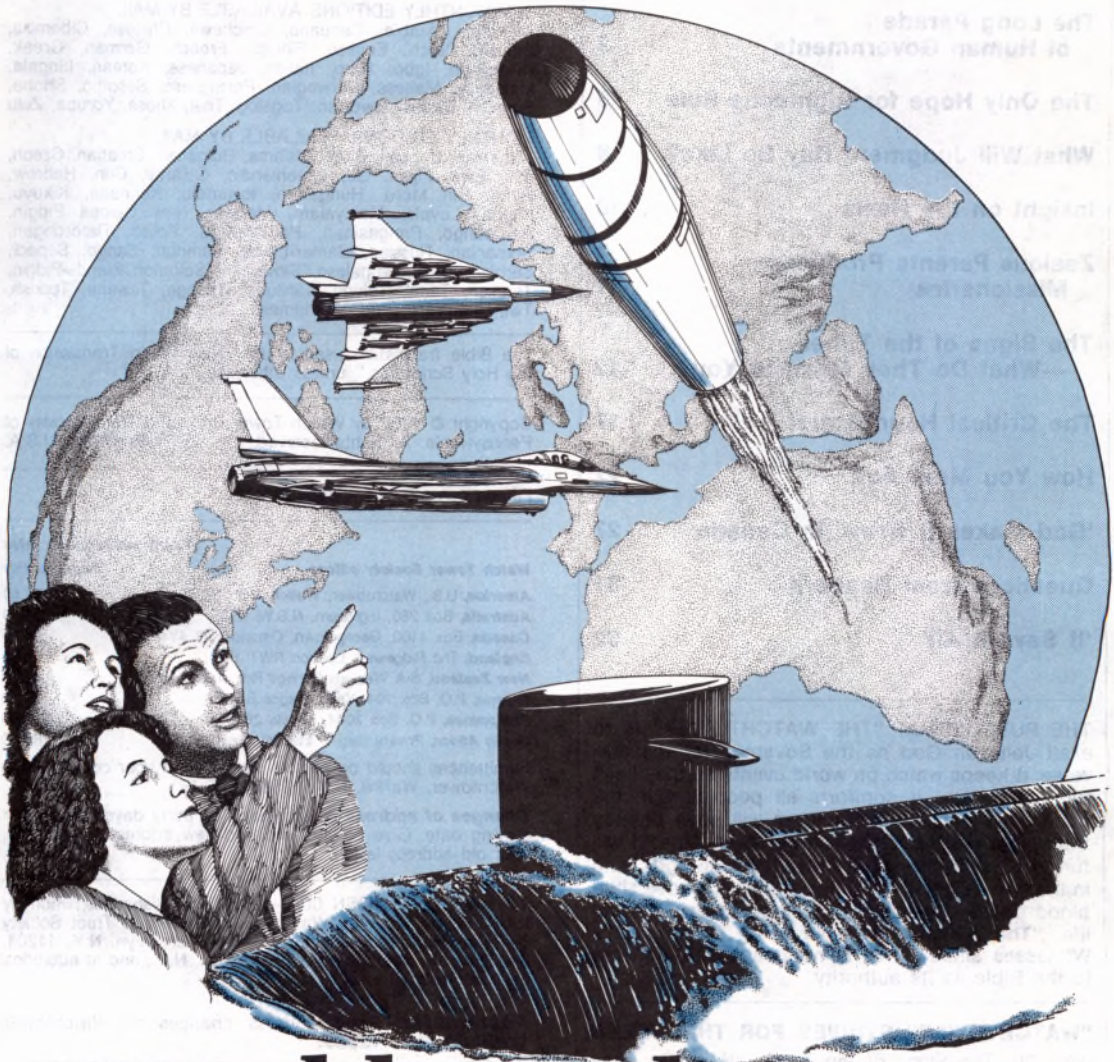


May 15, 1982

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



World Conditions— What Do They Mean to You?

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THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER" is to exalt Jehovah God as the Sovereign of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as they fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellowmen and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in the now-reigning king, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. "The Watchtower," published by Jehovah's Witnesses since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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- June 20: The Signs of the Times—What Do They Mean to You? Page 12. Songs to Be Used: 84, 80.
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The Long Parade of Human Governments

Men have tried them all; none have succeeded. What hope remains for righteous rule?

MONARCHIES, empires, democracies, republics, dictatorships and socialistic governments—all forms of human rule have been tried many times over during the past 6,000 years. All ultimately fail, though each new one tried is proclaimed to be the one that will succeed.

Present efforts at human rule are no exceptions. They have blazed no new trails, have ushered in no glowing successes. The same systems of government are in existence, with the same records of failure. The work ethic is fading, morals are collapsing, old values are giving way to "me-first" philosophies. Poverty and hunger, inequality and special privilege, oppression and corruption, crime and terrorism, powerful nations dominating weaker ones, arms races and greedy wars—all these evils are products of present-day human governments. If any one thing sets this generation apart, it is the surge ahead in scientific knowledge, but this has been prostituted to

corrupting industry and producing terrible weapons of war.

After 6,000 years of human experimentation with governments of all kinds, in this area also it can be said that "there is nothing new under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1:9) Neither are the causes of failure in human government new. It is still true, as Jehovah declared through his prophet Jeremiah: "It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct



his step." (Jeremiah 10:23) In addition to there being human imperfection, "the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." "The god of this system of things has blinded the minds" of millions. Satanic influences are maneuvering "the kings of the entire inhabited earth."—2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 5:19; Revelation 16:14.

When we look at the parade of human governments, at their rise to power and later their decline and fall, a pattern seems to run through them all. This has caused scholars to speak of history as repeating itself. World powers rise to their zenith through purposeful dedication and sacrifice. But, once entrenched, they slowly relax in spirit and ultimately dissipate into materialistic excesses and fleshly immoralities. Once this has happened, collapse is not far off.

Historian Will Durant recognized this pattern of internal decay, saying: "We have tried to show that the essential cause of the Roman conquest of Greece was the disintegration of Greek civilization from within. No great nation is ever conquered until it has destroyed itself." (Part II of *The Story of Civilization*, p. 659) *The World Book Encyclopedia* (1978 ed.) pinpoints one forerunner of collapse that should give our generation special cause for concern: "Family is the oldest human institution. In many ways it is the most important. It is society's most basic unit. Entire civilizations have survived or disappeared, depending on whether family life was strong or weak."—Vol. 7, p. 24.

Will History Repeat Itself?

Historian Arnold J. Toynbee said of history repeating itself: "A survey of the historical landscape in the light of our existing knowledge shows that, up to date, history has repeated itself about twenty times in producing human societies of

the species to which our Western society belongs, and it also shows that, with the possible exception of our own, all these representatives of the species of society called civilizations are already dead or moribund. Moreover, when we study the histories of these dead and moribund civilizations in detail, and compare them with one another, we find indications of what looks like a recurring pattern in the process of their breakdowns, declines, and falls. We are naturally asking ourselves to-day whether this particular chapter of history is bound to repeat itself in our case. Is that pattern of decline and fall in store for us in our turn, as a doom from which no civilization can hope to escape?"

He then answers his own question: "In the writer's opinion, the answer to this question is emphatically in the negative. . . . There is nothing to prevent our Western civilization from following historical precedent, if it chooses, by committing social suicide. But we are not doomed to make history repeat itself; it is open to us, through our own efforts, to give history, in our case, some new and unprecedented turn. . . . What shall we do to be saved? In politics, establish a constitutional co-operative system of world government. In economics, find working compromises (varying according to the practical requirements of different places and times) between free enterprise and socialism. In the life of the spirit, put the secular super-structure back onto religious foundations. . . . Of the three tasks, the religious one is, of course, in the long run by far the most important."—*Civilization on Trial* (1948), pp. 38-40.

Typically, he is emphatic in thinking that our civilization can be different and can escape the repetition of the history of human governments. He wrote the above 34 years ago, basing his hope politically on the United Nations, eco-

nomically on compromise between capitalism and Communism, and, most important of all, on a return to religion as the foundation of our civilization. Today we see failure on all three fronts. The United Nations has proved ineffective, compromise between capitalism and Communism is farther off than ever, and religion is weaker than ever.

History seems on the verge of repeating itself. But will it?

There is another writer of history that has expressed himself on human government. He has, in fact, written in advance a history of it. He has also written in advance of a righteous rule that will come to the earth. The following article considers his expressions on government.

The Only Hope for Righteous Rule

"And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin."—Daniel 2:44.

HISTORY reveals that many rulers of past ages were considered to be gods. Even in our century Stalin and Hirohito were so acclaimed. None of such so-called gods measured up to the Biblical proof of godship, namely, the ability to foretell the future. Jehovah challenges all false gods: "Cause us to hear even the things that are coming. Tell the things that are to come afterward, that we may know that you are gods." (Isaiah 41:22, 23) No human rulers have ever been able to foretell the future, not even of their own rulership. They have always made glowing predictions of what they will do in office, but they have proved themselves false prophets so often that people now place little trust in their forecasts.

World War I was fought 'to make the

world safe for democracy.' It did not. The League of Nations was to be 'the political expression of God's kingdom on earth.' It was not. World War II was to rid the world of dictators. They still flourish. The United Nations was to unite nations in peaceful cooperation. They are split into Eastern and Western blocs, and Third World nations are pawns as wars cold and hot rage on. World rulers proclaim hope but, for the most part, they produce hopelessness. Their predictions of better times go unfulfilled. As it was in ancient times, so it is today: "Treating the wounds of my people slightly and lightly, saying 'All's well, all's well,' when all is not well." (Jeremiah 6:14, *Moffatt*) Little wonder people no longer believe the promises of politicians!

