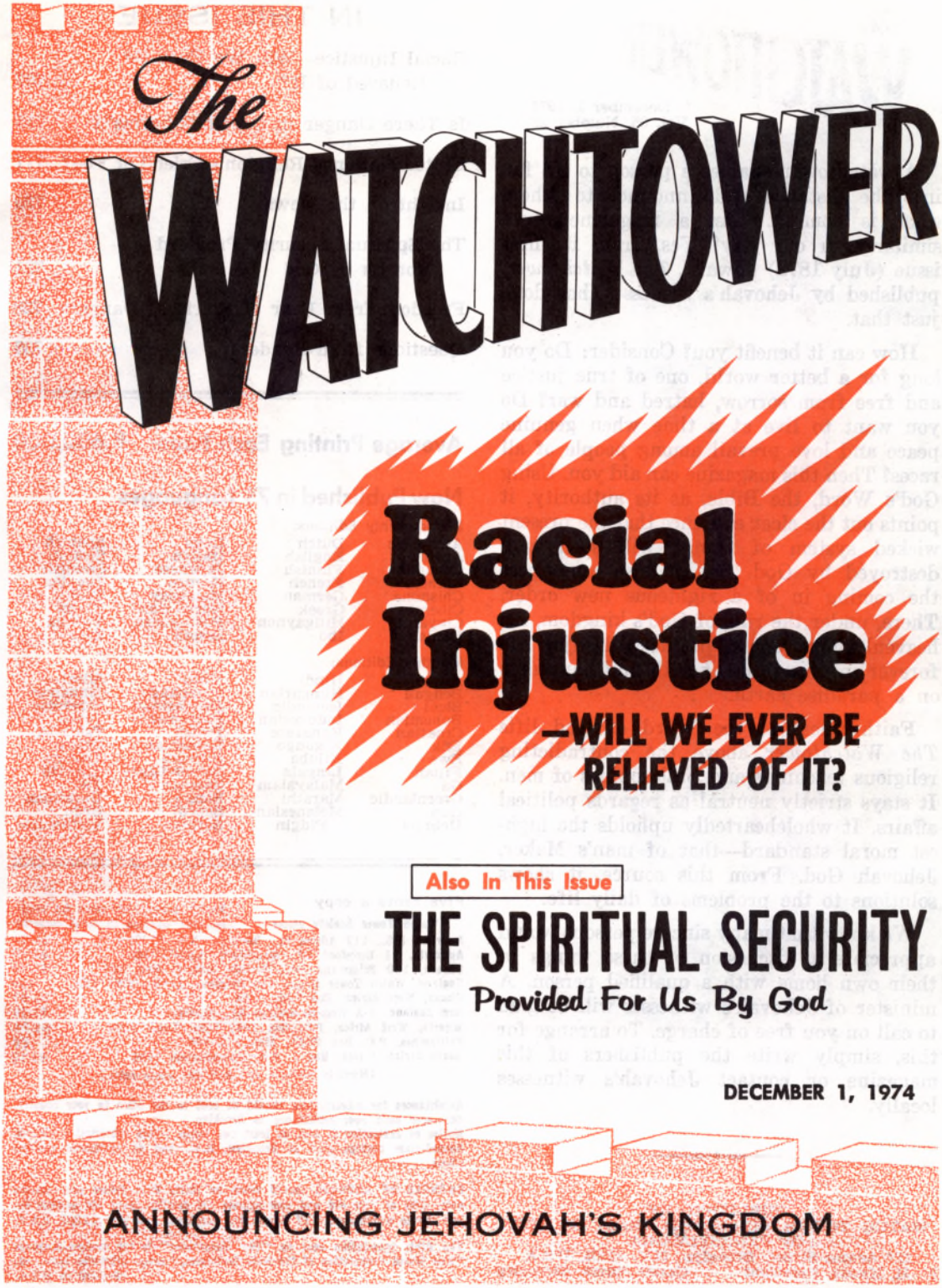

The WATCHTOWER

Racial Injustice
—WILL WE EVER BE RELIEVED OF IT?

Also In This Issue

THE SPIRITUAL SECURITY
Provided For Us By God

DECEMBER 1, 1974

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

December 1, 1974
Vol. 95, Number 23

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.

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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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RACIAL INJUSTICE

—Will We Ever Be Relieved of It?

This is a question many persons today are asking. Is revolution the answer? Read how one black found the only successful way of achieving relief from injustice.

IN THE early morning light, I watched from the deck as frogmen slipped silently into the icy waters of the Canadian harbor. They were checking the submerged part of the boat for explosives. There were those who wanted to stop our departure, even if it meant blowing up the boat.

However, shortly we pulled away without incident. About 500 of us, mostly black Americans, were on our way to Cuba, ostensibly to help with the sugarcane harvest. But, really, more was involved.

Government leaders knew this. A few weeks later a U.S. senator told Congress: "American citizens are being indoctrinated and trained to attack and destroy our institutions and our Government. This activity is underway on our doorstep at this hour. Fidel Castro's Cuba is the enemy base for the operation."—*Congressional Record,* March 16, 1970.

The senator was right, at least about me. I was going to Cuba for advanced training in revolutionary tactics. My goal was to initiate armed insurrection against the American system.

Aboard ship, we asked ourselves, and particularly we asked the few whites who were with us, "Would you kill your own mother or father if they tried to interfere with the revolution?" Those who hesitated were checked off as requiring further education. They needed more fully to appreciate the necessity of relieving the suffering of the masses by overthrowing their oppressors, we felt.

"How twisted can peoples' minds become!" you may be thinking. "Conditions may be bad, but surely they do not warrant a revolution."

Yet thousands of sincere young people believe otherwise. Even persons from wealthy families, as news reports reveal, join in what they believe is a fight to relieve injustice. Why? What causes them to think that the destruction of the system is the only hope for relief from injustice?

Please, let me explain. It may give you insight into the thinking of others, particularly of millions of blacks. My own life and feelings, I believe, are illustrative.

GROWING UP BLACK IN AMERICA

I was born in the deep South in 1945, one of eleven children. We were share-

"Why, I asked myself, did whites want to keep us down? What was wrong with being black?"

croppers. My first home was a wooden shack on the edge of a cotton field, and over the years I lived in a number of such shacks. We pasted newspapers to the walls to keep the winds out in the wintertime.

But simply being poor was not so bad; there were poor whites too. It was the treatment and attitudes toward blacks that hurt. We were barred from white schools, white restaurants, white rest rooms, or even from using the same drinking fountains as whites. And there were the signs, "COLORED AND DOGS NOT ALLOWED."

In those days in the South, public places, such as bus stations, were sectioned off, and we had to sit in the back of the bus. When it appeared that we had forgotten our place, there were the belittling drawls: "Now, you-all know no niggers belong here. Now git on to the back."

I remember when fourteen-year-old Emmett Till was killed—it was big news nationally, but to my parents and most Southern blacks, it was an old story—another black killed by whites—the unusual factor being his age. He was fished out of the Tallahatchie River dead—whites had viciously beaten him to death for reportedly whistling at a white girl. But do you murder for that?

This helped me to appreciate the fearful, pleading tones of grandma instructing us to remember always to look at our toes when speaking to white persons, and to say "Yes, sir" and "No, ma'am" and, above all, to play the part by smiling. But why, I asked myself, did whites want to keep us down? What was wrong with being black?

When I was still quite young my sister had an asthmatic attack, and the white landowner we worked for refused to be bothered with taking her to the doctor. My father, normally a mild man, in desperation held a gun on the man and forced him to drive for medical help. Of course, dad could never come back home or he would have been lynched. He fled north, and we moved to my grandmother's in another county. Eventually, father sent for us to join him in New York city.

My father's work as a house painter and caretaker resulted in our moving into an all-white residential area in Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn, where I was the only black in class. My teacher seemed to assume that I would be stupid, but I was determined to prove otherwise.

In the sixth grade, I was reading at the second-year college level, and so I was put in special classes for exceptional students. The following year I was chosen to join an experimental program called "Project Talent." I had an avid interest in many things, and boundless energy. I studied singing, ballet, journalism and nursing, and I went to a modeling school.

After leaving high school, I became a recording artist, working at one time with Paul Simon of Simon and Garfunkle. This gave me opportunity to travel to other cities for television and other appearances. I also pursued a college education.

MAKING OF A REVOLUTIONARY

In time I realized, though, that I was a victim of deception, largely self-

deception. I was unrealistic to think that perhaps the color of one's skin did not matter. It was a lie that racism existed only in the South; it was bad, too, in the North, only neatly camouflaged. I had tried to push from my memory the image of the little nigger girl being shuttled to the back of the bus, unwelcome in white homes, in white schools, in white restaurants. But now I was forced to remember.

I had to fight to get an apartment in white neighborhoods, being forced to go to the New York State Commission on Human Rights. Also, as I pursued my education with certain careers in mind, I found doors closing and barriers rising. When I applied for one job, I remember being offered an unusually high salary, not for my skills but just to give the company the appearance of being integrated. I was outraged and told them to keep the job.

CRYSTALLIZING VIEWS AND OPINIONS

Headlines were exploding with shocking episodes, one right after another in the 1960's. One September morning in 1963, a bomb blast shattered a Birmingham, Alabama, church during Sunday-school classes. Scores of terrified black children ran out screaming; others were bleeding and moaning. Four did not utter a sound. They were dead—murdered by whites. The following summer, three civil-rights workers, Chaney, Schwerner and Goodman, were murdered in Mississippi.

By now I had become involved in the fight for equal rights. I worked for CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) and SNCC (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee). I listened to more moderate black leaders, like Dr. Martin Luther King. I even did a feature article about him for the *Harlem Valley Times*. When he, too, was killed by a white man, I had to ask myself, as did many other blacks, "What did the non-violence he advocated accomplish?"

I began reading extensively about the history of blacks. I read about the cruel slave trade and the treatment of blacks as property, and how black families would be broken up and sold to different masters, without regard to human feeling. It angered me to learn that certain slave owners would use a well-built, powerful man to breed his slave women and thus produce offspring for the slave market or for work in the fields.

Such terrible injustices are best forgotten, some persons may say. But I could not forget, because it seemed to me that, though slavery was over, the attitudes were still very much alive.

OUTRAGED BY INJUSTICES

Everywhere I looked, I saw the same thing: black people clustered in ghettos suffering from discrimination, economic depression, injustice, bad housing, overcrowding, hopelessness. I began to see these places as colonies of oppressed people, people who needed to be freed.

The way I saw it then, we blacks were no different from the American colonialists who had rebelled against the British yoke in 1776; we also were a people denied certain "inalienable rights," just as they had been. As the colonialists had rebelled, now it was our turn to do the same. That's how I saw it, and I was not alone in this.

Then something happened that pushed me over the edge into action.

My own father was murdered. The police and clerks at the morgue said that no one knew who he was, that he was an unknown person. So they went ahead and cut out the organs they wanted. But it was not true that they did not know who he was, for they had contacted us by means of the identification he had on him!

