to which the "prisoners of the hope" needed to "return" was the Messianic kingdom of God, which was represented away back there by the city of Jerusalem, where a king of the royal family of David of Bethlehem used to sit on a throne that was called "Jehovah's throne." (1 Chron. 29:23) To this earthly form of divine rulership the "prisoners of the hope" had to "return," coming out from their long exile in pagan Babylon, the locality where organized false religion was begun in opposition to Jehovah God in the days of Nimrod the notorious hunter. (Gen. 10:8-10; 11:1-9) In the prophet Zechariah's time this Babylon had occupied the seat of world domination, as the third world power of Bible history. In 539 B.C.E. Almighty God broke Babylon's hold on its "prisoners" and opened the way to freedom!

[9] A thrilling bit of history that was in the dim ancient past! But it is not dead history. It is *prophetic* history that lives for today and finds its live parallel today, in our generation. That is why this was written and preserved among the prophecies of Zechariah, one of the last prophets of Jehovah before Jesus Christ. Well, then, can we people today be classified as "prisoners of the hope"? Yes, if we see and accept the hope that the "God of hope" holds out before us. The last book of his Holy Scriptures, the Revelation, pointed forward to the existence of, not ancient Babylon, but Babylon the Great in our day. This mightier Babylon symbolizes the world empire of false religion, which has religious connections with the political governments of this system of things, even with Communist Russia. All peoples of the world, whether practicers of the hundreds of religions or stickers to the worldly political institutions, are "prisoners" of Babylon the Great and her political associates. For their salvation, these "prisoners" need to be emancipated, liberated!

8. (a) To whom were those words of Zechariah 9:12 first addressed, and what was the "stronghold" away back there? (b) From where did those "prisoners of the hope" have to return, and how was the way to freedom opened?

9. (a) Why is that not a mere bit of ancient dead history? (b) Who are the "prisoners of the hope" today, and what do they need?

10 It is highly urgent that this take place. Why? Because Babylon the Great and all her political paramours are doomed now to early destruction! How can men be emancipated from their spiritual prison, where there is nothing more to expect than destruction in the coming "great tribulation"? There is only one way to emancipation, and that is by turning to "the stronghold" that Jehovah God has set before all "prisoners of the hope." That "stronghold" is the Messianic kingdom of God, which was anciently represented in the stronghold city of Jerusalem. The earthly Messianic kingdom in Middle Eastern Jerusalem long ago passed away. It has been revived in our time, not over there in earthly Jerusalem, but in the heavens, where the royal Descendant of King David sits, namely, Jesus Christ. His is not some perishable material throne in earthly Jerusalem, but it is really "Jehovah's throne," for he sits at the "right hand" of Jehovah God in the heavens. (Ps. 110:1, 2; Acts 2:34-36; 7:55, 56; 1 Pet. 3:22; Rev. 3:21) From there since the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 Jehovah has sent forth the 'rod of Christ's strength.'

10. (a) Why is it highly urgent that this liberation take place? (b) What is the "stronghold" today to which the "prisoners" must return, and what has Jehovah sent out therefrom since 1914 C.E.?

11 It is under the feet of this Christ and his faithful followers that Jehovah will "crush Satan" shortly. (Rom. 16:20) The kingdom of this Messianic Emancipator is the commissioned representative of the Divine Rulership of the Most High and Almighty God, Jehovah. It is the only hope of all mankind. It is the divinely appointed stronghold to which to turn for freedom and life in endless happiness. Since the close of World War I in 1918 the Christian witnesses of Jehovah have left their spiritual imprisonment in Babylon the Great and have 'returned to the stronghold,' to the established Messianic kingdom of God in the heavenly Jerusalem. Despite the worsening fatal world conditions, they are now enjoying their wonderful spiritual emancipation and are rejoicing in their glorious hope for the near future. In great compassion for all mankind they cry out urgently to all the "prisoners" everywhere to 'turn to the stronghold,' as they fulfill Christ's prophetic command: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." —Matt. 24:14.

11. (a) What, then, is the only hope of all mankind? (b) Since 1918 C.E. from where and to where have Jehovah's Christian witnesses 'returned,' and how are they telling all other "prisoners" to turn to that "stronghold"?