Jehovah—a God Who Knows the Future

However, Jehovah God knows government, and his predictions concerning human governments are always fulfilled. Some 150 years before Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the land city of Tyre, God's prophet Isaiah foretold its destruction. His prophet Nahum predicted the fall of Nineveh, and that not only came to pass but did so in the way Jehovah had described. (Isaiah 23:1-13; Nahum 1:8; 2:6, 8; 3:13) Years before Judah fell to Babylon, Jeremiah foretold it, and also the restoration of the Jews that would follow a 70-year desolation period. But Isaiah predicted the same events over a hundred years before Jeremiah did and even gave the name of the one who would overthrow Babylon and release the Jews from captivity.—Jeremiah 29:10; 51:30, 37; Isaiah 13:17-22; 44:26-28; 45:1, 2.

Even more striking is Jehovah's predictive power relative to human governments when in a vision he reveals to Daniel the rise and fall of world powers. In Daniel chapter 8 the prophet sees a two-horned ram that is supreme, until a he-goat with a great horn between its eyes comes out of the west and smites the ram and breaks its two horns. But as soon as the goat becomes mighty, the big horn is broken and four smaller ones come up in its place. (Vss. 3-8) We are not left in doubt as to the interpretation of all of this.

"The ram that you saw possessing the two horns," the account explains, "stands for the kings of Media and Persia. And the hairy he-goat stands for the king of Greece; and as for the great horn that was between its eyes, it stands for the first king. And that one having been broken, so that there were four that finally stood up instead of it, there are four kingdoms from his nation that will stand up, but not with his power."—Vss. 20-22.

Some years after Daniel was used to predict these momentous events, the dual nation of Medo-Persia, the two-horned ram, did overthrow Babylon to become the Fourth World Power. More than two centuries after Daniel recorded this prophecy, Alexander the Great rose to power and cast down Medo-Persia. Upon Alexander's death—the breaking of the great horn on the he-goat—the Fifth World Power of Greece was divided into four parts. Each part was ruled over by one of Alexander's four generals—the four little horns that replaced the great horn, but they never gained its power.

Daniel chapter 7 also shows by a vision a succession of beasts representing the rise and fall of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and the Roman Empire. In chapter 2 a dream of Nebuchadnezzar represents by means of a great metallic image in human form the rise and fall of world powers down to our day, and then it shows the destruction of that colossal image:

"A stone was cut out not by hands, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and of molded clay and crushed them. At that time the iron, the molded clay, the copper, the silver and the gold were, all together, crushed and became like the chaff from the summer threshing floor, and the wind carried them away so that no trace at all was found of them. And as for the stone that struck the image, it became a large mountain and filled the whole earth."—Daniel 2:34, 35.

The stone that becomes a mountain and fills the earth is Christ's kingdom that replaces all human governments, as Daniel 2:44, 45 reveals: "And in the days of those kings 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; forasmuch as you beheld that out of the mountain a stone was cut not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the copper, the molded clay, the silver and the gold."

The seventh chapter of Daniel also speaks of the succession of human rulerships and also concludes its parade of *governments* with their replacement by Christ's kingdom: "With the clouds of the heavens someone like a son of man happened to be coming; and to the Ancient of Days [Jehovah God] he gained access, and they brought him up close even before that One. And to him there were given rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him. His rulership is an indefinitely lasting rulership that will not pass away,

and his kingdom one that will not be brought to ruin."—Daniel 7:13, 14.

6,000 Years of Failures Are Enough!

Jehovah God has patiently allowed people thousands of years to try many times over all the kinds of governments they could think of. Not one has brought permanent blessing to its subjects. These have been starved, impoverished, oppressed, victimized by religious, racial, national and economic prejudices, heavily taxed to support corrupt governments, and have been diseased, crippled and killed by centuries of senseless wars waged by greedy and power-mad rulers. No honest person can contend that given more time men could have established a righteous government. Over and over again it has been demonstrated that 'it is not in man that walks to direct his steps.' (Jeremiah 10:23) Also, repeatedly proved is the fact that no human rulers were in reality gods able to predict the future, even of the governments they controlled.

In sharp contrast, Jehovah has proved himself to be the God who does know the future, including that of human governments. He also knows, and has told mankind through his Word, the Bible, of a righteous government under his appointed king, Christ Jesus. Whereas human rule has been a curse for mankind, Christ's kingdom will bring blessings of health, happiness and endless life in a paradise earth.—Compare Luke 23:42, 43; Revelation 11:15.

Let all honest persons who love righteousness now acknowledge Christ Jesus as their Redeemer and King. Recognize that "there is no salvation in anyone else, for there is not another name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved."—Acts 4:12; Matthew 12:21.



What Will Judgment Day



THE Bible gives a picture of Judgment Day that is much different from the way many persons imagine it. The day is not one to be dreaded or feared. Look at these pictures. They give some idea of how wonderful Judgment Day will be for humankind.

The Scriptures show that God has appointed Jesus Christ to be the Judge during Judgment Day. (Acts 17:31) And we can be confident that he will be fair and just in his judgment.—Isaiah 11:3-5.

Contrary to popular opinion, Christ will not judge those who are resurrected on the basis of their past sins, many of which may have been committed in ignorance. The Bible explains that at death a person is set free or released from any sins he committed. It says: "He who has died has been acquitted from



Be Like?

his sin." (Romans 6:7) This means that when a person is resurrected he will be judged according to what he does during Judgment Day, not on the basis of what he did before he was resurrected.

Judgment Day, therefore, is not a literal 24-hour day. It will be 1,000 years long. It is the same 1,000-year period during which Christ and his associate kings will rule over redeemed mankind. (Revelation 20:4, 6) During this time people will work together toward making the earth a paradise. In due time the dead will be welcomed back to life on earth. —Luke 23:43.

What happiness there will be when families long separated by death are joined together again! Yes, how pleasant to live in peace, to enjoy good health and to receive instruction regarding God's purposes! During Judgment Day all who are alive on earth will be learning about Jehovah God and his ways. They will have opportunity to obey and serve him.

Those who choose to serve Jehovah during Judgment Day will be in line to receive everlasting life. But, even under these best of circumstances, some will refuse to serve God and will turn to wickedness. As the scripture says: "Though the wicked one should be shown favor, he simply will not learn righteousness. In the land of straightforwardness he will act unjustly." (Isaiah 26:10) So wicked persons who refuse to change their ways will be destroyed. Only the righteous will be permitted to enjoy the paradise earth.

Insight on the News

Hypnosis—Aid to Memory?

At a recent meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, an expert contended that hypnosis cannot be trusted as a memory aid in police investigations. Martin Orne, professor of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, noted that television dramas often portray a hypnotized witness recalling some detail that catches the villain. But he said that in real life "at best, the evidence that hypnosis can significantly increase recall is highly controversial."

Professor Orne told the scientists that a problem with hypnotic recall is the fact that the hypnotist can influence his subject's memory: "If the hypnotist has certain beliefs, he will create memories in the subject's mind." As a result, he said, even though "you may consider hypnosis-enhanced testimony in investigations, . . . in court you've got to prove that you didn't alter that witness's memory." But once a witness has been hypnotized, Orne stressed, there is no way to be sure of that.

Such information should cause a Christian to consider carefully how submitting to hypnotism could affect his relationship with God. For example, could it be said that one who submits to hypnotism, with its potential to alter memory, is acting in harmony with the "greatest commandment" to "love Jehovah your God with your whole . . . mind"?—Matthew 22:36, 37.

A Look Into the Future

In a review of the book entitled *Predictions*, the British magazine *New Scientist* admitted the bias of modern skeptics against Biblical prophecy, saying that it has "become fashionable to date the books of the Bible by the predictions they contain." To illustrate, the reviewer cites the fact that "Luke, which contains an apparent prediction of the fall of Jerusalem (Luke 19:43, 44), is confidently dated after AD 70 when the event actually took place."

The reviewer goes on to disparage human predictions cited in the book and then ridicules "Daniel's prediction of 'the spectacular rise of Alexander the Great and the fall of the Medo-Persian Empire,'" which, he quips, "turns out to be, 'Therefore the he-goat waxed very great; and when he was strong the great horn was broken.'"

Though there may be reason to scoff at most human predictions, in attempting to demean Biblical prophecy, the reviewer illustrated his bias and apparent lack of research. Daniel's prophecy did not include merely a pictorial "he-goat" and "horn." Using similar figures, it graphically forecast history both before and after the time of the he-goat and identified characters specifically: "And the hairy he-goat stands for the king of Greece; and as for the great horn that was between its eyes, it stands for the first king."—Daniel 8:3-22.

Sickness — "Mankind's Lot"?

"An incalculably long life of lasting productive vitality is expected from the medicine of the future," said Professor H. E. Richter to the Thirtieth German Convention for Graduate Medicine in West Berlin. However, the doctor asserted, people have been misled by "excessive claims" resulting from medicine's sensational boom during the past century.

Instead, Professor Richter insisted, "the limitations of medicine have become clearly perceptible" in recent times, but society still "persists in holding to its deeprooted false expectations, making scapegoats out of the doctors who fail to fulfill the utopian demands people make of medicine." Rather than holding to unrealistic expectations, the doctor said that "we must accept sickness, infirmity and mortality as mankind's lot and must bury medicine's dream of permanent fitness and vitality."

