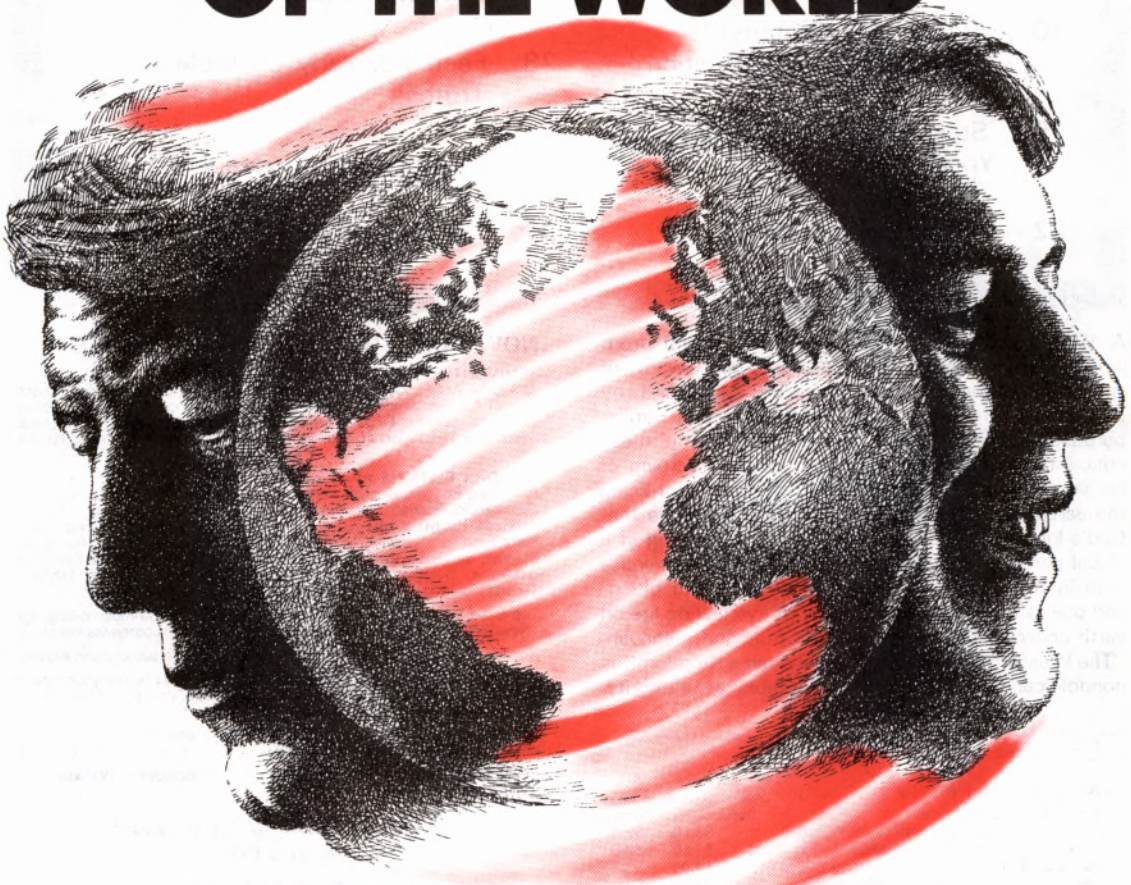


NOVEMBER 15, 1981

THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

"THE END OF THE WORLD"



**SOMETHING TO FEAR
OR TO HOPE FOR?**

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A WATCHTOWER provides a vantage point from which the watchman can observe and warn of approaching danger. This magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses since 1879, serves a similar purpose. It keeps watch on world events in these critical times and calls attention to God's warning of his vengeance soon to be executed on those ruining the earth. It comforts all peoples with the hope that God's kingdom by Jesus Christ is about to bring in a global paradise of peace. It encourages all to exercise faith in the ransoming power of Jesus' shed blood, and points to the joyous prospect of everlasting life on earth under the sovereignty of the true God, Jehovah. "The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom" is nonpolitical, and adheres to the Bible as authority.

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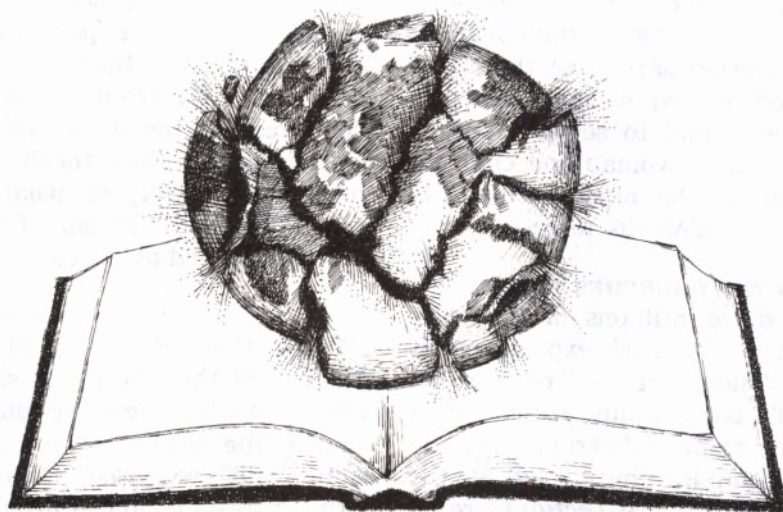
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DOES THE BIBLE FORETELL THE END OF THE EARTH?

THE END OF THE WORLD—five words that have struck terror into many hearts throughout the centuries of human history. Today they have lost much of their impact, since religious belief is on the wane. Yet predictions of world catastrophe are not limited to the field of religion. Scientists in several branches of human learning warn of calamity for the human race.

SCIENTIFIC FEARS

Astronomers have listed at least four threats to continued life on earth. Under the heading "The Four Cosmic Catastrophes That Threaten the Earth," the French scientific magazine *Science et Vie* enumerated these as the explosion of a supernova, a giant solar flare, the fall of a giant meteorite or the entry of the entire solar system into a cloud of cosmic dust that would absorb so much of the sun's heat that the earth would be frozen.

At the same time, ecologists are in-

creasingly sounding an alarm concerning the dangers of pollution through the use and the abuse of unnatural substances that endanger the health and even the life of humankind and wildlife. Yes, pollution is poisoning the air we breathe, the land and the food it produces, and the seas together with the fish we eat. Unwise and selfish deforestation has brought about both disastrous flooding and man-made deserts.

Taken individually, these environmental threats would doubtless be insufficient to put an end to life on earth. But compounded, they add up to a formidable danger. In an interview with Paris' news-weekly *L'Express*, Maurice Strong, former secretary-general of the World Environment Conference, recently stated: "If man continues to adopt such an arrogant attitude toward nature, although I hate to say it, he will eventually disappear."

However, the most immediate threat to life on earth—the one that has been re-

ferred to as "The Final Holocaust or Apocalypse" and misnamed "Armageddon"—is the very real possibility of total nuclear war. The militarized nations of the world have stockpiled nuclear weapons with an explosive power equal to several tons of TNT for every man, woman and child on earth. No wonder the nuclear threat is spoken of in end-of-world terms!

WHAT DO THE CHURCHES TEACH?

For hundreds of millions of Catholics and many Protestants such expressions as "Doomsday," "Judgment Day" or "the end of the world" conjure up visions of a final reckoning and the destruction of the earth. Under the heading "End of the World," the authoritative *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* states: "The Catholic Church believes and teaches that the present world, as God made it and as it is, will not last forever. All the visible creatures made by God throughout the ages . . . will cease to exist and will be transformed into a new creation."

Christendom's churches teach that the ultimate destiny of man is either eternal bliss in heaven or everlasting punishment in "hell." According to them, the earth has no permanent role in God's purpose. Yet Catholic and Protestant theologians know quite well that the Bible speaks of the coming of God's kingdom in order for God's will to be done 'on earth as it is in heaven.' (Matt. 6:10) They know that this is one of the essential things for which Christians are to pray. They are also very familiar with the Bible promise of "a new earth" wherein righteousness is to dwell. (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-4) But Catholic and Protestant theology on these scriptures and many others that speak of the earth in God's purpose is vague, even evasive.

On the other hand, having sent all the good to heaven and the wicked to "hell,"

many of Christendom's theologians are quick to quote such scriptures as "Heaven and earth will pass away" (Matt. 24:35) to 'prove' that the earth will be destroyed. They are only too happy to rid themselves of the earth, for which they find no place in their theology. They very conveniently interpret what some Bible translations call "the end of the world" as meaning the end of the earth.—Matt. 24:3.

THE BIBLE VIEW

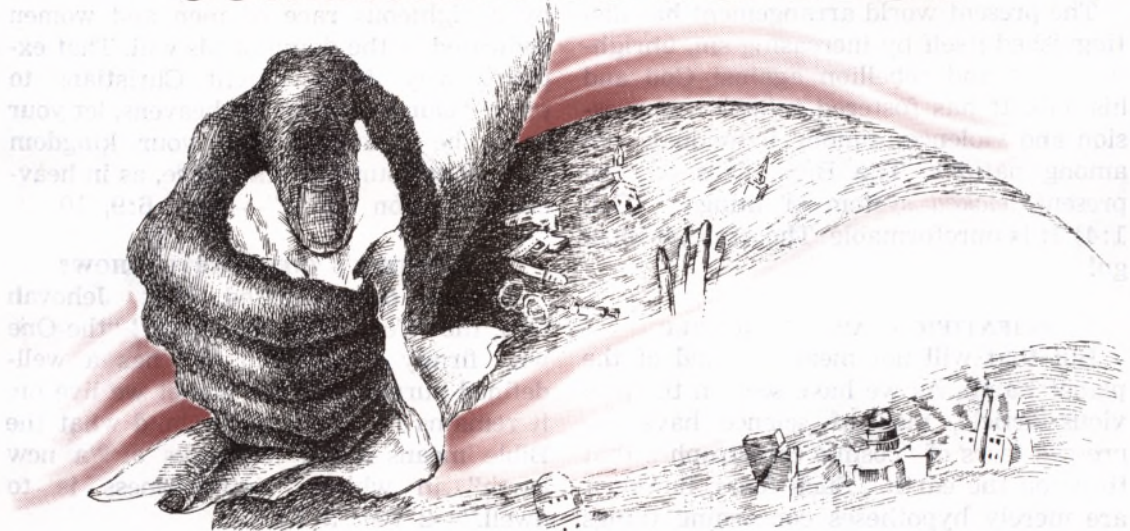
What, then, does the Bible mean by "the end of the world"? It should first be noted that what some versions translate as "end of the world," others render "close of the age" (*Revised Standard Version*, both Protestant and Catholic editions), "completion of the age" (Marshall—*The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament*) or "conclusion of the system of things" (*New World Translation*). The words "close," "completion" or "conclusion" are more precise translations of the Greek word *synte'leia*, as distinct from *telos* (end or complete end; compare Matthew 24:6, 14). Likewise, "age" and "system of things" are more accurate translations of *ai-on'*, as distinct from *ko'smos*, which generally designates the world of mankind.

