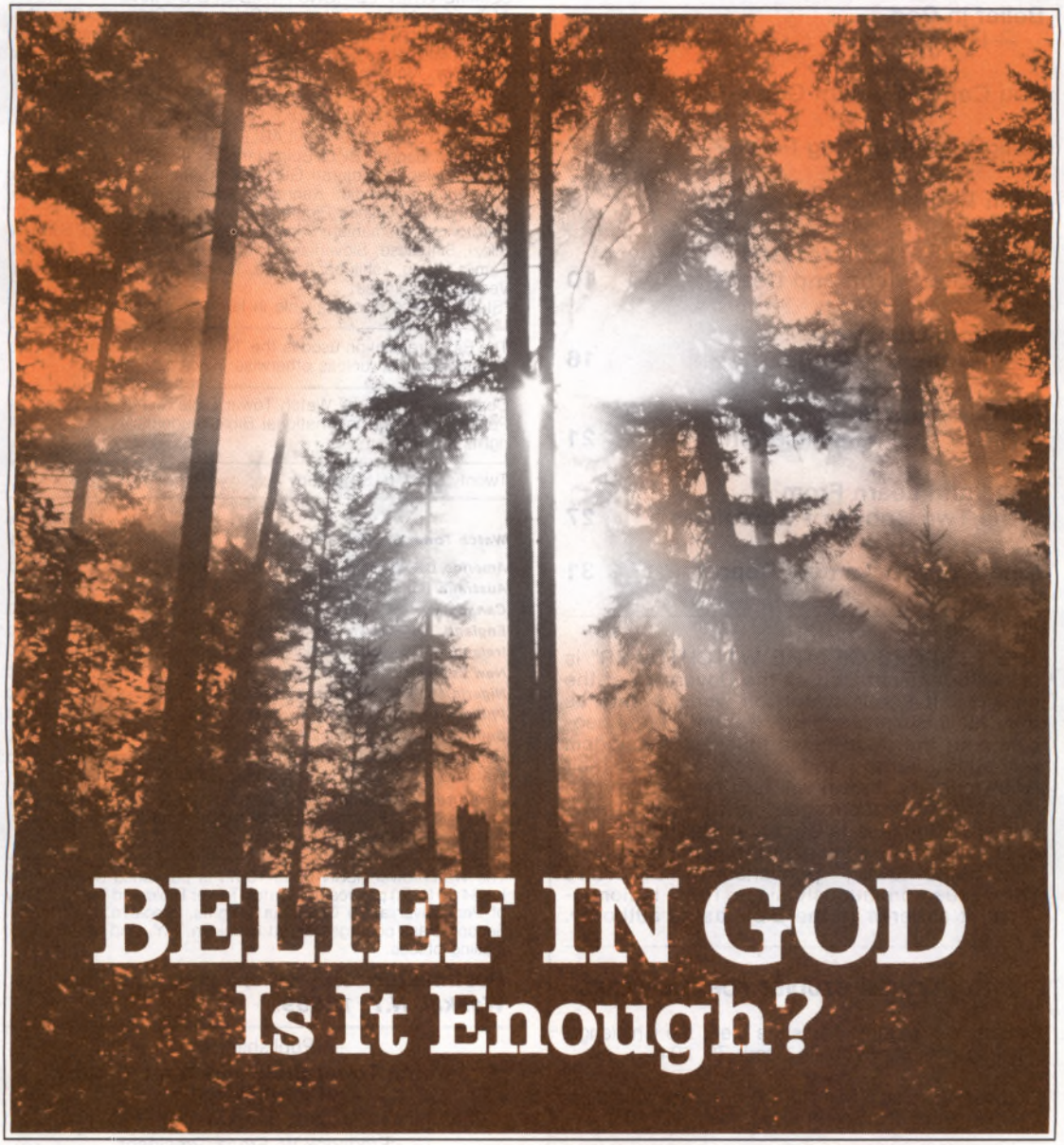
September 1, 1985

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



The Watchtower®

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

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Vol. 106, No. 17

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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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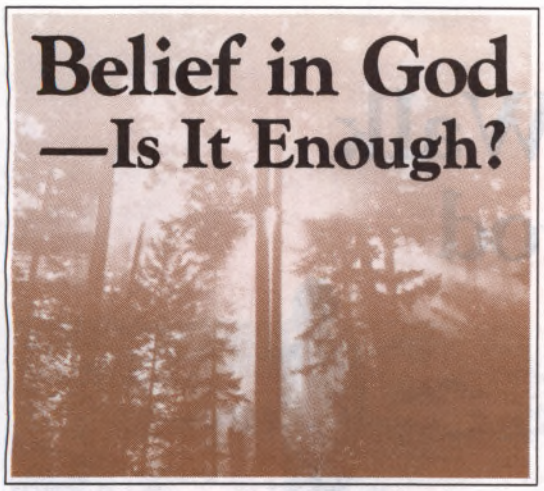
Belief in God —Is It Enough?



"DO YOU believe in God or a universal spirit?" asked famous pollster George Gallup, Jr. Perhaps to the surprise of some, *95 percent* of both the adults (over 30 years of age) and the teenagers polled said yes! But to what extent does belief translate into action? Apparently very little. For Mr. Gallup reported that when some young adults were asked, "To what degree do your religious beliefs affect your daily thinking or acting," a mere 26 percent said, "a great deal."*—*The Search for America's Faith,* by George Gallup, Jr., and David Poling.

Obviously, then, mere belief in God is not enough. Wrote the disciple James: "You believe there is one God, do you? You are doing quite well. And yet the demons believe and shudder. . . . Faith apart from works is inactive." (James 2:19, 20) On the other hand, the Bible tells of individuals who went beyond mere belief. Enoch, for example, "kept walking with the true God." (Genesis 5:24) The relationship between Enoch and his God thus became so close that it was as if they walked together! But why was Enoch favored with this unique relationship? For one thing, though he lived in the midst of a degenerate religious atmosphere where shocking "ungodly deeds" were commonplace, Enoch followed a righteous way of life. With courage and frankness he exposed the evil ways of his contemporaries, prophesying: "Look! Jehovah came with his holy myriads, to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly concerning all their ungodly deeds that they did in an ungodly way, and concerning all the shocking things that ungodly sinners spoke against him."—Jude 14, 15.

Walking with God put Enoch in grave danger. His enemies apparently schemed to assassinate him and end his irritating prophesying. The God with whom he walked, however, intervened. Says the Bible: "By faith Enoch was transferred so as not to see death, and he was nowhere to be found because God had transferred him." Yes, "God took him" in death, apparently sparing him a violent death at the hands of his enemies.—Hebrews 11:5, 13; Genesis 5:24; compare John 3:13.

Noah was another man who "walked with the true God." Like Enoch, "Noah was a righteous man. He proved himself faultless among his contemporaries." (Genesis 6:9) And this in spite of the fact that in his day loose conduct was prevalent and violence ran rampant. Noah, though, displayed godly fear and stood out as "a preacher of righteousness." God therefore preserved him and his family when he brought a deluge upon that ancient world! —2 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 11:7; Genesis 6: 5, 11.

Does God still extend the invitation to walk with him? Yes indeed! The apostle Paul said that God "is not far off from each one of us," if we but "grope for him and really find him." (Acts 17:27) But how can we do this? And what does walking with God really entail?

* Thirty-nine percent said "some," 14 percent said "hardly any," and 12 percent said "not at all."

You Can Walk With God

"WILL two walk together unless they have met by appointment?" asked the prophet Amos. (Amos 3:3) But can you make an "appointment" to walk with God?

Yes! For, in fact, God takes the initiative by extending to us the invitation to be his friends. He does not coerce us into such friendship. Rather he draws us to him by his magnificent qualities. Why, creation alone provides abundant testimony to God's goodness! "His invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship." (Romans 1:20) Or as the apostle Paul said at Acts 14:17: "He [God] did not leave himself without witness in that he did good, giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts to the full with food and good cheer."

Men such as Enoch and Noah were therefore eager to accept God's offer of friendship. They perceived that God was "worthy . . . to receive the glory and the honor." (Revelation 4:11) So they responded to God's invitation and approached him in faith. "Without faith it is impossible to please him well," said Paul, "for he that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (Hebrews 11:6) So by seeking out a relationship with God, you, too, can make an "appointment" with Him. And, said the psalmist, "Happy is the one you [God] choose and cause to approach."—Psalm 65:4.

Since a friendship with God is made on his terms, one must study his Word, the Bible, in order to find out what is "the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:2) "Really, how could I ever [understand Isaiah's prophecy] unless someone guided me?" asked a sincere seeker of God back in Bible times. And perhaps you feel the same way. However, God saw to it that a disciple named Philip approached this man and explained the

prophecy. (Acts 8:30-35) Does God show any less interest in sincere seekers of him today? Why, the mere fact that you are reading this Bible-based journal demonstrates God's interest in you! Would it not be wise to allow those from whom you obtained this journal to help you to learn even more about God?

Seeing the Invisible One

As you grow in your knowledge of God, he will become more and more real to you. You will soon appreciate that he is not some nameless bundle of energy but rather a Person with a name! Says the Bible at Psalm 83:18: "That people may know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth." As a Person, Jehovah has qualities, likes and dislikes—even feelings! —Compare Exodus 34:6, 7; Psalm 78:40.

God also has righteous standards. For example, Proverbs 3:32 says: "The devious person is a detestable thing to Jehovah, but His intimacy is with the upright ones." Joseph was one of the "upright ones." The Bible tells of how the wife of his Egyptian master, Potiphar, repeatedly pleaded with Joseph to have immoral relations with her. Yet he refused, saying, "How could I commit this great badness and actually sin against God?"—Genesis 39:9.

Jehovah was real to Joseph. He had a healthy fear of Him and acted as though he was in His literal presence. Joseph was like the psalmist who said: "I have placed Jehovah in front of me constantly. Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be made to totter." (Psalm 16:8; compare Proverbs 3:5, 6) Moses had similar faith. He "continued steadfast as seeing the One who is invisible."—Hebrews 11:27.

