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The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



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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 continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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Frederick W. Franz, President

Man's Inhumanity to Man

THE scene—a country in West Africa, 1961. Military police with fixed bayonets suddenly interrupt a peaceful Christian meeting. They handcuff the men present and then brutally beat them into “little more than a pile of flesh.” The conductor of the meeting receives so many blows with a club that he vomits blood for 90 days. The police expect the men to die.

“Man’s inhumanity to man” is a grim, recurring theme of history. The ancient Assyrians impaled their war prisoners on stakes that were run up through the abdomen into the chest. The Romans had their own way of using the stake. Their victims were first scourged so severely that flesh was often stripped from the bones. Then they were tied or nailed to upright stakes and left to die—slowly, agonizingly.

Shocking callousness and cruelty have often been shown by priests. The Aztecs of Mexico made human sacrifices to their god Huitzilopochtli by ripping out the hearts of their living victims. In the 16th century, though, Hernán Cortés of Spain conquered the Aztecs. Was his religion any better? In those days the Spanish Inquisition operated



ghastly torture chambers and burned “heretics” to death. The rack, a common form of torture, stretched the victims’ limbs until they came out of joint. Other methods were even more grisly—but we spare you.

‘But that’s all in the past,’ some people think. ‘People are more humane and civilized today.’ Is that so?

Torture is by no means obsolete. True, the horrible public burnings that once regaled sadistic, callous crowds and clergy are a thing of the past. But in the secrecy of prison cells, torture is still regularly and frequently practiced—often with sophisticated methods that do not even leave a trace of evidence. In a South American country, a victim who had undergone the modern torture of violent electric shocks had this to say: “The only thing that comes to mind is: they’re ripping apart my flesh. But they didn’t rip apart my flesh. . . . They didn’t even leave marks.”

One press report claims that many countries are “notorious for torture and death of political prisoners.” The report continues: “People have also ‘disappeared’ after arrests—never to be seen again.” The United Nations

Human Rights Committee has black-listed as "villains of oppression and tyranny" more than a hundred UN member states.

Massacres have been frequent throughout this 20th century. In 1915-16 an invading army was used to deport forcibly most of the Armenian population, during which operation possibly a million Armenians were slaughtered. It is calculated that as a result of the revolution in Russia, 14 million civilians died between 1914 and 1926. In China, from 1949 to 1958, between 15 and 30 million perished in "political liquidation campaigns." Massacres of Jews have been frequent for many centuries; but none were so starkly cold-blooded or extensive as the slaughter of over

six million Jews under Hitler's regime.

However, there are sins of omission as well as of commission. Inhumanity can reveal itself by simply turning a blind eye to those in trouble. In a recent test case in South Africa, a woman lay motionless beside her car on the edge of a highway to see if anyone would stop and help. No one did in two days.

Inhumanity is also apparent in countries enjoying a glut of food. What happens to it? Much is destroyed. And yet, according to a 1982 UN report, 40,000 young children die from malnutrition and infection—*every day!*

"Man's inhumanity to man," therefore, continues even in our "enlightened" age. But how did it all start? Can anybody stop it?

Inhumanity —Its End Is in Sight!

"A THING of beauty is a joy for ever," wrote Keats the poet. Many beautiful things—paintings, sculptures and especially literary masterpieces—reveal something of their creator. The earth, this "thing of beauty," with its marvels of life, growth, color, taste and a thousand other delights, reveals a Creator that is all-wise, all-powerful and all-loving.

The greatest literary masterpiece of all time, the Bible, has also been a "thing of beauty" and "a joy" to millions for hundreds of years. It tells us that "God is love," that he is "merciful and gracious" and that man was made "in his image." (1 John 4:8; Ex-

odus 34:6; Genesis 1:27) Many of humankind clearly reflect the qualities of their Maker and show real compassion and kindness. They abhor cruelty and inhuman conduct. So—

How Did "Man's Inhumanity to Man" Originate?

Certainly not with God. Before creating the first human pair, he lovingly prepared a beautiful home for them. A portion of the earth was adorned with trees, flowers, fruit, streams and animal life in abundance—Paradise! To enjoy this beauty forever, they had to be obedient to God, to do things his way. But they were not robots, pro-

grammed to obey; they had freedom of will and choice. God wanted his human creatures, the crowning glory of his visible creation, to serve him because they loved him and delighted to do his will.

To God and his invisible angelic creation, the garden of Eden and its happy, harmonious inhabitants must have been a lovely sight. God's purpose was that, from this glorious genesis, the whole earth would become a global Paradise with happy people, bringing honor and praise to him.

But the angels were also free moral agents. One of them allowed covetousness and ambition to grip him. He began to envision himself as the god of mankind. (2 Corinthians 4:4) So he plotted to win the first two humans over to his side. To entice Eve to join his revolt, he promised her, "You are bound to be like God," and, furthermore, "you positively will not die"—the first lie ever told. (Genesis 3:4, 5) Eve fell for the lure, and Adam later joined her in yielding to stimulation by their rebellious angelic mentor. The former angel thus became God's adversary, or "Satan" in Hebrew.

"You will positively die." God had warned Adam that this would be the consequence of rebellion. (Genesis 2:17) Satan's promise of not dying in the flesh being false and God's warning true, Adam and Eve did die, thus making Satan "a manslayer when he began." (John 8:44) Due to his diabolical influence, peace and harmony in the human family were also destroyed. Later on, Adam's eldest son, Cain, became jealous because his brother Abel's offering to Jehovah was accepted, but his was rejected. Being "hot with great anger," Cain ruthlessly murdered Abel.

"Man's inhumanity to man" had begun.—Genesis 4:2-8.

This murder also drew attention to the issue of pure worship versus false worship. Abel was the first of a long line of witnesses of Jehovah to be martyred because of their faith.

Some time after Abel's murder, other angels were lured by Satan to materialize so as to cohabit with attractive women on earth, and they thus fell under Satan's influence. From those illicit unions came the "Nephilim," or "mighty ones"—tyrannical bullies. Before long, "the earth became filled with violence"—man's "inhumanity" multiplied. (Genesis 6:1-11) Jehovah, in all justice and mercy, could not allow those chaotic conditions to continue. He flushed out that ancient system of things in Noah's day with the Flood.—2 Peter 2:5.

But this did not eliminate Satan's vile influence. The Flood forced the disobedient angels to dematerialize, and, now separated from Jehovah's holy organization, they became an invisible demonic organization under Satan's domination. (Ephesians 6:12) In order to control mankind, they use spiritism, necromancy, astrology and other occult devices. Although unable to take on human form again, they often possess humans, animals and inanimate things such as fetishes. Under the influence of demon powers and the blind fanaticism of false religion, nationalism and racism, people do inhumane things that they normally would not do.

It is no wonder, therefore, that religious persecution continues to this day. In our opening paragraph on page 3 mention is made of a group of Christians who were nearly clubbed to death. These suffered because they were Jehovah's Witnesses. On this occasion

they survived their beating. While vicious blows rained down on the group conductor, he petitioned Jehovah "to care for the lives of these, His 'sheep.'" To the surprise of the police, not one of them died. Jehovah can protect his own if he so wills.—2 Chronicles 16:9.

In the United States, racial animosities have resulted in brutal mob actions and even lynchings. The harsh, overbearing attitude of some African whites toward blacks is also well known. Religion has often worked hand in hand with politics in building up the long, bloodstained record of inhuman acts that fill the history books. Wrote E. Bolaji Idowu, professor of religious studies at Ibadan University, Nigeria: "Priestcraft with all its . . . ghastly forms of inhumanity perpetrated in the name of Deity—these have been a constant embarrassment to religion . . . How can history forget the Crusades, the *Jihads*, the Inquisition, those burnings and mutilations and devastations?"

How Will It End?

Certainly not through human efforts. Some humanitarian organizations are trying to improve man's lot, but the world has sunk too deeply in the mire of corruption and violence for man's efforts to be successful.

However, Jesus said: "The things impossible with men are possible with God." (Luke 18:27) He also said to his disciples: "Take courage! I have conquered the world." (John 16:33) As God's chief adversary, Satan hated Jesus and used political and religious leaders to attack him—from King Herod who tried to murder him as a babe to the priests who used the might of Rome to kill him on the stake. Satan also tried to seduce Jesus with a

magnificent lure—"all the kingdoms of the world and their glory"—if only Jesus would worship him. (Matthew 4:8) But Jesus defeated Satan's efforts to master him; he kept integrity through the grim suffering of scourging and the stake.

Significantly, at that dark moment of apparent defeat, Jesus indicated that a decisive victory over Satan had actually occurred. One of his companions in suffering, a robber, begged: "Jesus, remember me when you get into your kingdom." Through Jesus, even this common criminal had come to gain some appreciation of the Kingdom of God as man's only hope. Jesus triumphantly replied: "Truly I tell you today, You will be with me in Paradise."—Luke 23:42, 43.

Here Jesus clearly linked his Kingdom with Paradise and indicated it would play a key role in carrying out Jehovah's original purpose for this earth. But when? How? Obviously Satan's evil world has to be cleared away first. Indications are that this will take place very soon.

Asked by his disciples when this would happen, Jesus spoke of world war, food shortages, earthquakes, pestilences, increase of crime, strange and fear-inspiring events in the heavens, great anxiety for the future, and other factors, as making a composite sign that "the end" is near. (Matthew 24:3-14; Luke 21:10, 11, 25, 26) These things have been happening on an unprecedented scale since 1914. So, as Jesus said: "As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect . . . because your deliverance is getting near . . . Know that the kingdom of God is near." (Luke 21:28, 31) At last the end of "man's inhumanity to man" is in sight!

