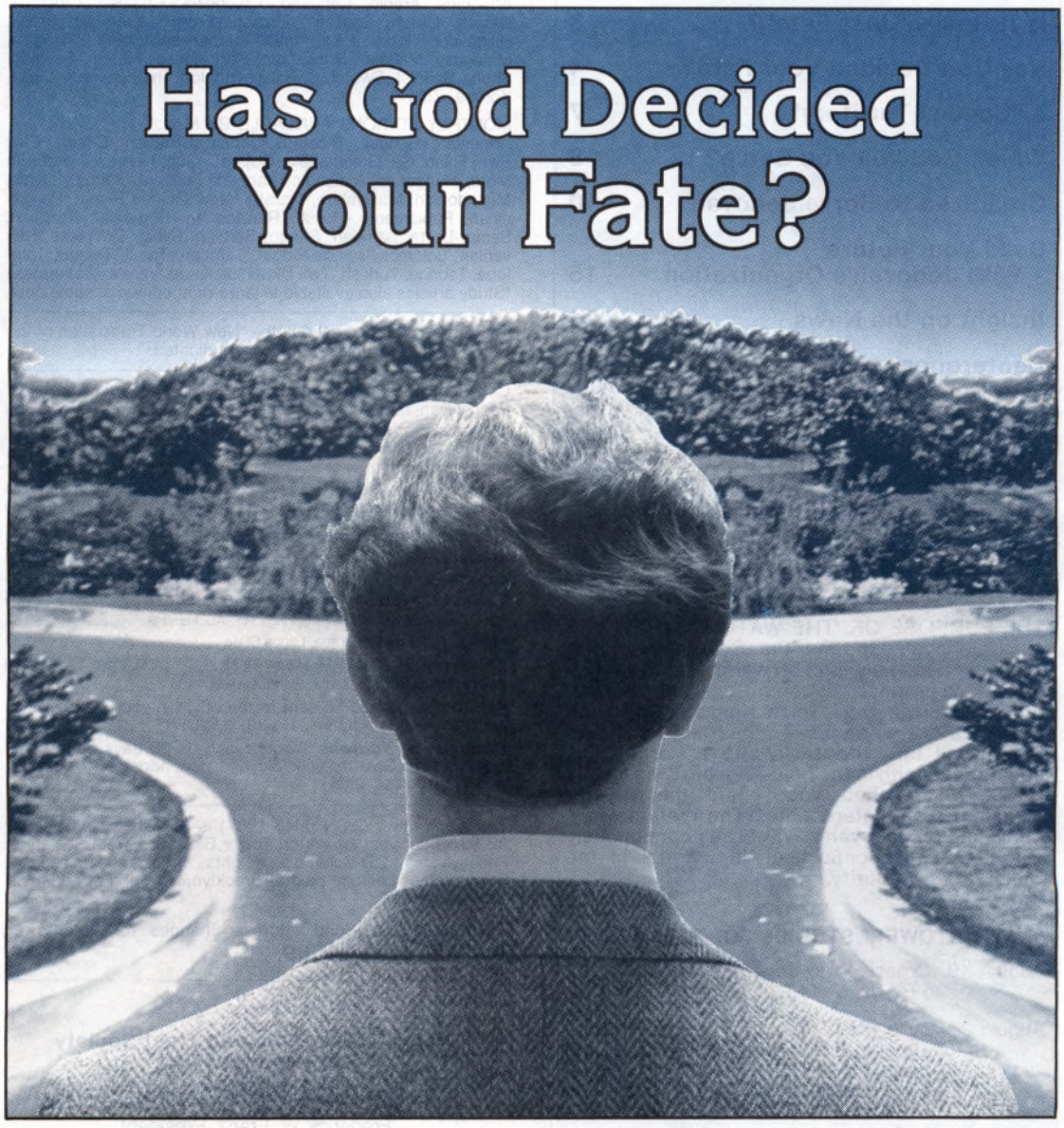
July 15, 1984

# The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

## Has God Decided Your Fate?



# The Watchtower®

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

July 15, 1984
Vol. 105, No. 14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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.

### "WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

August 19: Organized to Serve Jehovah. Page 10. Songs to Be Used: 118, 91 (99, 90).

August 26: Build Your Future With Jehovah's Organization. Page 15. Songs to Be Used: 221, 89 (73, 49).

(Alternate songs are from 1966 songbook.)


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# Is It Really "Just Fate"?

"IT DOESN'T matter who you are or what you're doing," the grieving man said, "things like this can happen." Chunks of granite had fallen from a building, fatally striking his friend. "It's fate," he somberly concluded.

But are we really helpless pawns of something called fate? This question has perplexed man for centuries, and with good reason. As King Solomon once observed: "The swift do not have the race, nor the mighty ones the battle, nor do the wise also have the food, nor do the understanding ones also have the riches, nor do even those having knowledge have the favor." (Ecclesiastes 9:11) What accounts for such disparities?

Solomon explained: "Time and unforeseen occurrence befall them all." But many believe that God decides their destiny. For example, many espouse 16th-century theologian John Calvin's theory of "predestination." Other clergymen had claimed that God preordains individuals to be saved. Calvin, however, took this to the logical and frightening conclusion that men were also predestined to damnation! He called this the *decretum horribile,* or "the horrible decree," of God.

Some objected that such a doctrine made God responsible for sin. But in an attempt to refute "a certain worthless person" who opposed his theory, Calvin indignantly replied: "This wretched fellow does not see that, by snatching at false pretexts for excusing the justice of God, he thereby subverts his power." It was inconceivable to Calvin that an almighty God would not possess absolute foreknowledge.

Belief in predestination or in fate is bound to have a profound effect on a person's way of life. But does the Bible really teach that we are locked into a predetermined future, that we are simply victims of "fate"?

# Has God Decided Your Fate?

MANY people are convinced that God does predetermine a person's fate. And they feel sure that the Bible proves this to be true.

For example, some may point to the case of Esau and Jacob. They were still in the womb when God foretold: "The older will serve the younger." (Genesis 25:23) Similarly, God knew in advance that Samson, Jeremiah and John the Baptizer would perform mighty works in his service. (Judges 13:3-5; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1: 13-17) Would this not mean that such individuals were predestinated to eternal salvation?

Moreover, what about Judas Iscariot? Long before he was born, Scriptural prophecies spoke of the Messiah's betrayal. (Psalm 41:9; 55:12, 13) The Bible even says that "from the *beginning*" Jesus Christ knew who would betray him. —John 6:64.

In the light of the foregoing points, what would you say? Does the Bible teach that God has predestinated some to eternal salvation and others to condemnation? Has God decided your fate?

### Predestination—The Implications

Before answering these questions, consider the implications of predestination. If this doctrine were true, it would mean that God foreknew all that would result from his creating man—the deflection of Adam and Eve, the wars, the crime, the immorality, the oppression, the lying, the hypocrisy, the disease. By speaking the words, "Let us make man," then, God deliberately would have been setting all this wickedness in motion! (Genesis 1:26) God's placing before Adam and Eve the prospect of everlasting life would, therefore, have been a sham. So would the Bible's invitation, "Let *anyone that wishes* take *life's* water free."—Revelation 22:17.

But the Bible says that Jehovah is a God "abundant in loving-kindness and truth." (Exodus 34:6) He would never offer something he knew that it was impossible for one to obtain. Jesus Christ asked: "Who is the man among you whom his son asks for bread—he will not hand him a stone, will he? . . . Therefore, if you, although being wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more so will your Father who is in the heavens give good things to those asking him?" (Matthew 7: 9-11) Furthermore, if God long ago foreordained precisely who would gain eternal salvation and who would be eternally destroyed, why does the Bible say that "Jehovah . . . is patient with you because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires *all to attain to repentance*"?—2 Peter 3:9.

Predestination, therefore, runs counter to what the Bible actually teaches about God. 'But would not limiting God's knowledge of the future undermine his *almightiness?*' you might ask. Not at all. At Titus

If God knew that Adam and Eve were doomed to failure, placing everlasting life before them would have been a cruel hoax

1:2, for example, we learn that "God . . . cannot lie." But does this undermine God's almightiness? No, rather, it highlights God's truthfulness.

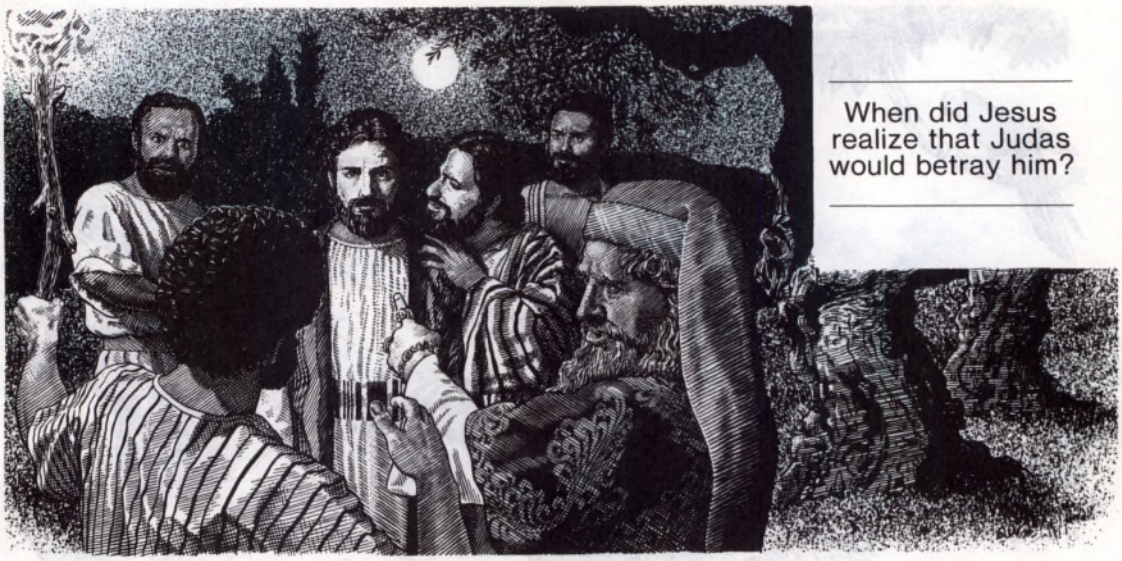
The apostle Paul counseled Christians endowed with the gift of prophecy: "Gifts of the spirit of the prophets are to be *controlled* by the prophets. For God is a God, not of disorder, but of peace." (1 Corinthians 14:32, 33) Such prophets would not speak out indiscriminately but would share their prophetic messages in an orderly way. To do this, self-control was needed. Certainly, then, God is also able to use his foreknowledge *selectively,* using it only when there is a reason or a purpose for doing so.—Compare Genesis 22:1, 12.

