MARCH 1, 1978

THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

Our Incoming World Government— GOD'S KINGDOM

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Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

March 1, 1978
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"Be of Good Cheer"

A ROARING tempestuous wind rushes down on the ship, violently seizing the vessel. Like a cork bobbing crazily, the ship is tossed about in the raging sea. At a time such as this, how could anyone be of good cheer?

Faced with just such a circumstance during a sea voyage to Rome, the apostle Paul told imperiled men: "Be of good cheer." (Acts 27:14-22) The apostle was confident that not even one life would be lost because he believed the divine promise made to him: "Have no fear, Paul. You must stand before Caesar, and, look! God has freely given you all those sailing with you."—Acts 27:24.

Though not in danger of experiencing shipwreck in a turbulent sea, we today live in a world filled with turmoil and trouble. Many people are disheartened, depressed, discouraged, and they feel helpless in the face of mounting problems. Can we be of "good cheer" at a time such as this?

Because of God's promise, the apostle Paul was of good cheer during a seemingly hopeless situation. Therefore, it logically follows that our being of good cheer depends on what the Creator has in mind for us. The earth's potential for superabundantly satisfying all man's needs proves that Jehovah God wants us to be of good cheer. Even idol-worshiping men at Lystra (Asia Minor) were told: "[God] did not leave himself without witness in that he did good, giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts to the full with food and good cheer."—Acts 14:17.

Yes, despite unpleasant aspects of life, there is much that can bring us pleasure. Included are such common things as a fine meal, a gorgeous sunset, a walk through a beautiful park and a hike in a forest. Furthermore, while our present circumstances may not be ideal, we have God's assurance that he will bring an end to wickedness and will remove from mankind all sorrow, anguish, sickness and even death itself.—Rev. 21:4.

When we do not allow the problems of the present to blind us to the many good things around us and the marvelous future that God has in store for his servants, we can be cheerful. As Proverbs 15:15 says, we can enjoy a "feast constantly." Negative aspects of life fade into the background when personal blessings and God-given hope occupy one's thoughts.

A cheerful attitude also helps an individual to put up with hardships. Since one does not brood about them, difficulties are easier to bear. Cheerfulness prevents a person from magnifying the faults of others and tends to make him more tolerant

of their shortcomings. Because a person's thinking is not unduly negative, he is less inclined to gossip and to grumble. This can affect the individual's health for good, as it keeps in check such hurtful emotions as hatred, anger, jealousy, revenge and ill will. In his book *Cancer,* Dr. J. E. Hett points out that love, cheerfulness and gentleness promote a person's well-being. This harmonizes fully with the Bible proverb: "A heart that is joyful does good as a curer." (Prov. 17:22) Moreover, the happy, contented person can cheer up others.

There is wisdom in shifting one's thinking to positive things. The Bible encourages: "Whatever things are of serious concern, whatever things are righteous, whatever things are chaste, whatever things are lovable, whatever things are well spoken of, whatever virtue there is and whatever praiseworthy thing there is, continue considering these things." (Phil. 4:8) When such things become the main topic of our conversation, listeners will be built up, yes, cheered up.

Surely, it is well worth the effort to cultivate and to maintain a cheerful disposition, as it contributes to one's own welfare and that of others. The apostle Paul's advice during a dangerous storm at sea is good counsel for us in these troublesome times. So, "be of good cheer."

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

happinesses 6 through 9

JESUS stated 'happiness' number six of his Sermon on the Mount as follows: *"Happy are the pure in heart, since they will see God."*—Matt. 5:8.

"The pure in heart" are persons inwardly clean. Theirs is a purity of affections, desires, appreciation and motives. It contrasts markedly with merely external or ceremonial cleanness. (Matt. 23:25-28; Mark 7:3, 4) Rather than stressing outward displays of piety, the Scriptures encourage displaying "love out of a clean heart and out of a good conscience and out of faith without hypocrisy."—1 Tim. 1:5.

The pure in heart enjoy happiness especially because "they will see God." This does not necessarily mean literal seeing with the human eye, for 'no man may see God and yet live.' (Ex. 33:20; John 1:18; 1 John 4:12) But there are other ways in which rightly motivated worshipers on earth may "see God" at present. For example, observing God act in one's behalf because of one's integrity is a way to "behold God." (Job 19:26; 42:5) Visits to the temple at Jerusalem for worship are described as one's going "to see the face of Jehovah," or to present oneself before him.—Ex. 34:24; Deut. 31:11; Isa. 1:12.

The Greek word that Matthew uses for "see" also means "to see with the mind, to perceive, know." Since Jesus perfectly reflected God's personality, he could say: "He that has seen me has seen the Father also." (John 14:7-9) The pure in

heart who accepted Jesus as Messiah and listened to him gained deep insight into God's personality. By exercising faith in Jesus' sin-atoning sacrifice they gained forgiveness of sins and a relationship with God and were able to render acceptable worship before his throne. (Eph. 1:7) Seeing God in this sense will reach its pinnacle for spirit-anointed Christians when they get to heaven, for there they will actually see God and Christ.—1 John 3:2; 2 Cor. 1:21, 22.

The opportunity to see God through accurate knowledge and true worship, however, is only for those pure in heart. The Scriptures show that practicers of sin have neither seen nor come to know God and his son. "He that does bad has not seen God."—1 John 3:6; 3 John 11; Ps. 24:3, 4.

"THE PEACEABLE" BECOME GOD'S SONS

Jesus gave as the seventh happiness of the Sermon on the Mount: *"Happy are the peaceable, since they will be called 'sons of God.'"*—Matt. 5:9.

"The peaceable" are evident both by what they avoid and by what they practice. Peaceable individuals are not aggressive or belligerent; neither do they return evil for evil when wronged. (Rom. 12: 14-21) But there is also a positive aspect to their disposition.

The Greek word for peaceable means "peacemakers." They not only conduct themselves peacefully but go out of their way to establish peace and concord between contending parties. They refuse to participate in or condone anything that serves to 'separate those familiar with one another.' (Prov. 16:28; 17:9) By word and example they encourage peaceableness both within and outside the Christian congregation.—Rom. 14:19; Heb. 12:14.

The peaceable are happy, "since they will be called 'sons of God.'" They enjoy an intimate relationship with God as his children. Maintaining this relationship, however, calls for imitating the qualities of God's personality, which includes peaceableness. (2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:20; Jas. 3:17) Anyone who unlovingly continues at enmity with his fellowman "does not originate with God." —1 John 3:10.

In Jesus' day the Jews believed that they were children of God because of being His human creatures. (Isa. 64:8) But Jesus showed this was not true even though they were the natural seed of Abraham. (John 8:39, 41) In fact, to certain ones Jesus declared: "You are from your father the Devil." (John 8:44) Since all mankind inherit sin from Adam who was created an earthly "son of God," sonship with God has not become automatic.—Rom. 3: 23; 5:12; Luke 3:38.

Only the peaceable who accepted Jesus as the Messiah and sin-bearer were given "authority to become God's children, because they were exercising faith in his name." (John 1:12; Isa. 53:12; 1 Pet. 2: 24) The "great crowd" of peaceable "other sheep" of the Fine Shepherd Jesus Christ will have him as their "Eternal Father" during his millennial kingdom, but at the end thereof he will turn them over to his own heavenly Father to become the offspring of God.—Rev. 7:9-17; John 10: 14-16; Isa. 9:6; 1 Cor. 15:27, 28.

PERSECUTED, YET HAPPY

As the eighth happiness in this series, Jesus declared: *"Happy are those who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake, since the kingdom of the heavens belongs to them."* (Matt. 5:10) Expanding on this he uttered a ninth happiness: *"Happy are you when people reproach you and persecute you and lyingly say every sort of wicked thing against you for my sake. Rejoice and leap for joy, since your reward is great in the heavens; for in that way they persecuted the prophets prior to*

you."—Matt. 5:11, 12; compare Luke 6: 22, 23.

"Those who have been persecuted" are Christians who have experienced reproach, slander and ostracism "for righteousness' sake," or "for the sake of the Son of man." Their sufferings are due to worshiping Jehovah and bearing the name of Jesus Christ and following his footsteps closely. —1 Pet. 2:19-21.

The reason for rejoicing here is the same as that given in the first happiness, namely, "the kingdom of the heavens belongs to them." (Compare Matthew 5:3.) Though it may mean reproach, being expelled from their communities and even death in some cases, Christians know that the "joy" of ruling with Christ in God's heavenly kingdom or enjoying perfect human life as its earthly subjects are well worth it.—Matt. 25:21, 23; Heb. 12:2; Rev. 21:1-5.

This 'reward in the heavens' (that is, from God) is not in the sense of wages earned for work done. Under no circumstances can sinful humans earn God's favor and obligate him to bless them. (Gal. 2:16; Jas. 2:10) The reward of kingdom blessings is an "indescribable free gift," an evidence of God's benevolence and generosity. (2 Cor. 9:15; Jas. 1:16-18) It is a reward paid to Christians for faithfully enduring reproach, persecution and wicked lies said against them because of their unbreakable devotion to God.

Jesus also presented a contrast to these final two happinesses, saying: *"Woe, whenever all men speak well of you, for things like these are what their forefathers did to the false prophets."* (Luke 6:26) Rather than proclaiming God's truth, the "false prophets" of ancient Israel spoke what people wanted to hear; and the people "loved it that way." (Jer. 5:31) But such popularity has never been an indication of God's favor. The approval of Jehovah God rests only upon persons who speak and act in accord with his Word. (Ps. 15:1, 2) Those who do that, however, can expect persecution, for Jesus said: "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also."—John 15:20.

Memorializing Christ's Death —How Much Longer?

THE MEMORIAL of Christ's death has only a limited run. To first-century Christians, the apostle Paul wrote: "For as often as you eat this loaf and drink this cup, you keep proclaiming the death of the Lord, until he arrives." (1 Cor. 11:26) This plainly means that, when the Lord Jesus Christ does arrive, the proclaiming of his death by means of celebrating the Lord's Supper, or Evening Meal, will stop.—1 Cor. 11:20.

At Passover time of the year 33 of our Common Era, the Lord Jesus Christ established "the Lord's evening meal." Indicating its purpose, he said to his faithful apostles: "This is my body which will be given for you; do this as a memorial of me." Also, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this as a memorial of me." (Luke 22: 19; 1 Cor. 11:23-25, *The Jerusalem Bible; The New English Bible*) The pouring out

of Christ's blood and the laying down of his perfect human body in sacrifice brought his direct, personal, living presence with his earthly disciples to an end, especially so when he ascended back to heaven on the forty-second day from that time. So the Lord's Evening Meal was to be celebrated each year on its anniversary date (Nisan 14) as something to remind them of Christ's death in their behalf. It would rekindle their appreciation of this.