That is why Jehovah's Witnesses are already making great changes in their lives by studying the Bible diligently and doing what it says. They are uninvolved in political conflicts and they 'learn war no more.' They endeavor to become mild-tempered and to love their neighbors. Jesus said: "Happy are the peaceable" and "happy are the mild-tempered ones, since they will inherit the earth."—Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:5, 9.

Paradise Restored

At God's appointed time, Christ Jesus will fight against "the kings of the earth and their armies" and utterly cleanse this earth of every vestige of Satan's world. This tremendous victory will climax a "great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning." Satan and his demons will afterward be "bound," or restrained from exercising their wicked influence over mankind, for a thousand years.—Matthew 24:21; Revelation 16:14-16; 19:11-20; 20:1-3.

And then? "New heavens and a new earth" where "righteousness is to dwell"—God's Kingdom fully in control with 'his will taking place, as in heaven also upon earth.' (2 Peter 3:13; Matthew 6:10) Under the Kingdom's direction, the earth will gradually be restored to Paradise. And it is in this Paradise that the robber who died with Jesus will be raised from the dead as one of the millions "in the memorial tombs" who hear the voice of Jesus "and come out."—John 5:28, 29.

What will this former criminal find? The corruption and cruelty of Rome and all other empires and governments gone forever! Instead of a satanic spirit of greed, lust, hate and fear brooding over the earth, there will be a mar-

velous atmosphere of peace, joy, unity and love. The spiritual paradise already enjoyed by millions of Jehovah's people will spread earth wide. "Works of the flesh," such as "fornication, uncleanness, loose conduct, idolatry, practice of spiritism, enmities, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, contentions, divisions, sects, envies, drunken bouts, revelries, and things like these," will be eliminated, because "those who practice such things will not inherit God's kingdom."—Galatians 5:19-21.

The robber no doubt practiced some of these things, but after being resurrected he will start with a clean slate because "he who has died has been acquitted from his sin." The robber has already received "the wages sin pays . . . death" and will be in line to receive "the gift God gives," that is, "everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord."—Romans 6:7, 23.

What a relief, and what a prospect for the robber and millions more! With God's Kingdom governing all the earth righteously and wisely, it will yield its fruitage and be beautified. All living creatures on earth, in their fascinating variety, will once more be subject to man as at the beginning. (Genesis 1:28; Isaiah 11:6-9) This earthly Paradise, "a thing of beauty," will be a "joy for ever."

More importantly, with Jehovah's holy spirit flowing freely, the fruitage of that spirit will flourish—"love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." (Galatians 5:22, 23) All races and nations will become one great brotherhood. How? By 'clothing themselves with love—the perfect bond of union.' "Man's inhumanity to man" will disappear forever.—Colossians 3:14.

Insight on the News

Interest in the Supernatural

"The occult, the supernatural and the paranormal are big business," says an article in *U.S. News & World Report*, "with people from all walks of life paying top dollar to consult with readers, seers and other self-proclaimed visionaries." Among those mentioned are astrologers, psychics, spiritualists and others of the some 600,000 occult practitioners in the United States who charge fees of up to \$300 for their advice. Millions of dollars are also spent on magazines, books, tapes and movies that deal with subjects that range "from astrology to witchcraft." An estimated 30 million readers regularly consult newspaper horoscopes, with wide interest shown in conventions, lectures and fairs that deal with psychic matters. Witchcraft schools are said to abound, and there is even a marketed computer that produces astrological charts in seconds.

Why such interest in the supernatural? Among the reasons given are: "Fear of death, personal experience with premonitions and widespread treatment of the topic in books and films." Many people are also drawn in by the "entertainment value" of the occult or are "sincere people for whom the paranormal amounts to a religion or a body of knowledge that is or will prove to be scientifically valid."

The Bible, however, takes a very definite stand against any

involvement in occult practices. People so involved were strictly condemned and uprooted from the ancient nation of Israel, "for everybody doing these things is something detestable to Jehovah." (Deuteronomy 18: 10-12) Likewise, Christians are warned to keep free from spiritism.—Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:8.

'Butchery in God's Name'

"Religious Wars—around the world, butchery in the name of God." Under this heading, Associated Press writer Charles J. Hanley states: "Moslem vs. Christian, Catholic against Protestant, Hindu vs. Buddhist—the cross and crescent fly once again among the emblems of battle. Sectarian conflict bloodies Belfast's alleyways, Beirut's streets, Sri Lanka's village lanes." He cites Moorhead Kennedy, executive director of New York's Council for International Understanding, as saying that "religion is an underlying—and underestimated—element behind much of the world's violence." Kennedy further stated: "We've never really gotten over the Crusades." One reason for this religious butchery, observes Kennedy, is the belief of some in reincarnation. Others believe that martyrdom "guarantees entrance to heaven," while still others exalt a spirit of militarism.

At present, many do 'underestimate' the extent to which

such religions are responsible for bloodshed in the earth. But the Bible shows that soon the nations will have had their fill of it and will turn on the entire global empire of false religion to destroy it. Only those who, as worshipers of Jehovah, have heeded his counsel to "seek peace and pursue it" will be delivered during the great tribulation that will then engulf mankind.—1 Peter 3:11; Revelation 17:1, 2, 16; 18:24.

Fruits of Evangelism

"After four centuries of determined missionary work by Catholic priests and nuns, nearly 70,000 Mixe Indians dwelling in the rugged Sierra Madre of southern Mexico are Christians—but in name only," reports Canada's *Globe and Mail*. "Their spiritual life remains a heady mixture of animal sacrifices, magical charms, divine mushrooms, buoyant dances, solemn processions and the consumption of mezcal, a cactus-based liquor, all united by a mystical, intimate bond with nature," continues the report.

In contrast, Jehovah's Witnesses in this region, as in all parts of the world, are teaching the people the Bible, which "holy writings . . . are able to make you wise for salvation." (2 Timothy 3:14-17) Thus many of the Mixe Indians are abandoning the above-named superstitious practices and are responding to the Bible's good news.

Spain's Willing-Hearted Ones Do the "Impossible"

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES had been preaching in Spain since 1919. Then in 1936 civil war broke out and their work was brought to a virtual standstill. The authorities took over the Watch Tower Society's small branch office in Madrid and confiscated the printing equipment. The foreign pioneers, or full-time preachers, had to flee the country to avoid imprisonment. By the spring of 1939 General Franco had won the war and a Catholic Fascist dictatorship was imposed. The only religious organization allowed to function legally and publicly was the Roman Catholic Church. In such a setting, would Jehovah's Witnesses ever be able to get back on their feet?

To the isolated groups of Spanish Witnesses back there, a recovery seemed impossible. Yet in 1970, after 34 years of underground, "catacomb," activity, Jehovah's Witnesses finally were given legal recognition in Spain. After a brief search, they located a small building in Barcelona that would serve as a central office and a Bethel home for their headquarters staff. That original Bethel family started with just 12 members. In 1972, when the remodeled building was dedicated by N. H. Knorr (then president of the Watch Tower Society), there was an average of 15,668 Witnesses preaching each month in Spain. Four years later, that figure had doubled to over 36,000! The Barcelona Bethel facilities were al-

ready too small for existing needs. But where could a suitable larger property be found?

One problem was the zoning laws. Normally, land is zoned for either industrial or residential use. What was needed was land that could be used for both purposes, since members of the Bethel family who work in the factory, workshops and offices also reside in the same complex. A nationwide search was mounted for a suitable piece of land on which to build or for a building already in existence that would be adequate for future expansion. The months and years rolled by without any real success.

In 1980 the impasse finally was broken. A large five-winged factory building was found about 15 miles (24 km) out of Madrid, on the outskirts of the village of Ajalvir. The building was almost brand new and only partially finished, and the local authorities were willing to permit mixed zoning there. But there was one big problem—finances.

How Would the Brothers Respond?

For more than 30 years the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, U.S.A., had gladly financed the preaching work in Spain without any repayment. But because of heavy expenditures, due to expansion at the Brooklyn headquarters at that time, it was impossible for the Society to fi-

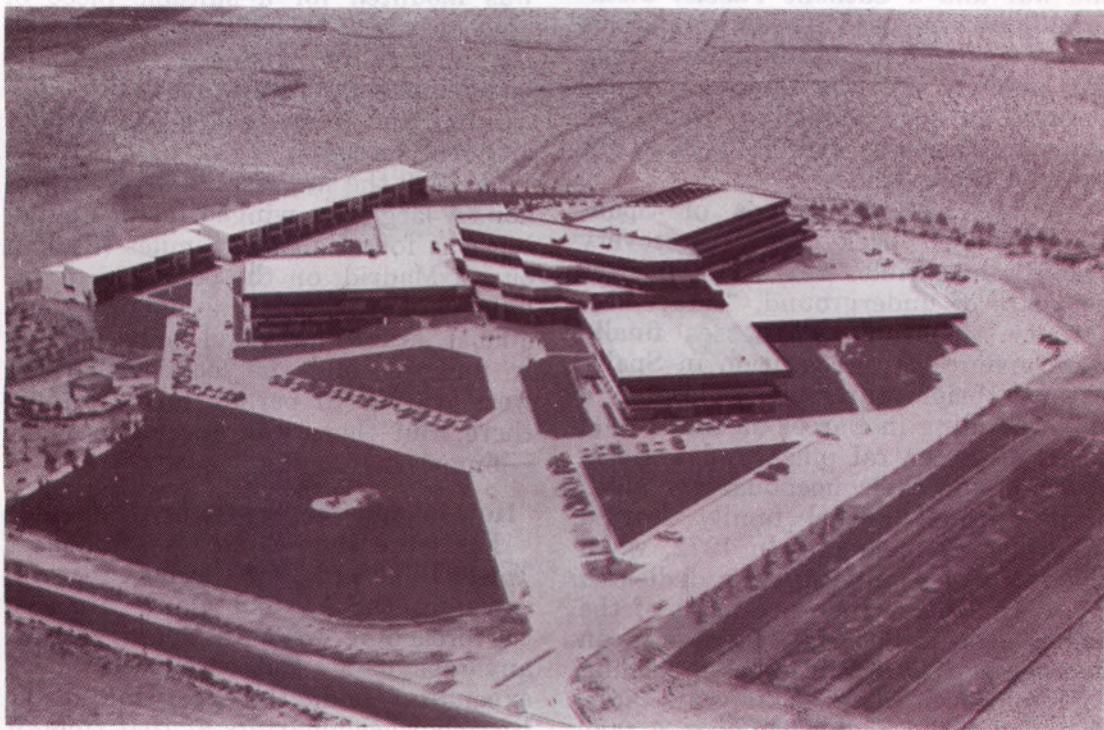
nance new Bethel facilities in Spain. If Spain was to have a new branch complex, the Spanish Witnesses would have to finance it themselves. This was a new challenge of much greater proportions than anything previously faced in the Spanish field. In fact, it seemed impossible that the Spanish brothers, with their relatively low wages, could donate sufficient funds to cover the cost of this enterprise.