To me it was as if he had been killed twice, first knifed on the street and then cut up at the morgue. When they finally showed dad to us, he was a mess. They

had not even wiped the blood from his teeth or from his eyes. I was bitterly convinced that he was treated with such contempt because he was black and poor. I refused to cry. Instead, in my heart, I made a vow. I was going to do something about the injustices I saw my people suffering.

I felt that whites had grown accustomed to living a lie. They tried to get us to believe that it was our own inherent inferiority that was responsible for our oppressed condition. I saw that their racism held us oppressed. By nonviolent means, blacks had tried to point this out to whites. Now, I for one had to stop dealing with the white man's attitude and deal solely and directly with the oppression itself.

I joined the Harlem branch of the Black Panthers. By then, I agreed with their ideology that it was time for blacks to arm themselves. Late in 1969, I read in a black radical newspaper about the trip to Cuba. Cuba had successfully mounted a revolution, and I wanted to go there and find out how they had done it. I immediately volunteered, and was chosen for the three-month trip.

A REVOLUTIONARY IN ACTION

I had been led to believe that Cuba was an ugly little poverty-stricken island. But my own impression was that it was the most beautiful place I had ever seen. Toward the end of our stay, we spent three weeks traveling the island, and from what I personally saw I became convinced that Cuba was clean, with no litter, nor any idlers, prostitutes, drunks or unoccupied youths roaming the streets. Everyone seemed to have something to do, both young and old.

At our camp in Cuba everything was run in a military way. Each morning we were awakened by an announcement, and by 6 a.m. we were on our way to the cane fields. It was hard work, but I enjoyed the discipline and working "to serve the people," as the revolutionary slogan of the day went. We worked side by side with hard-core Communist fighters from Vietnam, Africa, Korea and Russia. They would share with us their experiences, thus developing in us an international concept of the struggle for liberation.

"I was willing to fight and die to bring about the liberation of black people."

In the evenings veterans of struggles for liberation in Vietnam, Cuba, Africa and other places would speak to us. We saw films, including "The Battle of Algiers," which showed how Moslem women disguised themselves and took an active part in driving out the French. I enjoyed the speeches of Fidel Castro, and was impressed by the rapport he seemed to have with the common people.

Also, karate instruction was available. But having already learned that, I concentrated on weapons. I knew how to make Molotov cocktails, and how to shoot a gun. But now, because I asked, one of the Cuban soldiers showed me how to handle a machine gun.

Toward the end of our stay, emphasis was placed on what we were going to do with what we learned. I was ready and eager. I was willing to fight and die to bring about the liberation of black people, as well as oppressed peoples world wide.

Before leaving Cuba in April of 1970, I was asked by a revolutionary group to work with them. I was to camouflage myself by getting a respectable job, and when the time was right I would be contacted. In time I was. My assignment was to subvert the military, to use "any means necessary" to find and bring over to the revolutionary side black military men who had technical skills that could be used.

We learned, for example, of a black Air Force captain, a karate and munitions expert, who had been denied a promotion because of his color. I contacted him, and arranged a meeting. I played up to him and, in time, won his friendship. Eventually I sold him on the idea of organizing black armed forces men to work against the military system. The next few months I contacted a number of young men—all well-educated and skilled, at least for the purposes we were interested in.

Soon, however, I became totally repelled by the way I was using myself. Moreover, I found that, even when strategy was not involved, the revolutionaries I knew did not live up to the moral idealism I had come to expect of the liberation movement. They became grossly promiscuous. One night, after a comrade had relations with his woman companion, he turned to me. I saw this, not as revolutionary, but as revolting.

These things started to disturb me. I still believed that the removal of the system was necessary to correct conditions, but I began wondering about our methods. I had time to think now—hiding out, waiting to be contacted with new instructions, moving from place to place to avoid detection—and I began thinking about alternative ways of bringing relief from injustices. Then, one day, while alone in an apartment in a New York slum, a most attractive way was brought to my attention.

RELIEF FROM INJUSTICE—HOW?

A knock sounded at the door, and I opened to see a large, nearly six-foot-tall black woman who had climbed five flights to the apartment. She said something about enjoying meaningful life, and held up a blue book, *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. I was an avid reader, and so accepted it. At that, she described a free study course, and offered to come back. I asked her to demonstrate what she meant.

The first chapter opened with the question: "Do you want to live in peace and happiness?" I thought: "Why, that's why I have been fighting, so that blacks and all oppressed people can live in peace and happiness." The second question asked: "Do you desire good health and long life for yourself and your loved ones?" "Of course! And that is what I saw in Cuba," I said to myself—"better medical advances, and people looking forward to added years of life in good health."

Another question inquired: "Why is the world so filled with trouble?" I had an answer: "These capitalists want everything for themselves." The next question in the book was: "What does it all mean?" That was easy, I felt. It meant that the system had to be destroyed. It was rotten through and through.

Finally, the last question of the first paragraph asked: "Is there any sound reason to believe that things will get better in our lifetime?" "You bet it will," I thought to myself. "Revolutionary struggles are going on all over the world to see that it does. Cuba got better; it got the imperialists off its back. Black people will get them off too."

I had never seen a book with such thought-provoking questions. I thought I

knew the answers, but was eager to see what the book said. As we studied, paragraph ten absolutely staggered me, hitting me like a thunderbolt. I read it aloud:

"All the many things foretold in God's Word of truth indicate that the time for world change is upon us right now! What we see going on throughout the world today in fulfillment of Bible prophecy shows that our time is the one that will see the destruction of this entire wicked system. *Present-day governments will be removed to make way for the rule of all the earth by God's government.* (Daniel 2:44; Luke 21:31, 32) Nothing can stop this change, because God has purposed it."

"God's government"? God has a government? It was the first time in my life I ever heard about God's government. Why, all I had learned from the churches was that God was somewhere up in the sky, and he was going to burn all the bad in hellfire and take all the good to heaven. But now this book said that God was going to destroy present-day governments.

The woman invited me to consider this thought from the Bible. She opened to Daniel 2:44. I read it myself: "And in the days of those kings *the God of heaven will set up a kingdom* that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. *It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms,* and it itself will stand to times indefinite."

"Well, how about that!" I thought to myself. "God does not like these governments either. And he is going to destroy them!" I just could not get over that! This idea, though seeming farfetched, stuck in my mind.

ANY MERIT TO IT?

Later I became suspicious. I wondered if the woman might have been a government agent. Not taking any chances, I moved the next day.

Although I had stopped working to subvert the military, I began recruiting ghetto youths for training in Cuba. Still, this prospect of God's having a government persisted in my mind. I had been reared to believe in God, but things I saw made me skeptical. The churches seemed to portray God as mercenary; they always seemed to be milking people of their money and blinding them to the source of their oppression. And so it did not disturb me that in Cuba religion was somewhat suppressed. But now, I really wondered if God was real.

I decided to pray and see what would happen. I did not know how. Anyway, I made sure the curtains were closed so no one would see me, and got down on my knees. I said something to this effect: "God, whoever you are, if you're still alive, help me. I don't know what I need. But if you have what I need, please send it to me."

The very next morning, a Saturday, a couple called and started talking to me about God's government, so I knew they were the answer to my prayer. They invited me to the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, and the next day I attended.

I was deeply impressed by how warmly I was welcomed by both blacks and whites, and by the genuine friendliness among them. Skeptical, I went to other Kingdom Halls. But the situation was identical. The unity and warmth that existed among the Witnesses was beautiful to me. Further-

'The churches always seemed to be milking people of their money and blinding them to the source of their oppression.'

> "There is no hint of superiority of race taught in the Bible."

more, there was a commitment, an integrity, a willingness even to die for their convictions. I learned how Witnesses in Nazi Germany, Malawi and other places had suffered horribly, but refused to compromise in their loyalty to what they considered to be righteous principles.

This was puzzling to me. "What holds these people together? What is behind them, motivating them?" I wondered. It was obviously not some nationalistic government, for the Witnesses teach that God will destroy these. I came to appreciate, too, that they were not a secret organization with behind-the-scenes leaders.

A REAL GOVERNMENT WITH SUBJECTS

It was at this time that I began seriously to consider the idea of God as having a heavenly government with earthly subjects. Could it be possible that these Witnesses are earthly subjects of God's government? And when God crushes all earthly governments to pieces, are these the people He will preserve to start a new earthly society?

The idea fascinated me, and I was determined to investigate further.

I remembered, as a child, learning the prayer that Jesus Christ taught his followers: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:9, 10, *Authorized Version*) Now for the first time it dawned on me that this kingdom is a real government, having a king ruling over a domain with subjects. Jesus Christ himself is God's appointed king; he, in effect, told Pontius Pilate that he was. (John 18:36, 37) I also learned that the Bible foretold about this ruler: "For . . . unto us a son is given: and *the government shall be upon his shoulder* . . . Of the *increase of his government and peace* there shall be no end."—Isa. 9:6, 7, *Authorized Version.*

THE BEST CONSTITUTION

For a government to be real, I knew that it had to have a constitution or a set of laws that its subjects submit to. In planning a new government, we revolutionaries had given considerable thought to its laws. Now I came to view the Bible as, in effect, the constitution of God's government. But whom does this Lawbook govern?

I was convinced that it did not govern the masses of professed Christians, not Christendom, not the people who have perpetrated the bloodiest wars in history and who, because of thinking themselves superior, have shamefully raped and oppressed minority groups. But I could see that Jehovah's witnesses really are different. The Bible truly is their constitution, their Lawbook. What it says governs every aspect of their lives.

There is no hint of superiority of race taught in the Bible. We are all one family, equal in all respects in God's sight. "God is not partial," the Bible says, "but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35) You cannot imagine how much it meant to me to learn these things.

The white churches had told us that we blacks are a cursed race, hence inferior, animallike. In fact, numerous myths have been perpetrated to the effect that we have rudimentary tails and, as a race, that we are stupid, that we smell offensively, and so forth. How grand to be part of a people who allow God's Word the Bible to help rid them of such demeaning falsehoods!

Do not get me wrong. I am not saying that Jehovah's witnesses are perfect. At

times I detect among certain ones of them leftover attitudes of racial superiority, and I have sometimes seen a certain uncomfortableness of some of them when in close association with persons of another race. But really, what can you expect after centuries of this world's carefully indoctrinated hatred?

It is as the song explains in the well-known musical "South Pacific," in which a young army man, distressed because he had fallen in love with a young girl of another race, sings: 'your being taught to hate and fear; that you have got to be taught from year to year, having it drummed into your dear little ear—carefully taught to be afraid of people whose eyes are ugly made and whose skin is a different shade; carefully taught before it's too late, before you're six or seven or eight, to hate all the people your relatives hate.'

'Jehovah's witnesses strive to love one another regardless of race.'

