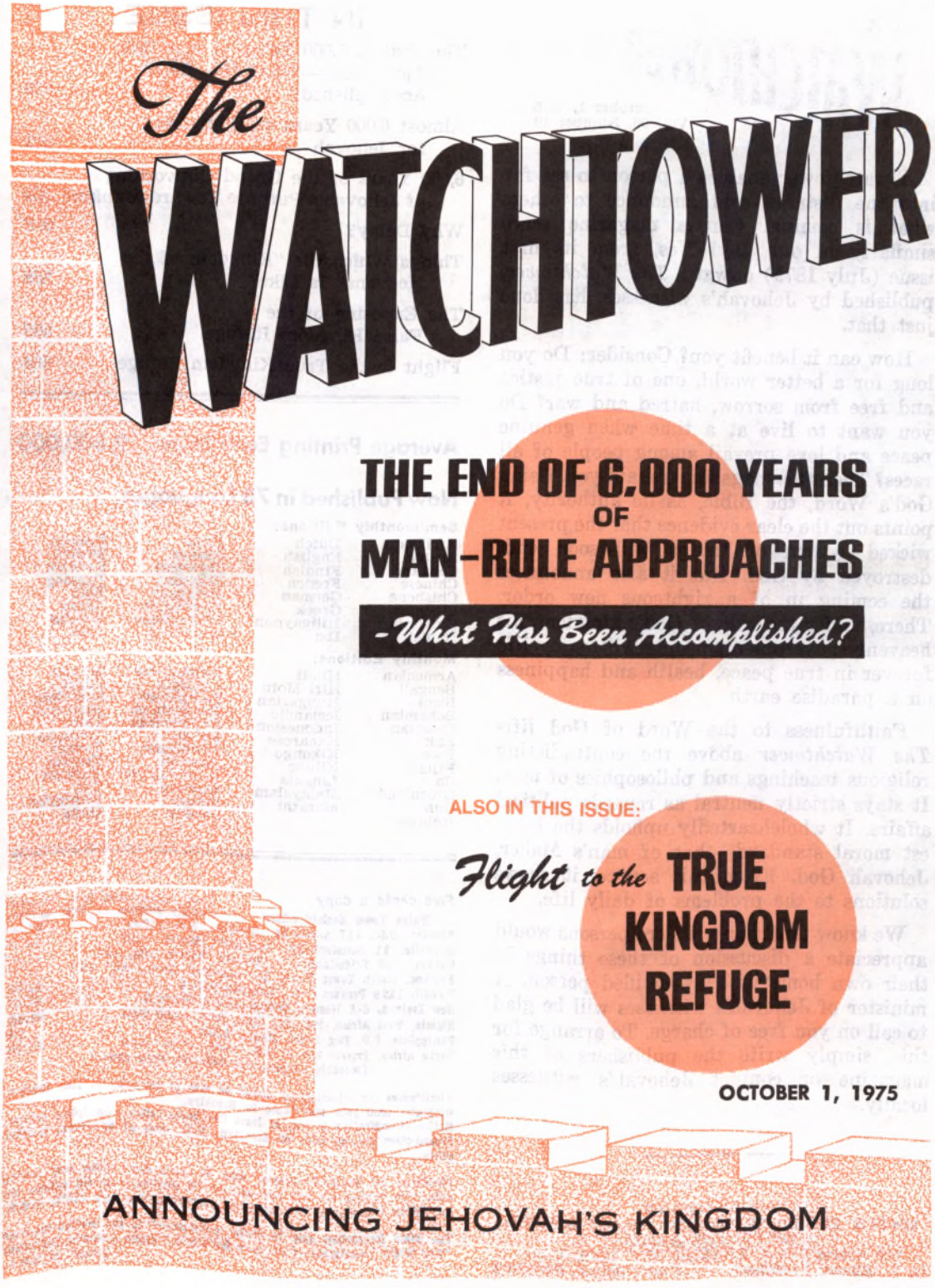

The WATCHTOWER

THE END OF 6,000 YEARS OF MAN-RULE APPROACHES

-What Has Been Accomplished?

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Flight to the **TRUE KINGDOM REFUGE**

OCTOBER 1, 1975

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

October 1, 1975
Vol. 96, Number 19

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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IN THIS ISSUE

The End of 6,000 Years of Man-Rule Approaches—What Has Been Accomplished? 579

Almost 6,000 Years of Witnessing for Jehovah 581

6,000 Years of the Grand Outworking of Jehovah's Purpose Toward Mankind 584

Why Delay? 588

Things Which the "Kingdom of the Heavens" Is Like 589

The Exposing of the False Kingdom Refuge 595

Flight to the True Kingdom Refuge 604

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The End of 6,000 Years of Man-Rule Approaches

-What Has Been Accomplished?

SINCE a new Jewish lunar year began in September 1975 a significant point in human history was reached. What was that? According to the Bible's count of time, mankind then completed 6,000 years of existence on earth. Yes, the first man Adam, if he had chosen to remain obedient under God's rulership, would have still been alive and 6,000 years old in September of this year.

Does this mean, then, that mankind has now reached 6,000 years into the 7,000-year period that God 'blessed and made sacred' as his great "rest day"? Does it mean that Christ's millennial Kingdom rule, as the final 1,000 years of that "rest day," is to be reckoned from September 1975?—Gen. 1:27, 31; 2:2, 3; Rev. 20:1-6.

No, it does not mean that. Why not? Well, the Bible record shows that God's creations on the "day" just preceding that 7,000-year "rest day" did not end with Adam's creation. It shows a time lapse between the creation of Adam and that of his wife, Eve. During that time, God had Adam name the animals. Whether that period amounted to weeks or months or years, we do not know. So we do not know exactly when Jehovah's great "rest day" began, nor do we know exactly when it will end. The same applies to the beginning of Christ's millennial reign. The Bible provides us no way to fix the date, and so it does us no good to speculate when that date may be.—Gen. 2:18-25; Matt. 24:42, 44.

However, the Bible's time clock *does* indicate to us that 6,000 years of human history end in this year 1975. Early in God's "rest day" Adam became a rebel against God-rule. Thus, for the most part, the first 6,000 years of man's history have been marked by man-rule. What did man's independent rulership accomplish during those six millenniums of time, or six spans of 1,000 years each? Let us take a panoramic view of those millenniums, each in its turn.

First Thousand Years Man's happiness in the paradise of Eden ended as Adam and Eve rebelled against the sovereignty of their Creator, Jehovah God. Justly, God expelled the man and his wife from the garden into the uncultivated earth, to fend for themselves under the independent government of their choice. Probably that became a form of patriarchal rule. But during the 900-and-more years that remained of Adam's life, sin-tainted mankind became involved more and more in violence, murder, false religion and a permissive way of life that ended only in death.—Rom. 5:12; Gen. 3:12, 16-19; 4:10, 11, 23, 26.

Second Thousand Years Under man-rule, "the badness of man" abounded to the point that God, after giving due warning, brought a global deluge to destroy those who had "ruined" the earth and filled it with violence. Though God preserved alive faithful Noah and his family because of their righteousness, their de-

scendants became involved in human politics in defiance of Jehovah God. Less than 200 years after the Flood, Nimrod became a ruthless dictator and king. He exalted himself against the Most High God, so that there came to be a saying, "Just like Nimrod a mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah." His hunting exploits no doubt included the killing of men, as well as of animals, so that he established a tyranny over mankind. When his rebellious course culminated in building a city, Babel, and "a tower with its top in the heavens," Jehovah performed the miracle of confusing the language of mankind. This forced them to abandon their building program, and to be scattered over the earth. The first human dictatorship disintegrated in defeat!—Gen. 6:4, 5, 11; 10:8-12; 11:1-9.

Third Thousand Years There were wars among mankind, tribe against tribe, city-state against city-state and kingdom against kingdom. Egypt became the dominant world power, but was punished by God because it oppressed his people, Israel. The people of the nations drifted deeper into pagan idolatry, even to the point of offering child sacrifices. Oppressive dictatorships arose and the common people suffered as pawns of the rulers.—Gen. 14:1-16; Ex. 1:8-11; 6:1-6; 14:26-31; Deut. 18:9-12.

Fourth Thousand Years In Egypt's wake, a procession of world empires, ruled by ambitious kings, arose in succession. These became prominent in the fourth millennium. Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome—each, in turn, fought with its mighty armies and gained world domination. They were also permitted to gain and wield sovereignty over the nation of Israel. The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation both liken such mighty political powers to "beasts." False religion was always prominent in its support of these cruel dictatorships.—Dan. 7:2-8, 17; 8:3-8, 20-22; Rev. 13:1, 2; 17:3-8, 11; Ezek. 21:25-27.

Fifth Thousand Years Imperial Rome now held sway over many lands. In the domain of Rome, John the Baptist was beheaded, Jesus Christ was impaled, the imperial armies destroyed Jerusalem and Christians were persecuted—all this within the first century of our Common Era. In the fourth century C.E., the unbaptized Caesar Constantine organized Christendom with its clergymen and the politico-religious setup of Rome, and the Catholic Hierarchy brought on the Dark Ages, with all their miserable oppression of the common man, and particularly of those who sought to serve God. The *Church-and-*State combine was glorified in 800 C.E. when the Roman pope crowned Charlemagne as ruler of the Holy Roman Empire.—Mark 6:25, 27; 15:25, 37; Luke 21:20-24; 2 Thess. 2:3.

Sixth Thousand Years The Roman Empire fragmented into rival and oppressive European states. These sent their warships abroad to seize and colonize the so-called "pagan" areas of the earth. Great Britain became the dominant world power. Colonial America declared and gained its independence from Britain, but continued close alliance in an Anglo-American world-power arrangement. The eighteenth century was a time of industrial revolution, and the twentieth century started an era of world wars, which embraced nearly all political nations, supported by the leading religions. The domination of the democratic "king of the south" was challenged by the Germanic "king of the north," but dictatorial Germany has now been superseded by the Communist giant as "king." None of these forms of political government have brought real happiness or security to their subjects. And now a nuclear arms race threatens the annihilation

of mankind. Revolution and rebellion against authority, the mushrooming of a permissive society and the rapid growth of crime and pollution have added to man's problems.—Dan. 11:27-40; Rev. 11:18.

Panoramic Survey This 6,000-year period of man's existence was early marked by the loss of paradise. Since then, frustrated mankind has tried many kinds of government in an effort to regain at least some form of material paradise. But what has been accomplished? The result is world confusion. Mankind faces ruination, just as Jesus foretold concerning our day: "On the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out . . . while men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth." But God's Word holds forth hope! —Luke 21:25, 26.

ALMOST 6,000 YEARS OF Witnessing For Jehovah

THE rebellion of man and woman in Eden raised a great issue. Would humans out of sheer love for Jehovah loyally choose to render sacred service to their Creator and Sovereign God. "The original serpent, the one called Devil and Satan," had set out to mislead the entire inhabited earth. By challenging Jehovah's sovereignty, he implied that not even one of mankind would prove faithful to God. Satan claimed that man was inherently selfish—that man would serve God only for what he could get out of it in a material way.—Gen. 3:1-5; Rev. 12:9; Job 1:7-12.

In his great wisdom, Jehovah determined to prove once and for all time the rightness and righteousness of his sovereignty. He foresaw that there would be those of mankind, of the offspring of Adam, who would rejoice to uphold His sovereignty under whatever kind of test Satan might bring upon them. Once this issue had been settled beyond any doubt, the vindication of Jehovah's sovereignty would thereby stand proved for all eternity. This would be a touchstone against which any future challenge could immediately be tested and turned back. But it would take a period of time, some 6,000 years, to settle this issue. And what have 6,000 years of human history shown thus far? Have there been integrity-keeping witnesses of Jehovah on earth during all that time, to prove that God is true and that Satan is a liar?—Prov. 27:11.

