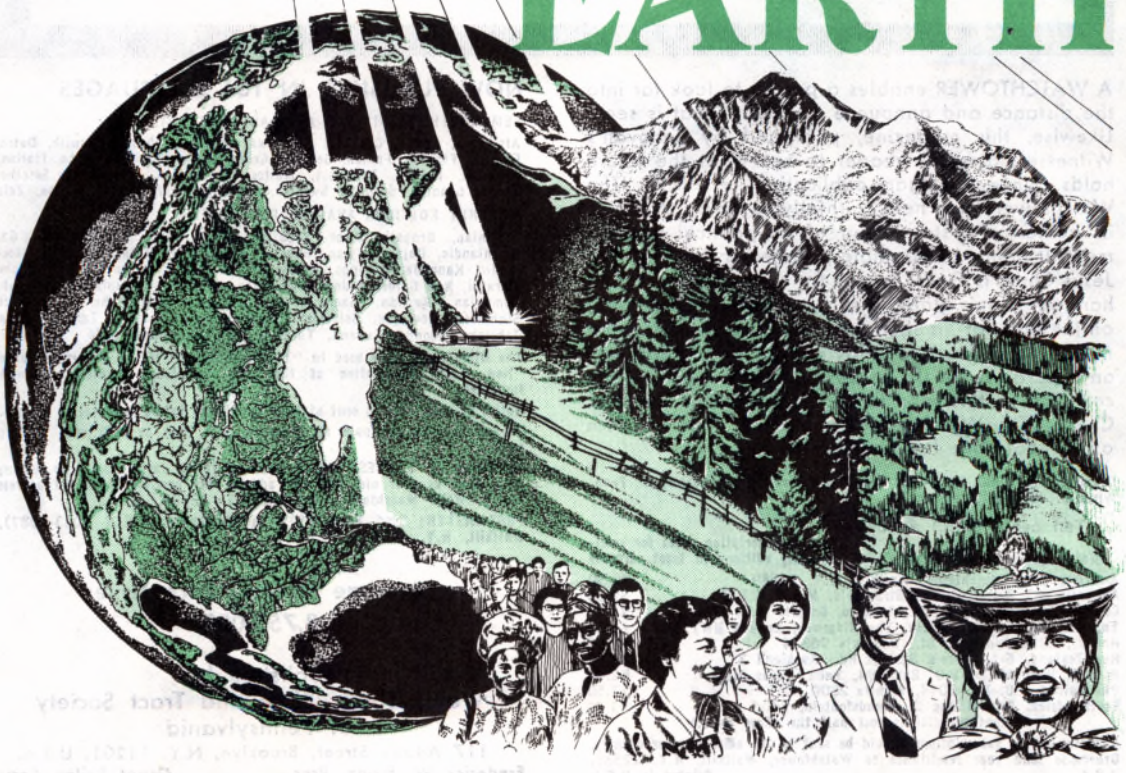
APRIL 1, 1980

THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

God Promises a NEW EARTH



THE WATCHTOWER®
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April 1, 1980
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OUR COVER: God who created our earth promises also a "new earth." How will this hope be realized, leading to what glorious future for mankind? Articles in this issue explain

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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The Promise of a Bright Future

WHAT compassionate person has not been greatly troubled on witnessing injustices and suffering? There definitely is a need for righting a multitude of wrongs. But will we ever see an end to all the distressing things that continue to affect the human family?

Over 19 centuries ago a man who had made his livelihood as a common fisherman wrote: "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to [God's] promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell." (2 Pet. 3:13) This man, the apostle Peter, along with many other servants of the Most High throughout the centuries, drew encouragement from this promise. With eagerness all of these looked forward to that grand day when lawlessness, oppression and violence would cease and the scales of justice would be balanced. But how can we be sure that this promise originated with the Creator of man and is certain to be fulfilled? Would a fulfillment bring benefits only to those living at that future time? And is there anything in the promise that offers a dependable hope for billions of dead humans?

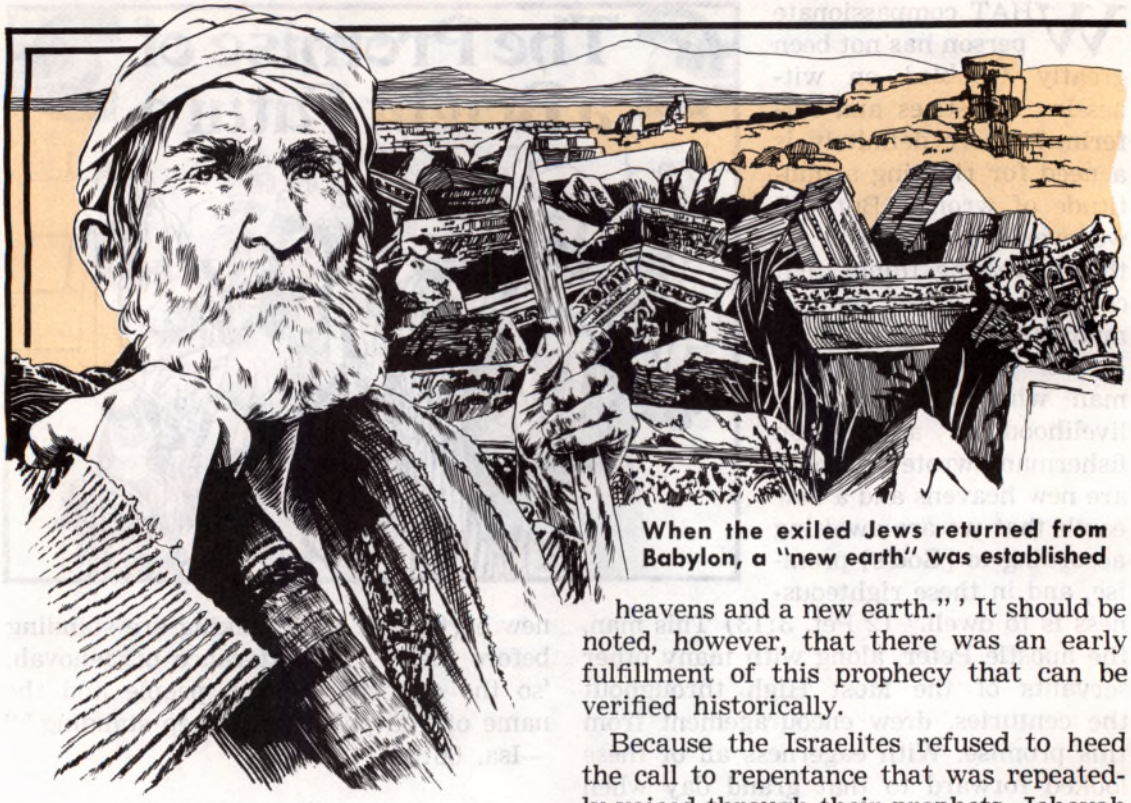
It is noteworthy that when Peter referred to "new heavens and a new earth" he was not introducing a promise that Jehovah God had made only recently. About 800 years earlier, the Almighty, by means of his prophet Isaiah, had declared: "Here I am creating new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart." (Isa. 65:17) " 'Just as the new heavens and the new earth that I am making are standing before me,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'so the offspring of you people and the name of you people will keep standing.' " —Isa. 66:22.

SOUND EVIDENCE

Though these words were committed to writing many centuries ago, we today have reliable testimony that they are indeed of divine origin. The Bible itself provides the key in identifying the source of true prophecy. Three points are involved: (1) The message should promote pure worship, (2) the prophet must speak in Jehovah's name, and (3) the things foretold must come true. (Deut. 13:1-4; 18:20-22) How do the prophecies of Isaiah measure up in these respects?

An examination of the book of Isaiah reveals that it consistently appeals to the Israelites to turn from the wrong course and to serve the Creator with a pure motive. In each case the words are proclaimed in Jehovah's name. For example, we read:

"Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the badness of your dealings from in



When the exiled Jews returned from Babylon, a "new earth" was established

front of my eyes; cease to do bad. Learn to do good; search for justice; set right the oppressor; render judgment for the fatherless boy; plead the cause of the widow. If you people show willingness and do listen, the good of the land you will eat. But if you people refuse and are actually rebellious, with a sword you will be eaten up; for the very mouth of Jehovah has spoken it." (Isa. 1:16, 17, 19, 20)

"Search for Jehovah, you people, while he may be found. Call to him while he proves to be near. Let the wicked man leave his way, and the harmful man his thoughts; and let him return to Jehovah, who will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will forgive in a large way." (Isa. 55:6, 7)

Clearly, the prophecies of Isaiah measure up to the requirements of (1) turning individuals to pure worship and (2) having been spoken in Jehovah's name.

But what about the fulfillment—(3) the coming true of what was foretold? Someone might say, 'We still do not see "new heavens and a new earth." ' It should be noted, however, that there was an early fulfillment of this prophecy that can be verified historically.

Because the Israelites refused to heed the call to repentance that was repeatedly voiced through their prophets, Jehovah God abandoned the disobedient people into the hands of their enemies. The capital city of Jerusalem and the land of Judah were desolated when the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar completed their conquest. Archaeological evidence confirms this fact. Says the book *The Archaeology of Palestine,* by W. F. Albright: "There is not a single known case where a town of Judah proper was continuously occupied through the exilic period. Just to point the contrast, Bethel, which lay just outside the northern boundary of Judah in pre-exilic times, was not destroyed at that time, but was continuously occupied down into the latter part of the sixth century." (P. 142) While the land lay in a ruined state, many Jews were in Babylonian exile.

There was little hope that the Jewish exiles would be able to return to their

"Render judgment for the fatherless boy; plead the cause of the widow."—Isa. 1:17.

homeland. It was against the policy of the Babylonian monarchs to permit this. (Isa. 14:16, 17) Still the prophecy of Isaiah had decreed that a ruler by the name of Cyrus would authorize the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the repopulating of the land of Judah. (Isa. 44:25–45:2) But this was not to happen until the completion of a period of 70 years from the beginning of "the devastations of Jerusalem" at the hands of the Babylonians in 607 B.C.E.—Dan. 9:2.

The turning point came on the night of October 5/6, 539 B.C.E., 68 years after the start of Judah's 70-year servitude to Babylon. (Jer. 25:9-11) Feeling secure within well-fortified Babylon, the inhabitants engaged in riotous feasting. They were oblivious to the fact that the level of the Euphrates that coursed through the middle of the city was dropping rapidly. The river had been diverted by the besieging forces under the command of Cyrus the Persian. When the Medes and the Persians marched down the riverbed, they gained easy access to Babylon through the gates along the river. Quickly passing through the streets and slaying any who offered resistance, the invaders captured the palace and killed the resident ruler Belshazzar. Thus in one night, with hardly a struggle, mighty Babylon fell.

