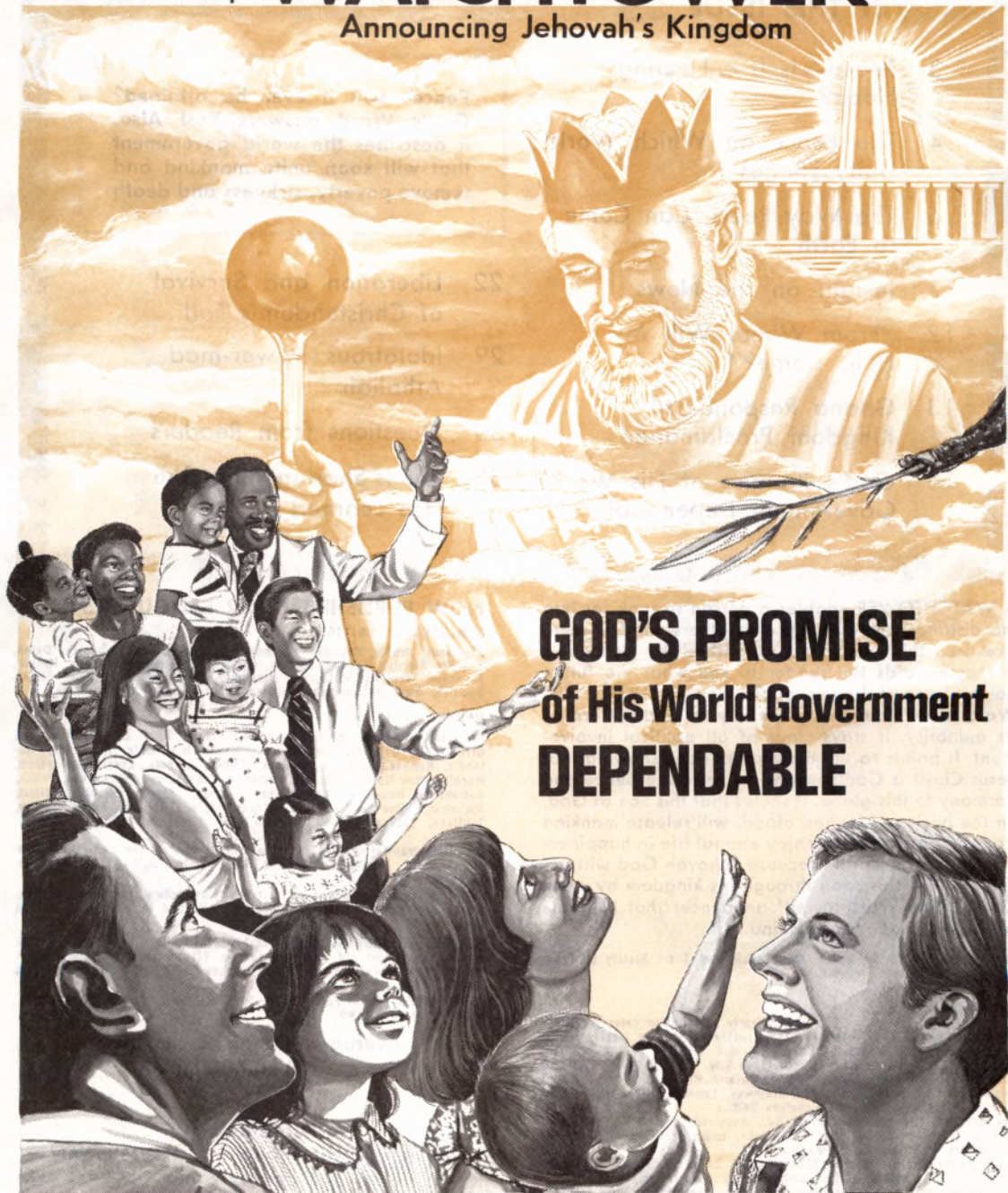


DECEMBER 1, 1979

THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



GOD'S PROMISE
of His World Government
DEPENDABLE

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Peace—will it ever be attained? God's Word answers Yes! Also, it describes the world government that will soon unite mankind and remove poverty, sickness and death

A WATCHTOWER enables a person to look far into the distance and announce to others what is seen. Likewise, this magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, aids the reader to see what the future holds. Since it began publication in 1879, "The Watchtower" has held faithfully to God's Word as its authority. It stays clear of all political involvement. It points to the Bible prophecies showing that Jesus Christ is God's means for restoring peace and harmony to this globe. It shows that this Son of God, on the basis of his shed blood, will release mankind from sin and death to enjoy eternal life in happiness on a paradise earth. Because Jehovah God will accomplish all this soon through his kingdom by Jesus Christ, "The Watchtower" announces that kingdom as the real hope for mankind.

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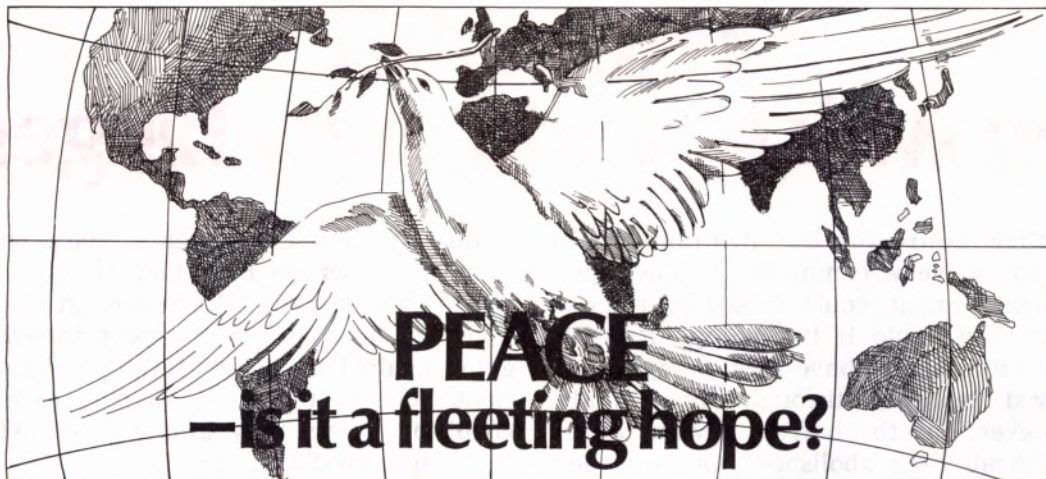
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PEACE—this has been viewed by people from the earliest times as a “magical” word. Yet how few are the years when peace has prevailed earth wide!

To date no nation of the world has succeeded in ‘beating its swords into plowshares and its spears into pruning shears.’ (Isa. 2:4) The armaments race has absorbed vast sums of money that could have been used to better the nations morally and economically. Following the peace treaty that United States President Carter helped to negotiate between Israel and Egypt, news comments and cartoons made much of the gigantic piles of armaments that were promised to both sides pledging “peace.”

The reason why peace has been a will-o'-the-wisp, say some students of the matter, is that peace is generally thought of as the mere absence of physical conflict. An article in *Sunday Magazine*, October 15, 1978, entitled “Who Are These Peace People?” commented:

There are those who question where the peace movement is today. For example, consider the opinion of the Rev. Dr. Homer A. Jack, chairman of the Nongovernmental Organizations Committee on Disarmament at the United Nations. . . .

“‘We haven’t had a disarmament movement and very little disarmament activity really since 1964 or 1965,’ he said. . . . ‘Everything disassociated because of the Vietnam war. The disarmament movement fragmented, kind of petered out.’”

“Others,” said the article, “maintain that a true peace movement does not exist today.”

Another authority on the matter, Mr. James H. Laue, who is director of the Center for Metropolitan Studies at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, and co-chairman of the National Peace Academy Campaign, said of the need for a concerted, organized approach to world peace: “The notion of peace is nice, but vague . . . What peace has meant for so many years has been negative—the absence of tension and conflict.”

Laue stated that, since 1935, 140 bills have been introduced in the United States Congress toward the creation of a peace establishment or academy, but that the concept of peace always has seemed too vague to fit into a working agency.

Consequently, up to the present time peace has been an unattainable goal. Is this because peace has a meaning that goes beyond the commonly accepted definition? Let us investigate.

THE PEACE on which world unity hinges

THE desire for the abolition of war is a very commendable one. Such an achievement would indeed bring great relief. But could it be lasting? Recently Israel and Egypt have been enjoying improved relations through their treaty. However, has the hatred between Israeli and Arab been abolished? Or, are they, in effect, 'sitting on dynamite'? Similarly, in other lands—for example, Ireland, Lebanon and Zimbabwe Rhodesia—are the deep-seated racial, religious and nationalistic feelings being eliminated?

Another question to consider when evaluating peace arrangements is, What is the moral basis for peace? Usually in international treaties each country involved seeks all the advantages or concessions it can get. In many instances, when a pact or agreement is made, it is merely a case of "peaceful coexistence," an uncomfortable toleration of one another, but with no real harmony. Generally, both nations are at the same time building up their stock of armaments, to protect themselves against other countries or against one another. Moreover, when a treaty between two or more nations is made, other nations are offended by the coalition, feeling that it is a power play against them. They become suspicious and fearful of a conspiracy or of an actual attack.

