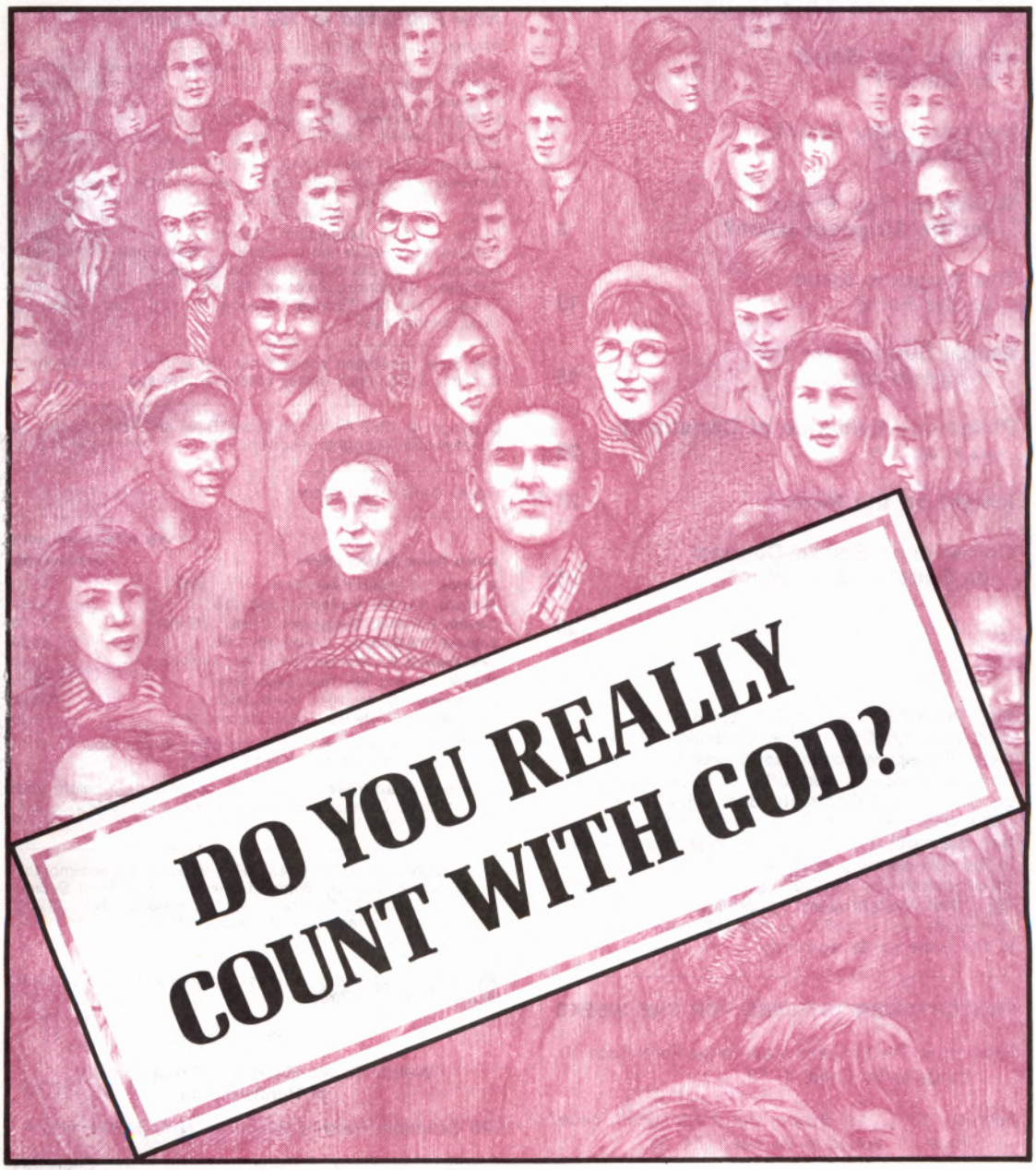
January 1, 1983

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



The Watchtower®

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

January 1, 1983
Vol. 104, No. 1

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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.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

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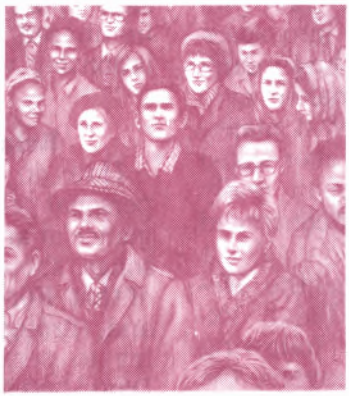
Are You Too Small to Matter?

DO YOU sometimes feel that nobody cares about you? Have you ever felt lonely even though surrounded by people? Why should such thoughts assail you? Because in so many cases today the individual has ceased to count.



In many countries bureaucracy has converted people into items of data lost in a maze of computer software. They have become numbers, ciphers, for some faceless government agency. Do you have that feeling at times?

Or maybe you work for a big company with hundreds or thousands of employees. As a consequence you may feel that you are even less than a cog in a wheel or a thread in the fabric. Even those who dwell in vast cities can feel utterly lonely. Why is that? Because neighbors often are total strangers, just another number on the next door.

Yes, it is very easy to believe that you are too small to matter, too insignificant to be noticed in the hustle and bustle of present-day life. This is especially true in modern society, in which the competitive drive has produced so many people who are insensitive to one another. Personal dignity is trampled upon and "Drop dead!" is considered a smart answer.

But is it the same way with God? Is he, the Sovereign Lord of the universe, so superior to mankind that we are all too small to matter to him? The Bible indicates that on one occasion Jehovah God had "ten thousand times ten thousand [100 million]" angels standing before him. (Daniel 7:10) He is also the Creator of the countless stars in the universe. Has he perhaps lost track of all this spirit and material creation? The Bible answers: "He is counting the number of the stars; all of them he calls by their names." (Psalm 147:4) Certainly, the celestial bodies are not out of control. As for the righteous angels, doubtless Jehovah calls them also by name, even though the names of only two of them, Michael and Gabriel, have been revealed to man.—Daniel 12:1; Luke 1:26.

Then what about mankind? Does God care? The psalmist David wrote: "Cause me, O Jehovah, to know my end, and the measure of my days—what it is, that I may know how transient I am. Look! You have made my days just a few; and my life's duration is as nothing in front of you. Surely every earthling man . . . is nothing but an exhalation." (Psalm 39: 4, 5) If man is as transient as a mere exhalation, then how can we be sure that he is not too small and temporary for God to care about him? From God's standpoint, do humans really matter? Do YOU really matter?

Do You Really Count With God?

AT NIGHT, have you ever paused to look out at the universe? Have you ever wondered how far out into space you are actually peering, or how many stars you can see with the naked eye? Then, overwhelmed by the vast majesty of the heavens, have you ever asked yourself, Does insignificant man really count with God? Is God in fact concerned about me as an individual?

Three thousand years ago the Hebrew poet-king David of Judah expressed amazement in the following words: "When I see your heavens, the works of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have prepared, what is mortal man that you keep him in mind, and the son of earthling man that you take care of him?" (Psalm 8:3, 4) Yes, even though David did not realize it, with his naked eye he was peering into the universe a distance of some 600,000 light-years.* He was impressed that the Creator of that vast expanse should also take man into account.

David expressed a parallel thought in Psalm 144, where we read: "O Jehovah, what is man that you should notice him, the son of mortal man that you should take account of him? Man himself bears resemblance to a mere exhalation; his days are like a passing shadow." (Verses 3, 4) Yet, in spite of man's comparative insignificance and transience, David knew that man does count with God. How could he be sure of that? Because he himself had developed a personal relationship with Jehovah.

What Kind of Relationship Is Possible?

How do we know that David had a personal relationship with God? A quick glance at any of David's psalms, or poetic songs, should be enough to convince us of that. For example, let us take Psalm 23 and, through its simply expressed words, try to perceive the implicit confidence David had in his Shepherd, Jehovah God.

"Jehovah is my Shepherd.
I shall lack nothing.
In grassy pastures he makes me lie down;
By well-watered resting-places he conducts me.
My soul he refreshes.
He leads me in the tracks of righteousness for his name's sake.
Even though I walk in the valley of deep shadow,
I fear nothing bad,
For you are with me;
Your rod and your staff are the things that comfort me."—Verses 1-4.

Here, the depth of David's relationship with God shines through with clarity. How does that psalm affect you? Do you recognize the bridge of trust between the defenseless "sheep" David and his protective Shepherd, Jehovah? Without a doubt, David was conscious of the fact that although man resembles "a mere exhalation," he personally did count with

* A light-year is the distance light travels in a year at a speed of 186,281 miles (299,338 km) per second. This amounts to 5,878,000,000,000 miles (9,460,000,000,000 km), the distance light travels in a year. Of course, the universe is much more extensive than the limited view of man's naked eye.

his God and Shepherd. Therefore, David could say with conviction: "Jehovah is my Shepherd. I shall lack nothing." Now, how can you achieve the same confidence, the same trust?

To begin with there is one vital point we cannot overlook. It is not just a matter of the shepherd's taking an interest in his sheep. The sheep also have to follow their shepherd and give heed to his voice. In other words, if we want to count *with* God we must also count *on* God ourselves. If sheep flee the fold or reject the shepherd, then protection is lost. The relationship is ruined by the sheep's own deliberate waywardness. In spite of man's history in this respect, God has shown concern for mankind, not only as a group but also as individuals. What evidence do we have for saying this?

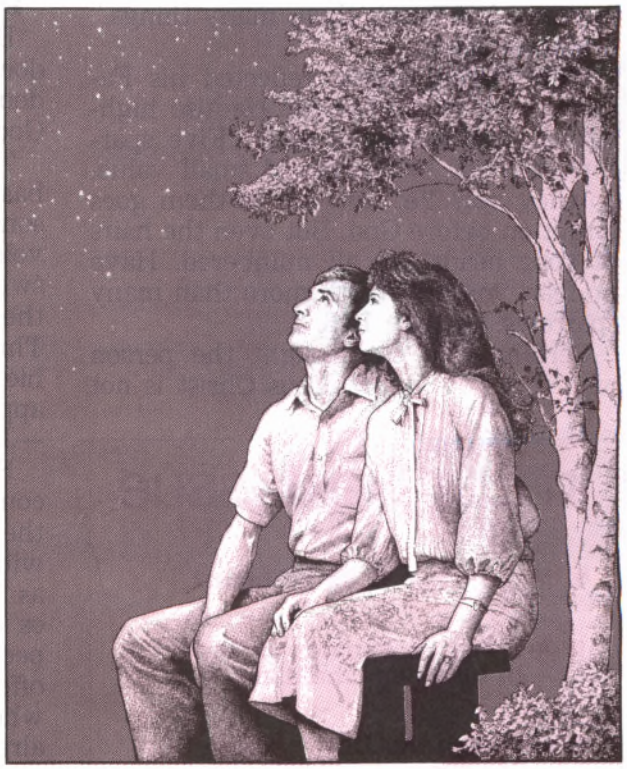
Since When Has Man Mattered to God?

From the very beginning of human history, Jehovah has manifested concern for mankind and its future. When selfish rebellion broke out in Eden, God did not abandon the human family and leave them without hope. He promised a future "seed" that would take action against man's chief enemy and bring relief by bruising Satan's head. (Genesis 3:15; Romans 16:20) Thereafter Jehovah continued to deal with mankind, at times as individuals and on other occasions as nations.