Interestingly, the word *ko'smos* appears in none of the scriptures containing the words sometimes mistranslated "end of the world." So that expression does not mean the end of humanity. It refers to the conclusion of a wicked system of things, the close of an era (*ai-on'*) characterized by the bad doings of "ungodly men."—Compare 2 Peter 3:7.

Far from foretelling the end of the earth, the Bible holds out the promise of a wonderful future for our beautiful planet. But first the earth must be wiped clean of the present wicked system. The end of this system is therefore something to hope for, as the following article will show.

THE "END OF THE WORLD"

SOMETHING TO HOPE FOR



"ECONOMIC and moral crises, wars, assassination attempts, seizures of hostages, the arms race, the tragedy of famines and refugees—humanity is indeed very sick. . . . But the end of a world is not necessarily the end of the world." So said the Paris daily *Le Monde* under the headline (in English) "Apocalypse Now?"

Wittingly or unwittingly, the writer of those lines expressed the Bible viewpoint on things. The Scriptures show that a world (in the sense of a "system of things") can come to its end without *the* world (in the sense of the earth and all its inhabitants) being destroyed. Moreover, as we shall see, the very conditions mentioned by that French newspaper as evidence that "humanity is indeed very sick" were foretold in the Bible as part of a sign indicating that we are now living at the "conclusion" of the present wicked "system of things" and that we are at

the dawn of another "age" that will be characteristically different—a new "system of things."

WHY THE OLD "WORLD" MUST GO

The spine-chilling term "end of the world" is really a misnomer that has been used by Christendom's preachers to scare people into supporting their church systems. The original Greek means "conclusion of the system of things." Hence, a person might ask: Why must the present system disappear?

The primary reason is that such is God's purpose. Why? Ever since it came into existence, shortly after the flood of Noah's day, the present system of things has gone from bad to worse. (Gen. 10:8-12; 11:1-9) It was not created by Jehovah God. On the contrary, God's true servants have always been harassed and even persecuted by "the rulers of this system of things." (1 Cor. 2:6) And small won-

der, for the apostle Paul calls Satan "the god of this system of things." (2 Cor. 4:4) If only because it was "the rulers of this system of things" that "impaled the glorious Lord," Christ Jesus, such a system deserves to disappear.—1 Cor. 2:8.

The present world arrangement has distinguished itself by increasing sin, unrighteousness and rebellion against God and his will. It has fostered injustice, oppression and violence—among individuals and among nations. The Bible calls it "the present *wicked* system of things." (Gal. 1:4) It is unreformable. Therefore, it must go!

SCIENTIFIC FEARS UNFOUNDED

But that will not mean the end of the planet Earth. As we have seen in the previous article, men of science have expressed fears of "cosmic catastrophes that threaten the earth." Such fears, however, are merely hypotheses concerning things that *could* occur, but that take no account of the most important cosmographic factor: God and his purpose for the earth.

Pierre-Paul Grassé, a member of the French Academy of Science, states:

"Natural order was not invented by the human mind or set up by certain perceptive powers. No, it is a reality that was comprehended perfectly by such physicists and mathematicians as Planck and Einstein. The existence of order presupposes the existence of organizing intelligence. Such intelligence can be none other than God's."

Yes, more and more scientists have come to the conclusion that it is more rational to acknowledge the existence of an intelligent Creator than to explain the universe by the word "chance."

Since God exists, the question now is: What does he purpose for the earth? His Word, the Bible, replies: "This is what Jehovah has said, the Creator of the heavens, He the true God, the Former of the earth and the Maker of it, He the One who firmly established it, who did

not create it simply for nothing, who formed it even to be inhabited: 'I am Jehovah.'" (Isa. 45:18) Jehovah God did not create the earth with the intention of eventually destroying it. (Ps. 104:5) God's purpose is for the earth "to be inhabited" by a righteous race of men and women dedicated to the doing of his will. That explains why Jesus taught Christians to pray: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth."—Matt. 6:9, 10.

A RIGHTEOUS "NEW EARTH"—HOW?

Having demonstrated that Jehovah God, the "Former of the earth," "the One who firmly established it," has a well-defined purpose for the planet we live on, it remains for us to understand what the Bible means when it speaks of "a new earth" in which "righteousness is to dwell."—2 Pet. 3:13.

Obviously, the promised "new earth" cannot mean a new planet. What it does mean can be deduced logically from the context in Peter's second letter. As an example of what is due to occur before the righteous "new earth" is set up, Peter speaks of the flood of Noah's day. He mentions "an earth [Greek, *ge*] standing compactly out of water and in the midst of water by the word of God; and by those means the world [Greek, *ko'smos*] of that time suffered destruction when it was deluged with water."—2 Pet. 3:5, 6.

What "world" was destroyed by the Flood? Earlier in that same letter, Peter writes: "He [God] did not hold back from punishing an ancient world [*ko'smos*], but kept Noah, a preacher of righteousness, safe with seven others when he brought a deluge upon a world [*ko'smos*] of ungodly people." (2 Pet. 2:5) So a "world of ungodly people" came to an end by means of the Deluge. Yet the earth

and a minority of humans upon it survived.* It was the wicked, ungodly human society that was destroyed, not the planet Earth.

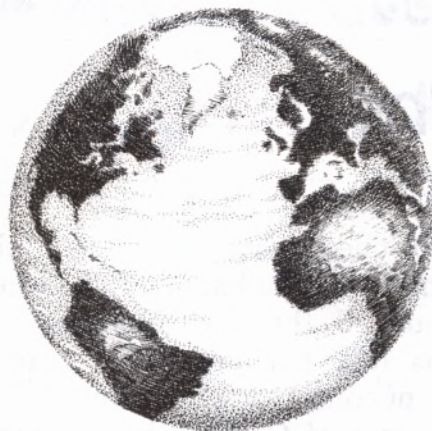
Similarly, it is with reference to the symbolic "earth," representing the corrupt human society that has developed since the Flood, that Peter goes on to say: "By the same word the heavens and the earth that are now are stored up for fire and are being reserved to the day of judgment and of *destruction of the ungodly men.*" (2 Pet. 3:7) Yes, just as the planet Earth survived the end of the pre-Flood "world of ungodly people," so it will survive the "fire" or "destruction" of "ungodly men" and their governments. These latter, and the wicked human society over which they rule, make up the symbolic "heavens and the earth that are now."—Compare Revelation 21:8.

Peter adds: "But there are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his [God's] promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell." Logically, by these words he is referring to a righteous new government (God's kingdom under Christ) and a regenerated human society.—2 Pet. 3:13.

HOW TO SURVIVE

Whereas most human futurologists are mournfully pessimistic about the future of the earth and human society, Christians who really believe and follow the Bible are very optimistic. They see in the crises that have erupted on earth since 1914 the "sign" that Jesus told his followers to watch for. Jesus added: "As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near. . . . when you see these things occurring, know that the

* For proof of the global flood, see chapter 3 of the book *Is the Bible Really the Word of God?*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.



God's kingdom is about to take over rulership of the earth

kingdom of God is near. Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication that you may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur."—Luke 21:10, 11, 25, 26, 28, 31, 36; Matt. 24:3, 7-13.

Far from being "prophets of doom," Jehovah's Witnesses are sounding forth the very best of news, namely, that God's kingdom is about to take in hand the governing of the earth. They are fulfilling Jesus' prophetic words: "And this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end [*telos*] will come." (Matt. 24:14) That "end" will mean the destruction of the present wicked system of things, the end of injustice, oppression, violence, wars, famine, disease—yes, the end of suffering and of death itself!—Rev. 21:1-5.

Truly, the "end of the world" is not something to fear. Rather, it is something to hope for, since it will usher in a righteous new system of things on this beautiful earth that God has 'fixed on its foundations, unshakeable for ever and ever.' —Ps. 104:5, *The Jerusalem Bible*.

Why did God create our earth?

GOD once asked the man Job: "Where did you happen to be when I founded the earth?" Since humans had not yet been created, Job, of course, was not around. But the "sons of God" in heaven were watching, and the Bible says that they "joyfully cried out together." Yes, they "began shouting in applause" on this important occasion.—Job 38:4, 7.

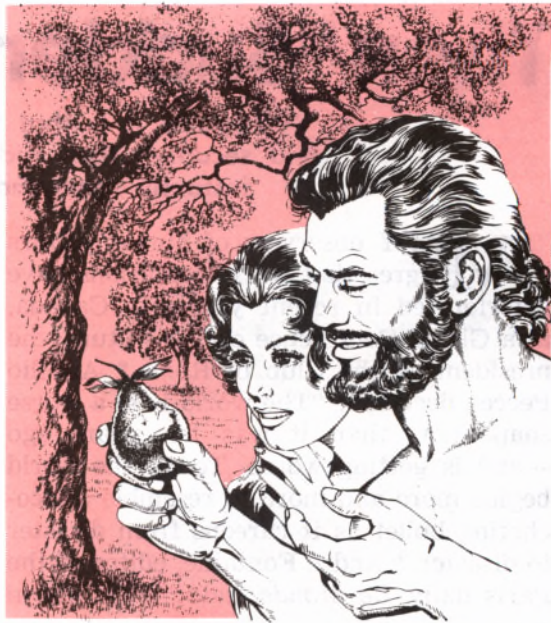
What made these angels so happy? They must have known something about God's purpose for the earth. God may have told them that he was going to create new kinds of creatures to live here. So the angels were happy to see such a beautiful place being prepared as the everlasting home for the human family.

Finally, after producing other creatures, God created the first human couple, Adam and Eve. Then he put them in a special beauty spot on earth called the Garden of Eden, and told them: 'Have many children so that they fill the earth. Cultivate the earth, and take care of the fish, the birds and all the animals.' (Gen. 1:28) God wanted humans to live forever in happiness on earth.—Ps. 37:29.