How does all of this relate to the promise of "new heavens and a new earth"? There is a direct relationship. After introducing the promise of "new heavens and a new earth," the word of Jehovah through Isaiah continues: "Exult, you people, and be joyful forever in what I am creating. For here I am creating Jerusalem a cause for joyfulness and her people a cause for exultation. And I will be joyful in Jerusalem and exult in my people; and no more will there be heard in her the sound of weeping or the sound of a plaintive cry."—Isa. 65:17-19.

Following the return of the exiles to the land of Judah and the completion of the rebuilding work, Jerusalem did indeed become "a cause for joyfulness," ceasing to be a site of mournful desolation. The sound of weeping resulting from the calamities of war that had resounded in the streets of that city decades earlier was heard no more. In 537 B.C.E., when the land began to be repopulated with repatriated Israelites and their domestic animals, a "new earth" came into existence. Over this "earth" of repatriated Israelites, a "new heavens" ruled, for, through Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua, Jehovah God directed and supervised the returned exiles.—Isa. 51:16; Hag. 1:1, 14.

In view of this fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, we can say that it is of divine origin, meeting all three requirements of

genuine prophecy. Because the source of the message is the eternal God, Jehovah, we can rest assured that the restated promise of "new heavens and a new earth" will have a grand fulfillment.

FULFILLMENT OF RESTATED PROMISE

Manifestly, as long as the present system of things continues, we cannot expect righteousness to prevail among humankind. Hence, the present system must come to its end. This will take place when Jehovah God, by means of his Son, acts against all who persist in a course that threatens the peace and happiness of the human family. The fact that this great day of executional judgment has not yet arrived should not be misinterpreted, for the passing of time has served a beneficial purpose. Commenting on this, the apostle Peter wrote: "Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise, as some people consider slowness, but he is patient with you because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance."—2 Pet. 3:9, 10; 2 Thess. 1:6-10.

In Coming Issues

- **Coming—A World Without Pain**
- **Baptism—An Expression of Faith**
- **A Willing Response**

Wisely, none of us would want to presume on God's patience. The day of reckoning is drawing ever closer. For that event to find anyone in a disapproved state before the Creator would spell disaster. That is why Jesus Christ gave this warning: "Pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare. For it will come in upon all those dwelling upon the face of all the earth. Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication that you may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur, and in standing before the Son of man." —Luke 21:34-36.

Those who stand as approved will next witness the fulfillment of these words: "[God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away." (Rev. 21:4) What grand relief this will mean for humankind! All sadness over injustices, suffering and oppression will then be unknown. Distressing pain will be a thing of the past. No more will death claim our loved ones. Peace will reign everywhere. All persons will be motivated by genuine love in attitude, word and action.

Not even those who have died will miss out on the fulfillment of God's promise. Why not? The Bible answers: "There is going to be a resurrection." (Acts 24:15) Jesus Christ's having been raised from the dead—a fact to which there were upward of 500 witnesses—provides the basis for this hope.—1 Cor. 15:3-6, 13, 16.

Surely, it is the best of news that God's promise of "new heavens and a new earth" is rapidly moving toward its fulfillment. Hence, there is a vital need for us to seek an approved standing before our Creator. This is what the apostle Peter urged his fellow believers to do, saying: "Since you are awaiting these things, do your utmost to be found finally by him spotless and unblemished and in peace." (2 Pet. 3:14) Is this what you are striving to do?

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

Jesus' Unfaithful "Ground Crew"

● A long-playing record now on sale in the Federal Republic of Germany contains a protest song directed against today's religious leaders. Prof. Helmut Thielicke, a German theologian, recently wrote an article about this song, explaining the singer's protest as follows: "He has in mind what Jesus wanted and compares this with what his clerical ground crew has allowed it to become. If Jesus were to return to our earth and see the damage his people have done in his name, he would be unable to recognize himself in their undertakings. He would be overcome with anger, disappointment and sadness." While agreeing with many of these statements, Thielicke concludes that the essence of the message is: 'Do not confuse Jesus of Nazareth with his ground crew.'

But why should the 'ground crew's' teachings and actions be so out of line with those of its Master? Jesus, whose followers the religious clergy of Christendom claim to be, once said: "Everyone that is perfectly instructed will be like his teacher." (Luke 6:40) Evidently they have not allowed themselves to be "perfectly instructed" by the One whom they call their Lord.—Matt. 7:21-23.

A Rebuilt Babylon?

● The government of Iraq has made plans to restore the ancient city of Babylon. It intends to spend about $6 million (U.S.) a year on a 10-year project to preserve and restore as many of the ruins as possible. Iraq has asked Japanese experts from Kyoto University to submit proposals on the project, including the "reconstruction" of the Tower of Babel. It is believed that the tower was at least 300 feet (91 m) in height and that it was a ziggurat or terraced pyramid used for religious worship. "All that exists now is grass and swamp on the tower site," said one of the Japanese experts. In fact, Babylon is nothing but a ruin and its famed Procession Street "looks like the overgrown driveway of an untended European castle."

Why did Babylon become such a forbidding ruin? Because of the people's wickedness and ardent false religious worship, the God of heaven declared that Babylon would "become piles of stones" and that it "will never be inhabited." (Jer. 51:37; Isa. 13:20) Does the current work of restoring Babylon mean that it is going to be inhabited? No, Iraq wants to create a "museum city," in effect, a dead city—one only for tourists, not a residential area. Even if such a project is completed, a visit to Babylon would be like a visit to a museum, and a tourist could see with his own eyes the fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

An "Insidious Motif"?

● During a visit to Australia, noted violinist Yehudi Menuhin commented on music's hidden power, saying: "Music, of course, is very therapeutic. It releases all the pressures, but it can also build them. As a musician I have to listen to music . . . and I don't like what is happening to a great deal of it today. I feel it is being manipulated towards violence. In so much there is a theme—no, not theme, theme is too strong—an insidious motif that is like the twisted speeches of demagogues. It pounds away not at the conscious level of the mind, but at the level below that. I don't know why it is there, why it has been put there; just that it is there."

Others, too, have noticed the subconscious effects of music. One scientific study revealed that certain musical rhythms affect the heart, arterial rhythms and brain synchronisms. Another report detailed the use of music in stores to increase impulse purchases. And, after 11 young men and women died at a rock concert in Cincinnati on December 3, 1979, an article in the New York "Times" questioned the influence of the music and reached this conclusion: "There is something inherently violent about rock music."

Music motivates, for good or for bad. So use discernment when you listen to music. Guard against being victimized by an "insidious motif." The apostle Paul said: "Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons."—Eph. 5:15.

RWANDA—Where Jehovah's Patience Has Not Been in Vain

YELLOW-CRESTED cranes are having their morning meal among papyrus reeds along the meandering Niabarongo headwaters of the mighty Nile. Nearby, banana groves shelter a few small shops that line a stony road. Cassava, maize, coffee, beans and other crops decorate the steep slopes, interrupted by small scattered homesteads. Built of hardened clay bricks and covered with red roof tiles, the houses are quite attractive with their walls plastered white or yellow.

On the green hillsides, women dressed in red diligently work the fields, while a few goats and long-horned cattle can be seen on small pastures. At an altitude of about 1,600 meters (5,250 ft.) above sea level, the fresh air is invigorating. In the distance, partly enwrapped by white clouds, the 4,000-meter (13,000-foot) peaks of the volcanic Virunga chain crown the peaceful setting.

This is Rwanda, where Jehovah's patience has not been exercised in vain. On one of the many small footpaths, still a bit slippery after the night's rains, over a half-dozen adults and youngsters are walking along. It is Saturday morning, and they are on a 25-kilometer (16-mile) journey to Kigali, Rwanda's capital. There they plan to attend weekly Christian meetings and to benefit from personal Bible studies. Their interest in Scriptural truth had been aroused by a young woman from their area, after she had been contacted with the Kingdom message in Kigali. They are among individuals in Rwanda appreciating Jehovah's patience in these "last days." —2 Pet. 3:9; 2 Tim. 3:1.

A LATE START

True Christianity came to Rwanda at a very late date. A small country, covering only 26,338 square kilometers (10,169 square miles), Rwanda is landlocked in the heart of Africa. Its populace of over 4.5 million make use of nearly every available piece of land on its thousands of green hills. Until recently, under heavy domination by a few of Christendom's religious organizations, the people came to know spiritual famine. (Amos 8:11) In 1971, however, three foreign Kingdom proclaimers began their work here, concentrating their efforts mainly on the limited Swahili-speaking population. By 1974 their number had grown to 14, but very few Rwandese were among them. Since about that time, greater religious freedom has prevailed in Rwanda, and several witnesses of Jehovah speaking Rwanda's popular language, Kinyarwanda, have joined their ranks.

Among them was one family man who, like many Rwandese, was working for the copper mines in Shaba (formerly Katanga) in southern Zaïre. This man had searched for the truth and finally found it at the end of the 1960's. As others moved away, he had opportunities to share in congregational responsibilities and thus rapidly acquired the experience needed to be a helpful spiritual shepherd. Yet, his thoughts and prayers often turned toward Rwanda, his distant homeland where hardly anyone was hearing the "good news." Soon afterward, the instructor of a special course provided for Christian overseers encouraged him to

enter the full-time preaching work in his home country. This possibility made his heart rejoice, so that neither a recent job promotion nor discouragement from relatives could hold him back. Jehovah's hand was evident to him and his wife, as the necessary paperwork was completed in an amazingly short time and the company he worked for provided airplane tickets to Rwanda. His experience in the disciple-making work has proved to be a real stimulus to the activity here, along with the hard work of other zealous Witnesses. —Matt. 28:19, 20.

JEHOVAH'S PATIENCE APPRECIATED

Many of Rwanda's new Kingdom proclaimers once were devout members of other religions. Now they show great appreciation for Jehovah's patience, rapidly progressing and diligently proclaiming the "good news," often as full-time evangelizers. A few examples will illustrate this.

A Pentecostal evangelist felt pity for the young special pioneer publisher in his town and decided to "straighten him out." But the discussion that followed had quite the opposite effect. The evangelist confronted his priest with 18 doctrinal questions, but that clergyman could not answer them properly. When the evangelist began studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, there were threats to kill him, as well as other forms of opposition. His wife wanted a divorce and cooperated with his enemies, but her position changed one day. As she was listening from the "prayer room" in the house while the Bible study was being conducted, she heard the Witnesses counsel her husband against beating her. Imagine the husband's surprise one day when he found

her witnessing to the priest! Not only were husband and wife united as true worshipers, but also five other family members took advantage of Jehovah's patience.