With his coming absence and his return in mind, Jesus said to his disciples when inaugurating the Memorial: "In the house of my Father there are many abodes. Otherwise, I would have told you, because I am going my way to prepare a place for you. Also, if I go my way and prepare a place for you, I am coming again and will receive you home to myself, that where I am you also may be."—John 14: 2, 3.

Until Jesus came to receive the last of these disciples to himself in the heavenly place prepared for them, the memorial of his death would continue being celebrated. When all are finally united with him above for the purpose of acting as priests with him and ruling as kings with him, the Memorial celebration on earth will cease.

Christ's reign for the 1,000 years in heavenly glory will be the proper time for his earthly subjects to celebrate his kingship, not his sacrificial death on earth. It will be the time for mankind to be glad, to rejoice with him in his royal reward. Mankind will then be receiving in full the benefits of his sufferings and death that had to precede his glorification in heaven.

How many "will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him for the thousand years"? A limited number, 144,000 disciples. (Rev. 7:2-8; 14: 1-3; 20:4-6) They are pictured as sealed with the "seal of the living God." The apostle John says:

"I heard the number of those who were sealed, a hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the sons of Israel. Out of the tribe of Judah . . . Reuben . . . Gad . . . Asher . . . Naphtali . . . Manasseh . . . Simeon . . . Levi . . . Issachar . . . Zebulun . . . Joseph . . . Benjamin." These were sealed with God's holy spirit. (2 Cor. 1:21, 22) Their number is confirmed by Revelation 14:1-5, which says that they were marked in the forehead with Christ's name and with that of his Father. Also, they stand with the glorified Lamb Jesus Christ on Mount Zion, the heavenly one, not the earthly one in the Middle East where ancient Jerusalem once stood.—Heb. 12:22; Rev. 3:12.

In ancient fleshly Israel, the priests and the Levites who served under them at Jehovah's temple were taken exclusively from the tribe of Levi. This is not the case with the 144,000 who "will be priests of God and of the Christ." According to Revelation 7:4-8, only 12,000 of these are taken from the tribe of Levi. The 132,000 others will be taken from the other 11 tribes named. This proves that the 12 tribes there named are not the same as the 12 tribes of fleshly Israel.—1 Cor. 10:18.

Those "tribes" out of whom all 144,000 are taken and sealed are spiritual Israelites. Those not selected and sealed are rejected. A similar thing occurred with ancient natural Israel during the first century of our Common Era. Just a "remnant" of the natural fleshly Israelites were chosen, although "many," the whole nation, were called and had the opportunity to furnish the 144,000 associate priests and kings for Jesus Christ in heaven. The remainder of the unbelieving nation was rejected. Reportedly, 1,100,000 of these suffered a violent death when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in 70 C.E. Likewise today, those of the spiritual Israelites who are not sealed with the "seal

of the living God" do not receive his protection during the coming whirlwind that forms when the "four winds" are let go by the four angels at God's due time so as to 'harm the earth, the sea and the trees.'

The unsealed rejected spiritual Israelites will be 'harmed' to destruction. They will not come out of that "great tribulation" alive as the "great crowd" does, who are said to be out of every earthly tribe, nation, people and tongue.—Rev. 7:1-14.

LORD'S EVENING MEAL INSTITUTED

Jesus Christ associated the Memorial evening meal with God's kingdom. Quite properly so, for his death in faithfulness was, first of all, for the vindication of the universal sovereignty of Jehovah God, the "King of eternity." (Rev. 15:3) By his faithfulness to the death he was proving himself worthy of being the Permanent Heir of David with whom God made a covenant for an everlasting kingdom. (2 Sam. 7:1-29; 2 Chron. 13:5, 8; Luke 1:31-33; 22:29, 30) This fact is made very prominent by the account of the Passover of 33 C.E., as given by the Gospel writer Luke. In it we read:

> "At length when the hour came, he reclined at the table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them: 'I have greatly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it again until it becomes fulfilled in the kingdom of God.' And, accepting a cup, he gave thanks and said: 'Take this and pass it from one to the other among yourselves; for I tell you, From now on I will not drink again from the product of the vine until the kingdom of God arrives.'
>
> "Also, he took a loaf, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them, saying: 'This means my body which is to be given in your behalf. Keep doing this in remembrance of me.' Also, the cup in the same way after they had the evening meal, he saying: 'This cup means the new covenant by virtue of my blood, which is to be poured out in your behalf.' "—Luke 22:14-20.*

The two cups of wine that Jesus used, according to the above account, were the last two of four cups of wine that were traditionally drunk by all sharers in the Passover during the first century C.E. So they were cups Nos. 3 and 4. Cup No. 3 was drunk after the celebrators had eaten the Passover lamb and the unleavened bread. It was called "the cup of blessing" because of the blessing pronounced over it. (1 Cor. 10:16) Jesus "gave thanks" to God for the cup before sharing it with the apostles. Thus Jesus led in celebrating the Passover according to the accepted custom of the time. He did not alter or interrupt it by introducing anything new into the observance. In this way he kept the Law as a born Jew.

However, when the Passover meal had been carried out according to the Mosaic law, Jesus was free to introduce the new evening meal for memorializing his approaching death on that same Passover day. On the table there were still unleavened bread and cup No. 4, after the drinking of which Psalms 115 to 118 of the Hallel ("Praise") were sung. So it was "the cup of praise."—See *The Watch Tower* as of March 15, 1921, pages 88, 89, under the subheading "the Cup of Praise"; also, Meyer's *Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Gospel of Matthew,* pages 45, 46, under verse 27; also, *The Jewish Encyclopædia* under *Passover, Seder* and *Arba Kosoth* (*Four Cups*).

The apostle Matthew was with Jesus that Passover night, and his account takes

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* Because some manuscripts omit the words after "my body" and to the end of verse 20, such words are omitted by *The Bible in Living English* (Byington), *The New English Bible,* and *An American Translation,* evidently because the accounts by Matthew and Mark tell of Jesus' using only one cup on this occasion. *The Holy Bible in Modern English* by Ferrar Fenton double-brackets the questioned words as though they were spurious.

"Loaf"—Luke 22:19 "Cup of Blessing"—Luke 22:17 "Cup of Praise"—Luke 22:20

up after the drinking of the "cup of blessing":

"As they continued eating, Jesus took a loaf and, after saying a blessing, he broke it and, giving it to the disciples, he said: 'Take, eat. This means my body.' Also, he took a cup and, having given thanks, he gave it to them, saying: 'Drink out of it, all of you; for this means my "blood of the covenant," which is to be poured out in behalf of many for forgiveness of sins. But I tell you, I will by no means drink henceforth any of this product of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in the kingdom of my Father.' Finally, after singing praises [psalms Nos. 115-118 of the Hallel], they went out to the Mount of Olives."—Matt. 26:26-30.

When the faithful apostles drank cup No. 4, or "the after-dinner cup" (Ferrar Fenton), they were, according to Jesus' words, symbolically drinking blood, Jesus' blood. (Luke 22:20, *FF*) In spite of being Jews in the Mosaic Law covenant, this thought did not prove revolting to them. (Ps. 16:4) Jesus had prepared them for this by what he said to them on a previous occasion. This was shortly before the Passover of 32 C.E. and the next day after he had miraculously fed a multitude of listeners by multiplying a few loaves and fishes. (John 6:4) The apostle John tells us:

"In answer Jesus said to them: '. . . I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread he will live forever; and, for a fact, the bread that I shall give is my flesh in behalf of the life of the world.'

"Therefore the Jews began contending with one another, saying: 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' Accordingly Jesus said to them: 'Most truly I say to you, Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in yourselves. He that feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has everlasting life, and I shall resurrect him at the last day; for my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. . . . Just as the living Father sent me forth and I live because of the Father, he also that feeds on me, even that one will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. It is not as when your forefathers ate and yet died. He that feeds on this bread will live forever.' . . .

"Therefore many of his disciples, when they heard this, said: 'This speech is shocking; who can listen to it?' . . .

"Owing to this many of his disciples went off to the things behind and would no longer walk with him."

But the apostle Peter stuck to Jesus and said: "You have sayings of everlasting life; and we have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God." —John 6:43-69.

On that occasion Jesus was not speaking to those circumcised Israelites about "everlasting life" as human creatures on a Paradise earth under his millennial kingdom. Rather, he was speaking about the very same opportunity that he was setting before the apostle Peter and his fellow apostles by means of the "sayings of everlasting life." It was the opportunity to gain inherent life with the Christ in the heavens, "life in yourselves." (John 6:53) By reigning with him in heaven they could pass on to mankind the life-giving benefits of his sacrifice.*

Those Jews had wanted to "seize him to make him king" to sit on David's throne. But Jesus chose rather to let his Father make him a king in heaven. (John 6:15, 61, 62) Those Jews were in the Law covenant mediated by Moses. That Law covenant was meant to lead the Jews to Christ and thus afford them the opportunity to become a "kingdom of priests" with him. —Ex. 19:5, 6; Gal. 3:24, 25.

So, in the discussion recorded in John 6:52-65, Jesus was not talking about the world of mankind as the ones to drink his blood as well as eating his flesh, figuratively, during his millennial reign. He was talking about believers whom he would bring into the new covenant. (Jer. 31:31-34; Rev. 20:4-6) These would become spiritual Israelites. That is why, when Jesus inaugurated the "Lord's evening meal," he said to his Israelite apostles: "This cup means the new covenant by virtue of my blood, which is to be poured out in your behalf." (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:20, 25) Or, according to Matthew 26:27: "Drink out of it, all of you; for this means my 'blood of the covenant,' which is to be poured out in behalf of many for forgiveness of sins." The 11 faithful apostles who accepted the unleavened bread and the cup of wine at Jesus' hands that Passover night of 33 C.E. were taken into the new covenant on the day of Pentecost, the fifty-second day from the Passover.

* See *The Watchtower* under date of January 15, 1951, pages 55, 56, paragraphs 22-25, under subheading "Eating and Drinking for Life in Oneself." Note also issue of April 15, 1949, pages 119, 120, paragraphs 23-28, under "The Gift of Life in Himself."

MEMORIAL AND THE KINGDOM

The old Law covenant, with its prospect of "a kingdom of priests," acted as a tutor to lead only a small remnant to Christ, the many Jews of Israel being called or invited but only a few being chosen. (Matt. 22:1-14; Rom. 9:27-29; 11:5) But the new covenant produces what Peter called "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for special possession." —1 Pet. 2:9.