From a human standpoint, Professor Richter is no doubt correct in his assessment of medicine's potential. Nevertheless, perfect human health will come not through medical breakthroughs but through healing benefits provided by the Great Physician, Jehovah God. He promises that soon he will make a "new earth" where "mankind's lot" will be no more death, "neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore."—Revelation 21:1-5; compare Isaiah 33:24.

Zealous Parents Produce Missionaries

OVER three thousand years ago childless Hannah, a faithful woman in Israel, promised her firstborn son to Jehovah's service if she was granted a child. Jehovah answered her earnest prayers and she fulfilled her promise. Her son Samuel became a full-time servant of God and a Bible writer.—1 Samuel 1:4-28.

Many Christian parents in modern times have been examples to their children in Jehovah's service and have encouraged them to become full-time servants like Samuel, rather than plan for a secular career. This point was brought home forcibly on March 7 at the graduation of the 72nd class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead located in Brooklyn, New York. For five months the 42 students had received intensive training for missionary work in foreign fields. What attracted many of them to full-time service? Three fleshly sisters can answer that question—Brenda, Rhonda and JoDene Rittenbach:

"We were brought up in a happy theocratic home where our parents helped us to love and live the truth. They set the example. At different times, as circumstances permitted, they engaged in auxiliary pioneer service (60 hours a month of Christian ministry) along with us, especially at vacation time," explained Brenda.

"They also taught us to take a practical view of pioneer service," added JoDene, "by sitting down with us and reviewing our responsibilities in the home and in the pioneer service. They helped us to plan things realistically rather than have a starry-eyed approach."

With their six children now grown up what is the situation in the Rittenbach family? The three daughters will soon be serving in Colombia. Three married sons (with their wives) are also in full-time service. And what are mother and father doing? They are working full time at Watchtower Farms in New York State!

There is no doubt that Janice Peterson from Ontario, Canada, was influenced by her par-

ents to take up full-time service. "My father was a pioneer minister before he married. Once married and with children, his goal was to pioneer with the family and serve where the need was great. His ambition was fulfilled in 1969 when all of us, including my crippled mother, moved to Nicaragua. What a joy when my father and I were able to serve together there as special pioneers! Now my husband and I will soon be serving in South America."

In some cases even grandparents have influenced the lives of these graduates. Ross Miller's grandmother was a colporteur (pioneer) in the early part of the century and her zeal has influenced two generations. Her son, Ross' father, used to serve as a special pioneer and in the Brooklyn Bethel headquarters of the Watchtower Society. Ross' mother has also been a pioneer. He has an uncle and aunt who are serving in the Mexican field. Without a doubt zealous parents and relatives can influence the next generation.

Several more in this class are thankful for the fine examples and encouragement received from their parents, many of whom were present at the graduation exercises.

All 2,044 who attended the graduation rejoiced in a fine program that included encouraging talks by Bethel elders as well as an excellent variety of experiences, music and a Bible drama presented by the students. Everyone greatly appreciated the dynamic talk by 88-year-old president of the Watch Tower Society, F. W. Franz, on the topic: "Carry On as Men." He emphasized that all Christians, female as well as male, must serve courageously, especially in these dangerous pre-Armageddon days.—1 Corinthians 16:13; Psalm 68:11.

The 42 students from 5 different countries have been assigned to serve in 18 lands across 4 continents. Their missionary service will no doubt be a fine contribution to Kingdom expansion.

The Signs of the Times —What Do They Mean to You?

“There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth anguish of nations. . . . But as these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near.”—Luke 21:25, 28.

TOWARD the close of Jesus' earthly ministry, the Jewish religious leaders challenged him to display "a sign from heaven." In rebuking them, Jesus said: "A wicked and adulterous generation keeps on seeking for a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah." This indicates that they could not read the signs of the times, or else were ignoring them.—Matthew 16:1, 4.

² Do the signs of the times have meaning for us today? Yes, they do! And if we act on the meaning of these signs, we can be saved from a disaster greater than any caused by the wildest manifestations of bad weather. Let us, then, examine these signs.

³ The prophetic forecasts set out in the Holy Bible provide us with much information on the signs of the times. We are told, for example, how events that occurred in the lives of the people in ancient Israel were not merely of historic value but that "these things went on befalling them as examples, and they were written for a warning to us upon whom the ends of the systems of things

have arrived." (1 Corinthians 10:11) So we today have advance warning of coming events. By taking note of significant modern-day happenings, we will be able to act in a way so as to avoid the calamity confronting the "wicked and adulterous generation" now on earth. Thus we will not be like those Jewish leaders of the first century whom Jesus indicated did not interpret the signs of the times.—Matthew 16:4; Acts 2:40.

⁴ The Great Prophet, Jesus Christ, gave a composite "sign" of things that would occur to mark not only the conclusion of the Jewish system of things in the first century but the end of the worldwide system of things today. In addition to warning of "wars and reports of wars," he foretold global conflagrations that would blaze up in which 'nation would rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom.' Also, there would be "food shortages and earthquakes in one place after another."—Matthew 24:3-8.

⁵ Jesus also foretold the advent of many false prophets, who would appear on the basis of his name and would mislead multitudes by ignoring the importance of the "sign" that would mark his pres-

1. How did Jesus answer the Jews' request for "a sign from heaven"?

2. Why are the signs of the times important to us today?

3. In what way are events of Bible times still meaningful to us?

4. What composite "sign" did Jesus give, and what did it include?

5. How would false prophets regard this "sign"?

ence in Kingdom power. They would not see any meaning in the composite "sign" given by Jesus, as recorded in Matthew, chapters 24 and 25, nor in the other signs that would mark our momentous time, such as the general corrupting of society and the ruining of the earth. But have we not witnessed such events in this 20th century?

⁶ The great surge of troubles that suddenly broke upon mankind commencing in the year 1914 C.E., with its World War I and continuing through World War II, has not let up to the present time. This is so in spite of the fact that religious leaders have backed such schemes as the defunct League of Nations and the present United Nations, and contend that what we need now is the right men in political office to ensure a return to God for his blessing. Yet all around us there is evidence that the quality of life on earth is deteriorating, that conditions are going from bad to worse, that fear, suspicion, crime and violence have become the order of the day in these closing years of the 20th century.

What World Leaders Say

⁷ Does this sound rather pessimistic? Well, political men are candidly recognizing the crisis that exists. For example, Thomas J. Watson, former American ambassador to the Soviet Union, declared in a recent interview: "I perceive the world to be more dangerous than it has ever been in its history." Also, from a long-time optimist, Swedish sociologist and economist Gunnar Myrdal, comes this statement: "Everything is horrible. . . . We believed in reform, in education. Now we are facing a world where it is difficult to be optimistic."

6. (a) Despite the surge of troubles since 1914, what have religious leaders contended? (b) But how are world conditions developing?

7. How are world leaders expressing themselves?



When the Jewish religious leaders challenged Jesus to display a sign, what did he do?

⁸ Are there not substantial grounds for such lack of optimism among prominent world leaders? The tremendous stockpiling of war implements now going on among the nations of the earth is unparalleled in history. This alone is cause for alarm. Costs for such an arms race have added to the inflationary spiral that threatens national economies and pushes up prices for all kinds of goods and services. In describing the ride of the apocalyptic horsemen that represent war, famine and disease, the Bible's Revelation account forewarns that food costs

8. (a) What cause for alarm is now observable? (b) What matters foretold in Revelation chapter 6 are part of the signs of the times?

would soar to such a point that a quart of wheat would sell for a denarius, or a day's wage. How true this is in many parts of the world today! Such ominous developments, affecting our way of life, are all part of the signs of the times.—Revelation 6:3-8.

What Jesus Christ Foretold

⁹ It appears that the wisdom of the wise men of politics and industry has perished. (Isaiah 29:14) There is no brilliant statesman with a persuasive solution to the world's troubles or even to one nation's problems. Instead, there is fear for the future, just as Jesus foretold: "There will be . . . on the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out because of the roaring of the sea and its agitation, while men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken."—Luke 21:25, 26.

¹⁰ With the stockpiling of armaments racing beyond the control of the nations, the literal sea itself is filled with war equipment in the form of ships and submarines capable of carrying deadly nuclear warheads that can wipe out millions of people with a single missile. Indeed, the sea is roaring and 'agitated.' And what about the sky and space above us? True to Jesus' words, 'the powers of the heavens have been shaken' in that war planes, rockets, ballistic missiles and the like, can streak through space, across oceans and continents to strike enemy targets.

¹¹ The news media testify powerfully to the fulfillment of the prophecy that

9. (a) What wisdom appears to have perished? (b) What prophecy of Jesus now has pointed application?

10. (a) How has the sea become 'agitated'? (b) How have 'the powers of the heavens been shaken'?

11. How do the news media testify that the nations 'do not know the way out'?

the nations 'do not know the way out' of their problems. For example, note the following comments in a 300-page report to the United Nations by a commission headed by a former West German chancellor, Willy Brandt, as reported in the *Toronto Star* of May 31, 1980: "In essence, it [the report] says the world economy is breaking down and a continuation of current trends will lead to global chaos. . . . Double locks, armed guards and the fear of kidnapping and assassination are the new rewards for achievement almost everywhere." And, in a personal introduction to the report, Brandt says: "War is often thought of in terms of military conflict or even annihilation. But there is a growing awareness that an equal danger might be chaos—as a result of mass hunger, economic disaster, environmental catastrophes and terrorism."