### God's Foreknowledge

Just 40 years after the organizing of the Israelites as a nation, God foretold that they would break his covenant with them. Nevertheless, this foreknowledge was not without basis, as national insubordination and rebellion already had occurred. Hence, God said: "For I well know their inclination that they are developing today before I bring them into the land about which I have sworn." (Deuteronomy 31:20, 21) Just as a competent builder might predict the collapse of a structure built with inferior materials, so Jehovah could see the direction in which the nation was heading. *Individuals,* however, could and did respond to and thus benefit from counsel given by God's prophets.—Jeremiah 21: 8, 9; Ezekiel 33:1-20.

Jesus Christ likewise foretold doom for the religious leaders known as scribes and Pharisees. (Matthew 23:15, 33) Nevertheless, this did not mean that each and every Pharisee or scribe was headed for Gehenna. The apostle Paul himself was formerly a zealous Pharisee!—Acts 26:4, 5.

True, God did predict the course of certain individuals, such as Jacob and Esau. But this was not predestination. In the case of Esau and Jacob, God simply foreknew which of the national groups descending from them would gain dominance over the other. (Genesis 25:23-26) However, there is no indication that God



When did Jesus realize that Judas would betray him?

had fixed their eternal destinies. Much of a child's general disposition and temperament appear to be shaped by genetic factors. Jehovah may have considered the genetic makeup of unborn Esau and Jacob in determining which son would dominate.—Compare Psalm 139:14-16.

Similarly, Jehovah used his foreknowledge regarding Samson, Jeremiah and John the Baptizer. This foreknowledge, however, did not guarantee that they would remain faithful until death. God also foretold that one of David's sons would be named Solomon and that Solomon would be used to build the temple. (1 Chronicles 22:9, 10) Solomon, nevertheless, fell into apostasy in his later years. —1 Kings 11:4, 9-13.

But what of Judas Iscariot? Was not the traitorous course of one of Jesus' disciples clearly prophesied in advance? Yes, but the prophecies did not specify *which* disciple would be the betrayer. Indeed, what if Jesus had known that Judas would be the betrayer? Then Jesus' appointing Judas as an apostle would have made Him a "sharer" in that betrayer's sins. (Compare 1 Timothy 5:22.) God himself would also be an accomplice, since Jesus preceded his selection of Judas with fervent prayer to Jehovah.—Luke 6:12-16.

Nevertheless, Jehovah was 'not ignorant of Satan's designs.' (Compare 2 Corinthians 2:11.) He knew that Satan the Devil had previously used a man's close friend as a betrayer, as he had done in the case of David's friend Ahithophel. Therefore, it was Satan, not God, who "put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray" Jesus Christ. (John 13:2; 2 Samuel 15:31) Rather than resisting satanic influence, Judas allowed sin to gain the mastery over him. And at some point Jesus was able to read Judas' heart and therefore foretell his betrayal. (John 13:10, 11) Thus Jesus knew of Judas' betrayal "from the beginning"—not of his acquaintance with Judas, but from the "beginning" of that one's acting treacherously.—John 6:64.

### Foreordained by God

God's exercise of foreknowledge is, therefore, never due to some whim. The

apostle Paul told fellow anointed Christians: "We were foreordained according to the purpose of him [Jehovah God] who operates all things according to the way his will counsels." (Ephesians 1:11) Since man's fall into sin, it has been God's purpose to vindicate His name by means of His Kingdom. To that end, God has at times used his ability to foresee the future. For instance, he foreordained that there would be a *class* of joint heirs with Jesus Christ in the Kingdom, although *individuals* must prove faithful to be part of it.—2 Peter 1:10, 11.

Knowing the Bible's clear teaching on this matter can help you to have a healthy view of the future. God does not predetermine your fate. Instead, you can exercise the free will that Jehovah God has given to creatures made "in his image." (Genesis 1:27) You can make the wise choice and wholeheartedly respond to Jehovah God's offer of everlasting life. —John 17:3.

## A "Special Territory"

MANY Christian youths have adopted the view that school is their "special territory," and so are alert to opportunities to give a witness to both teachers and classmates. Notice the fine results that were had by Susan, a 13-year-old girl in Canada.

"In December my teacher asked the class to write a Christmas story for 'creative writing.' I chose as my subject 'A Report on the Origin of Christmas.' Using the school's encyclopedias and *Awake!* articles for references, I was able to write an informative report." What did the teacher think of it?

"At the end of my report the teacher made these comments: 'Very well written, Susan! I admire your honesty and respect your convictions. With your thoughtfulness and your understanding, you will always be respected. I hope in the future you will retain the admirable qualities that you now possess. In conclusion, it is very refreshing and rewarding to read or speak to someone of your age who has developed and maintains the courage of her convictions.'

"After reading the report himself, he let all the teachers in the staff room read it. So they all received a witness! It gave me the courage and determination to speak about Bible truths to others in school.

"Of course, all my schoolmates know that I am one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and, when they found out what I wrote about, they wanted to read my report also. They seemed so interested that I mentioned I would bring each of them an issue of *Awake!,* which carried an article dealing with Christmas. That was the December 22, 1979, issue, and it also had an article on 'disco.'

"When I brought the copies of that issue of *Awake!* to school, several others in the class saw them and also requested copies. They showed so much interest in the article on 'disco' that I decided to bring each of them a copy of the March 22, 1979, *Awake!,* which carried a series of articles on that subject. As a result, I placed 26 magazines with fellow students.

"On a later occasion, at the time our school nurse showed a film on personal development, I brought several fellow students each a copy of the book *Your Youth—Getting the Best out of It.* I told them that this book really helped me to understand the changes and problems associated with growing up.

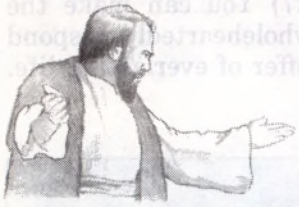
"Once again, when others in my class saw these girls reading and discussing the book, they asked me if they could have a copy also—even as did some of the boys. So, altogether, I placed 17 *Youth* books on that occasion. . . .

"On another occasion a girl in school told me she attended Sunday school and read the Bible, but she didn't understand it. I told her that I had a Bible that was easy to read and I would be happy to bring her one. Not only did I bring her a *New World Translation* but I also brought her a copy of *My Book of Bible Stories* and showed her how this book would really aid her in understanding the Bible. She was very excited about it."

How does Susan feel about witnessing at school? "I really enjoy witnessing to my friends at school and consider it a privilege to have this *special territory.*"

Are you in school? Why not take advantage of your "special territory"?

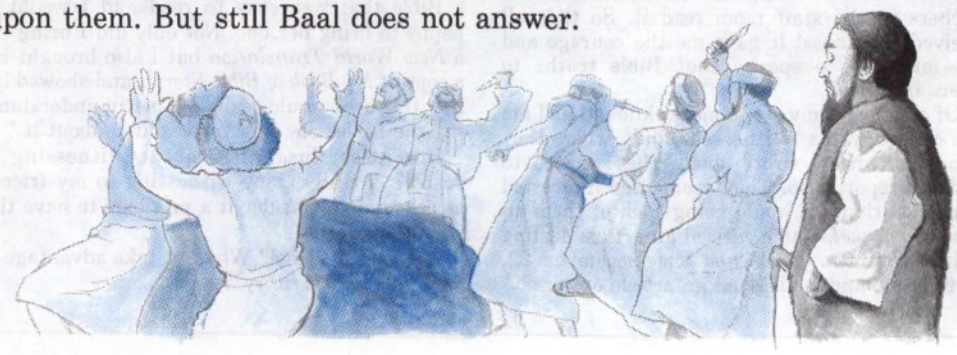
# Which God Will You Serve?



THE above question is as appropriate today as it was nearly 3,000 years ago. At that time Jehovah's prophet Elijah asked the people of Israel: "How long will you be limping upon two different opinions?" The people could not decide which God they would serve. So Elijah is here saying: "If Jehovah is the true God, go following him; but if Baal is, go following him."

How can the people make up their minds? Elijah proposes a fire test. 'Let your 450 prophets of Baal take a young bull,' he says, 'cut it in pieces and put it upon the wood as an offering, but they should not put fire to it. And I will take another young bull and do the same with it. Then let them call upon the name of Baal, and I will call upon the name of Jehovah. And the God that answers by fire is the true God.' All the people agree that this is a good test.

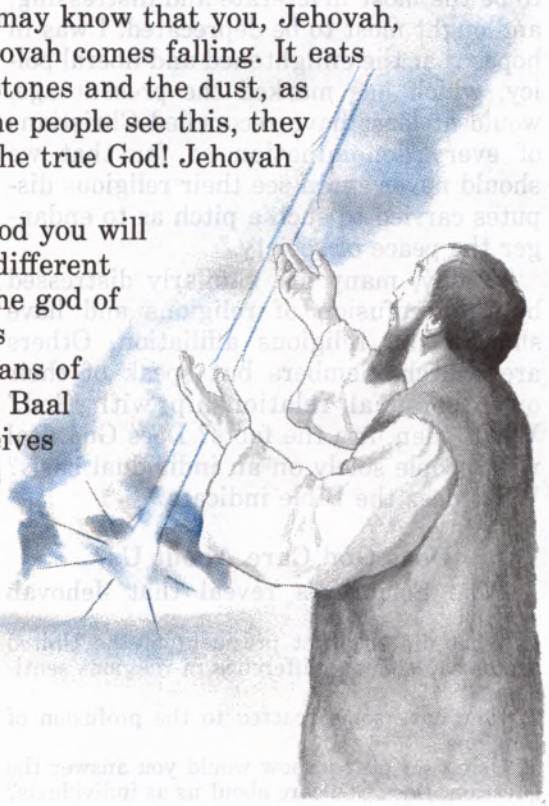
The prophets of Baal prepare a young bull on their altar first. Then, from morning till noon, they call: "O Baal, answer us!" But there is no answer. At noon Elijah begins to mock them: 'Call at the top of your voice, for he must be away having a bowel movement. Or maybe he is asleep and needs to be awakened.' At this, the prophets of Baal call as loud as they can and they cut themselves with daggers and lances until blood flows out upon them. But still Baal does not answer.



