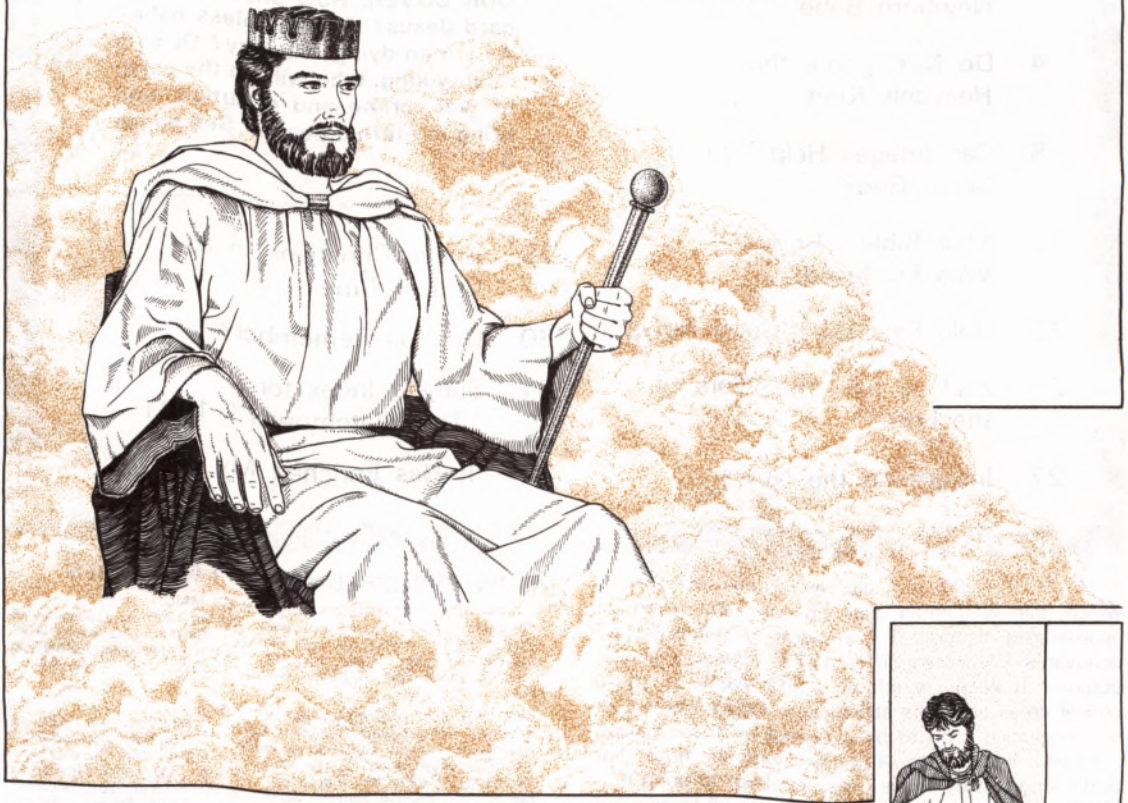


DECEMBER 15, 1981

THE

WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



Jesus Christ

—Babe In A Manger
Or Heavenly King?



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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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Millions Adore The Newborn Babe



ON DECEMBER 24, 1223, the 42-year-old Francis of Assisi (who was later canonized by the Roman Catholic Church) constructed in a church in Greccio, Italy, a model of the infant Jesus laid in a manger, or crib. Around the manger he placed figures representing Joseph and Mary, the shepherds who came to see the infant Jesus, an ass and an ox. A few hours later, at midnight, Francis' model of the nativity scene became the focal point of the Christmas Mass.

Since then the use of the crib in the celebration of Christmas has spread over all the world. Many, even today, despite the rank commercialism of Christmas, still feel sentimental and nostalgic during the Christmas season. They find something beautiful in the sights and sounds of wide-eyed children singing carols, the decorated Christmas tree, the excitement of gift-giving, the memory of the angelic announcement "Upon earth peace among men of goodwill" and, in the center of it all, that sweet and helpless infant lying quietly in a manger.—Luke 2:14, 16.

Of course, most people know by now that the trappings of Christmas are more

pagan than Christian. Encyclopedias available in most public libraries show that the feasting and gift-giving are hand-me-downs from the pagan Roman Saturnalia. The holly, mistletoe and decorated Christmas tree come from northern European paganism. Even the date, December 25, was not when Jesus was born. Rather, it was the date that the worshipers of Mithra celebrated the birth of the "unconquered sun."

But the nativity scene? Well, according to the Bible, the "wise men," or eastern astrologers—who are sometimes represented in Christmas scenes as being present at the manger—never made it to the actual place where Jesus was born. They arrived later, when Joseph and Mary were already living in a house. (Matt. 2:1-11) However, Jesus *was* laid in a manger after his birth. Shepherds did come to see him, and angels in the heavens did sing, "Glory in the heights above to God, and upon earth peace among men of goodwill." —Luke 2:8-14.

That tiny infant, born in Bethlehem nearly 2,000 years ago, has become the most famous baby in history. The account of his birth, as recorded in the Bible, has been published around the world. To millions of people, Jesus is still thought of as a babe in a manger.

Do you feel that this is proper? Should we still think of Jesus as a helpless babe lying in a manger? What does the Bible indicate?

Do Not Ignore The Heavenly King

IT APPEARS that while Jesus was on earth as a man, he never drew attention to his early childhood. On one occasion while he was preaching, a woman in the crowd cried: "Happy is the womb that carried you and the breasts that you sucked!" But Jesus countered: "No, rather, Happy are those hearing the word of God and keeping it!" (Luke 11:27, 28) He did not encourage people to speak sentimentally about his birth or Mary's role in it.

It is noteworthy that the Bible does not give us the date of Jesus' birth, and Jesus nowhere commanded us to celebrate his birthday. Moreover, during the first centuries after Jesus' death, there is no record of Christians ever celebrating Christmas.

In view of this—and in view of the numerous pagan customs associated with Christmas—many today do not join in the celebration. They prefer to show their respect for Jesus in other ways. To them, Jesus is no longer a babe in a manger. He has grown up to become something much greater.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

During the celebration of Christmas, certain passages from the Bible are often read at religious services, and, hence, have become quite well known. Consider some of these passages as they appear in a modern translation of the Bible, and see what they say about how we should view Jesus today.

One scripture tells us how Mary first



learned she was going to be the mother of Jesus. The angel Gabriel appeared and announced: "Look! you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you are to call his name Jesus." This event is very famous. Yet, have you ever noticed the angel's next words concerning Jesus? "This one will be great and will be called Son of the Most High; and Jehovah God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule as king over the house of Jacob forever, and there will be no end of his kingdom."—Luke 1:31-33.

Yes, the angel Gabriel showed that there was much more than the birth of a baby involved here. Mary's child would become great. He would be the royal heir of King David and would rule as a king forever.

When Jesus was born, another well-known event took place. An angel appeared to shepherds who were watching their flocks in a field and said: "Look! I am declaring to you good news of a great joy that all the people will have, because there was born to you today a Savior, who is Christ the Lord, in David's city. And this is a sign for you: you will

find an infant bound in cloth bands and lying in a manger." Then a multitude of other angels joined this first one, praising God and saying: "Glory in the heights above to God, and upon earth peace among men of goodwill."—Luke 2:8-14.

The angel told the shepherds that Jesus would be lying in a manger—this was a sign for them, to help them to identify the infant in question. But what part of that message do you think thrilled the shepherds most? Surely, the news that here at last was the promised Savior, the one who would certainly become Christ. Here was born the one who, when he grew up, would bring peace on earth among men of goodwill.

Another scripture often used in Christmas services in the churches of Christendom is found in Isaiah chapter nine. There the words are recorded: "For there has been a child born to us, there has been a son given to us; and the princely rule will come to be upon his shoulder. And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."—Isa. 9:6.

There has been some impressive music written to accompany these words, and this can usually be heard around the time of Christmas. Yet how many really listen to the words that come after "there has been a child born to us"? Jesus is here given some weighty and meaningful titles. And verse 7 describes him as the one who brings blessings without end by his Kingdom rule. Is this not the way we should think of him today?

WHAT JESUS IS NOW

When a person celebrates his birthday, he customarily receives presents and congratulations on being a year older. How would he feel if, every time his birthday came around, his mother insisted on bringing out snapshots showing what he was

like when he was a baby? People like to be recognized for what they are now, not just for what they were as infants.

It is rather similar concerning life and death. People hope to be remembered for what they accomplished in life, not for what they looked like in their last moments. Hence, when a statue is erected in honor of a famous man, it usually shows him standing upright and strong, or engaged in some activity for which he was famous, not suffering in his death agonies.

In view of this, it is interesting how Jesus is usually envisioned by most people. At Christmas he is represented as a helpless babe in a manger. The rest of the year he is most often shown as a man dying in agony. Is this a balanced representation?

True, with regard to these two occasions Jesus showed wonderful humility. First, he gave up his glorious position in heaven.



Mary heard that Jesus would
"rule as king . . . forever"



Isaiah was told that Jesus would
be a Prince of Peace

He "emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men." As a human, "he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake."—Phil. 2:7, 8.

We should be fully aware of these sacrifices that Jesus made, because they are examples for us of deep humility. (Phil. 2:5, 6) Also, each of these experiences was essential for Jesus to fulfill his Father's will and to offer his human life for the salvation of the human race. In this way he could become our "Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

But Jesus' experience did not stop there. He is not now lying helpless as a babe in a manger. Nor is he dead on a torture stake. After his death, God raised him to life and "exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend."—Phil. 2:9, 10.

Jesus himself said: "All authority has been given me in heaven and on the earth." (Matt. 28:18) He is now God's anointed king, ruling in heaven in the now-established kingdom. He has already experienced the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy: "To him there were given rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him. His rulership is an indefinitely lasting rulership that will not pass away, and his kingdom one that will not be brought to ruin."—Dan. 7:14.