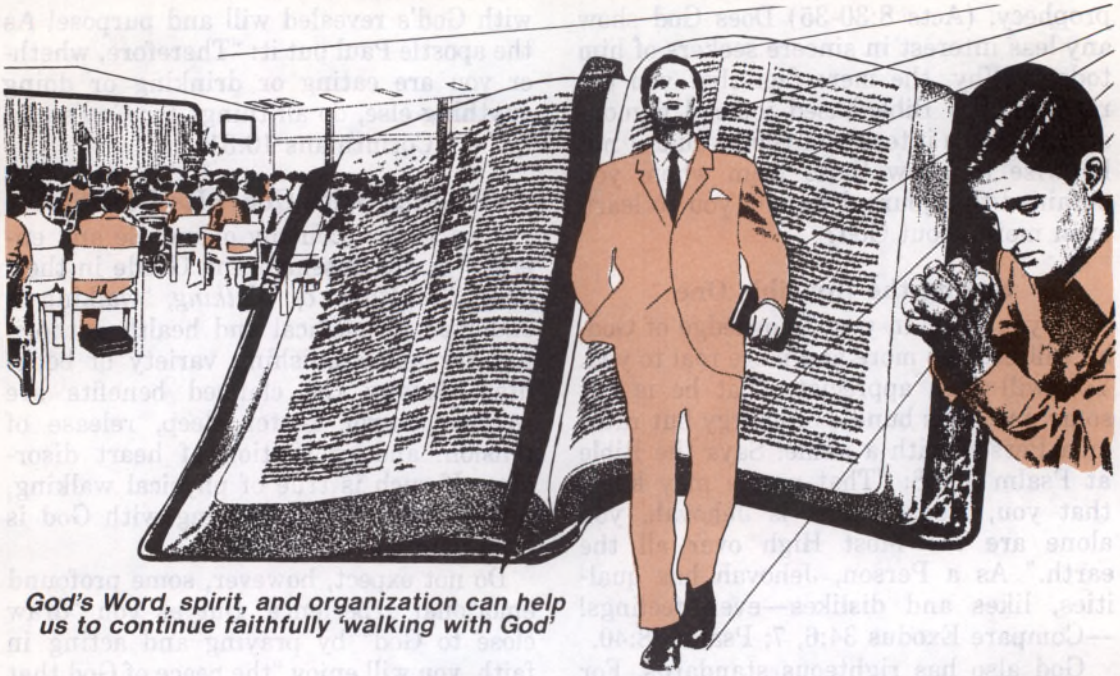
Walking with God, therefore, means more than taking in knowledge. It means adopting a way of life that harmonizes with God's revealed will and purpose! As the apostle Paul put it: "Therefore, whether you are eating or drinking or *doing* anything else, do all things for God's glory."—1 Corinthians 10:31.

Walking With God—Its Benefits

"For all its economy of muscle and energy," wrote Sussman and Goode in their book *The Magic of Walking,* "walking is endorsed by medical and health authorities for an astonishing variety of benefits." Among the claimed benefits are weight control, better sleep, release of tension, and prevention of heart disorders. If such is true of physical walking, we can expect that walking with God is even more advantageous.

Do not expect, however, some profound emotional experience. But as you "draw close to God" by praying and acting in faith, you will enjoy "the peace of God that excels all thought." (James 4:8; Philippians 4:6, 7) One woman, for example, used to engage in heavy drinking and drug use because of constant depression. She also experimented with a number of sects of Christendom. But then she began studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. Said she: "While nothing else I tried could relieve my depression, understanding Jehovah's purposes gave me a real purpose in living." Yes, as a person begins walking with God, he is led in a path that is sure to bring him spiritual and emotional benefits.—Compare Isaiah 30:21.

Another benefit was pointed out by a discerning woman named Abigail. She told King David: "When man rises up to pursue you and look for your soul, the soul of my lord will certainly prove to be wrapped up in the bag of life with Jehovah your God." Imagine that! When threatened by his enemies, David's life would be under Jehovah's protective custody as if it were a precious object carefully wrapped



God's Word, spirit, and organization can help us to continue faithfully 'walking with God'

up for safekeeping. Although this does not necessarily imply that physical protection will always be given God's servants, He is sure to protect the eternal interests of those who walk with him today!—1 Samuel 25:29; compare Psalm 116:15.

This, though, does not mean that you will be exempt from problems common to mankind, as if Christians lead some sort of charmed life. Solomon observed that "time and unforeseen occurrence befall" all mankind. (Ecclesiastes 9:11) The apostle Paul, for example, suffered from "a thorn in the flesh," possibly some sort of physical infirmity. (2 Corinthians 12:7; Galatians 4:13-15) His companion Timothy likewise suffered from "frequent cases of sickness." (1 Timothy 5:23) Similarly, Christians today have their share of illnesses and even occasional feelings of discouragement or depression.

Further, Jehovah God at times permits momentary trials so as to refine us, as he did when allowing Joseph to be imprisoned. (Psalm 105:17-19) Some may suffer a premature death at the hands of violent persecutors as did Stephen. (Acts 7:57-60) But never should God's friends feel abandoned. (Compare 2 Corinthians 4:8, 9.) "For God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name." (Hebrews 6:10) Said one Christian woman who was sustained through years of unjust imprisonment: "I am deeply convinced that none of those who zealously endure in Jehovah's service will experience disappointment. With my whole heart I have trusted Jehovah and his assuring words, 'I will by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you.'"—Hebrews 13:5.

Help in Keeping Up Our Fight

Keeping such a faithful course is not easy. Satan and his wicked spirit forces are intent on entrapping us. (Ephesians 6:12) Then there is the present wicked system of things with its attractive lures.

A Christian in the first century named Demas was sidetracked because "he loved the present system of things." (2 Timothy 4:10) Finally, there is our own sinful flesh with its inclination toward evil. (Romans 7:21-23) A constant fight against these influences is needed if we are to continue walking with God.

God, though, has made three powerful instruments available to help us: (1) His Word, the Bible, which provides needed guidance. (Psalm 119:105) (2) His visible organization, the Christian congregation, which is carrying out God's spiritual feeding program. (Matthew 24:45-47; Ephesians 4:11-16) The Watch Tower Society, the publisher of this magazine, is closely associated with that organization. (3) His holy spirit, which we receive through prayer, study of the Scriptures, and association with his people. It would be a serious mistake to neglect any one of these provisions. The prophet Micah exhorts us, "Be modest in walking with your God." (Micah 6:8) That means recognizing our limitations and being totally dependent upon God.

Indeed, our walking with God can be compared to a little girl who is walking with her father during a powerful storm. If she were to let go of his hand or decide to go her own way, she would soon get lost. But if she holds on tightly, she can walk safely and confidently with her father. We, too, must take care to submit to God's direction as given through his Word and organization. Independence can only get us hopelessly lost. By modestly walking with God, however, we can be led safely through the oncoming storm of Armageddon and survive into a promised new order. There, death and pain will be things of the past. (Revelation 16:16; 21: 3, 4; 2 Peter 3:13) Will you, therefore, accept God's gracious invitation to walk with him?

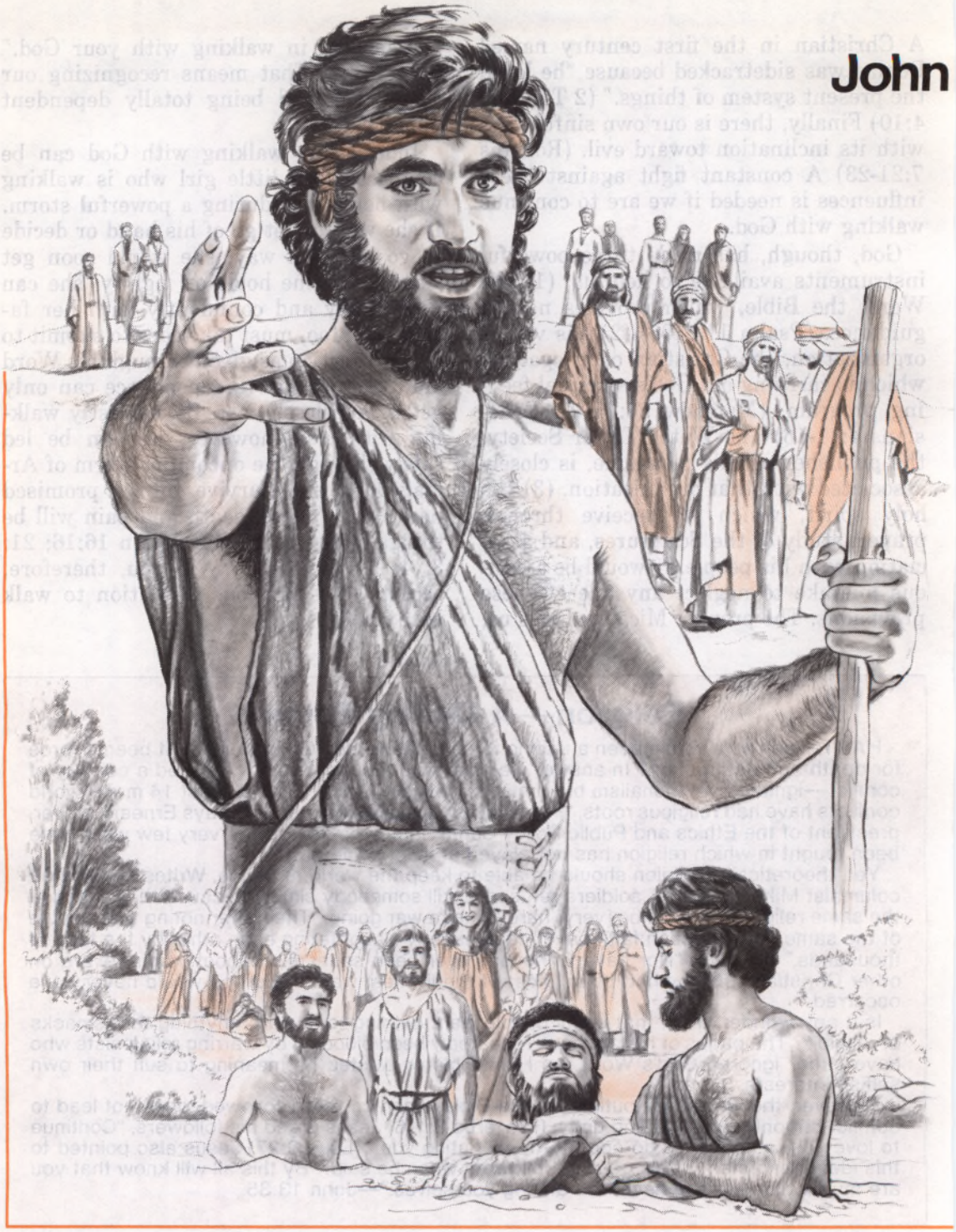
Religion—A Uniting Force?