Now Elijah mends the altar of Jehovah that had been torn down. He cuts the young bull in pieces and puts it on the wood. Then three times he has the offering, the wood and the stones of the altar soaked with water. He also fills with water the large trench that he has made all around the altar.

At last, when it becomes evening, Elijah prays: "Answer me, O Jehovah, answer me, that this people may know that you, Jehovah, are the true God." At that, fire from Jehovah comes falling. It eats up the offering, the pieces of wood, the stones and the dust, as well as the water in the trench. When the people see this, they fall on their faces and say: "Jehovah is the true God! Jehovah is the true God!"—1 Kings 18:21-40.

Have you made up your mind which God you will serve? You cannot be limping upon two different opinions. There is only one right way. The god of this system of things, Satan the Devil, is worshiped today, but not so much by means of service to some local agricultural god, as Baal was in ancient times. Instead Satan receives worship when people put material things first, serving their own interests rather than doing the will of their Creator, Jehovah God. So the choice is up to you. Jesus Christ showed the right one when he quoted God's Word and said: "It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service."—Matthew 4:10.



# Organized to Serve Jehovah

"The reason I left you behind in Crete was for you to get everything organised there."—TITUS 1:5, *The Jerusalem Bible.*

IN A personal letter of October 20, 1792, the first president of the United States, George Washington, wrote: "Of all the animosities which have existed among mankind, those which are caused by a difference of sentiments in religion appear to be the most inveterate and distressing, and ought most to be deprecated. I was in hopes that the enlightened and liberal policy, which has marked the present age, would at least have reconciled Christians of every denomination so far that we should never again see their religious disputes carried to such a pitch as to endanger the peace of society."

[2] Today, many are similarly distressed by the profusion of religions and have shunned all religious affiliation. Others are church members but speak of their own 'personal relationship with God.' What, then, are the facts? Does God deal with people solely on an individual basis? What does the Bible indicate?

## Does God Care About Us?

[3] The Scriptures reveal that Jehovah does show concern for people as individuals. For instance, in the field of human relations, God's Word makes such statements as these: "He that is holding the one of little means in derision has reproached his Maker." "He that is defrauding the lowly one has reproached his Maker, but the one showing favor to the poor one is glorifying Him," that is, Jehovah God. (Proverbs 17:5; 14:31) Actually, "God loved the world [of mankind] so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16, 36) Moreover, the apostle Peter stated: "For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35) So Jehovah does care about individuals and approves of those who fear him and do what is righteous.

[4] The Bible also states: "Jehovah knows those who belong to him." (2 Timothy 2:19) But does this mean that individuals here and there throughout many religious organizations of the world are acceptable to God? Or should it be expected that such persons would be associating with one another, would be organized to serve Jehovah?

1. What did the first president of the United States say about a difference in religious sentiments?
2. How have some reacted to the profusion of religions?
3. Using scriptures, how would you answer the question, Does God care about us as individuals?
4. What questions arise for our consideration?

### Jehovah—A God of Organization

5 God's inspired Word gives us some insight into his way of doing things. For instance, consider the invisible heavens. Are circumstances chaotic there? No indeed! The myriads of spirit creatures are not functioning independently of Jehovah in some haphazard manner. Rather, we read: "Bless Jehovah, O you angels of his, mighty in power, carrying out his word, by listening to the voice of his word. Bless Jehovah, all you armies of his, you ministers of his, doing his will." (Psalm 103: 20, 21) Clearly, the holy angels are well organized to serve Jehovah.

6 But what about the human realm? Well, the Deluge of Noah's day brought an end to all antediluvian organizations that might have existed on earth—except one. Noah and the seven other Flood survivors emerged from the ark as a family organization. A matter of prime importance to them was the rendering of united worship to God, for we read: "Noah began to build an altar to Jehovah and to take some of all the clean beasts and of all the clean flying creatures and to offer burnt offerings upon the altar." The Flood survivors did not immediately go their separate ways religiously, but they were all together for this significant event that culminated in blessing, instruction and a covenant originating with God. (Genesis 8:18–9:17) Yes, after the Deluge, Noah's family started off as an organization that served Jehovah.

7 The descendants of Abraham were richly favored by Jehovah, and nobody can reasonably deny that they eventually became a national organization. Why, the Bible book of Exodus alone shows how they were delivered from Egyptian bondage and were organized as a theocracy! The book identifies Jehovah as the God of theocratic organization. When the Israelites obeyed God's Law, they were able to worship him as an orderly, secure and joyful organization. They were undeniably organized to serve Jehovah.*

In David's day, divisions of priests and Levites were organized to serve Jehovah

8 Evidence of fine organization was seen in connection with service at Jehovah's earthly sanctuary. For instance, concerning the Levites, we read: "David organized them in divisions corresponding to the sons of Levi: Gershom, Kohath and Merari." Similarly, "divisions of the sons of

5. How do the holy angels function in relation to Jehovah?

6. As what did Noah's family start off after the Flood?

7. As regards organization, what do we learn from the book of Exodus?

* Please see *The Watchtower* of October 15, 1983, pages 28-31.

8. What evidence of good organization was seen in connection with service at Jehovah's earthly sanctuary?

The governing body provided direction for the well-organized first-century congregations

Aaron" were set up. With the help of Zadok and Ahimelech, "David organized them according to the appointed duties in their service . . . They organized them by lot." Of later times, we read: "Jehoiada posted watchmen for the house of the LORD under the direction of the Levitical priests and the Levites whom David had organized to be in charge of the house of the LORD to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, according to the order of David." (1 Chronicles 23: 2-6; 24:1-6; 2 Chronicles 23:18, *Revised Standard Version*) Yes, divisions of priests and Levites were organized to serve Jehovah.

### What About Christianity?

9 When Jesus Christ was on earth, he did not tell all those believing in him to go their separate ways and concentrate only on a 'personal relationship with God.' Rather, disciples gathered to Jesus, and from among them he selected 12 men as apostles. Their selection was made after a night in prayer and thus with the help and approval of Jehovah. (Luke 6:12-16) This bespeaks organization that had divine backing. Moreover, Jesus organized his followers into a well-instructed group of Kingdom proclaimers. For instance, he imparted needed instruction to the 70 disciples he sent out in an organized fashion. —Luke 10:1-24.

9. What evidence is there that Jesus Christ organized his followers for service to Jehovah?

10 The Christian Greek Scriptures plainly show that Jesus' early followers were well organized. They did not rely only on personal reading of the Scriptures. Rather, congregations were established and met regularly to study God's Word. These congregations were not independent, autonomous units, but they worked together in love. For instance, congregations exchanged heartfelt greetings, and organized groups in Macedonia 'kept begging for the privilege of giving' something to help needy "holy ones" elsewhere. (1 Corinthians 16:19, 20; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7; Colossians 4:14-16) Yes, the early Christian congregations cooperated with one another under the direction of a governing body comprised of the apostles and older men at Jerusalem.—Acts 15:1–16:5.

10. How do the Scriptures show that Jesus' early followers were well organized?

[11] The apostle Paul helped to establish some of the well-organized congregations that came into existence because of God's blessing upon the preaching work. Furthermore, Paul said that Jehovah "is a God, not of disorder, but of peace." The apostle also pointed out that "God has organized the body" of Jesus Christ's anointed followers as it pleases Him. Hence, we should expect "God's congregation" to be well organized and to function peacefully, harmoniously.—1 Corinthians 14:33; 12:24, *The Riverside New Testament;* 1 Timothy 3:5.

[12] Regarding the organization of Jesus' followers, historian J. L. von Mosheim wrote: "If . . . what no Christian can doubt, the apostles of *Jesus Christ* acted by a divine command and guidance, then that form of the primitive churches which they derived from the church of Jerusalem, erected and organized by the apostles themselves, must be accounted *divine."* —*Institutes of Ecclesiastical History, Ancient and Modern,* Volume I, pages 67-8.

[13] Jehovah's Witnesses are convinced that the first-century congregations of Jesus' followers were organized in accord with the divine will. In harmony with that pattern, therefore, among the Witnesses today overseers and ministerial servants are appointed by holy spirit to care for congregational matters.—Acts 20:28; Philippians 1:1.

[14] During the first century, the apostles and older men in Jerusalem had general supervision of the congregations, although certain men exercised oversight in particular areas and might delegate some authority to others. (Acts 14:21-23; 15: 1, 2) Accordingly, the apostle Paul assigned the Christian overseer Titus to care for certain matters on the Mediterranean island of Crete. In this regard, Paul told Titus: "The reason I left you behind in Crete was for you to get everything organised there and appoint elders in every town, in the way that I told you." (Titus 1:5, *JB*) We can be quite sure that the instructions provided in the letter to Titus helped him to carry out that assignment so that Christians there might be well organized to serve Jehovah.

11. Why should we expect "God's congregation" to be well organized?

12, 13. (a) What has been said about the congregations organized by Jesus' apostles? (b) In harmony with the first-century pattern, who care for congregational matters among Jehovah's Witnesses?

14. (a) How were the first-century Christian congregations supervised? (b) Why did the apostle Paul leave Titus in Crete?

### Why Be Well Organized Today?

[15] So far, it has been shown Scripturally that good organization was a hallmark of Jehovah's servants in times past. Therefore, circumstances are the same today. And there are excellent reasons why Jehovah's modern-day witnesses should be well organized.