THE NEED FOR GOD'S KINGDOM

While on earth, Jesus made this kingdom the theme of his preaching, saying: "Repent, you people, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." (Matt. 4:17) He taught his followers to pray for that kingdom, and in so doing emphasized its importance. He said: "You must pray, then, this way: '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) He thus showed that God's will is going to be accomplished by means of this kingdom, over which Jesus is now the appointed king.

What is God's will? It is for Jesus to be the "Prince of Peace." Hence, God will be "making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth." (Ps. 46:9) On the basis of Jesus' death, God's purpose is to save mankind from sin and death and give us the opportunity to live forever. Hence, Jesus becomes our "Savior, who is Christ the Lord." The benefits of this saving activity will come to mankind through the Kingdom.

For those who accept the opportunity, the future under Christ's kingship will be full of blessings. No more sickness, no more death, a resurrection of our lost

loved ones and spiritual and physical prosperity are all promised to faithful mankind under Jesus, who, as Gabriel said to Mary, "will rule as king . . . forever." —Rev. 21:4; John 5:28, 29; Luke 1:33.

But how will this be possible, since the earth is ruled now by human governments that are extremely jealous of their sovereignty? The Bible pictures Jesus not only as a prince of peace but also as a conquering king who removes from before him all the obstacles to mankind's eternal happiness. Rulers are warned to accept his kingship. (Ps. 2:10-12) For those that ignore his rulership, the Bible says: "In the days of those kings [present political rulers] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite." Thus Jesus will become world ruler.—Dan. 2:44.



Many today recognize Jesus as the now-reigning King

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

When Jesus grew up from babyhood and became a man, he showed qualities that make us warm to him as a person. He had compassion for the oppressed, and he pitied the sick and tried to help them. (Matt. 14:14) He loved children, and children were drawn to him. (Matt. 19:13-15) He loved righteousness and hated lawlessness. (Heb. 1:9) Moreover, he deeply loved his disciples "to the end."—John 13:1.

Does he still have these qualities, now that he is a heavenly king? Certainly he does. These qualities, demonstrated while he was a man on earth, make him the ideal ruler for the human race.

Almost 2,000 years ago, Jesus' birth was announced and the angels in heaven expressed great joy. But that little babe has grown up! We cannot ignore the fact that he is now "King of those who rule as kings and Lord of those who rule as lords." (1 Tim. 6:15) So, not as a babe but as a ruling king, he will bring about "upon earth peace among men of goodwill," as many of us so earnestly desire.

Why not examine the Bible yourself and come to know Jesus as he really is, God's now-reigning king? Why not study to find out how you, too, can be numbered among those "men of goodwill" who will experience the 'peace on earth' that God promised almost 2,000 years ago? And do not forget that Jesus himself has extended this personal invitation to you: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) Can you wisely ignore this kind invitation from such a king?

Can images help you serve God?

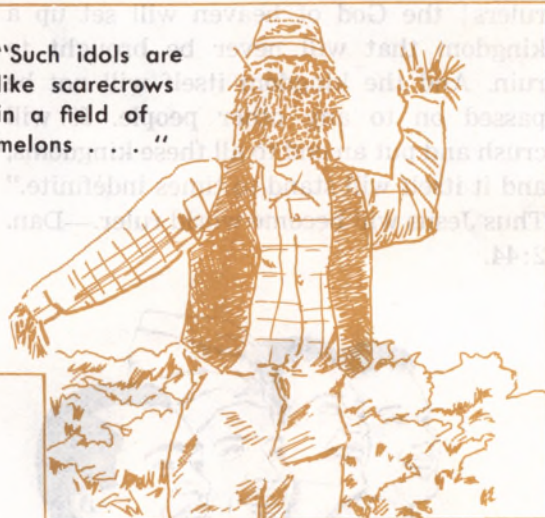
IT HAS been the custom of many persons to use images in their worship of God. They may say that they do not worship the image, but that seeing and touching it aids them in worshiping God. Yet, does God want us to worship him with the aid of images? Let us see.

God directed his ancient people of Israel: "Do not follow the ways of other nations . . . The religion of these people is worthless. A tree is cut down in the forest; it is carved by the tools of the woodworker and decorated with silver and gold." The people

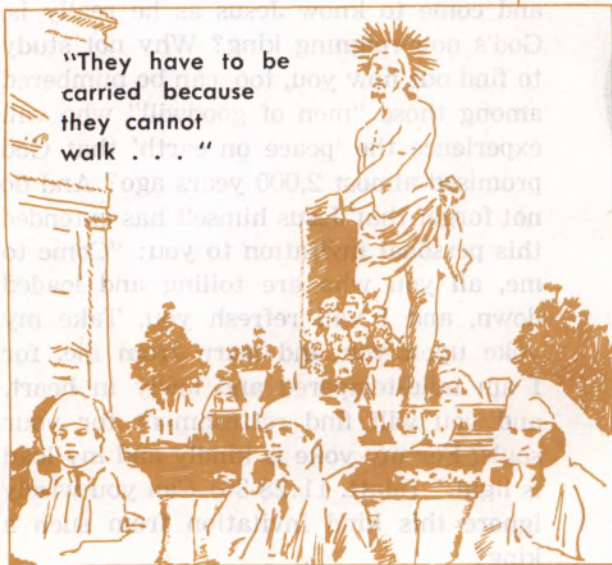
They are "carved
by the tools
of the wood-
worker . . . "



"Such idols are
like scarecrows
in a field of
melons . . . "



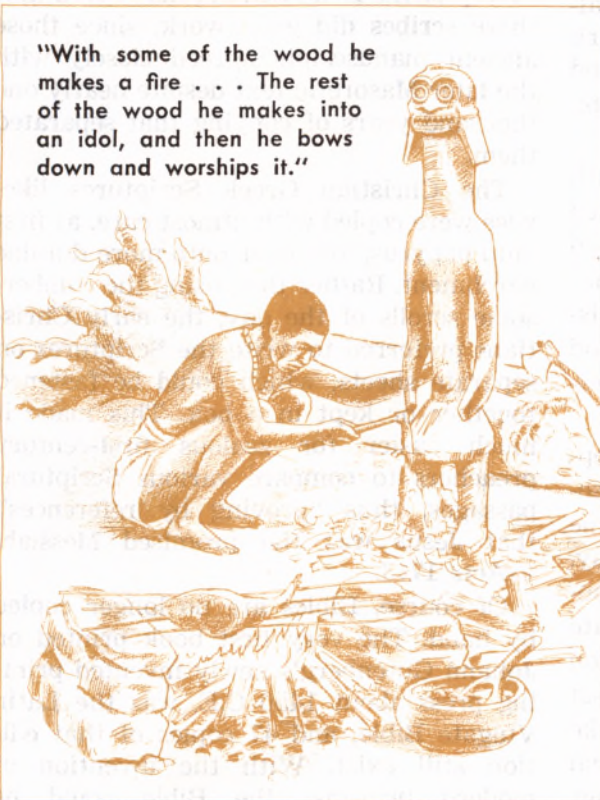
"They have to be
carried because
they cannot
walk . . . "



believed that such an image or idol was a help in worshiping God. Yet the Bible goes on to say: "Such idols are like scarecrows in a field of melons; they cannot speak; they have to be carried because they cannot walk. . . . they can do you no good." —Jer. 10:2-5, *Today's English Version*; Isa. 46:6, 7.

Often an image or idol is made in the form of a person. The image may be made from a tree, the wood from which can also be used to make a fire. The Bible says of a man who uses wood for both of such purposes: "With some of the wood he makes a fire; he roasts meat, eats it, and is satisfied. . . . The rest of the wood he makes into an idol, and then he bows down and worships it. He prays to it and says, 'You are my god—save me!'"—Isa. 44:13-17, *TEV*.

"With some of the wood he makes a fire . . . The rest of the wood he makes into an idol, and then he bows down and worships it."



Does it really make sense to honor an image? The Bible answers: "Such people [who do] are too stupid to know what they are doing. They close their eyes and their minds to the truth. The maker of idols hasn't the wit or the sense to say, 'Some of the wood I burned up. I baked some bread on the coals, and I roasted meat and ate it. And the rest of the wood I made into an idol. Here I am bowing down to a block of wood!' It makes as much sense as eating ashes."—Isa. 44:18-20, *TEV*; Ps. 115:4-8.

So, as we might have expected, Jesus Christ never used images in worship. "God is a Spirit," he explained, "and those worshipping him must worship with spirit and truth." (John 4:24) Acting in harmony with this counsel, none of Jesus' early followers used images as aids in worship. In fact, his apostle Paul wrote: "We are walking by faith, not by sight." (2 Cor. 5:7) And Jesus' apostle John warned: "Guard yourselves from idols." (1 John 5:21) Why not look around your home and ask yourself whether you are following this advice?—Deut. 7:25.

Your Bible How It Was Produced

IN OUR violent, hungry and polluted world there is no shortage of bad news. But here is some good news: In these wicked "last days" of Satan's system of things millions of copies of God's Word, the Bible, are being printed in hundreds of languages and are being distributed over all the earth.—2 Tim. 3:1.

How much Satan and his demons would like to stop this worldwide distribution of God's Word! Yet the complete Bible is available in 275 languages today, and at least one or more of the Bible books can be found in 1,710 tongues, making God's Word available in the language of virtually everyone on earth. Even in this dark epoch of human history, 'Jehovah's hand is not too short' to get his life-giving Word to those needing it.—Isa. 50:2.

True, some are distributing Bibles with an eye on the cash register. An estimated 20 million copies are sold in the United States yearly, many for profit. But other persons are translating, printing and distributing God's Word out of love for God and neighbor. Jehovah's Witnesses are especially active in such work.

Early Christians pioneered the development of the codex (an early form of loose-leaf book that replaced the cumbersome scrolls then in use). In a similar way, modern-day Christian witnesses of Jehovah are making good use of up-to-date computerized typesetting and composition methods, coupled with advanced offset printing equipment. Their goal? To make Bibles available to everyone at nominal cost. Perhaps you have a copy of the new,

1981 edition of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. Would you like to know how this Bible was produced?