HAS religion as a whole been a uniting force in the world? Or, rather, has it been a force for death and destruction? In answer we must say, the world has witnessed a century of conflict—ignited by nationalism but fueled by religion. Since 1909, at least 14 major world conflicts have had religious roots. "From ancient times to the present," says Ernest Lefever, president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C., "very few wars have been fought in which religion has not played at least some part."

Yet, theoretically, religion should be able to keep the world at peace. Writes syndicated columnist Mike Royko: "If soldiers refused to kill somebody simply because they practice the same religion, it would be [very] hard to get a war going." Then after noting that people of the same non-Christian faith have "been eagerly slaughtering each other by the tens of thousands," he says: "Nor have Christians ever been squeamish about waging wars on other Christians. If they had been, most of the liveliest wars in Europe would never have occurred."

Is it any wonder, then, that many people want nothing to do with anything that smacks of religion? The pages of history have repeatedly been bloodied by warring religionists who have either ignored God's Word the Holy Bible or twisted its meaning to suit their own selfish interests.

However, the way of life outlined in the Bible, when correctly followed, does not lead to conflict but only to peace and unity. (Proverbs 3:1-6) Jesus urged his followers, "Continue to love your enemies, to do good to those hating you." (Luke 6:27) Jesus also pointed to this identifying mark of his genuine followers when he said: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves."—John 13:35.


John

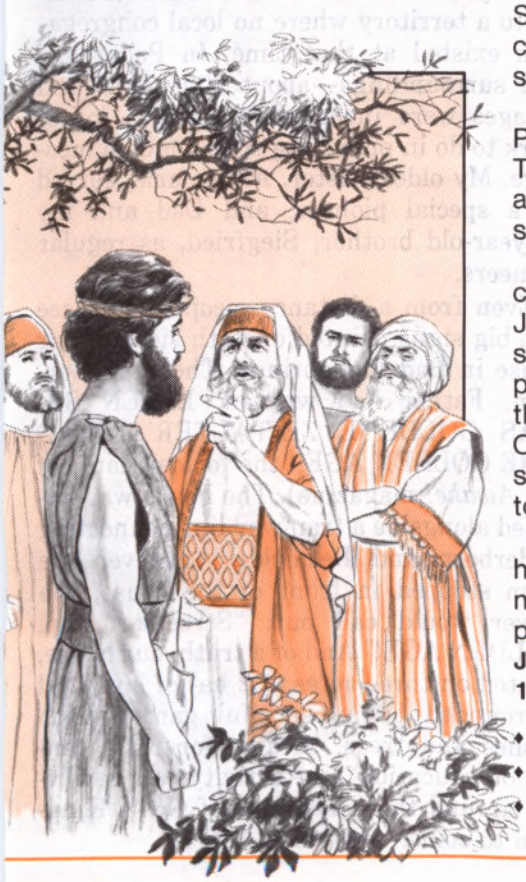
Prepares the Way

SEVENTEEN years have passed since Jesus was a child of 12 questioning the teachers in the temple. It is the spring of the year 29 C.E., and everybody, it seems, is talking about Jesus' cousin John, who is preaching in all the country around the Jordan River.

John is indeed an impressive man, both in appearance and in speech. His clothing is of camel's hair, and he wears a leather girdle around his loins. His food is insect locusts and wild honey. And his message? "Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near."

This message excites his listeners. Many realize their need to repent, that is, to change their attitude and to reject their past course of life as undesirable. So from all the territory around the Jordan, and even from Jerusalem, the people come out to John in great numbers, and he baptizes them, dipping them beneath the waters of the Jordan. Why?

John baptizes people in symbol, or acknowledgment, of their heartfelt repentance for sins against God's Law covenant. Thus when some religious Pharisees and Sadducees come out to the Jordan, John condemns them. "You offspring of vipers," he says. "Produce fruit that befits repentance."



Due to all the attention John is receiving, the Pharisees send out priests and Levites to him. They ask: "Who are you? that we may give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

John explains: "I am a voice of someone crying out in the wilderness, 'Make the way of Jehovah straight,' just as Isaiah the prophet said." John is preparing the way by getting people in a proper heart condition to accept the Messiah, who will become King. Of this One, John says: "The one coming after me is stronger than I am, whose sandals I am not fit to take off."

Thus John's message, "the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near," serves as a public notification that the ministry of Jehovah's appointed King, Jesus Christ, is about to begin. **John 1:6-8, 15-28; Matthew 3:1-12; Luke 3:1-18; Acts 19:4.**

- What kind of man is John?
- Why does John baptize people?
- Why could John say the Kingdom has drawn near?

My Family's Love for God Despite Prison and Death

As told by Magdalena Kusserow Reuter

MY BROTHER Wilhelm was to be executed by the Nazis the following morning. His crime? Conscientious objection to service in the German army. He was 25 years old and well aware of his impending execution by firing squad. During that evening of April 26, 1940, he wrote us the following farewell letter, after which he peacefully went to bed and slept soundly.

"Dear parents, brothers, and sisters:

All of you know how much you mean to me, and I am repeatedly reminded of this every time I look at our family photo. How harmonious things always were at home. Nevertheless, above all we must love God, as our Leader [Führer] Jesus Christ commanded. If we stand up for him, he will reward us."

In his final night our dear Wilhelm was thinking of us—his Christian parents and his five brothers and five sisters, an unusually large and harmonious family. Through the turmoils of time, as a family we have seen to it that our love for God has always come first.

Our "Golden Age" Home

My parents, Franz and Hilda Kusserow, had been zealous Bible Students, or *Bibelforscher* (Jehovah's Witnesses), from the time of their baptism in 1924, the year I was born as their seventh child. The years of youth that we 11 children spent with our parents were a marvelous time. Since my father retired from secular work early in life, he was able to devote much time to us. This he did in harmony with Bible principles. Not a day passed without our receiving Biblical counsel and instruction. Our parents recognized that children will not automatically become praisers of Jehovah just because their parents are.

In 1931 Father followed the Watchtower Society's invitation to move his large family to a territory where no local congregation existed at that time. In Paderborn and surroundings—about 200 towns and villages were included—we had a lot of work to do in preaching the Kingdom message. My oldest sister, Annemarie, served as a special pioneer, and Dad and my 15-year-old brother, Siegfried, as regular pioneers.

Even from a distance, people could see two big signs painted on both sides of our house in Bad Lippspringe. There, in German, Father had written: LESEN SIE 'DAS GOLDENE ZEITALTER' (READ 'THE GOLDEN AGE,' the former name of the *Awake!* magazine). The house was situated alongside a tramway line connecting Paderborn and Detmold. Whenever the tram stopped in front of the house, the driver would call out: "Streetcar stop, GOLDEN AGE!" And of a truth, our house, located on three acres (1.2 ha) of land and surrounded by a beautiful garden with bushes and trees, became for us a center of education and activity, all revolving around the golden age of God's Kingdom to come.—Matthew 6:9, 10.

All in Harmony

A family blessed with so many children required management. There were often vegetables and fruits to harvest. The chickens and the ducks had to be cared for, and the family lamb needed its feeding bottle. Dachshund "Fiffi" and the cat "Pussi," also beloved family "members," needed attention. So Father scheduled the work of housekeeping, gardening, and caring for the domestic animals. Each child shared in the various chores, which were rotated weekly between the boys and the girls.

Dad also included time for recreation, which included music, painting, and a number of other things, all supervised by Mother, a professional teacher. We had five violins, a piano, a reed organ, two accordions, a guitar, and several flutes. Yes, not only did our parents supervise our school homework but they also made music and singing a part of our educational program.

What I consider of most importance today is that there was not a single day that passed without our receiving some spiritual instruction, whether at the table receiving answers to our questions or by means of learning by heart different Bible texts. Father also insisted that we learn to express ourselves correctly. In other words, we had an ideal family life, better than any story could tell. Of course, we also had our weaknesses, and Father would often discipline us with words that hurt more than any physical punishment. He always taught us to apologize for our errors and to be forgiving to others. We did not realize then how important all this training was going to be.

The last photo ever taken of the entire family. Left to right, rear: Siegfried, Karl-Heinz, Wolfgang, Father, Mother, Annemarie, Waltraud, Wilhelm, Hildegard. Below: Paul-Gerhard, Magdalena, Hans-Werner, and Elisabeth

The youngest member of the family, little Paul-Gerhard, was born in 1931. He was welcomed by his brothers, Wilhelm, Karl-Heinz, Wolfgang, Siegfried, and Hans-Werner, as well as by me and my sisters, Annemarie, Waltraud, Hildegard, and Elisabeth.

Tribulation Begins

About this time Adolf Hitler was coming to power in Germany. It seemed that Father knew that problems were on the way, and more and more he prepared us for the difficult years to come. He showed us from the Bible that some faithful Witnesses would be persecuted, thrown into prison, and even killed. (Matthew 16:25; 2 Timothy 3:12; Revelation 2:10) I remember thinking that this would not necessarily happen to our family. Little did I know what the future held for us.

The first blow was the death of my brother Siegfried by accidental drowning at the age of 20. Then in the spring of 1933 we came under scrutiny by the National

The family house located at the streetcar stop "GOLDEN AGE"

Socialists, now commonly known as the Nazis. The secret police ordered that the signs on our house be painted out. But the paint in those days was so poor that you could still see "GOLDEN AGE" shining through! And the tram driver continued to call out: "Streetcar stop, GOLDEN AGE!"

Gradually the pressures became stronger. Fellow Witnesses, severely mistreated by the Gestapo, sought refuge in our home. Father's pension was cut because he refused to say "Heil Hitler." Between 1933 and 1945, the Gestapo searched our house some 18 times. But did all of this intimidate us children? My sister Waltraud remembers: "Even with persecution running high, we drew strength from our parents, who regularly studied the Bible with us. We still followed Father's schedule."

The Youngest Under Pressure

With butterflies in our stomach, the youngest of us went to school each day. The teachers demanded that we salute the flag, sing Nazi songs, and raise our arms while saying "Heil Hitler." Because we refused, we were made objects of derision. But what helped us remain steadfast? We all agree that the secret was that Father and Mother daily discussed our individual problems with us as they occurred. (Ephesians 6:4) They showed us how to act and how to defend ourselves with the Bible. (1 Peter 3:15) Often we held practice sessions, asking questions and giving answers.

My sister Elisabeth recalls a severe test she had: "A most difficult moment for us that we will never forget was when, in the spring of 1939, the school principal accused us children of being spiritually and morally neglected and arranged by court to have us hauled off from school and abducted to an unknown place. I was 13, Hans-Werner 9, and little Paul-Gerhard only 7 years old."