First Millennium

Abel was the first integrity-keeping witness of Jehovah, upholding His sovereignty. (Heb. 11:4) Because he offered an animal sacrifice acceptable to Jehovah, while Cain's offering was not acceptable, Abel was murdered by his brother Cain. "The founding of the world" took place when Adam and Eve began to have sons and daughters. Abel was the second reported son. Enoch, the seventh man from Adam, also 'walked with God' as a faithful witness, and prophesied concerning Jehovah's judgment of ungodly men. Because of his faithfulness, after 365 years, "God took him" from the land of the living in such

a way that he did not see death in the same way that others do.—Gen. 4:1-15; 5:1-4, 21-24; Luke 11:49-51; Jude 14, 15; Heb. 11:5.

Second Millennium

Early in this millennium, Methuselah's son Lamech was inspired by God to utter a prophecy that his own son Noah would bring comfort to mankind. Born in 1056 A.M. (*anno mundi*), Noah, as a man of towering faith, lived 944 of his 950 years in this millennium. Although angelic sons of God disobediently took up married life on earth in his day and mankind became prone to violence, Noah "walked with the true God" and proved to be "faultless among his contemporaries." As evidence of his faith, at God's direction he constructed a huge "ark for the saving of his household [of seven other faithful ones]; and through this faith he condemned the world" of ungodly men. He was "a preacher of righteousness," and later he offered sacrifices to God in thankfulness for deliverance during the Flood. In serving faithfully in obedience to Jehovah, Noah and his family provided living proof that Satan is a liar, to the chagrin of that wicked one. —Gen. 5:28-31; 6:9; Heb. 11:7; 2 Pet. 2:5.

Third Millennium

Noah lived six years into this millennium. Two years after his death, Abraham was born. Because Abraham truly believed God, putting obedience to his Creator ahead of physical comfort and even demonstrating faith that God could restore to life by a resurrection, he was richly blessed by Jehovah. As "Jehovah's friend," Abraham received God's promise that the Messiah would come through his family line. Abraham, his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob (later named Israel) all showed exemplary faith, not attaching themselves to any human kingdom but dwelling in tents in a foreign land as they awaited the symbolic "city" that Jehovah would build. Jacob's twelve sons became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel. Of these sons, Joseph showed great loyalty to God by following high moral principles and in rescuing his father's family (in whom the Abrahamic promise centered) in a time of famine. Later, Moses chose to champion the worship of the true God, rejecting personally the glory of Egypt. Steadfastly he obeyed Jehovah in leading God's people out of Egyptian captivity to be organized into a typical "holy nation." A contemporary, Job, was prominent in refusing to break integrity to God, even when afflicted with material losses and impairment of health. Joshua, Caleb and the judges of Israel were also outstanding fighters for righteousness. As this millennium drew toward its close, David, the son of Jesse, proved to be 'a man agreeable to God's heart,' and because of his unswerving allegiance God made with him a covenant for an everlasting kingdom. —Gen. 9:28, 29; 11:26; 12:1-3; Jas. 2:23; Acts 13:22; Heb. 11:8-32; Job 1:8; 27:5.

Fourth Millennium

Following the death of David's son Solomon, the nation of Israel was divided into two kingdoms. Faithful kings were in a minority. However, there were many integrity-keepers to be found among Jehovah's prophets, such as Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah and many others. It was reported in Elijah's time that seven thousand faithful ones in the northern Israelite kingdom had "not bent down to Baal." In the southern kingdom, at Jehovah's temple in Jerusalem, thousands of individuals, including many loyal priests, continued to worship the true God. When the northern kingdom went into exile, many God-fearing Jews who had come from the north con-

tinued to worship at Jerusalem; and when Jerusalem itself was desolated, faithful exiles in Babylon—Ezekiel, Daniel and others—continued to uphold true worship. After seventy years, nearly 50,000 devout Jews and associates returned to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, and restore Jehovah's worship there. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged them in this. Also, Nehemiah and other faithful Jews worked hard at instructing God's people in the Law, so that they could appreciate that "the joy of Jehovah" is indeed a "stronghold." Faithful scribes, too, worked painstakingly at making handwritten copies of the Scriptures, and God's Word multiplied and spread.—1 Ki. 19:18; Neh. 8:9, 10; Hag. 1:12-14; Zech. 1:1-3; Heb. 11:32-38.

Fifth Millennium

This millennium opens with the Bible's mention of Jehovah's blessing and favor on Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary, Simeon, Anna and other true worshipers. John the Baptist came 'preparing the way of Jehovah,' and his fearless service led to his death as a martyr. But fear for his own safety did not make him compromise. The promised Messiah himself appeared, to set the perfect example of integrity. Oh, how Satan strove to find some flaw in Jesus' constant loyalty to Jehovah's sovereignty! But he failed in this, miserably. Jesus' faithfulness under the most excruciating trials, right down to a cruel death, gave the complete and conclusive answer to the challenger. The apostles and other early Christians followed in Jesus' footsteps. But after the close of the first century, as foretold, the "weed" class of false Christians, sown by Satan, began to persecute the "wheat" class, the true Christians. About the fourth century, some who rejected the pagan Trinity doctrine were labeled "Arians." Others who held faithfully to celebrating the Memorial of Christ's death on Nisan 14 were termed "Quartodecimans (or, Fourteenthers)." In the seventh century some who held to "genuine apostolic Bible-Christianity" were called "Paulicians." But this name-calling, along with persecutions, did not deter faithful anointed Christians from keeping their integrity! —Luke chapters 1 and 2; Matt. 13:24-30.

Sixth Millennium

Amidst Christendom's vast domain of imitation Christians, the true anointed Christians continued to remain loyal in the face of sadistic tortures and martyrdom at the hands of the Catholic priesthood. From the twelfth century C.E., the "Waldenses" in France rejected Catholic traditions in favor of adhering closely to the Bible. Many of these became martyrs. One of them said: 'The Cross should not be prayed to but loathed as the instrument of the Just One's death.' Starting in the sixteenth century C.E., the Reformation resulted in a breaking away from the authority of the Catholic Church on the part of many individuals and countries. In the 1870's, the modern Christian witnesses of Jehovah began preaching vigorously as an organized group. Despite opposition from the 'weedlike' clergy of Christendom, this "wheat" class was separated out, and down to this year of 1975, they have witnessed in 207 lands by their preaching. Particularly during the two world wars, these Christians were bitterly persecuted. Many of them died in Nazi concentration camps rather than renouncing their faith in Jehovah God, and Jehovah's witnesses continue to face trials in Communist and other lands. But through it all they keep integrity, and continue wholeheartedly to proclaim the good tidings of the Kingdom throughout the entire earth. Since 1935,

the few thousand anointed ones have been joined by over two million others in witnessing to God's kingdom, and these are truly a "great crowd" looking to Jehovah as their Universal Sovereign and to his Son as their Messianic King!—Rev. 2:10; 3:10; 20:4; 7:9, 10.

Jehovah Vindicated

As the millenniums have passed on into history, Jehovah's side of the issue raised in Eden has been convincingly proved. In all ages, Jehovah has had his faithful witnesses on earth, and they are here on earth in rapidly growing numbers today! At the close of this sixth millennium, they are thankful to God for all his marvelous provisions, including the gift of life itself and the glorious prospect of everlasting life in his new order. All of this has been made possible by the sacrifice of his integrity-keeping Son, the Messiah-King, Jesus Christ. They believe that Jehovah's sovereignty is the right sovereignty. Their one desire is to follow his righteous ways. They are determined that Satan will never swerve them from the path of integrity. They rejoice to have a share in proving Satan to be a liar and they press on with unshakable faith in making known the modern "magnificent things of God." What joy they have in knowing that Jehovah himself is about to act to uphold righteousness and to magnify His own sovereignty by removing Satan, his adherents and all his wicked works in the impending great "day of Jehovah's anger"!—Acts 2:11; Zeph. 2:2, 3.

6,000 YEARS OF THE Grand Outworking Of Jehovah's Purpose Toward Mankind

WHEN Adam openly rejected Jehovah's rightful sovereignty, Jehovah dealt with mankind in a merciful, loving way. He did not put Adam to death immediately and start all over again by creating a replacement for him here on earth. Rather, God chose to allow Adam to continue living and to commence producing the human family. This family that stemmed from Adam was "subjected to futility" by God in that, through inheritance from Adam, it came under condemnation of death. Of itself, humankind could find no way of release from this unhappy condition. However, this subjection to futility was "on the basis of hope," in that God, out of his incomparable undeserved kindness, purposed a way out for faithful ones among Adam's descendants. In this manner they might be "set free from enslavement to corruption" and be delivered into a "glorious freedom" as restored children of God. This grand hope was expressed in a prophecy that Jehovah himself spoke back in Eden. Examine now the record, millennium by millennium, as to whether there has been any slowness on God's part in carrying forward his purpose to bring release for humankind. —Rom. 8:20, 21; Gen. 3:15; 2 Pet. 3:9.

FROM 4026 TO 3026 B.C.E.

During the millenniums preceding man's creation, God had shown deep love and interest by preparing a paradise home for the human family. But when man in Eden rebelled, Jehovah, as the Sovereign Ruler, held court, sentenced Adam and Eve to death, and expelled them from the garden of pleasure. Jehovah acted in accordance with his quality of *justice*. But he did not carry out the sentence in such a way as to blot out the human race. He allowed the first pair, though now sinners, to produce children. When sentencing Adam and Eve, Jehovah also declared that he would raise up a "seed" or offspring to bruise Satan and his followers. This indicated that he would act with *mercy* toward Adam's offspring, so that they could have *hope* of recovery and life through this promised "seed."—Gen. 3:8-24.

When Cain murdered his brother Abel, Jehovah made clear that mankind is to be held accountable for bloodguilt. This *just* God inspired faithful Enoch to prophesy that Jehovah would come "with his holy myriads, to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly concerning all their ungodly deeds." So Jehovah made it clear that he would always act justly and in righteousness against the wicked, but in his mercy he held out a glorious hope for those who would honor him. —Gen. 4:9-11; Jude 14, 15; Ex. 34:6, 7.

FROM 3026 TO 2026 B.C.E.

Early in this millennium Noah was born. Jehovah used Noah in acting out a prophetic portrayal of the deliverance that He would at last bring to mankind. In what way? Jehovah brought the cataclysm of the Deluge as his execution of judgment upon the ungodly. Only Noah and his family survived, along with specimens of all the animal kinds, in the ark, to emerge in due course into the cleansed earth. More than two millenniums later, the Messiah, Jesus, explained the prophetic meaning of the Deluge. He said: "For just as the days of Noah were, so the presence of the Son of man will be. For as they were in those days before the flood, eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and they took no note until the flood came and swept them all away, so the presence of the Son of man will be." In this way the "Son of man," Jesus himself, pointed forward to the purposed "day and hour" when Jehovah God would bring the "great tribulation" upon the earth, ridding it of ungodly men.—Gen. 6:13-22; Matt. 24:36-39.

Following the Deluge, when granting man permission to eat animal flesh, Jehovah declared life to be sacred and he prohibited the eating of any blood. But even while Noah yet lived, the cleansed human society became corrupt and showed disregard for God's law, as Nimrod, a wanton hunter, set himself up as earth's first king. Jehovah had purposed that human society should spread abroad in all the earth. When Nimrod defiantly opposed this purpose by trying to centralize the world of mankind under himself as dictator and "god," Jehovah acted! By confusing the language of mankind, Jehovah enforced the scattering of mankind "over all the surface of the earth." Thus he showed that no one who tries to tamper with his stated purpose will succeed.—Gen. 9:1-7; 10:9, 10; 11:1-9; Isa. 55:11.

FROM 2026 TO 1026 B.C.E.