However, because they live by the constitution of God's government, Jehovah's witnesses have, to a degree unmatched by any other people on earth, rid themselves of racial prejudice. They do strive to love one another regardless of race, realizing, as the Bible says, "He who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot be loving God, whom he has not seen." (1 John 4:20) On occasion my heart has been warmed to the point of uncontrollable tears to experience the genuine love of white Witnesses, people whom shortly before I would have killed without hesitation to further the cause of a revolution.

THE RELIEF NEAR AT HAND

Today I am truly sorry for the part I had in scheming to overthrow human governments. Through Bible study I have learned that such a course is not only futile, it is in violation of what the Bible says at Romans 13:1-7. Hence, no government official need ever fear trouble at my hand. Yet, at the same time, I am convinced that those who continue to look to human governments for relief from injustices not only will be disappointed, but are in danger of being destroyed when God's government soon 'crushes and puts an end to all these governments.'

This means, of course, that Communist governments, too, are scheduled for destruction by God. Although such governments have, I believe, done many things to improve the condition of the masses of people, human rulers simply have proved incapable of providing justice for all. In fact, some Communist governments have committed terrible atrocities. Furthermore, people under those governments still get sick, grow old and die. Human rulers are unable to do anything to prevent this. But God can and he will! His Word says: "God himself will be with [mankind]. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away."—Rev. 21:3, 4.

Thus relief for mankind from all forms of oppression, including even that enemy death, is available. But only in God's way, not man's. So, instead of supporting human attempts to root out oppression and injustice, I now look to God to do this. And I use my full time showing people that the only true hope for relief from injustice is by means of God's kingdom, which soon now will bring this longed-for relief. *—Contributed.*

Is There Danger IN OCCULT "CHARMS"?

WE OFTEN see persons who carry about or have in their homes certain "charms" obtained from others who believe in or practice some form of spiritism, fortune-telling, and so forth. These articles may be in the form of an image, an amulet or fetish. Or a gift—a picture, a handkerchief, a scarf—something not ordinarily viewed as a charm, may be received from someone who practices spiritism. Are these things harmless?

The question is of interest to you whether you want to worship God or not. Why? Because your attitude and actions toward these things can vitally affect your mental and even your physical health. We have evidence of this, not only from the Bible, God's Word, but also from the personal experiences of many.

When God was about to bring the nation of Israel into the land of Canaan, he gave specific and repeated warnings about this danger of occultism. It was not without reason, nor because of favoritism, that he was driving out the people who lived in Canaan. He told Israel why, saying: "These nations whom you are dispossessing used to listen to those practicing magic and to those who divine." He called these practices "the detestable things of those nations," and then commanded: "There should not be found in you . . . anyone who looks for omens or a sorcerer, or one who binds others with a spell or anyone who consults a spirit medium or a professional foreteller of events or anyone who inquires of the dead."—Deut. 18:9-12, 14.

Furthermore, Israel was told: "You must not mention the name of other gods. It should not be heard upon your mouth." (Ex. 23:13) This did not mean that they could not mention those names as *false* gods, for example, in teaching or warning their children. But they were not to acknowledge those gods as having any power, or to be looked to for anything. Why?

Because, even if they were not directly worshiped, any leaning toward them, expecting them to do good or bad, or wanting any material thing connected with them, would actually mean having association with wicked demons. These demons are *real spirit persons,* wicked angels, the worst enemies of God and man. The apostle Paul said: "The things which the nations sacrifice they sacrifice to demons, and not to God." (1 Cor. 10:20) Because Israel did not obey God's command, some persons were terribly afflicted. When Jesus was on earth, he healed many, casting out demons who troubled them.—Matt. 12:22; Luke 13:11-16; Mark 5:2-13.

'But,' you may ask, 'what harm is there in merely accepting gifts from persons who practice some form of spiritism or astrology, who rely on charms, Ouija boards, and so forth?'

This: In modern times many persons have been seriously harassed by the demons because of taking these things into their homes. As an example: a middle-aged woman in New York suddenly suffered occasional seizures of paralysis. She would lie in bed stiff, rigid and cold. She was able to speak but was very despondent, wishing that she would die. She was associated with a congregation of Jeho-

vah's witnesses, so was visited by two of the elders of the congregation. They recognized it as a possible case of demon harassment, and questioned the woman closely as to whether she had any association with any person connected with spiritism. She recalled having worked alongside such a person in a factory, finally quitting her job to get away from this person's constant 'predictions' and strange talk. She was asked whether she had accepted any gift from this individual, and it was finally discovered that the spiritistic woman had given her a pair of gloves and a string of beads. These were then hunted out and thrown into the incinerator. Immediately the woman recovered fully and has not had such an attack since. —Compare Acts 19:19.

'DO NOT BRING THEM INTO YOUR HOUSE'

There are numerous experiences like this on record. They emphasize the seriousness of God's command to Israel concerning the things belonging to the Canaanites. They were not to keep their images of worship, nor were they to take for themselves even the *gold and silver* from them *merely because of their material value.* God said: *"You must not bring a detestable thing into your house* and actually become a thing devoted to destruction like it. You should thoroughly loathe it and absolutely detest it, because it is something devoted to destruction." —Deut. 7:25, 26.

If a city of Israel were to abandon the pure worship of Jehovah and turn to false worship, its inhabitants were to be put to death and the entire city burned. God commanded: *"Nothing at all should stick to your hand* of the thing made sacred by ban, in order that Jehovah may turn from his burning anger."—Deut. 13:12-17.

Now, it is common knowledge that in some parts of the world there are medicinemen and juju priests who have, by spells and fetishes, caused death or calamity to people there. These practitioners have often tried their spells against those from among these people who have become Jehovah's witnesses, even planting fetishes on their premises. But they have been completely unsuccessful in causing any effect on the Witnesses. Of course, the Witnesses had absolutely rejected any association with these magic-practicing priests and had not accepted any gifts from them. They generally did not know that the fetishes had been planted on their property. And they were not harmed, much to the dismay of the practitioners.

You can see from this that you need not live in fear of the demons. You should not be terrified at astrological horoscopes or other predictions, nor of spells of practitioners of spiritism. But you are safe only if you utterly reject any connection with such persons, and absolutely abhor and reject any gifts they may offer. You need to *avoid knowingly allowing such detestable things into your house.* You are putting yourself into danger if you read horoscopes to see what they say, thereby giving some recognition that they just *might* turn out right. If you do, you show some liking, some leaning toward these detestable things, or a desire for some material thing connected with them. In that case, you should not be surprised if you suddenly experience demon attacks, perhaps hearing voices or being seriously afflicted.

If you have had such troubles, get rid of anything that you know that you or members of your family have taken from dabblers in spiritism. Cut off fellowship with such persons. Having done this, ask Jehovah God in the name of Christ to bring you assistance and relief. If you are a member of a congregation of Jehovah's witnesses, approach the elders and get their help, not as of exorcists, but so that you may receive their counsel and the help of their united prayers.—Jas. 5:13-18.

UNITED NATIONS
—RELIGION'S FRIEND OR FOE?

WHEN Jesus Christ was on earth, his disciples asked him many questions. He often answered, first, according to the immediate circumstances, and then gave a more complete, far-reaching prophetic answer that they did not grasp at the time. Later, after Pentecost, 33 C.E., they came to understand. Some things were to be clearly understood yet later. One of these has to do with the world peace and security organization that we today know as the United Nations.

A case in point is the disciples' question asked a few days before Christ's death: "When will these things [concerning the judgment on Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple] be, and what will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?" (Matt. 24:3) Jesus detailed Jerusalem's coming destruction. Then he went ahead giving further information, showing that his answer also had a long-range prophetic application to the conclusion of the system of things of our day. The prophecy focused particularly on the destruction of Christendom's false religious systems. Will the United Nations, in working for world security, view world religions as a help or a hindrance?

An outstanding feature of Jesus' answer was his mention of Daniel's prophecy about "the disgusting thing that causes desolation" and that would 'stand in a holy place.' (Matt. 24:15, 16) This prophecy had a fulfillment in the first century when the armies of pagan Rome came into Jerusalem, even undermining the temple wall. Less than four years later they finally desolated the city completely. What is the later and greater fulfillment?

CHRISTENDOM LIKE FIRST-CENTURY JERUSALEM

To perceive the modern-day fulfillment, it is necessary, first, to see the parallel between ancient Jerusalem and modern Christendom. Jerusalem made the claim of being the city of God. Indeed, the throne of David, called "Jehovah's throne," had been located there. (1 Chron. 29:23) Its temple was called "the house of Jehovah." (Ps. 27:4) But Israel had been so rebellious that there was no longer a king of the line of David on the throne. And the true worship of God had been so greatly corrupted by the traditions of the scribes and Pharisees that God was about to abandon his "house" forever.—Matt. 23:38; 15:1-9.

Christendom, similarly, has held itself forth as representing God. It counts itself as "holy" and has blessed its crusades and wars as being holy, even World Wars I and II. So it stands in a position similar in many respects to that of Jerusalem, though Christendom was never acknowledged by God as his own.

Jesus, in answering his disciples' question, said that "the love of the greater number [of professed servants of God]

will cool off." (Matt. 24:12) That was true among the Jews prior to Jerusalem's destruction. And that condition certainly is true in the so-called "Christian" nations of this generation. Professed Christians, even clergymen, instead of proclaiming God's kingdom, have worked vigorously in the political field. What, therefore, is a fitting destiny for Christendom's religions?

It would be entirely fitting that the very thing in which Christendom has put trust, instead of in God, would bring her downfall. Let us see how the prophecy in the Bible book of Revelation represents this.

FALSE RELIGION'S SPIRITUAL FORNICATION

Today the world scene is dominated by the Seventh World Power of Bible history, the British-American Dual World Power. However, the Bible discloses an EIGHTH WORLD POWER. As pictorially represented at Revelation 17:9-11, a scarlet-colored wild beast was shown in vision to the apostle John. On the beast's back was a harlotrous woman, "Babylon the Great."

About this symbolic "wild beast" we read: "The seven heads mean seven mountains, where the woman sits on top. And there are seven kings: five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet arrived, but when he does arrive he must remain a short while. And the wild beast that was but is not, it is also itself an eighth king, but springs from the seven, and it goes off into destruction."

At the time that this Biblical vision was given, in the first century, the Sixth World Power, Rome, held sway. The seventh had not arrived. The five preceding world powers, that 'had fallen' were, in turn, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece. "Babylon the Great" has had dealings with all these world powers, meddling in politics and having a great influence therein. For this reason she is called a "harlot," committing spiritual fornication. She is also called "the great city that has a kingdom over the kings of the earth." (Rev. 17:18) She is, accordingly, an empire, the world empire of false religion, in which the so-called "Christian" religion has played the primary part. As the primary force in fighting and in causing the world powers to fight true Christians, she is "drunk with the blood of the holy ones and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus."—Rev. 17:6.

This "scarlet-colored wild beast" is an eighth "king," an eighth world power. Since it "springs from the seven," it is not the Communistic bloc of nations. Also, unlike the Communist bloc, 'it was (for a while), then was not; it ascends out of the abyss (of inactivity) and goes off into destruction.'