"Heroic Steadfastness to Convictions"

✔ Consistent with the neutral position that they as Christian ministers take in all lands, Jehovah's witnesses in Germany during the second world war would not share in political or military activities. The Nazi authorities viewed this Bible-based stand as opposition to the government. They responded by severely persecuting these Christian witnesses.

Commenting on this, the book *Modern Germany—Its History and Civilization* (1966) says: "The most persecuted sect of all Christian denominations, and the one that was treated with almost as much cruelty as the Jews, was the Jehovah's Witnesses (*Bibelforscher*). Little has been written regarding this opposition group, but from the standpoint of heroic steadfastness to convictions and courageous and martyred resistance the German *Bibelforscher* occupy a most honored place in the history of German *Zivilcourage* [civilian courage]."—P. 513.

DO THE CHURCHES PROVIDE SANCTUARY FROM DIVINE ANGER?

THERE is but little question in the minds of people that a crisis faces this world. Is there any place where a person can find refuge should the threat of a third world war become a reality? More importantly, is there a place of safety during a time of divine judgment of this world? Is there anything that can be done that will be divinely recognized as a protection when God asserts full rulership over earth's affairs?

Will membership in a church ensure safety? Does God count the churches of the so-called "Christian" nations as sacred places of sanctuary, as has been a practice in Christendom?

Or if a person has left Christendom's churches and attends meetings with Jehovah's witnesses, can he count on this as giving safe refuge? Even if one has a better knowledge of the Bible than most professed Christians, does this provide sure protection?

When we look into what God did in past times in connection with his people Israel, we can say that the answer to these questions is, "No, there is much more involved in qualifying for divine protection." We can get the Divine Ruler's viewpoint by knowing what he did with regard to the city of Jerusalem and its temple upon which he had placed his name.

In the year 612 B.C.E., the land of Judah with its capital city Jerusalem found itself in a situation much like that of Christendom today. There was pollution, both literal and moral. Lawlessness and violence filled the land. Idolatry and other pagan, degraded forms of worship were predominant among those professing to serve God. Even right in the temple some of the most shocking practices were going on. Also, there was much fear and anxiety because of the constant threat of a destructive war with the pagan world power Babylon. Similar problems beset Christendom today.

A 'MARKING' AND SMASHING WORK

Accordingly, as Israel's invisible Divine Ruler, Jehovah was obligated to act. Would he consider Jerusalem and his temple inviolable, a sanctuary for those in them? As is Jehovah's practice, he revealed in advance what he purposed to do. While God's prophet Jeremiah was warning the people in Jerusalem of His displeasure, Ezekiel, in captivity over in Babylon, was, by God's power, given a visionary view of Jerusalem. He reports, in his prophetic book:

"And [Jehovah] proceeded to call out in my ears with a loud voice, saying: 'Have those giving their attention to the city come near, each one with his weapon in his hand for bringing ruin!' "—Ezek. 9:1.

These "giving their attention to the city" as 'ruiners' would not be Zedekiah, king of Judah at that time, and his princes, for these rulers had appealed to Pharaoh of Egypt to help them ward off Babylon's threat. To whom did Jehovah call? Ezekiel saw and described them:

"And, look! there were six men coming from the direction of the upper gate that faces to

the north, each one with his weapon for smashing in his hand; and there was one man in among them clothed with linen, with a secretary's inkhorn at his hips, and they proceeded to come in and stand beside the copper altar." —Ezek. 9:2.

These men, numbering seven altogether, were a complete team for action. They came from the direction that Babylon was to come against Jerusalem, but the "six men" having smashing weapons were not said to be Babylonian soldiers. They did, however, represent a heavenly army, which could, in actuality, use Babylonian soldiers as earthly agents.

Was the seventh "man" a soldier? No, he was a secretary, on a mission of peace. Ezekiel next tells us:

"And as regards the glory of the God of Israel, it was taken up from over the cherubs over which it happened to be to the threshold of the house, and he began calling out to the man that was clothed with the linen, at whose hips there was the secretary's inkhorn. And Jehovah went on to say to him: 'Pass through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and you must put a mark on the foreheads of the men that are sighing and groaning over all the detestable things that are being done in the midst of it.' "—Ezek. 9:3, 4.

