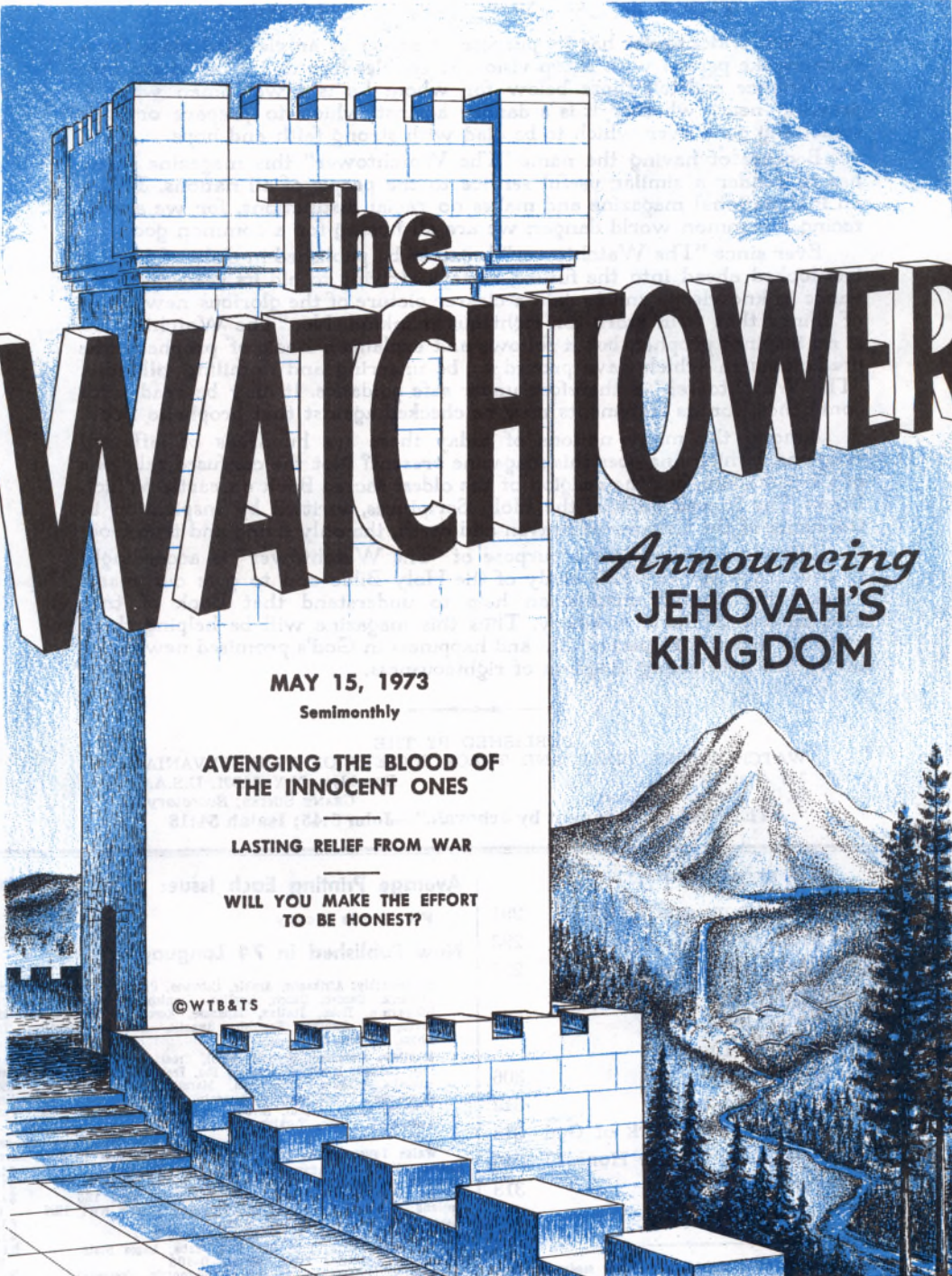




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

MAY 15, 1973

Semimonthly

**AVENGING THE BLOOD OF
THE INNOCENT ONES**

LASTING RELIEF FROM WAR

**WILL YOU MAKE THE EFFORT
TO BE HONEST?**

©WTB&TS

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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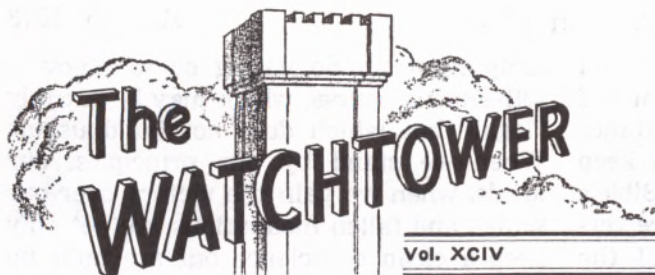
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JEHOVAH'S
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“Love Builds Up”

—WHOM and HOW?

WHAT a wealth of meaning, what truth in those three words: “Love builds up”! Love builds up mentally and physically; it builds up also morally and spiritually. Time and again those words of the apostle Paul have been applied to the psychosomatic effects that love has on the mentally and physically ill, and not without good reason.—1 Cor. 8:1.

Typical of the wealth of testimony concerning the power of love to build up are the words of Dr. Leo Bartemeir. As medical director of a psychiatric institute, he once stated that love should have its place among the remedies of the physician along with antibiotics, vaccines and other medicines. “The physician’s love for his patient and the patient’s love for his physician is a powerful influence in the restoration of patients,” he said. He holds that the modern trend of practitioners to be ‘objective’ or detached in dealing with their patients is a mistake and that “the love of the physician for his patients was

the central and necessary element in relieving them.”

However, true as it is that by love we can build up others, that does not happen to be what the apostle Paul was writing about. In the same verse he states that “knowledge puffs up.” Since Paul meant that a certain kind of knowledge tended to puff up those having that particular

knowledge, he must have meant in the case under discussion that love builds up *those having it*; that those giving expression to love would *themselves* benefit thereby. In fact, in the foregoing quotation by Dr. Bartemeir this fact is recognized. How so? In that he not only notes that the love of the physician builds up the patient but that the love of the patient builds up—the physician?—no, but the patient himself! In the same vein anthropologist Ashley Montagu wrote that “love is creative, greatly enriching the lives of both the receiver and the giver.”

Further testifying to the truth of Paul’s words that “love builds up” is a textbook of psychosomatic medicine by Professors Weiss and English: “The person who has the capacity to love is usually loved in return. The capacity to extend good will and consideration into every aspect of life, familial, marital, sexual and parental, *has a marked constructive effect upon the*

person who extends such feelings as well as upon the person who receives them and thus brings pleasure to both." (Italics added.) Yes, just as archaeologists keep making discoveries that verify the Bible's historical records, so psychiatrists are verifying the accuracy and wisdom of the Bible's counsel as to human relations.

A little reflection will make clear just how true it is that love builds up the one loving. Our great and loving and wise Creator built in us a hormonal system that functions best when we live in line with his righteous and wise principles. The science of psychosomatics has demonstrated the harm that comes to a person who indulges in such negative emotions as malice, anger, bitterness, greed, self-pity, envy and frustration. While resulting in harm to others, they harm most of all the one giving way to such emotions.

Logically, it must therefore follow that when we give expression to wholesome, constructive emotions, chief of which is unselfish love, we build up not only others but primarily ourselves, even as is implied in the words of the Lord Jesus: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—Acts 20:35.

While it is true that love for your mate, for your family and for a close friend can build you up, from the apostle's use of the Greek word *agápe* it is clear that he had in mind the unselfish, principled love that is free from any personal considerations. That this love builds up is further seen by his description of it. He tells that this kind of love is long-suffering, that it is patient and kind, that it is able to bear and endure all things and that it never fails. Helping to account for love's building up is the fact that it dispels weakening emotions such as pride, jealousy and greed.—1 Cor. 13:4-8.

An unselfish love for Jehovah God and for our neighbor will enable us to resist

temptations to do wrong or to follow a self-serving course, which may be entirely "legal" but which does not build us up. When we stand by our principles, our ideals, when we gain the victory over our selfish and fallen inclinations, we not only keep a clean conscience but are built up morally and spiritually thereby. Then we will find the inspired proverb to be true in our case: "The righteous are like a young lion that is confident." Like ancient Job we will be able to refute those who would impugn our motives, and we will be able to plead a good conscience before God.—Prov. 28:1; Job 16:1-4; 29:1-25.

Love also might be said to build up because it is apt to be self-rewarding. Not that that is the reason for expressing love, but that is what most likely will follow. As Jesus Christ expressed it: "Practice giving, and people will give to you. . . . For with the measure that you are measuring out, they will measure out to you in return." (Luke 6:38) A noted woman psychoanalyst wrote a book of admonition to unhappily married women, and the sum and substance of it was that truly loving and submitting to their husbands was the most rewarding thing they could do. Family members can gain happiness by working at making each other happy.

Here is another Scriptural example of this Bible principle. In encouraging the materially prosperous Christians at Corinth to show unselfish love toward their needy brothers in Jerusalem, the apostle Paul wrote: "He that sows . . . bountifully will also reap bountifully."—2 Cor. 9:6.

"Love builds up"—whom? The appreciative receiver, to be sure, but even more so the giver, the one loving. The giver is built up in every way, physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. He reaps bountifully and is loved by God, for "God loves a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9:7.



Lasting Relief

FROM WAR

WE HAVE long heard that there is to be a war that will finally end all wars on this earth. Of the thousands of wars fought since the days of Nimrod the mighty hunter, many of the major ones have been thought to be the last. This is especially true of World Wars I and II. World War I, it was declared, would "make the world safe for democracy." World War II was to make the world free, self-determining, to ensure the "four freedoms" for mankind.

Was World War II the last major war, or will there be another, an even more devastating one? From the history of the nations since World War II, there is much evidence to indicate that it was not the last major war. Some very bitter wars have been fought since then, and that bitterness exists in accentuated form among the nations that have been involved. There are centers of potential explosion in many places and situations that exist right now.

Jesus Christ, the greatest prophet that ever lived, showed that there would indeed be a war that would bring lasting peace. He spoke of the "great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning . . . nor will occur again." (Matt. 24:21) This "great tribulation" was to include this war, described in other places in the Bible.

It is worth while to consider what the Bible says about this war, because it iden-

tifies the opponents engaged in it, states the reasons for that war, and why it will bring lasting peace. Outstanding is the Bible's prophetic forecast in the book of Ezekiel, on which we will focus primary attention throughout this discussion. Ezekiel writes:

"The word of Jehovah continued to occur to me, saying: 'Son of man, set your face against Gog of the land of Magog, the head chieftain of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him. And you must say, "This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: 'Here I am against you, O Gog, you head chieftain of Meshech and Tubal. And I shall certainly turn you around and put hooks in your jaws and bring you forth with all your military force, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in perfect taste, a numerous congregation, with large shield and buckler, all of them handling swords; Persia, Ethiopia and Put with them, all of them with buckler and helmet; Gomer and all its bands, the house of Togarmah, of the remotest parts of the north, and all its bands, many peoples with you.''" —Ezek. 38:1-6.