A clear example of Jehovah's concern for the individual in ancient Israel was the law that made provision for orphans and widows, the destitute of the nation. For example, it specified that they were to have a part in the harvest even though they were without land. They were granted gleaning rights in the reaped fields. How superior that was to many welfare arrangements that exist in nations today! In Israel the individual retained his self-respect in spite of his poverty. Why? Because he did not have to beg or await a State-financed handout. With his own hands he gleaned for his needs. He did useful work and felt grateful to his bountiful God, Jehovah. —Leviticus 19:9, 10; Ruth, chapter 2.

Did Christ Highlight His Father's Care?

The four Gospels make it clear that Jesus Christ cared for people. And since he exactly reflected his Father's qualities, his concern was a clear evidence that man does count with God. (John 14:9)



Is God concerned about us?

Christ's teaching contained loving and practical guidelines for unselfish living. How clearly that was illustrated when his disciples returned tired and exhausted from a preaching campaign! What was his reaction? It was one of compassion and consideration. Jesus understood their feelings, their need for a break. "He said to them: 'Come, you yourselves, privately into a lonely place and rest up a bit.' For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure time even to eat a meal." So they all went off in a boat to a lonely spot for a change of pace.

But the crowd followed them. How did Jesus react to that? With impatience and anger? "Well, on getting out [of the boat], he saw a great crowd, but he was moved with pity for them, because they were as sheep without a shepherd. And he started to teach them many things." —Mark 6:30-34.

How clearly Christ reflected his Father's concern for people! He also highlighted this when he said: "Five sparrows sell for two coins of small value, do they not? Yet not one of them goes forgotten before God. But even the hairs of your heads are all numbered. Have no fear; you are worth more than many sparrows."—Luke 12:6, 7.

Certainly, in God's sight the person who seeks to follow Jesus Christ is not lost in the crowd. But the important point is, Do you actively seek to follow Jesus Christ? Are you conscious of your spiritual need in that respect? (Matthew 5:3) Remember, shortly before his arrest and subsequent death Jesus prayed to his Father: "I make request, not concerning these only [the 11 faithful apostles who shared his last supper with him], but also concerning those [other disciples] putting faith in me through their word." (John 17:20) Jesus knew that not only would his apostles count with God but so would those who later became believers on the basis of their preaching. That indicates that the Great Shepherd, Jehovah God, is accessible to all those who manifest the humble disposition of sheep.—Psalm 23:1.

Does Man Count With God Today?

But now you may ask, 'If man really does count with God, how is that evident today? And how can I benefit from God's concern for mankind?'

Today Jehovah, the Great Shepherd, has made provision for sheeplike persons throughout the world to hear his voice. How has he done this? Jesus answers: "No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him." Thus, Jehovah is drawing people of humble heart toward himself through his appointed "fine shepherd," Jesus Christ. —John 6:44; 10:11, 14-16.

How is that drawing work being accomplished? By the preaching activity of the faithful followers of Christ who are witnesses of the true God, Jehovah, even as Jesus was. Yes, the Christian witnesses of Jehovah are preaching wherever people are to be found. Freely, they are offering individual attention to anyone who desires to know God. If you have not already done so, are you willing to take your first step toward developing a personal relationship with the Great Shep-

In Our Next Issue

- **Music—Can It Be a Threat?**
- **Are You an Imitator of Christ or an Imitation Christian?**
- **Exposing the Devil's Subtle Designs**

herd, Jehovah? Are you willing to seek God through Jesus Christ? Remember Jesus' exhortation: "Keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you." By sending his Son to earth in our behalf, the Great Shepherd has already taken the first positive step toward you. If you respond, you will soon discover for yourself that man does count with God.—Matthew 7:7; 1 John 4:7-10.

The Great Shepherd lovingly cares for all his "sheep"

Does Man's Future Count With God?

The fact that man's existence is compared to an exhalation, to a mere breath, indicates how brief man's life span is. Yet, how long would you really like to live if you could enjoy perfect health and happiness? Did you say, "Forever"? Well, Jehovah has promised just that—everlasting life on a paradise earth. Thus, in the apostle Paul's letter to Titus, we read about "a hope of the everlasting life which God, who cannot lie, promised before times long lasting." (Titus 1:2) Based on that same promise, Paul offered counsel to others "to work at good, to be rich in fine works, to be liberal, ready to share, safely treasuring up for themselves a fine foundation for the future, in order that they may get a firm hold on *the real life.*" That "real life" leads on to everlasting life.—1 Timothy 6:17-19.

Do the Dead Count With God?

'But,' you may ask, 'what about the dead? Do they count with the Great Shepherd?' They certainly do! That is why the apostle Paul "was declaring the good news of Jesus *and the resurrection.*" (Acts 17:18) Surely, the resurrection is an outstanding example of Jehovah's concern for the individual. Why so? Because it shows that He has kept a record, down to the most minute detail, of the personality of those who are to be restored to life. The Supreme Controller of the universe, with its millions of galaxies and stars, is undaunted by the need to recall all that personality data and to imprint it in a recreated brain and heart. Little wonder that Jesus proclaimed with conviction: "Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his [Jesus'] voice and come out."—John 5:28, 29.

If you wish to be taken into account by the Great Shepherd, Jehovah, through his Son, Jesus Christ, do not hesitate to ask Jehovah's Witnesses to help you. In the privacy of your own home you can ask any Bible questions you desire and be assured of reasonable answers. Or you can write to this magazine's publishers who will help you to prove conclusively for yourself that you can really count with God now and in the future.

Where Do You Stand on the Kingdom Issue?

WHAT does the word "issue" here mean? It means a point that is under dispute between two or three people or groups and that needs to be settled by some authoritative decision or by some convincing demonstration. The issue now is one that is worldwide. It has to do with the Kingdom of God by means of his appointed ruler, Jesus Christ. Since the postwar year of 1919, 63 years ago, the prophecy uttered by that appointed ruler has been carried out by Jehovah's Witnesses in 205 lands, or countries, namely: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matthew 24:14.

What has resulted? This: All the rulerships of the earth have been obliged to face the issue whether they have relished it or not. By now it is clearly evident that they have not liked it. We are now living, as it were, in the twilight of the kingdoms of the earth. As the outcome of two world wars, many earthly kingdoms have been overturned and replaced by other forms of rulership—by republics or by socialistic dictatorships or other sorts of authoritarian governments. Today there are at least 15 kingdoms still functioning, such as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the kingdom of Jordan, the kingdom of Nepal in Asia, the kingdom of Tonga in the South Pacific and the kingdom of Swaziland in Africa.

Removal of Human Kingdoms

Total blackout faces all human kingdoms not just because kingdoms as a style of government are in the minority but because all forms of human government are faced with being removed to make way for a worldwide government not of man-made construction. Says the prophecy of Daniel 2:44 of more than 2,580 years ago: "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." World War I that began in 1914 did not spell out the fulfillment of that encouraging prophecy of Daniel, but it did signify that the God of heaven had installed his chosen King on a heavenly throne with power for the early carrying out of that prophecy.

Today all earthly governments are facing destruction even at their own hands by highly developed scientific means of warfare. Well-informed commentators on world affairs are themselves warning all of us of the threatening eventuality. They see that we are living in what the Bible calls "the time of the end," or "the last days." (Daniel 12:4; 2 Timothy 3:1) The nations are very hesitant about starting a third world war, in view of what it will mean for all of them—mutual annihilation. They would like to bring matters to a state of affairs where they can self-

confidently cry out, "Peace and security!" (1 Thessalonians 5:3) When, shortly, they do make such a public proclamation, it will not mean peace with the God of heaven. No, for since 1914 the nations have been at war with him. They are acting contrary to his good purpose for mankind. By God's permission they have demonstrated throughout human history that they are unable to govern the earth with lasting benefit to mankind, let alone with glory to God.

The Almighty God has his own due time for bringing the unsatisfactory system of things to a permanent end. Precisely at his own time he will usher out this system of things. By means of Jehovah's Witnesses the nations have been notified of this. They are without excuse.

Man-Rule or God-Rule?

The nations, that is to say, their governing powers, have decidedly shown where they stand on the issue of God's Kingdom by Christ. They have come out in favor of continued man-rule and against God-rule. The position that they have persisted in taking is a stand against the government of Jehovah God and his Christ. It is in favor of Satan the Devil, the unseen "prince of this world," according to Jesus' words to his apostles: "The ruler [or, "the prince," *Authorized Version*] of the world is coming. And he has no hold on me."—John 14:30; see also Matthew 4:8-11; 2 Corinthians 4:4.

Inasmuch as the nations have made their decision and hold to it, each individual must answer for himself the crucial question, Where do I stand on the Kingdom issue? We cannot escape having to make a decision regarding this outstanding world issue. Not paying attention to it will not excuse any of us from suffering the consequences. There is no room for neutrality. We are obliged to be either for the Kingdom of God or against it.

The vast majority of the people alive today may not have been living in that war-struck year of 1914; so they cannot recall all the notable events that have occurred since, by actual experience and observation. All the same, the "sign" marking "the conclusion of the system of things" as foretold by Jesus Christ has become visible and remains visible to all the nations and peoples. They are all feeling the effects of that "sign." We simply have to read what Jesus Christ foretold, according to the record set out in Matthew chapters 24 and 25, Mark chapter 13 and Luke chapter 21, to learn that he predicted wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, the persecution of his followers, persistent distress of nations with perplexity and the courageous preaching of the "good news" of the Kingdom "in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations" right down to the end of this agonizing system of things.

Of course, during the first century of our Common Era the true Christians did considerable preaching, in Asia, Africa and Europe, of the good news of the coming Kingdom. This was long before Europeans discovered the continents of North and South America and Australia and many islands of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, from the 15th century onward. Religious missionaries were sent out to the newly discovered areas. In more recent times Bible societies have been established and have spread the Bible far and wide in many languages. But the message of the Kingdom was not being preached by the missionaries and clergymen of Christendom, no, not in such a form that the Kingdom of Jehovah God by Jesus Christ would be made a worldwide issue. It was not the kind of preaching that would make the Kingdom proclamation a part of "the sign" that was to mark "the conclusion of the system of things."

The Kingdom Issue to the Fore!

"Sing to Jehovah a new song. . . . Say among the nations: 'Jehovah himself has become king.' "—PSALM 96:1, 10.