What, then, is lacking in such peace efforts? It is this: However sincere are nations' efforts to make peace, yet, if they have not consulted the Bible, they will not know what God's will is concerning these matters, or what he determines as the basis for peace. By neglecting to discern this, they are failing to make peace, first

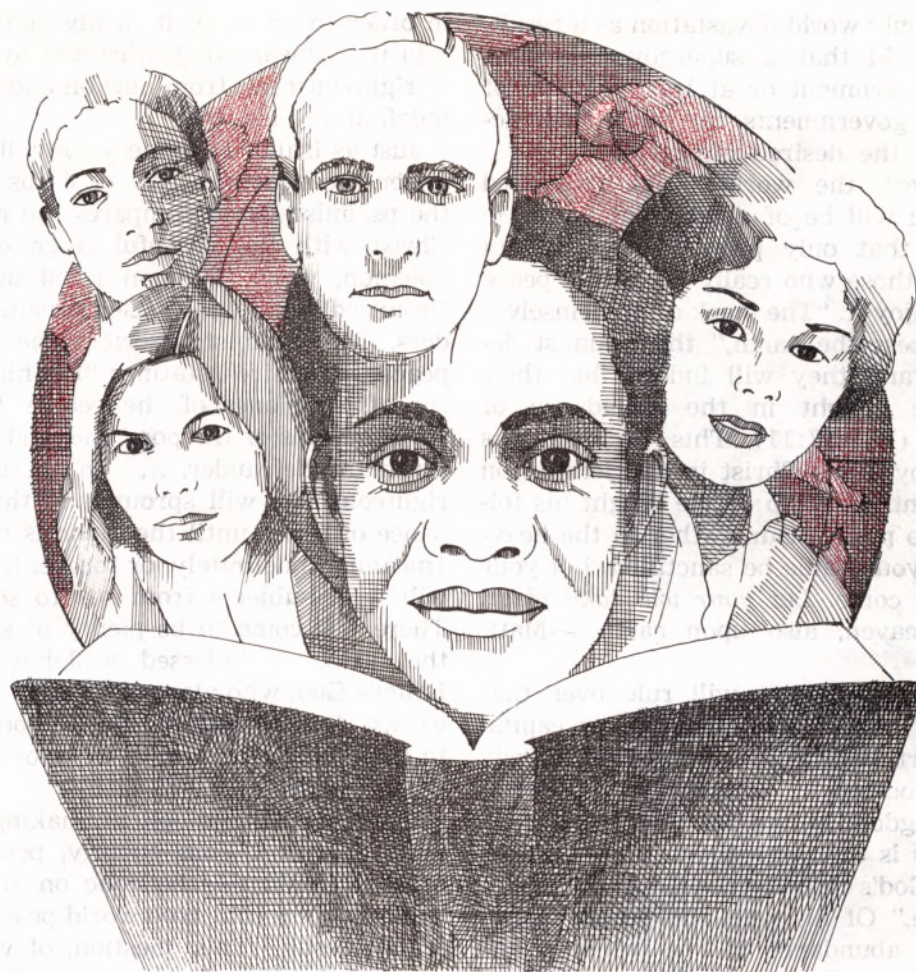
of all, with God. Consequently, the proper foundation has not been laid. If they are not in harmony with the Sovereign of the universe, how can they expect to avoid going against his will? How can the nations hope to maneuver into a peaceful condition unless they are at peace with the Universal Sovereign?

GOD APPEALS TO RULERS

Some may feel that it is impossible for any person or nation to please God—to be at peace with him. But this is not true. God welcomes any person who wants peaceable relations with him. (Acts 17:26, 27) He will enable that one to know how such peace can be achieved. Is it not reasonable to find out the will of the One who, the Bible says, is Ruler in the kingdom of mankind?—Dan. 4:25.

God even appeals to national rulers, saying: "And now, O kings, exercise insight; let yourselves be corrected, O judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear and be joyful with trembling. Kiss the son, that He may not become incensed and you may not perish from the way."—Ps. 2:10-12.

From the statement in this psalm and from many other scriptures, we can see that, for the nations to gain world peace, they must first make peace with God. For peace, the prime essential is heart harmony and unity with the Creator and Sovereign. He knows what is necessary for the contentment and happiness of those whom he has created. This has become more obvious in our present time when it is seen that man's efforts in connection with the ecology have often amounted to



The Bible shows that world peace
must be based on peace with God

stupid or greedy blundering and have become a threat even to comfortable living on the earth.

The appeal in the second Psalm, to kings and judges of the earth, gives the rulers of political nations an opportunity to make peace with God and his Son. But history shows that no entire nation has done so, and prophecy indicates that no political nation will ever do so. (Ps. 2:2, 3; Rev. 16:13-16) Therefore, the nations themselves will never be at peace with God or with one another. Because they have taken

this position, "the world is passing away and so is its desire."—1 John 2:17.

MAKING PEACE WITH GOD

God has the power, regardless of the action of nations, to enforce his will and to bring about peace. But he does not promise an *enforced* peace. This is what some men see as the only realistic hope. Perhaps the nations, they think, will arm themselves with atomic weapons to the point that all will be fearful of starting a war, knowing that there would be no vic-

tor, but only world devastation as a result. Others hold that a supergovernment, a world government or at least a union of national governments for peace will accomplish the desired objective.

However, the world peace that God brings in will be of a different kind. He tells us that only people of a peaceful nature—those who really want true peace—will enjoy it. “The meek ones themselves will possess the earth,” the psalmist declares, “and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace.” (Ps. 37:11) This promise was echoed by Jesus Christ in his Sermon on the Mount. (Matt. 5:5) He taught his followers to pray: “Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. *Let your will take place*, as in heaven, also upon earth.”—Matt. 6:9, 10.

What government will rule over that world of peace? Not one with its capital in an earthly city. Its administrative body will be located in heaven. Jesus called it “the kingdom of the heavens.” (Matt. 4:17) This is the government of God’s Son, whom God’s prophet called the “Prince of Peace.” Of his rule, the prophet said: “To the abundance of the princely rule and to peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom

in order to establish it firmly and to sustain it by means of justice and by means of righteousness, from now on and to time indefinite.”—Isa. 9:6, 7.

Just as Isaiah’s prophecy foretells peace under the heavenly rule of Jesus Christ, the psalmist David compares the reign of Christ with the peaceful reign of King Solomon, when Solomon ruled over the Promised Land to its God-ordained borders. The psalmist describes the kind of peace God desires, stating: “Let him judge the afflicted ones of the people, let him save the sons of the poor one, and let him crush the defrauder. . . . In his days the righteous one will sprout, and the abundance of peace until the moon is no more [meaning indefinitely, or forever]. And he will have subjects from sea to sea. . . . There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth. . . . Blessed be Jehovah God, Israel’s God, who alone is doing wonderful works. And blessed be his glorious name to time indefinite, and let his glory fill the whole earth.”—Ps. 72:4-19.

What are the steps in making peace with God, and, consequently, peace with others? Could this be done on an earth-wide scale, so that true world peace would be the result? This question, of vital importance to all, is the subject for discussion in the next article.

the way PEACE can come to earth

WORLD peace cannot come merely by efforts at disarmament, or by peace treaties, even by stopping cold wars or hot wars. Even proponents of peace are now saying that peace has to have a foundation in community and also in family living. James Laue of the National Peace Academy Campaign says: “Linking

[peace] with peacemaking on a community level has allowed us to define what peace is. The continuous development of techniques to resolve conflicts that come up every day, at home or in school, can help bring peace between nations.”

This is very hard to do. Writing in *To the Point International* under the heading

"Yes, World Peace Is Everybody's Business," George Mikes observes:

"We have been taught to love our neighbours. An extremely difficult and tiresome thing to do. You can love almost everybody except your neighbour. First of all, everybody's neighbour is a detestable, objectionable and meddlesome fellow—while the man living a few doors further down is likeable, pleasant and courteous. If you live in Chelsea, you will have no quarrels with the population of Turnham Green and you will get on splendidly with people in Crouch End [distant places]. Similarly, the British love the Australians and the New Zealanders—at the other end of the world—but have not always loved the French or the Germans."

So there can be no world peace unless we get along, first, with those closest to us. Is there truly some "technique" that will accomplish this? Not at all. Actually, man is very intelligent, and is especially adept at *techniques*. He has applied them in every endeavor, including peacemaking. Generally, he has had some success in almost every field—science, politics, commerce, sales and promotions—except peacemaking, which involves the closest human relations. Techniques will not work here. Why not? Because peace, which truly does begin at home, must come from the heart. Peace consists, not in mere tolerance, or in a balance of power, but in genuine love and understanding toward the other person or the other family or community or nation—race, religion or social status notwithstanding.

Can this be accomplished? At the present time, by only a few. But these few, regardless of the world situation, can have peace now. They can promote peace in their own sphere of influence. How?

HOW A PERSON CAN ATTAIN PEACE

First, a person makes peace with God by looking into the Bible for himself and by seeking to determine what arrangement God has made for approach to Him. The

individual cannot do this through any superficial study. He must search. He must "make sure of all things" and must "hold fast to what is fine."—1 Thess. 5:21.

The person who does this comes to recognize, first of all, that he is a sinner and needs help. He must acknowledge that he does not have the power within himself to do works that will please God and that

In Coming Issues

- "Come After Me, and I Will Make You Fishers of Men"
- The Pope at the U.N.
—Herald of Hope?
- The Challenge to Government

he does not have the wisdom to bring about true, lasting peace with anyone. The only way to attain peace with God is to get the barrier to peace removed—our own sin that blocks the way. This is not hard to do. It does not require great wisdom or ability. Faith in God and in his promises is the simple, uncomplicated way. This way is outlined very clearly in the Bible book of Romans, chapter 5, where we read:

"For, indeed, Christ, while we were yet weak, died for ungodly men at the appointed time. For hardly will anyone die for a righteous man; indeed, for the good man, perhaps, someone even dares to die. But God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, therefore, since we have been declared righteous now by his blood, shall we be saved through him from wrath. For if, when we were enemies, we became reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, now that we have become reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."
—Rom. 5:6-10.



God's Word points the way to peace with him

This reconciliation results in peace with God. The apostle Paul writes: "Therefore, now that we have been declared righteous as a result of faith, let us enjoy peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:1) And it is not merely a truce or temporary peace, overlooking the *past* sins one has committed. This peace is continuous with God, through Christ, helping the person to walk from then on in a way that maintains peace. God becomes the individual's best friend.—Compare John 15:15.

Jesus described this peace to his apostles, saying: "I leave you peace, I give you my peace. I do not give it to you the way that the world gives it." (John 14:27) The world gives a measure of peace through a few friends, pleasure, wealth, fame, position, promotion, a degree of serenity, and so forth, as well as through its systems of philosophy and false religion. But the peace that Christ imparts to one who genuinely puts faith in his atonement sacrifice is far different. Such a person gains, first of all, a clean, untroubled conscience, a true inner peace, a peace of mind, a peaceable disposition that makes for good relations with others, a greater purpose in life and a concrete hope for the future.

How? The apostle Peter tells us that when a person exercises faith in the "good news," dedicates his life to God and is baptized, the very act of undergoing baptism is a "request made to God for a good conscience." (1 Pet. 3:21) Because of inherent sinfulness, the individual has, in the past, had a bad conscience, one that weighed him

down as a great burden. About this, Jesus said: "Happy are those who mourn [who are sad over their poor spiritual state], since they will be comforted." (Matt. 5:4) He holds out this invitation to all: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you."—Matt. 11:28.

How refreshing it is, also, to share in the Kingdom-preaching work that Jesus instituted while he was here on earth, in which he trained his disciples and which he said would reach its climax at the conclusion of the system of things, which is now! (Matt. 4:17; 9:35; 10:7; 24:3, 14) Doing God's will in this way is spiritually upbuilding, satisfying and an aid toward keeping peace with God. As Jehovah's Witnesses go forth in his service, with "feet shod with the equipment of the good news of peace," they can be confident of his care and protection in every situation.—Eph. 6:14-16.

The apostle Paul speaks of Christians' hearts as being "sprinkled from a wicked conscience." This is because God has said: "I shall by no means call their sins and their lawless deeds to mind anymore." (Heb. 10:17, 22) Relieved in conscience, the Christian can have a true inner peace, a peace of mind. He worries less about

world conditions. Even sickness and death do not hold the same fears that they once held. The knowledge of the resurrection provision alleviates such fears.—1 Thess. 4:13, 14.