[16] Those acceptable to Jehovah cannot each have only a 'personal relationship with God' and be scattered throughout the world's religious bodies. *Jehovah demands true worship and is about to bring an end to Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion.* (John 4:24; James 1:27; Revelation 18:1-8) Furthermore, *unity is required of true Christians.* Today especially must they be together in one organization so as to comply fully with the apostle Paul's counsel: "Now I exhort you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you should all speak in agreement, and that there should not be divisions among you, but that you may be

15, 16. For what reasons here given can we say that those acceptable to Jehovah cannot merely have 'a personal relationship with God' and be scattered throughout the world's religious bodies?

fitly united in the same mind and in the same line of thought."—1 Corinthians 1:10.

[17] Moreover, *true Christians are not to forsake the gathering of themselves together in regular meetings.* Especially is that so today, as the end of this system of things draws near. (Hebrews 10:24, 25) Obviously, to follow that inspired counsel genuine servants of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ must all be part of one organization.

[18] *The Scriptures call for fellowship among Jesus' anointed followers.* In this regard, the apostle John wrote: "What we have seen and heard we are reporting to you too in order that you too may have solidarity [a sharing; fellowship] with us. And, too, our solidarity is with the Father and with his son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:3, *Byington; New World Translation; Authorized Version*) If Jesus' anointed followers each had only a 'personal relationship with God' and were not joined together in a single organization, how could they enjoy this solidarity, fellowship or sharing? This requirement can be met only by being organized. Today, Jesus' spirit-begotten followers have been joined by a "great crowd" of "other sheep." According to Jesus' description of sheeplike ones, we should expect these "other sheep" to cooperate so fully with his anointed followers that all together they would be "one flock" under him as the "one shepherd." (Revelation 7:9; John 10:16) And that is exactly what we find to be the case among Jehovah's servants in this "time of the end."

17. How do the words of Hebrews 10:24, 25 show that servants of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ must all be part of one organization?

18. (a) How does 1 John 1:3 show that all anointed Christians must be together in one organization? (b) Jesus' spirit-anointed followers have been joined by whom in this "time of the end," and what are the facts regarding cooperation among all of Jehovah's Witnesses?

**What Would You Say?**

- ☐ How do the holy angels function in relation to Jehovah?
- ☐ What evidence of good organization was there in ancient Israel?
- ☐ How would you prove Scripturally that Jesus Christ's early followers were well organized?
- ☐ Why does preaching the Kingdom message require cooperation within one organization?

(Daniel 12:4) As one globe-encircling brotherhood, all of Jehovah's Witnesses are well organized to serve God.—Compare 1 Peter 2:17.

[19] *Fulfilling the commission to preach and make disciples also requires cooperation within one unified organization.* (Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 1:6-8) If each professing Christian had only a 'personal relationship with God' and was associated with just any religious group at all, how could the witnessing commission be carried out? Why, some would, in effect, be saying "Shibboleth" and others "Sibboleth"! (Judges 12:4-6) How would hearers of such diverse messages know what to believe? Anointed Christians must 'earnestly endeavor to observe the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace,' and among them there is to be "one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all." (Ephesians 4:1-6) There must be agreement among all true Christians, a unified message, if people are to hear what is correct, put genuine

19. Why does fulfilling the preaching commission require cooperation within one spirit-directed organization?

faith in the true God and call upon Jehovah's name with the prospect of being saved. Moreover, one spirit-directed organization must be used in connection with the sending forth of those truthful preachers of the "good news."—Romans 10: 11-15.

20 Then, too, in keeping with Jesus' prophecy concerning his "presence" and "the conclusion of the system of things," there has to be one unified organization 'preaching this good news of the kingdom in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations before the end comes.' (Matthew 24:3, 14) Today, Jehovah's Witnesses alone are declaring the good news that the Kingdom has been functioning in the heavens since 1914 with Jesus Christ as King. There are more than 2,650,000 of these well-organized Kingdom proclaimers, and their ranks are swelling rapidly because of God's blessing.—Isaiah 43: 10-12; 60:22.

21 In these critical "last days," what a privilege it is to be among the throngs so well organized to serve Jehovah! (2 Timothy 3:1) There is a sound Scriptural basis for all those wholeheartedly devoted to God to continue serving loyally with his organized people. And as we shall see, there are good reasons for building a secure and happy future with Jehovah's organization.

20. What single organization is now fulfilling Matthew 24:14, and what evidence is there that God favors such well-organized activity?

21. As regards Jehovah's organization, what will we next consider?

# Build Your Future With Jehovah's Organization

"Be in the fear of Jehovah all day long. For in that case there will exist a future, and your own hope will not be cut off."—PROVERBS 23:17, 18.

JEHOVAH reveals future things to his people and this enables them to act with wisdom. (Isaiah 42:9) For instance, near the end of the first century C.E., God granted the aged apostle John visions of a hope-inspiring future. How happy we can be that John bore witness to "all the things he saw" and that they have been recorded in the Bible book of Revelation!—Revelation 1:1, 2.

2 Among other things, John saw "four angels" holding back "winds" that would cause the "great tribulation." How long would the angels be obliged to restrain those destructive winds? Another angel told them: "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until after we have sealed the slaves of our God in their

1, 2. Among other things, what did the apostle John see near the end of the first century C.E.?

foreheads."—Revelation 7:1-3, 14; Matthew 24:21, 22.

[3] The unleashed "winds" will wreak havoc upon Satan the Devil's earthly organization, devastating it completely. (Compare Jeremiah 25:32, 33.) But before that happens the remnant of anointed ones who are to rule with Jesus Christ in heaven must be sealed. The sealing of these "slaves of our God in their foreheads" is done by means of God's holy spirit, or active force, which anointed Christians have as a token of their heavenly inheritance. (2 Corinthians 1:21, 22; Ephesians 1:12-14) The preaching of the good news of God's Kingdom in "the final part of the days" brings to completion the gathering of these "chosen ones."—Micah 4:1; Matthew 24:14, 31.

[4] How many "slaves of our God" will be permanently sealed? John, who was one of them, faithfully reported: "I heard the number of those who were sealed, a hundred and forty-four thousand." These make up "the Israel of God," spiritual Israel, consisting of 12 tribes of 12,000 each. (Revelation 7:4-8; Galatians 6:16) What an organization! Under the King Jesus Christ, the 144,000 will be "a kingdom and priests to our God, and they are to rule as kings over the earth."—Revelation 5:10; 14:1-4.

[5] After the apostle John observed spiritual Israel, he saw a "great crowd" and wondered who they were. He was told: "These are the ones that come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Those making up the "great crowd" are the earthly subjects of the Kingdom, and it was foretold that "the Lamb," Jesus Christ, would "guide them to fountains of waters of life"—yes, eternal life on a paradise earth. (Revelation 7:9, 14, 17; Luke 23:43) Right now these "other sheep" make up "one flock" with the remnant of Kingdom heirs, and all such fearers of Jehovah constitute God's earthly organization. (John 10:16) By remaining faithful to him, they will have a blessed future, for we read: "Be in the fear of Jehovah all day long. For in that case there will exist a future, and your own hope will not be cut off."—Proverbs 23:17, 18.

3. Before the unleashed "winds" wreak havoc upon Satan's organization, what will have taken place and by what means?

4. How many "slaves of our God" will be permanently sealed, and how can you prove your answer Scripturally?

5. (a) Who are now associated with the remnant of spiritual Israel? (b) All fearers of Jehovah constitute what, and according to Proverbs 23:17, 18, what exists for them?

### This Old System Has No Future!

[6] We are now deep into "the last days" of this wicked system of things. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) World events aligned with Bible chronology establish the fact that Jesus Christ began to rule in the heavens in the autumn of 1914. (Psalm 110:1, 2) Daily, news reports indicate that the composite "sign" of Jesus' "presence" and the conclusion of this system is in evidence. (Matthew, chapters 24, 25) True, the "generation" contemporaneous with the Kingdom's establishment in 1914 is moving along in years. But Jesus' words indicate that it "will by no means pass away" before the "great tribulation" has brought an end to this world of unrighteous human society "lying in the power of the wicked one," Satan the Devil. How soon will that occur? Surely before long, for this is the 70th year of Kingdom rule! —Matthew 24:21, 34; 1 John 5:19.

6. Where do we now find ourselves in the stream of time?

[7] The "great tribulation" will begin with surprising suddenness. (Matthew 24:36-44) In its initial phase, destruction will befall "Babylon the Great," the world empire of false religion. Devastation of this major segment of Satan's system will affect the political and commercial elements. In this regard, the apostle John revealed that "the kings of the earth" will lament: "Too bad, too bad, you great city, Babylon you strong city, because in one hour your judgment has arrived!" And what of the commercial element? "Also," adds John, "the traveling merchants of the earth are weeping and mourning over her, because there is no one to buy their full stock anymore." (Revelation 18:1-19) Shortly after the destruction of false religion, Jesus Christ will use his heavenly army to destroy the rest of this wicked system of things. It will perish in the rapidly approaching "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon. —Revelation 16:14-16; 19:11-21.

[8] What does this mean for those having a wholesome fear of Jehovah? Why, it means that this world under Satan's control has no future! Its time has nearly run out! Hence, Jehovah's organization is the only one with which to build an eternal future.

[9] In view of what lies ahead, then, would it show faith, or even good sense, to try to build a secure future in some facet of this doomed system? For instance, with what worldly corporation or business firm could you safely build a lasting future? There is none! So is it not wise to be content with sustenance and covering while putting Kingdom interests first in life? (Matthew 6:33; 1 Timothy 6:7-12; 2 Timothy 2:4) Especially timely now is the apostle Paul's counsel: "Give orders to those who are rich in the present system of things not to be high-minded, and to rest their hope, not on uncertain riches, but on God, who furnishes us all things richly for our enjoyment; 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." —1 Timothy 6:17-19.