But you may recall what was done when the Israelites of Moses' day were privileged to build a tabernacle for Jehovah's worship. Moses had said to the Israelites: "From among yourselves take up a contribution for Jehovah. Let every willing-hearted one bring it as Jehovah's contribution." They voluntarily gave gold, silver, precious stones

and other items. (Exodus 35:5-9) Similarly, the issue was squarely put to the 751 congregations in Spain. The need was clearly explained at the 1980 district conventions all over the country. What was the response?

At the close of the conventions, people were lining up to contribute their jewels, gold and silver rings and bracelets, so that these could be turned into cash to finance the new project. At the convention in San Sebastián in the Basque country, an elderly sister handed over a heavy gold bracelet. When asked if she was sure that she wanted to donate such a valuable item, she answered: "Brother, it is going to do far more good paying for a new Bethel than it will on my wrist!"

A young couple contributed money



An aerial view of the Spanish Bethel

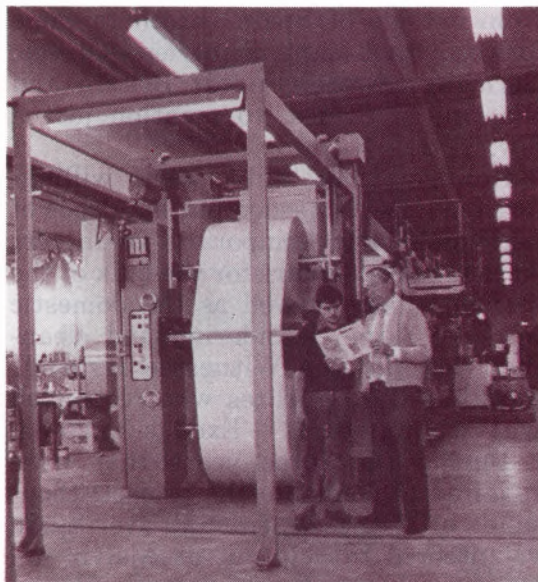
they had planned to use for their honeymoon travel. An older sister brought in a pile of damp and musty banknotes that she had stashed away under the floor of her home over the years.

As the weeks passed by, men and women, young and old, rich and poor, contributed with a willing heart so that Spain could have the needed new Bethel facilities. Even special pioneers, who receive only a limited monthly allowance, made contributions. For example, one couple sacrificed a trip to the United States and donated their ticket money. Children also sent their contributions to the branch office. One ten-year-old stated: "I am the firstborn of five children, and we have heard the suggestion about sending money for the new Bethel. We would like to contribute what we have saved in our money box. Although it is a small amount, we believe it will serve to buy something."

Young people also organized themselves in different ways in order to earn money they could send to the Society. Some made little dolls and sold them. One collected sawdust from carpentry shops and then sold it. One youngster who was saving to buy a guitar donated the money for the Bethel project.

New Challenges to Be Met

The Spanish brothers responded so well that what had seemed impossible became a reality. The factory building was purchased in October 1980. But there were new challenges to be met. The unfinished building now needed to be remodeled and completed. Separate living quarters would have to be built. A volunteer construction team had to be formed. Specialists were needed for drafting, engineering, building, electrical and plumbing work. At first sight,



*The first Spanish Awake!
off the M.A.N. rotary press*

all of this seemed impossible. But it was a challenge similar to that faced by Moses during construction of the tabernacle. So out went this call for volunteers: "Let all the wise-hearted ones among you come and make all that Jehovah has commanded." (Exodus 35:10) Now experts were needed for Bethel construction, and a similar call went out for willing workers.

One special pioneer, an engineer, was called in with his wife and child, serving for several years. A brother from Madrid who is a registered technical architect also offered his services in the quality control of the construction. An architect in Barcelona who is not a Witness heard of this vast project and was moved to volunteer his services for several weekends. However, relatively few such specialists were available among Jehovah's Witnesses in Spain. But expert help came also

from outside of Spain. Brothers came forward from many countries—Greece, Germany, Sweden, Great Britain and the United States, to mention just a few.

However, not only were willing-hearted experts needed but hundreds of permanent and temporary volunteers were required to care for the bulk of the manual labor, as well as the domestic work—cooking, laundering and cleaning. How did the Witnesses respond? Just like the Israelites who responded with willing hearts.—Exodus 35:20-35.

During the three years that were required to complete the project, thousands of Witnesses from all over Spain volunteered to help out at Ajalvir full time or on weekends and vacations. And their fine help and example served to give a witness. How so? During a period of ten months, the original factory owners continued their industry in two wings of the building while the Witnesses were working on the rest of the site. The former owners were so impressed by the zeal and conduct of the brothers that they adopted a company policy that any future employees would have to be Witnesses—and they have stuck to it!

The “Impossible” Achieved

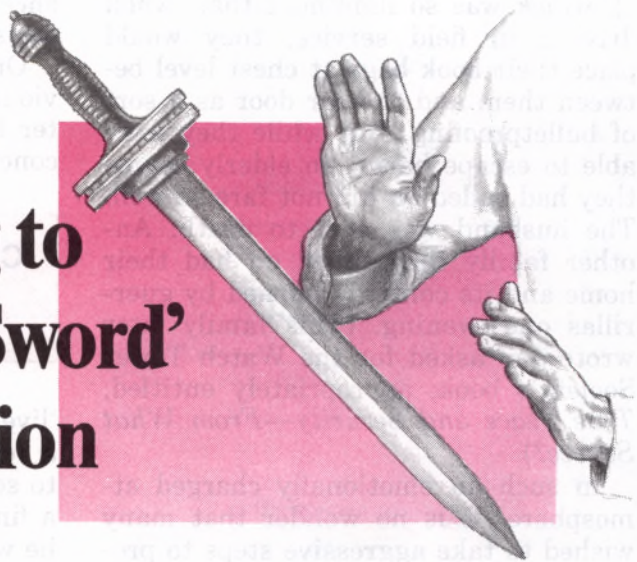
In the fall of 1982 a target date was set for the completion of the new Bethel facilities—October 9, 1983. As the months sped by, this seemed to be a formidable task. It was one thing to get the main structure and the residential modules looking like a Bethel complex, but finishing off the thousands of details was a different matter. Late into the night of Saturday, October 8, volunteers were still working to put the finishing touches to the marble floors and mirrored ceilings in the lobby. Yet,

on the morning of October 9—the day of the dedication—there, on a hilltop overlooking a typical Castilian scene with its autumn ocher colors, stood the gleaming white and gray Bethel complex in a setting of green lawns and multicolored flower beds.

Hundreds of visitors who poured in from Spain and other lands were amazed. Who would believe that an organization that had virtually been put out of existence and driven underground until 1970 could have such a beautiful headquarters just 13 years later! Without a doubt, Jehovah had fulfilled his word by the prophet Isaiah: “The little one himself will become a thousand, and the small one a mighty nation. I myself, Jehovah, shall speed it up in its own time.”—Isaiah 60:22.

The program got off to a grand start with experiences and expressions from old-timers who had lived through the trials of the 1930’s and from missionaries who had formerly served in Spain. Next F. W. Franz, the president of the Watch Tower Society, presented a talk on dedication and consecration. This discourse was followed attentively not only by the 956 present at the new Bethel but also by more than 62,000 in 12 different stadiums connected by telephone around the country. By their donations and voluntary work, most in attendance had contributed to this magnificent new Bethel complex. During the years of hard work, they had truly been conscious of wise King Solomon’s words: “Unless Jehovah himself builds the house, it is to no avail that its builders have worked hard on it.” (Psalm 127:1) With Jehovah’s blessing they were among the willing-hearted ones who had made all of it possible.

Declining to 'Live by the Sword' —A Protection



“RETURN your sword to its place”! This firm command of Jesus came at a time when the use of force seemed a logical choice. Standing before Jesus was “a great crowd with swords and clubs,” seeking to arrest him and subject him to a legal travesty. One of Jesus’ disciples drew a sword, intending to protect him by force. Would you blame him for that?

Jesus, however, would have no part in such violence. Commanding Peter to put away his weapon, he explained: “All those who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father to supply me at this moment more than twelve legions of angels?”—Matthew 26:47, 52, 53.