MAKING PEACE WITH OTHERS

The dedicated, baptized person is in the proper condition to make peace with others. Whatever he does toward his fellow-man must be done in love. Never may he let selfishness, greed, pride, jealousy or a desire for revenge be his motivation. People recognize sincerity, hospitality, genuine love, and, in turn, respond by showing similar qualities. Jesus stated a principle by which one can be a promoter of peace. He said: "Practice giving, and people will give to you. They will pour into your laps a fine measure, pressed down, shaken together and overflowing. For with the measure that you are measuring out, they will measure out to you in return."—Luke 6:38.

This love and this giving, if it is going to promote real peace, must not be narrow, partial or prejudiced. We must be real *neighbors* to all men among whom we find ourselves, regardless of their religion, nationality, color or social status. The apostle Paul pointed out that this is a Christian essential. He said: "Pursue peace with all people," and, "If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men." (Heb. 12:14; Rom. 12:18) Jesus forcefully illustrated the need to be a good, loving, helpful neighbor to everyone, taking time to make known the "good news" to all, and putting forth effort and using material goods to help others in distress, as the opportunity affords. Jesus made his point as strong as possible by depicting a

Samaritan man as the good neighbor, for there was a general enmity between the Jews and the Samaritans.—Luke 10:29-37.

What if such neighborly love is not reciprocated? The Christian cannot control this, but he can remain peaceable himself. If any other person wants to disrupt the peace or make war, the Christian can look to God for help to maintain balance and to avoid retaliation. The Bible counsel is: "Return evil for evil to no one. . . . Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but yield place to the wrath." (Rom. 12:17-19) If real danger threatens, the Christian puts confidence in God that no lasting harm can come to him. This confidence the apostle Paul expressed, saying: "I am convinced that neither death nor life nor angels nor governments . . . nor powers . . . nor any other creation will be able to separate us from God's love that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. 8:38, 39.

WORLD PEACE

'But how,' someone may ask, 'will such peaceful living on the part of a few bring WORLD peace?' In itself, our individual peace will not do it. But the God of Chris-

**We can share "the good news of peace"
with our neighbor**



tians is "the God who gives peace" and Christ Jesus is the "Prince of Peace." (Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 14:33; Isa. 9:6) Those who positively do not want peace, who are continual disturbers of the peace, those who cannot be at peace unless they rule, must be removed from the earth. God says he will "bring to ruin those ruining the earth," just as he did once before, at the time of the global flood of Noah's day. (Rev. 11:18; Gen. 6:12, 13) There is a price for peace and that, the Bible says, is that "the wicked is a ransom for the righteous one; and the one dealing treacherously takes the place of the upright ones." (Prov. 21:18) God will destroy all the wicked ones.

The Prince of Peace, God's king of all the earth, will bring an end to national conflicts. Just as God did in protecting his people Israel in ancient times, so he, through his appointed King, will do earth wide, and permanently. The 46th Psalm, recounting God's protection of Jerusalem from enemy nations round about, provides an example of what he will do in behalf of all peaceable ones. It states: "Jehovah of armies is with us; the God of Jacob is a secure height for us. . . . Come, you people, behold the activities of Jehovah, how he has set astonishing events on the earth. He is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth. The bow he breaks apart and does cut the spear in pieces; the wagons [for battle use] he burns in the fire."—Ps. 46:7-9.

With peace and harmony on the earth, works benefiting the earth can be carried out without hindrance, community wealth will not be drained for war purposes and the entire emphasis will be on beneficial projects. The rich produce of the earth will not be wasted. As to the individual, he can develop his talents and abilities and contribute freely to the general welfare of others. Only through a peace established with God can true world peace be brought about and maintained. Such a state of harmony between God and man is described in these words of the 85th Psalm: "As for loving-kindness and trueness, they have met each other; righteousness and peace—they have kissed each other. Trueness itself will sprout out of the very earth, and righteousness itself will look down from the very heavens. Also, Jehovah, for his part, will give what is good, and our own land will give its yield."—Ps. 85:10-12.

If you are a lover of peace, you can enjoy peace with God and with fellow Christians now, and a measure of peace with others, as a foretaste of the complete peace to be enjoyed shortly in God's new order. Peace with God is the first essential, then, to have peace with others of like faith and with all men as far as it depends upon you. God assures the perfect, lasting peace in his due time. It will come soon, after he has brought "to ruin those ruining the earth."—Rev. 11:18.

PEACE EXEMPLIFIED

The reputation of Jehovah's Witnesses for good conduct is well known. In Bombay, India, a Christian assembly was held for the first time in the Shanmukhananda Hall. The Board of Trustees of this hall were so pleased with the peace and good order of Jehovah's Witnesses that they made this statement to the convention overseer: "We are happy with your convention. We have never seen anything like this before. If everyone were like this there would be no need for government. You can come here every year if you desire."

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

● Recently Vermont Royster, a Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial writer, considered the extent of human knowledge in his "Wall Street Journal" column "Thinking Things Over."

Ageless Questions

"In little more than half a century we have made prodigious leaps in our knowledge about the infinitesimal particles that make up the physical world and about the powerful forces that govern the infinite space in which this world floats as a tiny speck," he wrote. "Yet here is a curious thing. In the contemplation of man himself, of his dilemmas, of his place in the universe, we are little further along than when time began. We are still left with questions of who we are and why we are and where we are going."

Royster suggested that men need to go beyond cold science to find answers to such questions because "for all that growing knowledge we are left with the ancient cry from the Book of Job: 'Where is wisdom to be found? And where is the place of understanding?'" The answers to those questions are found in that same book of Job, just a few verses later. It says: "Look! The fear of Jehovah—that is wisdom, and to turn away from bad is understanding."—Job 28:12, 20, 28.

● A pediatric neurologist with the University of Chicago may have found clues to why small children learn so quickly and can readily acquire additional languages. Using an electron microscope, Dr. Peter Huttenlocher found that babies between the ages of one and two have about 50 percent more synapses, or brain cell interconnections in their frontal cortex ("thinking area") than adults do. After peaking at two years of age, synaptic density steadily drops until age 16, where it remains about the same until old age. The report in "Brain Research" says this may explain why babies' brains are more "plastic" and recover better from injury.

Brainy Babies

No doubt parents could take greater advantage of this God-given early learning capacity. For example, Professor Archil Alkhazishvili of the Soviet Union's Georgian Academy of Sciences says that children can be taught to read from infancy, noting that his own two

daughters began to read at two years of age and had "swallowed" many of the classics by age seven. According to his comments in the Soviet digest "Sputnik," parents should "hang pictures showing letters, words and phrases on the wall." These will attract the child's attention and parents can casually read them aloud. "The child will involuntarily remember them," says "Sputnik," asserting that "such latent teaching is far more effective than intentional."

Such findings are in agreement with the thrust of Biblical counsel on the value of early training, such as in the case of Timothy, of whom it was said: "From infancy you have known the holy writings, which are able to make you wise."—2 Tim. 3:15; Prov. 22:6.

● In its issue of August 4, 1979, "The Economist" of London made some editorial observations on the world-shaking events of 65 years earlier:

"Night Descended in 1914"

"The events set in motion on August 4, 1914—two-thirds of a century, two generations of man and a whole leap of imagination ago—destroyed a moral-cum-political order, broke up an international balance of power, ended Europe's role as the world's maker of events and killed, in the proceedings, several dozen million people. . . . in 1914 the world lost a coherence which it has not managed to recapture since."

Describing the period since 1914, "The Economist" says that "this has been a time of extraordinary disorder and violence, both across national frontiers and within them. . . . This quality of the past two thirds of a century stands out in clear contrast to the period immediately before it," which period the article calls "the 'belle époque' on which night descended in 1914."

Once again respected contemporary observers identify a major historical turning point with World War I and events beginning in 1914. What is more striking is the fact that, on the basis of centuries-old prophecies, Bible students as early as 1876 stated that the period Jesus called the "times of the Gentiles" would end then, with startling consequences for mankind.—Luke 21:24, "Authorized Version."



“FROM WHERE WILL MY HELP COME?”



WHERE do you look for help in a time of great distress? Is it to the same source as did the psalmist? This songwriter of ancient times declared: “I shall raise my eyes to the mountains. From where will my help come? My help is from Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth.”—Ps. 121:1, 2.

When these words were recorded, the sanctuary of the Most High God was at Jerusalem. In a representative sense, therefore, that city was the place of his residence. So the psalmist raised his eyes to the mountains, evidently those of Jerusalem, and appealed to the grand Creator, Jehovah, for aid.—1 Ki. 8:30, 44, 45; Dan. 6:10.

Voicing his unshakable faith in God's ability to furnish needed help, the psalmist continues: “He cannot possibly allow your foot to totter. The One guarding you cannot possibly be drowsy. Look! He will not be drowsy nor go to sleep, he that is guarding Israel.” (Ps. 121:3, 4) It is simply impossible for the Almighty to allow those looking to him to totter, to experience a fall from which recovery is impossible. He will keep them standing before him as his approved servants. There is no danger that he will let them down during a period of drowsiness or sleep. The Most High is always at the zenith of his ability to give aid and is fully aware of everything that is happening. He is never drowsy, nor does he ever sleep. Therefore, those whom he is guarding are secure.

The psalmist says further: “Jehovah is guarding you. Jehovah is your shade on

your right hand. By day the sun will not strike you, nor the moon by night. Jehovah himself will guard you against all calamity. He will guard your soul. Jehovah himself will guard your going out and your coming in from now on and to time indefinite.”—Ps. 121:5-8.

When Jehovah guards persons, he is like protective shade that shields them from the burning rays of the sun. He is at the right hand, the best hand. This is significant, for in ancient warfare the sword was usually wielded with the right hand and, hence, was unprotected by the shield held in the left hand. Protection was generally furnished by a loyal friend standing on the warrior's right. Like such a dependable friend, Jehovah God provides ‘shade on the right hand.’

With Jehovah as guardian, a person will be protected from adversity comparable to sunstroke during the day and freezing cold during the night, when the moon is seen in the sky. In fact, Jehovah will guard his servants from all calamities that could result in their lasting hurt. Both now and in the future, he will provide such protection when a person goes out of his home and when he returns.

Surely, then, all who have Jehovah as their Helper need not be anxious. They may experience difficulties, perhaps even face violent death. However, as long as they look to their Creator for aid, he will protect them from all things that could bring about their spiritual ruin. So they will continue standing firmly as his approved servants.

GHANA RESPONDS TO KINGDOM PROCLAMATION

IN HIS great prophecy concerning the time of the end, Jesus 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.