One of these relatives was a capable young man sent by the church to "save" his uncle. After a five-hour discussion with the Witness who conducted the Bible study with the former evangelist, however, this nephew secretly arranged for a personal Bible study to be held *every day,* under the condition that his uncle would not be informed of this. But this secrecy ended when his uncle dropped in during a study. How delighted he was that his nephew was studying! After their Christian baptism, both this man and his nephew promptly became auxiliary pioneers and soon thereafter, regular pioneers (full-time Kingdom publishers). Since then they have moved to a rather isolated area, where some of their relatives and others have proved to be very receptive to the "good news." What a joy for them to see a new congregation formed there, with over 30 persons regularly attending meetings!

In another case, a primary-school teacher heard that a certain man in town was denying the Trinity doctrine. His curiosity aroused, the teacher endeavored to meet the man, and a discussion with him led to a Bible study. Four months later, the schoolteacher had discerned that he had been part of a world system of false religion, from which he promptly broke away, followed by two other members of his family.—Rev. 18:4.

When this man was baptized as a witness of Jehovah, his former church sent letters all over the country warning its "flocks" against him. But appreciation for his relationship with God moved him to become an auxiliary pioneer right after his baptism, followed by regular pioneer service soon afterward. This entailed another drastic change in his life. He had to give up his well-respected teaching position and return to a much simpler life as a farmer. Since Rwanda is very densely populated and about 97 percent of its inhabitants engage in farming, secular employment is scarce and very much treasured. But this young man found greater happiness than ever before, including the joy of seeing several of his Bible students baptized.

Another teacher, living half a day's journey from the nearest town, heard the message of truth when visiting Rwanda's university town. Because of his isolation and the high transportation expense, a Bible study had to be conducted by mail, enriched by only two personal visits over the months. But this was sufficient to move him to tell the "good news" to neighbors, friends and some of his students. In time, his wife accepted this hope as well.

Soon this man was faced with an ultimatum: Stop preaching or lose your job. His decision was clear; he would continue telling others about God's kingdom. Some warned him that he would be short of bread. However, not only have his family life and physical health improved, but he is also faring better spiritually. Others among his relatives have become subjects of God's kingdom, along with several of his former students. And with the help of a special pioneer, a new congregation has recently come into existence in that area. Looking back, one can see the great value of Bible study by correspondence where personal visits may not be possible.

OBSTACLES OVERCOME

Religious entanglements, general opposition, employment difficulties and isolation have been overcome by many who have embraced true Christianity in Rwanda. Other problems surmounted have included immorality, strongly entrenched tobacco habits and heavy drinking. Trib-

alism is still another obstacle that Christians have had to conquer.

Then, too, there are ancestor worship and related rituals. A traditional *rugo* (an oval-shaped homestead surrounded by a hedge) contains a small hut specifically built for dead ancestors. Many persons are still offering sacrifices in which blood and beer play a role. More pronounced manifestations of spirit worship are evident in cases of death, sickness and material problems. Naturally, such practices are abandoned by those taking up the pure worship of Jehovah.

For example, a young family man broke free from witchcraft. An ardent student of witchcraft, he had almost reached the state of being a sorcerer himself. About half of his monthly earnings would go for leopard skins, lions' teeth, elephant hair, potions and many other items associated with witchcraft. Even on his wedding day he devotedly invoked the spirits. Yet sicknesses pursued him and later also his wife.

After a brief initial contact with Jehovah's Witnesses, this man's wife was impressed by seeing the name "Jehovah" at Jeremiah 16:21 in her Kinyarwanda Bible and so invited the Witnesses to their home. Interest was aroused, and one day this couple attended a Christian meeting at which a talk was given regarding spiritism and the condition of the dead. This information touched the man profoundly. He went home, gathered all his items connected with spirit worship—paraphernalia worth over $250 (U.S.)—and burned these articles, a job that took him three and a half hours. (Compare Acts 19:18, 19.) How surprised this couple was to see that their health thereafter improved rapidly! On another day, a woman visited them and, after hearing the "good news," felt freed from years of spirit domination. In turn, she began studying the Bible and attending Christian meetings together with her husband. Meanwhile, our young family man has made other necessary changes in his life and has symbolized his dedication to Jehovah, who has shown him such patience and mercy.

A SELF-SACRIFICING SPIRIT

It is heartwarming to note the spirit of diligence, appreciation and willingness to make sacrifices that is evident among these who only recently began to taste of Jehovah's loving-kindness. One man had only enough money to pay half a one-way fare to a circuit assembly. So he started walking. After about 65 kilometers (40 miles) on foot, he reached the halfway mark and obtained transportation to the assembly. How happy he was to be there!

Even when means of transport are available, often the vehicles do not provide much comfort. A person may have to ride in the back of a truck or on top of such cargo as charcoal, firewood, sugar or bottled drinks. Drivers generally make sure that all space is utilized, crowding up to 50 persons on the back of a small open truck—for a price, of course! Add to this the constant bouncing on stony roads, as well as occasional rains, and you can visualize what traveling, in many cases, is like. But Christians have made such journeys uncomplainingly in order to find much joy and refreshment at their circuit assemblies.

Traveling from Rwanda to the 1979 international convention in Nairobi, Kenya, was extremely difficult. The 29 assembly delegates—adults and children alike—were detained for the greater part of a day by soldiers in Uganda, then ruled by Idi Amin. Eventually reaching Nairobi, however, these conventioners greatly appreciated attending a spiritually rewarding assembly with fellow believers from 28 countries.

Appreciation for the light of truth and

Jehovah's undeserved kindness also is evident in the "pioneer" spirit of many Kingdom publishers in Rwanda. On the average, each publisher who is not in the full-time preaching work is spending between 20 and 25 hours monthly telling others the "good news" and conducting over one weekly Bible study with interested persons. And repeatedly it has happened that a new publisher has reported over 50 hours of evangelizing activity and three, four or even five Bible studies with others during a month!

But much Kingdom-preaching work remains to be done in this small, beautiful African land. Flying over Rwanda, a person sees numerous scattered homesteads. Apart from the well-watered plains of the Akagera National Park in the east, many people live along this country's marshy riverbanks, on the rounded hilltops, near the green tea plantations, at the edges of the mountainous rain forest, on the many peninsulas of the scenic lakes and on the steep hillsides, even reaching up to the domain of the mountain gorilla on the forested slopes of the Virunga volcanoes. Efforts are being made to reach as many of these people as possible, both through visits in the more accessible homes and by meeting with them on market days.

Jehovah's Witnesses here are grateful for God's patience and for their opportunities to aid still others to take advantage of it. Divine patience can indeed be 'considered as salvation' for many, as is evident by a happy throng of worshipers of Jehovah in Rwanda.—2 Pet. 3:15.

Beware of Imputing Wrong Motives to Others

"TELL me. Why didn't you greet me on the street the other day? What have you got against me?"

"We met? No, I can't remember that!"

"That's impossible! We passed and you even looked into my eyes, but didn't greet me! What have you got against me?"

Did you ever experience or witness a situation such as this true-life incident? Perhaps you have seen an even more serious instance when wrong motives were imputed to someone. Unfounded suspicion and distrust are not pleasing to God. This is evident from the devastating results to which these traits can lead. Consider what occurred in Biblical times with the nation of Israel.

After the conquest of the Promised Land, two and a half Israelite tribes took possession of their assigned territories on the other side of the Jordan River. There they built an altar, not for the making of offerings and sacrifices but to serve as a witness that they and their descendants had not abandoned true worship. But the other tribes imputed wrong motives, suspecting these Israelites of falling away from Jehovah's worship, and therefore decided to wage war against them. Happily, the situation was clarified and the contemplated military action was not taken.—Josh. chap. 22.

King David once sent his servants to comfort King Hanun of Ammon over the death of his father. But the Ammonites wrongly suspected David of having sent

the men to act as spies, and therefore greatly humiliated them. This even led to war, in which the Ammonites and Syrians suffered a great defeat. What disastrous consequences for imputing wrong motives! —2 Sam. chap. 10.

WHEN NOBLE MOTIVES ARE QUESTIONED

On various occasions, in the days of the early Christians, wrong motives were imputed to persons. For instance, this happened to the apostle Paul. Therefore, he felt impelled to write: "I did not burden you down. Nevertheless, you say, I was 'crafty' and I caught you 'by trickery.'" Yes, certain fellow believers in Corinth wrongly argued that Paul was not acting out of love. They improperly imputed wrong motives to that faithful apostle. —2 Cor. 12:16.

An outstanding example is found in the case of God's Son. He came to the earth with the noblest of motives, continuously endeavoring to honor and vindicate Jehovah God. Nevertheless, he was falsely accused of blasphemy. (Matt. 26:64, 65) Catastrophic results were experienced by those who purposely imputed wrong motives to God's Son, becoming guilty of his murder and of endeavoring to block the way of salvation for many people.—Matt. 23:29-39.

Wrong motives have been imputed even to Jehovah God. Satan and his demons maintain that God does not rule out of love. Rather, the Devil contends that Jehovah egotistically withholds something good from humans in setting moral and ethical boundaries for them. Moreover, Satan holds that God "buys" obedience. (Job 2:3-5) In a similar manner, the noble motives of God's servants are questioned by Satan. Why, the Devil 'has accused them day and night before our God!' (Rev. 12:10) Certainly, godly individuals would never want to emulate Satan in unjustly imputing wrong motives to others.

GUARD AGAINST MISCONCEPTIONS

What can Christians learn from the Bible record? For one thing, it is possible to misunderstand the attitude and motives of others. The Ammonites did so when David sent men to comfort King Hanun.

Today, an individual may be shy and retiring. Perhaps he also has a stern facial expression. Others might wrongly conclude that he is cold, proud and unloving, although that may not be the case at all.

Sometimes people incorrectly impute laziness to others. But the one they consider lazy may be doing his utmost. Because of some physical weakness or health problem, he may not be able to do more or to work faster. So it is good to realize that, for many reasons, not all persons are equally productive or efficient.

At times, wrong motives have been imputed to those who have simply been trying to show loving consideration for others. For instance, in a certain office several persons take turns answering the telephone even after regular working hours. They need not sit right at the phone waiting for a call, but may do something else in a room nearby. One day, a responsible individual not on duty was right at the telephone when a call came in. Considerately, he answered it so that the person then on duty would not have to interrupt activity in a nearby room. Unfortunately, however, the one on duty imputed a wrong motive instead of thanking the thoughtful individual for his loving assistance. A minor matter? Yes, but it illustrates the need to guard against misconceptions in assessing the attitudes and motives of others.