Due to this fact, Jesus Christ can take them into the covenant for a kingdom with him. (Luke 22:28-30; Rev. 20:4-6) Consequently the "heavenly Jerusalem" can rejoice more than the earthly "Jerusalem," which was in the Law covenant. Why so? Because God's "woman," the heavenly "mother," who brings forth spiritual children for her 'Husband,' produces all 144,000 joint heirs of Christ and not a mere remnant of prospective Kingdom heirs. —Gal. 4:21-31; Isa. 54:1.

The spiritual sons of God, the spiritual Israelites in the new covenant, are the ones obligated to partake of the Lord's *evening* meal in remembrance of his death. The apostle Paul compares these spiritual Israelites with what he calls "Israel in a fleshly way." The material altar on which sacrifices were offered to God was called "the table of Jehovah." When Israelites ate part of the communion sacrifices to God, they became sharers with Him, for He was represented by the altar. (Mal. 1:7, 8) Similarly, the table on which the unleav-

ened bread and the cup of wine are put for the Lord's evening meal may be called "the table of Jehovah." The spiritual Israelites who partake of those Memorial emblems are thus having communion with him. They become sharers with Him as well as with one another.—1 Cor. 10:18-21; 11:25.

So, too, at the Memorial the cup of wine that symbolizes the "blood of the covenant" is spoken of as "the cup of Jehovah." When the spiritual Israelites drink from this cup, they become sharers with Jehovah respecting Christ's blood that validates the new covenant. By this gesture the spiritual Israelites show that they worship Jehovah as their God and do not idolize any demon as god. Jehovah accepts Christ's blood as that which puts the new covenant in force. Likewise the drinkers of the Memorial cup accept Christ's blood as the life that he poured out in sacrifice for them to get God's forgiveness of sins through that covenant.

Even though the Memorial cup symbolized a sacrificial death for Christ by the pouring out of his lifeblood, Jesus gave thanks to Jehovah for it. Moreover, after Jesus' disciples drank this cup of wine, both he and they sang the rest of the Hallel (or "Praise"), that is, Psalms 115 to 118. (Matt. 26:27-30) So, when celebrating the Memorial, those in the new covenant pronounce a blessing upon this cup. It is "the cup of blessing" because Jesus blessed it. We read:

> "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of the Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not a sharing in the body of the Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, although many, are one body, for we are all partaking of that one loaf."—1 Cor. 10:16, 17.

OBSERVERS AT THE MEMORIAL

A remnant of spiritual Israelites, who are members of the spiritual "body" of Christ, are still on earth. In recent years they have invited others to attend the annual Memorial celebration as witnesses or observers. These dedicated sheeplike persons were foreshadowed by Jonadab the friend of King Jehu of Israel. (2 Ki. 10:15-23; Jer. 35:1-16) Ever since the year 1935 C.E. Jesus Christ the Fine Shepherd has brought a "great crowd" of such modern "Jonadabs" or "other sheep" into association with the spirit-begotten remnant of his spiritual "body." But first in the *Watchtower* issue of February 15, 1938, we read this invitation:

> ". . . After 6 p.m. on April 15 let each company of the anointed assemble and celebrate the Memorial, their companions the Jonadabs also being present. Let the emblems be unleavened bread and real red wine."—Page 50, under "Memorial."

Those "other sheep," who are not of the same "fold" as the "little flock," attended the Memorial as observers, not as partakers.—John 10:16; Luke 12:32.—See *The Watchtower* as of March 1, 1938, page 75, paragraphs 50-52.

Ever since, the "other sheep," now increased to a "great crowd," have attended the annual Memorial of Christ's death. And why not? Though they do not drink the cup symbolizing Christ's blood, yet Revelation 7:14 says that they "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Revelation 7:9, 10 also shows them ascribing their salvation to God and the Lamb Jesus Christ.

So, this year, on March 23, after sundown, let all the dedicated, baptized "other sheep" assemble with the remnant of the "little flock" for the 1978 celebration of the Lord's evening meal. As the time nears for the glorified Lord Jesus to take the remnant home to their heavenly abode, the "great crowd" of the "other sheep" will not have the opportunity to do this much longer.

In 1946 I returned to Kyoto, Japan, after spending four years in Manchuria and China fighting in the second world war. Actually I was fortunate—millions didn't return.

Back home our country was devastated. Whole cities lay in ruins. The people were confused and suffering from hunger. Mothers could be seen searching for scraps of food for their starving babies. Yet, at the same time, the rich could always buy what they needed on the "Black Market." I knew what it meant to be poor, and never wanted that again. So making money became my chief goal in life.

But, as you will see, I found something better than material gain.

Finding Something Better Than Wealth

As Told by Shozo Mima

My mother died when I was three and I was brought up by my grandmother. We lived in a country area near Kyoto until I graduated from middle school at age 16. I didn't like schooling very much, so decided to help in my father's small business that consisted of selling items made of straw, such as straw bags, ropes, mats, and so forth. I remained there until Japan entered the second world war. Then in 1941, at the age of 20, I was called to the army.

In those days I used to wonder a lot about what happens to a person when he dies. Many of us youngsters were preoccupied with death, because we knew that young men who went to war would probably be killed. I felt it to be unfair that older people should enjoy life, and I should have to die in my youth. Even though Shintoism was a prevalent religion in Japan at the time, it had never provided me with anything that helped me spiritually.

After returning from the war, in keeping with Oriental custom, I married the widow of my brother who was killed in the war. Shortly afterward she died of tuberculosis. Following another Japanese custom, my father arranged through a go-between for marriage to my present wife, Mitsue.

My education was limited. And I wondered what I would do for a living. Having lost most of our material possessions dur-

ing the war, what counted to me now was financial security, yes, making as much money as I could. Ingenuity and hard work were the key to success, I felt, not necessarily a good education. In time I started a new business that had to do with transporting container boxes of fresh vegetables and fruits from growing areas to the market.

I worked hard day and night trying to build up the business. And it did begin to succeed, although I wasn't getting wealthy as I had hoped. Then, I began to pay a price for the hard-driving, unreasonable pressure that I was putting on myself. I became very sick, and was hospitalized.

For weeks my wife had to care for me. I thought my sickness was incurable, and that I might die. So again I started to be preoccupied with death, and what happens to a person when he dies.

DOES RELIGION HAVE THE ANSWERS?

To find an answer, I turned to religion. Earlier in life I had learned something about Shinshu Buddhism, so now I again became interested in it. Buddhism teaches that there is a world of immortal spirits, and that everyone who dies becomes a part of this spirit world. It also teaches that the spirits of some persons will be tormented in "hell."

I believed this, and so was convinced that humans have an immortal part of them that survives death to live on in a spirit world. I desired assurance that this supposed inner life of mine would not depart to some place of torment, but would *enjoy* a happy future after death. However, to my great disappointment, the one who was teaching me the Shinshu Buddhism religion died, and I wasn't able to get the answers that I wanted.

Still I continued to search for the way of salvation by attending other Buddhist meetings. I even went to some Protestant and Catholic churches. Interestingly, I found that these taught much as the Buddhists do, namely, that a person may either spend his afterlife in a place of fiery torment or enjoy salvation in heaven, depending on the type of life that he had lived while on earth. But the answers were not satisfying. Also, I could see the selfishness and greed of these churches and stopped going to them.

During the time that I was sick, Lois Dyer, an Australian missionary of Jehovah's Witnesses, called on me. She offered to study the Bible in our home free of charge, and I gladly accepted. But as the study progressed, my joy turned to pain.

This was particularly because of the Bible teaching that the human soul is not immortal. Lois read to me such scriptures as Ezekiel 18:4, which says: "The soul that is sinning—it itself will die." I was very angry to hear this, so I even tried to quit the study. Also, the study at times seemed difficult, causing me to ask: "Why must one study such difficult things to gain salvation? Isn't there a simpler way?"

Lois explained that, due to falsehoods taught by religions for hundreds of years, misconceptions are deeply rooted in people's hearts. Careful study is, therefore, needed to distinguish between truth and error. She also said that only truth will lead people to eternal salvation.

After her explanation, I began to recognize the real need of serious study in order to learn God's truths. This scripture in the Bible impressed me: "If you keep seeking for it as for silver, and as for hid treasures you keep searching for it, in that case you will understand the fear of Jehovah, and you will find the very knowledge of God." (Prov. 2:4, 5) Now I began to enjoy the Bible. As we examined its teachings, what we studied began to make sense to me.

I could see that it is true, humans *are* souls, and that at death the soul dies. The

dead are unconscious. (Eccl. 9:5, 10; Ps. 146:4) But Almighty God has the power to resurrect persons back to life, and his sure promise is that he will do this. (John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15) The Bible also clearly teaches that this earth we live on will be transformed into a beautiful home to be inhabited by humans obedient to God. (Rev. 21:3, 4) These Bible teachings began to make a deep impression on me, and to affect my life.

Soon I recuperated and was able to get back to work to bolster my sagging business. But my viewpoint toward gaining wealth, as well as toward Buddhism, had changed. I started to preach to the Buddhist priest about the things that I was learning from the Bible. This caused my father to get angry and he expelled us from his home. So we remodeled one of the rooms of my business office and moved in there.

PURSUING A DIFFERENT GOAL

In those days the meeting place of Jehovah's Witnesses was one hour away by streetcar. It was a public place, a small rented Japanese-style room, about four by seven meters (13 by 23 feet) in size. People in adjoining rooms would be playing the Japanese chess game of Go, or learning the use of the abacus, and would make a lot of noise. I was impressed by the sincerity and enthusiasm of those who attended the meetings, including many young people, who paid close attention to the study material despite the distractions.

I will always remember the first Memorial of Christ's death that I attended in 1955. As you may know, it is called "the Lord's supper" or "the Lord's evening meal." (1 Cor. 11:20) Not knowing what kind of meal would be served, I attended with another Bible student wearing my best suit and without having eaten supper. On our way home, we both were very hungry!

Then I began attending the semiannual circuit assemblies of Jehovah's Witnesses that lasted for two or three days. While away attending them I would worry about my business. But the happy association with the fine people there had become more important to me than making money.

It seemed logical that if the Bible contains the way of salvation, the only right thing to do is to share its truths with others. In time I progressed to helping others to study the Bible in their homes. My first regular study was with a painter. One particular snowy night, as I was on my way home, questions came into my mind: "Why should I be doing this at such a late hour? Why can't I just enjoy my own salvation? I know the importance of the work, but why . . . ?"

So, as I trudged through the snow, I prayed to Jehovah about the matter. Then I remembered what the missionary had told me when I asked her about a simpler way to salvation. She said: "God is love, and selfishness and hatred are from the Devil." Yes, most people are engaged in the selfish pursuit of wealth. But I could see that this preaching work is something very unselfish; it is God's work. By it Jehovah wants to gather people who will listen, and to train them for salvation.