However, Adam and Eve rebelled against God. As a result, sickness, trouble and death came upon the whole human family. (Rom. 5:12) Was the joyfulness of those "sons of God" who watched the preparation of the earth to end in disappointment? Was God's purpose for the earth to fail?

No, for God would be admitting defeat if he did not accomplish what he purposed. That he could never do! "Everything that is my delight I shall do," he declares. (Isa. 46:10, 11) And the Bible says that God did not create the earth "simply for nothing," but "formed it



even to be inhabited."
—Isa. 45:18.

True, the earth is now being inhabited, but not in the way God meant it to be. There is hatred. There is crime. There is war. Millions of people are hungry and sick. But God created our earth to be the happy home of humankind forever. And it will be! The Bible foretells: "God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away."—Rev. 21:3, 4.

"Peace and Security!"— Then "Sudden Destruction"

"Whenever it is that they are saying: 'Peace and security!' then sudden destruction is to be instantly upon them."—1 Thess. 5:3.

MANY observers of human affairs agree that world conditions have deteriorated in recent years. In Canada, at a Global Conference on the Future, the president of the Club of Rome,* Aurelio Peccei, declared: "The world is in a worse shape now than it was ten years ago—and is getting worse. Today the world begins more and more to resemble a ricocheting bullet as it careens from disaster to disaster." André Fontaine, editor of the Paris daily *Le Monde*, said: "No one in

* A group of highly regarded intellectuals who analyze world conditions.

1. What are many observers of world conditions now saying?

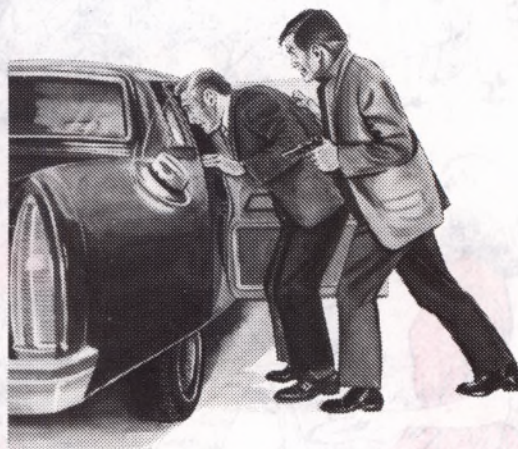


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the West seems able to cope with massive problems such as inflation and unemployment. The gap between the North and the South is widening. There are more and more wars, and the arms race is frightening. So I don't see any reason for optimism. . . . I see no Government in the world today which appears capable of coping with the major economic problems of our time." And a South African magazine reported: "Mankind would appear to have reached an all-time low of savagery, immorality, irresponsibility, selfishness and greed."

² Conditions in human society today certainly parallel what happened on earth just before God destroyed an ancient world by means of a global flood, sparing only

2. How are conditions in human society similar to those that existed just before the flood of Noah's day?



Conditions on earth today are like those before the Flood when the earth was "filled with violence"

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righteous Noah and his family. Of those days, the Bible says: "Jehovah saw that the badness of man was abundant in the earth . . . And the earth came to be ruined in the sight of the true God and the earth became filled with violence." (Gen. 6:5, 11) "Just as the days of Noah were," Jesus Christ foretold, so it is in our time. (Matt. 24:37) Once again the entire earth is "filled with violence" because "the badness of man" is abundant. Such conditions before the Flood gave evidence of the impending end of that ancient system of things. So today the evidence of world conditions in fulfillment of Bible prophecy clearly establishes the fact that this present system of things is in its "time of the end," its "last days." This has been so since the year 1914 C.E.—Dan. 12:4; Matt. 24:3-14; 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

³ Jesus foretold that some of those who were alive when the "last days" began would live to see this system's end. Already 67 years have passed since the "generation" of 1914 saw the start of these troubles. (Matt. 24:34) So time has nearly run out on this "crooked and twisted generation." (Phil. 2:15) Shortly we may be eyewitnesses of the fulfillment of the many Bible prophecies related to 'the passing away of this world.' (1 John 2:17) And we can have complete confidence that these prophecies will be fulfilled in every detail. Jehovah, "the One telling from the beginning the finale," the One who has inspired these prophecies, "has sworn, saying: 'Surely just as I have figured, so it must occur; and just as I have counseled, that is what will come true.'" —Isa. 14:24; 46:10; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21.

JEHOVAH'S "DAY OF VENGEANCE"

⁴ Among the many Bible prophecies concerning the end of this system of things

3. (a) How do we know that we are deep into the "last days"? (b) Why can we have complete confidence in Bible prophecy?

4. What is one of the prophecies relating to this system's end, and what questions does it raise?

is the one recorded at 1 Thessalonians chapter 5, verses 2 and 3. This reads: "For you yourselves know quite well that Jehovah's day is coming exactly as a thief in the night. Whenever it is that they are saying: 'Peace and security!' then sudden destruction is to be instantly upon them just as the pang of distress upon a pregnant woman; and they will by no means escape." What is this saying of "Peace and security"? Who says it? And what destruction comes immediately afterward?

⁵ These Bible verses speak of "Jehovah's day," which will result in "sudden destruction." So it is apparent that this prophecy concerns the "day" or period of time when Jehovah executes his judgments against this wicked system of things controlled by Satan the Devil. (2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 12:9) This will be Jehovah's "day of vengeance." (Isa. 61:2) Jesus spoke of this period of time in this way: "Then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again." (Matt. 24:21) The apostle Paul wrote that the coming execution of judgment would mean "the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his powerful angels in a flaming fire, as he brings vengeance upon those who do not know God and those who do not obey the good news about our Lord Jesus." He added: "These very ones will undergo the judicial punishment of everlasting destruction from before the Lord and from the glory of his strength." —2 Thess. 1:7-9.

⁶ The coming "great tribulation," Jehovah's "day of vengeance," will involve the entire present system of things—its false religions as well as its economic, social and political arrangements. The order of events in that "great tribulation" is indicated by the prophecies given in the Bible book of Revelation (the Apocalypse). These proph-

5. The prophecy at 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3 concerns what event?

6. How does the "great tribulation" begin and end?



God's judgment of false religion is so severe because "her sins have massed together clear up to heaven"

ecies reveal that Jehovah's "day of vengeance" begins with the destruction of all false religion. It ends when the political and other elements of the Devil's world, along with their supporters, "small ones and great," are finally destroyed.—Rev., chaps. 17 to 19.

"SUDDEN DESTRUCTION"

⁷ The saying of "Peace and security!" thus comes just before the "sudden destruction" of the world empire of false religion, which empire is called "Babylon the Great" in Bible prophecy. (Rev. 17: 5) She also is spoken of as "the great harlot . . . with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication." (Rev. 17: 1, 2) But, ironically, many of these "kings of the earth" who were once the harlot's 'lovers' will turn against her, for we are told: "These will hate the harlot and will make her devastated and naked, and will eat up her fleshy parts and will completely burn her with fire."—Rev. 17:16.

⁸ Why such a severe judgment upon this

7. The saying of "Peace and security!" comes just before what?

8. Why does Jehovah so severely judge worldly religion?

world's religious system? God's Word answers: "For her sins have massed together clear up to heaven." (Rev. 18:5) Among these sins is this: "In her was found the blood of prophets and of holy ones and of all those who have been slaughtered on the earth." (Rev. 18:24) While not teaching her followers the truth about God and his laws, worldly religion has become involved in wars that have resulted in the slaughter of hundreds of millions of people down through the centuries. Too, false religion has taken the lead in persecuting God's true servants. (Luke 11: 47-51; Rev. 17:6) So, directly or

indirectly, by what she has done or has failed to do, Jehovah holds "Babylon the Great" responsible for the blood of "all those who have been slaughtered on the earth."

⁹ False religion continues to amass blood-guilt right down to this day. For example, the *New York Post* of May 18, 1981, reported: "Former President Carter said yesterday that hate and violence make it seem that 'the world has gone mad.'" He also said that "deep religious conviction which should bind people in love seems often to be part of the madness and murder." Similarly, two days earlier an editorial by Mike Royko in the same publication stated that Catholics, Protestants, Moslems and Jews "are expressing their devotion to [God] by killing each other." He observed: "I guess they figure that if one side can wipe the other side out, it will prove that their way of worshipping is correct." He also noted that while the pope of the Roman Catholic Church is said to be a peaceful man, "his followers have

9, 10. (a) How have some people noted false religion's responsibility for bloodguilt right down to our day? (b) In reality, whom has "Babylon the Great" been serving?

been known to shed a few million gallons of blood when their tempers are up."

¹⁰ Thus, the "great tribulation" rightly begins with the destruction of the blasphemous, hypocritical world empire of false religion. It is a righteous judgment because worldly religion, "Babylon the Great," has claimed to serve God, but in fact has served the Devil. So by her "spiritistic practice," hundreds of millions of people have been deluded into serving the Devil's interests.—Rev. 17:3-6; 18:23.

¹¹ The fall of "Babylon the Great" comes very suddenly, totally unexpected from the world's standpoint. So sudden will be her destruction that it will shock the political rulers who supported her, for we read: "The kings of the earth who committed fornication with her and lived in shameless luxury will weep and beat themselves in grief over her, when they look at the smoke from the burning of her, while they stand at a distance because of their fear of her torment and say, 'Too bad, too bad, you great city, Babylon you strong city, because in one hour your judgment has arrived!'" Others—the "traveling merchants" or commercial elements that supported her—similarly exclaim: "Too bad, too bad . . . because in one hour such great riches have been devastated!"—Rev. 18:9-19.

¹² This fits the description in 1 Thessalonians 5:2 and 3, which shows that destruction comes very suddenly and unexpectedly, for "Jehovah's day" is to come "exactly as a thief in the night." In what way does it come "as a thief in the night"? In that most of mankind have not kept awake to the progressive revelation of God's will. They are spiritually asleep. They are like a person who is sleeping at night when a thief comes unexpectedly. Such persons have allowed themselves to

11. What shows that false religion's destruction comes with shocking suddenness?

12. In what way does destruction come unexpectedly and painfully?

become dulled into supporting this doomed system of things. So the destruction of Babylon the Great comes unexpectedly for them. Indeed, "Jehovah's day" for the destruction of all elements of Satan's system will come "exactly as a thief in the night." Destruction will come upon God's enemies suddenly and painfully, "just as the pang of distress upon a pregnant woman; and they will by no means escape."—See also 2 Peter 3:10.