Ghana is part of the "inhabited earth" in which the "good news" is now being preached. As a result, many have come to benefit from the work of Jehovah's Witnesses as they strive to reach every person with the Bible's message. During the last decade, the work has expanded so that there are now about 21,000 Witnesses sharing regularly in proclaiming the "good news."

To direct this activity, the first branch office of the Watch Tower Society in Ghana was established in 1947. Soon the increase of the work demanded larger facilities. These had hardly begun to be used when plans had to be made for still larger quarters, in order to serve the growing congregations. So a new building was constructed, being dedicated in 1963. Again, this facility proved to be inadequate for the increased needs, and a new site was obtained at Nungua, a suburb of Accra. Now preparations are under way



there for a fine, greatly enlarged new branch office and printery.

The rapid growth of Jehovah's Witnesses in Ghana reflects the readiness of the Ghanaian people to listen to the Bible's message and their zeal in responding to the good things learned. A few instances will serve to demonstrate how Ghanaians are hungry for Bible truth. The

following is a report from a congregation in Accra.

MANY SEEK BIBLE TRUTH

"An invitation was extended to us to speak to a group of about 60 persons who had undertaken a search of the Bible to find the true religion. Following some time of private study of the Scriptures on various doctrines, they began to invite leaders of various churches to talk to them and to discuss matters. After listening to these religious leaders and questioning them on various subjects, they asked the leader of their group to invite us also.

"The group leader said the main reason for deciding to invite us was that, after studying for some time, they found that they were obligated to preach to people. So they began going from house to house.

He said the usual question people asked them was, 'Are you Jehovah's Witnesses?' to which they answered, No. This experience prompted the group to invite us. They chose five subjects for discussion. After a speaker covered each subject, the group asked many questions. About a month later, we were invited to conduct a regular study of the Bible with them. When a consideration of the primary doctrines was finished, their leader told us that they had found that we have the truth and they had decided to associate with us.

"This group was affiliated with a branch group in another town. Meanwhile, word had gone to them as to what had been decided by the first group. Some of the elders of our congregation were invited over to explain matters. The final outcome was that 18 members of the group were baptized."

A FIRM STAND FOR BIBLE TRUTH AIDS OTHERS

The village of Amanyia, in the Volta Region, was visited by two Witnesses, who spoke to the residents about the Kingdom message. The Witnesses began to study the Bible with a small group of interested persons. However, no one took a firm stand for what he was learning. It so happened that a young man from the village had just completed his high-school education and had returned to teach in the Local Authority Middle School. This young man was a zealous Protestant churchman and so was assigned in his church to preach sermons. One of the Witnesses, who had been a senior of this young man in college, met and spoke to him. The Witness did not remember the young man until he introduced himself. At first the message did not impress the young man much, but he accepted the book *What Has Religion Done for Mankind?* After they had studied a few chapters of the book, along with

the Bible, he became convinced that the teachings of his church were not in harmony with the Scriptures. He decided to quit the church.

During another visit by the two Witnesses, this young man told them that he was going to do something; but he would not tell them what it was until later. Actually, he wrote a resignation letter to the church. The minister in charge was shocked. He invited the young man to visit him and asked whether it was true that he wrote the letter. He answered in the affirmative. The minister, not being convinced, asked the young man to go and think over the matter for three days, and then come and withdraw the letter. The young man replied that he meant what he said, but would think about this since he had asked him to do so. Meanwhile, the matter was reported to the elders of the young man's church, including the head of his family. Many were the rebukes and insults from these men. The head of his family said that if he did go so far as to withdraw from his church, they would not object if he should join any other religion, including the spiritualist churches, or return to the "mother church," the Roman Catholic, but to become one of Jehovah's Witnesses was unthinkable! The young man reported this to the lone Witness residing in the village. She encouraged him to remain firm in his decision to become one of Jehovah's Witnesses and not give up. She told him that for the present it would be hard on him, but that if he remained steadfast things would work out eventually and maybe some of the opposers would be helped thereby to get a clearer knowledge of Bible truth. He agreed.

Later, the young man was invited to come before the whole congregation of his church to tell them why he was resigning. He reported this to the Witnesses, who

helped him to prepare a good defense. Before the congregation, he started with a discussion of the Lord's Prayer, showing that the church's teaching that all who ever get life are going to heaven could not be correct. Immediately, the minister jumped up and protested that he had not been invited to preach to them but to tell them why he was resigning. The young man answered that since his reason for resigning was based on the Bible he could



not say anything without referring to the Bible. The minister would not allow him to continue; so he was driven out. A split then took place in the church. Some wanted to hear him, while others would not allow him to call attention to the Bible. This opened the way for a greater spreading of the "good news" in that village, with many calling on the young man to hear more.

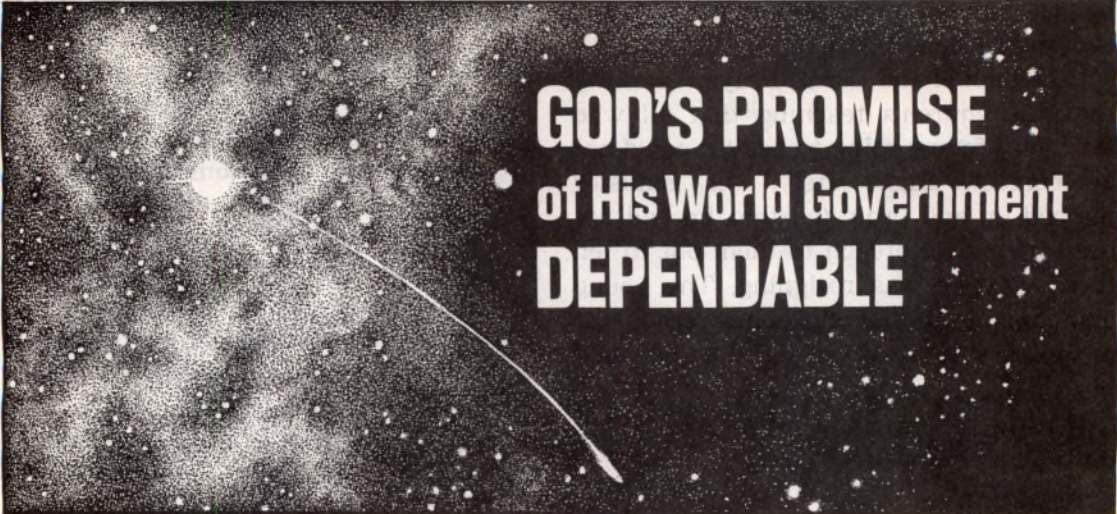
The next development was that the young man was invited to appear at a meeting before the head of the clan. Here, the elders of the community started to rebuke him. At this point a man who had a reputation as a drunkard came into the meeting. He took his seat in the gathering

with his head drooping for a while. Suddenly, he stood up and asked for an audience. He said, as all looked at him intently: "Why are you trying to stop this young man from worshiping his God? Has any of you ever seen someone who gets drunk like me who was said to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses? Or, have you ever seen any girl pregnant through fornication who was said to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses? Why make trouble for him? Fools! Leave him alone to worship his God!" With that, he sat down and no one had the courage to speak up in further opposition to the young man. That was the end of the meeting.

ASSEMBLIES HELP TO SPREAD THE "GOOD NEWS"

Theocratic assemblies have been milestones in the advancement of true worship in this land. These have broken down prejudices in the minds of even some highly placed individuals in the nation. For instance, at the "Joyful Workers" District Assembly held at Mampong, Ashanti, in December 1977, the paramount chief of the area was present on the last day and marveled at the convention arrangements and the conduct of the brothers. He could not find words adequate to express his feelings. A like attitude prevailed among many of his elders who came with him. All he could say was: "You are beautiful; you are clean!"

Under Jehovah's loving care and protection, despite some opposition, the proclaiming of the "good news" and the making of disciples is continuing in relative peace. We look forward to many more becoming disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is so because, on April 11, 1979, at the Memorial celebration of our Lord's death, there were more than 70,000 persons in attendance throughout Ghana.



GOD'S PROMISE of His World Government DEPENDABLE

"This is what Jehovah has said, 'If you people could break my covenant of the day and my covenant of the night, even in order for day and night not to occur in their time, likewise could my own covenant be broken with David my servant so that he should not come to have a son ruling as king upon his throne.'"—Jer. 33:20, 21.

THIS world has never seen anything like it! What? Why, a line of kings in one family running for 470 years and then, after an interruption of 2,520 years, taking to itself again full royal power. The family with such a matchless record was that of King David of Jerusalem, the illustrious forefather of Jesus Christ, who was born in David's own birthplace, Bethlehem.

² David's reign over his people began in 1077 before our Common Era. But when the prophet Jeremiah began his stormy career in 647 B.C.E., David's earthly line of kings entered its last 40 years of rule at Jerusalem. Jeremiah was a staunch upholder of God's solemn covenant promise with David for an everlasting kingdom. However, in the year 608 B.C.E. Jeremiah found himself under military custody in the royal capital. He was being held right in the Courtyard of the Guard attached to the palace of King Zedekiah, the 21st

king to reign in David's line, counting from David himself. With Zedekiah's overthrow by the Babylonians in 607 B.C.E., the 470 years of continuous rule by David's line in Hebron and earthly Jerusalem ended. Only Jesus Christ, the foretold descendant of David, could be used by God to revive David's kingdom in fulfillment of God's covenant with him for an imperishable kingdom.

³ While under military custody the prophet Jeremiah could have no communication with the Babylonians who were then besieging Jerusalem, but he did have communication with his God, as we read: "And the word of Jehovah proceeded to occur to Jeremiah the second time, while he was yet shut up in the Courtyard of the Guard, saying: 'This is what Jehovah the Maker of earth has said, Jehovah the Former of it to establish it firmly, Jehovah being his name, "Call to me, and I shall answer you and readily tell you great and incomprehensible things that you have not known."'"—Jer. 33:1-3.

1. In what way does King David's royal family prove to have a matchless record?

2. Where was Jeremiah in 608 B.C.E. during the reign of the last king of David's earthly line, and who only could be used to revive the rulership of David's lineage?

3. While under military custody, with whom did Jeremiah have outside communication, and how did such communication open up the second time?

⁴ What things? That the mountaintop city Jerusalem would be razed to the ground and then, after lying desolate for 70 years, it would be rebuilt. More than that, it would be reoccupied by its own people who had been carried into exile over a route 1,000 miles (1,600 km) long! Even though the royal line of David would not be put back on the earthly throne, yet it would continue for 639 years, until 33 C.E., the time for the appearance of the permanent heir to the throne to reign forever and ever. That Heir proved to be Jesus Christ!—Col. 1:13.