The world peace and security organization, known first (when it "was") as the League of Nations, was formed after World War I. It went into the abyss in 1939, when it was shown to be powerless to stop World War II (thus it 'was not'). Then, in 1945, it 'ascended' under a new name, the United Nations. How is it a "disgusting thing" in God's sight? Most noticeable is the fact that it has a symbolic harlot, an unclean woman, riding it. Also, being formed by the worldly powers and held up, especially by Christendom and its religions, in place of God's kingdom as the hope for world peace and security, it is a "friend of the world," making it an "enemy of God."—Jas. 4:4; John 18:36.

Now half of the member nations of the United Nations do not even profess to be Christian.

But has not the United Nations done some good? Some say, 'Why knock it? It's merely an effort to keep peace.' But was the Roman Empire "good"? It tried to keep the Pax Romana, the Roman peace, throughout the world, but it was, nevertheless, pagan, and turned out to be

the desolator of religious Jerusalem with its temple. It later persecuted true Christians.

FALSE RELIGION'S DESOLATION

What does the Bible show that the United Nations accomplishes before it 'goes off into destruction'? It turns out to become the destroyer of "Babylon the Great."

The account describes this destruction of false religion: "The waters that you saw, where the harlot is sitting, mean peoples and crowds and nations and tongues. And 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."—Rev. 17: 15, 16.

The Roman armies brought desolation to the holy city Jerusalem and its temple. Likewise, the armies under United Nations control become a desolator of the so-called "holy" arena of Christendom's domain—its false "Christian" religions.

What actually brings this desolation about? Is it merely the idea of the United Nations? It is *God's judgment* on the 'harlotlike' organizations of false religions that have long oppressed the people and have done so in religion's name, misrepresenting God and bringing reproach upon his name. This is particularly and expressly true of Christendom's religions. The account reveals who is really behind the destructive work against "Babylon the Great" when it says:

"For God will put it into their hearts [the hearts of earth's rulers] to carry out his thought, even to carry out their one thought by giving their kingdom to the wild beast, until the words of God will have been accomplished."—Rev. 17:17.

For this reason it is Jehovah God who gets the credit for doing away with false religion. Praise is given to him for this in the next chapter of Revelation, in the cry: "Be glad over her [Babylon the Great], . . . because God has judicially exacted punishment for you from her!" —Rev. 18:20.

Will the "wild beast" of scarlet hue then be the friend of true Christians? No more than the Roman Empire was. As an enemy, the "beast" must "go off into destruction" at the hands of Jesus Christ. The kings represented by the beast's ten horns "will battle with the Lamb, but, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings, the Lamb will conquer them." (Rev. 17:14) The "disgusting thing" will meet annihilation at that time, never to come up again.

A TIME FOR ACTION

The appearance now of the "disgusting thing" upon the world scene is a feature of the "sign" of Christ's presence and the imminence of its attack upon the Lamb. Even nearer, therefore, is the desolation of "Babylon the Great." What does this mean for those who may be involved with these worldly organizations?

God's Word urges: "Get out of her [Babylon the Great], my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues."—Rev. 18:4.

Only by a study of the Bible to see that this time of judgment is upon us, and by discerning between true and false religion, can anyone escape. But it is worth any effort that is required. For life on earth after the destruction of all unjust, God-dishonoring organizations will be a delight. Then, healing and permanent health will come to the people. Millions who have lost their lives because of "Babylon the Great's" deceptive, blood-spilling rule will be resurrected to join those on earth in rejoicing over false religion's desolation.—Rev. 20: 11-13; 21:1-4.

Insight on the News

Life No 'Chemical Accident'

● A letter from a Canadian reader published in the October issue of "Science Digest" magazine discussed the so-called "evolution of life." In the light of new discoveries in molecular biology, the writer said, the "likelihood that life began as an accident is becoming more remote, if not impossible."

To illustrate, he points out that—even supposing the "primeval" earth had been ideally set up with an abundance of vital amino acids and that every molecule of nitrogen and of carbon on earth was part of a more complex molecule, and even with these molecules forming new compounds at the fastest rate known to chemistry—even with all of this, the science of mathematical probabilities demonstrates that "by chance, not one recognized molecule of deoxi-ribonucleic acid (DNA [the building block of living creatures]) could be formed, even over the billions of years normally assigned to the task. Not even gas or dust clouds in outer space 20 times the mass of the sun would be sufficient. Consider, too, that not one, but quadrillions of molecules of one type of DNA are needed in a living organism. These molecules obviously have to be at the same place at the same time." His conclusion? "Chemical evolution of life and extraterrestrial life are not true sciences."

Contrasting Words with Facts

● "Neither violence nor revolution nor colonialism in any form will serve as methods of the church's evangelical action." Thus spoke Pope Paul VI in his address to a Synod of Bishops gathered in Rome to discuss "Evangelization in the Modern World." How well do those words line up with the Church's own record?

As noted by the Jesuit weekly "America" (October 12, 1974), they clearly contrast with Paul VI's own encyclical of 1967 ("Populorum Progressio" ["Development of Peoples"]) in which he implied justification of "revolutionary uprising" in situations "where there is manifest long-standing tyranny." Revolutionary Catholics in Latin America and other areas took that statement as tacit approval of their efforts to overthrow regimes viewed as tyrannical. Was the "infallible" encyclical now being corrected?

The centuries-long record of the Church's "evangelical action," however, provides the most notable contrast with Paul VI's words. For it is heavily marked with violence—in its blood-spilling crusades, its Inquisition, and its mass baptisms of native peoples facing death if they refused to accept the Church's brand of Christianity. Colonialism obviously was used by the Church in gaining control over vast areas in Latin America and Africa.

With good reason, the article in "America" magazine raised the question as to whether "the Church itself may be, in certain circumstances, a hindrance rather than a help to evangelization or the spread of the Kingdom."

Heart Surgery Problem

● The Bible's references to the human heart make evident that it plays a role in people's motivation, though the exact manner in which it does this is not spelled out. It is interesting, therefore, to read a recent report on an unusual problem that specialists in heart surgery experience.

A decade ago, according to an article in the Chicago "Daily News," when the heart-lung machine made open-heart surgery more practicable, reports showed that "many patients were developing mental problems after spending time" on the machine. "They experienced delusions and 'floating' periods when they felt detached from reality. Some became delirious or paranoid . . . Anxiety, hallucinations, mood irritability, apathy and depression were common." Currently, anywhere from 16 to 57 percent of open-heart-surgery patients have "postoperative mental aberration," though this psychotic trouble generally passes away.

Any major surgery places a patient under considerable strain and can bring a measure of mental and emotional upset. Nevertheless, there is evidence of notably greater frequency and severity of this problem when the human heart itself is involved. One thing at least is sure: the passage of time and the increase of real knowledge will demonstrate in varied ways that confidence in the Bible is never misplaced.

THE SPIRITUAL SECURITY Provided For Us By God

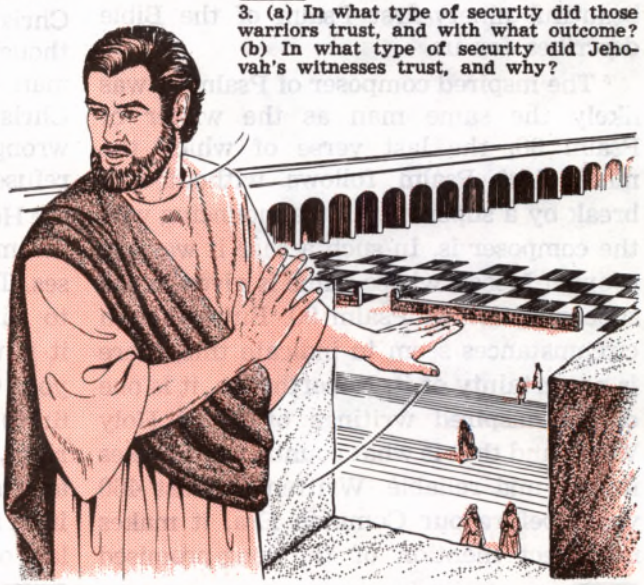
"I will say to Jehovah: 'You are my refuge and my stronghold, my God, in whom I will trust.'"—Ps. 91:2.

IT IS reported that the sword-wielding Napoleon Bonaparte said: "There are two powers in the world—the sword and the spirit. But, in the long run, the spirit always wins out."

2 Evidently dictator Adolf Hitler did not believe that observation made by a hardened warrior. By the power of the "sword" of sanguinary warfare, he set out to conquer the world. In the territory that he violently took over, Hitler tried to break the spirit of those who held to Christian neutrality toward worldly conflicts. In the year 1945 the power of his "sword" failed him and, in confession of defeat, he shot himself and had his corpse disposed of by fire. But the persecuted Christian witnesses of Jehovah, although reduced in ranks by some thousands, came forth triumphantly with unbroken spirit and openly resumed their work of proclaiming God's kingdom in lands overrun by Hitler. The spirit of God in them won out after twelve years of Hitler rule.

3 Both Bonaparte and Hitler sought security for themselves in a mighty military organization, along with strong autocratic political power and influence. Such worldly-wise type of security proved disappointing, deceptive. The seemingly insecure, unprotected witnesses of Jehovah were interested in a different type of security. It was a spiritual security, for such security is what will preserve one in a condition where one is worthy of everlasting life in peace and happiness in God's com-

3. (a) In what type of security did those warriors trust, and with what outcome? (b) In what type of security did Jehovah's witnesses trust, and why?



When urging Jesus to hurl himself from the battlement of the temple, the Devil dishonestly quoted Psalm 91 as if it were a guarantee of physical security

1, 2. (a) Reportedly, what did Bonaparte say about the sword and the spirit? (b) Hitler learned the statement's truth in connection with what Christians?

ing new system of things for mankind. To this day the surviving witnesses of Jehovah in Europe are seeking to remain within this spiritual security, for in the oncoming "great tribulation" man-made material, financial, military means of security will not result in preservation of one's life into God's new order. "The treasures of the wicked one will be of no benefit, but righteousness is what will deliver from death."—Prov. 10:2.

[4] Spiritual security means having God's protection of our spiritual life in harmony with His requirements for everlasting life. It is those who have spiritual security whom God approves, even though he may permit them to suffer death for their faithfulness to Him at enemy hands. Their spirituality maintained down till death is what he will reward with resurrection to the blessings and opportunities of life in his righteous new order. Spiritual security is to be preferred to the physical security that materialistic men try to provide. The spiritual security is the essential kind that we desire. This is the security that the beautiful ninety-first Psalm of the Bible describes for us.