SAYING "PEACE AND SECURITY!"

¹³ World-shaking events will mark the "sudden destruction" of false religion and all of Satan's world. But that destruction is immediately preceded by the saying of "Peace and security!" Thus it is of great interest to know what this proclaiming of "Peace and security!" could mean. For one thing, it does not appear to be just

13, 14. (a) How have the nations long talked about peace and security? (b) Why could none of such peace efforts be a fulfillment of 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3?



No previous peace efforts in our age fit 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3 because "sudden destruction" has not already come

the usual efforts of the nations wanting peace. They have long talked about that. For example, after World War I the nations signed the peace treaty at Versailles. Later, most countries signed the Kellogg-Briand peace pact of 1928. World War II also ended with peace treaties. In recent years the Soviet Union and the United States have talked about peace and have signed some arms-control agreements. Various nations of the Middle East have from time to time entered peace pacts with one another.

¹⁴ But none of these efforts fit the description at 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3. Why not? Because of the fact that the "great tribulation," Jehovah's "day of vengeance," has not begun. Remember, Paul said that destruction would come suddenly, "instantly," after the declaring of "Peace and security!" Moreover, the fulfillment has to be something striking enough to justify its being recorded as a specific prophecy inspired by Jehovah. The "Peace and security!" must be an exceptional development, different from the many peace efforts that had been made up until that time.

¹⁵ Also, who are the "they" who say "Peace and security!" just before the end comes? It is unlikely that any part of this world could proclaim such a thing without the cooperation or direction of the major political powers. Hence, it appears that the rulers of the nations play a large part in the outworking of this prophecy. The United Nations organization, supposedly dedicated to peace, could also play a role. And what of the religious elements? Since they are so much a part of the world, 'committing fornication with the kings of the earth,' they likely will support or actively promote the efforts that the political powers make in this direction. In this they would be imi-

tating the false prophets of ancient Judah who falsely declared: "Jehovah has spoken: 'Peace is what you people will come to have.'" Instead, God was soon to bring calamity on them, as his true prophet Jeremiah foretold.—Jer. 23:16-22.

¹⁶ But have the nations been moving toward any kind of "peace and security" lately? From the news of recent times, it would seem to be the opposite. George Kennan, former American ambassador to the Soviet Union, said: "Not for 30 years has the political tension reached so high and dangerous a point as it has today. Not in all this time has there been so high a degree of misunderstanding, of suspicion, of bewilderment and of sheer military fear" as there is today. A Toronto *Star* editorial added: "It wasn't fear of the future, but something more ominous: Fear of the present."

¹⁷ In recent months the major powers have spoken accusingly and threateningly against one another. Civil disorders, revolutions and wars have broken out in one part of the earth after another. The world's economy has become very unstable. Crime and violence have kept increasing to epidemic proportions. Surely, it seems difficult to see how "people" could say "Peace and security!" Yet Jehovah's Word never fails. (Isa. 55:11;

16, 17. (a) Does it seem that the nations are moving toward any kind of "peace and security" now? (b) Yet, why can we have confidence that such will take place?

15. Who logically will be saying "Peace and security"?

In Coming Issues

- The Path of the Righteous Does Keep Getting Brighter
- Do Not Ignore the Heavenly King
- "Lord, Open the King of England's Eyes"

1 Thess. 5:3, *Today's English Version; The Jerusalem Bible*) When it tells us that such a development will come just before "sudden destruction" strikes, then it indeed will come, however unlikely this may seem at present.

¹⁸ Recall the many prophecies that God inspired his servants to proclaim against ancient Babylon, the mighty world power that existed centuries before the Common Era. One author calculated that the probability of the Bible's major prophecies against Babylon being fulfilled was 5,000,000,000 to one! No doubt many of God's people in ancient times must have wondered how those prophecies could ever be fulfilled against so strong and entrenched a world power as Babylon. But they were, in every single detail. So today, it may

**God's servants will not be deceived
by the coming cry of "Peace and
security!"**

appear that the saying of "Peace and security!" followed by destruction of the world system is unlikely. But God's prophetic Word declares it will be that way!

ONLY A VENEER

¹⁹ Of this we can be certain: The cry of "Peace and security!"—whatever form it takes—does not mean that the underlying condition of this world will have been reversed. Nor does it mean that the nations will disarm or give up their hostile attitudes. " 'There is no peace,' my God has said, 'for the wicked ones.' " (Isa. 57:21) It is just that, for the moment, world leaders, out of desperation or because of seeing some selfish advantage in pursuing

some new policies, will cry "Peace and security!" in a more pronounced way than before.

²⁰ Why can we be so certain that this world will continue to deteriorate? Because 2 Timothy 3:1, 13 foretells that in these "last days . . . wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse." Therefore, the saying of "Peace and security!" will be only a veneer. It will not touch the true condition of mankind. Nothing this world under Satan does is going to end the avalanche of crime and violence, or bring a halt to family breakdown, or reverse rampant immorality, or prevent the millions of abortion murders of unborn children every year, or solve any other major problems of mankind. (Jer. 10:23) Nor will the majority of people suddenly turn to the true worship of God. Bible prophecy correctly stated that people in our time would be "lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God, having a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power."—2 Tim. 3:4, 5; see also Matthew 7:13, 14.

²¹ Thus, while the world will be deluded by vain hopes during the coming declaration of "Peace and security!" Jehovah's servants will not be. Instead, they will take this coming fulfillment of prophecy for what it really is: a final signal that the "great tribulation" is about to begin! They know, too, that after God's "day of vengeance" is finished, his faithful servants will enter a righteous new system of things to begin endless life on a cleansed earth that will be transformed into a paradise. (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 7:9-17) As all these thrilling events rush toward us, what should our attitude be?

18. How can the prophecies against ancient Babylon help us to have faith in the modern fulfillment of prophecy?

19. What will the saying of "Peace and security!" not mean?

20. (a) How can we be so certain that world conditions will continue to deteriorate? (b) What can we expect the majority of people to do with regard to the worship of God?

21. What will Jehovah's servants take the coming declarations of "Peace and security!" to mean?

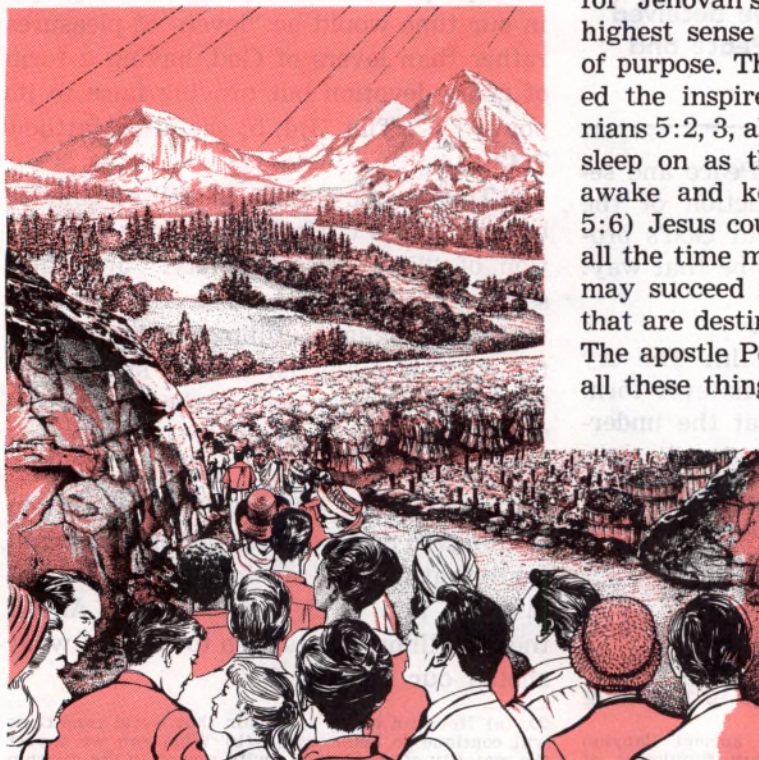
'Stay Awake and Keep Your Senses'

"Let us not sleep on as the rest do, but let us stay awake and keep our senses."—1 Thess. 5:6.

WHEN Jesus foretold the destruction of Jerusalem in his generation, he stated: "These are the days for meting out justice, that all the things written may be fulfilled." (Luke 21:22) In 70 C.E., God's righteous execution of judgment came against those who had profaned his name, broken his laws and persecuted his servants. Similarly, God's righteous execution of judgment against

this present wicked system of things is soon to come, once again demonstrating that all the things written in Bible prophecy are sure to be fulfilled. And that judgment will come with shocking suddenness to those who are unprepared, for the Bible states: "Whenever it is that they are saying: 'Peace and security!' then sudden destruction is to be instantly upon them." —1 Thess. 5:2, 3.

1. What fulfillment of Bible prophecy can we expect soon?



Any persons who want to survive into God's new order must now stream to Jehovah's true worship

² Between now and the time when God's judgments are concluded, it is imperative for Jehovah's servants to maintain the highest sense of vigilance and dedication of purpose. The apostle Paul, who recorded the inspired prophecy at 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3, also said: "So, then, let us not sleep on as the rest do, but let us stay awake and keep our senses." (1 Thess. 5:6) Jesus counseled: "Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication that you may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur." (Luke 21:36) The apostle Peter similarly wrote: "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion." —2 Pet. 3:11.

COMING TO JEHOVAH NOW

³ Any person who

2. What counsel does God's Word give us that we can apply to the immediate future?

3. For anyone to survive into God's new order, what must he do?

wants to survive into God's righteous new order urgently needs to come into a right relationship with Jehovah and His earthly organization *now*. "The name of Jehovah is a strong tower. Into it the righteous runs and is given protection." (Prov. 18: 10) "It must occur in the final part of the days that the mountain of the house of Jehovah will become firmly established above the top of the mountains, and it will certainly be lifted up above the hills; and to it all the nations must stream." (Isa. 2:2) Yes, any people of the nations who want to live in God's paradisaic new order must *now* stream to Jehovah's mountain, his true worship, which is firmly established and is exalted high above any other type of worship.