⁵ Only the Maker and Founder of the earth, the God who controls its affairs, could foresee and promise such things. He did so. So, in spite of all the gloomy views that observers might adopt regarding the final outcome of matters for the royal house of David, only this Jehovah could inspire Jeremiah to say:

“For this is what Jehovah the God of Israel has said concerning the houses of this city and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah that are pulled down on account of the siege ramparts and on account of the sword; concerning those who are coming to fight against the [besieging] Chaldeans and to fill places with the carcasses of the men whom I have struck down in my anger and in my rage, and on account of all whose badness I have concealed my face from this city, ‘Here I am bringing up for her a recuperation and health; and I will heal them and reveal to

them an abundance of peace and truth. And I will bring back the captives of Judah and the captives of Israel, and I will build them just as at the start. And I will purify them from all their error with which they have sinned against me, and I will forgive all their errors with which they have sinned against me and with which they have transgressed against me. And she [Jerusalem] will certainly become to me a name of exultation, a praise and a beauty toward all the nations of the earth who will hear of all the goodness that I am rendering to them [the captives]. And they will certainly be in dread and be agitated on account of all the goodness and on account of all the peace that I am rendering to her [Jerusalem].’”—Jer. 33:4-9.

⁶ By means of the world-conquering Babylonians, or Chaldeans, Jehovah God was pouring all his rage and anger upon the cities of the Kingdom of Judah. Justifiably so, for the Jews had erred from his commandments and had transgressed against the covenant made with their forefathers. So Jerusalem was to be destroyed and her survivors were to be deported to Babylon and the land be left empty of

6. What effect would the recuperation of Jerusalem after Jehovah's anger and rage were poured out upon her have upon the nations, and why?

4. What were the “great and incomprehensible things” that were now to be set forth?

5. What did Jehovah God promise concerning the then besieged city of Jerusalem?



man and domestic animal. Only the undeserved kindness of Jehovah could and would bring about Jerusalem's recuperation and restoration to health as a rebuilt city. Jehovah's healing of her would be so unexpected and incomprehensible to the non-Jewish nations that they would be filled with dread of such a wonder-working God. What this might result in for them would agitate these nations.

⁷ Although Jerusalem was to be left as a desolate ruin for 70 years, yet Jeremiah, the prophet of this miracle-working God, was not speaking of impossibilities when he foretold what would be said during her siege:

"This is what Jehovah has said, 'In this place that you people will be saying is waste without man and without domestic animal, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolated without man and without inhabitant and without domestic animal, there will yet be heard the sound of exultation and the sound of rejoicing, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those saying: "Laud Jehovah of armies, for Jehovah is good; for to time indefinite is his loving-kindness!"'

"They will be bringing a thanksgiving offering into the house of Jehovah, for I shall bring back the captives of the land just as at the start,' Jehovah has said." . . .

"In the cities of the mountainous region, in the cities of the lowland and in the cities of the south and in the land of Benjamin and in the surroundings of Jerusalem and in the cities of Judah flocks will yet pass by under the hands of the one taking the count,' Jehovah has said."—Jer. 33:10-13.

THE COMING WORLD GOVERNOR PROMISED

⁸ Jerusalem's recuperation began in 537 B.C.E., but she did not then come to have a king of the royal line of David. She got only a provincial governor in David's line of descent. This governor was subject to

the empire of the Medes and the Persians, the conquerors of the Babylonian World Power. Well, then, what about Jehovah's covenant that he made with King David for an everlasting kingdom in David's offspring? In spite of the temporary debasement of David's royal line at the time, Jehovah's Kingdom covenant guaranteed that the most glorious period for David's royal line was yet ahead.

⁹ How glad we today can be for that! Why so? Well, David's royal family tree had been cut down, but its stump was not dead. Almighty God could make it produce a "sprout" that would become the Permanent Heir of the promised kingdom. Let us listen to this:

¹⁰ "Look! There are days coming,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and I shall certainly carry out the good word that I have spoken, concerning the house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah [to which David belonged]. In those days and at that time I shall make sprout for David a righteous sprout, and he will certainly execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah [David's tribe] will be saved and Jerusalem itself [after her promised recuperation] will reside in security. And this is what she will be called, Jehovah Is Our Righteousness.'" This is the same name as that by which her future King was to be called.—Jer. 33:14-16; compare Jeremiah 23:4-6.

¹¹ Did this promise having to do with world government prove to be dependable? Yes! Although more than 640 years had to pass, the stump of David's dethroned, uncrowned, unsceptered family put a sprout forth right at Jehovah's due time. This was in the person of Jesus, who had been born in David's hometown of Beth-

7. What features of regular Israelite life were to be renewed in the once depopulated lands of Judah and Benjamin and Jerusalem?

8. Did Jerusalem's recuperation in 537 B.C.E. bring the restoration of the Davidic kingdom, and what lay yet ahead?

9, 10. For this to become so, what did Jehovah promise to produce from the debased royal family of David?

11. The promised "sprout" was brought forth in the person of whom, and, in 1914 C.E., how did he prove to be really the "Sprout" of Jehovah?

lehem and who was baptized by his fore-runner, John the Baptizer, and was immediately afterward anointed with God's spirit to be the Permanent Heir of the Kingdom covenant that had been made with David. (2 Sam. 7:4-16; Ezek. 21:21-27) In reality he became the "Sprout" of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, for, after the end of "seven times" (2,520 years) of Gentile sovereignty of the earth, in 1914 C.E., the glorified Jesus Christ has been used to revive Jehovah's sovereignty toward the earth in fulfillment of the Kingdom covenant.—Dan. 4:13-26; Zech. 6:12, 13.

¹² That this "Sprout" was "righteous" Jehovah God proved when he raised Jesus Christ from a martyr's death on the third day and exalted him to His own right hand in the heavens. Thus Jesus Christ, though once an earthly 'son of David,' became David's "Lord." (Ps. 110:1-4; Matt. 22:41-45) When he ascended back to his heavenly Father's right hand, it was with the value of his perfect human sacrifice. Thus he could bring salvation to "Judah," the capital city of which was "Jerusalem." Certainly, then, Jesus caused the royalty of David's house to sprout once again! —Rev. 22:16.

¹³ Jesus Christ is called "the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the root of David." (Rev. 5:5) Because of rejecting and having this 'Lion of the tribe of Judah' killed, earthly Jerusalem did not "reside in security," but was destroyed in 70 C.E. (Matt. 23:37, 38; Luke 21:24) However, the higher Jerusalem, "heavenly Jerusalem," does enjoy such security, for her spiritual children, the 144,000 anointed

followers of Jesus Christ, reside in security under Jehovah's care. (Heb. 12:22; Gal. 4:26-28) This "Jerusalem above" is really the organization called "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness." Since it is a matter of "Our Righteousness," not, 'My Righteousness,' the reference is to the 144,000 spiritual children of the heavenly Jerusalem, for Jehovah God does justify these or declare them righteous because of the merit of Christ's sacrifice. The name of Jesus Christ as the "Sprout" is also "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness," he being the representative of his 144,000 anointed followers. —Jer. 23:5, 6; see also 1 Corinthians 1:30, 31; Romans 3:21, 22.

¹⁴ With the anointed King and his associated organization being called by such a God-given name, what kind of government is God's coming world government for all mankind certain to be? Nothing but a righteous government. How thankful we can be for that!

THE DEPENDABILITY OF THE DIVINE PROMISE

¹⁵ Jehovah God will also have the right kind of priesthood along with his promised Kingdom. He makes us feel sure of this as he follows up all the foregoing by saying: "For this is what Jehovah has said, 'There will not be cut off in David's case a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel. And in the case of the priests, the Levites, there will not be cut off a man from before me to offer up whole burnt offering and to make smoke with a grain offering and to render sacrifice always.'" —Jer. 33:17, 18.

¹⁶ Does it matter, then, that since the destruction of the restored Jerusalem in 70 C.E. there has been no material temple

12. (a) How was Jesus Christ proved to be "righteous" as a sprout? (b) Whose "Lord" did he become, and how was a salvation made possible for "Judah" and "Jerusalem"?

13. (a) Which one is the Jerusalem that resides now in security? (b) The name "Jehovah Is Our Righteousness" refers to whose "righteousness," and why does the same name properly apply also to the one called "Sprout"?

14. Since Christ and his associate organization bear such a name, what kind of government is God's coming world government certain to be?

15, 16. (a) According to Jeremiah 33:17, 18, Jehovah will not fail to have what official servants? (b) Who will fill those official positions, and where will they serve Jehovah?

of Jehovah on earth and there is also no identifiable member of the tribe of Levi and of the house of Moses' brother Aaron to serve at such a temple? Not at all! For Jehovah now has as his High Priest and underpriests those who were foreshadowed by the ancient Levite priests in Israel, namely, Jesus Christ and his chosen followers who are anointed to the spiritual priesthood with God's spirit. The heavens where God thrones is the Most Holy of the spiritual temple in which this priesthood serves.—Heb. 9:24; 1 Pet. 2:9, 10.

¹⁷ So, all along God's promises have proved dependable, and they will yet prove dependable for us people. Listen: "This is what Jehovah has said, 'If you people could break my covenant of the day and my covenant of the night, even in order for day and night not to occur in their time, likewise could my own covenant be broken with David my servant so that he should not come to have a son ruling as king upon his throne; also with the Levites, the priests, my ministers. Just as the army of the heavens cannot be counted, neither the sand of the sea be measured, so I shall multiply the seed of David my servant and the Levites who are ministering to me.'"—Jer. 33:20-22.

¹⁸ As soon would the sun stop shining upon our earth and this earth stop spinning around its axis as for Jehovah to break his covenants concerning David and the Levites. Almighty God did multiply the "seed" of David down through the next 600 years and more until his Permanent Heir, Jesus Christ, arrived. This one became the antitype of the high priest Aaron and has also become a priest upon his heavenly throne, like Melchizedek. (Ps.

110:1-4; Gen. 14:18-20; Zech. 6:13; Heb. 6:20-7:3) Thus Jehovah has counteracted seeming disasters to Jerusalem and its temple and kept his covenants going.

¹⁹ For example, when the Babylonian army under King Nebuchadnezzar was besieging Jerusalem the second time, the following record was made: "And the word of Jehovah continued to occur to Jeremiah, saying: 'Have you not seen what those of this people have spoken, saying, "The two families whom Jehovah has chosen, he will also reject them"? And my own people they keep treating with disrespect, so that it should no more continue being a nation before them. This is what Jehovah has said, "If it was not a fact that I had appointed my own covenant of the day and night, the statutes of heaven and earth, so too I would reject even the seed of Jacob and of David my servant, so that I should not take from his seed rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For I shall gather their captives and will have pity upon them."'"—Jer. 33:23-26.