GIVING OTHERS THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT

Seeing the sad consequences of imputing wrong motives to others, we certainly want to refrain from doing this. Christians are wise to give others the benefit of the doubt. This is in harmony with the divine principle expressed by the apostle Paul, who said that love "believes all things." (1 Cor. 13:7) Adherence to this principle certainly means trusting a fellow Christian in cases of doubt, instead of being unduly suspicious of him.

Getting better acquainted with others may help us to avoid imputing wrong motives to them. Sometimes this takes months, or even years. But in many cases, the more information we have, the less we are in danger of imputing wrong motives to others.

WHEN OUR MOTIVES ARE QUESTIONED

But what if we are the ones to whom wrong motives are being imputed? How should we react? It is good not to take offense, for Ecclesiastes 7:9 says: "Do not hurry yourself in your spirit to become offended." In the course of time, the other person may get to know you better and may correct his view. Upon appreciating that he was mistaken, he will love you all the more, especially if you did not react in anger. Certainly, Christians want to imitate God, who exercises self-control in the face of accusations. Also, Jehovah knows our motives, and he will comfort us. We will find joy if we continue to "trust in Jehovah and do good." If he wants to vindicate us in some matter, he can do so at the proper time.—Ps. 37: 3-8; Acts 15:8; 2 Cor. 7:6.

An especially difficult situation exists when a person gets counsel from someone who misjudges his motives. Whatever might be said in defense may be viewed as self-justification. In reality, however, the counsel may not apply because not all factors have been taken into consideration. Still, some well-meaning counselors may tend to question your motives if you try to point out the real situation. Hence, if the point in question is of little importance, you may choose not to say anything further to correct the counselor's view, provided that no harmful results are to be expected from remaining silent. But it is not always required that you

simply say nothing if your position or motives have been misunderstood. Obviously, it would be morally wrong to allow a lie to stand unchallenged. There are instances when it is appropriate to explain your position or attitude calmly, so that your conscience is at ease because you know that at least you made an effort to clarify matters instead of being guilty of weakly admitting to a false charge. Thereby the counselor may benefit, too, especially as regards developing balance in the giving of counsel.

A German proverb says, "If one lies once, one does not believe him anymore, even if he speaks the truth." But this should not be so among Christians. If a person commits an error that becomes known to others, and a later development reminds some individuals of this past mistake, should they not be suspicious of this formerly erring person? Not necessarily, for love is not quick to judge a person. If we, although innocent, would be suspected of something just because we did that sort of thing in the past, would we not be distressed about the distrust shown toward us? Of course we would, for under the influence of God's holy spirit, people have made tremendous changes for the better. It is also good to remember that "love . . . does not keep account of the injury."—1 Cor. 6:9-11; 13:4, 5.

A NEED FOR CAUTION AND BALANCE

As we strive to follow the principle of not unjustly imputing wrong motives to others and of keeping balanced if our own intentions are misunderstood, we should remember that there is a need for caution. For instance, when Christians live under a regime that persecutes God's true servants, certain officials may resort to trickery to get them to betray fellow believers. In such cases, how could a person believe every statement or promise made by the persecutors? The following principle of God's Word applies to such a situation: "Anyone inexperienced puts faith in every word, but the shrewd one considers his steps." And Jesus Christ told his followers to be "cautious as serpents." —Prov. 14:15; Matt. 10:16.

However, Christians should trust and believe fellow worshipers of God so long as there is no definite evidence of disloyalty. We do well to recall the inspired words: "Who are you to judge the house servant of another?" "One there is that is lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But you, who are you to be judging your neighbor?"—Rom. 14: 4; Jas. 4:12.

Do you recall the case mentioned at the outset? One individual had imputed wrong motives to another who had failed to greet her. Well, in later conversation it was found that the man had just been lost in thought and had not recognized the woman. That was the only reason that he had not said hello. It was good that this woman spoke with the man about her impression and did not hold a grudge against him while at the same time not disclosing her thoughts. But an even better solution to this problem would have been to assume from the very beginning that the other person had merely overlooked her.

There is, indeed, a need for balance in evaluating the motives of others. Happily, there will be a time when no one on earth will be suspicious of the words or actions of fellow humans. Eventually, this will be the case in the new system of things under Kingdom rule. Everyone then will show love and will see the good qualities of others. No more will there be causes of offense, heartache, bitterness or discouragement. Until then, we should beware of unjustly imputing wrong motives to others.

"Hope that the creation itself also will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God."
—Rom. 8:20, 21.

HOPE for mankind seems baseless! Not a few people think so.

[2] Yet there are others who "hope against hope." That is, they keep hoping without any basis for expecting fulfillment. However, we are those who hope with solid basis for expecting the realization of our glorious hope. In this we resemble a man of ancient times.

[3] That man was an Oriental named Abraham, who first lived in what is now called Iraq. Believing in a special hope set before him, he moved to the neighborhood of the town called Beer-sheba, to the north of the Sinai Peninsula. In Abraham's case, the hope for certain nations became bound up with the birth of a baby boy by his wife Sarah. Ninety-nine years of life piled up on him, and 89 on his wife. Ordinarily, extreme old age should have shattered their hopes for the birth of a son. But Abraham had been given the promise by a Person who never fails his promise, namely, his God, Jehovah. What, then, did Abraham do? He held fast to his God-given hope. The historical record in the Bible says: "Although beyond hope, yet based on hope he had faith, that he might become the father of many nations in accord with what had been said [by God]: 'So your seed will be.'" (Rom. 4:18) Abraham's hope was not disappointed, for, by a mir-

1, 2. How do we differ from worldly people who are hoping "against hope" in behalf of the human creation?
3. In this respect, whom do we resemble, and how was the rightly based hope of that ancient patriarch realized?

acle, he had his son Isaac by his wife Sarah. From this birth, nations resulted!

[4] Today all human creation is bound up with a God-given hope! It refers, not just to earth's present living population, but to all human creation back to the direct offspring of the first man on earth, Adam. To the credit of his Creator, this first man was brought into existence absolutely perfect in body and mind. He was put in a perfect earthly home, the garden of Eden, with all the provisions for sustaining perfect human life in happiness. His Creator, his heavenly Father, became his companion, speaking to him regularly out of the invisible realm. Besides this, with all the land animals, birds and fish around him in the garden of Eden, Adam had plenty to keep him from becoming lonely. But why had Adam's heavenly Father put him in this delightful Paradise? To be a lone ranging forester or a gardener? How long was he meant to live and enjoy all this goodness at the hands of his Life-Giver?

[5] Adam was given to understand that this all depended upon him! With his perfect memory, Adam could never forget the advice that his heavenly Father gave him: "From every tree of the garden you may eat to satisfaction. But as for the tree of the knowledge of good and bad you must not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will positively die."—Gen. 2: 16, 17.

[6] That divine command opened up the way for Adam to live forever, if that was the will of God for him. As the record later shows, Adam did live for 930 years, but he could have lived indefinitely longer. He became responsible for our dying off today. As all of us should realize, that first man on earth had an offspring; otherwise, we should not be here. But it was not by this unhuman way of reproduction that scientific experimenters of today call sexless cloning, as in the case of some plants. Rather, as in the case of birds and land animals, God created for him a female counterpart, a wife, taking a rib from Adam's side to start off the creation of her. On marrying the first man to the first woman on earth, God set before them the hope of endless life on the paradise earth. He blessed them and told them to reproduce their kind in order to fill all the earth, over which their paradise would be extended.—Gen. 2:18-24; 1:26-28.

[7] The outlook for all mankind was then most hopeful. Adam and Eve never expected to see their offspring "groaning together and being in pain together" due to the physical, moral and social condition in which we find ourselves today. Disobediently eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and bad might have seemed like a tiny thing in itself, but that is what became responsible for the present condition. By sinfully eating, first Eve and then Adam dashed their God-given hope to pieces, while they were still childless. Unless God stepped in somehow, we today would be subject to complete hopelessness. True, a serpent in Eden did get involved

4. (a) With what is all human creation bound up, not only with respect to the present living population but to how far back? (b) What questions arise with respect to the first man when ranging alone in his earthly home?

5. Upon what individual did the answers to those questions depend, and what pertinent advice could perfect Adam keep in mind?

6. What did that divine command open up for mankind, and how were Adam's descendants to come into existence?

7. What state of human affairs did Adam and Eve not expect to come into operation, and why should blame for the course of human affairs not be placed on the serpent?

in the course of affairs, but let us not blame it all on that reptile. Instead, the Bible points us to the unseen spirit manipulator behind the serpent. Who was he? A heavenly angel, who was determined to turn Adam and Eve away from making Jehovah God their hope.

[8] That rebellious schemer who spoke through the serpent deceived Eve into trying to make herself like God. As such, she would build her own self-chosen hope. Till then her husband, Adam, had been God's prophet to her. Adam had acted as God's mouthpiece in telling her about God's command not to eat the forbidden fruit. But after aiming at making herself a goddess by eating the forbidden fruit, she acted as a prophetess for the serpent by using her beautiful voice in inducing Adam to join her in lawlessness. At last, for God-dishonoring reasons, Adam 'listened to the voice of his wife,' the false prophetess. (Gen. 3:17) Hence, Jehovah God pronounced a just sentence of death upon his unfaithful prophet, Adam. Eve, Adam's wife, came under that sentence. Now as good as dead, they were driven out of the garden of Eden, to live out the rest of their days in the uncultivated earth. All of us, as yet unborn in the reproductive organs of Adam and Eve, were driven out with them.

[9] No outlook different from what was set forth in God's command to Adam was held out for those original willful lawbreakers, Adam and Eve. Rightly, no hope was set before them, because they had thrown overboard their original God-given hope. But was the case left hopeless for all of us, their unresponsible offspring? Happily for us, No!

8. What was Eve misled into doing, and why do we today not find ourselves in the original garden of Eden?
9. Was any hope different from what was set out in God's command to Adam held out to the two willful human sinners, and how was the case left with regard to us their offspring?

A GOD-GIVEN HOPE OFFERED

[10] Words of hope were not addressed to Adam and Eve personally; they merely overheard them. God's words that contained a basis for our having hope were addressed to the rebellious spirit who had trickily used the serpent in inducing Eve to become a successful prophetess for him. That one was stigmatized with the name Satan the Devil. Because of his initiating the course of slyness and trickiness for the purpose of deceiving, even by means of a serpent in Eden, he was also called "the original serpent." (Rev. 12:9; 20:2) This self-deifying spirit creature, who became the first to lie against God and to woman, was the first to get a judicial decision from God at Eden. Upon him God pronounced his curse and then foretold a fight in which "the original serpent" and those taking his side in the conflict would suffer defeat.