¹² Where, then, is the enlightened thinking and planning that should be forthcoming from political and industrial leaders in these critical times? As God's prophet indicated about the leaders in the seventh century B.C.E., so it is in our time: "Look! They have rejected the very word of Jehovah, and what wisdom do they have?" (Jeremiah 8:9) Very little!

¹³ They must know that the expanding population and decreasing food supplies spell FAMINE, but we see no positive action or concrete plan on a global scale to meet that already grave situation. The above-mentioned report to the United Nations goes on to tell of the staggering growth in world population—over one million more every five days, with an estimated increase of close to two billion people in the next two decades. Meanwhile, demand for

12. How do Jeremiah's words have application today?

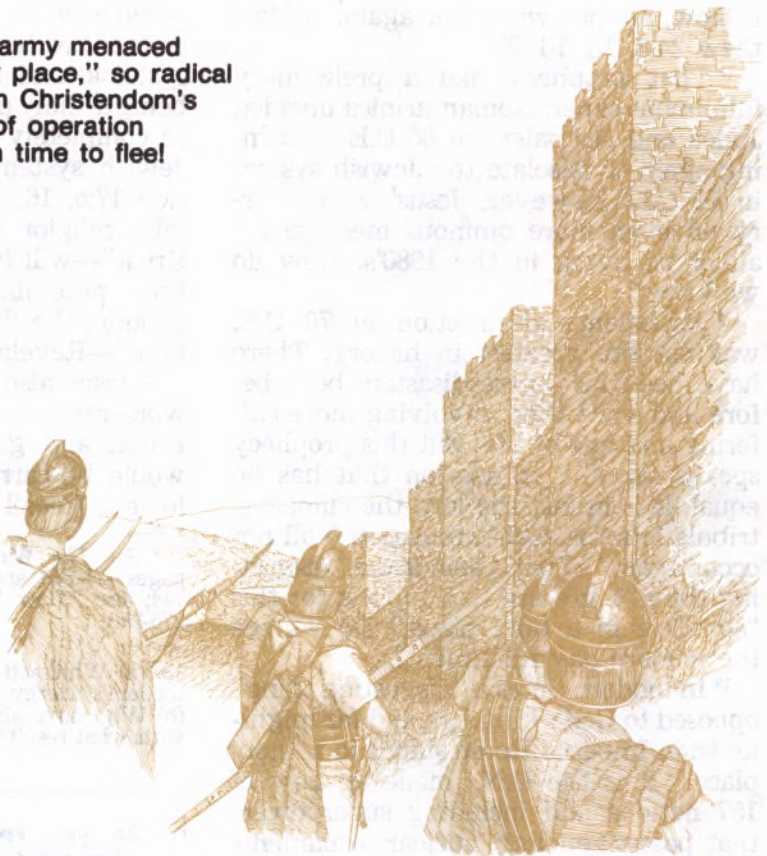
13. What developments in the earth indicate worsening famine conditions, and in fulfillment of what prophecy?

As the Roman army menaced the Jews' "holy place," so radical nations threaten Christendom's claimed realm of operation today. It is high time to flee!

food increases proportionately, even though there are grave doubts about the ability of the grain-producing countries to supply the vast amounts now needed. "There will be food shortages . . . in one place after another," is what Jesus foretold for these final days of this world system.—Matthew 24:7.

¹⁴ Consider, too, the escalation of violent crime throughout the industrialized nations. Jesus prophesied also of this "increasing of lawlessness." (Matthew 24:12) Are we honestly to believe that the solution is to furnish every citizen with a handgun and train him to use it? Yet that is evidently the thinking of many world leaders, as they insist on piling up munitions of war in the hope of attaining peace. Meanwhile, it is estimated that hundreds of millions of our fellow humans are starving and undernourished, while other millions are victims of malaria and river blindness—ills that could be alleviated with but a fraction of the funds spent on armaments. These are all part of the signs of the times that Jesus foretold.—Luke 21:10, 11.

14. In what terms did Jesus foretell other modern-day evils?



A Time to "Begin Fleeing"

¹⁵ God's greatest Prophet, Jesus Christ, pointed to other detailed features of the composite sign that should be heeded by those who would escape destruction. What are they? He said: "Therefore, when you catch sight of the disgusting thing that causes desolation, as spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in a holy place, (let the reader use discernment,) then let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains. For then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning un-

15. According to Jesus' prophecy, when should those using discernment take action, and how?

til now, no, nor will occur again.”—Matthew 24:3, 15, 16, 21.

¹⁶ That prophecy had a preliminary fulfillment when Roman armies invaded Judea and Jerusalem in 66 C.E., returning again to desolate the Jewish system in 70 C.E. However, Jesus’ words carry an even more ominous message for all of us living in the 1980’s. How do we know?

¹⁷ Jerusalem’s destruction in 70 C.E. was not the greatest in history. There have been far worse disasters both before and since then, involving more suffering and loss of life. But this prophecy speaks about a tribulation that has no equal. It is in fact the last, the climactic, tribulation, for such tribulation ‘will not occur again.’ What, then, is the “disgusting thing”? We are told to look for this “standing in a holy place.” Do we see the modern-day fulfillment?

¹⁸ In modern times a “disgusting thing” opposed to God’s kingdom and far mightier than Imperial Rome stands in a “holy place.” It is the U.N., made up now of 157 nations and including superpowers that possess enough nuclear armaments to blast mankind off the face of the earth many times over. This successor to the League of Nations is “disgusting” to Jehovah God and Jesus Christ and his disciples because it presumes to stand in the place of God’s kingdom in the hands of his installed King Jesus Christ, in the heavens. (Matthew 5:35; Mark 13:14) But Christendom also claims to have a “holy place.” It is her realm of operation that has already been taken over in large

16. What preliminary fulfillment did Matthew 24:15, 16 have?

17. Why must Matthew 24:21 have a climactic modern-day fulfillment?

18. (a) Today, what is the “disgusting thing”? (b) How does it now stand in the “holy place”? (c) What will be the final outcome for Christendom’s religions? (d) According to Revelation, how extensive will the destruction of religion become, preliminary to what finale?

sections of the earth by radical members of the U.N. Soon Christendom’s religious systems, and any claims she makes to being a “holy place,” will be desolated just as completely as was the anti-Christian Jewish system in 70 C.E.* As Revelation 17:5, 16, 17 shows, all segments of false religion worldwide—“Babylon the Great”—will be devastated at that same time, preliminary to the war at Armageddon, the finale of the “great tribulation.”—Revelation 16:14, 16; 19:11-21.

¹⁹ Jesus also foretold that, amid these worsening world conditions, a concentrated and global preaching campaign would be carried on by his faithful followers. Recall his words: “And this good

* See *The Watchtower* of December 1, 1971, pages 711-728, and December 15, 1975, pages 741-744; also “*Your Will Be Done on Earth*,” pages 275-283.

19. (a) What activity, foretold by Jesus, has Christendom’s clergy failed to share in, and why? (b) Who have shouldered this responsibility, and with what result?

Do you recall how each of the following features of the “last days” is described in Bible prophecy?

- ☐ World wars engulfing the nations
- ☐ Global famine, earthquakes, pestilence
- ☐ Upswing in delinquency, crime, disorders
- ☐ Many false religious leaders appear
- ☐ Unparalleled distress among the nations
- ☐ Sea agitated by submarine armaments
- ☐ Heavens disturbed by war weaponry

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." (Matthew 24:14) No such earth-wide activity is being conducted by Christendom's clergy, for they are friendly to this world's system of things. (James 4:4) Who, then, is fulfilling this command? Have not Jesus' loyal followers on earth, who are not part of the world, been busy preaching that Kingdom news publicly and from house to house for more than 60 years now, introducing

themselves since 1931 as Jehovah's witnesses? (Isaiah 43:10, 12) And have they not blanketed the earth with billions of pieces of literature containing the "good news" that soon now the Kingdom, or government, ruled by Christ from heaven will completely replace all imperfect and selfish human rulerships? Their activity not only has brought good news by pointing out the meaning of the signs of the times but has served also as a divine warning of God's coming day of vengeance.—Isaiah 61:2.

The Critical Hour Nears!

DESPITE clear warning and the colossal failure of human governments over centuries of time, imperfect, puny men are pushing ahead arrogantly with their schemes. But they will not do so for very much longer. Never for a moment should we doubt the ability of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to carry out the purpose he declared through his prophet: "And in the days of those kings [those ruling at 'the time of the end'] 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."—Daniel 2:44; 12:9.

² Jesus gave us another indication of

1. (a) Why are the schemes of puny men doomed to failure? (b) What purpose of God must soon be carried out?

2. (a) How did Jesus illustrate the situation that now confronts mankind? (b) What warning was given, and with what result?

the nearness of that critical hour. He referred to the conditions on earth in the days of Noah and reminded his followers that people then were completely engrossed in their own little plans and in leading a normal life, as they might have called it. Jesus said: "Just as the days of Noah were, so the presence of the Son of man will be. For as they were in those days before the flood, eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and they took no note until the flood came and swept them all away, so the presence of the Son of man will be." (Matthew 24:37-39) Those people were warned by the message that righteous Noah proclaimed decade after decade. (2 Peter 2:5) But how did the majority of the people regard that warning? Jesus said, "They took no note." They were not interested in Noah and his message. And so it was that "only Noah and those who were

with him in the ark kept on surviving," eight souls in all.—Genesis 7:23.

Will You Heed the Warning?