²⁰ In the year following that prophecy, Jerusalem was broken into and destroyed. The Jewish survivors were taken captive and most of them deported far away to Babylonia. It seemed as if Jehovah had rejected indeed the "two families" whom he had once chosen. The situation looked hopeless for both the family of David's royal descendants and the family of priests that descended from Aaron, the first high priest of Israel. Contrary to what the Creator of heaven and earth had said, it appeared as if Jehovah had broken his covenants respecting the royal family and the priestly family. It was a question of whether there would ever again be a king-

17. Just as we cannot keep day and night from occurring, so we cannot stop Jehovah from doing what regarding the kingship and the priesthood?

18. How long after Jeremiah's day did Jehovah keep his covenant concerning priesthood going, until the arrival of whom?

19. As soon would what regular phenomena with regard to our earth cease as for Jehovah to break his covenant with David for an everlasting kingdom?

20. What happened in Jeremiah's day that made it seem as if Jehovah would no longer have a kingdom over the earth or have his worship carried on?

dom of Jehovah over the earth or a revival of his true worship in it!

²¹ However, since that national disaster, day and night and the statutes of heaven and earth have not stopped functioning. So the Creator who has not broken his covenants respecting those inanimate things of the universe could not rightly be expected to break his covenants made with his intelligent creatures respecting his kingdom and his pure worship. Nor has he done so! He did have pity upon the offspring of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

21. How did Jehovah prove to be consistent about keeping covenants, with benefit to exiled Israelites?

After 70 years of exile they were gathered back to their God-given homeland.

²² It was to this restored people that the "righteous sprout," Jesus Christ, came 19 centuries ago. His martyr's death in 33 C.E. did not wreck God's covenant, for God glorified him in the heavens. There, says he, "I am living forever and ever." (Rev. 1:18) He has survived till Jehovah's installing of him as King in the promised world government. God's promise of this has been dependable!

22. How did God fulfill to this restored people his covenant respecting the "righteous sprout," and what does this prove regarding God's promise?



Just as surely as the sun rises each day God will keep his promise

Liberation

AND SURVIVAL OF CHRISTENDOM'S FALL

IN JEREMIAH'S day the sabbath year should have been a time of liberation for Jewish slaves. The last such sabbath year ended in 609 B.C.E. on Tishri 9, a day before the Jewish Day of Atonement. Jeremiah's people had been required to celebrate sabbath years ever since they entered the land of Canaan in 1473 B.C.E. Every 50th year from then was to have been observed as a Jubilee year, each Jubilee beginning on the Day of Atonement. The 17th Jubilee would prove to be the last one. It ended in 623 B.C.E., during Jeremiah's prophetic activity. As a priest at the temple Jeremiah should have heard the trumpet blast announcing the beginning of that Jubilee, a special year of liberation. Jehovah's law as given through the prophet Moses commanded:

² "You must sanctify the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty in the land to all its inhabitants. It will become a Jubilee for you, and you must return each one to his possession and you should return each one to his family. A Jubilee is what that fiftieth year will become for you."—Lev. 25:10, 11.

1, 2. (a) When and during whose prophetic career should the last Jubilee for the Jews have taken place? (b) What did Jehovah's law through Moses command the Jews about the Jubilee?

³ Like the weekly sabbath, every seventh year between Jubilees was to be a sabbath year. (Lev. 25:1-9) In a similar arrangement, Jehovah's law said: "In case you should buy a Hebrew slave, he will be a slave six years, but in the seventh he will go out as one set free without charge." (Ex. 21:2) "In case there should be sold to you your brother, a Hebrew or a Hebrewess, and he has served you six years, then in the seventh year you should send him out from you as one set free."—Deut. 15:12.

⁴ So, in Jeremiah's day, in that lunar sabbath year of 610-609 B.C.E., it was good in Jehovah's eyes for slaveholding Jews to conclude a covenant before him in the temple at Jerusalem to let their Hebrew slaves go free. In spite of the international situation so threatening to Jerusalem, this was the obedient course for Jeremiah's people to take. However, before that year of liberation ran out, those former slaveholders broke their solemn covenant and forced their former menservants and maidservants back into slavery. This

3. What was God's law concerning every seventh year between Jubilees, and how long could Hebrew buyers hold Hebrew slaves?

4. So, in the sabbath year of 610-609 B.C.E., what would it be fitting for Hebrew slave owners to do, but how did they give God added reason for punishing them?

displeased the covenant-keeping Jehovah and added another reason for him to punish them.—Jer. 34:8-16.

⁵ Happily that disregard for a covenant solemnly made before God was not shared in by certain persons then in Jerusalem who were known as Rechabites, the descendants of Jonadab the son of Rechab. (Jer. 35:6-11) Still, they were put in danger because of the punishment that was deservedly coming upon Jerusalem's Jewish inhabitants. But they were in a position to be shielded from what Jehovah God went on further to predict in view of the selfish unfaithfulness of the Jews. As in the case of Jerusalem of Jeremiah's day, Jehovah's further words should be of extreme interest to modern-day Christendom. Like Jerusalem then, Christendom is in the last days of her long existence. The final world power foretold in Bible prophecy, the eighth world power, is now with us. It is in the form of the United Nations. It has a death-dealing role to play toward Christendom, Jerusalem's modern counterpart. The U.N. and its predecessor, the League of Nations, have now had a combined life of 60 years. (Rev. 17:7-11) Before it perishes it will act!

⁶ Christendom, because of claiming to be Christian, should stand for freedom from bondage to this sin-enslaved world. In actuality, though, she has brought her church members into slavery to this world, for her own interests. This is because she has made herself a friend of this world but the enemy of God.—Jas. 4:4.

⁷ Christendom's spiritual slaves are slaving, not for God's kingdom by Christ, but for the doomed world and its ruler

and god, Satan the Devil. (1 John 2:15-17; Eph. 2:2) Christendom leads churchgoers into opposing those Christian witnesses of Jehovah who were prefigured by Jeremiah. So let her hear what he next said:

"Therefore this is what Jehovah has said, 'You yourselves have not obeyed me in keeping on proclaiming liberty each one to his brother and each one to his companion. Here I am proclaiming to you a liberty,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'to the sword, to the pestilence and to the famine, and I shall certainly give you for a quaking to all the kingdoms of the earth. And I will give the men sidestepping my covenant, in that they did not carry out the words of the covenant that they concluded before me with the calf that they cut in two that they might pass between its pieces; namely, the princes of Judah and the princes of Jerusalem, the court officials and the priests and all the people of the land who went passing between the pieces of the calf—yes, I will give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those seeking for their soul; and their dead bodies must become food for the flying creatures of the heavens and for the beasts of the earth. And Zedekiah the king of Judah and his princes I shall give into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those seeking for their soul and into the hand of the military forces of the king of Babylon who are withdrawing from against you men.'"

"'Here I am commanding,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and I shall certainly bring them back to this city, and they must fight against it and capture it and burn it with fire; and the cities of Judah I shall make a desolate waste without an inhabitant.'"—Jer. 34:17-22; compare Genesis 15:10-18.

⁸ Does that prophecy presage Christendom's fall before the worldly forces that Jehovah lets lay siege against her? What else could it foreshadow in the light of what befell Jerusalem? The capture of King Zedekiah and his deportation to Babylon, to die there, had been obediently foretold to him by Jeremiah. (Jer. 34:1-7) Certainly, then, in a major fulfillment of that prophetic event of Bible times, no

8. In the light of that prophecy of Jeremiah, what is foreshadowed for Christendom of today?

5. (a) What aliens then in Jerusalem were not implicated and yet were in danger? (b) How is Jerusalem's modern counterpart likewise in danger, and from what source?

6. How has Christendom, though claiming to stand for freedom, brought her church members into slavery?

7. (a) Christendom's churchgoers have been led into slavery to what and into opposition to whom? (b) What next in Jeremiah's prophecy is she called upon to hear?

good is in store for the rulers of Christendom!

⁹ In 609 B.C.E. the sabbath year ended on the 9th day of the 7th lunar month (Tishri), the day before Atonement Day. After that, on the 10th day of the 10th lunar month (Tebeth) of that same year, Emperor Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian military forces opened up their siege of Jerusalem. (2 Ki. 25:1, 2) Eighteen months dragged on till Jerusalem fell, that is, on the 9th day of the 4th lunar month (Tammuz), in 607 B.C.E. In his trying to escape and thus defeat Jehovah's prophecy, King Zedekiah got only as far as the city of Jericho, and then his Babylonian pursuers caught him. Then they brought him back for a face-to-face meeting with Nebuchadnezzar and to hopeless exile in idolatrous Babylon. (Jer. 34:2, 3) In the following lunar month, or on Ab 7, 607 B.C.E., Jerusalem was looted and burned down. Its desecrated temple of Jehovah did not save it. (2 Ki. 25:3-17) Truly the horrible destruction of Jerusalem was something to make other nations quake in fear of like treatment at the hands of Babylon.

¹⁰ However, centuries later the power of the spectacle of Jerusalem in ruins to inspire horror has been lost on Christendom. She does not quake. She sees in the ancient spectacle no prophetic illustration warning her of her own fast approaching destruction on a worldwide scale. This will start off the destruction of all false religion in the greatest tribulation ever to come upon this anti-Jehovah world. It will be as foretold in Matthew 24:15-22.

¹¹ Well, then, how will any human sur-

9. When after the sabbath year did the siege of Jerusalem begin, how long did this last, and how did the city become an object at which to quake for fear of suffering a like end?

10. Does Christendom quake at that ancient spectacle, and with what will her own destruction start?

11. When was Jerusalem's land left desolate without man or domestic animal, and were Jeremiah and Baruch the only ones to survive under Jehovah's favor?

vive such a tribulation? Similarly to how Jeremiah and his secretary Baruch survived Jerusalem's ordeal of sword, famine, pestilence and conflagration! Later, in the seventh lunar month of that disastrous year, Jeremiah was carried down to Egypt by those panic-stricken men who had rebelled against domination by Babylon. Thus the whole land of the kingdom of Judah became desolate without man or domestic animal. (2 Ki. 25:22-26) Thus the land came to enjoy an unbroken sabbath of 70 years. (2 Chron. 36:20, 21) But, besides Jeremiah and his secretary Baruch, others under Jehovah's favor also survived Jerusalem's destruction and the desolation of the land of Judah. This had been guaranteed to them through Jeremiah. We today should be interested in the case of those survivors, if we want to survive the coming tribulation.

SURVIVORS OF

CHRISTENDOM'S FALL PREFIGURED

¹² Upon whom will the Great Preserver of human life have his eyes during the impending tribulation in which this doomed system of things will perish? Upon those dedicated, baptized Christians whom he used a certain band of alien refugees in Jerusalem to prefigure. These friends of the Jews felt obliged to leave their nomadic life and take up life temporarily in Jerusalem because they did not want to join the camp of the enemy who were advancing to the siege of Jerusalem under the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar. Their forefather was Jonadab or Jehonadab, the son of Rechab. However, they were not called Jonadabs, for King David had had a nephew named Jonadab. But they were called Rechabites, this name marking them as non-Israelites. They were well known to Jeremiah.