⁴ Why is there such an urgency about coming to Jehovah's true worship now? Could not a sincere person wait until he actually sees Jehovah's executorial judgments beginning, and then quickly come over to His side? While that might sound appealing to some, would there then be enough time to build the right relationship with Jehovah? The evidence from the Scriptures answers, No. Jesus warned: "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." (Luke 21:34, 35) Note that those who are not awake spiritually are caught unawares, for that "day" comes upon them "suddenly," "instantly," in just the same way that "sudden destruction is to be instantly upon" those who are saying "Peace and security!"

⁵ Jesus likened such persons to an animal that unwittingly walks into a trap. He also likened spiritually unaware persons

to those in Noah's day who "took no note until the flood came and swept them all away." Was there any time for those people to learn of Jehovah and come under his protection *after* the Flood began? No, because Jesus plainly says that when the Flood came it "swept them all away." They were not already in the ark of protection with Noah and his family. Also, when God's judgment came against Sodom and Gomorrah, were there any who escaped *after* fiery destruction began raining from heaven? No, for all were destroyed except Lot and his daughters, who already had left the area. Even Lot's wife, who had started to leave but then hesitated, was overwhelmed by the destructive forces. With good reason did Jesus say: "Remember the wife of Lot."—Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:32.

⁶ Yet might there be a period of time *after* "Babylon the Great," the world empire of false religion, goes down, when people could have the opportunity of awakening spiritually and searching for Jehovah? The weight of evidence in the Scriptures is against this. In addition to the previous examples, there is also that of the first-century Jewish nation. Those religious Jews felt that they were worshiping God sufficiently and did not need to listen to the preaching of Jesus or of his followers. However, Jesus had warned: "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies, then know that the desolating of her has drawn near. Then let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains, and let those in the midst of her withdraw." (Luke 21:20-22) But when Roman armies that had been surrounding Jerusalem withdrew in the year 66 C.E., the overconfident Jews did not "begin fleeing." Having turned the Roman army's retreat into a rout by attacking its rear guard, the Jews felt no need to flee. They

4. How does Jesus show that waiting too long to come to Jehovah could be fatal?

5. What Bible examples do we have to show that people need to learn about Jehovah before destruction begins?

6. The weight of evidence in the Scriptures argues against what belief?

believed that God was with them, and they even coined new silver money bearing the inscription "Jerusalem the Holy." But the inspired prophecy of Jesus showed that Jerusalem no longer was holy to Jehovah.

⁷ Deceived by false religion, the Jews did not leave Jerusalem and Judea when they had the opportunity to do so. In fact, in the spring of the year 70 C.E., they did the opposite! They flocked into Jerusalem for a religious festival. But right at that time, powerful Roman armies under General Titus returned, surrounded Jerusalem and trapped all those people, like animals caught in snares. After a short siege, Jerusalem was destroyed. An eyewitness to those events, historian Flavius Josephus, wrote: "Now the number of those that were carried captive during this whole war was collected to be ninety-seven thousand; as was the number of those that perished during the whole siege eleven hundred thousand [1,100,000], the greater part of whom were indeed of the same nation [with the citizens of Jerusalem], but not belonging to the city itself; for they were come up from all the country to the feast of unleavened bread, and were on a sudden shut up by an army, . . . the entire nation was now shut up by fate as in prison, and the Roman army encompassed the city."—*Wars of the Jews*, Book VI, Chap. IX, pars. 3, 4, translated by William Whiston.

⁸ However, Christians who had stayed

7. What fate befell the Jews who did the opposite of what Jesus counseled?

8. What resulted to Christians who listened to Jesus, in contrast with the outcome to those who tried to flee at the last moment?



Christians who obeyed Jesus fled Jerusalem in time and did not suffer its fate in 70 C.E.

awake and had kept their senses were already out of Jerusalem and all Judea, having fled to places of security when the opportunity came after the year 66 C.E. By believing the prophetic words of Jesus and acting upon them, they survived. But, when that "great tribulation" came upon the Jews in 70 C.E., there was no longer any time for them to flee. Several thousand who tried to get out of the city through the Roman encirclement were caught by soldiers, who even cut open some of those Jews to get the gold that many of them had swallowed.

SURVIVING THE MORE SEVERE "TRIBULATION"

⁹ That was indeed a severe "tribulation" that came upon the Jews, exactly as Jesus had foretold. (Luke 19:43, 44) Yet Jesus' words indicated that a much greater "tribulation" would come in our time during Jehovah's "day of vengeance." Answering a question about the "sign" of

9, 10. (a) How severe will the "great tribulation" be?
(b) Why does there not appear to be any period of calm after the destruction of "Babylon the Great"?

his "presence," Christ declared: "For then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again." (Matt. 24:3, 21) This "tribulation" will come not only upon "Babylon the Great" but also upon all of Satan's system, including its political, social and economic arrangements.

¹⁰ While the destruction begins 'suddenly' with false religion, it proceeds unrelentingly toward its finish.

(1 Thess. 5:3) Arguing against there being any period of calm following the overthrow of "Babylon the Great," Bible prophecy shows that the anti-God forces that destroy her will not show Jehovah's dedicated witnesses any favor either. To the contrary, these anti-God forces will hate God's people and will turn on them too. The Bible shows that the same "wild beast . . . with ten horns" that devastated "Babylon the Great" will also "battle with the Lamb," Jesus Christ, as represented by his followers on earth. (Rev. 13:1; 17:12-14, 16; 19:19) These victory-flushed conquerors over false religion will no doubt consider God's servants just another religion to be taken out of the way so that there will be no remaining obstacle to their exercising earth-wide domination.—Ezek. 38:14-16.

¹¹ However, this attack upon God's servants is the same as attacking God, for he says: "He that is touching you is touching my eyeball." (Zech. 2:8; Ezek. 38:18, 19) That brings an immediate reaction

from Jehovah. It provokes his Armageddon fury upon the attackers. (Rev. 16:14, 16) He commands his King Son, Christ Jesus, and his heavenly armies to go on to the attack! With crushing force, Christ and his heavenly armies strike down the kings of the earth and all other remaining elements of this ungodly system, as well as everyone who supports it. Crying out with a loud voice, an angel invites the birds of heaven: "Come here, be gathered

together to the great evening meal of God, that you may eat the fleshy parts of kings and the fleshy parts of military commanders and the fleshy parts of strong men and the fleshy parts of horses and of those seated upon them, and the fleshy parts of all, of freemen as well as of slaves and of small ones and great." (Rev. 19:17, 18) Thus, the "great tribulation" reaches its climax. God's righteous "day of vengeance" upon this Satanic system of things comes to its conclusion.

¹² From the beginning of the "sudden destruction," starting with the devastation of "Babylon the Great," proceeding to the attack by the nations upon Jehovah's servants and continuing to God's war of Armageddon, there does not

appear to be any halt in the "great tribulation." So there is no Scriptural reason to conclude that there would be enough time to turn to God after false religion is destroyed. Instead, those who want to escape alive into God's new order should turn to Jehovah *now*. "Search for Jehovah, you people, while he may be found. Call to him



God's Word likens his alert servants to well-trained soldiers who have protective armor on and who are ready to obey

11. How does the "great tribulation" reach its climax?

12. When should sincere persons "search for Jehovah"?

while he proves to be near.” (Isa. 55:6) Now is when sincere persons should develop lives of faith, courage, love and service. Now is when they need to prepare themselves to withstand the pressures that will come against God’s people during the rapidly approaching “great tribulation.”

¹³ God’s Word likens his faithful servants to well-trained soldiers who are attentive, who have on their protective armor, and who are ready to obey any command given them by their leader. They are not like unprepared troops sleeping in the barracks at a time of danger and urgency. Paul says: “So, then, let us not sleep on as the rest do, but let us stay awake and keep our senses. For those who sleep are accustomed to sleep at night, and those who get drunk are usually drunk at night. But as for us who belong to the day, let us keep our senses and have on the breastplate of faith and love and as a helmet the hope of salvation; because God assigned us, not to wrath, but to the acquiring of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.”—1 Thess. 5:6-9.

¹⁴ Too, God’s servants have full confidence that he will keep his organization well informed, so that they can take the proper steps for survival. We can be sure of this because the inspired prophecy at Revelation, chapter seven, shows that “a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, . . . come out of the great tribulation” and survive into God’s new order where “God will wipe out every tear from their eyes.” (Rev. 7:9, 14, 17) And why does the “great crowd” survive? Because ‘they are rendering God sacred service day and night,’ and so he ‘spreads out his protective tent over them.’ (Rev. 7:15) Being properly informed, they know how to *serve* God acceptably. They do not

13. To what are God’s faithful servants likened, and in what ways?

14. What shows that God’s servants will certainly be properly informed so that they can do God’s will?



When the Israelites began to “shout a great war cry,” the walls of Jericho fell

wait passively to see what will happen. They know that the one who “does the will of God” is the one who “remains forever.”—1 John 2:17.

INCREASED ACTIVITY

¹⁵ Included as part of God’s will for our day is 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; and then the end will come.” (Matt. 24:14) To true Christians, these prophetic words are, in effect, a command to tell others about the good news of God’s kingdom and the incoming new order. And it certainly has been obeyed by Jehovah’s Witnesses in these “last days.” (2 Tim. 3:1; compare Matthew 28:19, 20.) Unselfishly they have used their time and resources to instruct others about God’s marvelous purpose for this earth. As a result of all this hard work, upwards of five million persons throughout the world expressed interest in God’s new order and

15. How have Jehovah’s Witnesses obeyed the command to ‘preach the good news of God’s kingdom in all the inhabited earth’?



his provision for salvation through Jesus Christ by meeting together this past April to observe the Memorial of Christ's death.

¹⁶ As Jehovah's forward-moving organization approaches the final years of its preaching activity toward this world, there is no doubt that the scope of the work will grow. Recall what the Israelites were instructed to do just before God destroyed

Jericho. First, they were instructed to march around the city once a day for six days. But then they were told: "On the seventh day you should march round the city seven times and the priests should blow the horns. And it must occur that when they sound with the horn of the ram, when you hear the sound of the horn, all the people should shout a great war cry; and the wall of the city must fall down flat."—Josh. 6:2-5.

¹⁷ On that seventh and last day, the Israelites were to increase their activity seven times! Then they were to "shout a great war cry." Exactly as instructed, they did this. "It came about on the seventh day that they proceeded to get up early, as soon as the dawn ascended, and they went marching round the city in this manner seven times. . . . And it came about on the seventh time that the priests blew the horns, and Joshua proceeded to say to the people: 'Shout; for Jehovah has given you the city.' . . . And it came about that as soon as the people heard the sound of the horn and the people began to shout a great war cry, then the

wall began to fall down flat."—Josh. 6:15, 16, 20.