Just recently, over 40 years later, Paul-Gerhard received a letter from an official whose conscience was still bothering him. He wrote: "I was the policeman who took you and your brother and sister to the reform school. I handed you over that same evening." Imagine, those three defenseless children abducted from school without a word to our parents!

Mother tried to find out where they had been taken. At last, after some weeks, she located them in a reform school in Dorsten. The director soon realized that the children were well mannered and that they did not belong there, so after several months they were released. But they failed to arrive home. What had happened?

My brothers and sister had been intercepted by the Gestapo and taken from Dorsten to Nettelstadt near Minden and placed in a Nazi training school. Visits by relatives, of course, were forbidden, but mother tried in every possible way to strengthen her children, including sending hidden letters. Once she was even able to meet and speak with them secretly. Later the children were separated and taken to different places. They maintained integrity, however, and refused to salute the flag or to say "Heil Hitler." They pointed to

Acts 4:12, where of Jesus Christ it is said: "There is no salvation [*Heil,* in German] in anyone else."

Entire Family Put to the Test

In the meantime, Father served two prison sentences. On August 16, 1940, he was released from prison, only to be sent eight months later for his third sentence to the penitentiary at Kassel-Wehlheiden. But during this short period of freedom, what a joy it was for him to be able to baptize three of us—19-year-old Hildegard, 18-year-old Wolfgang, and me, then 16.

Father was reimprisoned at the same time that Mother and Hildegard were incarcerated. I was also taken to court, and at 17 years of age was sentenced to solitary confinement in the juvenile prison at Vechta. There I had hardly anything to do. Arising early and just sitting around the whole day looking at whitewashed walls was not easy. I tried to remember as much as possible of what I had learned and was amazed at the spiritual riches I found. I recalled entire Kingdom songs and worked out Bible themes. How thankful I was for all the careful training that my parents had given me!

When my first six months in prison were about to end, the prison director called me to her office and explained that I would be released if I signed a paper renouncing my beliefs as false teaching. Again I had the privilege of defending my faith. Her reply was silence. Then she said with a sad voice that she would have to return me to the Gestapo. Four months later I was transported to the Ravensbrück concentration camp.

My mother and Hildegard were still in another prison. I met them later when they were assigned to Ravensbrück. Then Mother and I were able to stay together until the end of the war. Annemarie and Waltraud were also serving time in prison. Every member of the family had now been either put behind bars or abducted. The large house in Bad Lippspringe, once filled with the laughter and singing of carefree children, was now empty. The signs on both sides of the house had been painted over again and again. The GOLDEN AGE had faded from sight.

Ravensbrück—Friends and Foes

When I arrived at Ravensbrück, in spite of my apprehension I was looking forward to meeting other Witnesses. But how would I find them among all those thousands of prisoners? Part of the reception procedure was delousing. The prisoner who examined my head asked in a low voice "Why are you here?" "I am a *Bibelforscher,*" I answered. Joyfully she replied, "A heartfelt welcome, my dear sister!" I was next taken to the *Bibelforscher* block where Sister Gertrud Poetzinger took me under her wing.

The next day I was called to the camp commander's office. On his desk was a big Bible opened to Romans chapter 13. He ordered me to read the first verse, which says: "Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities." After I had finished he said: "And now you will explain to me why you do not want to obey the superior authorities." I answered: "In order to explain this, I would have to read the whole chapter." With that he closed the Bible abruptly and then dismissed me. Thus I started my three and a half years in Ravensbrück.

Apart from the brutality of the SS guards, the winters, perhaps, were the worst part of that experience. We used to stand out on parade in the freezing cold for the official head count every morning. That started at 4 a.m. and could last anywhere from two to five hours! We were not allowed to put our hands in our pockets,

and I got chilblains on my hands and feet and needed medical attention.

But we also used those wasted hours on parade to build one another up spiritually. When the SS guards were out of earshot, we would all repeat a text from mouth to mouth and thus center our minds on God's Word. On one occasion we all learned Psalm 83, repeating it one after the other, being careful that no guard caught us. This spiritual aid helped us to endure. But let us return to the spring of 1940.

The First Martyr

My older brother Wilhelm was sentenced to death and executed publicly in the hospital garden in Münster. He was the family's first martyr. Mother and I visited him shortly before his death. We were impressed by his resolute composure. He wanted Mother to take his overcoat, saying, "I don't need it now."

Hitler turned down Wilhelm's third appeal against the death sentence and personally signed his execution warrant. But even as Wilhelm's eyes were being bound, he was offered a last chance to renounce his faith. He refused. His last wish? That they should shoot straight. His court-appointed counsel later wrote the family: "He died immediately, meeting death standing erect. His attitude impressed the court and all of us deeply. He died in accordance with his convictions."

Mother immediately went to Münster to claim the body. She was determined to bury him in Bad Lippspringe. As she said, "We will give a great witness to the people who knew him." She added, "I will make Satan pay for killing my Wilhelm." She applied for Father to have four days leave from the prison to attend the funeral, and to our surprise it was granted!

Father gave the prayer at the funeral, and Karl-Heinz, the next eldest son, spoke Biblical words of comfort to a large crowd of mourners gathered at Wilhelm's grave. Some weeks later, without a trial, Karl-Heinz was also sent to a concentration camp, first to Sachsenhausen and later to Dachau.

A Second Martyr

My other older brother, Wolfgang, had taken a stand for the true God when he got baptized, even though he knew it could also lead to his death. But he could not forget the outstanding examples of steadfastness on the part of his father and brothers, indeed those of the entire family. On March 27, 1942, a year and a half after his baptism, he himself was sitting in a cell in Berlin writing the following farewell letter:

"Now, as your third son and brother, I must leave you tomorrow morning. Do not be sad, for the time will come when we will be together again. . . . How great our joy will then be, when we are reunited! . . . Now we have been torn apart, and each of us must stand the test; then we will be rewarded."

Hitler had decided that death by shooting was too good for conscientious objectors. He ordered beheading by guillotine. As our family's second martyr, Wolfgang was beheaded in Brandenburg penitentiary. He was only 20 years of age.

Love for God Still Comes Foremost

What has become of the family members who survived the Nazi era? Waltraud and Hans-Werner were the first to arrive back in Bad Lippspringe at the end of World War II. Hildegard, Elisabeth, and Paul-Gerhard followed. Father, with a broken leg, set out for home nestled between sheep riding on a livestock wagon.

"We were so happy to have Father free and back with us again," Waltraud recalls. "But he was very sick. In June 1945, a nurse brought our seriously ill brother

Karl-Heinz back from Dachau concentration camp. In July 1945, Annemarie, in a roundabout way, arrived back from Hamburg-Fuhlsbüttel penitentiary. The last members of the family, Mother and Magdalena, after many difficulties returned from Ravensbrück in September 1945. How much we had to talk about!"

Did this period of persecution and family loss deaden our love for God? By no means! Father, although sick, did not have a quiet moment until he had reorganized the work, including house-to-house preaching activity, and had arranged for holding meetings. While setting up a family schedule, which provided care for the sick and also saw to the need of making a living, we did not forget that our love for God should come foremost. We considered the possibilities of full-time service. So it was that Elisabeth and I became special pioneers in 1946, while Annemarie and Paul-Gerhard served as regular pioneers.

The Aftereffects

But the aftereffects of persecution on our health soon became apparent. In October of 1946, at the age of 28, Karl-Heinz died of tuberculosis. In July of 1950 my beloved father finished his earthly course in the conviction that his works would go along with him. My mother, who likewise had a heavenly hope, died in 1979. (See Revelation 14:13.) Elisabeth had to quit her full-time service but continued faithful until her death in 1980. In 1951 Mother had taken up pioneer service and, although over 60 years old, was able to continue for three and a half years. And what a great joy for her to see, before her death, most of her grandchildren take up the full-time ministry.

My youngest brother, Paul-Gerhard, worked in the printery at the German Bethel until he was invited to attend the missionary school of Gilead. He graduated with the 19th class in 1952. After several further years of full-time service, he was forced to quit when his wife became seriously ill. Even though she is still bedridden, he serves as an elder, and their daughter Brigitte is now serving as a special pioneer. Their son Detlef has been pioneering for 14 years. Elisabeth's two children, Jethro and Wolfgang, have also been in the full-time service for many years.

In 1948 I, too, went to serve in the Wiesbaden Bethel. Within the Bethel family I felt secure, just like at home. We worked hard, often working well into the night, unloading huge shipments of books from Brooklyn headquarters. In 1950 I married George Reuter, a fellow Bethel worker. With that, a new period began for me, with wonderful experiences at the side of my husband in circuit, district, and missionary service in Togo, Africa, in Luxembourg, and now in southern Spain.

And the rest of the family? In 1960, Annemarie, Waltraud, and Hildegard, together with Mother, moved to a large German city where they could work with English- and Italian-speaking congregations. Hildegard, who had survived nearly five years of prisons and concentration camp, finally succumbed to death in 1979. Annemarie and Waltraud have carried on with their self-sacrificing spirit and devoted work.

Truly, our family, whose love for God came first, has experienced the words of Jesus that "the Devil will keep on throwing some . . . into prison," testing the faithfulness of God's servants "even to death." But we have never forgotten what Jesus also said: "He that conquers will by no means be harmed by the second death." —Revelation 2:10, 11.

Therefore, we have every reason to look forward to being united in the coming "GOLDEN AGE"—no longer just painted on a wall. Under God's Kingdom it will be reality!—Revelation 20:11-21:7.

Kingdom Ministers Meet the Challenge

"What, then, is Apollos? Yes, what is Paul? Ministers through whom you became believers."—1 CORINTHIANS 3:5.

THE authority of ministers of religion is being challenged today. More and more, this is the case as the political element of this world turns against religion, including the "Christian" religion, regarding it as a profit-seeking racket. Even graduates of religious seminaries are discounted as duly authorized ministers and are put under ban in nations that are turning antireligious. Yes, the world empire of false religion is under assault and is threatened with an earth-wide attack that will spell its annihilation. The divine Author of true worship foretold this and fixed his own due time for the fulfillment of his prophecy. Creature life in the whole universe will benefit from this stupendous event!

[2] Yet, irreligion will not long remain to dominate the earth, but the vindicated Creator of the universe will remain! Yes, and the true religion of this deathless and Most High God will remain! For that matter, although earth's billions deny the facts, right now practicers of God's pure worship are alive and active on earth. And the following centuries-old statement is true today: "His invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship, so that they are inexcusable." —Romans 1:20.