FROM QUILLS TO COMPUTERS

You would not have a Bible to read if careful scribes in the past had not painstakingly copied the Scriptures by hand. In fact, the Hebrew word for "scribe" comes from a root meaning "to count," because, according to the Talmud, the scribes would count the letters and words in each section of Scripture to be sure that they made no mistakes! The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls proved that those scribes did good work, since those ancient manuscripts agreed closely with the later Masoretic text despite nearly one thousand years of copying that separated them.

The Christian Greek Scriptures likewise were copied with utmost care, at first onto papyrus, and later onto more durable parchment. Rather than using the cumbersome scrolls of the day, the early Christians preferred to write the Scriptures on separate sheets, which could be fastened together or kept in a box. This made it much easier for zealous first-century preachers to compare various Scriptural passages, thus "proving by references" that Jesus was the promised Messiah.—Acts 17:3.

Of course, Bibles are no longer copied by hand. The very first book printed on Johann Gutenberg's newly invented printing press about 1450 C.E. was the Latin Vulgate Bible, and 47 copies of that edition still exist. With the invention of modern printing, the Bible could be

made available to the common man, and Bible translations in vernacular languages soon appeared, despite Church opposition. Whereas a scribe could copy only a few pages a day, the modern web offset press that printed the 1981 edition of the *New World Translation* can produce over 20,000,000 Bible pages daily! While a scribe ran the risk of making mistakes on every page, the modern press precisely duplicates the text, copy after copy. The Bible text reproduced by the press has been stored in a computer and transferred to film for making plates. Thus, new plates for the press can be made without the risk of human transcription error. Bible production has come a long way!

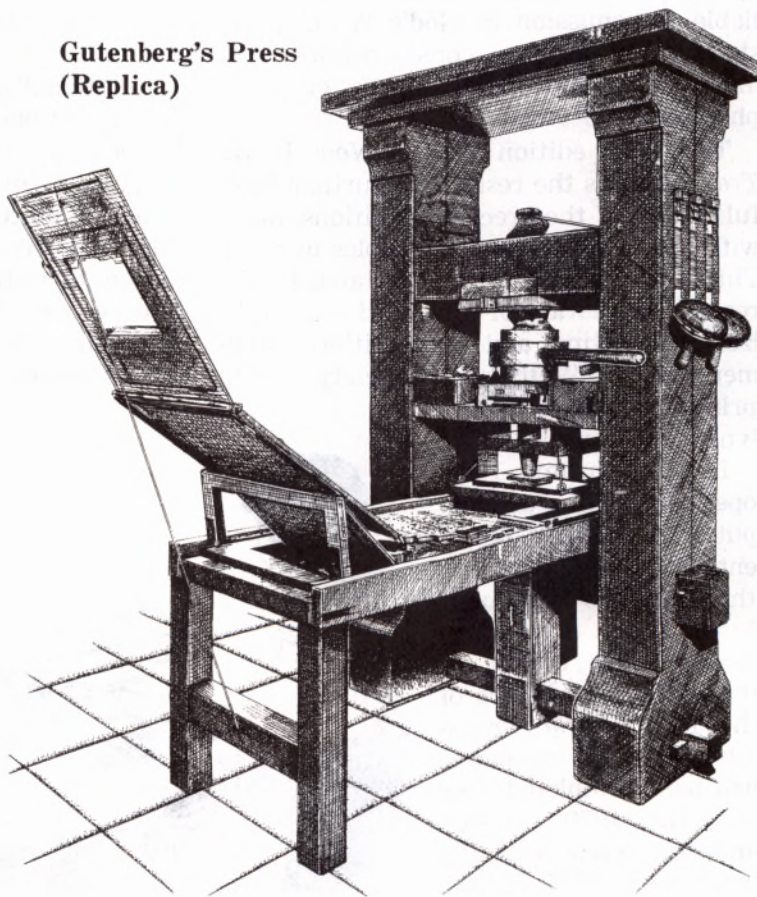
EXAMINING THE 1981 "NEW WORLD TRANSLATION"

The 1981 edition of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* is the culmination of 35 years of studious translation and careful revision. The translating project was initiated back in 1946, and by 1960 both the Hebrew and the Greek portions of God's Word had been rendered into English directly from the original languages. During those years of translation a great deal of careful research was done by the New World Bible Translation Committee to assure that the translation was internally consistent in word choice and that the best possible readings of various manuscripts were

used in the text. Jehovah's Witnesses, who use the *New World Translation* as their primary Scriptural reference, have greatly appreciated and benefited from this scholarly work.

However, the work of the translation committee (whose members remain anonymous at their request) was not finished in 1960. The *New World Translation* was first issued as a single volume in 1961, and this edition incorporated a careful revision of all the previous work. Since the 1961 edition contained no footnotes, a number of footnote readings from the earlier editions were put in the main text to conform more closely to the literal meaning of the original languages. A sec-

Gutenberg's Press
(Replica)



ond revision, in 1970, took note of changes both in English usage and in the understanding of the ancient languages being translated. Over 100 words or expressions used in the 1961 edition were therefore altered. In 1971, the *New World Translation* was issued in a larger-print format with footnotes, and another revision of the text was made.

It is the desire of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, which holds the copyright to the *New World Translation*, that this excellent translation be kept up to date. The *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* aims to render God's Word accurately and literally in harmony with the living, changing languages currently understood by its readers. This translation values reliable transmission of God's Word above stylistic or literary considerations that mark many modern idiomatic or paraphrased Bible versions.

The 1981 edition of the *New World Translation* is the result of a further careful review of the preceding editions, made with the above guiding principles in mind. This review was greatly facilitated by the recent installation of advanced computerized typesetting and composition equipment at the Watchtower Society's main printing plant in Brooklyn, New York.

In December 1979 operators sitting at computer terminals began entering the Bible into the Society's computer. In a little over five months, the typing of two different editions of the *New World Translation* into the computer had been completed. One was the 1970 revision and the other was the larger-print 1971 edition.

This dual entry method served two purposes. First, it helped to reduce the amount of time spent proofreading the Bible. To this end, the Society's data processing department designed a computer program to compare these two editions letter by letter. What would happen when the slightest difference was detected? The computer was instructed to print out the entire verse containing the discrepancy, indicating precisely where it occurred in the verse.

So this minimized the proofreaders' work in searching for text entry errors. The computer found most of them! True, once in a very great while the two typists made the very same mistake on the very same word. But that occurred only once in every 500,000 keystrokes, and these errors were located by the proofreaders and corrected.

Additionally, the entry of two different editions of the *New World Translation* allowed the computer to locate every verse in which the two versions differed, no matter how slight the variation. The New World Bible Translation Committee then reviewed each of these differences and decided which rendering to use in the 1981 edition. With the help of the computer, proofreaders were able to



find very slight variations in the text of the *New World Translation*. For example, some proper names were divided into two syllables in one part of the Bible (A'dam, E'sau), and in another part appeared as one word without the syllables indicated. Minor differences involving quotation marks, parentheses and brackets also were located and cleared up. The final result is that the 1981 edition of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* is the most accurate and consistent edition the Society has ever published.

COMPUTERIZED COMPOSITION

The computer does far more than assist proofreaders. It is a marvelous tool for page composition as well. How so?

Previous editions of the *New World Translation* were set on Linotype machines, requiring upward of a thousand man-hours of work. The operators of these machines typed the Bible text one line at a time, deciding at the end of each line if the last word in the line needed to be hyphenated and, if so, how the word should be divided. In the course of setting type for the entire Bible, Linotype operators had to make thousands of such decisions. Inevitably, some hyphenation errors resulted.

Moreover, "Linotype operators are only human," pointed out one experienced factory worker, "and they don't all set type exactly the same way. Some of them tend to set type a little 'tight,' which means they will try to squeeze a little more on every line than other operators, who set 'loose.' Or the same operator might set type somewhat differently on different days."

The Society's computer eliminated the need for Linotypes in Bible production. Once it contained the text of the *New World Translation* the computer program decided how that text should be composed into lines of type, and how the lines should

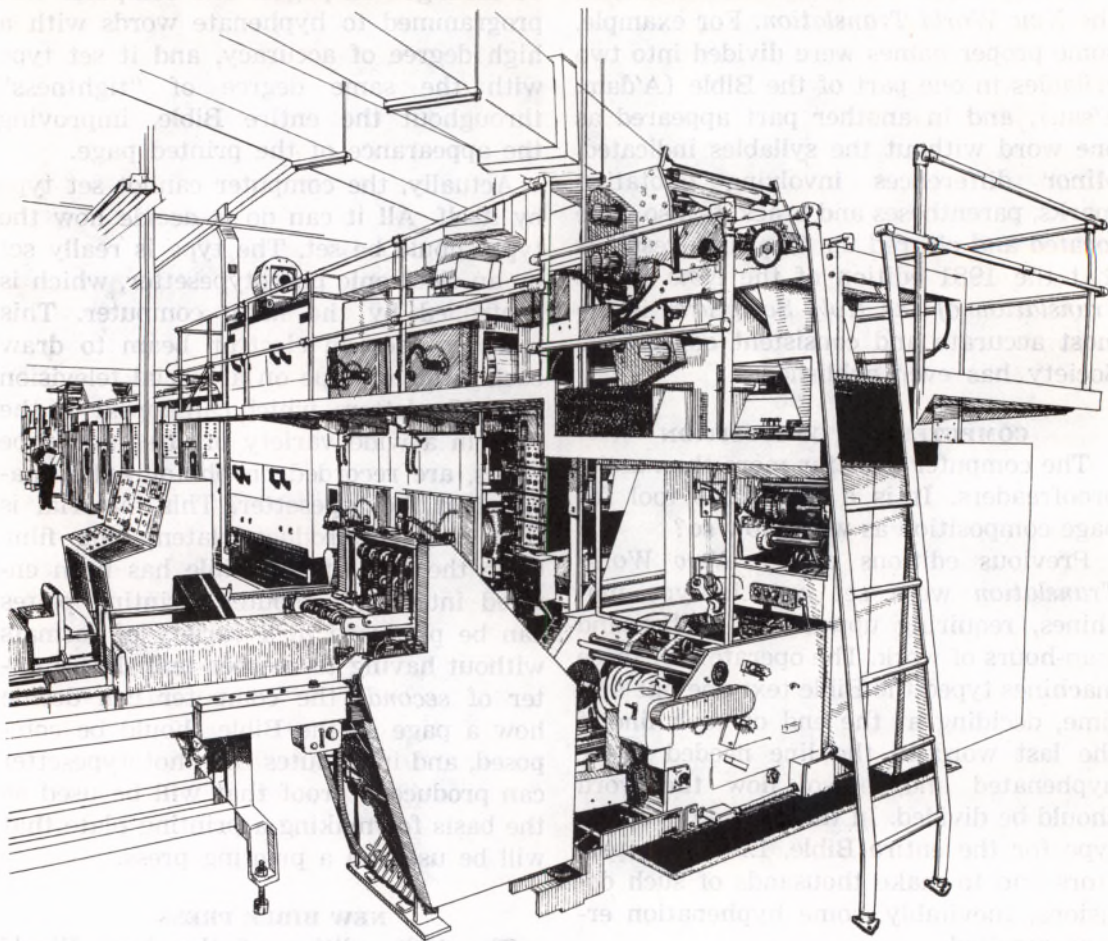
be arranged on pages. The computer was programmed to hyphenate words with a high degree of accuracy, and it set type with the same degree of "tightness" throughout the entire Bible, improving the appearance of the printed page.