[11] To "the original serpent" God said: "And I shall put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise you in the head and you will bruise him in the heel." (Gen. 3:14, 15) This meant annihilation for "the original serpent" and his offspring. But did this judicial decision of God afford any grounds for hope in behalf of the future offspring of Adam and Eve? No, not directly, but only by inference or implication.

[12] Aha! a woman is brought into the case. Who was she to be? She had to be one who would display enmity, hatred, for "the original serpent" and his offspring. Eve, who had made herself a false prophetess for "the original serpent," could not

10. Who was first to be sentenced there in Eden, what did that one come to be called, and how was this one to fare in the foretold conflict?
11. How did the wording of the sentence upon "the original serpent" allow for any hope respecting Adam and Eve's offspring?
12. God's words to Satan brought what kind of "woman" into the case, and why could Mary the mother of Jesus Christ not measure up to being that "woman"?

be suitable. She had been persuaded to believe that Jehovah God was a liar. Even Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, could not prove suitable. Four thousand years would pass before this Jewish girl would be born as a descendant of Abraham and under the Jewish Law code. Her firstborn son, Jesus, lived on earth for only 33½ years. When his earthly mother saw what "the original serpent" had caused to be done to this miraculously given son at Calvary, she had lived the better part of her life. So she herself could have exercised enmity toward "the original serpent" for only a few decades of life.

[13] Logically, the "woman" of God's prophecy would be one who was alive and was listening when God spoke to "the original serpent" in Eden. The symbolic "woman" would live on long after the death of Eve, yes, down till God's own time to have the "woman" bring forth the promised "seed," which proved to be more than 3,000 years after Eve's death. So, who could this symbolic "woman" be but God's own "woman," that is to say, his heavenly organization of holy spirit creatures who refused to join "the original serpent" in his rebellion? They respected God's marriage to his faithful universal organization and did not divorce themselves from him to join the organization that would marry "the original serpent." They were very pleased to have God put enmity between them and the organized "seed" of "the original serpent."

[14] At Eden, then, God set a motherly prospect before his wifelike heavenly organization. From then on she could hope to become mother to the "seed" of which her Husband, Jehovah God, would become the Father. To his "woman" the realization of this hope was worth awaiting for 4,000 years. She was willing to undergo whatever travailing in pain this might involve, just as in the case of the symbolic woman seen in the vision described by the Christian apostle John in Revelation 12:1-5. Motherhood is the normal desire of all adult women. So why not set motherhood before God's heavenly organizational "woman"? Fittingly, the hope of motherhood was imparted to God's "woman" before God mercifully let Eve, the wife of now sinful Adam, experience motherhood outside Eden. But it was not in the way of a blessing that God said to sinful Eve: "I shall greatly increase the pain of your pregnancy; in birth pangs you will bring forth children." (Genesis 3:16 as against 1:28) In passing on to their offspring information about God's prophecy concerning the "seed" of the "woman," Adam did not act as a prophet of God; neither did his wife, Eve, act as a prophetess of God. Whether Adam and Eve believed God's promise recorded in Genesis 3:15 or not, God did mean for their offspring to base a hope on that promise. Although Adam was created as a "son of God," we, his imperfect, sin-infected offspring, were not born into the sonship of Jehovah God. (Luke 3:38) Therefore, we do not naturally have the witness of God's holy spirit with our own human spirit that we are the children of God. However, is there any hope of our getting back into God's family of sons? Yes, there is!

[15] If the case had been hopeless for us, why did God let so many of us be born to Adam and Eve—well over 100 generations of their offspring till now? Today, after all the wars and other catastrophes besides sickness and natural death, there are more

13. Who or what only could prove to be the "woman" mentioned, and into what position was she pleased to be put toward the symbolic serpent and its offspring?
14. (a) So the expectation of what was set before God's "woman" along with what later experience of womankind? (b) Were we born into the relationship of children of God, and yet what hope is set before humankind?
15. What does the fact that today there are over 4,000 million of us humans still alive on earth indicate with respect to the case for mankind?

than 4,200 million of us alive, and it is predicted that by the year 2000 C.E. there will be 6,000 million humans on earth. Has this all been in vain? Evidently not!

[16] Of course, man cannot 'pull himself up by his own bootstraps.' Yet the case of the human creation is not hopeless, in spite of the unpromising look of things. This is not due to anything that man himself can do, but is solidly based on what God has already done and will yet do according to his unbreakable promise. Because God permitted some 70 generations to be born to Adam and Eve, it allowed for his Son from heaven to be born as the man Jesus Christ. On earth this Son of God carried out God's will for the benefit of all mankind. This marked a turning point in history for us humans!

HUMAN CREATION "SUBJECTED TO FUTILITY" WITH HOPE OF FREEDOM

[17] About 23 years after Jesus Christ finished his earthly course and ascended to heaven, the Christian apostle Paul wrote to the congregation in Rome, Italy, and said: "The eager expectation of the [human] creation is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not by its own will but through him that subjected it, on the basis of hope that the creation itself also will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God. For we know that all creation keeps on groaning together and being in pain together until now. Not only that, but we ourselves also who have the firstfruits, namely, the spirit, yes, we ourselves groan within ourselves, while we are earnestly waiting for adoption as sons, the release from our bodies by ransom. For we were saved in this hope."—Rom. 8:19-24.

[18] The One through whom the human creation was subjected to futility or frustration was God. We were not subjected to it by our own will, inasmuch as we did not will for ourselves to be born. God willed for us to be brought into existence, in spite of his sentencing Adam and Eve to death. (Gen. 3:16-24; 5:1-4) However, we were not born with the "glorious freedom" that Adam and Eve at first had in the garden of Eden as "children of God." We were born in "enslavement to corruption," under condemnation of all of Adam's offspring to death. (Rom. 5:12) Hence, we could not save ourselves. All our efforts at self-salvation were doomed to futility, frustration. Where have all the endeavors of man-made governments got us? Where have all the social, economic, financial, medical and scientific arrangements of aspiring mankind got us down to this very day? All of us are still undergoing mental, bodily and moral corruption. Also, it now appears as though a nuclear war with intercontinental ballistic missiles emerging from the seas and plunging down from the skies will mean an abrupt end to all of us. Can this be described as the "eager expectation" of groaning creation?

[19] However, man's Creator is not himself subject to futility or frustration. Corrupt mankind cannot frustrate the Creator's purpose. Hence, he himself is a hope for us. So he wants us to put our trust, not in ourselves, but in him. All of us he subjected to human incapability, in order that we might have no basis for pinning our hope on ourselves. As the only Source of hope, he subjected mankind to futility, but not on a

16. (a) Because of man's own helplessness, upon whose ability to perform does realization of creation's hope depend? (b) Whose birth and life on earth marked the turning point in human history?

17. In Romans 8:19-24, what did the apostle Paul write about the subjecting of mankind to vain self-effort and about creation's waiting for what with groanings?

18. (a) Who was it that subjected all human creation to futility, and how so? (b) Where have human institutions got us today, and is what is impending the same as the "eager expectation" of the groaning creation?

19. For what purpose did God subject fallen man to futility or frustration, but on the basis of what hope did he do this?

hopeless basis. Rather, as Romans 8:20, 21 says, "on the basis of hope that the creation itself also will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God."

[20] Today rulers of a certain political ideology classify their realm as being "the free world" in contrast with people under opposite rulerships. But, whatever be the claims of conflicting political groups, none of them have the "glorious freedom of the children of God." The God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ alone holds out the hope for the human family to be restored to the relationship that Adam and Eve had when he created them in Eden. But this restoration has to wait for a future action on God's part. What this is we learn in the apostle's words: "The eager expectation of the creation is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God." (Rom. 8:19) The apostle Paul, who penned those words in Romans 8:15-17, classified himself among those "sons of God."

[21] Those special "sons of God" are the seed of God's "woman," as spoken of in God's Edenic prophecy, at Genesis 3:15. The principal one of that "seed" of God's heavenly organization is Jesus Christ, the one whom God let "the original serpent" bruise in the heel at his death on the torture stake in the year 33 C.E. But God healed that heel wound by resurrecting his faithful Son on the third day of his death. By being resurrected as a heavenly spirit Son of God, not as a human Son, he could be received back by God's heavenly "woman." This one will, as Hebrews 2:14, 15 says, "bring to nothing the one having the means to cause death, that is, the Devil; and that he might emancipate all those who for fear of death were subject to slavery all through their lives."

[22] The secondary members of the "seed" of God's composite "woman" are the disciples of Jesus Christ, the ones who receive a begettal by God's spirit to become spiritual "sons of God" and joint heirs with their elder brother, Jesus Christ, in heaven.

[23] The apostle Peter speaks of their heavenly hope as a "living" one when he writes to them: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for according to his great mercy he gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an incorruptible and undefiled and unfading inheritance. It is reserved in the heavens for you." (1 Pet. 1:3, 4) This hope of theirs is still "living" today. It has not died out because of any seeming delay in its realization for the remnant of them yet on earth. They expect to see this hope realized shortly at the fixed time of their God and Father, Jehovah. The apostle Paul recalls to our minds Genesis 3:15, when he writes to the spirit-begotten congregation in Rome and says: "The God who gives peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly."—Rom. 16:20.

[24] The "revealing" of these "sons of God" along with the principal Son of God, Jesus Christ, in the near future, is what the "eager expectation of the [human] creation" is earnestly awaiting. But we expect soon before that event the "great tribulation" that the heavenly Father, Jehovah God, will let loose upon the opposers and persecutors who make tribulation for his spiritual sons and their loyal companions.—Rev. 7:14, 15; 2 Thess. 1:6-10.

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20. (a) Does the so-called "free world" enjoy the "glorious freedom of the children of God"? (b) The "eager expectation of the creation" waits for the revelation of what to be made?

21. Who is the principal one of those "sons of God," and how was his "heel" wound healed, with what purpose in view according to Hebrews 2:14, 15?

22. Who are the secondary members of the "seed" of God's "woman"?

23. According to 1 Peter 1:3, 4, to what kind of hope has God begotten the secondary members of the "seed," and is that hope still active at this late date?

24. The revealing of such "sons of God" is eagerly expected by whom, and after what event does this revelation take place?

Why Our Good Hopes Are Certain of Realization

"God makes all his works cooperate together for the good of those who love God."—Rom. 8:28.