GOG AND THE "LAND OF MAGOG"

The question is, Who is this Gog, and what is the "land of Magog"? The posterity of the peoples described are with us today. But the prophecy evidently did not refer merely to certain nationalities. Rather, it used, for the purpose of illustration, the powerful armed forces of the day, forces that could threaten Israel at that

time. Likewise, the powerful, well-equipped armed forces of this world today will be at Gog's disposal in the final war. It is notable that Babylon is not included, for the setting of Ezekiel's prophecy is at a time after Babylon had fallen to Medo-Persia, which had by this victory become the Fourth World Power of Bible history.

The prophecy of the Bible book of Revelation gives us clues that help us to identify Gog, the leader of the attack, and to understand what fight it is that Gog leads. In chapters seventeen and eighteen, Revelation describes the complete destruction of Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion. Then, in the nineteenth chapter, it speaks of the destruction of the military forces of earth along with their political organizations or governments.—Rev. 19:17-21; compare Revelation 19:19, 20 with Daniel 8:20, 21 as to the Bible's representation of world political governments figuratively as beasts.

But, just who is Gog? Again, Revelation helps us. For it reveals that the nations are led to war by demonic influence, chief of whom is the "dragon," Satan the Devil. (Rev. 12:9; 16:13, 14, 16) Gog, therefore, is Satan the Devil since his being hurled down to earth. What is the land in which he dwells, the "land of Magog"? There is no such land mentioned otherwise in Bible history. This "land" is described as "the remotest parts of the north." (Ezek. 38:6) It would be isolated and sparsely settled.

With regard to what the "land of Magog" figuratively means, Revelation's prophecy shows that, after Christ's enthronement takes place in heaven, Satan loses a war in heaven and is hurled down to the earth. This betokens "woe for the earth," which woe culminates in the final war. Having no further access to heaven, but being confined to the earth's vicinity, the Devil's situation is an isolated one, with only the demons accompanying him.

So "the land of Magog" is the invisible place or area to which Satan is confined at the time he makes his attack.—Rev. 12:5, 7-12.

THE OBJECT OF GOG'S ATTACK

Jehovah, knowing the magnitude of the fight Gog is to take up, says to him: "Be ready, and let there be preparation on your part, you with all your congregation, those congregated alongside you, and you must become their guard." (Ezek. 38:7) Gog becomes the "guard" or commander in chief, he is "chieftain" of all these forces, both demonic and worldly. Jehovah revealed that the attack was not to come in ancient times, but, rather, a long time later, when he said to Gog:

"After many days you will be given attention. In the final part of the years you will come to the land of people brought back from the sword, collected together out of many peoples, onto the mountains of Israel, that have proved to be a constantly devastated place; even a land that has been brought forth from the peoples, where they have dwelt in security, all of them. And you will be bound to come up. Like a storm you will come in. Like clouds to cover the land you will become, you and all your bands and many peoples with you."—Ezek. 38:8, 9.

Who are the "people brought back from the sword" that Gog attacks? Would their "land" refer to that of the present-day political nation of Israel? No. Israel, with its military forces, is part of this world of which Satan is said to be "god." (2 Cor. 4:4) It is also one of the political nations that make up the United Nations. The Israel that Gog attacks is the "Israel of God," spiritual Israel. (Gal. 6:16) How is this? Because God cast off natural Israel as his exclusive nation when they rejected the Messiah and on Pentecost day of 33 C.E. he established the Christian congregation. (Matt. 23:38; Acts 2:1-43) The apostle Paul explained later that "he is not a Jew who is one on the outside, nor

is circumcision that which is on the outside upon the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one on the inside, and his circumcision is that of the heart by spirit, and not by a written code."—Rom. 2:28, 29.

Furthermore, it is through Jehovah's fight with Gog that he will cause all nations of earth to "know that I am Jehovah," and this could not be through natural Israel, which refuses to use the name Jehovah, and does not claim that their political government is a theocracy, that is, a God-ruled government, set up to promote the pure worship of Jehovah.—Ezek. 38:23.

This understanding about the object of Gog's attack is in harmony with Revelation's picture of the matter when it says that the Devil, after being hurled out of heaven, would make those on earth who represent Jehovah and bear witness to Jesus the chief target of his attacks thereafter.—Rev. 12:17.

Ezekiel's prophecy focuses attention on the condition or situation of Jehovah's spiritual people, his Christian witnesses, in that "final part of the years." They have been "brought back from the sword," preserved from the persecutions of World War I and that which followed. They have been gathered into complete unity under their King and Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Greater David. At the time Gog makes his attack false religion will have been destroyed, but these Christian witnesses, the only ones who have stood for Jehovah's pure worship, will be dwelling in spiritual security.—Ezek. 34:23, 24; 37:22-25.

JEHOVAH LURES GOG TO THE FIGHT

Why does Jehovah "put hooks in [Gog's] jaws" and bring him forth with all his well-equipped forces against God's own gathered people? (Ezek. 38:4) Because Jehovah's time has arrived for the

fight, and by this means he causes the Devil and those siding with him to show to all persons their hatred for Jehovah. Also, by this fight Jehovah vindicates his name and sovereignty over all the universe. Jehovah says: "I shall certainly bring you against my land, for the purpose that the nations may know me when I sanctify myself in you before their eyes, O Gog."—Ezek. 38:16.

We can compare Jehovah's action here with his dealings with Pharaoh of ancient Egypt. Pharaoh was a hard-set enemy of God and his people. His desire was to enslave Jehovah's people, the Hebrews, the nation then used as His witnesses, and to crush them or, if unable to do this, to destroy them outright. (Isa. 43:12) Jehovah selected the time that would result in the greatest good for his people and simultaneously glorify his own name. By means of his dealings with Pharaoh and his forces, Jehovah proved himself supreme and the Subduer of all the gods of Egypt.—Ex. 12:12; 14:4.

In luring Satan to the attack God merely presents what seems to Satan to be the opportunity to vent his rage and hatred on Jehovah's witnesses. The prophecy reveals the motive Satan has:

"This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said, 'And it must occur in that day that things will come up into your heart, and you will certainly think up an injurious scheme; and you must say: "I shall go up against the land of open rural country. I shall come in upon those having no disturbance, dwelling in security, all of them dwelling without wall, and they do not have even bar and doors." It will be to get a big spoil and to do much plundering, in order to turn your hand back upon devastated places reinhabited and upon a people gathered together out of the nations, one that is accumulating wealth and property, those who are dwelling in the center of the earth.'"

—Ezek. 38:10-12.

Is the "big spoil" Satan hopes to get from these apparently defenseless people

material gain? No, for Jehovah's witnesses have comparatively little of this world's goods. (Jas. 2:5; 1 Cor. 1:27-29) They are also harmless, without military equipment. What Satan hopes to despoil are the Kingdom interests that these people have. For Jehovah's witnesses continually preach that kingdom and its good news for the people, and take care of these Kingdom interests world wide. And in this they are successful, gathering many persons from all nations to the side of that kingdom.

This the Devil and those having his spirit hate. We recall that the Devil stirred up the Pharisees because of Jesus' caring for Kingdom interests. People listened to Jesus. But these Jewish religious rulers said among themselves: "You observe you are getting absolutely nowhere. See! The world has gone after him."—John 12:19.

It is these Kingdom interests in the hands of God's anointed witnesses on earth that disturb the Devil. If he could just destroy these witnesses of Jehovah, there would be no one on earth to uphold Jehovah's sovereignty. At the point of time that the attack comes, the first part of the "great tribulation" has already resulted in the destruction by the political rulers of all other religion. These religious systems had no protection, for their claim to be servants of God was false. Jehovah's witnesses, however, are still standing. They have always been neutral toward all the political and military conflicts all around them. In their spiritual estate they figuratively dwell "in the center [*Hebrew*, navel] of the earth." Standing as they do, for worship of Jehovah, they are the focal point, the prime target, of Gog's hostility.—Ezek. 38:12.

THE END OF PEACE DISTURBERS

So, Gog goes headlong into the attack, and the war is on! Gog's military forces,

armed with nuclear weapons, germ and chemical warfare and other death-dealing equipment, may have struck fear into the hearts of worldly people. But how much more terror inspiring Jehovah proves to be when provoked by Gog's attack upon his people, whose attackers are 'touching his eyeball'! (Zech. 2:8) He says:

"'And it must occur in that day, in the day when Gog comes in upon the soil of Israel,' is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, 'that my rage will come up in my nose. And in my ardor, in the fire of my fury, I shall have to speak. Surely in that day a great quaking will occur in the soil of Israel. And because of me the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and the wild beasts of the field and all the creeping things that are creeping on the ground and all mankind that are upon the surface of the ground will be bound to shiver, and the mountains will actually be thrown down and the steep ways will have to fall, and to the earth even every wall will fall.'"—Ezek. 38:18-20.

This quaking will paralyze Gog's hordes with fear and will result in great confusion. What follows demonstrates the unprecedented fury with which Jehovah will strike with the awesome forces at his disposal:

"'And I will call forth against him throughout all my mountainous region a sword,' is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. 'Against his own brother the sword of each one will come to be. And I will bring myself into judgment with him, with pestilence and with blood; and a flooding downpour and hailstones, fire and sulphur I shall rain down upon him and upon his bands and upon the many peoples that will be with him. And I shall certainly magnify myself and sanctify myself and make myself known before the eyes of many nations; and they will have to know that I am Jehovah.'"—Ezek. 38:21-23.

Thus the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" brings lasting peace by destroying earthly war makers. It is fought at the symbolic 'battlefield' called Har-

Magedon (the situation the nations reach that sets the stage for the battle). Jehovah protects his people during that fight, vindicating himself as Universal Sovereign and the Preserver and Deliverer of his people. Just before they go down into destruction, the nations that have taken the

side of Gog will be forced to see and to realize, as he foretold, "that I am Jehovah."—Rev. 16:14, 16.

In the next issue of this magazine we shall consider what God's Word forecasts as the developments to follow this destruction of Jehovah's enemies.

WHAT SHALL I REPAY

TO JEHOVAH?

ONLY Bible-taught persons of meek disposition are likely even to raise the question as to repaying God for all the benefits he has bestowed on his human creatures. Most persons give more thought and expression to their woes, their causes for complaint, their prejudices, than to matters over which they might well be grateful. Genuine gratitude is rare. So blinded by self-interest are many that they cannot even see the multitude of causes for thanksgiving. This situation was clearly foretold by an inspired writer of the first century C.E. in these words: "Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, . . . unthankful, disloyal, . . . without love of goodness."—2 Tim. 3:2, 3.