So the 'man in linen' was evidently sent on a peaceful, lifesaving mission. Before giving the secretary his commission the Divine Presence moved from the celestial war chariot, described earlier in the vision, to the "threshold of the house," evidently meaning the threshold of the Holy of Holies inside the temple itself. From here Jehovah issued his command to the 'man in linen,' equipped with pen and ink to do the marking work.

Who were to receive the mark distinguishing them from the rest of Jerusalem's inhabitants? Those who were out of harmony with the idolatry, immorality and other disgusting things that were offending God, provoking him to anger. They were "sighing and groaning" because of the disrespect and insult toward righteousness and God's name.

The symbolic 'man in linen' would have to go from house to house, to every home in the city of Jerusalem, to find all these deserving the mark. They needed to be marked, signifying that they were true worshipers of Jehovah.

THE FIRST ONES TO BE SMASHED

Of what value was the mark? Jehovah gives the answer in his next command to the "six men" armed with weapons for smashing:

"Pass through the city after him and strike. Let not your eye feel sorry, and do not feel any compassion. Old man, young man and virgin and little child and women you should kill off—to a ruination. But to any man upon whom there is the mark do not go near, and from my sanctuary you should start."—Ezek. 9:5, 6.

Note where the smashing of heads was to *start:* from Jehovah's sanctuary! The idolatrous Israelites may have felt safe inside the temple, because they thought that slain dead bodies would defile the sanctuary but that their false worship with idols did not defile that holy place. However, Jehovah had moved far off from his nominal sanctuary, and in evidence of that he wanted it to be defiled by the slain bodies of those who were defiling the sanctuary with their idolatries. Accordingly, "they started with the old men that were before the house. And [Jehovah] said further to them: 'Defile the house and fill the courtyards with the slain ones. Go forth!' and they went forth and struck in the city."—Ezek. 9:6, 7.

Consequently, a person's being inside the premises of a church or temple, or in a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses, will not protect that person from Jehovah's anger, *if he is not living in harmony with God's righteous laws.* Even children whose parents fail to bring them up in

"the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah," in pure worship, will not be protected. Age or sex was no reason for an offender back there in Jerusalem to be spared when the anger of the Divine Ruler blazed against that city. 'Unmarked' parents will be responsible for the death of their little children.—Eph. 6:4; Ex. 20:5.

The sight of those idolatrous ones being killed right in God's sanctuary may have raised a question in Ezekiel's mind: If no one in such a sacred place as the temple is spared alive, how will anybody outside in the city of Jerusalem have an opportunity to be spared? Ezekiel was so moved by what he saw that he asked: "And it came about that, while they were striking and I was left remaining, I proceeded to fall upon my face and cry out and say: 'Alas, O Sovereign Lord Jehovah! Are you bringing to ruin all the remaining ones of Israel while you are pouring out your rage upon Jerusalem?' "—Ezek. 9:8.

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

What Jehovah here said actually came true when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem five years later.

WHAT BRINGS PROTECTION

We should consider these things in the light of justice and righteousness, and without letting our judgment be clouded by sentimentalism. We can be sure that Jehovah destroyed those who were defiling the land and making conditions violent and unlivable for those who wanted to do what was right. (Ps. 89:14; 2 Pet. 2:9) Also, his executioners killed those who did not care, and who went tacitly along with the detestable things being done. Only those were spared who really were grieved, not merely because their own "rights" or interests were being stepped on, but primarily because of the unrighteousness being practiced and the reproach it brought upon God's name.

So, no individual should think that he will be preserved because of the righteousness of a parent, if he is of responsible age. Nor will belonging to a church, or meeting with others who worship God, or having some knowledge of the Bible save him. God cannot be deceived. (Gal. 6:7) His angels will spare only those who are 'marked' as worshipers of God "with spirit and truth," in deed as well as in word.—John 4:24.