IN OUR 20th century an increasing number of members of the human creation have become informed about the approaching "revealing of the sons of God," and they now know what to expect soon. Notwithstanding all the 'groaning and being in pain' to which the human creation has been subjected till now, these informed, expectant persons are rejoicing in hope. Despite the decades of time that have passed since this "great crowd" first began forming, their hope also is a live one. Like a "tree of life," it lives within their hearts, because it is founded on God's promise that is written on the pages of the Bible.—Prov. 13:12; Rev. 7:9; 21:5; Rom. 8:19-22.

[2] Above all, they hope for the early vindication of the universal sovereignty of Jehovah the Creator. They appreciate that he is righteous in his exercising sovereignty over all the universe of his creation. Hence, they are inflexibly against the "original serpent," Satan the Devil, who misjudges and misrepresents Jehovah's sovereignty and who has turned most of the human creation against it. They pray the Lord's Prayer to Jehovah and say: "Let your name be sanctified." (Matt. 6: 9, 10) Thus they pray for Jehovah himself to sanctify his name. He will answer this prayer during the impending "great tribulation," which will reach its climax in the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har–Magedon and which will be followed by the binding and abyssing of "the original serpent" and all those of his demon "seed."—Ezek. 36:23; 38:16, 23; 39:27; Rev. 16:14, 16; 20:1, 2.

[3] The "great crowd" of hopeful ones will survive to witness the vindicating of Jehovah's universal sovereignty and the sanctifying of his name. Quite appropriately, then, Revelation 7:9, 10 prophetically pictures them as afterward standing before the throne of the vindicated God and before his self-sacrificing Son, Jesus Christ, and gratefully saying: "Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb."

[4] In the present-day situation before the outbreak of the "great tribulation," when the world is paralyzed with fear, the "great crowd" do not fear what worldly people fear. Courageously they obey what the apostle Peter wrote: "Sanctify the Christ as Lord in your hearts, always ready to make a defense before everyone that demands of you a reason for the hope in you, but doing so together with a mild temper and deep respect."—1 Pet. 3:15.

[5] Unselfishly they are sharing their glorious hope with everyone within reach. Thus they are taking part in the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." It is now more urgent than ever

1. In our 20th century an increasing number of members of the groaning creation have come to be informed of what, and what is the state of their hope after all these decades, and why?
2. (a) The "great crowd" prays for the vindication of Jehovah God in what rightful position? (b) In praying, "Let your name be sanctified," for what action are they praying, and when will this be fulfilled?
3. According to Revelation 7:9, 10, the "great crowd" of hopeful ones will survive to witness what events?
4. Because the "great crowd" do not share the fears of worldly people, what do they do with a mild temper and deep respect before worldly authorities?
5. How are they taking part in the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 24:14, and what is their attitude toward Jesus' command in Matthew 28:19, 20?

before for them to heed Jesus' command: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them, . . . teaching them."—Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20.

[6] Nobody else has a Bible-founded hope like ours. It is the finest thing we can share with others. Our hope is a treasure over which to rejoice. "Rejoice in the hope," we are told. (Rom. 12:12) We can confidently expect its realization soon. Not in vain are we awaiting its realization with endurance. Earlier Christians merely looked forward to what we are about to realize. Greatly favored will we be by actually experiencing its grand realization.

GOD'S WORKS SURE TO COOPERATE FOR GOOD

[7] We are not hoping for too much to be realized, if it is written in God's Word. Nothing written will be impossible for him! He cannot fall short of his glorious promise, as he is the Almighty God. If we love him and prove it by our obedience, he will not fail to make all his good promise a glorious reality. Along with the apostle Paul of the first century C.E., we know this. In Romans 8:28-30, written about 56 C.E., Paul made this affirmation:

[8] "Now we know that God makes all his works cooperate together for the good of those who love God,* those who are the ones called according to his purpose; because those whom he gave his first recognition he also foreordained to be patterned after the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Moreover, those whom he foreordained are the ones he also called; and those whom he called are the ones he also declared to be righteous. Finally those whom he declared righteous are the ones he also glorified."

[9] In the King James Version of the Bible Romans 8:28 reads: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Quite a number of modern translations of this Bible verse read the same way. However, Byington's *The Bible in Living English* reads: "And we know that to those who love God, God gives all cooperation for good, to those who, as suited his purpose, are called." Rotherham's *The Emphasised Bible* reads: "We know further that unto them who love God God causeth all things to work together for good." Lattey's *The New Testament* reads: "And we know that for them that love God he worketh all things together for good."—See also Schonfield's *The Authentic New Testament*, p. 338, paragraph 2.

[10] All the things set out in Romans 8:28-30 are God's works, not man's. It is God's works that, according to the record, he makes cooperate together for the good of the called ones who love him, because he wants them to gain the Kingdom to which he has called them. But if anyone who claims to be a baptized Christian in line for the heavenly kingdom acts out of harmony with his heavenly calling, we cannot expect God to make such action work good for the offender, or even that his action will automatically work for his good. For instance, if a professed Christian with the heavenly calling engages too vigorously in a sport during his recreation and breaks a leg or fractures his ankle, does God make that injury work for the sportsman's good?

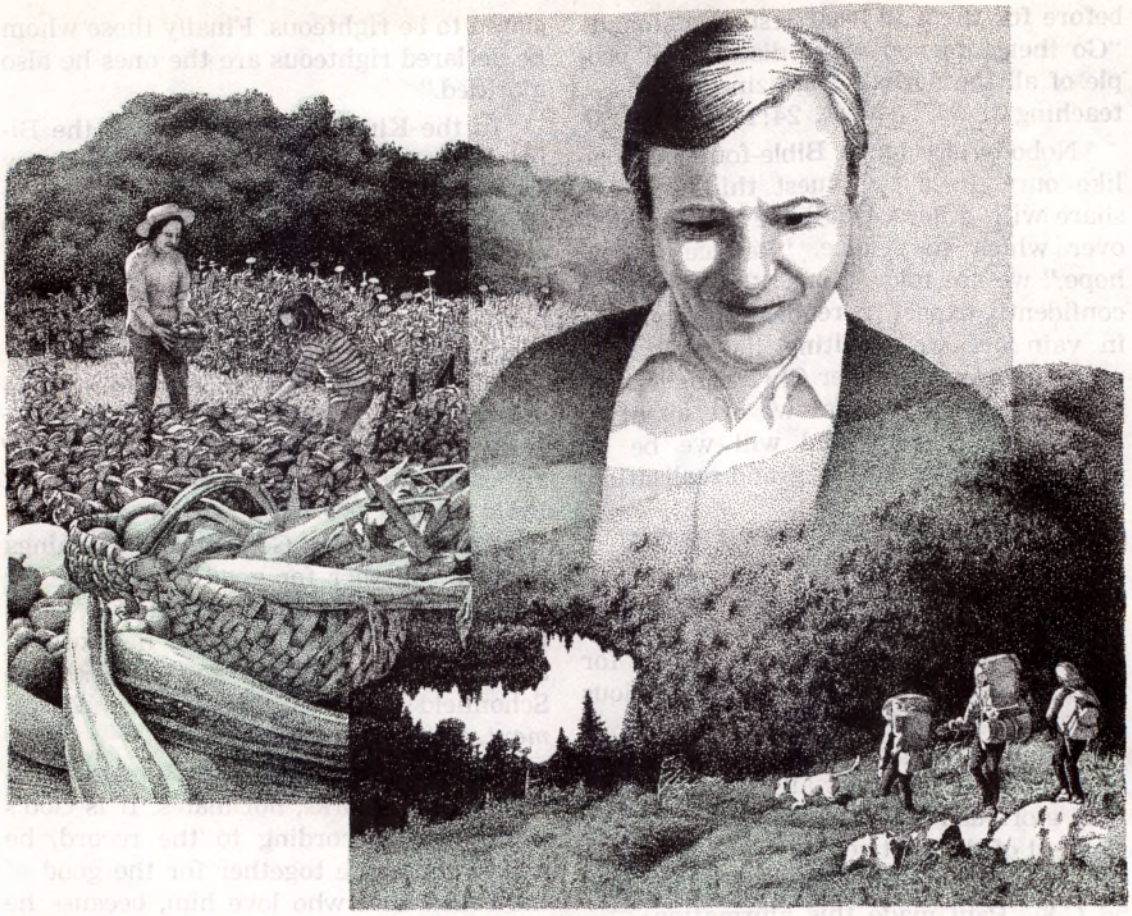
* This reading is according to the Vatican Manuscript No. 1209, the Alexandrine Manuscript, and Papyrus No. 46. See *The Syriac New Testament* by Dr. James Murdock.

6. Why will we be more greatly favored than earlier Christians who had a like hope in past centuries?

7, 8. (a) Why are we not expecting too much to be realized? (b) In this regard, what do we, like the apostle Paul, know, as set out in Romans 8:28-30?

9. How do the *King James Version* and a number of modern Bible translations render Romans 8:28, but how do other modern versions read similarly to the *New World Translation?*

10, 11. (a) What are the works that God makes cooperate together for the good of the called one? (b) What kind of personal actions should not be included among the "all things" mentioned in Romans 8:28?



Or if, in a period of weakness and wrong leanings, a called Christian chooses to pass through a red-light district out of curiosity or to see other men being lured into immorality with prostitutes and he himself falls victim to the solicitations of a harlot and commits fornication, can God be expected to make that experience work for the sinner's good? Does such putting of God to the test work for good?

[11] The outcome of such a physical or moral injury all depends upon the individual affected as to how he reacts to the consequences of his ill-advised course. He might learn a lesson from such a hard experience. But does his learning a lesson make the whole affair one of God's works, especially because He may exercise mercy in the matter? Certainly not! It should not be included among the "all things" mentioned by Paul in Romans 8:28.

[12] When we go on to read verses 29, 30 and note the works of God as recounted therein, we discern that, without exception, all of God's works toward the foreordained, called Christian are good. *Also*, they work together for the good of the Kingdom heir at every stage of God's handling of matters. Reversing the stages, Paul writes: "Because those whom he gave his first recognition he also foreordained to be patterned after the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn

12. All of God's works as recounted in Romans 8:29, 30 are of what nature, and in what order does Paul relate them?

among many brothers. Moreover, those whom he foreordained are the ones he also called; and those whom he called are the ones he also declared to be righteous. Finally those whom he declared righteous are the ones he also glorified."

[13] When does God do the glorifying? When he gives favored ones the splendor of the knowledge of his firstborn Son now exalted to His right hand. Thus God sets them in the way that leads to heavenly glory. After this initial work of God, he can next declare them to be righteous, but only if they put faith in the glorified Christ to the point of handing themselves over or dedicating themselves to God without any reservations.