Jehovah had made known that the promised "seed" and Deliverer for mankind would come through the family line of Noah's son Shem. In this line there appeared Abraham, a man who was counted righteous because of his strong faith. God made a covenant with Abraham, stating that by

means of Abraham's seed, all nations of the earth would "certainly bless themselves." By having Abraham go to the point of attempting to offer his son Isaac in sacrifice, God portrayed not only the future sacrifice of his own Son as a ransom for mankind but also the glorious resurrection hope. God also used Abraham's great-grandson Joseph in Egypt to picture how the Messiah would be raised up as a savior for mankind. In the nearby land of Uz, Job's "holding fast his integrity" in proving Satan to be a liar foreshadowed how the Messiah, as well as other faithful servants of God, would endure much persecution in vindication of Jehovah's purposes.—Gen. 22:3-18; Heb. 11:17-19; Gen. 47:21-27; Job 2:3.

At the halfway mark of this millennium, Jehovah led Israel, under Moses, out of Egypt and told them: "You yourselves will become to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." God gave a detailed law to Moses, together with instructions for the tabernacle, its service and the priesthood. All of this provided foregleams of Jehovah's future administration of matters for uniting all things under the Messiah. As this millennium drew to its end, God made a covenant with faithful King David, which gave promise that Messiah, as the 'seed of David,' would sit upon the throne of God's kingdom forever. As this millennium closed, David's son Solomon completed the building of Jehovah's grand temple in Jerusalem. Indeed, the outworking of God's purpose was moving grandly forward!—Ex. 19:5, 6; Eph. 1:9, 10; 1 Chron. 17:11-14; 2 Chron. 5:1.

NEXT ISSUE—SPECIAL!

One World, One Government, Under God's Sovereignty

FROM 1026 TO 26 B.C.E.

The dedication of the glorious temple of Jehovah built by Solomon was held in the opening year of the fourth millennium. This was at the halfway point between Adam's creation and our present day. Fittingly, Solomon prayed that the temple at Jerusalem would become a house of prayer for all nations. But Jehovah had specially chosen Israel to be the instrument by means of which He would reveal His divine purpose in restoring mankind, and through them He continued to make prophetic patterns of future events.—1 Ki. 8:1-66; Mark 11:17.

However, Israel fell into apostasy. In 740 B.C.E., Jehovah used Assyria as 'the rod of his anger' in punishing and sending the northern kingdom of Israel into exile. In 607 B.C.E., he likewise used Babylon in desolating Judah and Jerusalem. After seventy years a faithful remnant of Jews returned from exile in Babylon to rebuild the temple and restore true worship in Jerusalem.—Isa. 10:5-11; Jer. 25:8-14.

God used the prophet Daniel to prophesy that "Messiah the Leader" would appear sixty-nine weeks of years after the going forth of the command to rebuild Jerusalem itself, which command was issued in 455 B.C.E. Therefore Messiah, God's Anointed One, would be due to appear in 29 C.E. God also indicated that the Gentile domination of earth, as permitted by God, commencing in 607 B.C.E., would last for 2,520 years, ending therefore in 1914 C.E.—Dan. 9:24-27; 4:16, 23, 25, 32.

The written canon of the Hebrew Scriptures was completed in this millennium, by the end of the fifth century B.C.E. But language barriers were not to hinder the spread of the vital information contained in those sacred scrolls. During the third century B.C.E., the Greek Septuagint version of the Hebrew Scriptures began to be

made in Egypt; this was prepared for the benefit of Greek-speaking Jews scattered in other lands.—Rom. 3:1, 2; 15:4.

Events of the first century C.E. are of tremendous significance for mankind. From the spring of 29 C.E. John the Baptist was used to "prepare the way" before the Messiah. In the fall of this year, John baptized Jesus, at which time Jehovah anointed Jesus "with holy spirit and power." Jesus thus became the Messiah, Jehovah's King-designate and High Priest, for bringing everlasting salvation to mankind. By preaching and performing miracles during a special three-and-a-half-year ministry, Jesus demonstrated how he would carry out Jehovah's purpose when he gained the promised Kingdom rule. This would include raising the dead, and healing and restoring mankind to perfection in an earthly paradise. Jesus was impaled on a torture stake, condemned by the Jewish priests and Roman authorities. After his death and burial, Jehovah declared him to be altogether righteous by resurrecting him from the dead to heavenly life. Then the value of that perfect human sacrifice was presented to God in heaven by Jesus as High Priest, that its benefits might be applied on behalf of humankind.—Matt. 3:3, 13-17; Acts 10:37-43; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 9:24-28.

On the day of Pentecost, 33 C.E., Jehovah poured out his spirit on Jesus' assembled disciples, bringing them as a spiritual Israel into the new covenant, mediated by Christ. Starting with the conversion of Cornelius and his household in 36 C.E., Christianized Gentiles were also brought into this "Israel of God." Before this "little flock" of anointed Christians lay the grand prospect of sharing with Christ in his heavenly kingdom!—Acts 2:1-4; 10:24, 44-48; Heb. 9:15; Gal. 6:15, 16.

During the first century C.E., the Christian congregation became firmly established. Several apostles and other disciples of Jesus wrote down the Christian Greek Scriptures. By the end of that century the Bible canon was complete. The grand purpose of Jehovah God had now been written down in its entirety. The inspired Scriptures showed how many prophecies of God had been fulfilled or were in course of fulfillment. They held forth the certain hope of fulfillment of *all* of Jehovah's promises through the kingdom of his Son.—Acts 9:31; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21.

The good news in its purity was preached by anointed Christians in 'all creation under heaven.' But after the death of the apostles the foretold great apostasy set in, and the Christian congregation was contaminated through the infiltration of "wolves"—"ungodly men"—who spurned the undeserved kindness of God. In 325 C.E. apostates established hypocritical Christendom under the patronage of pagan Rome, and this brought a deep spiritual darkness. The fifth millennium drew to its close with understanding and appreciation of Jehovah's glorious Kingdom purposes at a very low ebb. But God's promises stood sure! He does not lie.—Col. 1:13, 23; Acts 20:29, 30; Jude 4; Titus 1:2.

During the sixth millennium Jehovah continued to test his true anointed ones as they endured persecutions. At last, curtains of darkness began to lift as the Bible was translated into the common languages of the people and began, especially from the sixteenth century, to circulate throughout Christendom. In the 1870's there started a thrilling restoration of appreciation of basic Bible truths. Jehovah began to gather his anointed ones. These, as a "faithful and discreet slave" class, again became prominent in carrying out a great spiritual

feeding program. Devout Christians began to look forward with keen anticipation to the year 1914 C.E., for this would mark the end of the Gentile Times. Indeed, it was in 1914 that Jehovah enthroned Christ Jesus in the heavenly kingdom, on heavenly Mount Zion, with possession of "the kingdom of the world." All the features of Jesus' prophesied "sign" indicating his presence in heavenly glory and the "conclusion of the system of things" became clearly evident as these features started to be, and continue to be, fulfilled. This has given true Christians great cause for rejoicing and has led to their vigorously proclaiming God's established kingdom. —Rev. 20:4; Matt. 24:3-14, 32-34, 45-47; 25:31-33.

From 1919 on, a spiritual paradise under Christ's headship was restored for God's anointed remnant on earth. And beginning with 1935 a "great crowd" of other humble worshipers came into evidence, joining with the anointed remnant of Jehovah's Kingdom class in singing Jehovah's praises throughout the earth. For forty years the ingathering of this "great crowd" has proceeded. Now more than two million of these servants of God look forward to passing through the fast-approaching "great tribulation" into a cleansed earth, where a literal paradise will be restored throughout this globe, and for all eternity! In some 35,000 Christian congregations, in 207 lands of the earth, God's zealous people are being prepared for survival—prepared also for the united work that lies ahead of them in connection with the literal paradise on earth.—John 10:16; Rev. 7:9, 10, 14, 15; compare Isaiah 35:1-10; 65:17-23.

JEHOVAH ACTS PROGRESSIVELY ON BEHALF OF MANKIND

Truly, Jehovah is a progressive God. He is not slow in carrying out his majestic purpose in all its aspects for the blessing and good of his creatures. Ungodly men may ridicule the good news that the promised "presence" of the Messiah as reigning King has taken place in our day But their words of ridicule will be turned right back on them at the "day and hour" that Jehovah has chosen to reveal "the Lord Jesus from heaven with his powerful angels." That will mean fiery destruction and "vengeance upon those who do not know God and those who do not obey the good news about our Lord Jesus." Of this we can be sure—"Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise." While patiently awaiting "Jehovah's day" for action, we can be happy that the "great crowd" that is to survive the "great tribulation" continues to increase rapidly. Surely we can exert ourselves vigorously on their behalf.—2 Thess. 1:7-10; 2 Pet. 3:3, 4, 9; 1 Tim. 4:10.

The parade of divine acts that has just been recounted, and that leads to man's restoration, stirs our hearts. With full confidence that all of Jehovah's grand purpose will be fulfilled toward those who love him, we will follow his leadings and those of his King, Jesus Christ, clear through the "great tribulation" into the yet future millennial Kingdom rule. Yes, Jehovah God has done and continues to do "surpassingly" for mankind.—Isa. 12:2-5.

WHY DELAY?

● It has been said that the lazier a man is the more he says he is going to do "tomorrow." If something needs to be done, why delay doing it? Now is the time to be busy in the service of God. About the lazy man the Bible says: "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding your arms to lie abed—and your poverty shall come like a prowler."—Prov. 6:10, 11, *The Bible in Living English.*

THINGS WHICH The "Kingdom of the Heavens" IS LIKE

ILLUSTRATIONS or parables were a prominent part of the teaching method of Jesus Christ nineteen centuries ago. In this way he fulfilled a Bible prophecy. Of this we are assured in the life account of Jesus Christ as written by his apostle Matthew Levi. This biographer tells us:

[2] "All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds by illustrations. Indeed, without an illustration he would not speak to them; that there might be fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet who said: 'I will open my mouth with illustrations, I will publish things hidden since the founding [of the world].' "—Matt. 13:34, 35; Ps. 78:2.

[3] Those illustrations or parables that specially bore on God's Messianic kingdom might well be called Kingdom illustrations or parables. At times these were introduced with the words, "The kingdom of the heavens is like," or, "With what are we to liken the kingdom of God?" or, "With what shall I compare the kingdom of God?"—Matt. 13:47; Mark 4:30; Luke 13:20.

[4] Jesus is reported as giving thirty illustrations or parables. According to the thirteenth chapter of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus once gave a series of seven Kingdom illustrations in close connection with one another. First was the illustration of the sower, then that of the wheat and the weeds, the mustard grain, the leaven hid in the batch of dough, the treasure hid in the field, the pearl of high value and the

"What is the kingdom of God like, and with what shall I compare it?"—Luke 13:18.

1, 2. By using illustrations in his teaching, what prophecy did Jesus fulfill?
3. What might illustrations bearing on God's kingdom be called, and how did Jesus introduce them?
4, 5. (a) How many illustrations did Jesus give, and what series of them did he give in Matthew, chapter thirteen? (b) According to Luke 13:17-21, under what circumstances did Jesus relate the illustrations of the mustard grain and the leaven?

dragnet. (Matt. 13:1-50) The Gospel writer Luke introduces the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven in a different way, and says:

5 "Well, when he said these things, all his opposers began to feel shame; but all the crowd began to rejoice at all the glorious things done by him. Therefore he went on to say: 'What is the kingdom of God like, and with what shall I compare it? It is like a mustard grain that a man took and put in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of heaven took up lodging in its branches.' And again he said: 'With what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three large measures of flour until the whole mass was fermented.' "—Luke 13:17-21.