Back there in Jerusalem no literal man went to all the houses making a literal mark on foreheads. It was a symbolic marking work. But according to divine promise and protection certain ones did escape execution, like Baruch the secretary of Jeremiah and Ebed-melech, the Rechabites, and undoubtedly some others. Symbolically God had them 'marked' as plainly as would be a literal mark on the forehead, so that the "six men," his angelic forces, would discern the "mark" and not come near them.

In this twentieth century, in Christendom, which, like Jerusalem, claims to be the domain of Christianity, violence fills the land. Reproaches against God and his law are increasing day by day. Where can protection be found? Is there a work going on today that corresponds to the 'marking' work back there? If so, who is doing the work? What is the "mark," and who qualifies to receive it today? These questions provide the basis for discussion in the following article.

ARE YOU A SUPPORTER OF DIVINE RULERSHIP?

IN THE various nations of the world we find many dissenters, persons dissatisfied with the form of government they are under or objecting to the way government is administered. Many are active in advocating some change, but offer only the ideas of men as a solution. They make no claim to faith in Divine Rulership.

Again, there are persons who say they realize that no man-made ideology or form of rule will succeed in solving the world's great problems. But do they have any genuine hope? Some of them feel vaguely that God may do something someday. They believe that if they live a good life, not lying, cheating, committing adultery, or like sins, they will be 'saved.'

Do these persons, then, truly identify themselves as supporters of Divine Rulership? Do they actually believe God's promises concerning his Messianic Kingdom government and its coming total rulership of the earth?

The apostle Paul said: "With the heart one exercises faith for righteousness, but with the mouth one makes public declaration for salvation." This public declaration would require an active, open identification of oneself as being a supporter of Divine Rulership.—Rom. 10:10.

Do you believe in your heart in God's sovereignty and that he will exercise it in righteous rulership over all the earth? Do you have faith that he will actually make the earth a paradise to time indefinite, forever? Do you want to submit to and advocate his rulership?

What is included in being a supporter of Divine Rulership, and how can you thus identify yourself?

The whole picture outlining how one becomes a supporter of divine rule, what it entails, what identifying oneself as such means, and the value of doing so, is given to us in the Bible book of Ezekiel.

WHERE CAN YOU GET 'MARKED' AS SUPPORTING DIVINE RULERSHIP?

As mentioned in the foregoing article in this magazine, 'marking foreheads' was of a symbolic kind in ancient Jerusalem. The prophet Ezekiel, in vision, saw "six men" with weapons for smashing and one man "clothed with linen, with a secretary's inkhorn at his hips." This latter man was to search throughout Jerusalem for those "sighing and groaning" because of the God-defaming things taking place. These were 'marked' in their foreheads to be preserved alive when the "six men" went through the city smashing the heads of those not marked.—Ezek. 9:1-7.

No one *actually* went throughout Jerusalem marking people. It was done only in the vision given to Ezekiel. This indicated that the major fulfillment of the prophetic vision was to come during the time of the end, before the modern-day "Jerusalem," namely, Christendom, is destroyed. Who, modernly, does the 'marking'?—Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11.

The 'man clothed with linen' would today be the appointed representative of the glorified King Jesus Christ. Why? Because the "kingdom of the world" has now become "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." (Rev. 11:15) Christ

now directs all things with regard to the Divine Rulership of Jehovah over earth. When on earth, Jesus used another term to describe the same symbolic 'man in linen,' calling him the "faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics." (Matt. 24:45-47) This "slave" who acknowledges Christ as Master is not a single individual, but is a body of people, Christ's spiritual brothers on earth. They are anointed with God's spirit to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom. These have the spirit of God acting upon them, motivating them, and they are already 'sealed in their foreheads' by God through Jesus Christ. They have this seal, God's spirit, that gives them a realization of their calling to be joint heirs with Christ. It is a "token" of their heavenly inheritance. Since they constitute the symbolic 'man clothed with linen,' they are appointed and sent forth on Jehovah's authority by Christ.—Rev. 7:3, 4; Eph. 1:13, 14; Rom. 8:16, 17.

This composite body making up the symbolic secretary obviously does not mark itself. The "seal" on its own forehead designates it as God's servant. Who, then, receives the divine commission?