[14] How, now, does God call a dedicated, baptized disciple of his glorified Son, in order that he might be 'transferred into the kingdom of the Son of his love'? (Col. 1:13) God does so by begetting him with His spirit to become a spirit-begotten son of God. Then it is that God can call or invite such a spiritual son to become part of the heavenly kingdom, which can be enjoyed only by those who are finally resurrected to spirit life in heaven. (1 Cor. 15:43-50) God foreordained that there should be associated with his Son a body of brothers having the same divine nature and being patterned after the image of his firstborn Son, Jesus Christ. So, after being called, the spirit-begotten child of God becomes a member of the foreordained class, in which he must prove faithful till his earthly death. God foreordained this *class,* not any particular individual by name, who gets into that class. God foreordained that the number of Christ's heavenly brothers should be 144,000, no individuals being named in that connection. —Rev. 14:1-3.

[15] In Romans 8:29, 30 the apostle Paul points out that to the class of Christians whom God proceeds to glorify or honor and dignify, to declare righteous, to call and to foreordain, he "gave his first recognition." This is what God did away back in the garden of Eden when he gave his prophecy concerning the "seed" of his own "woman" and the victorious exploit of that "seed." (Gen. 3:15) Thus, millenniums before that "seed" came into existence, God was the first one to recognize the need of it and its special assignment of work. From then on God gave "his first recognition" to his obligation to produce such a "seed." So this came first in God's program. Accordingly, what God considered worthy of "his first recognition" he kept in mind and heart all the way down to producing that "seed" in his Son Jesus Christ and the faithful spirit-begotten disciples of this Son. During all the time down till the arising of that "seed" God foreknew it and gave specially favored recognition to it.

[16] Hence, from start to finish, whose are the "works" that are detailed for us in Romans 8:28-30? They are God's "works." And since he is a consistent God, in perfect harmony with himself in all his dealings, he "makes all his works cooperate together for the good of those who love God." Not one of "all his works" is out of line, out of accord, with all his other purposeful works. These works proceed orderly, the one leading up to the other and preparing for it. God's purpose is magnificent, and he knows exactly how to carry it out successfully. So "those who are the ones called according to his pur-

13. (a) When does God do the glorifying of the ones declared righteous? (b) Upon what basis does the declaring of individuals righteous take place?

14. (a) How does one get to be among those "called" by God? (b) How is it that one gets to be included among God's "foreordained" ones?

15. When and how did God give "his first recognition" to the foreordained ones?

16. (a) How does each of "all his works" as narrated in Romans 8:28-30 perform its part? (b) So what is certain for all those "called according to his purpose"?

pose" can be sure that he will never fail. If they stay faithful and lovingly cooperate with him, they are certain to have a part in the accomplishment of his purpose by having an active share in his heavenly kingdom with Jesus Christ.

ANOTHER CLASS FOREKNOWN

[17] By means of the "called" ones to whom God gave his "first recognition," he has a loving purpose to fulfill. This was plainly made known 2,083 years after Adam's creation, namely, in the year 1,943 B.C.E. Then God said to the faithful patriarch Abraham: "All the families of the ground will certainly bless themselves by means of you." So this blessing embraced the world and was to be procured through a "seed" of Abraham. (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:17, 18) This foreordained "seed" would consist of Jesus Christ and his 144,000 "called" disciples. (Rev. 7:1-8; 14:1-3; Gal. 3:16, 29) God's simple promise to Abraham showed His foreknowledge of a "seed" class without his stating a definite number for them. Only the last Bible book gives us the number.

[18] In ancient times before Christ, there were individuals and groups that befriended Abraham's natural descendants. God used these as types or prophetic illustrations of people of our own modern times who would befriend and associate themselves with the small remnant of the "called" ones who are yet on earth.

[19] The very last book of the Bible, written by the Christian apostle John about the year 96 C.E., foretold and pictured those active associates of the remnant of the "called" ones as a "great crowd" without number. Members of this "great crowd" are to be preserved alive through the coming "great tribulation," yes, through the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har–Magedon and will enter into a new order on a cleansed earth under the millennial reign of Jesus Christ and his 144,000 "called" ones. The prophetic picture of this "great crowd" as recorded at Revelation 7:9-14 was explained by word of mouth and printed page in the year 1935.—Rev. 16:14, 16.

[20] In the 45 years since then, at least 42 types or prophetic pictures of that "great crowd" of Har–Magedon survivors have been set forth in Watch Tower Society publications. (See *You May Survive Armageddon into God's New World,* published in 1955, and pages 367, 368.) All these types and prophecies show that God had purposed only good toward this foreknown "great crowd." It is because they too love him. Many of them have been willing to prove their unbreakable love to him even to a martyr's death. Truly, the hope set before the "great crowd" is one that has not been held out to the vast majority of human creation. Although theirs is a unique and marvelous hope, they confidently look forward to its early realization. Never will this live hope of theirs be disappointed, for the God who gives hope is faithful. Trustworthy and sure of fulfillment is his promise toward them: "The One seated on the throne will spread his tent over them. They will hunger no more nor thirst anymore, neither will the sun beat down upon them nor any scorching heat, because the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, will shepherd them, and will guide them to fountains of waters of life. And God will wipe out every tear from their eyes."—Rev. 7:15-17.

17. What loving purpose did God have in connection with the called, foreordained ones, and since when?
18. In ancient times before Christ, what did God use individuals and groups to typify or prophetically illustrate?
19. How does Revelation 7:9-14 picture those active associates of the remnant of the "called" disciples of Christ, and what privilege in the near future is to be theirs?
20. Since 1935, how many types and prophecies pointing to the great crowd have been set out in our publications, and why is their hope unique and yet certain to be realized?

What Does the Proverb Mean?

All Things Are Naked Before Jehovah

"Sheol and the place of destruction are in front of Jehovah. How much more so the hearts of the sons of mankind!" says a writer of Proverbs.—Prov. 15:11.

Figuratively speaking, there is nothing separated by a wider distance from Jehovah, the Living God, than Sheol, the grave, the place of the dead. Also, many persons have been killed and their bodies have even been destroyed and not buried. These are all out of sight of mankind, and the great majority of them are forgotten, as though they never existed. As Ecclesiastes 9:5 states: "As for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all, neither do they anymore have wages, because the remembrance of them has been forgotten." Certainly the individual personalities, with all their variations and idiosyncrasies, are not known by humans. There is no earthly record of them.

But before Jehovah God, all is open. The psalmist says: "If I should spread out my couch in Sheol, look! you would be there." (Ps. 139:8) Not that God is everywhere at once, but that he can reach into the grave and take anyone out. "If they dig down into Sheol, from there my own hand will take them . . . And if they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, from there I shall carefully search and be certain to take them. And if they conceal themselves from in front of my eyes on the floor of the sea, down there I shall command the serpent, and it must bite them," said Jehovah of those who might try to escape his judgment.—Amos 9:2, 3.

God knows where each individual is buried. Or, if he was drowned in the sea, if he died on the battlefield or was cremated, God knows it. (Rev. 20:13) He knows every feature of the individual —what he looked like, as well as his personality traits, both inherited and acquired. (Compare Psalm 139:16.) He knows which ones are deserving of a resurrection. "There is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous," said the apostle Paul, and Jesus Christ himself declared: "The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his [Jesus'] voice and come out, those who did good things to a resurrection of life, those who practiced vile things to a resurrection of judgment." —Acts 24:15; John 5:28, 29.

If Jehovah so thoroughly knows the dead, then, how easy it is for Jehovah, the Creator of the human heart, to see all that is in the hearts of mankind now living. Through the prophet Jeremiah, Jehovah stated: "I, Jehovah, am searching the heart, examining the kidneys, even to give to each one according to his ways, according to the fruitage of his dealings." (Jer. 17:10) The speech, expression and acts of an individual show to a great extent what is in his heart. Even men can see it to a limited degree. How much more so Jehovah! The apostle Paul, after saying that the declared word of God is alive and exerts power, and is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart, continues: "And there is not a creation that is not manifest to his sight, but all things are naked and openly exposed to the eyes of him with whom we have an accounting."—Heb. 4:12, 13.

how can you be happy?

THE famous English jurist Blackstone noted that God's laws of justice are so inseparably interwoven with the happiness of each individual that, without adherence to divine law, happiness cannot be attained. This is reasonable, for the dominant quality of man's Maker is love and, therefore, all his laws are designed to promote the highest good of his intelligent creatures.

That is why true happiness in every aspect of life depends upon a wholesome fear of the Almighty God. This is emphasized in Psalm 128, where we read: "Happy is everyone fearing Jehovah, who is walking in his ways. For you will eat the toil of your own hands. Happy you will be and it will be well with you. Your wife will be like a fruit-bearing vine in the innermost parts of your house. Your sons will be like slips of olive trees all around your table. Look! That is how the able-bodied man will be blessed who fears Jehovah. Jehovah will bless you out of Zion. See also the good of Jerusalem all the days of your life, and see the sons of your sons. May there be peace upon Israel."—Vss. 1-6.

A proper regard for the Creator is manifest by a person's walking in his ways, complying with the course he outlines, observing his commands. When people adhere to divine law, they do not squander their resources but manage their affairs wisely and do good, quality work. Hence, with God's blessing, they enjoy the provisions for which they toil and are truly happy and secure.

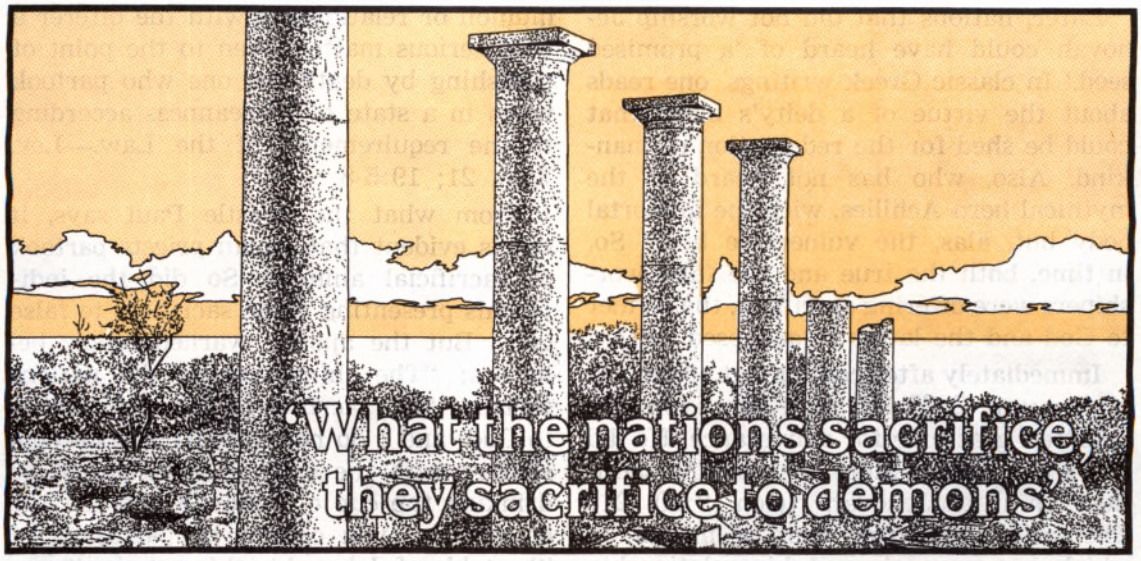
The wife of a man who fears God is compared to a fruit-bearing vine. Why? A vine needs some kind of support, such as a pole. Likewise, in benefiting from the good support of her husband and in being the mother of his children, the wife is like a fruit-bearing vine, happy and content to carry out her duties in the innermost part of the home.