¹⁸ We can expect a similar expansion of our preaching activity now, at this climax of the ages. No doubt, before the "great tribulation" is finished, we will see the greatest witness to God's name and kingdom in the history of this world. And while now the witness yet includes the invitation to come to Jehovah's organization for salvation, the time no doubt will come when the message takes on a harder tone, like a "great war cry." Revelation 16:21 shows that "a great hail with every stone about the weight of a talent [nearly 100 pounds] descended out of heaven upon the men, and the men blasphemed God due to the plague of hail, because the plague of it was unusually great." Hailstones are frozen, hardened water. So this pictures how, at the end, Jehovah's judgment message sent down upon disobedient mankind will be like a barrage of hard-hitting hail. The fact that the plague of hailstones is spoken of as being "unusually great" suggests that at the very end there will be a hard proclamation of Jehovah's "day of vengeance" by Jehovah's servants.

¹⁹ So, then, we do well to say, as Peter did, "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion"! (2 Pet. 3:11) Surely, we need to "keep comforting one another and building one another up." We should "always pursue what is good toward one another." (1 Thess. 5:11, 15) "Really, then, as long as we have time favorable for it, let us work what is good toward all, but especially toward those related to us in the faith." (Gal. 6:10) To this end, do not fail to 'stay awake and keep your senses.'—1 Thess. 5:6.

18. What do we anticipate as regards the scope and manner of the preaching activity before this system comes to its end?

19. In view of the immediate future, 'what kind of persons ought we to be'?

16, 17. (a) What instructions were given to the nation of Israel before God destroyed Jericho? (b) How were those instructions carried out?

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

- Surgery in the womb reached a new peak recently when California surgeons inserted a tiny plastic tube into the bladder of a fetus to drain a urinary blockage. Such new developments in treating the unborn make it seem "likely that the fetus with a treatable

Smallest "Patients"

birth defect is on the threshold of becoming a patient," say doctors writing in the "Journal of the American Medical Association" (JAMA). But in the same issue, an editorial raises a perplexing ethical question about such unborn "patients":

"Is it not contradictory for physicians to speak of the fetus as 'patient' when one of the stipulations for that role is that physicians would not under any circumstances abandon such an individual?" Yet abandon the tiny "patient" is just what a physician does when he performs an abortion. Hence, JAMA says that there is an "apparent inconsistency of encouraging fetal therapy on the one hand and respecting parental choice about abortion on the other." (August 14, 1981, pp. 772-777) This dilemma for physicians and their new group of tiny "patients" vividly illustrates the Scriptural position that life both inside and outside the womb is not a disposable commodity.—Ps. 139:13-16; Ex. 21:22-24.

- Thinking persons often wonder why there is so much violence in Northern Ireland among people who profess to be Christians. A columnist for London's "Daily Telegraph," Christopher Monckton, recently offered an explanation. He noted, for example, that the Irish Catholic primate, Cardinal Fee, had rightly declared that "people who deliberately take an innocent life commit a heinous crime against the law of God." But meanwhile the cardinal had also warned that if the British government "continues its rigid stance" in a dispute with Irish prisoners, "it will ultimately be faced with the wrath of the whole Nationalist population." Fee even questioned the government's right to pronounce a prisoner "a murderer or a suicide."

Vacillating on Violence

"The implication of his words," writes Catholic layman Monckton, "is that, although violence is in itself wrong, it is justified to a considerable degree by the institutional violence of the British Government." However, he continued, "this notion of meeting 'institutional violence' with actual violence owes much to Marxism and nothing at all to Christianity." The columnist declared that such a double-tongued approach "can only have confused the people and left them in doubt as to the Church's position." Hence, Monckton concluded: "If Cardinal Fee and his brother bishops had taught without equivocation not only that violence is wrong but also that nothing in the present Irish situation . . . can even in the smallest degree justify any of the acts of murder and suicide that are taking place, it is at least a possibility that fewer . . . acts of violence" would be committed.

- British social services authorities recently told a couple who had been foster parents for 47 children that they were unsuitable to adopt a child. According to the Toronto "Star," the officials declared that "a child growing up in the happy surroundings of their home would not be sufficiently exposed to 'negative experiences.'" A letter to the couple stated: "It would seem from the interviews and reports that both of you have had few, if any, negative experiences when children yourselves, and also seem to enjoy a marital relationship where rows and arguments have no place." The disappointed couple reportedly said: "To say we are not suitable because we do not row or argue is beyond belief."

'Good Is Bad'?

Do children really have to be exposed to "rows and arguments" to ensure a balanced life? The Bible's wise counsel to "train up a boy according to the way for him" certainly does not imply home demonstrations of squabbling. Surely there are enough of such "negative experiences" outside the home. The ideas of some of this world's social engineers call to mind Isaiah's warning to ancient Israel: "Woe to those who are saying that good is bad and bad is good."—Prov. 22:6; Isa. 5:20.



**As told
by
Fred Germann**

Serving Jehovah On His Holy Mountain

IN SOME parts of the world people superstitiously venerate mountains. For my part, being Swiss-born, I have always been irresistibly drawn to the mountains, and particularly the Alps. Ever since my childhood I have admired their overwhelming splendor, considering such majesty to be a silent testimony to God's glory. Even now, at age 86, the sight of such towering summits reminds me of the prophecy of Micah 4:1, 2, which foretells the gathering of determined men and women upon "the mountain of the house of Jehovah," the place of his pure worship, elevated above all false religions. What a privilege it has been for me to witness the fulfillment of this prophecy! But even as it takes determination and effort to climb a mountain in the Alps, so I have had to overcome many mountainous obstacles in pursuing pure worship. (Matt. 17:20) May I share a few memories with you?

FIRST GLIMPSES OF THE "MOUNTAIN"

In 1903, while living in the Swiss Bernese Oberland, my mother got her first glimpse of the "mountain" of true worship. She read a Bible tract announcing an incoming millennium under Christ that was to replace the present unrighteous system. She was so enthused by this message that she just could not help sharing

it with her neighbors. One evening she had a visit from an irate pastor. But, Bible in hand, she was ready with the answers. At that time I was eight years old.

Mother soon symbolized her dedication to God by water baptism. In our region of Switzerland there was just one small group of Christians with "faith so as to transplant mountains." (1 Cor. 13:2) It was in the little town of Thun, where, over 60 years later, the Watch Tower Society's Swiss branch was to be located. Though it was distant from our home, mother would attend the meetings as often as possible. Away back there, the Thun Congregation was mainly under the oversight of two fleshly brothers, both very gifted at teaching. One of them had been to the "Bible House" in Allegheny (later part of Pittsburgh), Pennsylvania, U.S.A., and had shared in the work of translating the fifth volume of *Studies in the Scriptures* into German.

Unfortunately, both these brothers stopped following the great Guide, Jesus Christ, and started 'leaning upon their own understanding.' (Prov. 3:5) They gradually developed a critical spirit. Not knowing where else to go, my mother continued for a time associating with this group, but she soon began to lose her fervor in God's service and eventually stopped going to the meetings. However, she continued talking to me about the truth and, when World War I broke out, I began to show real interest.

In 1915 Christian meetings were started in our little town of Frutigen. A local person made his house available for showing Pastor Russell's Photo-Drama of Cre-

ation. This eight-hour, four-part projection of slides and motion pictures, with sound and color, related God's purpose from the time of creation right down through human history to the climactic fulfillment of that divine purpose for the earth and mankind at the end of the millennium. My mother and I were both impressed by this remarkable presentation. We thus re-established contact with the Bible Students, known today as Jehovah's Witnesses. How happy we were! Our feet were at the foot of the "mountain of the house of Jehovah."

THE ALPS OR JEHOVAH'S MOUNTAIN?

At that time I was a fervent mountaineer, even to the point of risking my life. But I would occasionally ask myself: 'What is the true purpose of life, and why does the Source of all this beautiful creation not put a stop to injustice and suffering?' Through meeting attendance and the study of the Watch Tower publications, I came to understand and appreciate the Bible and its Author, Jehovah God. So, in the fall of 1915, I decided that my love for the Swiss mountains must take second place to my love for the "mountain" of true worship. I dedicated my life to Jehovah and was baptized by Brother Emile Lanz in his apartment in Bern. At that time Dr. Lanz was in charge of the work in Switzerland and France.

I was then 20 years old and had looked forward to a promising future working for the Swiss post office. But henceforth I chose Jesus as my Guide and I wanted to "follow his steps closely." (1 Pet. 2:21) So I wrote to the Bible Students requesting a supply of Bible literature for use in the evangelizing work. I was sent a huge parcel of tracts to distribute. Just then my professional activities took me to the little town of Huttwil. 'Now,' I said to myself, 'get going!' It was uphill work,

and I was all alone, but I drew the necessary strength to accomplish it from a daily study of God's Word and the Society's publications. Also, Hebrews 13:11-15 provided me with the determination I needed. Once I had finished preaching in this little town, I went on to the neighboring villages, calling back when I found interested persons. Nor did I forget my workmates. I asked one of them whether he would care to study the Bible, and he accepted my offer. His wife and neighbor also sat in on our Bible discussions.

In the course of these discussions, my colleague's wife and the neighbor asked if I would talk with the Protestant preacher, and I did so. This man still held fast to the hellfire doctrine. I explained how inconceivable this was, because the fleshly body would be quickly consumed in the flames. He retorted: "That's no problem. God probably provides asbestos bodies." When I opened my Bible to Ezekiel 18:4 (which says, 'the soul that is sinning will die'), he interrupted, saying: "We just *have* to believe that the soul is immortal." He refused to consider any scriptures on the subject.

About that same time, I met a schoolteacher who also believed in hellfire. I asked if she thought it possible for a person to be happy up in heaven, where she hoped to go, while thinking of the billions of sinners below in hell in eternal agony. She came out with this totally unexpected reply: "God will see to it that we won't even think about them." Such fallacious thinking convinced me of the need to help those who 'worship what they do not know.'—John 4:22.

A few months later I was transferred to Wangen-sur-Aar, where I had the joy of associating with the Biel Congregation. It was there that I made my decision to enter full-time service, and I wrote a letter of resignation to the Swiss postal au-

thorities. As soon as all my affairs were in order I went to Zurich, where the Bible Students had their literature depot. Thus, in May 1916, I became a colporteur (pioneer). Instead of finding my joy in climbing mountains, I was now able to devote all my time to the work of inviting people to "come, . . . let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah."—Mic. 4:2.