At that moment I more fully understood the love of God, and the importance of our labors of love. Before I retired that night I thanked Jehovah heartily for the understanding that he had given me. That experience I remember clearly until this day.

MEETING PROBLEMS SUCCESSFULLY

I now began to have more opposition from family and relatives, as well as from other associates. A principal reason was my nonparticipation in activities that so often have religious features, such as funerals.

My wife did not like the changes I made and asked for a divorce, which greatly shocked me. However, I was able to reason with her about the foolishness of such an action. Later she, too, started to study the Bible. I was so happy when she dedicated her life to Jehovah and was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1957.

It was especially difficult to bring up our two young girls in the way of true Christianity, for people in our community are zealous for unchristian religious festivals to which children are very much attracted. I tried to teach our daughters why certain celebrations and practices are not pleasing to God. We would review with them what we learned at our Christian meetings on our way home, and I often commended them if they remembered well. This encouraged them to pay attention. Also, my wife and I were very conscious to live lives consistent with our teaching, and always to set good examples for the children.

A BETTER, HAPPIER LIFE

In 1957, at an assembly in Osaka, it was announced that the missionaries in Kyoto would leave for other assignments. During the assembly the need of full-time "pioneer" preachers was discussed. So I started to think about whether I could be a pioneer by planning my time wisely.

When we returned home, I tried pioneering on a temporary basis, working in my business part time. Then I hired a man to look after the business for me while I was out in the preaching work. After a year the business was doing just as well as the year before. So I started to pioneer on a regular basis. Later, in 1964, I decided to sell the business. From the proceeds of the sale, and by working part time at a fish breeding and raising company I have been able to support my family and continue in the pioneer work to this day.

I have experienced so many benefits from following Jesus' counsel to 'stop storing up treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, rather store up for yourselves treasures in heaven.' (Matt. 6:19, 20) One of them was the construction in 1965 of a Kingdom Hall on my property.

When I first associated with Jehovah's Witnesses there were only 10 Kingdom publishers in Kyoto meeting in that small rented room. But now there are nine thriving congregations, with over 700 publishers and 96 pioneers in Kyoto! And there are six fine Kingdom Halls. All this growth of Jehovah's worship I have witnessed and shared in during the past 23 years.

A rewarding experience I'll never forget was attending the 1958 international convention in New York city's Yankee Stadium and Polo Grounds. By watching about 180,000 people the opening day I could understand that Jehovah God is certainly gathering people of all languages and nationalities together as his true worshipers.

It has been a particular pleasure to see the spiritual growth of ones with whom I've studied the Bible. Some of them are now serving as pioneers, and are helping yet other persons to learn the way of salvation. My wife has been a faithful companion these many years, and we regularly enjoy the preaching work together. Our two daughters are now married, and both of them have had a full share in pioneer service.

When I think back to when my chief goal in life was to become wealthy, there is no comparison as to how much happier I've been since I changed my goal. Truly there is nothing that can match the contentment and satisfaction that come with using one's life in the service of our Grand Creator.

Our Incoming World Government—GOD'S KINGDOM

"Make melody to God, make melody. Make melody to our King, make melody. For God is King of all the earth."—Ps. 47:6, 7.

IT IS for *us on earth!* It is perfectly suited to our pressing needs—this world government of which we speak. It is about to take over the care of all our affairs. That is why we speak of it as "our incoming world government."

[2] It comes from a source far higher, far greater, than us puny human creatures, who have failed so miserably in managing our affairs on earth. It comes from the One who knows how to run, not only our tiny earth, but also the whole universe. It comes from the Creator of all things. The world government is His kingdom that he promised as far back as six thousand years ago. For all of this ought we not to be glad and make melody to Him? Yes, indeed!

[3] In being a world government, God's kingdom will not deal with just one nation on earth. Long ago, from the spring of 1513 before our Common Era to the spring of 33 C.E., God was the heavenly King of just the nation of Israel. (Ps. 147: 19, 20) But now he gives his own word for it that he will be King over *all* the earth. This means over people of all nations. That is why, by means of one of his leading prophets, Isaiah, he said these words of encouragement to *all* peoples: "My own house will be called even a house of prayer for all the peoples."—Isa. 56:7.

1. Why do we speak of it as "our incoming world government"?
2. What about the ruling abilities of the One who furnishes this world government?
3. His kingdom being a world government, over what and whom will God be King?

[4] However, thousands of years before that, away back in the garden of Eden, God made a prophecy that has meaning for all peoples. There he said to the great Seducer of all mankind: "I shall put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He [the woman's seed] will bruise you in the head and you will bruise him in the heel." (Gen. 3:15) Those prophetic words indicated that, just as all the descendants of the first human couple were hurt by the deceptive action of the great Seducer, so *all* of them would benefit from the bruising of his head by the triumphant "seed" of God's "woman." That bodes good for us of today, does it not? Happily, Yes! And when God spoke of the Bruiser of the head of the Adversary, he was speaking of the government agency that he would set up over all mankind. The government was to be *of* God and *by* God and for all the people. Over this fact we should all rejoice.

[5] God's government over the nation of Israel, with himself as the heavenly King, was only for a period of time. *His loving* purpose for the future embraced more than just that small nation. It was at Mount Sinai in Arabia that God became King over the nation of Israel; but in the 40th year thereafter his prophet Moses sang a

4. What prophecy of meaning for us all did God make back in Eden, and what government agency did he then have in mind?
5. How did the song sung by Moses and the quotation made by Paul indicate that God's purpose for the future embraced more than Israel?

song in the hearing of all the Israelites. In the climax of that song, he said: "Be glad, you nations, with his people, for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and he will pay back vengeance to his adversaries and will indeed make atonement for the ground of his people." (Deut. 32:43) Some 1,528 years later those words of Moses were caught up by a man who was an apostle of the "good news" to the non-Israelite nations. Incorporating those words into his inspired letter to Roman Christians, he said: "Christ actually became a minister of those who are circumcised [the Israelites] in behalf of God's truthfulness, so as to verify the promises He made to their forefathers, and that the nations might glorify God for his mercy. . . . And again he says: 'Be glad, you nations, with his people.' "—Rom. 15:8-10.

6 The writer who thus quoted Moses' words was the apostle Paul. He was a far-ranging missionary intent on finally reaching Rome and planning to go even to Spain. He knew what God was then doing, not only for those Jews who accepted the "good news," but also for uncircumcised non-Jews, Gentiles, who put faith in the "good news." He knew that God was internationally minded. So to the congregation in Rome, made up of Jewish and Gentile Christians, Paul wrote:

7 "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also [the God] of people of the nations? Yes, of people of the nations also, if truly God is one, who will declare circumcised people righteous as a result of faith and uncircumcised people righteous by means of their faith."—Rom. 3:29, 30.

8 So for our time God purposes, not a national government, but a world government for people of all nationalities.

6-8. (a) How did Paul show that God was internationally minded as far as justifying people by faith is concerned? (b) So what kind of government does God purpose?

THE KINGDOM OF THE SON OF GOD'S LOVE

9 Today persons who know the mind of God do not depend on any nation, group of nations, or even the United Nations of now 149 members, to set up the sorely needed world government. They know that the Republic of Israel does not have any inherited claim on the privilege of setting up the world government for the blessing of all the families of the earth. The facts show that God's kingdom over the natural circumcised Jews ceased in the first century C.E. But God then made a gracious move that was related to the world government. He set up a spiritual kingdom. Over whom was that kingdom, inasmuch as the privileges of the kingdom of God were taken away from the nation of fleshly Israel? Who on earth are the subjects of that spiritual kingdom?

10 That kingdom had its start in the first century C.E. The apostle Paul specifically called attention to it in his letter to the Christian congregation in the city of Colossae, Asia Minor (now Turkey), when he said: "Thanking the Father who rendered you suitable for your participation in the inheritance of the holy ones in the light. He delivered us from the authority of the darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of his love, by means of whom we have our release by ransom, the forgiveness of our sins." (Col. 1:12-14) Away back there in the first century God began making the believers suitable for his purpose even though they were from the Gentile nations. He forgave their sins.

11 Thus the Colossian believers were made suitable for a share in the inheri-

9. Why does not natural Israel have any inherited claim on the privilege of setting up the promised world government?

10. In Colossians 1:13, what did Paul call that kingdom, and when did it begin?

11. What did God's delivering of the Colossian Christians from the "authority of the darkness" really mean for them?

tance with God's holy ones, who were in the light. They had been under the "authority of the darkness," or under the authority of all that such darkness represents. That would include ignorance of Jehovah God, estrangement from him, and not being under his rulership. So, as God made such believers suitable for a share in a brighter life, he "delivered [them] from the authority of the darkness." They now really became the most enlightened people on earth, for they were now enlightened by God. They were no longer under "the world rulers of this darkness, . . . the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places." (Eph. 6:12) God had intervened "to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God."—Acts 26:18.

12 In this way the first-century believers in the "good news" were brought into a realm of light. But with what was their enlightened condition connected? It was connected with a kingdom. When God "delivered [them] from the authority of the darkness," he at the same time "transferred [them] into the kingdom of the Son of his love." (Col. 1:13) That Son is Jesus Christ.

13 At the time that the apostle Paul wrote his letter to the congregation in Colossae, Jesus Christ was spoken of as being a king and as already having a kingdom. That is the way that the enlightened Christian congregation in Colossae understood the matter. Even their enemies came to understand the matter that way. For instance, what was the charge that the mobsters brought against the Christians in the city of Thessalonica? In order to incite the city ruler against the Christians, these mobsters said: "These men [that is, the apostle Paul and his missionary companions] that have overturned the inhabited earth are present here also, . . . And all these men act in opposition to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king, Jesus."—Acts 17:6, 7.

14 In showing the difference between the glorified Jesus Christ and the imperial Caesars and other political rulers on earth, the apostle Paul spoke of the immortal Ruler, Jesus Christ, as "the King of those [mortals] who rule as kings and Lord of those [mortals] who rule as lords, the one alone having immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light." (1 Tim. 6:15, 16) Besides that, the apostle Paul compares this immortal Son of God, Jesus Christ, with King Melchizedek of the twentieth century before our Common Era and says: "This Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, . . . is first of all, by translation, 'King of Righteousness,' and is then also king of Salem, that is, 'King of Peace,' . . . having been made like the Son of God, . . . And it is still more abundantly clear that with a similarity to Melchizedek there arises another priest, . . . for in witness it is said: 'You are a priest forever according to the manner of Melchizedek.' "—Heb. 7:1-3, 15-17; Ps. 110:1-4.

