

The
WATCHTOWER

**Can You Be True to God,
Yet Hide the Facts?**

**How One Language Will Bring
Unity to Mankind**

**'Keep Close in Mind the Presence
of the Day of Jehovah'**

JANUARY 15, 1974

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ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

January 15, 1974
Vol. 95, Number 2

A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's witnesses, has done just that.

How can it benefit you? Consider: Do you long for a better world, one of true justice and free from sorrow, hatred and war? Do you want to live at a time when genuine peace and love prevail among people of all races? Then this magazine can aid you. Using God's Word, the Bible, as its authority, it points out the clear evidence that the present wicked system of things will soon end, destroyed by God. But it also announces the coming in of a righteous new order. There, under the rule of God's kingdom, his heavenly government, people will enjoy life forever in true peace, health and happiness on a paradise earth.

Faithfulness to the Word of God lifts *The Watchtower* above the contradicting religious teachings and philosophies of men. It stays strictly neutral as regards political affairs. It wholeheartedly upholds the highest moral standard—that of man's Maker, Jehovah God. From this source, it shows solutions to the problems of daily life.

We know that many sincere persons would appreciate a discussion of these things in their own home with a qualified person. A minister of Jehovah's witnesses will be glad to call on you free of charge. To arrange for this, simply write the publishers of this magazine or contact Jehovah's witnesses locally.

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Can You Be True to God,

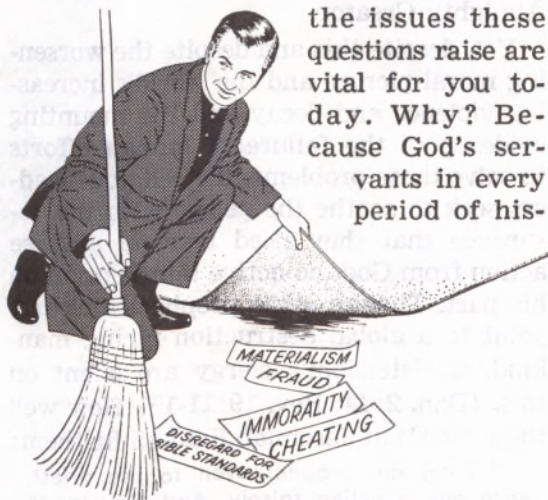
YET HIDE THE FACTS?

WHAT results when a lie is let go unchallenged? Does not silence help the lie to pass as truth, to have freer sway to influence many, perhaps to their serious harm?

What happens when misconduct and immorality are allowed to go unexposed and uncondemned? Is this not like covering over an infection without any effort to cure it and keep it from spreading?

When persons are in great danger from a source that they do not suspect or are being misled by those they consider their friends, is it an unkindness to warn them? They may prefer not to believe the warning. They may even resent it. But does that free one from the moral responsibility to give that warning?

If you are among those seeking to be faithful to God, the issues these questions raise are vital for you today. Why? Because God's servants in every period of his



WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE THE TRUTH COVERED OVER . . . ?

THE WATCHTOWER — JANUARY 15, 1974

tory have had to face up to the challenge these issues present. They have had to expose falsehood and wrongdoing and warn people of dangers and deception—not just in a general way, but in a specific way, in the interest of pure worship. It would have been far easier to keep silent or say only what people wanted to hear. But faithfulness to God and love of neighbor moved them to speak. They realized that “better is a revealed reproof than a concealed love.”—Prov. 27:5.

THE CONTINUING PATTERN

Consider the situation in ancient Israel and the example that God's prophets then set. Wrongdoing became rampant in that nation. Dishonesty, violence, immorality and hypocrisy disgraced the name of the God whom the Israelites claimed to worship. Did the people welcome divine correction? To the contrary, the Bible shows that they said this to God's prophets:

“‘You must not see,’ and to the ones having [inspired] visions, ‘You must not envision for us any straightforward things. Speak to us smooth things; envision deceptive things. Turn aside from the way; deviate from the path.’”—Isa. 30:9-11.

The majority of the religious leaders sought popularity by doing just that, condoning and “white-washing” the wrongdoing and violation of God's righteous standards and ways. But God's instructions to his true prophets are exemplified by what he said to the prophet Ezekiel:

“Now as regards you, O son of man, a watchman is what I have made you to



. . . OR DO YOU WANT TO KNOW THE FACTS?

the house of Israel, and at my mouth you must hear the word and give them warning from me. When I say to someone wicked, 'O wicked one, you will positively die!' but you actually do not speak out to warn the wicked one from his way, he himself as a wicked one will die in his own error, but his blood I shall ask back at your own hand."—Ezek. 33:7, 8.

In time God did bring the foretold destruction upon that nation. Only those who had faithfully upheld his word enjoyed his protection then.

Was it any different in the days of Jesus' earthly ministry? God's Son describes the state of affairs he found, saying:

"Light has come into the world but men have loved the darkness rather than the light, for their works were wicked. For he that practices vile things hates the light and does not come to the light, in order that his works may not be reproved. But he that does what is true comes to the light, in order that his works may be made manifest as having been worked in harmony with God."—John 3:19-21.

And who, primarily, objected to Jesus' bold declaration of the truth that exposed the way God's standards were being violated? Was it not the religious leaders, the scribes, the Pharisees and chief priests? Read for yourself what the Bible states at Matthew 16:21; 20:18, 19; 23:13.

Jesus knew the high position of trust and confidence that those religious leaders held in the eyes of the people. Did this cause him to remain silent and not warn others? No, but forcefully and publicly he exposed them as betrayers of God and man, as lovers of popularity and praise, as "hypocrites," "blind guides" who were like "whitewashed graves," beautiful outside but full of uncleanness inside, persecutors of those speaking the truth from God.—Read Matthew 23:1-36.

Though these men murderously plotted Jesus' death, his faithfulness to God caused him to make known the truth for the good of all those loving righteousness. His apos-

tles followed the same faithful course, not letting themselves be muzzled into silence.—Acts 5:27-32, 40-42.

Do we not face similar conditions in our time? Today a flood tide of immorality sweeps the earth. News reports reflect an unprecedented rise in dishonesty, crookedness and crime. Sexual looseness, perversion and homosexuality become ever more common and accepted. Bible standards of clean conduct and morality are ignored or even ridiculed. Yet many of those engaging in these things call themselves "Christian" and profess to serve God. How true the words at Titus 1:16: "They publicly declare they know God, but they disown him by their works"!

Most notable of all is that more and more of today's religious leaders openly condone and "whitewash" much of this wrongdoing. They speak of the Bible's moral standards as "outdated" and 'inadequate for today's modern circumstances.' They place its authenticity as God's inspired Word in doubt, thereby weakening its strength among the people as a force for right. They accept the evolution theory in place of the Bible's account of man's creation by an All-wise and Almighty Creator.

Yet, despite this and despite the worsening moral picture and the world's increasing violence and decay and the mounting evidence of the failure of human efforts to solve these problems, the religious leaders seek to soothe the people with the assurance that they need fear no adverse action from God, no active intervention on his part. Though Bible prophecies clearly point to a global destruction facing mankind, Christendom's clergy are silent on this. (Dan. 2:44; Rev. 19:11-15) How well these words at Jeremiah 6:13-15 fit them:

"From the prophet even to the priest, each one is acting falsely. And they try to heal the breakdown of my people lightly, saying, 'There is peace! There is peace!'"

when there is no peace. Did they feel shame because it was something detestable that they had done? . . . they have not come to know even how to feel humiliated. Therefore they will fall among those who are falling; in the time that I must hold an accounting with them they will stumble,' Jehovah has said!"

WHAT FAITHFULNESS REQUIRES OF US

Do you believe that lies should not go unchallenged? Then what about falsehoods told about God, misrepresentations of his announced purposes? Surely this is, not less, but more serious than lies of a general kind. Perhaps you agree that wrongdoing should be exposed. But what if the wrongdoing is done by religious people, perhaps persons in your own church? Will faithfulness to God cause you to speak out for what is right? And if we would naturally feel guilty about failing to warn our neighbors of some threatening disaster, such as an approaching flood or violent windstorm, should we not feel greater guilt if we failed to warn them of approaching destruction that God's Word positively shows as now threatening people everywhere?

Christ Jesus said that in this time of the end "this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matt. 24:14) To those loving righteousness it is the best of news that God's heavenly government soon will take complete control of earth, that it will cause God's will to be done 'on earth as in heaven.'—Matt. 6:9, 10.

But Jesus said that after the preaching of such good news, "then the end will come." Obviously, those declaring the good news must also warn of that destruction, which will end the present world system. Logically, too, they must aid people to see why that destruction is coming, the reasons obliging God to act against a corrupt

world, and why the world's religions have failed to lead people into peaceful relations with God, even as the religious leaders of Israel failed to do so.

To do this requires true Christians to speak out, not holding back in exposing false teachings and unscriptural practices of the world's religious organizations. It requires them to show people why and how the entire present world system is responsible before God for the bad conditions on earth and why he therefore detests it and has the unalterable determination of removing it forever. They must show persons why their trusting in or supporting that world system places them in line for experiencing God's anger. Faithfulness to God and love for their neighbor require this.

Today, in over 200 lands and islands of the sea, more than one million six hundred thousand of Jehovah's witnesses regularly share in carrying out the divine commission to bear witness. Rather than speaking "smooth things" that lull people into complacency, they straightforwardly show what the Bible clearly states, that "whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God." (Jas. 4:4) The fact that this bold proclamation is now being made earth wide is sound evidence that time is running out for this present world system. As its end draws ever closer, the urgent need for action grows.

If you desire to learn more concerning pure worship—the protection it brings and the blessings to which it leads—why not contact Jehovah's witnesses, perhaps through their local Kingdom Hall? You will find them willing and happy to aid you to gain Bible knowledge in your own home, free of charge. In faithfulness to God, use the yet-remaining time wisely.—Eph. 5:15-17.

Where

LOVE OF TRUTH

THERE is a big difference between knowing what is truth and loving it. A person may know what is true but not act in harmony with it. But one who loves truth shows this by adhering to it.

To the disappointment of many, love of truth is woefully lacking among church members. But this does not mean that there are no lovers of truth today. To the contrary, some of the disappointed ones now rejoice in having found real love of truth. Where? Read their experiences and see.

PRACTICERS OF TRUTH ARE DIFFERENT

A young woman working at the Catholic headquarters in Essen, Germany, tells of her disappointment about the views she heard expressed there: "I was surprised and disappointed when they told me that the Bible was subject to interpretation and that one should not take everything in the Bible so seriously. The Bible 'had gone through many changes and was only applicable to certain times,' I was told. The account of creation was definitely rejected. Concerning celibacy, one priest declared, 'I have lived together with my housekeeper in the best relationship for thirty-five years, but we have agreed that we will not marry.'"

Through a study of the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses, however, this woman came to appreciate that there are people who take the Bible seriously and are not afraid to expose religious error. After attending the talk and slide presentation at the Kingdom Hall on the subject "A Close Look at the Churches," she noted the clear distinction between true worship and the false.