DARK CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON

Anyone who has done any mountain climbing knows that one must be equipped for sudden changes in weather. Well, during those World War I years, dark clouds were looming up on the peaceful horizon of our preaching work in Switzerland. Brother Lanz, who had baptized me in 1915, began to manifest a rebellious spirit toward the Watch Tower Society's president, Charles T. Russell. Puffed up with pride at being "Doctor" Lanz and convinced that his methods were the best, he allowed an embittered heart to develop within him.

One Sunday, when I was visiting the Frutigen Congregation, Lanz came out in open opposition. During his talk he said that the Society was in the wrong, and he proposed "another sort of good news." (Gal. 1:6) Hitherto he had always presented Brother Russell as an exemplary Christian, but now he severely criticized him. Mother, angered at what she heard, said to me: "We must stay firm. It was here that we found the truth, and this is God's work!" Her loyal attachment to Jehovah and his worship on his holy mountain had become unshakable. But her physical health worsened. So, in May 1917, due to family responsibilities, I had to give up full-time colportering and return home, where I resumed my former secular work. My mother finished her earthly course in 1918, faithful down to the end.

After such trials it seemed that our

congregation in Frutigen had been 'sifted as wheat,' for only four of us were left to continue inviting people to worship Jehovah on his holy mountain. (Luke 22:31) Among these was Sister Emmy Schneider, who later took up the full-time preaching work and who is still faithful in Jehovah's service. Brother Russell sent Conrad Binkele from Brooklyn to handle the dramatic situation brought about by Lanz and to strengthen the brothers. Many left Jehovah's mountain of light at that time and soon found themselves in "the darkness outside."—Matt. 25:30.

In 1919 the way opened for me to get back into the full-time service. So I resigned once more from my work with the post office. I was able to go and help the Bern Congregation. At that time Alexandre Freytag, the Society's representative at the French office in Geneva, became an apostate and soon he was sending out emissaries to win over to his ideas Christians in and around Bern. By personal visits, several of us were able to help the brothers to keep on walking firmly on the "mountain" of Jehovah's pure worship.—Rom. 16:17, 18, 25-27.

NEW EQUIPMENT

The first world war had considerably upset international communications. So we were no longer receiving Bible literature from Brooklyn. In order to help people to find Jehovah's "mountain," we had necessary Bible aids printed by a local firm. But this proved to be too expensive. We therefore considered the possibility of doing the printing ourselves.

A few members of the Bern Congregation had had some experience in printing. So, having 'calculated the expense,' and with the agreement of the Society's new president, Brother J. F. Rutherford, a cooperative society called "The Watch Tower Printery" was set up. (Luke 14:

28) One-hundred-franc debentures, reimbursable at will and without interest, were issued to raise the necessary funds, and a spacious house was purchased in Bern, at 36 Allmendstrasse.

A capable brother had the responsibility of buying the equipment. Knowing what our financial possibilities were, he went to Germany to buy good secondhand presses and one new rotary press. Unfortunately, all these machines were loaded onto a railway freight car with a leaky roof. This was just after the war, and conditions were still hard in Europe. What a disappointment when all this equipment arrived! The rain had got in and it was all rusty!

It was of no use sitting down and crying. Members of the Bern Congregation, including sisters, set to work with kerosene and emery cloth. After weeks of hard work, no trace of rust remained and, with the help of a specialized fitter, the brothers set up the presses and soon got them running smoothly. This printery building later served as the branch office and factory for Switzerland and the French-speaking countries for many years. Eventually, the Swiss Bethel was transferred to a much larger building constructed just across the street, at 39 Allmendstrasse. Later still, it was moved to Thun.

FEARLESS ON JEHOVAH'S "MOUNTAIN"

The eight-day convention held at Cedar Point, Ohio, from September 1 to 8, 1919, emphasizing the theme "Blessed Are the Fearless," was a great source of encouragement for us Bible Students. We in Europe were also greatly helped when Brother Rutherford visited us in the fall of 1920. His example and words of encouragement made us determined to give of our very best in Kingdom service.

In addition to the Photo-Drama, the talk on the subject "Millions Now Living

Will Never Die" was a magnificent witness. There were great audiences, and the book with the same title went "like hot-cakes." Sometimes literature servants would order these books by telegrams worded: "Send two hundred Million," or, "Urgent. 150 Million," much to the surprise of the telegraphists!

I was privileged to serve in the Bern Bethel right from the start, in October 1920, and still have wonderful memories of the warm brotherly love that reigned in the family. One morning, in July 1921, the branch overseer informed me that I had been appointed to supervise the work in Alsace-Lorraine and the Saar. Although much work had already been done in these parts, the existing congregations needed strengthening and new congregations needed to be organized. Here also "the mountain of the house of Jehovah" had to be "lifted up above the hills," so that "peoples" in Lorraine, Alsace and the Saar might "stream" to it and worship Jehovah.—Mic. 4:1.

As a pilgrim, and with the help of the local elders, I was able to organize public lecture campaigns. Since the Catholic Church was particularly powerful in those areas at that time, this activity took courage, and many times the Cedar Point theme "Blessed Are the Fearless" came to our minds.

HELPING THE "SHEEP"

Through his prophet Ezekiel, Jehovah stated: "I will search for my sheep and care for them. And I will bring them out from the peoples . . . In a good pasturage I shall feed them, and on Israel's high mountains their abiding place will come to be." (Ezek. 34:11, 13, 14) Back there in that early postwar period, zealous Christians sought out the "sheep" in every nook and cranny, and led them to Jehovah's "mountain" of true worship

where they found nourishing spiritual food.—See Matthew 25:31-46.

With the publishing of the magazine *The Golden Age* (now *Awake!*), young Christians in Strasbourg and Saarbrücken plucked up their courage. They presented the magazine in the many restaurants and brasseries, giving a very good witness.

In 1922 and 1923 the Photo-Drama was shown again in Alsace, first by Brother Charles Eicher and later by myself, when Brother Eicher was called to serve at Brooklyn Bethel. There were no public-address systems back then. So it was a good thing that the *Palais des Fêtes* in Strasbourg had perfect acoustics, for there was an audience of about 1,800 every night. Our violinist, Charles Rohner, contributed greatly to the success of these presentations. He also was called to Brooklyn Bethel, where his musical talents were put to good use enhancing broadcasts over Watch Tower radio station WBBR.

The inhabitants of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg also needed to be invited to worship Jehovah on his holy “mountain.” I managed to show the Photo-Drama in the towns of Luxembourg, Esch and Differdange, and to give talks in five other locations. But Luxembourg was too far from Strasbourg for me to go there on a regular basis. Eventually, arrangements were made for German-speaking brothers from nearby Trier, Germany, to care for the work there.

In August 1925, and again in the spring of 1926, I was assigned as a pilgrim to visit the congregations in eastern Switzerland. It was about that time that I met my wife-to-be, Antoinette. But I did not want my marriage to interfere with my full-time service. A solution came along just at the right time. In May 1926 someone was needed to take care of the office and literature depot the Society had set up in Lens, northern France. I was sent

there, first alone, and then, in 1927, I married Antoinette. She joined me in Lens and did the housekeeping and cooking, as well as some office work, along with Brother François Jankowski, who took care of the correspondence with the Polish brothers in the north of France.

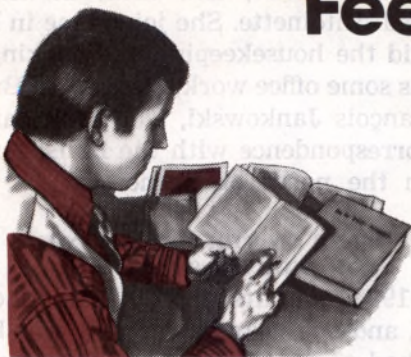
“SAFE ON THE MOUNTAINS” OF JEHOVAH’S WORSHIP

In 1928 our first baby, Daniel, came along, and one year later Frédy was born. So I had to reorganize my life. I had to look for secular work to provide for my family. (1 Tim. 5:8) The big question was “where?” Should we return home to Switzerland and to the Alps that I loved so much, or stay in France, where the need seemed to be greater?

We finally decided to set up home in the Paris area, where, at the time, there was only a handful of Kingdom publishers. And here we are still, over 50 years later. Although slowed down somewhat by our age, both Antoinette (Mimi) and I are still striving to serve Jehovah faithfully on his holy “mountain,” and we rejoice to see some of our children and grandchildren doing likewise.

What a climb from 1915 to 1981! But I have been helped all the way by Jehovah and his organization, under his Son, Christ Jesus. As I draw near the end of my earthly course, I should like to express my deep appreciation to the “faithful and discreet slave” for the wonderful spiritual provisions made to help me and all my fellow Christians throughout the world to have the spiritual strength needed for the uphill work and the obstacles to be overcome. (Matt. 24:45-47) Like Habakkuk of old, I can say: “The Sovereign LORD [JEHOVAH] gives me strength. He makes me sure-footed as a deer and keeps me safe on the mountains.”—Hab. 3:19, *Today’s English Version*.

Feed Regularly On Bible Truths!



THE greatest Teacher that ever lived once stated that man does not live on bread alone, but also needs spiritual food, God's Word. From that, can we not reasonably conclude that Christians should feed regularly on spiritual food, even as they do on literal bread? Certainly. (Matt. 4:4) Such spiritual food includes not only the Bible but literature that helps us to understand the Bible. That is why the publishing and administrative agency for Jehovah's Witnesses, the Watch Tower Society, does not content itself with just printing Bibles. It also publishes Bible aids on a regular basis to aid readers to a fuller understanding of the Bible.

The question has been raised as to the value of regularly reading these publications, since at times the same subject may come up for repeated consideration. But do we not eat bread, potatoes or rice regularly? Also, the apostle Peter wrote: "For this reason I shall be disposed always to remind you of these things, although you know them and are firmly set in the truth that is present in you." (2 Pet. 1:12) Let it be noted, too, that when a subject is considered more than once there are often new angles, new points of view, additional insights, more and effective presentations. As Proverbs 4:18 puts it: "The path of the righteous ones is like the bright light that is getting lighter and lighter until the day is firmly established."