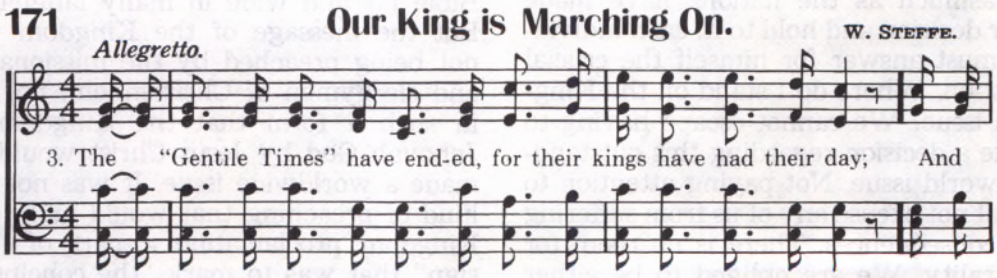
IT WAS not until the year 1914 that the words of the song could first be rightly sung and applied, "The 'Gentile Times' have ended, for their kings have had their day."* By the date of October 1 of 1914 World War I had been raging for more than two months. Those words about the Gentile Times were a reference to the prophecy of Jesus Christ as to when first-century Jerusalem and its temple would be destroyed. That destruction occurred in 70 C.E. At Luke 21:24 Jesus is quoted as saying: "And they [the Jews] shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (*Authorized Version*) Back in the days of King David of Israel the city of Jerusalem was made the capital city of the typical kingdom of God. Thus Jerusalem became the symbol of the typical kingdom of Jehovah God by his anointed king over the independent nation of Israel. So, in harmony with this, Jesus' words at Luke 21:24 referred to the treading or trampling down of the typical kingdom of God.

2 When did that treading down first begin? Not in the year 70 C.E., 37 years after Jesus gave his prophecy. In that year the rebuilt city of Jerusalem was destroyed, this time by the Roman armies. But the treading down of which Jesus prophesied was a continuation of

* See the song entitled "Our King is Marching On," pages 162, 163, of the songbook *Hymns of the Millennial Dawn*, copyright 1905.

1. (a) What song could first rightly be sung in 1914, and why? (b) To what treading down did Jesus refer at Luke 21:24?

2. (a) When did the treading down first begin, and how? (b) Why was the Messianic Kingdom not set up following Jerusalem's destruction in 70 C.E.?



These words of *Hymns of the Millennial Dawn* have applied since 1914

the treading down that had begun at the first destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in the year 607 before our Common Era. When, centuries later, the Romans destroyed the rebuilt Jerusalem in 70 C.E., the full length of "the times of the Gentiles" had not been reached. Jesus knew that fact in advance, and so he did not say that the coming destruction of rebuilt Jerusalem by the Romans would be at once followed by the setting up of the real or antitypical Kingdom of God in the hands of the Messiah, the Christ. Rather, the typical kingdom of God as represented by the Jerusalem of his day was to keep on being trodden down by the uncircumcised nations until the appointed "times of the Gentiles" ran out according to God's own timing.

[3] Here we turn to Daniel's prophecy, chapter 4, and find that the number of "the times" would be seven. The years contained in each time would amount to the number of days in a prophetic lunar year, namely, 360 days. Each day would stand for a year, according to the way in which Gentile nations reckon time. Thus calculated, the "seven times" would total up to 2,520 years. (Compare Daniel 4:16, 23, 25, 32.) Since they began when the Babylonians overturned the typical kingdom of God at Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E., in the latter half of that year, they were due to end in the year 1914 of our Common Era, in the latter half of that year. During that marked period of time World War I began. Though that is very interesting, the most important meaning to attach to the ending of the "times of the Gentiles," or the "appointed times of the nations" (*New World Translation*), in that war-stricken year is this: The antitypical spiritual Kingdom of God in the hands of his anointed Son, Jesus Christ, started there in the heavens. The fact that this is disputed by the religious leaders of Christendom and others makes it an "issue" of the highest importance. And we must face it!

3. (a) How may we calculate the length and ending of the Gentile Times? (b) What issue of highest importance then came to the fore in 1914?

Vindicated on the Issue

[4] So, first of all, we will ask: Who were the ones that, many years beforehand, pointed out to the whole world that "the times of the Gentiles" would end in the latter half of 1914? It was the International Bible Students, using the columns of the *Watch Tower* magazine and other publications of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Today they are known worldwide as Jehovah's Witnesses. Have world events vindicated them? Yes!

[5] Since most of mankind today pay no attention to that calculation of God's time, and since Christendom with its hundreds of sects and denominations dispute its correctness, have those opposers who far outnumber Jehovah's Witnesses won the hot dispute concerning the setting up of God's Kingdom by Christ in the heavens in 1914 C.E.? The fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy concerning what would mark "the end of the world" (*AV*), or "the conclusion of the system of things" (*NW*), thunders back to us the answer No! Sixty-eight years after 1914 we see in existence the state of affairs foretold by Jesus in Luke 21:25-27, in the following words: "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. And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and

4. Who have been vindicated by world events?
5. (a) What answer has been given those disputing the setting up of God's Kingdom? (b) How does the fulfillment of Luke 21:25-27 support historically the ending of the Gentile Times in 1914?

great glory." Properly, then, the ending of the Gentile Times in the latter half of 1914 still stands on a historical basis as one of the fundamental Kingdom truths to which we must hold today.

[6] Does everybody have to feel faint out of fear because of the things seen coming on the earth? Did Jesus himself say that everybody would feel that way about it? Not at all! For Jesus himself made an exception of his faithful disciples, saying to them afterward: "But as these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." (Luke 21:28) According to Matthew 24:32, 33, Jesus also said: "Now learn from the fig tree as an illustration this point: Just as soon as its young branch grows tender and it puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. Likewise also you, when you see all these things, know that he is near at the doors." (See also Mark 13:28, 29.) Since they have the visible proof in world conditions and events that their deliverance is near, at their very door, as it were, they rejoice and do not share the anguish of the Gentile nations.

Loyal Supporters of the Kingdom

[7] Where do these today take their stand on the Kingdom issue? The present-day remnant, or remaining ones of Christ's disciples, whom he calls his spiritual "brothers" and who hope to share with him in his heavenly Kingdom, take their stand in loyal support of Jehovah's Kingdom by his Christ. (Matthew 25:40) They read the signs of the times correctly, to the effect that the long-prayed-for Kingdom was set up and started operations at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914. They recognize that the time is here for them to proclaim to everybody that since 1914 that superhuman, heavenly government rules and that it will bring this worldly system of things to its complete end and thereby accomplish the glorious vindication of the universal sovereignty of the Most High God. Upon them falls the obligation to carry out Jesus' prophecy:

[8] "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matthew 24: 14; Mark 13:10.

Where the "Sheep" Station Themselves

[9] That prophecy of Jesus serves as a command to the spirit-anointed disciples of the King of kings, Jesus Christ, who now reigns. In obedience they have already pushed the preaching of the Kingdom message into 205 lands and islands of the seas. Also, the glorious message is being conveyed to mankind in 174 languages, not including the sign languages. No doubt, many other inhabitants of earth are yet to be reached by all the modern means of communication, so that before "the end" virtually "all the inhabited earth" gets "a witness."

[10] However, what has already been the response to the Kingdom preaching worldwide—yes, in spite of all the opposition and persecution that Jesus said would occur as part of "the sign" of his "presence" in the heavenly Kingdom and of "the conclusion of the system of things"? There has been a sharp division of the inhabitants of the earth for and against the Kingdom. Jesus foretold this division in his prophecy on "the sign," and it is the culminating feature of his

6. Why do Jesus' modern-day disciples rejoice rather than share the nations' anguish?
7, 8. (a) Where have the spiritual "brothers" of Christ taken their stand, and why? (b) What obligation have these shouldered?
9. How have Christ's "brothers" fulfilled the prophetic command, and with what result?
10, 11. (a) How has Kingdom preaching brought the issue to the fore? (b) What does Jesus say in introducing the final feature of the "sign"?

prophecy as recorded by the apostle Matthew. Jesus introduced this final parable of his prophecy by saying:

11 "When the Son of man arrives in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit down on his glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will put the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who have been blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the founding of the world.' "—Matthew 25:31-34.

12 We notice that, when introducing that prophetic illustration, Jesus borrowed the expression the "Son of man" from Daniel 7:13, 14, where we read: "See there! with the clouds of the heavens someone like a son of man happened to be coming; and to the Ancient of Days 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."

13 The peoples and national groups have been gathered before this reigning King since the close of the Gentile Times in 1914. From his heavenly position the King can survey all of them as our earthly globe spins around on its axis. He knows that World War I was not fought for the sake of his Kingdom rule. No! For after that ghastly war was over the League of Nations was set up at The Hague in Holland, and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America referred to it as "the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth." But if that had been the case, why was the League of Nations knocked out of commission by World War II, and why has it been succeeded by the United Nations?

14 That is how the nations as political entities have shown where they have taken their stand on the Kingdom issue, with which they have been confronted since 1914. But the personal question confronting each one of us is, 'Where do I, myself, stand on the Kingdom issue?' Is your stand the same as that of the symbolic "sheep" gathered at the right hand of the reigning King, Jesus Christ? This pastoral King tells us how a person may be considered fit to be separated to the side of divine favor in contrast to the goatlike people. It is by doing good to those yet remaining on earth of the spiritual "brothers" of the reigning King, who are in line for a seat with him on his heavenly throne. The doing of such good things means that they approve of the Kingdom witnessing done by the spiritual "brothers" of the King. They give support to it in every way that they can, not being ashamed of these proclaimers of the good news of the Kingdom even when these are imprisoned, but trying to help them to get out of such confinement, as was the case back in the postwar year of 1919. More positively than that, they directly share with the anointed remnant in preaching "this good news of the kingdom," just as Jesus foretold at Matthew 24:14. They do this publicly and from house to house.

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12. From what prophecy does Jesus borrow the expression the "Son of man," and what does this tell us about the Kingdom?

13. (a) From his vantage point in the heavens, what survey does the King make of our earth? (b) What proves that the League of Nations was no expression of God's Kingdom?

14. (a) What personal question now confronts each one of us? (b) How may one gain the King's favor? (c) In what positive ways do the "sheep" give support to the King's "brothers"?

15 Those sheeplike individuals will be rewarded by being invited by the King to "inherit the kingdom prepared for [them] from the founding of the world." (Matthew 25:34) This does not signify that they are to die and have a resurrection to life in heaven with the spiritual "brothers" of the King. He does not call them his "brothers." They are persons separated from the nations that are gathered before his throne. They look forward to being blessed by the Kingdom of Jesus Christ and his spiritual "brothers." So what they inherit is the earthly realm of the Kingdom, where Paradise is to be restored all around the globe. When Jehovah God made our earth he purposed for it to become a paradise everywhere, and he put man and woman on earth to make it that way, starting with the garden of Eden, or Paradise of Pleasure. The fall of Adam and Eve into sin and death did not deal out a defeat to God's purpose. (Isaiah 55:11) He at once made preparation for bringing about the earth-wide Paradise by means of a heavenly Kingdom, in which his loyal Son would be the Ruler, or King. It had to be a celestial government if it is yet to crush out of existence the originator of sin and deception, Satan the Devil, a mighty spirit creature.—Genesis 3:15.

16 The sheeplike ones will inherit this Paradise realm of the heavenly Kingdom. A "great crowd" of them will do so without ever dying off the face of the earth and needing a resurrection from the dead back to life on earth. (Revelation 7:9; 21:4) What a wonderful way for them to be ushered as "righteous" ones "into everlasting life"! They will witness it when all the goatlike ones on earth are told to "depart into everlasting cutting-off." (Matthew 25:41-46) This will be during the "great tribulation," which will reach its peak of intensity in "the war of the great day of God the Almighty" on the battlefield of Har-Magedon. (Revelation 7:14; 16:14-16) There the last of the cursed "goats" will be cut off from earthly life for all eternity.