6 Because "all the crowd began to rejoice at all the glorious things done by him," one would incline to think that Jesus reacted to the rejoicing of "all the crowd" by telling two prophetic illustrations to picture how God's kingdom would not be made up of only a "little flock," as Jesus had indicated earlier, in Luke 12:32. Instead, it would grow to great size and all the world of mankind would be like birds by their lodging in the refuge provided by the Kingdom. Also, that the great mass of mankind would become impregnated with the true teachings of Christianity. For instance, the *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew,* by H. A. W. Meyer, Th.D., English edition of 1884, says on page 259, paragraph three:

> *The parable of the mustard seed* is designed to show that the great community, consisting of those who are to participate in the Messianic kingdom, i.e., the true people of God as constituting the body politic of the future kingdom, is destined to develop from a small beginning into a vast multitude, and therefore to grow *extensively;* . . . "being a small flock, they were increased into a countless one." *The parable of the leaven,* on the other hand, is intended to show how the specific influences of the Messiah's kingdom (Eph. iv.4 ff.) gradually penetrate the whole of its future subjects, till by this means the entire mass is brought *intensively* into that spiritual condition which qualifies it for being admitted into the kingdom.

7 However, there is a fact that is here worth considering as significant. It is this: Right after recording those two parables of Jesus and telling how thereafter he went teaching from place to place, the Gospel writer Luke injects the question of a certain man: "Lord, are those who are being saved few?" Did Jesus' answer seem to agree with that suggestion? Did it indicate a kingdom of a "little flock"?—Luke 13:22, 23.

8 Listen: "He said to them: 'Exert yourselves vigorously to get in through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will seek to get in but will not be able, when once the householder has got up and locked the door, and you start to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, "Sir, open to us." But in answer he will say to you, "I do not know where you are from." Then you will start saying, "We ate and drank in front of you, and you taught in our broad ways." But he will speak and say to you, "I do not know where you are from. Get away from me, all you workers of unrighteousness!" There is where your weeping and the gnashing of your teeth will be, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves thrown outside.' " (Luke 13:23-28) So, as many as do get in through the "narrow door" will have to 'exert themselves vigorously.'—Note also Luke 13:5-9.

9 Back in the issue of *Zion's Watch Tow-*

6. Since Jesus gave the parables after the rejoicing of the people over the things done by him, what might one be inclined to think that Jesus wanted to illustrate by the parables?

7, 8. What serious question does Luke record after that, and what Kingdom parable of Jesus?

9. In a contribution to the *Watch Tower* issue of April 1881, how did J. H. Paton explain the parable of the leaven?

er dated April 1881, on page 5, there appeared a contribution by J. H. Paton, on the parable of the leaven. In the course of his discussion he said:

> This work of progression and glorious *success,* seems to be illustrated by the Saviour's parable, in which He compared the kingdom of heaven to *leaven,* which a *woman* took and hid in *three measures* of meal *until the whole was leavened.* Matt. 13:33. A very plausible and we will add, forcible objection to this application of the parable, is based on the fact that leaven of bread and of doctrine are spoken of in the Bible as elements of impurity and of corruption. Would the Saviour represent the *kingdom of heaven* by an element and process of corruption? We understand the Saviour here uses *one feature* of the leaven only, in His illustration, that is its *permeating power.* It does not cease until the work is done, so God's kingdom will not cease its operations until the curse is removed.

10 However, *Zion's Watch Tower,* under date of May 15, 1900, page 154, took exception to that view. Under the subheading "The Parable of the Leaven," it said: "Leaven represents corruption throughout the Scriptures: In every other instance of its Scriptural use it is represented as an evil, an impurity, something that is defiling. . . . It would not seem reasonable that our Lord should use the word leaven here as Christian people generally suppose, in a good sense, as implying some grace of the holy spirit. On the contrary, we recognize consistency in all of his teachings, and we may be as sure that he would not use leaven as a symbol of righteousness as that he would not use leprosy as a symbol of holiness."

11 *The Watch Tower,* under date of June 15, 1910, page 205, pursued that same line of thought. It said, under the heading "Leaven Hidden in the Meal," the following: "The parable of the 'leaven' (v. 33) illustrates the process by which, as was foretold, the church would get into the wrong condition. As a woman would take her batch of flour for baking and put leaven (yeast) in it and the result would be that the mass would become leavened, so it would be with the church of Christ; the food of the entire household would become leavened or corrupted. Every portion would become more or less vitiated with the leaven of false doctrines which would permeate the entire mass. Thus today nearly every doctrine inculcated by Jesus and his apostles has become more or less perverted or twisted by the errors of the dark ages." —See also *The Watch Tower* as of June 15, 1912, pages 198, 199, under the heading "Parable of the Leaven."

10. How did the *Watch Tower* issue of May 15, 1900, comment on the parable of the leaven?
11. How did *The Watch Tower* under date of June 15, 1910, explain the parable of the leaven?

LEAVEN AND WINE

12 Now, if J. H. Paton, like the *Watch Tower* editor C. T. Russell, were alive at the time, he might have objected to those articles in the *Watch Tower* issues of 1900, 1910 and 1912. He might have insisted that *The Watch Tower* stick to the *"one feature* of the leaven only, in [Jesus'] illustration, that is its *permeating power."* As the permeating power lies in the fermentation that is caused, he might have argued that fermentation is fermentation, something to be viewed objectively. So he might have referred to Matthew 9:17, where Jesus says: "Neither do people put new wine into old wineskins; but if they do, then the wineskins burst and the wine spills out and the wineskins are ruined. But people put new wine into new wineskins, and both things are preserved." —Also, Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37, 38.

13 The still-continuing fermentation of the new wine causes gas bubbles and bursts the old, nonresilient wineskins. The wine

12. In objection, what might the aforementioned *Watch Tower* contributor insist upon, and what illustration of Jesus concerning wine and wineskins might he mention?
13. (a) In what sense, then, is the fermentation of the wine used as a symbol? (b) In view of that, what question arises as to the symbolic significance of fermentation caused by leaven?

fermentation operates to a good end, and so here fermentation is used in a good way and symbolizes something good. But does that argue that the fermentation caused by leaven is used as a symbol of something good in the parable of the woman that hid leaven in three large measures of flour until the whole mass was fermented? And so is there an exception or two to the Bible's use of leaven as a symbol of what is bad and wicked? Does the Bible use leaven as a symbol in a twofold way, both as a symbol of what is good and righteous and also as a symbol of what is bad and wicked?

[14] How, though, can it be rightly argued that the Bible uses the leaven of dough in such a twofold way, when, at the celebration of the Passover and of the seven-day festival that followed, wine was allowed to be drunk whereas all leaven of bread was forbidden, banned, under pain of death for a violator? (Lev. 23:5-13; Luke 22:7-20) So, does the Bible treat all fermentations and their permeative power alike? Does the Bible treat only the permeating power caused by fermentation as the one factor that is to be considered, regardless of what causes the fermentation? The Scriptural answer is No! Otherwise, we would not find the apparent discrepancy at the celebration of the Passover and of the week-long festival of unleavened bread that followed the Passover.

[15] It is apparent, therefore, that fermentation with its permeating power is, in itself, not the determining factor so that it occupies a status either good or bad as regards its symbolical meaning. Rather, the thing that is added to promote the fermentation is the determining factor. In the Holy Scriptures, the fermentation (as a factor) is not isolated from what causes it. Consequently, the fermentation that is naturally caused in wine making is not classified as being the same as the fermentation that is promoted in flour dough by an additive, yeast, namely leaven or sour dough.* Hence anyone's referring to the fermenting new wine put in new wineskins in order for him to show that leaven (sour dough) added in bread making is a symbol of what is good and righteous fails to make the point. His argument is not Bible-based. For this reason the argument used by J. H. Paton in the April 1881 issue of *Zion's Watch Tower* does not hold good. The inspired Scriptures *do* oblige us to make a distinction in the case of leaven (sour dough) as a symbol. Accordingly, the parable of the leaven is not an illustration on the positive side; to the contrary, it is on the negative side. But we shall present more on this matter of leaven later on in our discussion.

14. What fact shows that the Bible does not treat wine fermentation as on the same level as fermentation caused by leaven added to a batch of flour?
15. In the matter of fermentation, what is the determining factor, and so is the parable of the leaven on the positive side or not?

"THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS IS LIKE" VARIOUS THINGS

[16] Does the former explanation in the 1900, 1910 and 1912 issues of *The Watch Tower* on the parable of the leaven hold good *today,* when Jesus' parabolic illustrations are reaching the climax of their fulfillment? Yes, indeed! Some students of the Bible might incline to object, because, say they, it is "the kingdom of the heavens" that is said to be like the leaven and like the grain of mustard seed. (Matt. 13:

* "The process of alcoholic fermentation requires careful control for the production of high quality wines. . . . Grape skins are normally covered with bacteria, molds, and yeast. The wild yeasts such as *Pichia, Kloeckera,* and *Torulopsis* are often more numerous than the wine yeast *Saccharomyces.* Although species of *Saccharomyces* are generally considered more desirable for efficient alcoholic fermentation, it is possible that other yeast genera may contribute to flavour, specially in the early stages of fermentation. *Saccharomyces* is preferred because of its efficiency in converting sugar to alcohol and because it is less sensitive to the inhibiting effect of alcohol."—*Encyclopædia Britannica,* Volume 19, edition for 1974, page 879, under "Fermentation."

16, 17. Why might someone object to the foregoing because of how the parables of the mustard grain and of the leaven are introduced? But what kind of introduction is given to the parable of the dragnet, used in what operation?

31-33) Yes, but it is also true that, in the seventh and last parable of the series in Matthew, chapter thirteen, Jesus said:

17 "Again the kingdom of the heavens is like a dragnet let down into the sea and gathering up fish of every kind. When it got full they hauled it up onto the beach and, sitting down, they collected the fine ones into vessels, but the unsuitable they threw away. That is how it will be in the conclusion of the system of things: the angels will go out and separate the wicked from among the righteous and will cast them into the fiery furnace. There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be."—Matt. 13:47-50.

18 Now we know that those making up the "kingdom of the heavens" or the Messianic "kingdom of God" are the Lamb Jesus Christ and his 144,000 spiritual Israelite followers. (Rev. 7:4-8; 14:1-5) So we are here obliged to ask, Did Jesus mean that this Kingdom class of 144,001 are like a dragnet that holds within itself "wicked" and "righteous" individuals and that it is manipulated by angels inferior to Jesus Christ? We remember, too, that Jesus introduced another parable, saying: "Then the kingdom of the heavens will become like ten virgins that took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were discreet." (Matt. 25:1, 2) Are we to understand that the Kingdom class of one hundred and forty-four thousand and one is divided up into half of foolish individuals and half of discreet ones? Never could this be the case! Evidently, then, by the expression "the kingdom of the heavens is like" Jesus *meant* that, in connection with the kingdom of the heavens, there is a feature like this or like that. Or, matters in connection with the Kingdom will be like such and such a thing.

18. (a) So, what questions are raised with regard to the parable of the dragnet and that of the wise and foolish virgins? (b) Evidently Jesus meant what by "the kingdom of the heavens is like"?

19 This understanding of the meaning of expressions allows for Jesus to illustrate bad as well as good developments with respect to the "kingdom of the heavens" or the Messianic "kingdom of God." To arrive at the proper understanding, we have to take into account the purpose for which the parable or series of parables was given. Jesus himself advised us of that purpose. After he had publicly given the parable or illustration of the four kinds of soil upon which the seed of the sower fell, his disciples asked him: "Why is it you speak to them by the use of illustrations?" Let us note, now, this reply of Jesus:

20 "To you [disciples] it is granted to understand the sacred secrets of the kingdom of the heavens, but to those people it is not granted. For whoever has, more will be given him and he will be made to abound; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. This is why I speak to them by the use of illustrations, because [to quote from Isaiah 6:9, 10], looking, they look in vain, and hearing, they hear in vain, neither do they get the sense of it; and toward them the prophecy of Isaiah is having fulfillment, which says, 'By hearing, you will hear but by no means get the sense of it; and, looking, you will look but by no means see. For the heart of this people has grown unreceptive, and with their ears they have heard without response, and they have shut their eyes; that they might never see with their eyes and hear with their ears and get the sense of it with their hearts and turn back, and I heal them.' "—Matt. 13:10-15.