BECOMING IDENTIFIED AS SUPPORTERS

The ones being marked are scattered throughout the earth in the realm of "Babylon the Great," the world empire of false religion, particularly those in the realm of the dominant part of that religious empire, namely, in Christendom. (Rev. 17:5) They see with sorrow and disgust the immoral, unjust, unmerciful, ungodly practices taking place, particularly things falsely done under the cloak of Christianity and in the name of God. They see that Christendom's clergy practice and condone these things. These honest-hearted people are not sorry in the same way as are others who cry out, demonstrate and revolt simply because they are not getting something they selfishly want. No, they are saddened because the things practiced are *wrong*.—Compare 2 Corinthians 7:10, 11.

To find these scattered ones a house-to-house search must be made. The 'marking'—is it a getting of knowledge into their heads? It is that, and much more. Head knowledge does not always motivate people so that all can see a change in their lives. This "mark" being placed on the foreheads means it will be seen by all, just as ancient slave owners often marked their slaves in the forehead, if not also in the hand, so that their ownership was clearly recognizable. So, to identify the symbolically 'marked' ones, much more than knowledge must be given them. For in Christendom many persons have read and reread the Bible. Some have much knowledge. But they do not live and act as Christians. They do not support the Divine Rulership. They may outwardly have "a form of godly devotion," but do not, either inwardly or outwardly, prove true to its power. They do not have a true faith accompanied by works in proof thereof.—2 Tim. 3:5; Jas. 2:18-26.

Therefore, if you desire to have the "mark" your *heart* must be reached so that you can 'exercise faith for righteousness.' Your entire life must be governed by Christian principles for all to see and recognize.—Rom. 10:10.

Do you have this "mark"? Or, if not, do you desire it? If so, you must listen to the good news of the Kingdom now being proclaimed. Then, after getting Bible truth into your heart you will follow the apostle's direction "that you should be made new in the force actuating your mind, and should put on the new personality which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty."—Eph. 4:23, 24.

So it means that, not only is the preaching from house to house to be done and Bibles and Bible literature to be placed in the hands of those desiring to know God. Additionally, those doing the 'marking' must spend much time in Bible study with those they are helping to receive the "mark." They must build 'fire-resistant' Christian qualities in these honest-hearted learners.—1 Cor. 3:10-15.

If you desire the "mark" you, as one being 'marked,' will want to associate regularly with those bearing the news of God's rulership through his Messianic kingdom. You will also find yourself anxious to tell others about the things you have learned. They will probably be amazed at your boldness, sincerity and enthusiasm as well as the change in attitude and actions that Bible knowledge has brought about in you.

You will come to appreciate the need to follow the righteous course of full dedication of yourself to God and to be baptized in symbol of that dedication. As you carry out your dedication in devoted service to God, people will be able clearly to see the "mark," the evidence of the Christian personality that identifies you as a slave of God and Christ.

If you are one who receives the "mark" in your forehead, of what benefit is it to you? Primarily, it identifies you as being in the Sovereign God's service, a supporter of his Divine Rulership. You have his favor and protection. "Jehovah knows those who belong to him," and he will deliver them. (2 Tim. 2:19; Ps. 145:20) You have prospects of living through the destruction of this present system of things into God's new order, to live forever under Divine Rulership. The "mark" actually spares those having it from destruction, from being smashed by God's angelic executioners during the "great tribulation." (Matt. 24:21) This was pictured in Ezekiel's vision by the sparing of the 'marked' ones in Jerusalem.

You must then keep that symbolic mark in your forehead as you share in the 'marking' work under the direction of God's anointed ones. The work to be done is so great that the few anointed ones left on earth cannot personally do all the marking. To refuse to join in the 'marking' work would be failing to support Divine Rulership. Hundreds of thousands are grasping the opportunity to be taught, made disciples of Jesus Christ, marked themselves, and are, in turn, helping others to be marked for protection through the "great tribulation" that wipes out this system of things.—Matt. 28:19, 20.