[5] The inspired composer of Psalm 91 was likely the same man as the writer of Psalm 90, the last verse of which the ninety-first Psalm follows without any break by a superscription announcing who the composer is. In such a case it was the prophet Moses, whose name is given in the superscription of Psalm 90. But although circumstances seem to indicate this, there is no certainty of it. Nevertheless, it is one of the inspired writings of God's Holy Word, and that is what counts, what makes it true and reliable. Written at least 460 years before our Common Era, it makes no direct mention of the long-promised Messiah, God's Anointed One, or the Christ. It centers our attention upon the One who was the Divine Source for the spiritual security of even the Messiah, the Christ.

[6] For example, in the year 29 of our Common Era, God's great Adversary applied verses eleven and twelve to a certain man in the Middle East. Satan the Devil, the Tempter, was out to wreck the spirituality of this man, deceptively by the misuse of God's own inspired Word. In those verses of Psalm 91 the Tempter worked in the idea of physical security. He argued that especially a "son of God" would have such personal bodily protection and safeguarding. In proof of this to the Devil and to the Jewish people, the man should hurl himself down from the battlement of the temple at Jerusalem and let the angels carry him gently to the temple pavement against the laws of gravitation. This would be like a "sign from heaven."

[7] Of all persons, this Psalm 91 should fit this man who had recently been anointed with God's spirit to be the Messiah, the Christ. So the Devil schemed what he thought was a real temptation for this man anointed of God. But the man, Jesus Christ, saw through the trick, saw the wrong thrust given to Psalm 91:11, 12. He refused to forsake his spiritual security.

[8] He did this by appealing to the inspired command given through the prophet Moses. The Bible record tells us: "Jesus said to him [that is, to the Devil]: 'Again it is written, "You must not put Jehovah your God to the test." ' " (Matt. 4:7; Deut. 6:16) Jesus believed in holy angels all right, but he did not believe that those angels would protect him against himself if he improperly tried to defy God's known law of gravitation to make a selfish, fool-

4. Why is the spiritual security to be preferred to the physical kind, and what Bible psalm describes it?
5. What is to be said of the composer of Psalm 91, and upon whom does it center our attention?
6, 7. How did Satan use Psalm 91:11, 12 in his trying to tempt Jesus Christ, and why without success?
8. How did Jesus counter the temptation by Satan, and with what benefit to himself?

hardy display of himself before the Jewish people at the temple. Wisely, in this case, Jesus' keeping to his place of spiritual security resulted in his physical security. He did not die a premature death in a way that did not fulfill Scripture. He remained alive, "in the secret place of the Most High."—Ps. 91:1.

"THE SECRET PLACE OF THE MOST HIGH"

9 Psalm 91 applies to a time of many dangers such as are mentioned by the psalmist, in order to give comfort, confidence and assurance to those passing through the perilous time. Jesus Christ, when on earth as a man, could take to heart this marvelous psalm, for there can be no doubt that it applied to him as an individual. When he rejected the Devil's proposal, falsely based on verses eleven and twelve, he was not rejecting the psalm as applying to him in a right way. If there was anyone that set his affection upon Jehovah God, it was Jesus Christ, in fulfillment of verse fourteen.

10 Logically it would apply to all his baptized disciples who faithfully follow in his footsteps and copy his example. Not that each one of these can say, 'This psalm applies to me individually just as it did to Jesus Christ.' No, but it applies to these true disciples as a class, and anyone who finds himself in that class can draw spiritual strength from it. The psalm did not foretell any particular one of Christ's true and loyal disciples.

11 The Bible book of Revelation, chapter twelve, verse seventeen, mentions a "remnant" of spiritual brothers of Jesus Christ as being on the woe-afflicted earth after the birth of God's Messianic kingdom in the heavens in the year 1914 C.E.

12 Concerning the remaining ones of the "seed" of the heavenly mother of that kingdom, Revelation 12:17 (King James *Authorized Version*) says: "And the dragon [Satan the Devil] was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Since this remnant of the woman's seed on earth is warred upon by Satan the Devil and his demon angels, the remnant must certainly need to be in the place of spiritual security provided by the God whose commandments the remnant keeps. In harmony with this obvious fact, in the article "Place of Security," published in the *Watch Tower* issue of August 1, 1927, the opening paragraph on page 227 cited Revelation 12:17 and then said:

13 "Those who are of the 'remnant' will surely seek with diligence to know the secret place of safety and, being brought into it, will be anxious to abide there."

14 So, with that understanding of those who were then dwelling in the "secret place of the Most High," the series of three consecutive articles dealing with Psalm 91 was started off, entitled "Place of Security," "Why in Security," and "Defence and Security," and published in the *Watch Tower* issues of August 1 and 15 and September 1, 1927.* As matters turned out, that commentary on Psalm 91 was published eight years before the "great multitude" described in Revelation 7:9-17 (*AV*) began forming, or from the year

9, 10. (a) Was Jesus rejecting Psalm 91 as having an application to himself individually? (b) To whom also does this psalm apply, and in what way?

11-13. (a) Where does Revelation speak of the remnant of spiritual brothers of Jesus Christ, and why must they need to be in the place of security provided by God? (b) How did the *Watch Tower* issue of August 1, 1927, show who was in the "secret place of safety"?

* Many years earlier, the book entitled "The Battle of Armageddon," published in the year 1897, said, on page 592, paragraph 1: "A psalm describing this period declares:—'A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee [the faithful saints, members of the body of Christ, whose elect members will now shortly be completed.]'—Psalm 91:7."

Thus already back there in 1897 the individual addressed in Psalm 91 was regarded as a composite person, a class of disciples of Jesus Christ.

14, 15. (a) With that understanding, what series of articles was started off back there in 1927? (b) This was eight years before what modern-day crowd of people was discussed in *The Watchtower*?

1935 onward. (See the two-part article entitled "The Great Multitude," published in the *Watchtower* issues of August 1 and 15, 1935.) In describing this "great multitude," the inspired apostle John says, in Revelation 7:14, 15, (*AV*):

15 "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them [or, will spread his tent over them, *New World Translation*]."

16 According to that prophetic description, the faithful members of the "great multitude" or "great crowd" (*NW*) should today be sharing spiritual security with the "remnant" of the woman's seed in the "secret place of the Most High." Otherwise, the Most High God would not preserve them during the "great tribulation" so that they may come out of it alive on earth and into God's new order. In that righteous new order those of the "great crowd" continue rendering sacred service to God day and night in the courtyards of his spiritual temple. It can thus be seen that, aside from Jesus Christ himself, Psalm 91 did not foretell any individual disciple of Christ, but did refer to his baptized disciples as a class or congregation, down till this day. The time for special need of its application is from the year 1919 onward, after the ousting of Satan and his demon angels from heaven down to the vicinity of this earth, which ouster of them followed the birth of God's Messianic kingdom in the heavens in 1914 C.E.—Rev. 12:1-13.

17 While we now take up an examination of Psalm 91, we can ask ourselves personally, Do I belong to the favored class that is referred to and addressed in this faith-strengthening psalm? If we can say Yes, then we can be sure that we shall have the spiritual security that is described in the psalm. Descriptively, the psalm opens up, saying: "Anyone dwelling in the secret place of the Most High will procure himself lodging under the very shadow of the Almighty One."—Ps. 91:1.

18 The "secret place of the Most High" is not the place where he himself resides in the heavens invisible to human eyes, or even secluded from the heavenly hosts. It is not the heavenly place that was pictured by the Most Holy, the innermost compartment of the tent of worship constructed by the prophet Moses in the wilderness of Mount Sinai in the year 1513 B.C.E. There the divine presence was symbolized by the miraculous Shekinah light that hovered above the mercy seat of the golden Ark of the Covenant. The Most High needs no secret place for himself, in order to be sheltered from the threats and dangers described in Psalm 91. Rather, the "secret place" is the concealed place, the covert, that he has provided for those who fulfill the requirements that are set out in Psalm 91. It is a place of shelter for them, a place of protection for them. Since it is a place of spiritual security, the people of the world cannot see it with their natural eyes, and, not having spiritual discernment, they cannot see that the dwellers therein are in that "secret place."

19 However, the spiritual security that those faithfully dwelling there enjoy testifies to their really being there. The facts show that they are spiritually safeguarded on the paramount issue that is now before all heaven and earth. It is the issue indicated by the designation of the One pro-

16. (a) The "great crowd" also should be in what place of security, and why? (b) Aside from Jesus Christ, who is the one foretold in Psalm 91, and from when on is the time of special need for Psalm 91 to apply?
17. As we now take up an examination of Psalm 91, what personal question can we ask ourselves?
18. What is that "secret place of the Most High," and why cannot worldlings see or discern it?
19. (a) Those in the "secret place" were spiritually safeguarded on what issue, as suggested in what designation? (b) When was this issue published to the world?

viding the "secret place," namely, "the Most High." Ah yes, it is the issue of Universal Sovereignty. It was called to the attention of the world of mankind in the midst of World War II, in which the nations were battling over the question of who shall rule the earth, and some months before the United States of America became involved in that world struggle. At the international assembly of Jehovah's Christian witnesses at St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A., in the summer of 1941, the then president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society delivered the speech on the subject "Integrity." In that speech to scores of thousands of conventioners, he stated and made clear that the issue before all creation was Universal Domination. —See the leading article "Integrity," published in the *Watchtower* issue of August 15, 1941, page 245, paragraph 19.

[20] The questions of the domination of the earth and the national sovereignties of the peoples are hotly contested at present. The world situation as well as Bible chronology marks this as the generation in which the Most High must once and for all time settle the age-long issue of Universal Domination or Universal Sovereignty. The ones occupying the "secret place of the Most High" are the ones who see the issue and have unequivocally come out in favor of His universal sovereignty and therefore maintain Christian neutrality toward the conflicts of the worldly nations for national sovereignty and domination of the earth. The nonpolitical dwellers in the "secret place of the Most High" could not enter and remain there unless they recognized and held fast to His universal sovereignty. They eagerly look forward to His vindicating of his universal sovereignty within this generation, in the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at the symbolic place called Har-Magedon.—Rev. 16:13-16.

[21] On Bible record Melchizedek, the king of Salem in the Middle East, was on the right side of the issue of universal sovereignty in the twentieth century before our Common Era. The short account written about him by the prophet Moses proves that. To the Universal Sovereign this ancient king ascribed the victory gained by the patriarch Abram (or Abraham) over the four invader kings from the land of Mesopotamia. To this effect, Genesis 14: 18-20 tells us: "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine, and he was priest of the Most High God. Then he blessed him and said: 'Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, Producer of heaven and earth; and blessed be the Most High God, who has delivered your oppressors into your hand!' At that Abram gave him a tenth of everything."

[22] By giving Melchizedek as the priest of the Producer of heaven and earth a tenth part of all the spoils of victory over the four marauder kings, Abram took his stand with priest-king Melchizedek on the side of the Universal Sovereign. In public evidence of this Abram swore in the name of the Universal Sovereign. This he did when restoring to the king of Sodom the properties that he, Abram, had recovered for him. Genesis 14:21-24 informs us: "After that the king of Sodom said to Abram: 'Give me the souls [the rescued people], but take the goods for yourself.' At this Abram said to the king of Sodom: 'I do lift up my hand in an oath to Jehovah the Most High God, Producer of heaven and earth, that, from a thread to a sandal lace, no, I shall take nothing from anything that is yours, in order that you may not say,

20. When is the time for settlement of this paramount issue, and who are the ones that see and take their stand on the issue in favor of the one to be vindicated respecting it?