17 With such alternative prospects set before the inhabitants of earth, the question is a most urgent one, 'Where do you stand on the Kingdom issue?' With whom do you want to be classified—with the approved "sheep" or with the cursed "goats"? Those who unqualifiedly take their stand in support of the Kingdom will not merely inherit its earthly Paradise but have a most exhilarating part in vindicating the universal sovereignty of Jehovah, the God of gods and the King of kings.—Psalm 136:2; Daniel 2:47.

15. (a) How does the reward of the "sheep" differ from that of Jesus' "brothers"? (b) How does this tie in with God's original purpose? (c) Why is a celestial Kingdom needed to accomplish this purpose?

16. (a) In what way will the sheeplike ones be especially favored? (b) When do the "goats" go into "everlasting cutting-off"?

17. (a) What urgent question do you now face? (b) Your wholehearted support of the Kingdom will mean your sharing in what privileges?

With regard to the Kingdom issue, how would you answer the following:

- ☐ What period is covered by the Gentile Times of Luke 21:24?
- ☐ According to Luke 21:25-27, what events mark the end of the Gentile Times?
- ☐ In harmony with Luke 21:28, how have Jehovah's Witnesses *reacted* to the present world crisis?
- ☐ In what connection is the "Son of man" described in the prophecies, and what positive action is required at his arrival?

Global Support for the Kingdom Issue

"O Jehovah, you have added to the nation; you have glorified yourself. You have extended afar all the borders of the land."—ISAIAH 26:15.

WHICH nation does Jehovah bless thus with expansion? It is "the righteous nation that is keeping faithful conduct." (Isaiah 26:2) It is the spiritual nation of true Christians that Jehovah's heavenly helpmeet, "the Jerusalem above," brought to birth "at one time," in the modern year 1919. In contrast with the nations of earth and their clergy, who had fought World War I for world domination, Jehovah's "nation" gives uncompromising support to his Messianic Kingdom, established in the heavens in 1914. (Galatians 4:26; Isaiah 66:8; Revelation 11:15-18) Jehovah has brought this "righteous nation" into a spiritual paradise of Kingdom activity and set it to work in giving a final witness to the nations and peoples of earth.—Matthew 24:14; 25:31-33.

[2] In fulfillment of the prophetic song of Isaiah 26:1-6, the members of the newborn nation have entered through wide-open gates in making their approach to "a Mount Zion and a city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem." (Hebrews 12:22) These Kingdom heirs joyfully heed the words of the song: "Trust in Jehovah, you people, for all times, for in Jah Jehovah is the Rock of times indefinite." Jehovah has "added to the nation," up to its full membership, and these citizens of the holy nation hail Jehovah as their "Rock" and "Sovereign Lord," confident that he is about to bring all his grand purpose to fulfillment.—Isaiah 26:15; 25:8.

[3] In recent years Jehovah has 'extended the borders' of his theocratic land still farther. This he has done to make room for "the desirable things" out of all the worldly nations—a "great crowd" that becomes part of his dedicated people. These 'fill his house with glory' as they, too, witness to his name and Kingdom. —Haggai 2:7; Revelation 7:9, 15.

Jehovah Adds to the Nation During 1982

[4] As they give wholehearted support to the Kingdom issue, Jehovah's Witnesses make written reports of their month-by-month service. In this, they are like the man with the secretary's inkhorn, described at Ezekiel 9:1-11, who is commissioned to mark people for survival and who faithfully reports back to Jehovah, saying, "I have done just as you have commanded me." How satisfying it can be at Service Meetings to hear details of a fine total report by the congregation and

1. (a) How has a modern-day "nation" fulfilled Isaiah 26:2? (b) How does this "nation" contrast with the worldly nations?
2. For what reasons does this "nation" rejoice?
3. In what further way has Jehovah been glorified?
4. (a) How does Ezekiel 9:1-11 set forth a fine example for those engaged in a 'marking' work today? (b) As a result of faithfully reporting our service, what satisfaction can we have?

to know that your report, even though it may have been a mere 'widow's mite,' contributed toward that result! Also, as we each year examine the grand total of activity in the annual worldwide report of Jehovah's Witnesses, it can be thrilling to reflect on the fact that our own reports, however small, are yet a part of that tremendous global record! —Mark 12:42, *Authorized Version.*

[5] On pages 18-21 you will find the "1982 SERVICE YEAR REPORT OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WORLDWIDE." The precious name of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah is indeed glorified by this marvelous record of service! Looking at the total figures at the bottom of page 21, we find a most encouraging increase of 4.2 percent in the number of those sharing each month in Kingdom service in obedience to Jesus' command: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations." Also, there is that splendid new peak of 2,477,608 Witnesses who shared at some time or another during the year in preaching the good news "publicly and from house to house."—Matthew 28: 19; Acts 20:20.

[6] However, Jehovah's Witnesses do not expect to convert the world. Rather, their divinely given commission is "to proclaim the year of goodwill on the part of Jehovah and the day of vengeance on the part of our God." It is our fervent hope and prayer that millions more of earth's teeming billions will respond to the Kingdom message before the "great tribulation" removes all harmful, ruinous elements. Then, "the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea."—Isaiah 61:2; Matthew 24:14, 21, 22; Isaiah 11:9.

[7] Looking to further rapid expansion of the Kingdom work, Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide have been busy during the past several years in expanding their organizational facilities. Headquarters at Brooklyn, New York, has renovated and extended office facilities at 25 Columbia Heights, and factory operations both at Brooklyn and at Watchtower Farms have been computerized and updated for offset printing. Throughout the earth, more than 30 of the Society's branches have been building new, enlarged facilities, some of which are illustrated on the opposite page. Jehovah's organization is geared for further increase and expansion!

[8] In all, 95 countries among those listed in the Service Year Report attained to an all-time peak in the number of Kingdom publishers during 1982, and some of these reached real landmarks. For example, the teeming metropolis of Hong Kong was served for the first time by more than 1,000 ministers of the Kingdom. (Isaiah 60:22) Brazil moved ahead, with 133,377 in the field as a new peak, this becoming the largest "drove" of Witnesses outside the United States. (Micah 2:12) As the second largest religious group in Catholic Italy, Jehovah's Witnesses enjoyed an 8-percent increase for a peak of 98,-172 publishers of the Kingdom. (Mark 4: 8, 20) Islands of the sea, large and small, from Australia to the Caribbean, registered new publisher peaks. (Isaiah 42:10) There is joy in noting fine progress in lands that have special problems, such as Argentina, El Salvador, Pakistan and Uganda. (Psalm 91:9, 10) Countries where

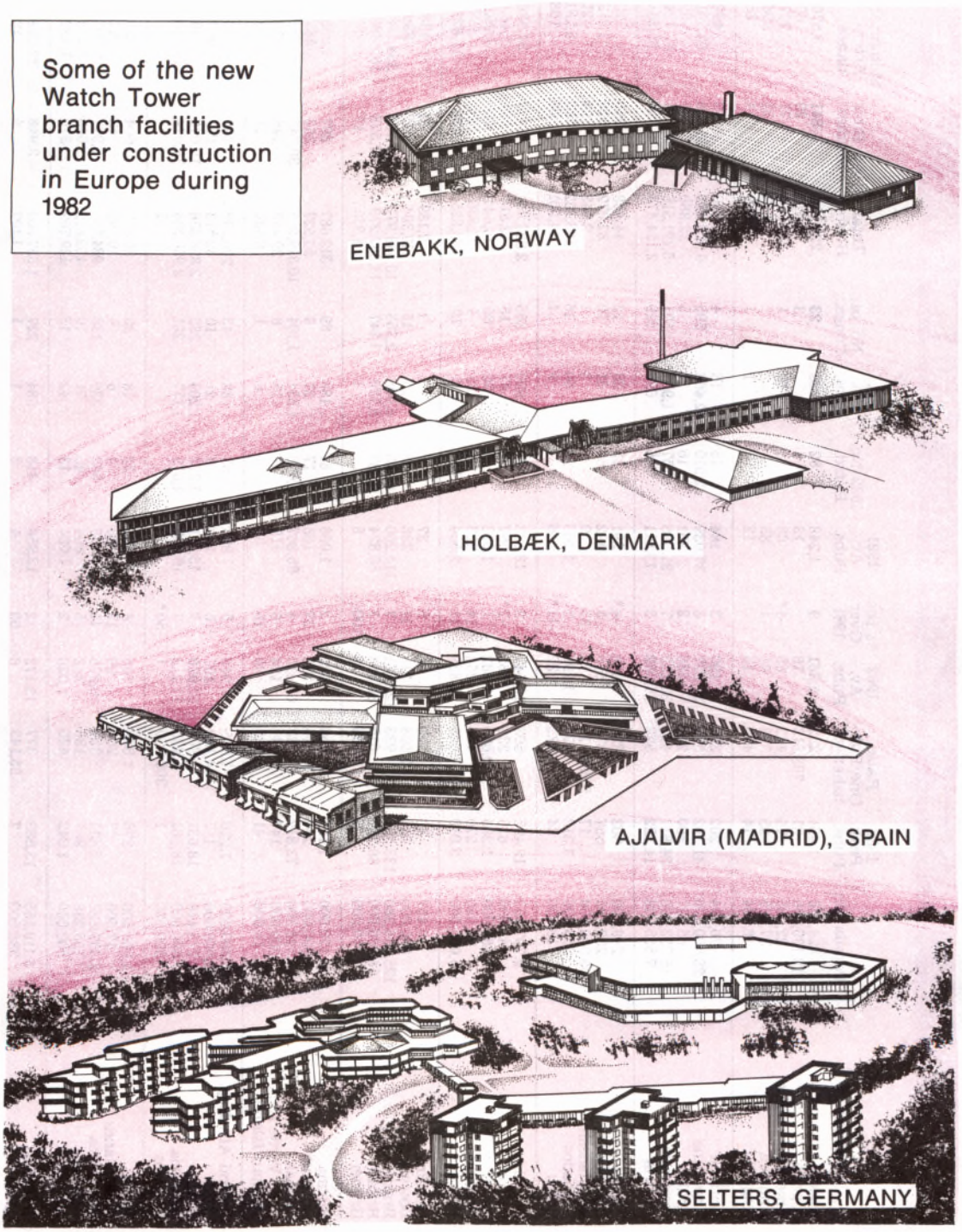
5. (a) How has Jehovah glorified himself with regard to the 1982 Service Year Report? (b) How has the 'disciple-making' work borne fruit?

6. With regard to their commission, what fervent hope do Jehovah's Witnesses have?

7. How has Jehovah's organization prepared for further expansion?

8. With regard to Kingdom-publisher increase, what points of interest did you find in examining the chart on pages 18-21?