That spirit of unthankfulness is contagious. It can spread and affect others like a virulent disease. It can poison the minds of even those who have turned to the worship of the only true God, Jehovah, if in any way they neglect to keep strong their faith and trust in the One they worship. How important, then, to meditate frequently on all the benefits Jehovah has

showered upon us—yes, even before we were conscious of his benign rule of all the universe! And there are special reasons to be thankful that we are alive in this particular period of human history, that we have an insight into God's marvelous purposes for mankind and this earthly planet that was created to be man's lasting, beautiful home.—Jer. 9:24.

Remember, we were all born into a dying race. From the very day of birth we have been subject to fear of death through inheritance from our sinner parents. We have been at the mercy of selfish, tyrannical rulers and of men who, like wild beasts, have been greedy for prey. We have been duped, robbed, impoverished, not alone as to material things, but, what is worse, as to spiritual things. We have stumbled around in a dark and merciless world with apparently no one to care about our welfare. (Ezek. 34:2-6) We may even have prayed for help without knowing to whom we prayed.

Many of us had even reached a critical point in life, perhaps a dead end, an im-

possible situation, with no way out, or so it seemed. Like birds caught in a snare and at the mercy of the trapper, such have been unable to help themselves, facing almost certain death or at least total frustration and loss of desire to live. They were, they felt, beyond any help. Others, completely aghast at the realities of life in a wicked system of things, have plunged into debauchery of one kind or another in an effort to forget the stabbing pains of disappointment in life's possibilities for them. This, too, proved to be vain.

But then, at the right time for them, Jehovah stepped into the picture. It may have been through one of his Witnesses coming along with the good news of the Kingdom. It may have been by reason of reading one of the many Bible study aids published by Jehovah's witnesses. The results were astonishing! Eyes and ears were opened to things hitherto unseen and unheard, wonderful spiritual things! The meaning of God's Word, the Bible, gradually began to unfold. A whole new vista of life and usefulness opened up on the basis of the glowing promises of a new order.

Next we learned that there were many others who had been through like disappointing and frustrating experiences in life and who were now, just as we were, thrilled over the prospects ahead, the prospect of life in a new system of things in which righteousness would predominate. (2 Pet. 3:13) And we found that they assembled regularly in a Kingdom Hall, where every meeting had to do with improving our knowledge of God and his provision of salvation. What a completely different association that was from any we had previously experienced in worldly social and religious circles! Surely we had many reasons for thinking about repayment to the generous Giver of all these good things!

In this new and refreshing association with other grateful ones, it became our privilege to lend ourselves generously to the aims and activities of the group. As we enjoyed the conveniences of the Kingdom Hall we became conscious of the fact that it must cost something to maintain such places. There was no need for anyone to shake a collection plate under our nose or supply us with printed dues envelopes, as is the practice in many of Christendom's religious houses. No one has to solicit funds to carry on the work of the great Owner of the universe, we learned. Yes, we came to realize that it is repugnant to true Christians to beg, cajole and pressurize people into giving contributions. Responsible men in the congregations, we noted, were fully aware that such solicitation is not in harmony with the spirit and principles of Christianity.

Of course, there was no losing sight of the practical view of the matter. It does cost something to maintain the Kingdom Halls, to supply heat, lighting and other conveniences that render them suitable for the work of conducting a Bible education campaign. From time to time older men in the congregation would inform those assembled about the expenses entailed, and about the opportunity for all willing ones to share in defraying the expense, not on a per capita basis, nor by some arbitrary determination, but wholly on the basis of the ability and willingness of the contributors. In each Kingdom Hall there is a contribution box, never prominent, into which anyone may drop his gift. The whole arrangement is quite opposite to the idea of solicitation. Only gifts willingly offered are appreciated by Jehovah and his Christian servants.—2 Cor. 9:7.

In due time we learned about the extent of the work of Jehovah's witnesses, spread across some 208 lands around the earth;

about the tremendous undertaking of reaching out into those lands with the Kingdom message, training and sending missionaries, helping nationals of those countries to take up and forward the same fine work among their fellow citizens. All of this, we knew, cost something. And this is what prompted us, each one, to raise the question: How

may I share more positively in this marvelous global activity, even though I am not in a position to leave my home?

Well, we soon found the answer. How happy we were to learn that it was appropriate to send our personal contributions toward this grand life-giving work to the branch office of the Society administering the activities of Jehovah's witnesses in our homeland! For example, for persons in the United States the appropriate address to use for this purpose, we learned, was Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 117 Adams Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201.

Other important ways of striving in our own small way to repay Jehovah for all his blessings came to our attention in due course. We learned that it is possible to share personally in the great preaching and teaching work that achieves God's sworn purpose to find and care for a multitude of straying sheeplike men and women in these urgent days before this old system of things reaches its end in a time of great tribulation. (Ezek. 34:11) By regular attendance at Kingdom Hall meetings, training for such participation is received as well as great encouragement by association with other grateful ones. And

what a delight to be learning to do what Christ Jesus and his disciples were doing some nineteen hundred years ago! Thrilling too the knowledge that at this late date

there are still such opportunities for persons seeking to follow in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus!

As we look back upon all the way that Jehovah our God has led us, the benefits he has

conferred so generously, can we stifle the surge of gratitude that rises in our hearts? Can we afford to forget all his loving-kindnesses and go back to harping on our petty troubles and complaints? No, but with the inspired psalmist we can joyously declare: "Our soul is like a bird that is escaped from the trap of baiters. The trap is broken, and we ourselves have escaped. Our help is in the name of Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth." (Ps. 124:7, 8) The "God merciful and gracious" has liberated us from the vanity of a godless life, from the frustrations of self-centered living, yes, from 'ropes of encircling death,' for has he not given us hope of life through Jesus Christ?

It is clear that the course of gratitude is now to sing forth the praises of our God to all we meet, letting them know about the blessings we have received, our completely new outlook on the future. Let us share with them the goodness of Jehovah. Freely we have received; freely let us give to other needy ones. And as we give of ourselves and our means, let us have confidence that Jehovah is pleased with our humble efforts to respond to the question: "What shall I repay to Jehovah for all his benefits to me?"—Ps. 116:12.

THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Do You See Only Others' Weaknesses?**
- **"Pursue the Things Making for Peace."**
- **Keeping God's Congregation Clean in the Time of His Judgment.**

AVENGING THE BLOOD

of the Innocent Ones

FROM the beginning of Jehovah's dealing with mankind he has demonstrated his high regard for life. At the same time he made it clear to man that he too must respect life or else answer to Jehovah for his lack of regard. Failure to take Jehovah's law into account has brought upon the nations Jehovah's just judgment, and the innocent blood that has been shed over the centuries can no longer be covered over or left unavenged. This is made quite certain by the words of the prophet Isaiah: "For, look! Jehovah is coming forth from his place to call to account the error of the inhabitant of the land against him, and the land will certainly expose her bloodshed and will no longer cover over her killed ones."—Isa. 26:21.

² The first two men known to be born into the human race became involved in this issue of shedding innocent blood when the offering to Jehovah that Abel made was accepted, whereas Cain's was not looked upon with favor, "and Cain grew hot with great anger, and his countenance began to fall." Recognizing the threat to Abel's life that Cain's anger imposed, Jehovah warned Cain that exaltation could be his simply by turning to doing good. However, the reason for Cain's lack of

"For, look! Jehovah is coming forth from his place to call to account the error of the inhabitant of the land against him, and the land will certainly expose her bloodshed and will no longer cover over her killed ones."—Isa. 26:21.

favor in making an offering to Jehovah, the 'Reader of hearts,' became more manifest as Cain's wrong attitude expressed itself further. (1 Sam. 16:7) Instead of humbling himself

in recognition of Jehovah's law, following his brother's example, he chose to ignore God's counsel to get the mastery over the sin that was "crouching at the entrance" and followed the path that led to violent murder of his brother. (1 John 3:12; Jude 11) Further evidence of his attitude was his callous and lying response to Jehovah's inquiry as to Abel's whereabouts: "I do not know. Am I my brother's guardian?" No expression of repentance or remorse was this! Nor could Cain's pretended innocence absolve him of liability. Jehovah's judgment was rendered immediately. "Listen! Your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground. And now you are cursed in banishment from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood at your hand."—Gen. 4:4-11.

³ Notice that Jehovah particularly called attention to Abel's blood as being spilled out upon the ground. Why? Because life is in the blood and Abel's blood was spilled without a justifiable cause. Cain took life from Abel, life that belonged to God, and the blood that stained the ground at the scene of his murder bore mute but elo-

1. What is Jehovah's attitude toward life, as shown by the prophet Isaiah?

2. (a) In what issue concerning life did Cain and Abel become involved, and what motivated Cain's attitude? (b) What was Jehovah's judgment in the matter?

3. (a) Why was Cain not absolved of guilt, and how did he view his judgment from Jehovah? (b) In Noah's day, what did Jehovah do to cleanse the earth, which had become filled with violence?

quent testimony to the life that had been poured out, crying out to Jehovah for vengeance. Cain must have realized that his taking the life of Abel jeopardized his own life, because he complained to Jehovah: "I must become a wanderer and fugitive on the earth, and it is certain that anyone finding me will kill me." (Gen. 4:14) However, Jehovah said to him: "'For that reason anyone killing Cain must suffer vengeance seven times.' And so Jehovah set up a sign for Cain in order that no one finding him should strike him." (Gen. 4:15) The sign that Jehovah set upon Cain was unmistakable in import, as later testified by Lamech, a descendant of Cain, when he composed these words: "A man I have killed for wounding me, yes, a young man for giving me a blow. If seven times Cain is to be avenged, then Lamech seventy times and seven." (Gen. 4:23, 24) Violence increased in the earth until, in Noah's day, Jehovah wiped out everything in which the "breath of the force of life" was active, from man to beast. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark were spared when the floodwaters covered the earth.—Gen. 7:22, 23.

SANCTITY OF BLOOD ENFORCED

'This "breath of the force of life" was God's creation and was first implanted in sea animals, in winged flying creatures and in land animals. This was thousands of years before man received this gift from God. However, even this was not the beginning of the operation of life-force in the earth. It was in the third creative day when God superimposed upon inanimate atoms of matter the force of life, saying: "Let the earth cause grass to shoot forth, vegetation bearing seed, fruit trees

yielding fruit according to their kinds, the seed of which is in it, upon the earth." (Gen. 1:11) In vegetation, especially in woody plants, a juice or vital circulating fluid called sap was to course, delivering essential food to the tiniest branch, leaf and blossom. Thus it might be said that the life of the tree is in the sap, which carries the life-sustaining properties of the plant throughout its entire system. However, some fourteen thousand years later, in the fifth creative day, when sea creatures and the flying creatures began to be created, and another seven thousand years later, in the sixth creative day, when land animals began to be created, Jehovah prepared in them a different kind of circulatory system. And he filled the intricate circulatory systems of these creatures with a new vehicle, blood instead of sap, carrying oxygen and food elements to every tissue of every organ and part of the body. But the life in the blood is of a higher order than that which animates plants and vegetation. It is the life of a "soul." Furthermore, man was given no restrictions as to the cutting down of plants, thus taking their life. On the contrary, "all vegetation bearing seed . . . and every tree" were given to both man and beast for food. (Gen. 1:29, 30) But in Eden, and after man sinned and was expelled from Eden, he was not given authority to take the life of animals with the same unrestricted freedom he had with plants. The life of a soul was held sacred by God.