Christians today likewise abstain from trusting in weapons such as guns and knives—even during these dangerous, “critical times hard to deal with.” (2 Timothy 3:1) They take seriously the Bible’s command to ‘beat swords into plowshares,’ and they do not seek to harm their fellowman. (Isaiah 2:4)

Because they do not carry weapons for purposes of self-defense, instead of resorting to violence they are more inclined to try to reason with people who would do them harm. “If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men,” is the counsel they follow. (Romans 12:18) Nevertheless, it is not always easy to refuse to ‘live by the sword.’ Situations can develop that severely test a Christian’s desire to “be peaceable with all men.”

This is what happened in an African nation a few years ago. A power struggle developed within the nation. Civil war raged, with widespread guerrilla attacks. Citizens were therefore compelled to enter the security forces. On the other hand, enormous pressure to join the guerrillas was placed on some by their fellow countrymen. Indeed, citizens were at times caught in a squeeze between guerrilla recruiters and government soldiers who brutalized any who aided the guerrillas.

Violence began to sweep the country. A pioneer couple recalls that the danger

of attack was so imminent that, when driving in field service, they would place their book bags at chest level between them and the car door as a sort of bulletproofing. But while they were able to escape harm, an elderly couple they had called on did not fare so well. The husband was shot to death. Another family they called on had their home and its contents burned by guerrillas one evening. (This family later wrote and asked for the Watch Tower Society's book, appropriately entitled, *True Peace and Security—From What Source?*)

In such an emotionally charged atmosphere, it is no wonder that many wished to take aggressive steps to protect themselves. 'Should a person stand by idly and let himself or his family be murdered?' such ones reasoned. Many began carrying weapons. And witnesses of Jehovah in that war-torn nation wondered what they should do.

Facing the Threat of Prison

By and large, Jehovah's Witnesses came to a united conclusion: to remain entirely neutral in the civil war and desist from carrying dangerous weapons. But was not this decision impractical—dangerous? Their experi-

ences underscore the rightness of their decision.

One young man named Tony had previously served in the armed forces. After becoming a Christian, however, he concluded he could not conscientiously

Christians take seriously the Bible's command to 'beat swords into plowshares'

'live by the sword' and cause harm to a fellow human. So when called upon to serve another term he declined, and a fine was imposed. Shortly thereafter he was summoned again, and this time he was given a six-month prison sentence. Yet a third time he was called and sentenced to ten months in prison. However, he appealed this sentence to a higher court. For the next two years he was in and out of court, each time preparing himself and his wife for a ten-month separation. "My wife and I said 'good-bye' some 13 times in two years, but each time something happened to delay the carrying out of the sentence," he commented.

In the interim, he and his wife became special pioneers, and he was granted recognition as a minister. But the law still required that he serve his ten-month sentence. Finally he received a letter offering a suspended sentence if he would plead guilty. "I told them I could not do that, since I was innocent," explained Tony. He braced himself to go to jail. To his surprise came a letter stating that the justices of the High Court had analyzed the case and had thrown it out of court on a technicality! Tony felt blessed for declining to 'live by the sword.'

In Our Next Issue

- **Mankind United—What It Could Mean**
- **Music—Jehovah's Joyous Gift to Us**
- **How Important Is Prayer to You?**

Many Christians, however, were subjected to a seemingly endless series of prison sentences. No sooner would they be released than they would be called up again for service, and the cycle of court cases and prison would start up again. Imagine what a hardship this was on married men with children! Nevertheless, those who maintained their neutrality not only were protected from the violence of a brutal civil war but were also able to “hold a good conscience” before Jehovah.—1 Peter 3:16.

Protecting One's Family —Without Weapons!

Refusing to participate in violence proved a blessing to a family man named Will. He, his wife and five children owned a farm some 40 miles (64 km) from town. Traveling to meetings and other business exposed this family to great danger. It seemed tempting to rely on firearms as a protection. Nevertheless, Will had already experienced blessings from relying on Jehovah. Years ago he had been a successful tobacco farmer. When he learned through the pages of *The Watchtower* that such employment was improper for a Christian, he took the courageous step of switching to other crops. The community was shocked at this seemingly foolish decision. Nevertheless, good weather—even during bad seasons—helped him make a success of his new venture. The community was amazed! And Will and his family experienced firsthand God's promise that he would not “leave or forsake” his servants.—Hebrews 13:5.

As the warfare got started, Will faced another test of Christian integrity. But strengthened by his past experience, he decided he would not resort to carrying a gun. He chose, instead,

to rent a house in town for his wife and children so that school and Christian meetings during the week would be handy, and they would not have to

“If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men”

travel the 110 miles (177 km) each day through dangerous territory.

While they were away one night a guerrilla group broke into their farmhouse and stole some of their belongings. Yet, surprisingly, they did not burn the house down or do serious damage to the property. Why was this? The guerrillas told Will's farm workers that they knew “Boss Will” was one of Jehovah's Witnesses and that he was a good man who treated his workers with fairness! How much more powerful his Christian reputation proved to be than reliance on dangerous weapons!

The Real Source of Protection

Experiences such as these highlight the fact that Jehovah blesses those who maintain Christian neutrality and decline to ‘live by the sword.’ True, at times Jehovah permits one of his servants to die, even as a circuit overseer in that country was murdered. Nevertheless, it is better to die showing full reliance on Jehovah than to allow fear of man to govern our course. (Matthew 10:28) These violent times should not cause us to ‘live by the sword’ or rely in any way on dangerous weapons for deliverance. The Bible assures us: “Trembling at men is what lays a snare, but he that is trusting in Jehovah will be protected.”—Proverbs 29:25.

Kingdom Unity a Reality Today

"When you see these things occurring, know that the kingdom of God is near."—LUKE 21:31.

THE above words were spoken by the greatest of all prophets, Jesus Christ. And to what things did Jesus here refer? Why, the very things that surround us in today's disunited world! The world is falling apart. This is what Jesus prophesied as part of the sign of "the conclusion" of the world system, when he spoke of "wars and disorders, . . . and on the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out." (Matthew 24:3, 7, 8; Luke 21:9, 25) Disunity everywhere! But should Jehovah's Witnesses be disturbed because of the world's disunity?

² Our Master answers for us. Jesus said: "As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." (Luke 21:28) Deliverance from what? From a disunited world that is terminally ill.—1 John 5:19.

Political Anguish

³ Even the United Nations is a contradiction of its own name. It is anything but united. Its secretary-general, in deploring the inability of the Security Council to maintain peace and security, has declared: "We are perilously

near to a new international anarchy." The disunity is appalling. A *Washington Post* writer comments: "Events are out of control." "Since the 1960s governments everywhere, West and East, have begun not to work," writes a former White House aide and political consultant. And a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations has observed that the General Assembly "is becoming the Theater of the Absurd."

⁴ However, even worse could come, for the cold war has been intensifying, and already the nuclear powers have stockpiled sufficient warheads to destroy 1,600,000 Hiroshimas. A former U.S. ambassador to Moscow sees the two superpowers as being "on a collision course," and declares that "there is bound to be an explosion down the line somewhere." These are the fruits of disunity in our world today. The threat is real. It is exactly as Jesus said it would be at the time of "the conclusion of the system of things": "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 21:26) Yes, even the heavens, as the nations prepare to send into orbit satellites with nuclear warheads!

4. In what remarkable ways is Luke 21:26 now being fulfilled?

1. Of what did Jesus prophesy at Luke chapter 21?
2. How should we react to world conditions, and why?
3. How are knowledgeable people deploring political trends?

Big Business Totters

⁵ Disunity and fear abound also in the world of commerce. The president of the World Bank comments, "I don't think anything is safe over the next decade." At a meeting of 24 major industrial countries in 1982, the gloomy prediction was made that they would have 30 million unemployed by 1983. This prophecy came all too true!

⁶ A Nobel prize winner in economics sums up the world situation by saying, "Everything is horrible." In this, world religion is deeply involved. The "many waters" of Revelation 17:1, 15—"peoples and crowds and nations and tongues" of this godless world—have been withdrawing their support from religion, so that financial support for religion has been drying up also. (Compare Revelation 16:12.) But the present economic plight of the churches is as nothing in comparison with the

5. What fears and gloom engulf the world of commerce?

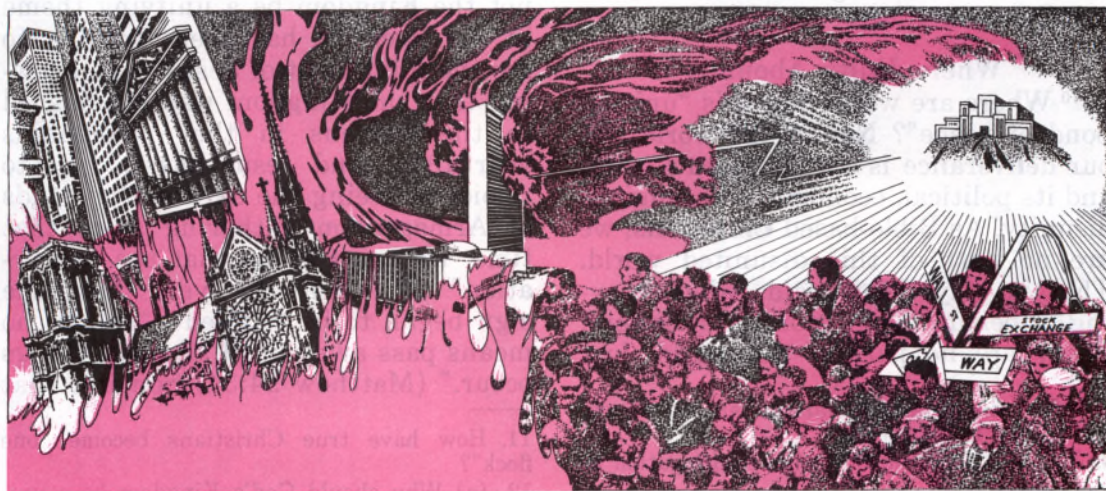
6. What does God's Word say about the economic plight of religion and its outcome?

anguish they will feel when the Sovereign Lord Jehovah executes judgment in fulfillment of his words: "A calamity, a unique calamity, look! it is coming. Into the streets they will throw their very silver, and an abhorrent thing their own gold will become. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's fury." (Ezekiel 7:5, 19) And greedy manipulators of big business will share in this anguish of the world's religion!—Revelation 18:2, 3, 16.