**Today, all genuine fearers of God have Jesus as their Shepherd and serve together in unity as Jehovah's earthly organization**

### Build Your Future Wisely

[10] What spiritual balance is evident in those words of the apostle! In them Jehovah's people see a key to survival. It is this: Keep material things in their proper place, realizing that emphasis should be placed not on "uncertain riches" but on being "rich in fine works." That certainly would include zealous, regular participation in the Christian ministry. With the storm clouds of the "great tribulation" already forming on the horizon, this is no time to plan for a prosperous future in some worldly business firm or to be climbing the corporate ladder. It is time to preach the good news of God's Kingdom, to warn the unsuspecting of impending danger. Furthermore, Jesus

7. (a) What will happen during the initial phase of the "great tribulation"? (b) What will occur shortly after the destruction of false religion?
8. Which organization is the only one with a lasting future, and why is this the case?
9. (a) In view of what lies ahead, what questions may well be asked? (b) What timely counsel is found at 1 Timothy 6:17-19?
10. With the "great tribulation" looming right before us, what should be our principal concern?

Because of divine blessing upon the Kingdom-preaching work, multitudes are streaming to the elevated worship of Jehovah

Christ has commissioned us to preach and make disciples. Hence, that should be our principal concern as Jehovah's Witnesses.—Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20; Isaiah 43:10-12.

[11] Many occupations now pursued by people of the world will end forever during the "great tribulation." True, some types of work will be revived in God's promised new system of things. But do you know of any present-day occupation having as many beneficial aspects as the Christian ministry? Spiritual development and progress that come with this God-given work will be most beneficial in the New Order. The strong relationship with Jehovah that is cultivated in the ministry will extend into that system of things. And the improved skills in teaching may well be of help in educating millions then resurrected.—Isaiah 54:13; John 5:28, 29; Revelation 20:12.

[12] If our prime concern now is that of pleasing God and doing his will, we have truly marvelous prospects. (Psalm 40:8; Romans 12:1, 2) Indeed, if we are 'in fear of Jehovah, a future exists for us and our hope will not be cut off.' (Proverbs 23:17, 18) Everlasting life will be our lot if we continue to walk "the path of life" in fear of God. (Psalm 16:11) Along the way, though, we need to set and attain reasonable theocratic goals.

### Some Reasonable Goals

[13] Some have just begun what might be termed their ascent of "the mountain of the house of Jehovah." Since the war years of 1914-18 the worship of Jehovah, whose temple or "house" once stood atop a mountain in Jerusalem, has continued to be exalted. It has been "established above the top of the mountains" on which temples to false gods have been built. Thus Jehovah's

11. What will be some lasting benefits of the Christian ministry?

12. As Jehovah's servants, what marvelous prospects do we have, but what do we need to do?
13. (a) Scripturally, why can we say that Jehovah's worship has continued to be exalted? (b) In a sense, what are some of the goals that hundreds of thousands have attained?

worship has been "lifted up above the hills." To the elevated worship of Jehovah, multitudes are streaming. (Micah 4: 1-4; Isaiah 2:2-4) After taking in accurate knowledge of the Scriptures, they repent, turn around, make a dedication to God in prayer and symbolize this by water immersion. (John 17:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19) In a sense, these are goals being attained by hundreds of thousands of people out of all nations, who thereafter serve Jehovah faithfully as part of his earthly organization. How happy they are to engage in the exalted worship of the only true God! But what about you? Have you taken these steps?

[14] Even after we have begun to worship Jehovah with his people, we need to develop and maintain a good spiritual appetite. Having learned "the primary doctrine about the Christ," we should "press on to maturity" by availing ourselves of all the spiritual provisions Jehovah is making through "the faithful and discreet slave." (Hebrews 6:1-3; Matthew 24:45-47) So you might well ask yourself: Do I read God's Word regularly? Am I a good student of the publications provided through the "slave" class?—Hebrews 5: 11-14.

[15] Then, too, we should heed Paul's counsel: "Let us be concerned for each other, to stir a response in love and good works. Do not stay away from the meetings of the community, as some do, but encourage each other to go; the more so as you see the Day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:24, 25, *The Jerusalem Bible*)

14. Even after we have begun to worship Jehovah, we should press on to what, and how can this be done?

15. (a) What counsel did Paul give at Hebrews 10:24, 25, but what have some been doing? (b) If there is room for personal improvement in meeting attendance or in the Christian ministry, what is suggested?

**Are you building your future with Jehovah's organization? Pioneer activity and Bethel service are among the fine theocratic goals many have attained**

Regular attendance at Christian meetings is part of our "sacred service." But some attend only the public talk each week, regularly leaving the Kingdom Hall before the study of *The Watchtower* begins. Others often miss the Service Meeting. Has it become less meaningful for them because they are not very active in the house-to-house witnessing work and other avenues of the Christian ministry? If you find that there is room for personal improvement in any of these respects, why not pray to Jehovah about such matters, asking that he help you to become regular and exemplary in all aspects of "sacred service"?—Hebrews 12:25-29.

[16] What are some other reasonable theocratic goals? Well, there is an ever-increasing number of individuals now engaging in the full-time ministry as regular or auxiliary pioneers. Could you expand your ministry in such ways? Of course, even if your Scriptural obligations prevent you from reaching such objectives, you can give moral support to full-time preachers while personally doing as much in God's service as your own circumstances permit. By faithful worship and service to Jehovah's praise, all of us can show that we 'rest our hope not on uncertain riches but on God.' And for those who can engage in the pioneer work, this surely is one of the finest ways

16. (a) What reasonable theocratic goals are here mentioned? (b) Even if Scriptural obligations prevent one from reaching such objectives, what is still possible?

to "get a firm hold on the real life." —1 Timothy 6:17-19.

[17] Serving in one of the Bethel homes around the world is also a splendid privilege, one that younger people in particular can well consider prayerfully. Bethel service provides excellent training in human relations, for Bethel workers cooperate closely to advance Kingdom interests. Certain skills developed at Bethel may be useful in the vast teaching work that will take place in the New Order. Of course, since many enter Bethel service early in life, they do not have much in a material way. But they are content with sustenance and covering and have the deep satisfaction of knowing that their work benefits many others spiritually.—Ecclesiastes 3:12, 13.

[18] Participating in various fields of full-time service can teach a person greater dependence on Jehovah God. Worldly people who put their trust in "uncertain riches" often adopt the view that a person must look out for himself. But especially may the full-time minister learn that Jehovah makes ample provision for those "seeking first the Kingdom and his righteousness." (Matthew 6:25-34) Thousands who have served in the pioneer ranks for many years will attest to the fact that they have never lacked the necessities of life. Speak with them and you will find that they agree wholeheartedly with the psalmist David, who declared: "A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous left entirely, nor his offspring looking for bread."—Psalm 37:25.

17. (a) Younger people in particular can well consider what privilege of service? (b) What satisfaction do members of the Bethel family have?

18. Participating in full-time service can teach a person what, and how is this supported by the Scriptures?

## Build a Secure Future

[19] If we are Jehovah's loyal witnesses, we realize that time is very short for this system. So what should we be doing? We should be acting wisely in harmony with these words of the apostle Peter: "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion, awaiting and keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah, through which the heavens being on fire will be dissolved and the elements being intensely hot will melt!"—2 Peter 3:11, 12.

[20] The apostle John, too, made it clear that this world is passing away. (1 John 2: 15-17) Soon, this old system will perish. Hence, all who fear God should now be involved in 'holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion, while awaiting and keeping *close* in mind the presence of Jehovah's day.' Never forget that only God's organization will survive the end of this dying system. Act wisely, therefore, and make plans for life eternal by building your future with Jehovah's organization.

19, 20. (a) Since time is very short for this system of things, what should we be doing? (b) So how can we act wisely with respect to the future?

### By Way of Review

□ All fearers of Jehovah constitute what, and Proverbs 23:17, 18 gives them what assurance?

□ Which organization alone has a future, and why do you so answer?

□ With the "great tribulation" so near, what should be the principal concern of Jehovah's Witnesses?

□ What are some of the theocratic goals that many may attain?

# Insight on the News

## "No Evidence at All"

In an effort to explain how living things evolved, modern-day sociobiologists rely on Neo-Darwinism, which is a later version of Charles Darwin's theory of slow, adaptive evolution. But a newer, rival theory—called "punctuated equilibrium" by Stephen Gould and others—holds that the production of new animal species occurred in comparatively sudden jumps, or "jerks."

Punctuationists maintain that fossil evidence is in their favor. Why? Because intermediate animal forms are "not detectable in the fossil record," observes Dr. John Turner in a recent issue of *New Scientist*. But the main difference between these two camps is that punctuationists claim that (1) the "jerks" were generated, not by some form of Neo-Darwinian adaption, but by some process possibly still unknown and (2) the "jerks," according to Turner, "always accompany the branching of the evolutionary tree."

"There is no good evidence for [these ideas]," concludes Dr. Turner. "I am tempted to say no evidence at all. Of the essential jerk theory, one can say as Gould did of sociobiology, that it brings no new insights, and can cite on its behalf not a single unambiguous fact." But since punctuated equilibrium is so popular among rival evolutionists, this also amounts to an unintended admission of how little, if any, evidence there is for the traditional evolutionary belief. Since neither theory can explain the gaps in the fossil record, both lack credibility.

However, there is a fully satisfying explanation for fossil gaps, one that also agrees with modern genetics. It is found in the Bible's statements that animals produce "according to their kinds" and that man is an independent creation of God.—Genesis 1:24; 2:7.

## Science a Religion?

In a recent article in *New Scientist*, Michael Shallis has come to the defense of physicist Fred Hoyle, who has been criticized for some of his views. "Perhaps Hoyle's biggest heresy," says Shallis, 'is that he has introduced the idea that the Universe needs a cosmic intelligence to control it.' He adds that Hoyle believes that without such intelligence "the Universe does not make sense."

Though Shallis maintains that the existence of God or purpose in the universe is a "metaphysical question" with which science cannot deal, he observes "that scientists are permitted by their own colleagues to say metaphysical things about lack of purpose and not the reverse. This suggests . . . that science, in allowing this metaphysical notion, sees itself as religion and presumably as an atheistic religion (if you can have such a thing)."