Actually, the computer cannot set type by itself. All it can do is decide how the type should be set. The type is really set by an electronic phototypesetter, which is controlled by the main computer. This machine uses an electron beam to draw each letter of type on a special television tube. The letters, which can appear on the tube in a wide variety of sizes and type styles, are recorded on photographic material in the typesetter. This material is then used to produce platemaking film. Once the text of the Bible has been entered into the computer, printing plates can be produced in a variety of formats without having to reenter text. In a matter of *seconds* the computer can decide how a page of the Bible should be composed, and in minutes the phototypesetter can produce a proof that will be used as the basis for making a printing plate that will be used on a printing press.

NEW BIBLE PRESS

The 1981 edition of the *New World Translation* was printed on a new web offset press specially configured to produce Bibles. This new press is 109 feet (33 m) long—quite large compared to most Bible presses. It prints on four rolls of thin Bible paper at the same time, producing 128 Bible pages with every impression, or the equivalent of over 2,600 Bibles per hour of running time.

"Our older Bible presses produce only 64 pages per impression," pointed out a factory overseer. "The new press allows us to print larger sections of the Bible. So there are not as many sections to be sewn together in the bindery, saving time and manpower."



The new press has other advantages as well. A comparison of the 1981 edition of the *New World Translation* with previous editions quickly reveals that the new edition is easier to read and visually more pleasing. Why? A new, more delicate typeface was used that might not have stood up well under the pounding of a letterpress, but presents no problems when printed on an offset press. This gives the pages of the 1981 edition a distinctly crisp look. Moreover, when Bibles are printed on letterpresses, it is very difficult to keep the required heavy impression from showing through the page, further darkening it. This show-through problem does not

exist when offset printing is used. The advantages of new Bible printing technology are obvious as soon as the 1981 edition of the *New World Translation* is opened!

MULTI-LANGUAGE COMPUTERIZATION

When the *New World Translation* was first undertaken, no one expected that it would someday be available in six languages besides English, with the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* available in another four. Today this Bible version is printed in the native tongues of over one billion people, who thus can benefit from the textual

research and scholarly attention that went into the original English translation.

This retranslation work has been greatly simplified by the literal nature of the English *New World Translation* itself. "It is nearly impossible to retranslate a paraphrased Bible," admitted a representative of one of Christendom's Bible translating societies. Not so with the *New World Translation*! To date, careful retranslation of the English text, with comparison of the Hebrew and the Greek, has yielded fine results in Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Danish, Finnish, Japanese and Swedish. Serious students of God's Word in many lands now benefit from a translation that courageously restores God's name, Jehovah, to its proper place in the Biblical text, that is free from the bias of religious traditionalism, and that gives the literal meaning of God's Word as accurately as possible.

The Watchtower Society's new computer facilities should be a great help in this ongoing work of multi-language Bible printing. Future editions of the *New World Translation*, regardless of language, will eventually be entered into a computer and will have the same excellent features as the 1981 English edition.

WORLDWIDE MODERNIZATION

The *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* is only the beginning of the Watchtower Society's conversion to computerized photocomposition and typesetting. The Society's major printing branches are presently installing modern

In Coming Issues

- **Why So Much Dishonesty?**
- **The Virgin Birth—Can You Believe It?**
- **God's Purpose in Having Some "Born Again"**

offset presses. It is hoped that in the near future phototypesetting can be used worldwide to handle pre-press operations for many of the more than 160 languages in which the Society currently prints literature. As a result, faster and more accurate typesetting will reduce the time lapse between the English editions of the Society's publications and the editions in other languages. The prospect is thrilling indeed!

A large undertaking? Yes, but much has already been accomplished! Let all credit be given to Jehovah God, whose will it is that the "good news" of his Messianic kingdom be preached "in all the inhabited earth," regardless of the local languages! As long as it is Jehovah's will that this preaching work continue, the Watchtower Society intends to use every appropriate means to get Jehovah's Word of truth "to the most distant part of the earth." (Matt. 24:14; Acts 1:8) How privileged anyone is to be able to participate in this grand work today!

ALL-TIME BEST-SELLER!

The Book of Lists (1977) shows the Bible to be the all-time best-seller, with a distribution of 2,458,000,000. But it acknowledged that to be an incomplete figure and said: "Most likely the actual total figure for Bible sales and distribution . . . would be in the area of 3 billion copies."—P. 222.

HOLD FAST THE "GOOD NEWS"!

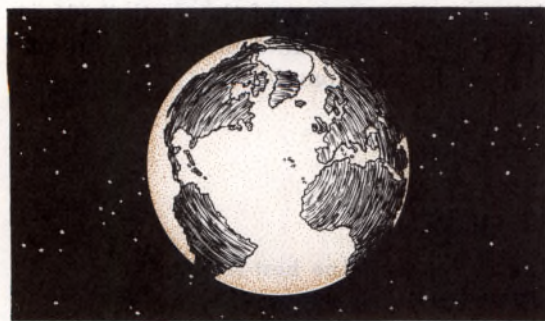
"You are holding it fast, unless, in fact, you became believers to no purpose."—1 Cor. 15:2.

THE apostle Paul climaxes his first letter to the Corinthians with a masterful discussion of the resurrection. Why did he argue so fervently in behalf of the resurrection? It was for a timely purpose. Those Corinthian Christians were surrounded by a greedy, immoral world, and some had even fallen into Satan's snares. Paul did not want his beloved brothers to be "believers to no purpose," for that would mean their destruction. Rather, he wanted them to stand firm in the "good news" that he declared to them.

² Likewise today, we live in a world that does not know God. Therefore, we who 'have rested our hope on the living

1. Why did Paul argue fervently in behalf of the resurrection?

2. (a) Why should we today work hard in behalf of the "good news"? (b) How is the resurrection tied in with the "good news"?



The "good news" focuses on God's kingdom by Christ, the hope for restoring paradise to our earth

16

God' must work hard and exert ourselves in behalf of the "good news." (1 Tim. 4:10) This "good news" now focuses on the established "kingdom of our Lord [Jehovah] and of his Christ." It is by resurrection that Christ Jesus and his 144,000 associate kings gain that kingdom, the

A WORLD EMPIRE OF FALSE RELIGION CENTERS ITS HOPE ON THE PLATONIC TEACHING THAT ALL SOULS ARE IMMORTAL

heavenly Mount Zion. Also, it is by resurrection that the great majority of mankind will attain to the earthly realm of the Kingdom. (Rev. 11:15; 14:1; 20:12) Hence, the resurrection becomes an outstanding feature of the "good news."

THE RESURRECTION HOPE

³ What, then, is this resurrection hope? It is not a hope based on the supposed immortality of the soul, as taught by the world empire of false religion, both inside and outside Christendom. No, it is a hope for mortal souls! The word "resurrection" (Greek, *an-as'tas-is*) occurs some 40 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. It means a standing up again to life. In order

3. In what way does the resurrection teaching conflict with that of the immortality of the soul?

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to rise again to life, a person must first be dead, for life is the opposite of death.—Deut. 30:19, 20; Isa. 38:17-19.

⁴ In the Hebrew Scriptures, there is no teaching of human immortality. The idea was entirely foreign to the Jews. However, there are many indications that these believed in an earthly resurrection. Apparently that is why they conjectured that Jesus might be the risen 'John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or another of the prophets.'—Matt. 16:14.

⁵ After describing the faithful course of Abel, Enoch, Noah and Abraham's household, the apostle Paul tells us: "In faith all these died, although they did not get the fulfillment of the promises, but they *saw them afar off* and welcomed them and publicly declared that they were strangers and temporary residents in the land." They looked forward to a resurrection, which would be on earth under the rule of "the city having real foundations"—God's kingdom by Messiah. When tested with regard to offering up Isaac, faithful Abraham "reckoned that God was able to raise him up even from the dead." Also, Abraham believed God's promise to him that "by means of your seed all nations of the earth will certainly bless themselves." Logically, the vast majority of the people of those nations would need to be resurrected in order to enjoy such blessings through that "seed."—Gen. 22:18; Heb. 11:4-19.