WHEN THE 'MARKING' BEGAN

When did the modern-day 'marking' work as foreshadowed by the work of the 'man clothed with linen' begin? At the earliest, it began when, in its issue of August 15, 1934, *The Watchtower* published the article entitled "His Kindness." Prior to this, in 1931, through the Biblical book *Vindication,* published by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, it had been shown to the dedicated, anointed followers of Jesus that they had the 'marking' work to do. In that same year they had embraced the Scriptural name "Jehovah's witnesses," suggested in the Bible at Isaiah 43:10-12. It was as if Jehovah were commanding them: "Pass through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem [as foreshadowing Christendom], and you must put a mark on the foreheads of the men that are sighing and groaning over all the detestable things that are being done in the midst of it."—Ezek. 9:4.

In 1934, in the above-mentioned article "His Kindness," Jesus' words at John 10:16 were considered: "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold [the "little

flock" of heavenly heirs]; those also I must bring, and they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock, one shepherd." It was first seen that the "other sheep" of the present time must be those who have dedicated themselves to God through Christ and who have symbolized that unconditional dedication by being immersed in water, like Jesus.

Why, during the three years from 1931 to 1934, was the 'marking' work not done? Because, prior to 1934, the work toward these persons consisted merely of imparting Bible knowledge to them. Only from 1934 on was it clearly understood that the "mark" entailed much more.

In the spring of the next year, 1935, the 'marking' work really began on an organized basis. At a general convention of Jehovah's witnesses in Washington, D.C., the understanding of the "great crowd" as pictured in Revelation chapter seven was clarified. In an address on "The Great Multitude" the then president of the Watch Tower Society explained that these were not a heavenly class, as described in the first eight verses of this chapter, but, rather, were persons to whom God extends the hope of everlasting life on a paradise earth. Hundreds were powerfully moved that day to present themselves for water baptism.—Rev. 7:9-17.

THE WORK TO BE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

In Ezekiel's vision the marking of foreheads came to its end. Just as surely, the modern-day 'marking' will successfully be completed, preparing all who exercise faith for righteousness and who make public declaration with the mouth for salvation. Ezekiel tells us: "And, look! the man clothed with the linen, at whose hips there was the inkhorn, was bringing back word, saying: 'I have done just as you have commanded me.' "—Ezek. 9:11.

What if the man in the vision, that is, the modern-day composite "man," should fail to carry out his commission? He would be accountable for the blood of those executed in the "great tribulation." Jehovah made this plain to Ezekiel, who was appointed as a watchman to warn of execution of God's judgment. The anointed ones on earth have carried out their assigned job, however. They have persisted in calling on the people, helping them to get the lifesaving Bible knowledge. This has not been easy to do, because the fiercest of opposition and persecution have been directed against them. But they take as a command Jesus' prophetic words: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matt. 24:14.

Accordingly, when that "end" does come the 'marking' work will be completed. The anointed spiritual brothers of Jesus Christ yet on earth look forward to the time when they can bring back word to their heavenly Commissioner Jehovah God: "I have done just as you have commanded me."

If you are one of the unnumbered "great crowd" you will cooperate side by side with the anointed ones. You will be a full advocate and supporter of Divine Rulership. You will see that you maintain the "mark," which is the evidence that you are a dedicated, baptized disciple of Jesus Christ and that you have a Christlike personality that differentiates you from all hypocritical "Christians." You will aid others to get and retain the "mark." This will make you an integrity-keeping slave of the Almighty God, with sure prospects of entering into Jehovah's further service in His new system of things under the Lamb Jesus Christ.

● Is it possible that the present crisis in religion is due to a lack of practicality of Christianity?—U.S.A.

When considering the answer to this question, we should remember that there is a difference between the Christianity of Christendom's churches and that of the Bible. Though one form of Christianity may be impractical, this would not mean that the other form must also be impractical.

Many people believe that practicality in religion requires active involvement in the political, social and economic issues of the day. They feel that church failure in this respect shows that Christianity is impractical.

But have not the churches of Christendom been actively involved in the affairs of the world? Indeed! In many lands the churches of Christendom have exercised considerable political influence, even to the point of dominating the ruling element. Of course, the political alignments of the church systems have often favored the rich. Nevertheless, the churches lay claim to helping the poor. Churches have built hospitals, conducted charity drives and have encouraged their members to be active participants in social reforms. While some good may have been accomplished, have such efforts resulted in the best good possible? Have these efforts really changed people's lives, producing better husbands, wives, fathers, mothers and children? The sad fact is that often very little contrast is seen between the lives of church members and nonchurch members. Prisons are filled with people who belong to religious organizations. Does this not indicate that *something* other than involvement in social reforms and the like is needed?