Refusal to believe in a higher power reveals an attitude similar to that cited by the psalmist, who said: "The wicked one according to his superciliousness makes no search; all his ideas are: 'There is no God.'" (Psalm 10:4; 19:1) Furthermore, this attitude has the effect of limiting the theories of the origin of the universe to mere chance.

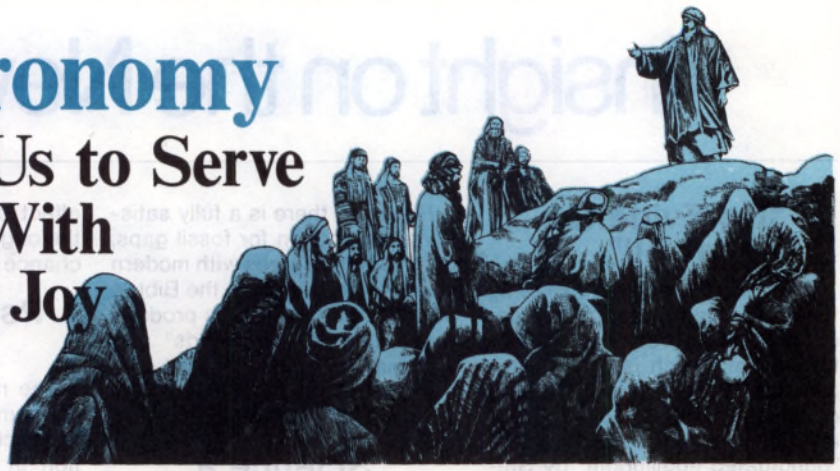
## Psychosomatic Healing

The numerous studies in psychosomatic healing now being conducted "signal a transformation in the traditional view [of medicine] that has been described as 'nothing short of revolutionary,'" says *Medical World News*. For example, the mind's effect on the body's immune system has been a subject of growing interest. Recent studies demonstrate significantly reduced immunity to disease in widows and widowers after bereavement. The immunity does not return to normal levels until mourners adjust to their loss.

In a three-year study, evidence of the mind's effect on the heart was demonstrated in the treatment of cardiac patients said to have "hard-driving, aggressive, competitive ways." Teaching these men patience, rearranging their schedules to make time for reflection and for loved ones, and defusing everyday irritations were among the factors that cut the rate of recurrence of myocardial infarctions some two and three times over men who received only medical counseling and regular physicals.

Among other things, such research confirms certain Scriptural statements. For instance, the Bible says, "A heart that is joyful does good as a curer" and "a calm heart is the life of the fleshly organism."—Proverbs 17:22; 14:30.

# Deuteronomy
## Exhorts Us to Serve Jehovah With Heartfelt Joy



JEHOVAH'S worshipers must serve him faithfully and with heartfelt joy. This the Bible book of Deuteronomy makes clear. (Deuteronomy 28:45-47) And its exhortation to such faithful, joyous service has great import in the lives of 20th-century witnesses of Jehovah.

Deuteronomy was written by the Hebrew prophet Moses on the plains of Moab in 1473 B.C.E. and covers somewhat over two months. Likely, the last chapter was added by Joshua or High Priest Eleazar. Deuteronomy consists of four discourses, as well as a song and a blessing by Moses when Israel was about to enter the Promised Land. (Deuteronomy 1:3; Joshua 1:11; 4:19) In Deuteronomy Moses explained and elaborated on certain points of the Law. Among other things, the book shows that Jehovah demands exclusive devotion. It also warns against false worship and exhorts God's people to be faithful in his sacred service.

Yet, in what specific ways did the words recorded in Deuteronomy help the Israelites? And how can this book benefit Jehovah's Witnesses today?

The Israelites have been in the wilderness for about 40 years when Moses now addresses them. In part, he recounts the appointment of judges to assist him. He cites the ten spies' bad report that led to rebellion and wilderness wanderings. Recalled, too, are victories God made possible. Moses warns against idol making and underscores this by declaring: "Jehovah your God is a consuming fire, a God exacting exclusive devotion." This is followed by exhortation to obey Jehovah. —Deuteronomy 1:1–4:49.

In a second discourse, Moses first restates the Ten Words and recounts the giving of the Law. Emphasis is laid on loving Jehovah with all the heart, soul and vital force. Child instruction is highlighted. Seven nations of Canaan and their appendages of false worship are designated for destruction. The Israelites are told that they were chosen not because of their righteousness but due to Jehovah's faithfulness as a covenant keeper. Once in the Promised Land, they must remain obedient and not forget God. Cases of disobedience are reviewed, and heartfelt love and fear of God are shown to be essential. Blessings and maledictions are set before Israel, and obedience to God is urged. —Deuteronomy 5:1–11:32.

Cited next are laws affecting life in the Promised Land. Among these are regulations on destroying vestiges of unclean religion, eating meat and handling blood, dealing with false prophets and apostasy, clean and unclean foods, and tithing. Details are provided on debt releases, slavery and firstborn animals. The three annual festivals are considered, as are certain judicial matters and laws for kings and Levites. After warnings against spiritism, a prophet like Moses is foretold.—Deuteronomy 12:1-18:22.

Among further regulations mentioned are those concerning refuge cities, military exemptions, cleansing from bloodguilt, the marrying of captive women, the firstborn's right, rebellious sons, regard for others' property and for life, sexual matters, and ineligibility for membership in the congregation. Still other laws include those dealing with slaves, interest payments and vows. Regulations on such matters as divorce, loans, kindness to the fatherless and to widows, brother-in-law marriage, accurate weights, the offering of firstfruits, and tithing bring this discourse to a close.—Deuteronomy 19:1-26:19.

Moses' third discourse opens with instructions to write the Law on great stones. Blessings are to be pronounced from Mount Gerizim and maledictions from Mount Ebal. Blessings for obeying God's commands are then contrasted with curses to be expected for disobedience.—Deuteronomy 27:1-28:68.

In connection with Moses' fourth discourse, there is a renewal of the covenant between Jehovah and the Israelites. Moses recounts God's care in the wilderness. Warning is given against disobedience, and Jehovah's mercy is stressed. Finally, a life-or-death choice is presented. The people of Israel may 'keep alive by loving Jehovah, listening to his voice and sticking to him.'—Deuteronomy 29:1-30:20.

Moses urges the Israelites to be courageous when entering the Promised Land, for Jehovah is marching with them. The commissioning of Joshua as leader is followed by a prophecy regarding Israel's rebelliousness. Next, in song, Moses extols Jehovah, foretells woes for Israel's unfaithfulness but ends with an assurance of divine vengeance coupled with the call, "Be glad, you nations, with his people." Moses bestows final blessings, after which the 120-year-old prophet views the Land of Promise, dies and is buried by Jehovah in an unmarked grave.—Deuteronomy 31:1-34:12.

The foregoing résumé may well whet your spiritual appetite. But as you read Deuteronomy, significant questions may arise. Let us now anticipate and answer some of them.

### Moses' First Discourse

• 4:15-24—Do these words against image making mean that it is wrong to display photographs of individuals?

These verses prohibit the making of images for false worship. But the Israelites were not prohibited from making images for other purposes. For instance, there were God-approved likenesses of cherubs on the tabernacle tent cloths and on the cover of the sacred ark. It would be inappropriate to associate the usual taking and displaying of photographs with idolatry, unless they were deliberately used for false religious purposes. Normally, there is no Scriptural objection to photography, painting and sculpturing that serve useful or artistic purposes in depicting people or things.

### Moses' Second Discourse

• 6:6-9—Is this command to 'tie God's law upon the hand' to be understood literally?

These verses do not support the practice of wearing phylacteries (small cases containing Bible texts). Rather, the wording points to a figurative application. (Compare Exodus 13:9; Proverbs 7:2, 3.) It is not said that the commands were to be written on something and then worn by a person or attached to doorposts and gates. The Israelites were to keep God's commands in view at all times, whether they were at home, on the road or near the city gates, where elders handled legal cases. They were to retain God's law in the heart, teach it to their children and demonstrate by action (as expressed by the hands) that they adhered to it. The people were to identify themselves publicly as upholders of Jehovah's law, just as if it were written between their eyes for all to see. Similarly, Jehovah's Witnesses today seek to prove themselves God's obedient servants. Their hearts move them to obey his Word, and they fill their minds with things that are true, of serious concern, righteous, lovable, virtuous and praiseworthy. In every way they endeavor to show that Jehovah's commands are before them at all times.—Philippians 4:8; Colossians 3:23.

• 8:3, 4—Does this mean only that the clothing supply was replenished?

The provision of the manna was a continuing miracle. So was the fact that the clothing did not wear out and their feet did not swell during the 40 years in the wilderness. If the clothing supply merely was renewed normally, that would have been no miracle. There would be no difficulty involved in using the same clothing for all those years, because children's clothes could be passed on to younger ones, and wardrobes would become available for others as adults died. Since the number of the Israelites was nearly the same at the end of the wilderness trek as at the beginning, the original clothing supply would be about right throughout the 40 years.—Numbers 2:32; 26:51.

• 14:21—Since the Israelites could not eat "any body already dead," why could it be given to an alien resident or sold to a foreigner?

As the Supreme Lawgiver, Jehovah *had* the right to place certain restrictions upon only the Israelites. They were "a holy people" to him. Other nations did not observe this prohibition against eating an animal that had died of itself. There was nothing unjust about giving an unbled carcass to an alien resident or selling it to a foreigner, for the Israelites did not misrepresent matters and the recipient or buyer acted voluntarily. It may be added that Deuteronomy 14:21 harmonizes with Leviticus 17:10, which forbade the alien resident to eat blood. An alien resident who was a proselyte was not to eat blood, but this prohibition did not apply to an alien resident who was not a full proselyte. Such a person might have uses for an unbled animal carcass viewed as unclean by a faithful Israelite or proselyte.

• 17:5-7—Why was it required that the hand of the witnesses should be first to come upon a person sentenced to death?