'When Noah came out of the ark, Jehovah gave him a new law. In doing so, Jehovah spoke of the "soul" as the "blood." That is because the "soul" or "life" is in the blood. Not that the soul is something immaterial, invisible and intangible residing inside of man. Animals,

4. (a) When and how did Jehovah introduce the force of life into his material creation? (b) How did Jehovah demonstrate the higher order of the life of a "soul" as compared with life that animates vegetation?

5. (a) What new law did Noah receive after the flood, and in connection with what authorization was it given? (b) How did this commandment further emphasize the sanctity of blood and the life it carries?

fish and birds are called "souls" (Gen. 1:20-24) and, in creating man, Jehovah blew breath of life into the body made of dust and "the man came to be a living soul," that is, man *was* a soul; he did not *have* a soul. (Gen. 2:7) But after the Flood, Jehovah made a change in his dealing with mankind as regards the shedding of blood. Jehovah gave man the sacred responsibility of acting immediately as Jehovah's executioner of willful murderers. This indefinitely lasting covenant was stated in connection with an authorization to eat the flesh of animals, but Jehovah warned Noah specifically regarding the sanctity of blood and the life carried in the blood. "Every moving animal that is alive may serve as food for you. As in the case of green vegetation, I do give it all to you. Only flesh with its soul—its blood—you must not eat. And, besides that, your blood of your souls shall I ask back. From the hand of every living creature shall I ask it back; and from the hand of man, from the hand of each one who is his brother, shall I ask back the soul of man. Anyone shedding man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed, for in God's image he made man." (Gen. 9:3-6) Capital punishment was now enjoined upon mankind as a divine requirement, and it became quite clear as time progressed that failure to carry out this requirement would again bring serious bloodguilt.

NO RANSOM FOR THE BLOODGUILTY

⁶ Centuries later, Jehovah God again emphasized his high regard for the life of a "soul" in prescribing punishment for violation of the law of Israel mediated through Moses. Jehovah said: "And your eye should not feel sorry: soul will be for soul, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand

for hand, foot for foot." (Deut. 19:21) Jehovah further warned his people as they were preparing to enter the Promised Land: "And you must not pollute the land in which you are; because it is blood that pollutes the land, and for the land there may be no atonement respecting the blood that has been spilled upon it except by the blood of the one spilling it." (Num. 35:33) So far-reaching was Jehovah's provision for keeping the land free of pollution because of bloodguilt of its inhabitants that he even provided for instances where the murderer was not known. The loss of an innocent life should not be allowed to cause the ground to continue polluted.—Deut. 21:1-9.

⁷ The one authorized under the law of Israel to avenge the blood of one who had been killed was called the "avenger of blood" or *go'el* and was the nearest male relative of the one slain. (Num. 35:19) Since the nearest of kin would be personally involved with the one slain, it is understandable that he would have a keen interest in fulfilling this responsibility, even rising up in the heat of anger to avenge the life of his kinsman. If the murderer was known, then atonement for the blood of the slain man must be swift and certain. "In case there should happen to be a man hating his fellowman, and he has lain in wait for him and has risen up against him and struck his soul fatally and he has died, and the man has fled to one of [the cities of refuge], the older men of his city must then send and take him from there, and they must deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, and he must die. Your eye should not feel sorry for him, and you must clear away the guilt of innocent blood out of Israel, that you may have good." (Deut. 19:11-

6. According to the law of Moses, how only could the land be kept unpolluted from bloodshed, and how far-reaching was this provision?

7. (a) Who was authorized in Israel to avenge one slain, and how did he carry out his responsibility? (b) How did Israel's law differ from later practices, especially in medieval times?

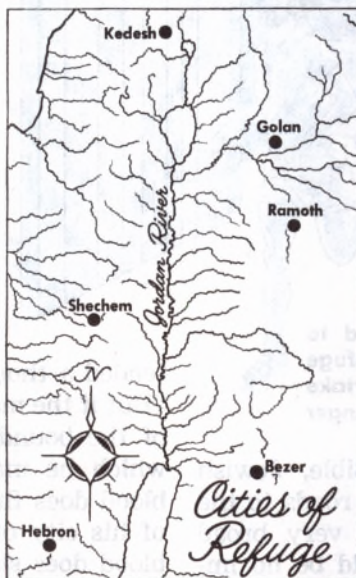
13) No sanctuary was to be made for the willful murderer, neither could a ransom be paid for his soul. (Num. 35:31) In many lands in ancient and medieval times, refuge was provided for anyone, even though he might be guilty of murder. The churches of Christendom thus became sanctuaries for those who had deliberately violated God's law. This was not tolerated under the law in ancient Israel. One example of failure of even the sacred altar of burnt offerings to provide sanctuary is the case of Joab. When he would not let go of the horns of the altar and come out, Solomon ordered that he be executed there in the courtyard of the tent of Jehovah for his part in the rebellion of Adonijah and for his killing Abner and Amasa.—1 Ki. 2:28-34.

MERCY FOR THE UNINTENTIONAL SLAYER

8 If the avenger of blood were to overtake such a killer, then no bloodguilt would result from his execution of the murderer because, in fact, he would be making atonement for the innocent blood that would otherwise cause the land to be polluted. (Num. 35:33) But what if the killing had been accidental and there had been no malice or intent? In such a case the taking of the life would have been unintentional, without seeking the injury of the slain one. If the avenger of blood were to overtake this unintentional manslayer and kill him in the heat of anger, then, since the manslayer was innocent of premeditated murder, his own next of kin

might indignantly rise up against the executioner of his kinsman and another innocent life would be taken, because the first avenger of blood did have the legal right to fall upon the unintentional slayer. This could easily give rise to a blood feud with one innocent life after another being lost, and the land would have been bathed in blood.

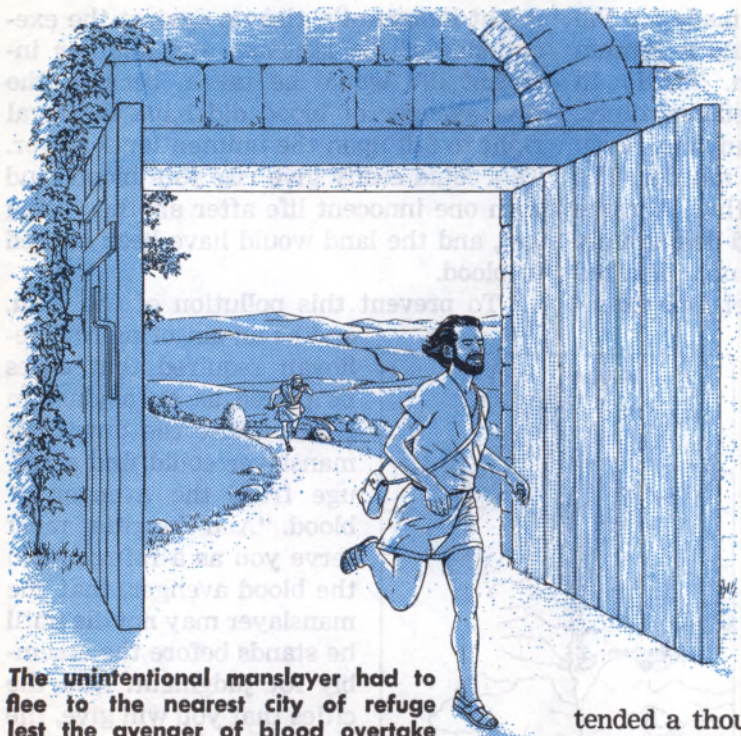
9 To prevent this pollution of the land, and as an act of mercy, Jehovah required that cities be placed as an asylum in Israel where the unwitting manslayer could find a refuge from the avenger of blood. "And the cities must serve you as a refuge from the blood avenger, that the manslayer may not die until he stands before the assembly for judgment. And the cities that you will give, the six cities of refuge, will be at your service. Three cities you will give on this side of the Jordan, and three cities you will give in the land of Canaan. As cities of refuge they will serve. For



the sons of Israel and for the alien resident and for the settler in the midst of them these six cities will serve as a refuge, for anyone to flee there that fatally strikes a soul unintentionally." (Num. 35:10-15; Deut. 19:1-3, 8-10) These cities must be nearby and easily accessible, as stated in Deuteronomy 19:6: "Otherwise, the avenger of blood may, because his heart is hot, chase after the manslayer and actually overtake him, since the way is great; and he may indeed strike his soul fatally, whereas there is no sentence of death for him, because he was no hater of him formerly." In addition, though it is not

8. (a) Why would there be no bloodguilt on the avenger of blood for taking the life of a manslayer? (b) Would there be bloodguilt on the avenger of blood if he took the life of an unintentional manslayer? How might the land have become polluted in such a circumstance?

9. What means of asylum was made for the unintentional manslayer?



The unintentional manslayer had to flee to the nearest city of refuge lest the avenger of blood overtake him and kill him in the heat of anger

specifically stated in the Bible, Jewish tradition informs us that the roads to the cities of refuge were made very broad and even, so that there would be no impediments in the way, and they were constantly kept in good repair.

SAFETY ONLY IN THE CITY OF REFUGE

¹⁰ Although anyone taking life could flee to the city, asylum was provided only until such time as the manslayer could stand trial before the elders of his city in the jurisdiction of whom the murder took place. (Josh. 20:4-6) And "the assembly must then judge between the striker and the avenger of blood according to these judgments." (Num. 35:24) If found guilty of murder, the manslayer must be turned over without delay to the avenger of blood

10. How was it determined whether a man was entitled to asylum in the city of refuge?

for execution. (Num. 35:30) If, on the other hand, the manslayer was found innocent of malice, not hating the slain man formerly, then "the assembly must deliver the manslayer out of the hand of the avenger of blood, and the assembly must return him to his city of refuge to which he had fled, and he must dwell in it until the death of the high priest who was anointed with the holy oil."—Num. 35:25.

¹¹ In order to be assured of continued refuge, the manslayer must remain within the boundaries of the city, its suburbs and its grazing grounds, which extended a thousand cubits outside the city. "But if the manslayer without fail goes out of the boundary of his city of refuge to which he may flee, and the avenger of blood does find him outside the boundary of his city of refuge, and the avenger of blood does slay the manslayer, he has no bloodguilt. For he ought to dwell in his city of refuge until the high priest's death, and after the high priest's death the manslayer may return to the land of his possession." (Num. 35:26-28) This would mean that, once a manslayer had entered the city as an accepted inhabitant of the city, having proved his innocence of intentional killing by undergoing a proper trial, then he could not go outside the city even temporarily for any reason without risking his life. This would impress upon the manslayer the seriousness of what he had done, even though innocently, and continually impress upon him the mercy of Jehovah in

11. How only would the city continue to be a place of refuge to the manslayer, and what would this impress upon him?

allowing him this asylum. It was further stated: "And you must not take a ransom for one who has fled to his city of refuge, to resume dwelling in the land before the death of the high priest." (Num. 35:32) Otherwise, it would make a mockery of the provision Jehovah had made and would suggest that life could be purchased from Jehovah.