21. In the twentieth century B.C.E., what king was on the right side of the issue of universal sovereignty, and what patriarch did he bless and with what words?

22, 23. (a) How did Abram, immediately afterward, give public evidence of taking his stand on the side of the Universal Sovereign? (b) How did the Universal Sovereign act within his right, as recorded in Deuteronomy 32:8?

"It was I who made Abram rich." Nothing for me!" The One in whose name Abram swore acted as the Universal Sovereign when he reserved for Abram's descendants, the Israelites, the land in the Middle East that he had promised to Abraham. Says Moses on this:

[23] "When the Most High gave the nations an inheritance, when he parted the sons of Adam from one another, he proceeded to fix the boundary of the peoples with regard for the number of the sons of Israel."—Deut. 32:8.

[24] Even the faithful heavenly angels recognize the universal sovereignty of the creative Producer of heaven and earth. So, when the angel Gabriel explained to the Jewish virgin, Mary, how she would miraculously become the mother of her firstborn son, who was to be called Jesus, he said to her: "Holy spirit will come upon you, and power of the Most High will overshadow you. For that reason also what is born will be called holy, God's Son." (Luke 1:35) And later that full-grown Son showed that he also recognized who was the Universal Sovereign when he said to his disciples: "Continue to love your enemies and to do good and to lend without interest, not hoping for anything back; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind toward the unthankful and wicked."—Luke 6:35.

[25] The time has drawn near when the inspired prayer will be answered against those who oppose the universal sovereignty of the Producer of heaven and earth: "O may they be ashamed and be disturbed for all times, and may they become abashed and perish; that people may know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth." (Ps. 83:17, 18) Hence, in this generation when the paramount issue of universal sovereignty is to be permanently settled, our security lies in dwelling in the "secret place of the Most High," unwaveringly upholding His side of the issue. Our dwelling there will be a protection against our being disastrously influenced and misguided by all the controversial political propaganda now rampant in the earth. —Ps. 27:5.

24. How in the annunciation to Mary was it shown that faithful angels recognize the Universal Sovereign, and how did Jesus Christ show such recognition in his words to his disciples on lending?

25. What prayer regarding the issue of paramount importance is to be answered within our generation, and where does our security lie therefore?

"THE VERY SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY ONE"

[26] What will "anyone dwelling in the secret place of the Most High" procure for himself? The complete opening verse of Psalm 91 answers: "Anyone dwelling in the secret place of the Most High will procure himself lodging under the very shadow of the Almighty One." In this case, the procuring of lodging for oneself means that one will be treated as the guest of the Almighty One. This Almighty One is the same as the Most High. The one and the same Being has both qualities of supreme highness and almightiness.

[27] Because of being all-powerful, he can maintain his supremacy, his universal sovereignty. He can enforce his sovereignty in any and all parts of creation, against any intelligent, living creatures who may rebel against it. It is useless for any creature to oppose or ignore the sovereignty of the Most High, for He is the Almighty One. The reasonable thing to do is to recognize His rightful sovereignty and be submissive, loyal and true to it, always acknowledging him as the Sovereign of one's life. The ones that do this are the ones that are taken into the "secret place of the Most High," as the guests of the Almighty One.

26, 27. (a) Who are the ones that are taken as guests into the "secret place of the Most High"? (b) Why can this One enforce his sovereignty, and so what is the reasonable thing for us to do?

[28] For hundreds of millions of people today who are not familiar with the Holy Bible, it is hard to grasp the idea of an almighty Being, without equal in all the realm of existence. But as long ago as the twentieth century before our Common Era, the Most High, the Producer of heaven and earth, called that fact to the attention of his earthly friend, the patriarch Abram. In the year before the birth of Abram's son Isaac, the Most High by means of His angel spoke of himself as all-powerful. Genesis 17:1, 2 tells us: "When Abram got to be ninety-nine years old, then Jehovah appeared to Abram and said to him: 'I am God Almighty. Walk before me and prove yourself faultless. And I will give my covenant between me and you, that I may multiply you very, very much.'" He proved that nothing was impossible for him by miraculously giving to Abram and his aged wife their son Isaac, when they were both dead as far as reproducing children was concerned. He was a hundred years old and she ninety years old at Isaac's birth. (Gen. 17:17; 21:1-5; Rom. 4:19-21) This Almighty One still exists.

[29] The Almighty One was as a very intimate Being to Abraham's grandson Jacob. (Gen. 35:11; 43:14; 48:3; 49:25; Ex. 6:3) He can be very intimate to us also, even though we are such puny creatures in contrast. Just think of being a guest of His in the "secret place of the Most High"! But today, we must remember, we are admitted into this intimacy only through the good offices of his most intimate heavenly Son, Jesus Christ. During the night before laying down his perfect human life as a sacrifice to God for our sins, Jesus said to his faithful apostles: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6) So it is through him that we approach to the Loftiest One in all existence and acknowledge Him as the Universal Sovereign, our Sovereign to whom our lives and loving loyalty and devotion belong. In this way we procure for ourselves "lodging under the very shadow of the Almighty One."

[30] What a wonderful thing it is for us to be overshadowed by the Almighty One! This betokens our having his interest, concern and attention. The picture here is not that of a smaller person being in the shadow of some much larger person or that of being in the shadow of something lifeless, "the shadow of a heavy crag in an exhausted land." (Isa. 32:2) The right picture in the mind of the composing psalmist is that which is suggested in Psalm 17:8, where David prays to the Most High: "Keep me as the pupil of the eyeball, in the shadow of your wings may you conceal me."

[31] Yes, the picture drawn upon is that of a parent bird hovering aloft over its young and casting a shadow upon them. As long as the young ones down below see that they are in the shadow of their parent above, they know that they have its attention and are protected and are safe from predatory birds. That such bird

28. When did the Most High call his being all-powerful to Abraham's attention, and how did He prove it?
29. Today we can come into the "secret place of the Most High" only by means of whom, and why?

30, 31. What picture evidently was in the mind of the psalmist when speaking about being "under the very shadow of the Almighty One"?

flight overhead denotes attention and protection is confirmed by what is said in Isaiah 31:4, 5: "In the same way Jehovah of armies will come down to wage war over Mount Zion and over her hill. Like birds flying, Jehovah of armies will in the same way defend Jerusalem. Defending her, he will also certainly deliver her. Sparing her, he must also cause her to escape."

32 Thus the Almighty One is likened to a mighty bird, and those who are in the "secret place" of spiritual security are likened to the young brood of that parent bird. Their being "under the very shadow of the Almighty One" makes the "secret place" all the more secure for them. He being the Most High, everything else is beneath him, and nothing below can escape his almighty powers of vision. He can at once detect any movement on the part of anything or anyone below against those who are under his "very shadow." Instantly he can come to the defense and preservation of his overshadowed ones who are lodging with him as spiritual guests. He as Host faithfully keeps his honor with regard to his responsibility toward those whom he entertains as his guests. How consoling this thought! Where else could we find real spiritual security?

32. (a) Thus the Almighty One and we in His "very shadow" are likened to what? (b) His being also the Most High enables Him to do what as a faithful Host?

FREEDOM FROM FEAR OF Spiritual Dangers

TO GAIN the freedom from fear of spiritual dangers that is described in Psalm 91, we have to pursue the course it prescribes. With reference to part of this course, the psalmist goes on to say: "I will say to Jehovah: 'You are my refuge and my stronghold, my God, in whom I will trust.' "—Ps. 91:2.

2 Let us all take note that it is to Jehovah that the psalmist (or the one whom he represents) says: "You are my refuge and my stronghold." In this way he identifies the Most High and the Almighty One as the One bearing the unique name Jehovah. This agrees with what the Most High said to Moses after his return to Egypt: "I am Jehovah. And I used to appear to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as God Almighty, but as respects my name Jehovah I did not make myself known to them."—Ex. 6:2, 3.

1. To procure such freedom from fear, what course must one pursue?
2. Who is thus identified by that unique name, in agreement with Exodus 6:2, 3?

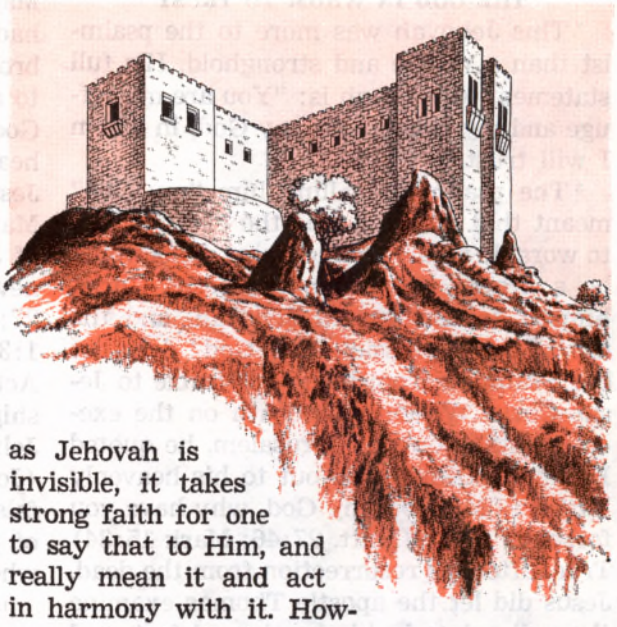
3 When enlarging upon the import of His name, the Almighty One said to Moses: *"Eh·yeh' a·sher' eh·yeh'."* That expression, found in the Hebrew text of Exodus 3:14, means: "I WILL BE THAT I WILL BE" (Rabbi Leeser's translation); or, "I Will Become whatsoever I please" (Rotherham's translation); or, "I SHALL PROVE TO BE WHAT I SHALL PROVE TO BE." (*New World Translation*) This meant that this Almighty One could adapt himself

3. When enlarging upon the import of his name, what Hebrew expression did the Almighty One use, and what did this, as rendered by some English translations, mean and imply?

to the circumstances of his people, and that, whatever he needed to become or prove to be for the sake of his people and in line with his purpose, he could and would become or prove to be that. He could and would meet any situation successfully. So, by this Hebrew expression, He was not talking about his self-existence, his being eternal.

[4] The divine name is related to that expression. The name Jehovah was made his "memorial" name, "the memorial of me to generation after generation." (Ex. 3:15) According to the root of the name Jehovah in the Hebrew language, it appears to mean "He Causes To Become (or, Prove To Be)," that is, as regards Himself and as regards what He will become or prove to be, and not with respect to creating things. Who else in all the realm of intelligent life could rightly give himself a name like that, except the Most High and Almighty One? Not even God's Son, Jesus Christ, assumed a name like that. He could be given the name that combined God's name with it, such as Jeshua or Jesus, which means "Jehovah Is Salvation," but never the name Jehovah strictly by itself.—Jer. 23:6; 33:16.