Everyone in Israel was to be zealous for true worship and anxious to see that the organization remained clean and that no reproach was brought upon Jehovah's name. The witnesses were to show such zeal by taking the lead in carrying out the judgment. (Compare Numbers 25:6-9; Deuteronomy 13:6-11.) Of course, it was one thing to testify against someone and quite another to execute the individual. This would make a witness think very carefully in giving evidence, and only a wicked person would give false testimony knowing that he would be the first to act in putting the man or woman to death. Jehovah's Witnesses can apply these principles by being zealous for the congregation's cleanness and also very careful about giving truthful testimony. After all, each one of us must answer to the Supreme Judge, Jehovah.—Matthew 12:36, 37.

• 22:5—In view of this prohibition, is it proper for a woman to wear slacks?

The evident purpose of this law was to

prevent sex abuses and confusion of sexual identity. In appearance and attire, normally a man wants to look like a male and a woman like a female. For an Israelite to act contrary to this internal sense of propriety could have led to homosexuality. Although both men and women then wore robelike garments, there was a difference between the garb of males and that of females. Similarly, in some parts of the earth today, both men and women wear slacks, though the styles differ for each sex. The principle in this text would not rule out a Christian woman's wearing slacks sometimes, as when working around the house or on a farm. And according to local custom and necessity, slacks may be the desired attire in very cold climates. The Bible counsels women to "adorn themselves in well-arranged dress, with modesty and soundness of mind." —1 Timothy 2:9, 10.

• 24:6—How could seizing a hand mill or its upper grindstone as a pledge be like seizing a soul?

Usually, bread was baked daily and grain frequently had to be ground into flour. So a family's daily bread depended on the hand mill. Mercifully, then, God's law forbade the seizing of a person's hand mill or its upper grindstone. To seize either of these would result in depriving the family of its daily bread and would amount to seizing a "soul" or "means of life."

### Final Discourses, Song and Blessing

• 32:39—How can there be no gods together with Jehovah when John 1:1 says that 'the Word was with God and was a god'?

These texts deal with completely different matters. The point made at Deuteronomy 32:39 is that false gods have no share with the true God, Jehovah, in his saving acts. They are unable to deliver their worshipers from disaster, and such gods were not with Jehovah in anything that he did. Although the "Word" is a god or a mighty one, he does not stand in opposition to Jehovah or act as his rival, as was the case with the false gods. —Deuteronomy 32:12, 37, 38.

• 33:1-29—Why is Simeon not mentioned in this blessing?

Simeon and Levi had cooperated in an act of cruelty, and although they were given portions in Israel, these were not like those of the other tribes. The Levites were given 48 cities throughout the land, whereas Simeon's lot was enclosed within the territory of Judah. (Genesis 34:13-31; 49:5-7; Joshua 19:9; 21:41, 42) So when Moses turned his attention to Judah, he well knew that Simeon's portion was included with it. Moreover, the tribe of Simeon came under the general blessing: "Happy you are, O Israel! Who is there like you, a people enjoying salvation in Jehovah?"—Deuteronomy 33:29.

### Of Lasting Aid to Faithful Servants

Deuteronomy is of lasting benefit to Jehovah's servants, and we can draw valuable instruction from it. For instance, during the invasion of Canaan, Joshua implicitly followed counsel now recorded in this book. Similarly, we should readily accept divine guidance. (Deuteronomy 20:15-18; 21:23; Joshua 8:24-29) Jesus Christ quoted from Deuteronomy in successfully resisting Satan. Like Jesus, we acknowledge that man must live on Jehovah's utterances, that we are not to put God to the test and that we must render sacred service to him alone.—Matthew 4:1-11; Deuteronomy 5:9; 6:13, 16; 8:3.

This book identifies Jehovah as a God exacting exclusive devotion. (Deuteronomy 4:24; 6:15) It also declares: "You must love Jehovah your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your vital force." (Deuteronomy 6:5) In essence, then, Deuteronomy exhorts us to serve Jehovah faithfully. May we, therefore, render sacred service to him with heartfelt joy.

# Blessed for Pursuing Peace

THE apostle Peter pointed out that those who would "love life and see good days" must "seek peace and pursue it." (1 Peter 3: 10, 11) This is not always easy, but it results in blessings. To illustrate, consider the following experience of one of Jehovah's Witnesses in Canada.

I had just turned 20 years of age and was about to fulfill a childhood dream. I was recruited into the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Thus began what I assumed to be a full career as a policeman. However, with almost 16 years of service, I resigned.

Before I explain my reason for leaving the force, perhaps some background information will be helpful. My earlier days in the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) were spent in the province of New Brunswick. It was during this time that I met a lovely young woman who became my wife. We were living in a very small apartment that was being cared for by a couple who just happened to be Jehovah's Witnesses. They would often witness to us. However, at that time religion was far removed from my priorities in life. On the other hand, my wife readily accepted the truth and subsequently became a baptized witness of Jehovah. To say the least, I was not impressed. I tried everything to change her mind, but without success. I even invited a local priest over to straighten her out. Looking back on this visit, however, I believe the priest's apparent lack of Scriptural knowledge made the truth even more real to her.

For almost six years I tried to show my wife the foolishness of her belief, yet she stood firm for Jehovah. In time, I mellowed and developed the attitude that she could do whatever she wanted and I would follow my own beliefs. Of course, at that time my aspirations were not Scriptural; I wanted to enhance my career in the RCMP as far as possible. To that end I volunteered for extra duties and tried to become involved in high-profile cases in order to get the attention of my superiors. This was at the sacrifice of time that should have been spent with my family.

I continued to pursue this life-style until the summer of 1978. It was my wife's desire to attend the "Victorious Faith" International Convention in Montreal, in the province of Quebec. I agreed to drive her to Montreal, but I refused to attend any of the sessions. After returning from the first day of the convention, my wife said that the next day's program centered on family life and convinced me that I should attend. To this day I thank Jehovah that I did. I was amazed by the orderly fashion in which this massive group conducted themselves. No smoking, no obscene language, and people seemed to be so happy and at peace with one another. Although I had almost no knowledge of the Bible, I found the talks delivered by the speakers to be very informative and practical. These people were attempting to learn and apply God's laws as set out in the Bible. As a policeman, it was my experience that many

people, although knowing the law, attempted to find loopholes in order to do things their own way. I was now impressed. Shortly after returning home from the convention, I began to study the Bible and was baptized in October 1979.

As I progressed spiritually, I was able to put aside many worldly habits and eventually was given the privilege of serving Jehovah God as a ministerial servant. My putting on a new Christian personality was readily observed by fellow police officers, who, at first, made light of my new belief. (Ephesians 4: 22-24) In time, I was able to turn their jesting remarks into an opportunity to give a witness. In fact, as the word spread throughout the department that I was a witness of Jehovah, many would approach me with questions. I am also very thankful to my supervisors who, out of respect for my faith, assigned duties to me that would not cause me to compromise my relationship with Jehovah.

Yes, everything appeared to be going along quite well. One evening when I returned home from work, my wife was eagerly reading the July 15, 1983, *Watchtower,* in particular the study article on pages 21-6 entitled "Seek Peace and Pursue It." It dealt with avoiding "employment that involves carrying a weapon for use against other humans," as "there is always the danger of incurring bloodguilt by taking life with the weapon." (Isaiah 2:4; Romans 12:17, 18) The article further stated: "As the world becomes increasingly violent we can no longer regard as exemplary a brother who continues in armed employment. He could be allowed six months to make a change. If he does not make a change, he would not be in a position to hold special privileges of service and responsibility in the congregation.—1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:5, 6."

Obviously, I had a very important decision to make. As a family, we discussed the matter and took it to Jehovah in prayer. The following workday I approached my boss and explained my situation. After a lengthy conversation, we concluded that the force would not likely exempt me from wearing a firearm. Consequently, I gave notice that I would be resigning within six months.

I had no idea where to start looking for work, as I had been steadily employed since leaving school. Also, the economic climate was adversely affecting the job market. I did have several contacts in the business community that I had developed over the years, so I decided to call them. Amazingly, in less than one week I was directed to an established organization that was looking for someone to fill a new position as an investigator. I contacted the person responsible for staffing the position and discovered that I was well qualified for the job. The work would be very similar to my duties as a fraud investigator, and I would not be required to carry a firearm. You can imagine that I had my résumé over there in a flash.

When I was interviewed for this job, I decided it was best for me to be candid as to my reason for leaving the RCMP. To my surprise the interviewer (who would be my supervisor) explained that he left his former occupation for reasons of conscience and he could identify with my situation. He also indicated that this position must be filled by someone with unquestionable integrity. He thanked me for being so open and indicated that he was going to recommend me for the position. Within two weeks I was officially hired.

There is no doubt in my mind that Jehovah's spirit assisted me and my family throughout this experience. Perhaps there are some brothers facing a similar situation. I pray that my experience will encourage them to rely on Jehovah and let him work things out his way.—Matthew 6:33.

As the foregoing experience shows, pursuing peace and putting God's Kingdom first in your life will call for effort and may require some personal adjustments. But blessings flow to those applying Scriptural counsel, thus manifesting a spirit similar to that of the psalmist David, who said: "Instruct me, O Jehovah, in your way, and lead me in the path of uprightness."—Psalm 27:11.

# Macao
# —A Record of Endurance

AS THE oldest Western settlement on the China coast, Macao has endured for well over 400 years. But in this land of contrasts, another kind of endurance is seen—an endurance that leads to hope. —Romans 5:3, 4.

Shortly after Columbus discovered America, Portuguese explorer Jorge Alvares came to this small one-mile by three-mile peninsula at the mouth of the Pearl River. Realizing its importance as a gateway to the famed Cathay of Marco Polo's travels, Portugal secured its possession of Macao by signing a treaty with China in 1557. It soon became the busiest trading post in the Far East.

### Its Religious Life

It has been said that the Catholic Church was only a half step behind the explorers and traders. By the time Macao became important commercially, it had also become "the head of Christendom in the East." During its "golden age," the diocese of Macao exercised jurisdiction over the church's interests in all of China and Japan. Today, the majority of Macao's residents, being Chinese, follow no particular religion, other than perhaps the traditional Chinese customs associated with ancestor worship or with Buddhism. They make a great showing at weddings and funerals and on holidays.