Chronic Religious Disunity

⁷ Let us now take a closer look at the religious world. Here disunity is indeed a sickening reality. Catholicism runs the gamut from guerrilla-fighter priests to bishops campaigning for a nuclear freeze. The pope called 1983 a Holy Year. Did this help? The cold war intensified. Recall that the year 1933 was also a papal Holy Year, and what did it accomplish? Hitler came to pow-

7. How has Catholicism failed to bring unity?



Chronic disunity in 20th-century politics, big business and religion precedes the execution of divine judgment

er, starting off the train of events that led to World War II.

⁸ The World Council of Churches, supported by 301 Protestant and Orthodox denominations with an estimated 400 million members, has contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to politically oriented revolutionaries. In the United States alone there are more than 1,200 religions. What a discordant trumpet call these are sounding! Their disunity has made its large contribution to the "disorders" and "lawlessness" that Jesus said would become just such a reality during "the conclusion of the system of things."—Luke 21:9; Matthew 24:3, 12.

⁹ The chronic disunity observable today in Christendom's religions contrasts sharply with the apostle Paul's portrayal of the true Christian congregation as "earnestly endeavoring to observe the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace." Said Paul: "One body there is, and one spirit, . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all persons, who is over all and through all and in all."—Ephesians 4:3-6.

Where Unity Abounds

¹⁰ Where are we to find this "uniting bond of peace"? Not in the world, for our deliverance is *out of* Satan's world and its political, economic and religious disunity. As Bible-based Christians, we are no part of this disunited world. That is why Jesus said, when praying in behalf of his anointed followers: "They are no part of the world, just

as I am no part of the world." And he added: "I make request, not concerning these only, but also concerning those putting faith in me through their word; in order that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in union with me and I am in union with you, that they also may be in union with us, in order that the world may believe that you sent me forth."—John 17:16-21.

¹¹ Such marvelous unity we see today in the international society of Jehovah's Witnesses. Happily, millions out of the world have taken note of this unity, and many of these who study God's Word are assembling now as the Lord's "other sheep." As these unite with the "little flock" of anointed Christians, all become "one flock" under the Fine Shepherd. (John 10:16; Luke 12:32) All delight to be called Jehovah's Witnesses, gathered into a very real Kingdom unity!

Why "Kingdom" Unity

¹² Why do we say, Kingdom unity? Well, is not God's Kingdom the theme of the entire Bible? So, then, should not the Kingdom be a unifying theme in our lives? It has been thrilling to see the fulfillment of Jesus' sign showing that the Kingdom was established in the heavens in that momentous year 1914. And Jesus has told us to rejoice at seeing the dark storm clouds of Armageddon gathering since that time. He has told us that the "generation" of 1914—the year that the sign began to be fulfilled—"will by no means pass away until all these things occur." (Matthew 24:34) Some of that

8. What discordant situations are to be observed in Protestantism?

9. How can the true Christian congregation be identified?

10. Where is "the uniting bond of peace" now to be found, and why there only?

11. How have true Christians become "one flock"?

12. (a) Why should God's Kingdom be a unifying theme in our lives? (b) Why should we rejoice despite increasing world disunity?

"generation" could survive until the end of the century. But there are many indications that "the end" is much closer than that!

¹³ Jehovah's prophet speaks of the approaching calamity, saying: "Keep in expectation of it . . . It will not be late." (Habakkuk 2:3) In the meantime we do not share the fear of the disunited world, for we have been united earth wide under the Kingdom. God's Kingdom, for which we pray, has become a reality. (Matthew 6:9, 10) And our glorious unity is a reality. This has all come about as foretold by Jehovah's prophets of old.

—Isaiah 9:6, 7; Daniel 2:44; 7:13, 14, 27.

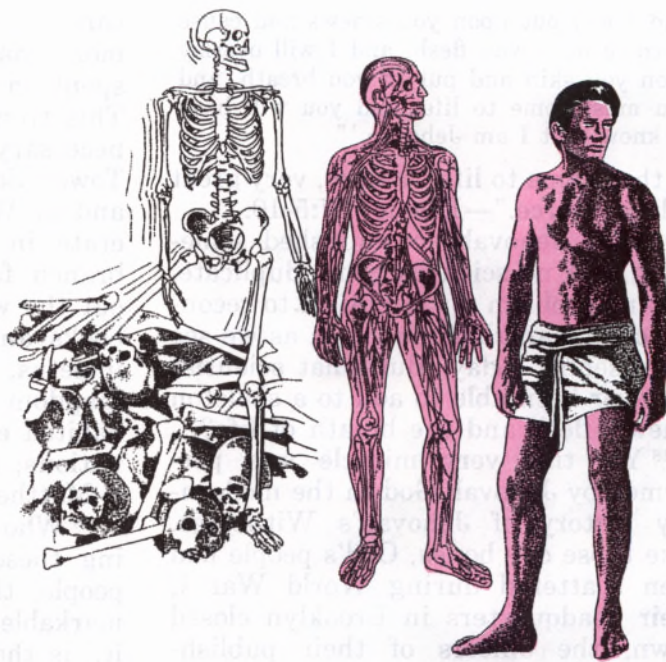
"Dry Bones" Reactivated

¹⁴ In this connection, let us examine Ezekiel chapter 37. What does the prophet say?

"The hand of Jehovah proved to be upon me, so that he brought me forth in the spirit of Jehovah and set me down in the midst of the valley plain, and it was full of bones. And he had me pass along by them all round about, and, look! there were very many on the surface of the valley plain and, look! they were very dry. And he began to say to me: 'Son of man, can these bones come to life?' To that I said: 'Sovereign Lord Jehovah, you yourself well know.' And he went on to say to me: 'Prophecy over

13. Why do we not share the fear of the disunited world?

14. What remarkable scene is described at Ezekiel 37:1-4?



Ezekiel's vision of revived "dry bones" pictures restoration of God's people to spiritual prosperity

these bones, and you must say to them, 'O you dry bones, hear the word of Jehovah.'"—Ezekiel 37:1-4.

¹⁵ Can you imagine it? An entire valley plain heaped up with dry bones! However, this is no scene of something after Armageddon. It depicts happenings earlier in our century. For those bones represent the lifeless state, the inactivity, of God's anointed servants on earth at the time.

¹⁶ However, Jehovah did something about that. Hear his own words:

"This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said to these bones: 'Here I am bringing into you breath, and you must come to life.'

15. What modern-day situation is here portrayed?

16, 17. What did Jehovah promise to do, and how would this be miraculous?

And I will put upon you sinews and cause to come upon you flesh, and I will overlay upon you skin and put in you breath, and you must come to life; and you will have to know that I am Jehovah.’”

So they came to life, “a very, very great military force.”—Ezekiel 37:5-10.

¹⁷ Here Jehovah accomplished something that no scientist could duplicate. It is no problem for scientists to reconstruct human skeletons such as we see in museums today. But what scientist has ever been able to add to a skeleton sinews, flesh and the breath of life?

¹⁸ Yet this very miracle was performed by Jehovah God in the modern-day history of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Like those dry bones, God’s people had been scattered during World War I, their headquarters in Brooklyn closed down, the officers of their publishing society put in prison for terms of 20 years and their field activity brought to a standstill. Back in 1918 and early in 1919, their situation seemed hopeless. But Jehovah remembered those faithful ambassadors of the Kingdom. In 1919 he revived them, just as he had foretold at Ezekiel 37:14:

“‘And I will put my spirit in you, and you must come to life, and I will settle you upon your soil; and you will have to know that I myself, Jehovah, have spoken and I have done it,’ is the utterance of Jehovah.”

¹⁹ Thus Jehovah restored his persecuted people to a land of spiritual prosperity and set them to work in giving a Kingdom testimony that has spread

18. (a) Why did the outlook for God’s people look hopeless in 1918 and early in 1919? (b) In line with the prophecy, how did Jehovah remember these faithful ones?

19. (a) How and for what purpose has Jehovah restored his people? (b) Why has it become necessary to expand the Society’s facilities worldwide?

throughout the earth. Each day, now, more than a million hours are being spent in proclaiming the good news. This tremendous witness has made it necessary to enlarge greatly the Watch Tower Society’s facilities in Brooklyn and at Wallkill, New York. These operate in conjunction with dozens of branch factories and offices throughout the world in providing the Bibles, books and magazines, as well as the impetus, to get “this good news of the kingdom . . . preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come.”—Matthew 24:14.

²⁰ Who takes all the credit for restoring these witnesses as an organized people, thus making possible this remarkable unity of action? “‘I have done it,’ is the utterance of Jehovah.” And so it has become a Kingdom reality!

An Expanding Witness

²¹ The grand witness continues to expand throughout the earth, with millions of faithful missionaries, pioneers and congregation workers sharing therein. Like first-century Christians, the modern-day witnesses of Jehovah have been preaching the hope of the good news “in all creation that is under heaven.” (Colossians 1:23) Appreciating that “Jehovah is a great God and a great King over all other gods,” we extend the invitation to all honest-hearted ones: “O come in, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before Jehovah our Maker.” What a joy it is to know that each week, on the average,

20. What now becomes a reality, and who takes the credit for it?

21. (a) How have Jehovah’s Witnesses proved to be like first-century Christians? (b) What invitation is being extended, and with what result?

more than 3,000 new ones are being baptized and brought into the unity of the Fine Shepherd's flock! These now "worship the Father with spirit and truth."—Psalm 95:3-6; John 4:23, 24.