After she told her mother what she had seen and heard during this presentation about the actions of some Catholic clergymen, her mother

Is Found



felt that the Catholic Church had been misrepresented. Therefore she insisted that the speaker have a talk with the priest. During the resulting discussion, the mother said repeatedly to the priest, "Say that what the Witnesses are saying is not so!" But the priest could not deny what was being said, because it was the truth.

On account of her love for truth, the daughter severed her connection with the Catholic Church and is now sharing with others what she has learned.

Not all respond so readily to the exposure of religious error. At times, false teaching has blinded people to such an extent that they think they want nothing to do with those who do not agree with their beliefs. Yet, once

someone is able to help them to see that they have not been told the truth, they are willing to make tremendous changes. Says a young woman from California: "As a child I was taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church and attended their church school. At that time we were taught not to have anything to do with the name Jehovah, and always to check certain scriptures to make sure that that name did not appear before we bought a Bible.

"Despite this religious background, I married by the time I was fifteen and, at eighteen, was in the process of getting a divorce. In the meantime I had turned to prostitution, nude modeling, making stag films and also to the occult.

"Then, one day, a nine-year-old boy and his grandmother came to my door with *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* I told them that I wasn't interested and didn't want any. The man in the apartment with me said that he wanted them and gave the boy ten cents. When we closed the door, I took the magazines out of his hand, ripped them up and threw them into the garbage.

"The grandmother came back about two months later. Again I told her that I wasn't interested in Jehovah's witnesses or their literature. I told her about Jehovah's name and how it was not in the Bible and that as Christians we shouldn't use it. Then she asked me to get my Bible and to turn to Psalm 83:18. When I read it, I was put into a state of shock.

I stood there for a moment with my mouth open and then started to scream at her, saying things like: 'Why didn't they tell me the truth? Why did they have to lie to me?' She could see that I was upset. So she left.

"The following week she returned and we had a long Bible discussion. Thereafter we had several other discussions, but never an organized Bible study. I began to see this would mean changes in my life, changes that I was not quite ready to make. So I would not be at home, only being there when I had a question or when I felt like talking. I would sit at my neighbor's place and watch her come to my door and wait for her to leave, or just not bother answering the bell. But, somehow, we always got together. I even moved three times and she tracked me down!"

In time this young woman did make the necessary changes. She continues: "Within six months I was preaching the good news. Not long thereafter I was baptized."

Similarly, a man in Colombia, South America, did not continue following what was generally accepted in his community once he understood that it was wrong. This man was about to accompany Jehovah's witnesses in their preaching activity. He had already made tremendous changes to bring his life into harmony with the teachings of the Bible. However, when asked, "Where do you get your electricity?" he replied, "Like others in this section of town." And how was that? He had simply strung two wires to an electric pole for street lighting and had connected them. When it was explained to him that this was a form of stealing, he immediately saw the point and desired to rectify the situation. He reported the matter to the proper authorities, saying:

"Look, I was a no-good, I was a drunkard and was unfaithful to my wife. But now this is all different. I study with Jehovah's witnesses and want to get baptized to become one of them. Also, I want my home used for Bible studies, and I need a meter, as Jehovah's witnesses do not steal electricity, nor anything else."

LOVE FOR TRUTH LEADS TO FAITHFUL ENDURANCE

Besides moving persons to change their way of life to conform to God's Word, love for truth has made it possible for many to endure terrible persecution.

A case in point is one of Jehovah's witnesses in Liberia. The mother of five children, she lived with her non-Witness husband in a very remote village of less than ten houses. Through jungles and swamps she would make her way to the Kingdom Hall, always being among the first to arrive. This despite the fact that for eight years her husband opposed her, even subjecting her to great physical abuse.

There was the time that he wounded her seriously with a stick. He inflicted wounds on one of her legs and told her, 'Let me see how you can go to the Kingdom Hall without legs.' She was in bed for some days, but as soon as she felt better and could walk a bit, her first trip was to the Kingdom Hall, to the disappointment of her husband.

Finally, after many similar incidents, came the climax. Their large rice farm was about to be harvested. The husband chose this time to abandon the family, with no intention of returning to his Witness wife. He went to the capital city of Monrovia. Meanwhile, fellow Witnesses harvested the rice, thereby saving the mother and her children from starvation.

At Monrovia, the husband, by coincidence, found accommodations with a man who, unknown to him, was one of Jehovah's witnesses. This Witness invited him to a meeting and, though he did not know the nature of the meeting, he just could not refuse to go, as he was staying in the home. At the Kingdom Hall he was warmly welcomed and learned that those in attendance were Jehovah's witnesses, just like his wife. Their kindness impressed him, as he never thought that such a "crazy religion" (as he had been calling it) could be practiced by people in a city like Monrovia. Later, in the house, he confessed to the Witness accommodating him that he was going back to his family and would worship Jehovah.

Back home he knelt down before his wife, related his experiences and asked her for forgiveness. Since then he never misses a meeting at the Kingdom Hall and is now zealously telling others about the truth that he once bitterly opposed.

If you would like to associate with people who live by the Bible because they love truth, even to the point of enduring persecution for it, why not visit a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses at your earliest opportunity? See for yourself whether love of truth can be found there.

Insight on the News

- Since mid-December earth's inhabitants have been fascinated by the rare appearance of the comet Kohoutek. To many it is a display of awesome celestial beauty. Others see in it a fulfillment of Luke

Kohoutek a Sign?

21:11, where Jesus foretold "fearful sights and from heaven great signs" at the "conclusion of the system of things." They remember Jewish historian Josephus' report that before the end of the Jewish system in 70 C.E. "a star stood over the City [Jerusalem], very like a broadsword, and a comet that remained a whole year." Is Kohoutek a sign for our day?

True, those viewing all comets as "evil omens" may be frightened by Kohoutek. But astronomy enables most persons to know that this comet neither threatens our planet nor is more significant than Halley's comet, which visits earth's vicinity every seventy-six years.

What, then, of Jesus' words about "fearful sights and from heaven great signs"? Do well-informed persons feel fear because of things they now see in the heavens? Yes. What is fear-inspiring is the potential for war that man-made satellites imply. Nearly 50 percent of the satellites launched serve military purposes.

Such "fearful sights" are seen not only in "outer space" but also in the immediate "heavens" of our atmosphere, where modern militarists hurl intercontinental missiles. When armed with nuclear warheads these can rain instant death on millions of persons. It is these things, with the fear that they generate, that fulfill part of Jesus' prophecy.

- This decade has heard much of a "thaw" in the cold war, of détente and pacts for halting the arms race. How strong really is the movement toward genuine peace?

Peace Through Law

London's Institute for Strategic Studies in a recent report informs us that more, not fewer, weapons are being made. And at the World Conference on World Peace Through Law, speaker C. S. Rhyne said that, even with the U.N., "we have no peace." The reason? He answered: "We have no peace, my friends, because form and structure do not substitute for substance.

Without the will to follow the road to peace, all the institutions in the world are useless."

"World Peace Through Law"—yes, but whose law and enforced by what government? Most nations today have compulsory war training. None have compulsory peace training.

The Bible at Isaiah 2:2-4, however, foretells many people turning to divine government and that to them God's "law will go forth." The effect among them is that "nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore." The means for enforcing that law throughout all the earth is the kingdom of God's Son. Those seeking peace hypocritically and not through God's law are due for removal by that kingdom in the near future.—1 Thess. 5:3.

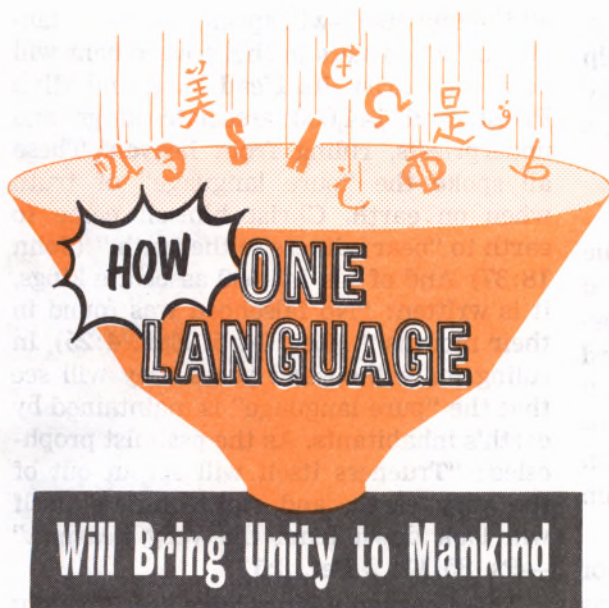
- Agricultural analysts increasingly warn of severe food shortages coming on a world-wide scale. What prospects are there of escaping hunger?

Famine Threat

Many take comfort in recent good harvests in some major countries. But one good season is not enough. In the U.S., the world's leading food producer, there are no more grain reserves in storage. Food science professor Georg Borgstrom says: "People are still convinced that some great technological trick will solve the problem." But "green revolutions," "miracle rice" and "wonder wheat" have not brought the solution.

Some may try to cope individually by storing up food against future famine possibilities. How much security does this give? If electrical power fails, what happens to frozen foods? And if conditions got dire enough, would not those holding large supplies become prime targets of hunger-crazed people?

The Bible foretold food shortages as part of the sign of our times. (Matt. 24:3, 7, 21; Rev. 6:1-8) More than this, in the coming "great tribulation," opposers of God's kingdom may seek forcibly to place his servants in starvation conditions. The safety of true Christians will lie, not in stored supplies, but in God's care. They can join the prophet in saying confidently: "Though the terraces themselves may actually produce no food, yet, as for me, I will be joyful in the God of my salvation."—Hab. 3:17, 18; Rev. 7:9, 10, 14.



RIGHT now there is much national rivalry and suspicion. Travelers are familiar with the wearisome "red tape" of passports, visas and customs checks. Distribution of food and other necessities is hampered by tariffs and trade barriers, and the economy and prosperity of every country are seriously affected.

Among the things blamed for international lack of cooperation is the language barrier. Some have advocated an international language as one of the "cures" for much of the difficulty. It is true that fuller communication through a common language would do some good. It would tend to erase certain misunderstandings, and many delays and tie-ups would be eliminated.

But would one language in itself be the answer? No, much more is needed. In fact, at a time when all people spoke one tongue, God himself created language differences. And he did it for the good of the human race. How is this?

This was because, following the global flood in the days of Noah, the people rebelled. God had commanded the people to

spread out so that, as the population increased, they would carry on true worship throughout the earth. The one language they spoke would have been a great advantage, a unifying force.—Gen. 9:1.

But Noah's great-grandson Nimrod did not recognize God's sovereignty, as Noah did. In a desire to have control of earth's population at that time, Nimrod saw that it served his purpose better to concentrate the people in one area. So he encouraged the people in their rebelliousness to build a religious tower, so as to hold them in close subjection and under his domination.—Gen. 11:1-6.

God's device of confusing their language protected mankind from the iron hand of imperial dictatorship.

Jehovah said about this: "Look! They are one people and there is one language for them all, and this is what they start to do. Why, now there is nothing that they may have in mind to do that will be unattainable for them." So God miraculously caused them to speak new languages.—Gen. 11:5-8.