⁶ Later, integrity-keeping Job asked the question: "If an able-bodied man dies can he live again?" Job believed that a man could. And he indicated that faith by asking God to conceal him in Sheol (mankind's common grave) and remember him

4. What shows that the early Jews believed not in human immortality but in an earthly resurrection?

5. In line with God's purpose, to what prospect did Abraham and other ancient servants of God look forward?

6. What do the words of Job and of the sons of Korah indicate as to the resurrection?

TRUE CHRISTIANITY HOLDS TO THE BIBLE-BASED HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION OF UNCONSCIOUS SOULS FROM GRAVEDOM

after a set time. (Job 14:13-15) In Psalm 45:16, the sons of Korah prophesied that Messiah would have "sons" whom he would appoint as "princes in all the earth," during his millennial reign. These "sons" would include worthy "forefathers" of his to whom he will become a father by resurrecting them from the dead.—Matt. 1:1-16; Luke 3:23-38.

⁷ The inspired prophets also spoke of a resurrection, which they understood to be earthly. (Isa. 25:8; 26:19; Hos. 13:14) As death approached, the aged Daniel received the promise: "You will rest, but you will stand up for your lot at the end of the days." (Dan. 12:13) Daniel, who "through faith . . . [even] stopped the mouths of lions," looked forward to "a better resurrection." This would be a resurrection *to life* under God's established kingdom, in contrast to what Elijah, Elisha, Jesus and the apostles accomplished in raising persons who later died again.—Heb. 11:33, 35.

⁸ After Jesus had commenced his ministry, the imprisoned baptizer, John, sent messengers to ask whether Jesus really was the Messiah. After performing further miraculous cures, Jesus told them: "Go your way, report to John what you saw and heard: the blind are receiving sight, the lame are walking, the lepers are being cleansed and the deaf are hearing, *the dead are being raised up*, the poor are

7. (a) How do the writings of the prophets support the hope of an earthly resurrection? (b) Why will the resurrection of Daniel and others be "a better resurrection"?

8. What view of the resurrection was entertained by the messengers of John and by Martha?

being told the good news." (Luke 7:19-23) Thus, Jesus not only was establishing that he was the Messiah but also was building faith in what he would accomplish through his kingdom, even to raising the dead. Those people understood this to be a resurrection on earth. So did Martha, when later she said to Jesus concerning the dead Lazarus: "I know he will rise in the resurrection on the last day."—John 11:24.

THE HEAVENLY RESURRECTION

⁹ If Jesus had not raised Lazarus at that time, his hope would indeed have been an earthly one. But Jesus did perform that miracle, in temporarily bringing back Lazarus from the dead. Undoubtedly, Lazarus survived beyond the day of Pentecost, 33 C.E., and this would mean his receiving an additional favor from his Lord. For on that day of Pentecost he would be begotten by God's spirit to the hope of heavenly life, with the prospect of a heavenly resurrection in view. How was this opportunity opened up?

¹⁰ In his first letter to the Corinthian Christians, the apostle Paul discusses the resurrection. Some in the congregation there were arguing that "there is no resurrection of the dead." Apparently they had taken the viewpoint that living Christians had already experienced some kind of spiritual "resurrection," and perhaps some were combining this with Plato's philosophy of the immortality of the soul. Whatever the details of their erroneous viewpoint, Paul saw fit to 'put them in their place' by presenting a masterly argument in behalf of the true teaching on the resurrection, laying stress on 'the good news through which they were also being saved.'—1 Cor. 15:1, 2, 12.

9. How was Lazarus able to receive hope of a heavenly resurrection?

10. What erroneous viewpoint arose in Paul's day, but how did he refute this?

¹¹ What is this "good news"? It centers around the Christ. Paul includes among "first things" of importance the fact that Christ died, was buried, was raised up, and that he appeared, first to Cephas (Peter), then through various appearances to 500 and more other persons, and finally to Paul himself. Truly, Christ had been resurrected in the spirit! (1 Pet. 3:18) As Paul twice emphasized, these stirring events were "according to the Scriptures," confirming all that Jehovah's word had prophesied with regard to Messiah. Our faith would be useless were it not anchored in the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. 15:3-8, 17.

"EACH ONE IN HIS OWN ORDER"

¹² Further on, the apostle links the resurrection with Jehovah's Kingdom purposes. With confidence Paul proclaims: "Now Christ has been raised up from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep in death." If Christ is a "firstfruits," then there must also be other resurrected ones, "but each one in his own order." Others must wait until Christ's "presence" with Kingdom power, when the ransomer, Jesus Christ, starts to 'make alive' those who "are dying" or who have died because of sin inherited from Adam.—1 Cor. 15:20-23, *Kingdom Interlinear*.

¹³ After Christ, resurrected 'in their own order' will be the 144,000 anointed Kingdom heirs, who have followed in Jesus' footsteps to the death. This resurrection starts "during his presence [Greek, *parousia*]," which began in the eventful year 1914. A few remaining ones of Christ's spiritual "brothers" are still serving on earth, and these likewise will be resurrected in this "rank," "in the twinkling of an eye" at their human death. Thus

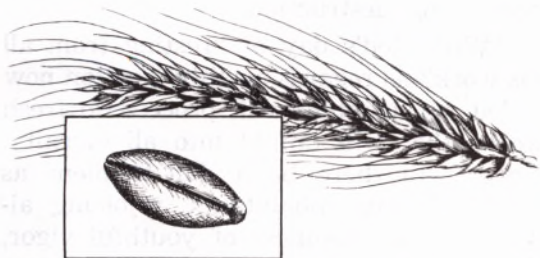
11. How does the "good news" tie in with the resurrection hope?

12. In what way does Christ become a "firstfruits"?

13. How does the resurrection proceed according to "rank"?

the entire “[spiritual] Israel of God” will be gathered to the heavenly kingdom.—1 Cor. 15:22, 23, 50-52; Heb. 2:10-13; Rev. 7:4-8; Gal. 6:16.

¹⁴ The apostle beautifully illustrates the death and resurrection of spirit-begotten Christians. He does this by a comparison with the death of a bare grain of wheat



or any one of the rest, from which a new plant sprouts. Yes, the body “sown in corruption” is “raised up in incorruption” as a glorious spiritual body that ‘bears the image of the last Adam’—the Lord Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. 15:35-49.

¹⁵ However, are the 144,001, including Christ, the only ones to be resurrected in proper order? Not at all! For Hebrews 11:40 tells us that their resurrection is to “something better,” a heavenly spiritual estate. This is better than what? Why, better than the estate attained in the resurrection that takes place next in order! This resurrection must include those who will be made “princes in all the earth,” and who reasonably will be among the first to be resurrected on earth following Jehovah’s decisive victory at Har-Magedon’s battle. Thus they will be able to take up their assigned duties in the “new earth”—the theocratic society of God’s people in the cleansed earth. Theirs is a “better resurrection,” for it takes place under God’s kingdom, with prospect of everlasting life for the resurrected ones.

14. How does Paul illustrate the heavenly resurrection?
15. Where does the “better resurrection” take place, and who are included?

In this time group we expect to find faithful dedicated Christians who today have an earthly hope and who die from various causes prior to the coming in of the “new earth.”—Isa. 32:1; Rev. 16:14, 16; 21:1, 3, 4.

A FAVORED GROUP

¹⁶ However, there is one group who are especially favored. And who might these be? They are the “great crowd” whom the apostle John describes in some detail at Revelation 7:9-17. Their hope is everlasting life in the “new earth.” As a group they pass through the “great tribulation” without ever having to die. What a precious privilege these enjoy as a result of ‘washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb’! In this most important finale to the “last days,” when a resounding witness must be given to the nations and people of earth, this “great crowd,” to the number of more than 2,300,000 at present, is seen to be performing such “sacred service” in the earthly courtyards of Jehovah’s arrangement for worship. This “great crowd” experiences no “scorching heat” of divine judgment. And why? “Because the Lamb [Jesus Christ], who is in the midst of the [heavenly] throne, will shepherd them, and will guide them to fountains of waters of life. And God will wipe out every tear from their eyes.”

¹⁷ No doubt the “great crowd” will be joyful as they move out into the cleansed earth and welcome resurrected faithful ones. Then, also, in God’s due time, and in orderly arrangement, the billions of mankind in the “memorial tombs” will come forth on earth in a general resurrection. (John 5:28, 29; Rev. 20:12) As the so-

16. Which other group enjoys special favor, and in what privileges do these share?

17. (a) What joy awaits the “great crowd”? (b) How will the miracle of the resurrection move on to its finale?

ciety of the "new earth" begins to function, and as Christ and his corulers apply the benefits of his ransom sacrifice in healing mankind and lifting them to perfection of mind and body, what rejoicing there will be among the happy, united families of mankind!—Isa. 65:17, 18; 2 Pet. 3:13.

¹⁸ One thousand years will pass like one day, at least from Jehovah's standpoint. (2 Pet. 3:8) The earth will be filled with perfect humanity, just as Jehovah purposed when he first created man, some 7,000 years earlier. His 7,000-year "day" of rest will be at its end, and it will not have been in vain, for his grand purpose toward our earth will have been fulfilled. What now?

¹⁹ The apostle Paul tells us: "Next, the end, when [Christ] hands over the kingdom to his God and Father, when he has brought to nothing all government and all authority and power [in opposition]. For he must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing.

18. How will God's grand purpose toward our earth come to complete fulfillment?

19. What happens after the "last enemy" is brought to nothing?

Can you answer the following?

- What shows that men and women of faith in early times looked forward to a resurrection on earth?
- After Christ the "firstfruits," how many others share, "each one in his own order," in the heavenly resurrection?
- When and in what groups does the resurrection on earth take place?
- How is one class particularly favored in gaining life on earth without a resurrection?
- What must we all do so as not to become "believers to no purpose"?

... then the Son himself will also subject himself to the One who subjected all things to him, that God may be all things to everyone." (1 Cor. 15:24-28) Satan will then be released, as described at Revelation 20:7-10, to test individually the integrity of perfected mankind. Then he, and any who may follow him, will be hurled into the symbolic "lake of fire," which signifies everlasting destruction.

²⁰ With God's day of "resting from all his work" as regards earthly creation now ended, no doubt he will proceed to fresh works that will unfold into all eternity. Never will there be a dull moment as earth's joyous inhabitants, rejoicing always in the freshness of youthful vigor, share in whatever activity the God of purpose assigns them to do.—Gen. 2:3; Isa. 66:22.