¹² The one being admitted to the city of refuge was not to become a burden upon the inhabitants of the city. It is reasonable that while there he must contribute to the welfare of the city and work for his provisions. He might do this by working at his own trade, if suited to the city life. If not, then he might even be required to learn a new one. Nothing in the law of Jehovah allowed for begging or living off the charity of others without contributing something in return, if physically able to do so. Even the widow and the orphan who might be without land or means of sustenance, while provided for bountifully, were still expected to work for what they received. (Deut. 24:17-22) It is interesting to note that, while manslaughterers were not held prisoners in the city and were free to go if they saw fit, still Jehovah's inducement to keep his provision for safety was of such a nature that only the most foolhardy would attempt to violate it.

¹³ Furthermore, Jehovah's mercy in providing refuge for the unintentional manslayer was not to be abused, nor did the law allow for inexcusable negligence as a claim for mercy. For example, when a man built a new house he was required to make a parapet for its roof; otherwise, anyone falling from the roof would bring

bloodguilt upon the house. (Deut. 22:8) If a man owned a bull that was in the habit of goring, and the owner was served warning, and if he failed to keep his bull under guard and it killed someone, the owner of the bull was bloodguilty and could be put to death. (Ex. 21:28-32) If a thief was caught breaking in at night and was killed in the struggle to apprehend him, there was no bloodguilt. But if it happened in the daytime when he could be plainly seen, the one fatally striking him was bloodguilty. (Ex. 22:2, 3) Truly, Jehovah's law was in perfect balance, exacting just retribution from the wicked but extending mercy to those falling into sin or an unintentional violation of the law.

RETRIBUTION SURE AND SOON

¹⁴ What an indictment of ancient Israel this equitable provision of Jehovah proved to be! Although the whole law of Israel laid emphasis on the sacredness of life and the sanctity of blood, from the beginning of his dealings with Israel only a small remnant responded to the repeated pleadings Jehovah found it necessary to make with his people, 'rising up early and sending his prophets' to warn them of the certainty of just retribution. They not only refused to heed Jehovah's warning counsel, but they violently turned on his prophets and cruelly put them to death, thus adding the blood of these innocent ones to their guilt before Jehovah. (Jer. 26:2-8) Therefore Jehovah sent them this indictment through Jeremiah: "Also, in your skirts there have been found the blood marks of the souls of the innocent poor ones. Not in the act of breaking in have I found them, but they are upon all these." (Jer. 2:34) And through Isaiah:

12. Was the manslayer held as prisoner in the city? What kept him there, and what must he do during his period of residence?

13. What additional features of the law of Israel made it clear that the taking of life even unintentionally was not to be viewed lightly?

14. How did Israel as a nation accept the Law's requirements as to the sanctity of life, and what indictments were God's prophets authorized to deliver?

"The very land has been polluted under its inhabitants, for they have bypassed the laws, changed the regulation, broken the indefinitely lasting covenant. That is why the curse itself has eaten up the land, and those inhabiting it are held guilty. This is why the inhabitants of the land have decreased in number, and very few mortal men have remained over."—Isa. 24:5, 6.

¹⁵ Jerusalem was destroyed in 607 B.C.E. because of her many crimes against Jehovah, including her bloodguilt, and only a remnant remained uncondemned. But, in spite of this awesome retributive act of Jehovah, the false religious leaders of Jesus' day could not deny their own bloodguiltiness any more than the religious leaders of Jeremiah's time, for, in both instances, their skirts were crimson red with the blood of Jehovah's faithful ones, including even that of his own dear Son.—Matt. 23:33-36; 27:24, 25; Luke 11:49-51.

15. What retribution did Jehovah bring against his people Israel in Jeremiah's day, and what added responsibility in this regard did their descendants in Jesus' day bear?

¹⁶ Now, today, the bloodguilt of all the nations of the earth has reached its fullness. So great is the bloodguilt of the "harlot" Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, that she is said to be drunk with the blood of Jehovah's people. (Rev. 17:5, 6; 18:24) At any time Jehovah's Avenger of blood is due to strike, and woe to anyone who is caught in her association! (Rev. 18:4) Such bloodguilty ones "will not live out half their days," as David said. (Ps. 55:23) Earnestly our prayer should be with that of the psalmist: "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God the God of my salvation," and "from bloodguilty men save me." (Ps. 51:14; 59:2) Then, in the very near future, when the mighty chorus of praise in heaven ascends to Jehovah because the last elements of Babylon the Great will have been destroyed and the blood of all the innocent ones will have been avenged, our voices will be joined on earth with all those who have escaped the retributive sword of Jehovah's Avenger.—Rev. 19:1, 2, 15, 21.

16. What position have the nations today taken on the issue of the sanctity of life, and what should our view be?

Leaving the City of Refuge

**MEANS
LOSS
OF LIFE**

TODAY bloodguilt rests heavily upon Christendom and upon all the world. Many sincere persons, because they have not personally killed a man or directly engaged in war, are unaware of their own

1. In what position like the Jews of Jesus' day does Christendom stand?

personal share in the guilt. Nevertheless, they must share this responsibility with those represented in prophecy as having shed innocent blood. Christendom today stands in the same position as the Jews of Jesus' day, to whom Jesus said: "Here I

am sending forth to you prophets and wise men and public instructors. Some of them you will kill and impale, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city; that there may come upon you all the righteous blood spilled on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. Truly I say to you, All these things will come upon this generation. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the killer of the prophets and stoner of those sent forth to her."—Matt. 23:34-37.

² Jerusalem's bloodstained record came, not from engaging in theocratic warfare under the command of Jehovah God, but because she shed innocent blood and deliberately put to death many of God's prophets, even Jesus, God's Son, being condemned to death there. This was not done in innocence, for seven centuries earlier, in Jeremiah's day, Jehovah exposed Jerusalem's bloodguilt when he said through his prophet: "Also, in your skirts there have been found the blood marks of the souls of the innocent poor ones. Not in the act of breaking in have I found them, but they are upon all these. But you say, 'I have remained innocent. Surely his anger has turned back from me.' Here I am entering into controversy with you on account of your saying, 'I have not sinned.'" (Jer. 2:34, 35) Acting directly upon these words, in 607 B.C.E. Jehovah did express his anger against Jerusalem for her wanton bloodshed, and his Babylonian executioners poured out her blood upon the ground in an appalling destruction. So, too, Jerusalem came in for another bloodbath, in fulfillment of Jesus' words, and before it was finished in the summer of 70 C.E. 1,100,000 had died within the besieged city.

2. From what did Jerusalem's bloodstained record come, and what retribution did she receive?

BLOODGUILT THROUGH SHARING RESPONSIBILITY

³ Let those in Christendom particularly take heed from this warning example. Not all the Jews killed by the Babylonians or by the Romans were guilty directly of killing God's prophets or otherwise taking human life, yet they perished with those who had willfully shed innocent blood. Why so? Because they upheld the record and traditions of Judaism and thus shared in this society responsibility for her bloodguilt.

⁴ Christendom is truly a modern-day counterpart of Jerusalem and her realm of Judah. Christendom's record before God has been stained with blood unjustly shed from her beginning in the fourth century, in Constantine's day. This record cannot go unnoticed, for Jehovah, who does not change, stated to Noah: "Your blood of your souls shall I ask back. From the hand of every living creature shall I ask it back; and from the hand of man, from the hand of each one who is his brother, shall I ask back the soul of man. Anyone shedding man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed, for in God's image he made man."—Gen. 9:5, 6.

⁵ Christendom's hundreds of wars besides religious inquisitions and crusades prior to 1914 have expended the lives of countless hundreds of thousands of unsuspecting persons, and the two world wars since 1914, for which Christendom must bear the major responsibility as to tens of millions of lives, have amassed a frightful blood debt, which she must settle according to God's covenant concerning blood. These wars cannot be claimed to be theocratic wars fought in God's name, although priests and clergymen of both

3. Why did many perish who had not directly taken life?

4. Why cannot Jehovah overlook Christendom's record?
5. (a) What acts of Christendom have established her record, and why can they not be justified? (b) Who share responsibility in Christendom's bloodguilt?

sides in these controversies that were fought in Christendom have imparted blessings on their participants. This has not authorized anyone to kill his fellowman and stand without bloodguilt before Jehovah God. Coming under such priest's or clergyman's blessing was not a coming into the "city of refuge" of Jehovah's High Priest, Jesus Christ. Though fought sincerely by many in a religious or patriotic fervor, the calling of God's name on such conflicts has not relieved the participants of bloodguilt. Additionally, those who approve, aid or back up those persons that directly commit bloodshed, or engage in propaganda and such movements that lead to innocent spilling of blood, likewise come under a society responsibility as parties to the crime and must stand before the God of justice, who cannot and will not pass by such bloodguilt.

* Of a far more serious nature, however, is Christendom's bloodguilt because of taking the lives of many of God's true servants. Babylon the Great, the worldwide empire of false religion, of which Christendom is the dominant part, is described in the book of Revelation as being "drunk with the blood of the holy ones and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus." (Rev. 17:6) Just as surely as Christendom has failed to heed the warning of Jehovah, so Jehovah's judgment will soon be entered upon her as it was upon her prototype, Jerusalem and Judah, in 607 B.C.E. and 70 C.E. All persons found to be in association with her at that time will be sharers in her guilt and must also share in her destruction.—Rev. 18:4.

HOW TO FLEE TO TODAY'S REFUGE CITY

¹ Jehovah has mercifully held back his Avenger of blood, the Lord Jesus Christ,

from striking out with his angelic hosts against Christendom and all those sharing in her bloodguilt, but soon the time limit will be ended. (Rev. 7:1-3) In the coming "great tribulation" the Avenger of human blood will strike. "For, look! Jehovah is coming forth from his place to call to account the error of the inhabitant of the land against him, and the land will certainly expose her bloodshed and will no longer cover over her killed ones." (Isa. 26:21; Matt. 24:21, 22) When that time of decision comes, all mankind will be brought face-to-face with their joint responsibility, and this on a larger scale than Jerusalem and Jewry ever faced. All who have not found the place of safety will be made to pay the penalty. For all time the earth must be cleansed of the blood of those unrighteously slain. Atonement must be made in order that the covenant concerning the sanctity of blood made with Noah might be fulfilled. The only way to flee to safety is to find the road leading to Jehovah's antitypical "city of refuge" and abide there until the day of Jehovah's wrath is past and continue dwelling in it under the benefit of Jehovah's great High Priest, Jesus Christ. What, then, is the antitypical city of refuge?