For about four thousand years the language barrier that God established has remained. It has served to prevent large-scale regimentation—yes, widespread regimentation under one false religion, the religion that began in Babylon. Having a common language helps bad men to cooperate more easily in a bad thing.

But something else of importance should here be noted. It is clear from what happened that when men *did* all speak one language this alone did not bring peace. People today who speak the same language do not always get along together. No, one language, though helpful for unity of action, does not necessarily bring unity of heart and mind, with happiness. Before one language could be used in a fully bene-

ficial way, all people would have to be united in one religion, the pure worship of the one true God, according to the way set forth by God in his Word. Can this come about? Will it?

ONE UNITED WORSHIP COMES FIRST

One pure worship under the one true God can come to be, and it will. God says, speaking of the time now, just before he expresses his indignation toward the world's kingdoms: "For then I shall give to peoples the change to a pure language, in order for them all to call upon the name of Jehovah, in order to serve him shoulder to shoulder."—Zeph. 3:8, 9.

The "pure language" here spoken of could not be a literal language, such as English, Spanish, Russian, French, and so forth. We cannot say that any of these languages need to be eliminated because of *impurity*. The original language given to Adam was good. (Gen. 1:31) And later, when God miraculously bestowed new tongues on people at Babel, these were not impure languages, not bad in themselves. They were from God, whose gifts are always good, and they have served a good purpose.—Jas. 1:17.

So a new form of human speech could not be the "pure language" of which the prophet spoke. The "pure language" is the *truth of God* from the Bible. It can be spoken now and applied to one's life no matter what literal tongue one speaks. It makes a change, not only in words, but in the *things* a person thinks and talks about. His speech is cleaned up and becomes up-building, promoting better relations with others.

THE GOVERNMENT THAT MAINTAINS TRUTH

During the coming thousand-year reign of God's kingdom the whole world—yes,

all the universe—will speak this "pure language." The rulers in this government will be Jesus Christ, its Head King and High Priest, and 144,000 associate kings and underpriests, ruling from heaven. These all spoke the "pure language" of truth when on earth. Christ himself came to earth to "bear witness to the truth." (John 18:37) And of his 144,000 associate kings, it is written: "No falsehood was found in their mouths." (Rev. 14:5; Eph. 4:25) In ruling for a thousand years they will see that the "pure language" is maintained by earth's inhabitants. As the psalmist prophesied: "Trueness itself will sprout out of the very earth, and righteousness itself will look down from the very heavens."—Ps. 85:11; 2 Pet. 3:13.

These heavenly kings have been "bought from among mankind," from all nations. (Rev. 14:4; Matt. 28:19) Will they, in heaven, speak their former native tongues? It would not be reasonable to think so. There is no doubt that those in heaven will all speak the same language, the gift of this language being conferred upon them in their new spirit bodies at their resurrection from the dead. The apostle Paul wrote about the "tongues of men and of angels," and we read of discussions between God and angels.—1 Cor. 13:1; 1 Ki. 22:19-22; Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6.

This does not mean that their former earthly language will be erased from their minds. No, for it will be by identifying themselves by their former language that they will be able to recognize themselves as being the same persons. But at their heavenly resurrection they will not need interpreters to speak to one another. They will speak the language of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will speak the language of his heavenly Father, Jehovah God.

Then, what language will be spoken by earth's inhabitants during that heavenly

kingdom's rule? Will those on earth whose native tongue is Greek be ruled over by one of the heavenly kings who, when on earth, spoke Greek, with another area speaking Russian under a Russian-speaking Kingdom heir, another area Chinese, and so on, according to the distinct language groups? Since languages constitute a barrier to communication and fullest unity, will this be the case?

In this regard, it must be said that the Bible does not indicate what assignments of kingly responsibility will be given out by Jesus Christ to his 144,000 subordinate kings, but it would be very illogical to suppose that the Kingdom would leave a barrier to communication in God's righteous new order—a barrier that he created for *rebellious* people, to safeguard and restrain them from full unity in a bad activity.

ONE RACE, ONE LANGUAGE

When we examine God's original purpose concerning man's language, it becomes clear that he will have but one language spoken during Christ's thousand-year rule. God wanted man to communicate. He himself spoke to Adam, and arranged for Adam to talk to him. (Gen. 2:15-23) Also, he gave language to man as an indispensable tool for thought. Adam could build upon the language as he learned new things or needed an enlarged vocabulary. Adam could fill the spiritual capacity God gave him, learning about God and expressing himself fully.

What was the one original language? It was undoubtedly what later came to be called Hebrew. Why can we say this? Well, when the confusion of tongues occurred at the Tower of Babel, not all were affected. Noah had not rebelled. He recognized God's sovereignty, not making himself king, as Nimrod did. Noah's son Shem, whom Noah had prophetically

blessed, evidently stayed with Noah and with true worship. (Gen. 9:26, 27) The Bible record reveals that true worship was carried down through the Shemites, particularly through the outstanding man of faith, Abraham. Abraham (Abram) was called a Hebrew.—Gen. 14:13.

Later, Moses, a descendant of Abraham, wrote his account (Genesis through Deuteronomy) in a language called Hebrew. There may well have been little change in Moses' language from the original language spoken by Adam. Why? Because men then enjoyed very long life-spans, their lives often overlapping into five or six generations. Therefore, the language could have been passed down through only five human links between Adam and Moses, namely, Methuselah, Shem, Isaac, Levi, Amram. (Gen. 5:3-32; 11:10-32; 21:5; 25:26; 29:34; Ex. 6:16, 18, 20) Of course, after the exile of Israel to Babylon in 607 B.C.E., and right on down to our modern times, the Hebrew language has been influenced by other languages. Too, the exact pronunciation of God's name as spelled out in the Hebrew of Moses' day is not now known. But God can easily restore the purity of the language so that those living in the New Order will speak it naturally and fluently.

This speaking of one literal language will be the finishing touch to the unity brought about by the "pure language" of truth—beautifully so! All religious, national, social and racial barriers will be things of the past, and, additionally, with one vocabulary all will be able to express their thoughts fully and be understood accurately. Think also of being able to read for yourself exactly what the Hebrew prophets wrote—in their own language! The many resurrected ones who did not previously know God will find that the inspired Scriptures give an accurate ac-

count of human history down to the days of the prophet Malachi. Then the honest-hearted ones will be able to say, as did the apostle Paul: "Let God be found true, though every man be found a liar."—Rom. 3:4.

LEARN THE "PURE LANGUAGE" OF TRUTH NOW

To live in such a world will indeed be a delight. You can have a foretaste of it now. For the major requirement can be met now. The requirement is to learn the "pure language" of truth from the Bible. This "pure language" erases all social, racial and national barriers. This "language" is being learned and spoken by hundreds of thousands of people today, and they are at unity, just as the prophet Isaiah was inspired to foretell:

"It must occur in the final part of the days that the mountain of the house of Jehovah [his true worship] will become firmly established above the top of the mountains, and it will certainly be lifted up above the hills; and to it all the nations must stream. And many peoples will certainly go and say: 'Come, you people, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will instruct us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths.' . . . And they will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore." —Isa. 2:2-4.

The Kingdom government will bring about the speech of one tongue earth wide during Christ's thousand-year reign, but right now you have available to you the "pure language." Jehovah's witnesses call on you, not to promote their own ideas, but as ambassadors and envoys of that Kingdom government. That God is really backing their work, and that the Bible's "pure language" has great power are evident facts. How?

In the changed, cleaned-up lives and the

happy unity of more than a million six hundred thousand people from all languages. Their unity, peacefulness and love for one another have been a matter of amazement for observers. The fruitage of their conforming to Bible ways is illustrated in a comment in the *Detroit News* of June 21, 1973, with regard to a convention of Jehovah's witnesses at Detroit's Tiger Stadium:

"It's . . . the kind of convention which finds policemen wandering in, realizing they have nothing else to do, and leaving for more important matters."

And at the Düsseldorf, Germany, assembly, where delegates from many nations gathered, the newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* of July 28, 1973, remarked:

"Since Wednesday nearly 60,000 people have assembled—it is the largest convention that has ever been held in Düsseldorf, the city of exhibitions. And it is a mass meeting which follows its own laws. We have never seen so many people meet together who are so orderly, so moral, so disciplined as they are."

Jehovah's witnesses do not confine their love to their own circle. They desire to help all who want to live under the righteous rule of God's Messianic kingdom, where every barrier to unity will be wiped out. If you desire to learn the "pure language" you can do so, with their help. —Rev. 22:17.

IN COMING ISSUES

- Rulers for the People's Interests.
- Earthquakes Affect Everyone.
- Finding Joy in Training Children.

ARE YOU AS CONSIDERATE OF YOUR FAMILY *As You Are of Others?*

"GLAD you were able to make it," said the host to one of his guests. Replied the guest: "Oh, when I say I'm coming, I COME!" Yes, he prided himself on being a man of his word. But was he such a man of his word to his family? Well—not always.

There is a German proverb, *Haus Bengel und Strassen Engel*, which means, 'At home an ill-mannered boor but on the street an angel.' That proverb points up a common human failing. For example, at the end of a social evening a husband may be eager to help some young single woman with her coat, but may let his wife put on her own coat. Apparently the pretty single woman stimulated the husband's romantic interest so that he became the courteous gentleman. But how much more good he could do by being solicitous and romantically courteous to his own wife! That would be loving his wife as he loves himself, which is what a husband should do.—Eph. 5:33.

To the point is the saying that "charity begins at home," that is, it *should* begin at home. Not in the matter of giving money necessarily, but in being helpful to one another. Are we not quick to help out when a stranger asks for directions or for

some other information? So should we not likewise be quick to help out in our homes, in fact, even more ready to do so? Yet how often one member of the

family struggles with burdens while others of the family seem to be blind as to their opportunities to be of help. Are there a number of children to get ready before a certain hour? Are there a lot

of dishes to be washed? Especially should husbands of "working wives" recognize that the old notions of what is a man's sphere of work and what is a woman's sphere need to be revised if wives are not to be unduly burdened.

Charity also begins at home when it comes to putting up with others' weaknesses and shortcomings. One may tend to make allowances for outside friends and acquaintances, such as those with whom one happens to be working. Should we not be even more ready and willing to put up with the shortcomings and weaknesses of our own families? In some cases it may be a mistaken sense of duty and love that causes some wives or husbands to be unduly critical of their mates.

Far more important is it that we build one another up by giving moral support, overlooking slight inaccuracies or weaknesses, than that everything be exactly perfect or be required to measure up to what we think it ought to be. Besides, the one prone to correct another may well be the one that is mistaken. Of course, one that is close to another can be helpful in



aiding that one to avoid mistakes, but the role of being your mate's "severest critic" can be overdone.

Yes, the considerate thing to do is to make allowances for another's weaknesses. Remember, they are often due to heredity or environment, which exert a powerful influence in molding personality. And such is also the wise course, for to the extent that we are merciful with others, others will most likely be merciful with us, even as Jesus Christ on one occasion noted: "With the measure that you are measuring out [to others], they will measure out to you in return." (Luke 6:38) As one American woman in the public limelight said in arguing against the stand taken by some in the women's liberation movement: "I treat my husband like a king and he treats me like a queen."