12. Those survivors of the coming tribulation were prefigured by what alien nomadic people, and how did Jeremiah happen to find them in Jerusalem?

¹³ For more than 250 years they had been faithful to the vow imposed upon them by their well-known ancestor Jona-dab. The Israelites could not match such a record as regards faithfulness to the Law covenant into which their forefathers had entered through Moses as their mediator with Jehovah God, back in 1513 B.C.E. So now the God whose covenant they had violated purposed to show the difference between these Israelites and the vow-

13. How did the covenant keeping of the Israelites compare with the vow keeping of the Rechabites, and what was Jeremiah told to do with the Rechabites?

keeping Rechabites. Accordingly the Rechabites were now to be put to a test in a place holy to Jehovah, his temple in Jerusalem. So he told Jeremiah: "Go to the house of the Rechabites, and you must speak with them and bring them into the house of Jehovah, to one of the dining rooms; and you must give them wine to drink." (Jer. 35:1, 2) This, even though it was well known that the Rechabites were "teetotalers."

¹⁴ Jeremiah did as commanded. (Jer. 35:

14. How did the Rechabites explain their refusal to drink wine at Jeremiah's hand, and also their dwelling in a city?



Survival Of Christendom's Fall

3-5) Yet, even at the prophet's hand the Rechabites refused to drink. They explained:

"We shall drink no wine, because Jonadab the son of Rechab, our forefather, was the one that laid the command upon us, saying, 'You must drink no wine, neither you nor your sons, to time indefinite. And no house must you build, and no seed must you sow; and no vineyard must you plant, nor must it come to be yours. But in tents you should dwell all your days, in order that you may keep living many days upon the surface of the ground where you are residing as aliens.'

"So we keep obeying the voice of Jehonadab the son of Rechab our forefather in everything that he commanded us by drinking no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons and our daughters, and by not building houses for us to dwell in, so that no vineyard or field or seed should become ours. And we keep dwelling in tents and obeying and doing according to all that Jonadab our forefather commanded us. But it came about when Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came up against the land that we began to say, 'Come, and let us enter into Jerusalem because of the military force of the Chaldeans and because of the military force of the Syrians, and let us dwell in Jerusalem.'"
—Jer. 35:6-11.

¹⁵ The vow laid upon the Rechabites was a protective one. It kept them leading a simple life as aliens in the land and apart from the corruption of the cities. As they were not Israelites under the Mosaic Law covenant, they were like strangers within the gates of the Israelites and afforded no trouble to their Israelite hosts. They did not interfere with the Israelites in carrying out their covenant with Jehovah, but, rather, went along with the Law covenant as far as it applied to them. Yet, when it came to drinking alcoholic beverages, they were like Israelite Nazirites. By remaining sober, they kept their senses. Invasion of the land of Judah by the armies of King Nebuchadnezzar was about to affect their simple nomadic life. Naturally, at the ad-

15. In what way was the vow laid upon the Rechabites a protective one, and how were they provided for in the Mosaic Law covenant?

vance of the invading Chaldeans, the Rechabites fled into Jerusalem.

¹⁶ Their doggedly sticking to their vow against wine drinking, even when invited by the prophet-priest Jeremiah, furnished Jehovah with an example to use against the covenant-breaking Israelites. The Rechabites kept their vow, even though it was imposed upon them by a mere man, their forefather. The Israelites broke their Law covenant, even though it was established, not with a mere man, but with the Most High God. Opportunely Jehovah now told Jeremiah:

"Go, and you must say to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem: 'Did you not continually receive exhortation to obey my words?' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'There has been a carrying out of the words of Jehonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons, to drink no wine, and they have drunk none down to this day, because they have obeyed the commandment of their forefather. And as for me, I have spoken to you men, rising up early and speaking, but you have not obeyed me. And I kept sending to you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, 'Turn back, please, each one from his bad way, and make your dealings good, and do not walk after other gods to serve them. And keep dwelling on the ground that I have given to you and to your forefathers.' But you did not incline your ear, nor did you listen to me. But the sons of Jehonadab the son of Rechab have carried out the commandment of their forefather that he commanded them; but as for this people, they have not listened to me.'"

"Therefore this is what Jehovah the God of armies, the God of Israel, has said, 'Here I am bringing upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the calamity that I have spoken against them, for the reason that I have spoken to them but they did not listen, and I kept calling to them but they did not answer.'"
—Jer. 35:13-17.

¹⁷ It is plain from this comparison of

16. How did the vow-keeping Rechabites furnish Jehovah with an example to use against the covenant-breaking Israelites, and what did he find it needful to bring upon them?

17. Why must the apostasy of the Israelites be classed as willful, and so what was inescapable for them?

Rechabites with Israelites that the highly favored Israelites were, with the help of God's prophets, capable of keeping their covenant with Jehovah their God. He had provided his temple and its priesthood to offer up sacrifices to offset their unwilling sins that they committed due to the weaknesses of their flesh. In spite of this, they chose additional gods, particularly Baal, and incorporated into their worship all sorts of wickedness that were forbidden by Jehovah's law through Moses. So their apostasy from God's Law covenant that called for pure worship was willful. It showed no respect either for the one living and true God or for their solemn vows to him. This bespoke nothing but calamity for such apostates. For like reasons inescapable calamity impends over all Christendom!

ESCAPE FROM DESTRUCTION UPON ALL FALSE RELIGION

¹⁸ Who today wants to escape being destroyed with Christendom and her intimate friend, this God-dishonoring system of things? "We do!" say those of the "great crowd" foretold in Revelation 7:9-17. They draw strong assurance from Jehovah's promise made to the vow-keeping Rechabites, as set out in Jeremiah 35:18, 19, where we read: "And to the household of the Rechabites Jeremiah said: 'This is what Jehovah of armies, the God of Israel, has said, "For the reason that you have obeyed the commandment of Jehonadab your forefather and continue keeping all his commandments and doing according to all that he commanded you, therefore this is what Jehovah of armies, the God of Israel, has said: 'There will not be cut off from Jonadab the son of Rechab a man to stand before me always.' " ' ' ' "

18. From what words of Jeremiah to the Rechabites does the "great crowd" draw assurance of surviving the destruction of Christendom and her friend, the world?

¹⁹ Thus Jonadab the son of Rechab, although not an Israelite, would not fail to have a descendant to stand approved in Jehovah's presence here on earth forever. Let us recall that this Jonadab had been heart and soul with King Jehu in destroying Baal worship out of the apostate Kingdom of Israel. (2 Ki. 10:15-28) The name of this son of Rechab, that is, Jonadab or Jehonadab, takes note of the only living and true God, for it means "Jehovah Is Liberal." The Rechabite to whom Jeremiah stated the divine promise was Jaazaniah, and his name means "Jah [that is, Jehovah] Hears." (Jer. 35:3-5) True to their vow, Jaazaniah and his brothers had refused to drink wine at the hand of Jeremiah in Jehovah's temple. There in Jehovah's presence they demonstrated integrity toward their vow.

²⁰ Jehovah respected the faithfulness of those Rechabites and promised that they would not be wiped out during the coming destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. We can be sure that the Rechabites were not then cut off from Jehovah's presence, for he respected his word of promise just as much as those Rechabites respected their vow with regard to wine. There *may* be historical evidence of their survival in the person of a Malchijah the son of Rechab, who repaired a gate of Jerusalem in the days of Governor Nehemiah. (Neh. 3:14) Whether any Rechabites survived till the days of Jesus Christ and became his disciples is not recorded in Jehovah's Word. But it would have been most appropriate!

²¹ Natural Rechabites are not identifiable today, but there are modern counterparts of them. They are the close asso-

19. (a) What was Jonadab's attitude toward Baal worship? (b) Of whom do the names Jonadab (Jehonadab) and Jaazaniah take note, and what position did they take toward wine?

20. Although we have no direct Biblical evidence, of what may we be sure about the Rechabites when Jerusalem was destroyed, and after that?

21. What national disaster did the Rechabites survive, and so what is it fitting for their modern counterparts to survive?

ciates of the spiritual Israelites, who were pictured by Jeremiah. The Rechabites of old survived apostate Jerusalem's destruction. Since they typified the "great crowd" of Christ's "other sheep," it is appropriate for these counterparts of the Rechabites to survive the world's "great tribulation," the first feature of which will be the destruction of Christendom, the counterpart of Jerusalem.

²² Volume III of *Vindication*, released Monday, July 18, 1932, in Brooklyn, N.Y., was the first to set out (on pages 77-83) that Jonadab of old pictured a class of God-fearing people who, under God's protection, would pass alive through the "great tribulation" into the New Order under Christ's kingdom. (Pp. 230-233 of the *Watchtower* issue of August 1, 1932) The interesting subject for discussion "Millions Now Living Will Never Die" was thought to apply to them. Logically, then, the *Watchtower* issue of April 15, 1935, made this announcement:

Again *The Watchtower* reminds its readers that a convention of Jehovah's witnesses and Jonadabs will be held at Washington, D.C., beginning May 30 and ending June 3, 1935. It is hoped that many of the remnant and the Jonadabs may find it convenient to attend this convention. Heretofore not many Jonadabs have had the privilege of attending a convention, and the convention at Washington may be a real comfort and benefit to them.—P. 114.

²³ It did prove to be so, for there on Friday, May 31, it was revealed to them that the Jonadab class was identical with the "great multitude" foreseen in Revelation 7:9-17 (*Authorized Version*). Likely most of the 840 conventioners baptized in water next day proved to be Jonadabs or antitypical Rechabites.

22. (a) When was it first set out that Jonadab pictured a sheeplike class that would survive the "great tribulation"? (b) To what did the *Watchtower* issue of April 15, 1935, invite them especially to come?

23. What was revealed to those Jonadabs at that Washington (D.C.) convention, and so the water baptism next day included many of whom?

²⁴ The original Jonadab lived in the 10th century B.C.E. and did not see Jerusalem's destruction in 607 B.C.E. But his descendants, the Rechabites, whom Jeremiah put to a test on vow keeping, did experience Jerusalem's downfall and survived it indefinitely. Because of descent from Jonadab, they too prefigured the "great crowd" destined to survive Christendom's downfall.—See *You May Survive Armageddon into God's New World*, pages 64-67.