15 When was God's Son made a King-Priest like Melchizedek? This was 40 days after his resurrection from the dead, when he ascended to heaven. Then he appeared in the presence of God with the value of his perfect human sacrifice in behalf of the redeemed humans who were to become his subjects in the future.

16 Here, at this point, some persons

12. With what does Paul say that the enlightened condition of those first-century believers was connected?

13. What did not only the Colossian Christians but also the enemies understand the official position of Christ to be at that time?

14. How did Paul compare the imperial Caesars and other political rulers of the day with the glorified Jesus Christ?

15. When was it that Jesus Christ became a King-Priest like Melchizedek?

16. Why, at this point, might some persons have questions about Christ's reigning?

might experience a little confusion of thought and say, 'Why, I have understood that Jesus Christ has been reigning in heaven only since the end of the Gentile Times in 1914. So how could it be that he has been reigning in heaven since the year of his ascension to heaven, the year 33 C.E.? (Acts 1:1-11; 2:22-36; Heb. 9:24; 10:12, 13) In what way has he been King all the time since, and over whom has he been reigning?'

THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM OVER SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

17 Well, back in 33 C.E. Jesus Christ did not begin reigning over the world of mankind. He had no share in a world government. He did not start reigning over the Gentile nations, for the Gentile Times were due to end in 1914 C.E.—Luke 21:24.

17. Over what did Christ not begin reigning back in 33 C.E.?

First-century Christians recognized Christ's kingship over them as a spiritual Israel

18 On Pentecost of 33 C.E., at the outpouring of God's holy spirit, a new nation came into existence, spiritual Israel. (Gal. 6:15, 16; 1 Pet. 2:9, 10) Hence, the glorified Jesus Christ then began reigning over spiritual Israel, over those whom God "transferred . . . into the kingdom of the Son of his love." (Col. 1:13) To this congregation of spiritual Israelites the words of Jesus Christ apply: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." (John 17:14) Inasmuch as he began reigning over those who were "no part of the world," he was not reigning over the world. So he was reigning over something that was separate from the world. His subjects were in the world but were "no part of the world."

19 Jesus Christ was never an earthly human king. He is now a heavenly spiritual King. (John 18:36) According to Hebrews 4:14, he "passed through the heavens." And according to 1 Peter 3:22, "he is at God's right hand, for he went his way to heaven; and angels and authorities and powers were made subject to him." This included spiritual Israel on earth. Consequently Christ's kingdom since Pentecost of 33 C.E. has been a spiritual one. The worldly-minded churches of Christendom, who meddle in the politics of this world, have not subjected themselves to "the kingdom of the Son of [God's] love." They are the friends of this world.—Jas. 4:4.

20 Christ's kingdom was necessarily

18. Although Christ then began reigning, why was it not over "the world"?
19. So what kind of kingdom was "the kingdom of the Son of [God's] love," and who were its subjects?
20. Because of a special relationship of its subjects to God, Christ's kingdom had to be of what kind?

of a spiritual kind in that it was over dedicated, baptized Christians who were begotten by God's spirit to become the spiritual children of God. It was just as Jesus told the Jewish ruler Nicodemus: "Unless anyone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Unless anyone is born from water and spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. What has been born from the flesh is flesh, and what has been born from the spirit is spirit."—John 3: 3, 5, 6.

[21] According to John 1:12, 13, with regard to those who received Jesus as the Messiah, "to them he gave authority to become God's children, because they were exercising faith in his name; and they were born, not from blood or from a fleshly will or from man's will, but from God." For this reason, Christ's kingdom since the outpouring of the holy spirit upon the Christian congregation at Jerusalem on Pentecost of 33 C.E. has been over a spirit-begotten class, over spiritual Israelites. (Rom. 2:29) It has not been a world government over earthly nations.

[22] Well, now, is "the Son of [God's] love" to be King over only a congregation of spirit-begotten disciples? In order for the world of mankind to become his subjects on earth, will they all have to become spirit-begotten, "born again," as the spiritual sons of God? Is that how the world government over all mankind comes, by a world conversion to Christianity before the millennial reign of Christ? No! And yet Jesus Christ will share in world government over the whole human race. In the prophecy of Revelation 11:15, the announcement was to be made at the due time of the Lord God: "The kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever."

21. Why was Christ's kingdom then not a world government?
22. According to what announcement at God's due time was Christ to share in world government?

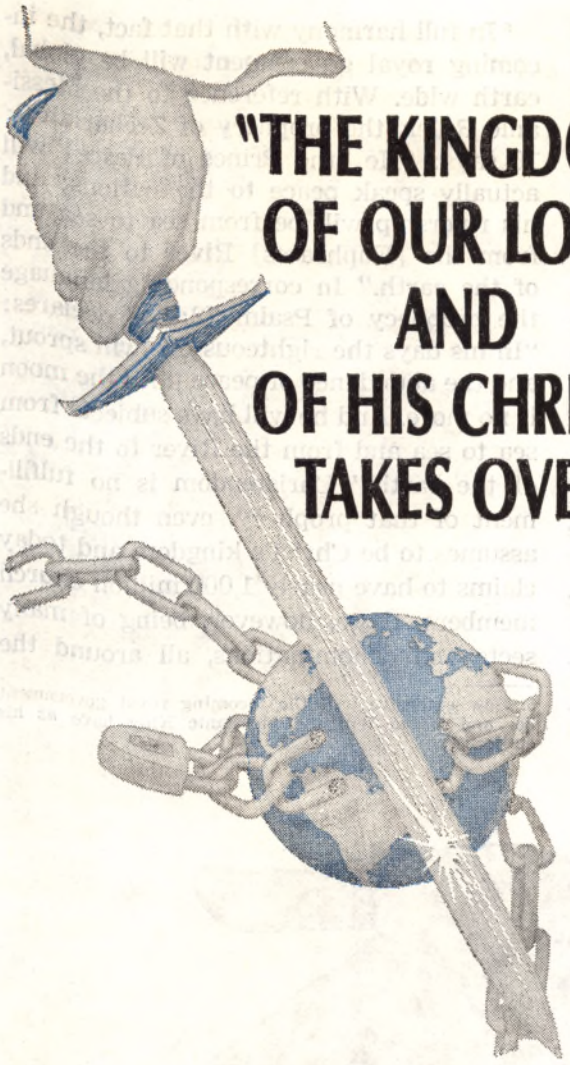
[23] That announcement heralds a world government! How, then, is Jesus Christ to gain a share in that world government? The Lord God recognizes his Son as having a right to share in such a world government. Why so? Because God gave his Son to die for all the human race, and this Son died as a perfect human sacrifice. By this he redeemed the whole human family. As Hebrews 2:9 says: "That he by God's undeserved kindness might taste death for every man." Also, 1 Timothy 2:5, 6 calls him "Jesus, who gave himself a corresponding ransom for all."

[24] However, the Lord God set a time for giving his self-sacrificing Son a share in the world government. When? At the end of the Gentile Times. At that marked time God's permission of the Gentile Nations (including those of Christendom) to dominate the whole world without interference from God's kingdom was to expire.—Luke 21:24; Heb. 10:12, 13.

[25] All the intervening centuries have allowed God to go ahead with something that has a vital connection with our incoming world government. What has that been? The transferring of additional approved disciples of Jesus Christ into the spiritual "kingdom of the Son of his love." (Col. 1:13) He has been doing this according to his own divine will by begetting them with his spirit. (Jas. 1:18) His purpose is to have 144,000 thus taken from among mankind and transferred into his Son's spiritual Kingdom. These 144,000 must be such as will steadfastly remain in that kingdom in spite of all the trials, hardships and persecution experienced in this world. They must prove to be spirit-begotten disciples who remain "faithful even to death."—Rev. 2:10; 7:4-8; 14:1-3.

23. Why does God recognize Jesus Christ as deserving a share in world government?
24. What time did God set for giving his Son a share in world government?
25. What have the intervening centuries allowed for God to do, with a vital tie to the incoming world government?

"THE KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND OF HIS CHRIST" TAKES OVER



WE ARE all interested in the governing factors of our incoming world government. In course of time all 144,000 of Christ's faithful spirit-begotten disciples will be numbered among those governing factors. Then they will no longer be earthly subjects of a spiritual kingdom of Christ, but they will be kings with him in heaven. This prospect agrees with the words of Revelation 5:9, 10, addressed to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God: "With your blood you bought persons for God out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and you made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God, and they are to rule as kings over the earth."

[2] Notice, please! That inspired statement does not say that the sacrificed Lamb of God bought persons for God out of the 12 tribes of the one nation of Israel that spoke the Hebrew tongue. Not just persons who were bought out of that small Jewish nation will make up the ruling factors of our incoming world government. The governing factors of that world rulership will not have their roots in just the fleshly nation of Israel, even though the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, was himself a Hebrew-speaking Jew or Israelite, when a perfect man on earth. As he is now in heaven, he is to be known no more according to the flesh that he sacrificed. (2 Cor. 5:16) In harmony with this he will have associated with him in the world government persons whom he bought "out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation."

[3] Thus the ruling factors will have an international extraction. Naturally, for this reason, they will have an interest in all members of the human family regardless of color, race, tribe, nation or language. This is just as it should be, inasmuch as the Lamb of God died for all mankind, not for just one people or nation.

[4] Today the political governments con-

1. When will the 144,000 spirit-begotten disciples of Christ cease to be subjects on earth of his spiritual kingdom?

2. The governing factors of the incoming world rulership will therefore have their roots of extraction in what section of mankind?

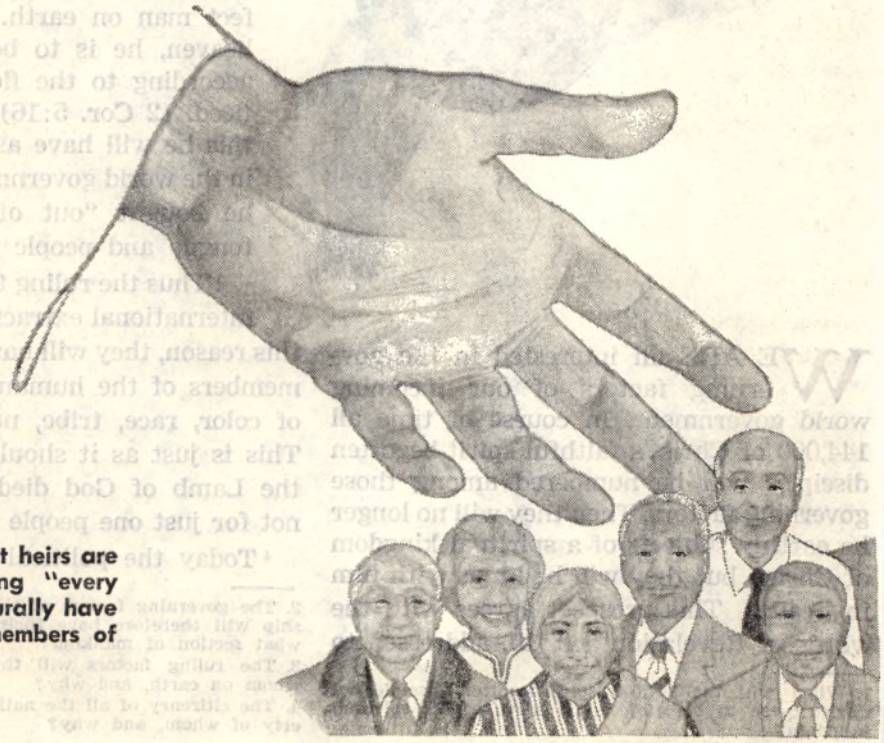
3. The ruling factors will thus have an interest in whom on earth, and why?