GETTING TO UNDERSTAND THE CONSCIENCE BETTER

For a specific example, take the matter of conscience. In September 1972, *The Watchtower* published a number of articles on the human conscience in its role as "witness-bearer." These showed that our conscience is an inborn witness, testifying for or against us, and that it functioned even before Jehovah God gave man written codes or laws. These articles also pointed out the need to respect the conscience of others and what role conscience plays in matters of employment. Never before had these matters been so clearly elucidated.

Then in April 1975, two more articles appeared on the conscience. Among the various points made by these articles were that there are two basic roles that the conscience plays. One is what might be viewed as a judicial capacity. This is the role the conscience plays "after the fact," when it judges us guilty because of our having transgressed in some manner. (2 Sam. 24:10) However, for Christians, the conscience more often should play what might be termed a legislative role. Of course, this does not mean that it actually legislates new laws for the Christian. But, based on the laws and principles in the Bible, a Christian's strong conscience will be a guide for him. It is as if it legislates for him ahead of time that a certain course is wrong. A well-known Scriptural example of this is that of Jacob's son Joseph refusing the importunities of Potiphar's wife.—Gen. 39:9.

Then still more recently, *The Watchtower* (of September 1, 1976) had a further article on conscience entitled "Training Our Conscience to Do More for Us." Generally, when considering matters of conscience the question is whether a thing is good or bad, right or wrong. But in this article emphasis was placed on the Bible's association of a good conscience with faith and love. (1 Tim. 1:5) Yes, not only should our conscience keep us from transgressing Jehovah God's laws but it should also come into play as to our taking advantage of opportunities to do unselfish, noble, kind, loving things.—Compare Luke 10:29-37.

So, never take for granted that just because an article appearing in *The Watchtower* deals with a subject previously discussed it is a mere repetition. True, sometimes the refinements are not great, but they all add something to reveal the Bible truth as more beautiful, more meaningful, yes, more helpful to us.

All of this calls to mind an anecdote told about Michelangelo. A friend had admired a beautiful statue that Michelangelo had carved. Coming to him some time later, the friend was surprised to find him still working on the same statue. Michelangelo pointed out all the improvements he had made in the meantime, to which his friend replied, 'But these are only trifles.' In reply, Michelangelo said: 'Yes, that is true. But trifles make perfection and perfection is no trifle!' So while many times the refinements made in understanding may not seem of great importance, they do help to make our understanding of a subject more nearly complete or perfect.

KEEPING IN FIGHTING TRIM

Nor is that all. The Bible and the publications that help us to understand the Bible better are not merely concerned with head knowledge. God's Word is 'a

lamp for our feet and a light to our roadway.' (Ps. 119:105) Also, we are told that God's Word is "beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) But only to the extent that we apply it to our lives can it serve these purposes. And how can we apply it if we have forgotten what we have read?

That we keep on being reminded of the counsel contained in God's Word is vitally important in view of the three enemies with which we have to contend. There is *the world*; friendship with it means enmity with Jehovah God. (Jas. 4:4) Concerning our conflict with the world, the apostle John wrote: "This is the conquest that has conquered the world, our faith." (1 John 5:4) Faith is dependent upon knowledge—knowledge that is easily brought to mind, not information that has long since been forgotten. Because the world presses in upon us so forcibly day after day, we need to be reminded continually not to be loving the world nor the things in it; for the world and all that is in it will pass away, but the one that does the will of God will remain forever.—1 John 2:15-17.

We also have *the Devil* and his demons as our enemies. "Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone." (1 Pet. 5:8) He and his demons wage warfare on us and so we need to put on the whole spiritual armor of God, which the apostle Paul describes at Ephesians 6:11-17. Our wearing this armor and making use of it depends again upon our continually feeding on God's Word. Undoubtedly, to be able to wield the 'sword of the spirit, God's word,' effectively, we need to have that word fresh in our minds and hearts.

Our third enemy is none other than *our own inborn, inherited sinful inclinations*, against which we must struggle earnestly and continuously. Since our mothers 'conceived us in sin and gave birth to us in error,' from youth up our inclination is bad. (Gen. 8:21; Ps. 51:5) Because this is so, we can all lament, as did the apostle Paul: "The good that I wish I do not do, but the bad that I do not wish is what I practice." (Rom. 7:19) Due to this inheritance, we find that the human heart is devious, treacherous, deceitful. But with the help of God's Word and of Bible aids that assist us to understand and apply Bible principles, we can cope with this enemy within us. However, like the apostle Paul, we must pummel our bodies and lead them about as slaves. —Prov. 3:32; Jer. 17:9; 1 Cor. 9:27.

WHAT ABOUT THE TIME FOR IT?

The Christian's life is a full one. There is the Bible to be read, along with a new magazine each week, preparation to be made for meetings and attending them, and participation in the grand work of making disciples of those who listen gladly. Also, there are everyday obligations of a mundane kind in caring for ourselves and our families. Each one might well ask himself or herself: How much time do I spend reading secular periodicals, newspapers and magazines? How much time do I devote to viewing television or listening to popular music? True, these are forms of recreation and entertainment, whereas many might view preparing for Christian meetings and reading Christian literature as 'so much work.' But need such preparation and reading be viewed in that way? The psalmist said: "I am exulting over your saying just as one does when finding much spoil." (Ps. 119:162) So we need to consider carefully whether our life course really identifies us as spiri-

tual rather than physical persons.—1 Cor. 2:14-16.

All of this calls to mind the words of Jesus about the happiness of those who are conscious of their spiritual need. (Matt. 5:3) The lower earthly creatures—birds, insects, mammals, fish, and so forth—have no spiritual needs. But man does have them. His neglecting of these has contributed toward the sorry mess in the world today. Materialistic philosophies and ideologies drive men ever farther away from God. Their physical needs—food, clothing and shelter—and sex, as well as pleasure, or lust for power, become paramount in their lives. But if we are truly conscious of our spiritual needs, we will regularly feed on Bible truths, finding time to do so and appreciating them to the full. The reward? Well, we will be helped to pursue the course of godly devotion, which is "beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come."—1 Tim. 4:8.

QUESTIONS from READERS

● When you face difficult trials or tasks, is it appropriate to ask for "a double portion" of God's spirit, as Elisha did?

Rather than feeling that you need to ask for 'twice as much' of God's spirit on some occasion, it is better to think in terms of requesting that God supply holy spirit in accord with your needs.

After the prophet Elijah crossed the Jordan River and just before he was taken heavenward in a fiery chariot, his associate and successor, the prophet Elisha, made a special request. According to the *King James Version*, Elisha said to departing Elijah: "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me."

(2 Ki. 2:9) Some Christians, drawing on that language, have thought about needing or have actually asked God for "a double portion of spirit."

However, the *New World Translation* helps us to understand Elisha's request. It reads: "Please, that two parts in your spirit may come to me." (2 Ki. 2:9) Elisha was asking for a firstborn's portion of Elijah's spirit. How is that?

What Elisha said draws upon the practice in ancient Israel of distributing a man's property when he died. Whereas the other sons would receive a portion of the inheritance, the firstborn, or eldest surviving son, received a double portion, as well as the responsibility of headship in the household.—Deut. 21:17.

When it was God's will to remove Elijah from the immediate scene as the principal prophet to Israel, Elisha was to succeed him. Elisha would not be left as the only prophet at the time. Associated with him were various men known as the "sons of the prophets." (2 Ki. 2:3, 5) Yet Elisha was to be the foremost among them, as the prime successor to Elijah. (2 Ki. 4:38; 6:1-3) So even though they likely had a measure of God's spirit and carried out some prophetic functions, Elisha was like the firstborn son of Elijah and could appropriately request two parts of Elijah's spirit.

Jehovah God provides holy spirit for his faithful worshipers according to their needs and circumstances. When, because of the huge number of people involved, Moses needed assistance, God directed that 70 qualified older men be selected to help. Jehovah told Moses: "I shall have to take away some of the spirit that is upon you and place it upon them, and they will have to help you in carrying the load of the people." (Num. 11:16, 17) Now, that does not mean that Moses would thereafter be inadequately supplied with holy spirit, having a spirit deficiency. No, God would provide for Moses and for the 70 assistants ample spirit for them to handle the tasks before them. Similarly, Elisha as well as the "sons of the prophets" would have sufficient holy spirit to carry out their duties and to face the coming tests or trials.

Christians, too, can receive an ample amount of God's active force, or spirit. Understandably, they should live in a way that does not impede the flow and activity of holy spirit. (Compare Ephesians 4:30.) And they should pray for the spirit, believing what Jesus said: "If you, al-

though being wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more so will the Father in heaven give holy spirit to those asking him." (Luke 11:13) We can be sure that God "does not give the spirit by measure," or "sparingly." (John 3:34, NW, 1950 ed.; *Centenary Translation of the New Testament*) Rather than "a double portion," he will give us the amount of holy spirit we need to cope with life's problems, to share in the important work of preaching the "good news of the kingdom" and to understand and apply his Word.—Matt. 24:14.

● Does Matthew 26:74 mean that under pressure the apostle Peter used profanity?

No. This verse describes how Peter reacted when he, after Jesus' arrest, was accused of being one of His followers. We read concerning Peter's third denial: "Then [Peter] started to curse and swear: 'I do not know the man [Jesus]!'" —Matt. 26:74.

In certain languages the words "curse" and "swear" can refer to profanity. But when Peter 'cursed' and 'swore' he was not using foul or profane speech as many do when angry.

In the Bible, both in the original Hebrew and in the original Greek, a "curse" was a calling down of evil on some one or on some thing. It was not profanity and might not even be linked with anger. (Gen. 3:14, 15; 4:11, 12) To attest to the truthfulness of a statement, a person might utter a curse. By that he was stating, 'If what I am saying is not true, may I be cursed; may evil come upon me.' Similarly, someone might "swear" to a matter, thus taking an oath that it was true and that a calamity might befall him if it were not.

So Peter was not using profanity but was fearfully trying to convince those around him that his denials were truthful. That, of course, was a falsehood for which he had to repent. (Luke 22:61, 62) The Bible, though, does make it clear that Christians should avoid profanity, telling us: "Let a rotten saying not proceed out of your mouth."—Eph. 4:29.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS
December 20: "Peace and Security!"—Then "Sudden Destruction." Page 10. Songs to Be Used: 16, 59.
December 27: 'Stay Awake and Keep Your Senses.' Page 16. Songs to Be Used: 90, 103.