[3] When those words were written during the first century of our Common Era, Jehovah God had his ministers on the earth. Thus the apostle Paul could write: "What, then, is Apollos? Yes, what is Paul? *Ministers* through whom you became believers, even as the Lord granted each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God kept making it grow."—1 Corinthians 3:5-9.

[4] Jehovah must also have ministers on earth today. But he is not using the religious ministers of Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion. In fact, they will soon be out of a job. That will be when Babylon the Great itself is put out of existence. Foretelling this, Revelation 16:19 says: "The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and Babylon the Great was remembered in the sight of God, to give her the cup of the wine of the anger of his wrath."

[5] What, then, about people who remain the loyal adherents of the religious systems served by the professional ministers

1. (a) Religiously, what is being questioned today, and why? (b) What empire is being threatened, and what will happen to it?
2. As to religion, what will remain and what will not?

3, 4. (a) How can it be proved that Jehovah has ministers on earth? (b) How do we know that the religious ministers of Babylon the Great will soon be out of a job?
5. What happened in ancient Babylon in 539 B.C.E., and what about ministers and other supporters of the religions of Babylon the Great?

of Babylon the Great? Well, consider what happened on that night of 539 B.C.E. when King Belshazzar and his invited lords were praising Babylonian gods at an outstanding feast in defiance of the besieging Medes and Persians. First, notice was served on the revelers when they saw miraculous handwriting on the wall of the banquet hall and heard the interpretation given by Jehovah's prophet Daniel. Then, with Babylon's fall that very night, the king and apparently the other banqueters extolling false gods were slain by the invading conquerers. (Daniel, chapter 5) A similar disaster awaits ministers and those remaining loyal to the religious systems of Babylon the Great.

God's Ministers Urgently Needed

[6] No one can reasonably question the fact that we are now living in the most critical period of human history since the global Flood of Noah's day. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) So it is vital that there now be genuine ministers of the God of Noah. Surely, as Jehovah gave warnings to the people of Noah's time and to the revelers at Belshazzar's feast, He must have had an urgent message for the human family since 1914, when the first world war broke out. Actually, on a wide public scale, for some four decades God's servants had pointed to that year as marking the end of the Gentile Times, regarding which Jesus said: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."—Luke 21:24, *King James Version.*

[7] For some 53 years after 1914, or until the Six-Day War of 1967, earthly Jerusalem continued to be trodden down by non-Jewish nations. Evidently, however, Jesus was not referring finally to the Jewish Jerusalem of today but to what that city represented up until 607 B.C.E. And what did it represent? Why, the Kingdom of

6. (a) In this critical period, what must God have for the human family? (b) When did the Gentile Times end, and what did Jesus say about this?

7. (a) Until when was earthly Jerusalem trodden down by non-Jewish nations? (b) To what was Jesus referring finally when he spoke of Jerusalem's being "trodden down of the Gentiles"?

As Jehovah used Daniel to serve notice on revelers at Belshazzar's feast, so He has ministers to deliver an urgent message today

Jehovah God by means of his anointed King of the royal house of David!—Luke 1:32; 1 Chronicles 29:11.

[8] Jesus Christ was the one to whom Jehovah God would give the kingdom of his forefather David of old. Before Pilate as judge, Jesus said that His Kingdom was not of this world, meaning that it would be heavenly. (John 18:36) Logically, then, Jesus' future installation in the Kingdom at the end of the Gentile Times would take place in the invisible heavens. Thus his enthronement would be invisible to human eyes, and that is why neither we nor the Gentile nations literally saw him enthroned in his rightful, God-given Kingdom in 1914. Those nations certainly did not believe that this event took place, despite the fact that it had been proclaimed by Jehovah's people since the 1870's.

[9] Without regard for the Kingdom message, in the autumn of 1914 the nations became engulfed in war. As foretold at Psalm 2:1-12, they proved themselves to be Jesus' enemies, refusing to "kiss" the newly installed King as a sign of their submission and allegiance. Hence, it became necessary to carry out Psalm 110: 1, 2, where we read: "The utterance of Jehovah to my Lord is: 'Sit at my right hand until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet.' The rod of your strength Jehovah will send out of Zion, saying: 'Go subduing in the midst of your enemies.'"

[10] Jewish opposers displayed their enmity toward Jesus' apostles when Jesus sat down at God's right hand to await the time to start ruling amid his enemies. (Acts 4:24-26) Correspondingly, it was among enemies that the glorified Jesus Christ began his rule at the close of the Gentile Times in 1914. Thus in this 20th century, as in the past, it has been among enemies that Jehovah has had bearers of his message, his genuine ministers of the Kingdom. They are his witnesses.—Isaiah 43:10-12.

8. To whom would Jehovah give the kingdom of David, and why would humans not be able to see the foretold enthronement?
9. (a) What did the nations do without regard for the Kingdom message? (b) In view of what the nations did in 1914, what became necessary?
10. (a) Under what circumstances did Jesus begin ruling in 1914? (b) Who have been representing Jehovah in the 20th century?

Defending Our Qualification as Ministers

[11] All along, it has been necessary for genuine God-ordained Kingdom ministers to defend their authorization for the ministry. That certainly has been true of Jehovah's Witnesses in this 20th century. Their qualification as duly ordained ministers of God has been challenged and discounted. By whom? Particularly by Christendom's theological-seminary graduates who receive a certificate of ordination and become paid clergymen. They consider themselves duly schooled and adequately qualified to be the exclusive professional ministers of the God of the Bible.

[12] The situation was similar in the first century C.E. In the Roman province of Galatia, even the inspired writer of about half the books of the Christian Greek Scriptures met with a development that challenged his qualification as an apostle of Jesus Christ, for it put in question the correctness of what he was teaching as Christianity. So he was obliged to tell the Galatians: "I marvel that you are being so quickly removed from the One who called you with Christ's undeserved kindness

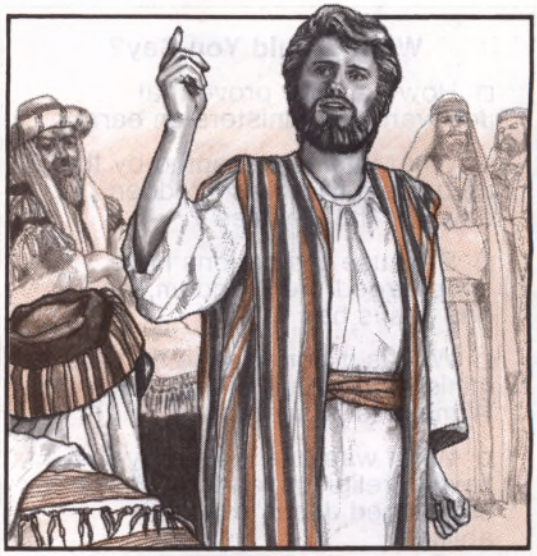
11. By whom has the authorization of Jehovah's Witnesses as God-ordained Kingdom ministers been challenged?
12. The authorization of what prominent first-century Christian was challenged, and how was anyone bringing a different sort of good news to be viewed?

over to another sort of good news. But it is not another; only there are certain ones who are causing you trouble and wanting to pervert the good news about the Christ. However, even if we or an angel out of heaven were to declare to you as good news something beyond what we declared to you as good news, let him be accursed. As we have said above, I also now say again, Whoever it is that is declaring to you as good news something beyond what you accepted, let him be accursed."—Galatians 1:6-9.

[13] True, that writer, the apostle Paul, did not first learn Christian teachings by personal contact with Jesus Christ or His 12 apostles. Later, Paul did spend some time with the apostle Peter, or Cephas. (John 1:42; Galatians 1:18, 19) But in defense of his being a qualified minister of the good news from God by Christ, Paul could tell the unstable Galatian Christians: "Yes, when they came to know the undeserved kindness that was given me, James and Cephas and John, the ones who seemed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of sharing together, that we should go to the nations, but they to those who are circumcised." (Galatians 2:9) So those Galatians should have asked themselves: If Jesus' disciples James, Peter, and John recognized Paul as a bearer of the true good news, what basis do we have for challenging his message and moving away from it?

[14] But what about Jehovah's people today? Well, since a person like Paul was obliged to defend his qualifications as a minister of God and Christ, why should we be surprised if we, as dedicated, baptized witnesses of Jehovah, are challenged and have to defend our standing as Kingdom ministers? Of course, as in Paul's case, such baseless challenging of us proves nothing.

13. Why should the Galatians not have questioned Paul's authority?
14. Why is it not strange that the ministerial status of Jehovah's Witnesses is challenged?



Religious leaders were too proud to accept even Jesus Christ as a minister of God

Even Jesus Was Challenged

[15] The Lord Jesus Christ himself was challenged and confronted with the unwillingness of his own people to accept him as an authorized minister of God. For instance, we read: "When by now the festival [of tabernacles] was half over, Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching. Therefore the Jews fell to wondering, saying: 'How does this man have a knowledge of letters, when he has not studied at the schools?'" Jesus met that challenge head-on, declaring: "What I teach is not mine, but belongs to him that sent me. If anyone desires to do His will, he will know concerning the teaching whether it is from God or I speak of my own originality. He that speaks of his own originality

15. Who, ranking higher than the apostles, was also challenged as to his teaching authority, and to whom did he ascribe his authority?

What Would You Say?

- How can you prove that Jehovah has ministers on earth?
- What was represented by the Jerusalem that was "trodden down of the Gentiles"?
- Because the nations have disregarded the Kingdom, what has Jesus had to do?
- Why is it not strange that the ministerial status of Jehovah's Witnesses is challenged?
- What was overlooked by the Jewish religious leaders who challenged Jesus' teaching ability?

is seeking his own glory; but he that seeks the glory of him that sent him, this one is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him."—John 7:14-18.

16 The religious leaders of Judaism looked upon Jesus Christ as a mere Galilean. Of course, they did not think that he could not read because of not having attended school, especially something like a theological seminary. After all, Jesus already had shown that he could read the text of the Hebrew Scriptures. (Luke 4:16-21) What proved unacceptable to such Jews of Judea and Jerusalem was that this former carpenter was not a theologian and could not be ranked with the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees of their nation. Why, then, should he publicly presume to know what the Hebrew Scriptures meant and how they applied, speaking with such authority as he did? This is what made those Jews too deaf spiritually to hear the ring of the divine truth. They were too proud to accept what came from a man who had not graduated from a theological school.