The saying of the world that "familiarity breeds contempt" should not apply to our relations with members of our own family. Just the opposite should be the case. Familiarity should "breed" loyalty and respect because of our having learned to know, understand and appreciate one another better. It is natural for people who have been given proper training at home during youth to treat outsiders or strangers with a measure of respect. And that is as it should be, for does not the Bible say, "Honor men of all sorts"? "All sorts" would include members of our own families, would it not? (1 Pet. 2:17) By showing respect to one another, individual members of a family strengthen one another's personality, putting each one in a better position to be helpful to the others. Respect can be shown by addressing others with due regard for who they are and according to their feelings, both in what is said and *how* it is said.

Sometimes a member of a family feels

free to be blunt, severe or critical of others in the family although he would not think of treating outsiders this way. But, in doing so, is he not betraying a lack of empathy? There is a great difference, for example, between the way we feel when we ourselves discover we have made a mistake, and are able to correct it, and the way we feel when another calls a mistake to our attention and asks us to correct it. Empathy will help us to appreciate that difference.

Often, however, our failure to treat our own families as we treat outsiders is due to mere thoughtlessness. Especially when it comes to saying things that had better been left unsaid. With outsiders we are inclined to be more careful. But with our own families also it is well always to think before we speak. A handy rule is to ask: "Is it kind? Is it true? Is it necessary?" Give thought, also, to the way you say a thing. The opposite of thoughtlessness is showing consideration. Do so even in little things, for it has well been said, "Little things mean a lot." Consideration is shown by prefacing a request with "Please," and saying "Thanks!" and meaning it whenever receiving a favor no matter how small.

Truly many are the reasons for us to be helpful, charitable, respectful and considerate in dealing with those outside our families. There is a moral satisfaction in manifesting these characteristics, it makes for better relations, it helps us to be well thought of and may even benefit us in a material way. But do we not stand to benefit in these various ways also if we manifest those characteristics to those of our own families? Indeed we do, and even more so. Besides, in doing so we might be said to be 'laying up treasures' that can be drawn upon when we are in need. And what a comfort that can prove to be!

EARLY CHRISTIANS' LOYALTY TO GOD

TESTED

WE HUMANS have an inherent desire to be loved. Therefore, it is not easy for us to bear up under constant misrepresentation, ill treatment and hatred. Yet that is exactly what the early Christians did.

To stop their activity, opposers stirred up mob violence and official action against them. These opposers also misrepresented their work and made it appear that only the inexperienced and ignorant would be stupid enough to accept Christianity. Said one such opposer, Celsus:

"Whenever they get hold of children in private and some stupid women with them, they let out some astounding statements as, for example, that they must not pay any attention to their father and schoolteachers, but must obey them; they say that these talk nonsense and have no understanding, and that in reality they neither know nor are able to do anything good, but are taken up with mere empty chatter. But they alone, they say, know the right way to live, and if the children would believe them, they would become happy and make their home happy as well. And if just as they are speaking they see one of the schoolteachers coming, or some intelligent person, or even the father himself, the more cautious of them flee in all directions; but the more reckless urge the children on to rebel."

Why, despite such absurd misrepresentation, did the early Christians continue their efforts to preach and to make disciples? Why did they not just wait until others approached them instead of taking the initiative to spread their beliefs? Early Christians recognized that they had a commission from the Lord Jesus Christ to de-

clare the truth to others and to make disciples. (Matt. 28:19, 20) They wanted to be faithful to that commission, even if this resulted in their being persecuted.

Another aspect that made Christians objects of hatred was their separateness from the world. (John 15:19) They did not share in political activity nor did they serve in the armies of Rome. Hence, Christians were labeled as unpatriotic and their position was represented as foolish, in fact, as dangerous to the security of the state.

Why did Christians not succumb to arguments to render military service in defense of Rome? They recognized the principle enunciated at Isaiah 2:4: "They will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore." Clearly alluding to this prophecy, an early Christian writer, Justin Martyr, noted:

"We who were filled with war, and mutual slaughter, and every wickedness, have each through the whole earth changed our warlike weapons,—our swords into ploughshares, and our spears into implements of tillage."

Then, too, Christians recognized themselves as members of an international brotherhood. Though opposers did not understand the love Christians had, they were forced to acknowledge that it existed. It was stated of Christians: "They love one another almost before they know one another . . . and they call one another promiscuously brothers and sisters." Because of their deep love for one another, early Christians did not let the world's

hatred and divisions break up their unity.
—John 13:35; 1 Pet. 5:9.

They also refused to engage in any activities linked with idolatry. Notes the book *A History of Christianity*:

"Because they refused to participate in pagan ceremonies the Christians were dubbed atheists. Through their abstention from much of the community life—the pagan festivals, the public amusements which to Christians were shot through and through with pagan beliefs, practices, and immoralities—they were derided as haters of the human race. They were popularly charged with perpetrating the grossest immoralities."

Why were the early Christians so adamant in avoiding idolatry? They recognized it as disloyalty to God, something both senseless and detestable. Justin Martyr declared:

"We see that these idols are dead and have not the form of God. The craftsmen make what they call a god; which we consider not only senseless, but to be even insulting to God who thus gets His name attached to things that are corruptible, and require constant service. The artificers of these are both intemperate and practised in every vice. Even their own girls who work along with them they corrupt."

Having incurred the world's hatred because of their zealous preaching and their separateness from the world's conflicts, politics and idolatry, Christians were often brought before public officials for punishment. These officials would give them the opportunity to renounce Christianity and thus escape punishment, yes, even death. Pliny the Younger, writing to Emperor Trajan, tells of his procedure in dealing with Christians:

"I asked them whether they were Christians; if they admitted it, I repeated the question twice, and threatened them with punishment . . . An anonymous information was laid before me containing a charge against several persons, who upon examination denied they were Christians, or had ever been so. They repeated after me an invocation to the gods, and offered religious

rites with wine and incense before your statue (which for that purpose I had ordered to be brought, together with those of the gods), and even reviled the name of Christ: whereas there is no forcing, it is said, those who are really Christians into any of these compliances: I thought it proper, therefore, to discharge them."

All that was necessary to escape punishment was the performance of religious rites once. But those who were truly devoted Christians remained loyal to God. They did not compromise; they did not reason that it was just a little thing for which they could ask God to forgive them.
—Compare Luke 4:6-8.

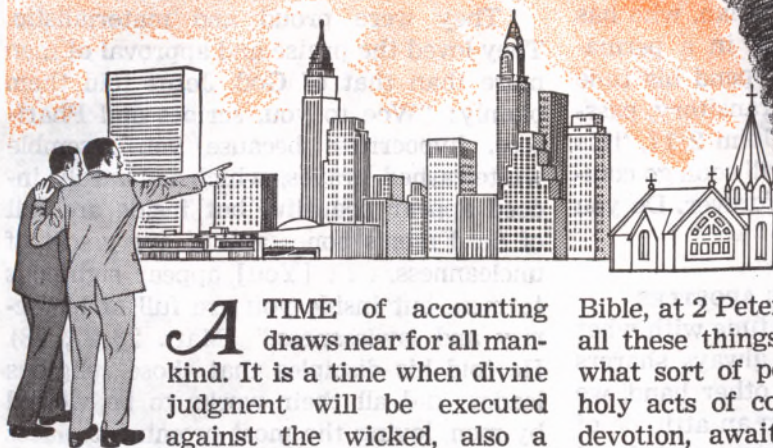
The record that many early Christians made for themselves is one of outstanding loyalty, even when faced with death under extreme torture. Of the terrible persecution that befell them during the reign of Caesar Nero, who shifted the blame onto them for the fire that destroyed much of Rome, the historian Tacitus notes:

"An arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired."

There are Christians today who have shown similar loyalty to God in the face of death. They too call one another "brothers" and "sisters" and really love one another deeply, avoiding all involvement in the conflicts and politics of this world. They zealously proclaim the truth in spite of misrepresentation. Are you one of them? Do you have the kind of faith that is needed to show such loyalty to God? If you really want such faith, Jehovah's witnesses will be glad to help you to acquire it.

'Keep Close in Mind the Presence of

THE DAY OF JEHOVAH'



A TIME of accounting draws near for all mankind. It is a time when divine judgment will be executed against the wicked, also a time of deliverance for the righteous. All persons then alive will be called to account for the way they have used their lives, whether with selfish disregard for the will of God and the welfare of their fellowmen or with loving obedience to God and unselfish concern for fellow humans. Because it will be a time of settling accounts on the part of the true God, the coming time period is referred to in the Bible as the "day of Jehovah." It deserves our serious concern.—Zeph. 2:2, 3.

² Do you have the presence of the day of Jehovah close in mind? Do you *keep* it there? Is it a reality to you? The apostle Peter felt that way. He encouraged all Christians to have that attitude. In the

Bible, at 2 Peter 3:11-13, he wrote: "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion, awaiting and keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah, through which the heavens being on fire will be dissolved and the elements being intensely hot will melt! But there are new

heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell."

³ Are you keeping close in mind that fiery day of Jehovah? Is it so real to you that you can see it clearly, immediately ahead of you? According to *The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*, that expression "keeping close in mind" is "speeding up." So we should not be slowing it down, that is, not looking at Jehovah's day as a long way off and putting it off.

⁴ This attitude is a necessary one for

1. What is the "day of Jehovah," and why should we be giving serious thought to it now?

2, 3. What attitude toward the "day of Jehovah" did the apostle Peter urge all Christians to have?

4. Why would it result in serious loss to us if we failed to keep Jehovah's day close in mind?

all Christians, at *all* times, regardless of when Jehovah's "day" arrives. Why? The apostle Paul answers, "for the scene of this world is changing." (1 Cor. 7:31) It is like the changing scene on a stage, which, though appearing glamorous, is soon succeeded by another scene, with different settings and different actors, so that there is nothing permanent. (Eccl. 1:4) Why, then, should the Christian, who has the hope of life everlasting in a permanent world of real values, spend his time and his life energies on a transitory, passing thing? As stated at 1 John 2:17, 'this world is passing away.' It will soon go completely out of the picture, forever. Do you believe that?

THE ATTITUDE OF THE APOSTLES

⁵ If we keep alert and in tune with what Jehovah is doing, we are always sharers in great blessings. On the other hand, we are in danger if we develop an attitude of skepticism toward the things pointed out to us by the "faithful and discreet slave," that composite Christian body through which Jesus Christ provides spiritual food for his disciples. We can find ourselves in a situation where we are like stragglers in an army column, easily picked off by the enemy.—Matt. 24:45.

⁶ The desire not to miss out on anything that God would provide was the attitude Christ's apostles had. When they asked Jesus, "What will be the sign of your presence?" they did not know that his future presence would be invisible. (Matt. 24:3) Even after his resurrection, they asked: "Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?" (Acts 1:6) They looked for a visible restoring of it. However, their inquiry showed that they were keeping in mind God's kingdom by Christ as being close. They looked forward to having an official share in that king-

dom. They were not like the unbelieving Jews who saw Jesus visibly among them in the flesh and yet did not recognize that he was the promised Messiah, that 'the kingdom of God was in their midst.' (Luke 17:21) Jesus had all the credentials of the Messiah. He came in the way the Scriptures foretold. But those Jews did not accept him. They stumbled over him. Why?