Some of the new Watch Tower branch facilities under construction in Europe during 1982



1982 SERVICE YEAR REPORT OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WORLDWIDE

Country	Population	1982 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Publisher to:	1982 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1981	1981 Av. Pubs.	1982 No. Bptzd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
Alaska	424,338	1,451	292	1,361	9	1,248	82	128	23	226,956	841	3,570
Algeria	19,130,000	27	708,519	18		18	5		3	1,275	20	60
American Samoa	32,395	75	432	65	-4*	68	1	10	1	17,663	77	227
Andorra	37,825	95	398	84	-1*	85		2	1	8,449	31	196
Anguilla	6,524	14	466	13		13		1	1	2,559	4	28
Antigua	70,794	202	350	190	3	184	15	16	4	32,689	113	490
Argentina	28,000,000	41,392	676	39,927	8	37,039	2,510	2,464	595	6,373,229	39,025	93,951
Aruba	65,927	300	220	286	2	281	16	7	5	32,880	205	909
Australia	15,053,600	34,817	432	33,153	7	31,086	1,757	1,957	571	5,191,515	13,531	67,724
Austria	7,555,338	14,322	528	14,052	3	13,611	746	696	219	2,154,478	6,364	25,511
Azores	249,500	303	823	278	-4*	291	13	20	12	44,488	250	773
Bahamas	209,505	557	376	515	5	492	52	31	10	87,072	528	1,912
Bangladesh	90,000,000	17	5,294,118	12	33	9		3	1	2,543	24	21
Barbados	255,000	1,313	194	1,196	3	1,166	58	60	16	163,162	767	3,281
Belau	13,000	34	382	32	-11*	36		9	1	14,201	86	168
Belgium	9,797,953	19,495	503	18,547	2	18,133	937	920	285	2,822,841	6,824	37,536
Belize	145,000	615	236	585	-2*	597	38	47	16	112,514	560	2,469
Benin	3,380,000	1,205	2,805	1,082	1	1,073	1	26	66	115,644	618	3,262
Bermuda	54,050	276	196	254	14	223	6	25	4	51,330	214	597
Bolivia	5,000,000	3,010	1,661	2,839	11	2,554	331	425	70	783,825	3,598	12,821
Bonaire	9,457	43	220	39	5	37		3	1	7,189	31	148
Botswana	800,000	319	2,508	318	11	286	23	27	15	59,304	312	896
Brazil	125,054,380	133,377	938	122,661	7	114,200	9,165	6,008	2,353	16,588,977	86,765	354,198
Britain	54,266,000	88,236	615	83,564	3	80,824	4,437	5,778	1,147	13,367,279	37,528	169,888
Brunei	170,000	21	8,095	16	100	8		1		1,935	17	81
Burma	31,170,000	1,123	27,756	1,082	2	1,066	61	188	69	319,687	867	3,058
Burundi	4,000,000	247	16,194	213	27	168	17	27	8	52,527	363	587
Canada	23,848,300	73,812	323	68,410	4	65,867	3,678	4,334	1,104	10,319,955	30,743	139,733
Cape Verde Rep.	300,000	147	2,041	124	8	115	11	15	6	39,448	246	470
Cayman Islands	15,600	41	380	39	18	33	1	6	1	6,689	21	89
Central Afr. Rep.	2,300,000	1,220	1,885	1,046	5	995	63	88	43	200,598	891	5,332
Chad	4,000,000	117	34,188	107	5	102	9	21	10	42,513	172	599
Chile	11,275,440	18,631	605	17,078	9	15,711	1,222	1,209	282	2,826,386	18,076	59,548
Colombia	27,600,000	18,581	1,485	17,212	7	16,099	1,079	1,177	281	2,950,334	18,974	77,160
Comoros	300,000	1	300,000	1	-50*	2				31		
Congo	1,600,000	876	1,826	795	4	767	22	18	36	86,857	604	2,326
Cook Islands	17,600	67	263	56	12	50	3	5	4	10,792	42	197
Costa Rica	2,339,828	6,611	354	6,275	11	5,663	562	336	138	984,741	5,971	19,903
Curaçao	165,238	887	186	848	5	804	45	71	10	169,612	1,065	2,683
Cyprus	500,000	1,042	480	1,020	2	1,004	13	42	13	129,709	370	1,922
Denmark	5,119,155	13,583	377	13,173	2	12,959	418	584	227	1,557,609	3,948	22,698
Djibouti	386,000	7	55,143	6	50	4	3	1	1	1,109	4	12

Dominica	70,302	218	322	194	10	176	18	17	7	36,173	132	603
Dominican Rep.	5,647,977	7,411	762	6,983	5	6,633	452	646	131	1,407,114	9,874	26,612
Ecuador	8,829,010	6,475	1,364	5,905	14	5,165	619	596	116	1,274,401	7,742	34,024
El Salvador	4,997,354	10,470	477	9,611	17	8,242	1,165	848	180	2,076,327	14,299	40,208
Equatorial Guinea	450,000	50	9,000	42	27	33	13	9	2	20,120	173	232
Falkland Islands	1,830	6	305	5	67	3			1	351	3	11
Faroe Islands	44,070	65	678	60		60	5	12	4	15,817	31	114
Fiji	658,000	772	852	737	7	687	50	112	24	176,871	744	2,672
Finland	4,811,391	13,873	347	13,620	2	13,297	643	1,054	254	2,085,944	5,675	23,012
France	54,257,000	73,077	742	71,095	4	68,430	4,472	2,830	1,206	10,485,175	35,444	147,473
French Guiana	73,022	261	280	245	3	238	17	16	3	49,269	343	826
Gabon	750,000	379	1,979	342		343	10	13	13	49,417	373	1,045
Gambia	633,663	13	48,743	11	-15*	13		3	1	4,093	25	41
Germany, F. R.	59,824,000	104,068	575	101,454	2	99,223	4,091	3,615	1,473	13,413,420	34,558	172,815
Ghana	11,365,342	22,494	505	21,287	-1*	21,591	841	1,721	477	3,950,903	24,960	76,305
Gibraltar	30,000	88	341	83		83	3	3	1	9,534	22	159
Greece	9,706,687	19,785	491	19,112	3	18,516	511	863	457	2,598,736	5,760	34,671
Greenland	51,435	76	677	71	-9*	78	2	6	7	12,103	40	119
Grenada	111,000	344	323	314	1	312	15	26	7	56,247	275	818
Guadeloupe	324,000	2,975	109	2,848	6	2,698	196	82	40	412,133	2,768	7,740
Guam	108,821	204	533	178	21	147	8	36	1	49,115	235	523
Guatemala	7,000,000	6,132	1,142	5,921	5	5,658	438	348	100	975,857	5,658	21,720
Guinea	5,143,284	198	25,976	154	-2*	157	4	41	12	64,710	253	731
Guinea-Bissau	530,000	7	75,714	6	50	4	2	2	1	1,746	16	21
Guyana	842,000	1,136	741	1,095	-2*	1,119	58	138	29	240,701	1,008	3,683
Haiti	6,000,000	3,214	1,867	3,077	2	3,007	187	195	76	546,764	3,644	14,841
Hawaii	981,000	4,730	207	4,558	2	4,474	195	636	59	1,022,993	4,045	13,037
Honduras	3,954,684	3,153	1,254	2,966	3	2,879	196	247	68	633,564	3,828	16,216
Hong Kong	5,000,000	1,020	4,902	972	10	880	79	220	13	359,771	1,394	2,227
Iceland	231,958	129	1,798	115	3	112	3	14	2	24,292	65	303
India	700,000,000	5,337	131,160	5,136	3	4,969	354	558	254	1,092,167	3,310	14,283
Ireland	4,907,217	2,120	2,315	2,021	6	1,915	109	318	75	541,150	949	4,174
Israel	5,271,000	271	19,450	261	6	246	14	15	5	44,677	153	531
Italy	57,140,355	98,172	582	94,648	8	87,854	8,025	8,304	1,423	19,404,101	62,145	213,657
Ivory Coast	8,189,500	1,546	5,297	1,472	5	1,396	121	129	44	302,668	1,828	5,047
Jamaica	2,200,000	6,912	318	6,588	1	6,554	369	346	166	947,172	4,697	17,543
Japan	117,776,771	72,015	1,635	67,730	12	60,267	7,237	22,261	1,371	28,556,286	95,891	173,344
Jordan	2,984,000	55	54,255	42	17	36	1	1	1	4,409	26	116
Kenya	17,180,000	2,704	6,354	2,583	9	2,366	236	427	96	825,231	3,485	7,860
Kiribati	56,000	10	5,600	7	75	4		1	1	834	4	19
Korea	39,330,000	30,237	1,301	28,891	4	27,771	2,123	4,106	543	6,471,837	22,293	63,098
Kosrae	5,522	26	212	24	26	19	2	3	1	4,840	22	77
Lebanon	3,012,000	1,904	1,582	1,811	2	1,773	53	78	49	262,385	1,028	3,782
Lesotho	1,309,000	641	2,042	635	8	588	45	60	40	133,656	515	2,662
Liberia	1,800,000	1,071	1,681	1,030	1	1,019	46	98	30	230,640	1,171	3,998
Libya	2,856,000	7	408,000	3		3				333	3	4
Liechtenstein	26,130	35	747	32	10	29		3	1	5,281	25	84
Luxembourg	434,600	1,025	424	1,006	3	980	59	72	20	177,709	632	2,207

Country	Population	1982 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Publisher to:	1982 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1981	1981 Av. Pubs.	1982 No. Bptzd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
Macao	375,000	10	37,500	9	-18*	11		6	1	9,266	18	26
Madagascar	9,000,000	1,308	6,881	1,159	11	1,046	122	82	31	212,499	1,802	5,924
Madeira	256,800	396	648	367	7	342	15	16	10	50,838	305	1,140
Malaysia	14,680,421	610	24,066	579	9	529	52	71	18	158,236	868	1,414
Mali	5,000,000	42	119,048	38	12	34		16	1	24,499	126	81
Malta	315,262	171	1,844	142	46	97	21	14	2	29,586	91	337
Marshall Islands	29,670	208	143	127	-7*	136	3	24	3	29,701	192	532
Martinique	328,566	1,288	255	1,245	8	1,158	84	42	21	182,365	968	3,689
Mauritius	950,545	512	1,857	486	7	454	36	38	9	94,233	458	1,350
Mayotte	47,250	2	23,625	1		1				891	8	17
Mexico	67,382,581	113,823	592	106,573	8	98,610	8,767	8,177	4,207	18,528,899	111,437	536,725
Montserrat	12,335	24	514	22	5	21		3	1	4,845	21	114
Morocco	20,050,000	92	217,935	85	-2*	87	5	7	2	17,647	54	198
Nauru	6,000	4	1,500	2		2				259	2	14
Nepal	14,000,000	21	666,667	19	27	15		3	1	3,724	12	44
Netherlands	14,310,526	28,072	510	26,618	1	26,267	965	1,599	287	3,884,266	8,110	46,711
Nevis	11,230	29	387	27	4	26		5	1	8,542	22	87
New Caledonia	145,000	500	290	428	12	381	50	20	7	71,606	482	1,249
New Zealand	3,158,200	7,600	416	7,132	3	6,937	370	468	119	1,109,972	3,816	16,284
Niger	4,990,000	77	64,805	69	13	61	5	18	6	30,981	88	164
Nigeria	79,758,969	106,314	750	96,489	4	93,191	2,938	5,168	2,182	14,159,354	70,452	268,668
Niue	3,843	9	427	8		8			1	1,013	4	52
Norway	4,115,952	7,149	576	6,824	1	6,753	286	190	180	703,536	1,889	13,064
Pakistan	90,000,000	204	441,176	193	12	173	12	44	6	66,504	270	583
Panama	1,824,796	3,523	518	3,321	4	3,182	230	245	71	609,885	4,040	12,185
Papua New Guinea	3,006,799	1,542	1,950	1,460	3	1,419	109	136	79	290,157	1,525	6,108
Paraguay	3,062,092	1,733	1,767	1,617	7	1,505	46	121	44	267,205	1,248	3,603
Peru	18,540,000	15,595	1,189	14,530	8	13,510	1,216	1,690	312	3,348,009	17,059	62,192
Philippines	48,000,000	62,768	765	60,098	1	59,328	2,900	5,586	2,189	10,041,477	26,056	203,740
Ponape	23,140	65	356	59	-2*	60	3	14	1	19,570	77	304
Portugal	9,297,900	22,515	413	21,447	4	20,586	1,365	859	393	2,683,197	13,962	58,003
Puerto Rico	3,200,000	17,713	181	16,817	6	15,926	1,121	862	241	2,512,615	12,182	49,742
Réunion	544,200	727	749	677	10	618	47	34	12	116,451	487	1,994
Rodrigues	33,274	18	1,849	15	36	11		1	1	1,358	8	47
Rota	1,274	6	212	3	New			2		3,331	10	16
Rwanda	5,400,000	330	16,364	285	38	206	73	58	13	119,710	649	1,094
St. Eustatius	1,335	1	1,335	1	-50*	2		1		650	5	
St. Helena	6,000	94	64	84	-2*	86	3	1	2	6,879	22	219
St. Kitts	35,135	110	319	99	-8*	108		7	2	16,115	79	261
St. Lucia	115,000	278	414	249	11	224	26	28	5	48,918	244	957
St. Martin	15,926	80	199	71	29	55	7	5	1	11,059	51	274
St. Pierre & Miquelon	6,000	9	667	7	17	6		1	1	1,133	5	12
St. Vincent	106,000	133	797	117	16	101	15	15	4	25,898	93	322
Saipan	15,588	32	487	23	28	18		7	1	10,471	25	66
San Marino	20,400	77	265	75	-5*	79		4	1	12,033	23	140