21 This was the stated purpose of Jesus in speaking to the people of Israel by the use of parables, to fulfill Psalm 78:2; and

19, 20. (a) To arrive at the proper understanding, what do we have to know about the purpose of the parable series? (b) According to his own words, why did Jesus speak to the people in parables?

21. (a) By Jesus' use of parables, how was Isaiah 6:9, 10 fulfilled in the case of Israel? (b) How did the parable of the four kinds of soil illustrate that same fact?

by means of the parables Jesus showed that the prophecy of Isaiah 6:9, 10 would be fulfilled, namely, that comparatively few, a remnant, would accept his true message and become real Christians worthy of the "kingdom of the heavens." For example, in the parable of the sower he spoke of four kinds of soil, but three out of four proved to be unproductive. Only the fine type of soil produced abundantly, thirtyfold, sixtyfold, a hundredfold, in proclaiming the message of the Kingdom. (Matt. 13:3-8) Thus in the very first parable of the series the negative aspect as regards the "kingdom of the heavens" predominated.

22 In the next given parable of the wheat and the weeds, the enemy oversowed the wheat field with weeds, so that, when the harvesttime came, the field was marred by the presence of the abundance of weeds. Jesus explained that the "fine seed" are the true anointed Christians, "the sons of the kingdom." The weeds are the opposite of this, they are imitation Christians, in fact, "the sons of the wicked one," the Devil who sowed them. The harvesttime is the "conclusion of a system of things," where we now find ourselves. As we look out over the spiritual harvest work that has been going on since the spring of 1919 C.E., what do we observe? The "sons of the kingdom" who are harvested under angelic guidance are a mere remnant, today numbering around ten thousand partakers of the emblematic bread and wine at the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Since the year 1948, when the report shows such ones numbered 25,395, they have been decreasing in number. On the other hand, the imitation "sons of the kingdom," the ones toward whom the prophecy of Isaiah 6:9, 10 is fulfilled, are around one thousand million members of the churches of Christendom.—Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43.

22. In Jesus' parable of the wheat and the weeds, toward which class is Isaiah 6:9, 10 fulfilled?

23 In the parable of the treasure hid in the field, it is only one man that discovers this treasure and "sells what things he has and buys that field." All the others have their sense of values applied in a different direction because their eyes were as if 'pasted shut' and did not see the hidden value in that field.—Matt. 13:44.

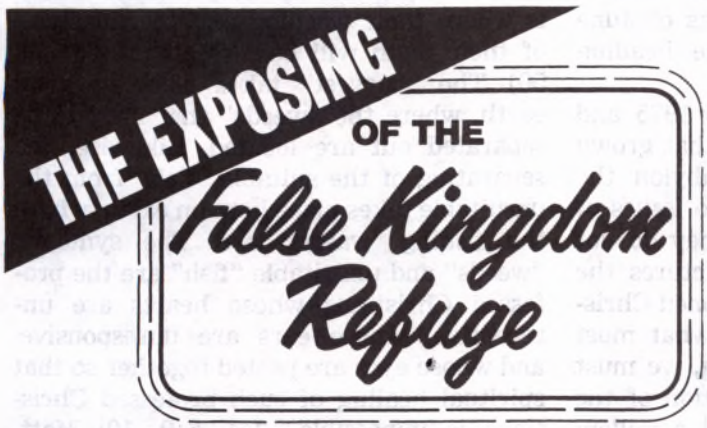
24 In the parable of the "one pearl of high value," it is only one "traveling merchant" that craves having the rarest pearl that can be found. He is the only one that "went and promptly sold all the things he had and bought it." All the other traveling merchants were looking for something else that they considered valuable, likely something that would not cost them all that they had in order to get the purchase price. —Matt. 13:45, 46.

25 In the parable of the dragnet, this mass fishing instrument, handled by fishermen who picture "the angels," collects "fish of every kind," fish suitable for Law-keeping Jews to eat and other fish forbidden by the law of Moses. Only the suitable fish were collected into vessels, and the rest were thrown away as abominable. —Matt. 13:47-50.

26 It is here on earth, in the "conclusion of the system of things," where we find ourselves since the year 1914 C.E., that the parable of the wheat field comes to the climax of its fulfillment. So as operations go forward, to "separate the wicked from among the righteous," under the invisible guidance of God's holy angels, what do we observe to be the facts of the case in connection with the "kingdom of the heavens"? Are the "righteous" ones who are called to the heavenly kingdom in the overwhelming majority? They are, to the

23. In the parable of the hidden treasure, how many take positive action?
24. In the parable of the pearl of high value, how many traveling merchants were willing to pay the price for it?
25, 26. (a) At what time do the parables of the dragnet and of the wheat field come to the climax of their fulfillment? (b) How are the prophecies fulfilled toward the "righteous" ones and toward the imitation Christians?

contrary, an insignificant spiritual "remnant," whereas the church members of Christendom who expect to get to heaven at death are estimated to be in the hundreds of millions. The prophecy of Isaiah 6:9, 10 is fulfilled toward these imitation Christians. These will be cast into the "fire" of the "great tribulation" that is just ahead. (Matt. 13:47-50) So Christendom, the counterfeit "kingdom of the heavens," is not the place for anyone now to seek refuge.



WHAT, now, must be the intent of Jesus' parable of the mustard grain, a seed very tiny in its embryonic condition but developing into a tree? The intent must be to show something in harmony with the reference made by Jesus to the negative picture given in Isaiah 6:9, 10. (Matt. 13:13-15) In giving this third parable in a series of seven, Jesus said: "The kingdom of the heavens is like a mustard grain, which a man took and planted in his field; which is, in fact, the tiniest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the largest of the vegetables and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and find lodging among its branches."—Matt. 13:31, 32.

[2] The issue of *Zion's Watch Tower* under date of May 15, 1900, page 153, said: "The third parable-picture of the kingdom in its present embryonic condition of development is intended to show that from a very small beginning the nominal church of this Gospel age would attain to quite considerable proportions. . . . Yet this large development does not necessarily signify advantage or anything specially desirable, but on the contrary it becomes a disadvantage, in that the fowls of the air come and lodge in its branches, and defile it. The 'fowls of the air' in the preceding parable of the sower represented Satan and his agents, and we are, we think, justified in making a similar application here, and interpreting this to mean that the church planted by the Lord Jesus flourished rapidly and exceedingly, and that because of its attainments, strength, etc., Satan through his agents, came and lodged in the various branches of the Church. They have been lodging in the branches of this Gospel church for these many centuries, and are still to be found in her, a defiling element."

[3] Presenting a view similar to that just quoted, the issue of *The Watch Tower* for June 15, 1910, page 204, went on to say: "So then the teaching of this parable would lead us to conclude that the church of Christ, at one time, was so unimportant in the world that it was a shame and a dishonor to belong to it, but that ultimately it would become honorable and great and the adversary's servants would have

1. What was the intent of Jesus in giving the parable of the mustard grain, in harmony with what prophecy?
2. In likening the mustard-grain tree to the nominal church, how did *Zion's Watch Tower* as of May 15, 1900, interpret the lodging of the birds of heaven among the tree's branches?
3. What did *The Watch Tower* under date of June 15, 1910, say that the "tree" at its full development represented, along with birds?

pleasure in its shade. This development the Scriptures represent as being Babylon, declaring that, as a whole, with the various branches and denominations, the nominal church of Christ is Babylonish. Hearken to the Lord's words: 'She has become the hold of every foul spirit and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird.'" —See also *The Watch Tower* as of June 15, 1912, page 198, under the heading "Like a Mustard Seed."

4 Here we are now, in this year 1975, and the big question is, What does that grown mustard-seed tree picture? Babylon the Great, say the above-quoted two issues of the *Watch Tower* magazine. They do not say that this vegetable tree pictures the Kingdom class of 144,001 enthroned Christians in heavenly power. But what must *we* of today say? For one thing, we must bear in mind that this illustration of the mustard grain does not present a millennial picture, to show the final number of the Kingdom class reigning in heavenly glory and with all mankind taking refuge under this Messianic kingdom. It does not present a *heavenly* scene with regard to the heirs of the "kingdom of the heavens." It pictures an *earthly* state of affairs at a particular period of time.

5 The special period of time is that indicated by Jesus in the parables of the wheat and weeds and of the dragnet. In the parable of the wheat field oversown with weeds, Jesus said: "The harvest is a conclusion of a system of things, and the reapers are angels." In the parable of the dragnet, Jesus said: "That is how it will be in the conclusion of the system of things: the angels will go out and separate the wicked from among the righteous and will cast them into the fiery furnace. There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be." (Matt. 13:39, 49, 50) The "harvest" takes place here on earth, where the "weeds" that need to be separated out are located. Likewise, the separating of the suitable "fish" from the unsuitable takes place here on earth, where the fishing 'waters' are. The symbolic "weeds" and unsuitable "fish" are the professed Christians whose hearts are unreceptive, whose ears are unresponsive, and whose eyes are pasted together so that spiritual healing of such professed Christians is impossible.—Isa. 6:9, 10; Matt. 13:14. Compare Acts 28:25-28. See the article "No Healing Till Houses Are Without Man," in *Watchtower* issue of December 15, 1966.

6 By the "conclusion of the system of things" in our times the symbolic mustard-seed tree should be fully grown. That state of growth would correspond with the harvesttime. Since the harvest of the spiritual "wheat" or "sons of the kingdom" has been in progress since 1919 C.E., we can discern the symbolic mustard-seed tree now at its full growth here on earth. This vegetable tree claims to represent the

4. (a) What did those two *Watch Tower* articles not say that the symbolic "tree" was? (b) As to time and location, what kind of picture and scene does the mustard-grain parable not illustrate?

5. What is the special period of time in which the parable reaches the climax of its fulfillment, and where does that fulfillment take place?

6. What does this vegetable "tree" of today claim to be, and why, therefore, could that symbolic "tree" not be Babylon the Great?

"kingdom of the heavens," for Jesus said that "the kingdom of the heavens is like" it. For that reason the mustard-grain tree could not picture Babylon the Great, for that organization is the world empire of false religion that started with ancient Babylon. Babylon the Great as a whole does not claim to be or represent "the kingdom of the heavens" or the Messianic "kingdom of God." However, the most numerous and prominent part of Babylon the Great does claim to represent God's heavenly Messianic kingdom. That most powerful part of Babylon the Great is Christendom, with its thousand or more religious branches and denominations.

7 Christendom claims to have sprung from the original small Christian congregation in Jerusalem during the first century C.E. Today Christendom's congregations number into the millions. She has attained her greatest growth! But her scandalous worldliness and lack of spirituality today make it certain that her tremendous growth has not been due to her spiritual virtues and her having the advancing light of Bible truth. Religious history shows that actually Christendom was founded in the fourth century C.E. by the pagan Roman emperor Constantine the Great, who claimed to be converted to Christianity in 312 C.E. but who remained unbaptized until shortly before his death on May 22, 337 C.E. He made the degraded Christianity of his day the State Church of the Roman Empire, using some three hundred apostate, compromising "bishops" to do so. As Pontifex Maximus of the Roman Empire, he convened the first Council of Nicaea, Asia Minor, and ruled on the doctrines that it decreed to be Church doctrine.

8 Today, what permeates the whole mass of the churches of Christendom? True Bible teaching and structure and procedure and observance? No! It is the fusion religion that Pontifex Maximus Constantine promoted, in which the Babylonish doctrines and procedures are the fundamental things rather than the teachings of God's inspired Holy Word. Constantine was the one who as presiding officer of the Council of Nicaea settled the dispute over the personality and attributes of Jehovah God by ruling in favor of the Babylonish doctrine of the Trinity. Jesus Christ foretold this process of corrupting Christian doctrine and practice by giving the parable of the leaven. He said: "The kingdom of the heavens is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three large measures of flour, until the whole mass was fermented." —Matt. 13:33.