²² In this day of Jehovah's judgment upon Satan's divided world, it is most important that all such sheeplike ones out of all nations unite in heeding the message of the angel that has "everlasting good news to declare," saying in a loud voice: "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of the judgment by him has arrived, and so worship the One who made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters." Are you one who has been brought into that Kingdom unity?—Revelation 14:6, 7.

²³ What a united group are the 2,500,000 Kingdom proclaimers now serving in 205 lands! God's holy spirit operates upon them, and they produce its fruitage. (1 Corinthians 2:12; Galatians 5:22, 23) Though coming from many different national extractions, they speak the one pure language of truth. (Zephaniah 3:9) Shoulder to shoulder they serve—in Kingdom unity!

²⁴ Whatever disunity may have existed in the past, this has been smoothed out, and especially since Jehovah brought his people under a theocratic arrangement from the year 1938. This was in fulfillment of his prophetic promise at Isaiah 60:17: "I will appoint peace as your overseers and righteousness as your task assigners." Even despite the ravages of World War II, with its accompanying cruel persecutions of Jehovah's Witnesses, the Kingdom

22, 23. (a) Why is it important for sheeplike ones to unite? (b) How do the Scriptures describe our unity and the reason for it?

24. How have verses 17 and 22 of Isaiah chapter 60 been fulfilled?

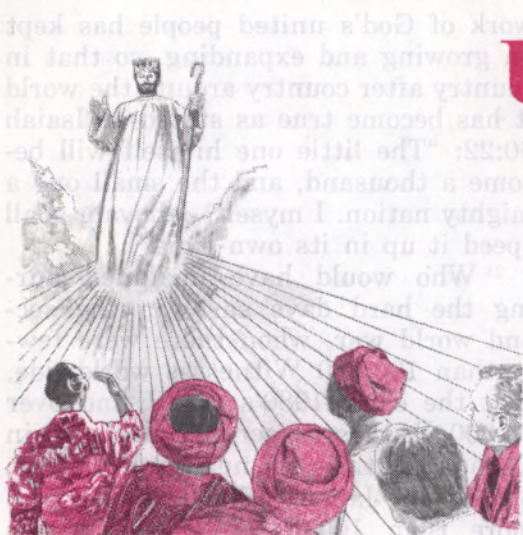
work of God's united people has kept on growing and expanding, so that in country after country around the world it has become true as stated at Isaiah 60:22: "The little one himself will become a thousand, and the small one a mighty nation. I myself, Jehovah, shall speed it up in its own time."

²⁵ Who would have imagined during the hard days early in the second world war, when there were fewer than 100,000 Witnesses worldwide, that the early 1980's would find over 70,000 Witnesses serving unitedly in Canada and the same number in France, 80,000 in Japan, 90,000 in Britain, more than 100,000 in Italy, in the Federal Republic of Germany and in Nigeria, over 130,000 in Mexico and more than 140,000 in Brazil, as well as 250,000 loyal Witnesses in lands where our work is under full or partial ban? And the United States recently reported 643,170 active Witnesses. Without a doubt, Jehovah has been true to his promise that he would make his Name people "a mighty nation." Indeed, a marvelous testimony to the reality of Kingdom unity!

25. What testifies marvelously to Kingdom unity?

How would you answer?

- ☐ What disunity is seen in three major segments of Satan's world organization?
- ☐ Where does true unity abound, and why?
- ☐ How has Ezekiel 37:1-14 been fulfilled?
- ☐ Kingdom unity has led to what witness?



United in Worship Under Our Shepherd-King

“This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: ‘Here I am taking the sons of Israel . . . , and one king is what all of them will come to have as king.’”—EZEKIEL 37:21, 22.

KINGDOM unity, we say. And this is right in line with the latter part of chapter 37 of Ezekiel’s prophecy. There, in verse 16, Jehovah tells Ezekiel to take two sticks. On one he is to write, “For Judah and for the sons of Israel his partners.” On the other he must write, “For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and all the house of Israel his partners.” What do these sticks represent?

² They stand for the two parts of the kingdom of Israel, which became divided into Judah to the south and Ephraim to the north. Each in its turn went into captivity—the northern kingdom in 740 B.C.E. and the southern kingdom in 607 B.C.E. But in 537 B.C.E. a remnant from all 12 tribes of Israel returned to Jerusalem, there to reestablish the *united* worship of Jehovah. How is this shown in Ezekiel’s prophecy?

1, 2. (a) What do the two sticks of Ezekiel 37:16 represent? (b) What happened to these two “sticks”?

³ Listen to Jehovah’s words to Ezekiel, at verse 19:

“Speak to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: “Here I am taking the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his partners, and I will put them upon it, that is, the stick of Judah, and I shall actually make them one stick, and they must become one in my hand.”’”

Ah, unity must prevail among Jehovah’s restored people!

United in Worship

⁴ No longer would God’s people be divided into two nations, with loyalties divided between kingdoms to the north and the south, but they would actually be “one nation in the land.” Ezekiel speaks words of comfort to them, as commanded by Jehovah:

“And speak to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: “Here I

3. As illustrated by Ezekiel 37:19, what must prevail among God’s restored people?

4. How was Ezekiel 37:21 fulfilled (a) in 537 B.C.E.? (b) in modern times?

am taking the sons of Israel from among the nations to which they have gone, and I will collect them together from round about and bring them onto their soil . . . and one King is what all of them will come to have as king.”” (Ezekiel 37:21, 22)

Just as these words were fulfilled toward the unified remnant of Israel as they returned from captivity in 537 B.C.E., so the restored remnant of anointed Witnesses of modern times have experienced the joy of being united in their paradisaic land of spiritual prosperity.—See also Ezekiel 36:33-36.

⁵ At the same time, God’s people have been cleansed from all spiritual defilement caused by Satan’s world empire of false religion, “Babylon the Great.” (Revelation 17:5; 18:2, 4) Their liberation from false religious doctrines and practices is the modern-day major fulfillment of the prophecy that applied in a miniature way to Israel of old at its restoration from captivity in the literal Babylon:

“And they will no longer defile themselves with their dungy idols and with their disgusting things and with all their transgressions; and I shall certainly save them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and I will cleanse them, and they must become my people, and I myself shall become their God.”—Ezekiel 37:23.

⁶ The disgusting idolatry of the religions of Christendom and pagandom has been set aside by Jehovah’s restored people. No longer do they idolize creatures or follow the customs of worldly religion, such as observing God-dishonoring “holidays.” Their wor-

ship is not distributed to three gods in one, the so-called godhead of some mysterious Trinity, but they are united as the one people who worship the one God, Jehovah. In unison they praise the Sovereign Lord of the universe, and this binds them together in a unity unknown to any other people on earth! (Isaiah 52:8) Even if a former associate develops a wicked conscience, deviating from the body of truth provided by Jehovah, we stand united with God’s organization in its work and in precious intimacy with our God.—Proverbs 3:32; Hebrews 10:22, 23.

Recognizing the King

⁷ When ancient Israel was restored to its “land,” true worship became a unifying force among them. But the kingdom was not restored. Why, then, does Jehovah at Ezekiel chapter 37, verses 22 and 24, speak of a “king” over them? Verses 24 and 25 read:

“And my servant David will be king over them, and one shepherd is what they will all come to have; and in my judicial decisions they will walk, and my statutes they will keep, and they will certainly carry them out. And they will actually dwell upon the land that I gave to my servant, to Jacob, in which your forefathers dwelt, and they will actually dwell upon it, they and their sons and their sons’ sons to time indefinite, and David my servant will be their chieftain to time indefinite.”

⁸ That part of the prophecy has never been fulfilled on fleshly Israel, nor will it ever be so fulfilled. Therefore the application must be to spiritual Israel. But when? Well, when has a king with

5. How have God’s people been cleansed from defilement?

6. (a) Why does spiritual Israel now enjoy intimacy with its God? (b) What unity must we observe, even if someone deviates from the truth?

7. In addition to true worship, what other unifying force is promised for God’s people?

8. (a) Why must these verses apply to spiritual Israel? (b) How do we pinpoint the time of fulfillment?

“legal right” come to sit again on the throne of David? This happened with the ending of “the appointed times of the nations” in the modern year 1914. As the Gentile Times ran out, “the kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord” Jehovah, who “will rule as king forever and ever,” and also “of his Christ,” the One whom David typified.—Ezekiel 21:26, 27; Luke 21:24; Revelation 11:15.

⁹ So, today, not only are we Jehovah’s Witnesses unified by true worship—important as such worship is—but we are also unified in being gathered under our “Chieftain” King! Both our worship and the Kingdom are realities to us. And both serve to unite us in our worldwide brotherhood.

¹⁰ How we love our King! To all of us he is “one shepherd”—a kindly Shepherd who leads us to waters of everlasting life. He knows each of us by name and is interested in calling us out and leading us to luscious spiritual pastures. But like the sheep of a flock, we must stay united, ‘walking in Jehovah’s judicial decisions.’ We must keep separate from the following three segments of Satan’s organization: its corrupt politics, its greedy commercialism and its idolatrous religion. In a unity like that of Jesus and his early disciples, we show that we are “no part of the world.” And this includes, too, shunning the world’s immorality. (John 17:14, 16, 20, 21; 18:36) There must be no divisions among us, as we keep Jehovah’s statutes and “certainly carry them out.”

9. What two things serve as unifying realities today?

10. (a) How do we regard our Shepherd-King?
(b) How do we carry out Jehovah’s “judicial decisions”?