³ Can we honestly say that we have not been warned? We have before us the same appearance of things as in Noah's generation. Note how the majority ignore, scoff at or ridicule the message borne by Jehovah's Witnesses today. Many are absorbed in their own day-to-day living and long-range planning. God and his purposes with regard to mankind and this earth do not even enter their minds. Many persons claim to be Christians and belong to some religious denomination, but only for the convenience and the so-called respectable image it gives them in modern society. They simply 'take no note' of the warning and must therefore take the consequences. But what about you? Will you wisely heed the signs of the times?

⁴ You have observed, have you not, how empires and kingdoms are splintering into fragments, how religious and political movements are breaking down into left, center and right groups, how so many want to have their own way, right or wrong. Does not this point to the "last days" foretold by the apostle Paul? He wrote: "But know this, that in the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God." (2 Timothy 3:1-4) Surely, when we add the fulfillment of this

3. How do people respond to the warning today?
4. How did Paul and Peter foretell the present-day situation?

prophecy to all the other things foretold by Jesus Christ, the signs of the times become very full of meaning. Truly, we are in those "last days," and lack of discipline can be seen on all sides—in schools, in business, in labor circles, in society in general.—Compare 2 Peter 3:3-7.

⁵ Today, when ambitious men and leaders of nations likewise demonstrate lack of reasonableness and failure to reconcile all their conflicting claims and stubbornly forge ahead with their own schemes for world betterment, what will you do? What do the signs of the times definitely point to as the safe course for you? Will you be wiser and more reasonable than those prominent men? They do not consider the sacrificial death of Christ Jesus to be of any importance. They refuse to accept the fact that he died not only that we might all live but also to make possible his glorious kingdom by which he will destroy the power of the god of this world, Satan the Devil. (Hebrews 2:14) But you can exercise faith in the sure promises of the Creator. You can hope for the marvelous outcome that Jehovah assures to each one putting trust in him.—Psalm 37:3, 4, 28, 29, 39, 40.

An Urgent Call to Meek Ones

⁶ To you and to all who read the signs of the times accurately the urgent call is sounded out by the prophet of Jehovah God: "Before there comes upon you people the burning anger of Jehovah, before there comes upon you the day of Jehovah's anger, seek Jehovah, all you meek ones of the earth, who have practiced His own judicial decision. Seek righteousness, seek meekness. Probably you may be concealed in the day of Jehovah's anger." (Zephaniah 2:2, 3) Clearly, Jehovah

5. (a) What questions should we now consider?
(b) How does our expectation differ from that of worldly men?
6. What urgent call now sounds forth, and why?

Like Jesus, we should demonstrate unshakable
faith in God's ability to fulfill all his promises

would provide an opportunity for lovers of peace and righteousness to get saved from a doomed system of things.

⁷ Instead of being obstinate and opinionated in the face of all these signs (like so many worldly political and religious leaders), are you meek, teachable and ready to listen eagerly to God's provision for your safety? Have you tried to live according to the Bible's standards of righteousness, that is, Jehovah's "judicial decision"? Are you heartsick at the things you see and hear going on in the earth, yes, even in your own neighborhood? Unlike self-satisfied ones who do not care what happens to others so long as they get what they want out of life, are you not deeply moved by the hardships, oppressions and near-famine conditions under which millions of your helpless fellow humans have to live? If your answer to these questions is Yes, then probably you may prove to be among those to whom Jehovah promises concealment in the day of his wrath. —Isaiah 26:20, 21; Ezekiel 9:4-7.

⁸ If you are a meek person, readily disposed to listen to divine teaching, how should you go about 'seeking meekness and righteousness'? This may be a question on your mind. The meek and lowly One, Jesus, invites you to be truly his disciple. That would require that you study his example, his life's work while he was on earth, and strive to do as he did. Note that he went about doing good, never doing evil even to his oppressors. (Acts 10:38) God's kingdom was

often the theme of his teaching, of his illustrations, of his prayers. (Matthew 4:17; Luke 8:1) He had nothing in common with the political kingdoms of this world. (John 18:36) He demonstrated unshakable faith in God's ability to fulfill all His promises toward His servants on earth. Jesus disapproved of those who claimed to be serving God while at the same time teaching doctrines unsupported by the written Word of God. (Mark 7:5-8) Are you prepared to imitate him in all these matters?

⁹ In no way did Jesus act independently of his heavenly Father. In fact, he declared: "The Son cannot do a single thing of his own initiative, but only what he beholds the Father doing. For whatever things that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner." (John 5:19; 7:16-18) Again he said: "He that sent me is with me; he did not abandon me to myself, because I always do the things pleasing to him." (John 8:29) He showed no inclination to live his life in his own way for the gratification of personal desires and ambitions. He flatly turned down the world rulership and prominence offered him by Satan the Devil. (Luke 4:5-8) Will you accept and follow Jesus' example in order to gain the approval and blessing of Jehovah God?

Where to Look for Help

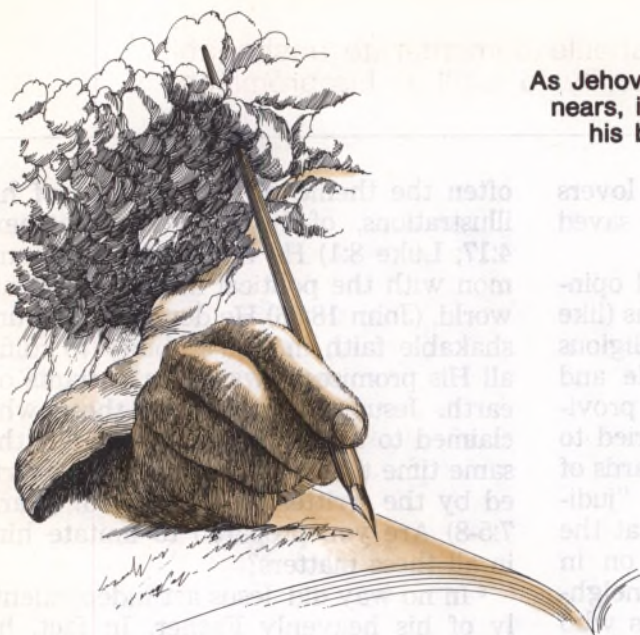
¹⁰ It is not possible for you to follow that course in your own strength, so subtle and deceptive are the methods

9. What fine example did Jesus set for us?

10. (a) What outstanding aid has God provided, and how may we avail ourselves of it? (b) What meaning do the words of John 17:3 have for us?

7. To what questions may we answer Yes with benefit to ourselves?

8. How may we 'seek meekness and righteousness'?



As Jehovah's day of vindication
nears, is your name written in
his book of remembrance?

of the archdeceiver. You need all the assistance that God has furnished to enable you to succeed. The outstanding aid that he has provided is the Holy Bible. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) As you know, one cannot learn what is in the Bible simply by listening to a brief sermon each week and engaging in various rites and ceremonies. There is need for a course of Bible study, not for yourself alone but also for your family. Remember, this is the only Book that can make good its claim to having the Creator of heaven and earth as its Author. No other book or basis for study can offer its reverent students what Jesus indicated, namely: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) There are men and women versed in Bible knowledge who are ready to assist you without charge or obligation. You have only to ask Jehovah's Witnesses and you

will receive the needed help to get started.

¹¹ What a wonderful promise God holds forth to those who think upon and discuss among themselves the practical benefits of studying what God and Christ have revealed about themselves! Note how it is expressed by one of Jehovah's prophets of old: "At that time [when Jehovah settles accounts with his presumptuous enemies who thought they would get away with wickedness forever] those in fear of Jehovah spoke with one another, each one with his companion, and Jehovah kept paying attention and listening. And a book of remembrance began to be written up before him for those in fear of Jehovah and for those thinking upon his name."—Malachi 3:16.

¹² This means much more than just living a good, respectable life according to this world's standards. It means obtaining accurate knowledge of God's purposes toward man, learning what he expects of us, and then devoting our life to serving him and doing his will in every aspect of life. How else could we expect Jehovah to write our names in his "book of remembrance"? How could he

11, 12. (a) What promise does Jehovah hold forth to those meekly studying his Word? (b) How may we have our names written in God's "book of remembrance"?

remember us for good if we fail to show reverent fear of his Word and name, and fail to discuss them with our fellow humans at every possible opportunity?—Romans 10:10.

¹³ A businessman, a student in school, or a busy housewife may conclude that he or she is too busy to give time to such a study. But it is good to recall Jesus' kindly words of warning about the uncertainties of plans, ambitions, even of life itself: "What benefit will it be to a man if he gains the whole world but forfeits his soul [or, life]?" (Matthew 16:26) Then also there are the apostle Paul's words that apply so pointedly in these urgent times when we are surrounded by signs of the approaching end of a wicked system of things: "So keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportunity time for yourselves, because the days are wicked. On this account . . . go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is." (Ephesians 5:15-17) In view of the calamity that Jehovah is about to bring in upon this whole wicked world, it is good to heed his counsel given through his prophets: "Search for Jehovah, you people, while he may be found." "This is what Jehovah has said . . . , 'Search for me, and keep living.'"—Isaiah 55:6; Amos 5:4.

¹⁴ There are those who enjoy good health and an abundance of energy, mental and physical, and for this reason may not feel so keenly their dependence on the Creator. So the tendency is for them to make great plans for their future and give little thought to God's place in their

lives. They set their sights upon wealth or honor among men or a comfortable and carefree old age. God is not in all their thoughts and plans. Wisely the inspired Bible writer warns: "Come, now, you who say: 'Today or tomorrow we will journey to this city and will spend a year there, and we will engage in business and make profits,' whereas you do not know what your life will be tomorrow. For you are a mist appearing for a little while and then disappearing [your life is so short at best]. Instead, you ought to say: 'If Jehovah wills, we shall live and also do this or that.' But now you take pride in your self-assuming brags. All such taking of pride is wicked."—James 4:13-16.