[5] Correctly, then, those who are represented by the psalmist speaking in Psalm 91:2 can say to Jehovah: "You are my refuge and my stronghold." He has, especially since the postwar year of 1919 C.E., become those things to them, in a spiritual sense, of course. Inasmuch



as Jehovah is invisible, it takes strong faith for one to say that to Him, and really mean it and act in harmony with it. However, who else is there to flee to for safety as in a refuge but Jehovah the Most High? What stronghold could be stronger or harder to assail and overcome than the Almighty One himself? It was with inspired wisdom indeed that ancient King Solomon wrote: "The name of Jehovah is a strong tower. Into it the righteous runs and is given protection."—Prov. 18:10.

[6] In the final analysis, even though it is now done through Jesus Christ the Son of God, yet it is upon the name of Jehovah that fallen, sinful human creatures must call for everlasting salvation. It was not just the pre-Christian prophet Joel who said that. (Joel 2:32) It was the apostle Peter also who said that on the day of Pentecost of 33 C.E., when the Christian congregation was founded. (Acts 2:21) Years later, the apostle Paul also wrote it, in Romans 10:13. Though access to the Most High and Almighty One is now gained only through his Mediator Jesus Christ, yet it is still Jehovah in whom we must find our refuge and who is our unconquerable stronghold.—Zeph. 3:12.

4. (a) According to its Hebrew root, what does the name Jehovah mean, and with reference to whom or what? (b) What about the application of this name to the Christ, God's Son?

5. Why is it fitting to say to Jehovah that He is one's "refuge" and "stronghold," and what does Proverbs 18:10 wisely say?

6. Though Christ is now involved, yet whose name is called upon for salvation, and who is the one that is the "refuge" and "stronghold" for Christians?

7 This Jehovah was more to the psalmist than a refuge and stronghold. His full statement to Jehovah is: "You are my refuge and my stronghold, my God, in whom I will trust."—Ps. 91:2.

8 The psalmist's calling him "my God" meant that Jehovah was the One for him to worship as the Divine Being. This would be a proper expression for Jesus Christ himself to use toward Jehovah, and the use of the expression "my God" does not bar Psalm 91 from being applicable to Jesus Christ. When near death on the execution stake outside Jerusalem, he quoted Psalm 22:1 and cried out to his heavenly Father: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34) True, after his resurrection from the dead, Jesus did let the apostle Thomas examine the nail prints in his hands and feet, and Thomas said in amazement: "My Lord and my God!" But Jesus understood Thomas' exclamation in the right way, and so did the apostle John. In recording this incident in his Gospel account, John was not trying to convey the idea that Jesus was Jehovah God or that Jesus was a trinitarian "God the Son"; but John states the purpose of recording Thomas' exclamation by saying right after Jesus' reaction to Thomas:

9 "Jesus performed many other signs also before the disciples, which are not written down in this scroll. But these have been written down that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God [not, God the Son]."—John 20:26-31; Matt. 16:16.

10 A week before this occurrence with Thomas, the resurrected Jesus said to Mary Magdalene, near the tomb where his body had been buried: "Be on your way to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father and to my God and your God.' " (John 20:17) The heavenly Father was as much a God to Jesus as He was to the disciples of Jesus. Many times the inspired Scriptures speak of Jesus Christ as "the Son of God," but never as "God the Son." (Matt. 14:33; 27:40, 43, 54; Mark 1:11; 5:7; 15:39; Luke 1:35; John 1:34, 49; 5:25; 10:36; 11:4, 27; Acts 9:20; Rev. 2:18; etc.) Thus by worshiping the Most High and Almighty One, Jehovah, as the one living and true God (John 17:3) we are safeguarded from the false trinitarian worship and other forms of pagan worship. Jehovah is the God in whom to put our trust.

11 Said the apostle Paul: "This was that we might have our trust, not in ourselves, but in the God who raises up the dead. From such a great thing as death he did rescue us and will rescue us." (2 Cor. 1: 9, 10) Also, Hebrews 2:13 puts the words of Isaiah 8:17, 18 into the mouth of Jesus Christ, and reads: "And again: 'I will have my trust in him.' And again: 'Look! I and the young children, whom Jehovah gave me.' " We dare not put our trust either in ourselves or in other mortal men: "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man, to whom no salvation belongs. . . . Happy is the one who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in Jehovah his God." (Ps. 146:3-5) The wise man Solomon expressed the same safe rule of conduct, saying: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding."—Prov. 3:5.

12 Consequently, our trust in this God whose name is Jehovah means sticking inseparably to his worship, not compromis-

7-9. (a) Why does use of the expression "my God" in Psalm 91 not bar it from being applied to Jesus Christ? (b) What was doubting Thomas' exclamation before the resurrected Jesus, and what did John prove by inserting that incident in his Gospel?

10. (a) According to his message to his brothers by means of Mary Magdalene, the resurrected Jesus was ascending to whom? (b) By worshiping Jehovah as the one living and true God, from what doctrines are we safeguarded?

11. In whom were Paul's trust, that of Jesus, that of the psalmist and that of the proverbialist?

12. What does trusting in Jehovah as God mean for us as respects his Word, his commandments and his worship?

ing with Babylon the Great, which is the world empire of false religion. (Rev. 17:1 through 18:24) 'Trust in Jehovah as God' means believing wholly in the Sacred Scriptures that He has inspired by his holy spirit and keeping his commandments, as his Son Jesus Christ did. It means jealously guarding the worship of Jehovah God, keeping it clean from human traditions and worldly practices.

13 Here let us pause and take note that, in just those opening two verses of Psalm 91, we have the four important designations of the One whom we worship, also the four vital things that attach to those designations. Consider these: (1) The Most High with his "secret place" in which to dwell; (2) The Almighty One with his "very shadow" under which to lodge; (3) Jehovah with his refuge and stronghold; and (4) God with his trustworthiness. Truly this is an unbeatable combination of factors operating together for the security and preservation of the true worshipers who meet the requirements for enjoying those benefits! This matchless combination of divine qualities has now been in operation during all these past decades of this "time of the end" of this system of things, as a consequence of which we have enjoyed marvelous spiritual security till now. Just how this has served for our spiritual security the psalmist now proceeds to show, making us more aware and appreciative of the dangers from which we have been safeguarded.

THE MENACING "TRAP" OF THE "BIRDCATCHER"

14 "For," says the psalmist in detailing just how the things mentioned in the first two verses are true and realistic, "he himself will deliver you from the trap of the birdcatcher, from the pestilence causing adversities."—Ps. 91:3.

15 The language here is figurative, pictorial, for we are not literal birds in danger of the trap of a literal "birdcatcher." But the likening of us to birds "under the very shadow of the Almighty One" is carried forward here. The psalmist David likens himself and his companions to birds that have actually been caught in the trap, but from which they have been delivered. In Psalm 124:1-8 he says: "Let Israel now say, 'Had it not been that Jehovah proved to be for us when men rose up against us, then they would have swallowed us up even alive, . . . Blessed be Jehovah, who has not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is like a bird that is escaped from the trap of baiters. The trap is broken, and we ourselves have escaped. Our help is in the name of Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth.' " In this case the "baiters" were not literal "birdcatchers," and the "bird" that escaped from their broken trap was not a literal bird, but refers to "our soul," the soul or life of the nation of Israel.

16 In fulfillment of that prophetic psalm, Jehovah God did break the trap in which the anointed remnant of spiritual Israel was caught. It was the trap sprung by Babylon the Great and her political, judicial, military accomplices. In the spring of the postwar year of 1919 Jehovah broke that trap for his repentant remnant and did not let the "baiters," the symbolic birdcatchers, sink their teeth into the flesh of the trapped "bird." Thereafter the escaped remnant of spiritual Israel were taken into the "secret place of the Most High," and "under the very shadow of the

13. (a) In those opening two verses of Psalm 91, we note what four factors operating together for our security? (b) During what particular time have those four qualities operated for us, and where do we find illustrations of the dangers from which we are safeguarded?

14, 15. (a) What kind of language do we find in Psalm 91:3, and why? (b) What like illustration does David give in Psalm 124, and with application to whom?

16. How was there a modern fulfillment of Psalm 124, and is there danger of another "trap"?

Almighty One." Yet a "trap" is still set for them by a "birdcatcher," and Jehovah must deliver them from being caught in it.

17 Who, then, is that "birdcatcher," and what is his "trap"? It has long been discerned and agreed to that the symbolic "birdcatcher" is Satan the Devil. Away back in the issue of March 1, 1904, of the *Watch Tower,* the article entitled "Under His Wings!" commented on Psalm 91:3 and said regarding "the snare of the fowler," that this was "the deceptions of Satan, in which all those not protected shall stumble." (Page 74, column 2) A much later issue of *The Watch Tower* agreed with that and said: "It seems certain that 'the fowler' here named by the prophet is the Devil, and that his snare consists of his methods employed, and by his organization, working in divers and numerous deceptive ways to entrap those who claim to be servants of the Most High God." (Page 231, paragraph 37, of the *Watch Tower* issue of August 1, 1927, presenting the first of a series of three articles on Psalm 91, *Authorized Version*) Of all the symbolic "fowlers" or "birdcatchers" referred to in the Bible, Satan the Devil is the outstanding one.

18 Describing the method of the symbolic birdcatcher, Jeremiah 5:26 says: "For among my people there have been found wicked men. They keep peering, as when birdcatchers crouch down. They have set a ruinous trap. It is men that they catch." How false prophets acted like birdcatchers in the apostate nation of Ephraim (the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel), Hosea 9:8 said: "As regards a prophet, there is the trap of a birdcatcher on all his ways." The great "fowler" or "birdcatcher," Satan the Devil, is out to catch men, those who are lodging "under the very shadow of the Almighty One."

19 What is his symbolic "trap," from which Jehovah God delivers and keeps safe those who continue abiding "in the secret place of the Most High"? The symbolic "trap" that Satan the Devil has set for those who trust in Jehovah God as their "refuge" and "stronghold" is the earthly organization that is opposed to God's organization, namely, Satan's visible organization. In it God's great Adversary tries to catch Jehovah's worshipers and to hold them as victims, to their spiritual ruin and ultimate destruction.

20 Notably from the year 1922 onward it was pointed out from the inspired Scriptures that Jehovah God has an organization, including his organized "remnant" on earth, and that there is an enemy

17. Who is the symbolic "fowler" or "birdcatcher" as pointed out in *Watch Tower* issues of 1904 and 1927?
18. Who are likened to birdcatchers by Jeremiah and Hosea, and what are their methods?
19. What is the symbolic "trap" of the great "birdcatcher"?
20. (a) From when onward notably was it pointed out that God has an organization and that, if not belonging to it, one belongs to what? (b) According to direct statement, to which organization did Jesus and his disciples belong?

organization, Satan's organization, with an invisible demonic part and a visible earthly part. It was pointed out that, if one does not belong to Jehovah's visible organization, then one belongs to the Adversary's organization. Jesus Christ, to whom Psalm 91 applies in the first instance, belonged to the organization of Jehovah God. His faithful disciples also belonged to that same divine organization. That was why, when leading his eleven faithful apostles in prayer, he said to God: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." (John 17:14, 16) This, he said, was why the world hated them.—John 15:18-20.