OF VITAL IMPORTANCE

²¹ We must 'hold fast the good news,' including its resurrection hope, for the resurrection is of vital importance to all of God's servants. Faithful men and women of ancient times believed in an earthly resurrection, and they looked forward to it. (Heb. 11:13-16) Christ Jesus was raised as the "firstfruits" of the resurrection, as testified to by hundreds of eyewitnesses. Anointed, spirit-begotten Christians have "preached in all creation that is under heaven," both in apostolic and in modern times, so that the "good news" relating to the resurrection has circled the globe. (Col. 1:23) And as the remaining anointed ones finish their earthly course to gain their heavenly reward, a "great crowd," again with hope of everlasting life on earth, has taken up the proclamation of the Kingdom "good news." —Matt. 24:14.

20. What glorious prospect will face mankind as God's rest day ends?

21. How may we benefit from Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 15?

²² How privileged are all these groups as they attain to their goals, each one in his own order, or rank! Truly, we today have every reason to follow Paul's fur-

22. What concluding admonition does Paul give in his letter, and why do we have every reason to follow it?

ther admonition: "Stay awake, stand firm in the faith, carry on as men, grow mighty. Let all your affairs take place with love." (1 Cor. 16:13) Thus we will be believers to good purpose.

ZEALOUS FOR "THE WORK OF THE LORD"

"Become steadfast, unmovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord."—1 Cor. 15:58.

THE resurrection hope should be a great stimulus, always, to each one of us. For the enemy death touches the lives of each one of us directly or indirectly, at some time or another. When loved ones die, we may reflect on Jehovah's grand purposes, so that we "may not sorrow just as the rest also do who have no hope." We may have faith that the dead will rise again, just as Jesus rose from the dead. (1 Thess. 4:13, 14) Also, we have the assured expectation that, should we ourselves die, Jehovah will remember us in the resurrection, provided

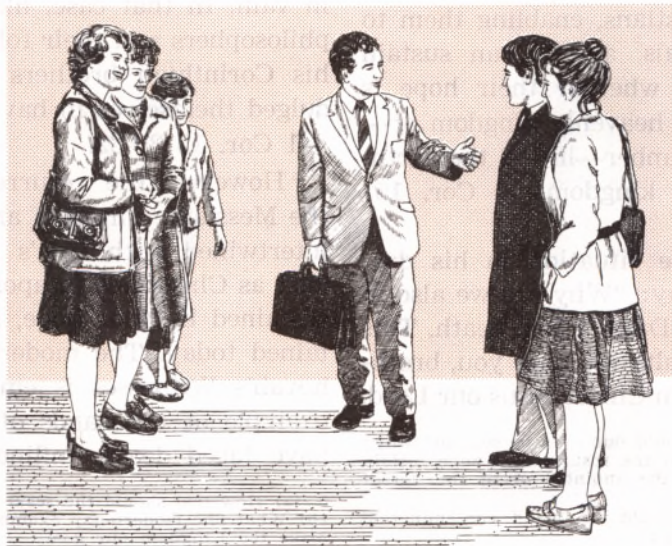
1. Why should the resurrection hope have real meaning for all of us?

we have been faithful in carrying out our dedication to him.—John 5:28, 29; 6:40.

² As these "last days" move quickly toward their finale, many of us hope to survive the "great tribulation" without ever having to die. (Matt. 24:21; 2 Tim. 3:1) However, even with the swift, the mighty ones, the wise and the understanding ones—"time and unforeseen occur-

rence befall them all." Unexpected illness, accident or disaster may come our way. In such event, how desirable that we had been expending ourselves in God's service with our whole heart, soul,

2. In view of Ecclesiastes 9:11, what should be our attitude toward life?



mind and strength! For then his approval and our share in the resurrection would be assured. Moreover, our keeping integrity would have been an encouragement and blessing to others who had observed and listened to us, that they too might be saved in the resurrection hope.—Eccl. 9: 11; Mark 12:30; 1 Tim. 4:15, 16.

STRENGTHENED BY THE RESURRECTION HOPE

³ The apostle Paul stated: "If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied." Our faith would be useless, our preaching in vain. But our eyes are firmly set on that assured goal of life in Jehovah's new order—whether we attain to it by surviving Har-Magedon, or, as in the case of some, by an early resurrection from the dead. In his day, Paul was addressing Christians who had been anointed by God's spirit, and who were required to undergo a baptism into death, just as experienced by Jesus during the three and a half years down to his execution at Calvary. So Paul asks the question: "If the dead are not to be raised up at all, why are they also being baptized for the purpose of being such?" Yes, the resurrection hope sustained those Christians, enabling them to endure many trials, and it can sustain Christians today, whether their hope is eternal life in the heavenly kingdom or—for the greater number—life in the earthly realm of that kingdom.—1 Cor. 15: 13-19, 29.

⁴ Writing of the situation in his day, Paul goes on to say: "Why are we also in peril every hour? Daily I face death. This I affirm by the exultation over you, brothers, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord.

3. (a) On what goal should our eyes be set, and why? (b) In what way should the resurrection hope sustain Christians, whether of the anointed or of the "great crowd"?

4. For what reasons should we avoid contamination by Epicurean philosophy?

If, like men, I have fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, of what good is it to me? If the dead are not to be raised up, 'let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we are to die.'" In proclaiming the "good news" that focused on the risen Christ, Paul ex-



Some fearless overseers serve
"in peril every hour"

perienced many dangers and persecutions, and through these he had God's protection and blessing. If the resurrection were merely a hoax, all of this would have been in vain. In that case, like the Epicurean philosophers and their followers, Paul and his Corinthian brothers might have indulged themselves in having a good time.—1 Cor. 15:30-32.

⁵ However, the resurrection hope and the Messianic kingdom are real. They are intertwined with God's eternal purpose. Just as Christians in apostolic times were sustained by that hope, so they are sustained today. The modern history of Jehovah's Witnesses is embellished by the example of thousands of Christians who have faced death unflinchingly, knowing

5. (a) How real should the resurrection hope be to us? (b) What fine modern-day examples do we have as we make the Kingdom our goal?

that their integrity assured them of an early resurrection into either the “new heaven” or the “new earth.” There are those hundreds of Witnesses who were beheaded, shot, starved or beaten to death in Catholic Hitler’s concentration camps. More recently, many have endured dangers and persecutions in certain socialistic and newly developing lands. But always their confidence has rested in God’s incoming kingdom. That has been their goal, whether to be attained by survival through the “great tribulation” or by resurrection. It should be the goal of each one of us now!—Rev. 21:1-4.

⁶ Take as an example the African country of Zimbabwe, which for many years was torn asunder by civil strife. Jehovah’s Witnesses were outstanding in their neutrality, and in their continued preaching of the Kingdom during that era of violence. (John 17:16) It was especially dangerous for the traveling overseers to continue their upbuilding visits to the congregations. But continue they did, taking their lives in their hands. At times these faithful brothers were captured while traveling from one congregation to the next. They were charged with being strangers and spies in the area, and their lives were threatened. One circuit overseer was killed, and his body was left lying by his bicycle as a warning to passersby. However, other circuit overseers continued fearlessly in their service, until the arrival of more peaceful times brought relief from that kind of danger. If we should ever be confronted by similar circumstances, may we be just as fearless in continuing our “sacred service” to God! —Luke 12:4-7; Rom. 12:1, 2.

⁷ Today, there is a similar crisis in El Salvador, where civil strife has flared up

6. What example from Africa contains encouragement for overseers to expend themselves fearlessly?

7. How have our brothers in El Salvador been blessed in holding fast to their hope?

throughout the land. Again, Jehovah’s Witnesses are strictly neutral as to the violence. Even so, some of them have been killed in cross fire. But faithful elders have continued to serve congregations and isolated groups, strengthening and encouraging these. (Compare Isaiah 32:1, 2.) Some of them have had remarkable escapes from death, but they are determined to keep right on in their teaching and shepherding work, even at continuing peril of their lives. (1 Pet. 5:1-4) Congregations hold their meetings ahead of curfew, and Jehovah has blessed them richly with a 22-percent increase in publishers during 1981. These 8,242 Kingdom pub-



Good habits of meeting attendance and the field service help us to keep zealous for God’s kingdom

lishers were conducting 13,948 home Bible studies with newly interested persons as the service year drew to its close. How wonderfully our God blesses all those who press on fearlessly, though “in peril every hour”!

⁸ However, some in more affluent and seemingly “safe” countries have been misled into a spiritually dangerous way of life. They think that they can hobnob with

8, 9. (a) How have some in affluent countries been misled? (b) How should we react, and why?

the world and have a good time in the Epicurean style, but at the same time keep one foot, as it were, in God's organization. They may have been influenced by unwise associations with apostate persons, thus leading to a dimming of appreciation of their privilege of regular, zealous Kingdom service. How foolish! Paul says pointedly to all such: "Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits." Useful theocratic habits of meeting attendance and service to God are so easily replaced by indulgence in the pleasures of a wayward world. The vision of God's new order fades, and with it the resurrection hope. Similar things happened to Hymenaeus, Alexander and Philetus in Paul's day. And, sad to relate, such things are happening to some today.—1 Cor. 15:33; 1 Tim. 1:18-20; 2 Tim. 2:15-19.

⁹ It is shame on any who, at this late hour, remove themselves from wholehearted support of Jehovah's organization and its service! The present world system is tottering at the brink. Only by standing in the "good news," by "holding it fast," we "are also being saved." It is essential that we continue and increase in knowledge of God. Appropriately, Paul addresses those who have failed in this respect, saying: "Wake up to soberness in a righteous way and do not practice sin, for some are without knowledge of God. I am speaking to move you to shame."—1 Cor. 15:1, 2, 34.