²⁵ Ho, then, you dedicated, baptized Christians who were typified by those ancient Rechabites! You, like them, must keep away from overindulgence, from false worship and from getting mixed up with this world, making it your friend. (Jas. 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17) Keep imitating Jonadab the son of Rechab in displaying zeal for Jehovah and opposition to modern Baal worship, that you may see Jehovah by means of his Greater Jehu, Jesus Christ, destroy Christendom and all other false religions. With Rechabite-like faithfulness, carry out your dedication to the Sovereign Lord Jehovah and take your part in furthering the interests of his glorious kingdom by Christ. This will aid you to hold onto the liberation from this doomed world that you have gained, until it is no more. Using your blessed freedom according to God's will, you will not be "cut off" when he expresses his vengeance against this wicked world and all its friends, but you will stand approved before him and be rewarded with life on a paradise earth under his Son's kingdom. Great will be the joy with which the remnant of the Jeremiah class will elatedly rejoice over you!

24. In surviving Jerusalem's destruction in 607 B.C.E., whom did also Jonadab's descendants prefigure today?

25. In view of the outstanding features about Jonadab and the Rechabites, what exhortation is given their counterparts of today?

(Further consideration of the prophecy of Jeremiah will be taken up in *The Watchtower* of February 1, 1980.)

Idolatrous, Power-mad **ATHALIAH**



THE saying 'like mother like daughter' applied with full force to Athaliah, the daughter of Jezebel and Israelite King Ahab. Jezebel did not shrink back from shedding innocent blood to further her aims, and neither did Athaliah. Both were steeped in idolatry.

It was indeed a tragic mistake when faithful Judean King Jehoshaphat formed a marriage alliance with King Ahab, taking Athaliah as a wife for his son Jehoram. That alliance nearly cost Jehoshaphat his life when he joined King Ahab in a military venture against the Syrians. Though Jehovah God intervened to spare him, Jehoshaphat was reproved with the words: "Is it to the wicked that help is to be given, and is it for those hating Jehovah that you should have love?"—2 Chron. 18:1-3, 30, 31; 19:1, 2.

After Jehoshaphat's death, the effects of the marriage almost destroyed the royal line of Judah. Athaliah's baneful influence contributed toward Jehoram's following

the bad course of the royal house of Ahab. To secure his position, he murdered his brothers and some of the princes. Abandoned by Jehovah for unfaithfulness, Jehoram faced internal and external troubles. The Arabs and the Philistines overran the Kingdom of Judah and, with the exception of the youngest boy Ahaziah (Jehoahaz), took all of Jehoram's sons captive. Then the marauder band that came with the Arabs killed all the older sons. Finally, Jehoram died of a loathsome disease, during the progress of which "his intestines came out."—2 Ki. 8:16-19; 2 Chron. 21:4, 16-19; 22:1.

When Ahaziah succeeded his father as king, his mother became the counselor. Because she was the real power behind the throne, the short one-year rule of Ahaziah was marked by gross wickedness. After Ahaziah was mortally wounded at the command of King Jehu of Israel, Athaliah saw her opportunity to seize the throne of the Kingdom of Judah.—2 Chron. 22:2-9.

Athaliah was so power-mad that she killed her own grandsons. However, the infant Jehoash escaped, being saved by his aunt Jehoshabeath. About six years later, the husband of Jehoshabeath, high priest Jehoiada, had Jehoash proclaimed king. On seeing this, "Athaliah ripped her garments apart and cried out: 'Conspiracy! Conspiracy!'" But this was to no avail. Jehoiada ordered her execution. In this way, the last surviving member of the house of Ahab came to an inglorious end.—2 Chron. 22:10-12; 23:11-15.

How can the power-mad action of Athaliah be explained? She was thoroughly entrenched in the worship of idols. Because of her influence, her sons broke into the temple of Jehovah, doubtless to plunder it. Items taken from Jehovah's sanctuary were devoted to the fertility god Baal.

QUESTIONS from READERS

● How is it that Christians "judge angels," according to 1 Corinthians 6:3?

This evidently refers to anointed Christians sharing with Christ in the future judgment of wicked angels, demons. In urging Christians to settle personal disputes with the help of mature brothers in the congregation rather than resorting to secular courts, the apostle Paul wrote: "Or do you not know that the holy ones will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you unfit to try very trivial matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? Why, then, not matters of this life?"—1 Cor. 6:2, 3.

Some have thought that by 'judging' Paul was speaking of Christians' being able to expel demons. But Christ's followers already had been empowered to do that on occasion, where-

(2 Chron. 24:7) As the Bible reveals, such idolatry leads to all kinds of other gross sins. We read:

"Just as they did not approve of holding God in accurate knowledge, God gave them up to a disapproved mental state, to do the things not fitting, filled as they were with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, badness, being full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malicious disposition, being whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, insolent, haughty, self-assuming, inventors of injurious things." (Rom. 1:28-30)

The fact that Athaliah murdered her own grandsons to secure power for herself reveals just how far into a mentally disapproved state idolatry can lead a person.

Athaliah's case emphasizes the danger of involvement with idolatry. False worship can open the doors to all kinds of evil. Wisely, then, we should continue to heed the inspired words: "Guard yourselves from idols."—1 John 5:21.

as Paul here was pointing to the future ('we *shall* judge the world and we *shall* judge angels'). (Matt. 10:8; Luke 10:17; Acts 16:16-18; 19:11, 12) Others feel that Paul was saying that by their exemplary conduct Christians condemn the debased angels that follow Satan. Again, however, this was not something restricted to the future; for years Christians had displayed fine conduct. (Matt. 5:14-16; Titus 2:6-8; 1 Pet. 3:16) Also, the context of Paul's words seems to rule out that this 'judging of angels' is simply a matter of engaging in conduct that condemns through contrast.

The Bible, though, shows that judgment awaits the Devil—his being bruised in the head. (Gen. 3:15) Describing the opening part of that action, Revelation 20:1-3 says that a powerful angel will seize the Devil and bind him for the millennium. Verses 7-10 relate that at the end of that period Satan will be released briefly. But then, as the second phase of the 'bruising,' he will be cast into the fiery lake of eternal destruction.

Revelation does not pointedly say that the anointed king-priests in heaven will participate in executing this judgment. But neither does it mention that the demons will be abyssed along with the Devil, which the Bible elsewhere

does indicate. (Luke 8:31) So the fact that Revelation 20:1-10 does not depict the 144,000 as acting with Christ in expressing judgment does not mean that they have no role in this. Romans 16:20 says about them: "For his part, the God who gives peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly."

Consequently, it seems that when Paul said that anointed ones "shall judge angels" he was referring to the future executing of judgment on wicked spirits. Even if the Bible does not give us details about the part Christ's joint heirs will have in this judging, we can be sure that they will at least have a supportive role. They unquestionably will be behind Jesus, approving of the judgment.

● Was it not wrong for Lot to offer his daughters to the Sodomites?

While some persons have charged that Lot acted improperly, we really are not in position today to condemn him. The Bible shows that God, who reads hearts, did not judge Lot adversely.

When God sent two materialized angels to Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot hospitably insisted that they stay in his home. That evening a mob of Sodomites surrounded the house, crying: "Where are the men who came in to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may have intercourse with them."—Gen. 18:20, 21; 19:1-5.

Stepping outside, Lot tried to dissuade the men. Then he pleaded: "Please, here I have two daughters who have never had intercourse with a man. Please, let me bring them out to you. Then do to them as is good in your eyes. Only to these men do not do a thing, because that is why they have come under the shadow of my roof." The angered mob pressed in on Lot, almost breaking in the door. Then the angels intervened and struck the mob with blindness.—Gen. 19:6-11.

This account has puzzled or disturbed many, particularly women. Some persons have even charged that Lot acted in a cowardly way, that he should not have offered to pay for his guests' safety with his daughters' virtue or that he should have given himself to the mob.

But it should be noted that, according to the Oriental code, it was a host's responsibility to protect guests in his home, defending them even to the point of death if necessary. Lot's words ("that is why [the two men] have come

under the shadow of my roof") show that he felt an obligation to protect his houseguests. Also, how can anyone charge Lot with cowardice? He bravely went out to the mob, even closing the door behind him and facing them alone.

But what about Lot's offer to the mob? While some have said that Lot should have offered himself, it is unlikely that the perverted mob would have been satisfied with an old married man. Yet the offer of two virgins might have been somewhat confusing to the mob: Here were two young virgins, and the chance to soil their purity might have had some appeal to the mob. But on the other hand these were females and engaged to two men of the city. So that offer could have the effect of distracting or dividing the perverted mob.

Furthermore, although Lot had at first entertained angels unawares, by now he well may have realized these to be messengers from God. (Heb. 13:2) Hence, Lot could have felt that, as deeply attached to his daughters as he was, he would be willing to sacrifice them if necessary. (Compare Genesis 22:1-14; 2 Samuel 12:3.) In offering his daughters to the mob, Lot could have been confident that, if it was Jehovah's will, God would protect his daughters even as God had already protected Sarah in Egypt. (Gen. 12:17-19) And Jehovah *did* direct matters so that Lot and his daughters were kept safe, not only from the homosexual mob, but also from the fiery destruction that came on the cities.—Gen. 19:15-29.

The angels did not say that by making the offer Lot had spoiled his righteousness. Instead, they aided Lot and his family to escape when God brought to ruin those cities that did not contain 10 righteous persons. (Gen. 18:26-32) More significantly, God did not criticize Lot, who was tormented at even observing lawless deeds. On the contrary, Jehovah, who can read hearts, pronounced Lot to be a "righteous man."—Prov. 15:11; 2 Pet. 2:8, 9.

This account is a valuable part of the Bible. It serves to accentuate Sodom and Gomorrah's badness, it stirs up indignation in righteous ones who read it, and it manifests God's disapproval of homosexuality. Also, this account helps us to appreciate the Bible's assurance that God is righteous and just—he does not countenance wickedness. (Deut. 32:4) And we can trust that God is equally perfect and just in his judgment that Lot was a "righteous man."

This past August the following letter was received from a woman in Washington, D.C.:

"Dear Sir:

"Recently I purchased several copies of 'My Book of Bible Stories' from a friend . . . Truly, I could not put this most inspiring, clear and beautifully illustrated publication down. I have been raving to everyone about these stories of the Bible. I have read these stories over and over again, and read the references in the Bible upon which they are based. Like many people, I neglect to read my Bible as often as I should because of many activities and work. Besides, I don't always understand some of the readings. This printing of 'My Book of Bible Stories' has enhanced my Bible readings and understanding.

"With all this uplift, I decided to purchase a few of these books for others to read and called your place and was told by one of your

gracious staff members that this type of request would be honored.

"I am enclosing a check for \$120.00 for the initial purchase of sixty (60) books to be forwarded to me as quickly as possible. If necessary I may be reached at . . . for further information. I am anxious to receive these marvelous readings.

"May God continue to bless you in all your endeavors."

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

January 6: God's Promise of His World Government Dependable. Page 16. Songs to Be Used: 16, 84.

January 13: Liberation and Survival of Christendom's Fall. Page 22. Songs to Be Used: 33, 23.