¹⁵ So, then, whatever your present position in life, there is urgent reason for you to associate with the more than two million people throughout the earth, of many nations and languages, who are widely known as students of the Bible and proclaimers of its message, and particularly identified by their witnessing to Jehovah's name and kingdom.—Isaiah 43:10, 12; Matthew 24:14.

15. In view of the signs of the times, what urgent need should we recognize today?

What vital counsel does each of the following scriptures provide for us at this time?

- ☐ Matthew 24:37-39
- ☐ 2 Timothy 3:1-4
- ☐ Zephaniah 2:2, 3
- ☐ Ephesians 5:15-17
- ☐ James 4:13-16

13. (a) What counsel of Jesus and of Paul may we apply in our lives? (b) How may we show ourselves to be "wise persons"?

14. (a) What mistake do many make today, and why? (b) In this regard, what sound advice is found at James 4:13-16?



How You Must Act!

THERE are today more than 43,000 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses throughout the earth. These come together each week in their Kingdom Halls for Bible study and meetings that are open without cost to anyone who sincerely desires to improve his knowledge of the Bible. Entire families, with children of all ages, attend these meetings at the Kingdom Hall. Here, great benefits will come to you in addition to finding answers to many Bible questions that have puzzled you in the past. As your whole family participates in such meetings for one or more hours each week, and as all take in knowledge of Bible principles, causes of strife and lack of communication in the family will gradually disappear. (Psalm 119:165) There will be greater harmony, greater trust in one another. Is that not just what families need?

² Learning and applying Bible principles in your daily life will prove to be a

1. How do congregational meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses benefit families?

2. In what different walks of life will application of Bible principles help, and in what ways?

boon to you in many situations and circumstances. Doing so will give purpose to the student in school, improving his ability to take in instruction and profit from it. This will help the housewife to appreciate the importance of her role in the family. It will result in the employee having better relations with fellow employees, and in the value of the employee being recognized by the employer. The employer will come to appreciate, too, that as he deals with those under his authority, so Jehovah will deal with him. Thus reasonableness and cooperation will replace the selfish, independent attitudes that are rife in this old world.—James 3:17, 18.

"I Am with You All the Days"

³ As the standards and practices of this present system go on deteriorating, those who love God and follow Christ will not descend to the depths of degradation that are going to merit divine punishment in the greatest trouble of all time. Unitedly,

3. What hard fight must servants of God put up, yet with what assurance?

faithful witnesses of the true God will put up a hard fight for the faith, despite the efforts of God's enemies to infiltrate their ranks and influence them wrongly. (Compare Jude 3, 4.) These servants of Jehovah have the promise of the now invisible King of God's choice: "Look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the [present wicked] system of things."—Matthew 28:20.

⁴Being with them until that time means, too, that Christ Jesus will usher survivors of the "great tribulation" into a completely changed situation on earth, a situation in which Christ's rule from heaven will ensure that "they will not do any harm or cause any ruin in all my holy mountain [kingdom]; because the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea." (Isaiah 11:9; Revelation 7:14) Gone will be the ruiners of the earth with all their sophisticated nuclear weaponry! Gone will be oppressors and liars and murderers! During his reign of a 1,000 years, Christ Jesus will firmly but gently lead earth's human inhabitants along the way to human perfection.—Revelation 21:4.

⁵Swiftly, the radical change in the world scene will now be upon us, at a time when the majority do not expect it, for they have not paid attention to the Bible's warning: "Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication that you may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur, and in standing [favorably] before the Son of man." (Luke 21:36) Tremendous convulsions will occur amid the visible and invisible rulerships of this wicked system of things. Peter, writing under inspiration, warned: "Yet Jehovah's day will

come as a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a hissing noise, but the elements being intensely hot will be dissolved, and earth and the works in it will be discovered." (2 Peter 3:10) Yes, Jehovah will thoroughly expose all the machinations of wicked men and demons as he brings an entire world system to its well-deserved end.—Jeremiah 25:31-33.

Storm Warnings

⁶Just as the signs in the literal skies give advance warning of storms and widespread desolation, so the signs of the times speak of the final storm and desolations that loom on the world horizon. (Luke 12:54-56) How destructive will be the effects of that divine act on this iniquitous system of world rulership? Judge for yourself from these words of an inspired prophet of God: "Jehovah has indignation against all the nations, and rage against all their army. He must devote them to destruction; he must give them to the slaughter. And all those of the army of the heavens must rot away. And the heavens must be rolled up, just like a book scroll; and their army will all shrivel away, just as the leafage shrivels off the vine and like a shriveled fig off the fig tree."—Isaiah 34:2, 4.

⁷Again prophesying about the end of an entire world system, with its lofty starlike rulers and those who support and back them, the prophet declares at Isaiah 51:6: "Raise your eyes to the heavens themselves, and look at the earth beneath. For the very heavens must be dispersed in fragments just like smoke, and like a garment the earth itself will wear out, and its inhabitants themselves

4. What changed conditions may be expected after the "great tribulation"?

5. What timely admonition do we find at Luke 21:36 and 2 Peter 3:10?

6. (a) What do the signs of the times indicate for the immediate future? (b) How destructive will God's act prove to be?

7. (a) How does Isaiah 51:6 describe the end of the world system? (b) How are Jehovah's salvation and righteousness involved?

will die like a mere gnat. But as for my salvation [says Jehovah], it will prove to be even to time indefinite, and my own righteousness will not be shattered."

Executing Judgment

⁸ Then, too, the glorified King, Christ Jesus, by his angel instructed the apostle John to write this dire message: "And I saw when he opened the sixth seal, and a great earthquake occurred; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the entire moon became as blood, and the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as when a fig tree shaken by a high wind casts its unripe figs. And the heaven departed as a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and every island were removed from their places. And the kings of the earth and the top-ranking ones

8. What are the features of the dire message recorded at Revelation 6:12-17?

and the military commanders and the rich and the strong ones and every slave and every free person hid themselves in the caves and in the rock-masses of the mountains. And they keep saying to the mountains and to the rock-masses: 'Fall over us and hide us from the face of the One seated on the throne [Jehovah] and from the wrath of the Lamb, because the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?' " (Revelation 6:12-17) No enemy of Jehovah and of Christ the King will survive!

⁹ The Bible here shows that the mighty ones of the earth—the rulers of the nations, the military leaders, the wealthy business magnates—and all who support them, whether conscripted or volunteers, will have to meet up with Jehovah's

9. (a) What various groups will be forced to acknowledge Jehovah's judgment of them? (b) What do Psalm 83:17, 18 and Ezekiel 39:6, 7 tell us as to the reason for this judgment?



At Armageddon there will be no refuge for the wicked

judgment. They will have no way to flee! Their selfish schemes and efforts to preserve this old wicked system will fail. They will be forced to see that heaven's favor is not upon them. The prayer of Psalm 83:17, 18 will be answered, for these enemies of God will "become abashed and perish." And why? "That people may know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth." Yes, it will be Jehovah's time to carry out his declaration repeated some 60 times through his prophet Ezekiel, that they "will have to know that I am Jehovah."—Ezekiel 39:6, 7.

Happy Those Who Survive

¹⁰ To preserve their lives through the greatest tribulation of all human history men will run for cover. But where? They will not be trusting in Jehovah, but in their own organizations. Hence, they will turn to human, political governments and commercial organizations, which dominate the earth like lofty mountains, as backbones of the present system of things. Thus it is that they will try to hide themselves, seeking to escape the wrath of Jehovah. Divine prophecy will inevitably be fulfilled. What is forecast in the signs of the times will have caught up with them as everlasting cutting off in destruction descends upon all opposers of the kingdom of God.

¹¹ But what a glorious day that will be for all the meek ones of the earth! It will be like awakening from a bad dream. Happy will be those survivors. Love of money, which is "a root of all sorts of injurious things" such as cheating and cutthroat competition, will have been eradicated. (1 Timothy 6:10) The

10. Where will men fail to find cover during the tribulation?

11. What will be some of the reasons for happiness among the survivors?

In Our Next Issue

■ **Is There a Future for Today's Youth?**

■ **An Educated Tongue—"To Encourage the Weary"**

■ **"Each One In His Own Place"**

inhabitants will labor under happy conditions and will rejoice in the fruits of their work, for the prophet of God declares: "And they will actually sit, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble; for the very mouth of Jehovah of armies has spoken it." (Micah 4:4) Imagine! All causes of tension and worry removed forever! Do we rejoice at such a prospect?

¹² In place of the scorching sun of misrule and oppression by Satan, the mimic god, Jehovah of armies promises that 'to those who are in fear of my name the sun of righteousness will certainly shine forth, with healing in its wings (or, rays).' (Malachi 4:2) And not only the physical ailments will be healed, but also the mental and emotional ailments that have resulted from so much sorrow in the past. In what way? By the canceling out of death and its ravages among the human family. Of this we can be certain in view of God's comforting message: "Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will

12. (a) To what healing does Malachi 4:2 point forward? (b) What disabilities will God himself remove from mankind?

be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.”—Revelation 21:3, 4.