² In ancient Israel the manslayer must flee to one of the six cities especially designated, and, after establishing his innocence in regard to wanton slaying, he must abide in the city of refuge until the acting high priest died. (Num. 35:9-34) Thus the antitypical city of refuge must be Jehovah's provision to protect one from execution for violating God's covenant concerning the sanctity of blood. Entrance into that city is made by our coming and remaining under the benefits of the active service of his High Priest, Jesus Christ. Jesus' perfect human life, which he sacrificed on earth, was equivalent to that which the

6. Of what further act is Christendom guilty, and will she escape punishment for this?

7. When will Jehovah's Avenger of blood strike, and where only is refuge to be found?

8. What is the antitypical city of refuge, and how is entrance made into it?

first man Adam enjoyed in the paradise of Eden. Jesus surrendered this sinless life in death and after his resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God in heaven he was able to present the value of the ransom sacrifice for the sake of Adam's dying descendants. Thus Jesus became mankind's Redeemer, our closest relative. The administration of the benefits of this ransom sacrifice therefore cleanses us of guilt and provides a reconciliation for mankind to God.—Heb. 2:14; 10:12; Rom. 5:11; compare Acts 2:37-40.

* Every violator of the divine covenant concerning the sanctity of blood, whether willful or unintentional, must seek God's forgiveness and the cancellation of his sin through faith in this lifeblood of the High Priest, Jesus. He must show sincere repentance over having committed a violation by obediently remaining under the divine provision through Christ, trusting in the righteousness and the good offices of the High Priest. Paul, the apostle, who as Saul of Tarsus persecuted the Christian congregation, even approving of the murder of them, stands as an example of those violating the covenant concerning blood. "Nevertheless," he says, "I was shown mercy, because I was ignorant and acted with a lack of faith." (1 Tim. 1:13) Because Jehovah through Christ saw this repentant attitude in Saul, established later by many faithful works, the Avenger of blood, the resurrected Jesus Christ, did not put him to death later in the 'day of vengeance of our God.' (Isa. 61:2) When Jesus revealed himself to Saul and exposed Saul's persecution of the true church as persecution of Him, Saul repented, changed his course of action, and availed himself from then on of the benefits of the ransom sacrifice, as in a refuge city.—Acts 9:1-19.

9. (a) In seeking God's forgiveness, what must be done by every violator of the divine covenant concerning the sanctity of blood? (b) How does Paul stand as an example?

REQUEST TO GOD FOR A CLEAN CONSCIENCE

¹⁰ Coming into the ancient city of refuge on the part of the unintentional manslayer was not enough for his protection. Before he could remain in the city and receive the benefits the city had to offer he must prove that he had a clean conscience toward God in regard to the intentional spilling of blood. Today this clean conscience toward God can be obtained only by a sincere, honest request to God expressed in dedication of oneself to God through Christ and then baptism. This means that the person coming to God must recognize the sins that he has committed in violation of God's law and must change his course of action in regard to the doing of God's will. Thus, a full and unreserved dedication of his life must be made to Jehovah and then a presenting of himself for total immersion in water must take place in symbol of his dedication. Especially now as the world's end nears.

¹¹ The apostle Peter spoke of the saving power of baptism and its relation to the Christian conscience when he wrote at 1 Peter 3:20, 21: "That which corresponds to this [that is, Noah and his family's passing through the flood in the ark in that end of the world] is also now saving you, namely, baptism, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the request made to God for a good conscience,) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The conscience that we request from God by complying with his baptismal arrangement is a conscience that is freed of any guilt toward God. It is an awareness of the provision of Jesus' atonement sacrifice that cleanses us of all sin, not like the animal sacrifices that had to be repeated every year. No, this good conscience that God gives us allows us to come into a clean

10. How does one today seek to have a clean conscience before God?

11. What is the clean conscience that we request, and how is it maintained?

relationship with Jehovah and stay that way by availing ourselves of the services of his great High Priest. Those coming into this condition must maintain that good conscience by continuing to perform the work assigned to them in this antitypical city of refuge. The conscience therefore plays an important part in our remaining in the city of refuge.

¹² Having come into the antitypical city through dedication and baptism under the provision of the atonement sacrifice of Christ Jesus, we leave behind all sense of guilt and we should continue on in the city with that same freedom. Should we, however, begin to harden our conscience against God and justify ourselves for even minor infractions of Jehovah's law for those refugees in the city, we are putting ourselves in the dangerous position of eventually leaving the city altogether. God's law is clearly defined for us in his Word and through the Bible publications that he has provided to understand his will and purpose for mankind in the time of the end. To ignore this clear direction of God's spirit is to ignore the direction of our Christian conscience. To ignore the conscience is in time to feel no pain or disturbance when it should prick us. Eventually, as Paul said, the conscience can become hardened like flesh seared with a branding iron. In this condition the conscience, like proud flesh, feels no pain, no sense of guilt. In time we could become complacent toward wrongdoing, and when wrong is called to our attention we will eventually just shrug it off as though to say: "So what? Who cares?" Such an indifferent attitude can lead only to a complete disregard for the provision under which we were permitted to enter the city, and if we are overtaken in this condition, this state of mind, we would have no protection from the Avenger of blood

because we would be no longer in this city under the protective benefits of the High Priest during the coming "day of vengeance."

HOLDING FIRM DOWN TO THE END

¹³ Since becoming self-reliant and losing faith in the High Priest's sacrifice and trusting no more in its covering of sins is to leave the city of refuge, thus exposing ourselves to destruction at Armageddon, we do well to heed the warning of the apostle Paul when he said: "That is why it is necessary for us to pay more than the usual attention to the things heard by us, that we may never drift away." (Heb. 2:1) The time for Jehovah's Avenger to go into action is ever closer. Now is no time to be caught unawares, outside the city of refuge or in a dangerous position near the edge of the pasture grounds, which marked the limits of this sanctuary provided by Jehovah. We must never fall into the snare of thinking that we can deviate even just a little from the righteous requirements of Jehovah. Who of us can say at what point one becomes willful in ignoring Jehovah's provision and ceases to be one who is 'just using poor judgment'? Remember what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4:4: "For I am not conscious of anything against myself. Yet by this I am not proved righteous, but he that examines me is Jehovah." Can we say that we are putting our trust in Jehovah if we deliberately ignore or violate his commandments to us? To think of leaving the antitypical city of refuge even temporarily is to tempt God to save us from his Avenger of blood. Besides, if a person in such a condition had to face death right now from natural causes before the "great tribulation," what share has he in the resurrection? Never should we neglect laying a sufficiently sound basis in faith,

12. How could we put ourselves in the dangerous position of leaving the modern-day city of refuge?

13. How does one leave the antitypical city of refuge, how can this be avoided, and what danger is faced by those who do leave?

relying sufficiently on the great High Priest's services, for the Avenger of blood to remember us favorably when resurrection time comes. (Matt. 24:21, 22) Failure to do so in this "time of the end" can mean extinction for all time. One would not be privileged to survive the coming "great tribulation." One is executed.

WHEN FREED FROM THE CITY OF REFUGE

¹⁴ How long must the former bloodguilty ones stay inside the city of refuge? Until they no longer need the services of the High Priest. Paul wrote to the Hebrews: "Consequently he is able also to save completely those who are approaching God through him, because he is always alive to plead for them. For such a high priest as this was suitable for us, loyal, guileless, undefiled, separated from the sinners, and become higher than the heavens." (Heb. 7:25, 26) Such services, then, are for those survivors of the "great tribulation" who are in human imperfection. As long as any bloodguilt continues, the services of the High Priest are necessary in order to maintain a right standing with God. Those who have been anointed by God's holy spirit to be spiritual sons, joint heirs with Christ, must keep within the antitypical city of refuge till they faithfully finish their earthly course in death, thereby forever sacrificing their human nature. Since Christ's sacrifice applies only to those having human nature, the High Priest "dies" to them in the sense that he no more needs to act in their behalf with the merit of his human sacrifice, for in the case of the "little flock" of "joint heirs with Christ" in the resurrection they are changed from human to spirit and reside henceforth in heaven as possessing a "divine nature."—Luke 12:32; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.

14. How long must those now on earth with heavenly hopes stay within the antitypical city, and why until then?

¹⁵ Those survivors of the "great tribulation" with hopes of earthly life, however, are not freed from the city of refuge when God's enemies have been destroyed at Armageddon and retribution has been meted out for the blood of those innocently slain throughout the generations of mankind. True, before the Avenger of blood acts as Jehovah's executioner, those of this "great crowd" must have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Still, the "great tribulation" does not remove their bloodguilt or rid them immediately of the sins inherited from Adam. Even though they have a clean conscience toward God, they must continue to maintain this clean conscience by staying within the bounds of the antitypical city of refuge until restored to human perfection, thereby no longer needing the services of the High Priest. When will this come? Only when they have attained to human perfection at the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ and he yields them over in their perfection to Jehovah for a final test of their integrity on their own merit. When they come out from under this protection of the great High Priest, Jesus Christ, he, in effect, as High Priest dies to them, for he will no longer need to act in their behalf with the cleansing blood of his sacrifice.

¹⁶ What of those, then, who will be resurrected during Jesus' thousand-year reign? Must these, too, come within the city of refuge and remain there until the "death of the high priest"? No. For these have paid the penalty for their sinfulness by their own death. (Rom. 6:7) They have been acquitted of sin by going down into the common grave of all mankind. On

15. When are those with earthly hopes free to leave the antitypical city, and what accomplishes this for them?

16. What position toward the antitypical city of refuge do those have who come forth in the resurrection to life on earth?

coming forth from death, they are now standing on a road that leads, not into the antitypical city of refuge, but into life everlasting. Continuing on this highway of life they too will be aided by the High Priest to attain to human perfection. Their passing the final test after the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ will bring them also Jehovah's declaration of them righteous and a guarantee of endless life on earth. Failure, however, to meet the requirements of God that will apply to mankind in that day will bring upon them a final judgment of condemnation and they will be exterminated forever, just as those who were executed a thousand years earlier in the "great tribulation."

¹⁷ But, someone might ask, what of Paul's words to the Hebrews: "This hope we have as an anchor for the soul, both sure and firm, and it enters in within the curtain, where a forerunner has entered in our behalf, Jesus who has become a high priest according to the manner of Melchizedek forever"? (Heb. 6:19, 20) Why is it said that Jesus will be a High Priest forever if his services as High Priest are to end toward the world of mankind at the end of the thousand years? In what way does he continue as High Priest forever?

¹⁸ In the Jewish type the high priest literally died, thus ending not only his services as high priest but his life as well.

17. What questions arise as to the "death" of the High Priest?

18. What service of the great High Priest will come to an end, but why will this not put an end to all his relationship with mankind?