¹¹ How different is this way of life from that of worldly religionists! With them, usually, anything goes. They allow the permissive society with its moral filth. They often have differing standards for different parts of the world. For example, in affluent countries, they hold more or less to the arrangement of one husband—one wife; in another hemisphere they admit to membership those accustomed to having, and who still have, a great many wives. (Compare Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Timothy 3:2, 12.) But we who are united under Christ, the Shepherd-King, follow Bible statutes and principles in every part of the world. And when nations go to war, we refuse to kill our brothers of another nation, for in the words of Isaiah it is said of us: “Neither will they learn war anymore.”—Isaiah 2:3, 4.

¹² This unity of the remnant of spiritual Israelites is beautifully foretold, too, by the scripture at Micah 2:12, where Jehovah says: “In unity I shall set them, like a flock in the pen, like a drove in the midst of its pasture; they will be noisy with men.” This is something that we observe at assemblies of Jehovah’s people: Thousands listening attentively, quietly, eager to pick up every word as we pasture under the shepherding of Jehovah and his Shepherd-King. Orientals, blacks, whites—the anointed remnant and the “other sheep”—all are at unity in this drove. Our conventions, our assemblies, our congregation meetings, provide irrefutable testimony that Kingdom unity is a global reality today!

11. How does our way of life contrast with that of worldly religionists?

12. How do we show ourselves to be at unity, “like a flock in the pen”?

¹³ However, what of Micah's words, "They will be noisy with men"? What do we experience before and after our meetings and assemblies? Why, the noise of happy association, as in pleasant conversations we share the joy of our Christian association and speak of our service to our God. And the worldwide congregation becomes "noisy," also, from the point-of-view that it is constantly increasing; as new congregations continue to be formed, the harmonious song of praise to Jehovah intensifies in volume throughout the earth.—Psalm 96:1-3.

¹⁴ This happy unity, like that of a flock in a pen, does not go unnoticed by the world. For example, at the time of the 1983 "Kingdom Unity" District Conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses, the police in Taegu, Korea, sent 30 officers to the assembly hall on the first day, but on seeing the good order and how the Witnesses were controlling the traffic outside, they sent only two officers the three remaining days. At Taejŏn, the hall manager remarked: "It appears that you people have been inspired from heaven—this is wonderful." An overstatement, but he made his point! In Rangoon, Burma, one of the Gandhi Hall committee commented: "If only the whole world had a society like yours, there would be no problems in the world."

Jehovah's "Covenant of Peace"

¹⁵ True peace belongs to those whom

13. How has the flock become "noisy with men"?

14. Illustrate how the world takes note of our unity.

15. What desirable peace is described at Ezekiel 37:26?



Jehovah's "covenant of peace" is with his united people now and assures prosperity on into the Paradise earth

our Shepherd-King, Christ Jesus, leads to pasture. It is a peace that comes with unity, and that unity is indeed a Kingdom reality among Jehovah's Witnesses in all the earth today. Wonderfully does Jehovah describe this in his words to Ezekiel at chapter 37, verse 26:

"And I will conclude with them a covenant of peace; an indefinitely lasting covenant is what there will come to be with them. And I will place them and multiply them and place my sanctuary in the midst of them to time indefinite!"

Peace with God! Peace that can be everlasting, thanks to the loving sacrifice that our Shepherd-King made while he was here on earth!

¹⁶ Now that spiritual Israel has been multiplied to the full number of 144,000,

16. What has led to the multiplying of the "sheep"?

a great crowd of “other sheep” join these in sacred service at Jehovah’s sanctuary. There is no end to multiplying the “sheep”—already they number into the millions! In unity around the world, these Kingdom proclaimers go from house to house. This public worship is real and purposeful to us, identifying us as the one people in all the earth that is interested in magnifying Jehovah’s name and in proclaiming his Kingdom of peace. How glad we are to share in his covenant of peace!

¹⁷ At Ezekiel 37, verses 27 and 28, we read Jehovah’s concluding words of encouragement to his united flock:

“And my tabernacle will actually prove to be over them, and I shall certainly become their God, and they themselves will become my people. And the nations will have to know that I, Jehovah, am sanctifying Israel when my sanctuary comes to be in the midst of them to time indefinite.”

How glad we are that Jehovah’s protection is spread over his people like a tent! Nor is this loving watch-care limited to spiritual Israel, for we read concerning the “great crowd” that “the

17. (a) What encouragement does Jehovah give at Ezekiel 37:27, 28? (b) How do we know that Jehovah’s watch-care is not limited to spiritual Israel?

How has Ezekiel 37:15-28 been fulfilled with regard to:

- ☐ Making Jehovah’s people “one stick”?
- ☐ Setting up ‘one king and shepherd’?
- ☐ God’s “covenant of peace” with his people?
- ☐ God’s tabernacle “over them”?

One seated on the throne will spread his tent over them.” No longer does any heat of Jehovah’s displeasure strike them.—Revelation 7:9-17.

¹⁸ How glad we are, too, that Jehovah dwells in the midst of spiritual Israel, setting up his sanctuary in their midst “to time indefinite”! Just as this center of his worship is holy, so also those who come to worship there must be holy, sanctified, set aside for the service of their God. Anointed Christians are spoken of as “washed clean, . . . sanctified, . . . declared righteous in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the spirit of our God.” (1 Corinthians 6:11) And as the above-cited scripture at Revelation 7:9-17 shows, the “great crowd” with earthly hopes have also “washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,” that they may render God “sacred service day and night in his temple.” What a tremendous witness results from that unified global service!

¹⁹ However, our greatest joy, as we move forward in Kingdom unity, will be to arrive at the day of Jehovah’s vindication. Then his glorious name will be sanctified—cleared of all the vile reproach that has been heaped upon it. The nations will be compelled to witness the deliverance of Jehovah’s name people. But more important, as our Sovereign Lord himself declares: “They will have to know that I am Jehovah.” (Ezekiel 38:23) May we hold fast to our Kingdom unity, now a reality, until Jehovah’s glorious name is indeed sanctified in all the universe!

18. (a) How does Jehovah ‘sanctify Israel’? (b) How does the “great crowd” come also to have a righteous standing before God?

19. (a) How will the nations be compelled to acknowledge the words of Ezekiel 38:23? (b) Till then, what must we be resolved to do?

Is Immorality False Worship?

THE Spanish weekly news magazine *Cambio16* reported a development in the programs of French pirate radio stations. Under the title "Sex Over the Air," it said: "Other [stations] have preferred pornography—or we should say, pornophony—and they devote their time to live broadcasting of orgasms, ecstasies and caressings in full detail. . . . Between one o'clock and three o'clock in the morning [the station] establishes contact between listeners unknown to each other so that they can recount directly by telephone their acts of love or masturbations."

The report went on to explain how one announcer invites couples to the studio and "begins to go through the adjectives of his erotic dictionary to accompany the heavy breathings and sighs of couples who have decided to make love live in front of the microphones."

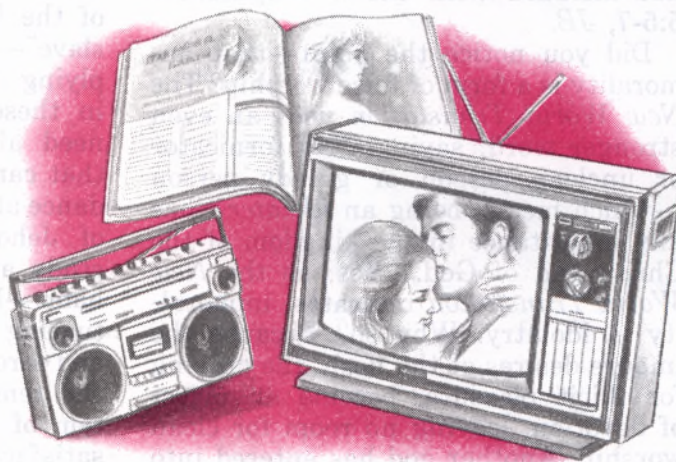
Public interest has been aroused by this type of broadcast, as is shown by headlines and editorial comments appearing in Paris dailies such as *Le Matin* and *Le Quotidien*.

A Different Kind of Idolatry

How should a Christian view this innovation in broadcasting? The apostle Paul counseled the Christians of Ephesus: "This,

therefore, I say and bear witness to in the Lord, that you no longer go on walking just as the nations also walk in the unprofitableness of their minds . . . Having come to be past all moral sense, they gave themselves over to loose conduct to work uncleanness of every sort with greediness." Or, as *The Jerusalem Bible* puts it: "They have abandoned themselves to sexuality and eagerly pursue a career of indecency of every kind. Now that is hardly the way you have learnt from Christ, unless you failed to hear him properly when you were taught what the truth is in Jesus."—Ephesians 4:17-21.

Maybe someone will object that listening to immoral conduct over the radio is not the same as participating in such acts and should not be cen-



Can these lead you to false worship?

sured. However, the dividing line for the Christian is much sharper than that. For example, we read in Ephesians chapter 5: "Let fornication and uncleanness of every sort . . . *not even be mentioned* among you, just as it befits holy [spiritually pure] people; neither shameful conduct nor foolish talking nor obscene jesting." If uncleanness should not even be mentioned among Christians, then certainly they are not going to choose to be witnesses to it, whether by reading, television or radio.—Ephesians 5:3, 4.

But why should it be so important for a Christian to avoid every form of immorality? Why should pornography, whether visual or audible, be shunned? Paul answers: "For you can be quite certain that nobody who actually indulges in fornication or impurity or promiscuity—which is worshipping a false god—can inherit anything of the kingdom of God. Do not let anyone deceive you with empty arguments: it is for this loose living that God's anger comes down on those who rebel against him. Make sure that you are not included with them."—Ephesians 5:5-7, JB.