9 The fermentation of the whole mass of Christendom has now had sixteen centuries of time in which to take place. Who can deny that Christendom is completely leavened today by the corrupting influence of Babylonish doctrine and worldliness and Nimrod-like defiance of the universal sovereignty of Jehovah God? This corrupting of the tremendous mass of Christendom's imitation "sons of the kingdom" has made the false earthly "kingdom of God" an excellent place for the agents of Satan the Devil to take refuge in, like the "birds of heaven" lodging among the branches of the full-grown mustard-seed tree.—Matt. 13:31, 32.

10 The lodging of all these symbolic "birds of heaven" in the many ramifications of Christendom has not been for the spiritual benefit of Christendom. It is just like the tree that grew from the mustard grain that the farmer planted in his garden or field. The birds of heaven that lodged in its branches were able to eat

7. To what has Christendom's greatest growth in history been due, and when did she really start and how?
8. What in the way of doctrine and practice permeates Christendom today, and in fulfillment of what parable?
9. How long has this religiously corrupting influence been going on in Christendom, with what opportunity for the agents of the Devil?
10, 11. (a) Why is nothing beneficial for mankind pictured in the parable of the mustard grain? (b) So, what "kingdom" today does the mustard-seed "tree" picture?

the mustard seeds, just like the birds of Jesus' parable of the four soils who ate up the seeds that fell from the sower's hand by the roadside. (Matt. 13:4) As far as Jesus' parable went, the tree did not serve for any human benefit. For instance, the parable does not tell how, when the tree became full size, the planter came and chased those birds away and collected a large quantity of mustard seed for making a good sauce to season some foods. But, certainly, the farmer did not plant the mustard grain in his garden just to provide a lodging place for the "birds of heaven."

11 All things taken into account, it is apparent that the symbolic mustard-seed "tree" of today is the counterfeit "kingdom of the heavens," namely, Christendom, with her clergy lording it over the laity. The full-grown "tree" could not consistently picture the remnant on earth today of the sealed spiritual Israelites, for these are merely a fraction, not the full numerical growth of the 144,000 Kingdom heirs. In fact, for more than twenty-seven years the spiritual remnant has been getting fewer in number. At the Memorial celebration of 1975 their number had dropped to 10,454.

A MUSTARD PLANT DIFFERENT FROM WHAT WE MIGHT EXPECT

12 Quite logically, someone might raise up against the foregoing presentation the following objection: In Jesus' parable, the man who sowed the mustard grain did so with good intentions. From this grain he expected the growth of a mustard plant "according to its kind." (Gen. 1:11, 12) He did not expect something foreign to what he had sown. He had in mind no counterfeit of a mustard plant. That being the case, how can we say that such a counterfeit is exactly what the sower got? Accordingly, how can we say, as above, that the "tree" that grew from the mustard grain represented Christendom, the counterfeit of the "kingdom of the heavens"?* Is that not contrary to God's law that a seed must produce its own kind? Would not this divine law, when spiritually applied, rule out the idea of Christendom, the opposite of the "kingdom of the heavens"?

13 In this regard, things started with Jesus Christ. If there had been no Christ, there would have been no Christendom. A simple statement, but true nonetheless! In the fourth century of our Common Era Christendom pinned herself to the true Christ, not to a false Christ, a false Messiah, so as to make the counterfeit more undiscernible. She even took his official designation by calling herself Christendom. She has appropriated to herself the various things connected with Jesus Christ. She practices baptism in water, some of her churches even today practicing total immersion. She celebrates the Lord's Supper with bread and the product of the grapevine. She has her elders or bishops and deacons. (Phil. 1:1, *Authorized Version*) And, as for the Holy Bible as a whole, the very Bibles that the Christian witnesses of Jehovah have used down till the beginning of the publication of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* in 1950 C.E. have come to us from the Bible societies that Christendom's churches have operated.

14 It is plainly evident that Jesus Christ is implicated with the formation of Christendom, which has professed till now to be his true Church. Furthermore, Jehovah God takes Christendom at her word and according to her own claims. For this

* See pages 206-209 of the book *Man's Salvation out of World Distress at Hand!* published in 1975.

12. On the basis of the Bible rule that a seed must bring forth its kind, what objection might someone logically raise to the explanation that the mustard-seed "tree" pictures Christendom?

13, 14. (a) Why would there have been no Christendom if there had been no Jesus Christ? (b) According to what standard does God hold her accountable to Him, and of what is she the counterpart?

reason Jehovah calls upon her to live up to her claims and holds her responsible for failure to live up to his requirements. For this he will bring upon her a due punishment. In this "conclusion of the system of things" he judges her as unfaithful to her religious professions. She is the modern-day counterpart of unfaithful Israel of ancient times.

[15] Adding to the Scriptural proof that Jesus Christ is implicated with the growth of Christendom, there is the parable of the wheat and the weeds (tares). True, Jesus Christ, "the Son of man," did not sow those weeds in his own field. His enemy, Satan the Devil, did so. In the parable, the slaves of the Sower quickly discovered the presence of the weeds in the wheat field. They wanted to uproot the weed sprouts. But the Sower, the owner of the wheat field, would not let them do so. In his patience and long-suffering he ordered the slaves to let both the weeds and the wheat grow together until the harvest around Pentecost time. First then would he have the weeds, now fully grown, separated from the wheat.

[16] In fulfillment of this feature of Jesus' parable, he did not have Christendom destroyed as soon as it manifested itself. He permitted it to expand. In that sense he is involved with Christendom's *growth* to its present proportions, the greatest in its history. Even up till this writing, Jesus Christ has not destroyed Christendom. She is still, by his permission, occupying space in the Sower's field, "his field," his religious "field under cultivation."—Matt. 13:24-27; compare 1 Corinthians 3:9.

[17] Further illustrating Jesus' tie-in with Christendom is the parable of the dragnet. (Matt. 13:47-50) The fishermen who handle the dragnet picture the heavenly angels under the direction of the glorified Jesus Christ. But what does the dragnet itself picture? Because the parable says that "the kingdom of the heavens is like a dragnet," does the dragnet picture the 144,001 members of the "kingdom of the heavens" class? No, it could not do so, when we take all the features of the parable together. The book *"Thy Kingdom Come,"* published in 1891, said, on page 214, that the dragnet pictured "the nominal Christian Church." *The Watch Tower* under date of June 15, 1912, on its page 201 and under the heading "The Parable of a Fish Net," spoke of it as "the Gospel net, with its full assortment of churchianity of every style."

[18] More recently, in the *Watchtower* issue of November 15, 1967, appeared the study article entitled "Let Down Your Nets for a Catch." On page 686, paragraph six says that "the dragnet symbolizes the earthly organization that professes to be God's congregation that is in the new covenant with God through the Mediator Jesus Christ. So it claims to be the spiritual Israel, the holy nation that is anointed with God's spirit to reign with Jesus Christ in the heavenly kingdom. It includes the true professors and the false or unfaithful professors. Logically it includes Christendom, with its hundreds of thousands of professed Christians, belonging to hundreds of sects called Christian."

[19] Thus in the Kingdom parables Jesus Christ illustrated his link with the formation and growth of the nominal Christian organization of Christendom. His connection with Christendom is similar to the connection of his heavenly Father Jehovah with apostate Israel of ancient times. Jehovah's purpose in establishing the nation of Israel back in 1513 B.C.E. was good and righteous. But what happened to that

15, 16. How does Jesus' parable of the wheat and the weeds show his being implicated with the growth of Christendom till now?
17. By whom has the symbolic "dragnet" been handled, and, in 1891 and 1912, what was this "dragnet" said to picture?
18. What did *The Watchtower* under date of November 15, 1967, say that the dragnet pictured?
19, 20. (a) Jesus' experience with the symbolic mustard grain has been like what experience of Jehovah, as set out in Jeremiah 2:21-23? (b) In Hosea 10:1-4, how did Jehovah picture the degeneration of Israel as a symbolic "vine"?

nation whom he had chosen and planted in the Promised Land in Palestine? Jehovah himself replies to that question in Jeremiah 2:21-23. There he says: "'As for me, I had planted you as a choice red vine, all of it a true seed. So how have you been changed toward me into the degenerate shoots of a foreign vine? But though you should do the washing with alkali and take to yourself large quantities of lye, your error would certainly be a stain before me,' is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. 'How can you say, "I have not defiled myself. After the Baals I have not walked"? See your way in the valley. Take note of what you have done. A swift young she-camel aimlessly running to and fro in her ways.'"

[20] Also, in Hosea 10:1-4, Jehovah says: "Israel is a degenerating vine. Fruit he keeps putting forth for himself. In proportion to the abundance of his fruit he has multiplied his altars. In proportion to the goodness of his land, they put up good pillars. Their heart has become hypocritical; now they will be found guilty. . . . They speak words, making false oaths, concluding a covenant; and judgment has sprouted like a poisonous plant in the furrows of the open field."

[21] In the days of Jesus Christ and his apostles the nation of Israel was just as apostate as in the days of Jeremiah and Hosea. In fact, it was the generation of Israel that brought about the death of Jesus the Messiah and that persecuted his apostles and first-century disciples. Such Israelites especially were the ones to whom Jesus, as well as Isaiah, referred as having their eyes plastered shut, their ears unresponsive and their hearts unreceptive so that there was no spiritual healing for them. (Isa. 6:9, 10; Matt. 13:13-15; Acts 28:24-28) Hence that apostate generation suffered national calamity in 70 C.E. So, now, does anyone ask the question, How could Jesus as the Sower of the parable plant the symbolic mustard grain and yet have it become a tree of a foreign kind, the corrupt counterfeit called Christendom? The experience of Jehovah God with the ancient nation of Israel gives the divine answer to such a questioner!

[22] Jesus Christ, with his prophetic foresight, could foreknow the outcome for the symbolic mustard grain that he planted in the first century. He was acquainted with the history of Israel and knew all the prophecies. So he could tell the parable of the mustard grain and have in mind the counterfeit "kingdom of the heavens," Christendom, as being pictured by the full-grown mustard plant in which the "birds of heaven" lodged.—Note Matthew 13:25, 38, 39; 24:23-25.

[23] Jesus' parable did not, in itself or as far as it went, illustrate that the thing that was symbolized by the bird-infested "tree" would be destroyed. Yet that is no argument that such destruction will not come upon the symbolic "tree," namely, Christendom. (Compare Luke 13:5-9.) The same thing may be said with regard to the dragnet: Jesus' parable does not show that the dragnet would pass out of existence. But neither does the parable show that the dragnet was ever used again. Were it to be used again, it would bring out again from the "sea" the very same mixture of sea life as was depicted in the parable. So, because the parable does not go so far as to illustrate it, this does not signify that what is pictured by the dragnet will not be done away with in God's due time. Operations under the guidance of the angels have been carried

21. (a) How did the Jewish generation of Jesus' day show its apostasy? (b) Whose experience answers the question as to whether Jesus could plant a symbolic mustard grain and have a foreign plant develop?

22. Why could Jesus tell the parable of the mustard grain and have in mind that the full-grown "tree" would picture a counterfeit organization?

23. (a) From the failure of the parable to show the destruction of the mustard-seed "tree," what should we not conclude? (b) What does the parable of the dragnet not show about that fishing net?

on with that symbolic dragnet for the past nineteen centuries. But, when once the work of separating the forms of sea life that have been hauled in by that symbolic dragnet is completed, that fishing operation will not be repeated.