This is not so with the greater High Priest, Jesus Christ. True, his services end in this capacity when mankind is brought to a complete standing in righteousness before Jehovah, but Jesus at Jehovah's right hand continues forever. Cessation of his office as a mediating High Priest toward mankind does not end his life. The good effects of his service as King and High Priest over mankind will remain forever with mankind, and mankind will forever be indebted to him for having served as King and High Priest in their behalf. To all eternity they will bow the knee at the name of Jesus and confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. 2:5-11) His services toward mankind will then no longer be necessary in the application of his atonement sacrifice toward them. But as Jehovah's great Administrator and Spokesman, he will unquestionably continue throughout all eternity as the preeminent One in magnifying Jehovah's praise and leading in worship that will unify the entire universe to Jehovah's glory and honor.

¹⁹ What a blessed privilege it will be to be among those happy creatures who have survived down to that time! How thankful we will be for the mercy of Jehovah that has made this marvelous provision possible! It is this hope now that can sustain us. May we cherish it as we treasure life itself, for remaining in Jehovah's refuge city now in this "time of the end" of the bloodguilty world does mean our life.

19. What can now sustain us, and what should our earnest effort be?

Experience the Best Teacher?

● Have you met individuals who go through life disdaining counsel or caution because of believing that "experience is the best teacher"? The point has been made about such an outlook, that one big problem is that an individual sadly winds up learning a lot of things he really did not want to know. What an advantage it is, then, to have the Bible for one's guidance. It represents more than the oldest accurate account of human experiences. It actually presents the loving guidance of a God interested in the happiness of humans.

Building to Accomplish the Work of God

AROUND the world there are over 1,600,000 of Jehovah's witnesses. They are well known. Why? Because they regularly call on other people to talk to them about God's purposes for mankind. They urge people everywhere to learn God's requirements for survival through the coming "great tribulation" into His righteous new order. (Matt. 24:14, 21) With a view to reaching the greatest number of persons possible in the available time, they distribute vast quantities of Bible literature. This requires printing plants, along with all the related facilities that are needed to support such operations.

On April 3, 1973, another building for use in connection with this Christian work was dedicated at Watchtower Farm, near Pine Bush, New York. What took place on that occasion gives one some insight into the organization itself.

TOURING WATCHTOWER FARM

Longtime members of the headquarters staff of the Watchtower Society were in-

vited to attend the dedication program. Over eighty of them, all with records of over twenty-five years of such service, left Brooklyn early on April 3 for the trip of a hundred miles to Watchtower Farm.

Arriving at the farm, they saw a miniature city spread out before them. Just eleven years ago this property had been acquired by the Watchtower Society. And since then its productive capacity had been increased, and necessary buildings had been erected, so that the farm could adequately supply the needs of the large headquarters staff in Brooklyn.

The visitors were taken on a tour to the dairy barn, from which 80,000 gallons of milk had been sent to the Brooklyn Bethel family during the past year; to the cheese room, where some 50,000 pounds of cheese had been produced during the year; to the hen house, where 60,000 dozen eggs had been laid; and to the slaughterhouse, where over 250,000 pounds of beef and pork and 60,000 pounds of chicken had been prepared for use by the Bethel family during



At Watchtower Farm—new residence building (center) connected to factory at left

the year. They also heard about the new water-purification plant, and saw under construction a large, modern sewage-disposal plant. All these facilities have been designed, built and are operated by volunteer workers, all of them Jehovah's witnesses. Nothing is used for commercial profit; the entire arrangement makes it possible to produce Bible literature at minimal cost, for the benefit of honest-hearted persons everywhere.

After seeing the farm, those on tour were taken to factory building No. 1, where they saw two rotary presses that are in regular use. Is that the extent of the printing operations to be carried on here? By no means. There on the factory floor, in crates, were parts for four more rotary presses soon to be erected, and they learned that others were en route. Behind the first factory they were shown another one, much larger, measuring 350 feet in breadth and in length. So that a part of the newest factory could be put to use while the rest is being completed, a portion 62 feet wide and 350 feet long has been closed in and made ready as a giant pressroom. By September it is hoped that the new pressroom will have six rotary presses operating. The visitors were excited about what they saw.

The tour moved on, through a long passageway connecting the factory to the new residence building designed to house the growing staff needed to do the printing here. It is a handsome structure, six stories high, beautifully decorated, with a large rotunda on the front and a pool with a fountain planned for the front yard. Other buildings on the farm had already provided housing for over two hundred persons. This new structure now makes available rooms for another four hundred and seventy-four.

Among those taking the tour that day were forty-four members of the anointed remnant from the Brooklyn headquarters,

persons who cherish the prospect of being joint heirs with Christ in his heavenly kingdom. They have devoted many years in the service of their Lord. Many of them still move about at a pace that amazes their younger associates. Some of them were bent with age. A few got short of breath and needed a helping hand at times on the tour. One was being moved around in a wheelchair. But how their eyes beamed at what they saw! Here were new buildings and equipment that could be used to spread the vital message of God's kingdom, to bring honor to Jehovah's name.

DEDICATION PROGRAM

At noontime a fine meal was served in the beautiful dining room of the new residence building. What a pleasant setting! On the walls were painted lovely natural scenes from around the earth, and the floor-to-ceiling windows to the northwest looked out on the Catskill Mountains. About four hundred and fifty persons were on hand, including the farm staff, the construction workers and those who had come from Brooklyn Bethel.

After the meal, N. H. Knorr, the president of the Watch Tower Society, spoke to the group for about an hour. He was followed by the vice-president, F. W. Franz, then by George Couch, Max Larson and Harlan Mathes, all of whom have had much to do with the work at Watchtower Farm.

In his remarks, Knorr emphasized what can be accomplished when a person applies himself to the service of God in his early years and perseveres in that work. He referred to the founder of the Christian congregation, Jesus Christ, who set the example for all his followers by giving of himself to the full. He also spoke of C. T. Russell, the first president of the Watch Tower Society, who, in his early twenties, gathered groups of people for serious study of the Bible; by the age of twenty-seven,

in 1879, he had begun to publish the magazine now known as *The Watchtower*, and he kept right on full time in the Lord's work until his death in 1916. In a heart-warming way Knorr also drew attention to some in his audience with long records of faithful service, some reaching back to the days of Russell. His listeners responded with appreciative applause.

During the program for the dedication of the new residence building, it was most interesting to listen to details related by the speakers concerning the building work done by the Watch Tower Society over the years. That activity reaches back eighty-four years to the time when the "Bible House" was built in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Knorr recalled that, years later, in 1927, when the Society built a factory in Brooklyn, it seemed very large compared to their immediate needs, but it was soon filled to capacity as the demand for Bible literature grew. Similarly, in 1967 when another large factory was built to fill out a four-city-block complex in Brooklyn, it seemed that it would provide ample space for years to come. But who could foresee that the number of persons baptized by Jehovah's witnesses within a single year would more than double within three years? It proved to be a time of unprecedented growth.

More facilities were needed to publish Bibles and Bible study helps. So, as Knorr told his audience, when it no longer proved possible to expand in Brooklyn, building work began at Watchtower Farm. The first factory there was hardly complete when it became evident that another would be needed. Also, more housing would be needed for the workers. Work got under way on the fine new residence building that was being dedicated on this occasion. Plans were also drawn up for the second factory (the large one that now has a section ready for erection of new printing presses), and

a building permit was obtained. As Larson related, though the actual building did not get under way until the next year, shortly after the permit was issued it would no longer have been possible to obtain such a permit, because a change was made in the zoning ordinance. It is evident that over the years Jehovah has blessed the work of his servants, putting it into their minds to do things that have made it possible to care for the great upsurge in the number of persons who have taken up true worship.—Isa. 2:2, 3; Ps. 127:1.

During the program special mention was made of the workers who have volunteered to share in the construction and installation of equipment. Some of them were free to move and, upon learning of the work to be done here, they left their secular employment in other parts of the United States and volunteered their time and skills for this work that they recognized to be directly connected with spreading the Word of God. Some are grandparents and great-grandparents, perhaps retired, but they have gladly offered to use their skills to get the work done. All these workers are ordained ministers who also share in preaching and teaching God's Word to others.

It is not only at Watchtower Farm near Pine Bush that there is a great expansion of the Society's printing facilities. As he concluded the dedication program, Brother Knorr mentioned that a large new printery and Bethel home are also nearing completion in Japan. Another printery is almost completed in the Philippines, and one in Nigeria. In March, such a printing plant was inaugurated in Brazil. World wide, expansion is taking place. All the evidence shows that there is only a short remaining time until the "great tribulation" breaks out, and it is the earnest desire of Jehovah's witnesses to use all their resources to give the greatest possible witness in all the earth between now and then.

WILL YOU

MAKE THE EFFORT TO BE HONEST?

"THE surest way to remain poor is to be an honest man." Do you agree with that sentiment of Napoleon expressed over a century and a half ago? Many today do.

An ever-increasing crowd considers dishonesty as an accepted way of life, a 'necessary evil' for survival in the present system of things. Honesty, on the other hand, is viewed by many as a sign of weakness, yes, an invitation to others to take advantage of one.

How do you feel about the matter of honesty? Do you agree with the viewpoints noted above or do you feel that honesty is something desirable, something worth putting effort into? The Bible leaves no room for doubt. How is that?

Readers of the Bible are encouraged to "become imitators of God," and "to follow [Christ's] steps closely." (Eph. 5:1; 1 Pet. 2:21) Jehovah himself is perfectly honest, "a God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice." And of Jesus Christ, we read: "He committed no sin, nor was deception found in his mouth." (Deut. 32:4; 1 Pet. 2:22) All who would win God's approval must likewise manifest the godly quality of honesty.

Are you willing to put forth the effort that this requires? If so, daily you will be faced with challenging situations that test your honesty. What are some of these?

Certain privileges that employers extend to their employees can present a challenge to honesty. Some offer special discounts to their staff. Perhaps this is true where you work. If so, does this mean that you

can buy items for anyone you choose? Or does the special discount apply only for yourself and your immediate family? And what about personal use of the company car or other equipment? If you are not sure what your employer's policy is on such matters, will you make the effort to be honest and ask? If you do, make sure the one you ask has authority to give you a truthful answer.

Consider, also, Jesus' command: "Pay back, therefore, Caesar's things to Caesar." (Matt. 22:21) This includes paying "to him who calls for the tax, the tax." (Rom. 13:7) Some establishments deduct required taxes before paying their employees. But with other people honesty necessitates personal effort. Why so?

Many are self-employed. Some work in service positions, as waiters and waitresses, with a large portion of their income coming in the form of tips. Others perform work in addition to their regular employment for which they receive remuneration. In many cases no taxes are previously deducted from their income.

Some, looking for an opportunity to gain relief from the burden of high taxation, report a portion of their income for taxing, but not all. Because the likelihood of getting caught is small they adopt the viewpoint that 'what the government does not know won't hurt it.'

Honesty requires effort also in connection with what 'Caesar' or the secular government provides for the people. Some countries make available government-sponsored social services, which include financial aid to those with low income or

who are unemployed. In the United States this is known as public or social welfare.