¹³ However, what of the billions that have died and who have been ‘sleeping in the dust of the earth’? (Daniel 12:2) Is there any hope for them? Yes, for in accord with the teaching of Christ Jesus, his faithful apostle Paul said: “I have hope toward God, . . . that there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.” (Acts 24:15) The 1,000-year reign of Christ will furnish many of these returnees from the grave the first opportunity to have a clear understanding of God’s purposes, the first opportunity to bring their lives willingly into harmony with God’s will. What a glorious time of happy reunion that will be!

¹⁴ Surely we are privileged in standing here today at this vantage point of time! We now see all around us the signs that point to an imminent and sweeping change. We can understand that Jehovah has refrained from interfering with rule of the nations by selfish men and depraved demons for a reasonable time in order to show up their utter inability to bring about peace and prosperity for all. Now the signs of the times reveal to our discerning eyes that there is not a moment to lose. It is urgent for us to take steps that will merit God’s favor. The apostle Paul’s words to a crowd of listeners in ancient Athens should move us to act now. He said that God ‘is telling mankind that they should all everywhere repent.’ (Acts 17:30) By our doing so, on the basis of accurate knowledge, and then dedicating ourselves to God, we

13. (a) How does the Bible express the resurrection hope? (b) What “first” opportunities will many then have?

14. (a) At what vantage point do we now stand? (b) How should the signs of the times motivate us?

have the opportunity to demonstrate to the great Judge of all that we are in favor of his kingdom under Christ. But we must take the steps now, without delay, and while Satanic rule still holds sway over the earth. This will provide the acid test of our genuine love for God’s truth and righteousness.—1 Peter 1:6, 7.

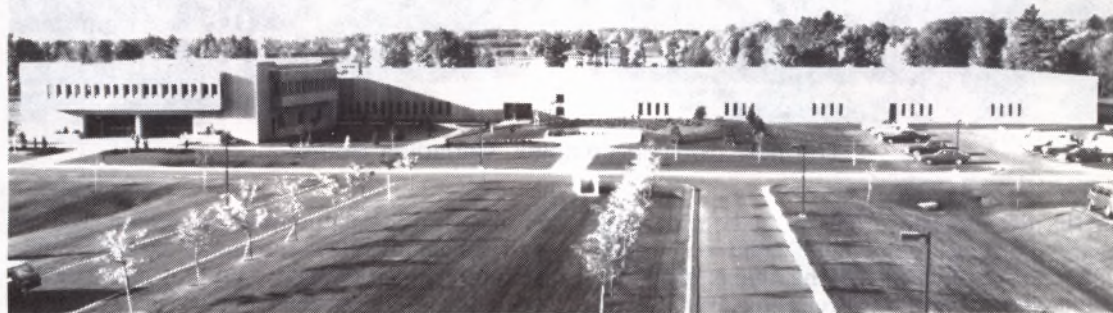
¹⁵ Will you be among that happy throng of survivors? Will you have taken your stand against Satan and all unrighteousness and for God and his kingdom by Christ in complete loyalty to God? Will you have shared in warning your fellow creatures and given them the opportunity to save themselves from the doom of a wicked generation? May that be your blessed portion, and may your voice be forever joined in the chorus of thankful praise to Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth and sea and all that is in them.—Psalm 146:1, 2, 5, 6.

15. (a) What questions may you now answer, to your own benefit? (b) As shown in the 146th Psalm, what action on your part will lead to true happiness?

DO YOU RECALL?

- ☐ How regular association in the true Christian congregation brings benefits
- ☐ What Jesus counseled in concluding his prophecy on the sign (Luke 21:36)
- ☐ Some scriptures pointing up the extent of and reasons for Jehovah’s judgment act
- ☐ What happy prospects lie ahead for the survivors and for those now dead in gravedom
- ☐ What positive action is now needed on the part of all who hope to survive

'God Makes It Grow' in Canada



Office and factory building, Watch Tower branch, Canada

WHAT joy there is to those involved when they see healthy, flourishing physical growth! Ask any farmer. Ask any parent. The whole atmosphere is one of happy encouragement to all. This is equally true in the case of spiritual development.

Consider the way it was in the days of the first-century Christian congregation. On the very first day of its existence it expanded to 3,000 rejoicing disciples! What made it grow? The inspired account says that "*Jehovah* continued to join to them daily those being saved." The "happy God" made it grow!—Acts 2:41-47; 1 Timothy 1:11.

That this 'multiplying of disciples very much in Jerusalem' was no mere initial spurt of growth in home soil that would soon wither and die is seen in the results of the disciple-making work of the apostle Paul in Gentile nations about 15 years later. At that time, too, "the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day." The reaction to this continuing expansion? It caused "great joy to all the brothers." When news of the apostolic decree to receive these Gentiles as Christians reached the various congregations "they rejoiced over the encouragement."—Acts 6:7; 16:5; 15:3, 31.

However, even though human servants were used to carry the good news to fellowmen, mature early Christians knew that no human deserves the credit for the result. They humbly felt that God was causing the growth. As Paul explained it: "I planted, Apollos watered, but *God* kept making it grow."—1 Corinthians 3:5-8; see also *Lamsa*.

Growth in the Canadian Field

Humble, productive Christians in Canada feel the same way today. Jehovah's Witnesses have been busily sowing the "word of the kingdom" in their part of the world field and this has borne good fruit. (Matthew 13:18-23, 36-43) From small plantings in 1880 the number of Kingdom preachers and disciple makers steadily multiplied. By 1956 there were 28,540 in 740 congregations. That year new branch facilities had been dedicated. They were in buildings designed to accommodate the expansion Jehovah was bringing. A magazine press was installed in 1958 to care for the increasing demand for the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. Magazine distribution had soared to over 3,000,000 copies the previous year.

When publishers of the Kingdom passed the 60,000 mark in 1975 and magazine placements



The new dwelling complex, Canadian Bethel

in the field topped 8,700,000, it became clear that larger facilities would again be needed. Jehovah was indeed making things grow and 979 congregations were rejoicing over the encouragement. It can be appreciated that Jehovah's Witnesses do not build structures to promote growth. Rather, God-given growth and new disciples demand expanded facilities to look properly after the work of Kingdom preaching.

The genuineness of the joy of these modern-day Christians can be seen in their response to the notice that the Watch Tower Society had acquired land just outside Georgetown, Ontario, and was preparing to construct new branch quarters there.

Expanded Branch Facilities

Construction began with necessary site work in late 1978. It had been determined that although heavy steel and concrete work would have to be handled by outside firms, our Christian brothers would be given opportunity to volunteer their time and talents wherever possible. And volunteer they did! More than 600 of them came from all parts of the country to look after the plumbing, heating, electrical installations and other needs. Some came for a few weeks, some for a number of months, others for two years. As many as 200 were on the job site at one time.

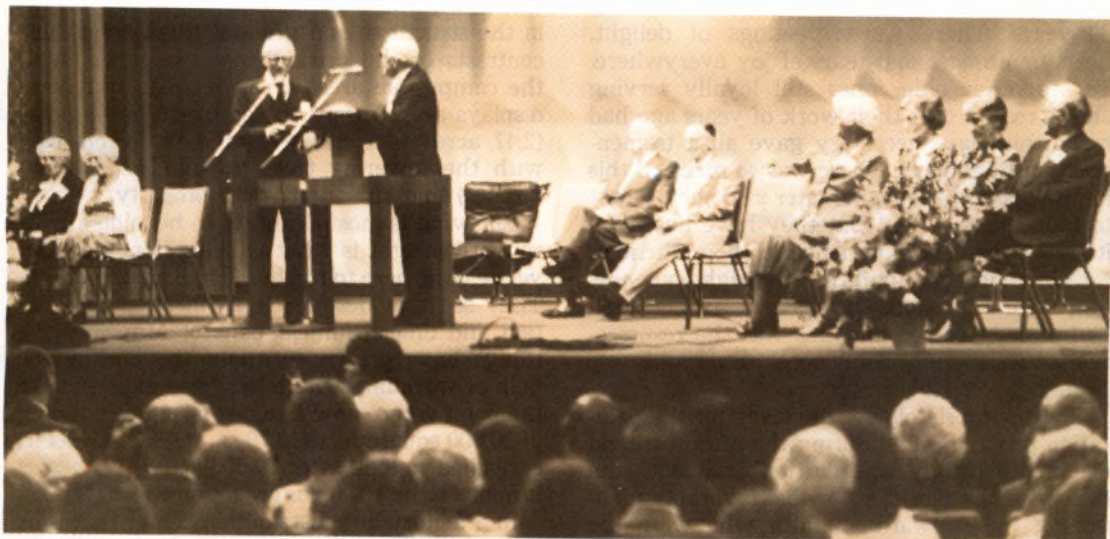
In some cases whole families came. An electrical contractor from Eastern Canada closed down his lucrative business, relocated his family in a house near the site and became supervisor

of electrical installation for the project. Did he and his family view the move as unduly upsetting? The father said: "Well, it hasn't really been the sacrifice some might think. Rather, I feel we are the ones who have benefited. I think all of us have grown spiritually and the family spirit of cooperation now is tremendous. As far as I'm concerned, all my memories from working on this project will be good ones that we will never forget."

When the problem of what kind of roofing for the new buildings would be best was solved, there was then a new problem—finding one of Jehovah's Witnesses familiar with this approach to roofing that was relatively new to Canada. The morning after making its decision on the roof the Building Committee received a long-distance call from a Witness in Western Canada. He was a roofer offering his services. His specialty? Exactly that kind of roofing needed!

Later, when this Witness was asked if his family had given up much to come to work on the roofing, he replied: "Words can hardly explain the joy and benefit our family have received. Our spirituality has been built up by this experience. It has made our family pioneer-minded." He and his wife have been serving as pioneers (full-time Kingdom preachers) since the completion of the project.