São Tomé	80,000	11	7,273	8	14	7		1	1	1,660	21	69
Senegal	5,000,000	374	13,369	365	5	349	26	60	9	122,805	555	866
Seychelles	67,000	50	1,340	45	10	41	2	3	1	7,906	52	145
Sierra Leone	3,002,426	638	4,706	588	-4*	610	19	104	33	176,912	798	2,407
Solomon Islands	232,936	553	421	504	5	478	15	73	32	119,914	512	2,483
South Africa	31,188,700	28,783	1,084	27,587	4	26,503	1,373	1,809	901	4,666,625	17,791	79,169
South-West Africa	989,100	331	2,988	287		287	17	25	12	61,650	256	696
Spain	37,833,863	50,355	751	48,938	6	46,062	3,526	3,449	812	8,772,829	33,162	110,020
Sri Lanka	15,000,000	680	22,059	669	5	637	40	118	24	214,099	807	2,322
Sudan	20,000,000	120	166,667	112	13	99	5	7	3	22,727	178	293
Suriname	350,000	868	403	830	7	773	30	84	15	155,267	672	2,777
Swaziland	554,589	680	816	658	8	612	29	27	37	116,120	474	1,787
Sweden	8,328,066	18,438	452	17,781	3	17,314	703	1,382	310	2,682,463	7,794	30,259
Switzerland	6,365,960	11,459	556	11,049	4	10,649	501	364	232	1,518,694	5,977	20,818
Syria	8,088,000	172	47,023	126	-8*	137	2	4	7	16,338	62	295
Tahiti	149,000	485	307	462	7	431	46	36	11	77,971	382	1,212
Taiwan	18,000,000	987	18,237	909	1	902	47	154	22	243,406	811	2,660
Tanzania	19,900,000	1,739	11,443	1,701	7	1,583	41	160	82	374,831	1,352	5,499
Thailand	47,875,002	783	61,143	771	4	740	54	117	27	200,521	658	1,721
Togo	2,660,220	1,904	1,400	1,628	11	1,472	7	30	67	127,916	1,269	4,493
Tonga	90,128	34	2,651	30	11	27	6	8	1	11,753	49	97
Trinidad	1,106,638	3,444	321	3,243	3	3,154	137	345	44	618,425	3,061	9,100
Truk	38,650	35	1,104	32	3	31		6	2	9,680	62	206
Tunisia	6,250,000	47	132,979	43	-10*	48	1	1	1	4,102	26	99
Turkey	45,000,000	776	57,990	753	-2*	766	56	43	12	129,340	461	1,326
Turks & Caicos Isls.	7,436	34	219	29	16	25		4	2	8,035	29	96
Tuvalu Islands	8,000	22	364	17	13	15	6	3	1	4,343	34	136
Uganda	14,100,000	228	61,842	213	15	186	27	31	11	64,300	400	593
U.S. of America	229,973,394	613,007	375	581,934	3	563,452	33,734	45,801	7,670	92,857,170	344,493	1,499,284
Upper Volta	6,147,363	180	34,152	168	10	153	7	41	8	72,307	319	584
Uruguay	2,788,000	4,406	633	4,186	4	4,043	140	361	90	788,649	4,138	13,369
Vanuatu	123,000	42	2,929	33	-13*	38	3	2	2	6,498	69	165
Venezuela	17,000,000	19,082	891	18,048	11	16,283	1,301	1,530	205	3,561,777	21,262	70,749
Virgin Isls. (Brit.)	12,000	87	138	76	1	75		4	3	8,956	50	256
Virgin Isls. (U.S.)	95,300	497	192	449	-1*	454	32	32	8	73,678	410	1,547
Wallis & Futuna Isls.	10,800	3	3,600	2		2		1		557	1	10
West Berlin	1,889,000	4,855	389	4,805		4,819	149	176	62	639,916	1,681	7,211
Western Samoa	158,130	132	1,198	124	5	118	13	20	3	38,801	149	502
Yap	9,320	46	203	40	5	38	1	8	1	13,664	82	184
Zaïre	30,000,000	26,123	1,148	24,648	3	24,015	2,557	4,050	874	7,165,834	39,356	107,628
Zambia	6,052,000	55,702	109	52,556	5	49,949	2,120	3,445	1,334	8,743,754	58,683	268,915
Zimbabwe	7,730,000	11,173	692	10,676	6	10,078	548	638	475	1,702,831	6,505	28,369
177 Countries		2,240,599		2,122,373	4.7	2,027,843	128,700	168,160	40,454	364,756,038	1,476,502	5,852,485
† 28 Other Countries		237,009		220,261	0.3	219,643	9,840	4,699	4,499	20,100,624	109,791	400,302
GRAND TOTAL (205 countries)		2,477,608		2,342,634	4.2	2,247,486	138,540	172,859	44,953	384,856,662	1,586,293	6,252,787

* Percentage of decrease

† Work banned and reports are incomplete

MEMORIAL PARTAKERS WORLDWIDE: 9,529

Jehovah's organization has long been established shared, too, in the forward surge—Britain, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany—and also the U.S.A., which in August reached a peak of 613,007 Kingdom proclaimers in the field, an 8.8-percent increase.—Acts 16:5.

"Pioneering" the Good News

[9] Of these worldwide proclaimers of the Kingdom, an average of 172,859 reported each month as "pioneer" ministers, spending considerable time each day telling the good news to others. Compared with the previous year, the ranks of these full-time workers increased by 14 percent! Many others, also, are planning to enter this joyful service. Are you one of these? Truly, it would enable you to 'bear witness thoroughly,' after the apostolic example, concerning the glorious blessings just ahead for all who come to Jehovah, exercising "faith in our Lord Jesus."—Acts 2:40; 8:25; 10:42; 20:21, 24; 23:11; 28:23.

[10] Though they do not take vows to be full-time preachers, these loyal pioneers, including the many "auxiliary pioneers" (who may serve as such just for a month or two), are like the Nazirites in ancient Israel, in that often they minister to God at great self-sacrifice. In some lands Jehovah's servants have really expended themselves in 'always offering to God a sacrifice of praise.' For example, in April, Venezuela reported 2,464 auxiliary pioneers—136 percent more than the previous peak number. And Trinidad had 51 percent of its total publishers active as pioneers. In June, at the height of the rainy season in Japan, 25,140 were sharing in pioneer ministry —36 percent of all Kingdom publishers in that land. What joy and satisfaction is to be found in denying oneself in order to praise Jehovah more fully!—Hebrews 13:15; Numbers 6:8; Luke 9:23-25.

[11] However, not only the devoted pioneers but indeed the entire "nation" of spiritual Israel, along with the millions of their companions of the "great crowd," have made a most commendable effort in Kingdom preaching during 1982. All have contributed their part to the new all-time peak of 384,856,662 hours spent in field service during the year, and many have shared in conducting the 1,586,293 Bible studies held weekly in the homes of interested persons. On the occasion of the Memorial of Jesus' death, observed on April 8, 1982, the worldwide attendance, in 44,953 congregations, was 6,252,787 persons—a multitude indeed! And may we be diligent in continuing to care for the spiritual feeding of all these "little sheep"!—John 21:15-17.

[12] Immediately after stating the law concerning the Nazirites, Jehovah had Moses pronounce a blessing on the entire nation, saying: "May Jehovah bless you and keep you. May Jehovah make his face shine toward you, and may he favor you. May Jehovah lift up his face toward you and assign peace to you." How beautifully these words apply today to Jehovah's holy nation of spiritual Israel—and also to the "vast mixed company" out of all nations that has come forth to share with them in service to Jehovah! It is indeed thrilling to know that 138,540 new witnesses of Jehovah were baptized throughout the earth dur-

9. (a) What is the report on pioneer increase? (b) Why is this privilege recommended to all who can make room for it?

10. (a) In what way may pioneering today be compared with the Nazirites' service in Israel? (b) How have Jehovah's Witnesses really expended themselves in various lands?

11. (a) Why should those unable to pioneer not be discouraged? (b) What splendid record of service and attendance shows that Jehovah's Witnesses everywhere have been most active?

12. What blessing is pronounced at Numbers 6:24-26, and to whom may it now be applied?

ing the year, a 15.6-percent increase over the number baptized the previous year. Jehovah's name has been placed upon all of these, as well as upon all others in the congregation, so that Jehovah himself has come to "bless them."—Numbers 6: 24-27; Exodus 12:38.

'Coming Off Victorious'

13 In a number of lands Jehovah's Witnesses have to put up a hard fight for the faith under most difficult circumstances. Due to the viciousness of the enemy, and to protect our brothers, some of these places are not listed individually in the tabulated report, but the totals of their service appear in the line above the grand total, headed: "28 Other Countries."

14 The Witnesses represented in these reports are indeed "coming off completely victorious through him that loved us." (Romans 8:37-39) As we reflect upon their faithful service, may we be determined, also, to overcome all obstacles in order to keep on serving Jehovah with our 'whole heart, soul, mind and strength,' as we lovingly help our neighbor to do likewise. In this way we can demonstrate that we "are not far from the kingdom of God."—Mark 12:29-31, 34.

15 The wife of a traveling overseer in Lebanon wrote: "In the service, whenever we hear the antiaircraft shooting, we stand under cover inside building entrances for protection, because five people had been killed by falling shrapnel in the territory we were working from house to house that same week. Constantly our prayers to Jehovah were for his blessing on the coming assembly and our brothers in West Beirut. The circuit assembly was on June 13. To our joy a cease-fire was announced on the radio the day before, on the 12th, so the assembly went off fine." And later reports showed that none of Jehovah's Witnesses were harmed in West Beirut at that time.