4. The citizenry of all the nations are really the property of whom, and why?

sider their citizens to be the property of the State. In this way such governments push God the Creator and his sacrificed Son Jesus Christ out of the realm of property rights. But shortly in the heavenly Court of Divine Justice it will be established that the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, was slaughtered here on earth for those who make up the citizenry of all nations. So by right of purchase they all belong to him, and not to any man or men. They are Christ's property, yes, also the property of his heavenly Father, Jehovah God. So this purchase does not limit itself to just the 144,000 who will be kings with Christ in the heavenly government. We must have the broad view of the Son of God that John the Baptizer had, when he pointed to the baptized Jesus and said: "See, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world!" Yes, of the world. —John 1:29.

[5] In full harmony with that fact, the incoming royal government will be global, earth wide. With reference to the Messianic Ruler, the prophecy of Zechariah 9:10 says: "He [the Prince of Peace] will actually speak peace to the nations; and his rulership will be from sea to sea and from the [Euphrates] River to the ends of the earth." In corresponding language the prophecy of Psalm 72:7, 8 declares: "In his days the righteous one will sprout, and the abundance of peace until the moon is no more. And he will have subjects from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth." Christendom is no fulfillment of that prophecy, even though she assumes to be Christ's kingdom and today claims to have nearly 1,000 million church members, these, however, being of many sects and denominations, all around the

5. How extensive will the incoming royal government be, and whom will the Messianic King have as his subjects?



As the 144,000 joint heirs are selected from among "every tribe," they will naturally have an interest in all members of *the human family*

earth. The nations professing to be Christian have been the most peace-disturbing political entities of human society. They have not proved themselves to be the united subjects of the Prince of Peace, Christ. —Isa. 9:6.

6 Were they not the ones that caused world peace to be shattered by global war in the years 1914-1918? Twenty or more participants of the 28 nations and empires that finally got involved in the war claimed to be Christian. Over what issue did they go to war? It was the issue of world domination. No, not world domination for Jesus Christ, but world domination for whoever was to win the global conflict. But World War I did not settle the issue to a finality. Twenty-one years later they started to fight it out on a greater scale. And now, more than 32 years after World War II ended, the issue of world domination is not settled to the satisfaction of worldly nations. The political situation is building up to a third violent resort to arms globally.

7 Till now the nations that have put their national sovereignty foremost have brushed aside what Jehovah's Christian witnesses have been proclaiming to them even in the face of cruel persecution. Proclaiming what? This: that early in the autumn of the war-racked year of 1914 their lease on world rulership without the interference of God's kingdom expired. Or, to use the language of the prophecy of Jesus Christ, "the times of the Gentiles," "the appointed times of the nations," expired. Then the time fixed by the Sovereign of the universe, Jehovah God, arrived for him to set up "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." He brought to birth the kingdom of his Christ, not at Jerusalem over in the Middle East, but up in heaven at his own right hand. (Luke 21:24, *Authorized Version; New World Translation*) Because this took place up in heaven, it was invisible to us. But the evidences of it are before our eyes in the things that Jesus Christ foretold for a visible "sign" to us.—Matt., chaps. 24 and 25; Mark 13: 3-37; Luke 21:5-36.

6. How did the nations of Christendom prove themselves to be no subjects of the Prince of Peace?

7. Worldly nations that put their own sovereignty foremost have pushed aside what announcement made to them by Jehovah's Christian witnesses?

ENTER "THE KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND OF HIS CHRIST"

8 How many of us have noticed that "sign" and read its meaning as it has unfolded before our eyes since the end of the Gentile Times in 1914? It indicates that then was the due time for loud voices in heaven to proclaim: "The kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever."—Rev. 11:15.

9 Let us listen to that proclamation again and notice what it says. Not, 'and they will rule as kings forever and ever,' but, "and *he* will rule as king forever and ever." Who, then, is the One that is said to do the ruling as king forever and ever? He must be the leading one spoken of in the proclamation, the one who has a Christ or Anointed One. He must be the one spoken of as "our Lord." The one who is called in heaven "our Lord" is the Principal One, and "his Christ" is the secondary one, the subsidiary one. Hence, the government is termed "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ," and is something of greater proportions and bigger dimensions than "the kingdom of the Son of his love," spoken of in Colossians 1:13, the apostle Paul mentioning such a kingdom about 35 years before John wrote the Revelation. So at the taking over of the "kingdom of the world" it is Jehovah God who

8. Since when was that "sign" readable, and the time for what announcement did it indicate?

9. How does this "kingdom" compare with that mentioned in Colossians 1:13, and who is said to do the ruling as king in it?

really starts reigning. He is "the Lord of the earth."—Rev. 11:4; Zech. 14:3-9.

10 That the foregoing is the correct application of the expression "our Lord" is supported by what the 24 elders said as they worshiped before the divine throne: "We thank you, Jehovah God, the Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and begun ruling as king." (Rev. 11:16, 17) So this marks the start of a special period in the universal rulership of God, "the King of eternity."—1 Tim. 1:17; Rev. 15:8.

11 The kingship of Jehovah God is what is exalted even in what is said in connection with the birth of an offspring by God's heavenly "woman." The offspring is pictured as a male child, "who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod." That doubtless means that the symbolic male child is to break all the political nations of the earth to pieces as when smashing clay pottery. So it has a governmental role to fulfill. But who, basically, wields the kingly power? This is spelled out for us in the words: "And her child was caught away to God and to his throne." —Rev. 12:1-5.

12 God is the One who enthrones this symbolic male child. God is the Source of all rightful rulership. The symbolic child is given a position subsidiary to God's kingship. As a governmental agency of God it is spoken of as something brand new, as fresh as a newly born baby, not as something that had already been in existence since Pentecost of 33 C.E. Accordingly, when war breaks out in heaven after the birth of this symbolic male child and finally the victory is won, Satan and his demons being ousted, a loud voice in heaven is heard to say: "Now have come to pass the salvation and the power and the kingdom [of whom?] of our God and the authority of his Christ, because the accuser of our brothers has been hurled down." (Rev. 12:7-10) Thus again the kingdom is said to be that of our God. He is the One who really does the reigning, and his Christ or Anointed One, Jesus, gets "authority" to rule in a secondary way under the Lord God.

13 There is a sound Scriptural reason why matters are stated in this way, with emphasis on the kingship of Jehovah God. It is His universal sovereignty that is at issue when there occurs the take-over of the "kingdom of the world" at the close of the Gentile Times in 1914. Two thousand five hundred and twenty years before that Jehovah had had a kingdom in the earth that represented him in the midst of the Gentile nations. That was the kingdom of the royal house of David at Jerusalem. David and his royal successors were said to sit on "Jehovah's throne" at the capital city of the nation. (1 Chron. 29:23) Shortly before his death David made a generous contribution to the building of a temple to Jehovah and at that time he said: "Yours is the kingdom, O Jehovah, the One also lifting yourself up as head over all." (1 Chron. 29:11) Thus the kingdom of the royal house of David was an expression of the universal sovereignty of Jehovah God toward the earth.

14 In harmony with God's covenant with King David for an everlasting rulership, the royal house of David continued to occupy "Jehovah's throne" at Jerusalem until the summer of 607 B.C.E. At that tragic time the Babylonian armies captured Jerusalem and destroyed it, and King Zede-

10. So this marks the start of what for the "King of eternity"?

11. The symbolic male child born by God's "woman" plays what kind of role, but who, basically, exercises the kingship?

12. Who is it that enthrones the symbolic male child, and accordingly, thereafter, who is said to have the kingdom, and to whom is authority given?

13. At the close of the Gentile Times in 1914, what was at issue with respect to Jehovah, and how had this been expressed much earlier toward our earth?

14. Despite God's everlasting covenant with David for a kingdom, what interruption occurred in the occupancy of the throne by David's descendants?

kiah was deported to Babylon as an exile. The complete desolation of the land of Judah followed, by the middle of the seventh lunar month, Tishri, of that year. Although the exiled Jewish survivors were restored to Jerusalem and the land of Judah 70 years later, "Jehovah's throne" was not reestablished at Jerusalem, to be occupied by a descendant of David with the royal right to the crown and the scepter. Why not?

[15] It was because now, since the desolating of the land of Judah in the year 607 B.C.E., the Gentile Times had set in and were due to run for 2,520 years, or until 1914 C.E. Jehovah's sovereignty toward this earth was like the lofty tree seen in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. That tree was chopped down, only its rootstock being left in the ground. "Seven times" were ordained to pass over the tree stump before any tree growth could spring up from it. For that reason bands of iron and copper were fastened around the tree stump, to stay there till the "seven times" were finished. (Dan. chap. four) True to this picture, at the end of "seven times" of unimpeded Gentile domination of the earth Jehovah's universal sovereignty was to express itself again toward our earth.

[16] At that marked time in God's schedule of events the occasion would call for 'the kingdom of the world to become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.' (Rev. 11:15) Valid reason that would be for tremendous joy on the part of all those in heaven and on earth who had prayed for God to assert once again his full sovereignty toward our earth, where the Gentile powers had held world domination for so long. Then, and not at the pouring out of holy spirit on Pentecost of 33 C.E., the proclamation of Psalm 97:1, 9 would be due to be made: "Jehovah himself has become king! Let the earth be joyful. Let the many islands rejoice. For you, O Jehovah, are the Most High over all the earth; you are very high in your ascent over all other gods." (Also, Psalm 99:1.) Later on, the destruction of Babylon the Great (the world empire of false religion) would confirm Jehovah's kingship. With a Hallelujah the cry will ring out:

[17] "Praise Jah, you people, because Jehovah our God, the Almighty, has begun to rule as king."—Rev. 19:6.