Did you notice the point—that immorality is a form of false worship? The *New World Translation* uses an even stronger word, saying: "No fornicator or unclean person or greedy person—which means being an *idolater*—has any inheritance in the kingdom of the Christ and of God." Yes, as the *New World Translation* indicates, immorality is idolatry! Why so? Because the impure desires of the flesh, the craving for illicit pleasure, become an object of devotion, leaving no room for clean worship. Another god has entered into the person's way of life—the god of greedy, selfish, immoral desire. Thus,

godly qualities are challenged by improper sexual desires. By inclining his eyes or ears to pornography, the individual is jeopardizing any relationship he might have with the holy God, Jehovah.—Isaiah 6:3.

How Can We Keep Clean?

How can we resist the temptations of the modern Sodom and Gomorrah? We can do so by having strong spiritual values and clinging to them, letting these control the heart and the mind. In the previously quoted letter to the Ephesians, Paul exhorted fellow believers: "Put away the old personality which conforms to your former course of conduct and which is being corrupted according to his deceptive desires; but . . . be made new." In what respect? "In the force actuating your mind." This makes it possible to "put on the new personality which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty."—Ephesians 4:22-24.

How can we maintain that "force" that actuates the mind? By deepening our knowledge and appreciation of the Bible, and by accepting the guidance of the Master's "faithful and discreet slave"—the Christian body that is supplying clear guidelines for godly living in these evil and difficult times. We need also the upbuilding association that can be obtained by regular attendance at the Bible educational meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses. When such study and association are our regular habit—like eating—then the force actuating our mind will also be constant and strong. It will motivate us to resist the temptations of this immoral system of things that has set up sexual satisfaction at any price as a modern false god.—Matthew 24:45-47; Acts 8:30, 31; Hebrews 10:24, 25.

Bible Aids: Are They Unscriptural?

ONE Sunday morning in Connecticut, U.S.A., a man answered a knock on his door and found one of Jehovah's Witnesses standing on his doorstep. The Witness spoke to him about the Bible and offered him some literature explaining important matters from the Bible. The man, however, turned it down. He pointed to a Bible that was on the dashboard of his pickup truck and said: "The Bible is all I need."

Would you agree with this man? Well, if he meant that nothing could replace the Bible as the source of truth, then all Christians would have to agree with him. But the literature carried by that Witness was not meant to replace the Bible. It was designed to explain the Bible, to highlight parts of it that might be helpful in that man's life and thus build up respect for and knowledge of that important book. Is it unnecessary or even wrong to read such literature?

The Scriptures —Enough in Themselves?

Do the Scriptures suggest that reading the Bible—important as it is—is all that is necessary to obtain an accurate knowledge of the truth? Not really. For example, the disciple James said about the Jews: "From ancient times Moses has had in city after city those who preach him, because he is read aloud in the synagogues on every sabbath." (Acts 15:21) Yet in spite of

all that Bible reading, most of the Jews never came to discern that Jesus was the Messiah.

The Ethiopian eunuch mentioned in Acts chapter 8 was also a Bible reader. The disciple Philip heard him reading aloud from the book of Isaiah while the eunuch was traveling homeward in his chariot. Was that enough for him to get a knowledge of the truth? Philip asked him: "Do you actually know what you are reading?" He answered: "Really, how could I ever do so, unless someone guided me?" (Acts 8:30, 31) He humbly recognized his need for help in understanding the Bible.

Remember, too, the command that Jesus left with his followers just before he ascended to the heavens: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, *teaching* them to observe all the things I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19, 20) Clearly, it was necessary to do more than invite new converts to public Bible readings or give them a Bible and leave it to them to read. The Christian also had to *teach* them.

Again, the apostle Paul saw the need of something more than merely encouraging Bible reading when he said to Timothy: "While I am coming, continue applying yourself to public reading, to exhortation, to teaching." (1 Timothy 4:13) Reading the Bible was vital-

ly important—Paul put public reading first on his list. But also necessary was helping the listeners to understand the meaning of what was being read (teaching) and encouraging them to apply it in their lives (exhortation).

Finally, in the book of Acts we get a clear picture that the disciples and apostles did far more than merely read the Bible to people. They helped to make it understandable to them. “Judas and Silas, since they themselves were also prophets, encouraged the brothers with many a discourse and strengthened them. However, Paul and Barnabas continued spending time in Antioch teaching and declaring, with many others also, the good news of the word of Jehovah.”—Acts 15:32, 35.

Written Helps

‘But that is not written literature,’ you may say. True. However, is there a big difference between a written and a spoken discourse? In fact, even though they had no access to printing facilities, the apostles and other early Christians did make use of the written word to spread the good news. They wrote numerous letters to the different congregations so as to keep in touch while they were absent from them. Some of these actually became a part of the Bible, but many did not.

In the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians that is preserved in our Bible, we read the following words: “In my letter I wrote you to quit mixing in company with fornicators . . . But now I am writing you to quit mixing in company with anyone called a brother that is a fornicator.” (1 Corinthians 5:9-11) Here, Paul is clearly referring to an earlier letter to the Corinthians, one that we do not possess today. Did the Corinthian Christians feel they did

not need the letter that did not become a part of the Bible? Clearly not. They appreciated it as a written aid to help them to understand Scriptural truths and to apply Scriptural principles in their lives.

When he wrote to the Colossian congregation, the apostle referred to another letter that no longer exists, this time to one sent to the Christians in Laodicea. He said: “And when this letter has been read among you, arrange that it also be read in the congregation of the Laodiceans and that *you also read the one from Laodicea.*” (Colossians 4:16) Hence, not only were letters written to different congregations but those letters were circulated from congregation to congregation. If modern printing facilities had been available in those days, can you imagine how the apostles would have taken advantage of them to flood the world of their time with information about Jesus?

Well, modern printing *is* available today, and Jehovah’s Witnesses do use it to flood the world with Bibles and with printed Bible study aids. There can be no Scriptural objection to this. Like the Christians that Timothy ministered to, we today need to read the Bible. But we also need to be taught so as to understand it and to be exhorted so as to know how to apply it in our lives.

Bible study aids can only be beneficial as long as they do not distort the Word of God and provided that they glorify God, direct the reader to true worship, help him to keep separate from the world and assist him to grow closer to God while he is walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. We believe you will find that the Bible literature distributed by Jehovah’s Witnesses meets all these requirements.

Questions From Readers

■ Is Jesus the "God" referred to at Hebrews 1:8?

No. The weight of the evidence indicates that it is Jehovah. According to the *New World Translation*, Hebrews 1:8 says: "But with reference to the Son: 'God is your [the Son's] throne forever and ever.'" This shows that Jesus' throne, his office or authority as a sovereign, has its source in Jehovah the Almighty God.

However, believers in the Trinity prefer the *Authorized Version*, or *King James Version*, which renders Hebrews 1:8 this way: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Thus, they feel that Jesus is shown to be the same as Almighty God. Why is this not correct?

First, note the context. In many translations, either in the main text or in the margin, Hebrews 1:9 reads, "God, *your God*, anointed you." This makes it clear that the one addressed in verse eight is not God, but one who worships God and is anointed by him.

Secondly, it should be noted that Hebrews 1:8,9 is a quotation from Psalm 45:6, 7, which originally was addressed to a human king of Israel. Surely the writer of this psalm did not think that this human king was Almighty God and neither did the writer of Hebrews think that Jesus was Almighty God. Commenting on this, scholar B. F. Westcott said: "It is scarcely possible that אלהים [*Elohim*, "God"] in the original

can be addressed to the king. . . . Thus on the whole it seems best to adopt in the first clause the rendering: *God is Thy throne* (or, *Thy throne is God*), that is 'Thy kingdom is founded upon God.'

With good reason, therefore, the *New World Translation* and

a number of other translations render Hebrews 1:8 as, "God is your throne." (See *An American Translation*, Moffatt; also the marginal reading in *American Standard Version*, *Revised Standard Version* and *The New English Bible*.) This makes it clear that the "Son," Jesus Christ, has a God who is higher than he is.

■ In Jesus' parable of the wheat among the weeds, do the "weeds" include those who recently have become apostates?

No, for strictly speaking they are not "weeds."

This illustration and Jesus' explanation of it are found at Matthew 13:24-30, 37-43. In the "field," which is the world, the "Son of man" sowed "fine seed," representing "the sons of the kingdom," genuine anointed Christians. Then the Devil sowed "weeds" that might appear to be "wheat," but are actually "the sons of the wicked one," evidently imitation Christians that exist at the same time as the wheatlike true Christians. This developed particularly after the apostles died. (2 Thessalonians 2:6, 7) Through the centuries there have been many who merely claimed to be Christians, including the clergy who have spread false teachings.

Jesus said that during the harvest period, the "conclusion of a system of things," the "weeds" would be collected out and "burned with fire." Some might view the small number of persons who recently turned apostate as "weeds" being col-

lected out. But Jesus did not say that the "weeds" had once been "wheat" and then turned bad. They were sown as "weeds" and remained such, consistent with the genetic rule that vegetation reproduces "according to its kind." (Genesis 1:11, 12) We need to bear in mind, though, that in speaking of the "weeds" Jesus was foretelling a particular sort of false, or imitation, Christians who would appear. He was not discussing individuals of the "wheat" class who might go bad, becoming like rotten wheat stalks.

Apostates of the apostles' day and their modern counterparts are not represented by the "weeds." Yet the Bible shows that such apostates are "not of our sort," have God's disapproval and should be shunned by loyal Christians. Any who apostatize and do not repent by the end of this system of things will experience the same fate as the "weeds," being "burned with fire" or destroyed completely.—Titus 3:10; 1 John 2:18, 19; 2 John 9-11.