16 In a Central American country, where the peaceful ministry of Jehovah's Witnesses has been grossly misunderstood by the new government, all missionaries were deported. One missionary couple were seized and held in a secret hideout for two weeks, until loyal native Witnesses located them and revealed their whereabouts to the British Embassy, where arrangements were made for their departure. It was reported from this area that the authorities were searching for "the faithful and discreet slave" whom they had heard was the leader of the work of Jehovah's Witnesses.—Matthew 24:45-47.

17 In the African country of Zimbabwe, a high government official told a political rally: "As long as they are Jehovah's Witnesses we have no problem. They are not our enemies. But if they cease being Jehovah's Witnesses then it is time to be concerned." It is the prayer of God's true people that all government officials take such an enlightened viewpoint, so that all of Jehovah's Witnesses "may go on leading a calm and quiet life with full godly devotion and seriousness."—1 Timothy 2:1, 2.

"Kingdom Truth" District Conventions Start Something!

18 During the month of June 1982, the international series of "Kingdom Truth" District Conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses was launched, and these conventions still continue in parts of the globe.

13, 14. (a) What is the situation of our brothers listed under "28 Other Countries"? (b) What encouragement may we derive from their example?

15-17. (a) What encouraging reports do we have from strife-torn sections of the earth? (b) What other similar reports have you read during the past year? (c) What is the prayer of Jehovah's Witnesses with regard to the rulers?

18. What outstanding book was released at the "Kingdom Truth" District Conventions, and what is its purpose?

In the U.S.A. alone there was a new peak attendance of 1,108,022.* At these 1982 conventions in the U.S.A., as well as in a number of other places, a new Bible study aid was released. This is the beautifully illustrated 256-page volume entitled *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth.* But this is no mere picture book. Nor is it a book especially prepared for children. Its lovely illustrations are for the purpose of teaching persons of *all* ages, that they may be helped to cultivate that lifesaving quality, FAITH. It was because of their FAITH firmly grounded in an accurate knowledge of Jehovah, his Word and his purposes, that loyal witnesses of ancient times were able to overcome seemingly insuperable obstacles. It is through FAITH that a "great crowd" of righteously inclined persons today are meeting the challenge of these "last days" and will find salvation through the "great tribulation" into Jehovah's New Order.—Revelation 7:9, 14; 2 Timothy 3:1; Hebrews 10:38, 39; 11:32-38.

[19] One family head, a happy recipient of this book, commented: "It is truly a gift from Jehovah unprecedented in my 25-year association with the truth. The style of writing would appeal to anyone. The illustrations are so moving you can see every emotion they seek to represent. God's Kingdom purposes unfold in a convincing manner." This priceless book has already been published in 21 languages, with many more to come.

[20] It is hoped that millions of persons around our globe may yet learn the truth through the pages of this new book, *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth,* and that these will stand firm in support of the Kingdom issue when, shortly, the concluding words of the "song" of Isaiah chapter 26 are fulfilled: "Go, my people, enter into your interior rooms, and shut your doors behind you. Hide yourself for but a moment until the denunciation passes over. For, look! Jehovah is coming forth from his place to call to account the error of the inhabitant of the land against him." After the Sovereign Lord Jehovah thus vindicates his great name at Har-Magedon, "the righteous nation that is keeping faithful conduct," along with the "great crowd" of companion worshipers, will come forth unscathed, to advance into the reality of all those grand promises that "Jah Jehovah" has so faithfully recorded in his Word.—Isaiah 26:2, 4, 20, 21; Revelation 7:9, 14; 16:13-16.

Considering the modern-day fulfillment of the prophetic "song" of Isaiah 26:

- ☐ Verse 2: Who first gave global support to the Kingdom issue, how, and with what result?
- ☐ Verse 4: What confidence should these words instill in every servant of Jah?
- ☐ Verse 15: High points of the 1982 Service Year Report indicate what fulfillment?
- ☐ Verse 20: What place of refuge does Jehovah provide, and for how long?
- ☐ Verse 21: What emphasis does this give as to Jehovah's reason for executing judgment?

* *Worldwide,* at the 1981 "Kingdom Loyalty" District Conventions, there was an attendance of 4,147,256, with 44,357 new Witnesses being baptized.

19. What comment do you yourself have to make on this book?

20. (a) Why is it desirable that millions more learn the truth through this instrument? (b) Those who pay attention to Isaiah 26:2, 4 may advance soon to what reality?

Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide rejoiced at the release, during their "Kingdom Truth" District Conventions, of the 256-page illustrated book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth.* This book, clearly setting out the basic Bible teachings, has an appeal to people, old and young alike, who seek better things for our earth. It is expected to play a major part in stepping up the Witnesses' global work of encouraging the study of the Bible in the home.

Philemon—Evidence of Christianity in Practice

PRACTICE what you preach! How forcefully Jesus makes this point in denouncing the religious leaders of his day! (Matthew, chapter 23) But what about teachers in the early Christian congregation? Did they practice what they preached? That they did is clearly shown in the Bible book of Philemon.

The letter to Philemon is addressed, not to a congregation, but to a specific person, and it deals with a private matter. Adding to its personal nature is the fact that Paul wrote it with his own hand, rather than using a secretary.

What was the reason for this personal letter from Paul to Philemon? It was this: Paul was sending back to Philemon his slave Onesimus. Onesimus had run away, perhaps even stealing money from Philemon to finance his journey to Rome. Somehow Onesimus had come in contact with Paul in Rome, had listened to his preaching and had become a Christian. As such he was most useful in ministering to Paul, and the apostle had become quite attached to him. But Paul did not want to keep Onesimus there without Philemon's consent. So, with Onesimus' approval, Paul was sending him back to Philemon—no longer as just a slave but now as a beloved brother in the Lord.

That Onesimus was now a valued and trusted brother is shown by his also being entrusted, along with his companion Tychicus, with Paul's letters to the congregations in Ephesus and Colossae. (Ephesians 6:21, 22; Colossians 4:7-9) In both of these letters Paul gives advice for slaves to be obedient to their masters. (Ephesians 6:5-7; Colossians 3:22, 23) So Paul was acting in harmony with his counsel in sending Onesimus back. He respected the property of others and lived by his advice to be in subjection to the existing governmental arrangement. —Romans 13:1-7; 1 Corinthians 7:20-24.

Paul also exemplified his own counsel to show humility, love and concern for others. (Ephesians 4:1-3; Philippians 2:3, 4; Colossians 3:12-14) Rather than compelling Philemon by weight of apostolic authority to forgive Onesimus and receive him as a brother, Paul humbly appealed to him on the basis of Christian love and their personal friendship. (Philemon 8, 9, 17) What a fine example for Christian overseers today!

Philemon was indebted to Paul, for it was through Paul that he had learned the good news and had been set free from bondage to paganism. Still, legally, he could mistreat and deal harshly with Onesimus. And surely he had reason to be angry with him. Not only did Paul encourage Philemon to show kindness, forgiveness and mercy but the apostle too was willing to do so. "If [Onesimus] did you any wrong or owes you anything," wrote Paul, "keep this charged to my account. . . . I will pay it back." —Philemon 18, 19.

Certainly, as shown by the book of Philemon, the early writers and teachers of Christianity themselves lived by Christian principles. They practiced what they preached.

Insight on the News

God and Caesar

In a Nigerian *Daily Times* article, columnist Andy Akporugo said: "When the Lord Christ himself said 'Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's,' he could not have intended Jehovah's Witnesses to take it literally." (Matthew 22:21) The columnist evidently thinks Jehovah's Witnesses are going too far in putting God first when there is conflict between the demands of God and Caesar. In his argument columnist Akporugo appealed to 13th-century philosopher Thomas Aquinas, who combined non-Christian Aristotle's teachings with Christian doctrine. The columnist also made reference to the thinking of non-Christian Plato and Islamic philosopher Ibn Kajldun. But should the opinions of non-Christian philosophers be the basis for understanding what Jesus meant?

Jesus' words must be understood in the light of his statements that his Kingdom and his followers are "no part of this world" (John 17:16; 18:36), and that Christians should seek "first the kingdom" of God. (Matthew 6:33) Hence, Jehovah's Witnesses rightly choose to "obey God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 5:29.

Disturbed Catholics

A Roman Catholic professor of religion recently commented on the pope's granting an audience to the Palestine Liberation Organization's leader, Yasser Arafat. "Many of us who consider ourselves Catholics," wrote Harry James Cargas in the *Los Angeles Times,* "are deeply disappointed that Pope John Paul II would grant an audience to a terrorist under whose leadership children have been murdered in their schools simply because they were Jewish. . . . But perhaps there is no great surprise here. When the church's Melchite-rite vicar of Jerusalem, Archbishop Hilarion Capucci, was sentenced to 12 years in an Israeli prison for smuggling ammunition and guns to Arab dissidents in Israel, the Vatican arranged for his release. The agreement was that Capucci would refrain from political acts, yet he has not only posed publicly embracing Arafat, he also has attended Palestine Liberation Organization meetings in Syria and Lebanon and toured Italy propagandizing on behalf of the PLO. The Vatican apparently has not reprimanded him."

Professor Cargas went on to add: "We Catholics must also recognize the shame of the Crusades, the Inquisition, the institution of the ghetto, the pogroms. And of course there is the great silence of Pope Pius XII while Hitler's policies to eliminate world Jewry were carried out in Christian Europe."

How is such religious involvement with injustices to be viewed? Jesus Christ declared: "By their fruits you will recognize them. . . . A good tree cannot bear worthless fruit."—Matthew 7:15-20.

Experts Find It "Hard to Swallow"

The Jewish newspaper *Allgemeine Jüdische Wochenzeitung,* published in Germany, recently interviewed Professor J. T. Radday, who used a computer to make a "linguistic analysis of Bible texts." Certain Bible scholars have long denied that Moses was alone in his writing of the Pentateuch. The computer analysis revealed, however, that the book of Genesis "in all probability was written by one author." The computer estimate of probability was 82 percent. "Is 82 percent high or not?" Professor Radday asked. In answer, he noted that the probability of Moses' writership was "enormously high" compared to similar analyses of other writers' works.

On the other hand, he said: "The experts—sorry to say—found it very hard to swallow. In other words, they have resisted it and no wonder: It is hard for somebody to give up a theory with which he not only is familiar, but with which he identifies, with which he has grown up and has personally taught for decades." Such attitudes help us to understand why the apostle Paul declared: "Not many wise in a fleshly way were called . . . but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put the wise men to shame." Humble people are willing to be corrected, though their peers may think them to be foolish.—1 Corinthians 1:26, 27.

Colossians—Sound Counsel on Belief and Conduct

WHAT is Jesus Christ's place in God's arrangement? To draw close to Jehovah and gain salvation, must true Christians keep special observances or practice asceticism? What is required of godly husbands, wives, children and others?

Questions such as these needed to be answered for first-century Christians living in the city of Colossae, Asia Minor. They were surrounded by Gentiles clinging to heathen philosophies involving asceticism, as well as by Jews who abstained from certain foods and observed special days. In fact, to some extent false teaching had infiltrated the congregation.