"BECOME STEADFAST"

¹⁰ Paul concludes his argument in support of the marvelous resurrection hope on a warm, appealing note. "Consequently, my beloved brothers," he says. He wants his spiritual brothers to reach their goal. Likewise, today, the "faithful and discreet slave" is deeply concerned about

the spiritual welfare of those millions, worldwide, who are interested in Jehovah's incoming kingdom. The "slave" wants to see all the "great crowd" qualify for life in the earthly realm of that kingdom. This they do by 'washing their robes' and serving God, to come unscathed "out of the great tribulation." (Matt. 24:45-47; Rev. 7:9, 14) How may that goal be attained? It is by sharing zealously in the work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul so indicates, in these words, which become the Yeartext of Jehovah's Witnesses for 1982:

"Become steadfast, unmovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord."—1 Cor. 15:58.

¹¹ The quality of steadfastness is essential to those who desire to 'make it' into Jehovah's new order. To be steadfast means to be constant, firm, unwavering. That is the kind of faith that we must have, an assured expectation of the unseen things that lie ahead, but which, through our study of the Scriptures, have become as real to us as if they were actually here.—Heb. 11:1.

¹² We know that the Messianic kingdom is at hand, having been established in the heavens in 1914. We have seen the "sign" of Christ's "presence" in Kingdom glory in the tumultuous events on earth in these "last days." We have observed the angelic direction of God's people as they have preached with missionary zeal "in all the inhabited earth," with literally millions of persons paying attention to the "good news." Pressures from Satan's world will no doubt increase, but is this any reason for wavering in our "sacred service," our precious service to the Sovereign of our lives, Jehovah God? Certainly not!—Matt. 24:3-14; 25:31-34; Rev. 7:15; 14:6, 7.

10. (a) What attitude do both Paul and the modern "slave" class have toward their "beloved brothers"?
(b) How does our Yeartext for 1982 tie in with this?

11. What does it mean to "become steadfast"?

12. What reasons do we have to be unwavering in our service?

"BECOME . . . UNMOVABLE"

¹³ Paul exhorts us, also, to become "unmovable." This is akin to being steadfast. It means that, in observing God's commandments, we must never be shaken in our integrity. That was the attitude of the exemplary integrity-keeper Job, who said of his God and Judge: "After he has tested me out, I shall come forth as gold itself." Can we express such confidence? We can, if we are able to say of Jehovah, as did Job: "His way I have kept, and I do not deviate. From the commandment of his lips I do not move away. I have treasured up the sayings of his mouth more than what is prescribed for me." (Job 23:10-12) If we, like Job, will go even beyond what is scheduled for our regular meetings, digging down deep into the Watch Tower Society's publications for further enlightenment on the modern-day application of God's Word, we will be helped, indeed, in remaining steadfast, unmovable in the truth.

¹⁴ For more than 100 years now, *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom* has been building up, progressively, a body of truth related to Jesus' ransom, the resurrection hope and the incoming kingdom of our God. Through its pages, it has made the Bible come alive in the minds and hearts of millions of sincere persons. It has helped these to discern the errors taught in Christendom's religions and indeed in the entire world empire of false religion—"Babylon the Great." It has called attention to the great spiritual fall of "Babylon the Great" and has echoed the angel's prophetic command: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues."

13. How, like Job, may we show ourselves to be "unmovable"?

14. (a) How has *The Watchtower* been progressive in bringing enlightenment to sincere persons, and with what result? (b) What warning has it echoed, and how have many responded?

(Rev. 17:1, 5, 15, 18; 18:2, 4) Many have been helped to do just that, and have become loyal supporters of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom.

¹⁵ However, there have always been some who, rather than remain unmovable in their loyal support of the Kingdom, want to drift back to the beliefs and ways of false religion. These do not appreciate that the Master, Christ Jesus, is using the anointed body of his followers on earth as a "faithful and discreet slave" in dispensing spiritual food.—Matt. 24:45-47.

¹⁶ It was first in 1895 that some friends of *Zion's Watch Tower* suggested that this magazine is identified with "that slave"—"that servant." (Matt. 24:46, *Authorized Version*) Enemies aroused violent opposition to this viewpoint of such friends, so that *The Watch Tower* of October 1, 1909, had this to say:

"Our friends insist that this Scripture indicates that in the end of this Gospel age the Lord would use not many channels for the dissemination of the Truth, but one channel . . . They hold that all of them received their knowledge of Present Truth directly from the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society's publications, or indirectly through those who have received their enlightenment through *this channel*. They are glad correspondingly to co-operate as 'fellow-servants' with the Society's work, believing that thereby they are following the leadings of the Divine Providence, as well as the instructions of the Divine Word."

¹⁷ Then, referring to those enemies of truth, *The Watch Tower* said:

"They seek to turn the minds of the enlightened ones in another direction by telling them that 'each should dig' the jewels of Divine Truth for himself; that the Society's publications merely gave them the start on which now they should im-

15, 16. (a) What have some failed to appreciate? (b) Who is "that slave" of Matthew 24:46? (c) In connection with the "slave," when and how did it become clear that God was using only one channel to dispense truth?

17. (a) How, formerly and now, have some sought to discredit the truth? (b) Why should we be happy to remain "unmovable" in association with the "slave"?

prove, so that eventually its teachings would be far in the background. These disloyal 'fellow-servants' suggest further that there is danger of worshipping the Society and that to avoid so doing it is practically necessary to give it a kick or to turn their backs upon it. They say, Let us have a Bible study, but let us exclude the Society's publications!"

That was written 72 years ago, and to this day there are a few who would try to discredit the body of truth that Jehovah has built up progressively, using his one channel. As the light of truth grows ever brighter, how happy we should be to remain "unmovable" in our association with the Master's 'faithful slave'!—Col. 1:21-23.

"ALWAYS HAVING PLENTY TO DO IN THE WORK OF THE LORD"

¹⁸ Yes, have "plenty to do," not in 'doing one's own thing,' but in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therein lies a recipe for keeping spiritually healthy. Spiritual laziness can lead to doubts. It can be fatal, as Proverbs 19:15 indicates: "Laziness causes a deep sleep to fall, and a slack soul goes hungry." In the case of persistent spiritual laziness, spiritual starvation and death are the result. Let us, then, be busy—preaching regularly from house to house (even in unreceptive territories), witnessing informally at every opportunity, making return visits on sheeplike persons and conducting with them regular home Bible studies in one of the Society's publications. Some of us may be able to serve as "pioneers," or full-time Kingdom proclaimers, in this work of the Lord Jesus, who is, indeed, the "pioneer" of our faith.—Heb. 12:2, *Moffatt*; Isa. 6:8-10.

¹⁹ Whether we are enrolled as pioneers or not, all of us can perform our "sacred service" joyfully, in a true pioneer spirit. This may lead many of us to do "auxiliary

pioneer" work from time to time, and if the joy derived from this can encourage some of us to become regular pioneers, how much greater will be our share in "the work of the Lord"!—Rom. 12:1, 2.

²⁰ This work of the Lord Jesus, following in his footsteps, is also "the work of Jehovah." (1 Cor. 16:10; John 5:17) How privileged we are to be co-workers with the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, the Lord Jesus Christ and the heavenly angels at "the conclusion of the system of things"! (1 Cor. 3:9; Matt. 25:31-33; 28:19, 20) For we know that our labor is "not in vain in connection with the Lord." Whether we reach the New Order by resurrection or by survival through the "great tribulation," may we be able to say, in the words of the faithful apostle Paul, at 1 Corinthians 15:57: "Thanks to God, for he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" Yes, victory over death, leading on to the grand blessings of eternal life!

20. (a) With whom are we privileged to be co-workers? (b) With what assurance should we press on toward the goal? (c) Finally, what words of Paul should we want to make our own, and why?

Do you appreciate these points?

- Why it is necessary at all times to be fully alive to the resurrection hope
- What encouragement the resurrection hope provides for our brothers who have to face death daily
- Why those who associate with doubters or apostate thinkers should be 'moved to shame'
- Why the quality of steadfastness is essential in order to 'make it' into Jehovah's new order
- How meaningful is the statement made about "one channel" in "The Watch Tower" more than 70 years ago
- How pioneering or otherwise "having plenty to do in the work of the Lord" can serve for our protection

18. (a) What is a recipe for keeping spiritually healthy, and how does Proverbs indicate this? (b) What are some avenues for 'having plenty to do in the work of the Lord'?

19. What spirit may all of us show, but how may some have a greater share in the work?

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

● A speech on "How to Gamble—If You Must" is periodically given by a Catholic nun to social clubs in the San Francisco Bay area of California. The nun holds a doctor's degree in mathematics and is an expert on probability. According to

Nun Advises Gamblers

the newspaper "The Oregonian," she gives advice and tips to groups planning gambling trips to Nevada. Typically, her suggestions are said to run this way: "Know the game. Know the odds." She also gives advice on what games to bet on and what games to avoid.

When asked if it is a sin to gamble, the nun's reply is: "No, I don't believe so." "Life is a gamble," she adds. "I think gambling is neutral in the sinning category." Her comments merely reflect the view of her church. "Catholic teaching considers gambling as morally indifferent in itself," says the "Catholic Encyclopedia for School and Home."—Vol. 4, p. 506.

Experience shows, however, that when money is wagered or bet, greed is close at hand. Many who have become compulsive gamblers began by making petty bets 'for entertainment.' So, rather than trying to 'know the game and the odds,' getting involved in activities that are known to promote the "works of the flesh," is it not wiser for Christians to involve themselves in activities that produce the "fruitage of the spirit"?—Gal. 5:19-23.

● Bonfires are lit along the eastern coast of Spain and in many countries of Europe on the eve of June 24, termed

'Christianize' Pagan Festivals?

"Saint John the Baptist's" day on the Catholic calendar. What do bonfires have to do with John the Baptist? Barcelona's morning daily "La Vanguardia" ad-

mits that the entire festivity actually "represents the Christianization of the summer solstice." This astronomical event, when the sun appears to stand still in its heavenly northward or southward motion, motivated festivities and licentious merrymaking among the ancient pagans.