⁷ They were proud and materialistic. They loved the praise and approval of men more than that of God. Jesus told them plainly: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you resemble whitewashed graves, which outwardly indeed appear beautiful but inside are full of dead men's bones and of every sort of uncleanness. . . . [You] appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness." (Matt. 23:27, 28) He told his disciples that those religious leaders did all their works to be viewed by men, loving the most prominent places and wanting public adoration. They were lovers of money, but they did not love God.—Luke 16:14.

⁸ With this attitude it was impossible for the Jewish clergy to accept Jesus as the Messiah. Though Christ was right there before them, in the flesh, performing the most wonderful cures, their eyes were blind. Being in this state of mind and heart, they were disappointed in Jesus because their selfishness caused them to look for the wrong things, according to the standards of the world.—John 5:39-44; Isa. 8:14, 15; Matt. 13:57.

⁹ We today must not become materialistic like them. It is extremely dangerous to allow ourselves to fall into a sleepy, apathetic condition, in our mind and heart 'putting off' the presence of the fiery day

5, 6. How did the apostles by their attitude toward Christ and his kingdom set a fine example for us?

7, 8. Why did the scribes and Pharisees fail to accept Jesus as the promised Messiah?

9. How would our spiritual condition be affected if, in our mind and heart, we were to put off the presence of Jehovah's day?

of Jehovah. If we do, we will fail to discern God's leadings, his directives for us. We will fail to get to know him, appreciating his fine characteristics. A drowsy attitude will cause us not to see clearly what needs to be done in the service of God. We will not ever 'be ready' for or wanting the "day of Jehovah" to come. We will be off balance so that we may be caught unawares when that "day" arrives.—1 Thess. 5:2-5.

WHAT WORLD CONDITIONS INDICATE

¹⁰ Bible chronology definitely marks the time in which we live as being of great importance. The "appointed times of the nations," extending from 607 B.C.E. to 1914 C.E., have ended. (Luke 21:24) Six thousand years of human history are soon to end. In the light of these facts, what we see happening to the world is very significant. To what conclusion does it point? World conditions give strong testimony of the closeness of the end. For one thing, now, for the first time, even the world leaders have recognized world destruction as a real possibility. They agree that an all-out nuclear war would be so deadly that there could be no winners, only losers. However, many, particularly the scientists, say that there is even greater danger from worldwide pollution, and also from the "population explosion," with the widespread famine, disease and unrest that it threatens to bring. A report in the *Washington Post* stated: "Suddenly in any number of disparate countries—the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, India, Japan—influential men have sensed an impending danger unlike any in human experience." These men recognize that, even though mankind might survive the impending crises one at a time, they could not survive if *all, or even several of them,*

hit at once. In every field—war, population growth, ecology, crime, famine, disease, unrest—there is the potential for destruction, and all of them could explode simultaneously.

¹¹ While some say that modern technology can and will solve the problems, what is technology doing? Has it not shared responsibility for the worsening situation, particularly in the areas of war and pollution? And even if technology could solve these problems, *will it do so?* No, there is too much selfishness among people, too many selfish interests that block efforts to remedy the bad situation. Yet the foretold destruction will *not* come from the sources that men fear. The present world system will not collapse on its own. Now that its complete failure is clearly evident, Jehovah's own time is at hand to annihilate it. And this time he clearly marked in his Word long ago. Unmistakably, the Bible pinpoints 1914 C.E. as the time when the "kingdom of the world" became the kingdom of the Lord God and of his Christ. Before the generation that was then alive passes off the scene, the "great tribulation" will strike.—Rev. 11:15; Dan. 4:10-17; Matt. 24:21, 34.

¹² Events in the field of religion are also of keen interest to students of God's Word. Many are leaving the priesthood and the ministry, and churches are closing. But it is not merely the closing of churches, the loss of members in many places, and the resigning of clergymen that portend the destruction of world religion, as if it were going to collapse on its own. There is more to it.

¹³ Consider this: What really brought God's anger resulting in the desolation of

11. (a) Why is it unreasonable to expect technology to solve the problems? (b) Why will world destruction not come from the sources that men fear? (c) As shown in the Bible, when will the "great tribulation" strike?

12. What developments show a decline in the influence of worldly religion in many places?

13. What led to the desolation of Jerusalem and its religious system in 70 C.E.?

10. (a) In what way is our time marked by Bible chronology? (b) What view do world leaders take of the critical situations facing mankind?

Jerusalem and its religious system in the year 70 C.E.? It was their rejection of God's Word, which led to all sorts of moral corruption. Also, their spurning of God's Son as the Messiah and their choosing instead to put their trust in Caesar. (Matt. 15:1-9; John 19:14-16) Jerusalem's end was fully deserved. Are Christendom's clergy today any better? No, they are counterparts of those corrupt religious leaders of ancient Jerusalem.

¹⁴ They too have rejected the Bible as God's inspired Word. In some cases they have openly labeled parts of it as "myth." But that is not all. Listen to just a few from among the many headlines that have appeared in the public press. From Australia: "Minister Urges Church to Bless Homosexuals." From New York city: "Is Homosexuality Wicked? Episcopal Priests Say No." From Sweden: "Ease Sex Rule, Say Clergy." From London: "Bishop Wants Sex Made Legal at 14." This is what happens when people turn away from the Word of God.

¹⁵ Their rejection of God's Messianic kingdom in the hands of his Son is also a matter of record. Like the Pharisees, Christendom's clergy have put their trust in the governments of men. They are on hand to pray when presidents and kings take office. Chaplains bless the troops as they go to war. And they are willing and eager to point to the United Nations organization as the means by which mankind will gain the peace and security that only God's Messianic kingdom can bring.

¹⁶ These are only a sample of the sins that the religions of Christendom have committed. They have brought the greatest blasphemy upon the names of God and

Christ, and have tried to efface true worship of Jehovah God from the earth. It is these things that make certain that Christendom's destruction is imminent.

FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE 'DAY'S' NEARNESS

¹⁷ There is no question that world conditions indicate the nearness of the "presence of the day of Jehovah." But that is not the only evidence. We can also find clear-cut evidence of its nearness in what is going on in God's true Christian congregation—in what Jehovah is doing with respect to his people. From God's dealings in recent years the new order of righteousness is seen to be so close that we can see it taking shape right before us.

¹⁸ Consider these developments: Organizationally, the congregations of Jehovah's people have now come more fully into line with the Scriptures, with the arrangement of elders and ministerial servants. Also, they have been aided to understand Ezekiel's vision of the citylike seat of worldwide administration on earth, called "Jehovah Himself Is There." They realize that there will be an administrative body serving under the heavenly kingdom, a body called the "chieftain" in Ezekiel's prophecy. (Ezek. 45:7; 48:35) Furthermore, they now understand that the "great crowd" of survivors of the "great tribulation" will be the foundation of the "new earth," the new earthly society brought about by Christ's thousand-year reign. Understanding of Zechariah's prophecy has enlightened them to see that everything done by God's people will be in holiness and exaltation of Jehovah's sovereignty, with nothing unclean or harmful at all, so that God will have no more cause to find any fault with his people. (Zech.

14. How has the clergy's rejection of the Bible as God's inspired Word influenced their outlook on morals?

15. In what ways have Christendom's clergy demonstrated their rejection of God's Messianic kingdom?

16. So, rather than the mere declining of church attendance, what things make certain that Christendom's destruction is near at hand?

17-19. (a) Where else do we find evidence of the nearness of the "day of Jehovah"? (b) What are some of the developments among God's people that show that the incoming of God's new order is very near?

14:20, 21) Additionally, they have been carefully instructed as to how persons must live now if they are to survive the "great tribulation." All of this helps to prepare honest-hearted ones for life in God's new order. We also see as never before the rapid, even phenomenal, influx of those who will compose the "great crowd." Truly, the separation of the "sheep" from the "goats" is proceeding at an amazing rate. Today persons who long for righteous conditions respond very quickly to the good news. —Mark 13:10; Matt. 25: 31-46; Rev. 7:9.

¹⁹ In view of these evidences, it would indeed be a person dull of hearing and slow to observe who did not realize that we are in the generation that Jesus foretold would immediately precede the incoming of God's righteous new order. And we are *very well along in that generation*, according to all the evidences before our eyes. —Matt. 24:34.

FALSE RELIGION'S END TO COME SUDDENLY

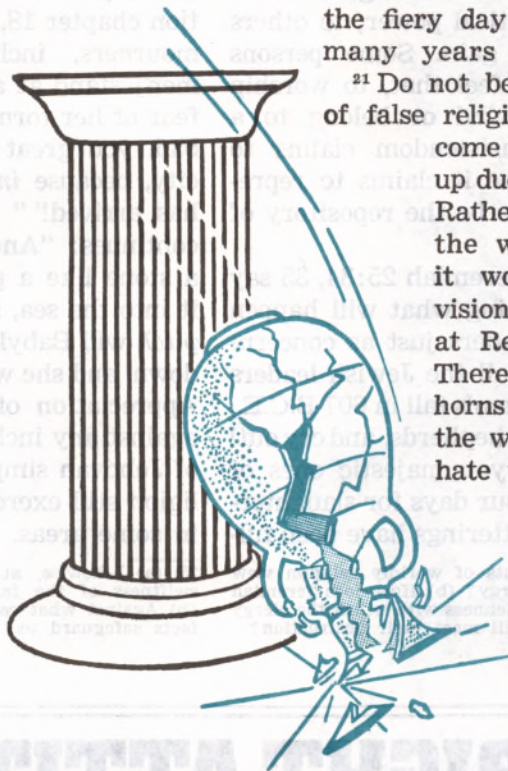
²⁰ However, there are some who, when viewing the religious picture, tend to 'put off' the fiery "day" of Jehovah. They may reason in the following manner: 'It is true that we see worldly religion weakening in some areas, churches closing, less respect for the churches, and other signs of losing ground. Yet, even in these areas, do we not frequently see that

the churches have strong political connections? Also, they often own much industrial property, even large blocks of residential property that they use for commercial gain. They are well established financially. Again, in other sections attendance is still strong in the churches. Many people maintain their church membership in spite of the corruption that exists. Can we not say, then, that these strengths displayed by the churches are indications that the presence of the fiery day of Jehovah is yet many years off?'

²¹ Do not be deceived. The end of false religion is not going to come by its simply folding up due to lack of support. Rather, it will come in the way that God said it would come, in his vision to the apostle John, at Revelation 17:16, 17. There it reads: "The ten horns that you saw, and the wild beast, these will hate the harlot and will

make her devastated and naked, and will eat up her fleshy parts and will completely burn her with fire. For God put it into their hearts to carry out his thought, even to carry out their one thought by giving their king-

dom to the wild beast, until the words of God will have been accomplished." Jehovah God himself will give the command for the destruction of "Babylon the Great" at the beginning of his "day," and that destruction will come with surprising suddenness.



Christendom's false religions and their clergy will have a sudden crash to destruction, just as a beautiful vase suddenly falls from its pedestal

20, 21. (a) What situation as to worldly religion may cause some to tend to 'put off' the fiery day of Jehovah? (b) But how does Revelation 17:16, 17 say that the destruction of "Babylon the Great" will come about?