[18] These proclamations put in bold relief the fact that it is the Sovereign Lord Jehovah who takes up reigning again toward our earth at the close of the "seven times" of Gentile domination. It is He who takes his great power to himself and takes over "the kingdom of the world." (Rev. 11:15-17) Then he gives to his Son, Jesus Christ, a share in "the kingdom of the world." Thus "his Christ" shares in something that he never had before, as a gift from the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. This is just the gift that He promised to make. It was about the time that he was going to overthrow and bring to ruin the kingdom of David's royal line at Jerusalem. To the last reigning descendant of King Da-

15. How was the interruption of Jehovah's sovereignty toward our earth pictured in a dream of King Nebuchadnezzar?

16, 17. (a) At that marked time, what kingdom would be due to become Jehovah's possession, and what proclamation would fittingly be made? (b) At the destruction of Babylon the Great, what is to be announced in confirmation of Jehovah's rulership?

18. Who then takes to himself his power to rule as king, and what gift does he make to his Son?

In Coming Issues

- **Prisoner Rehabilitation —Can It Succeed?**
- **Living as Belonging to Jehovah**
- **A Friendly Island Listens**

vid, he then said: "Remove the turban, and lift off the crown. This will not be the same. . . . A ruin, a ruin, a ruin I shall make it. As for this also, it will certainly become no one's until he comes who has the legal right, and I must *give* it to him." —Ezek. 21:25-27.

19 Jesus Christ proved to be the one "who has the legal right," by his faithfulness in the flesh to the death. He is David's Permanent Heir. But the thing to which he has the "legal right" was not given to him in 33 C.E., after he ascended to heaven. Forty-four days before his ascension he gave his prophecy as recorded in Luke 21:5-36. In this he foretold the destruction that was to come to the then existing Jerusalem, which did come at the hands of the Roman legions in 70 C.E., and with regard to that he said: "They [the Jews] will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations, until the appointed times of the nations are fulfilled." (Luke 21:24) So in 33 C.E. he could not be given that to which he had gained the "legal right," not even at Pentecost of that year.

20 That to which Jesus Christ gained the "legal right" was the Davidic kingdom, an earthly kingdom, the "turban" and "crown" of which had been worn by David and his royal successors. (Ezek. 21: 25-27) As a perfect human, Jesus was born into the royal family of David, which naturally put him in line for the Davidic kingdom. (Rom. 1:3, 4; Luke 1:32, 33) Since David was an earthly king, he could not bequeath to Jesus Christ anything more than he himself had had, an earthly kingdom. The angel Gabriel told Jesus' earthly mother, the virgin Jewess Mary, that God would give him "the throne of David his father." Was this kingdom given to Jesus in 33 C.E., when he ascended back to heaven and sat down at God's right hand? David's kingdom had been overthrown in 607 B.C.E., to continue inoperative for the "seven times" of Gentile world domination, or, for 2,520 years from 607 B.C.E.—Acts 1:6.

21 So, before the glorified Jesus Christ could exercise the rights of David's earthly kingdom, he had to wait at God's right hand until the Gentile Times ended in 1914 C.E. (Heb. 10:12, 13) He had to wait until Jehovah God took to himself his "great power" as Universal Sovereign and brought to an end the Gentile Times and assumed "the kingdom of the world." Then God could invite Jesus, as the Permanent Heir of King David, to share with Him in the "kingdom of the world," a kingdom over all mankind on earth.—Rev. 11:15.

22 Thus in 1914, not in 33 C.E., the symbolic "stone" seen in King Nebuchadnezzar's dream was cut out of the great mountain that pictured Jehovah's universal sovereignty. (Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45) It was at that time also that Jehovah God planted his "feet" upon the symbolic "mountain of the olive trees" and it split in the middle to form two mountains, one toward the north and the other to the south. (Zech. 14:4, 9) This corresponds with the birth of the male child by God's heavenly "woman," as pictured in Revelation 12: 1-5. In this way a new "kingdom" was brought forth, a new expression of God's sovereignty toward our earth. God then put his King-Designate on the throne to exercise his "legal right." The symbolic bands of copper and iron were removed from around the "rootstock" of God's interrupted sovereignty toward our earth. The prescribed "seven times" had now passed over the rootstock.—Dan. 4:23, 26.

19. According to Jesus' own prophecy at Luke 21:24, *why could he* not be given that to which he gained the "legal right" even at Pentecost of 33 C.E.?
20. According to Ezekiel 21:25-27, to what did Jesus gain the "legal right," and what only could David bequeath to Jesus as his Permanent Heir?
21. So, before Jesus could exercise his right to David's kingdom, he had to wait for God to take what action?
22. Thus when was the new kingdom brought forth, and how was this pictured in Bible prophecies?

Now Is The Due Time to WELCOME THE UNIVERSAL SOVEREIGN

THE UNIVERSAL SOVEREIGN is "the Ancient of Days," Jehovah. To him the glorified "Son of man," Jesus Christ, came, in 1914 C.E., for a share in the "kingdom of the world."

[2] The prophet Daniel foretold this, saying: "See there! with the clouds of the heavens someone like a son of man happened to be coming; and to the Ancient of Days he gained access, and they brought him up close even before that One. And to him there were given rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him. His rulership is an indefinitely lasting rulership that will not pass away, and his kingdom one that will not be brought to ruin."—Dan. 7:13, 14.

[3] That kingdom has brought into it later on in this "time of the end" 144,000 spirit-begotten disciples of Christ. Just as Daniel 7:27 foretold: "The kingdom and the rulership and the grandeur of the kingdoms under all the heavens were given to the people who are the holy ones of the Supreme One. Their kingdom is an indefinitely lasting kingdom, and all the rulerships will serve and obey even them." —Dan. 12:4; Rev. 14:1-3; 20:4, 6.

[4] Because the Ancient of Days takes his Anointed Son Jesus into association with him in "the kingdom of the world" it becomes "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." (Rev. 11:15) Thus all the world of mankind become earthly human subjects of the Universal Sovereign Jehovah and of his Christ. These earthly subjects now include the "great crowd" who are introduced to us in the vision in Revelation 7:9-17. This vision was first understood in 1935 C.E.

[5] Today the "great crowd" well understands that "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" involves two main persons, namely, the Lord Jehovah and his Son, Christ Jesus; also, that this particular government to which they are subject dates, not from Pentecost of 33 C.E., but from 1914 C.E. Accordingly, the "great crowd" observes that, 63 years after Pentecost, Christ Jesus was still encouraging his spirit-begotten disciples to look forward to that kingdom, saying: "To the one that conquers I will grant to sit down with me on my throne, even as I conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne." (Rev. 3:21) They had yet to inherit that coming heavenly kingdom as "heirs indeed of God, but joint heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8:17) Jesus Christ is the main Heir of God, and his disciples are minor heirs. —Heb. 1:1, 2.

1, 2. Daniel, chapter seven, pictures the glorified "Son of man" as being brought in before whom and as being given what?

3. According to Daniel 7:27, who also are brought into that indefinitely lasting kingdom?

4. The "great crowd" of today are the subjects of what heavenly government?

5. According to Revelation 3:21, 63 years after Pentecost of 33 C.E. Jesus was encouraging his spirit-begotten disciples to look forward to what?

[6] So the Kingdom of which those spirit-begotten disciples on earth were "joint heirs with Christ" is not something in which they had been since the outpouring of holy spirit at Pentecost of 33 C.E. For that reason the apostle Peter, writing his second letter about 64 C.E., or 30 years after Pentecost, gave his fellow Christians this admonition: "If you keep on doing these things you will by no means ever fail. In fact, thus there will be richly supplied to you the entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. 1:10, 11.

[7] In God's due time the 144,000 joint heirs with Christ are richly supplied that entrance into the heavenly kingdom by means of the "first resurrection." Then they will no longer be the spirit-begotten subjects on earth under "the Son of [God's] love." That temporary relationship with the glorified Jesus Christ will be gone forever. They will be the heavenly immortal, incorruptible kings with him. (2 Tim. 2:11, 12; Rev. 20:4, 6) This means that the temporary subject state that applied to them since Pentecost of 33 C.E. and while they were yet in the flesh on earth will have passed forever. (Col. 1:13) For having lived clean and faithful lives on earth, they inherit "the kingdom of the Christ and of God."—Eph. 5:5.

[8] The 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ with his 144,000 joint heirs did not begin in 1914 at the inauguration of the "kingdom of the world . . . the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." What *did* begin there for Jesus Christ was his official, royal "presence," or parousia, about which his apostles had asked, according to Matthew 24:3. His "presence" in Kingdom power did not start when God used him to pour out holy spirit at Pentecost of 33 C.E. (2 Thess. 2:2) Only since the Gentile Times ended in 1914 has the foretold "sign" become visible to prove that the Son of God is invisibly present in Kingdom power, in the "kingdom of the world."

[9] This kingdom is assigned to destroy the present wicked system of things. In Jesus' prophecy that sets out the things that make up the portentous "sign," he referred to the Kingdom when it was about to carry out this destructive work, saying to his apostles: "In this way you also, when you see these things occurring, know that the kingdom of God is near." (Luke 21:31) By carrying out its assigned work, this kingdom will deliver the faithful disciples of Christ yet on earth from further oppression by the Gentile nations. This explains why Jesus said to his disciples: "As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." —Luke 21:28.

[10] The remnant of spirit-begotten disciples of Christ yet on earth saw "these things" start to occur back in 1914 C.E. Their deliverance from the present wicked system of things occurs when the royal "stone" that was cut out of the mountain of God's sovereignty strikes the "image" of worldly political rulership of the earth and destroys it in the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har–Magedon. (Dan. 2:44, 45; Rev. 16:14, 16) Their "deliverance" also includes their later being taken from the earthly scene and being ushered into "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" by the "first resurrection" from the dead. (2 Pet. 1:11; Rev. 20:4, 6) This will enable them to rule as kings with Jesus

6. According to 2 Peter 1:10, 11, were the spirit-begotten disciples already in that kingdom or yet to enter into it?
7. By means of what do they have that entrance into the kingdom supplied to them, and so what temporary relationship to Jesus Christ passes away?
8. Did the 1,000-year reign of Christ begin in 1914, and what does the foretold "sign" indicate in this regard?
9. From the occurring of the "sign," the disciples were to know that what was near, and why were they to quit any dejectedness?
10. When does the "deliverance" of the spirit-begotten remnant take place, and what does it include?

Christ during the millennium when Satan the Devil and his demons are bound and confined in the abyss, no longer able to dominate mankind's affairs invisibly. —Rev. 20:1-3.