16. Why did the religious leaders of Judaism feel they had grounds for questioning Jesus' teaching ability?

"Taught by Jehovah"

17 Those worldly-wise Jews overlooked the One who really had been teaching Jesus Christ. Why, Jesus' own skill as a teacher had come from "the greatest teacher of all," Jehovah God! (Job 36:22, *Today's English Version*) Referring to God in this capacity, Jesus said: "When once you have lifted up the Son of man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing of my own initiative; but just as the Father taught me I speak these things." (John 8:28) So Jesus proved himself to be the finest pupil in the universal school of the highest Teacher in existence. This was a credit to the One who taught him. No wonder the Nazarenes said of their former townsman: "Where did this man get this wisdom and these powerful works?"—Matthew 13:54.

18 To understand the Bible, we want and need the best teacher possible. And that teacher is the Inspirer of that unsurpassable Book. Speaking to those who were members of that Teacher's visible, earthly organization during his earthly lifetime, Jesus said: "No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him; and I will resurrect him in the last day. It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by Jehovah.' Everyone that has heard from the Father and has learned comes to me." (John 6:44, 45) Jesus was there quoting Isaiah 54:13, which reads: "And all your sons will be persons taught by Jehovah, and the peace of your sons will be abundant."

17. In connection with Jesus Christ, the Jewish religious leaders overlooked what Teacher, and what kind of scholar was Jesus?

18. (a) What sort of teacher should we want? (b) What did Jesus say about the greatest Teacher and those taught by Him?

[19] However, we ask: The "sons" of whom were to be "persons taught by Jehovah"? That prophetic promise was made to a figurative "woman," a prospective mother of certain "sons," or children. This "woman" is the one addressed at Isaiah 54:1, where it is said: "'Cry out joyfully, you barren woman that did not give birth! Become cheerful with a joyful outcry and cry shrilly, you that had no childbirth pains, for the sons of the desolated one are more numerous than the sons of the woman with a husbandly owner,' Jehovah has said."

[20] Since Jehovah is the One who addresses this "woman" and is to be the Teacher of her "sons," he must be her figurative Husband, and she must be his womanlike heavenly organization. Her "sons," or children, are students of "the greatest teacher of all." Of course, it is vital that those "sons," Jesus' anointed followers, and their companions, the "great crowd," continually apply the instruction provided by Jehovah. (Revelation 7:9) That surely is one way to heed Paul's admonition: "Keep testing whether you are in the faith, keep proving what you yourselves are." (2 Corinthians 13:5) If dedicated, baptized Christians continue to do this and remain diligent students of the greatest Teacher, they should have the needed qualification as Kingdom ministers authorized by Jehovah. We shall next see how God's ministers prove their qualification.

19. The "sons" of whom were to be taught by Jehovah?

20. In view of 2 Corinthians 13:5, what must dedicated Christians continue to do, and what bearing does this have on their qualification as Kingdom ministers?

God's Ministers Prove Their Qualification

"And who is adequately qualified?"—2 CORINTHIANS 2:16.

IN TODAY'S religiously divided world, this question may be asked in all sincerity: Who actually is an authorized minister of God? Similarly, the apostle Paul asked: "Who is adequately qualified for these things?" When challenged, Paul and his colaborers could say, "We are"! (2 Corinthians 2:16, 17) But today, who have a solid basis, the right, and the courage to reply, "We are"?

[2] Before answering that question, let us consider these words of Paul to Christians in Corinth: "But thanks be to God! For . . . wherever we go he uses us to tell others about the Lord and to spread the Gospel like a sweet perfume. As far as God is

1. In today's religiously divided world, what question may be raised in all sincerity?

2. What is the essence of Paul's words at 2 Corinthians 2:14-17?

concerned there is a sweet, wholesome fragrance in our lives. It is the fragrance of Christ within us, an aroma to both the saved and the unsaved all around us. To those who are not being saved, we seem a fearful smell of death and doom, while to those who know Christ we are a life-giving perfume. But who is adequate for such a task as this? Only those who, like ourselves, are men of integrity, sent by God, speaking with Christ's power, with God's eye upon us. We are not like those hucksters—and there are many of them—whose idea in getting out the Gospel is to make a good living out of it."—2 Corinthians 2:14-17, *The Living Bible;* see *The Watchtower,* May 1, 1944, pages 133-4.

[3] Peddling God's Word for selfish profit—how repulsive such a thought! Paul did not seek financial gain by preaching that Word so as to live a life of ease, eventually to retire from the ministry and take it easy the rest of his days. He was willing to make tents as sideline work to provide funds for himself and help his associates in Jehovah's service. (Acts 18:1-4) Paul did not become a financial burden to those to whom he preached the good news. So he could ask the Corinthian Christians: "Did I commit a sin by humbling myself that you might be exalted, because without cost I gladly declared the good news of God to you?" (2 Corinthians 11:7) That question had to be answered with a positive no!

[4] Today Jehovah's Witnesses imitate the apostle's fine example in not peddling the priceless Word of God but in making it available to all. They do not commercialize such a holy thing. Thus they have no paid clergy, their public speakers do not charge for lectures, and a collection plate is never passed at their meetings. If anyone desires to contribute money for the work, he can drop any amount, even one like the widow's "two small coins of very little value," into a contribution box at the Kingdom Hall or elsewhere. (Luke 21:1-4) Such freewill contributions are used to defray expenses and not to enrich any individual. Even private homes are freely opened for meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses.—Philemon 1, 2.

3. (a) How should we react to the thought of peddling God's Word for selfish profit? (b) What did Paul do to avoid becoming a financial burden to those to whom he preached?

4. How do Jehovah's Witnesses imitate Paul's example in connection with God's Word?

"Adequately Qualified"

[5] But who today has qualified Jehovah's Witnesses to carry on after such a Scriptural pattern despite all the persecution and opposition they constantly experience? No one can account for this but the Individual that adequately qualified Paul and his companions for sacred service. Please note the purity of Paul's motive, in contrast with a religious peddler's motivation, as he explained: "As out of sincerity, yes, as sent from God, under God's view, in company with Christ, we are speaking." (2 Corinthians 2:17) This is the way Jehovah's Witnesses are speaking today. But are we recommending ourselves as ministers? Do we need to publish letters of recommendation from others?

[6] Paul disavowed qualification for his ministry as something he developed. He said: "Our being adequately qualified issues from God, who has indeed adequately qualified us to be ministers of a new covenant." (2 Corinthians 3:4-6) Unlike Paul, the clergy of Christendom claim to be "adequately qualified" because of having

5. Who has qualified Jehovah's Witnesses for sacred service?

6. (a) Why do Christendom's clergy think they are "adequately qualified"? (b) But what is the basis for a person's having adequate qualification for the true Christian ministry?

graduated from theological seminaries. So they deny that those who are not seminary graduates are qualified ministers having authority to teach. But Paul's special schooling in Judaism did not qualify him for the Christian ministry pertaining to the new covenant. Nor did Jesus establish any theological seminary for his 12 apostles or anyone else to attend. No less so today, a person's being adequately qualified for the true Christian ministry must issue from Jehovah, the greatest Teacher. Of course, such a minister would have to furnish proof beyond all denial.

Jesus taught his disciples to be ministers, but he did not establish any theological seminary

"Who Gave You This Authority?"

7 Religious leaders challenged the right of even God's Son to preach the good news and perform miracles. In the temple, "the chief priests and the older men of the people came up to him while he was teaching and said: 'By what authority do you do these things? And who gave you this authority?'" (Matthew 21:23) They refused to draw the conclusion the Jewish ruler Nicodemus reached when he told Jesus: "Rabbi, we know that you as a teacher have come from God; for no one can perform these signs that you perform unless God is with him."—John 3:1, 2.

8 Jesus could have told his challengers, 'Let my works speak for themselves!' After more than three years of his public career, the chief priests and older men had many signs on which to base a correct conclusion as to Jesus' identity and right to perform miracles and teach the truth about God's Kingdom. They simply were too stiff-necked to accept all the evidence Jehovah was furnishing to prove that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

9 In view of what happened in Jesus' case, it does not surprise Jehovah's Witnesses that their qualification as authorized ministers of his Father is called into question by religious leaders today. Since those who challenged Jesus' authority ignored his many miraculous works, he raised a question that put them on the spot. And his present-day disciples can do the same thing in the case of those who willfully overlook the works of those disciples.

7. In what way did the religious leaders differ from Nicodemus in the way they viewed Jesus' authority?

8. After more than three years of Jesus' ministry, how did Jewish leaders react to proof of his identity and authority?

9, 10. (a) Why should it not surprise Jehovah's Witnesses that their qualification as ministers is questioned today? (b) How did Jesus deal with religious leaders who challenged his authority, and what effect did this have?

[10] When the chief priests and older men asked Jesus, "Who gave you this authority?" he did not pose an abstract question but said: "I, also, will ask you one thing. If you tell it to me, I also will tell you by what authority I do these things: The baptism by John, from what source was it? From heaven or from men?" The account adds: "But they began to reason among themselves, saying: 'If we say, "From heaven," he will say to us, "Why, then, did you not believe him?" If, though, we say, "From men," we have the crowd to fear, for they all hold John as a prophet.' So in answer to Jesus they said: 'We do not know.' He, in turn, said to them: 'Neither am I telling you by what authority I do these things.'" (Matthew 21: 23-27) Today, Jehovah's Witnesses can question the clergy Scripturally in a way that has a similar effect.*

[11] From 1876 onward, Jehovah's people served notice upon the world, and particularly upon Christendom, that the Gentile Times would end in the fall of 1914. (Luke 21:24, *King James Version*) The clergy could not ignore this preliminary work of almost 40 years—a work corresponding to that of John the Baptizer. Those clergymen waited eagerly to pounce upon this journal's editor should 1914 pass without any outstanding events to correspond with those about which he warned. But, oh, how they were silenced when on July 28, 1914, peace was shattered by the outbreak of World War I!

[12] The war's devastation and the withdrawal of many men from agricultural pursuits brought food shortages. Earthquakes shook various parts of the earth, causing much damage and suffering. In 1915 an earthquake at Avezzano, Italy, killed 29,970, and a tremendous quake in 1920 brought death to 200,000 in Kansu Province, China. In 1923, more than 140,000 died in the Great Kanto earthquake in Japan. On the heels of the war came the Spanish flu that in one year killed more victims than had four years of war. Not to be passed over was the persecution of Jehovah's servants during that first world conflict, climaxed by the unjust nine-month imprisonment of the president and the secretary-treasurer of the Watch Tower Society and six of their co-workers.