[24] Since the dragnet pictured "the nominal Christian Church" or 'the organization of professed Christians, including the true and the false,' the symbolic dragnet will actually be done away with. Such a religious device that includes Christendom will be cast away and never be used again. By the end of the "conclusion of the system of things" Jehovah God will have gotten all his good "fish" for the true "kingdom of the heavens." (Matt. 4:17; 13:47-50) So the failure of the parable to illustrate it does not prove that the figurative dragnet will not accomplish its purpose and be done away with, be laid away, never to be used again. And yet Jesus said that "the kingdom of the heavens" was like that dragnet. Certainly, then, the dragnet did not itself picture the Kingdom class of 144,001 members.

WHAT ABOUT LEAVENED THINGS OFFERED TO JEHOVAH?

[25] There is no question about whether the nominal Christian organization, pictured by the bird-infested mustard-grain "tree," has become corrupted with Babylonish teachings and practices. In the foregoing discussion it was pointed out that this corrupting of the professed Christian organization was pictured in Jesus' parable in which a woman hid a bit of leaven in three large measures of flour, in order to leaven the whole mass. (Matt. 13:33) Yet someone might still find difficulty with that explanation of the parable. He might ask himself, Does the leaven in that parable really picture something bad, corruptive of religion? Might it not picture the power that permeates the true Christian congregation of Kingdom heirs with righteousness, holiness? Why, look at the things that were offered to Jehovah God according to the law of Moses and that contained leaven with acceptance by Him! Does this not indicate that the Holy Scriptures use leaven as a symbol of goodness and righteousness? Might this not also be the case in Jesus' parable of the leaven buried in a large batch of dough?

[26] A prominent instance, that might be referred to, of where leavened things were offered to Jehovah under command by him and with acceptance by him, is the two loaves of leavened wheat bread that the Jewish high priest offered on the day of the Festival of Weeks, or Pentecost, which fell on the sixth day of the spring lunar month of Sivan. This was the fiftieth day from Nisan 16, when the high priest offered up the firstfruits of the barley harvest. (Lev. 23:15-17; Deut. 16:9-12; Acts 20:16; 1 Cor. 16:8) In view of all

24. Despite its not being shown in the parable, why will the symbolic dragnet be done away with in God's due time?

25. Although the nominal Christian organization is leavened with Babylonish things, what question might someone still have about the leaven hid in dough by the woman, and why so?

26. How might such a questioner reason about the leaven in the two loaves of wheat bread that the high priest offered on the day of Pentecost?

the respect given to those two loaves, one's reasoning might go in the following way: Jehovah on the festival day accepts the two wheat loaves containing leaven. Does not, then, Jehovah's acceptance in this case of something leavened signify that there the leaven takes on a favorable meaning? Does this not prove that at times leaven does take on a good symbolic value with God? Why, look at how leavened bread was a favorite bread among Jehovah's ancient chosen people, whereas the unleavened bread was called "the bread of affliction." (Deut. 16:1-3) Surely that must impart a favorable aspect to leaven when being used as a symbol in the Bible!

27 If we follow such a line of reasoning regarding the two leavened wheat loaves presented on the festival day of Weeks, then where does it consistently lead? To this: Those two Pentecostal loaves were typical, foreshadowing things to come according to God's purpose. So in the antitype of that presentation of the two leavened loaves on Sivan 6, the thing symbolized by the leaven in the loaves must be something good, righteous, virtuous. Hence we ask, What do those two loaves of leavened wheat bread themselves typify? They typify the true Christian congregation of imperfect human believers that came into existence on the day of Pentecost of the year 33 C.E. (*Zion's Watch Tower* as of March 1, 1898, page 68, paragraph 4) So, now, if, on the day of Pentecost, the leaven pictured something on the good side, then consistently the new Christian congregation is pictured as starting off with an antitypical leaven of goodness *in itself,* some special "grace of the holy spirit." All of this, before the holy spirit was poured out!

28 However, did the human members of the Christian congregation start off with some inward merit of their own on the Pentecostal day of the outpouring of God's holy spirit upon them? No; they had no righteousness of their own. So, the leaven found in the offering of the firstfruits of the wheat harvest has long been explained to mean sin, the sin that the members of the Christian congregation of Kingdom joint heirs inherited from disobedient Adam. (Rom. 5:12; see *The Watch Tower* as of June 15, 1912, page 198, the second paragraph under the heading "Parable of the Leaven.") However, back there on the day of Pentecost, 33 C.E., it became true of the imperfect members of the Christian congregation that "the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin."—1 John 1:7; see page 229, paragraph 1, through page 231 of the book *The Temple,* by Alfred Edersheim, edition of 1881.*

29 Such explanation of the leaven in the two Pentecostal wheat loaves is supported by another fact. It is this: Pentecost, the festival day of Weeks (*Shabuoth*), is linked by the count of time to the day for offering the firstfruits of the barley harvest. That offering was made on Nisan 16, the third day from Passover. (Lev. 23:

27. If we follow that line of reasoning, to what conclusion does it lead us as to the meaning of the leaven in the antitype of the two Pentecostal loaves of wheat bread?

28. However, in harmony with *The Watch Tower,* what does the leaven in the typical Pentecostal loaves of wheat bread picture?

29. (a) With what day of offering firstfruits is the day of Pentecost linked, and how? (b) What about the matter of leaven as regards that earlier day of offering firstfruits of harvest?

* Page 230, lines 12-14, says: "Hence they were leavened, because Israel's public thank-offerings, even the most holy, are leavened by imperfectness and sin, and they need a sin-offering."

In correspondency with the foregoing, we read in the book *Biblical Commentary on The Old Testament,* by Keil and Delitzsch, (Volume II - The Pentateuch) and under the subheading (page 437) entitled "Sanctification of the Sabbath and the Feasts of Jehovah.—Chap. XXIII," and in lines 16-34 of page 443, the following: "' . . . Ver. 20. *The priest shall wave them* (the two lambs of the peace-offerings), *together with the loaves of the first-fruits, as a wave-offering before Jehovah; with the two lambs* (the two just mentioned), *they* (the loaves) *shall be holy to Jehovah for the priest.*' . . . The sin-offering was to excite the feeling and consciousness of sin on the part of the congregation of Israel, that whilst eating their daily leavened bread they might not serve the leaven of their old nature, but seek and implore from the Lord their God the forgiveness and cleansing away of their sin."

9-17) When, on Nisan 16, the high priest waved to and fro the "sheaf of the firstfruits of [Israel's] harvest" of barley, no leaven was offered along with it. Two tenths of an ephah of fine flour moistened with oil was offered along with the fourth of a hin measure of wine, but no leaven. (Lev. 23:13) In fact, this ceremony fell within the seven-day festival of the unleavened bread, during all of which time no leaven was to be around or to be eaten. Why, now, was there an absence of leaven at this ceremony on Nisan 16 whereas on the related festival of Pentecost there was the presence of leaven?

[30] If leaven were to be regarded as a favorable symbol because God accepted it on the day of Pentecost, why was it not permitted in the offerings that were made along with the waving of the sheaf of the firstfruits of the barley harvest? If the leaven were a symbol in a good sense, then would not the absence of leaven indicate that there was something good missing at the offering of the sheaf of barley by the high priest? Yes, it would typify that in the fulfillment of this prophetic picture there would be absent some virtue or some "grace of the holy spirit." But is that actually the case? For an answer we have to consider what was typified by the sheaf of the firstfruits of the barley harvest. It is no one else but the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ himself.—1 Cor. 15:20.

[31] In harmony with that fact, Jesus Christ was raised from the dead on Sunday, Nisan 16, 33 C.E., in the midst of the week-long festival of the unleavened bread or cakes. Certainly at his glorious resurrection he was not missing out on something good, some virtue or "grace of the holy spirit," a fact that would be pictured if the missing leaven were to be viewed as a favorable symbol, as a so-called 'leaven of righteousness.' To the very contrary of that, the absence of leaven on Nisan 16 at the waving of the sheaf of the firstfruits of the barley harvest typified that Jesus Christ was resurrected as a perfect, righteous, sinless spirit person. At his resurrection he was, as 1 Timothy 3:16 says, "declared righteous in spirit." There was no symbolical "leaven" about him.

[32] Related to this, there is this fact: Nisan 16, the day when the firstfruits of the barley harvest were presented to Jehovah God, was the third day from Passover. After Jesus Christ celebrated the Passover supper on Nisan 14, 33 C.E., he took a loaf of unleavened bread and broke it and said to his faithful apostles: "Take, eat. This means my body." (Matt. 26:26) Since there was no leaven in the loaf used, does this mean that, by reasoning on the basis that leaven is a good symbol, Jesus' fleshly body lacked something vital, lacked righteousness, lacked some "grace of the holy spirit"? Absolutely not! The unleavened quality of the loaf that Jesus said typified his body pictured that Jesus' fleshly body was free from all sin and imperfection.—Heb. 7:26.

[33] In agreement with all the foregoing, the issues of the *Watch Tower* magazine for May 15, 1900, and June 15, 1910, were correct in saying that, as a symbol, leaven or sour dough is used throughout the Scriptures in an unfavorable sense or on the negative side. From the Bible's very first mention of leaven or sour dough, in Exodus 12:15-20; 13:7, down to the last mention in Galatians 5:9, the Holy Scriptures have used leaven as a symbol of what is bad. If we need witnesses to that fact, we have at least TWO witnesses to testify

30. (a) If leaven typified something righteous, then what would its absence on the day of offering the barley firstfruits indicate? (b) What did the sheaf of the firstfruits of the barley harvest typify?

31. (a) On what day was Jesus resurrected, and why then? (b) What did there being no leaven permitted on that day in Israel picture about Christ's resurrection?

32. (a) What did Jesus say about the loaf that he broke when instituting the Lord's Supper? (b) Hence what did the unleavened quality of that loaf there symbolize?

33. So, then, how do the Holy Scriptures use leaven in the way of a symbol, and what witnesses do we have in support of this?

to the fact that the Bible unvaryingly uses leaven to symbolize something bad, unrighteousness, error, sin. Jesus referred to the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. (Matt. 16:6-12; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1) The apostle Paul warns against the leaven that leavens the whole lump or mass. He refers to the typical festival of unleavened bread and clearly defines what leaven symbolizes, for he says: "Christ our passover has been sacrificed. Consequently let us keep the festival, not with old leaven, neither with leaven of badness and wickedness, but with unfermented cakes of sincerity and truth." —1 Cor. 5:6-8; see Deuteronomy 17:6, 7; 19:15; 1 Timothy 5:19; Hebrews 10:28.*

[34] In the face of this, Jesus did not make an exception with regard to the meaning of leaven when he gave the parable of the woman who hid a bit of leaven in three large measures of flour. In his consistency of teaching, he there used leaven to symbolize something unfavorable. So the parable must illustrate something unfavorable about matters having to do with the "kingdom of the heavens." There the leavening of the big batch of dough pictures prophetically the corrupting of the professed Christian congregation with Babylonish error of teaching and practice. It pictures the symbolic leavening of what is illustrated by the full-grown mustard plant. Appropriately, then, both Matthew and Luke put the parable of the leaven right alongside the parable of the mustard grain, and Luke does so right after a stinging rebuke of hypocritical religionists.—Luke 13:10-21.

34. Accordingly, what does the parable of the leaven illustrate?

Flight to THE TRUE KINGDOM REFUGE

THE ORGANIZATION pictured by the "tree" that grew from the mustard grain in Jesus' parable has been exposed by the worldwide preaching of Jehovah's Christian witnesses. (Matt. 13:31, 32) Relatively few professed Christians have taken flight from that religious organization, namely, Christendom, and taken refuge under God's Messianic kingdom proclaimed by Jehovah's Christian witnesses. Like the prophet Isaiah of the eighth century B.C.E., these witnesses have gone and still go repeatedly to the peoples of Christen-

1. (a) How has the organization pictured by the mustard-grain "tree" of Jesus' parable been exposed? (b) How have most people in Christendom proved to be as described in Isaiah 6:8-10?