Another big solstice festival that has been 'Christianized' is December 25. At about that

time the days begin to lengthen again, and the sun-worshiping Romans celebrated the birthday of the unconquered sun. In the fourth century C.E. this was changed into the celebration of the birth of God's Son. Even the fir tree used by the pagan Germanic tribes in their winter solstice celebrations was later adopted as the "Christmas" tree.

Rather than 'Christianize' such pagan events, the apostle Paul sets the right course for true Christians by asking: "What sharing does light have with darkness?" Then he admonishes: "'Get out from among them, and separate yourselves,' says Jehovah, 'and quit touching the unclean thing'; 'and I will take you in.'" —2 Cor. 6:14-17.

● Commuters in the Tokyo, Japan, area spend an average of one and a half hours getting to

Unsatisfying Materialism

and from work. Since many work overtime for several hours each day, it is not uncommon for them to be away from their home for 13 hours or more. Leaving the house before seven in the morning, it is usual to return after eight in the evening.

Many of these workers live in small houses on small lots, as space is at a premium. If a 50-foot (15-m) by 100-foot (30-m) lot is used for comparison, their average housing lot is about half of that. In Tokyo itself, it is even less. And with all their hard work, very few see any way of improving their situation.

Nevertheless, over 64,000 Jehovah's Witnesses in Japan are conducting more than 90,000 Bible studies in the homes of people, showing them from the Bible the real hope of a much more satisfying life in a paradise "new earth." (2 Pet. 3:13) In that new order of God's making, people will live in peace, contentment and genuine material prosperity, freed from today's frustrations, as the prophet Isaiah foretold: "They will certainly build houses and have occupancy; and they will certainly plant vineyards and eat their fruitage. They will not build and someone else have occupancy; they will not plant and someone else do the eating. For like the days of a tree will the days of my people be."—Isa. 65:21, 22; Ps. 37:11.

Active Christians In A Critical Time

YOU, as other persons around the globe, may be keenly aware that we live in critical times.

Many realize that times are critical because so much attention is given to weapons and war. Others sense the criticalness because of economic problems. Or, if asked why our times are critical, you might think about the increasing crime and violence. These problems are but evidences that we are living during a foretold period: "In the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here."—2 Tim. 3:1-5.

But on Sunday, September 13, 1981, there was a special event that well illustrated that even in our "critical times" Christians can be spiritually active and optimistic about the future. What was that event? How can we benefit from it?

GRADUATION OF GILEAD SCHOOL

The special event occurring in New York, N.Y., U.S.A., was the graduation exercise of the 71st class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. We do well to reflect on some points made during the program.

The principal speaker was F. W. Franz, president of the Watchtower Society and of the School. His hour-long talk opened with a review of the School's history. After the outbreak of World War II, the then-president of the Society, J. F. Rutherford, believed that intense persecution against Jehovah's Witnesses might require that a move be made from the Society's Brooklyn, New York, headquarters. Thus he had buildings constructed in upstate New York that could be used to house the headquarters staff. Then in 1942, when N. H. Knorr became the Society's third president, a careful review of Revelation chapter 17 revealed that the League of Nations peace organization, symbolized by a wild beast, would reappear in some form. (Rev. 17:8) That meant that the war would end and a period of

peace would follow. As you know, that is exactly what happened, the refurbished peace organization being the United Nations.

With that Scriptural insight, the decision was made to employ the buildings in upstate New York for a special school to train missionaries who could spread the "good news of the kingdom" in many foreign lands during the coming peace period. (Matt. 24:14) This unique school opened on February 1, 1943, and, as the Society's fourth president, Franz was now addressing its 71st graduating class.

He appropriately asked the 27 students from eight lands: "Some 36 years of the current peace period have elapsed, so *how long is it going to last?* And what indications do we have that it is going



Future instructors of the Gilead Extension School in Germany, with Filipino missionary graduates

to terminate very, very soon?" How would *you* answer?

Franz then discussed some fascinating aspects of Bible chronology involving our very time. He mentioned that Jehovah's Witnesses have long held that the World War I year of 1914 marked the end of the period mentioned by Jesus: "Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations, until the appointed times of the nations [or, "times of the Gentiles," *Authorized Version*] are fulfilled." (Luke 21: 24) That means that God's kingdom, represented by Jerusalem, was established in heaven then. But some have claimed that 1914 meant nothing and that Jesus had in mind a trampling on the literal city of Jerusalem. The speaker, though, asked: "What do you find when you enforce the consequences of that view?"

In 1967 the army of the state of Israel gained control of the West Bank, including the old walled city of Jerusalem. "Yet," Franz asked, "has that resulted in the glory of Jehovah God? Has that resulted in the coming of the Messiah to establish the kingdom of God over there in earthly Jerusalem?" The clear answer is, No. Nor are the literal Jews preaching the "good news of the kingdom" in fulfillment of Matthew 24:14. Hence, the facts show that the 'trampling of "Jerusalem" by the Gentiles' did not end in 1967. Rather, the "sign" Jesus gave has been fulfilled since the pivotal year 1914. From then the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, has been ruling from the heavens in the midst of his enemies. (Ps. 110:1, 2) The new missionaries were thus urged, 'The time left

certainly must be reduced,' and they should have a sense of urgency, with much to do in these critical times.—1 Cor. 7:29-31.

The graduating students could easily see why they should be active in Christian work. So could their relatives and others in the audience, numbering some 2,000. All were thrilled to learn that arrangements have been made for training more missionaries. Two of the students were to return to Germany to be instructors at a new "Gilead Extension School" in that country. It will be a concentrated two-and-a-half month course for ministers who, without having to learn English, can be trained and proceed to foreign missionary assignments.

HELPFUL COUNSEL FOR ACTIVE CHRISTIANS

Other speakers on the graduation program offered sound Scriptural counsel to the class, counsel that all Christians can benefit from in our critical times.

U. V. Glass, one of the Gilead School instructors, encouraged reflection on the example of Jeremiah, who continued to preach despite opposition and danger. In contrast, the prophet Urijah fearfully fled to Egypt, only to be brought back to Judah and executed by the king. The example of Jeremiah, and the support he received from the Ethiopian Ebed-Melech, was also highlighted in an excellent drama put on by the students in the afternoon. The drama was entitled "Fearless Proclaimer of an Unpopular Message."

The graduation program included brief but helpful talks by some experienced ministers.



The Biblical drama movingly portrayed Jeremiah as a fearless proclaimer of God's message

For instance, David Olson focused on 1 Samuel 2:30, where God says: "Those honoring me I shall honor." It was pointed out that all of us appreciate being treated with respect, so we should make it a point to accord others honor or regard. That is especially helpful for persons living or working closely together, such as the missionaries. Karl Klein discussed the importance of 'not heaving sighs against one another,' as advised at James 5:9. Whereas we might groan or sigh over our own shortcomings, groaning over the weaknesses of fellow Christians usually involves judging them and can cause them to be discouraged or depressed.

While the students were not becoming missionaries by taking some vow, Ralph Walls emphasized that they (and all of us) might imitate the spirit of the ancient

Nazirites. These denied themselves certain things so that they might concentrate on spiritual matters. And, as the Nazirites' hair emphasized their subjection to Jehovah, active Christians need a spirit of submission, to those with whom they serve as well as to God.—Num. 6:2-7.

The graduation program closed after the drama and a final prayer. But the audience were more determined than ever to continue actively 'walking with God,' as George Gangas earlier in the day enthusiastically urged the class, drawing on the examples of Enoch and Noah. (Gen. 5:24; 6:9) And all could recall instructor J. Redford's talk that concluded with the encouragement that the graduates and the audience continue 'to advertise the King and the Kingdom' in these critical times.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Have you given careful thought to recent issues of "The Watchtower"? If so, likely you will recall the following:

● Why is speaking in tongues not part of Christianity today?

Because the gift of tongues was given only to the first-century Christians, verifying that God's favor had shifted from the old Jewish arrangement to the newly established Christian congregation. (1 Corinthians 13:8; Hebrews 2:2-4)—8/15, pp. 4-6.

● What is the "pure language" mentioned at Zephaniah 3:9?

It is "the pattern of healthful words" that speaks in praise of Jehovah and his righteous purposes through Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 1:13)—8/15, p. 28.

● Who alone can successfully tell right from wrong?

Those whose minds are constantly being reinforced by spiritual information from God's Word. This knowledge sharpens their "perceptive powers," thus training their senses not to be easily deceived. (Hebrews 5:14; Genesis 8:21)—10/1, p. 9.

● Is sickness a punishment for sin?

Sickness can be a direct result of sin as the Bible states: "Whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." (Galatians 6:7) This is true of those "sowing" immorality, smoking, drunkenness, gluttony, and so forth. However, the root cause of all sickness can be traced to the sin of Adam. (Romans 5:12)—10/15, pp. 5, 6.

● How can you as a Christian youth resist temptations to immorality?

Confide in your God-fearing parents or the elders in the congregation. Avoid thinking about, looking at or sharing in things that will excite sexual feelings. (Colossians 3:5; 1 Corinthians 9:27) Build up a personal relationship with Jehovah by study and prayer.—11/1, pp. 11-13.

● How can you as a parent reach your child's heart?

From an early age, communicate with your children, giving them positive, friendly help as needed. Parents should cooperate in building a close family relationship, setting a good example themselves in regular Bible study, prayer and field ministry. Recognize that divine help is necessary to reach your child's heart. (2 Corinthians 4:7; Psalm 51:5)—11/1, pp. 19, 20.

● Will it be possible for a sincere person to come over to God's side after the start of the "great tribulation"?

The evidence from the Scriptures answers, No. For any person to survive into God's righteous new order, he now has to build up a right relationship with God. (Proverbs 18:10; Zephaniah 2:3)—11/15, pp. 16, 17.

● What features make Matthew's Gospel account distinctive?

It stresses the theme of the "kingdom of the heavens." Jesus is presented to the Jews as the long-promised Messiah by referring to some 100 places in the Hebrew Scriptures. Matthew gives the only eyewitness account of Jesus' instituting the memorial of his death.—11/1, pp. 24, 25.

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