This provision has given rise to much dishonesty. Officials have expressed concern at the ease with which welfare money may be obtained with minimal inquiry being made as to the recipient's eligibility. A United States senator in a speech before the Senate on March 14, 1972, spoke of "literally thousands of people all around the country who should not, under any reasonable interpretation, be eligible for benefits, or whose benefits should be substantially less than they are receiving." A United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare survey revealed that, of 500,000 recipients, 4.9 percent were ineligible for any payment, and over 7.9 percent received overpayments.

To be honest when faced with the temptation to obtain what appears to be 'easy money' can require determined effort in a variety of circumstances. For instance, a person may qualify to receive welfare payments for a while but then undergo a change of status, for example, due to marriage, becoming employed or receiving a salary increase. The law may specify that he should now receive benefits at a lower rate or none at all. Will he make the effort to be honest and notify the administration of his changed status?

Some refrain from doing so, reasoning that as long as the government does not look into the matter it is all right. But even if a person does inform them, he may continue to receive money at the same rate as before due to inefficiency or indifference on the part of the office workers.

What would you do if you found yourself in that situation? Would you accept the money, reasoning that someone else's mistake or negligence entitles you to it? Or would you refuse to accept that to

which you are not entitled by law? The Bible can help you to make the right decision. How so?

For one thing the Bible reveals that "the eyes of Jehovah are in every place, keeping watch upon the bad ones and the good ones." He sees everything we do, and this in itself should serve as a strong incentive to conduct ourselves honestly at all times.—Prov. 15:3; compare Psalm 139:1-12.

Then, too, the word of God forthrightly condemns deception and thievery. At Ephesians 4:25, we read: "Wherefore, now that you have put away falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor." Falsehood, of course, includes direct lying. But what about voluntarily withholding information from Caesar that he has a right to know? Is that any less a form of falsehood?

The Bible's command is clear: "Let the stealer steal no more." A Christian has no desire to come into possession of something to which he has no right, even if that may be made easy through someone else's error or oversight. Instead, a follower of Christ is to "do hard work, doing with his hands what is good work."—Eph. 4:28.

Honesty commends itself in many positive ways too. The most important of these is outlined for us at Proverbs 3:32: "For the devious person is a detestable thing to Jehovah, but His intimacy is with the upright [or, honest] ones."

Those who cultivate such a fine relationship with the Creator know that they need not resort to trickery and deception to obtain the necessities of life. If they "keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness," which righteousness includes honesty, they are assured that "all these other things will be added to [them]."—Matt. 6:33.

Also, Bible study convinces one that

"there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." The result? One is freed from the anxieties of materialism and enjoys a well-being that cannot be valued in dollars and cents.—Acts 20:35.

Yes, honesty requires effort. But a fine relationship with Jehovah God and its attendant blessings make it well worth the effort. The question remains though: Will you make the effort to be honest?

YOUTHFUL DECISION

HOW old must a person be before he is able to make proper decisions in connection with what is right? Would you think eleven years old to be too young?

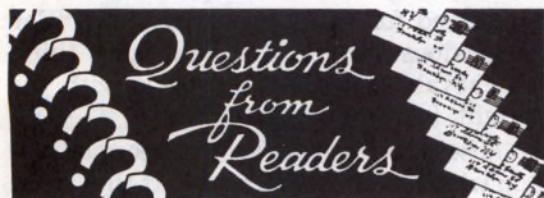
At a large assembly of Jehovah's witnesses in Stuttgart, Germany, a Witness minister related an experience he had beginning in December 1966. One day an eleven-year-old boy from the neighborhood knocked on his door and stood there with a copy of the Bible study aid *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained* under his arm. When the minister inquired what the lad desired, the boy asked to have a Bible study using the book. His older sister had studied in it previously and now he had the book in his possession and decided that he wanted to learn the truth of the Bible.

And that he did. Over the next three years he regularly studied with the Witness minister. Then, before he reached the age of fourteen, he made another decision. In Germany a child can legally leave the church at the age of fourteen even without the consent of his parents. The lad decided that this is

what he ought to do, for he could see that the religion of his family was not based on Bible truth.

The boy's father and grandmother were surprised at his decision and were displeased. They owned a flower shop, and a good part of their business involved making floral decorations for religious holidays. Despite their various warnings and pressures, he remained firm in his decision to exercise the legal right he had to leave the church.

At the assembly the minister relating the experience pointed out that the lad was continuing as a zealous worshiper of God: "Despite his youth, he has put up a good 'fight for the faith' and is determined to continue this, with the help of and to the honor of his Creator." As long as the boy remains under parental authority, he must be an obedient son in everything that does not directly conflict with God's Word. But it is a wise son who realizes that, when human commands conflict with those of God, one's obligations to God come first.—Eph. 6:1; Acts 5:29; Eccl. 12:1.



● How is a person "marked" in the sense described at 2 Thessalonians 3:14, 15?—American Samoa.

The apostle Paul wrote to the congregation at Thessalonica: "If anyone is not obedient to our word through this letter, keep this one marked, stop associating with him, that he may become ashamed. And yet do not be con-

sidering him as an enemy, but continue admonishing him as a brother." (2 Thess. 3:14, 15) A little earlier in his letter he had given similar instructions, saying: "Now we are giving you orders, brothers, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to withdraw from every brother walking disorderly and not according to the tradition you received from us." (Verse 6) Paul then went on to show the "tradition" that had been received from him and his associates in the hardworking example they had set when with the brothers there in Thessalonica. While most in the congregation were doing well, there were certain ones now who were "walking disorderly . . . not working at all but meddling with what does not concern them."—Verses 7-11.

Thus, these "disorderly" ones were not committing grave offenses such as fornication, idolatry or extortion, offenses which could oblige the congregation to remove them, if unrepentant, disfellowshipping them. (1 Cor. 6: 9-13) Nevertheless, these individuals were poor examples and an unwholesome influence within the congregation. They were not, in certain significant aspects at least, representative of what genuine Christianity should be. While not gross, neither was their misconduct something so minor or petty that it could be overlooked or covered by love. (1 Pet. 4:8) Hence, the need to 'mark' such ones. But who would do this and how?

Note that Paul's letter was not one sent to an overseer, such as Timothy or Titus, nor are the overseers specifically mentioned (as at Philippians 1:1), but the letter is addressed "to the congregation" in general. (2 Thess. 1:1) So, rather than the elders officially and publicly labeling certain individuals as "disorderly," the members of the congregation individually would do the marking. For the phrase, "keep this one marked," other translations read: "mark him well" (*New English Bible*); "note him well" (*New Berkeley Version*); "take note of him" (*Jerusalem Bible*); "take special note of that man" (*New American Standard Bible*). They would 'mark' him in the sense that we mean when saying, "Mark my word," that is, take special note of it.

This marking or noting of certain ones as poor examples may be illustrated by contrast with the favorable marking called for at Psalm 37:37. There the psalmist exhorts: "Watch the blameless one ["mark the man of integrity" (footnote: "take note of"), *Jewish Publication Society*] and keep the upright one in sight, for the future of that man will be peaceful." Christians also are urged to 'keep their eye' on those setting a fine example among them, observing their conduct and imitating their faith. (Phil. 3:17; Heb. 13:7) This, of course, does not call for any public naming of such good examples. Their good conduct speaks for itself and becomes known to observers. So, too, does the poor conduct of these disorderly ones, and the congregation members *individually* 'mark' them by taking note of them as persons *not* to be imitated.

To what extent do they "stop associating" with such "marked" ones? Verse 6 of this chapter says to "withdraw ["keep aloof," *New*

American Standard Bible] from every brother walking disorderly." Their 'withdrawing' is evidently of the kind described at Galatians 2:12. There it is related that Peter, mistakenly in this case, "went withdrawing and separating himself" from people of the nations, whereas before he used to eat with them. Thus it appears that congregation members would cease to have *social relations* with those they themselves 'mark,' and this for the purpose of showing that they do not approve of the habits or course these are taking.

To illustrate, in a congregation certain ones may fail to heed the Scriptural warning concerning worldly associations, perhaps even "dating" an unbeliever. (1 Cor. 7:39; 15:33; 2 Cor. 6:14) They may do this though counseled often regarding the matter. The elders, from the platform and otherwise, may even have emphasized the Bible's counsel and warning against such conduct, not, however, naming the individuals involved. What then? Then, if approached and invited to share in such worldly association by a member of the congregation, the ones approached would 'mark' such a one as "disorderly" in this regard. They certainly would not want to associate with him in his course. In some cases, parents might find it necessary to instruct their children to restrict their association with certain young persons in the congregation who may be showing themselves "disorderly" in such ways. Elders, of course, would be careful not to use such ones in any exemplary capacity.

This does not mean that brothers would refuse to greet such a one, as if he were of the kind of persons described at 2 John 9-11. When at a Christian meeting place, they would receive and treat such a one in brotherly fashion. But they would keep in mind his poor example and failure to respond to counsel and, as appropriate opportunity afforded, would 'admonish him as a brother.' And, of course, it is especially important that they set a good example themselves in the matter involved. —Titus 2:7, 8.

Is there a difference, then, between these "marked" ones and persons who may have committed serious sins but who were not disfellowshipped due to their sincere repentance? Yes, there is. True, these latter ones may have been publicly reproved, in harmony with 1 Timothy 5:20, but they have already recognized the wrong of their course, felt shame over it

and repented. That is not the case with the ones needing to be "marked." It is for the very reason that they are not recognizing the error of their way so as to repent of it that they need to be shamed, and that is why the brothers stop associating with them on other than necessary occasions, as at Christian meetings.

This 'marking' does not mean we are 'judging' our brothers—ruling them out as being Christian or as fellow disciples or brothers. Nor are we judging them in things that are solely matters of individual conscience. (Rom. 14:10) We object to a particular habit or course that is clearly contrary to Bible principles. If these persons overcome such we are happy to view them as no longer in need of being marked and are happy to be able to associate freely with them.

We should, then, not use this apostolic injunction as a reason for looking down upon or treating coolly any person who does not measure up precisely to what we may personally view as an "ideal" course or example. Some persons are new in the faith and have

much to learn. They are to be dealt with considerately and patiently. (Rom. 14:1-4; 15:1) So, one can ask oneself the question, 'Is the person truly "disorderly" in a matter of sufficient consequence to merit such marking?' An occasional minor slip in conduct is not the same as consistently following a course that is out of harmony with clear Scriptural counsel. Consideration would need to be given also when one is conscientiously battling a weakness and sincerely wants to improve. We want to protect our spiritual health and that of our brothers. Yet, we also want to "pursue the things making for peace and the things that are upbuilding to one another," showing real love and concern for one another.—Rom. 14:19.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

June 17: Avenging the Blood of the Innocent Ones. Page 300. Songs to Be Used: 80, 60.

June 24: Leaving the City of Refuge Means Loss of Life. Page 306. Songs to Be Used: 9, 46.

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To what extent do they "stop associating" with such "marked" ones? Verse 9 of the chapter says to "withdraw [keep aloof]. Now