It is a paradox, however, that this "head of Christendom in the East" actually derived its name from that of an Oriental deity. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* tells us that the Portuguese name Macau "is supposed to be of Chinese origin, compounded of *Ma,* the name of a local divinity, and *gau,* 'harbour.' " Indeed, *A-Ma* is traditionally the name of a Chinese goddess of sailors and fishermen, and her shrine is the *Ma Kwok* temple. In an attempt to Christianize it, the Portuguese used the official name "A Cidade do Santo Nome de Deus de Macau"—A City of the Holy Name of God of Macao.

If any god can be called the "God of Macao" today, it would probably be the god of "Good Luck." It has been said that Macao boasts more churches than Vatican City and more gaming tables than Monte Carlo. In addition to the casinos with their wide assortment of Chinese and Western games, there are jai alai, horse trotting, greyhound racing and the annual Macao Grand Prix auto and motorcycle races. They attract gamblers from all over the world, and they keep Macao alive financially, greatly affecting, if not dominating, its way of life.

### How True Religion Came to Macao

It was not until 1961 that a glimmer of light about the true God began to shine in this "City of the Holy Name of God." This was the beginning of a more important record of endurance.

A lone witness of Jehovah from Portugal came to Macao with her husband, who was in the armed forces. Her efforts at preaching among the Portuguese-speaking people did not meet with much

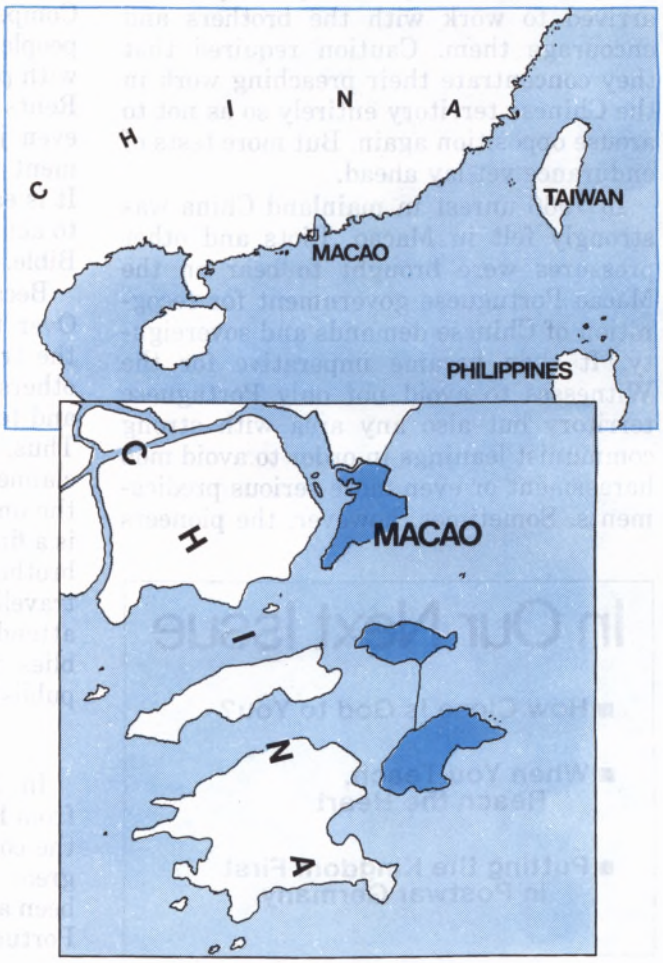
success, and new "friends" soon avoided her. The one person who showed interest and started studying the Bible did not speak Portuguese, and progress was slow. Soon, however, the sister's husband was transferred out of Macao, and no one was left to carry on the preaching work.

Because of their proximity, Macao allows Chinese residents of Hong Kong to come and go without any special visas or permits. So, in February 1963, two Chinese special pioneers (full-time preachers) came over from Hong Kong to reopen the Kingdom-preaching work, especially among the predominantly Cantonese-speaking population. Though this was "virgin territory," the message about the true God and his heavenly Kingdom government did not receive a hearty welcome. Most people were just too busy and too burdened with trying to make ends meet to take an interest in spiritual things. Nevertheless, an interested family from Indonesia was contacted. By means of a mixture of Cantonese, English and Indonesian, eventually the older boy, Johnnie, and his sister Shirley did accept the Bible's truth. Now Shirley and her husband, who came from Hong Kong in 1975, also serve as special pioneers in Macao.

Though two proclaimers of the good news resulted fairly soon from the initial witnessing in Macao, the years that followed proved to be ones that called for unusual endurance. Tests and discouragement were to come from many directions. Between 1963 and 1968, nine special pioneers were sent to Macao, but by August 1968, only one remained to help the small group, then numbering five. What had happened?

### Pressures From Many Sides

Since there was just a small isolated group of Witnesses in Macao, only shortened versions of the weekly meetings were held. Response to the Kingdom message was slow, as was the pace of life. This caused some of those who came to help to become discouraged, if not homesick. So they returned to Hong Kong. Others left for personal reasons.



One day in 1965, the Portuguese secret police in Macao appeared unexpectedly at a Witness family's home where a Bible meeting was in progress. They confiscated all the Bibles and Bible literature and warned everyone about attending such meetings. Because the work of Jehovah's Witnesses was banned in Portugal at that time, the Macao authorities arrested and deported two special pioneer sisters. Needless to say, this was quite a blow to the small group of new ones who had begun to serve Jehovah.

Still, the few Witnesses remained firm. A few months later, other special pioneers arrived to work with the brothers and encourage them. Caution required that they concentrate their preaching work in the Chinese territory entirely so as not to arouse opposition again. But more tests of endurance yet lay ahead.

In 1966 unrest in mainland China was strongly felt in Macao. Riots and other pressures were brought to bear on the Macao Portuguese government for recognition of Chinese demands and sovereignty. It then became imperative for the Witnesses to avoid not only Portuguese territory but also any area with strong communist leanings in order to avoid mob harassment or even more serious predicaments. Sometimes, however, the pioneers would unexpectedly find themselves confronted by groups of menacing and fanatical people. Silent prayers and alertness provided the escape in many such close calls.

Since then, things have subsided considerably. That, along with official recognition of Jehovah's Witnesses in Portugal, meant that the few Witnesses in Macao could carry on their work with little interference from either the Chinese or the Portuguese authorities.

Job and housing shortages, due to the influx of refugees and other immigrants, posed another obstacle for the Witnesses. Competing for what work there is, most people work many hours at meager wages, with perhaps only two days off per month. Rents are so inflated that a tiny room or even just a bunk-bed space in an apartment would eat up most of their income. It is easy to see why many find it difficult to act on what they have learned from the Bible.—Matthew 6:33; 13:22.

Because of this, progress has been slow. Over the years some who have accepted the truth have had to move away, while others have fallen victim to the pressures and temptations of this system of things. Thus, even today, there are only 11 proclaimers of the good news associated with the one congregation in Macao. Yet there is a fine, happy and positive spirit, and the brothers are not discouraged. Visits by traveling overseers from Hong Kong and attendance at circuit and district assemblies there are highlights that the few publishers find most faith strengthening.

### Recent Expansion

In August 1979 a missionary couple from Portugal came to Macao to work with the congregation. This has proved to be a great blessing. For not only have they been able to give a thorough witness to the Portuguese community but they are also

## In Our Next Issue

- **How Close Is God to You?**
- **When You Teach, Reach the Heart**
- **Putting the Kingdom First in Postwar Germany**

learning Cantonese to work among the Chinese population.

This, however, has not gone unnoticed by the Catholic Church. Warnings about the "poison" of Jehovah's Witnesses appeared in church publications, and Catholics were advised not to talk to the missionaries unless they were "prepared." But such warnings have had just the opposite effect. They opened up many opportunities for interesting conversations, and people who in the past showed no interest asked for Bible discussions.

Recently, the Society purchased a missionary home to serve as living quarters for the missionary couple and a special pioneer. The "spacious" living room also serves as a fine Kingdom Hall. In March 1983, 38 persons were present to observe the Memorial of Christ's death. To help these interested ones on a regular basis, all meetings are held in the evenings because many of them have to work seven days a week. About 20 come to the public Bible lecture each week; many of them also attend the other meetings. The few brothers faithfully prepare all the meeting parts week in and week out without a word of complaint. What a fine example of endurance!

Over the past 20 years or so, many, many hours have been spent in placing tens of thousands of pieces of Bible literature in the hands of Macao residents, both Portuguese and Chinese. Though the increase has been small numerically, the few, faithful Witnesses here continue to build a fine record of endurance. They remember Jehovah's words to Ezekiel: "You must speak my words to them, regardless of whether they hear or they refrain." (Ezekiel 2:7) This they are doing, and will continue to do, to Jehovah's praise.

# Questions From Readers

■ First Timothy 4:10 calls God "a Savior of all sorts of men, especially of faithful ones." So will any unfaithful ones be saved?

No. The point is that salvation is assured particularly for those exercising faith.

The apostle Paul advised Timothy that a benefit of godly devotion is that it "holds promise of the life now and that which is to come." (1 Timothy 4:6-8) Then Paul wrote: "For to this end we are working hard and exerting ourselves, because we have rested our hope on a living God, who is a Savior of all sorts of men, especially of faithful ones."—1 Timothy 4:10.

God holds out to all men the possibility of salvation. As Paul wrote: "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a corresponding ransom *for all.*" (1 Timothy 2:5, 6) But who will respond to the ransom, choosing life rather than death? (Deuteronomy 30:19, 20) Some people reject the Christian message of salvation. In others, the 'seed' takes root and grows for a while, but later they let opposition, material interests or other concerns come between them and salvation. —Matthew 13:3-8.

So while the salvation God holds out is available potentially to everyone, the way things turn out will prove that salvation is particularly for "faithful ones." The apostle Peter thus urged: "For this reason, brothers, all the more do your utmost to make the calling and choosing of you sure for yourselves; for if you keep on doing these things you will by no means ever fail." —2 Peter 1:10; John 3:16.