The sons of the happy couple are likened to slips of an olive tree. Cuttings or slips cut from a grown tree are often used for starting new trees. Also, an old tree may send up shoots from its roots, thereby perpetuating itself. Like such shoots of the olive tree, the sons surround the father, contributing their part to the happiness of the family.

When this psalm was written, the sacred ark of the covenant, representing God's presence, was located on Mount Zion. Hence, since the Most High was dwelling there in a representative way, all blessings could be spoken of as coming from Zion or Jerusalem. Since Jerusalem was the center of true worship, the welfare of individual Israelites was closely associated with the welfare of Jerusalem. So it was to the individual's benefit to see the good of Jerusalem all the days of his life—a long life that would enable him to see his grandsons.

The happiness that could be gained by obedience to God's law was not restricted to individual Israelites. It could be enjoyed by the whole nation, if obedient. Appropriately, then, the psalmist closes with the prayerful expression: "May there be peace upon Israel." (Ps. 128:6) Yes, may God's people enjoy peace and security at all times.

If you desire the kind of happiness referred to in Psalm 128, consider the Bible carefully and allow yourself to be directed by its guidelines. Confirm, by your own experience, that real happiness comes from obedience to God's law.



WRITING to Christians living in the notorious city of Corinth, the apostle Paul gave this warning: "The things which the nations sacrifice they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers with the demons." (1 Cor. 10:20) How can 20th-century Christians benefit from this warning? Could we actually become "sharers with the demons" although not offering animal sacrifices? What is the principle behind the apostle's words?

SACRIFICES OF THE PAST

In ancient times, many people presented sacrifices and offerings to their gods. Doing this was an act of devotion, even love, on their part. By means of his sacrifice, the offerer wanted to please or appease the divinity he worshiped.

As an unrepentant sinner, the first man, Adam, never offered God a sacrifice. The first sacrifices mentioned in the Bible were those of Adam's sons Abel and Cain. Cain's offering consisted of "some fruits of the ground," whereas Abel sacrificed "some firstlings of his flock." "While Jehovah was looking with favor upon Abel and his offering," we are told, "he did not look with any favor upon Cain and upon his offering."—Gen. 4:3-5.

Jehovah, who can read the heart, rejected Cain's offering as formalistic, without any underlying faith. His offering might tend to exalt the individual presenting it, rather than showing love for the Divine Being. It was obvious to Jehovah that Cain was not seeking to draw closer to his Maker in a proper intimate relationship. Abel's intentions, however, were quite the opposite.

Paul, in writing to Hebrew Christians, pointed out that Abel's sacrifice was prompted by faith. Likely, Abel had learned and had kept in mind what Jehovah had said to the serpent while our first parents were still in the garden of Eden: "I shall put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise you in the head and you will bruise him in the heel." (Gen. 3:15) No doubt, Abel analyzed those words and fully believed that someone would have to shed his blood, or be 'bruised in the heel,' so that mankind might be uplifted again to the state of perfection that Adam and Eve enjoyed before their rebellion.

Later, nations that did not worship Jehovah could have heard of 'a promised seed.' In classic Greek writings, one reads about the virtue of a deity's blood that could be shed for the redemption of mankind. Also, who has not heard of the mythical hero Achilles, with the immortal body but, alas, the vulnerable heel? So, in time, both the true and the false worshipers were offering sacrifices, the former to God and the latter to supposed deities.

Immediately after coming out of the ark in the year 2369 B.C.E., Noah expressed heartfelt gratitude for deliverance. He did so by building an altar and offering sacrifices on it to Jehovah. (Gen. 8:20, 21) Thereafter, sacrifices were a means by which a person showed his relationship with and dependence on God. In time, it became customary for the male family head to act as a priest.—Gen. 31:54; Job 1:5.

Eventually, sacrifices of clean animals became a vital part of Jehovah's worship as practiced by the Israelites. These sacrifices typified the sacrifice of Jesus' life to save all obedient mankind. As Adam, the forefather of the human race, passed imperfection and death on to his offspring, so "the last Adam," Jesus Christ, ultimately would give his perfect life as a ransom for all kinds of people.—Matt. 20:28; Rom. 5:12; 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:22, 45.

Among the many types of sacrifices or offerings presented under the law given to the Israelites through Moses were the communion, or peace, offerings. In this type of offering, Jehovah received the pleasing smoke of the burning fat and the officiating priest received a choice portion of the animal, as did other priests on duty. The worshiper and his household partook of the sacrificial victim in the courtyard of the temple where dining rooms were provided. It was, indeed, a communion sacrifice. Jehovah considered this communion or relationship with the offerer a very serious matter, even to the point of punishing by death the one who partook when in a state of uncleanness according to the requirements of the Law.—Lev. 7:20, 21; 19:5-8.

From what the apostle Paul says, it seems evident that pagan priests partook of sacrificial animals. So did the individuals presenting these sacrifices to false gods. But the apostle warned fellow believers: "The things which the nations sacrifice they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers with the demons. You cannot be drinking the cup of Jehovah and the cup of demons; you cannot be partaking of 'the table of Jehovah' [this act signifying peace with God as partakers of the Lord's Evening Meal] and the table of demons. Or 'are we inciting Jehovah to jealousy'? We are not stronger than he is, are we?" —1 Cor. 10:18-22.

When the Mosaic law was in operation, a person could distinguish between true and false worship. He could reason with soundness that if the sacrifice was not offered at Jerusalem's temple by one of the Aaronic priests, automatically such a sacrifice was unacceptable to God. (Deut. 12:5-7; 26:2, 3) Today, however, animal sacrifices are not offered in Jerusalem or elsewhere by an Aaronic priesthood. Such sacrifices have been fulfilled and taken out of the way by Jesus' sacrifice. (Col. 2:13, 14; Heb. 7:12) Hence, how can we exercise care today so as to avoid being partakers with the demons?

EXERCISE CARE TODAY

Sacrifices denote devotion to a superior power or deity. So, today they have to do with our conduct, our behavior, our way of thinking and acting. Paul indicated that "the god of this system of things" is none other than Satan the Devil, the chief de-

mon. (2 Cor. 4:4) Logically, therefore, Christians cannot be a part of this system over which he rules. Otherwise, we would be sharing with him, would be used by him. (Jas. 4:4) Many things done by people of this system are contrary to Jehovah's will and ways, and involvement in these practices would mean sharing with the demons in wrongdoing. Think of the many aspects and features of false religion, nationalism, materialism, worship of popular idols, and so forth.

True Christians are "no part of the world." (John 15:19) They live in this system of things, but do not belong to it. They have come out of its false religious empire. (Rev. 18:4) This system's religion, politics, ambitions, materialistic aspirations, hopes and the like once were part of our own lives. In the past, some of us fought for this system, tried to reform it, strove to perpetuate it. But now we see the futility of our former sincere efforts. When we were supporting this system of things, which stands in opposition to Jehovah's will and ways, we were dead in God's sight. But Jehovah extended mercy to us. He showed us the way out. Yes, he made Christ's anointed followers alive spiritually. Paul describes this at Ephesians 2:1-6.

Let us remember that ancient Israel was a nation differing from all other nations. It had Jehovah as its God, a unique place of worship, a priesthood and a law. That law not only showed God's people how to be clean morally and spiritually, but also commanded them to avoid alliances with the other nations and involvement in their practices.—Deut. 18:9-13.

Jehovah's servants of today also are different from the nations of this world. These Christians have Jehovah as their God, as well as their own form of worship based on his Word. They accept the Bible as God's book and follow its commandments. One of the Bible's commands is: "Do not be loving either the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him; because everything in the world—the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one's means of life—does not originate with the Father, but originates with the world. Furthermore, the world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:15-17.

Only when we comprehend what it means to be no part of this world can we understand Paul's words to the Corinthians: "No; but I say that the things which the nations sacrifice they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers with the demons." (1 Cor. 10:20) Blessed are those who today keep a clean position before Jehovah and his Son and do not become "sharers with the demons."

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

May 4: Creation's Hope—Awaiting Its Realization. Page 16. Songs to Be Used: 21, 111.

May 11: Why Our Hopes Are Certain of Realization. Page 22. Songs to Be Used: 119, 110.

Her Prayer Was Answered

The Bible furnishes evidence that angels have directed those declaring the "good news." (Acts 8:26-38; Rev. 14:6, 7) So it is appropriate that witnesses of Jehovah pray to him for aid and success in their preaching work. In this regard, a Christian woman in Trinidad reports:

"It was a cold rainy morning that I left home to meet the group for field service. My feelings corresponded with the weather, as I was feeling a bit low. . . . As my companion and I set out, I prayed in my heart to Jehovah that I should meet someone who would be genuinely interested in studying the Bible. I was still praying when we reached the first gate. We called and a young woman came out and invited us in."

A Bible discussion ensued and the young woman was invited to attend a Christian meeting. She did so, while also taking advantage of the home Bible study arranged by the Witness for her benefit. Being eager to pass on to others the good things she was learning, she began conducting a Bible study with her mother and a friend. The young woman made rapid spiritual progress and was baptized in symbol of her dedication to Jehovah God.

In retrospect, the Witness remarks: "Oftentimes I recall how I felt that rainy morning and thank Jehovah for answering my prayer about meeting someone who was really interested in studying the Bible."

Yes, Jehovah's Witnesses take very seriously their activity of sharing the "good news" with others, praying always for God's direction and blessing on that work. Have you a desire to learn the truth of God's Word? If so, do not hesitate to express your wish the next time a Witness calls at your door.