²² We should not forget that Babylonish world religion is viewed by its adherents as something sacred, something beautiful. Its leaders, particularly the clergymen of Christendom, have been looked upon as men of God, holy. Even nonreligious men among politicians and businessmen address them by high-sounding titles, as Reverend, Right Reverend, Father, Holy Father and by other flattering terms. Of course, worldly religion has brought to some people things they desire. To some it gives social status; to some, political power; to others it brings financial gain. Some persons among churchgoers feel that, to worship God, they must attend or belong to a church, because Christendom claims to worship God, because it claims to represent the Bible and to be the repository of truth.

²³ But what does Jeremiah 25:34, 35 say about this? Concerning what will happen to Christendom's leaders just as concerning what was to befall the Jewish leaders shortly after Jerusalem's fall in 607 B.C.E., it says: "Howl, you shepherds, and cry out! And wallow about, you majestic ones of the flock, because your days for slaughtering and for your scatterings have been fulfilled."

22-24. (a) How do adherents of worldly religion view their religion and their clergy? (b) How does Jeremiah 25:34, 35 illustrate the suddenness with which the clergy and their false religion will meet their destruction?

filled, and you must fall like a desirable vessel!"

²⁴ So it is not a slow fading away by loss of members that brings the end of Christendom's false religions and their clergy. Instead, just as a beautiful vase, a "desirable vessel," suddenly falls from its pedestal, to the dismay of its onlookers, so the clergy and their false religion have a sudden, surprising crash to destruction.

²⁵ Also, as to the swiftness of the fall of Babylon the Great, what does Revelation chapter 18, verse 10, say? "They [the mourners, including many commercial men] stand at a distance because of their fear of her torment and say, 'Too bad, too bad, you great city, Babylon you strong city, because in one hour your judgment has arrived!'" And then, in verse 21, it continues: "And a strong angel lifted up a stone like a great millstone and hurled it into the sea, saying: 'Thus with a *swift pitch* will Babylon the great city be hurled down, and she will never be found again.'" Appreciation of this fact can protect us against any inclination to 'put off' the day of Jehovah simply because Babylonish religion still exercises considerable influence in some areas.

25. (a) Likewise, at Revelation 18:10, 21 how is the swiftness of the fall of Babylon the Great shown? (b) Against what can appreciation of these Scriptural facts safeguard us?

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE IS A SAFEGUARD

ABOUT the year 64 C.E. the apostle Peter wrote to the Christian congregation urging them to 'keep close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah.'

When Christians first read those words

1. (a) When did Peter write urging Christians to 'keep close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah'? (b) Thereafter, how long would it be before the coming of Jehovah's "day"?

it was yet about six years before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, before God's "day" of judgment on that city. (Acts 2:14-21) It was more than 1,900 years before the presence of the "day" of Jehovah's judgment of Christendom and the present system of things. Yet Peter's words had an application to Christians living back then.

² Why would Christians living so far from God's "day" of final judgment need to feel this way? Because any other attitude would lead them into the snare of involvement with the world and into putting their trust and hope in worldly things. They were to keep in mind that the things around them were going to be destroyed. Besides, they would have to prove their integrity to God by 'loving not the world or the things in the world,' for they would, in time, die, and what would their record then be as spirit-begotten, anointed Christians, brothers of Jesus Christ?—1 John 2:15.

³ The question facing anointed Christians all through the past nineteen centuries has been, What is my record with Jehovah God *now*? Am I making God's calling and choosing of me sure, so that I qualify to be one of his "royal priesthood," with hopes of reigning with Christ? (1 Pet. 2:9; 2 Pet. 1:10; Rev. 20:4, 6) They did not have to be living in the "day of Jehovah" to be judged by Jehovah as worthy or unworthy of that heavenly position to which they were called.—Heb. 3:1.

⁴ What about us today? Is it different because we are close to the end of this system of things? No, it is not a matter of waiting until the "great tribulation" is upon us. For how do we know that we

shall be alive at that time? At James 4:14, the Bible reminds us: "You do not know what your life will be tomorrow. For you are a mist appearing for a little while and then disappearing." If we take matters lightly, we do not know when our unreliable heart will pull us away. (Jer. 17:9) Furthermore, we do not know when conditions might come about that could catch us off guard, to our calamity, even before the "great tribulation" comes. How could that be? Let us see.

WHAT ENDURING TO THE END MEANS

⁵ When Jesus spoke of the time in which the apostles lived and which prefigured the time in which we are living, he said: "He that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved." (Matt. 24:13) He was talking about the enduring of persecution, mounting lawlessness and world hatred. He said that some of his disciples would be killed during that persecution. But if a Christian endured all of this to the very death or to the finish of this violent state of world hostility, he would be saved because of his integrity. (Matt. 24:9-12) He might not live until the end of the system of things, but he would be judged as to whether he was a part of this world or not, no matter at what time the "end" was for him. (1 John 2:15; Jas. 4:4) Any one of us, whether of the spirit-begotten, anointed brothers of Jesus Christ, or of the "other sheep," who entertain earthly hopes, young or old, can die very quickly, today or tomorrow, due to unforeseen circumstances, including a sudden outburst of religious persecution. Wise King Solomon spoke of the situation that confronts men in general when he said: "Time and unforeseen occurrence befall them all. For man also does not know

2,3. Why was it vital for anointed Christians all through the past nineteen centuries to 'keep close in mind Jehovah's day'?

4. Why do we today, and every day, need to give serious attention to what we are doing with our lives?

5. (a) What is the meaning of Jesus' statement, "He that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved"? (b) Of what fact concerning the possible "end" of one's present life does Solomon remind us?

his time. Just like fishes that are being taken in an evil net, and like birds that are being taken in a trap, so the sons of men themselves are being ensnared at a calamitous time, when it falls upon them suddenly."—Eccl. 9:11, 12.

⁶ We have examples of how quickly our end, individually, can come, emphasizing the importance of being in a right position before God and of having a good standing in his favor at all times. Not long ago one of the members of the headquarters staff of the Watchtower Society was working in a Kingdom Hall in New York with another brother. He was approached by a young man who came into the hall and asked for information, which the Witness kindly gave him. Suddenly, under religious animosity, the young man whipped out a knife and stabbed the Witness to death. How good to know that he had been serving faithfully right up to that time!

⁷ Again, we have the experience of Jehovah's witnesses in Malawi. Here was a country where people had responded marvelously to the Kingdom message. In 1972 there was a ratio of one of Jehovah's witnesses to every 194 of Malawi's population. During that year 1,617 new ones were baptized. We could say that there was real prosperity for the 447 congregations of Jehovah's witnesses in that country, and for the more than 22,000 Witnesses actively associated with these congregations. There had been persecution in 1967, true. But one might have thought in 1972, 'With such spiritual prosperity we are surely far from calamity.' Yet, what befell the Witnesses in Malawi almost overnight? Because of their faithful neutrality toward the politics of this world their homes were burned, some of their women were raped, they were mobbed, some tortured or killed,

6. What "unforeseen occurrence" recently befell one of the members of the Society's headquarters staff, but what had he been doing up till that time?

7, 8. What should we learn from the experience of our brothers in Malawi?

and most were driven, with peril to their lives, to neighboring countries.

⁸ What do we learn from this? The Christian should live every day as though it might be the end of his present earthly life. He must make true Christianity a way of life, being closely knit with his brothers in the congregations, actively serving Jehovah with all his strength. For where would those Malawian Witnesses have been if they had been apathetic, negligent of their spiritual condition? Only those with spiritual strength could stand firm when the test came, and to the credit of the Malawian Witnesses, the great majority of them did so.

⁹ God reveals to us what we need to know so that we can take a wise course and help others by alerting them to the danger and to the imminence of Jehovah's "day." But he has not told us exactly what year or what day, even what hour, he will begin the "great tribulation" on this world. (Matt. 24:36) It is not knowledge of the precise time when the "great tribulation" is to begin that determines whether we will be active in his service or not, or whether we will be living in a way pleasing to him or not. To please God, we must serve him at all times, the true motivation being, not the nearness of the end, but love for him as our wonderful heavenly Father.

WHY GOD'S TIMING IS RIGHT

¹⁰ We have seen that the "great tribulation" comes suddenly. Jesus said that it comes as a "snare." (Luke 21:34-36) An animal about to be caught in a snare may be unaware that he is even near danger, when suddenly he is hopelessly caught. The Bible is not warning us of a make-

9. What is it that determines whether we will be found pleasing to Jehovah at the time when the "great tribulation" arrives?

10-12. (a) In what sense does Jehovah's "day" come as a "snare"? (b) How do those who lose faith because things do not take place when they anticipate them show that they fail to appreciate the superiority of Jehovah's position?

believe situation. It is real, and will take place exactly when and as it should. God has a time to destroy this system of things. But some get impatient and lose faith because things do not happen as they anticipate and God's action seems to delay. This is because of the shortness of man's life-span and his consequent impatience to get things done in the brief time that he has. As a result, he may be inclined to judge God on the basis of such human experience, with its limitations. —Hab. 2:3.

¹¹ On the other hand, Jehovah lives forever. He does not need to become impatient. He can scan the situation and see precisely where in the stream of time his acts will accomplish the most good for everyone concerned and will thoroughly carry out his purpose as well.—Prov. 15:3.

¹² Peter expresses the thought in this way: "Let this one fact not be escaping your notice, beloved ones, that one day is with Jehovah as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise, as some people consider slowness, but he is patient with you because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance."—2 Pet. 3:8, 9.

¹³ So any seeming delay on Jehovah's part is not for his personal benefit, nor because of any slowness to act. It is for the benefit of us humans. Jehovah could quickly destroy this world! As Peter notes, he can do more in one day than men could do in a thousand years. For example, when Jesus was on earth, he restored withered hands, blind eyes, even resurrected a man whose body was partly decomposed. He accomplished these mighty works instantaneously. But think how long it would have taken under ordinary circumstances

for the man to grow another arm, or the resurrected man to replace decayed body parts by normal growth. Then, looking at matters the other way—to Jehovah, who lives forever, and who purposes things ages in advance, the passing of a thousand years is "as a watch during the night." (Ps. 90:4) He is not limited by time, as we are. So if he acts in a manner that appears slow to us, we must keep in mind that it is in consideration for us, and is the *very best way* for all concerned.

¹⁴ The person understanding his position before God, having faith in God, does not need to be anxious. The apostle assures Christians: "Your labor is not in vain in connection with the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58) If we know his purpose, what his will is for us now, and what is the hope ahead, we do not have to know the exact timetable of events. No matter when Jehovah's "day" arrives, we will be busy doing the divine will. Is that what you are determined to do?

DO YOU HAVE THE "MARK"?