[13] Since the end of World War I, Jehovah's Witnesses have asked Christendom's clergy: 'Are the catastrophic events that have afflicted our earth from 1914 onward a fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy at Matthew 24:3-13?' If those clerics honestly said yes, they would have to admit that Jesus Christ came into his heavenly Kingdom in 1914. Naturally, since Jesus said that 'the world would behold him no more' and he now is an immortal spirit person, his "coming," or "presence," is invisible. (John 14:19; Matthew 24:3, *KJ;* 1 Peter 3:18) But admitting all of this would debar the clergy from arguing that the world-shaking events of 1914-18 were merely a routine flare-up of nations in the course of history.

[14] Moreover, if the clergy of Christendom admitted that the events of 1914-18 marked the start of the end for the old

* See, for example, paragraphs 13 and 14 below.

11. What work did Jehovah's people do prior to 1914, and how were their critics silenced?
12. What hardships accompanied and followed World War I?
13. What have Jehovah's Witnesses asked Christendom's clergy, and what would these critics have to admit if they answered honestly?
14. (a) If religious leaders made the right admission, in what work would this oblige them to share? (b) What makeshift for the Kingdom would they have to renounce, but what course have they pursued?

As qualified ministers, Jehovah's Witnesses preach the good news of the established Kingdom. Do you?

system of things, they would be obliged to acknowledge the other features of "the sign" of Jesus' "presence" and would have to take part in the fulfillment of his words: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." (Matthew 24:14) That would mean preaching, not the Gospel they have preached for centuries, but the good news of the Kingdom established in heaven at the close of the Gentile Times in 1914. They would have to renounce the League of Nations as "the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth" and view it and its successor, the United Nations, as 'the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place.' (Matthew 24:15, *KJ*) But down to the year 1985, the clergy of Christendom refuse to brand the League of Nations and the United Nations as that "abomination," or "disgusting thing."

[15] So Christendom's clergy refuse to take a stand for Jehovah's Kingdom by Jesus Christ. For failing to support it, they will be destroyed in the "great tribulation" just ahead. But unlike them, Jehovah's Witnesses have abandoned Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, and are preaching the Kingdom message in 203 lands. This unparalleled work is an outstanding feature of "the sign" proving that in 1914 Jesus was installed as heavenly King, to rule amid his enemies.—Matthew 24:3, 14, 21; Psalm 110:1, 2; Revelation 18:1-5.

15. What future awaits the clergy, but what have Jehovah's Witnesses been doing?

Any Need for a Recommendation?

[16] Are we baselessly recommending ourselves as Jehovah's anointed witnesses? Or are we adroitly maneuvering matters so as to establish such a recommendation for Jesus' "other sheep"? (John 10:16) Paul did not do such a thing but could say to those Corinthians who became Christians due to his tireless efforts: "Are we starting again to recommend ourselves? Or do we, perhaps, like some men, need letters of recommendation to you or from you? You yourselves are our letter, inscribed on our hearts and known and being read by all mankind. For you are shown to be a letter of Christ written by us as ministers, inscribed not with ink but

16. What questions arise as to recommendation, and what did Paul have to say about this?

with spirit of a living God, not on stone tablets, but on fleshly tablets, on hearts." —2 Corinthians 3:1-3.

17 With the help of Jehovah's spirit, Paul wrote a number of Bible books and made many converts to Christianity. So he certainly proved to be adequately qualified for the Christian ministry. In a modern parallel, especially since this journal was first published in 1879, the anointed remnant of Christ's disciples, though not inspired as was Paul, have produced much Bible literature. Since 1920, they have published thousands of millions of books, booklets, magazines, and tracts in many languages. This literature has been distributed at reduced cost, much of it being given free to the poor. The Watch Tower Society has also arranged for free Bible lectures and has sent missionaries to unserved territories around the globe. Tens of thousands have responded to the printed and vocal message and have symbolized their dedication to Jehovah God by being baptized, particularly since 1935 when it was first made clear that an unlimited "great crowd" of Jesus' "other sheep" can look forward to eternal life in a restored paradise on earth.—Revelation 7:9-17; Luke 23:43.

18 Consequently, what if the clergy challenge the anointed remnant to produce certificates as Doctors of Divinity? Why, these servants of Jehovah can provide far more significant evidence! They can now point to over two and a half million "other sheep" earth wide and can say: 'There is our letter of support!' They can take up Paul's words and declare to members of the "great crowd": "You yourselves are our letter, inscribed on our hearts and known and being read by all mankind." (2 Corinthians 3:2) Let Christendom's clergy read that living letter made up of dedicated, baptized Christians who are serving Jehovah God day and night at his temple and who are helping to 'preach this good news of the kingdom in all the earth for a witness to all the nations.' (Matthew 24:14) Like the anointed remnant, they are proving themselves to be adequately qualified for the Christian ministry.

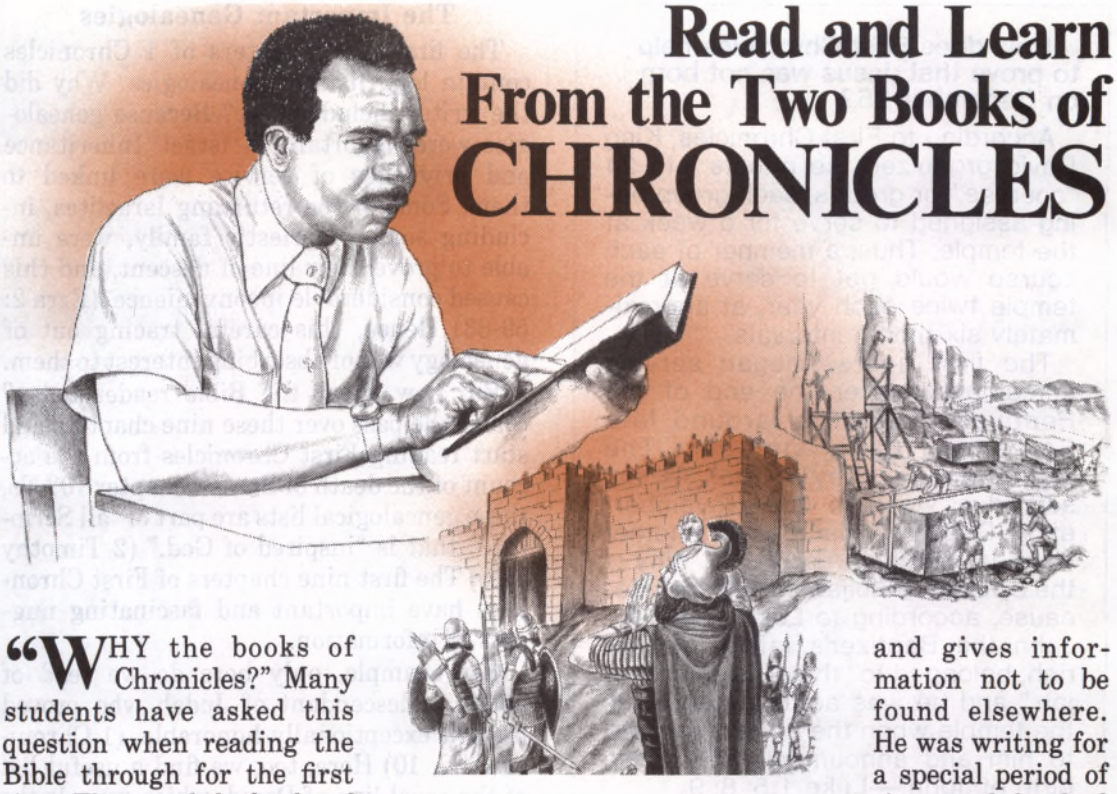
19 This unique letter of recommendation will not be wiped out in the impending "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at the symbolic place called Har-Magedon. (Revelation 16:14-16) Rather, it will be guarded and preserved by the Omnipotent God for display in the post-Har-Magedon system of things under Christ the King. What a powerful letter that "great crowd" will be to the billions of human dead whom Jehovah God, by Jesus Christ, will then resurrect from the memorial tombs all around the earth! So keep on writing, you anointed remnant! And keep on assisting them, you "great crowd" of the Fine Shepherd's "other sheep"!

17. Why can it be said that Paul was adequately qualified for the ministry, and in this regard, what may be said of Jehovah's Witnesses?
18. If challenged to prove their qualification as ministers, to what can the anointed remnant point?
19. What unique letter of recommendation will be preserved through Har-Magedon?

What Are Your Comments?

- How do Jehovah's Witnesses imitate Paul in not peddling God's Word?
- What is the basis for a person's being adequately qualified for the true Christian ministry?
- If religious leaders made the right admission, in what work would they be obliged to share?
- The anointed remnant can point to what unique letter proving that they are adequately qualified ministers?

Read and Learn From the Two Books of CHRONICLES



"WHY the books of Chronicles?" Many students have asked this question when reading the Bible through for the first time. They read the books of Samuel and Kings and see the history of God's people under the kings presented in a vivid, masterly fashion. Now they face the two books of Chronicles: nine long chapters of genealogies followed by a repetition of much of what they have read before. *Eerdmans' Bible Handbook* comments: "On the face of it, Chronicles seems to repeat in duller and more moralistic fashion what we already have in 2 Samuel and Kings."

But that is only on the surface. Just as the four Gospels in the Christian Greek Scriptures all cover the same general material, but each gives a different perspective and adds information unique to itself, so the writer of the books of Chronicles, while covering the same general material as previous books, has his own perspective and gives information not to be found elsewhere. He was writing for a special period of time and he had certain, well-defined goals. When we understand this, we can enjoy reading the books and learn lessons that will help us today.

They Filled a Need

The books of Chronicles were written, probably by Ezra, for the benefit of the Jews who returned to the Promised Land at the end of the 70 years' captivity in Babylon. After telling about the rule of David and Solomon and the subsequent division of God's people into two nations, the writer concentrated on the southern kingdom of Judah and presented its history in a way that would provide lessons for the returned exiles. He traced the development of the important royal line of David, and in so doing he answered vital questions: Why did Jehovah allow his chosen nation to be exiled

How does First Chronicles help to prove that Jesus was not born on December 25?

According to First Chronicles, King David organized the priests into 24 "courses," or groups, each group being assigned to serve for a week at the temple. Thus, a member of each course would get to serve at the temple twice each year, at approximately six-month intervals.

The first course began serving immediately after the end of the Festival of Booths, around late September/early October. The eighth group, named after Abijah, served a week in late November/early December, and then another week in late June/early July. Why is the division of Abijah significant? Because, according to Luke's account, John the Baptizer's father, Zechariah, belonged to "the division of Abijah," and he was actually serving in the temple when the angel appeared to him and announced the coming birth of John.—Luke 1:5, 8, 9.