[11] Deliverance also nears for the "great crowd" of sheeplike people who are now taking their stand with the spirit-begotten remnant in favor of "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." But the Gentile nations have ignored the Kingdom "decree" about which they have been given notice, as set out in Psalm 2:1-9: "Why have the nations been in tumult [since 1914 C.E.] and the national groups themselves kept muttering an empty thing? The kings of earth take their stand and high officials themselves have massed together as one against Jehovah and against his anointed one [his Christ], . . . Let me refer to the decree of Jehovah; he has said to me [Christ]: 'You are my son; I, today, I have become your father. Ask of me, that I may give nations as your inheritance and the ends of the earth as your own possession. You will break them with an iron scepter, as though a potter's vessel you will dash them to pieces.' "—Rev. 7:9, 10; 11:15.

NEUTRALITY ASSOCIATED WITH KINGDOM PREACHING

[12] Since 1914, the "kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" has had a right to interfere with Gentile nations. Does this mean that Jehovah's Christian witnesses now have a right to meddle in worldly politics? May they take sides, as Catholics and Protestants do, with this or that *political* party, even conspiring against established political government or stirring up revolution? Not at all! Uncompromisingly they have copied the example of the Lamb, Jesus Christ, in being "no part of the world." They hold strictly to the kingdom that was brought to birth in heaven in 1914. (John 17:14, 16; Rev. 12:1-12) In spite of the fierce persecution leveled against them because of their Christian neutrality toward worldly conflicts, they carry out the prophetic word of their heavenly Leader, Jesus Christ, when he said: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10.

[13] This Kingdom witness has to be done before this system of things ends and Christ's 1,000-year reign begins. Hence, the birth of God's kingdom in the heavens in 1914 did not mean the beginning of Christ's millennial reign. According to Bible prophecies, much has to take place before this system of things ends, making way for Christ's reign of 1,000 years with his 144,000 spirit-begotten disciples.—Rev. 20:4, 6.

[14] Satan the Devil is determined that, before he and his demon angels are hurled into the abyss for 1,000 years, he will drag all the nations down into destruction and thus prevent their becoming Christ's subjects during His millennial reign. To this end he is leading all the worldly nations to the battlefield of Har–Magedon, there to fight against Jehovah God and his Christ. (Rev. 16:13-16) Satan the Devil will thus be responsible for the everlasting "woe" that strikes the Gentile nations there. (Rev. 12:12; 19:11-21) How can we escape that woeful destruction with those nations?

[15] We must refuse to march as allies with the Gentile nations in their march to

11. Who else will then enjoy deliverance, but for ignoring what "decree" will the Gentile nations not share in that deliverance?

12. Despite the end of the Gentile Times in 1914, what position do Jehovah's Witnesses take toward worldly politics?

13. So why did the end of the Gentile Times and the start of Christ's millennial reign not take place simultaneously?

14. What is Satan determined to accomplish respecting the nations before he is abyssed, and why?

15. For refusing to march with the Gentile nations under Satan, what has been the experience of Jehovah's Witnesses, and why?

fight against Jehovah God the Almighty at Har–Magedon. Such refusal has brought great hardship upon Jehovah's Christian witnesses. Especially since the ouster of Satan the Devil and his demon angels from heaven, the remnant of the prospective joint heirs of Christ have been the main target of the wrathful Satan the Devil. (Rev. 12:13-17) His aim is to break their integrity toward God. In this way he would make them unfit to rule as kings with Christ during the 10 centuries when all the demons are imprisoned in the abyss. Satan the Devil is bent on preventing Christ from having the full number of 144,000 associate kings in the heavenly world government. Will Satan the Devil succeed in this? Never!

16 Well might an earthworm try to prevent a farm tractor from running over it as for Satan and all the earthly nations of which he is the invisible ruler to succeed in crippling and halting God's incoming world government! Besides having suffered defeat in the earlier war in heaven, Satan will see the defeat of his misled nations at Har–Magedon. He will see Christ irresistibly use his "iron scepter" in dashing all the assembled nations to pieces as if they were earthenware vessels fashioned by a potter. (Ps. 2:8, 9; Rev. 12:5) Then Satan and his demons will be seized by the victorious Christ and be chained and hurled into the abysmal dungeon. This will be sealed tight shut for 1,000 years. During that demon-free millennium God's world government by Christ will rule as an expression of his rightful universal sovereignty.—Rev. 20:1-6.

WELCOME "THE GLORIOUS KING" IN!

17 Divine world government for the relief and blessing of oppressed dying mankind is certain. Do we believe that fact? Our belief in this joy-inspiring fact calls for us to do something now! Do what? Do like the dedicated, baptized "great crowd," which began forming 20 years after the birth of God's kingdom in 1914. They are hailing "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" as the only hope for everlasting deliverance! According to the prophetic vision given in Revelation 7:9-17, the "great crowd" clean up their lives and serve Jehovah God at his spiritual temple *now!* Our following this same course will ensure our being on the winning side during "the war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har–Magedon. (Rev. 16:14, 16; 19:11-21) Before us will then open the way to Paradise on earth under the best government that humankind will ever have had. Our desire for the best moves us to prepare for its coming now!

18 Behold now, with eyes of faith, the victorious march of the Sovereign Lord of all creation! He brings with him world government by Christ for the blessing of all the families of the earth, living and dead. Let us acknowledge his rightful sovereignty and say in the words of Psalm 24:1, 2: "To Jehovah belong the earth and that which fills it, the productive land and those dwelling in it. For upon the seas he himself has solidly fixed it, and upon the rivers he keeps it firmly established." Ah, yes, no subterranean waters will ever rise to overflow the earth like a flood, while at the same time the seven seas have bars set for them by the Creator.

19 We now have reason to be like the citizens of ancient Jerusalem in the year 1070 B.C.E. King David was then having

16. How will a demon-free millennium be brought in, and as an expression of what will God's world government by Christ rule?

17. To demonstrate our belief in the certainty of world government, what should be done by us now, imitating whose example?

18. What does the Sovereign Lord God now bring with him, and so what should we acknowledge as belonging to him?

19, 20. In harmony with Psalm 24, we now have reason to be like the citizens of ancient Jerusalem on what occasion?

the sacred ark of the covenant carried by the Levite priests toward the city gates. As the joyful city watched the approaching procession conducting the symbol of God's presence, they heard the cry ring out:

[20] "Raise your heads, O you gates, and raise yourselves up, O you long-lasting entrances, that the glorious King may come in!"

[21] In order for the name of the royal Personage to be heralded abroad, the guards or sentries at the gates respond: "Who, then, is this glorious King?" Promptly and without shame there comes back the priestly reply: "Jehovah strong and mighty, Jehovah mighty in battle." (Ps. 24:7, 8) Ah, then, it is no lowly individual that asks entrance into the royal city. It is the loftiest Personage in all the universe, Jehovah "the glorious King." For that reason the gates and the long-lasting or ancient entrances seemed to be too low. Hence, they should heighten themselves for the passing through of so lofty a king. He was far loftier than King David, who sat on "Jehovah's throne" at Jerusalem. (1 Chron. 29:23) In earlier times other kings may have passed through the ancient entrances of the city, but none as glorious or as mighty as Jehovah, the Most High God. He was the One that did battle and gave the victory to King David over the former pagan occupants of the city, the Jebusites. He, too, was the One that gave to King David the victory over the Philistines in their two attempts to depose David from his throne in the newly captured city of Jerusalem.—2 Sam. 5:4-25.

[22] It was on a peaceful mission that the Warrior-King, Jehovah, as symbolized by the ark of the covenant, approached the city in 1070 B.C.E. In deference to his highness, the cry again arises from the oncoming marchers: "Raise your heads, O you gates; yes, raise them up, O you long-lasting entrances, that the glorious King may come in!" Once again the inquiry is made: "Who, then, is he, this glorious King?" Back comes the reassuring answer: "Jehovah of armies—he is the glorious King."—Ps. 24:7-10.

[23] Today in this year of 1978 C.E. the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har–Magedon approaches. Now, long since the Gentile Times ended in 1914, "Jehovah of armies" is especially "the glorious King." Why so? Because, as Psalm 47:8 foretold, "God has become king over the nations," he again acting as the Universal Sovereign toward our earth. He will display his mightiness in further maintaining at Har–Magedon "the kingdom of the world . . . the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." (Rev. 11:15-18) Jehovah's Christ, the Son greater than King David, is the one whom he has enthroned to represent Him in the world government. First, Jehovah of armies, attended by his Son Jesus Christ and armies of heavenly angels, will rid the universe of today's wicked system of things. Then he will bless mankind with righteous world rulership through his Son, Jesus Christ. This grand prospect gets nearer to its realization!

[24] Does not this "glorious King," Jehovah of armies, deserve now a heartfelt welcome from us? Most certainly, Yes! Come in, then, O our glorious King!

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21. (a) Why were the gates and the ancient entrances of Jerusalem called on to heighten themselves? (b) Why was it then fitting to declare that Jehovah was "mighty in battle"?

22. How was "Jehovah of armies" then symbolized, and on what kind of mission was he thus approaching the entrances of Jerusalem?

23. (a) Why, since 1914, is Jehovah of armies especially "the glorious King"? (b) What will he maintain at Har–Magedon, and after that what will he do for mankind?

24. So what does this Jehovah of armies now deserve from us?

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

● Many religious scholars claim that early Christianity sprang from the Jewish sect of the Essenes. Recently a major study and translation of a 27-foot-long (8.2-meter-long) Dead Sea Scroll was published in Hebrew by Yigael Yadin, the famed archaeologist. Does it support the claim that the Essenes were a link between Judaism and Christianity? According to Yadin, this scroll surprisingly showed that the Essenes were, "not only the most extreme in their legalistic approach to all temple laws of purity, but ardently believing that the sacrifices and all that go with them are essential, as prescribed in the Torah [law of Moses]." Yet, clearly, Christians were noted for their not observing such rituals.

Essenes the First Christians?

Though Mr. Yadin believes that the Essenes influenced Christianity, he was obliged to ask: "How come that such an extreme sect influenced early Christianity, which broke away from this very law of Moses . . . ?" In answer, he could only offer a guess that the "early Christians came in touch with the Essenes in a late phase," when the Essenes had changed some of their views.

However, the Bible makes irrelevant such unfounded speculations about how Christianity got its teachings. They came from God himself.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

April 9: Our Incoming World Government —God's Kingdom. Page 16. Songs to Be Used: 3, 105.

April 16: "The Kingdom of Our Lord and of His Christ" Takes Over. Page 21. Songs to Be Used: 2, 4.

April 23: Now Is the Due Time to Welcome the Universal Sovereign. Page 27. Songs to Be Used: 6, 90.