¹⁵ Just before the destruction of ancient Jerusalem by the Babylonians, Jehovah gave Ezekiel a vision in which a symbolic man went through Jerusalem, setting a mark upon the foreheads of all who were "sighing and groaning over all the detestable things" that were being done in Jerusalem. (Ezek. 9:4) That was prophetic of a work that is being done today. Each one who professes to be of the "other sheep," with hope of life here on earth in God's new order, should ask himself: 'Do I really have the mark? Does my life give evidence, just as clearly as a mark on my forehead, that I have a truly Christian personality? Do I really hate the bad

13. (a) Who really benefits from the fact that Jehovah has not yet executed judgment on this system of things? (b) How is it true that "one day is with Jehovah as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day"?

14. Why do we not need to know exactly when Jehovah's "day" will arrive, but what should we be doing?

15. (a) What is the "mark" that all who will be spared to life on earth in God's new order must have? (b) What questions as to a person's reaction to bad conditions in the world will help him to analyze whether he truly has the viewpoint that God requires?

things that I see going on, especially in Christendom? Do I feel bad simply because these things bring danger and inconvenience to me, or am I grieved because I see God's name being reproached?"

¹⁶ Those who truly display the "mark" of the Christian personality are very careful lest the day of Jehovah overtake them practicing things that would classify them with lovers of the world. Is that true of you? For example, how do you really feel about such things as loose conduct, fornication and adultery? Regardless of what your past way of life may have been, are you now in full agreement with Jehovah's judgment against those who practice such things? (1 Cor. 6:9-11; Heb. 13:4) Of course, some people have never committed such a thing. Yet this in itself does not mean that they are 'marked' for survival. Those who have the "mark" are not merely persons who avoid such conduct because it can lead to unpleasant consequences. They hate the wrong because it is a violation of Jehovah's righteous ways. They realize, as faithful Joseph did, that fornication or adultery not only is defiling, but is actually a "great badness" and a "sin against God." (Gen. 39:9) It is Jehovah's viewpoint that is of chief concern to them. Knowing that sexual immorality is one of Satan's chief snares, it is vital to avoid situations that may tempt a person to commit this sin and lose out when so near the portals of the New Order. Keep in mind the example of Israel in Moab on the borders of the Promised Land. Twenty-four thousand lost their lives there in the snare of sexual immorality.—Num. 25: 1-9.

¹⁷ What about truthfulness? Do we really respect the truth, or are we willing to twist the truth a little bit, to get out of

16. (a) Although a person may always have been morally chaste, why does that in itself not mean that he has the "mark"? (b) Yet why is it vital to avoid sexual immorality?

17. If we truly have the "mark," what will be our attitude as to truthfulness, and why?

an inconvenient circumstance, or to get something we want? Lying is a common practice in business today. But where did lying originate? Jesus said that the Devil "is a liar and the father of the lie." (John 8:44) A liar, therefore, is actually serving the Devil. But we give evidence that we have put on the new personality, that we truly have the "mark," if we always speak the truth. God's Word says: "Now that you have put away falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor." (Eph. 4:25) Do you, in a tight spot, feel a temptation to lie as the easy way out? Or are you like the writer of Proverbs who said: "Untruth and the lying word put far away from me"?—Prov. 30:8.

¹⁸ Many persons are newly coming into the way of the truth during this time near to the "day of Jehovah." Previously they carried on practices harmful to their own minds and bodies. But now they are being baptized, making the request to God for a good conscience. (1 Pet. 3:21) If you are among those contemplating taking that step of baptism, or if you took the step some time ago, can you get or receive a good, clean conscience from God if you continue to engage in a practice that is known to have harmful effects on mind and body? Can you gain a clear conscience simply by associating with Jehovah's witnesses, who endeavor to live by the Bible's high standard of cleanliness, if at the same time you carry on a practice that they reject? Can you say that you are really one of them? Do you want to be?

¹⁹ A clean conscience is essential if you expect to receive favor and life from God. Therefore, in all things that we do our first consideration should be: How do these things reflect on God's name? And second: How do these things reflect on

18, 19. Why is more required than simply coming to meetings and associating with Jehovah's witnesses, if we want to have a good conscience before God?

his Christian congregation that represents his name and kingdom? Doing this will help us to maintain a good conscience in the course that we choose. We need to consider that God has made the Christian congregation a "pillar and support of the truth" in the earth. (1 Tim. 3:15) We should live in harmony with what that congregation teaches. Keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah will protect us from holding on to something that, in comparison with the glorious treasure of Jehovah's favor, is "a lot of refuse." (Phil. 3:8) It will cause a person to work to maintain a good conscience. He will keep his body under control, so that, after he has preached to others, he himself should not become disapproved by God.—1 Cor. 9:27.

AGAINST WHAT DID JESUS WARN HIS DISCIPLES?

²⁰ However, it is not necessarily the big things that may overthrow a person's faith. Stressing the matter of everyday living by faith, the Lord Jesus Christ warned: "Pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare. For it will come in upon all those dwelling upon the face of all the earth. Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication that you may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur, and in standing before the Son of man."—Luke 21:34-36.

²¹ Against what kind of things was Jesus here warning? He was not speaking of such sins as fornication, adultery and thievery. Such things would, of course, keep one out of the kingdom of God. But

20-23. (a) Against what things that could weaken our faith did Jesus warn, as shown at Luke 21:34-36? (b) Explain how these everyday concerns of life could have such a faith-destroying effect. (c) If we really want God's spirit to direct us, where should we be?

Jesus was warning them against common things that can easily affect any of us, involving eating, drinking and the daily cares of life. But all of these are very easy to indulge in to a sinful excess. Therein lie their subtlety and peril. A person can easily be deceived into thinking he is taking a safe course, and then be caught unawares. An individual can become involved and entangled in the affairs of this world and the anxieties that such bring, with serious damage to his spirituality. He can become overly concerned with acquiring things of this life that he may think he needs. He may get to feeling that he has to have 'the best' of all the conveniences and comforts that the world in general has. He may feel that it justifies his working extra time at a secular occupation in order to get them.

²² As a result, he neglects his spiritual life; he does not take time to study; he fails to give needed help to his family to keep them spiritually healthy; he loses out on association with his Christian brothers. Consequently he has little zeal for the field service. Even what he does is usually a perfunctory service, not putting himself out to aid others to become disciples. He really demonstrates that he does not actually believe that Christ is reigning and that the day of Jehovah is at hand.

²³ On the other hand, if a person is truly making supplication to God, he desires God's spirit to be upon him, to guide him. He will put himself where God's spirit is active, associating with and being a real companion and fellow worker of those who have God's spirit.

PROPER MOTIVATION FOR PREACHING WORK

²⁴ What motivated Jesus Christ, the greatest Preacher ever on earth? His love

24. What motivated Jesus in his preaching of the "good news"?

for Jehovah and for Jehovah's "sheep." "On seeing the crowds," Matthew reports at chapter 9, verse 36, "he felt pity for them, because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd." Did Jesus merely *feel* bad about them, or merely *speak* to his disciples about their pitiful state? No. He loved the people from his heart, and it motivated him to act strenuously in their behalf. The very next words of Matthew's account (vss. 37, 38) read: "Then he said to his disciples: 'Yes, the harvest is great, but the workers are few. Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.'" And Jesus and his disciples did reap a great harvest. At Acts 4: 4 we find that the number of men who believed by that time was about five thousand, and later, at Acts 6:7, we read: "Consequently the word of God went on growing, and the number of the disciples kept multiplying in Jerusalem very much; and a great crowd of priests began to be obedient to the faith."

²⁵ Similarly today, the need is very great. Never were the people all over the world in more dire need of the truth. So, each of us faces the questions, Do I love Jehovah's scattered "sheep"? Am I willing, not merely to condemn and decry the bad conditions, but to do something, the only thing that will really help these people? Do I love Jehovah enough to prove my love in that way?

²⁶ A Christian who, with his wife, had served as a pioneer minister of Jehovah's witnesses in Ireland for fourteen years said: 'Day after day we would go all day long from house to house and not find one response. At night when I came home I had to keep asking myself, Why am I do-

ing this? And the answer always had to be, Because I love Jehovah.'

²⁷ What about yourself? Do you face indifference or opposition in your territory? If so, remember the apostle Paul's words at Hebrews 10:36-39: "You have need of endurance, in order that, after you have done the will of God, you may receive the fulfillment of the promise. For yet 'a very little while,' and 'he who is coming will arrive and will not delay.' 'But my righteous one will live by reason of faith,' and, 'if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.' Now we are not the sort that shrink back to destruction, but the sort that have faith to the preserving alive of the soul."

²⁸ In view of all these things, then, it is good for all of us to examine ourselves to be sure of the spirit we have. If we have become baptized witnesses of Jehovah, we certainly do not want to develop a negative attitude toward the glorious position in which we stand. This grand favor of Jehovah should motivate us to have a burning interest in others and a desire to help others. It should impel us to be whole-souled in our service to Jehovah. (Eccl. 9:10) Having the treasure of the truth in our possession, and being favored with the Christian ministry, we cannot afford now to shirk our responsibility by an apathetic manner of reasoning or by excuses.

²⁹ Jehovah encourages us through the prophet Isaiah, saying: "Here I am laying as a foundation in Zion a stone, a tried stone, the precious corner of a sure foundation. No one exercising faith will get panicky." (Isa. 28:16) Back there in Isaiah's day the people trusted in a false peace and security. But today, we know that the King Jesus Christ is ruling and

25, 26. (a) In view of the need of the people to learn the truth, what questions face each one of us? (b) As illustrated by the experience of a couple in Ireland, what should motivate us to keep on preaching?

27. If we face indifference or opposition in our ministry, what Scriptural counsel can we beneficially call to mind?

28. So how should we feel about the privilege of being witnesses of Jehovah?

29. What will enable us to look forward to Jehovah's "day" with joyful confidence?

that the glorious new order of true peace and security is near at hand. If we exercise faith we will be firm, not shaken by doubts. There is no doubt about what is required of us to live in that new order.

Firm faith coupled with "holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion" will assure us salvation. Thus we will stand approved before the Son of man when Jehovah's fiery "day" arrives.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Have you read the recent issues of *The Watchtower* carefully? If so, you will doubtless recall these points:

- Why is it often beneficial for more than one elder to share in a discussion with a member of the congregation seeking advice?

The combined wisdom and experience of more than one person can result in a more balanced viewpoint. There is also less likelihood of being misquoted.—P. 542.*

- How can a Christian avoid falling victim to sexual immorality?

It requires effort to maintain self-control, diverting one's thinking to that which is wholesome and avoiding reading matter and entertainment that incites passion. (Phil. 4:8, 9) The single Christian seeking to maintain cleanness should strive hard to avoid looking at or touching one of the opposite sex in such a way as to excite illicit passion.—Pp. 595, 596.

- Why, as Proverbs 25:17 states, can a failure to 'make one's foot rare in the house of one's fellowman' make one an 'object of hatred'?

People, even close friends, need privacy. Too lengthy or too frequent visits can cause one's coming to be resented.—P. 600.

- How did Jesus Christ 'conquer the world'?

He remained unconquerable, in no way becoming like the hateful world. Despite persecution, Jesus Christ continued loving people, helping them spiritually and healing their afflictions. He did not break off from his self-sacrificing course of laying down his perfect human life.—P. 653.

- What did the apostle Paul mean when he indicated that the 'good news was being preached in all creation under heaven'?—Col. 1:23.