* In the 1971 edition of *Encyclopædia Judaica*, Volume 7, we find, in columns 1235-1237, an article entitled "*Hamez* . . . 'fermented dough'." In column 1237, under the heading "Leaven in Jewish Thought," we read the following:

"Leaven is regarded as the symbol of corruption and impurity. The 'yeast in the dough' is one of the things which 'prevents us from performing the will of God' (Ber. 17a). The idea was greatly developed in the Kabbalah. The New Testament also refers to 'the leaven of malice and wickedness' which is contrasted with 'the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth' (1 Cor. 5:8). Similarly the word is applied to what was regarded as the corrupt doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt. 16:12; Mark 8:15).

"It was applied particularly to the admixture of elements of impure descent in a family. (Fermented) 'dough' was contrasted in this context with 'pure sifted flour.' . . . "

dom, but in what spiritual condition do the overwhelming majority of Christendom prove themselves to be? Just as the prophet Isaiah foretold, namely, with their eyes plastered shut, their ears unresponsive and their hearts of appreciation unreceptive to the Kingdom message.—Isa. 6:8-10.

[2] How long will such ones stay in that spiritually sick state, inside Christendom? Jehovah prophetically answered this question in his words recorded in Isaiah 6:11-13. They will stay there until Christendom, the symbolic mustard-grain "tree," is wiped out in the oncoming "great tribulation." (Matt. 24:21, 22) See the article "Have You Said: 'Here I Am! Send me'?" in the *Watchtower* issue of December 15, 1966.

[3] Those God-fearing people who have taken flight from doomed Christendom have examined the affairs and events of the world since 1914 in the light of Bible prophecies. By such a comparison they have discerned that God's Messianic kingdom in the hands of his Son Jesus Christ was born in the heavens in that war-torn year. They have not taken refuge under the League of Nations as the "political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth," nor in the present-day United Nations as mankind's "last hope." In utter rejection of such views as expressed by the clergymen of Christendom, these open-eyed, responsive-eared, receptive-hearted ones have fled to God's established kingdom and taken refuge under it, fleeing, as it were, "to the mountains" outside the danger zone before the "great tribulation" breaks. (Matt. 24:16-22) Thus they have come into a "paradise" of a spiritual kind, that Jehovah God has established for his restored people since 1919, in fulfillment of the Bible's restoration prophecies.—Isa. 35:1-10; 65:17-25.

[4] The peace and security that these now experience under the Messianic kingdom are picturesquely described in Isaiah 32:1, 2, 17, 18, in these words: "Look! A king will reign for righteousness itself; and as respects princes, they will rule as princes for justice itself. And each one must prove to be like a hiding place from the wind and a place of concealment from the rainstorm, like streams of water in a waterless country, like the shadow of a heavy crag in an exhausted land. And the work of the true righteousness must become peace; and the service of the true righteousness, quietness and security to time indefinite. And my people must dwell in a peaceful abiding place and in residences of full confidence and in undisturbed resting-places."

[5] Those on earth who correspond to the "princes" here described are not any "princes of the Church" in Christendom. They are the "elders," the appointed "overseers" of the more than thirty-five thousand congregations of Jehovah's delivered and restored people. As they are directly responsible to the heavenly King, Jesus the Messiah, they wisely carry on their shepherd-like care of the flock "for justice itself." In this way they contribute to the peace, quietness, trustworthiness and security of the spiritual paradise into which Jehovah has brought his restored worshipers since the year 1919 C.E.

UNDER THE COMING MILLENNIAL REIGN OF THE MESSIAH

[6] Just as the waterproof ark carried Noah and his family and pairs of all the animals and birds through the global deluge of 2370-2369 B.C.E., so the spiritual

2. How long will such spiritually sick people stay in Christendom?

3. Why have God-fearing persons taken refuge under God's established Messianic kingdom, and into what has He brought them?

4, 5. (a) How are the peace and security of those who are brought into the spiritual paradise described in Isaiah 32:1, 2, 17, 18? (b) In the fulfillment of this prophecy, who are the "princes" mentioned, and how do they contribute to the restful conditions of the paradise?

6. How is it that God's new order on earth will start off with a spiritual paradise, but what earthly work will lie before those in that paradise?

paradise under Jehovah's protection will survive the coming deluge of the "great tribulation." Faithful worshipers of Jehovah who abide within this spiritual paradise will survive with it through that "tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again." (Matt. 24:21, 22; Rev. 7: 9-14) For this reason God's righteous post-tribulation new order of things on earth will start off with a spiritual paradise "filled with the knowledge of Jehovah" and occupied by his faithful worshipers. (Isa. 11:9) Ahead of the "great crowd" of survivors who correspond with the three sons and three daughters-in-law of Noah, there will lie the work of beautifying all the literal earth like a paradise, like a Garden of Eden on a global scale. So the inhabited earth of the future, under the thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ and his 144,000 associate kings, will be a paradise in a literal sense. Jesus Christ himself promised it by name.—Luke 23:43.

7 Back in 2369 B.C.E., after Noah's ark landed on a mountain of Ararat and he was permitted to open the door that Jehovah God had shut, Noah and his family moved out into the open. But not just they alone, for, as Genesis 8:19 tells us, "every living creature, every moving animal and every flying creature, everything that moves on the earth, according to their families they went out of the ark." These were to multiply on the earth just the same as the human survivors of the deluge. —Gen. 1:20-25.

8 What would be the relationship of these lower earthly creatures to man? This relationship God indicated when, on blessing Noah and his family, God said: "And a fear of you and a terror of you will continue upon every living creature of the earth and upon every flying creature of the heavens, upon everything that goes moving on the ground, and upon all the fishes of the sea. Into your hand they are now given." (Gen. 9:1, 2) So mankind did not move out of the ark of preservation with any terrorizing prospects before them, even from animals. Mankind had had no fear of the animals inside the ark, where even the lion ate vegetation, just like the bull.

9 That was doubtless an indication for our own future on the inhabited earth. Along with the human worshipers of Jehovah in their spiritual paradise, earthly creatures of a lower kind will be preserved for mankind's use and enjoyment. Undoubtedly, after the "great tribulation" is over, God will give a reassurance to his surviving worshipers on earth respecting the fish, the flying creatures and the land animals. The Almighty Creator will put the fear of man into all these lower earthly creatures, so that they will not molest man. According to what God commanded the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, mankind will have all these inferior creatures in subjection. They will be obedient, harmless subjects of mankind.—Gen. 1: 27, 28.

10 More than thirteen hundred years after the Deluge, when King David of Jerusalem wrote the eighth psalm, not all the lower earthly creatures were in subjection to man in the sense of being tame and harmless toward man. But in this psalm David prophetically pointed forward to a man who would yet have all of them in subjection. In that psalm David said: "When I see your heavens, the works of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have prepared, what is mortal man that you keep him in mind, and the son

7, 8. (a) Who survived with Noah and his family in the ark? (b) Why did Noah's family not move out of the ark with fear of the lower earthly creatures?

9. What does that indicate that God will do after the "great tribulation" for the fulfillment of what He commanded Adam and Eve respecting the lower earthly creatures?

10. Are all lower earthly creatures now in subjection to man, and how did David point forward prophetically to the man to whom they would be subject?

of earthling man that you take care of him? You also proceeded to make him a little less than godlike ones, and with glory and splendor you then crowned him. You make him dominate over the works of your hands; everything you have put under his feet: small cattle and oxen, all of them, and also the beasts of the open field, the birds of heaven and the fish of the sea, anything passing through the paths of the seas."—Ps. 8:3-8.

11 Whom, now, has Jehovah God designated as that "man" to whom all earthly things should be subjected? The inspired book of Hebrews, chapter two, verses five through nine, tells us, saying: "It is not to angels that he has subjected the inhabited earth to come, about which we are speaking. But a certain witness has given proof somewhere, saying: 'What is man that you keep him in mind, or the son of man that you take care of him? You made him a little lower than angels; with glory and honor you crowned him, and appointed him over the works of your hands. All things you subjected under his feet.' For in that he subjected all things to him God left nothing that is not subject to him. Now, though, we do not yet see all things in subjection to him; but we behold Jesus, who has been made a little lower than angels, crowned with glory and honor for having suffered death, that he by God's undeserved kindness might taste death for every man."

12 This means that, after the "great tribulation" and the chaining of Satan the Devil and his demons and the imprisoning of them in the abyss, the "inhabited earth to come" will be in subjection under the feet of Jesus the Messiah. Also, all the things in the inhabited earth, including "small cattle and oxen, all of them, and also the beasts of the open field, the birds of heaven and the fish of the sea, anything passing through the paths of the seas." (Ps. 8:7, 8) The "beasts of the open field" include all the wild animals that are at present savage and dangerous to man, such as the lion, the bear, the leopard, the cobra and any other poisonous snake. "Anything passing through the paths of the seas" will include piranha fish, sharks and killer whales.

13 Jesus the Messiah, now crowned with glory and honor in heaven, has not lost his power over wild and untamed beasts. (Mark 1:13; 11:2-7) He will show the subjection of these presently dangerous creatures to himself. How? By making them subject to the "great crowd" of heirs of the future earthly paradise who will survive the "great tribulation" into God's new order for our earth. Thus, the wild, ferocious, dangerous animals of today will be made harmless to the earthly worshipers of Jehovah God. The harmless relationship between beast and man that will then prevail will correspond with the description of Isaiah 11:6-9, which has already found its fulfillment in the spiritual paradise now enjoyed by Jehovah's Christian witnesses.

14 Thus God the Creator's original purpose to have all animal creation on earth subject to perfect man and woman in a global Garden of Eden will take form. The earth-wide paradise will be a place of peace and security. All the ransomed human dead who will be brought forth from their graves onto this "inhabited earth to come" will have nothing of which to be afraid. (Acts 24:15; John 5:28, 29; Rev. 20:11-14) The "roaring lion," Satan the Devil, and his demons will not be in the vicinity. The glorified "Son of man" in the heavens will

11. Where and how is the name given of the man whom God has designated for having all earthly things subject to him?
12. In the "inhabited earth to come," what earthly living creatures will also be subject under the feet of Jesus?
13. How will Jesus Christ, now glorified in heaven, show that all these lower earthly creatures are subject to him in the "inhabited earth to come"?
14. Why will the ransomed human dead have nothing to fear on coming forth into the "inhabited earth to come"?

enforce peace earth wide between man and man and between man and beast and between beast and beast. "Righteousness is what the inhabitants of the productive land will certainly learn," and the service and effect of such righteousness throughout the earth will be peace, quietness, cause for true confidence, and security. (Isa. 26: 9; 32:17, 18) Oh, what a grand place the earth will be for man to occupy eternally as his paradise home! All of this will be because the "inhabited earth to come" will be under the true "kingdom of the heavens."—Matt. 4:17; 5:3, 10.

[15] This is the "kingdom of the heavens" that it is now our privilege and opportunity to proclaim world wide. We who have already taken refuge under it are concerned for the safety of others in this time of unprecedented world distress. The tribulation of all tribulations is just ahead. In view of that fact, let us continue to direct all teachable people to the true Messianic "kingdom of the heavens" and help them to take safe refuge under it. Their salvation out of the world's greatest distress depends on this!

15. What is it now our privilege and opportunity to do respecting the people who are in danger because of the "great tribulation" just ahead?

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

November 2: Things Which the "Kingdom of the Heavens" Is Like. Page 589. Songs to Be Used: 6, 68.

November 9: The Exposing of the False Kingdom Refuge, ¶1-24. Page 595. Songs to Be Used: 90, 118.

November 16: The Exposing of the False Kingdom Refuge, ¶25-34, and Flight to the True Kingdom Refuge. Page 601. Songs to Be Used: 1, 117.