21 Usually a person or creature walks into a trap without knowing it. Generally, the trapper sets out some bait to lure the unsuspecting creature within range of the trap and to trigger the trap by nibbling at the bait. The "birdcatcher" Satan the Devil is a great Baiter. What bait does he use to lure people into his visible worldly organization, to become victimized in it as in a trap? The bait is the selfish attractions of this world, its promising opportunities for selfishly gaining wealth, fame, position and power. Warning against such deceptive bait, Jehovah God inspired the Christian apostle John to write to those lodging "under the very shadow of the Almighty One":

22 "Do not be loving either the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him; because everything in the world—the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one's means of life—does not originate with the Father, but originates with the world. Furthermore, the world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:15-17.

23 Now, nineteen hundred years after those words were penned by John, the traplike organization of Satan the Devil is very close to passing away forever. Those of us who have come out of Satan's visible organization into the "secret place of the Most High," why should we desire to be lured back into that doomed organization? We do not care to be like the onetime Christian Demas, concerning whom the apostle Paul in a final letter before his death said: "Demas has forsaken me because he loved the present system of things, and he has gone to Thessalonica." (2 Tim. 4:10) Religious Babylon the Great, including Christendom, has been caught and is held fast in the trap of Satan's visible organization and will suffer early destruction with it. In obedience to God's command in Revelation 18:4 we have come out of Babylon the Great and out of Satan's trap in which she is caught. By not going back to her, we can keep on enjoying the benefits of our deliverance from the "trap of the birdcatcher." Under the "very shadow of the Almighty One" we have spiritual security.

"THE PESTILENCE CAUSING ADVERSITIES"

24 In the same verse, along with the "trap of the birdcatcher," the psalmist mentions another potential threat to spiritual security, namely, a deadly epidemic disease that is very contagious, infectious. He says: "For he himself will deliver you from the trap of the birdcatcher, from the pestilence causing adversities."—Ps. 91:3.

25 Like the birdcatcher's "trap," this

21, 22. (a) What is generally used as a lure into a trap, and what is the lure used by the Great Birdcatcher? (b) What did God inspire John to write against the deceptive bait?

23. (a) Why do we not want to become like Demas, mentioned in association with Paul? (b) Obedience to Revelation 18:4 has brought us out of what "trap," and into what place?

24, 25. (a) What does the psalmist associate with the birdcatcher's trap, in the same verse? (b) What does this symbolize, and why appropriately so?

adversity-causing "pestilence" is symbolic. Since the psalmist under inspiration associates the two together, the symbolic pestilence of today is something that goes along with the birdcatcher's trap, that is to say, with Satan's visible, earthly organization. This figurative "pestilence" is, in fact, bred, cultured, within that selfish, worldly organization. This infectious "pestilence" that rages like a tempest throughout the earth is nationalism.

[26] Secular historians have noted the fact that, since World War I of 1914-1918 C.E., the spirit of nationalism has seized upon the peoples of the world. Quite naturally, this, because that war was fought by the Allies "for self-determination of peoples." Said British historian Arnold Toynbee as recently as November 21, 1972:

> "Since the end of World War II nationalism has doubled the number of local sovereign independent states and has halved their average size. . . . Mankind's strategic and hygienic problems are global and they are pressing; they cannot be solved by the governments of local states. They call for the establishment of a global authority endowed with overriding power. Mankind's survival demands political unity, yet mankind's present mood is increasingly divisive. Have we gone mad?"

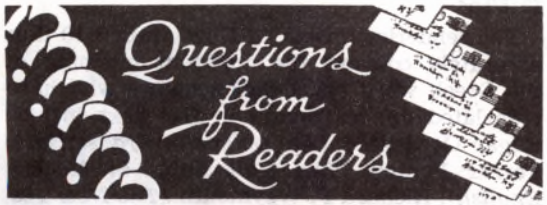
[27] Satan the Devil, whom Jesus Christ called "the ruler of this world," is responsible for this wave of nationalism by means of which he has hoped to destroy those who have said to Jehovah: "You are my refuge and my stronghold, my God, in whom I will trust." (Ps. 91:2) This political "pestilence" of nationalism has caused many and great "adversities." Despite the establishment of the League of Nations in 1920, intensely nationalistic dictators have come forth, like Mussolini of Italy, Stalin of Russia, Hitler of Germany, the empire-minded political party of Japan, and so forth. So it furnished the driving force for World War II. It has fanned up fanatical patriotism, religiously fervent gestures to national symbols and emblems, military preparedness accompanied by burdensome taxation, international rivalries, insistence on national sovereignty rather than submission to Jehovah's universal sovereignty and Messianic kingdom.

[28] Not to speak of the adversities that all of this has caused for the human race in general, it has resulted in special hardships for Jehovah's Christian witnesses. But the Almighty One has not let them become infected with the "pestilence" of nationalism and fall victim to its deadly effect upon Christian spirituality. They have not been lured nor pressured into worshiping the political "wild beast" bearing the number 666, nor its political "image," the United Nations, the successor to the League of Nations. (Revelation, chapter 13; 15:2-4; 20:4) They have not compromised on giving exclusive devotion to God and upholding his universal sovereignty.

[29] In 1939, despite the raging of World War II, they unitedly came out world wide in favor of absolute Christian neutrality toward worldly political and military conflicts. (See the article "Neutrality" in the *Watchtower* issue of November 1, 1939.) Although they have suffered, some even to the death, for their faithfulness, Jehovah God has kept them spiritually secure "in the secret place of the Most High" and "under the very shadow of the Almighty One."

(To be continued)

26. Since when has nationalism seized upon peoples, and what did historian Toynbee say recently about nationalism?
27. How has nationalism been like a "pestilence causing adversities"?
28. For whom has this "pestilence" caused special hardship, but on what issue have these not compromised?
29. Despite World War II, what did these come out in favor of in 1939, and with what effect upon their spirituality?



● Might Satan be responsible for some of the severe storms and floods that have in recent years been so destructive to life and property? —U.S.A.

The Bible does report one instance of Satan's causing a destructive storm that brought death to faithful Job's children. (Job 1:12, 18, 19) But we are not to assume on this basis that Satan is directly responsible for all destructive storms. Why not? Because it was by special divine permission that Satan was allowed to test Job's integrity.

Actually, man himself is often to blame for so-called "natural" disasters. His mismanagement of earth's resources and interference with natural cycles have had a definite effect on the weather and climate. Observes the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1974 edition): "There is growing evidence that emissions into the atmosphere of large quantities of heat, gases, and particles by industrial and other activities are causing changes in the weather and climate." Additionally, much flood damage has resulted from removal of trees, which help to prevent erosion, and from building towns in the lowlands or flood plains adjacent to rivers. Many authorities recommend that nations prevent this practice, one by which man brings so much suffering on himself.

It may be noted, too, that humans generally have chosen to ignore God's law in their lives and so the Creator has left them to shift for themselves. As a result, they experience the outworking of his unchangeable law: "Whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." —Gal. 6:7.

Still, in an indirect way, Satan has been responsible for the calamities that have befallen man. The Devil has definitely influenced humans for harm, causing them to pursue a course of selfishness and greed to the point of ruining the environment. The apostle Paul, when writing to Christians at Ephesus, pointed out that they were no longer molded by that bad influence, saying: "It is you God made alive though you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you at one time walked according to the system of things of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit that now operates in the sons of disobedience."—Eph. 2:1, 2.

Satan is thus referred to as "the ruler of the authority of the air." Since Christians are shown to be no longer under his influence, it is evident that the "air" over which he rules could not be the literal atmosphere. For, like all others of mankind, Christians are affected by literal atmospheric disturbances. But they are not under the control or influence of "wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places" over whom Satan exercises authority. (Eph. 6:12) So the "air" is the superterrestrial realm in which these "wicked spirit forces" operate. And the "spirit" that operates, not in true Christians, but in "the sons of disobedience" is the invisible active force over which the satanic "ruler" has control and which proceeds from him to affect those who, like him, are disobedient to Jehovah God.

Thus it can be seen that there are no clear indications, Scriptural or otherwise, for attributing certain storms and flood disasters of recent years *directly* to superhuman powers.

● At Revelation 5:10 the *New World Translation* reads: "You made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God, and they are to rule as kings over the earth." Does not the Greek word *epi*, translated "over," actually mean "on" or "upon"?—U.S.A.

The basic significance of the Greek word *epi* is "on" or "upon," but that is not the only meaning. When used in connection with power, authority or dignity, *epi* can also mean "over." Numerous Biblical examples illustrate this.

IN COMING ISSUES

- **Why Is It So Hard to Make a Living?**
- **Translating the Bible —A Hazardous Task.**
- **Who Will See "the Sign of the Son of Man"?**

God is referred to in the Bible as being "over [*epi*] all." (Rom. 9:5; Eph. 4:6) The Ethiopian eunuch was "over [*epi*] all" the treasure of Candace. (Acts 8:27) The "faithful and discreet slave" is appointed by his master "over [*epi*] his domestics." (Matt. 24:45) Seven certified men were to be selected by the Jerusalem congregation that the apostles might "appoint them over [*epi*] this necessary business" of food distribution. (Acts 6:3) Clearly, in all these instances the Greek word *epi* followed by the genitive case cannot be translated "on" or "upon," but, in harmony with the context, is properly rendered "over."—Note also Revelation 9:11; 11:6.

Likewise, at Revelation 5:10, those entrusted with rulership are in charge of the earth, exercising dominion over those dwelling on it. The subject matter of this text is rulership, and logically, therefore, the Greek word *epi* calls attention, not to the location of the rulers, but to the area over which they exercise authority. That they rule "*over* the earth" agrees with the rest of the Scriptures, which reveal that God's kingdom by Christ is heavenly and that Jesus' associate rulers are promised heavenly life.—Luke 22:29, 30; John 14:2, 3; 1 Cor. 15:50-54.

The rendering "over" at Revelation 5:10 thus accurately conveys the apparent meaning of the Greek word *epi*. Other scholars who have translated *epi* as "over" in this text include Edgar Goodspeed (*An American Translation*), Ferrar Fenton (*The Holy Bible in Modern English*), Richard F. Weymouth (*The New Testament in Modern Speech*) and Msgr. Ronald Knox (*The New Testament in English*). See also the Catholic Confraternity's translation of *The New Testament* (1941), *The Amplified New Testament*, *The 'Holy Scriptures'* by J. N. Darby and *The New Testament* by Charles B. Williams.

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