This upbuilding spirit that moved some to wholesome attitudes toward full-time service was not limited to family men with professions. It also became the experience of hundreds of young men and some young women who vol-



Old-timers relate past experiences during dedication program

unteered to work. Some of these youths grew to manhood and womanhood during their stay on the job site, becoming skilled craftsmen by the time they left. Their youthful vigor, enthusiasm and cooperative spirit were an encouragement to older ones. Non-Witness workers on the job were highly impressed with the behavior and work habits of these youths. Some of these young people are now pioneers, some have become members of the Bethel family and others have gone to other lands to assist in branch-expansion work going on there.

And what about those whose individual circumstances did not allow for sharing in the actual construction? Their enthusiasm for the growth Jehovah gives was seen in the fact that they wholeheartedly supported it in other ways. Some of them took on added duties and responsibilities in their local congregations, freeing the ones who could go to do construction work. Another fine evidence was seen in the donations and loans by Jehovah's Witnesses themselves to help cover the construction cost. In this way, along with contributions already on hand at the branch, it was possible to finance the entire multimillion-dollar project without having to obtain funds from any banks or lending institutions. That surely manifested conviction and confidence!

This excellent spirit brought the project to

completion on time. Jehovah's spirit was also manifest in the relatively problem-free transfer of the equipment and personnel to the new quarters in June of 1981. Now attention could be given to preparing for dedication of the new premises in October of 1981.

Happy Dedication of New Complex

Saturday, October 10, 1981, dawned bright and clear, giving promise of a beautiful day for dedicating these new facilities to Jehovah God for his purposes. That lovely sunrise kept its promise—the entire day was an ideally colorful autumn setting for the program and the touring of the premises.

Soon the invited guests began to arrive. It had been decided by the Branch Committee that, since it was impossible to have all of Jehovah's Witnesses in the country present, a group of those long associated—pioneers, former pioneers and others—should form a representative group from across the land. That meant that many of these invited ones had known one another when the total number of Witnesses was few, some having pioneered together in Quebec and other areas where they opened up the preaching work years ago.

Well, you can imagine the spirit of joy and enthusiasm as these old-timers saw one another, some of them for the first time in 20 or

30 years! There were greetings of delight, hearty embraces and tears of joy everywhere. To see other older ones still loyally serving and to realize that their work of years ago had made this place necessary gave all a tremendous spiritual boost. There was so much of this happy visiting that some later said they forgot to tour the complex! But they have described it as the greatest experience in their Christian career, almost like entering the righteous new order. Someone said: "It was as if Armageddon had already passed and this was the resurrection of all these faithful ones!" Everyone was beaming.

This appropriately set the stage for the dedication program, held during the afternoon and evening. Fittingly, one portion dealt with the history of the work in Canada, favorably mentioning the stalwarts in faith who were the roots in early plantings. A slide program showed how some of these worked in truly pioneering the Kingdom proclamation years ago. Another portion featured interviews, such as with a 95-year-old sister who is still a pioneer, having been on the list since 1914! When asked if she was disappointed that God had not yet brought on the total end, she confidently replied, "No! His time is my time!" When one old-timer was asked what kept him going, his reply was: "Appreciation and gratitude!" How true, and how good a reminder to all of us!

Three members of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses, Leo Greenlees, Karl Klein and Grant Suiter shared in the program. The dedication talk "Jehovah, I Will Laud You," was given by Grant Suiter and dealt nicely with what this new and expanded branch facility was all about. Then, in prayer, the speaker dedicated it all to Jehovah's use and praise. The audience at the branch Kingdom Hall and the thousands tied in by telephone lines at various locations understood exactly why these structures had been built. There was yet work to do in preaching the Kingdom good news and making disciples.—Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20.

Encouraging Future Prospects

Visitors can see tangible evidence that Jehovah has prospered the work of preaching the "good news" and that this branch facility is one of many designed for the work yet to be done. Of course, visitors do see a literal beauty

in the structures and grounds themselves. The contrasts of the precast concrete panels with the campuslike areas of lawn, trees and floral displays are pleasant to the eye. The 45 acres (2.47 acres = 1 hectare) of grass blend well with the towering trees (evergreens, maples, birches) that rim the 65-acre property.

But what is most beautiful to beholders with spiritual insight is what is being done and can yet be done here to further Kingdom preaching. They see that despite clergy-inspired persecution and official, unjust bans of former times, things have grown. Without the backing or help of worldlings there has been expansion to the point where now a two-story office building of 20,000 square feet (10.76 sq. ft. = 1 sq. meter) is readied to look after 70,000 active Witnesses in more than 1,100 congregations.

In a factory and distribution center that is as long as Noah's ark (c. 450 feet [140 m]) and three times as wide (c. 225 feet [70 m]) visitors see a new Harris offset rotary printing press, which can produce 35,000 magazines an hour.* Here *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* are printed in English, French and Italian. Ink and negatives for making offset plates for these publications come from Brooklyn. Visitors can observe also a smaller offset press turning out magazines in Ukrainian and Samoan. Reflecting Canada's multilingual population and the multiplying of many-language congregations is the printing of *Our Kingdom Ministry* in seven languages now. It is clear to visitors that there is room for more printing to be done. Magazines are now mailed from here to 66 other lands to assist in the teaching of the "good news" there.

There are 170 volunteer workers now being housed in the residence building (Bethel). There is room for 250 to be accommodated there. Its dining room can feed 350 persons at mealtimes. Much of the food supplies come from Watch Tower Farm, a 285-acre operation just about 20 minutes away. It, too, is capable of producing more.

Thus, there is every evidence of Jehovah's blessing on the work of Kingdom proclamation in this land. The proclaimers rejoice over the encouragement. It is their sincere wish that there will yet be further increase and growth to Jehovah's praise.—Haggai 2:6, 7.

* This building is actually 440 feet (134 m) long, 240 feet (73 m) wide.

Questions from Readers

■ Genesis 19:24 speaks of *'the Lord'* raining down sulfur and fire *'from the Lord'* on Sodom. Does this indicate that God is a trinity?

Believers in the Trinity have tried to find support for their doctrine from the account of Abraham and Lot. But careful, frank examination shows that it no more teaches the Trinity than does the Bible as a whole.

Abraham received a visit from "three men" who clearly were from God. Greeting them, Abraham said: "Jehovah, if, now, I have found favor in your eyes, please do not pass by your servant." (Genesis 18:1-3) Of course, Jehovah God himself had not appeared in the flesh to Abraham, for 'no man may see Him and yet live.' (Exodus 33:20; John 1:18) Hence, Abraham must have expressed himself this way because of recognizing that these "men," and perhaps one of them in particular, represented Jehovah. This agrees with other occasions when angels of God appeared to humans and were spoken of as "Jehovah" for they were heavenly representatives of the Most High.—Compare Genesis 16:7-13; Judges 6:12-16.

After the "three men" delivered that important message involving the foretold "seed," attention was turned to Sodom and Gomorrah. A comparison of Genesis 18:22 and 19:1 proves that the "men" who had visited Abraham were angels. While one of these representing Jehovah remained with Abraham, the other two heavenly messengers went to Sodom. There, at the mouth of two witnesses, they

assured Lot and his family that destruction was coming on the cities and that flight was necessary. Once Lot and his two daughters were safe, destruction came on the wicked cities. We read: "Then Jehovah made it rain sulphur and fire from Jehovah, from the heavens, upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah."—Genesis 19:24.

In many older Bible translations, this verse speaks of "the Lord" raining down fire from "the Lord." Some commentators who believed in the Trinity claimed that it meant that the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, brought destruction from the Lord God, the Father. But the Hebrew text shows that both references are to "Jehovah," who was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and who was different from Jesus.—Exodus 6:2, 3; Acts 3:13.

It is consistent with Hebrew idiom to speak of a person's doing something in reference to himself. We read: "Solomon proceeded to congregate the older men . . . to King Solomon." "To Moses [Jehovah] said: 'Go up to Jehovah . . .'" "[Jehovah] went on to say: . . . I will save them by Jehovah." (1 Kings 8:1; Exodus 24:1; Hosea 1:6, 7; Zechariah 10:12) In this same way Genesis 19:24 tells us that Jehovah brought the unprecedented sulfur and fire from himself, "from Jehovah, from the heavens." So rather than being a strained prop for the unscriptural

Trinity doctrine, this verse underscores the point made at Psalm 83:18: "That people may know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth."

It might be mentioned in passing that there is another aspect of this account that ardent believers in the Trinity have attempted to use in support of their doctrine. They have stressed that there were *three* who appeared to Abraham and who represented God, so they suggest that a trinity is indicated.

That there were three angels, though, is hardly a valid indication of a triune deity, for nothing in this account speaks of a plural Godhead. German scholar Franz Delitzsch observed that "the idea that the Trinity is represented in the three is in every point of view untenable."

So, why did God send *three* heavenly creatures representing him? The angels came to tell Abraham that he and Sarah would produce a son. (Genesis 18:10) Evidently God considered it appropriate for this prophetic message to be presented by three witnesses, even as the Law later said that "at the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses [a] matter should stand good" or be established. (Deuteronomy 19:15; 1 Timothy 5:19) Abraham would have reason to doubt that he and Sarah, considering their age and physical condition, could produce a son. (Hebrews 11:11, 12) But the witness of three angels would certainly be convincing.

"LET YOUR KINGDOM COME"

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