While imprisoned at Rome the apostle Paul, who may never have visited Colossae, received a report about his fellow believers there. (Colossians 1:7, 8; 2:1) In certain ways they were doing well. But some false teachings imperiled them spiritually, and the apostle was deeply concerned. Hence, under divine inspiration Paul wrote a moving letter to the Colossians in about 60 to 61 C.E.* Its sound counsel on belief and conduct answered important questions for them, even as it does for 20th-century Christians.

The Son's Preeminent Place

Paul's letter was directed to "the holy ones and faithful brothers in union with Christ," that is, to Jesus' anointed followers at Colossae. The apostle thanked God in prayer because of their faith, hope and love. Moreover, Paul and Timothy 'had not ceased praying that they might be filled with accurate knowledge, wisdom and spiritual comprehension.' To what end? 'So as to please Jehovah fully.'—Colossians 1:1-12.

A vital part of that knowledge concerns God's Son. By means of him Christians have their release by ransom, the forgiveness of their sins. He is "the firstborn of all creation," the start of Jehovah's creative works through whom millions of angelic sons, the universe and the earth, with its plant and creature life, were brought into existence. The Son is also "the firstborn from the dead," in that he prepared the way for his joint heirs to be resurrected to share immortal life with him in heaven. And among other things, Jesus Christ is "the head of the body, the congregation," the preeminent one among his anointed followers. —Colossians 1:13-18.

Moreover, 'God saw good for all fullness to dwell in his Son.' He is the very embodiment of divine qualities, including wisdom—in fact, everything Christians need for their instruction and guidance. His teachings, which harmonize with the rest of the Scriptures, lack nothing. Through him all other things in heaven and on earth will be reconciled to God, and due to Christ's sacrifice the long-hidden "sacred secret," which includes

* See also *Aid to Bible Understanding*, pages 365, 366; *"All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial,"* pages 224-227. Both books are published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

the hope of Gentiles sharing heavenly glory with him, has been revealed. But that reconciliation depends on Christians' remaining steadfast and not being shifted away from the hope of the good news. Paul was working hard as a minister of this good news centered on Christ, the preeminent one in God's arrangement. —Colossians 1:19-29.

False Teachings Refuted

To enjoy the glorious privilege of sharing with Jesus in heavenly life, the Colossian Christians needed to remember that 'concealed in Christ are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.' Hence, they should guard against anyone who might 'carry them off as his prey through the philosophy and empty deception according to the tradition of men and not according to Christ.' They had to reject the unscriptural concepts of the Greeks and the non-Biblical teachings of the Jews. A similar rejection of false teachings and a firm stand for truth are vital for Jehovah's Witnesses today.—Colossians 2: 1-12.

Next, Paul fortified the Colossians against Judaizers. He pointed out that God had removed the Mosaic Law, nailing it to Jesus' torture stake. Hence, they should allow no one to judge their faith and righteousness on the basis of food, drink and certain observances. Why? Because such things were but a *shadow* of coming things, "but the *reality* belongs to the Christ."—Colossians 2:13-17.

To combat other erroneous views, Paul warned against those delighting in insincere, hypocritical humility and "a form of worship of the angels." Apparently, some in Colossae either thought they were carrying on the form of worship that angels supposedly practiced or they actually worshiped them directly. But this and such things as "mock humility" and asceticism, or "severe treatment of the body," were shown to be "of no value in combating the satisfying of the flesh." Similarly today, such things as asceticism and feigned humility will not make us more spiritual.—Colossians 2:18-23.

To maintain genuine spirituality and combat improper fleshly desires, Jesus' anointed disciples must 'keep their minds fixed on the things above, not on the things upon the earth.' Only by doing so can they hope to be made manifest with Christ in heavenly glory. Likewise, Christians having earthly hopes need to set their affections on spiritual things. —Colossians 3:1-4; Matthew 6:19-21.

Sound Counsel on Conduct

What will really help us to draw closer to Jehovah and become more spiritual? 'Deaden your body as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire and covetousness,' said Paul. Misuse of the power of speech through such things as wrath, obscene talk and lying must also be avoided. As the apostle told the Colossians, we must 'strip off the old personality and put on the new one.' We must clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, long-suffering and love—that "perfect bond of union." All of this will contribute not only to our own peace but also to that of the entire congregation. —Colossians 3:5-17.

Like the Colossian Christians, present-day witnesses of Jehovah can benefit from Paul's counsel regarding family obligations and other responsibilities. Wives are admonished to be in subjection to their husbands. Husbands are to keep on loving their wives and "not be bitterly angry with them." Children are to obey their parents, and fathers are not to exasperate their children "so that they do not become downhearted."—Colossians 3:18-21.

Christian slaves were to be obedient,

and they were to be treated righteously and fairly by their believing masters. Philemon and his slave Onesimus lived in Colossae, and doubtless they both received this counsel with deep appreciation. (See page 26.) The same principles should be applied by modern-day Christians in the employer-employee relationship. In fact, whatever we are doing, we should "work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah."—Colossians 3:18–4:1.

Paul urged his fellow believers to persevere in prayer, with thanksgiving. Also, they should pray for God to open a door of utterance for Paul and his associates "to speak the sacred secret about the Christ." How this should move us to express gratitude to Jehovah and pray that he might prosper the Kingdom-preaching work! And as Paul counsels, may our own utterance always be gracious, "seasoned with salt." What we say should be in good taste, having an appeal to our hearers, and should tend toward preserving the lives of those heeding our words.—Colossians 4:2-6.

Personal greetings and admonition brought this very helpful letter to a close. Tychicus and Onesimus (who evidently delivered it) would give the Colossians details about Paul. Epaphras, who may have helped to found the congregation at Colossae, was said to be 'exerting himself in their behalf in prayer.' Paul himself concluded with a personal greeting and prayed that they might enjoy undeserved kindness.—Colossians 4:7-18.

Paul's counsel to the Colossian Christians helps us to comprehend the preeminent place of Jesus Christ in God's arrangement. This letter shows us what we must do—and what we must avoid—if we are to draw close to Jehovah and gain salvation. It points out God's requirements for husbands, wives, children and others who desire divine favor. Indeed, Paul's letter to the Colossians provides sound counsel on belief and conduct.

Questions From Readers

■ **How can we assist those in our congregation who have a disfellowshipped relative?**

It is fine when elders and others give warm and loving consideration to Christians who are in this situation, for by showing kindness and understanding they can help to counteract the emotional and spiritual strain the situation may produce. Yet Christians having a disfellowshipped relative, and those who want to help, need to have a clear and proper view of disfellowshipping.

God's Word directs the congregation to expel those who unrepentantly practice sin. (1 Corinthians 5:11-13) This protects the congregation in general from contamination and upholds its good name. But on a personal basis loyal Christians in the family, and others wanting to help them, need protection too. We can appreciate why by considering what a person's being disfellowshipped reveals about his heart condition. Note the following two situations in connection with disfellowshipping:

First, when a person has committed a serious sin for which he might lose God's favor and be disfellowshipped, a committee of spiritual elders meets with him. He may already have realized the wrongness of his course, repented in his heart and begun to produce "works that befit repentance." (Acts 26:20) When that is so, the elders will reprove him with God's Word, will offer Biblical advice on 'making straight paths for his feet' and will pray with him

and for him. Since he is repentant, he need not be expelled or viewed as disfellowshipped by his family or others.—1 Timothy 5:20; Hebrews 12:13; James 5:14-16.*

Second, it may be that when the committee meets with the sinner, he has not yet repented. During the meeting the elders may be able to touch his heart, bringing home to him the gravity of his sin. (Compare 2 Samuel 12:1-13.) Of course, since he has not up till then produced any 'fruit that befits repentance,' the elders should exercise real caution to make sure that he is not merely sorry or ashamed over being found out. (Luke 3:8) Being concerned about the congregation, they should be absolutely convinced that he is now truly repentant and ready to "turn to God by doing works that befit repentance." (Acts 26:20) If they are convinced that he is repentant, he may remain in the congregation and be helped by the elders, his family and others.

What is the point of mentioning these two aspects? It is to illustrate that if someone is disfellowshipped, he must at the time have had a truly bad heart and/or been determined to pursue a God-dishonoring course. Peter said that the condition of such a person is worse than before he became a Christian; he is like 'a sow that was bathed but has gone back to rolling in the mire.' (2 Peter 2:20-22) This should help Christian relatives and others to have God's view of a disfellowshipped person.

But human emotions and attachments can have a powerful effect, making it difficult for people to act in accord with the disfellowshipping decree if a relative is involved. (Compare Numbers 16:16-33.) For example, a faithful Christian wife realizes that her husband's being disfellowshipped means that the spiritual ties that formerly existed have been severed. He has, by his conduct and its results, broken a spiritual bond between himself and true Christians. His wife will continue to show love and respect for him as husband and family head, even as do wives whose husbands never were believers. (1 Peter 3:1, 2) But it will not be possible to have spiritual fellowship with him, sharing in Bible discussions and prayer with him as she once did. (Proverbs 28:9) She certainly will feel this loss.

Another sort of loss may be felt by loyal Christian grandparents whose children have been disfellowshipped. They may have been accustomed to visiting regularly with their children, giving them occasion to enjoy their grandchildren. Now the parents are disfellowshipped because of rejecting Jehovah's standards and ways. So things are not the same in the family. Of course, the grandparents have to determine if some necessary family matters require limited contact with the disfellowshipped children. And they might sometimes have the grandchildren visit them. How sad, though, that by their unchristian course the children interfere with the normal pleasure that such grandparents enjoyed!

These examples show why fellow Christians should be alert to the special need that may exist when someone in the congregation has had a close relative disfellowshipped. The apostle Paul urged Christians to "speak consolingly to the depressed souls," which might well describe the loyal Christian family member. (1 Thessalonians 5:14) Nor should we limit our comforting, encouraging words to a single expression when the disfellowshipping occurs. The need for upbuilding may extend for a long while. In a sense, it may grow as the faithful one is for a long period of time deprived of spiritual fellowshipping with the family member. Of course, it is not necessary for us to keep mentioning disfellowshipping in conversation. We just need to go out of our way to be warm, genuinely interested and, above all, spiritual.—Proverbs 15:23; Ecclesiastes 12:10.

Much good can also be accomplished by providing Christian association. Sometimes a Christian whose mate has been disfellowshipped feels isolated. As mentioned above, the expelled mate has proved that he is not the sort of person that we want to be around. And we need to be careful not to get involved in fellowshipping with him just because we want to visit or help the Christian mate. So maybe a visit can be made when the disfellowshipped one is known to be out of the house.

We need to help our brothers and sisters who have disfellowshipped relatives to see the truthfulness of the inspired words: "There exists a friend sticking closer than a [fleshly] brother," or other fleshly relative. (Proverbs 18:24) We may not be able to undo all the hurt or make up for all the loss that *the disfellowshipped* person has caused his Christian relatives. Yet, by being aware of the special needs such Christians have "we may be able to comfort those in any sort of tribulation," including this one. And lovingly we can strengthen those who have this special need.—2 Corinthians 1:3, 4; Hebrews 12:12, 13.

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* For a more complete discussion of the various factors to be considered in identifying genuine repentance as well as what is involved in "works that befit repentance," see *The Watchtower* of September 1, 1981, pages 24-26.