As Luke's record shows, John was conceived very soon after this. Hence, he was born nine months later, either early September or early April. Luke's record also shows that Jesus was six months younger than John. (Luke 1:26) Thus this detail from the book of Chronicles shows that, rather than being born at the end of December, Jesus was born either early March, or early October. Other scriptures show that the latter is the correct time.—For more details, see *The Watchtower,* June 15, 1954, page 382.

in a pagan land? And how could the returned Jews (as well as true Christians today) avoid making the mistakes that led to this punishment?

The Important Genealogies

The first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles contain long lists of genealogies. Why did the writer include these? Because genealogies were important in Israel. Inheritance and privileges of service were linked to them. Some of the returning Israelites, including some of priestly family, were unable to prove their line of descent, and this caused considerable inconvenience. (Ezra 2: 59-63) Hence, this careful tracing out of genealogy was of absorbing interest to them.

But how about the Bible reader today? Should he pass over these nine chapters and start reading First Chronicles from the account of the death of Saul in chapter 10? No, these genealogical lists are part of "all Scripture" that is "inspired of God." (2 Timothy 3:16) The first nine chapters of First Chronicles have important and fascinating nuggets of information.

For example, only here do we read of Jabez, a descendant of Judah who proved himself exceptionally honorable. (1 Chronicles 4:9, 10) Here, too, we find a useful list of the royal line of David, which reveals the important fact that Zerubbabel, the governor of the Jews after their return from Babylon, was of that line.—1 Chronicles 3: 10-19.

Telling Us More About David

The remaining chapters of First Chronicles flesh out the historical narratives of previous books, particularly rounding out our knowledge of King David. In previous books the Bible reader got to know David as a devoted servant of Jehovah, an effective warrior, a poet, and a fine leader of men. In First Chronicles we learn that he was also a master organizer. He organized the nation and the army, and he organized worship at the temple, making 24 divisions of priests, Levites, and singers.—1 Chronicles 23: 1-27:22.

Second Samuel describes David's intense

desire to build a "house," or a temple, for the ark of the covenant. (2 Samuel 7:2-5) Jehovah would not allow David to go ahead with his plans, and First Chronicles explains why. David was a man of blood. The temple would be built by David's successor, a peaceful man. (1 Chronicles 22:8-10) Second Samuel also tells us how David came to buy the threshing floor where the temple was eventually built. (2 Samuel 24:18-25) First Chronicles adds to that by describing the huge contribution that David amassed and all the arrangements he made, so that when Solomon was in a position to start constructing the temple, everything would be ready for him. (1 Chronicles 22:6-19) Why, Jehovah even gave David the temple layout, which was faithfully passed on to Solomon.—1 Chronicles 28:9-21.

Jehovah's Blessing . . .

As you continue reading the second book of Chronicles, you will notice that a theme begins to stand out: When the kings of Judah showed complete confidence in Jehovah, they were blessed. When they did not, the people suffered. For example, King Rehoboam's son Abijam, fighting a war against Israel, was badly outmaneuvered by Jeroboam, the warrior king of the northern kingdom. Abijam's army found itself completely surrounded, so "they began to cry out to Jehovah, while the priests were loudly sounding the trumpets." The result? "God himself defeated Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah [Abijam] and Judah." —2 Chronicles 13:14, 15.

Similarly Asa, Abijah's son, defeated a huge army of one million Ethiopians because he relied on Jehovah. (2 Chronicles 14:9-12) Asa's son Jehoshaphat was saved from the combined attack of Ammon, Moab, and the Edomites, while many years later his descendant, King Hezekiah, was saved from the might of Assyria, because of that same confidence.—2 Chronicles 20:1-26; 32:9-23.

Why did Joseph become father of *two* tribes of Israel, while his brothers fathered only one tribe each?

First Chronicles helps us to answer this question. Joseph was given the double portion that belonged to the firstborn. True, Joseph was almost the youngest of the 12 sons of Jacob, but he was the older son of Jacob's favorite wife, Rachel. By birth, the right of firstborn should have gone to Jacob's eldest son, Reuben, his firstborn by Leah. But, as First Chronicles tells us, Reuben forfeited this because of a serious sin. The record says: "Reuben . . . he was the firstborn; but for his profaning the lounge of his father his right as firstborn was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, so that he was not to be enrolled genealogically for the right of the firstborn." The account goes on: "For Judah himself proved to be superior among his brothers, and the one for leader was from him; but the right as firstborn was Joseph's."—1 Chronicles 5:1, 2.

. . . and Displeasure

Nevertheless, many of the kings did not show this confidence, usually for one of three reasons. The first was that many fell into the snare of idolatry. Jehoash, Jehoshaphat's great-grandson, started out well, but then turned to idolatry. Jehovah withdrew his protection, and Jehoash was defeated in battle by the Syrians and was finally assassinated. (2 Chronicles 24:23-25) Jehoash's son, Amaziah, showed how seductive idolatry can be. Amaziah started by showing exemplary faith in Jehovah. Then, after a successful war in which he defeated the Edomites, incredibly he took the gods of the Edomites and began to worship them! (2 Chronicles 25:14) So, again, Jehovah withdrew his protection from the king.

Perhaps the worst example of idolatry is Manasseh. Not only did this king worship false gods but he actively persecuted those who stuck to Jehovah's worship. It was because "he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood" that Jehovah determined to destroy Judah. "Jehovah did not consent to grant forgiveness." (2 Kings 21:11; 23:26; 24:3, 4) Yet, surprisingly, Manasseh was the son of Hezekiah, one of the most faithful of Jewish kings. In fact, his birth was the result of a miracle. He was born after Jehovah miraculously extended his father Hezekiah's life. (Isaiah 38:1-8; 2 Chronicles 33:1) And there is a final surprise. After many years of persecuting worshipers of Jehovah, Manasseh repented and at the end of his life was a servant of Jehovah!—2 Chronicles 33:1-6, 12-17.

A second thing that trapped the kings of Judah was foreign alliances. These got the good king Asa into trouble, as well as the not-so-good king Ahaz. (2 Chronicles 16:1-5, 7; 28:16, 20) A tragic result of a foreign alliance was seen in the case of Jehoshaphat. This fine servant of Jehovah unwisely cultivated an alliance with Baal-worshiping King Ahab of Israel. He followed Ahab on unwise military expeditions and allowed Jehoram, his son, to marry Ahab's daughter, Athaliah. Athaliah was a bad influence on her husband, Jehoram, and on Ahaziah, her son, when they became kings in their turn. Then, when Ahaziah died, she usurped the throne and killed most potential rivals. Happily, Jehovah maneuvered things so that the royal line of King David was preserved, but what a tragic result from unnecessary foreign entanglements!

A third snare that some of the kings fell into was haughtiness. It blemished the last years of good King Asa, and because of it, King Uzziah, the military genius, spent the final part of his life as an isolated leper. Even faithful King Hezekiah fell into this snare when he was visited by emissaries from Babylon and proudly showed them the temple treasury.—2 Chronicles 32:25, 26; Isaiah 39:1-7.

Read and Learn From Them

Yes, the two books of Chronicles are a rich mine of information. They show the kind of conduct that pleases Jehovah, and they demonstrate that even kings can fall into sin. What a warning that is today, especially to those in positions of authority in the Christian congregation! Modern idolatry is just as subtle as was idolatry in the days of the Israelite kings, and we must be determined to avoid it. (Ephesians 3:19; Colossians 3:5; Revelation 13:4) We, too, must avoid unnecessary entanglements with the world. (John 17:14, 16; James 4:4) And certainly, the weakness of pride, or haughtiness, is still a problem that we have to fight against.—Proverbs 16:5, 18; James 4:6, 16.

Reading and learning from the two books of Chronicles will fortify our determination to serve Jehovah by following the good examples and avoiding the bad examples that are presented to us from Jewish history. It will encourage us to imitate the good and avoid the bad, that "through our endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope."—Romans 15:4.

In Our Next Issue

- **Adversity —How Can We Face It?**
- **Ministerial Servants—A Blessing to Jehovah's People**
- **Do You Show Godlike Kindness?**

Kingdom Proclaimers Report

Expansion at the "Hub"

IN INDUSTRIAL circles, the city of Kitwe, Zambia, is often called the "hub" of the Copperbelt. This is because Kitwe lies right at the center of the mining district. Kitwe, however, is also a hub of another sort—the center of theocratic activities in Zambia. Since 1962 the branch office has been located there, and during these two decades the number of publishers in Zambia has virtually doubled, from 30,129 in 1962 to a peak of 58,925 in 1984. The Memorial attendance for 1984 was 393,431, which is one person for every 16 of Zambia's total population.

With such rapid growth, the old branch facilities soon became inadequate. At first, the present structure was simply expanded, adding another dining room for the headquarters staff and space for storage and shipping. However, soon the Zambian branch ventured into the field of printing Bible literature. And in no time at all the small printing room became so cramped that there was little space for movement or storage. Too, since the branch office was in a residential area, it was difficult to carry on a factory operation without disturbing the neighbors.

So the brothers in Zambia put in an application for a site on which to build a new factory. Obtaining such a site, however, was not easy. The first site offered was rejected by the city council as being 'zoned for government use.' However, a brother came forward and offered some land that he owned. As soon as the brothers got the clearance, they hired an international architectural firm to make plans and present them to the city council for approval. News of this electrified the brothers in Zambia! Many came to help with the construction, which was done under the supervision of a brother who is a professional contractor. In just two years, in 1984, the building was finished.

It was a joyous occasion, indeed, when the dedication program for the buildings took place. Although the brothers were told that seats at the program were extremely limited, over 4,000 from all parts of Zambia attended the meeting! They were thrilled to hear the branch coordinator speak on the history of the work in Zambia and show how Jehovah has backed the work there. Following this, some experiences from old-timers were heard. Some had in times past served as special pioneers in such countries as Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda when the work there was supervised by the Zambian branch. Now these countries are cared for by the branch that was established in Kenya.

Brother John McBrine, who was visiting from Zimbabwe as zone overseer, concluded the program by encouraging the Zambian brothers to put these new facilities to good use. The literature produced at this factory will further the cause of pure worship and help good-hearted persons to come to a knowledge of the truth! And what will doubtless result from this? Further expansion at the "hub" of theocratic activities in Zambia!

New Watch Tower branch facilities at Kitwe, Zambia

COURAGE to Face Death

"My husband recently died of cancer," wrote a woman from California. "It is a disease that can destroy both hope and life. Yet the information in the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* helped my husband die with courage. It can most certainly help others to live with hope. Everyone should read it."