This did not mean that every individual had personally been reached, but that the preaching was being pushed to all parts of the earth under heaven.—P. 683.

- In Jesus' illustration of the minas, at Luke chapter 19, who or what are represented by

the "man of noble birth," the "distant land," the "ten slaves" and the "ten minas"?

The "man of noble birth" is Jesus Christ, who was born in the royal line of David. The "distant land" to which he went to secure kingly power is his Father's dwelling place in the spirit realm. Jesus' disciples, the "ten slaves" of the illustration, received the symbolic minas, that is, the field of activity that Jesus had prepared through intensive preaching and teaching. They received these symbolic "ten minas" when Jesus Christ commissioned them to make and baptize disciples. So by preaching and teaching in imitation of Jesus Christ, his disciples could make the field that he had prepared productive, causing it to yield still more disciples like themselves.—Pp. 712-715.

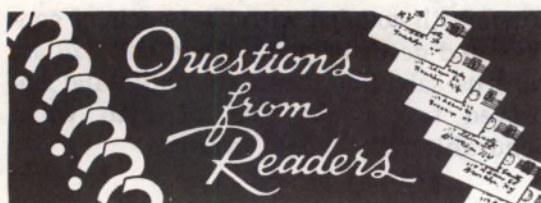
- What is the 'sealing' that is completed before the destructive winds of the "great tribulation" are released?—Rev. 7:2, 3.

This does not refer to the initial sealing of those numbered among the 144,000 who are in line for a heavenly inheritance. It is a final sealing, a determination of the permanence of the initial sealing. (Compare Ephesians 4:30.)—P. 730.

- Why will even God's devoted people experience hardships at Har-Magedon?

The Scriptures reveal that Jehovah God will then use plagues, earthquakes and natural elements against his foes. This will lead to a general breakdown or disruption of governmental services and the like. Jehovah's servants will not be entirely spared from the effects of such things. As 'objects of hatred by the nations,' they cannot expect national governments to grant them favored treatment or exemption from shortages. Rather, they can expect to have their personal freedoms reduced. Even their economic and living conditions may be reduced to the mere subsistence level. Yet, by loyal adherence to Jehovah, they will have sound reason for confidence as to the outcome.—P. 759.

* All references are to *The Watchtower* for 1973.



● Why do some of Jehovah's Christian witnesses stand up for the flag salute but not for the playing of the national anthem?—U.S.A.

Jehovah's Christian witnesses endeavor to follow God's Word and the dictates of their Bible-trained conscience. Like Christians in the first century, they view themselves as 'alien residents' in the world of unbelieving mankind and give their loyalty to the kingdom of God by Christ. (1 Pet. 2:11) It is for this reason that they refrain from all acts, including those of a nationalistic nature, that would imply disloyalty to God and his appointed King Jesus Christ.

It should be kept in mind that a national flag is more than a piece of cloth. It is officially viewed as a sacred symbol of a nation and is treated with reverence. When worn out, for example, the national practice often rules that the flag is not to be disposed of unceremoniously, but is to be 'destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.' There are also regulations governing the hoisting, lowering, folding, flying and displaying of flags. Saluting or pledging allegiance to the flag is considered as a reverent act, an act of sacred devotion, and since the flag is an image of the State, such an act constitutes a form of idolatry.—Compare Exodus 20:4-6; 1 John 5:21.

While not discouraging others from saluting the flag of any nation, Jehovah's Christian witnesses feel that they can give such worship only to Jehovah God. They have due respect for the flag of their respective countries, but for them to idolize the flag of any nation and engage in acts of worship to an image of the State would be an act of unfaithfulness toward God and disloyalty toward the kingdom of God's Son.

Frequently, the practice is for all in attendance at a flag-salute ceremony to stand *and* personally salute the flag as a pledge of allegiance to this image of the State. In such a situation the mere act of standing likely is not in itself viewed as an act of worship. Therefore, many true Christians have seen no objection to standing respectfully, but not sa-

luting and saying the pledge. Of course, conscience enters into the picture. Even if some Witnesses follow this course, others may be moved by their consciences to remain seated or to excuse themselves from the place where the ceremony is going on.

With regard to the national anthem, sometimes those in a group are expected to stand *and* sing. This situation, then, would be comparable to what was just mentioned regarding a national flag. However, more often the audience is expected merely to stand while the anthem is played or while it is sung by one person (a soloist) but not by all. In this case, one's standing would denote approval of the words and sentiments expressed in the song. Regarding such anthems *The Encyclopedia Americana* says: "Love of fatherland and pride in one's country are the keynotes of most national anthems, and in many, religious feeling is blended with patriotic sentiment. National hymns and anthems are frequently closely related to the folk songs of a country or grow out of wars and revolutions." Since Jehovah God is the Creator of the earth, and all nations have a common ancestor, Adam, there is no Scriptural basis for nationalistic pride and feeling of racial superiority. (Acts 17:26) So it might be asked, Could a Christian in any way suggest that he is in agreement with feelings of nationalistic pride? Would it be right for him to join in songs that approve of wars and revolutions?

This fact should not be overlooked: The above stand of Jehovah's witnesses is in no way disrespectful of constituted government authority. Jehovah's witnesses take absolutely no part in any politics of any country. They never participate in any riots, revolutions or rebellions in an attempt to overthrow a government. They are never disloyal, never engage in subversive agitation or antigovernment activity of any kind. In fact, the Bible says that the temporal governments are an "arrangement of God" and stand "placed in their relative positions by God." More than that, Jehovah's witnesses are under divine command to give taxes, tribute and honor to such "superior authorities."—Rom. 13:1-7.

Jehovah's witnesses, therefore, properly stand up or bow down or even prostrate themselves before a ruler out of honor and respect for his position, if that is the custom of the land. (Gen. 23:7; 42:6; 44:14) But they will not laud such a human ruler as a god. Nor will they bow down or salute or kiss or burn incense in

a reverent act of worship before a picture or an image of a ruler or an image of the State, like the one Nebuchadnezzar raised up in the plain of Dura, or like the modern flags of the nations. (Acts 12:21-23; 14:12-15; Dan. 3:1-29) So as long as governments do not make laws contrary to God's laws as set forth in the Bible, Christians today, like first-century Christians, will be obedient in giving "Caesar's things to Caesar," and will at the same time render "God's things to God," namely, their worship and service.—Acts 4:19; 5:29; Mark 12:17.

● At 1 Corinthians 10:13 the apostle Paul wrote: "No temptation has taken you except what is common to men. But God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but along with the temptation he will also make the way out in order for you to be able to endure it." What is the source of such temptation and how does God make the way out for the Christian?—U.S.A.

As illustrated by Israel's wilderness experiences, referred to by Paul in the preceding verses, the "temptation" comes through circumstances that could induce one to break God's law. Earlier in this chapter, Paul wrote: "These things became our examples, for us [Christians] not to be persons desiring injurious things, even as they desired them. Neither become idolaters, as some of them did; just as it is written: 'The people sat down to eat and drink, and they got up to have a good time.' Neither let us practice fornication, as some of them committed fornication, only to fall, twenty-three thousand of them in one day. Neither let us put Jehovah to the test, as some of them put him to the test, only to perish by the serpents. Neither be murmurers, just as some of them murmured, only to perish by the destroyer."—1 Cor. 10:6-10.

Were these circumstances of such a nature that the Israelites could not resist the temptations that were involved? Consider the facts. The Israelites came to desire "injurious things" at the time Jehovah miraculously provided a month's supply of quail for them. They had been without meat for some time, but they had been well supplied with manna to eat. Yet they gave way to the temptation of such unrestrained greed that "the one collecting least gathered ten homers" or sixty-two bushels of quail.—Num. 11:19, 20, 31-35.

Earlier, while Moses was receiving the Law on Mount Sinai, the Israelites became "idola-

ters," as Paul mentions. They engaged in calf worship and gave way to sensual pleasures. Why? The absence of their visible leader was the circumstance that gave rise to the temptation, for they said to Aaron: "Get up, make for us a god who will go ahead of us, because as regards this Moses, the man who led us up out of the land of Egypt, we certainly do not know what has happened to him."—Ex. 32:1, 6.

Just before entering the Promised Land thousands of Israelites were allured by Moabite women. Through association with these women their sinful passions were aroused to the point of committing sexual immorality. This is the occasion, referred to by Paul, when thousands were felled in one day for their sin.—Num. 25:1.

At times, the Israelites also yielded to the temptation of rebellious complaining. On one occasion they spoke out against Jehovah and Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no bread and no water, and our soul has come to abhor the contemptible bread." (Num. 21:5) By such complaints the Israelites were 'putting Jehovah's patience to the test.' They were putting him to the proof as to whether such complaining would be left unpunished.

One of the occasions when the Israelites did not resist the temptation to murmur was after the destruction of rebellious Korah, Dathan, Abiram and their associates. This was because they began to reason that the execution of the rebels was an injustice. Numbers 16:41 relates: "The next day the whole assembly of the sons of Israel began to murmur against Moses and Aaron, saying: 'You men, you have put Jehovah's people to death.'" As a consequence of their finding fault with the way justice was administered, 14,700 Israelites perished from a divinely sent scourge.—Num. 16:49.

Manifestly none of the temptations were of such a nature that the Israelites could not have resisted them. But the Israelites yielded to temptation because of forgetting Jehovah, his loving care for them and the rightness of his law and ways. They lost faith.

As in the case of the Israelites, the temptations faced by Christians are common to human experience. So if Christians put forth needed efforts to resist such temptations and rely on Jehovah God to sustain them, they can remain faithful. This is because "God is faithful" and will not allow his people to be 'tempted beyond what they can bear.' He will

never forsake or abandon his servants to the point of allowing them to come into situations or circumstances that make it humanly impossible for them to do his will.

In the case of the circumstances and situations he permits to develop, Jehovah makes the way out by strengthening his people to resist temptation. For example, others may subject a Christian to physical abuse in an effort to make him renounce his faith. This circumstance may tempt the Christian to yield so as to escape further torture and possibly even death. But, on the basis of the inspired assurance given by the apostle Paul, he knows that the circumstances that give rise to the temptation are but temporary. Jehovah will not allow the situation to build up to the point where He cannot fortify Christian faith and spiritual strength enough to maintain integrity.

Then, too, by means of his spirit, Jehovah sustains those who are subjected to pressures. Acting as a remembrancer and a teacher, God's holy spirit brings back to their minds things they need to know from the Holy Scriptures

to resist temptation and helps them to discern the correct application of these things. (John 14:26) Therefore they are not deceived into following a wrong course. They understand the real issues involved. Many have thus been sustained by Jehovah to continue faithful to the very death. It was not death that made the way out for them, but the help provided by Jehovah made it possible for them to endure to the end without yielding to the temptation.

Not only does Jehovah aid his servants by means of his spirit, but he also uses his angels in their behalf. Says Hebrews 1:14: "Are they not all spirits for public service, sent forth to minister for those who are going to inherit salvation?"

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

February 17: 'Keep Close in Mind the Presence of the Day of Jehovah.' Page 49. Songs to Be Used: 80, 74.

February 24: The Right Attitude Is a Safe-guard. Page 54. Songs to Be Used: 43, 76.