What the churches of Christendom have done is contrary to the teachings of the founder of Christianity. Jesus Christ said of his disciples: "They are no part of the world." (John 17:16) And the apostle John wrote: "We know we originate with God, but the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." (1 John 5:19) So regardless of what seeming good may be accomplished, a Christian's active involvement in world affairs would mean supporting a system that is disapproved by God. Such involvement can never have God's approval and blessing, as amply demonstrated by men's repeated failures in trying to improve the world. Men's efforts might be compared to removing water from a sinking ship with a spoon. True, water is being removed, but the overall effort accomplishes nothing really worth while.

On the other hand, what Jesus Christ did was practical. He gave honest-hearted people every reason to change their way of life for the better. He helped them to know God as a person—his boundless love, mercy, goodness and undeserved kindness. This prompted people to want to be imitators of God.

Similarly, when people today come to recognize the rightness of God's law and appreciate what love the Creator has shown in providing his only-begotten Son as a ransom, they are moved to bring their lives into conformity with God's commandments. They follow through on the inspired admonition to 'deaden their body members as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness.' They put away "wrath, anger, badness, abusive speech, and obscene talk."—Col. 3:5, 8.

Is it not true that things would be quite different today if people everywhere were doing just that? What fine improvement this would bring to family life and to one's relationship with fellow humans! Yes, true Christianity is practical in that it can produce better people. And, as evident among Jehovah's witnesses today, true Christianity is not experiencing a crisis but is prospering—in over two hundred lands throughout the earth.

True, the churches of Christendom are facing a crisis, but not because of the impracticality of Christianity. It is because of their failing to imitate Jesus' example to keep separate from the world. These church systems have spent valuable time and effort in trying to perpetuate a system of things that is disapproved by God. They have placed great emphasis on human wisdom and material things, to the virtual exclusion of motivating people's hearts to live Christian lives. Hence, Christendom's churches have nothing better to offer than does the world generally. They have ignored the only practical thing, that is, helping people to appreciate the rightness and righteousness of living in harmony with God's Word.

● Can a Christian be expected to pay taxes to a government that engages in practices that are contrary to his beliefs?—U.S.A.

The Bible definitely shows that it is proper for Christians to pay taxes. When asked whether it was lawful to pay head tax to Caesar or not, Jesus Christ replied: "Pay back, therefore, Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God." (Matt. 22:17, 21) The apostle Paul, in discussing submission to governmental authorities, wrote: "There is . . . compelling reason for you people to be in subjection, not only on account of that wrath [directed against lawless persons] but also on account of your conscience. For that is why you are also paying taxes; for they are God's public servants constantly serving this very purpose. Render to all their dues, to him who calls for the tax, the tax."—Rom. 13:5-7.

Neither in the words of Jesus nor in those of the apostle Paul is there even a hint that the servant of God has any responsibility with reference to the use governmental authorities make of the tax money. The situation is comparable to one's paying an electrician, a plumber or other workman for services rendered.

Governmental authorities are "God's public servants" in the sense that Christians benefit from their services, including the handling of mail, fire protection, water supply, education, public transportation, the building and maintenance of roads and highways as well as protection by law-enforcement agencies and judicial systems. Even when governments engage in practices that are contrary to a Christian's beliefs, he still benefits from these services.

Also, as Jesus pointed out, the money belongs to "Caesar." This is because the governmental authority issues money and assigns a particular value to it. So when the government requires that part of the money be returned for services rendered, the Christian is under obligation to do so.

Governments that misuse their authority will be held accountable by God.—Rom. 12:19.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

November 12: Divine Rulership—the Only Hope of All Mankind, ¶1-22. Page 617. Songs to Be Used: 1, 6.

November 19: Divine Rulership—the Only Hope of All Mankind, ¶23-32, and The Long Waiting in Hope Soon to End, ¶1-11. Page 624. Songs to Be Used: 13, 105.